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EVERY SATURDAY.

Week Ending October 27th, 1934.

JZANOU
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THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Hobson on the Warpath!

HOBBY, old man—"Hold on!"

"What's the row?"

"My esteemed Hobson—"

"Stop him!"

The Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove all spoke at once.

Harry Wharton & Co., as a rule, had little to do with Hobson of the Shell, and did not bother their heads about him or his proceedings. Indeed, the last time they had seen him, Bob Cherry had punched his nose—Hobby having stated it as his fixed opinion that the Remove were merely fags, which was an insult that had to be wiped out in blood—from Hobby's nose.

But when a junior was seen striding into the Sixth Form passage, with clenched fists and blazing eyes, and a face almost white with wrath, it was evidently time for somebody to chip in.

Harry Wharton & Co. were coming away from Loder's study where they had delivered lines. Since Loder of the Sixth had been head prefect of Greyfriars, lines had fallen in the Remove as thick as leaves in ancient Vallombrosa. The Famous Five were specially favoured, and a great deal of their leisure time was taken up with lines for Loder.

Coming down the passage they met Hobson face to face. And they promptly lined up across the passage to stop him. A junior who looked as Hobby looked at that moment, and who was heading for a Sixth Form study, required stopping—for his own good.

Hobson, unheeding, barged on.

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By

FRANK RICHARDS

But he had to stop when Harry Wharton and Johnny Bull grabbed him by either arm.

"Let go!" roared Hobson, struggling.

"Hold on a minute!"

"Let go!"

"My dear chap, keep cool!" urged Harry. "Where are you going?"

"I'm going to see that cad—"

"Who?"

"That bully—"

"But who—"

"That rotten brute, Loder!" roared Hobson. "Let me pass, will you, you cheeky fag! Leggo!"

On this occasion no member of the Famous Co. thought of punching Hobby's nose for calling them fags. They were too concerned for Hobby. Obviously he was not in a frame of mind to be allowed to call on the captain of the school.

"Easy does it, old bean!" said Bob Cherry soothingly. "We all know that Loder is a blighter; but he's head prefect, and captain of the school now old Wingate's gone. You can't barge

It's rather a new game for the rascally Gerald Loder to plead pardon for delinquents . . . but it's either that or the sack from Greyfriars!

into his study and bellow at him, you know."

"Can't I?" hooted Hobson. "You'll see! Leggo, bother you! I'll punch you if you don't leggo!"

"But look here—" urged Frank Nugent.

"Leggo!" bawled Hobson.

"My esteemed and absurd Hobson—" began Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Leggo!"

"For goodness' sake cool down, old chap!" said Harry Wharton anxiously. "Loder will hear you and come out to—"

"Leggo!"

Hobson of the Shell wrenched himself loose with a sudden effort, and barged through the Removes. Frank Nugent, making a grab at him, staggered back from a hefty punch, and sat down. Then Hobson went racing up the passage to Loder's study.

"Stop him!" gasped Wharton.

He raced after Hobson.

But he was too late.

Hobson of the Shell reached Loder's study door. He did not stop to knock. He hurled the door wide open, with a crash, and tramped into the study.

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove. "Hobby, you ass!"

The Co. came running up the passage. But it was too late to save Hobby from himself, so to speak. He was in Gerald Loder's study now.

Loder of the Sixth was seated at his table. He was examining the lines the chums, of the Remove had handed in. He was rather in hope of finding some fault which would justify him in recalling the juniors, and telling them to write out the impositions over again.

He was interrupted by Hobby's sudden entrance. He started up, and stared blankly at the excited Shell fellow.

"What the dickens——" he ejaculated.

"You rotter!" roared Hobson.

"What?"

"You putrid bully!"

"Why, what—— I—I——" Loder of the Sixth fairly stuttered.

He was aware that he was not popular, and he had a pretty clear idea of what the Lower School thought of him. But he had never expected to be told. Juniors, as a rule, did not tell Sixth Form prefects what they thought of them. It was rather too risky.

But James Hobson was too wildly excited to think or care about the risk. He leaned over Loder's table, shaking a clenched fist at the bully of Greyfriars. His knuckles came so close that Loder involuntarily started back.

"You bullying rotter!" bawled Hobson, in a voice that woke the echoes of the Sixth Form studies, and reached many ears as well as Loder's. "I've a jolly good mind to punch your face for you! Do you fancy that you can do as you jolly well like because old Wingate's away, and you've sneaked into his shoes——"

"You young——"

"Captain of Greyfriars!" hooted Hobson, scornfully and derisively. "Captain of rats! Who'd have voted for you, I'd like to know? Nobody wanted you! Old Prout had to appoint you captain, because he jolly well knew you wouldn't get elected! Do you think you'd be captain of Greyfriars if the Head was here? No fear! You've butted in because that old ass Prout is playing at being headmaster, and you pull his leg with your sneaking trickery! You ought to be kicked out of the school!"

Loder gasped.

Plenty of Greyfriars fellows would have liked to talk to him in that strain. Hobby of the Shell was the first to do so.

Outside the study the Famous Five listened with bated breath. They agreed with old Hobby all along the line. But really, a Lower fellow couldn't talk to prefects like this! Something, evidently, must have happened to excite Hobson to a terrific extent.

"Turfed out!" roared Hobson. "That's it! That's what you want! If that old ass Prout knew you as the fellows do, you'd go out so quick it would make your head swim. Rotten bully! Look here! You touch my pal Hoskins again, and I'll bung you in the eye——see?"

"I—I—I——" gasped Loder. He grabbed up his ashplant from the table. "Why, I'll skin you—— I'll——"

"Skin your grandmother!" snorted Hobson. "You've whopped old Claude, you rotten bully! You try it on again, that's all! I've come here to tell you what I think of you! You're a rotten bully, and a sneaking cur, and a crawling toad!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"You young madman!" roared Loder. "Bend over that chair! I'll give you twice what I've given Hoskins! Bend over!"

Loder strode round the table and pointed to a chair with his cane. Hobby did not bend over. He glared at the bully of the Sixth.

"Do you hear me?" roared Loder.

"Shut up!"

"Wha-at?"

"Shut up! I don't want any of your

swank!" roared Hobson. "For two pins I'd hit you in the eye now!"

That was enough for Loder. He made a jump at Hobson of the Shell, with the cane uplifted. It came down on Hobby with a heavy swipe, and he yelled as he caught it across the shoulders.

The next instant he leaped at Loder. His right came up, clenched hard, and lashed at the Sixth Former's face.

Then it was Loder's turn to yell.

Hobby's fist caught him right in the eye. Hobson was a big and sturdy fellow, and there was plenty of beef in that punch. It sent Loder spinning backwards, and he landed on his back on his study carpet.

Bump!

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob, staring in blankly at the door.

Loder had been knocked down!

Sixth Form man as he was, head prefect, captain of the school, prime

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Poor Old Hobby!

PONG!

It was the tap of the tuning-fork.

That sound fell on the ears of Harry Wharton & Co. as they came up the Shell passage.

Claude Hoskins, the musical genius of Greyfriars, was "getting his note."

The chums of the Remove exchanged a grin. Hoskins of the Shell was frightfully keen on music. Every hour that he did not spend in the music-room he regarded as an hour wasted.

There were whole reams of music-paper in the study that Hoskins shared with Hobson and Stewart, covered with weird hieroglyphics that, according to Hoskins, meant something.

What they meant was a secret known only to Hoskins. Only Hoskins understood them—even if Hoskins did!

Keen as he was on music, Hoskins would probably not have been tapping his tuning-fork at that moment had he been aware of the wild happenings in the Sixth. He was very chummy with Hobby, though Hobby did not understand music at all. Hobson, like great Dr. Johnson, regarded music as a not unpleasant noise!

The chums of the Remove looked into the study.

Hoskins, tapping the tuning-fork with his right hand, waved them away with his left. He did not want to be interrupted.

But he was not sitting at the table. He was standing. His recent experiences with Loder's cane had made him unwilling to sit down.

There were sheets and sheets of music on the table. Some of the sheets were torn across. A Vandal hand had been at work!

"Get out!" said Hoskins.

"Where's Hobby?" asked Wharton.

"I don't know. Get out; I'm busy!"

"Hobby's been busy, too," remarked Bob Cherry. "He punched Loder of the Sixth in the eye ten minutes ago."

"Wha-a-t?"

Even Hoskins forgot music. He laid down his tuning-fork and stared at the Removites.

"P-punched Loder in the eye!" he stuttered.

"Right in the jolly old optic!"

"Oh crumbs! Why, he'll get sacked for punching a prefect! You can't punch a prefect!" gasped Hoskins in dismay. "I—I wish I'd gone after him, now. I knew he was wild. Only, you see, I had my music to see to——"

"Bother your old music!" said Bob Cherry. "What on earth was the row about? Hobby came up to the Sixth looking like a Red Indian on the war-path! We tried to stop him, but it was N. G."

"That brute Loder!" said Hoskins. "You see, he came here and whopped me. The brute had given me lines. He's always giving fellows lines. I never did them, and he doubled them. See? Then I forgot all about them. I came to the study to write them—honour bright! And then I thought of a bit on the piccolos for my Fantasia in G minor, and—and I forgot all about the lines, of course."

"Of course!" grinned Bob. "You would!"

"Then the beast barged in and asked me why I hadn't done the lines," explained Hoskins. "I told him to shut up. You see, he was interrupting me."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Then he whopped me," said Hoskins. "I wouldn't have minded that so much."

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Keep Your Eyes Open for More Big Attractions, Boys!

favourite of the temporary headmaster, he had been knocked down by a Lower School fellow!

He sat up on the carpet, with his hand to his eye. Hobson, unrepentant, glared down at him.

"Take that, you bully!" he roared.

"Ow!" gasped Loder. "Oooogh! Oh, my eye! Oooogh!"

"That's for you!" said Hobson. "Now perhaps you'll keep the cane to yourself, you bully! Yah!"

With which James Hobson, of the Shell, turned and stamped out of the study, slamming the door after him with a slam that woke the echoes far and wide.

Harry Wharton & Co. gazed after him as he went stamping down the passage.

"Well," gasped Bob, "old Hobby's done it now!"

There was no doubt about that! Old Hobby had done it. Done it with a vengeance! He had knocked down Prout's head prefect, and, in all probability, blacked his eye! Now it was time for the skies to fall!

though it was pretty stiff, but he grabbed up my music and tore it! Look at it! The Vandal! The Philistine! The—the cannibal!"

"Prefects don't like being told to shut up," remarked Johnny Bull.

"I could have sat down and cried," said Hoskins, with a break in his voice. "All my band parts—I've been at work on them ever since the term started—and now I've got them all to write out over again, and they're all mixed up and—"

"And Hobby?"

"Old Hobby came in and saw what had happened, and went off at the deep end," said Hoskins. "Loder's whopped him a good many times, too, but that was the climax, you know, tearing up a chap's music! But I never knew he was going to rag Loder—"

"Well, he's done it now," said Harry. "Loder deserves it, a dozen times over, but Hobby's rather an ass. I shouldn't wonder if Loder has a black eye—"

"Oh crikey—"

"And when he shows it to Prout the fat will be in the fire! Look here, Hacker might put in a word, as your Form-master. Think it's any good going to Hacker?"

"Hacker's a fool!" said Hoskins. "He ragged me in class only this morning because I wrote down a bit for the 'cello on my Latin paper. It came into my head, you know—"

"Never mind that! Get Hacker to speak to Prout before poor old Hobby gets the chopper."

"Well, I'll try!" said Hoskins doubtfully; and he left the study, to try his luck with Mr. Hacker, the master of the Shell.

Two prefects of the Sixth Form, Walker and Carne, passed him in the passage. They glanced at him and then

came on to the study, which the Remove fellows were just leaving.

"Is Hobson here?" asked Walker.

"No," answered Harry.

"Well, Prout wants him. Know where he is?"

"Haven't the foggiest."

Walker and Carne went into the study, evidently to make sure that Hobson was not there. The Famous Five walked away with serious faces. Hobson was wanted already, which meant that Loder of the Sixth had already gone to Prout. It could scarcely be doubted that the outcome of the affair would be "bunking" for James Hobson, and the chums of the Remove were feeling quite concerned about him. Hobby of the Shell was rather a fat-head, but he was a decent fellow, and everybody liked him—as much as everybody loathed Loder.

"I say, you fellows!" yelled Billy Bunter, as the Famous Five came up the Remove staircase. "Heard?"

"What, and which?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Loder's got a black eye!" squeaked the Owl of the Remove, in great excitement. "I saw it!"

Evidently Billy Bunter had got the news already. He was telling the tale to a dozen Remove fellows on the landing when the Famous Five came up.

"Gammon!" said Skinner. "Everybody at Greyfriars would like to black Loder's eye, but who'd have the nerve to do it? Not even Smithy!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith laughed.

"Hardly!" he agreed. "There's a limit."

"Well, it's black!" declared Bunter. "I tell you I saw him going to the Head's study. You know old Prout sticks in the Head's study now Dr.

Locke's away, and he makes out that he's headmaster—"

"Better let him hear you saying he makes it out!" grinned Peter Todd.

"Well, Loder was going to see Prout, but I'll bet he could only see him with one eye. He, he, he!" chortled Bunter. "I tell you the other was as black as—"

"As the back of your neck?" asked Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast! It was as black as the space of ades—I mean the ace of spades! Somebody has hit Loder in the eye!"

"More power to his elbow if he has," said Squiff. "But—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Bunter's got it right, for once," said Harry. "Hobby of the Shell punched Loder in the eye in his own study—"

"Great pip!"

"Serve him right!"

"He's asked for it a dozen times!"

"But it will be the long jump for Hobby if he's really blacked Loder's eye!" exclaimed Mark Linley.

"Poor old Hobby!"

"That chap was always a silly ass!" remarked Skinner.

"Oh, shut up, Skinner!"

"Where's Hobby now?" asked Hazeldene.

"Seems to have vanished," answered Nugent. "The prefects are looking for him to take him to Prout."

"Poor old Hobby!"

"It's the sack!"

"Serve Loder right, all the same!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Here comes Sykes of the Sixth! Want anything, Sykey?"

"Is Hobson of the Shell up here?" asked the prefect.

"Haven't seen him."

"Well, Prout wants him!" grunted Sykes.

And, after a very cursory glance along the Remove passage, he went down again.

"I say, you fellows, Hobby's keeping out of sight!" grinned Billy Bunter. "I fancy he's sorry by this time that he punched Loder! I'm jolly glad he did, all the same! He, he, he!"

The Famous Five went into Study No. 1 to tea. They were feeling quite worried about "poor old Hobby." Mr. Prout, acting as temporary headmaster in the absence of Dr. Locke, could hardly do anything but expel a fellow who had given a Sixth Form prefect a black eye. No doubt Hobby, on reflection, realised as much, and the juniors could guess that he was feeling very much dismayed by that time.

Perhaps that was the reason why he could not be found. After tea the Removites went down, expecting to hear that Hobson of the Shell had been bunked. But they found that the prefects were still looking for him, and had not yet succeeded in finding him. Hobby of the Shell seemed to have vanished into thin air.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Hunting Hobson!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH, the Bounder of Greyfriars, stretched himself in the study armchair in Study No. 4 after tea and took a cigarette from a case.

Tom Redwing, his study-mate, gave him an expressive look and left the study. The Bounder laughed, and lighted the cigarette.

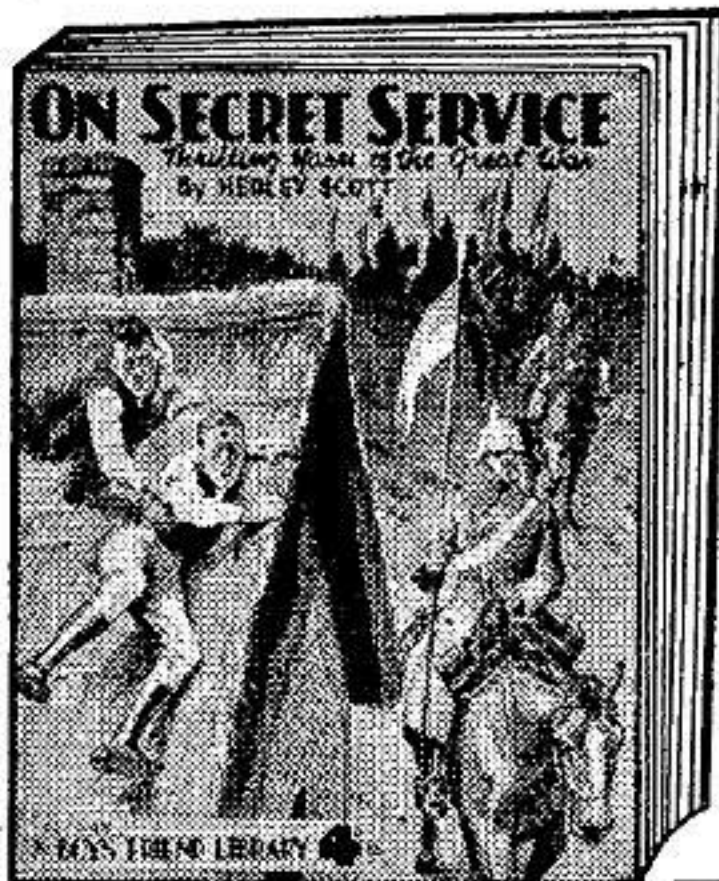
He was smoking when the study door suddenly opened, and Smithy whipped the cigarette from his mouth, dropped

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it, and placed his foot on it before the door was fairly open. Loder of the Sixth had a way of paying sudden surprise visits to Remove studies, and he probably had a suspicion that there were shady secrets to be discovered in Study No. 4 if the Bounder could be caught off his guard.

Fortunately for Smithy, it was not Loder this time. Loder of the Sixth was rather busy attending to an eye that was growing darker and darker, in spite of all his care. The cigarette was swiftly annihilated, but the scent of smoke in the room would have betrayed the Bounder. But it was only Claude Hoskins of the Shell who came in.

"You silly ass!" grunted the Bounder, greatly annoyed.

Hoskins came in, and shut the door after him.

Vernon-Smith stared at him.

He hardly knew Hoskins, whom he regarded as a cranky ass. The genius of the Shell had never visited Study No. 4 before, and the Bounder could not imagine why he had come now.

"What the thump do you want?" grunted Vernon-Smith.

"Just a word or two," said Hoskins. "I suppose you know about that hooligan Loder tearing up my music?"

"Bother your idiotic music!"

"Of course, you wouldn't understand what it means! You're a fool!" remarked Hoskins, with a nod. "Never mind that! What I mean is, you've heard about old Hobby punching the brute in the eye—"

"Stout lad!" grinned the Bounder.

"The prefects are hunting him to take him to Prout. I've been to Hacker, but he says he can't interfere. I've given Hobby the tip to keep out of sight for a bit."

"Haven't they found him yet?"

"No; and they won't! You see, I'm not going to have old Hobby sacked, if I can help it, for acting like a good pal!" said Hoskins. "I've got rather an idea for pulling him through. That's why I've come here."

"Blessed if I can see why," said Vernon-Smith, with a stare. "I'd do anythin' I could to help a chap who blacked Loder's eye! But I can't do anythin'."

"Last week there was a rag in Loder's study," said Hoskins. "You were in it up to the neck. You busted open his desk or something, and got out a lot of things he was frightened for Prout to see—cigarettes and racing papers, and all sorts of such muck. The fellows say so, anyhow. Loder must have had some reason for letting you off as he did—and that was the reason."

"Right on the wicket!" agreed the Bounder. "Loder would have been sacked if Prout had seen what I rooted out in his study. He was jolly glad to let the matter drop, though we fairly wrecked the place. But what—"

"Well, Loder hasn't changed in a week," argued Hoskins. "If he had such things in his study last week, he's got them there now—what?"

"I suppose so. But what—"

"Well, that's the idea. I only wanted to make sure," explained Hoskins. "Of course, I'd never give even a cad like Loder away to be sacked, but I'm thinking of Hobby. Hobby's got to be pulled through somehow. Loder could pull him through if he liked—nobody else could. You scared the brute by rooting out all his putrid secrets! Why shouldn't I do the same?"

The Bounder whistled.

Hoskins of the Shell was popularly

supposed to think of nothing but sharps and flats, chromatic scales and diatonic chords in G major, diminished sevenths and perfect fifths, and such things.

Evidently the danger of his chum had roused Hoskins.

At this very hour he should have been in the music-room, putting in his piano practice. He had forgotten it. Friendship could go no further.

"I say, I'd be careful, if I were you!" advised the Bounder. "Loder may be more careful with his things since we showed him up that time. And—if you don't mind my mentionin' it—you're rather a foozlin' ass!"

"Well, I only wanted to make certain that Loder is a rotten black-

GREYFRIARS CARTOONS

By HAROLD SKINNER

No. 19.—SIDNEY JAMES SNOOP.

(The weedy slacker of the Remove.)



Snoop's a pal of mine, of course,
But, although I shall not fall
After this to feel remorse,
Truth is great and must prevail.

This is how he looked to-day
After trying Prout's cigars.
Never smoke! It does not pay!
(Why these cynical "Ha, ha's"?)

guard, as the fellows say, before I got going," said Hoskins. "You really found those rotten things in his study?"

"Yes, rather!"

"That does it, then! I'm going to get a pull on Loder; and if Hobby's sacked, Loder can jolly well be sacked along with him!" said Hoskins determinedly. "He begged for that punch in the eye, and he can't complain. Hobby can keep out of sight till I get Loder fixed."

Claude Hoskins left Study No. 4, leaving the Bounder grinning. Smithy, it was true, had ragged Loder, and fairly brought him to his knees with the fear of exposure. But Smithy was the man for such things. Claude Hoskins most certainly was not.

Smithy's opinion was that that "foozling ass" would come a mucker; he certainly was not the kind of fellow to deal with Gerald Loder successfully. If he began playing the goat in Loder's study, it was probable that he, not Loder, would be sacked along with Hobby. However, Hoskins was on the warpath, and that was that!

When the Bounder went down he found most of the fellows discussing the mysterious disappearance of Hobson of the Shell.

Half a dozen Sixth Form prefects were looking for that elusive youth, but without any luck.

The Bounder knew the reason now—Hobby was keeping out of sight to give his pal a chance to carry out his scheme of pulling him through.

Loder was not among the prefects looking for Hobson. It was known that Loder was keeping to his study at present, and surmised that he spent most of his time in bathing his damaged eye.

Generally nobody wanted to see Loder; the less they saw of him, the better they liked it! Now quite a lot of fellows were very curious to see him. A prefect with a black eye was quite a novelty, and the rumour of Loder's black eye excited general interest. But Gerald Loder, for the present, was keeping that eye to himself.

At calling-over in Hall most fellows expected that Hobby would turn up. Mr. Prout, portly and pompous, took the roll himself. When he called "Hobson," there was no answering "Adsum."

"I say, you fellows, Hobson's cutting call-over!" whispered Billy Bunter, in great excitement.

"Hobson!" repeated Mr. Prout's deep, fruity voice.

But answer there came none!

Loder was not seen in the ranks of the Sixth. Apparently, he was still nursing his eye in his own quarters. Mr. Prout's plump face wore a frown. No doubt he was greatly perturbed by the fact that his head prefect had had his eye blacked. It was an occurrence that Prout justly described as unparalleled.

Nobody saw Loder before prep. This was an unaccustomed relief to the juniors, who had a welcome rest from Loder's too-active ashplant. After prep several fellows went along to the Shell to inquire whether Hobson had turned up. But he hadn't. It began to look as if he would not be bagged till bed-time. But it was not yet bed-time when Billy Bunter suddenly put an excited face into the Rag, and shouted to the juniors there.

"I say, you fellows, they're after him!"

There was a rush out of the Rag.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There goes Hobby!" roared Bob Cherry.

A glimpse was had of James Hobson cutting down a passage as if he was on the cinder path. From the staircase Walker and Carne of the Sixth came running. Evidently they had rooted Hobson out at last.

"Stop!" shouted Walker.

"Stop!" howled Carne.

They rushed after Hobson.

It was at that moment that the spirit moved Bob Cherry to dart across the passage right in front of the two prefects.

They crashed into him together, and Walker, Carne, and Bob were mixed up on the floor.

Undoubtedly it saved Hobson. He

vanished. A patter of feet came back from the direction of Masters' Studies, and Hobby of the Shell was gone.

"You young rascal!" roared Walker, struggling to his feet, shaken and breathless.

He gave Bob a cut with his cane and rushed on. Carne stayed to give him two cuts and rushed after Walker.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob. He staggered up. "Oh crumbs! Wow!"

"Hobby's got clear!" said Harry Wharton.

"Ow! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hobby was still uncaptured. Why he was playing this weird game when it was certain that he must be bagged sooner or later was a mystery to most of the fellows. Only the Bounder knew of Hoskins' scheme—and the Bounder's belief was that Hoskins would "foozle" it. That was what remained to be seen.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Doggo!

JOHNSON—I mean Jackson—come in, Jackson!" said Mr. Woose, the new master of the Remove.

Harry Wharton entered the study.

He was not surprised to be greeted as Johnson and Jackson—indeed, he would not have been astonished had Mr. Woose called him Rumpelstilchen!

Mr. Woose was an absent-minded gentleman, and hardly ever remembered a fellow's name. He was as unlike Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, as one man could be unlike another. Some of the Remove were rather glad that Quelch had "rowed" with Prout and gone. Certainly they had an easier time in class with Woose. On the other hand, Quelch had stood up for his Form against Loder's tyranny, and it was not in Woose to stand up for anybody or anything.

Mr. Woose adjusted his gold-rimmed glasses, which were always slipping down his nose, and blinked at the captain of the Remove.

"You sent for me, sir?" said Harry.

"Oh, yes! Quite!" assented Mr. Woose. "I have something to say to you, Johnson. By the way, I think your name is Johnson?"

"Wharton, sir."

"Oh, quite so—quite!" said Mr. Woose. He had been putting some books away when his head boy came in. Now he sat down at Mr. Quelch's writing-table and put his feet under it. Apparently they knocked against something there, for he uttered an ejaculation.

"Goodness gracious! There is something under my table—perhaps the wastepaper-basket. Please look, Johnson."

Harry Wharton bent to look under the table, to pull away the object that incriminated Mr. Woose as he sat in Quelch's chair.

But he did not touch that object.

He stared at it with bulging eyes.

It was a live object.

It was, in fact, a Shell fellow, crouching into as small a space as a rather sturdy fellow could possibly crouch into.

Harry Wharton quite unexpectedly had discovered where Hobson of the Shell was hidden.

Luckily, he retained his presence of mind. Hobson had wriggled out of reach of Mr. Woose's feet. He gave Wharton an imploring look. Wharton said nothing; he reached under the table and pulled away a wastepaper-basket which, fortunately, was there.

"Ah! That was it," said Mr. Woose, as the wastepaper-basket was revealed.

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"Thank you, Jackson!" He stretched out his legs, which Hobson skilfully eluded. "Now, Jackson—I mean Johnson—I think you said your name was Johnson? Yes, yes! Now, Johnson, Mr. Prout has spoken to me about an extraordinary occurrence. I learn that a Shell boy named, I think, Hobbington or Harrington—in fact, I do not recall his name—has assaulted a Sixth Form prefect, and has hidden himself somewhere, perhaps because he is going to be expelled from the school when found. Had you heard of this, Johnson?"

"Yes, sir."

"Now, it seems that the prefects have been searching for this boy Hobbs—I think his name was Hobbs—and they found him hidden in a box-room," said Mr. Woose. "Somehow he succeeded in eluding them, however. He has not yet been found, Johnson."

"Hasn't he, sir?" gasped Wharton.

"Mr. Prout thinks that other boys must know where he is, and that they are helping him to remain in hiding," said Mr. Woose. "Do you think it possible, Jackson, that any Remove boy knows where he is?"

"I—I think it—it's possible, sir."

"Well, I hope not—I hope not! I do not wish my boys to be mixed up in the matter at all," said Mr. Woose. "Mr. Prout is very angry, of course—which is very natural in the extraordinary circumstances. Any Remove boy helping Hobley to elude the prefects will be severely punished. Please make that known to the Form, Johnson."

"Certainly, sir."

"If you have any reason to suppose that Hobbs is hiding in the Remove quarters, Johnson, you must tell me."

"I'm pretty certain he isn't, sir," answered Wharton demurely. "In fact, I think I can say for certain that Hobson isn't in any junior study."

"I am glad to hear it—very glad!" said Mr. Woose. "Can you assure me, Williams, that the boy Hobbs is not in the Remove passage at all?"

"I'm absolutely certain of it, sir," said Harry. He could hardly fail to be certain of that, as the missing Hobby was crouching within three feet of his toes as he stood before Mr. Woose's table.

"Very good! I will inform Mr. Prout of what you say," said Mr. Woose, rising. "He appears to think that some Remove boys may know something of the matter; I understand that Loder suggested it. I am sure I do not know why. I shall certainly inform Mr. Prout that it is a mistake."

The new master of the Remove whisked out of the study. His glasses fell off and fluttered at the end of their cord. Recapturing them, Mr. Woose jammed them back on his nose and hurried away to see Prout.

Harry Wharton closed the door after him, then he bent and looked under the table again.

"Hobby, you ass——" he breathed.

"That blithering idiot clear?" whispered Hobson.

"Yes, but he may be back soon. What the thump are you hiding in Woose's study for?"

Hobson crawled out from under the table; he was rather dusty, and very red and breathless.

"Well, they rooted me out of the box-room," he said. "I had to dodge somewhere. Old Claude got a word to me, you know, and he says he's got an idea for pulling me through if I can keep out of sight for a bit."

"What the thump——"

"I don't know what the stunt is any more than you do, but old Claude is frightfully clever, you know," said Hobson.

Wharton made no rejoinder to that. The loyal Hobby, who was not frightfully bright himself, had a great admiration for his chum. It was not widely shared by other fellows.

The general opinion in the Shell was that Hobby, outside football, was a fat-head, and that Claude Hoskins was a fearful ass. Harry Wharton's belief was that the Shell fellows were about right.

He could not help feeling that if Hobby was relying on old Claude's cleverness to pull him through he was backing a loser.

"We had only time for a word," explained Hobson. "Old Claude said it would be all right if I could keep doggo till to-morrow."

"I—I hope so, old chap," said Harry very dubiously.

"You see, I'm up for the sack," said Hobson dolefully. "I was rather wild when I went to see Loder; you may have noticed I was a bit excited——"

"Sort of," agreed Wharton.

"Of course, the brute ought to be punched!" said Hobson. "Still, a Lower School man can't punch a prefect. Prout will sack me. Only old Claude says he's got a wheeze, and he's awfully clever. I'm going to give him a chance, anyhow—if I'm going to be sacked I'm not in a hurry. They ain't going to snaffle me till to-morrow."

"You can't squat under Woose's table all night."

"Nunno! I dodged into this study because there was nobody here, and then that little ass Woose had to trickle in, and I squatted under the table to keep out of sight. Now he's gone it's all right. There's the vaults, you know."

"The vaults?" repeated Wharton blankly.

"The vaults under the school! I can hide there as long as I jolly well like, if I can get in! Old Quelch had charge of the key, you know, and it was always kept hanging in this study. You know where he kept it, being a Remove man. I was going to look for it——"

"I say, it will be a bit parky in the vaults at night——"

"That's nothing! I can stand that! I've got to keep doggo till to-morrow, to give old Claude his chance. I can jolly well tell you I don't want to be bunked. I forgot about that when I was punching Loder in the eye! I—I've been thinking of it a good bit since," confessed Hobson.

"But what can Hoskins do?"

"I don't know; but you know how clever he is."

"Um!"

"Anyhow, I'm doing as he says! Where's that key? I want to bag it before old Woose blows in again."

"Quelch used to keep it hanging on the key-rack over his desk. It's a long iron key. I know it by sight—I'll get it."

Harry Wharton stepped to the key-rack in the corner of the study where Mr. Quelch had been accustomed to keep several large keys, among them the key to the door of the vaults.

"Oh, my hat!" he ejaculated.

"What——"

"It's gone!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Secret Panel!

JAMES HOBSON gave an angry grunt.

"Gone!" he repeated.

"Yes."

"The vault door key?"

"Yes."

"Oh, look again!" grunted Hobson.

Wharton looked again—not that looking again was of much use. Looking again and again would not produce the missing key.

That long, iron key was quite well known. It had always been in charge of Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, in whose charge Dr. Locke had left many matters. Once or twice adventurous fellows, with a fancy for exploring the ancient vaults below Greyfriars, had "sneaked" that key to open the door that led down to the subterranean recesses. Whoppings had sometimes resulted for the dim old vaults were strictly out of bounds.

Nobody in the Remove, certainly, had bothered about that key of late, or given it a thought. Wharton had expected to find it hanging where Mr. Quelch had been accustomed to leave it. But it was gone.

"Some ass has bagged it to go down to the vaults, I suppose," said Harry. "I heard that Coker of the Fifth was gabbling about going down some time—perhaps he's got it."

"Blow him!"

"Or perhaps Prout's taken charge of it," added Harry. "The Head always left it with Quelch, but Prout's made a lot of changes since he's been Chief Beak. He mayn't have left it with Woose—no reason why he should, if he happened to think about it at all."

"Anyhow, it does me in the eye!"

"It do—it does!" agreed Wharton.

Hobson grunted.

Wharton, as a matter of fact, did not think it much loss. Hiding for a night in the dark, dreary, damp old vaults seemed rather a rotten idea to him. Neither had he the slightest faith in any "stunt" that Claude Hoskins might have evolved for pulling Hobby through. Still, he was full of sympathy for the hapless Hobby. He would have done anything he could to help the fellow who, only too certainly, was going to be "bunked" for blacking Loder's eye. But there seemed to be nothing that he could do.

"Blow it!" repeated Hobson. "I've got to keep doggo somewhere till tomorrow, to give old Claude his chance! Blow it! I'd like to punch the man that's got that key. I—I wonder whether he may have left the vault door unlocked—"

Hobby's mind, evidently, was still running on a hiding-place in the vaults. Certainly it was a safe place, if a fellow could tolerate the darkness, and cold, and solitude.

"Well, look here," said Harry. "If you're really keen on getting into the vaults, Hobby—"

"Of course I am, you young ass!"

"Well, there's a way in from this study," said Harry. "All the Remove know about the panel in the wall in this study—I daresay you've heard

about it—it's been screwed up since it was used last—"

Hobson started.

"My hat! I'd forgotten that!" he exclaimed. "I've heard about it—but I thought it was only some fag yarn—you fags are always such asses—"

"Fathead!"

"Look here, you young tick—"

"Ass!"

"If you want a punch in the eye, Wharton—"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Don't play the goat, Hobby, you duffer! You've done enough punching in the eye for one day, I should think! Look here, here's the panel if a fellow could get it open! It's screwed up, but I might be able to nip in with a screw-driver, if Woose keeps clear—"

He approached the wall of the study next to Mr. Quelch's bookcase.

Quelch's study was one of the oldest rooms at Greyfriars. The walls were of oaken panels, almost black with age, centuries old; though the stone walls they covered were centuries older.

Four screws were driven deep into the corners of that panel on which Wharton's hand rested, pointing it out to Hobson.

Interesting as that relic of ancient times was, Mr. Quelch had had no fancy for a secret door opening into his study. Hence the screws, which fastened it securely.

The heads of the screws had been carefully covered with putty and stained so that they did not show on the oak, and the panel looked exactly like the rest of the oaken wall. Wharton, however, knew where to look for it.

Hobson, with an eager look, joined him and ran his fingers over the wood. He soon spotted the screws.

"My hat! That's all right!" he said. "I can jolly well get that open."

"I might be able to get a screw-driver—"

"That's all right, I've got one."

Hobson produced his pocket-knife. It was one of those complicated knives that contain all sorts of things. Among other things it contained a screwdriver.

"Oh, good!" exclaimed Harry. "Keep an eye open for Woose."

"Right-ho!"

Hobson opened his screwdriver and set to work on the screws. They had to be scraped clear, but that did not take long. But it took longer to unscrew them. They were long, driven deep, and had been in the wood a considerable time. Five minutes elapsed before the Shell fellow got the first screw out.

Meanwhile, Wharton remained on guard at the door, listening for the returning footsteps of Mr. Woose.

It was close on bed-time now for the Remove and Wharton was getting a little anxious. But he was going to

stand by poor old Hobby, and help him all he could.

A squeaky voice—easily recognisable as Mr. Woose's—was heard in the passage. The deeper, sharper tones of Mr. Hacker, the master of the Shell, answered.

"That's Woose!" breathed Wharton. "And my beak!" muttered Hobson.

"All serene—they're jawing! Go ahead! Look here, I'll jolly well lock the door!" whispered Harry.

He turned the key silently.

Hobson went on with his work. A second screw was withdrawn; while the squeaky and the harsh voices continued in talk in the passage.

At length, however, the conversation outside ceased, and Mr. Woose was heard to come to his door.

The door handle turned.

Wharton's heart beat.

He was taking a great deal of risk in locking his Form-master out of his study. He could only hope that Mr. Woose would suppose that some fellow had locked the door for a "lark" and cleared off. He was very silent as he stood within the door.

"Goodness gracious!" came Mr. Woose's squeaky voice. "The door is locked! I have no recollection—no recollection whatever—of locking it when I left the study! Yet I must have done so."

Wharton grinned.

Mr. Woose's absent-mindedness was coming to the rescue!

He heard a rustling sound without, as the new beak went through pocket after pocket, evidently in search of his study door key!

"Goodness gracious!" ejaculated the squeaker again, "I cannot find the key—yet I must have taken the key! Dear me!"

"Is anyzing ze matter, sair?" came another voice; that of Monsieur Charpentier, the French master.

"Yes, yes, I have mislaid the key of my study, sir, and I must have locked the door when I left a short time ago. It is very distressing!" said Mr. Woose. "I can find the key nowhere! I must have laid it down, perhaps—I may have taken it away in my hand—"

"Vere you go viz yourself, sair, ven zat you leave your study?" asked Monsieur Charpentier.

"I went to speak to Mr. Prout!"

"Zen peut-etre—perhaps—you leave him chez Monsieur Prout—you lay him on ze table of Mister Prout—"

"Good gracious! That is very probable!" squeaked Mr. Woose. "I will go back to Mr. Prout and ascertain."

His whisking footsteps were heard receding—much to the relief of the two juniors in the study.

"Buck up, Hobby!" murmured Wharton.

(Continued on next page.)

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"There goes another!" said Hobson. The third screw was out, and the Shell fellow set to work on the fourth. That also was withdrawn before there was any sound of Mr. Woose coming back.

Wharton crossed to the panel, felt over it for the spot where he knew the spring was, and pressed it.

The panel flew open like a door. The electric light from the study streamed into the opening, disclosing a flight of spiral stairs that wound downward into deep darkness.

"Good!" said Hobby. "It's jolly dark——"
"Well, I've got my torch." Hobson extracted a tiny electric torch from his pocket, and shot a beam down the steps. "That's all right!"
"You'll find it jolly cold——"
"I can stand it!"

Hobson passed through the opening. Evidently he was determined, and the cold and the dark in the vaults had no terrors for him.

"Shut it up after me!" he said. "I don't suppose old Woose will notice that the screws are out—he never notices anything! Besides, he won't know about the panel, being new here. It's all right."

Wharton nodded, and closed the panel on him.

It clicked shut, and the oaken wall presented the same appearance as before. Quite a close inspection was required to discern the holes in the old black oak where the screws had been. Certainly it was unlikely that Mr. Woose would make any such inspection.

Wharton crossed to the study door again.

He unlocked it and peered out into the passage. Hobson had made his escape; and now the captain of the Remove was anxious to make his own. But the Removite was not so lucky as the Shell fellow.

The coast was clear, and he stepped out. But the next moment Mr. Woose came in sight round the corner.

"Goodness gracious!" ejaculated Mr. Woose.

He had returned—not having discovered any missing key on Prout's table—expecting to find his study door still locked! So he was, naturally, astonished to see the head boy of his Form stepping therefrom.

"Johnson!" he exclaimed. "I mean, Simpson! What——?"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Wharton. He was fairly caught.

"What does this mean, Johnson?" exclaimed Woose, whisking down the passage. "I recall now that you were in my study when I left it! Jackson, you locked the study door!"

"I—I——" stammered Wharton, quite taken aback.

"This is very reprehensible, Williams!" said Mr. Woose severely. "A very foolish practical joke on your Form-master, Williams! You will take a hundred lines of Virgil, Williams!"

"Yes, sir!" said Harry meekly.

Mr. Woose, frowning, went into his study—little dreaming of what had been happening there—and the captain of the Remove cut off, the richer by a hundred lines!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Horrid for Hoskins!

"**C**HUCK it, Hosky!" suggested Stewart of the Shell.

"Rot!" said Hoskins.

"It's a rotten idea!" remarked Stewart.

"Rats!"

"Well, you haven't much more time

before dorm—and Loder ain't coming out of his study!"

"I'll make him!" said Hoskins.

And he left Stewart and walked away to the Sixth Form passage. Claude Hoskins was in a very determined mood.

All the Shell fellows were rather worried about old Hobby. Hobby was a great man at games, and captain of his Form, and his loss would be severely felt on the football field if he went. Apart from that, the fellows liked old Hobby; all the more, perhaps, because Hobby was a little dense. All the Greyfriars Shell agreed that Hacker ought to have done something about it. But Hacker had done nothing.

Nobody else could do anything—though Claude Hoskins fancied that he could!

Whether Hoskins' remarkable scheme, derived from the Bounder's former proceedings, was any good, remained to be seen. Anyhow, there were unexpected difficulties in carrying it out.

Gerald Loder at present was understudying the shy violet. With his decorated eye, he was keeping to his own quarters. Perhaps he hoped that that eye would be better on the morrow. Anyhow, he was anxious to keep it out of the public view for the present.

He was "sporting his oak."

Even his friends, Walker and Carne, were shut out. Even juniors who had to take him lines were not admitted. His ashplant was idle. He had whopped nobody since Hobson had punched him in the eye that afternoon.

Five or six times Hoskins had scouted along the passage; but he found Loder's door locked and Loder at home every time.

Obviously, he could not carry out his scheme while Loder was at home!

Now that it was nearly bed-time, Claude Hoskins was getting desperate. He was going to get on with it.

He arrived at Loder's door in the Sixth and found it locked, as before. This time he tapped.

"Who's there?" came Loder's savage growl.

"You're wanted, Loder!" answered Hoskins.

"What?"

"You're wanted in the Head's study."

This was true, so far as it went. Certainly Hoskins wanted Loder in the Head's study—or any study but his own!

He heard a snort from Loder.

"Is that Hoskins? Have you got that young scoundrel Hobson?"

"Prout's going to sack him!" answered Hoskins diplomatically.

This also was quite true, though it gave Loder the far from correct impression that Hobson was now with Prout in Head's study, waiting to be sacked!

Hoskins heard Loder's chair creak as he rose.

He had "drawn" the bully of the Sixth!

The door was unlocked and opened. Loder shut off the light and came out, with his hand over his damaged eye.

Hoskins made a pretence of going away down the passage. But he loitered, and when Loder was gone he whipped back to the study, ran in, shut the door, and locked it on the inside.

Swiftly he switched on the light.

Loder was not likely to be more than a few minutes discovering that Prout had not sent for him. He was likely to come back raging.

But that did not matter to Claude Hoskins, who, once inside the study with the door locked, felt himself master of the situation.

Only a week ago, the Bounder, with the assistance of the Famous Five, had fairly wrecked that study! Loder had taken it like a lamb. He had had to,

because the sagacious Smithy had rooted out all sorts of things that would have earned him the "sack" if Prout had seen them. Loder had been only too glad to let the matter drop at the time, though it had embittered his enmity towards the heroes of the Remove, and he had since made them suffer for their sins in a good many underhand ways.

What had been done before could be done again—or so it seemed to the brainy Hoskins.

The scheme was simple enough! Loder could get old Hobby off the sack.

He was the only man who could. He had Prout in his pocket, as it were.

With proofs of his secret black-guardism in Hoskins' hands, all ready to be handed over to Prout, Loder would have to toe the line as he had done before in dealing with the Bounder!

Claude Hoskins had it all cut and dried!

He lost no time.

Every receptacle in the study that was not under lock and key, was quickly rooted through. But nothing of an incriminating nature was there.

Hoskins stopped at last before a desk—a new oaken desk that had replaced the one smashed by the Bounder. It was locked, and Hoskins had no doubt that it contained what he had been looking for. On the previous occasion Smithy had recklessly smashed open a locked desk. Now Hoskins was going to do likewise!

He picked up the study poker.

Crash, crash!

There were footsteps outside. Loder was coming back. The sound of crashing in his study greeted his ears as he came.

"What the thump——" roared Loder. He wrenched at his door-handle.

"Who's in there?" he bawled.

Crash!

"Is that you, Hoskins?"

Crash!

"By gum, I'll smash you!" shrieked Loder. "Open this door!"

Crash! Smash! Crash! Bang!

Smash!

Hoskins was going strong.

"Will you let me in, or shall I fetch Prout?" shrieked Loder, through the keyhole.

"Fetch Prout!" yelled back Hoskins. "Perhaps you'd like him to see what you've got in this study, Loder!"

"You mad young idiot!"

"Yah!"

Loder's footsteps departed.

Hoskins did not believe that he had gone to fetch Prout. When his study had been wrecked the week before, he had been scared out of his wits at the idea of Prout seeing what was revealed by the study wreckers. It had not occurred to Claude Hoskins' powerful brain that Loder had probably taken precautions against a similar happening.

But it dawned on him slowly when the new desk lay in wreckage round his feet.

Papers and letters, all sorts of things, were strewn on the floor. But there was not a single cigarette, no sign of a racing paper or a playing-card. There was absolutely nothing that Mr. Prout or Dr. Locke might not have seen without harm accruing to Loder.

Hoskins stared at the wreckage.

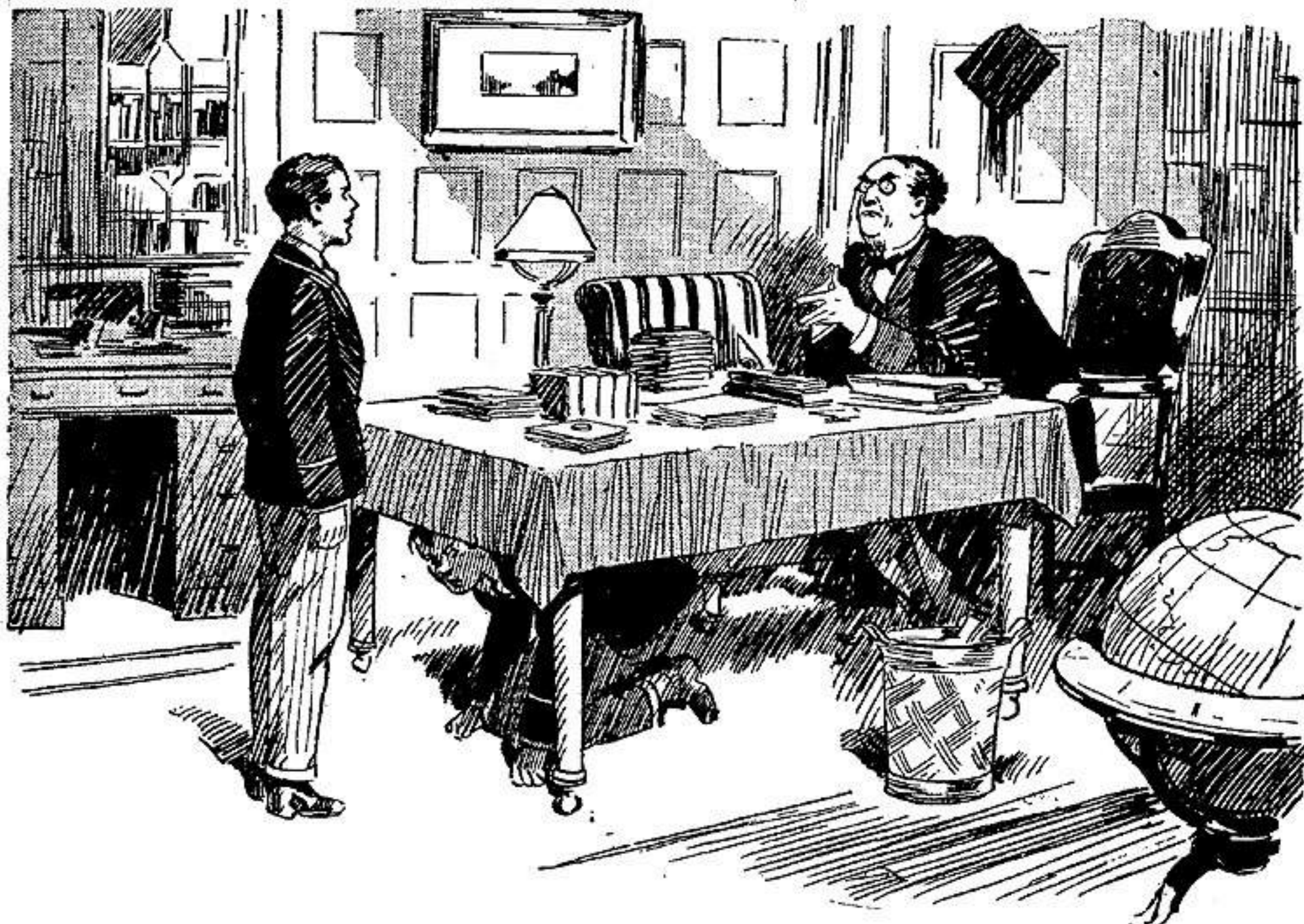
"Oh, my hat!" he ejaculated.

That Loder was the same old Loder, a black sheep and a blackguard, he had not the slightest doubt. That was a certainty. Somewhere there was plenty of evidence to get Loder sacked.

But not in his study.

That was growing clear now.

The Bounder's raid on that study had



"If you have any reason to suppose that Hobbs is hiding in the Remove quarters, Johnson," said Mr. Woose, "you must tell me." "I'm pretty certain he isn't, sir," answered Wharton demurely. "In fact, I think I can say for certain that Hobson isn't in any junior study." Wharton could hardly fail to be certain of that, as the missing Hobby was crouching under Mr. Woose's table.

been a warning to Loder, and he had profited by it. The tyrant prefect had too many enemies in the school to run such risks again. Wherever he kept his rascally secrets, he did not keep them in his study.

"Oh, my hat!" repeated Hoskins blankly.

He searched desperately round the study, but there was no other locked receptacle. There was nothing to be found.

"Crikey!" said Claude Hoskins.

A heavy tread approached the study door.

Prout was coming!

Knock!

"Hoskins!" came Prout's deep and fruity voice.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Admit me instantly!" boomed Prout.

Claude Hoskins tottered to the door. He opened it, and Prout sailed in.

Loder, behind him, gave Hoskins a vicious glare.

"Upon my word!" ejaculated Prout, staring round the study. "Hoskins, is it possible? This is—is amazing—unparalleled! You—you have actually locked yourself in a Sixth Form study and wrecked it! Are you out of your senses, Hoskins?"

The hapless Hoskins stood dumb.

It had been a failure—a ghastly frost! There was nothing against Loder to be found in that study. Hoskins stood convicted, in the eyes of the temporary headmaster of Greyfriars, as a reckless ragger—a fellow who had smashed up a prefect's study!

"Unprecedented!" boomed Prout.

"Unparalleled! Hoskins, you will be expelled for this outrage! Come with

me! I shall lock you in the punishment-room for the night! You will leave Greyfriars by an early train in the morning! Come!"

Prout's heavy hand fell on Hoskins' shoulder. Dumb and dismayed, Claude Hoskins was marched away. The Bounder had told him that he would "fozzle" it. Evidently the Bounder had been right!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Wrathy!

"SACKED!"

"Great pip!"

"Both of 'em!"

"Fancy old Hoskins! Smashing up a Sixth Form man's study—"

"Serve Loder right!"

"Yes; but you can't do these things, you know."

"Everything's going to pot since old Wingate went!" said Bob Cherry.

"The potfulness is terrific!"

"Since the Head went and left old Prout to carry on!" grunted the Bounder. "Prout's simply a pompous old ass!"

"Loder pulls his leg!"

"And who's Loder?" exclaimed Stewart of the Shell savagely. "A rotten bully and a rank outsider! A betting blackguard! He goes about with Walker and Carne—a pair of rotters like himself! His pal in the Fifth is Price—and you all know the kind of fellow Price is! He makes favourites of Angel and Kenney of the Fourth—a pair of priceless rotters! Prout must be the world's prize idiot not to know that Loder is the biggest rotter going!"

"Hear, hear!"

Stewart of the Shell was generally a cool and quiet fellow. Now he was wild and wrathful. The news had spread through the school like wildfire that Hoskins, as well as Hobson, was going to be expelled. Stewart was going to lose both his study-mates at one fell swoop.

"It's too thick!" said Carr of the Shell.

"The thickfulness is truly terrific!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The esteemed Loder is a preposterous blighter!"

"Hacker ought to do something!" said Temple of the Fourth. "A man's beak ought to stand by him!"

"I hear that Hacker's seen Prout!" said Fry of the Fourth. "He's been to his study. Hacker don't like two men in his Form being sacked. But you can bet Old Pompous wouldn't listen!"

It was close on dorm, but the Rag was crowded with excited juniors. Nearly all Greyfriars loathed Loder of the Sixth, and a fellow who punched his eye or wrecked his study was sure of sympathy.

Still, the more thoughtful fellows admitted that Mr. Prout, acting as headmaster, could hardly help coming down heavy on such lawless proceedings. Dr. Locke, in his time, would have sacked a man for such things.

Prout's fault was, of course, his confidence in Loder. Loder was not worthy of such confidence, and it was his own fault that he was loathed.

It was unimaginable that anyone would ever have punched "old Wingate" in the eye or wrecked his study when he was captain of Greyfriars.

Such things did not begin to happen till Loder was top dog—which alone was evidence that Loder was not the right man in the right place.

"All the same, we'd better keep our weather eye open," remarked Skinner of the Remove. "If men are going to be sacked for backing up against Loder, I'm going to give him all the soft sawder he wants!"

"You would!" sneered the Bounder.

"Old Hosky's locked up in punny now," said Stewart. "They're bunking him in the morning along with Hobby. It's a rotten shame!"

"They haven't found Hobson yet," said Temple. "Anyone know where he is?"

Harry Wharton was silent. Only he knew where Hobson of the Shell was—down in the vaults!

"I say, you fellows, here comes Walker!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

Walker of the Sixth looked into the Rag. He did not seem good-tempered. The search for Hobson of the Shell was beginning to get on the nerves of Prout's prefects. They had other matters to occupy their minds as well as hunting for a Shell fellow who did not choose to be found.

Inimical looks were fixed on Walker as he appeared in the doorway. He was a pal of Loder's, which alone was enough to make him unpopular.

"Is that young scoundrel Hobson here?" hooted Walker.

"Find out!" snapped Stewart.

"Go and eat coke, Walker!" shouted Carr.

"Buzz an inkpot at him!" shouted the Bounder.

Walker scowled and strode in. That was really not the way to talk to a Sixth Form prefect, and Walker was already irritated.

"Bend over that chair, Stewart!" he rapped, swishing his cane.

"Shan't!" answered Stewart recklessly.

Walker made a cut at him, and Stewart dodged round the long table. The prefect rushed after him.

That was enough for the crowd of juniors, already in a state of angry excitement. Three or four books and inkpots buzzed through the air, and all of them landed on Walker.

"Kick him out!" yelled the Bounder.

"You young sweeps!" shouted Walker. "You—Oh crumbs! Ow!" He staggered as a "Holiday Annual" caught him under the chin.

"Goal!" yelled Squiff.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Kick him out!"

"Boot him!"

Walker backed to the door. He had woke up a hornets' nest in the Rag; and did not seem to like hornets at close quarters.

There was a rush after him.

Walker was not exactly kicked out, but he was shoved and hustled and hustled, and went staggering out of the Rag, spluttering for breath.

Hoots and yells followed him as he went.

He rallied, in the passage, and came charging back, brandishing his cane. The Bounder slammed the door as he reached it, and it met Walker in full career, hurling him backwards. A loud bump was heard outside, as the senior went down.

"That will show Prout what we think of his prefects!" grinned the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he comes again!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as the door of the Rag opened. He grabbed up an inkpot to hurl.

"Look out!"

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"It's Prout!"

Bob dropped the inkpot just in time. He had come very near to landing it on the majestic Prout himself.

Mr. Prout, portly and pompous, rolled in. His florid face was red with anger. Silence fell on the juniors. They were in a reckless mood, and ready to deal with Walker. But the headmaster was another proposition.

"What—what?" boomed Prout. "What is this? A prefect assaulted by junior boys—what? What?"

Silence!

"Every boy in this room," said Prout, "will be detained on Saturday afternoon! Walker, take the names."

Walker came in.

There were angry and rebellious looks; but nothing was said. Two Greyfriars fellows were up for the sack already, and nobody else wanted to leave Greyfriars with them!

Names were taken—a long list, for there were fifty or sixty fellows in the Rag; of the Remove, the Fourth, and the Shell. Skinner, who had carefully kept out of the shindy, had his name taken with the rest, which was rather a satisfaction to the other fellows, if not to Skinner.

Then the juniors were ordered off to their dormitories, though it was not yet quite bed-time.

They went, with deep feelings.

Saturday afternoon was booked for a Form match between the Remove and the Fourth! Evidently that was going to be washed out now. There was only one consolation, and that was the fact that Loder of the Sixth had a black eye. There were few fellows in the Lower School who did not want to give him another to match!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

In the Dark!

JAMES HOBSON turned on the beam of his electric torch and looked at his watch.

It was eleven o'clock, and Hobby could almost have believed that it was eleven in the morning, so long did it seem to him that he had been in the dim dreary vaults.

"Oh crikey!" mumbled Hobson.

Hobby's faith in the cleverness of his chum Hoskins was great. Hoskins had said that he had a scheme for pulling him through, if he kept out of sight for a time, and avoided being turfed out till the morrow. Possibly Hobson would not have relied so much on that slim chance had there been any other to rely on. But there was no other! Unless Hoskins' stunt proved a winner, Hobby was booked for the sack. And the more he thought of that prospect, the less he liked it. Much as Loder of the Sixth deserved to be punched in the eye, poor Hobby had repented of that reckless punch.

Anyhow, he was going to give old Claude his chance, and for that reason, he was going to stick it out all night in the vaults. He was quite ignorant of the fact that old Claude had already tried it on, and failed, and was now locked up in the punishment-room, waiting to be "bunked" in the morning. It was just as well that Hobby did not know that, for certainly it would not have cheered him.

It was not only densely dark in the vaults, but very cold. Hobson moved about and did exercises, in the dark, to keep himself warm. He was getting very sleepy, but it was too cold to sleep on the hard stone floor. Hobby was not looking forward to a happy night.

A light would have been a relief; but his torch was getting exhausted, and

anyhow would never have lasted the night through. Hobby wisely husbanded it in case he should need it for finding his way about the vaults. He had not gone far from the spiral stair that led down through the thickness of the ancient wall from Mr. Quelch's study; but he knew that he could never find his way in the dark if he once missed it.

He sat down at last and rested his back against a stone pillar. But the chill of the stone drove him to his feet again, in spite of his drowsiness, and he put in some more physical jerks to get warm.

And it was only eleven o'clock, and there were hours and hours before him! Even the "sack" was not much worse than that prospect!

Suddenly Hobson gave a violent start. From the distant blackness of the vaults there came a gleam of light!

He stared at it blankly. It was a tiny beam of light, and moving along as if carried in an unseen hand! It vanished!

Hobson felt a shiver run through him.

He passed a hand across a clammy brow.

"Oh crumbs!" he breathed.

Nobody knew that he was in the vaults except Harry Wharton! He was not being searched for there, that was certain. Whence came that strange light?

In the day-time, and on the surface of the earth, Hobby, of course, did not believe in ghosts! He did not exactly believe in them now! But horrid recollections came back into his mind of strange tales that were told of the old Greyfriars vaults.

More than a thousand years ago there had been a Saxon monastery on that spot, of which the foundations still existed. Some of the old stone pillars round him had been standing where they stood now when Alfred was king. Discoveries had been made at various times of hapless wretches who had been walled in in those grim old days, and whose skeletons remained to tell the grisly tale. Stories were told of the spectres of ancient monks that wandered in the dark recesses.

Hobson shivered.

Such weird tales were not comfortable to think of in the middle of the night in a deep and lonely vault. And the light he had seen—what was that? His eyes had not deceived him—he was sure he had seen it!

He leaned on an old stone pillar, and felt his heart thumping. Suddenly, from the blackness, came another gleam.

Hobson gasped.

The glimmering light came from the same direction as the first, and passed along and disappeared in the same spot.

"Oh crikey!" breathed Hobson.

What on earth—or under earth—could it mean? Was the tale true of phantom monks haunting those dismal recesses in the dark hours of the night?

Hobson was strongly tempted to grope his way back to the spiral stair, and make his escape into Quelch's old study.

But he remained where he was. If Mr. Woose had not gone to bed yet, he would most likely be in that study. To emerge was to give himself up. Besides, Hobby had plenty of pluck. Startled and scared as he was, he was not going to be frightened away.

And he was thinking, too. The lights he had seen did not look like ghostly lights, whatever they might resemble; they looked like the beams from pocket flash-lamps. It was wildly improbable that anybody would be coming down into the vaults at night; but it was possible! And Hobby remembered that the key of the vaults was missing from

Wooso's study! He pulled himself together as he remembered that! Somebody had "pinched" that key, only for one purpose—to descend into the vaults. More than one "somebody," apparently, was doing so!

Hobson was thinking this out when another glimmer of light came from the darkness in the distance.

This time Hobson groped his way towards it, treading softly and cautiously, and feeling his way.

His curiosity was aroused; also, it was a relief to be near another human being in the solitude and silence. He did not intend to reveal himself, but he intended to see what was up!

He bumped against something in the dark. It was a stone stair. The light vanished.

But Hobby understood now.

The stair he had bumped on was the stair that led down from the door of the vaults. Three fellows, one after another, had descended that stair and crossed the vault—he knew that now. Obviously, they were Greyfriars fellows; no others could have been there at all.

What the game was was a mystery to Hobson. Still, he was glad that he was not alone in the depths—so long as he was not spotted.

He heard a faint sound above him. More fellows were coming down! He backed away out of possible sight beside the stone steps.

A glimmer of light came from above. He thought he heard the sound of a closing door.

Then came a low voice:
"Lockin' it?"

Hobson started! He knew that quiet, cultivated voice; the voice of Cedric Hilton of the Fifth Form.

"No; Loder's got the key!"

The answer came in the voice of Stephen Price of the Fifth.

"If it was found unlocked—"

"At this time of night? What rot!"

"Well, I suppose it's safe."

"Safe as houses! Come on."

The light came down the steps, and faint footfalls. Unseen in the darkness, betrayed only by that glimmer of light, Hilton and Price of the Fifth passed on across the wide arched vault. They were going the way three others had already gone. And Hobson of the Shell, intensely now, especially by the mention of Loder's name, followed on silently.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Black Sheep!

GERALD LODER rubbed his eye. There was a dark purple shade round that eye. It was neither ornamental nor comfortable. It irritated Loder; and his irritation was intensified by the faint lurking smiles on the faces of his friends.

So far as Loder could see, either with his sound eye or his black eye, there was nothing comic about that discoloured optic.

But he knew that his friends found something rather amusing in it. And though Loder had now met his friends on a festive occasion, he was scowling most of the time.

Loder sat at a green-covered table. It was a collapsible card-table, easily packed and carried, but quite large when opened out. On the table lay a pack of cards.

Folding chairs—now opened and set up on their legs—were round the table. It was rather like camping out.

But the camp was in a very peculiar spot! Overhead stretched the high stone arch of a vault!

Round about were the ancient arches, lost in shadow on all sides. Loder and his friends were meeting in strange quarters—a vault under the school!

On the table stood an ordinary electric lamp. There was, of course, no electricity laid on in the vaults below Greyfriars, which were hardly ever entered. The lamp was fed from a motor-car battery, to which a flex ran from the lamp, the battery being under the table.

Arranged round the spot, at a little distance, were a number of screens, of light weight and covered with bright cretonne, which gave an effect of an enclosed room. And there was a carpet on the stone flags.

There were other things, too, which added to the comfort of the strange spot Loder had selected as the meeting-place of the shady sheep of Greyfriars.

Smokes, of course, had not been forgotten.

Cigarette smoke curled up towards the high arch of the vault overhead. All the honourable company present were smoking.

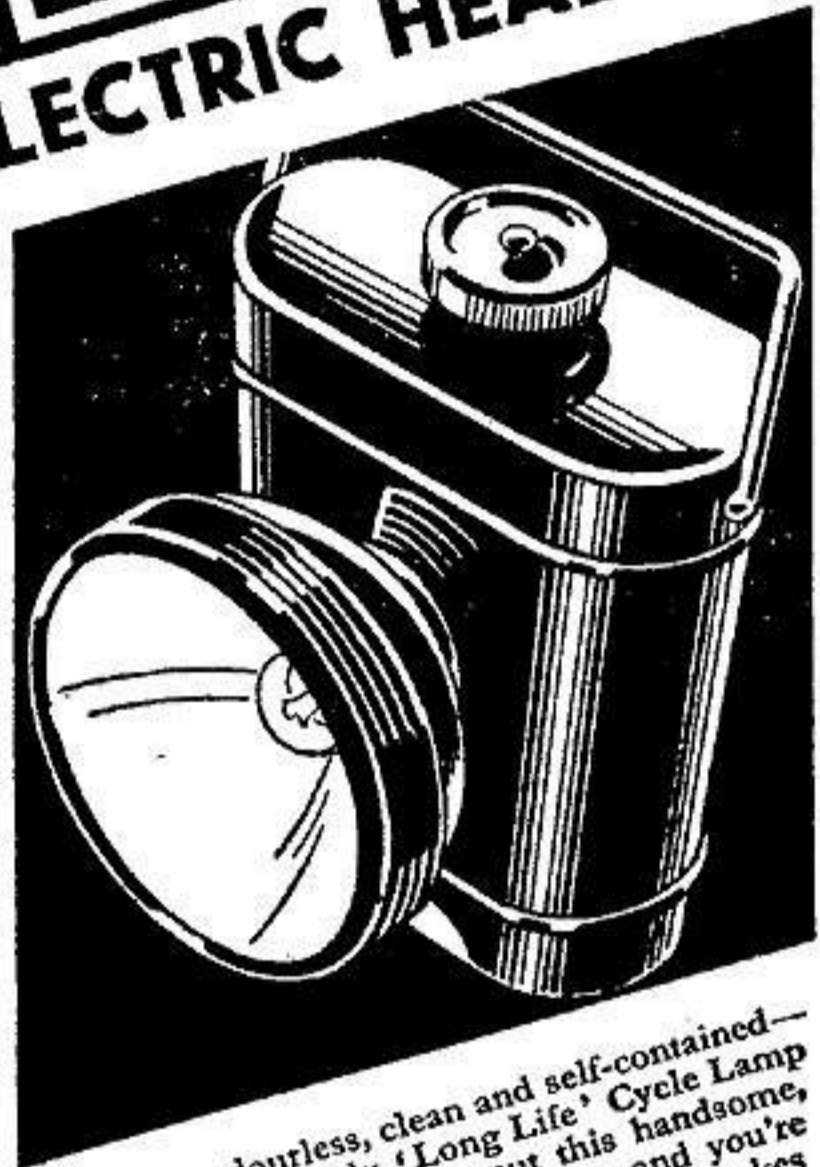
Loder and Carno and Walker, of the Sixth, were there. They were expecting others. Loder alternatively rubbed his discoloured eye and shuffled the cards while he waited.

(Continued on next page.)

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"I suppose those Fifth Form men are comin'!" remarked Walker, taking the cigarette from his mouth.

"Price said so!" answered Loder.

"Well, if Pricey comes, Hilton will come!" remarked Carne. "He's quite under Pricey's thumb again now Wingate's gone. Wingate was beginnin' to make him pi! I hope he'll come."

"He's comin' all right!" grunted Loder. "I believe he's rather taken with the idea of comin' here—safer and easier than breaking bounds and getting out of the school. I haven't asked Angel of the Fourth this time—"

"Dash it all, we don't want fags here!" said Walker.

"We want a fellow who's thick with money, whether he's a fag or not," answered Loder coolly. "I do, at all events."

Walker shrugged his shoulders, but made no answer.

"By gad!" murmured Carne. "I wonder what old Prout would say, Gerald, if he had a squint at us now."

"Sack all round!" said Walker.

"Old Pompous is fast asleep and snoring by this time!" said Loder, "and he wouldn't believe this, if he was told! I don't think he'd quite believe it if he saw it! He'd think he was dreaming! I've got that silly old ass right in my pocket, I can tell you."

Walker gave another shrug.

"That's all very well," he said. "But you haven't located here because you like the scenery. It's safer here than in the study—that's why we're here, Loder!"

"A fellow has to be careful!" said Loder. "I'm not keepin' anything in my study for the fags to turn out for Prout to see! I had a narrow escape when that young scoundrel Vernon-Smith ragged my study last week. I had to let him off to keep it dark. Only this evening that young idiot Hoskins tried on the same game; and it might have turned out serious for me if there had been anything in the study for him to root out. Prout's an old fool; but we've got to keep the wool over his eyes."

"They're coming!" said Carne, as there was a sound of footsteps in the vaults.

Through an opening in the screens surrounding the spot Hilton and Price of the Fifth appeared.

Hilton nodded to the three Sixth Formers and glanced round him very curiously, with a half derisive smile on his handsome face.

"Quite a jolly old night club!" he remarked.

"That's what it is!" agreed Loder.

"This is only a beginnin'—we're developing it later."

"Unless the beaks drop in!" grinned Hilton.

"They won't!"

"Well, I suppose not, now you're head prefect and captain of the school. Good thing for Greyfriars, what?"

Loder scowled.

"Chuck it, Cedric!" said Price. "We came here for a game, not to rag."

"My mistake!" said Hilton. "I only meant that Loder's a big improvement on Wingate as captain of the school. Life's goin' to be jollier under the new dispensation."

He dropped into one of the vacant chairs.

Price followed his example.

The distinguished company was now complete; and Loder dealt the cards, and the young rascals began to play banker—with half-crowns and currency notes on the table.

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They were soon deep in the game, and conversation languished.

Above them, Greyfriars was sleeping; but anyone who had awakened would certainly never have guessed what was going on in the school vaults.

Loder could hardly have selected a safer spot for his blackguardism.

And yet, as it happened, an eye was on Gerald Loder, little as he suspected or feared it!

Hobson of the Shell was peering through an opening of the surrounding screens, in a state of such astonishment at what he saw that his eyes almost bulged from his head.

He made no sound; and the card players never dreamed of suspecting that anyone was there.

What was up in the vaults had been a deep mystery to Hobson; until he saw Loder & Co. at their game.

Then he understood.

The Bounder's raid on his study had frightened Loder into excessive caution,

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and this was the result. It was all very well for Loder to declare that he had Prout "in his pocket"; and no doubt it was true, so long as he could deceive that pompous gentleman. But he had to be very careful indeed to keep the wool pulled over Prout's eyes.

Hobson gazed at the scene.

What would have happened to him had the black sheep discovered him there he could hardly guess; but there was no doubt that he would have had the thrashing of his life.

He was very careful not to be discovered.

After staring at the scene for a few minutes, Hobson retreated from the spot, taking care to make no sound.

Not till he had groped to a safe distance did he venture to turn on the light from his torch to see his way.

"By gum!" murmured Hobby. "The rotters! The worms! The cads! And that putrid tick is captain of Greyfriars! That old ass Prout would have a fit if he knew! By gum!"

Slowly a grin dawned on Hobby's face. Suppose Prout knew!

That was the sack for Loder, short and sharp!

Absolute blackguard and rotter! Loder was, Hobby had no idea of playing the part of sneak and informer and giving him away. That sort of thing was not good enough for a Greyfriars man.

Nevertheless, the power was in his hands; and he was under sentence of the "sack" for punching Loder in the eye! Loder could get him off the sack if he liked! He would like, fast enough, if the alternative was the sack for himself!

Hobby was not a bright man; but he was bright enough to think that out!

It took him some time to think it out—Hobby's brain did not work swiftly. But he had it clear at last, and he grinned.

"By gum!" said Hobby.

Whether old Claude's stunt had been a winner, or the reverse, Hobby did not know. But he fancied that he was on to a winner himself!

Having worked that out in his mind, Hobson of the Shell decided that he was not going to stay in the vaults any longer. He did not return to the spiral stair leading up to Quelch's old study. Price of the Fifth had left the door of the vaults unlocked when he came down, and all that Hobby had to do was to go down the stone steps and let himself out into the House.

Which he now proceeded to do.

He closed the big, heavy door behind him when he was through, and groped his way to the stairs. A few minutes later he quietly opened the door of the Shell dormitory.

All was dark and silent there.

That Claude Hoskins was missing from the dorm, locked up in "punny," Hobby did not know. He supposed that his chum was in bed, with the rest of the Shell. He did not want to wake anyone at that hour, and he turned into his own bed quietly in the dark.

He gave a sleepy chuckle as he thought of the surprise that would be caused in the morning by his presence there. But he was fast asleep long before Loder & Co. finished their game and left their secret den in the school vaults. Loder, as he locked the vault door after him, little dreamed who had recently passed through it.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Quite a Surprise!

"I SAY, you fellows! What's up?" gasped Billy Bunter.

Never had the Owl of the Remove felt so keenly before the handicap of his limited vision.

It was morning prayers at Greyfriars.

Bunter, as usual, was late.

On scarcely any morning of the term did the fat Owl arrive quite in time. He would bolt in just at the last second, or just after the last second, generally with a brace-button still to fasten or one end of his collar loose.

And so it happened that, as the fat junior wedged into the Remove, in his usual breathless state, he was, as usual, the last man in Hall, and did not know what was "on."

Even Bunter, short-sighted as he was, could see that something was on!

Fellows were staring, peering, gazing, craning their necks to look! They had their eyes upon something or somebody in Hall that caused them intense surprise and interest—thrilling interest.

Bunter nudged Bob Cherry in the ribs.



Harry Wharton crossed to the panel, felt over it for the spot where he knew the spring was, and pressed it. The panel flew open like a door, and the light from the study streamed into the opening, disclosing a flight of spiral stairs that wound downwards into the deep darkness. "Good!" said Hobson.

"What is it, old chap?" he gasped.

"What—"

"He's there!" gasped Bob.

"I say, you fellows, you might tell a fellow!" gasped Bunter. "Has something happened?"

"Somebody has!" grinned Vernon-Smith.

"What—who—which—"

Bunter was gasping with curiosity.

"Can't you see him, fathead?" asked Peter Todd. "He's standing with the Shell, just as if nothing had happened!"

"Who is?" shrieked Bunter.

"Loder's got an eye on him!" grinned Johnny Bull. "Look at Loder! He can only see with one eye, I fancy; but he's got the other on him!"

"Who?" roared Bunter.

"Silence!" called out Sykes of the Sixth. "Silence, there!"

"He's turned up!" came the voice of Horace Coker of the Fifth Form.

Prout had not yet come in to take prayers, and Coker of the Fifth felt bound to speak out loudly, simply because a Sixth Form prefect had just called for silence. That helped to make the Sixth understand how little, how very little, Coker thought of them.

"Silence!" snapped Walker.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes Prout!"

"Prout will jump!" said Frank Nugent.

"The jumpfulness of the esteemed Prout will probably be terrific!" grinned the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Silence in Hall!" rapped Carne.

"I say, what's up?" Bunter was in an agony of inquisitiveness. "I say, what's going on, you fellows?" He clutched Harry Wharton by the arm. "I say, what's up in the Shell, old chap?"

"Hobby, fathead!" answered Harry.

"Hobson!" squeaked Bunter.

"Yes, ass; he's turned up for prayers this morning, with the Shell, just as if nothing had happened!"

"Oh crikey!"

Every eye had been fixed on James Hobson, captain of the Shell, standing with that form. Now every eye turned on the portly Prout as he came in at the upper door.

Only one place was vacant in Hall—that of Hoskins, who was still locked in "punny." Everybody had expected two places to be vacant—Hobby's, as well as old Claude's.

But Hobson was there!

There he was, as large as life and twice as natural, as Bob Cherry put it! And he seemed quite at ease! There was a cheery grin on his face, as if he rather enjoyed the sensation he was causing.

Which was surprising enough, for he was under sentence of the sack, and only needed to be found to be turfed out!

Nobody had dreamed of seeing him there! Ever since he had blacked Loder's eye, early the previous afternoon, he had been invisible. Only Harry Wharton knew that he had taken refuge in the school vaults. But all the school knew that he was dodging capture by the prefects.

Had he been captured it would not have caused surprise. But it caused amazement to see him in Hall, in his place in the Shell, acting as if nothing of an unusual nature had occurred!

After dodging capture for half a day and a night he seemed to have handed himself over to the enemy; for there was no doubt, of course, that he would be collared in Hall! All the prefects had an eye on him—especially Loder! His Form-master, Hacker, had an eye on him! It was expected that Prout's eye would fall on him.

Prout, however, was not an observant gentleman. He did not observe Hobson—and did not even observe that anything unusual was going on in Hall. The breathless excitement was lost on Old Pompous.

So there was no immediate climax.

Silence fell with the entrance of Prout. After prayers, however, Loder of the Sixth went quickly up to the temporary headmaster of Greyfriars.

What he said to him the School could not hear; but they could guess.

Prout's eye turned on the Shell at once.

Loder left Prout and went over to the Shell. He signed to Walker and Carne to follow him. In case of trouble with the rebel of the Shell, Loder, evidently, did not want to risk getting another eye to match the one that already glowed purple. He preferred to have plenty of force at hand.

But Hobby, for mysterious reasons of his own, was not at all truculent. He even gave Loder a genial nod.

"You're to come with me to the Head's study, Hobson!" snarled Loder.

"Pleased!" answered Hobby.

"It's the sack, old man!" muttered Carr dismally. "You and old Hosky! I say, it's rotten!"

"It's a putrid shame!" said Stewart, loud enough for Loder to hear.

"Carr! Stewart! Take five hundred lines each!" said Loder grimly; and they gave him black looks.

He took Hobson of the Shell by the arm and walked him out of Hall. Carne and Walker followed.

Then the word was given to dismiss, and the school streamed out in a state of buzzing excitement.

"Can't make the man out!" said Bob Cherry. "What the thump did he want

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The SECRET of the VAULTS!



(Continued from page 13.)

to dodge them for so long, just to give himself up at the finish?"

"He fancied Hoskins had a stunt for pulling him through," said Vernon-Smith. "But he must know that that fozzlin' ass had landed himself in the soup instead! Loder's too deep for duffers like that!"

"Well, they've got him now!" said Toddy.

"But he doesn't seem to care!" said Harry Wharton, puzzled.

"The carefulness does not seem terrific."

Others, as well as the chums of the Remove, were puzzled by the obvious fact that Hobby of the Shell did not seem to care! Loder, Carne, and Walker, taking him to the Head's study, were prepared to prevent him from dodging away, fully expecting him to try it on. But Hobby did not try it on. He walked among them with a cheery face, and grinned as they entered the passage leading to Dr. Locke's study, now the official quarters of Prout.

"You seem to like the idea of being sacked, you young ass!" remarked Carne.

"Am I going to be sacked?" asked Hobby.

"You know you are, you young hooligan!" snarled Loder.

"Well, look what jolly distinguished company I shall have when I'm turned out!" grinned Hobby. "Fancy a man being sacked at the same time as three Sixth Form prefects!"

Loder & Co. stared at him.

"Mad?" asked Walker.

"Ain't you Sixth Form men going to be sacked?" asked Hobby coolly. "I rather think you are when I tell Prout about what goes on in the vaults at night!"

"Wha-at?"

The three stuttered together.

Loder & Co. came to a dead halt.

They blinked at Hobby.

Loder was the first to grasp the situation.

"Where have you been hiding?" he breathed.

"In the vaults!" answered Hobby cheerily.

"Oh gad!" muttered Carne.

"And I know who bagged the key of the vault door, and why!" said Hobby. "Prout will be frightfully interested to know all about it! What are you stopping for, Loder? Ain't we going to see Prout?"

Apparently they weren't!

Walker stood with a white face, utterly confounded by the sudden discovery that his fate was in the hands of the Shell fellow. Carne stood staring at Hobby, his face black with anger and apprehension. Loder was the one with presence of mind. He grasped Hobby by the shoulder, and hurried him away—not to the Head's study, but to his own!

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And not till they were inside Loder's study in the Sixth, with the door shut, did Gerald Loder breathe freely.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Whip-hand!

GERALD LODER stood with his back to the shut door of his study, his eyes fixed on Hobby, breathing hard and deep.

Hobby faced him coolly.

He had the whip-hand, and he knew it!

Loder seemed at a loss for words. His first thought had been to get the fellow who knew too much safe away from Prout. But now that he had got him in his study he hardly seemed to know how to deal with him.

It was Hobby who broke the silence.

"How's your jolly old eye?" he inquired politely.

"Wha-at?" stammered Loder.

"Nice colour!" said Hobby, eyeing it critically. "What you'd call an art shade in purple—what? I dare say it made Prout jump when he saw that eye."

Loder gritted his teeth.

"You'll be sacked for it!" he snarled.

"Think so?" said Hobby. "All right, let's go and be sacked together! What are you sticking there with your back to the door for? Prout will be going to brekker soon."

"You were in the vaults last night?" hissed Loder.

"I've told you so!"

"And you—you saw—"

"The whole show!" grinned Hobby. "Won't Prout stare when I tell him? What! Three of the Sixth and two of the Fifth up for the sack—along with old Claude and me? Wholesale order—what?"

"You're going to sneak to Prout?"

"One good turn deserves another!" said Hobby cheerfully. "Didn't you go and show him your black eye?"

Loder gave him a wolfish look. He would have given almost anything just then to spring at the Shell fellow like a tiger.

But he dared not!

He dared not touch Hobby, and he dared not take him to Prout! It was the end of all things for him at Greyfriars if he did.

His brain almost swam at the thought of Prout's wrath and horror and amazement at such a discovery!

His rage and terror were depicted in his face, and the varying expressions thereon made Hobby grin.

The tyrant of the school was brought fairly to his knees.

"Let's go to Prout!" said Hobby.

"Didn't he tell you to take me to him! I'm ready, if you are!"

"Oh, you young rotter!" breathed Loder. "If I'd known you were there—" He broke off. "Look here, you young rascal, you're going to keep your mouth shut—see?"

"Am I?" smiled Hobby.

"If you say a word of what you saw in the vaults—"

"I'm going to say a good many words when I see Prout—the whole jolly old story, in fact! Unless—"

"Unless what?" said Loder, between his teeth.

"Oh, let's come down to brass tacks!" said Hobby contemptuously. "You've brought me here because you dare not let me see Prout. What's the good of beating about the bush? I'm not keen on giving you away—it's no bizney of mine what rotten blackguardism you get up to in the Sixth! But if they bunk me, they bunk you along with me, and you can bank on that, Loder! Put that in your pipe and smoke it!"

"I—I'll do my best! I—I'll speak to Prout!" muttered Loder. "I—I'll try to get you off—"

"You'd better succeed!" said Hobby coolly. "If you don't, you'll be leaving Greyfriars the same time that I do!"

Loder stood silent again, gazing at him as if he could have bitten him. He was trying hard to think.

If he had had time to concert arrangements with his friends they might have lied themselves out of this! But there was no time!

And there was a stack of evidence in the vaults if Prout visited the spot, as he was certain to do if Hobby gave information—more than enough evidence to settle the matter for Loder & Co! And no time to get rid of any of it!

If he could gain time—

"Look here!" Loder's voice was husky as he spoke again. "We can't talk now—Prout's expecting me in his study with you. Look here, I'll let you cut, and you can keep out of sight again, as you did yesterday, while—while I'm trying to make Prout come round—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Hobby.

"What are you laughing at, you young idiot?" yelled Loder.

"Your little joke!" chuckled Hobby.

"I'm not joking, you fool! I mean what I say!"

"So do I!" said Hobby. "And it's this! I'm not giving you time to get all those things hidden away in the vaults and to make up a mountain of lies to tell Prout, so that you can get me bunked afterwards! What sort of a blithering ass do you think I am?"

"I—I would not—"

"Oh, can it!" snapped Hobby.

"Think I'd trust you? Look here, we're going to see Prout! You're going to get me off the sack, and old Claude, too—you can wangle it all right! All Greyfriars knows that you've got Old Pompous in your waistcoat pocket! You can put it how you like, but you've got to do it, and you've got to do it now. And if you don't, you know what to expect—and Walker and Carne as well! Greyfriars will be well rid of the lot of you!"

Loder made a forward movement. It seemed as if he could not keep his hands off the junior who defied him in his own study.

Hobby promptly clenched his fists.

"Come on, if you like!" he said. "I'll try to give you another eye to match that one!"

Loder checked himself in time. He longed and yearned to collar the Shell fellow and smite him right and left. But he dared not lay a finger on him. He stepped back, almost choking.

There was a tap at the door. Hobby unclenched his fists, and Loder tried to erase the savage scowl from his face as the door opened, and Mr. Hacker, the master of the Shell, cast a sour glance into the study.

"Oh, you are here!" snapped Hacker. "Hobson of my Form is wanted in the headmaster's study; Mr. Prout is waiting to see him. Why have you brought the boy here, Loder, instead of taking him to Mr. Prout?"

Hobson stood silent. It was up to Loder now.

But Hobby did not feel very uneasy. Loder had to save himself, and he could not save himself without saving the Shell fellow who was to be expelled. Loder had to decide at once; there was no time for laying plans or concerting defences with his friends. Under Mr. Hacker's sour glance Loder was red and confused; but he knew what he had to do, and he did it.

"I—I brought Hobby here to speak to him, sir," he stammered. "I—I have been thinking over—over what

happened, and—and I—I am in hopes of inducing Mr. Prout to take a more—a more lenient view, sir.”

“Indeed!” grunted Mr. Hacker. “Loder thinks Mr. Prout may let me off, and Hoskins, too, sir!” volunteered Hobby. “He is going to ask Mr. Prout if he will, sir. Isn’t that so, Loder?”

“Yes,” gasped Loder. “That—that is so!”

Mr. Hacker glanced at Hobson and then stared at Loder. Hacker, like any other Form-master, did not like expulsions in his Form. His expression grew a little less sour.

“I am glad to hear this, Loder!” he said. “As you were the victim of ragging by boys of my Form I have no doubt that Mr. Prout will listen to representations from you.”

“I—I shall do my best, sir!” gasped Loder.

“I shall be very glad if this matter

ends without an expulsion,” said Mr. Hacker, almost genially. “I shall myself punish Hobson and Hoskins for their outrageous conduct, in that case. And certainly I shall deal with them severely. You may rest assured of that. Do you desire Hobson to come with you to see Mr. Prout?”

“I—I think not, sir. I—I will go now—”

“Very good! You may come with me, Hobson! Please let me know the result, Loder, as soon as you have seen Mr. Prout! You will find me in my study.”

“Very well, sir!” gasped Loder. He made his way slowly to the Head’s study, where Prout was impatiently awaiting his arrival with the rebel of the Shell.

There was no help for it now. He had to get Hobby and Hoskins off, or share their fate! It was rather a new game

for Loder of the Sixth to plead for pardon for delinquents. But that was what he had to do—and he had to succeed! Very slowly indeed he made his way to Prout, turning over in his mind what he could say to that pompous gentleman, and he was not feeling happy when he arrived.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Amazing!

HARRY WHARTON & CO.

stared. So did plenty of other fellows.

The bell had gone, and the Greyfriars fellows were going to the Form-rooms.

Among the Shell fellows, heading for Mr. Hacker’s Form-room, were two

(Continued on next page.)



If in doubt over any Soccer query, "Linesman" will be only too pleased to help you. Write to him: c/o The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

THE WAY TO SUCCESS!

THE other day I had a most interesting chat with the new Secretary of the Football Association—Mr. S. F. Rous. We didn’t talk much about what might be called big football; that is about the form of the teams in the big Leagues. I found the new F.A. secretary much more interested, for the moment at any rate, in young footballers—the boy players.

He is very keen on the efforts which the Football Association are making to spread football knowledge—how to play the game—among the schoolboys of to-day. I understand that at the present time there are being distributed, among the school-teachers of the country, about twenty thousand copies of a football book, entitled: "How to Succeed." Those of my readers who still attend school, and who are interested in football, should ask their teachers if they have one of these books. If so, the footballers of the school would do well to make a collective study of the book.

It has been written with this direct object of teaching young players.

The author is the Rev. Kenneth Hunt, who knows something about football, believe me. He played quite a lot among professionals, helping the Wolves to win the Cup many years ago. Very few amateurs have Cup-winners’ medals, but Mr. Hunt is one of them.

It is quite natural that the new F.A. secretary should be concerned about boys playing football in the right way. He himself was a schoolmaster until quite recently, but gave up the job in order to take on as successor to Sir Frederick Wall at the offices of the Football Association.

In addition to supplying the schools with copies of the book telling how to play the game, the F.A. are also having an instructional film made, and old players are to be appointed as district coaches to the schoolboys.

BAD TOES COMPLAINT!

POSSIBLY one of my readers has heard about this scheme for teaching the lads the game of football, because I have received a letter in which this pertinent question is asked: "Do you think football teachers can really show boys how things should be done?"

My answer to that question is definitely in the affirmative, and I am all in favour of lads who want to make good at the game being brought up in the right way for a start. There is this to be said, however:

A lot of football skill is instinctive. I have known dozens of footballers who have played for their country who could not really tell how or why they did this or that on the football field. But instinctively these players have got the proper effect.

On the other hand there can be no doubt that many of the leading footballers of to-day owe their prominence in the game to correct early teaching. A boy who plays for his country as a schoolboy does not necessarily grow up into a star player. Many of the schoolboy internationals of a few years back, however, are now in the front rank of footballers. One who has gained honours this season is Westwood, the inside-left of Bolton Wanderers. He played as a schoolboy at Brierley Hill.

Obviously, no footballer can do himself full justice unless his feet are in good trim. One of my readers has trouble in this connection. He tells me that after each game the tops of his toes are very sore, and he wants to know how to get over this difficulty.

As there are doubtless many other young players who suffer in the same way, I may drop a general hint that a bit of cotton wool in the toes of the boots might be found

beneficial, and that the use of a little powder on the feet not only helps to keep them fresh, but helps to prevent the skin being rubbed off.

When the grounds are hard, too, the studs should be cut down to the minimum depth. The shorter the studs, the less the jar on the feet. Incidentally, in regard to the bad toes complaint, I have a suspicion that many young players use the toes of the boots too much when kicking the ball. The instep should be used more for hard kicking, and the sides of the boot for passing the ball to a colleague along the ground.

GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP!

I KNEW a great player some years back who said he had worn the same pair of boots in first-class football for many years. He added that during all that time it had never been necessary for him to have the toes of the boots repaired, but the sides had been patched and re-patched. This experience with the boots told a little lesson on how the game should be played. Very few footballers like new boots. They hang on to the old ones until they almost drop to pieces. This isn’t because they are superstitious, but because they play better in boots which have become "shaped" to the feet.

In football, as in other games, the question of what is good sportsmanship often crops up. In a recent match, one of my readers was keeping goal. He touched a hard-driven ball with the tips of his fingers, and it went over the goal-line. To his surprise the referee gave a goal-kick. My friend now asks whether he should have told the referee that a corner-kick was the proper decision. Would that have been the sporting thing to do?

Well, it would have been "sporty" of my young friend if he had told the referee that he had touched the ball, but I don’t think he was called upon to take this action.

So long as there is a referee in charge of a match his decisions, whether for or against a side, should be accepted without question.

Even the laws of the game lay this down as a principle, and it is the wisest course. After all, if the goalkeeper had told the referee that a corner-kick and not a goal-kick should be awarded, and the referee had changed his decision, then logically the referee would also have had to take the goalkeeper’s opinion on any other problem which had arisen during the match, concerning incidents in the goal area.

"LINESMAN."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,393.

whom nobody had expected to see heading for that Form-room again. They were James Hobson and Claude Hoskins.

Evidently, they were not "sacked." "I say, you fellows, there's Hobby and Hoskins!" squeaked Billy Bunter in astonishment. "I say, they ain't bunked, after all!"

"The bunkfulness does not seem to be terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Has Prout let them off?" asked Bob Cherry, in wonder.

"Looks like it."

"Has Loder?" grinned the Bounder. "Loder's king-pin, these days. Prout's a monkey on the stick that jumps when Loder pulls the strings."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, Hobby!" bawled Bob Cherry. "Is it all right, old man?"

"Right as rain!" answered Hobby cheerfully.

"Prout's let you off?" exclaimed Temple of the Fourth.

"He has."

"And Hoskins, too?"

"Me, too," smiled Hoskins. "I say, I was jolly glad when Hacker came and let me out of punny, and told me so!"

"Well, this beats the band!" said Fry.

"It beats the whole band! Why did Prout let you off, Hobby?"

"Loder put in a word for me."

"Loder did?" yelled the amazed juniors.

That was the climax of amazement. Loder, the bully of the Sixth, had put in a word for a fellow who had blacked his eye, and another fellow who had ragged his study. And he had, evidently, put in that word successfully, for here they were, going to the Form-room as usual.

"Do I sleep, do I dream, do I wonder and doubt, are things what they seem, or are visions about?" quoted Peter Todd.

"Loder can't be such a blighter, after all!" remarked Lord Mauleverer.

"Last word in blighters!" said Stewart of the Shell. "I can't make it out, and Hobby won't explain."

"Well, I've told old Claude," said Hobson, "but I'm not telling the whole school."

That statement added to the mystification of the juniors. But Mr. Woose and Hacker appeared in the passage at that moment, and the juniors went to the Form-rooms.

Surmise and speculation were rife in the Lower School of Greyfriars that morning, rather to the detriment of lessons.

There was hardly a fellow who was not glad that Hobson and his chum had got off the "sack." But all were puzzled and mystified.

It was said of old that a leopard cannot change his spots, nor an Ethiopian his skin. But Loder seemed to have changed, quite suddenly, and with a vengeance!

Everybody was anxious for break that morning in order to get at Hobby and shower questions on him. Everybody had sympathised with him, but all had to admit that it was extraordinary for a fellow to be allowed to stay on after blacking a prefect's eye! But the most extraordinary thing was that it was the proprietor of the black eye who had interceded for him. That put the lid on, so to speak!

"We shall see Loder sprouting wings, after this," Bob Cherry confided to his friends in class.

But if there was any change for the better in Gerald Loder, it was not visible in his looks, when he was seen in break.

He looked in the worst temper that the fellows had ever seen him in, which was saying a great deal.

His scowling brow, added to the effect of his blackened eye, gave him an expression that made fellows rather keen to keep clear of him.

"I say, you fellows, where's Hobby?" exclaimed Billy Bunter, as soon as the Remove were out.

"There he is!"

There was a rush for Hobson of the Shell.

He was quickly surrounded by a crowd of fellows, Shell, and Fourth, and Remove, with fags of the Third and Second hanging on the outskirts of the crowd, all eager for information.

But Hobby had none to give.

Loder having come to terms and fulfilled his side of the bargain, Hobby rightly considered that it was up to him not to give away the shady secrets of the black sheep of Greyfriars.

All he could—or would—say was that Loder had interceded with Prout, and Prout had let them off. Hacker had caned them in the Form-room, and that was the end of it.

From a distance Loder of the Sixth observed the eager crowd surrounding the captain of the Shell with an evil and uneasy eye.

Having very few scruples himself, Gerald Loder did not expect much of others, and he was in terror of Hobson telling the whole story all through the school. He was desperately anxious for no word to be said—at least, until he had had an opportunity of clearing away the evidence in the vaults—which he could hardly enter in the daytime without attracting notice. For that day, at least, Loder was going to be on tenterhooks.

He came striding over to the crowd, roughly pushing his way through the throng of juniors.

"Here, don't shove, you barging ass!" exclaimed Temple of the Fourth, unaware who was shoving till he looked round. "Oh! Loder! I say—"

Loder's eyes glinted at him.

He wanted to thrash Hobson within an inch of his life; but that pleasure was not for him. It was something in the way of a relief to thrash anybody, and Cecil Reginald Temple had asked for it!

Loder swished his ashplant, which he was yearning to use.

"Bend over, Temple!" he snarled.

"Oh, gad!" murmured Cecil Reginald, in dismay.

"Touch your toes!" snapped Loder.

The whole crowd were silent now, looking on. Whatever had been the cause of Loder's intercession on behalf of Hobson and Hoskins, it was clear that there had been no change in him. He was the same savage-tempered bully as of old—rather worse, if there was any difference. He was going to whop Temple simply because he wanted to whop somebody!

Then came another surprise. Hobson pushed forward.

"Hold on, Loder!" he said quietly.

Loder gave him a glare.

"What do you mean?" he snarled.

"I mean what I say. Hold on! I'd rather you didn't whop Temple, if you don't mind," said Hobson calmly.

The expression on Loder's face made the fellows exchange curious glances. He stood, for some moments of hushed silence, staring at Hobson. Then he tucked his ashplant under his arm again and walked away, without taking any further notice of Temple.

Cecil Reginald, who was preparing to "touch his toes," was very glad to leave them untouched!

He straightened up and blinked after Loder's retreating form.

"Great gad!" he ejaculated.

"Well, my only summer hat!" said Bob Cherry.

"Look here, Hobby, what's this game?" asked Harry Wharton. "Why the thump should Loder do what you tell him?"

"Oh, he likes to oblige me!" said Hobson airily.

"Docs he?" grinned the Bounder. "Then you'd better ask him to get us all off detention this afternoon. There's about fifty fellows detained for hustling Walker in the Rag last night."

"Eh, what? Oh, yes, I'll see about it!" said Hobson, and he walked away with Hoskins, who was grinning, leaving a crowd of fellows staring blankly after him.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Hobby Wants More!

"**T**OO jolly risky in the daytime!" muttered Loder.

Carne and Walker and Price nodded.

"My dear man," drawled Hilton of the Fifth, "it's riskier to leave the things there, now that a gabblin' fag knows about them."

The five seniors were gathered in Gerald Loder's study after dinner. Four of them were in an extremely uneasy frame of mind. Only Cedric Hilton, the dandy of the Fifth, preserved his usual monchalance. Indeed, he hardly concealed his contempt for the uneasy four.

"To-night!" muttered Carne.

Loder nodded.

"After lights-out we can go down into the vaults and get the dashed things out of sight," he said. "That young cad can talk as much as he likes when we've got everything safely hidden away. The rotten thing is, that I've had to get him off the sack. But I'll make him sit up and squeak when all's safe!"

"You would!" remarked Hilton.

Loder gave him an evil look.

"I'm dashed if I know how the young scoundrel spotted us," said Price of the Fifth. "I suppose he found the door unlocked. But—"

"Anyhow, he did!" said Loder. "And we can't go down in the day-time—anybody might spot a fellow! Unless Hilton would like to handle it!" he added, with a sneering glance at the handsome Fifth Former.

"Beastly fag!" yawned Hilton. "But I'd rather take the trouble than the risk of that young fathead givin' us away! Nothin' there to drag me in, if you come to that; but if you men got nailed you might let slip somethin' about your friends in the Fifth, what?"

Tap!

Loder & Co. started as the knock came at the door.

"Come in!" snapped Loder.

The door opened, revealing Hobson of the Shell. He did not come in, but stood in the doorway, giving the bully of the Sixth a cheery nod.

"What do you want?" asked Loder, repressing with difficulty his desire to clutch the ashplant with one hand and Hobby with the other.

"I want you to do me a favour, old bean!" said Hobson.

The black sheep exchanged glances. Hilton smiled faintly. He was the only one of the "sportsmen" who found anything amusing in the peculiar situation.

"What do you mean, Hobson?" breathed Loder.

"Well, it's really Walker I mean,"

said the Shell fellow. "I was rather busy last evening and missed what went on in the Rag; but I hear that some friends of mine have been detained for the half-holiday to-day on account of Walker barging in and asking for trouble."

"Well?" said Walker, with a deep breath.

"Will you ask Prout to let them off, Walker?" asked Hobson.

Walker did not immediately reply. "You see, there's a football match on between Lower and Upper Fourth," explained Hobson in an airy way. "I've promised to referee for the kids. Of course, they can't play Soccer in the Form-rooms. You see that?"

"Prout's detained them!" muttered Walker. "I can't do anything."

"Not really?" asked Hobson.

"No!" snapped Walker savagely. "So sorry!" smiled Hobson. "I think you'll be sorry, too, before long. Prout mayn't be so ratty with those fellows when he hears what kind of a blighter you are, Walker. What do you think?"

Walker did not state what he thought. His expression hinted that his thoughts verged on the unutterable.

"Excuse my bargin' in, Hobson," drawled Hilton, "but do you think this is quite playin' the game?"

The Shell fellow looked at him. "You've found somethin' out, and you're makin' use of it!" said Hilton. "Isn't that a trifle like blackmail?"

Hobson reddened.

"If I were dealing with decent fellows, yes," he answered. "But when a lot of fellows are under the weather because of a rotten bully and black-guard I'm going to get them off if I can. Think I'm going to leave my friends stewing in detention all this afternoon, instead of playing football, simply because Loder and Walker are a pair of sneaking bullies? No fear!"

"Hacker teaches them plain English in the Shell!" remarked Hilton.

"I'll tell you what," said Hobson. "Walker got these fellows detained, and he can get them off detention, and he's got to, or else I'll make him jolly sorry for himself, and the whole lot of you! Measly set of blackguards, that's what you are!"

With that Hobson of the Shell slammed the door shut and stalked away in great wrath.

Walker rose to his feet. He glanced round at his friends. "I—I suppose I'd better speak to Prout!" he stammered.

Loder gave him a nod, and he left the study. Hilton winked at Price.

"Prout will think he's got a jolly good-natured lot of prefects!" he remarked. "Always beggin' fellows off punishment!"

"Let that young villain wait till all's safe!" breathed Loder. "I'll show him just how much he can dictate to a prefect!"

"I—I suppose Walker will wangle it all right with Prout!" muttered Stephen Price uneasily.

"Oh, yes! The old fool would rather let a man off than punish him any day!" growled Loder. "That's the kind of old ass he is! He was quite pleased this morning when I spoke up for those two young cads in the Shell! He thought it magnanimous, considering that I'd bagged a black eye!" Gerald Loder gritted his teeth. "I'll show 'em exactly how magnanimous I can be when—"

"When it's safe!" smiled Hilton. "You needn't add that—we know how particular you are about safety, old bean!"

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Loder. "You're afraid to risk goin' down into the vaults in the day-time, anyhow."

"Not at all!" Hilton yawned and rose from his seat on the edge of the table. "Trot out the key and I'll go."

Loder and Carne and Price eyed him. "It's risky," muttered Carne. "If anybody sees you makin' for the door of the vaults—"

"I'll chance that! Most of the fags will be out of the House when the footer begins, and there won't be a lot of people about. Any special instructions what to do with the guilty goods?" Hilton laughed. "I suppose I can't come back carryin' the lot through the House?"

"Don't be a silly ass!" spat Loder. "They were got down there one at a time, and they can't be brought out again. They'll have to be hidden. We shall want all the things again later when—"

"When it's safe, as before!" grinned Hilton. "How you keep harpin' on safety, old thing! Must have been a connection of yours who invented the jolly old maxim 'safety first.' Only your maxim seems to be safety first and last and all the time!"

"There's a pit in the seventh vault where a skeleton was dug up years ago," said Loder, unheeding. "Drop the things into it. Nobody will ever find them there; but we can root them out later when we want them. I had that in mind all the time."

"Done!" said Hilton, and he slipped the long iron key into his pocket and lounged out of the study.

"Cheeky rotter!" muttered Loder, when he was gone.

"Well, he's got pluck!" said Price. "I'm no keener on riskin' it than you are, Loder! Still, as Hilton says, there's less risk in goin' down now and hiding the things than in leaving them there till to-night! Goodness only knows what that young villain Hobson will be up to next—and if he opens his mouth too wide all the fat's in the fire!"

Price followed his chum from the study. Loder was not entertaining company in his present mood.

A little later Walker of the Sixth came back. Loder and Carne looked at him inquiringly.

"It's worked!" said Walker, dropping into a chair. "I believe old Prout was glad of a chance to do the benevolent beak! Anyhow, he's going to tell Hacker and Capper and Woose that their precious young sweeps are let off detention! I wonder what Hobson will want next!"

"I don't know what he will want, but I know what he will get!" said Loder between his teeth. "Wait till I hear from Hilton that all's clear—and then—by gum, I'll make him wriggle."

Which was not a happy prospect for Hobby of the Shell, now refereeing in the football match between Harry Wharton & Co. of the Remove, and Temple & Co. of the Fourth.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Soccer—and a Surprise!

"IT beats Banagher!" said Bob Cherry.

"I'll say it's the elephant's hind leg!" remarked Fisher T. Fish.

"The beatfulness of the esteemed Banagher is terrific!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The surprise-fulness is great, and the astonishment preposterous! But we are going to play absurd football, which is all that matters."

"Hear, hear!"

Really it was amazing to the Remove men—as it was to the detained members of other Forms. Prout had come down heavy on the riot in the Rag the previous evening, and ordered detention for every fellow there—rather hastily, perhaps, as some of those present had taken no part in hustling and bustling Walker of the Sixth. Now he had let the whole lot off—without rhyme or reason, as it were!

The rumour spread that Hobson of the Shell had a hand in it. It was reported that he had gone to Loder's study and requested intervention from that quarter—successfully! A good many fellows knew that it was true. But that only added to the general surprise.

How Hobby did those things was a mystery!

However, satisfaction predominated. Howsoever Hobby had worked it, there it was—detentions were off, and football was on. Which on a fine, clear October day was eminently satisfactory.

In a very cheery mood, Harry Wharton & Co. changed for their match with the Fourth, and faced Temple, Dabney, & Co. in the field. Hobson of the Shell—immensely popular by now—was referee in that match. Fellows regarded Hobby with great interest.

Fags said that Loder—Loder of the Sixth—was afraid of that man Hobson in the Shell! Indeed, Bunter minor of the Second Form, said that he knew for a fact that Hobson had threatened to give Loder another black eye, if he didn't behave himself, and that Loder had fairly cringed!

This kind of rumour was good enough for fags of the Second Form, but older fellows were quite puzzled. Plenty of fellows suspected that there was a "yellow streak" in Loder, but nobody was likely to suspect him of being afraid of a Shell fellow! Yet why had he played up like this, dancing to Hobby's tune?

The juniors had to give that one up! And in point of fact, the heroes of the Remove soon dismissed the problem from their minds, football occupying

(Continued on next page.)

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their thoughts to the exclusion of lesser matters.

Temple & Co. of the Fourth were in rather good form, and the Remove men had plenty to do. The first half of the match finished up all square, each side finding the net once, and during the interval Harry Wharton warned his men to pull up their socks. It was about this time that Price of the Fifth strolled down to Little Side and stood looking on with his hands in his pockets and a rather sneering expression—habitual to him—on his face.

The second half was in progress when two Sixth Form prefects joined Price and stood talking to him.

Some of the juniors noticed the group then. Sixth Form men like Lawrence, or Bancroft, or Sykes might have come down—but it was very unusual for Walker or Carne to take any interest in junior football. Still more unusual was it for Price of the Fifth to do so.

"What's that gang here for?" Bolsover major remarked to a Fourth Form man in the crowd, and the Fourth former shook his head.

"Goal!" came a roar. Harry Wharton had potted the pill!

"Goal!"
"Bravo!"
The sides lined up again, and the game was going strong when Cedric Hilton of the Fifth sauntered along. He spoke to Price, who laughed, and they walked away together.

Walker and Carne of the Sixth remained. But they were not looking at the football. They were looking towards the House as if in expectation.

"Here he comes!" murmured Carne. And the two prefects walked to meet Loder, who was coming down from the House, his purple eye glimmering in the October sunshine.

"Goal!" came a roar from the Fourth.

Scott of the Fourth had put the leather in, and the scores were level again.

"They're keeping up!" remarked Bob Cherry. "And only ten minutes more to go! Pull up your socks, you slackers!"

It was rather unusual for Temple & Co. to put up a tussle like this. All eyes were on the game when it restarted. Hardly a fellow glanced at Loder & Co. standing at a little distance.

"Hilton says it's all right!" muttered Walker. "I suppose he's told you."

Loder nodded.
"Yes. He came to my study and gave me back the key! He's cleared everything out of sight—Prout can root in the vaults if he likes, he won't find anything there."

"Good!" said Carne.
"That young hound, Hobson, can tell Prout anythin' he pleases now!" said Loder, with a glitter in his eyes. "Let him—and I'll have him sacked for slandering prefects!"

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Walker.
"I only hope he'll give me the chance!" said Loder venomously. "He's got out of the sack once, but he won't get out of it next time if he gives me another chance."

He glanced at the football field.
"They're not through yet!" he remarked.

"Close on the finish, I think," said Carne. "Are you goin' to let them get through?"

"Hardly!"
"I say, let them rip," said Walker uneasily. "Don't muck up their footer match, Gerald! You can whop Hobson later."

"Don't be a soft ass, Jimmy Walker," answered Loder contemptuously. "Do you fancy I'm letting them get away with their cheek if I can help it? And I can help it now!"

"Well, look here, I think——"
"You don't, old man—you can't! Leave it to me," said Loder, and he walked towards the football field, followed by the other two—Walker frowning and Carne grinning.

Now that all was safe, Loder was going to show exactly how magnanimous he could be!

Interrupting a football match was a rather unheard of proceeding. Still, as head prefect, captain of the school, and head of the games, Loder had all sorts of powers in his hands. He was ready to use them all, and stretch them all to the utmost, to gratify his grudges.

"Hobson!" he called out in a loud voice.

Hobby of the Shell was busy at that moment. A tussle was going on in front of the Fourth Form goal, and the referee had a keen eye on it, as was a referee's duty. Probably he did not hear Loder's call! Anyhow, he did not heed it.

But spectators standing near Loder heard him, and looked at him.

"I say, Loder, Hobby's referee!" said Claude Hoskins. "He can't come off now."

Loder glanced round at Hoskins. That youth was already marked out as a victim.

"Go to the House, Hoskins!" he snapped.

"Eh?"
"Go to your study, and write out two hundred lines of Virgil. Bring me the lines before tea, or they will be doubled."

Claude Hoskins gazed at him. In musical matters, no doubt, "old Claude" was fearfully clever. In other matters, he was not so quick on the uptake. He did not realise at once, that this implied that all was safe now for Loder, or he would not have restarted "throwing his weight about."

"Oh, chuck it!" said Hoskins.
"What did you say?" asked Loder in a dangerously quiet tone.

"I said chuck it!" retorted Hoskins. "I'm not going to the House, Loder, and you'd better let Hobby alone, too, see?"

Loder slipped his ashplant into his hand.

"Bend over and touch your toes, Hoskins!" he said.

"Wha-at?"
"Are you getting deaf?" asked Loder pleasantly. "I told you to bend over and touch your toes! Sharp's the word."

Fellows near at hand were gazing at this little scene now, instead of at the football. Hoskins blinked at Loder, uncertain and dismayed. During that day, Loder had been under Hobby's thumb. Old Claude could not quite get it into his head that Loder was no longer in that uncomfortable situation.

"Shan't!" he said at last.
That reply, from a Shell fellow to a Sixth Form prefect, made some of the hearers gasp. It made Loder smile.

"Very well," he said, "you will be reported to Mr. Prout!" Loder turned his back on Hoskins.

He called to Hobson again.

"Hobson, do you hear me—Hobson?"
The tussle before the goal had broken up. Scott had spun the ball to mid-field, and there was a rush after it. Hobby followed on.

"Hobson!" roared Loder.
Hobby glanced round then.
"Come here!" rapped Loder,

"Can't!"
"I tell you to come here!"
"Shan't!"
Loder strode on the football field, grasped the referee by the neck, and dragged him bodily off.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Unfinished!

HERE was a roar on the football field, and round it.

Loder barged through the players, dragging Hobson. Play came to a sudden stop. Harry Wharton jumped into Loder's path, his eyes blazing.

"Get off this field, Loder!" he shouted.

A back-hander from Loder sent the captain of the Remove spinning. Hobson was hooked off.

"You rotten bully!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Let Hobson go, you rotter!" yelled Squiff.

"Oh gad!" gasped Temple of the Fourth. "Oh gad! Is that man Loder mad, or what?"

"Let go, you bully!" howled Hobson, struggling frantically. "I'll jolly well give you another black eye!"

"Collar the cad!" shouted the Bounder.

"Back up, you men!"
"Down with Loder!"

Walker and Carne rushed in. Loder needed their help, for the excited footballers were swarming round him.

"Stand back, you mad fags!" snapped Carne.

"Knock 'em over!" yelled the Bounder.

"Back up!" shouted Hobson. "Let go, Loder, you bully, or I'll make you squirm, you rotter!"

"Will you?" said Loder. "Go ahead and do it, if you can, my boy! Now you're coming to the House!"

"Let him go!" shouted Wharton.

"Take five hundred lines, Wharton!"
"Five hundred rats! We'll rag you if you don't let Hobson go! You rotten bully, keep off our ground!"

"Collar him!" hooted Vernon-Smith.

The reckless Bounder was the first fellow to get his hands on the captain of the school. He dragged Loder over, and James Hobson wriggled out of his grasp.

"Kick those rotters off!" shouted Bob Cherry.

A rush of the footballers drove Walker and Carne back. Loder was left struggling and roaring under a swarm of them. Carne ran for the House; Walker staggered away, gasping for breath.

Loder wriggled and roared.

"Chuck him out!"
"Boot him off!"
"Roll him away!"

Amid shouts and yells and hoots, Loder of the Sixth was rolled and booted away. He was left gurgling and guggling for breath. For some minutes the bully of Greyfriars was hors de combat.

"Now get on with the game!" said Hobson.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Here comes Prout!"

The portly Prout was seen advancing from the House. Evidently Carne had carried the news to him that his authoritative presence was required on the junior football ground.

Loder sat up gurgling.
"Oh, my hat! What's going to happen now?" grunted Johnny Bull. "Are we going on?"

(Continued on page 22.)

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The footballers exchanged doubtful looks.

"By gum!" gasped Hobson. "If that rotter Loder wants trouble, I'll give him all he wants when Prout comes."

"What can you do, ass?" grunted the Bounder.

"I can jolly well tell Prout that I saw Loder smoking and gambling in the vaults when I was hiding there last night!" roared Hobby.

"Oh crumbs!"

"You—you—you saw Loder?" gasped Bob.

"Yes, I jolly well did; and that's why he got me off the sack, because he was jolly well afraid not to!" howled Hobson.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Well, he's not afraid of you now, at any rate," said the Bounder dryly. "You'd better be careful what you tell Prout, unless you can prove it."

"I can jolly well take him to the very spot where Loder's got all the things—card-table, and cards, and smokes, and—"

"Oh, you blithering idiot!" said Vernon-Smith contemptuously. "Do you think Loder's left them there for Prout to see? He jolly well got them safe out of sight before he started this shindy."

"Oh!" gasped Hobson.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Hoskins.

"Still, it's true," said Hobby.

"Fat lot of good that is, if you can't prove it!" sneered the Bounder. "Think Prout is going to believe it?"

"Oh!" said Hobby again.

It dawned on Hobby's rather slow brain that an accusation was not of much use without proof. It dawned on him, further, that Loder would not have acted as he was now doing, unless the proofs had been carefully got rid of.

Hobby had to realise that the brief power had departed from his hands. So far from being able to bring the bully of Greyfriars to heel, as he had done earlier in the day, he was now at Loder's mercy.

"Oh!" he said, for the third time.

"You silly fathead!" said Smithy.

"Can you prove anything, or not?"

"Not if Loder tells lies about it."

"Then you'd better hold your silly tongue if you don't want to be sacked!"

"Oh!" said poor Hobby, for the fourth time.

Loder staggered to his feet. Prout was in the offing now, and Loder came towards the dismayed group of juniors.

"You'll answer for this to your headmaster—the lot of you!" he said. "As for you, Hobson, I hear that you've been saying slanderous things about me—some lying tale about seeing me in the vaults, or something, breaking the rules of the school. You can repeat this before Mr. Prout."

Hobby gazed at him.

"If any fellow here is fool enough to believe your yarn, he can please himself!" sneered Loder. "Mr. Prout will know what to think of it. I shall ask him to make an inquiry."

"Oh crikey!" said Hobson.

It was evident that all was safe now for Loder. Even Hobby's rather dense brain grasped that fact.

Prout arrived on the spot. Wrath glowed from his portly countenance, and gleamed from his eyes.

"What? What is this?" boomed Prout. "An attack on my prefects—"

"Loder interrupted our game, sir!" said Harry Wharton.

"Silence—silence! How dare you attempt to excuse such ruffianism! How dare you, I say! Loder, what is the cause of this?"

"I had to speak to Hobson, sir," said Loder. "I'd heard that he had been telling some disgraceful story about me among the fags, and I was going to question him. Then the whole mob set on me."

Prout raised a plump hand.

"Go to the House—all of you!" he boomed. "Every boy here, go to the House! Not a word! Go!"

"We're playing football, sir—"

"Go!" roared Prout.

The Bounder glanced round at his comrades. He was in a mood to barge over even the temporary headmaster, and get on with the game.

But the other fellows were hardly prepared for such desperate measures as that.

In silence, with black looks and deep feelings, the footballers trailed off the field, and headed for the House. The Form fixture had to remain an unfinished match.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Only Way!

"A SECRET society!"

"Yes!"

"Fathead!" said all the Famous Five together.

"Look here—!" grunted Herbert Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, don't be funny now!" groaned Bob Cherry. "Is this a time to be funny, when nearly every fellow in the House has been whopped?"

"The whopfulness has been truly terrific," groaned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "And the funniffulness is not the proper caper."

The Bounder scowled.

"We've all been caned," he said. "Hobby and Hoskins have been flogged. Loder's got a special down on those two; he'd like to see them sacked if he could. Are we standin' it all?"

"Ow! Wow!" said Frank Nugent.

"Wow!"

"We're getting back on Loder!" snarled the Bounder.

"Ow! Wow!"

"He's got us where he wants us! Hobby had him down for a time, but that's washed out; he's too cunning for a fathead like Hobson. Prout backs him up all along the line, and if we give him a black eye—as Hobby did—we get bunked. We don't want to be bunked."

"Hardly!" agreed Harry Wharton.

"There's only one way. Loder's after us, and we're getting after Loder. Only he's not going to know who did it."

"Um!" said the captain of the Remove doubtfully.

All the fellows were keen enough to "get after" Loder, for that matter.

Prout had come down with a heavy hand.

Every fellow in both football teams had been caned by the temporary headmaster for ragging Loder on Little Side. Hobson and Hoskins had been still more severely dealt with, for Prout considered that there was black ingratitude in their case. Only that morning Loder had begged them off the sack. This was their gratitude!

Nobody blamed Prout for being an ass. Asses, like poets, were born, not made. Prout couldn't help it.

But everybody wanted to boil Loder in oil!

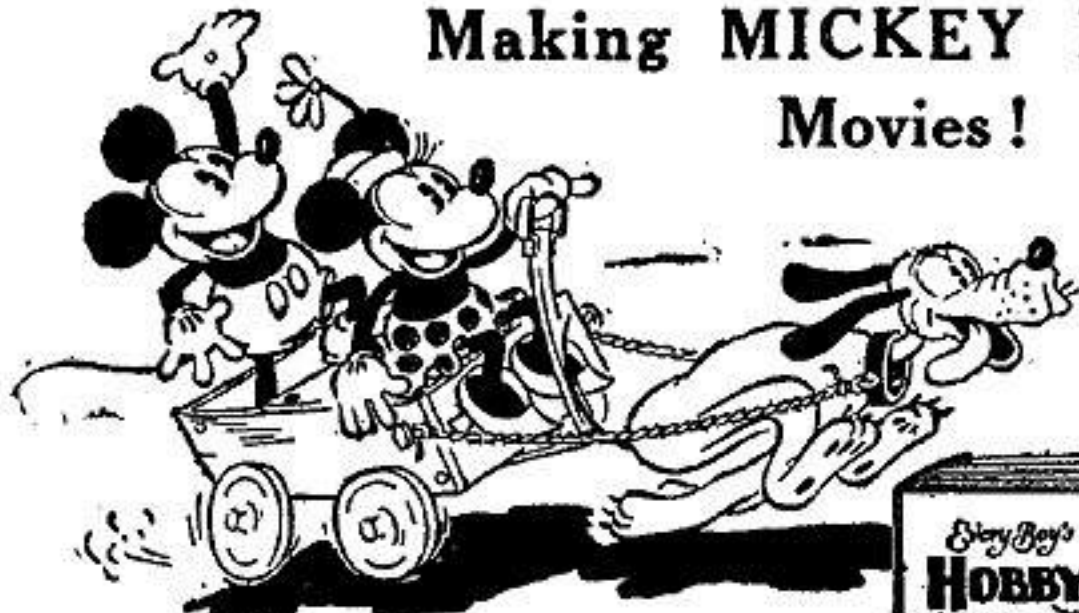
It was known now how Hobby had, for a short time, tamed the bully of Greyfriars; but it was also known that that was, so to speak, a chicken that would no longer fight.

Hobson had said nothing to Prout of his discovery in the vaults. It was certain that no proof existed any longer; and such an accusation against a prefect, without proof, could only have been treated as a slander, and punished accordingly. Poor Hobby realised that the tables were turned. He had got off the sack, it was true; but he had Loder on his trail, eager for vengeance.

How to handle Loder was a pressing question, a burning question, a most urgent question. It was the Bounder who weighed in with a "wheeze." He came to Study No. 1 with it, where he found the Famous Five in a rather dolorous state after their whopping from Prout.

"Think of it—if you've got anything

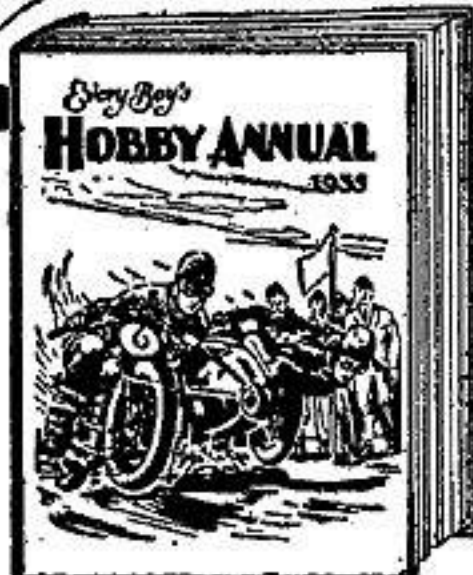
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As Gerald Loder strode on to the football field, Harry Wharton jumped into his path, his eyes blazing. "Get off the field, Loder!" he shouted. A back-hander from Loder sent the captain of the Remove spinning. "You rotten bully!" roared Bob Cherry, rushing up.

to think with!" said the Bounder sarcastically. "If you've read any history you know that wherever there is a tyrant there's a secret society up against him. Isn't Loder a tyrant?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Suppose he was collared out of the House by a couple of fellows who had their faces covered up," said the Bounder, "and ragged—ragged to the wide. Would he guess who had done it?"

"Hobby and Hosky," said Wharton.

"Exactly! And suppose Hobby and Hosky made it a point to be with their Form-master at the time—in his study, say—"

"Oh!"

"Then where would Loder be?"

"Um!"

"I'm not sayin' that the wheeze is a winner," said the Bounder. "My idea is to try it on and see how it works. If it's no good we can chuck it; if it answers we can carry it on for all it's worth."

"After all, it sounds rather promising," remarked Johnny Bull thoughtfully, "especially if Loder jumps to conclusions, and jumps on Hobby and Hosky and makes a fool of himself."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"That sounds all right," he said. "By gum, I want to make Loder sit up! But we can't punch a prefect; we shouldn't have Hobby's luck in pulling through. But—"

"Loder will have all Greyfriars to choose from when he looks for the men who handled him," said the Bounder. "I'm going to be one, and Cherry had better be the other—he's as big as Hobson."

"I'm on!" said Bob at once.

"Two of us can handle the brute, especially if we take him by surprise," said Vernon-Smith, "and this will be a beginning. If we get away with it all right the fellows will catch on to the idea at once. We make up a secret

society with a crowd in it, all up against Loder—"

"Passwords and things and all that?" grinned Bob. "Like the jolly old films—what?"

"By gum, there's a lot in it!" said Johnny Bull in his slow, thoughtful way. "Every time we get after Loder it can be different chaps do the trick. Prout will be puzzled."

"Well, he can't sack fellows on spec," remarked Nugent. "Look here, I'll cut along and call Hobby and Hosky."

Nugent left the study, returning in a few minutes with Hobson and Hoskins—who were wriggling painfully—and Stewart of the Shell. The Bounder was gratified by finding them all keen on the idea.

"Only, look here, I want to have a hand in it," said Hobson. "I want to be one to handle Loder, you know."

"Fathead!" said the Bounder impatiently. "Loder will guess first shot that you had a hand in it, and you've got to keep clear."

"But, look here—" said Hobson in his usual dense way. "Look here—"

"Shut up, Hobby, old man!" said Stewart kindly. "Don't you jaw! You can't think with that old thing you call a brain."

"Look here—"

"You and Hoskins have got to have an alibi proved all ready," said the Bounder. "Get up some excuse for being with Hacker; ask him to show you something in Latin grammar—"

"Look here, we get enough Latin grammar in class!" said Hobson in alarm. "If we give Hacker an excuse he may keep us an hour jawing."

"The longer he keeps you the better."

"But I've got some piano practice to do," said Claude Hoskins.

"Bother your silly rot!" grunted the Bounder.

"Look here—"

There was rather an argument in Study No. 1.

However, Hobson and Hoskins were convinced at last, and they agreed to play up as required. After which there was a discussion of ways and means, pros and cons; and the plan of campaign was settled. Then the conference broke up, in the hope of spotting a chance before prep of getting to work on the first proceeding of the Greyfriars Secret Society. How it was going to turn out nobody knew; but, at least, they were going to try it on.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

In Deep Disguise!

LODER of the Sixth smiled as he strolled in the dusky Cloisters. He had retired to that secluded spot to smoke a quiet cigarette.

Since the "war" in the school the black sheep of Greyfriars was more careful than ever in these little matters. He was very careful indeed to keep nothing in his study that would tell against him if rooted out by his foes in the Lower School. But Loder had every hope now of bringing those foes to heel, and having them feeding from his hand, as it were.

His eye was black, but Hobson of the Shell had paid rather dearly for the pleasure of blacking it; he was going to pay still more dearly if Loder could contrive it. And if he could be provoked into breaking out again in the same way he would be sacked and done with. And that seemed likely enough with a hot-headed fellow like Hobby. It would be a lesson to fellows who felt disposed to root after Loder's little secrets when Hobby was turfed out for good.

That was a satisfactory prospect, and Loder smiled over it as he strolled in the dusky Cloisters and smoked his
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cigarette. He was safe enough there—or so he fancied—it was lock-up now, and all the fellows in the House. It did not occur to Loder at the moment that any fellow might be dropping, in deep secrecy, from an opened window. Loder, as a prefect, had a right to be out of the House after lock-up if he liked, and he believed that he was the only fellow out of the House at the moment.

So it came as a great surprise to Gerald Loder when there was a sudden rush of feet and two dark figures appeared from behind the stone pillars of the Cloisters.

Before he knew what was happening he was collared and dragged over on his back.

He smote the stone flags with a heavy smite.

"Wow!" roared Loder. "Ow! Why, what—Ow! Whoop!"

He struggled frantically.

But one of the dark figures had hold of his wrists in a grip of iron, and the other was kneeling on his waistcoat, pinning him down.

Loder had simply no chance.

On his feet he would have been more than a match for one of them, and able to put up a good tussle against the two of them, but in his present position he was absolutely at their mercy.

He hardly realised what was happening as a looped cord was whipped over his wrists and drawn tight.

He struggled and kicked.

"Hold him, Hoskins!" came a gasping voice.

"Stick to him, Hobby!" came another gasping voice.

"I'll smash you!" gasped Loder. "I'll—I'll—you'll be sacked for this! Lemme gerrup! I'll—Groooooogh!"

Loder broke off, gurgling, as an apple was squeezed into his mouth by way of a gag! It was not a nice apple! It was a very old apple—very old and very squashy, and slightly smelly! As an article of diet, that apple was no longer of any use; even Billy Bunter would have disdained it. As a gag for Loder, it came in useful.

"Gurrrrrggh!" gurgled the hapless bully of Greyfriars. "Wurrrggh!"

He still kicked! But now that his hands were tied, both his assailants grasped his legs.

One of them was bent up at the knee and tied. Then Loder was released. Unable to get up on only one leg, he sprawled and gurgled.

It was dusky in the old Cloisters, but he could see the two fellows who panted over him. But he could not see their faces, and little of their figures.

Each of them was buttoned up in an old raincoat to the chin. Each of them had his face covered with a Guy Fawkes mask.

Except that, from their height, they were juniors, nobody could have guessed who they were, or to what Form they belonged.

But Loder knew! At least, he believed that he knew!

Both of them were rather big for juniors, which looked as if they were

Shell fellows. And had they not, in the excitement of the moment, called one another by their names?

Loder would have guessed, anyhow, that they were the two Shell fellows who had been flogged that afternoon. But he did not need to guess when one had called the other Hoskins, and the other had called the one Hobson! That left no doubt in the matter—to Loder's mind.

Even in his present state of discomfort, there was satisfaction in knowing that he would get these two young rascals sacked from the school for assaulting a prefect as soon as he could get to Prout and denounce them!

He tried to speak, but the apple presented difficulties!

"Grooogh! Urrrrggh!" was all that he could utter.

There was a breathless chuckle from under the Guy Fawkes masks. The taller of the two, who, to Loder's mind, was certainly Hobson, produced a bottle of ink from under his coat.

He removed the cork and up-ended the bottle over Loder's face. The ink came out in a stream.

"Splash!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gurrrrrggghh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The other masked figure produced a bottle of gum. Loder, wriggling frantically, got the gum down the back of his neck. After the gum had trickled down the bottle was shoved after it.

Then the ragers seemed to be satisfied. Loder was ejecting the mouldy apple in fragments, trying to yell for help.

They cut off and vanished in the darkness.

Loder of the Sixth was left alone—wriggling and gurgling! He got rid of the apple at last and shouted. But he realised that he was not likely to be heard so far from the House; and by pushing against a pillar he succeeded in struggling up on his one available leg.

Then he hopped!

With one leg tied up he had to hop on the other! In a frame of mind that could not have been described in words, the bully of Greyfriars hopped out of the Cloisters and hopped his way to the House.

Already he knew the two ragers would be back in the House! They would have stripped off the masks and coats, and no doubt hoped that their identity would remain unknown, thanks to that disguise—forgetting that they had uttered one another's names in their excitement! But Loder knew!

He hopped, and hopped! He reached the House at last. The door was closed, and Loder kicked at it savagely for admission. When it was opened he hopped in.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not Guilty!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"Who the dickens—?"

"Who is it?"

"What is it?"

"It's the Wild Man from Borneo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Who is this? What does this mean? Unprecedented—unparalleled!" Prout's deep boom was heard. "What—what—what?"

A hundred pairs of eyes stared, almost dazedly, at the strange figure that hopped into the lighted House!

Loder was hardly recognisable! Hatless, his hair wildly tousled, his face smothered with ink, his hands tied, hopping on one leg, he presented a really remarkable sight.

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I feel that I cannot let this short chat of mine pass without another mention of our popular Annuals—"The Holiday Annual" and the "Popular Book of Boys' Stories." If you have not the ready cash to pay for these bumper books ask your newsagent for particulars of the Annuals' Christmas Club, by means of which you can secure them by easy instalments.

Next week's splendid programme will consist of another rattling fine yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars, entitled:

"THE SECRET SEVEN!"

which will hold your interest from the first line to the very last, together with further chapters of Morton Pike's stirring highwayman-adventure story, a topical issue of the "Greyfriars Herald" and another interesting Soccer talk by "Linesman."

YOUR EDITOR.

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. A stamped, addressed envelope will ensure a reply.

WELL, chums, you now have in your hands a Sheriff's Secret Code and Cypher Key, which is the fifth and final item in connection with our

FREE SHERIFF'S OUTFIT,

and I hope you're as pleased with it as you were with the Sheriff's Star, Invisible Writing Pencil, Six-Shooter, and the Thumbprint Recorder—all of which have been presented FREE with previous issues of MAGNET. No other boy's paper, you will agree, has ever given to its readers such a splendid series of gifts. I guess you're feeling mighty glad you joined the happy band of "Magnetites," what? Stand by the Old Paper—that's my advice to you. I've got heaps more BIG ATTRACTIONS in store for you fellows!

After carefully studying the directions on the back of your Secret Code, turn to the cover of this issue of MAGNET and decipher the meaning of the letters—JZANQU—to be seen thereon. Taking the letter "N" as the code letter, turn the discs until the blue letter "N" is opposite the red letter "N"—care being taken not to move the discs again once you have got them in their correct position. Now you are ready to find the hidden word behind JZANQU. For instance,

Loder would look like when he came in—Bob Cherry and Smithy! Several other fellows had been wondering what he would look like! But to most of Greyfriars he came as a startling shock.

Juniors and seniors, masters and prefects, stared at him, blinked at him, fairly gaped at him.

"Get me loose!" Loder had got rid of the apple before this and could speak. "I'm tied—Mr. Prout, tell them to untie me—I've been attacked—I—I've been ragged—I—I—I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell. "Silence!" boomed Prout. "Is—is—is that Loder? Is it credible that one of my prefects has been treated in this manner? Walker—Carne—Coker—get Loder released at once! Bless my soul!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Coker. "Silence! How dare you laugh, Coker! Untie Loder at once!" boomed Prout. "Silence, all of you! This is not a laughing matter! I will cane any boy who laughs! Why, are you laughing, Mr. Woose? Are you laughing, sir?"

"Good gracious, no, sir!" gasped Mr. Woose. "I—I was—was coughing—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Silence!" roared Prout. Loder was untied. His hands were freed, and he was able to stand on both legs. He grabbed out a handkerchief and dabbed his inky face. The handkerchief was sadly stained, but it seemed to make little difference to the face! Loder was still of the ink, inky!

"Who has done this, Loder?" demanded Prout. "The offender shall be instantly expelled from the school—on this very instant!"

"If caught!" whispered the Bounder. "If!" grinned Bob.

"Hobson and Hoskins sir!" gasped Loder. "Those two Shell fellows, sir—they collared me suddenly from behind, when I was—was walking in the Cloisters, and—and got me down! I—I'd gone there to be quiet, sir, to think over some—some Greek I have to do, and—and they must have sneaked out of the House, and—"

"Amazing, incredible! Hobson! Hoskins! Where are they? Are they present?" boomed Prout, staring round.

Fellows were crowding up from every direction. But Hobson and Hoskins of the Shell were not among those who crowded up.

"Where are they?" boomed Prout. "Where is Mr. Hacker? Mr. Hacker—"

"I am here, sir!" said the quiet, acid voice of the master of the Shell. "If you desire to see Hobson and Hoskins of my Form, sir—"

"I do!" boomed Prout. "You see what they have done! Look at Loder, sir! Look at him!"

"I am looking at him, sir!" said Mr. Hacker acidly. "I have certainly never seen a Greyfriars prefect in such a disgraceful state before!"

"Boys of your Form, Mr. Hacker—"

"Nothing of the kind, sir!" said Hacker warmly. "All the boys of my Form are in the House, and have been in the House since answering their names at call-over! Of that I am positive, sir!"

"Loder states—"

"They must have got out of a window, sir!" said Loder, gasping. "It was Hobson and Hoskins who did this—"

"How dare you make such a statement!" hooted Mr. Hacker.

"It's true!" roared Loder.

"It is not true!" hooted the master of the Shell. "Mr. Prout, I deny Loder's statement absolutely—on my own knowledge, sir!"

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Prout blankly. "Loder, are you sure you made no mistake—sure that you recognised—"

"I could not recognise the young rascals, sir, as they had their faces covered with Guy Fawkes masks!" panted Loder. "But they called one another by their names, Hobson and Hoskins, in my hearing."

The Bounder winked at Bob Cherry, and Bob gurgled. That "wheeze" had been the Bounder's, and it had worked beautifully.

"That seems to settle the matter, Mr. Hacker!" said Prout. "Boys would scarcely call one another by other boys' names!"

"Scarcely!" murmured the Bounder. "Hardly ever! What?"

**CRACK A JOKE
AND WIN A PRIZE!**



TOUGH STUFF!

Diner: "Waiter, is this cottage pie?"

Waiter: "Yes, sir!"

Diner: "Then it must be the foundation stone I've got!"

Special Prize to: J. K. Weitz,
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Street, London, E.C.4. (Comp.)

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Silence! Why are not Hobson and Hoskins here?" demanded Mr. Prout. "Send for them at once! Do you know where they are, Mr. Hacker?"

"Certainly I do!" snapped Mr. Hacker. "They are in my study, sir, where I left them, when I came out on hearing this disturbance, sir! I have been assisting them, sir, in some Latin irregular verbs, in which they found difficulties, sir, and which they brought to me, their Form-master! It seems to be very fortunate that they did, sir, in view of the utterly unfounded accusation Loder is making against them."

"They weren't in your study when they grabbed me in the Cloisters!" howled Loder.

"And when did that happen?" demanded Mr. Hacker.

"Not a quarter of an hour ago!"

"And you dare to say that it was done by Hobson and Hoskins of my

Form, who have been in my study for considerably more than half an hour, and are there still!" hooted the master of the Shell.

Loder blinked at him, an inky blink. "In—in—in your study for half an hour!" he stuttered.

"More than that period!" snapped Hacker. "At the very moment you state that they attacked you in the Cloisters they were in my study, and had been there a considerable time! How dare you, Loder!"

"Bless my soul!" gasped Prout. "If—if—if you are certain that the boys were in your study, Mr. Hacker—"

"As they were there in my presence, sir, I can scarcely be in doubt about it."

"Quite so! Quite! Loder, you have made a mistake—a very serious mistake! This is not what I expect of you, Loder!"

Loder gasped helplessly. It was impossible, of course, to doubt Mr. Hacker's statement. If he said that Hobby and Hosky had been in his study at the time, they had been in his study at the time! The two masked juniors in the Cloisters, whoever they had been, had not been Hobson and Hoskins of the Shell. Yet they had called one another by those names!

"A most serious mistake!" boomed Prout. "Very serious indeed! This will not do, Loder—it will not do at all."

"They—they called one another Hobson and Hoskins, sir!" stuttered Loder. "I distinctly heard the names—"

"Nonsense!" snapped Hacker. "I tell you they did!" shrieked Loder.

"If they did, it was a trick—a transparent trick—to delude you!" snapped Hacker. "You are stupid, Loder—stupid, unthinking, and, I fear, unscrupulous in making accusations! Pah!" Hacker snorted. "Pah!"

He stalked away. "Loder, I am disappointed in you!" said Mr. Prout. "This is not what I expected of you Loder! Such hasty, unthinking accusations—"

"I—I thought—"

"Nonsense!" boomed Prout. And he, too, stalked away.

Loder, under the ink, was crimson with rage and humiliation. He glared round at a sea of laughing faces.

"What about gettin' a wash, old man?" murmured Walker

Loder stamped away. Really he needed a wash! He went to get one—followed by a roar of laughter that woke all the echoes of Greyfriars School.

Later, in Study No. 1, six members of the Remove, and two of the Shell, executed a dance of triumph round the study table.

"It's worked!" chortled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Worked like a charm!" chuckled the Bounder.

"The charmfulness is terrific!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And this isn't the end!" added the Bounder. "This is only the beginnin'! Loder's asked for it, and, by gum, he's goin' to get it! The Greyfriars secret society, my beloved 'earers, is goin' to be a power in the land!"

And the Bounder was right.

THE END.

(Look out for more lively fun and thrills in the next yarn in this grand series. It's entitled: "THE SECRET SEVEN!" And take the tip from me, chums—order your copy early.—Ed.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1.393

CAPTAIN CRIMSON!

By
MORTON PIKE.

WHAT'S GONE BEFORE.

Owing to the activities of a certain Dan Hickerman, Excise Officer, Squire Dashwood, a Jacobite at heart, comes into possession of the famous Trimmingham heirlooms, with which it is hoped to raise money for the Jacobite cause. While riding to Dashwood Hall he is robbed of the treasure by a mysterious highwayman who calls himself Captain Crimson. Later, Bart Huggett, a newcomer to the district, picks up a crimson mask and, being seen with it, is taken for the notorious highwayman. Immediately, the people of Wildwater set out to capture him. "Let's make for Burnt Mill," says young Jack Lennard who, together with his chum, Billy Jepp, joins in the chase, "we may spot our man making for the fields!"

(Now Read On.)



The Killing of "Captain Crimson" I

"IT'S a good scheme, Jack," said Billy Jepp, "but I've an idea our man has had warning already, and with an hour's start he could be at Danbury by now, laughing in his sleeve. We all know 'Captain Crimson's' no fool!"

Jack Lennard laughed joyously. Chasing highwaymen was better than being at the Grammar School, anyway.

The two chums rode down the hill into the rutty cart track known as Sandy Lane.

It had not occurred to either of the boys, as they left the hue-and-cry behind, that they were unarmed, for a riding-whip is scarcely a match for a loaded pistol in the hand of a desperate man.

The lane wound over an open part of the heath, with bare fields rising to a ridge on their near side, and fortunately they met nothing more formidable than a scuttling rabbit until they reached the knoll on which Burnt Mill stood.

Years before, the old wooden post-mill had been struck by lightning, which had destroyed the upper part, but the circular brick granary still remained, with the ladder leading up to the gallery, the whole thing forming a prominent landmark, for the knoll rose high above the saltings, and was visible for several miles down the river.

It was a favourite spot with the smugglers, as the gangs of men and horses could reach it by way of Sandy Lane, and see the "free-traders'" signal from the gallery long before the luggers came to their moorings.

"We ought to have sent a watcher up there when we first started," said Jack, as they rode up the grass-grown path. "I shouldn't be surprised if the fellow slipped by this way while we were taking the other road."

The door of the granary faced north, but the crazy ladder was on the south side, right in front of them as they

reached the top of the knoll. Dismounting, they clambered up the broken rungs with some difficulty, the whole thing shaking dangerously under their weight.

As they leaned on the gallery rail they saw the hue-and-cry already working down the long slope towards them, dotted about among the bracken; Billy's father, conspicuous in his white shirt-sleeves, and the parson, a black dot on his bay cob; Hickerman and the squire well to the front, and some of the dragoons riding across the open ploughland.

Five miles of fruitless search having damped the ardour with which they began, and there being only a disused quarry left that could possibly serve as a hiding-place, they were all making for it.

As this was close to the end of Sandy Lane, and the boys had just passed it, Jack's sigh of disappointment was echoed by his companion.

"We've drawn blank to-day, old chap," said Jack. "Look at poor old Falcon down on the road yonder. A lot of good he thinks he's doing with his white pony."

"And there's the squire coming out of the quarry," granted Billy. "What's he riding this way for? It's no good. Let's save him the trouble and give him a shout."

But the shout that burst from Billy Jepp's lips was a very different one, as, from out of the granary door beneath them, dashed a man on a black horse, spurring headlong down the knoll!

"I saw him first—the guinea's mine! Yoicks!" yelled Billy, through his hands. "There he is, making for the other road!"

The boys' natural impulse was to get to their horses; but as the fugitive had already reached the level with the choice of several ways in front of him, they ran round to the east side of the gallery to mark which one he took, and saw him look back over his shoulder as a chorus of shouts was borne on the wind.

"Stop thief! Stop thief! Death to the highwayman!" roared a score of voices, and someone accidentally discharged a pistol in his excitement.

So far, the other pursuers had not caught sight of him, but Mr. Bart Huggett was none the happier on that account, knowing it to be only a matter of moments before they would have him in full view, and those thrice accursed boys on the mill up yonder were yelling themselves hoarse!

His bloodshot eyes glanced round in search of cover.

On the right, water-meadows and the river; to the left, that heavy ploughland, and the going all up hill. But straight ahead lay the open road, and his horse was fresh.

"Normans End!" roared the watchers on the gallery, as they saw their man heading for the next village.

And then Jack Lennard fairly gasped. "See, Billy, yonder's my father coming back from his round, and Miller Winnows with him!" he cried. "They know nothing! They'll meet the 'Captain' at the bend!"

The colour faded out of the boy's flushed cheeks, for the barrel of Huggett's pistol glinted in the sunshine.

The same strong wind that had brought the hue-and-cry to the highwayman's ears, however, warned the two riders of his approach, although he was

galloping on the grass verge, and Jack and Billy saw Dr. Lennard's hand go to his coat pocket, and the pair trot into view while Huggett was still a dozen lengths from the corner.

"Egad, the captain's a fine rider, whatever else! Look at that!" exclaimed Billy, unable to repress a cry of admiration as the highwayman swung his horse aside and put him at the ragged hedge through which he crashed, to land cleverly in the adjoining field with scarce a check, and then race away at right-angles.

The boys thought of their own horses, but the gallery gave them such a splendid prospect that they remained where they were, unwilling to miss the smallest detail of that race for life or death.

"The squire's seen him! So has Mr. Warden!" cried Jack excitedly. "Will he clear the cattle-gate? No, he's turning along the brook! Gad! That was a jump, if you like! Rotten take-off, too! He's making for Dog Fox spinney. The dragoons will head him off there! Told you so! He's coming back, and Hickerman's waiting behind the big willow!"

Two reports cut short the running commentary, and one of them had cut short Bart Huggett's career of crime!

Jack and Billy saw the drabcoat huddle up over the black's withers, and the horse stop suddenly. Then, as the man slipped heavily to the ground, they ran for the ladder!

By the time they reached the spot, the hue-and-cry were crowding round the corpse to get a sight of the villain whose daring exploits had made Widewater afraid to be out of doors after dark for the past month and more.

As Jack squeezed his way through the chattering mob of perspiring men and sweating horses, Dick Loop held up two masks, one of red velvet, the other of black crepe, which he had just drawn from a side pocket in the skirt of the drab riding-coat, and a cheer rose from the circle.

"That's the end of Captain Crimson!" cried somebody, and there was another cheer.

"But who was he?" asked Dr. Lennard. "That's what I should like to know."

"And where did the dog hide himself?" said Squire Dashwood. "If only we could find, there might be a chance for some of us to discover our stolen property. Only last night he robbed me to a pretty tune. Where has he hidden it, eh? A pipe, this brass tobacco-box, and one shilling and five-pence is all he had on him; yet we know he must have gathered a small fortune since he came among us."

Nobody was able to answer the question, and having taken their fill of the corpse, they examined the highwayman's horse with curiosity.

Jack Lennard had never seen a dead man before, and the sight made him shudder.

The face, with its heavy jowl and the slightly parted lips showing the broken teeth, wore an expression of strange repose, in spite of so violent an end.

"A very ruffian, if ever I saw one!" said Billy Jepp, in a low voice. "Who'd think, to look at him, Jack, that he spouted Latin when he robbed our parson of fifteen guineas? I wonder what made him take to 'the road'?"

"And you may go on wondering, Billy. 'Captain Crimson' lived and died a mystery," replied Jack, turning away. "But the fellow could ride—we saw that. I believe he'd have got clean off if my father and old Winnows hadn't met him when they did."

Billy nodded, and as the doctor had not so far noticed his truant offspring

in the excitement of the moment, the pair melted away round the outskirts of the laughing crowd, and made for home.

The Traitor's Letter!

"WELL," mused Dick Loop to himself, as he trotted off down the long lane to take his stirring news back to Buckthorpe village and old Betty. "I reckon Squire Dashwood is a happy man to-night! He's had his revenge, anyway, and after a rare gallop, too, which is what he loves best of all!"

But, in spite of Dick Loop's ideas on the subject, of all that odd assortment of horsemen that took its noisy way to the Black Boar, Mr. Lancelot Dashwood, strange to tell, was the one to whom the death of the notorious highwayman had brought no satisfaction at all.

The squire had a terrible weight on his mind, and, what was more, the only way of relieving it was the writing of a letter—a thing the roystering squire hated like poison.

"An inquest to-morrow, another gibbet on the heath, and I suppose there's the end of it," he said to Dr. Lennard, as they rode back to Widewater together. "How is one to find out the scoundrel's hiding-hole?"

"In all probability that will be done long after you and I are gone, squire," said Dr. Lennard. "But, seriously, Dashwood, this wild story of Captain Crimson's robbing you of ten thousand pounds is nonsense, of course?"

"Very far from nonsense—it is the truth, Dr. Lennard! And, what's more, the money was not my own!" muttered the handsome, reckless fellow, pulling himself up short, like a man who had been on the point of saying something better left unsaid.

Everyone knew that the squire was a Jacobite at heart, and Dr. Lennard, filled with great concern at his words, said nothing as they rode on in silence.

"Can you find me a sheet of letter-paper and a quill?" asked Dashwood suddenly. "Those fellows yonder will be making a rare hub-bub at the Boar."

"Delighted, squire!" answered Dr. Lennard, as he led the squire into his house.

It took Squire Dashwood the best part of an hour and the splitting of three quill pens before the letter was finished and sealed; and you will perhaps understand why when you read it.

"My dear Lord Trimmingham," it began—then a blot—"I fear me your lordship will take as little pleasure in the reading of this as I do in the writing. The wallet of jewels you sent by Harry Wortley for the use of the Prince in France has been stolen.

"Harry was followed from London, and narrowly escaped being taken. I spare your lordship the details, but, sink me, 'twas a close shave.—Another blot.

"He left the wallet in his haste, and riding home with it I had the great misfortune to encounter a scoundrel who called himself 'Captain Crimson.' True, I was somewhat in liquor at the time, which will happen to the best of us. But the Trimmingham heirlooms were his, and my pistols with them! We shot the dog to-day, but have no trace of the wallet. I am heartbroken about the business, as you may believe, and, having made a clean breast of it, can do no more than subscribe myself
"Your lordship's humble and very contrite servant,

"LANCELOT DASHWOOD."

"P.S.—I gathered from Harry that we may look for a landing shortly—

unless this unhappy loss shall delay his Highness through lack of funds, which Heaven forbid!"

Having directed the letter to "The Right Hon. the Earl of Trimmingham, St. James' Square, London," and taken another long pull from the decanter Dr. Lennard had placed at his elbow, the squire went across to the Black Boar, where, as he had prophesied, uproar and laughter filled the house.

"Jepp," he said, beckoning the busy landlord aside, "what time does the coach pass through Witham?"

"They should change horses at eight o'clock, sir."

"Then I want you to send this note by a trusty messenger, Jepp, to be delivered into the hands of the guard," said the squire.

"Old Reuben's the man; I'll tell Billy to warn him."

"And here's a crown for his pains, Jepp. There's little chance of his losing it on the road after to-day's work!" laughed the squire, happier now that he had rid himself of that hated task. "Bring me a bowl of punch into the parlour."

Almost at the same moment, young Jack Lennard, who was supposed to have been at the Grammar School all the afternoon, and to have only just returned, was asked by Mrs. Lennard if he would carry a message to the upper town.

Jack was only too pleased to oblige, as he would be sure to meet some of the boys, to whom he could retail the story of the chase.

Already the news had spread, and folk were discussing it in the long street that constituted the upper town.

By the time Jack had given the true version to several of his acquaintances and done his errand, the sun had set.

"Hallo! What are you doing here at this time o' day?" he said, as he was suddenly confronted by a small boy mounted on a large cob.

"Old Parslow kept me in after school," whimpered the youngster. "I've had a flogging, too; and it'll be almost dark before I get home, Jack. Oh, I do wish you'd come with me as far as the Round Oak! I'm so afraid of meeting the highwayman when I'm alone!"

"I'll come with you, Jimmy," said Jack, and he laid a protecting hand on the child's knee. "It's rather thick of our headmaster, and if I were your father I'd— But, never mind, tell me all about it as we go along, and then I'll tell you something you'll be glad to hear."

Big, sixteen-year-old Jack Lennard had taken little Jimmy Martin under his wing at school, and no one dared to bully him there. To the fragile boy with the large eyes Jack was a hero.

Quite a number of the fellows who lived at a distance rode in to school every day, but the Martin's farm was three miles out, and to be kept in meant no companionship on the way back—all of which the tyrannical headmaster knew perfectly well. But, as Jack presently declared with hot indignation, old Parslow was a brute!

"Never mind, Jimmy, you won't feel afraid any more," said Jack Lennard, laughing at the tear-stained face. "The wonderful 'Captain Crimson' is as dead as a doornail now!"

"Dead?"

"Yes, Dan Hickerman, our new Excise Officer, shot him clean through the heart this afternoon."

And little Jimmy Martin listened, open-mouthed, to the story of the chase, which Jack told at considerable length.

It took a long time in the telling, and

the excited listener never noticed that they had left the Round Oak far behind them before it came to an end.

It was dusk, and bats were flitting in the gloaming when they arrived at Jimmy's home.

Jack opened the gate and watched the figure of his protegee as he trotted up the driftway to the farm, and then he turned back with plenty of thoughts for company on the lonely road.

Rather gloomy thoughts they were, too, for they centred on his own future which the talk of the hated Grammar School had brought up. Of all things in the world Jack Lennard longed to serve the King as a cavalry officer, but there seemed little likelihood of that.

Both he and Billy Jepp had been bitten by the same dog; but old man Jepp found his son far too useful in the flourishing posting trade attached to the Black Boar, and Dr. Lennard had destined Jack to follow in his own footsteps and succeed him in his large country practice.

But when Jack recalled that glorious gallop over the heath, and how they had watched the highwayman's desperate efforts to escape his pursuers, his thoughts took on a brighter cast. He strode briskly along until he heard hoof-beats ahead of him on the road, which ceased almost as their noise reached him, followed by a sound that might have been human.

He stopped and listened, realising that he had not even a stick in his hand.

Then suddenly a black shadow passed between him and the tall hazel hedge

on the other side of the road, the form of a galloping man that seemed to spring from nowhere and vanish in the darkness!

Jack felt himself go cold, and, seized with something very like terror, he ran towards the town, only to stop again as he neared the Round Oak.

"Robbed—robbed!" wailed a voice he knew at once. "Thirty year, boy and man, have I ridden this road, an' never been stopped afore! What shall I tell the squire?"

"Why, what's happened, Reuben?" cried the lad, coming up to the old post-boy, who sat hunched in the clumsy saddle, sobbing like a child.

"The letter for the London coach!" gasped Reuben. "He nigh tore the jacket off my back, and choked me the while with t' other hand. And when he'd got the letter he said: 'This is what I want!' and then he was gone!"

Jack, ignorant of what the squire had written, or, indeed, that he had written a letter at all until that moment, was just then concerned over two things—the unexpected appearance of another highwayman in their midst, and poor Reuben, the head post-boy, who was nearly sixty, and in a state of collapse.

"Come, Reuben, what's done can't be undone—least of all by staying here!" was all Jack could say. "Pull yourself together, man, and we'll tell the squire at once. At most he can write another letter and send it by the morning coach."

But Reuben had been so badly shaken, both in body and soul, that his

bandy legs were almost rattling, and he swayed dangerously in the saddle.

"Let me bide, Master Jack; mebbe I'll be better in a while!" he implored, blubbering afresh.

There was nothing for it but to stand by the old post-boy and hope that someone would come that way.

Then a whinny from the post-horse warned the impatient Jack that someone was not only coming but was there already, and the lad started, for the approach had been so noiseless that the hand on his shoulder and the voice coming out of the darkness came at the same moment!

A horseman's boot was pressing him against the grey's flank, and the black blur of a mounted man towered above him.

"Take that doddering old idiot back to the Black Boar, and this paper with him!" said the voice. "Honour is the touchstone between one gentleman and another, Master Lennard, and I put you on your honour to deliver this letter to Squire Dashwood unread!"

Scarcely knowing what he did, Jack's trembling fingers took the paper thrust out to him. Then as he had come, so did the mysterious rider go, leaving the dazed lad unable to tell which way he had taken in the darkness of the night!

"For musey's sake let us be a-goin' lest he come back again!" stuttered the terrified Reuben.

(Watch out for further thrilling chapters of this amazing story in next week's issue of the MAGNET, chums.)

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All applications for Advertisement Space in this publication should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

CAN INDIGESTION BE CURED?

If it can, please let me know how. I'm finding it almost impossible to digest my hat, which I rashly promised to eat in the event of the Remove beating us at footer.—C. R. TEMPLE, Upper Fourth.



THE NEW Greyfriars Herald



No. 108 (New Series.)

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

October 27th, 1934.

DARK EYES ARE FASCINATING!

Why not have yours darkened free of charge? Having just been whacked by the Pompous Prout, I'm in the right mood to give anyone a pair of black eyes in a brace of shakes!—G. BULSTRODE, Study No. 2, Remove.

INKY'S BIRTHDAY GUIDE

This week: DICK RUSSELL

The esteemed Dick Russell was born under the zodiac sign "Aries," so, from my learned and idiotic books of astrology, I can tell that he is full of fearful and terrific energy and has the self-reliant nature immensely.

To get to the top treefully is the esteemed and proper caper for our worthy chum, for he is born to command. As the honoured and fat-headed skipper of the Remove, I fancifully believe that his successfulness would be terrific and that he would become twice the man he is. But while my esteemed and posterous pal, Harry Wharton, holds the post there is little chance of that passfully coming about!

Great kindness is one of the chief features of the esteemed Dick Russell. But this is liable to take a seat backfully when he is doing something on which he has setfully made up his mind. I have noticed his kindness disappear altogether, for instance, when he is engaged in a scrappful encounter fistically!

The true-friendfulness of our honoured chum is terrific; he is also full of esteemed reason and ridiculous horse-sense.

If he follows his natural inclinations, his futureful outlook is indeed a rosy one!

Richard Hilary on—

THIS WEEK'S GOOD CAUSE

If there's one thing I do like about Greyfriars chaps it's their generosity. An appeal to the generous side of their natures never goes unheeded. They're always willing to help a fellow who's down on his luck.

For that reason, I feel sure that this appeal on behalf of my study-mate, Kipps, will meet with an open-handed response. Poor old Kipps is simply pining away because he hasn't enough cash to buy all the apparatus he needs for his conjuring tricks. It's enough to melt a heart of stone to think about it!

Won't you help this deserving young genius to achieve his lifelong ambitions in the conjuring line?

The Editor is going to publish the first list of promised subscriptions at the foot of this appeal. I sincerely hope they'll encourage all you chaps to add your names to it and join the happy throng of generous-hearted donors!

List of Promises.

(Collected by the Editor.)

- G. LODER. A thick car.
- H. J. COKER. A whopping.
- C. R. TEMPLE. A sook on the jaw.
- S. Q. I. FIELD. A waistcoat button.
- G. BULSTRODE. A penny (containing a large hole).
- F. T. FISH. Nix.

The HERO of St. SAM'S

By DICKY NUGENT

Tinkle! Tinkle! Tinkle! It was the old skool bell at St. Sam's, summoning the boys to General Assembly.

Like unleashed greyhounds—like bootlits from a machine-gun—the boys rushed to obey the summons. As they pored into the Grate Hall they speculated on the reason for the uneggspeted call.



"Someone's booked for a flogging or eggspulsion, I'll wager!" said Jack Jolly, of the Fourth Form.

But for once the leader of the Fourth was wrong. Dr. Birchermall, the revered Head of St. Sam's, was not wearing the crool, relentless look that appeared on his dile for floggings or eggspulsions. Instead, he was smiling a somewhat pekuliar smile.

"Gentlemen, chaps and fellows!" cried the Head, when the skool had assembled. "It gives me grate plezzure to announce that Sir Frederick Funguss, the chairman of our Board of Guvvners, has given me five quid—or, as

the vulgar would put it, five pounds—to be awarded for the bravest deed of the year, which ends on Satterday next."

"Hooray!" roared the assembled skool.

"The assistant masters have already supplied me with a list of heroic deeds which have come to their notiss from time to time," proseded Dr. Birchermall. "There is nothing, however, to stop any one of you performing before Satterday next some signal act of valier which will nock all these into a cocked hat. That is up to you!"

"Hooray!" "Next Satterday evening at seven-thirty the skool will again assemble in Hall," concluded the Head. "I will then announce the name of the prizewinner and present him with the oof. That, I fancy, is all that need be said about it. The skool is now dismissed!"

Dr. Birchermall stepped down from the platform, still wearing the same pekuliar smile.

The dramattick announcement was natcherally followed by a severer epidemnick of heroism at St. Sam's. Deeds of valier by the duzzen were witnessed in the interval between the Head's statement and the assembly on the following Satterday evening.

Loyle, of the Fourth, set fire to the woodshed and reskewed Fossil, the porter, from the flames.

Burleigh, of the Sixth,



tripped up Tallboy while they were on the towpath together, and reskewed him from the river.

Bowncer, of the Fifth, bribed a footpad to attack Mr. Noyes, the mewstick master, then put the footpad to flight.

Stirring happenings like these were going on all day long at St. Sam's, after the Head's announcement.

When Satterday evening came, however, it was generally considered that the prize would go to Jack Jolly. The leader of the Fourth had reskewed a yung lady from a mad bull that afternoon, and even Jack's rival heroes couldn't help admitting that his deed of daring beat theirs to a frazzle.

All eyes were on Jack Jolly when the skool assembled for the Head's prize-giving—but, strange to relate, Dr. Birchermall didn't even give him a glarnse.

He coffered for silence.

"My boys," he said, when the last sound had died away, "it gives me grate plezzure to announce the name of the year's greatest hero."

"Hear, hear!"

"The man I have selected for the prize has performed an act of cur-

ridge far surpassing anything previously known at St. Sam's," continued Dr. Birchermall. "His heroic deed consisted of telling the income-tax collector to go and eat coke!"

"Eh?" gasped the assembled skool.

"For this amazing act of heroism I am going to award him the prize of five pounds," said Dr. Birchermall, waving a crisp, russling banknote in the air. "I think you will all agree that he deserves it. The prizewinner is myself!"

"Wha-t-a-t?"

"I will now call for three cheers for the winner," concluded the Head. "Hip, hip, hip—"

But the St. Sam's boys did not pond with the eggspes cheer. What they did was to rush at the Head with one accord and smiee him hip and thigh!

After which, feeling a little mollyfied, they streamed out of the Hall.

A "RINGING" LAUGH DUE HERE

When inspecting the school bell recently a representative of a firm of bellfounders found on the platform round the bell quite a lot of cricket kit.

Bob Cherry said he always did have suspicions that Gosling had bats in the belfry!

VISITORS to the LIBRARY

Are asked to note that the carpet is swept but once a week, and jumping on it makes the air so thick you can cut it with a knife. So if there's any more leap-frog while you're selecting your books I'm going to KICK UP A DUST ABOUT IT! —PETER TODD, Asst. Librarian, Study No. 7, Remove.

Fisher T. Fish walked into the Rag the other evening with a most unusual expression on his hatchet face.

"I guess I gotta confession to make, folks," he began. "I ain't always been so straight with you as I might have been."

"Eh?" gasped the chaps, not at all surprised by the information, but considerably surprised by the admission.

"I been a bit of a panhandler in my time, I guess," said Fish—and some of us could have sworn there was a catch in his voice. "I guess I done some skulduggery hyer an' there. Yep!"

"You mean you've always been a bit of a low-down swindler?" impolitely asked Tom Brown, and, much to everybody's surprise, Fish nodded.

"You've said it," he acknowledged. "I been jest that, I reckon. I've swindled you guys more times'n I care to think of!"

"My hat! Well, that's true enough," remarked Squiff. "But what's the idea, admitting it? Have you decided to reform?"

The honest, kindly gleam in Fish's eyes seemed to strengthen visibly.

"Yep. I guess I have," he said. And a howl went up from the fellows in the Rag.

H. Vernon-Smith describes— A BUSINESS MAN'S REMORSE

"Balmy!" "Completely potty!" "Must be!" Dick Russell opined. "Can the giddy leopard change his spots?" "Not likely!"

But Fish was persistent. With the light of honesty still shining in his usually furtive eyes, he told us that he had at last seen the error of his ways and was determined to reform.

"It's Jake with me this time, I guess," said Fishy. "Me for the path of virtue in future—yes, siree! The fact is, there are too many swindlers about."

"True enough—and I'm jolly glad to know you're deserting their ranks, Fishy!" said Wharton cordially.

"Too many swindlers altogether," said Fish. "Ordinary straightforward, honest folks like you an' me don't get a chance these days—no, sir! It's time something was done about it. What's wanted is an organisation to advise the public on whar to go for the best bargains an' how to steer clear of panhandlers. An organisation that's got brains at the top of it an' means business from the word 'Go'!" "Eh?"

"That's what I've come to talk to you guys about," said Fish. "I'm starting something noo an' original—something that can't help being a success. Gentlemen, let me tell you that Fish's Honest Business Advice Bureau gets goin' to-morrow!" "You—you—"

"Shares one dollar each an' you'll get your money back a hundred times over!" smiled Fishy. "Snap 'em up while there's a chance, boys! I'm lettin' you in on the ground floor of this grand noo business, an' if you take my advice, you'll get in while the getting's good! A square deal all round an' down with swindling—that's what we stand for! Now, how many of you guys are gonna put your names down?"

"And is this why you've turned honest—in order to run an honesty racket?" demanded Wharton.

"Well, you wouldn't expect a guy to be honest without some good reason, would you?" asked Fishy, with quite a pained look on his hatchet face. "What can I put you down for, Wharton?"

"This!" snorted Wharton. "This" was a violent tweak on Fish's nose!

"You can put me down for this at the same time, if you like, old bean!" grinned Bob Cherry. Bob's "this" consisted of a violent tug at one of Fish's ears!

Quite a lot of chaps joined in and asked to be put down for something—in fact, the rush of offers became so embarrassing that eventually Fishy made a bolt for the door and quitted the Rag, howling!

When I saw him half an hour later the honest look had entirely vanished from his face and the wolfish or hawk-like expression was completely reinstated.

Fishy had apparently come to the conclusion that honesty doesn't pay, from the point of view of a keen American business man!

HILTON'S NIGHT OUT!

Cedric Hilton, Fifth Form blond and gay dog, had had a very unusual experience the other night.

Leaving his dorm, soon after "Lights Out," he took a trip to a new and somewhat shady road-house they've just opened on the other side of Court Field.

In the middle of supper he was suddenly horrified to recognise a Greyfriars prefect, who shall be nameless, walking into the room.

On the spur of the moment Hilton made a dive under the revolving

platform on which the band performed and waited there for the prefect to go.



At the end of that time his problems were solved for him. A couple

of burglars broke in, spotted Hilton, and gave him a tap on the napper.

They then tied Hilton up and helped themselves to the contents of the safe.

After that, feeling in festive mood, they sat Hilton on a chair in the middle of the platform and operated the switch that set the platform revolving. At three o'clock in the morning the police found Hilton, still spinning round merrily!

Asked afterwards what he felt like, Hilton admitted that the affair gave him an awful "turn."

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!



Fisher T. Fish talks a peculiar brand of "hot" American all his own. It produces a very lukewarm response among Removees, though. Only the other day Bolsover gave Fishy the complete "cold shoulder."



Out pheasant shooting with Sir Hilton Popper, Mr. Front complained that he can never hit "small things." When an angry bull burst on the scene, though, "Pronty" fled. He didn't care for "bullsize" targets!



Bob Cherry is a strong believer in acrobatics for keeping our feet—though he is equally at home as centre-half on the footer. He "pursues" and "arrests" opposing forwards, pulling up a superb "defence," an' "prosecuting" a very lively attack!



Peter Todd is a giant on legal matters—but he is equally at home as centre-half on the footer. He "pursues" and "arrests" opposing forwards, pulling up a superb "defence," an' "prosecuting" a very lively attack!



Piet Delarey, from South Africa, is as hard as nails. Though one of the best fighting men in the Remove, the only time he has engaged in fisticulture this term was to stop Bolsover major bullying Tubb, of the Third!



When the Famous Five had kippers for tea, Billy Bunter was not long in making his appearance. The Owl of the Remove has an unflinching "nose" for the "scent" of kippers. Perhaps that explains why he "wolfed" the lion's share!



When I saw him half an hour later the honest look had entirely vanished from his face and the wolfish or hawk-like expression was completely reinstated.