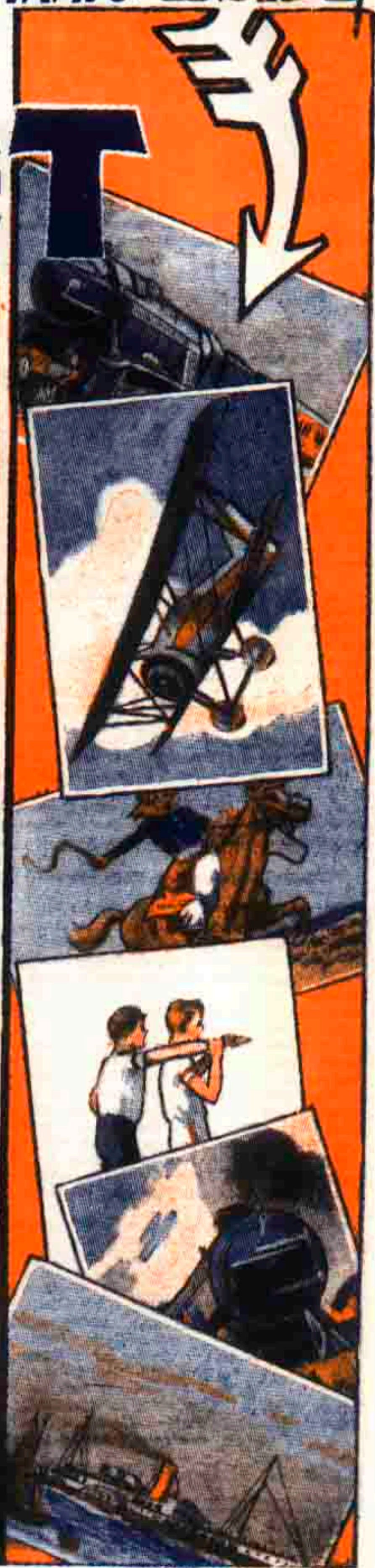


FREE-6 MORE SUPER PICTURE STAMPS-INSIDE!

The MAGNET

2¢





Come Into the Office, Boys!

Always glad to hear from you, chums, so drop me a line to the following address: The Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

YOUR GRAND FREE PICTURE GALLERY!

I MET two fellows yesterday arguing like billy-ho about the Flying Scotsman. One said the Flying Scotsman was the name of a train, the other said it was the name of a railway engine. Finally, they agreed to write to the Editor of the MAGNET about it. It was in my mind to make myself known to them, but on second thoughts I decided to let them wait and see—actually see a grand coloured picture of the Flying Scotsman, in the MAGNET. And here it is—one of the six magnificent Super-Stamps given free with this issue!

Of course, you've got that splendid Album, which was given free with the October 1st issue of our companion paper, "Modern Boy," and, of course, you are carefully sticking into it—in the proper places specially provided in the Album's pages—all your Super-Stamps as you collect them? I hope you are as carefully collecting the Super-Stamps now being given free with the "Ranger" and with the "Modern Boy." Don't leave these expensive pictures knocking around loose. Your motto should be "Into the Album with them at once!"

By the way, you can do your pals a good turn by telling them about these magnificent FREE picture stamps.

FAMOUS RAILWAY ENGINES!

But about that Flying Scotsman argument. Both fellows were right, for there is a train as well as a locomotive called the Flying Scotsman. So there are really TWO Flying Scotsmen. The train is much the older, though, for it was running 69 years ago, whereas the Flying Scotsman engine is only nine years of age. And it can do 89 miles an hour, hauling an enormously heavy train from King's Cross Station, in London, to Waverley Station in Edinburgh. There is no more famous express train in the whole world—and what a proud job for the firemen and drivers who have to take it the whole 392½ miles non-stop, an exciting run of 7½ hours! The Flying Scotsman engine and tender together weigh 158 tons 13 cwt.

The other famous British railway engine included in this week's Super-Stamps belongs to the Schools class locos of the Southern Railway—the most powerful of their special type in this country. Each of the locos are named after a big British school—Eton, Winchester, Lancing, and so on. The driving-wheels of these splendid engines are 6 feet 7 inches in diameter, and the weight of the engine and tender is 109½ tons. These Schools locos look very much like the Lord Nelson and King Arthur class, but whereas the latter have each ten wheels, the Schools locos have eight wheels.

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ROUGH-RIDERS AND ROUGH TUSSELS!

A NOTHER of our Super-Stamps this week shows how to get the better of a fellow in a rough tussle. Your attacker, who is shown on the left, is powerless once you get him into this position. Try it on your chum, and see. But be very careful, for that arm stretched out from the back over your shoulder would easily break if you put too much pressure upon it. This is known as the "Come-along hold."

The Rough-Rider is an Argentine Gaucho, the cowboy of the vast South American pampas or prairies, where tremendous herds of cattle need expert horsemen to look after them. From the very nature of their job, the gauchos are more at home in the saddle than they are on their own legs, and in the use of the lasso they are amazingly expert. The men have both Spanish and Indian blood in their veins.

VESSELS OF SEA AND AIR!

The paddle-steamer Royal Eagle is the newest of the Eagle Steamship Company's fleet of pleasure steamers, and one of our Super-Stamps shows what a splendid vessel it is. Driven by oil-engines, it carries nearly 1,800 passengers, and is 292 feet long. During the months of summer it takes passengers each day between London, Southend, and Margate. Perhaps you have been on her? If so, this picture will be a splendid souvenir of a happy holiday trip.

The last of this week's pictures shows one of the latest of the famous Armstrong-Whitworth fighting planes—a machine of which the R.A.F. is extremely proud. As swift in pursuit of an enemy as it is terrible in actual conflict.

A £20,000 FILM STAR DOG.

I doubt if there is a MAGNET reader in any part of the world who has not heard of Rin-Tin-Tin, the most famous film dog-actor that ever lived. Most of my readers have probably seen that splendid Alsatian dog on the screen at some cinema. And now Rin-Tin-Tin, who earned the colossal and almost unbelievable sum of £20,000 as a screen star is dead! The splendid old dog's son is to take Rin-Tin-Tin's place as film actor. But Rin-Tin-Tin himself—fourteen years old—will NEVER be forgotten!

WHERE RIN-TIN-TIN CAME FROM.

It was during the Great War that some soldiers discovered two puppies in a German dug-out, and an American airman promptly adopted them. He took them back with him to California, and one of them, which he named Rin-Tin-Tin, got a job on the films and was presently

earning £400 a week! He was shortly to have retired from cinema acting for good, when he had an attack of paralysis—and died! And now this amazing Alsatian is but a memory!

AMAZING—BUT TRUE!

Ears on their Legs.—Did you know that crickets listen with their front legs? A funny place for an insect to wear its ear drums, but that's where crickets smarten themselves up when told to wash behind their ears! In spite of this, crickets have very keen hearing.

Champion Chirpers.—Japanese crickets are also splendid songsters. The Japs put them into little wicker cages and hold championship contests, matching crickets whose singing ability has been amazingly developed against other champions, and thousands of people pay to hear the music! Some of the crickets can chirp ninety times a minute right through the night.

Alligator Nests.—In the Southern States of America boys go "alligator-nesting"—looking for the nurseries of alligators, which are made among the riverside bushes. An alligator may lay as many as 100 eggs. And an alligator can bite off a boy's leg at one snap. Rather more exciting than sparrows'-nesting, you'll agree with me!

Balloon-Busters.—They've invented a new sport for glider pilots. When a number of gliders—motorless aeroplanes—are well going, people on the ground launch air-balloons and the glider pilots see which of them can burst the largest number by prodding the balloons with sticks surmounted by pins! So far there is no record of any balloon-chaser falling out of his glider, but I should say it would be much easier to tumble out than prick one of those bobbing-about air-balloons!

Every MAGNET reader should make a point of getting this year's HOLIDAY ANNUAL. It's a better-than-ever volume of prize stories and pictures. For the price of six shillings it is a bargain—a bargain which should not be missed.

NOW I'll let you know something about the splendid programme I've got in store for you next week. To begin with, you'll enjoy reading:

"THE SCHEMER OF THE SIXTH!"
By Frank Richards,

the next story in our grand new series dealing with Harry Wharton's feud. This is a real first-class yarn, chums. So don't miss it, whatever you do!

Watch out, too, for more thrill-packed chapters of our sensational highwayman story: "The Red Falcon!"

Another tip-top issue of the "Greyfriars Herald" comes next on the list, and you'll vote it great, too!

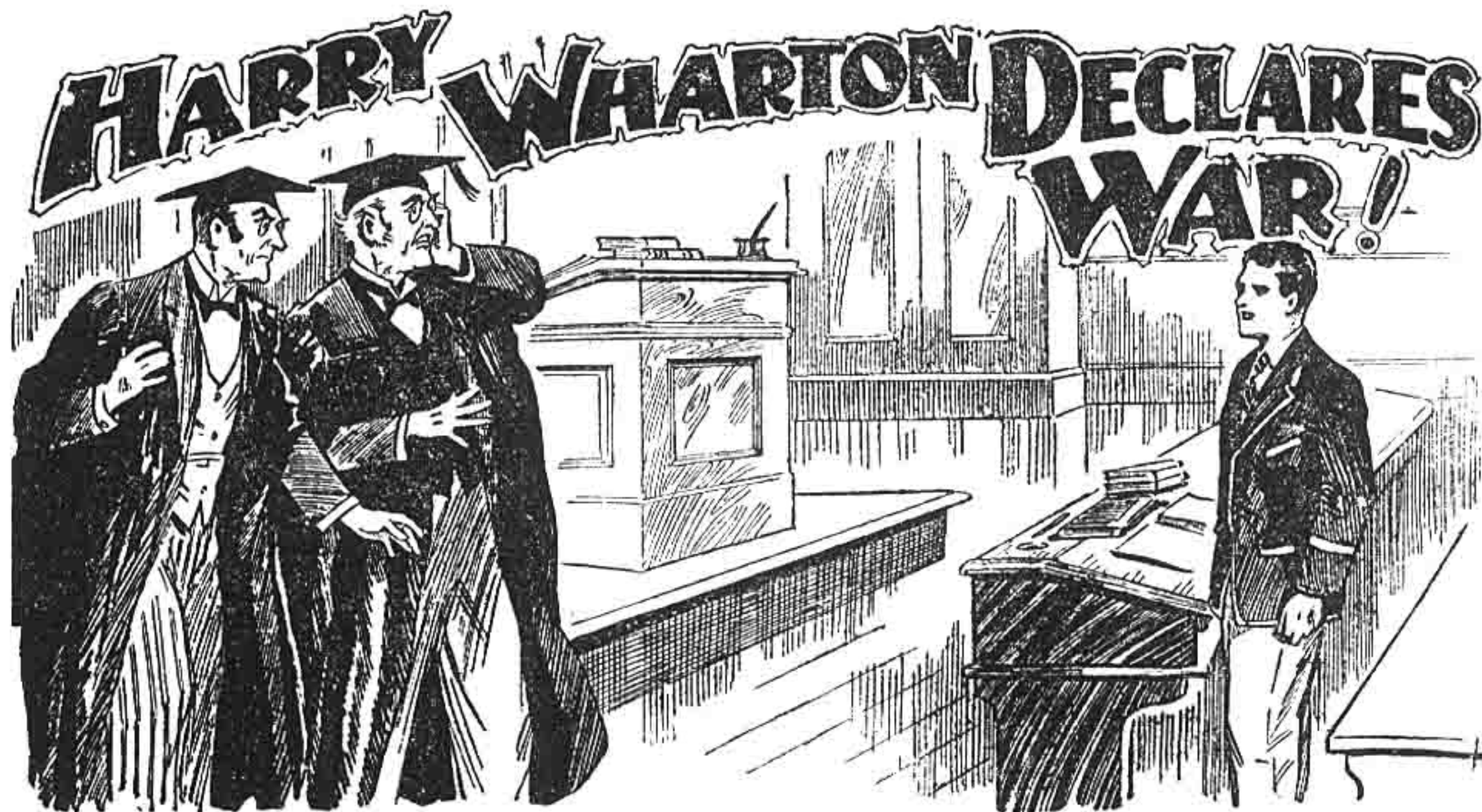
"LINESMAN,"

of course, will deal with more intricate Soccer problems set him by readers. A word of warning here! Make sure of the

SIX SUPER-STAMPS GIVEN FREE

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YOUR EDITOR.



BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Maully Astonishes the Natives!

"MAULEVERER!"
"Oh! Yaas?"
"What?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Yaas?" drawled the schoolboy earl of Greyfriars negligently.

Mr. Quelch, master of the Remove, looked fixedly at Lord Mauleverer. Every fellow in the Remove looked at him. It was third school at Greyfriars, and during that "school" Lord Mauleverer had been acting in an unusual, remarkable, and really unaccountable manner.

It was seldom that Remove men ventured to "rag" in class. Mr. Quelch was not the sort of master to be ragged. Even the Bounder, who was a born rebel and ragger, was rather careful how he carried on under the gimlet eye of Henry Samuel Quelch. Maully was no ragger—he was about the last fellow at Greyfriars to rag. Indeed, Maully regarded ragging a master as bad form; and for Maully to be guilty of what he considered bad form, was amazing.

Yet he was ragging Quelch, on this particular morning, in the most unexampled manner!

The occasion was rather ill-chosen, for Mr. Quelch was in one of his tartest and severest tempers that morning. Recent happenings in his Form had roused Quelch's deepest ire.

One place in the Remove was vacant. Harry Wharton, captain of the Form, was not there. Harry Wharton was locked in the punishment-room, for the dire offence of "punching a prefect," and most of the Remove expected that he would be "bunked." His friends were gloomy and glum at the prospect. Most of the Removites were concerned about it. But all of them were on their best behaviour. Quelch was seldom a man to be trifled with—now he was less so than ever. And this was the time Mauleverer had chosen to start in a new career as a ragger in class! It was

amazing—astounding! It seemed to be a case of fools rushing where angels feared to tread.

Quelch could hardly believe it at first. Maully was his best-behaved pupil. He was lazy—that was true; his "con" was generally nearly as bad as Billy Bunter's. But his manners were moulded on those of the ineffable Lord Chesterfield. They were irreproachable. So when Maully dropped a book on Skinner's toe, and Skinner gave a startled howl, Quelch supposed that it was an accident, and tart as he was, he let it pass. When another accident happened—the upsetting of an inkpot over Billy Bunter's

it was that Mr. Quelch rapped out Lord Mauleverer's name like a bullet, looking like Roderick Dhu on the occasion when dark lightnings flashed from Roderick's eye.

And Maully, plainly bent on more trouble, drawled out "Yaas," without even adding "sir."

Remove follows simply stared at him. They craned their necks to stare. They were astounded to see Maully, the quiet and placid Maully, sitting up and begging for trouble in this way. Mr. Quelch was astounded, too; but he was more angry than astounded.

"What did you say, Mauleverer?" asked Mr. Quelch, in a low, distinct voice.

"I said yaas!" answered Maully.
"Do you not know how to address your Form master with proper respect, Mauleverer?"

"Yaas!"
"If you do not say 'yes, sir' immediately, I shall cane you, Mauleverer."

"Yaas, sir, immediately!" said Maully.

Mr. Quelch quite jumped. So did the Removites! Obviously, Maully could not have supposed, really, that Quelch was telling him to say "yes, sir, immediately." It was a jest! Maully was in a jesting mood; though it was frightfully clear that Mr. Quelch was not.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"My esteemed Maully—" whispered Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Silence in the class!" hooted Mr. Quelch. "Mauleverer, you will take two hundred lines."

"Yaas!"
"At your next offence, I shall cane you!"

"Right-ho!"
"Oh crumbs!" breathed Frank Nugent.

Mr. Quelch could hardly believe his ears. He grabbed his cane from his desk almost convulsively. When a fellow answered "Right-ho!" to his Form master in class, it was time for the

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It's warfare now between Harry Wharton of the Remove and his Form master. And though it's boy against master, the boy wins the first round!

trousers—Quelch grew suspicious; but still he could hardly believe it. But he could not suppose that it was an accident when Maully caught Snoop in the eye with an ink-ball. Sidney James Snoop's surprised roar woke the echoes of the Form-room. Maully received a hundred lines on the spot. It was clear now that he was ragging.

Roman history was the subject in third school in the Remove Form Room.

Quelch went on with Roman history, with a suspicious eye on the surprising Maully! And Lord Mauleverer, leaning back on his form, opened his mouth, and yawned loud and long.

It was not a suppressed yawn, such as might have proceeded from any fellow when Quelch was imparting valuable but undesired information concerning the reign of the Emperor Nero. It was a loud and prolonged yawn, heard—and obviously intended to be heard—all over the Form-room. Then

skies to fall. The skies did not fall; but it was plain that Quelch's cane was going to fall—hard!

"Step out before the Form, Mauleverer!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Any old thing!" yawned Mauleverer.

He lounged out, with his hands in his pockets. The Removites watched him, as if fascinated. His friends—nearly all the Form—were alarmed for him. Unless old Mauly had suddenly gone off his rocker, there was no accounting for this.

Mr. Quelch pointed to a desk with his cane, held in a hand that trembled with anger.

"Bend over that desk, Mauleverer!" "Yaas!"

Whack! Whack! Whack!

There is a bad old maxim that to spare the rod is to spoil the child. Quelch, for once, seemed to be a firm believer in that maxim. He laid on those three swipes as if he fancied that he was beating carpet. Lord Mauleverer wriggled at the first, yelped at the second, and roared at the third. Quelch was angular, and rather bony, and would not have been suspected, on his looks, of packing a lot of muscle. But the beef he put into those swipes showed that he had plenty somewhere.

"Oh gad!" groaned Mauleverer, as he straightened up after the infliction. "Oh, my hat! Wow!"

"Go back to your place, Mauleverer! If you offend again in this lesson, I shall send you to your headmaster!" said Mr. Quelch, in a deep voice.

This was a dire threat. Only as a last resource, if a fellow was incorrigibly troublesome, was he sent with a note to Dr. Locke. It meant a flogging! The Bounder, in his most reckless mood, would have been brought to order by such a threat. It remained to be seen whether Mauly, in his new and remarkable ragging humour, would be brought to order.

He went back to his place, and wriggled painfully as he sat down. Quelch's eye was on him. He was going to give Mauly his particular attention now. Mauly, if he did not behave, was "for it."

"Mauleverer!" rapped out Mr. Quelch. "What were the words of Nero when the centurion discovered him in the garden?"

That was, as the juniors would have said, an easy one. They had just had it in the lesson! Even Billy Bunter knew that, Nero, rooted out of his hiding-place after his fall, had said to the centurion, "Haec est fides!"—"This is fidelity!" So Lord Mauleverer's answer, when it came, made the Remove jump.

"Yaas," said Mauly, "he said: 'Kiss me, Hardy!'"

The expression that came over Mr. Quelch's speaking countenance was simply terrific. There was an irrepressible chuckle in the Remove. Even Mauly could not have supposed that Nelson's remark had been made by the fallen tyrant of Rome. He was ragging again. The glare that swept over the class from Mr. Quelch stilled the chuckle.

"What did you say, Mauleverer?" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Kiss me, Hardy!" repeated Lord Mauleverer calmly. "Or was it 'Take away that bauble!'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Mauleverer, this is not stupidity—this is intentional impertinence! I shall give you a note for your headmaster."

Mr. Quelch stepped to his desk, wrote a hurried note, and handed it to Lord

Mauleverer, who received it meekly. He pointed to the door.

"Take that note to Dr. Locke, in the Sixth Form room, Mauleverer."

"Yaas," drawled Mauly.

"Go!"

Lord Mauleverer went.

The Form-room door closed behind him.

"Poor old Mauly!" murmured Johnny Bull.

"Jevver hear a man askin' for it like that!" whispered the Bounder.

"Silence!"

There was silence in class. Roman history went on its weary way in the Form-room; while Mauleverer, presumably, went on his way to the Head.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Colonel Wharton I

LORD MAULEVERER, outside the Form-room, grinned. Few fellows in his situation would have grinned. Really, it was not a grinning matter. He had lines, he had had a caning, and he was, in all probability, booked for a Head's whopping.

But Mauly grinned, as if completely satisfied with the course of events. No doubt Mauly had his reasons for his remarkable conduct in third school, mysterious as they were to the other fellows.

He walked quickly away. Generally the slacker of the Remove ambled slowly and with great leisure. Now he walked quite quickly. But he did not walk in the direction of the Sixth Form room, where the Head was with the seniors. He seemed to be in a hurry, but not in a hurry to deliver his note to Dr. Locke.

The direction he took was that of Masters' Studies. During school Masters' Studies were, of course, deserted. Mauleverer opened the door of Mr. Quelch's study, walked in, and shut the door behind him. He crossed over to the telephone, lifted the receiver from the hooks, called up the exchange, and gave the number "Wimford 100." This was a trunk call, and Mauly had to wait to be put through.

He stretched his elegant limbs in his Form master's armchair to wait. He had plenty of time. Quelch was booked in the Remove-room for nearly an hour to come. Certainly he would expect Mauly to return after seeing the Head. But he would not expect him yet. And if, getting impatient, Quelch came out to look for him, certainly he was not likely to look for him in Masters' Studies. Mauleverer, feeling that he was quite safe in his present quarters, waited with cheerful calmness for the telephone bell to ring.

Mauly had "astonished the natives" already in class. They would have been still more astonished if they had seen him now. Wimford 100 was, as many of the Remove knew, the telephone number of Wharton Lodge, the home of Harry Wharton, captain of the Form. Mauly's amazing proceedings that morning, apparently, had been for the sole object of getting out of the Form-room in order to ring up Harry's uncle, Colonel Wharton. In an hour's time he would have been free to ring up anybody he liked. It seemed that he could not afford delay.

The call came through, and Mauly lifted himself out of Mr. Quelch's armchair and took the receiver.

"Hallo! Is that Wharton Lodge?"

"Yes, sir!" came the smooth voice of Wells, the butler at the Lodge.

"Mauleverer speakin' from Greyfriars School. Please ask Colonel Wharton to come to the phone. I hope he's at home. It's important—very!"

"Colonel Wharton is at home, my lord, and I will call him at once."

"Thanks!"

Lord Mauleverer waited. Very quickly the voice of Colonel James Wharton came in deep tones over the wires.

"Hallo! Mauleverer—"

"Yaas, sir! Good-mornin', Colonel Wharton!" said Mauly into the transmitter. "Sorry to butt in and bother you, but it's frightfully important."

"What is the matter?" asked the colonel in puzzled tones. "I hope nothing is amiss with Harry?"

"Yaas."

"Not an accident—"

There was a quick note of anxiety in the old military gentleman's voice.

"No, no! But Wharton's rather in trouble, and I thought I'd let you know, sir. You, being a governor of the school, may be able to put in a word for the old chap. Anyhow, I thought you'd like to know. Old Wharton got his rag out this mornin'—"

"His what?"

"I mean, he got into a bit of a temper and punched a prefect—"

"Good gad!" ejaculated the colonel. "My nephew—Harry—impossible!"

"Sorry, sir, but there it is. My belief is that Wharton was in the right; he's not a fellow to break out like this for nothin'. It was Loder of the Sixth that he punched. Got him right in the eye—"

"Good gad!"

"The fellows are sayin' that Loder's got a black eye! Of course, there's lots of men in the Remove who would be jolly glad to give Loder a black eye, or a pair of them—"

"Wha-a-t?"

"He's rather a beast, sir! But punchin' a prefect is considered a rather serious matter here—"

"I should say so!" boomed Colonel Wharton. "I can scarcely believe such a thing of my nephew!"

"I fancy Loder must have worried him an awful lot to make him hit out like that, sir. He's rather a rotter! But actually Wharton hit him in the eye in break, and they've bunged poor old Wharton into punny—"

"Into what?"

"I mean into the punishment-room, and he's there now. The fellows are sayin' that he's goin' to be bunked—"

"Good heavens!"

"Bunkin' seems to be considered the proper sort of thing for a Lower School man who hits a Sixth Form prefect. I dare say it's all right, as a rule. But—"

"I hope this is not a foolish jest, Mauleverer."

"Oh, my hat! Not at all, sir! I can tell you that it's frightfully serious. We're all worried about Wharton. The fact is, Loder's been down on him since the term started, and I'm absolutely sure that he got Wharton's rag out and that he was to blame. Otherwise I shouldn't be buttin' in. But the beaks—"

"Who?"

"The masters, I mean—they're fearfully wild. Knockin' down a prefect in the quad is a bit unusual, sir. I'm afraid Wharton's goin' to be sacked. You'd hear all about it when he got home with a note from the Head in his pocket! But I sort of fancied that if I

put you wise at once, sir, you might bargo in—"

"Eh?"

"I mean, you might think it worth while to call on the Head, sir, and see whether anythin' can be done for the poor old chap. I'm not denyin' that he's gone rather over the odds. But—"

"If my nephew has done anything of the kind the provocation must have been very great, though that is little excuse for him. Discipline is discipline, as a soldier's son and nephew should know! I can scarcely believe this!"

"Sorry it's true, sir! But every man in the Form believes that Wharton had some jolly good cause. Loder's a bad hat! I'm not goin' to say anythin' against the man, of course, but he's a rank outsider, a beastly bully, and a cringin' worm! Lots of times I'd have liked to bung him in the eye myself; only, of course, such things aren't done!

was an old friend of the Head's; he was an "Old Boy" of Greyfriars; he was rather a big gun in every way. If anything could be done for the culprit now locked up in "punny" it had to be done before sentence was promulgated. Once the Head had delivered sentence the whole Board of Governors could not have made him retract. The sooner Colonel Wharton was on the scene the better.

"And now," sighed Mauleverer—"now for the beak!" And he left the Remove master's study and made his way to the Sixth Form room.

Maully had called the tune, and now he had to pay the piper. That bright idea of getting Colonel Wharton on the spot had flashed into his noble brain as he sat listening to Roman history from Mr. Quelch. Wharton was his pal, and Maully was the man to do anything for a pal. Now he had done it, and he had to take the consequences. Slowly

amazing of all, most unheard of, was the fact that a lower boy—a junior of the Remove—had given Loder of the Sixth that black eye!

Certainly Harry Wharton had not intended to adorn his old enemy in that remarkable manner. But he had hit hard, and Loder had captured it on that spot, with the result that Loder's eye was blacked. It was an awful happening, but there it was.

"Punching a prefect" was a dire offence. When the punch resulted in a black eye the outcome could not be doubted. It was the "sack"!

Wharton's chums—Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull, Frank Nugent and Hurree Jamsot Ram Singh—had hoped that the worst might not happen, till they saw Loder's eye! After that, hope was very faint. How could the Head possibly go easy with a fellow who had blacked a prefect's eye?

It was impossible! The captain of



"Bunter," said Dr. Locke severely, "I desire to ask you a question." "Oh lor'!" groaned the fat junior. "If it's about a pie, sir, I know nothing whatever about it. I never even knew there was a pie missing from the pantry!" "Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Head dazedly.

Wharton just forgot that for once. See?"

"I shall come down to the school immediately."

"Oh, good!" said Lord Mauleverer in great relief. "The beak's bound to listen to a governor of the school. I'm absolutely certain, sir, that you'll find that there's a lot to be said for poor old Wharton, though I admit that it's a bit thick to punch a prefect."

"I hope so—I hope so! Certainly I shall come at once. I shall order the car this instant. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye, sir!"

The colonel rang off before he heard Maully's good-bye.

Lord Mauleverer hung up and turned from the telephone. There was a satisfied expression on his kind, good-natured face. Every fellow at Greyfriars expected Wharton to be "bunked." But it was quite possible that Colonel Wharton might intervene with success. He was an influential member of the Governing Board; he

Lord Mauleverer made his way to the Sixth Form to deliver Mr. Quelch's note to the Head.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Last Hope!

"I SAY, you fellows! Look at Loder's eye!"

Billy Bunter chuckled.

The juniors hardly needed to have their attention directed to Gerald Loder's eye.

Loder of the Sixth could not appear in public without other eyes fastening on that eye. It was a prominent eye—a remarkable eye—an eye that leaped to the eye, so to speak!

It was black, but not comely! Black-eyed Susan, in the old song, drew many glances; but not so many as black-eyed Loder. For a Greyfriars prefect, a Sixth Form man, to be seen with a black eye was unheard of. Such things did not happen at Greyfriars. Yet it had happened. And, most

the Remove had to pay dear for that hasty blow.

Some fellows thought that Loder need not have paraded his eye in public. It was not a decoration to be proud of. Still, Loder could hardly be expected to hide his eye, and himself, in his study, like the flower that was born to blush un- seen. He had had to turn up for Greek in the Sixth Form room, anyhow, and everybody knew about his eye.

Now he was, so to speak, taking it for a walk in the quad, and every other eye within range turned on Loder's eye. If, like Hamlet's father, he had had an eye like Mars, to threaten and command it could hardly have made a greater impression on Greyfriars.

Billy Bunter chuckled, and many fellows grinned. But most fellows realised that the matter was serious. There might be an element of the comic in a black eye—to the beholder, if not to the possessor thereof. But the consequences were serious enough. A

fellow was going to be sacked for it, and the fellow who was going to be sacked was worth a dozen of Loder—in the opinion of his friends, at least.

After morning school the Co. walked round to look up at the little barred window of the punishment-room, to catch a glimpse of the prisoner there. But nothing was to be seen of Wharton. He did not show himself at the window of "punny." They wondered dismally what his feelings were like as he waited in that solitary room for the chopper to come down.

"It's rotten!" groaned Bob Cherry.

All the usual exuberant cheerfulness was gone from Bob's ruddy face.

"The rottenfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh dolorously.

"They can't sack him!" said Frank.

It seemed certain, yet to Nugent it seemed somehow impossible that his chum was to be turfed out of Greyfriars.

"They can't do anything else!" grunted Johnny Bull. "It's rotten enough; but he's asked for it! What else can the beak do?"

"Loder's a bully and a brute!" said Frank hotly. "He's a blackguard and a worm; he's a disgrace to the school—"

"The Head doesn't know all that."

"The knowfulness is not great, or the esteemed and disgusting Loder would be up for the sack!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "The absurd Wharton is for it!"

"Look here, let's go to Quelch," said Bob. "He's as mad as a hatter with Wharton, and—and no wonder, really! But we may be able to put in a word for the old chap."

"Um!" said Johnny Bull doubtfully. "More likely to give us six for butting in!"

"I don't care!"

Bob Cherry marched off to the Remove master's study, and his friends followed him, though with little hope. Such hope as they might have nourished faded away as they stood in the presence of Mr. Quelch, under the cold gleam of his gimlet eye.

He was about to leave his study when the juniors arrived, and they could guess that he was going to the Head. Now that morning school was over the masters were not likely to delay long in dealing with the prisoner of the punishment-room. But he paused to fix his gimlet eye on the dismal Co. and to rap out:

"Well?"

"If—if you please, sir—" stammered Bob.

"Be brief!"

"About—about Wharton, sir—"

"You can have nothing to say to me on that subject."

"There's something you ought to know, sir," said Bob resolutely. "I—I know Wharton's played the goat. But he believed that Loder had played a rotten trick on him."

"What do you mean?"

"You remember, sir, Wharton got into a row because the lines he left in your study were missing. Somebody took them away, and you thought he hadn't done them. He believed that it was Loder."

Mr. Quelch gave Bob a freezing glare.

"Wharton believed that a Sixth Form prefect had played a childish prank—and dared to strike that prefect in consequence!" he exclaimed. "You had better say no more, Cherry! If you imagine that such a statement is of any benefit to Wharton, you are very much mistaken!"

Without wasting more words on the Co. Mr. Quelch rustled away. They

went back dismally to the quad. Putting in a word for Wharton had not been a success!

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, dry up, Bunter!" grunted Bob.

"Is he bunked yet?" asked Bunter, blinking at the Co. through his big spectacles. "Some of the fellows are saying he's bunked already."

"No!" growled Bob.

"Well, they won't be long getting it over," said Bunter thoughtfully. "I'm sorry, you know! He was rather a beast—"

"What?"

"Rather a beast! Ill-tempered, you know," said Bunter. "Hot-headed sort of an ass, if you ask me! He kicked me yesterday—"

"I'll kick you to-day, if you don't shut up, you fat tick!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"And the kickfulness will be terrific!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Oh, really, Inky! As I was saying, I'm sorry for the chap!" said Bunter.

"I suppose Smithy will get in again as captain of the Remove when he's gone. You'll be alone in Study No. 1, Nugent!"

"Oh, shut up!"

"But that's what I was going to speak about," explained Bunter. "It's rather important. You know, I was in Study No. 1 with you before Wharton came. Well, when he's gone I'll come back, if you like."

"You fat idiot!"

"I mean it," said Bunter, blinking at him. "I've never been really satisfied with Toddy in Study No. 7. He's mean, you know. Hardly my class socially, either. I'll come back to Study No. 1. You'll like it a bit better than having Wharton there—what!—with his snappy temper, always getting his back up about something. You remember you had a scrap with him his very first day at Greyfriars, and—Yarooooooh!"

Billy Bunter did not know why Frank Nugent suddenly grasped him by the collar and banged his bullet head on the trunk of an elm.

But he knew that Nugent did it.

He could not fail to be aware of that! His head smote the elm with a fearful bang.

"Yarooooooh! Beast! Whoooooop!" roared Bunter.

Leaving the fat Owl to roar, the chums of the Remove drifted on.

Near the gates they came on Lord Mauleverer.

Maully was looking out into the road, as if in expectation. He wriggled a little as he stood. Maully had been through it that morning rather severely. He glanced round at the dismal four, and smiled.

"He's comin'!" he remarked. "I've just spotted the car."

"Who?" asked Bob, without interest.

"Wharton's jolly old uncle."

"Co'onel Wharton?" exclaimed Bob.

"Yaas."

The juniors stared out of the gateway. Far in the distance a car was coming along the Courtfield road at a fast pace.

"That's Colonel Wharton's car!" said Bob, staring. "Then, he knows!"

"I told him, old bean."

"You!" yelled the Co.

Lord Mauleverer grinned.

"What did you think I was raggin' Quelch for in third school?" he asked.

"I thought you'd gone off your rocker."

"Well, I hadn't. I was schemin' to get out of the Form-room to ring up Wharton's uncle. Deep—what?" grinned Maully. "What do you think Quelch would have said if he'd known

I got on his phone when he sent me to the Head?"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob.

What Quelch would have said—and done—if he had known, would hardly bear thinking of. Certainly it was fortunate for his cheerful lordship that Quelch had not known.

"And here the old bean comes!" added Maully.

The colonel's car came up at a rush. It turned in at the gates, and the juniors "capped" the bronzed old gentleman who sat within, as he passed them. Colonel Wharton gave them a nod. The car ran on up the drive, and the chums of the Remove looked after it, and then at one another. Their faces were brighter.

The old boy may be able to do something for Harry!" said Nugent hopefully.

"Let's hope so, at least!" said Bob.

"Hope springs infernal in the human chest, as the esteemed poet remarks," observed Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

There was one eye that turned malevolently on Colonel Wharton as he stepped from his car. It was Loder's. Loder of the Sixth had taken it for granted that Harry Wharton was going to be sacked, and that while the other fellows were at dinner, he would be going to the station. Now a doubt crept into his mind, and he scowled at Harry Wharton's uncle. Unconscious of his scowl, and of his existence, Colonel Wharton went in to see the Head.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Uncle and Nephew I

HARRY WHARTON sat on the edge of the bed in the punishment-room, with a dark and clouded face.

He knew that he was "for it"—that when morning school was over he would be taken before his headmaster—and he could hardly doubt what the result would be.

His brows were knitted, and there was a gleam of defiance in his eyes.

His pride, at least, was unsubdued.

Even his friends, he knew, condemned his action; they doubted what he believed of Loder, and they condemned the fierce outbreak of temper and indignation, which had culminated in his knocking down a Sixth Form prefect under the very eyes of his headmaster. They were concerned for him, anxious about him; but they felt that he had asked for what was coming to him. He was well aware of that.

It made no difference to his mood. He did not regret that angry blow. In the same circumstances he would have struck it again. There was a point beyond which patience could not endure. If the whole school condemned him, friends as well as foes, he could find support in his own stubborn spirit.

Chiefly, as he sat there in silence and solitude, it was the thought of his uncle that troubled him. It would be a heavy blow to Colonel Wharton when he came home in disgrace—expelled from his school. His uncle, who had been a father to him, was fond of him, proud of him, ambitious for him. What would be the effect on him? Likely enough he would blame him. The old soldier was keen on discipline. A junior boy at school, striking a prefect, would seem to him something like a private striking an officer. Wharton had had provocation enough, but even that he could not prove. Loder had been too wary and cunning to give him a chance of proving what he knew. The coming interview with his uncle, when he

reached home, was a dismaying prospect.

There were steps in the corridor, and a key grated into the lock of the door. It opened, and Wharton rose to his feet. He saw his Form master.

Mr. Quelch stood aside from the doorway and did not enter. Neither did he give Wharton a glance. Apparently he had come to the punishment-room merely to admit someone else.

Wharton saw that "someone else" the next moment. It was Colonel Wharton who strode in, with his heavy tread. Mr. Quelch drew the door shut.

Wharton faced his uncle.

His heart sank as he read the grim expression on the bronzed old face. Evidently Colonel Wharton had seen the Head. What Dr. Locke had told him could have produced only one impression on his mind.

"So I find you here, Harry!" said the colonel. "Locked up in the punishment-room, waiting to receive sentence of expulsion from your school."

"Yes, uncle," said Harry, in a low voice.

"I have heard from your headmaster what has happened. Have you a single word to say in your own defence?"

Wharton set his lips.

It seemed as if he had been tried and found guilty unheard.

"Yes, if you wish to hear it," he said quietly.

"I am waiting to hear it!" said Colonel Wharton grimly. He had not even shaken hands with his nephew.

He stood as stiff as a ramrod, his eyes on the junior's face.

"I suppose you know that I knocked Loder down," said Harry.

"Yes," grunted Colonel Wharton. "I know that you have broken and outraged every law of the school. Why?"

"I should not have touched him, I think, if he had not laid hands on me," said Harry.

"Why did he lay hands on you?"

"Because I told him what he was—a rotten rascal!"

Grunt from the colonel.

"I think I have seen Loder, some time or other," he said. "So far as I have seen he is much the same as any other Sixth Form man at this school."

"You've not seen much, then."

"He is a prefect of the Sixth Form, which means that he has the good opinion and confidence of his headmaster," said Colonel Wharton sternly. "You say that he is a rascal. You do not imply that his headmaster knows it?"

"Of course not!"

"If you are in possession of facts concerning him, you can place them before Dr. Locke. If you can prove that a prefect of Greyfriars is a rascal, it will go far to extenuate what you have done. Tell me, then, what you know of this Loder?"

"He is a bully and a brute, and any Lower boy in the school will say the same."

"Possibly. Prefects are given authority over juniors, and a boy who is caned for kicking over the traces may very likely regard it as bullying. Am I to understand that you take it upon yourself to knock down prefects because they are considered bullying in their ways?"

"Nothing of the kind," said Harry, biting his lip. "I don't mean that, of course."

"What do you mean, then?"

"Loder has always had a down on me. It's been worse since the new term started. He pulled my Form master's leg to get him down on me, too."

"Mr. Quelch, whom I know very well, is as keen and observant a man as I have ever met. He is not in the least a man to have his leg pulled, as you express it. That is nonsense."

"I was in a row yesterday, because some lines I had taken to Quelch's study were not found there. Someone had

taken them away, to get me into a row with Quelch. It was Loder.

"If that is the case, the fellow is a rascal, and ought to be kicked out of the school. Did you see him?"

"I was out of gates."

"Someone else saw him, and told you?"

"He would not be likely to let anyone see him doing such a thing."

The Colonel tugged his grizzled moustache, and stared at his nephew.

"What the duce do you mean, then? You cannot mean that this Loder told you himself that he had played such a trick?"

"No, no!"

"Then what do you mean? How do you know?"

"I'm absolutely certain of it!" answered Wharton.

"Good gad! For what reason?"

"Quelch did not believe I had put the lines in his study. I was up before the Head. Loder came and told the Head that he had seen me take the lines in."

"Do you mean that he got you out of the scrape?"

"Well, yes; but—" Wharton paused. It was hopeless and he knew it; but he went on: "He never saw me take the lines in. It was a lie! He was in the quad at the time, and couldn't have seen me."

"Good gad! You say the fellow is your enemy, and yet he came to your headmaster and told lies to save you from punishment. Are you mad?"

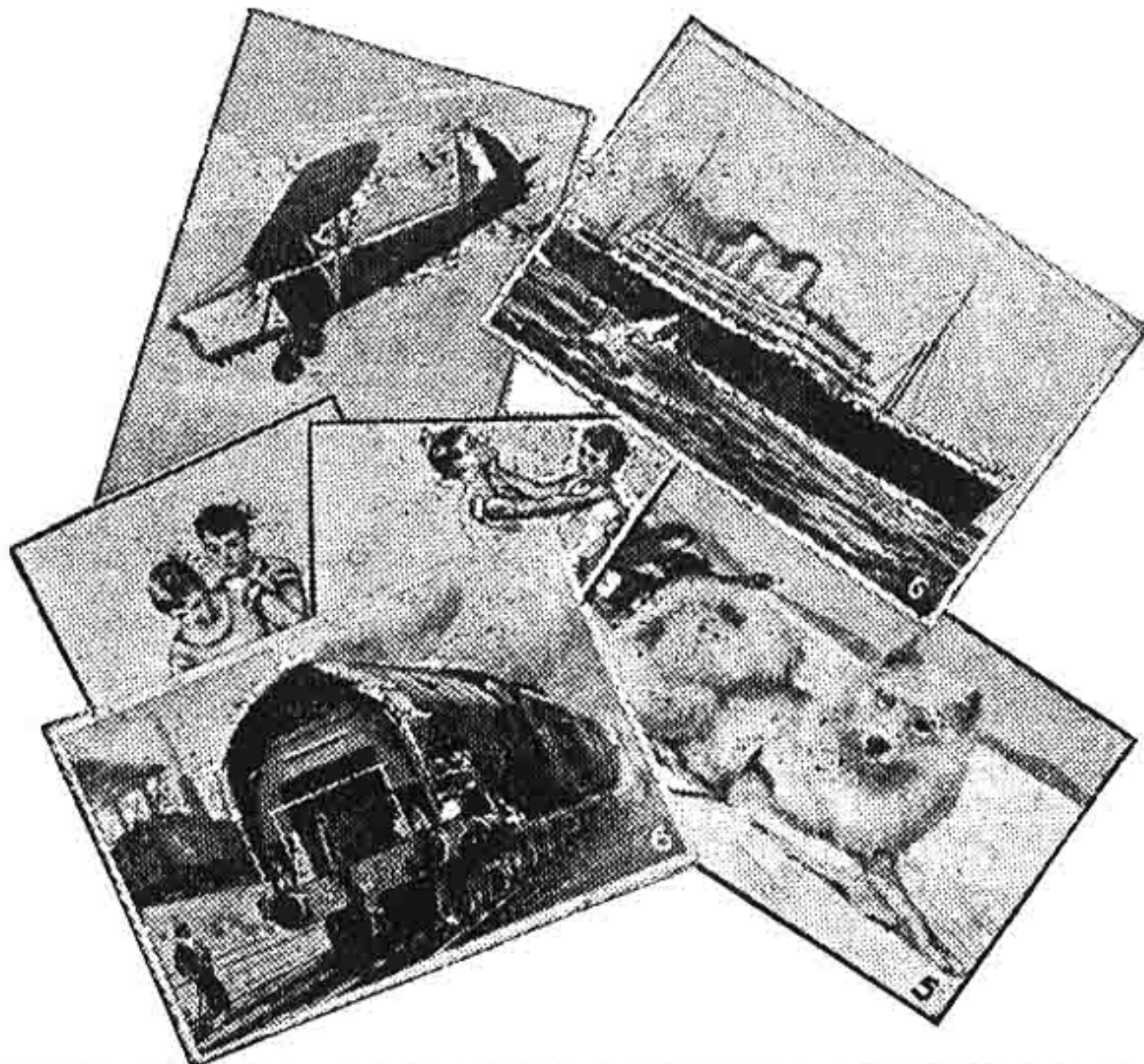
"I believe that he was frightened to let it go on—or that some fellow knew about it and made him butt in. He would have been glad enough to leave me to it. He came and told lies to the Head because he was afraid of being shown up. That's how I knew that he had played that trick on me."

Colonel Wharton looked hard at his nephew. What was clear to Harry Wharton was by no means clear to the

(Continued on next page.)

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old colonel. He seemed to doubt whether the boy was in his right senses.

"Is that all?"

"That's all!"

"A prefect speaks up for you, though he dislikes you, and saves you from punishment. You think that a proof that he is a liar, and has played a base trick on you. Good gad! Are you a fool?"

Wharton did not answer that.

"And that—a vague suspicion, unworthy of a decent lad's mind—that was cause enough for you to strike a prefect under the windows of your headmaster's study—under the eyes of your headmaster! You call this prefect your enemy when, on your own statement, all you know is that he acted in a generous and dutiful way towards you. You do not even pretend to have any proof—you ask me to believe that a Greyfriars prefect has acted like a rascal—like a crook by gad—when the only evidence is, that in spite of his dislike of you, he spoke up in your favour."

Wharton was silent. But like that it sounded absurd enough. And yet he knew!

"I have been told of this affair of the lines!" grunted the colonel. "I hear that at first you had the impudence to suspect that your Form master, Mr. Quelch himself, had suppressed the lines in order to punish you unjustly."

"It looked like it—until I knew about Loder. I know I was wrong, and I apologised to Quelch—I was sorry for that—"

"I should think so—by gad, I should say so! I can hardly believe that such a rascally suspicion could enter the mind of a nephew of mine!"

Wharton crimsoned.

"You don't know all the circumstances—"

"No circumstances could excuse such a miserable suspicion of an upright and honourable man!" said Colonel Wharton, raising his hand. "Say no more about that! Now, it seems, after groundless suspicions of your Form master, which you acknowledge to be wicked and unjust, you transfer your suspicions to a Sixth Form prefect—and expect them to be heeded! Cannot you see that you are as much in the wrong in the second place as in the first?"

"No!" said Harry, between set lips.

There was a long silence. The junior's face was hardening. Colonel Wharton paced to and fro in the room for some minutes in glum silence. He turned to his nephew at last.

"I had hoped to hear you say something in your defence. You have nothing to say. You do not seem even sorry for what you have done."

"No!" said Harry Wharton grimly.

"If I had not already prevailed on your headmaster to give you another chance here, Harry, I could not in conscience open my lips to make such a request!" said Colonel Wharton slowly. "I am surprised—shocked—I can hardly understand you! From what your friend said on the telephone, from what I knew of you—or fancied that I knew—I took it for granted that you must have received some serious provocation—though that would not have been an excuse for what you have done. I find that the provocation exists only in your imagination—in an unworthy suspicion of which you should be ashamed. What has come over you? You do not seem to be the boy I have always known—you seem almost a stranger to me!"

Wharton stood silent.

"Dr. Locke has consented," went on the colonel, "to give you another

chance. Your punishment will be as severe as possible, but it will stop short of expulsion. It seems of little use, however, if you go on as you have begun—you cannot remain at Greyfriars. Your next offence will mean instant expulsion, and certainly I shall not say a word for you. I can only hope that this narrow escape, and the punishment that is to follow, will be a warning to you, and that you will pull up in time."

"I am not to be sacked?"

"This time, no. You will be flogged—and placed under detention for every holiday this term. The punishment is severe, but not so severe as you deserve, and must have expected. I was thankful to be able to prevail on Dr. Locke to concede so much."

Wharton breathed hard. A flogging—and a term's detention! It was hard enough! But his heart was lighter. It was such a punishment as had seldom, or never, been inflicted at Greyfriars! But it was not the worst—he was not to go!

Anything else he could stand! And that narrow escape would be a warning to him—though not in the way that the colonel meant. He would be careful—very careful! Loder should not have a chance at him again—Quelch should not find it easy to get rid of him! He would not play into their hands again, as he had once already done!

Black and bitter thoughts were hidden behind the junior's pale, set face.

"Let this be a warning to you, Harry!" said the colonel, in a gentler tone. "You have lost your Form master's good opinion, and your headmaster's and mine! I am sorry to say so, but I must. And remember that if your wilful temper leads you astray again, you have no intervention from me to expect. I shall not utter a word in your favour!"

"I will remember that!" said Wharton bitterly.

The colonel gave him a sharp look.

"I will leave you now," he said abruptly. "I hope I leave you repentant! For your own sake, I hope so."

He turned to the door. Harry Wharton felt a pang at his heart.

"You are going, uncle?"

"I am going."

Without a look back, the colonel went. The door shut sharply after him. Wharton stood very still.

His uncle—his oldest and kindest friend—had gone, angry, resentful, condemning him. It was the hardest blow of all, and for some minutes Harry stood with a heavy heart, his lips trembling, the tears very near his eyes. But his face hardened again, and his lips set. If all the world abandoned him, he had still his stubborn pride to uphold him; that, at least, was left.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Flogging!

"THANK goodness!" said Frank Nugent, with a deep breath.

A weight was lifted from his heart.

All the Co. felt their hearts lightened. There were few fellows in the Remove who did not share their feelings to a more or less extent.

Wharton was not going!

He was still in "punny"; but he was not to be sacked! That news had spread through the school after Colonel Wharton had driven away in his car.

Many fellows had noticed that when the colonel went, he went with a grim, sombre face; the face of a man deeply displeased.

They did not wonder at it.

The nephew had asked for trouble, and the uncle had had to exert all his influence to get him out of it. The colonel's interview with the headmaster could have been neither easy nor pleasant. He could not take up the position of defending one who was wrong; his position had been that of a dismayed and displeased relative, asking for mercy for a wrongdoer. It must have been disagreeable enough for him.

Anyhow, he had succeeded, to the deep and intense relief of Harry Wharton's friends. Wharton was not to go.

Punishment, it was certain, would be hard and heavy. An example had to be made of the rebel, lest other fellows should be tempted to follow in his footsteps. That mattered little—indeed, even his friends could not deny that he merited punishment. Even if his suspicion of Loder was well-founded—of which there was no proof—knocking down a prefect in the quad was far beyond the limit. Whatever the punishment was, he had got off lightly.

How long he was to remain in "punny" nobody knew. He did not appear in the Remove Form room that afternoon.

But after school the bell rang for Hall, and the fellows guessed why they were assembled.

"It's a flogging, anyhow!" said Bob Cherry. "Thank goodness it's no worse than that! The old bean's pulled him through—he can stand a whopping!"

"The whoopiness will probably be terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But the esteemed Wharton can stand it grimly. The absurd Maully has saved the idiotic situation by calling in the ludicrous colonel."

"Good old Maully!"

"What about favouritism?" jeered Skinner. "Any fellow whose uncle wasn't a governor of the school would have been bunked."

"Better not let the beaks learn too much about you, then!" growled Johnny Bull. "All the governors in a bunch couldn't pull you through, if the Head knew you as we do."

To which Harold Skinner replied with a sniff.

The Greyfriars fellows gathered in Hall, knowing what to expect. The Head entered by the upper door, followed by Harry Wharton and Gosling. The latter was carrying the birch.

All eyes were fixed on Wharton.

He was a little pale, but perfectly cool, and he carried his head high. Mr. Quelch looked at him with a glint in his eyes. Something of repentance, at least of regret, might have been expected in the looks of the culprit—at the very least, a subdued seriousness. Nothing of the kind was to be discerned in Wharton.

If looks indicated anything, Wharton's indicated that he considered himself blameless and unjustly punished. That was more than enough to exasperate Mr. Quelch.

The Head spoke a few words. He touched upon Wharton's offence, his serious and unprecedented offence, of assaulting a prefect of the Sixth Form to the extent of disfiguring him. He stated that he had resolved to expel the culprit from the school, but had decided to give him one more chance to amend; and he trusted that the punishment to be inflicted would be a warning to the culprit himself, and to all others

who felt any temptation to outrage the laws and the great traditions of Greyfriars.

It was quite a solemn exordium, and produced a good deal of effect on the hearers. The Head, fortunately, did not observe Wharton's lip curl, while it was being delivered.

"Gosling, take up that boy!" came next.

The flogging followed.

The school looked on in silence at the severest flogging that Greyfriars had ever witnessed.

How any junior could take it in silence most of the fellows failed to understand. Wharton did.

Not a sound came from him.

Lash after lash descended, and his handsome face grew paler, and beads of perspiration stood out on his brow. But his teeth were set, his lips tightly shut, and he uttered no sound. His pride was stubborn, at that moment almost savage; torture itself could have wrung no cry from him.

It was over at last, to the relief of the school—no doubt to the Head's also. Wharton was set on his feet. He stood unsteadily, but in an instant he had pulled himself together. He was at the end of his tether, but he would betray no sign of weakness.

The school was dismissed.

Wharton's chums gathered round him as he went; Nugent slipped an arm through his. In silence they led him away.

Not a word was spoken till they reached Study No. 1 in the Remove.

Wharton leaned heavily on the table. His face was almost white, and he breathed hard and deep.

"Sorry, old man!" said Bob Cherry awkwardly.

"The sorrowfulness is terrific, my esteemed and idiotic chum," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a distressed, dusky face.

"Hard cheese, old bean!" said Johnny Bull.

And they left him; they knew that he wanted to be alone till the first effects of that stiff flogging had worn off. Only Frank Nugent remained with his chum.

He lingered a few moments.

"I suppose it feels pretty bad, Harry."

"Yes."

"You'll feel better presently."

"Yes."

"It's rotten, old chap."

"Yes."

"Nothing I can do?"

"No."

"Look here, would you rather I stayed or went?"

"I'd rather be alone for a bit."

"Right-ho, old fellow."

Nugent left the study and closed the door. Through the door he heard a gasping sound—a suppressed groan—and it gave him a pang. Skinner and Snoop came along. Evidently their intention was to give the flogged junior a look-in. One look from Frank Nugent caused them to abandon that intention, and they passed on.

Then Billy Bunter rolled up. Looks, however expressive, were wasted on William George Bunter.

"I say, shift, will you?" he said.

"Let a fellow go in. I want to see Wharton—I mean I want to speak to him."

"Get out!"

"Oh, really, Nugent! I suppose I can sympathise with a pal without you butting in," said Bunter indignantly. "What the thump are you sticking against the door for? Look here, get out of the way! See?"

"Clear off, you fat fool!"

"Is Wharton blubbing?" asked Bunter with interest.

"Will you clear, you dummy?"

"No, I won't!" answered Bunter independently. "I'm going to see him. If he's blubbing—Whoop! You kick me again, you beast, and I'll jolly well—Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

Bunter departed.

Harry Wharton was not seen again till tea-time. By that time he had recovered a little. The Famous Five gathered to tea as usual in Study No. 1, but it was a rather silent and dismal tea. Wharton was cool and calm, but there was a look in his eyes that his friends did not like. He had little to say, and the other fellows had little.

Tea was over when the study door opened and Herbert Vernon-Smith looked in. The Bouncer gave the silent party a cheery nod.

"Pretty stiff, Wharton, what?" he said.

"Very!" answered Harry.

"Getting over it?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Lucky you weren't bunked, old man! Everybody thought it would come to that."

"Sorry to disappoint everybody."

GOT YOUR POCKET WALLET YET?

If not, set to work and win one, like L. Cymbalist, of 18, Nelson Street, Southend-on-Sea, who has sent in the following winning Greyfriars limerick:

For providing Greyfriars with mirth,
Old Gosling's the best chap on earth.
He says, all young Himps
Should be boiled like shrimps,
And the rest should be drowned at birth!

These Wallets Are Well Worth Winning, Chums!

The Bouncer gave him a quick look.

"Nobody wanted you to be bunked, Wharton, unless it was Loder," he said quietly. "You can't wonder if Loder did, after the eye you gave him."

"I don't wonder at anything in Loder—except that he's not been sacked yet."

The Bouncer laughed.

"Well, gratters, old man!" he said.

"Thanks!"

"You'll be all right for the Highcliffe match; plenty of time for that," added Smithy.

"I shan't play in the Highcliffe match."

"Why the thump not? You'll have forgotten your whopping by Saturday afternoon."

"I'm gated."

"What putrid luck!"

"For the whole term!" added Wharton.

"Oh crumbs!" The Bouncer whistled. "That will play old Harry with the Form games!"

"Well, one fellow's loss is another fellow's gain. If I'd been bunked the fellows would have elected you captain of the Form."

"I hope you don't think I thought of that!" said Herbert Vernon-Smith very quietly.

"Why not?" said Wharton indifferently.

The Bouncer gave him a rather odd look and walked away. There was an

uncomfortable silence in the study after he had gone. Smithy had a very thoughtful face as he joined his chum, Tom Redwing, in the quad.

"Reddy, old man, there's goin' to be trouble this term!" he remarked.

"There's been enough already in our Form," said Tom.

"There's goin' to be more."

"Wharton—"

"You get me!"

"Surely after what's happened he will be careful," said Redwing.

"Yes," said the Bouncer musingly, "I fancy he will be careful—very careful. Yes, I think there's no doubt about that. Quelch won't catch him napping again if he can help it. But you remember that jolly old prophet, Reddy, who was angry, and considered that he did well to be angry? That's how Wharton feels now. He's up against things, and he means to give all the trouble he can. And a man like Wharton can give a lot."

"I hope he'll think better of it, Smithy, if you're right," said Tom Redwing uneasily. "After all, he's got off lightly. And he's not the man to nurse a grudge and a grievance. He'll get over this."

"I wonder!" said the Bouncer.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Early Bird!

HARRY WHARTON stood at the gates of Greyfriars School on Saturday afternoon when the brake rolled away with the Remove team to Highcliffe.

The brake was packed with Remove men going over to play, or to watch the match. Vernon-Smith was to captain the team, and the vacant place had been filled by his chum Redwing. Wharton waved a parting hand as the brake disappeared, and turned back into the quad.

From the expression on his face it would have been difficult to read his thoughts or his feelings. His face, indeed, was almost without expression. He was gated for the term, which meant that he was barred from all games that were played away. It was hard enough on a keen footballer, who was captain of his Form, and as Wharton's temper was well known, bitter words might have been expected from him on the subject, savage and sulky looks. But he looked calm and equable, and not a word of complaint had passed his lips.

Skinner had a theory that he had been scared into submission, and that he was now bent on "greasing" up to the beaks and the prefects, but fellows who knew him better were not likely to agree with Skinner's theory. But they did not understand him. Even his best chum, Nugent, had to realise that Wharton was in a mood these days that he could not understand.

At all events, he was not a fellow to wear his heart upon his sleeve for daws to peck at. It was the Greyfriars tradition that a fellow should take a knock without whining. But it was unusual for a fellow to take so hard a knock without giving a sign. Possibly Wharton, in these days, resembled one of those Arctic volcanoes, covered with ice outside, burning and seething within.

He walked back to the House. Billy Bunter met him on the way, with a fat grin and a blink through his big spectacles.

"Left out of it, what, old bean?" asked Bunter agreeably.

"Looks like it, doesn't it?"

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"Hard cheese, old chap!" grinned Bunter. "But what could you expect?" "Exactly."

"Loder's eye still looks a picture. I fancy he won't feel like turning up at the Cross Keys again till it gets well," chuckled Bunter. "I say, old fellow, don't walk away while a pal's talking to you. I'm awfully sorry to see you down on your luck like this, though you'll admit you asked for it. Too high-and-mighty, you know!" said Bunter, with a serious shake of his bullet head.

Wharton accelerated.

"What's the hurry, old fellow?" asked Bunter, trotting to keep pace. "Anxious to get in to detention, what? He, he, he! Bit rotten for you, with the fellows away playing footer, and you stuck in the Form-room doing irregular verbs! He, he, he! Same next Wednesday—you won't be able to go over to Rookwood for the match there! I can tell you I pity you."

Wharton walked faster.

"I say, old chap, hold on! You remember I told you I was expecting a postal order?" asked Bunter. "Well, it hasn't come! Think you could lend me five bob till my postal order comes, Wharton?"

Wharton walked into the House without answering that question—pressing and important as it was. Billy Bunter blinked after him in angry annoyance.

"I say, Wharton! Deaf?" he bawled.

Harry Wharton seemed deaf; at least, he went on his way regardless. He entered the Remove Form Room, and sat at his desk to wait for Mr. Quelch, who was to give him a detention task. His detention for the afternoon was from half-past two to half-past five—a weary length of time for any fellow to spend alone in a deserted school on a half-holiday.

It was now, however, only a quarter-past two, which looked as if Wharton was prepared to lengthen his detention of his own accord. Certainly no master at Greyfriars was likely to guess that a detained fellow had turned up for detention a quarter of an hour before he was due. There was no sign of Quelch in the offing, and not likely to be for ten minutes at the very least. In the quiet, deserted Form-room Wharton sat at his desk and waited.

The half-hour boomed out from the clock-tower, and Wharton heard footsteps in the Form-room passage.

He glanced towards the door.

It did not open.

He knew the tread of the Remove master; but Mr. Quelch did not enter the Form-room.

Mr. Quelch had come along from his study with a paper in his hand. It was an exercise in Latin irregular verbs, which he had carefully—and rather grimly—prepared for the detained junior. A boy who used his leisure in ragging, and in punching prefects, was much better occupied in improving his knowledge of the classical tongue, in the Remove master's opinion. It was a rather stiff exercise; not beyond Wharton's powers, but likely to tax him to the utmost. Paper in hand, Mr. Quelch walked up the Form-room passage, expecting to see Wharton at the door of the Remove-room.

He was not there.

Mr. Quelch looked at his watch. It was twenty-nine minutes past two. In strict justice, Wharton had another minute.

His Form master was prepared to give him strict justice—very strict. He walked down the passage again to occupy that minute.

The minute elapsed, and the half-hour

chimed, and still there was no sign of Wharton!

Not for an instant did it occur to Mr. Quelch that the junior had been a quarter of an hour early for detention, and that he had long been sitting in the Form-room—waiting! It was not likely to occur to him.

He glanced up the passage, and down the passage. He compressed his lips, and his eyes glinted. Wharton had been told distinctly to come to the Form-room at two-thirty precisely. It would have been judicious of him, in the circumstances, to arrive a minute or two early, to make sure. Now he was a minute or two late, and had not arrived.

Mr. Quelch waited—compressing his rather thin lips harder, and the glint in his eyes growing more pronounced.

Nobody came!

Five more minutes elapsed!

Mr. Quelch walked up and down the passage. The junior in the Form-room heard his steps passing and repassing.

Had Mr. Quelch opened the door and looked in, he would have seen the junior sitting at his desk, with an ironical grin on his face. But he did not open the door.

He paced and paced.

Deeper and deeper grew his frown, deeper and deeper his wrath. At a quarter to three his patience was exhausted.

This was not carelessness or forgetfulness. It was deliberate defiance! The detained junior had not come; evidently—to Mr. Quelch—he did not intend to come.

Hard and deep breathed Henry Samuel Quelch!

No doubt the rebellious young rascal had gone over to Highcliff with the footballers—he was capable of it! Perhaps, in those very moments, he was playing football, regardless of authority!

Mr. Quelch walked away with set lips, directing his steps towards the study of Dr. Locke. Harry Wharton heard him go, and smiled sourly.

He had, of course, known perfectly well that his Form master would never dream that he had arrived a quarter of an hour early for detention. He had been quite certain that Quelch would never guess that he was already in the Form-room, with the door shut. Quelch had arrived early, never dreaming that Wharton had arrived earlier. Now he was gone—for what? Wharton cared little. If Henry Samuel Quelch chose to make a fool of himself, Henry Samuel Quelch was welcome to get on with it.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Where is Wharton?

"L ODER!"

Loder of the Sixth was loafing about the House, in a state of suppressed irritation and bad temper. Loder's eye was

getting better. But it was not yet an eye that Loder cared to take for walks abroad. He was thinking of the junior who had given him that eye, and who had somehow had the luck to escape being sacked for it, when Mr. Quelch came along.

"Loder, Wharton has not yet come in for his detention, and is more than a quarter of an hour late," said Mr. Quelch. "If you are not occupied at the present time"—Mr. Quelch was a considerate gentleman—"will you have the kindness to look for him?"

Loder's sound eye gleamed.

"Certainly, sir!"

"I think it probable that the boy has gone out with his friends, regardless of the order of detention," said Mr. Quelch. "I fear that he is capable of that, or of any other act of insubordination. I desire, however, to make sure that he is not within school bounds."

"I will look for him at once, sir."

"Thank you, Loder!"

Mr. Quelch rustled on to the Head's study. Loder of the Sixth was rather at a loose end, with nothing to do. Now he had found quite a congenial occupation. Tracking down the junior who had dodged detention, marching him in with a hand on his collar was quite a pleasant task for the bully of the Sixth. Quite cheerfully he proceeded to root over Greyfriars for Harry Wharton—naturally, never thinking of looking in the Form-room where the young rascal was due.

It would be quite agreeable to find Wharton and march him in—still more agreeable to be able to report that the junior had gone out of bounds in spite of detention. Up and down, and round about the school went Loder of the Sixth, in a really cheery mood.

Dr. Locke was enjoying a quiet hour with his old friend Sophocles when Mr. Quelch tapped at his study door and entered.

The Head greeted him with a pleasant smile.

He was prepared to share the delights of Sophocles with his friend and colleague. He was, in fact, perusing one of those obscure passages which good old Sophocles left in a dim and tangled state to puzzle later generations. He would have been glad to discuss that mysterious passage with Quelch. But as he observed the portentous frown on the face of the Remove master, he realised that Quelch had not dropped in for a chat, and he laid down his hefty volume, with a suppressed sigh.

"I am sorry to interrupt you, sir!" said Mr. Quelch. "But—the boy Wharton—"

"Wharton—again!" Dr. Locke frowned. "Surely, Mr. Quelch, that junior is not giving more trouble, after his very recent flogging?"

"I fear, sir, that it is his object and intention to give trouble. It is now twenty minutes since he was due for detention in the Form-room, and I have seen nothing of him."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

"I fear, sir, that he has had the audacity, the impudence, to leave the school with his friends. I have asked a prefect to ascertain whether he is still within bounds. I hardly think he will be found."

Dr. Locke pursed his lips.

"This is very serious, Mr. Quelch!" he said.

"I regard it as very serious indeed, sir!"

"The boy escaped with what was, in truth, a light punishment for a very serious offence. If he is adding further defiance of authority—"

"There is no doubt upon that point,

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As no sound of breathing came from the dim figure lying quiet and still in the bed, Nugent bent down to make a closer inspection. "Oh!" he muttered, as he realised that the bed contained a dummy, carefully arranged to deceive any eye that might have glanced into the dormitory.

sir! His detention was due at two-thirty. I have waited in the Form-room passage till two-forty-five."

"And he did not come?"

"I have not seen him."

"Schoolboys are forgetful, Mr. Quelch," said the Head mildly. "It is possible that the boy has forgotten—"

"I do not think so for one moment, sir! Wharton is far from being a forgetful boy."

"However, it is possible that there has been some more or less excusable delay, and that he will arrive late—"

"I do not expect it."

"I shall take an exceedingly serious view of the matter, Mr. Quelch, if it indeed proves that this is an act of defiance to authority," said Dr. Locke.

"Unwilling as I am to expel any Greyfriars boy, and especially the nephew of an old friend who is a governor of the school, the boy cannot remain here and carry on a system of mutiny and insubordination. If he will not render proper respect to authority, he must go."

"Quite, sir!"

Mr. Quelch's lips set hard. It was his opinion that the sooner the rebel of the Remove went, the better.

Dr. Locke rose from his chair.

"I trust, Mr. Quelch, that it is merely a case of carelessness, of forgetfulness," he said. "I hope that we shall find that the boy has come in for detention by this time. We may find him waiting for you at the door of the Form-room."

"I shall be surprised, sir, if we do!" said Mr. Quelch.

"We will, at all events, ascertain!" said Dr. Locke.

The two masters left the study and proceeded in a stately progress to the Form-rooms. Mr. Quelch's face was set bitterly. He had no doubt on the subject. But Dr. Locke's kind old face had not quite lost its customary benignant expression. He hoped, and he trusted, that the troublesome boy was not guilty

of a new act of mutinous defiance. While admitting that Mr. Quelch had every reason to be severe and suspicious, he had a faint feeling that perhaps Quelch was a little too severe, a little too suspicious. He had a kind and hopeful nature, and he hoped for the best.

But the Form-room passage was deserted when the two masters rustled into it. No junior was to be seen waiting at the door of the Remove-room.

Quelch's eyes glinted; but the Head sighed. Apparently, the severe and suspicious Form master was right; and the patient and tolerant headmaster was wrong.

"He is not here, sir," said Mr. Quelch coldly, "and it is now three o'clock."

"We will wait a few minutes," said the Head.

"I have no expectation whatever that the boy will come, sir!" said Mr. Quelch still more coldly.

The Head made no reply to that. He paced along the passage, and stopped at the Remove door. Mr. Quelch paced with him, and stopped with him.

Dr. Locke hoped to see a breathless junior arrive at a run, remembering his detention. Mr. Quelch had no such hope!

But two or three minutes later, there was a footstep; and both masters turned their eyes on a figure that rolled into the passage.

It was not Wharton, however.

It was the fat figure of Billy Bunter that came rolling up—the short-sighted Owl of the Remove not perceiving the two masters till he was almost upon them.

Then Bunter halted, with a startled squeak.

"Ooooh!"

He blinked at Dr. Locke and Mr. Quelch through his big spectacles in alarm and surprise. Bunter did not

like beaks at close quarters. He wondered, too, what on earth they were there for. He started to back away, when Dr. Locke raised his hand and signed to him to stop.

"Bunter!"

"Oh, yes, sir! It wasn't me!" gasped Bunter in alarm.

"What? What was not you, Bunter?" asked the Head in surprise.

"Oh! Anything, sir! I—I mean nothing! C-a-a-can I go now, sir? It—it's a half-holiday, sir—"

"I desire to ask you a question, Bunter," said the Head severely.

"Oh lor'! I—I don't know anything about it, sir!" groaned Bunter. "I mean, if it's about a pie!"

"A—a—a pie!" ejaculated the Head, scarcely believing his majestic ears.

"Yes, sir! I know nothing whatever about it, sir! I never even knew there was a pie missing from the pantry, sir. I haven't heard it mentioned."

"Bless my soul!"

"Mrs. Kebble always thinks it was me, sir! But it wasn't! I don't know my way to the pantry! How could I, when I've never been there? I—I think it was the cat, sir."

"The cat!" repeated the Head almost dazedly.

"Yes, sir—that cat of Mrs. Kebble's—it's always nosing about the House. It may have had the pie! Cats are—are fond of pies, I—I believe, sir."

"Be silent, Bunter, you foolish boy!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir! But I never had it, sir! I never touched that pie!" groaned Bunter. "You can ask Skinner, sir! He knows! I gave him some."

"Bless my soul! Bunter, I desired to ask you whether you have seen Wharton?"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. He realised that it was not the question of the pie. "Wharton, sir? Yes, sir! I mean no, sir! I—I hope you don't think I was

coming here to speak to a fellow under detention, sir! I—I wouldn't! I know it's against the rules."

"You come here to speak to Wharton, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir! I was only going to ask him if he had a bob he didn't want! I—I've been disappointed about a postal order," sir," groaned Bunter. "But—but I wasn't going to speak to Wharton. I—I was only just going to say—"

"Do you know where Wharton is, Bunter?"

"Eh?" Bunter's little round eyes opened wide behind his big round spectacles. Naturally, he knew where Wharton was, as he had seen him go to the Form-room at a quarter past two, and his detention was not up till half past five. "Yes, sir! In the Form-room."

"In the Form-room!" repeated the Head.

"Yes, sir."

"In the Form-room!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir—unless he's cut," said Bunter. "I'm sure he wouldn't cut, sir, as you've been so fearfully waxy with him lately—"

"What?"

"Waxy, sir! I—I mean, shirty!" stammered Bunter. "That is, stuffy! I—I mean—"

"Silence! Wharton is not here!" rapped Mr. Quelch. "How dare you say that he is here, Bunter?"

"Oh lor'! If he's cut, I didn't know, sir! I haven't seen him since he went into the Form-room an hour ago."

Mr. Quelch gazed at the fat Owl with a gaze like that of the fabled basilisk. Dr. Locke glanced at Mr. Quelch.

To neither of the two masters had it occurred to open the Form-room door and look in. It seemed unnecessary, as Wharton had not arrived! Now, however, the Head crossed over to the Form-room door, turned the handle, and threw it open.

He looked in. Mr. Quelch looked in, at his side. A junior who was seated at a desk rose respectfully to his feet at the sight of the masters and stood demurely at attention.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Quelch Takes the Knock!

"WHARTON!"

"Yes, sir!" said Harry Wharton respectfully, but with a dancing glimmer in his eyes. This little "rag" was working out on more extensive lines than he had anticipated.

"You—you are here!" said Dr. Locke, gazing at him.

Wharton looked surprised.

"I am under detention, sir!" he pointed out. "That is why I am here."

"Oh! Quite so! But—"

The Head broke off and looked at Mr. Quelch. The Remove master's face was a study. A full-rigged ship, with all sails set, caught in the eye of the wind, could not have been taken aback more thoroughly than Henry Samuel Quelch was at the sight of Harry Wharton in

the Remove Form-room. Quelch could not speak. He could only gaze.

Billy Bunter binked in inquisitively through his big spectacles. He could see that the two masters were astonished to see Wharton there. As Wharton was under detention, and had to be there, their astonishment astonished Bunter. The fat Owl did not know what was the matter; but he realised that something was "up," and he wanted to know all about it. He was all eyes and ears as he blinked in.

The Head broke a long and rather painful silence.

"It seems, Quelch, that the boy is here," he said at last.

"It—it seems so," articulated Mr. Quelch. "No doubt he—he—he came while I was gone to your study."

"No doubt. He was late—"

"Very late, sir."

"Excuse me, sir," said Harry Wharton politely but firmly, "I was not late. I was early."

"Take care what statement you make to Dr. Locke, Wharton," said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice. "I have already informed your headmaster that you did not come in for detention, and that you were not here at a quarter to three, until which time I waited for you."

"If you have told Dr. Locke so, sir, of course I must not contradict you," said Wharton respectfully.

"Do you venture to say, Wharton, that you came in for detention at the time you were ordered to do so?" Mr. Quelch's voice rumbled. "Dare you say you were here at half-past two?"

"Yes, sir."

"Dr. Locke! You hear this boy!" Mr. Quelch almost choked. "He ventures to cast doubt on my word—not for the first time. I have told you, sir, that I was here before half-past two, that I waited at the Form-room door, and that this boy did not come. Need I say more?"

"Wharton! If it is your intention to cast doubt on your Form master's word, I shall send you away from Greyfriars by the next train. Is such your intention?"

"Not at all, sir."

"Then what do you mean?"

"I thought I spoke plainly, sir. I was in this Form-room at half-past two—before half-past two. I can say no more than that."

"It is false!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Very well, sir," said Wharton, still carefully respectful. "If you do not believe me, I can say no more. I might mention that a Remove fellow saw me come in, if that is any use."

"Name the boy!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"Bunter, sir."

"Bunter!" said the Head. "Bunter is here, I think." He glanced round. Bunter was there—there was no doubt about that. Bunter was not losing a word of this. "Bunter! Did you see Wharton come to this Form-room?"

"Yes, sir."

"At what time?"

"About an hour ago, sir."

"That is not sufficiently precise, Bunter. Endeavour to recollect the exact time, pray."

Billy Bunter cudgelled his fat brain.

"Well, it was about an hour," he said. "It was soon after the brake went, and I spoke to Wharton as he was coming in, and the beast—I mean, the old chap walked away while I was talking

to him, and came into the Form-room, and I went to look for Mauly. I was a long time looking for Mauly, and couldn't find him—and when I asked Skinner if he'd seen him, he sent me looking into the Cloisters, and Mauly wasn't there—"

"That will do, Bunter. Mr. Quelch, I think there is some misapprehension in this matter," said the Head, "and I think I see where it is. It seems that you came here a few minutes before half-past two, and expected to see Wharton arrive—"

"I did, sir."

"Did you enter the Form-room?"

"Enter the Form-room. Naturally, I did not."

"The door was shut, I presume?"

"The door is always shut."

"Quite so. Then if Wharton was already here, you would not have seen him?"

"If he was already here," repeated Mr. Quelch. "No doubt; but he was not already here. Why should he have been already here? It is not uncommon for boys to be late for detention; but I have never yet heard of a boy being early for detention."

"Quite so, quite; but it can scarcely be imputed to a boy as a fault, if he should be, for once, early for detention," said the Head. "Wharton, at what precise time did you enter this Form-room?"

"I could not say to a minute, sir," said Wharton calmly. "But I am certain that it was well before half-past two. I had been here at least ten minutes when I heard the half-hour chime."

"You have not left the Form-room?"

"No, sir; I am under detention," said Wharton. "Fellows under detention in the Form-room are not allowed to leave it, sir."

"Then you have been here an hour?"

Wharton looked at the Form-room clock before answering. Evidently, he was going to be very careful in his statements—as he had been warned to be.

"Yes, sir. Just over an hour, I think."

"What have you been doing?"

"Waiting for Mr. Quelch, sir," answered Wharton demurely.

"You have been waiting for Mr. Quelch?" repeated the Head.

"Yes, sir. My Form master was to give me a detention task, and I could not begin till he handed it to me, of course."

Mr. Quelch stood silent. The paper was still in his hand; the task for which Wharton had been waiting—in the Form-room, while Quelch was waiting outside. Mr. Quelch's face grew redder and redder as he realised how matters stood. His complexion was growing like unto that of a freshly boiled beet-root.

Dr. Locke turned to him. He had some compassion for the confusion of this hapless member of his staff; but he was annoyed. His time had been wasted. His pleasant hour with Sophocles had been interrupted. Fault had been found with a junior who, obviously, had only erred on the side of a very, very careful obedience to instructions. The whole affair was ridiculous and annoying—and the whole blame was on Mr. Quelch.

"As I said, there was a misapprehension in this matter, Mr. Quelch," said Dr. Locke, with perceptible coldness. "So far from being late for detention, Wharton was early! Instead of being, as you supposed, recklessly defiant of authority, it appears that his recent

(Continued at foot of next page.)

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while I was talking

ANOTHER INTERESTING SOCCER CHAT WITH OUR EXPERT.

"LINESMAN CALLING!"

What our special sporting contributor doesn't know about the great winter game isn't worth knowing. If you've an intricate problem that wants solving write to him at the Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and then watch for the reply in the MAGNET.

THERE is a query this week which will probably interest a lot of boys. "I am very keen on football," writes this reader, "and I have a hope of making good. At the moment, however, it does not look as though I am likely to grow up very big. Do you think it is any use dreaming dreams of football success if I remain a little fellow?"

Of course it is. Don't give up dreams of developing as a footballer because you do not seem likely to develop into a giant in the stature line.

Some of the finest footballers of the past have been little fellows. There was the case of "Fanny" Walden, the outside-right of Tottenham, who played for England in his day. He never measured more than five feet two and a half inches.

He was so small, and had such a boyish appearance generally, that on one occasion, just for a lark, when the Tottenham team were travelling, ten ordinary tickets were bought and one half-price one for the "boy." Walden had the last laugh, however, for he actually got past the man at the railway station barrier with the boy's ticket. And on the football field he got past many a giant in defence who never saw the way he was going!

DOES SIZE COUNT?

OF course, there are managers of big football clubs who won't look twice at a little fellow, and they have lived to regret it. Hughie Gallacher was turned down by Bury, as a young player, because he was too little to be a good centre-forward.

The officials of Torquay United are evidently of the opinion that the giants are wanted in the game to-day. Anyway, the average height of the players on the staff is only half an inch short of six feet. You can watch out for yourselves whether this Torquay idea of banking on size proves successful.

It is said that there is nothing new. Yet the other day I saw something which was new to me—a football without lace or without stitches. This ball is "blown up" through a very small valve, which is afterwards pushed under the outer cover.

This new ball is not yet in general use, but has been adopted by some of the clubs on the Continent. There is a certain advantage in such a ball, as the lace of the ordinary football has often proved dangerous.

I remember, for instance, that "Dixie" Dean, the centre-forward of Everton, had a lot of trouble with an eye not long ago. Indeed, for a few days it was feared that he might lose the sight of that eye. Dean had headed a ball in such a way that the lace struck the eyeball.

THE "W" FORMATION.

MENTION of this Everton player reminds me of another question, as it touches upon tactics. "I hear a lot about the 'W' formation of the attack used by football teams," writes "Tactics," "and I am wondering if you would recommend the club of which I happen to be captain to go in for this style of attack in junior games."

This is a difficult question, because, if we look round the leading football teams, we find conflict of evidence. Everton won the championship last season—scoring more goals than any other club in their section—without resorting to the "W" formation of the attack. When they went out on the business of getting goals all their forwards advanced to within shooting range. Between them the outside wing men scored nineteen goals; the inside wing men scored forty-five goals, and the centre-forward, forty-four.

Arsenal, however, have also been a successful side in recent times, and they have definitely worked on the principle

of having one forward, at least, well back all the time. Right through last season, Alex James, the inside-left of Arsenal, only scored two goals. His job was mainly that of giving the ball to the other fellows to score.

As a matter of fact, the tactics to be adopted by forwards must not be considered in that light only. The tactics of the whole team must be borne in mind.

If the centre-half of a side plays well back—as a third defender—then somebody must do the "donkey work" in the middle of the field; and Alex James does that work for Arsenal.

SHARP-SHOOTERS.

WHAT is the record number of goals scored by one player in a first-class match? is the question which comes from another reader. I am not sure how this reader would define a first-class match. If he would include a Scottish Cup-tie, then there is no doubt who holds the record.

An Arbroath player named John Petrie, scored thirteen goals himself in a Scottish Cup-tie against Bon Accord. Arbroath won the match by 38 goals—the biggest total score record in a big match, and the strange part about Petrie's feat was that he was playing at outside-right.

The individual score in a big League game in England is seven.

AN OLD SPANISH CUSTOM.

THERE is often a lot of argument, and more frequently than not difference of opinion, after a game as to which player gave the best show. They have a novel way of deciding this question in Spain, where football is making good progress.

As the people pay their money at the turnstiles to watch certain of the games in Spain they are each handed a "voting" slip, with the request that they shall write on it the name of the player they think is the most successful during the match, and leave the slips as they go out.

The player who gets most votes in that particular game is rewarded with a little gold medal shaped like a football. I don't like the idea, however. Football is a team game and a special reward for any individual player is apt to lead to selfish football. There is no room in football for the selfish player.

punishment has made him particularly careful not to give offence. If you had looked into the Form-room—"

Mr. Quelch gasped.

"Wharton had no right to enter the Form-room. Boys under detention wait outside the Form-room door, until admitted by their Form master. That is the invariable rule, which Wharton has broken."

His eyes gleamed at Wharton.

"You were aware of that, Wharton. You deliberately entered the Form-room and shut the door, before you were due here, knowing—knowing perfectly well that I should not guess that you were here. You have broken an invariable rule—"

"You told me to do so, sir," said Harry calmly.

"What?" Mr. Quelch's voice rose to almost a roar. "You dare to say—"

"Let the boy speak, sir," said Dr. Locke, quite sharply. "Wharton, be careful what you say. What were your Form master's precise instructions?"

"Mr. Quelch told me to be in the Form-room at half-past two, sir."

"Is that correct, Mr. Quelch?"

"Certainly it is correct. Boys under detention are always told to be in the Form-room at a certain hour. It is the way such instructions are always given. It does not abrogate the invariable rule that they shall be admitted to the Form-room by their Form master, as

Wharton was perfectly well aware."

"Wharton appears to have taken your words in a literal sense," said Dr. Locke. "At all events, it is clear that he was here, not only punctually, but actually early."

"He, he, he!"

That sudden exclamation came from Billy Bunter. At long last, Bunter's fat brain had assimilated the fact that the unfortunate Quelch's leg had been pulled to a remarkable and uncommon extent. It struck Bunter as funny, and he signified the same in the usual way.

Mr. Quelch spun round at him. If
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(Continued from page 15.)

Bunter thought it was a time for cachinnation, Henry Samuel Quelch did not. "Bunter! How dare you! Take a hundred lines! Go!"

"Oh lor'!"

Bunter vanished.

Dr. Locke coughed. Mr. Quelch stood crimson and almost trembling with anger and mortification, Wharton broke the painful silence.

"May I have my task, sir? I am sorry that so much time has been wasted—but I am sure, sir, that you will allow that it was not my fault; and perhaps you will make allowance if my exercise is not finished by half-past five."

In tense silence Mr. Quelch handed Wharton the Latin paper.

"Mr. Quelch will certainly make every allowance for the time unavoidably wasted, Wharton!" said the Head, very distinctly.

"Ah! Yes! Undoubtedly!" articulated Mr. Quelch.

A Sixth Form prefect with a darkened eye appeared in the doorway.

"I have looked for Wharton everywhere, sir," said Loder of the Sixth. "I am certain that he has gone out of bounds— Oh!" He broke off at the sight of Harry Wharton, and stared at him dumbfounded.

Dr. Locke coughed again. He was beginning to feel ridiculous; which did not make him feel pleased with Quelch.

"It appears that there has been a mistake, Loder," he said. "Wharton was in the Form-room all the time, unknown to Mr. Quelch."

"Oh!" gasped Loder.

"The junior has been guilty of no fault whatever; the whole thing was a misapprehension," added the Head, with emphasis, and Loder retired from the scene, to digest that the best he could.

The two masters left the Form-room. The door closed on Harry Wharton. He stood respectfully at attention till they were gone. Then he winked at the closing door.

At the end of the passage, the Head paused. The expression on his face was very grave. Mr. Quelch waited, knowing what was coming. It came!

"Mr. Quelch. That this boy Wharton has given you very great provocation, I am only too well aware. But let me beg of you not to allow that to cause any undue prejudice in your mind. Even a thoughtless, reckless, and disobedient boy is entitled to justice! I cannot say that Wharton has had justice in this instance! He has been suspected, indeed accused, of reckless, flagrant defiance of authority—and it transpires that he was only taking unusual and excessive care not to commit a fault. Pray let me beg of you, my dear Quelch, not to allow any prejudice, howsoever natural and justified, to mislead you in dealing with this rather troublesome boy."

With that, the Head rustled away.

He left Mr. Quelch standing very still. Quelch had been called over the coals! Gently, tactfully, kindly, mildly, as the Head had put it, it amounted to that.

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He had, in effect, been called to order! And he knew, in his bones, that the rebel of the Remove had deliberately pulled his leg—though he could not, of course, have foreseen that a Sixth Form prefect and the headmaster would be drawn into the affair.

Mr. Quelch went to his study at last. His feelings were too deep for words! He had allowed his dislike and suspicion of that junior to mislead him—to make a fool of him—to deliver him, so to speak, bound hand and foot into the hands of the rebel Remove! He knew that, in those very moments, the young rascal was grinning over it in the Form-room—he knew that, later in the day, it would be told in the Rag, and that all the Remove would roar over it.

The bitterness that rose in Mr. Quelch's heart surprised himself! Let the mocking young rascal beware! Let him take a single step over the line of safety, and there should be no mercy for him.

In the Form-room, Harry Wharton bent over his detention task with a smiling face, as if he found something rather amusing in Latin irregular verbs.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Whose Fault?

"HOW did it go?"

Harry Wharton was out of detention when the Remove footballers came back from Highcliffe. He met them as they came in. He had had his own little entertainment that afternoon, but his thoughts had wandered frequently to the footballers at Highcliffe.

"Licked—two-one!" said Bob Cherry, with a grunt.

"Rotten luck!"

"The luckfulness was terrifically rotten," remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "The missfulness of the esteemed Wharton was preposterous."

"Can't win every game!" said Herbert Vernon-Smith. The Bounder was not quite disposed to admit that the absence of the captain of the Remove had spelled defeat for the team. Smithy fancied that he could captain a team as well as any man in the Lower School.

"We ought to have won this game!" said Johnny Bull. "We should have won, with Wharton in the front line. Redwing's a good man, but he's nowhere near the form of Courtenay's lot. One dud makes a lot of difference, when it's touch and go!"

"Redwing's no dud!" said Harry.

"Well, I don't mean that—but I suppose Redwing won't say that he plays a game of Soccer like your game!"

"Certainly not!" said Tom. "I could only do my best. I did that."

"And a jolly good best," said Smithy, quick in defence of his chum. "We wanted a stiffer defence at back. That Highcliffe man, the Caterpillar, got through the backs like a knife through cheese."

Johnny Bull, who had played back, grunted expressively.

"You think so, do you?" he asked.

"No—I know so!"

"Then you've got a lot to learn about playing back. As much as Redwing has to learn about playing forward."

"Well, if you make Highcliffe a present of a run through—" said the Bounder.

"Who did?" roared Johnny Bull.

"Oh, chuck it, you men!" said Bob Cherry. "What's the good of ragging? We've been whopped, and there's an end!"

The footballers had not returned in their usual good-humour. They were good sportmen, and could take a beating. But, feeling that the beating was due to the absence of one man, who ought to have been playing, made them rather sore. It was like the Bounder, once in command, to shove his pal into the team because he wanted him to play. Redwing was a good and steady footballer, but there were better men at Soccer in the Remove, and most of the team could have told Smithy so, in fact, some had told him so.

There was a general feeling of irritation. Wharton was under detention—but he ought not to have been under detention; a football captain ought to have been more careful. So most of the fellows thought. In his absence, the best man available should have been picked out to play—and Redwing was not the best man available. Gathering up unnecessary lickings was not really the object of the Remove footballers.

"I say, you fellows! Licked?" asked Billy Bunter cheerfully. "Well, what the thump did you expect, when you left out the best footballer in the Form? Asking for it, I call it!"

"You blithering owl!" said Squiff. "How could we play Wharton when he was detained?"

"Eh? Who's talking about Wharton?" asked Bunter, blinking at him. "I don't call Wharton the best footballer in the Form! Rather so-so, if you ask me."

"Thanks!" said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"Well, I fancy I know something about Soccer," said Bunter. "I offered to play—you can't deny that, Smithy!"

"You burbling idiot!"

"You can call a fellow names!" said Bunter, with dignity. "You left me out! Well, what's the result? A licking! Facts speak for themselves."

"Kick him, somebody!"

"You preferred to play a dud like Redwing!" said Bunter, with a fat sneer. "You've got licked! If I'd been in his place, I fancy we should have pulled it off. Or you could have left out Cherry—he's rather a dud! Or Bull—what's the good of Bull barging about like a mad elephant?"

Johnny Bull made a movement with his foot, and Bunter retired hastily out of reach.

"Well, we've bagged a whopping," said Squiff. "Can't be helped—but it's a rather rotten look-out for Rookwood on Wednesday. Rookwood are better men than Highcliffe."

"I say, you fellows. I'm willing to play on Wednesday—"

"Shut up, you burbling jabberwock!"

"Wharton ought to be playing," said Johnny Bull. "I call it rotten to let the Form down like this."

Wharton coloured.

"A man under detention can't play," he said.

"You've no right to be under detention!"

"That's Quelch's fault, I suppose."

"You can suppose what you like, but everybody else at Greyfriars knows that you asked for it." Johnny Bull was evidently very much ruffled.

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Frank Nugent. "For goodness' sake let's have no ragging. I shouldn't wonder if Quelch wouldn't let Wharton off next Wednesday for the Rookwood match; his bark is always worse than his bite."

"Not likely!" said Harry. He bit his lip. After the happenings of that afternoon, it was far from likely.

"Well, he might," said Johnny Bull, mollified a little. "We want Wharton

in the game, if we're to have a dog's chance at Rookwood. If Wharton doesn't play the goat again between now and Wednesday, Quelch may stretch a point."

"He, he, he!" came from Billy Bunter. "I say, you fellows, we've had no end of a lark with Quelch while you were getting licked at Soccer. You should have seen Quelch after the Head had jawed him! I was just round the corner—they didn't see me—I heard every word! He jawed Quelch right and left! Called him awful names!"

"Fathead!"

"Well, perhaps you know more about it than I do!" sneered Bunter. "I can tell you Quelch was boiling! Boiling over! Wharton pulled his leg, and got him into a row with the beak. He, he, he!"

"What on earth's happened?" asked Frank Nugent anxiously.

"Nothing," answered Wharton indifferently. "Quelch made a fool of himself, but that's nothing new."

"He, he, he!"

Snort from Johnny Bull.

"So that's how you've been amusing yourself, Wharton, while we've been getting licked because you let us down! You had to get Quelch's rag out again! More important than winning football matches, what?"

Harry Wharton walked away without replying. After which Billy Bunter gave a full and rather exaggerated account of the afternoon's happenings. Some of the fellows laughed; the Bounder especially was extremely entertained. Wharton's proceedings that afternoon were after Smithy's own heart. But the Co., at all events, were not amused. It was clear that their wayward chum was carrying on his feud with Quelch, and equally clear that there was not the remotest chance of Quelch forgetting or forgiving it. Neither did it appear that Wharton desired him to forget or forgive. As for any chance that the captain of the Remove would be allowed to play football the next half-holiday, that was washed out.

At prep that evening, in Study No. 1, Nugent was silent and thoughtful; Wharton calm and self-contained as usual. It was "Sunday prep," and Wharton was very careful over the works of John Milton. Nugent was glad to see that he was working sedulously, though he could not help thinking that it only meant that the rebel of the Remove was on his guard; that he was taking care not to give Quelch an opening. Behind a cover of careful conduct he was at heart implacable.

After prep Wharton rose and yawned slightly.

"The men seem to think it's my fault that I'm out of the footer next Wednesday, Frank," he remarked.

"Not much good arguing about that," said Nugent.

"I'm not arguing, old chap! I've been thinking that I may be able to play, after all; and, of course, I'm keen on it."

"Quelch won't let you off."

"He might if a word was put in for me by some Sixth Form prefect whom he trusts; say, a thoroughly trustworthy man like Loder."

Nugent stared.

"You've got the backs up of all the prefects in the school, Harry. And Loder's the least likely of the lot to speak a word for you."

"He might," said Harry. "He's on Quelch's right side this term. They're both down on me like a ton of bricks, and a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous

kind, you know, as the jolly old poet says. He's greased up to Quelch, and got away with it. I'm sure Quelch would listen to him if he urged him really earnestly to let me off for the game."

"But he won't!" said Frank blankly. "Why should he, when he loathes you like poison?"

"Well, he might!" said Wharton.

And he strolled out of the study, whistling, leaving his chum the most perplexed fellow in Greyfriars.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Mysterious!

FRANK NUGENT lifted his head from the pillow and looked round him in the dark dormitory.

It was Monday night, and eleven had chimed. It was not the chime that had aroused Nugent. There had been

A SHEFFIELD STEEL PEN-KNIFE goes to S. Ferguson, of 35, Hillside Road, Stamford Hill, N.15, for sending in this joke:



Employer (interviewing prospective office-boy): "Is there anything you can do, my boy, that no one else can do?"
Office-Boy: "Yes, sir."
Employer: "What's that?"
Office-Boy: "Read my own writing!"

NOW YOU RAISE A LAUGH, CHUM!

some nearer sound; some stirring in the room. He hardly knew why he felt uneasy, but he sat up and peered towards Wharton's bed, which was next to his.

It was too dark in the Remove dormitory for him to make out whether there was a sleeper in the bed. But he had a feeling that Wharton was not there.

Ever since the day of the flogging Nugent had been anxious and troubled for his chum. The very calmness and quiet of Wharton's outward demeanour made him more uneasy. He knew that Wharton was feeling bitter resentment under a sense of injustice and wrong. That cool calmness in a fellow of hasty temper and passionate nature was a bad sign.

But surely—surely Wharton, in his resentment and bitterness, was not the fellow to fall into rotten ways. Surely not. Frank could not believe so, and yet he felt, he knew, that Wharton had left his bed in the Remove dormitory after lights out. If it was not to break bounds at night, what was it for?

He slipped from his bed and stepped

quietly to Wharton's. He gave a gasp of relief at the sight of the outlines of a sleeper's figure there.

Wharton was not gone; he was asleep in bed. In deep relief Nugent looked at the dim figure lying quiet and still. Then it came into his mind that there was no sound of breathing from that figure.

He started.

"Oh!" he muttered, as he bent over the bed.

Closer inspection revealed the fact that no sleeper was there. The bed contained a dummy, carefully arranged to deceive any eye that might have glanced into the dormitory.

Nugent returned to his own bed and sat down on the edge of it. His friends were asleep—all the Remove slept soundly—and from Billy Bunter's bed came a deep snore. Nugent was careful to make no sound to awaken any other fellow.

He knew that Wharton was gone, but he was intensely anxious that no one else should know. His heart was heavy as he sat waiting for his chum to return. Where was Wharton gone?

The half-hour chimed.

It was half-past eleven. Only half an hour to midnight, and the captain of the Remove absent.

There was a faint sound at the door. Nugent could not see it in the gloom, but he knew that the door had opened and that someone had stepped in.

A dim figure loomed up, coming towards Wharton's bed. The truant had returned.

"Harry!" whispered Nugent.

Wharton gave a violent start and turned quickly towards him. He peered at Nugent in the shadows.

"You awake!" he muttered.

"I've been awake half an hour."

"Why?"

"I found you were gone."

"Well?"

"Where have you been, old chap?"

Wharton laughed softly.

"Don't be an ass, Frank! Do you think I'm taking up Smithy's stunts, and Skinner's, and going out on the razzle? Do you think I should be fat-head enough to give Quelch a chance at me?"

"Then it isn't that!" Frank drew a deep breath of relief. "But, haven't you been out of the House?"

"No fear!"

"For goodness' sake, Harry, you haven't been playing any mad trick on Quelch at this hour of the night!"

"Guess again!"

Frank could not guess. He peered at his chum and discerned the mocking smile on his face, the glimmer in his eyes. He saw, too, that Wharton was only partly dressed; he could not have been out of the House, on some hare-brained expedition, in slippers and with his pyjamas tucked into his trousers.

"Dear me!" Wharton chuckled quietly. "Quelch is watching for a chance at me, like a cat after a rat. I believe he would give a year's salary for something to report to the Head to get me sacked on. Do you think I'm ass enough to give him a chance?"

"You've been up to something, Harry."

"Naturally."

"You can tell me, I suppose."

"Better not, old man! It's not a matter you'd want a hand in. Go to sleep and forget all about it."

Wharton turned in quietly. Nugent went back to bed deeply troubled. In a few minutes Harry Wharton was fast.

asleep. But it was much longer before Frank slept. He lay and wondered for a long time, uneasy and alarmed, before slumber sealed his eyes at last.

When the rising bell clanged out in the morning Harry Wharton turned out of bed cheerfully. He was, as usual, one of the first down from the dormitory. If he had anything on his mind, there was no sign of it in his face.

Nugent wondered uneasily whether he was going to hear of some happening in the night: some reckless jape that had been played on Mr. Quelch, or perhaps on Loder of the Sixth. But nothing transpired. Nothing, it appeared, had happened.

He was relieved, but utterly puzzled. During the day Wharton spoke no word on the subject; he appeared to have forgotten the incident. In the Form-room that day he was, as usual, a careful and attentive pupil, though without receiving a single kind glance or word of commendation from his Form master. Mr. Quelch was no fool, and he was quite well aware that Wharton's exemplary behaviour since the flogging was merely camouflage; merely that and nothing more. Behind it the gimlet eye could discern the unbending spirit that mocked at authority.

But Mr. Quelch, at least, had no fault to find with Wharton in class. If he was, as the junior believed, looking for a chance at him, he found none.

That evening Herbert Vernon-Smith dropped into Study No. 1 after prep. The following day was the Rookwood date, and the Bounder wanted to know.

"It's settled, of course, that you won't be coming over to Rookwood, Wharton," he said abruptly.

"I'm not sure of that!" answered Harry.

"You don't think Quelch will let you off?"

"I think he may."

"That's rot, and you know it!" said Smitty.

"It may be rot, but I don't know it," answered Wharton.

"We want to know where we stand!" grunted the Bounder.

"Oh, quite! Sorry I can't be more definite at the moment," said the captain of the Remove. "You see, it doesn't wholly depend on me. We are no: quite our own masters here, are we?"

"You're up to somethin'," said the Bounder, giving him a keen look.

"Guessed it in one!" assented Wharton.

"Well, what is it?"

"Something I'd rather not jaw about."

"Oh, rats!"

The Bounder left the study frowning.

After lights-out that night Frank Nugent did not sleep. He was uneasy and wondering whether there was to be another mysterious expedition that night. He was not surprised, therefore, when, at half-past ten, he heard a creak from the next bed. He knew that Wharton was getting up.

"Harry! You're going?"

"You awake? Yes, I'm going."

"Like me to come?"

"Better not!"

Harry Wharton left the dormitory silently. While the rest of the Remove slumbered Frank Nugent lay awake and troubled, wondering what the strange proceedings of his wayward chum might mean.

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THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Out of Bounds!

GERALD LODER of the Sixth Form gave an impatient grunt. "Hang it!" he snapped.

It was nearly midnight. Greyfriars School was buried in darkness and slumber. The last light had long been extinguished; the last door had closed.

The Head of Greyfriars would have been very much surprised to learn that any member of the Greyfriars community was out of the House at that hour. The Head's knowledge on many subjects was profound; but the Head did not know all that went on under the ancient roofs of Greyfriars.

At a quarter to twelve Loder of the Sixth had let himself in at the side gate to which all the prefects had keys, and crossed quietly to the House, arriving at the door of the Sixth Form lobby.

Loder was not in a good temper.

His darkened eye had kept him, practically, a prisoner within the school walls for days and days. It was much better now, though a deep shade still remained round that eye. But the blackguard of the Sixth was utterly fed-up with a righteous and sober life! That night he had gone out of bounds, and enjoyed a couple of hours in his own dingy way with shady associates at the Cross Keys.

He had been glad, very glad, to see his sporting friends again, to handle dingy cards in an atmosphere of tobacco smoke; not so glad, however, to be relieved of most of his spare cash by Mr. Banks and his pals at the entertaining game of poker.

Feeling tired and rather dismal, and in an exceedingly bad temper, Loder arrived at the door of the Sixth Form lobby, unlocked it from the outside, and pushed—without moving the door. Apparently it had jammed.

In his present frame of mind the slightest untoward incident was enough to irritate Loder to savage anger. He shoved violently at the door; he would have kicked it, had he dared. But he was only too well aware of the necessity for silence.

Savage shoving did not stir the door. It remained fast.

Loder breathed hard.

It was not jammed! It was fastened! He had locked it outside and taken away the key when he went out; now he had unlocked it; it was not the lock that fastened it. Obviously it was bolted.

The colour wavered in his face. "What fool—what officious idiot—had come along to the lobby and bolted that door? What exasperating ass had taken the trouble to bolt a door that was already locked?"

Loder stared at the shut door with feelings that could hardly have been expressed in words—had he dared to utter any.

He turned from it at last.

He was shut out! It did not mean that a master had discovered his absence: in that case a master would have been sitting up for him to come in, and there would have been a light in a window. There was not a single light in all the many-windowed House.

Some fool had bolted the door, knowing nothing about Loder and his excursion out of bounds. So he concluded. Fortunately there was another way in. The mere thought of being shut out for the night, of being found in the morning outside the House after a night out, sent a cold shiver down Loder's back.

He was a trusted prefect, and had his headmaster discovered that his trust was betrayed, it would have meant short shrift for Gerald Loder.

But a Greyfriars man who played such a game as Loder had to be wary; and Loder was very wary. The Sixth Form studies were on the ground floor, and it was possible to climb in from the quad. And on all occasions when he was out at forbidden hours, Loder left his study window unfastened—a second string to his bow, as it were, in case of accidents.

After glaring savagely at the door that would not open, Loder went quietly along under the Sixth Form windows, and stopped under his own.

It was shut: but it was easy enough to force up the sash from outside if the window was not fastened.

He clambered on the broad stone sill, and, kneeling there, endeavoured to force up the sash.

It did not stir.

For several long minutes the black sheep of Greyfriars continued his efforts, the perspiration breaking out on his brow, though it was a cold October night.

He desisted at last; with a sinking of the heart and a feeling of terror creeping over him.

He knew that the window would have opened had it been unfastened as he had left it. It had been fastened within since he left.

What did it mean?

What could it mean?

He had locked his study door before leaving, to guard against the remote—the very remote—chance of anyone entering his study during his absence.

Yet someone must have entered his study; obviously. How—and why? Only a master could have done so—only the Head, in fact! No one else had possession of keys to study doors.

Loder's heart was like ice.

The Head knew!

That was his terrifying thought!

Standing under his window, leaning weakly on the sill, Gerald Loder felt his knees quake under him.

It meant the sack! He was found out, and he was going to be sacked. Nothing could save him. The Head had allowed himself to be induced to give a junior another chance who had been guilty of mutinous insubordination. But there would be no other chance for a Sixth Form prefect who betrayed his trust—a man who, entrusted with authority over others, disgraced the school by his own conduct. He was lost!

Long minutes Loder stood leaning on the window, in a state of terror that was almost pitiable. He had chanced it often and often, relying on his own wary cunning to see him through. Now he had chanced it once too often, and the chopper was coming down.

But he pulled himself together at last! Could it, after all, be the Head? It seemed impossible for anyone else to have entered a locked Sixth Form study. But surely the Head would not fasten a fellow out, and then go back to bed! It was impossible! The Head would be up—a light would be burning.

Hope flickered again in Loder's breast. It was not—it couldn't be—the Head who had done this! Not a master at all! He was not found out yet. If he could contrive somehow to get back into the House he would not be found out.

Who had played this trick on him was a mystery—but there was a chance yet. Could it be one of his friends, Walker or Carne, playing a horrible practical joke to scare him? He had had a row with Walker lately—perhaps that was it! He stared up at the study window and became aware that a face was pressed to the glass within, watching him as he stood there in the gloom.



Loder tapped at the study window. "Who's in there?" he inquired venomously. "Open the window at once!" "Any hurry?" drawled a cool voice from within. The Sixth-Former shuddered as he looked up and saw that it was Harry Wharton, who held him at his mercy—the junior whom he had persecuted.

He started.

Someone was in the study! Not a master—that was impossible! It must be Walker—scaring him! Loder gritted his teeth and tapped on the glass.

To his intense relief he heard a faint sound of the catch pushed back within. The lower sash rose a few inches.

"You fool!" breathed Loder venomously. "You rotter! Let me in at once!"

He heard a low laugh.

He started again.

It was not Walker! He fancied that it was a junior. How could it be a junior, when all the Lower School had long been in bed in their dormitories? But it was a junior.

"Who's there?" Loder's voice sounded cracked. "Open the window! Open the window at once!"

"Any hurry?" drawled a cool voice.

And Gerald Loder with a shock, recognised the voice of Harry Wharton.

an ace of the "sack"—who held him at his mercy! Wharton, who ought to have been asleep in the Remove dormitory more than two hours ago, was in his study, holding the window. If the junior whom he had wronged wanted vengeance, he had it now. He had only to fasten the window again, and leave the blackguard of Greyfriars out for the night. Loder would not escape what Wharton had so narrowly escaped.

"Let me in! Let me in!" breathed Loder.

The sash rose a few more inches. Loder hoped again, but it stopped when it was seven or eight inches open.

Wharton looked out at him through the aperture. Loder could see him now, and see the cool, mocking smile on his face.

He clenched his hands convulsively.

"You young villain! You've played this trick on me! You bolted the door of the lobby!" Loder choked.

"Exactly!"

"Let me in!"

"You're all right where you are, old bean!" Wharton laughed softly. "Stay there and think of the morning. You won't get off with a flogging, Loder! They don't flog the Sixth. You came jolly near getting me bunked. How near to it do you think you are yourself?"

Loder, gritting his teeth, scrambled on the sill again. He grasped the sash with both hands, and strove to force it up.

Wharton hung his weight on it within.

Instead of rising, the sash shot down, and Loder jerked away his fingers just in time.

He panted and dropped back from the sill. The window was closed once more, and he dreaded to hear the sound of the catch fastening.

But Wharton did not close the catch. He stood looking at the terrified prefect through the glass.

Loder tapped on the window. He had to make terms with this young villain somehow.

The sash rose a few inches again. Once more Wharton's mocking face looked out at him.

"Trying again?" asked the junior cheerfully.

"Let me in, there's a good kid! I—I'm sorry—I—I'm sorry we've had trouble," said Loder thickly. "Don't be a rotter! Let me in! You know what it means to me if I don't get in."

"Quite! That's why I'm here."

"Oh, you young rotter!" groaned Loder.

"If the Head could see us now, I don't think he would consider me the rotter of us two. Like me to call him?"

"Quiet!" hissed Loder.

"Why?" Wharton spoke coolly, without lowering his voice. "I've nothing to be quiet for. I've broken dormitory bounds; but that's not an awfully serious matter. Besides, I've got the excuse that I knew that a window was unfastened, and came down to fasten it. Burglars might have got in, you know. I think even Quelch would excuse me, in the circumstances. What do you think, Loder?"

"Will you be quiet?" groaned Loder.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Let me in!"

"I haven't taken all this trouble for nothing, old bean. I've had quite a lot of trouble—watching every night to catch you on the hop. I knew I should catch you out, sooner or later, old bean, knowing your manners and customs." Wharton laughed again. "To-night I struck lucky. I've lost a lot of sleep on your account, Loder."

"You—you—" breathed Loder. "How did you get into my study, you young hound?"

"Not by the door—I found it locked. I got in by the window—as you'd like to do old thing, if you could!"

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THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Pinned Down!

HARRY WHARTON looked through the glass at the staring prefect standing outside, with a cool smile on his face. His hands were on the sash. He was prepared for a desperate attempt on Loder's part to force it up. But that was impossible so long as the junior held it within.

Loder stared at him blankly.

"Wharton!" he breathed.

"Little me!" assented Wharton.

"You young scoundrel!"

"Go it!"

"Open the window at once!"

"Any hurry?"

Loder trembled with rage and terror. It was the junior whom he had persecuted—the junior who had come within

Loder's eyes gleamed.
"You got out of the House, then, after bolting the lobby door inside. How did you get out?"

"You'd like me to tell you? Guess!" Loder choked with rage. The junior must have left a door or window unfastened when he got out of the House to climb in at the Sixth Form study window.

But which—of the innumerable doors and windows in the great building? Wharton was not likely to tell him.

"Go round the House and search!" grinned Wharton. "You've got plenty to choose from. It will keep you busy till morning—keep you from thinking of what's going to happen to you when you're caught out of the House."

"Will you let me in?"
"Why should I?"
"I—I'll overlook this. I—I'll let you off—I'll do anything you like!" muttered Loder desperately. "What do you want, hang you?"

He realised by this time that Wharton had some object in view. The junior was not merely playing with him like a cat with a mouse.

"Now you're talking!" assented Wharton cheerfully. "I dare say you know I'm detained for all half-holidays this term, Loder—through you."

"What about it?"
"I want to get off to-morrow to go over to Rookwood for the match there."

"Oh!" ejaculated Loder. "Look here, I'll speak to your Form master. I'll put it to him. I'm in his good books. I can get you off!"

Loder would have promised that, or anything else, to get on the safe side of the window. Keeping the promise would have been another matter. Loder's promises were rather in the nature of pie-crusts—made and broken.

"Yes, I know you're in Quelch's good

books, and I fancy you could get me off if you tried hard!" agreed Wharton. "In fact, I'm banking on it."

"I'll try my hardest! Now let me in!"

"You give me your word?"

"Yes, yes."

"And you think I'm fool enough to take it?"

"You—you— Look here—"

"Oh, can it?" said Wharton contemptuously. "Do you think I don't know that if I let you in you'd forget your promise on the spot, and lay into me with a cane? I wasn't born yesterday, Loder!"

"My word of honour!" breathed Loder.

"But you haven't any honour, old bean! You're a liar and a rascal!"

Loder choked.

"I've got you fixed, and I'm going to tie you down!" said Harry Wharton coolly. "You've got me detention for the term, with your rotten trickery. You're getting me off to-morrow for the Rookwood match. I'm going to see that you do it, or take your gruel, you our. Here's your fountain-pen. I found it on your desk. Here's your Greek lexicon. You'll write on the fly-leaf as I dictate."

Wharton pushed out the fountain-pen and the lexicon on the window-sill. Loder stared at them blankly, not comprehending.

"What the thump—"

"Take the pen!"

Loder took it, his hand trembling with fury.

"Now write—in your usual fist. If there's any trickery I shall fasten this window and go back to bed. You've got one chance. If you lose it, it's your own look-out!"

"What do you want me to write?" breathed Loder.

"As I dictate. 'In consideration of being let in at my study window after midnight, after going down to the Cross Keys for a spree, I agree to get Quelch to let H. Wharton off the detention, which I caused by my sneaking treachery. (Signed) Gerald Loder.' That's what you're to write—in your usual fist—on the fly-leaf of your lexicon. I shall keep the lexicon for a time—as long as I want it."

Loder's eyes fairly bulged from his head as he listened.

"You—you—you young madman! That would be enough to get me sacked, if it was seen."

"That's what I want."

"You—you—you—" Loder gurgled.

"I shall keep the lexicon, with that written in it, till after the Rookwood match to-morrow," said Wharton deliberately. "Then, if I play at Rookwood, I shall return it to you."

"How do I know that?" muttered Loder huskily.

"I give you my word on that. You can take my word, though I can't take yours," said the captain of the Remove scornfully. "Anyhow, you've got no choice. It's the sack for you if I shut you out, and you know it!"

"I—I'll write!"

"Don't alter your fist—the first trick means that your number's up. Like it or lump it, you've got to toe the line!"

Loder opened the lexicon at the fly-leaf and wrote. But his eyes gleamed as he wrote. His study door was locked, the key in his pocket. Once he was in the study he would get that dangerous bit of writing back fast enough.

He finished the writing, and Wharton took in the lexicon. He closed the sash down while he examined it by the light of a pocket-torch. The inspection satisfied him—Loder had not dared attempt to disguise his hand. Those words, written in Loder's fist on the fly-leaf of Loder's own lexicon, placed the bully of the Sixth utterly at the mercy of the junior—so long as Wharton kept possession of the book.

The sash rose a few inches again.

"That's all right," said Harry.

"Now let me in!" breathed Loder.

"You've forgotten that the door here's locked. Pass in the key."

Loder panted with rage. He had counted on tricking the junior—and the junior was not to be tricked.

"Look here, let me in—"

"So that you can grab the lexicon!" Wharton laughed. "Likely, isn't it? Are you passing in the door key or staying out for the night?"


With a groan of rage Loder passed in the key of his study door.

"Thanks!" said Wharton politely. "Now I shall shut the window—but leave it unfastened. It will take you a few minutes to get in. If you find me in the study then, you're welcome to grab the lexicon, old bean."

The sash closed down, and Wharton disappeared from the window. In a few moments he had unlocked the study door and was gone.

Loder, on the sill, struggled desperately with the sash. He got it up and plunged headlong into the study. He bounded across to the door, but he knew that the junior was gone. He tore open the door and paused in the passage. To follow Wharton back to his dormitory, to tear the lexicon away from him by force—that was his first furious thought. But he knew that it was useless to attempt it. Already the junior was back in his dormitory, already the lexicon was in a safe place where Loder's eyes would not fall on it.

A row in the Remove at midnight meant awakening the masters—with no result but to bring to light what Loder



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desired to keep hidden—the writing that meant the sack for him if it was seen. In a state of rage and terror that was, perhaps, a sufficient punishment for his rascality, Loder stepped back into his study.

In the Remove dormitory Frank Nugent was still awake when Harry Wharton came in. He whispered as Harry came to his bed.

"Harry, old chap! What—"

"All serene!" Wharton laughed softly. "I've been having a chat with Loder."

"Loder!" repeated Frank.

"Yes; he's agreed to put in a word for me to-morrow with Quelch."

"You're pulling my leg!" muttered Frank.

"Not the least little bit."

"Well, I don't understand."

"Loder does!" said Harry—and he turned in.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Whose Lexicon?

"GREEK!" exclaimed the Bouncer, in astonishment.

"Why not?"

"Takin' up swottin'?"

It was rather unusual for a junior to walk out in break with a Greek lexicon under his arm.

A good many fellows glanced curiously at the hefty volume under the arm of Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove.

It was big enough to be seen!

Dr. William Smith's Greek Lexicon was packed with knowledge, but not in a small space. It was large and it was heavy, and few fellows at Greyfriars had any curiosity to penetrate into its learned contents. Mark Linley, who was now head boy of the Remove, was one of the few; but even Mark, keen as he was on absorbing classical knowledge, had never been seen taking a Greek lexicon for a walk in the quad at break. And as Wharton did not take Greek as a study, it was still more surprising in his case.

But there it was!

"Not coming to punt a ball about?" asked Bob Cherry, rather sarcastically. "I see you've got some light and frivolous literature."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Greek lexicons can be quite entertaining in some circumstances," he answered.

"Is it a jape, or what?" asked Bob, puzzled.

"Something like that!"

While the Co. punted a ball, Wharton sauntered on with his dictionary. Intentionally or unintentionally, he passed fairly under the nose of Loder of the Sixth, who was walking with Carne.

Loder's eyes fairly snapped at the sight of the big volume in its dark red cover. He hardly needed to glance at the title on it to recognise it for what it was.

Apparently not observing Loder, Harry Wharton walked on, taking the direction of Masters' studies. Loder breathed hard.

"Come along, Carne!" he muttered.

"After that kid."

"What on earth for?" asked Arthur Carne, in surprise.

"He's got my lexicon."

"What rot!" said Carne. "If he'd bagged a lexicon from the Sixth he wouldn't be walking about with it in the quad. Lexicons are much alike."

"I tell you it's mine! See that he doesn't dodge away with it!"

"Oh, all right!" said Carne.

Loder hurried after Wharton, and the surprised Carne followed him. Harry Wharton did not look back, but seemed to be aware that the two prefects were after him, for he broke into a trot and arrived under Mr. Quelch's study window. That window was open, to admit the autumn breeze, while the Remove master corrected a pile of papers for his Form. The angular figure of the Remove master could be seen within.

"Stop!" called out Loder sharply.

Wharton did not stop till he was fairly under Mr. Quelch's window. Then he looked round in innocent surprise.

"Did you call me, Loder?"

"You know I did! Give me that book!"

Loder quite gloated. He had taken it for granted that the junior would hide the lexicon safely somewhere. Obviously, he had to keep it safe from Loder. It seemed that he was keeping it in his personal possession; but if he fancied that that was keeping it safe he was mistaken. Loder stretched out his hand for the volume.

Wharton put it behind him.

"I can't give you this lexicon, Loder," he said mildly—"I want it. It's not mine, really—I borrowed it."

Loder's eyes gleamed. He had not forgotten the circumstances in which Wharton had "borrowed" a Greek lexicon in his study.

Once the volume was safe again in his hands all was safe. It would not take him long to tear out the flyleaf and destroy it. Then the cheeky young rascal could look out!

"Give me that book at once, Wharton! How dare you take a lexicon from my study?" This was for the benefit of Mr. Quelch, who could hear all that was said through the open window. "Hand it over, I tell you!"

"It's not yours!" said Harry obstinately.

"You lying young rascal! Give it to me!" Loder advanced on the junior, who still held the book behind him. He was quite prepared to take it by force.

Mr. Quelch left his study table and stepped to the window. There was a deep frown on his brow. He was not surprised—not in the least—to hear that the rebel of the Remove had been playing tricks in Loder's study.

"Wharton!" he rapped out.

"Yes, sir?"

"Give Loder his lexicon at once! How dare you play such tricks?"

"It's not Loder's lexicon, sir," said Harry meekly.

"You have no such volume, Wharton, as you do not take Greek as a subject."

"I've borrowed it, sir."

"You are sure the book is yours, Loder?"

"Absolutely certain, sir. I have missed the lexicon from my study, and wondered who had taken it. I recognise it."

"That is sufficient! Hand the book to Loder at once, Wharton!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "I order you to do so."

"Very well, sir!"

Harry Wharton handed the lexicon to Loder of the Sixth. Loder's fingers closed on it almost convulsively.

"You will take two hundred lines, Wharton, for playing such a trick in a Sixth Form study," said Mr. Quelch.

"What trick, sir?"

"Abstracting one of Loder's school-books, Wharton," said the Remove master sternly. "How dare you pretend to misunderstand me?"

"Very well, sir; it is not for me to contradict you," said Wharton meekly.

"But what am I to say to Linley, sir?"

"Linley!" repeated Mr. Quelch. "What has Linley to do with it? What do you mean, Wharton?"

"It is Linley's lexicon, sir."

"Wha-a-at?"

A dozen fellows had gathered round, drawn by the little scene under Mr. Quelch's window. Some of them grinned as Wharton made his statement in his meekest tone. The Bouncer winked at Tom Redwing. Wharton, evidently, was "going it" again.

"Wharton! Are you speaking seriously? Do you mean to tell me that Linley lent you that lexicon?"

"Yes, sir."

"Loder, lexicons are much alike. You had better look on the title-page and see what name is written there."

Loder, with set lips, opened "Dr. William Smith." He was careful to let no eye but his own see the fly-leaf. But he need not have been so careful. On the title-page was written, in the hand of the new head boy of the Remove, the name "Mark Linley." Obviously, it was not Loder's lexicon. Equally obviously, Wharton had intentionally led him to suppose that it was, for the playful intention of pulling his leg. Still more obviously, Loder's lexicon was hidden in a safe place, and Wharton could display it to the public eye if he liked, with the result that Loder would be sacked from the school. He was still at the junior's mercy.

Loder's face was a study.

"Well?" rapped Mr. Quelch sharply.

"It—it—it is not my lexicon, sir!" stammered Loder. "I—I thought it was, but—but—but it isn't."

Mr. Quelch's eyes gleamed. He was intensely annoyed.

"Really, Loder, you should be more careful!" he exclaimed. "You stated distinctly that it was your lexicon. You said that you recognised it. Now it appears that Wharton borrowed it from a boy in his own Form. Really, Loder, you should exercise more care!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Loder.

"If the book is not yours, give it back to Wharton at once!"

Loder gave the book back to Wharton. Suppressing his feelings as well as he could, he walked away. Mr. Quelch turned from the window red with vexation.

"Excuse me, sir," said Wharton, in his silkiest tones, "am I to do the lines, sir?"

"The—the lines?"

"You told me to take two hundred lines, sir. But as Loder was mistaken in thinking that this lexicon was his—"

Mr. Quelch gave him a look.

"You need not do the lines, Wharton!" he almost gasped.

And his study window closed with a slam.

Harry Wharton strolled away, with a smile on his face, and the book under his arm. He went up to Study No. 13 in the Remove, where Mark Linley was swotting Livy.

"Thanks for the loan," he said, laying "Dr. William Smith" on the table.

"Finished with it already?" asked Mark, with a smile.

"Yes, thanks."

"Keep it as long as you like, you know."

"Finished with it, thanks!"

When the Greyfriars fellows came in from "break" Wharton passed quite near Loder of the Sixth—without a lexicon under his arm. Loder gave him a glance, with a glitter in his eyes that was almost homicidal. And Wharton,

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quite understanding what a struggle Loder had to keep his hands off her, smiled cheerily as he went to the Form-room.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Working the Oracle!

AFTER school that morning, most of the Remove fellows were thinking of the football match at Rookwood.

It was an important fixture in the Remove list; and it was sheer ill-luck that the best footballer in the Form should be under detention.

The Bounder was rather keen to captain the side at Rookwood; but no one else was keen to see him do it! There was a rumour in the Form that the detained skipper might, after all, be let off for the match, and all the footballers hoped that it was well-founded. It was known that Wharton expected to be going over to Rookwood with the team, though on what he founded that expectation was rather a mystery.

The little scene under Quelch's window in "break" had certainly not disposed his Form master more favourable towards him. And the matter rested with Quelch. But Wharton had his own reasons for his belief; and he smiled when he saw Loder of the Sixth heading for the Remove master's study shortly before dinner.

Loder had left it as late as he could. He had put in some time, looking in all sorts of likely and unlikely places, for a certain Greek lexicon. But he had not found it, and he dared delay no longer. He had to play up or take his gruel. He had been ruthless in his dealings with the junior he disliked—and his ruthlessness was coming home to roost, as it were. Slowly, but inevitably, Loder made his way to Mr. Quelch's study.

Mr. Quelch had been annoyed that morning. But his manner to Loder was genial enough. Last term Mr. Quelch had observed, with disapproval, that this particular prefect seemed to have a "down" on Harry Wharton. This term that was rather a recommendation in his eyes, now that he himself had a tremendous "down" on the rebel of the Remove. He was disposed, in fact, to believe that Loder's judgment had been better than his own. For there was no doubt that Mr. Quelch's feelings towards his former head boy were now of the deepest antipathy.

"Come in, Loder," he said, kindly enough.

"The fact is, sir, I—I have rather a favour to ask of you, if you will be kind enough to hear me," said Loder, with an effort.

"Indeed!"

"It concerns Wharton, sir."

Mr. Quelch's brow knitted at once.

"What has the boy done now, Loder?"

He expected to hear of some new delinquency, as a matter of course.

"It's not that, sir!" said Loder hastily. "The fact is, it seems that—the Remove boys are playing a rather important fixture to-day—important to them, I mean—and as Wharton is captain of the Form, they—they will miss him—"

Mr. Quelch raised his eyebrows.

"I fail to understand you, Loder."

"I mean, sir, if—if you would be so very kind as to give Wharton leave to go over to Rookwood—"

Mr. Quelch's surprised eyebrows rose and rose, till they really seemed likely to float over the top of his head.

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Never had he been more astonished.

"Loder!" he ejaculated.

"I know it's asking a lot, sir, as the boy is under detention, and he is an impertinent young rascal!" Here Loder's real feelings came out for a moment. "But in the circumstances—"

"In what circumstances?"

"It—it's rather a big thing to the juniors, sir! They want Wharton very badly to play. The boy himself deserves no consideration from you, but the others—"

Had Wingate come and put it like that to Mr. Quelch, it would not have been so surprising. But it was amazing from Loder.

"I'm afraid you'll think this rather a cheek on my part, sir! But it was for an assault upon me that Wharton received his detention. That being the case, I—I felt you might excuse me for asking you, sir."

"It is a very kind and generous thought, Loder—very kind and generous indeed!" said Mr. Quelch. "After what has happened this term, I should never have expected you to speak a word in favour of that rebellious and reckless boy. But—"

Loder trembled. The consequences of a refusal were too dire. He had to get round Quelch somehow.

"I should be very grateful, sir, if you would consent. The Remove boys set great store by this match, and they seem to think Wharton indispensable. If you attach any value to my opinion, sir, I think a concession might be granted on this occasion."

Loder's earnestness was evident, and it had its effect on the Form master.

"Very well, Loder; I consent," said Mr. Quelch. "You may tell Wharton that he is free from detention this afternoon. You may tell him that he owes it entirely to your intervention; and I trust that even his obdurate heart may be touched with gratitude."

"Thank you, sir," said Loder.

He left the study, having risen very much indeed in Mr. Quelch's estimation. In the passage, with the door closed, Loder gritted his teeth, almost pale with rage. He had succeeded—and saved his worthless skin. That was the chief thing. But his rage was deep and bitter. He went in search of Wharton, and found him with his friends in the quad, near the door, waiting for the dinner bell.

The expression on Loder's face drew curious glances on him from the juniors. Wharton smiled—a slightly sarcastic smile, that very nearly pushed the bully of the Sixth beyond the limit of self-control. Loder's hands twitched with his eagerness to lay them—hard—on the captain of the Remove. But he dared not.

"Wharton!" he almost gasped.

"Yes, Loder!"

"You are excused detention this afternoon," said Loder thickly. "Mr. Quelch has told me to tell you so. You are at liberty to go over to Rookwood."

"Thanks," said Wharton indifferently.

"Hurrah!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"That's jolly good news, Loder!"

"The goodness of the esteemed news is terrific!" chuckled Hurreo Jamsset Ram Singh.

Loder walked away, his message delivered. He could hardly trust himself within hand's reach of the junior who had made him knuckle under.

"Loder doesn't look pleased!" grinned Bob. "I fancy he didn't like bringing the jolly old good tidings. I wonder why Quelch picked him out to tell you, old bean?"

"Well, it's all serene, anyhow," said Johnny Bull, with satisfaction. "For goodness' sake, Wharton, don't play the goat again before we get away."

"What on earth made Quelch let the man off?" asked Vernon-Smith in wonder; perhaps not wholly gratified. "It's not like Quelch!"

"Oh, his bark is worse than his bite," said Bob. "Quelch is a jolly good sort, in his own way."

Frank Nugent did not speak; his eyes were on Wharton's face, though he read nothing there. Wharton's look was impassive.

"Blessed if I make it out," said the Bounder. "Wharton said last night that Quelch might let him off for the match! How did you know, Wharton?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"What does it matter? I'm let off—and we're going to beat Rookwood, I hope. Hallo, there's the bell!"

The juniors went into the House. Most of the fellows were puzzled; but there was general satisfaction. Frank Nugent touched his chum on the arm as they went in.

"What does it mean, Harry?" he asked, in a low voice.

"It means that I'm playing football at Rookwood to-day."

"I know that! But—you remember what you told me in the dorm! Has Loder got you off?"

"I fancy so."

"Why should he?"

"Well, it might be because he's such a kind-hearted, forgiving sort of chap—kindest friend and noblest foe, and that sort of thing!" said Wharton satirically.

"Don't be an ass! Why did he get you off?"

"He's lost a Greek lexicon from his study. I'm going to find it for him—after the Rookwood match."

Frank stared.

"That isn't a reason."

"It's Loder's reason," said Wharton, laughing. "Possibly there's something in that lexicon that would land Loder in trouble if it got round among the beaks. I shouldn't wonder!"

Nugent's face became very grave.

"If you mean that you found out something about Loder and you have been holding it over his head, Harry, I—"

"Well, what then?"

"It's not like you! I'd rather see you cut the Rookwood match! Harry, you can't do a rotten thing like that."

"Is it rotteness than pinching a fellow's lines and getting him into a row?"

"No! But you're not Loder," said Frank sharply. "If Loder did that, as you believe, he's a rotten rascal—but that's no reason why you should be—" He broke off.

"A rotten rascal, too? Carry on!" said Wharton, with a sneer.

"It's rotten, Harry."

"That's your opinion?"

"Yes, it is."

"Keep it to yourself, then."

And Wharton left his chum and went into the House.

An hour later, the footballers were on their way to the station. Loder of the Sixth watched them start, with a black brow; and Harry Wharton turned and waved his hand to Loder as he went.

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Wharton slipped the key into the lock and turned it. The next moment the door was opened from within, and a Sixth Form man, with a face pale with rage, was revealed to sight in the light from the passage. "Loder!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in amazement.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Caged!

BILLY BUNTER grinned. Bunter, that fine autumn afternoon, seemed to have the Remove passage at Greyfriars all to himself.

The footballers were gone over to Rookwood; and a good many other fellows had gone with them to see the game. The rest of the Remove were following their various avocations, mostly out of doors. Bunter, indeed, would not have been up in the studies without a special reason. Probably he would have been looking for some obliging fellow to cash, in advance, a postal order which he was expecting; or else trying the effect of his eloquence on Mrs. Mimble at the school shop.

But Bunter had a special reason for haunting the Remove passage that afternoon. Bunter's proceedings certainly would have caused surprise, had he been observed. He had taken the key from the door of Study No. 1 and slipped it into his pocket. What he wanted with the key of Harry Wharton's study was rather mysterious.

Then he sat down in the doorway of Study No. 7, his own study, with his eyes, and his spectacles, turned in the direction of the staircase.

A fat grin dawned on his podgy visage at the sight of a Sixth Form man coming up the stairs.

Loder of the Sixth glanced along the passage and started at the sight of Billy Bunter in his doorway.

He gave the Owl of the Remove a far from amiable look, and strolled across the landing and disappeared.

Bunter chuckled softly.

Five minutes later Loder strolled back into view. He glanced up the passage again; Bunter was still in his doorway.

Loder scowled.

He hesitated a moment or two, and then came up the passage.

"What are you frowsting about the House for on a half-holiday?" he snapped. "Clear off at once!"

"Oh, really, Loder—"

"Get out!"

Billy Bunter got out.

No doubt he had a right to "frowst" in his own study if he liked, but there was no gainsaying an order from a prefect. Billy Bunter rolled down the Remove staircase and disappeared.

Loder watched him go. He waited on the landing a few minutes, to make sure that Bunter did not return.

Then he stepped swiftly to Study No. 1, opened the door, stepped in, and shut the door after him.

He looked for the key, to turn it in the lock; but the key was not there. There was nothing surprising in a key being missing from the door of a junior study—Lower boys were careless in such matters. Loder jammed a chair-back under the door-handle, to prevent sudden interruption; and then set about the business that had brought him to the study.

He was really not likely to be interrupted. Wharton was away for the Rookwood match, and Nugent had gone over with the team. Nobody else had any business in the study.

Already that day Loder had looked in a good many places for the Greek lexicon, in which was written what amounted to his own sentence of the "sack" if it came to light. He had had, of course, no opportunity of searching Study No. 1 while its owners were in the House. Now, with its owners far away, he had ample opportunity.

He had little doubt, or rather none, that Wharton had hidden that tell-tale

volume in his own study. Loder was there to find it.

Faithless himself, Loder was not likely to believe in the good faith of others. Wharton had agreed to return him what he had written after the Rookwood match if leave was given for him to play. Loder had had to let it go at that simply because he had had no choice in the matter. He had kept his part of the bargain. But what guarantee had he that Wharton would keep his? The temptation to the junior would be strong to keep that incriminating document; so long as he had it Loder was at his mercy, and had, so to speak, to feed from his hand. He would keep it. That Wharton, with all his faults, was incapable of breaking a promise a fellow like Loder was not likely to believe.

He had to find that lexicon.

So long as that document was in existence Loder lived in fear and trembling. He had to find it.

Carefully and methodically he proceeded to search the study. A detective in search of hidden loot could not have been more meticulous.

Deep in that pressing task, Loder forgot the fat existence of Billy Bunter. Billy Bunter, however, had not forgotten Loder.

A quarter of an hour after Loder had shut himself up in Study No. 1 the Owl of the Remove came cautiously up the staircase.

Like Moses of old, Billy Bunter looked this way and he looked that way; and, like Moses again, he saw no man.

On tiptoe the fat Owl approached Study No. 1.

Outside the door he stilled his breathing and listened. A fat grin irradiated his face at the sound of a movement within.

Loder was there!

Bunter suppressed a chuckle.

Why Loder was there was a mystery to Bunter. Harry Wharton, before he started for Rookwood, had told him that he had an idea that Loder would go rooting in his study while he was gone. Bunter, seeing no reason why Loder should do so, had doubted it—till he saw the bully of the Sixth arrive on the scene. Now he knew, though he was still mystified.

The fat Owl drew the door key from his pocket.

Softly, carefully, he inserted it in the outside of the lock.

From within the study came faint sounds of a fellow rooting about, a rustling of moving papers and books. Loder was busy! Obviously he was quite unaware that a fat and grinning Removite was on the point of locking him in the study. Why he was there, why Wharton wanted him locked in, Bunter neither knew nor cared much. What he knew was that a study supper in Study No. 1 was to be his reward if he got away with it. And that was enough for Bunter to know. It made him very keen.

Click!

The key turned in the lock. It clicked as it turned. Bunter jerked it out again and dropped it into his pocket.

There was a sudden, suppressed exclamation in the study. Loder, in the midst of his eager searching, had heard that click of the lock. It startled him, and he ran quickly to the door.

Bunter, standing still as a fat mouse outside, heard him grab the door-handle, turn it, and drag. The door, of course, did not stir. Billy Bunter grinned at it cheerfully. He was afraid of Loder—but not with a locked oak door between them. But he was careful to make no sound. Loder of the Sixth was not to know who had locked him in.

The door-handle rattled.

"Locked!"

Bunter heard Loder's suppressed, muttering voice. The prefect was trembling with rage. He knew now why the key had been missing from the lock. Some young scoundrel had played this trick on him. Not Wharton; he was away. But the wary young scoundrel must have anticipated this visit and search, and put up some fellow to trap Loder like this. There was no other explanation. Now he was locked in the study—a prisoner, unless he chose to give an acrobatic exhibition by clambering down forty feet from the window into the quad!

Loder whispered through the keyhole.

"Who's there?"

Bunter winked a fat wink.

Then on tiptoe he departed.

Loder heard the tiptoeing Owl go, and ground his teeth with fury.

Surely the young villain, whoever he was, would not dare leave him locked up there for the afternoon! But Loder knew that the young villain would! He knew that Wharton had "wangled" this as well as if Wharton had told him. He knew that he was to remain a prisoner until the footballers came back from Rookwood, unless he chose to yell for release—in which case he would have been called on to explain what he was doing in Wharton's study at all. That was not an explanation Gerald Loder was prepared to make.

He paced the study like a caged tiger.

He turned at last to the search again for the hidden lexicon. If he could find that, and destroy what was written on the flyleaf— But he could not find it.

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All he found was the indubitable fact that it was not hidden in Study No. 1.

The rebel of the Remove had been too wary for him.

Meanwhile, Billy Bunter was waiting for the return of the footballers quite as anxiously as Loder of the Sixth. He was not thinking of Loder, caged like a tiger in Study No. 1, he was thinking of the study supper that was to reward him, and naturally he had no thoughts to waste on Loder.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Wharton's Win!

"GOAL!"

"Bravo!"

"Goal! Good old Wharton! Hurrah!"

It was a cheery roar on the Rookwood ground.

Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood School had found their hands full with the Greyfriars team from the kick-off. But Jimmy Silver & Co. were good men and true, and they put up a great game.

In the first half the Bounder put the ball in first, but Morningson of Rookwood followed on with a goal for the home team. The score was level at half-time.

But in the second half Greyfriars pulled ahead. Harry Wharton scored soon after the re-start, and for a long time the score stood at two to one.

The Rookwooders put all their beef into it. It was ding-dong all the time, a hard-fought battle from start to finish.

Harry Wharton was playing the game of his life. He was thoroughly enjoying himself. And his lead was followed well by his men. At Highcliffe, without their skipper, the Remove team had bagged a defeat, but a different tale was told at Rookwood. The ball went in again from Wharton's foot, and Greyfriars stood three to one; and the Rookwooders nourished now only a faint hope of equalising, while a win seemed too far off to think of.

Frank Nugent was not in the team, but he had come over with a dozen other fellows to watch the game. His face was bright as he watched his chum. Keen on the game, thinking only of Soccer, enjoying every minute of the strenuous struggle, Harry Wharton seemed his old self again at last; no longer the hard, mocking rebel of the Remove, but the cheery fellow his chums had always known. Frank rejoiced in his chum's success, but still more in the change that had come over him.

"Goal! Bravo, Wharton!"

The struggle went on, Rookwood resisting all the way; but in the last five minutes Wharton landed the pill again. And the Greyfriars fellows roared. Even the Bounder was glad, after all, that Wharton had come over to Rookwood to captain the side. And Frank, doubtful as he was of the methods Wharton had employed to gain leave for the match, could not help rejoicing.

"Goal! Goal! Hurrah!"

Four goals to one was the total when the final whistle blew and the panting players came off. And three of them had been contributed by the captain of the Remove.

Bob Cherry thumped Wharton on the back in the dressing-room.

"Ripping, old bean!" he said. "Topping! Tip-top!"

"The tip-topfulness is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"You've got to square Quelch somehow, old chap," said Bob. "You're not

standing out of matches after this! It simply can't be done!"

"You can't—and shan't!" said the Bounder. "We'll all go to Quelch in a body and tell him to think again."

"Hear, hear!"

Harry Wharton's flushed, happy face clouded a little. He had forgotten Quelch, forgotten Loder, forgotten all his trials and troubles in that glorious game. He had to remember them now.

"Quelch won't let up," he said quietly. "If he did, Loder would wangle it somehow to set him going again."

"You'll have to make your jolly old peace with Loder, then!" said Bob. "After all, you can keep clear of the brute if you try."

Wharton, thinking of what had probably happened to Loder that afternoon, made no reply to that.

His face was thoughtful when the Greyfriars crowd packed into the train for the journey home.

But the rest of the footballers were in the cheeriest spirits as they rolled home to Greyfriars.

The October evening had long set in, and it was past lock-up when they arrived. A crowd of fellows met them as they marched into the House—and did not need to ask "how it had gone." It was plain from the looks of the returning victors how it had gone.

"I say, you fellows—" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry, bestowing a hearty smack on Bunter's fat shoulder. "We've beaten them, fatty!"

"Yaroooh!"

"What do you think of four goals to one?" chirruped Bob.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, what about supper? You'd better not leave it till after prep, I think—"

Harry Wharton slipped away from his comrades. He had to find something that was concealed in an empty box in a box-room, and convey it to Loder's study in the Sixth.

Billy Bunter met him on his way to the Remove passage, after his visit to Loder's vacant study.

He handed the key of a study door to Wharton, with a fat grin.

"All serene, old chap!" he chuckled. "Mind, don't you 'et out to Loder that I locked him in! He would be frightfully waxy! You may like having the prefects down on you. I jolly well don't, see?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"That's all right, fatty," he answered.

"What about supper?" asked Bunter anxiously. "What are you going to have for supper? Something decent, I hope! I say, old fellow, don't walk away while a fellow's talking to you."

But Wharton did walk away. He went up the Remove staircase, and found his friends gathered outside the door of Study No. 1. They were looking puzzled.

"The door's locked," said Frank. "Some silly ass has locked the door and taken the key away, Harry."

"Here it is!"

"But what—"

"There's somebody in the study," said Johnny Bull. "I heard him move. How the dickens can he be there with the door locked?"

"It is terrifically queer!" remarked Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"Yes, isn't it?" said Wharton carelessly, as he slipped the key into the lock and turned it.

The door was torn open from within. A Sixth Form man, with a face pale

(Continued on page 28.)

THE RED FALCON

By ARTHUR STEFFENS.



Turning the Tables!

A RIDER in the crowd of horsemen, who came pressing on behind, whipped out a hunting-horn, and rang a stirring peal on it. Then, with heads bowed and shoulders drooping, the pursuers urged on their galloping horses, chest to tail, through the brick-paved yard, and out past the pump where McLean had a few minutes before fought the Earl of Huntford, and so on to the lovely lawn that shimmered in the morning sunshine.

With a rush and a clatter they raced away over grass and rose-beds, trampling down the flowers, and hurling clods of loam into the air.

At the end of the garden stood a mighty, spreading walnut-tree, as fine a tree as could have been found in the whole of Kent.

Initials and dates had been carved upon the weather-cleaned bole until it was scarred all over. A seat ran around the base of it. Here lovers had plighted their troth, and gossips had let their tongues wag merrily of a summer's night.

The sight of the stately tree, however, stirred no spirit of romance in the hearts of the hunters as they blundered past it, and through the kitchen garden beyond.

They wanted Hal and Jerry, and as they crashed through a hedge and emerged into an open field beyond, and saw their quarry just disappearing out of it, they let out one great roaring

shout, and the whole hunt went tearing in pursuit.

McLean let Hal out of the field first. Then, knowing how fully he could trust Galloper, he stayed a while to take stock of the horses of his pursuers.

"There's a rare mob of 'em, Hal!" he cried, as he galloped his horse alongside Beauty again. "And they have some good horses. I noticed, too, that some of the men were armed."

Hal was riding Bow Street Beauty with an ease that made Jerry's eyes dance to behold. How the boy did learn! Necessity is a great school-master Jerry silently vowed as he watched the free play of Beauty's muscles, and saw how the well-trained horse enjoyed the gallop.

Jerry knew that Beauty would not fail the boy, and, as for Galloper, why, he had never, even in the days when he was accounted a rich man, ridden a more perfect horse.

The two rode easily on, casting a glance back every now and again at the hunt.

Squire Chivey held the lead, a clumsy rider whose face was now purple from his exertions. The squire sat astride a beautiful roan, and, in his mad haste to overtake the highwaymen, he was riding it unsparingly.

Behind him the rest of the chase was strung out in a line, and, after the first dozen, they were tailed off. The black-guardly Colonel York was taking care to be in a safe position.

The leaders of the hunt had gained,

READ THIS FIRST.

Convicted of robbing the Earl of Huntford of a diamond star, Hal Lovett and Jerry McLean are conveyed to the convict hulk *Ethallon*, anchored at Woolwich—Hal to serve a sentence of seven years and McLean to await deportation. As the result of a prearranged plan, the convicts fire the ship, and Hal and Jerry escape in the blackness of the night, eventually reaching an inn owned by the Earl of Huntford. Here they are betrayed by Colonel York, a highwayman, and forced to flee, pursued by the magistrate of the county and a posse of huntsmen.

but only on sufferance, for Jerry was holding Galloper in, and Hal just kept ahead, having every confidence in McLean.

The bellowing squire came on. He was a man of overbearing temperament, vastly wealthy, and he held an abounding belief in his physical powers. Grandly mounted and backed by many wealthy gentlemen, he intended to stage a show for their benefit. Squire Chivey intended to apprehend the highwaymen single-handed.

He roared and bellowed as he rode, closing in upon the chase, and believing that the highwaymen could never get away.

Indeed Jerry McLean delayed so long in opening and passing a gate that the squire had galloped to within twenty lengths, when Jerry went through and let the gate clang to behind him.

The squire was not prepared to jump, and so, cursing loudly, he hooked at the latch with the handle of his riding-crop, opened the gate, and followed.

But to his chagrin he discovered the highwaymen had increased their lead to almost a whole field ahead.

Crushing his hat down upon his head, he rode helter-skelter after them.

McLean and Hal had now settled down to ride in earnest. The squire saw first one, then the other, clear a five-barred gate. Deuce take it, but they were smarter than he had thought! The squire nearly came a cropper as he took the jump.

By the time that gate was passed there were nine horsemen only left in the race. The others were hopelessly tailed off, and Colonel York, having done his worst, thought it expedient to go his own way, which he promptly did.

McLean followed Hal's lead along a footpath, and at the end of a field came to another gate. On each side of the gate tall elm-trees reared their trunks sixty feet into the air. Tall hedges obscured the view.

Here McLean pulled Galloper up, and brought the horse round. He slipped on his mask and pulled out his pistols, quickly examining the priming of each. Then he loosened his banger in its scabbard.

"Hal, boy," he said, "let us turn this chase to good account. The fat rider behind us is so keen on wanting to make our acquaintance that I think we ought to humour the joke. Ride Beauty behind the screen of that elm."

Hal brought his horse back, and edged it as desired behind the shelter of the tree. Up in the branches a colony of rooks were making a deuce of a din.

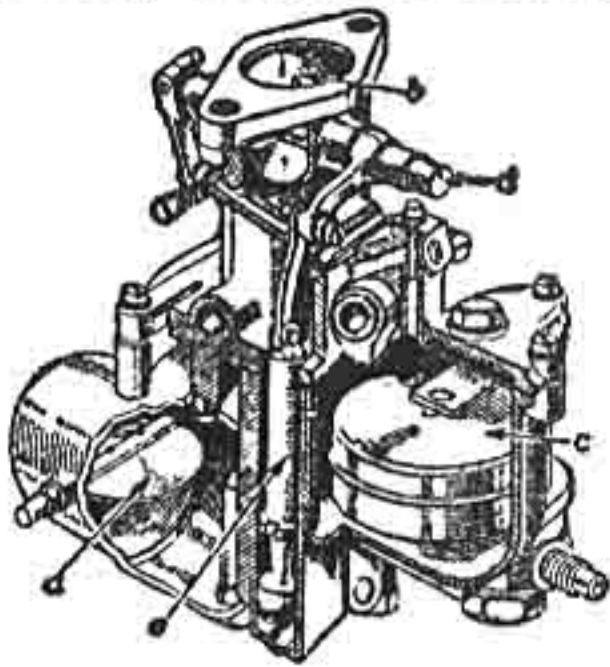
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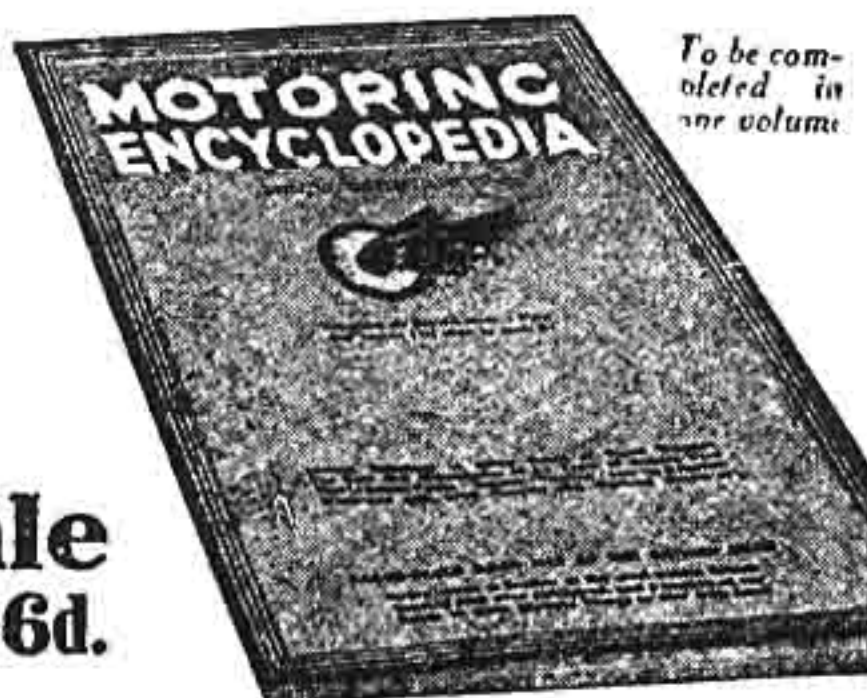
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"Are you going to frighten the hunt?" asked Hal, his boyish face warm from the excitement of the chase, his blue eyes ablaze with devilry.

"I'm going to do more than that, lad," answered Jerry. "It's only fair they should pay for their amusement. We've got to live. I'm going to have their money, Hal."

Hal Lovett laughed aloud. Here was a way of turning the tables which appealed to him.

"There are a lot of them," he said.

"But they have got to come through that gate," said Jerry, pointing with his pistol, "and they can only pass it one at a time. The squire will come first. We'll clean him out and set him loose, and then deal with the others—if they've a mind to face the music."

"And there are two of us," said Hal gleefully.

He whipped out his mask and fitted it on. Then he examined his pistols. By this time Squire Chivey had ridden close to the gate. Jerry and Hal could hear him talking, proof that another rider was close behind.

"They are deuced well mounted!" they heard the squire say, as the clapping hoof-beats brought him nearer. "But we've got the best horses in Kent. We're bound to run them down eventually. Besides, once they take to the road, they will have to pass the toll gates. We'll overtake them there."

Then the squire's purple face and burly figure, heaving now from the exertion of riding, loomed up beyond the five-barred gate.

Squire Chivey stooped to open it, and swung the gate wide. Through he came with a rush, turning his horse about, and holding the swinging gate with the crook of his crop to allow his friend behind to pass.

The squire was so lost in concentration, and the two highwaymen had drawn back so close to the hedge, that he failed to see them.

Not so his friend, who came through without having anything more to do but ride. This second rider saw the two masked horsemen lurking by the hedge, and his jaw dropped.

"By Jove!" he cried; and Squire Chivey looked up to find a pistol held within a yard of his nose.

"Come, Squire!" said Jerry, with a merry laugh. "You have enjoyed your fun, and now you must pay for it. I'll have that diamond pin which sparkles in your cravat. That signet-ring you wear also appeals to me. You doubtless carry a snuff-box, and a purse. Hand them over, and be quick about it, for my finger itches on the trigger."

The sight of the masked horsemen, the pistol and the ringing, echoing words, had an electrical effect upon the squire. He rocked backwards in the saddle, dropped his lower jaw, and stared goggle-eyed. Then his hands dropped upon the horse's neck as he gurgled and mumbled, his heavy body shaking like a jelly.

The other horseman, a lean, hungry-looking man of the military type, swept his hand to his capacious side pocket. He had not seen Hal Lovett, and his grim lips and glinting eyes betrayed his purpose. But, even whilst he was raising the weapon he swung into view, Hal urged Bow Street Beauty close up to him and touched his cheek with the cold barrel of his own pistol.

"Your money, if you please, sir, and your valuables," said the boy, strangling a laugh. "See that you give me everything; and drop that pistol, or I shall fire!"

The man drew his horse back with a

jerk and let the pistol fall. His face flamed with anger. But the pistol the highwayman aimed at his heart was a rare persuader. With an oath he set his hand again in his pocket and drew out a purse which he tossed to Hal.

The boy caught it deftly in his left hand and stowed it away safely in his own pocket, the first fruits of his new profession.

Now came the sound of galloping hoofs in the field beyond the gate. Some more horsemen were coming.

As they neared the gate they caught sight of the squire handing out his cash and his gold snuffbox and other trinkets to a masked horseman, and the military-looking gentleman backing his horse away from another horseman who wore a mask.

"We're being robbed in broad daylight, curse me!" roared Squire Chivey. "Help! Shoot the rascals down!"

Two horsemen cautiously approached the shut gate. One of them hauled out a heavy horse-pistol. This he brought to bear on Jerry McLean, and, pulling the trigger, let it off with a loud explosion which sent the rooks chattering in panic-stricken flight from the top of the tall elms.

The bullet, aimed at the heart of Jerry McLean, did not lodge there, however. Instead, it carried away the three-cornered hat worn by the military gentleman, which hurtled in the air with a double hole bored clean through it, to settle down flat in the dust.

Jerry wheeled Galloper about and answered with a shot that sent a bullet singing past the misguided marksman's head. It was quite enough, too, for, wheeling his horse about, he galloped helter-skelter back along the trail, followed by the other timid gentlemen who had accompanied him, leaving the squire and his friend to the tender mercies of the highwaymen.

"Squire," said Jerry, "you will oblige me by dismounting." His second pistol wavered uncertainly. "Must I ask you twice?"

The squire dropped out of his saddle immediately. Then Jerry brought his whip down on the flank of the spirited roan with a plop, which started the animal off in a mad gallop.

"Now, sir, you, too," said Jerry, covering the military-looking gentleman, who was white with rage.

The man dismounted, muttering strangled threats.

Crack!

Hal in turn sent the second horse in a mad career across the furrows.

"How are we going to get home, the devil take you, sir?" roared the purple-faced squire.

"Unless you can think of some better way, squire," replied McLean, gallantly raising his hat, "I am afraid you'll have to walk!"

Huntford Hall!

THE pursuit of Jerry and Hal finished at that five-barred gate between the towering elms.

Having forced the squire and his friend to disgorge, the two adventurers made off at top speed.

Nor did they ease or rest their horses until they had placed many miles between themselves and the Huntford Arms.

"The awkward part of this business, my boy," said Jerry McLean, as, after passing a third toll-gate, they eased

their hard-riden horses to a walk, "is that news of the exploit will be flashed through all the Home counties. The Runners know where we are. The Earl of Huntford will, after this morning's disgrace, move heaven and earth to bring about our undoing. We must find some safe refuge wherein to hide."

"But how and where?" asked Hal.

Jerry shrugged his massive shoulders. He was growing bigger and stronger every day with this freedom.

"Fate or the devil must provide," he replied.

The two cantered on, keeping their eyes open for danger signs. A coach rattled past them, with post-horn blaring merrily. Then came farmcarts and wagons, a smart barouche, and horsemen making for the nearest village or town.

Suddenly, as they swept round a bend, they saw before them a narrow village street flanked on either side by gabled cottages, square-fronted Queen Anne houses, and the like. At a distance along it, on the right, a duckpond glistened in the sunshine. Opposite this stood a gabled inn whose swinging sign,

dared look back. It needed nerve to show such case, but they walked their horses until they were safely round the bend again, and then rode swiftly away.

The moment they reached a cross-road they turned down it. It led to an open common, on the far side of which a high, red-brick wall, backed by a line of glorious trees, ran as far as the eye could see.

They walked their horses along a deserted road. Trees nearly met above them as it narrowed into a sylvan lane. And here, presently, they came upon a gipsy caravan, beside which sat a swarthy, ragged-looking rascal mending pots.

Jerry reined in his horse.

"We are strangers here, friend," he said. "We are making for the coast. Can you tell me who owns the fine estate beyond the brick wall?"

The gipsy looked up with a scowl.

"The Earl of Huntford, drat him!" he growled.

Jerry thanked him, then, opening his purse, he extracted a silver piece, and tossed it to the gipsy. Then the adventurers rode on.

"So! Beyond that brick wall lies Huntford Hall, Hal, boy," said Jerry. "And what then?"

Hal Lovett shot a keen questioning glance at Jerry.

"What have you in mind, Jerry?" he asked.

"The horses are tired," replied McLean. "If we show ourselves it will be at the risk of our necks. We have enemies all round us. I propose, therefore, that we seek shelter in the nearest wood and wait until dark."

"And then?" asked Hal, knowing full well what Jerry would answer next, yet wanting to hear him say it.

"We are so near the home of the man who sent us to the hulks, boy, I think we ought to pay him a visit."

Hal laughed aloud.

"I ask nothing better than that," he said.

About a mile along the leafy lane a wood opened out on the left. An open ditch ran alongside a raised bank about four feet high. Here and there were breaks between the nut bushes which crowned the bank and through one of these gaps the two friends rode.

Here were silver birch-trees and beech, and nut bushes by the score. The place was a veritable fairyland, and nothing seemed to inhabit it but the birds they disturbed as they rode quietly on, or the rabbits, which scurried in fright to their burrows.

Into the heart of the wood the two went and dismounted, leaving their horses to crop at the rich young grass which grew among the rain courses.

Here they stretched themselves out and lazed, getting hungry as the day wore on, and yet content. No man came near them, they heard never a voice.

"It will soon be dark now," said Jerry McLean, "and then, Hal, for a visit to the home of the Earl of Huntford, the man who sent us to the hulks on a false charge!"

(Hal and Jerry are booked for a big surprise when they enter Huntford Hall. You'll read all about it in next week's instalment of this gripping serial, chums. And don't forget that next Saturday's MAGNET will contain six more FREE picture stamps. Order your copy NOW!)

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The King's Head, depicted dubiously the heavy features of his Majesty King George III.

A church spire tapered to the sky, and green trees and a village green gave colour and atmosphere to the pretty scene.

But the sight that made the adventurers pause was a group of horses gathered outside the inn. These were hot and dusty from hard riding. Two men stood in charge of the horses, and a group of villagers were gossiping with the men.

There was no mistaking the three-cornered hats of the two men, the broad-skirted, blue coats, the red waistcoats, and the harness of the horses. Jerry and Hal had lit upon a posse of Bow Street Runners. And very likely this was no ordinary patrol, but the special troop over which Martin Cosgrave, the great thief-taker, himself presided.

Jerry, slowing his horse, swung it lazily about.

"We'll not disturb that hornets'-nest, Hal," he said. "Let's get to cover as quickly as possible!"

Hal obeyed, showing no sign of flurry, taking his time like Jerry. Neither

HARRY WHARTON DECLARES WAR!

(Continued from page 24.)

with rage, was revealed to sight in the light from the passage.

"Loder!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, in amazement.

"Look here! What are you doing in our study, Loder?" exclaimed Frank Nugent indignantly.

"Looking for anything, Loder?" asked Harry Wharton.

Loder did not speak. Without a word, but with a glare of concentrated rage and bitterness at the captain of the Remove, he stalked past the juniors, and went down the stairs. They stared after him blankly.

"What the thump?" asked Johnny Bull. "Look here! I wouldn't have this! Loder's no right in this study! I'd jolly well ask Quelch to make him explain, if I were you, Wharton!"

"Perhaps I shall—if I hear anything from Loder this evening!" said Whar-

ton, laughing. "But never mind Loder now! Who's ready for supper?"

Everybody was ready for supper—especially Billy Bunter. A cheery crowd swarmed in Study No. 1.

Meanwhile, Loder of the Sixth, with a white fury in his face that made fellows stare at him as he passed, stalked away to his own study. When he turned on the light there, the first object that met his eyes was a Greek lexicon lying on his table.

Loder made a jump at it.

He opened it at the flyleaf! He could scarcely believe his eyes, or his luck, when he saw what was written there! Wharton had kept his word! In almost frantic haste, Loder tore that flyleaf out of the lexicon, and applied a match to it.

He breathed hard and deep! He was safe now! Wharton had held him in the hollow of his hand until that page was destroyed! The young fool had parted with the power he held—now it was Loder's turn! Loder grabbed up the ashplant from his table.

Then he paused. There were a dozen witnesses to the fact that he had spent the afternoon in Wharton's study, and it would be very awkward to explain to Mr. Quelch, or the Head, what he had been doing there! It was no time for a row with Wharton!

Loder laid down the ashplant.

Harry Wharton wondered, carelessly, whether he would have trouble with Loder that evening. He thought it more probable not. And he was right. He saw nothing of Loder, and there was no interruption to the merry party in Study No. 1 celebrating the victory at Rookwood.

THE END.

(Now look out for: "THE SCHEMER OF THE SIXTH!" the next sparkling yarn in this grand new series dealing with the feud between Harry Wharton and the rascally prefect, Loder. It's absolutely great, and so are the six picture stamps which will be presented FREE with this issue.)



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STOP STAMMERING! Cure yourself as I did. Particulars Free.—FRANK B. HUGHES, 26, HART STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.

BOYS! GREAT NEWS

"NEWFOOTY" GAME REDUCED. Best table football invention. BIG DISCOUNT on sales to friends. 22 Men, Ball and Goals. MEN FOLLOW BALL AND INTERCEPT PASSES LIKE FOOTBALLERS DO. Boys and parents praise it. MANY TESTIMONIALS. Special Advertising offer TO NOV. 30TH. 2/- plus 3d. POST.

THE "NEWFOOTY" CO., 6, YORK ST., WALTON, LIVERPOOL. FULL OF REAL FOOTBALL THRILLS AND EXCITEMENT

All applications for Advertisement Space in this publication should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, UNION JACK SERIES, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

FOR SALE
Broadsword, naval cutlasses, blunderbusses, African cutgels, and fine battle-axe. Owner joining the Disarmament League.—P. BOLSOVER, THE ABODE OF PEACE, Remova Passage.

SECOND FORM FOOTBALL CLUB
We hereby challenge the School First XI to a match on Big Side next Saturday. If the First XI don't accept, then we shall all know it's because they're jolly well funky! Yah!
(Signed) DICKY NUGENT, Captain.

THE NEW Greyfriars Herald

EXTRA GOOD EDITION

October 15th, 1932.

MAKE YOUR MOTOR CALL IN TROTTER.
Foots cleaned, studds renewed, overalls mended, young gents waited upon daily. Services and civility to the best of my ability. Pay what you please!
TROTTER, Page.
The Kitchen, Greyfriars.
Dicky Nugent writes to ask if we'll advertise for a kind reader to help him pay for some "pains" of glass he smashed.
Sorry, Dicky, but we've no room for an "agony" column this week!

ARE SCHOOLBOYS HEROES?

A THOUSAND TIMES "YES!"

We've heard that another headmaster has been accusing the modern schoolboy of cowardice. "Where are the schoolboy heroes of my time?" he asks.

Without hesitation we answer: "At Greyfriars!" If the question: "Are school-boys heroes?" were put at Greyfriars, the answer would be: "Yes, a thousand times yes!"

Just to prove our point, let us briefly refer you to a few simple acts of heroism at Greyfriars during the last week.

Amateur Astronomer Wanted—

As Spurring Partners to Heavyweight Boxer. Guaranteed that he'll see more stars than he ever saw before! Apply, BOLSOVER MAJOR The Gym.

THEY LACKSKI

One of the sturdiest governors says it's a shame that the seniors are so ignorant of Russian. We can't answer for that, but we must say we've often noticed their lack of Polish!

BOXING— A Brutal Sport

Alonzo Todd has applied to Wingate for the use of a room sufficiently large for a demonstration against the "brutal sport of boxing."

Wingate, who is nothing if not helpful, has agreed to let him have the landing store cupboard and a couple of chairs!

Dicky Nugent's Weekly Wisdom

My majer says that I ought to wash in soap and water more often, but he adds that I can't expect to use my Windsor and keep my Staines, too!

The lengths to which that old fogey will go to make a joke are almost incredible!

And The Red "Raw" -ed

Bulstrode, who lost the decision to Johnny Bull on points in a six-round contest, had to apply uncooked steak to both eyes to relieve their blackness. His complaints of a "raw" deal—but, after all, it's only "meat" that he should!

"BUNTER'S ONE OF THE BEST!"

Juniors Answer Mysterious Inquirer

Johnny Bull and Inky and Nungent and several other Renegade chaps were sitting themselves down at the gates the other day when a mysterious-looking old bird rolled up and spoke to them.

"Any of you boys happen to know Bunter?" he asked.

"Bunter? I've heard that name before somewhere, I fancy!" chuckled Nungent.

"Yes, we've known him quite a long time, sir—haven't we, chaps?"

"What-ho!"

"The stranger nodded.

"Good! You're just the boys I've been wanting to meet! I'd like to know something about this Bunter. What sort of a boy is he? A young fraud, would you say?"

The chaps promptly sensed trouble for Bunter, and equally promptly decided to answer promptly.



The stranger looked a little surprised.

"Indeed! And wouldn't you describe him as lazy and boastful?"

"Lazy and boastful?" gasped Dick Russell, following Nungent's lead. "My hat! Imagine Bunter lazy and boastful! Why, he's a regular live wire and as modest as anything!"

"Indeed!" exclaimed the stranger, apparently still more surprised. "But is he not untruthful and dishonest?"

"What, Bunter?" grinned Johnny Bull, entering into the spirit of the thing.

"The stranger looked staggered.

"Would you call him a decent young fellow, then?" he asked.

"One of the best!" said Dick Russell heartily.

"A fellow in a thousand!" grinned Nungent.

The stranger took off his hat and mopped his brow.

"Well, this is pleasant news indeed!" he remarked. "I suppose it's up to me now to explain why I asked so many questions about Bunter. The reason is that I'm his uncle."

"His—his uncle?"

"Exactly!" grinned the stranger. "I didn't intend to tip him a fever if he was as fat, lazy, boastful and dishonest as he used to be, you see; so I thought I'd ask about him first! Now can you tell me where he is?"

"We told him. And now you know how it is that Bunter has been able to spend the last two days in the tuckshop without having to borrow."

AS OTHERS SEE THEM

WHAT HE TINKER 'BOUT BOB CHELLY

By WUN LUNG

Bob Chelly, the volly funny fella. Ho no likee fat-pie—what you see 'bout fella who no likee beautiful fat-pie? He plenty say fella, eh what? Bob Chelly no likee stewed birds' nest! No likee stewed birds' nests! Me no savvy fella that!

Bob Chelly plenty funny other ways, too. When he quailed with his eye like Skimmer, you tinker he catch him and give him plenty 'pod Chinese torture? Not Bob Chelly! In China me take fella, me get him and untie off ears. Bob Chelly no 'pod off Skimmer's ears. He say "Skimmer, he just a silly!" and laugh! Me no savvy tings like that!

Also of 'is no worship his honoured ancestors. What you tinker it fella who no worship his honoured ancestors, eh? He at plenty unbuns to tittle, Chinese! Me worship my leopold-grandfather and grand-grandfather and his great-grandfather, too, me worship hundreds of respected and honoured ancestors, but Bob no worship one!

Many of 'is funny tings funny of' Bob do. He plenty to use kante all fork lather than chop-sticks—you tinker him plenty big 'y fathead not ploddering chop-sticks, eh? Me, too!

Also see of' Bob plenty fine fella! Me likee henna! When Biggly Bolsover kick poor little Wun Lung, Bob Chelly come along plenty quick and kick him lots, makee Bolsover 'y plenty good, eh?

Also well Wun Lung no receive remittance and get hard up, of' Bobme long fondle all he got so poor little Chinese boy, plenty 'om tuckshop.

Me no see Bob, but takee all round Bob one plenty good chap. One when Wun Lung go back to China he takee Bob Chelly. Then tuckshop Bob to eat with chop-sticks and cutie off enemies.

Oh! Bob still then, what you tinker? (Look out next week's number in which Bob Chelly will tell you what tinks of Wun Lung!)

HE'S CHEAP SKATE, ANYWAY

Our American cousin in No. 14 was surprised the other day when a kid from the Second walked in and asked for a sixpenny 'net of cod and twopennyworth of chipped potatoes!

It seems the tag misunderstood the meaning of the illuminated me-plate that has recently appeared, on the study door.

The sixpenny 'net is wrong. The hands are pointing to 10 and it has just struck twenty-six. The fight time is 44! Not what you'd call a stri' in success, eh?

HILL CLIMBING SENSATION

BY COKER

NON-STOP MOTOR-BIKE

In the motor-bike hill-climbing tests on the slopes of Black Pike last week none of the competitors got beyond the half-way mark. This inspired Coker of the Fifth to see what he could do, and on Wednesday afternoon, accompanied by the ever-faithful Porter and Greene and about fifty spectators in search of free entertainment, he set forth, wheeling his machine on a hand-truck so that it should be subjected to no strain on the way.

Coker had a good deal of difficulty (writes our Motoring Correspondent) in getting the bike to start when he reached the foot of the hill, and a number of suggestions were offered out. In the first place Vernon-Smith said that it possibly needed air. The spectators were therefore pushed back a little way and fans were waved, but the machine didn't respond to the treatment!

Temple of the Fourth, who is a bit of an authority, suggested oil. Nobody had any oil, so fellows who had brought picnic baskets put a piece of butter into an empty burning tin and melted them over an improvised fire of twigs. Coker's motor-bike indignantly declined the mixture.

Johnny Bull said that it was clear that the machine wanted water. Bob Cherry promptly helped by throwing a bucket of water over it, but even this didn't seem to get things going.

Eventually Coker said that the only way was to give it a running start. He thereupon gripped the handbars



and made a blind rush for the hill, accompanied by a ringing cheer from the crowd.

Still the machine wouldn't start. What happened, though, was even more surprising than that would have been. So frazzled had Coker become that he ran on and on and up and up till he reached the top of the hill on Shanks' pony!

It was just as he reached the top that the engine found us out!

Now that the game's up there's no harm in telling our readers just how we produce the "Herald." This is how it's done:

Cherry and Nugent and Squiff go to No. 1 Study. Cherry opens the banisters cupboard and chooses a few out of the stock. Nugent then unticks the absurdities drawer and turns out a number of absurdities, and Squiff goes to the chimney and pulls down some monstrosities.

The crude ingredients are then well mixed in a pail and sent to the printers with a bottle of hyperbole for veneering purposes. The printers occasionally, of course, we run short of something or other. Nugent may lean across to Squiff and say: "We're awfully short of absurdities, old chap."

Squiff's reply will probably be "Help yourself to a few monstrosities to make up for 'em, old boy!"

Well, that's how it's done. His reply was to hurl a Greek lexicon at the inquirer, never know our secret, but Apparently he meant that he had no such intention!

THE SECRET OUT

How We Prepare The "Herald"

In the course of a violent speech at the Prefects' Meeting this week, Gerald Loder has let the cat out of the bag as regards the "Greyfriars Herald," but a crude mixture of banalities, absurdities and monstrosities, veneered with hyperbole?

We bang our heads in shame and admit it. For a long time we have preserved our secret, but Loder has found us out!

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GREY-RIANS ACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!



Wun Harry Wartton came to Greyfriars he was inclined to be in a mood and ill-tempered fellow, but Nugent's influence did much to help him and his feet.

Peter Aode con- "es, Bunter (cells on an average 236,56 " lbs per day. Todd does not say how he keeps count, but we don't think he's far out!

Lonzy's Little Letters

Dear Editor.—Without desiring to appear censorious, I cannot but think that the Sixth are peralventure unworlly of the approbation of earnest school-ards at Greyfriars, inasmuch as continuous with their insatiable adherence to sporting proclivities, their philosophical principles, as a result of their philanthropic outlook, cannot be described as other than quaquaversal.

Yours truly,
ALONZO TODD.

(We fancy Lonzy means that he doesn't think much of the Sixth!—Ed.)

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?



Johnny Bull has taken up a study "spreads" which always eats up a special variety of term in the French Army as he's a good marksman on the football field, too!

Mr. Hanz Charpentier, the ex-ceptible French master, served his term in the French Army as a good marksman on the football field, too!