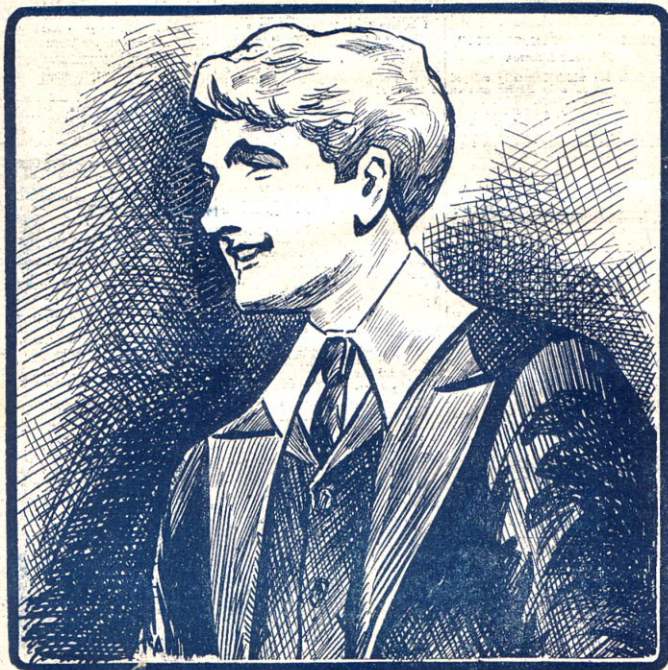
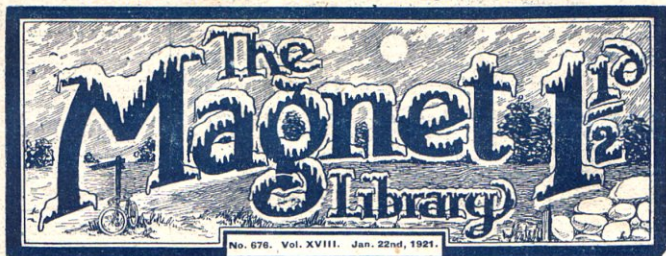


WHO IS THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER IN THE GREEN COAT?

SEE THE GRAND LONG COMPLETE SCHOOL STORY IN THIS ISSUE!



BOB CHERRY, THE FIGHTING EDITOR OF "THE GREYFRIARS HERALD,"

The Famous Schoolboy Journal which is contained in this issue.



Address all your
letters to :

The Editor,
"The Magnet Library,"
The Fleetway House,
Farringdon Street,
London, E.C.A.

I am always pleased
to hear from my chums.

For Next Monday:

Our next week's programme is again a very fine one. We have a grand long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, entitled:

"BILLY BUNTER'S SMUGGLERS!"

By Frank Richards.

and it is one which I greatly enjoyed reading. When Billy Bunter gets an idea into his head, boys, all the King's horses and all the King's men can't convince him that he's wrong. Billy as related in next week's story, gets the idea that there are smugglers about Pegg Bay, and he, with two other juniors, eventually fall into the hands of several unscrupulous men. The remarkable fact about this is that Billy could have avoided capture had he so wished.

All the juniors think that Billy is a fat, cowardly chump, but when they hear the full story of

"BILLY BUNTER'S SMUGGLERS,"

they are ready to admit that they have been mistaken. This story, chums all, is going to please you immensely; and I hope you will lend your copy to a friend when you have finished with it. I have something more to say about this farther on.

"BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY!"

There will be another grand supplement in our next week's issue, and William George Bunter edits it.

All my chums who saw the first issue of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" will remember it well—it was too funny to forget in the short space of one month. So, without my going fully into all that Billy has prepared for you, it is only necessary to say that Billy has this time surpassed himself. It's funnier than before, is "Billy Bunter's Weekly," and I hope sincerely that all my chums will make sure of their copy of next week's MAGNET LIBRARY by ordering a copy in advance.

"THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL."

I suppose I can take it for granted that it is the thickness of the volume that has prevented readers from deluging me with congratulatory letters in connection with "The Holiday Annual," until now. I take this opportunity, however, of cordially thanking all readers who have written to me concerning the Annual, and I must say I am "bucked" with the reception it has received at the hands of my chums. The work of compiling "THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 676.

such an immense budget of stories, articles, puzzles, and heaps of other interesting items is not at all light, I can assure you, but, so long as you are all pleased with it, that's all that matters.

I believe the newsgatherers have a few copies left if any of my readers have not as yet seen "The Holiday Annual," and, judging by the letters I have received—it is not only my advice, but thousands of my readers' advice—get a copy before it is too late!

READ THIS, PLEASE!

I am once again going to appeal to all my loyal chums to help me obtain new readers. It is quite an easy matter for you to lend your copy to a non-reader friend when you have finished with it; and I am positive that once a boy or a girl sees the MAGNET LIBRARY, he, or she, will want to have a copy of their own every Monday.

Recommendation is the finest advertisement I can have, and if you are a satisfied reader, and enjoy reading the stories of our famous chums, Harry Wharton & Co., I ask you to recommend the MAGNET LIBRARY to all your chums at school.

In some cases it is difficult to obtain the MAGNET LIBRARY. I have had letters from my chums who say that they have the greatest difficulty in obtaining a copy in their town or village. If any reader finds it difficult to get a copy of the MAGNET LIBRARY, will he please inform me? My letter of thanks and stamps refunding postage will be sent by return of post.

So, my dear chums, when you meet a boy or girl who is not a reader of the MAGNET LIBRARY, will you please put in a good word for it? If you have a copy to lend them, so much the better.

One good turn deserves another, and I am ready to help any reader who is in trouble or difficulty. In fact, I think this little bit will explain what I mean:

"When in trouble or in doubt,
Write to me to help you out."

NOTICES.

I have very much pleasure in inserting the following notices at the request of my chums, who, in the event of their receiving begging letters or advertisements as a result of their names and addresses being here published, should absolutely ignore them. The only person's epistle they should take any notice of is the direct reply to their own advertisement.

Thomas Worden, 197, Station Road, Bamber Bridge, would like to hear from readers interested in engineering and aviation.

Correspondence.

Correspondence is wanted by:
A. Burrell, 98, Peterborough Street, Christchurch, New Zealand; ages 18 to 22.

Douglas Kissock, 45, Buxton Street, North Adelaide, South Australia.
Hugo Book, 7, Bridge Street, South End, Port Elizabeth, South Africa.
Cyril Patterson, 54, Wellington Road, Dunston-on-Tyne, is starting the National Companion Paper Club, and would be glad to hear from readers.

Victor H. Book, P.O. Box 125, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, asks for correspondents anywhere, and will reply in each case.

Jack P. McLellan, 575, Chaplote Street, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, would like to correspond with an English boy scout.

Charles J. Wilson, 40, Cleghorn Street, Dundee, Scotland, wants correspondents anywhere.

"Lancercite" Magazine, 12, Wynyard Road, Mt. Eden, Auckland, New Zealand, wants to hear from Australasian readers.

Fred J. Hall, Box 2671, Johannesburg, South Africa, wants to hear from readers in this part of the world.

Geoffrey M. Naidoo (Indian), 66, South Union Street, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, would like to correspond with readers in America, Japan, and elsewhere.

Mack Longford, 182, Fox Street, Pitsmoor, Sheffield, asks for correspondents readers.

F. A. Bottomley, 48, Downhills Park Road, Tottenham, N.16, is starting a magazine on hobbies and sports, and would be pleased to hear from all those interested.

Corpl. C. Strachan, 27589, Brigade Headquarters, Allahabad, India, would like to hear from correspondents of the Companion Papers.

William E. Black, Box 322, G.P.O., Adelaide, South Australia, asks for correspondence.

Will Newall, Lone Pine, 1, Baptist Street, Redfern, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia, asks for correspondents, anywhere, but especially Birmingham, and Manchester.

Harold H. Goodman, 6, Queen Street, Church Gresley, nr. Burton-on-Trent, Staffs, wants to hear from readers; age 16 to 17.

Your Editor



His Blundering Best!

A Magnificent Long Complete School Tale of the Chums of the Remove and Percy Bolsover
 :: of Greyfriars. ::

BY
FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Mr. Quelch's Visitor!

"I SAY, Wharton!" It was Percy Bolsover—Bolsover major of the Remove—who hailed Harry Wharton, captain of his Form, across the quad.

Bolsover was not long out of the sanatorium, whither he had been forced to go after a collision on the road to the station with the horse drawing a fly. He had been running away from school—running away from the consequences of his own folly—when that accident had occurred, and there were several fellows in the Remove who looked upon him coldly now on account of what he had done. Then there had been more trouble with Bolsover minor of the Second Form.

But Wharton and the rest of the Famous Five were not among these. They, like Bolsover, had suffered from the persecution of Mr. Hobbinson, who for a miserable fortnight or so had taken Mr. Quelch's place as Form-master of the Remove; and, though they could never have done what Bolsover did, they could understand how one of his sulky and brooding nature could do it.

"What is it, Bolsy?" asked Harry, more friendly in his tone than usual to this particular fellow, who was no chum of the Famous Five.

"Did you see that chap who asked for Quelch?" returned Bolsover. "They were standing together now, having advanced towards one another after Bolsover's hail."

"No. Didn't know anyone had been asking for him. What about it?"

Frank Nugent and Bob Cherry were coming towards them. Bolsover lowered his voice as he replied:

"I don't want everybody to hear, you know. I'd tell you because—oh, well, you're not so ready to laugh at a fellow and think him a silly ass if you don't agree with him as some chaps—Cherry, for instance."

"Bob isn't like that really," said Harry loyally. "He's not end sympathetic in his

way. But if there's anything you want to tell me that you'd rather those two shouldn't hear, I can listen to you and then catch them up."

"Thanks, Wharton, if you wouldn't mind," Bolsover answered.

"I'll be with you in two or three minutes," Harry called to his chums. "There's something I want to have a word or two with Bolsover about."

"Right-ho!" sang out Bob.

"But don't be long," added Frank.

"They passed on."

"That was decent of you, Wharton," Bolsover said.

"What was?" inquired Harry, rather at a loss to understand.

"Saying you wanted a word or two with me, when it's really me who's keeping you."

"That's nothing," said the Remove skipper. "And it wasn't a whacker, either. If there's anything you want to say to me, I do want a word or two with you."

"Thanks, Wharton; you're a good chap! And, look here, it wasn't so much that I'd mind those other fellows knowing, you know—only that I can talk about it more easily to you than to them."

Harry thought that Bolsover was about to express his contrition for, having so nearly got the Famous Five into a nasty scrape. For they were accused of what he had done; and though the Head had not been ready to credit the charge against them, he had been shaken in his faith at one stage of the examination, and was angry with them for refusing to tell all they knew.

But Bolsover did not know as much about their trouble with the Head as all that came to. He had thought that his running away would clear them; he knew that his return with Mr. Quelch to confess had cleared them; and he gave them—quite rightly—credit for having no grudge against him, though he knew that in their places many fellows would have cherished resentment.

It was something quite different that

he had in mind in wanting to talk with Wharton—something that really did concern Mr. Quelch's visitor.

"Go on, old chap."

"I'm suspicious about that bounder," Bolsover said.

"What bounder?" asked Wharton. "Do you mean the man who asked for Mr. Quelch?"

"Yes, of course. I'm talking about him, you know."

"Oh!" said Harry. "Yes, I know. What about him?"

"I believe he's an enemy!" Bolsover replied, in a loud whisper.

"Enemy? Enemy of whom?"

"Of Quelch's, ass! Oh, beg pardon! But you really don't seem very bright to-day, Wharton."

"Well, I didn't see the fellow. That makes a bit of difference, you know."

"Yes, it would. I do believe that if you had seen him you'd think just the same as I do about him."

"It's possible," Harry admitted.

"You've got some reason for what you think, no doubt, and in your place I might have had the same reason. But I can't judge of that unless I know what it was."

"Look here, I'll walk to the gates with you. I'm going to stay there till the fellow comes out again, anyway. I don't feel a bit easy in my mind about him."

"Right you are! Come along! What was it made you suspicious?"

"The look of him, and his manner. He's a little old sweep, not nearly as tall as I am—no taller than you. Wears a greenish overcoat and glasses and a soft hat—"

"And other things—trousers, for instance, I suppose?" Wharton put in.

"Oh, don't rot, Wharton! I'm in earnest about this. He's queer, and I'm not at all sure that he isn't a bit mad. Talks to himself, you know, and works his face about, and feels in his pocket as if he'd a dagger or a gun or something there."

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Harry stared. He had never before suspected Bolsover major of having a lively imagination. But this sounded very like Bunter after devouring a blood-and-thunder story.

"Got a cold and couldn't find his handkerchief, perhaps, Bolsy," said Harry.

"Not again! It wasn't that. Besides, having a cold wouldn't make him pronounce Quelchly's name in the way he did, or make his eyes gleam behind his spectacles as they did when he spoke it."

"A cold might make a chap pronounce anything almost anyhow, and it might make his eyes water, too."

"If you're going to make fun of all I tell you, Wharton—"

"I'm not making fun of it—I'm honouring it. But I don't think it's a bit likely that Quelchly should have any deadly enemies. Why should he? When you come to think of it, there are very few people about who are so fair and just in their dealings with everybody as he."

"That don't prove anything," replied Bolsover, sticking to his notion with natural obstinacy. "Plenty of rotters hate decent fellows just for being decent."

"But they don't chase them about and try to do them harm for no bigger reason than that," objected Harry.

"Well, we don't know what reason this boulder may think he has."

"Are you ever coming, Harry?" shouted Bob Cherry, from down the road.

"What do you want me to do, Bolsover?" Wharton asked.

"I don't want you to do anything. I only thought I'd like to tell you. If there's anything to be done, I'll do it myself. I'm not going to have any harm coming to Quelchly. He's a white man! I shouldn't forget as long as I live how jolly decent he was to me. I reckoned you thought a lot of him as well, or I shouldn't have said a word."

"So I do, Bolsover—we all do. And if there's anything in this, and you want any help, you've only to come to us. But I really don't think there can be much in it. Coming, Bob?"

And Harry Wharton hurried off to join his chums.

Bolsover major waited at the gate to watch for the Form-master's visitor. He was not going to be talked out of his convictions by Wharton or by anyone.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Mr. Prout in Agreement!

"**H**ALLO, Wibley!"

William Wibley, the great man of the Remove in the dramatic line, did not answer Bolsover's greeting in words. He merely nodded, in rather a distant manner.

Wibley was one of those who did not regard Bolsover as having come out of the late trouble with Mr. Hobbinson very creditably.

It was not much in Wibley's way to bother his head about such things. Nearly all his thoughts were given to his dramatic activities. He meant to be a great actor-manager some day. Meanwhile, he was a schoolboy simply because he had to be—because his people and the world generally would not believe that at fifteen he was capable of licking into a cocked hat any stage idol of the day. So Wibley did just as little work in classes as would pass muster, and devoted all the rest of his time to what he called his art.

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He welcomed any chance to try his hand at impersonations. Wibley was sure that he could impersonate successfully anybody who was not more than a foot taller, and, say, five stones heavier than he was. Faces did not matter; make-up would conquer any difficulties there, with the aid of his real talent for contorting his features and keeping them contorted for almost any length of time necessary.

But it did happen that Wibley thought quite a lot of the Famous Five, and especially of Wharton. In every way, except as stage-manager and lead in a play, Wibley considered Harry Wharton all there, and no end of a good fellow. Of course, it was absurd of the skipper of the Remove to imagine that he came within miles of Wibley in those two roles. Otherwise, Wibley had no fault at all to find with Wharton. But he had never liked Bolsover.

Bolsover failed to observe at the moment that Wibley had come very near cutting him. His attention was wholly taken from the schoolboy actor by the appearance at that moment of the man who had aroused his suspicions.

Wibley, who had jumped off his bicycle at the gate, noted the intense concentration of the burly junior's gaze, and thus had his attention drawn to its object.

Mr. Quelch's visitor really was rather an eccentric-looking person. His overcoat, in colour and in cut, dated far back. He wore big glasses, and his leathery face moved as he muttered to himself. He had a thin beard and untidy side-whiskers, and between his soft hat and the frayed collar of his great-coat a bunch of lank black hair, worn much too long, protruded.

"What a character-study!" murmured Wibley. "Might be a miser, now—or a mad inventor, or a professor with a bee in his bonnet! Easy to do, too!"

"Eh?" said Bolsover vaguely.

He was aware that Wibley was saying something; but he did not bear the words, and he was not really interested. He had no attention to spare from the man whom he suspected of being Mr. Quelch's enemy.

Wibley did not repeat what he had said, but he had been addressed to Bolsover anyway. He did not want to talk to Bolsover.

Mr. Quelch's queer visitor drew nearer. His jaws still moved; he looked straight before him, and passed between the two boys, and out of the gates without being apparently aware of the fact that their eyes were upon him.

"Looks up to anything!" muttered Bolsover.

And he moved a step or two in order to watch the stranger as he went, still mumbling, in the direction of Friarshade.

"What d'ye mean?" queried Wibley, forgetting that he was barring Bolsover for the time being.

"Do you know who that fellow is?" Bolsover asked in return.

"Don't know him from Adam. He doesn't date quite as far back as that, I suppose; but he might almost have come out of the Ark. That green coat of his must have been made in the year dot. I never saw but one like it."

"What's his overcoat matter, ass?" snapped Bolsover.

"What's he matter, come to that?" retorted Wibley.

"That's all you know! Would you be surprised if I told you that that merchant is Quelchly's deadly enemy?"

Bolsover was sorry next moment that he had spoken. He had no real evidence. That mattered little, for he was thoroughly convinced that he had made no mistake. But Wibley was not one of

those fellows in whom he would have confided for choice.

"Rot!" ejaculated Wibley.

"Oh, all serene! If that's the way you take it, I shan't tell you any more about it!"

"What more is there to tell?"

"That's my business!" replied Bolsover dourly.

"Don't see it! Hanged if I do! Even if you were right it wouldn't be your affair. Quelchly can look after himself, I suppose?"

"That's not so certain."

"Well, anyway, he won't want your protection."

"That's more than you know, too. I'm pretty hefty. I could take on a couple of weeds like that chap. Why, he's no bigger than you are—not much, anyway. And I don't suppose he's much stronger, either."

"If you mean that you could take on two like me—"

"Two? Why, I'd take on half a dozen like you, Wibley, and fairly chew them up!" snarled Bolsover.

Wibley did not like that a bit. He might not rank high among the Removees as a fighting-man, but he did not lack pluck. Bolsover could lick him, but he was not afraid of Bolsover.

"If they'd their backs turned, and you'd a bat handy to smother them with!" he snarled hotly.

"I'll take it out of you for that, you sneering rotter!" howled Bolsover.

"Better wait till Prout's past, I should think," Wibley replied.

Bolsover glanced in the direction in which Wibley was looking, and saw Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, strutting along from Friarshade, with a revolver in his right hand.

Mr. Prout—who had been in his younger days a perfect Nimrod, if his own stories could be believed—still cherished the rifle with which he had shot grizzlies in the Rocky Mountains. But he had lately recognised the fact that the rifle was not a particularly useful weapon in peaceful Kent, and he had bought a revolver, and taken to diligent practice somewhere in the village—so it was said, at least.

It was very like Mr. Prout to strut along a public highway carrying a revolver. But not even the most timid of the Second Form fags would have been greatly alarmed by the sight, and most of the population around Greyfriars knew Mr. Prout too well for any little eccentricity on his part to disturb them.

Nevertheless, it appeared that the Fifth Form-master had struck alarm into someone, and he seemed a trifle proud of it, for he stopped to relate the matter to the two juniors.

"Did either of you boys happen to see a short person in a green overcoat—ha!—a person with a most untidy head, who looked as though a visit to his hairdresser was long overdue?" he asked.

"Yes, sir!" replied Wibley.

"I saw him, sir," said Bolsover.

"Are you aware who he is?" inquired Mr. Prout.

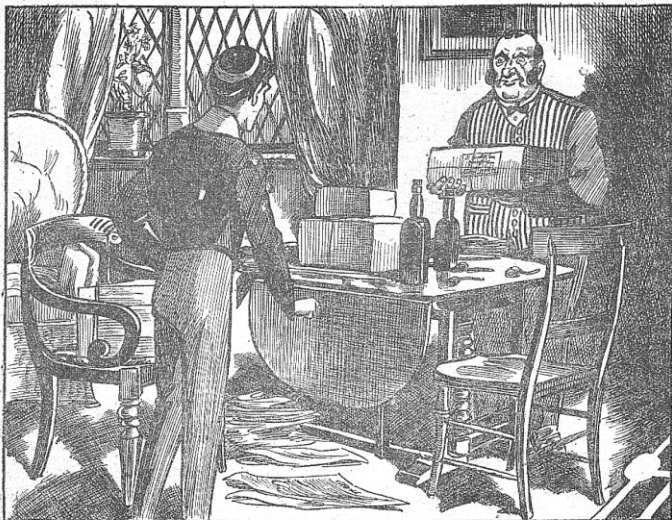
"No, sir!" Wibley said.

"I don't know who he is, but he's up to no good here. I'm pretty sure of that," answered Bolsover.

This was the sort of thing calculated to arouse Mr. Prout's interest.

In his dreams—sleeping and waking—Mr. Prout had often put to flight burglarious visitors to the school with his trusty rifle. He had actually brought out that lethal weapon on more than one occasion when there had been a night alarm; but he still pined for the chance of doing justifiable execution with it.

Greyfriars generally held that if Mr. Prout ever shot anybody it would not be



Wibley saw a parcel, which was dusty and old, lying on the heap of scattered furniture. But before he could read the label, Gosling had snatched it from before his eyes. (See Chapter 5.)

the person he aimed at. But, as the rifle was never loaded nowadays, there was no great risk.

"Ha! Now, what leads you to say that, Bolsover?" Mr. Prout asked.

"Oh, he thinks that the fellow is someone lurking about to assassinate Mr. Quelch," said Wibley, grinning.

"I never said that!" snarled Bolsover. "I said that the chap was Qu—was Mr. Quelch's enemy. So he is! I'm certain of that!"

"Ha! Why are you certain of that, Bolsover?"

Wibley laughed.

"It's all rot, sir!" he said. "Bolsover's imagining things!"

But Mr. Prout frowned at Wibley.

"I asked Bolsover, not you, Wibley!" he said severely. "I have my own reasons for suspecting that the man of whom we speak is not—ha!—an individual of clear conscience and good intentions. That was why I asked whether you knew who he might be. I met him along the road. This little toy was in my hand."

Mr. Prout tossed up the revolver as he spoke. He evidently intended to catch it as it fell; but he failed to do so, and it reached the ground.

Wibley unostentatiously put himself a trifle to the rear of the master. The revolver might go off, and Wibley had no wish to rob the British stage of its future greatest ornament by taking foolish chances.

But Bolsover picked up the weapon,

and handed it back to Mr. Prout. He handed it back with reluctance, for he could not help thinking what a very useful thing it would be for him to have just then. But he knew that there was no chance of getting a loan of it.

"Thank you, Bolsover. As I was saying, this little toy was in my hand—ha!—as I wended my way from Friardale. Surely nothing in that to cause alarm to anyone not burdened with a guilty conscience, eh, Bolsover?"

"I shouldn't think so, sir," replied the big Removite.

Wibley did not agree. But he said nothing.

"I am a man used to firearms. My very appearance should be enough to assure anyone of that," went on the master.

Wibley grinned. He could not see what there could be in the figure of a short, stout gentleman like Mr. Prout to convey any such assurance. Certainly no such assurance would have been conveyed to him had Mr. Prout been a stranger.

Bolsover scowled at Wibley, who was taking the whole business in a highly becoming spirit of levity. Mr. Prout whipped round, seeing the scowl, and Wibley did not wipe the grin off his face quite quickly enough.

"Ha, Wibley, proceed! I will not detain you," said the master majestically.

And Wibley had to go, though he would have preferred to stay.

"I have lived in countries where it is

the custom of every man to 'pack a gun,' as they term it," Mr. Prout continued to Bolsover. "To me, after all my experiences in the Wild West of wilder days than these, England is tame and dull. To vary the monotony of existence, I have taken to this revolver—a mere toy, with which, as yet, I have by no means attained the—ha!—nice precision of aim which has always been mine with my trusty rifle. I make no secret of my possession of the toy. Why should I? I hold a licence to carry firearms, and my character is known to all around here. Ha!"

"Yes, sir," said Bolsover, as Mr. Prout paused and seemed to expect him to say something.

"But this person—this man in the green coat—looked alarmed when he perceived the revolver, and when I—ha!—tossed it up and caught it, as is my playful way, he—ha!—took to his heels. Bolsover—positively took to his heels and fled, as though he suspected me of evil intentions! Absurd, Bolsover—simply preposterous!"

"I think you are right. Do you know, sir, I think the man must really have a guilty conscience," replied the janitor.

Mr. Prout was really so pleasant and confidential with him that he had begun to entertain a wild hope that he might actually get the loan of the revolver, if only he could manage to make out a strong case.

"You think so, Bolsover? Ha! What THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 676.

was it gave you the idea that this person, whom I cannot help regarding with suspicion, was an enemy of Mr. Quelch? Should such prove to be the true state of the matter, this toy may yet prove useful! I have the highest respect for our Mr. Quelch, who is—ha!—the worst of men. I would not for much have our Mr. Quelch harmed. He is himself a man of peace; but he has at least one friend—!—who would not hesitate to let daylight into anyone who attempted injury to him!"

And Mr. Prout struck an attitude that it was a pity Wibley should have missed. "He asked me where Mr. Quelch could be found, sir," answered Bolsover eagerly. "And I didn't like his tone or the way he worked his face about, or the evil gleam in his eyes."

"You are right, Bolsover. Ha! You are quite right. There was a very evil gleam in the eyes of the green person in the coat—I should say the person in the green coat. I noticed that myself. And his conduct altogether strikes me as—ha!—as suspicious in the highest degree. Of course, Mr. Quelch may be able to explain that—"

"Do you think Quel—Mr. Quelch would like being asked about it, sir?" put in Bolsover.

He felt that it would be quite a blow to him and quite a score to Wibley if it turned out that the man in the green coat was harmless. He did not exactly want to cherish a delusion; but he did not want his dream of repaying Mr. Quelch's kindness by protecting that gentleman from harm shattered rudely.

"I had not thought of that, Bolsover. Perhaps you are in the right. It might not be—ha!—quite delicate to mention the matter to our good Mr. Quelch. But I will—ha!—keep my eyes skinned—a phrase we used in the Wild West in the good old days, Bolsover—for this suspicious person, and if he attempts anything against my esteemed colleague, he had better beware! He will have Paul Prout to deal with, Bolsover! Ha!"

"I should think that would be best, sir," answered the Removite, hoping that Mr. Prout would soon forget all about the matter, which was more than likely. "I say, sir, you've got your rifle; couldn't you let me have that revolver?"

For one second the Fifth Form-master hesitated. He felt in sympathy with Bolsover, as he had not done with any boy for a long time. The glamour of wild romance enveloped them both in that moment.

But, apart from his pet craze, Mr. Prout was not exactly a fool. He could guess what the Head would say if it came out that he had lent a revolver to any boy on any pretext whatever.

"I am sorry, Bolsover, but that is quite out of the question," he said. "You must be satisfied to remain on the watch, and let me know if there is anything to be done. I shall—ha!—know how to deal with the situation, you may rely on that."

And Mr. Prout strutted off, slipping the revolver into his pocket as he went.

"I guess I shall have to borrow that thing when he's not looking," muttered Bolsover.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Voices in the Common-room!

"TELL you it's the truth! Really, anyone might think you fellows looked upon me as a most abominable liar!"

"We do, Bunter! We do!" replied Squiff—otherwise Sampson Quincy Ilfeley, Field, from far Australia.

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"Rather!" chorused Rake and Desmond, Morgan, and Russell.

"Geewhilkkins! It would take some tall teller to beat you at that game, Bunter!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"You do handle the truth a trifle carelessly, y'know, Bunter!" remarked Vernon-Smith.

"Really, I don't know when you will believe me!" said the Owl of the Removite, a note of pathos in his voice.

"The answer to that is an easy one, porpoise—it is 'Never!'" replied Peter Todd.

And Rake and Russell, Desmond and Morgan, Ogilvy and Delarey, Tom Brown and Hazeldene, echoed as with one voice:

"Never!"

"Did you tell Hobby the strict, frozen, cast-iron truth, fatty?" asked Wibley.

Bunter winked a fat wink. The temporary master who had made himself so thoroughly detected by the Removite had employed Bunter as a spy; and thereof had come trouble for the fat rascal, for the Head had taken a very serious view of his conduct.

But once again Billy Bunter had escaped the sacking he had so often deserved, and, after the Bunterian fashion, he had grown to regard his delinquencies in the matter of Hobbinson as a joke, though at first he had resented any reference to them.

"The answer to that is 'Never!' if you like," he said. "I had Hobby on a string—that was all. He promised me all the grub I could eat if I told him tales. So I told him as many as he liked to listen to, and I had the grub, you bet! But the yarns weren't true. I made them all up out of my own head. He, ha, he!"

"But fellows were punished for your lies, look you!" said Morgan. "I was, I know."

Bunter regarded Morgan with disdain. "Really, if you weren't quite so thick-headed, Morgan, you would see that it wasn't my fault if Hobby believed lies! I wasn't going to let a chance like that slip. I should think, I didn't like Hobby a bit better than you chaps did; but I must say I had a jolly good time while he was here. He, he, he! I used to laugh no end to myself while he swallowed the crammers I stuffed him up with—"

"And you swallowed the grub—"

"The wages of sin!" said Peter Todd solemnly, breaking in on Morgan.

"Shut up, Todd! I'm talking to this fat worm. And Hobby laid into us and gave us whacking impots for things we'd never done, you podgy sweep! I've a good mind to—"

"Oh, really, you fellows, I'm surprised that you don't make Morgan stop this silly rot!" protested Bunter, getting behind Squiff. "What's the good of going over things that are all done with now? I think it's a sign of a weak mind myself."

"I'm weak-minded, am I, whatever?" roared Morgan, trying to push his way through to Bunter. "Let me get at him!"

"What's the row?" asked Bolsover-major, coming into the junior Common-room, where a score or more of the Form were gathered around Bunter and the big fireplace at this moment.

"Bunter's explaining things to us," answered Peter Todd. "It ought to interest you, Boley. It's about Hobby—"

"You dry up about Hobby, Todd!" shouted Bolsover, clenching his big hands.

Peter shrugged his narrow shoulders. In spite of those narrow shoulders, Peter

was a first-rate fighting-man, and feared neither Bolsover nor any other. But he was never quarrelsome.

"Right—ho!" he said. "I'd forgotten that it was a subject you'd your reasons for barring. Perhaps you'd prefer Bunter's latest—a yarn about a row in Quelch's study?"

"What's that? Tell us, Bunter!" said Bolsover, an eager light of interest upon his heavy face.

Everyone but Wibley was surprised. Wibley grinned, and Bolsover gave him a look that would have killed if looks ever did that. He was getting very annoyed with Wibley.

"Go on, porpoise! You have Bolsover's gracious permission," said the Bounder.

"I don't know that I shall tell it all now," replied Bunter crossly. "I can't stand the way you fellows treat me. Anyone might think you considered me almost beneath contempt."

"Quite!" snorted Ogilvy.

"Quite!" echoed a dozen more.

"Don't take any notice of them, Bunter. They're only chipping you. Get on with your giddy yarn," Bolsover said.

"Boley's your pal if no one else is," sneered Skinner. "Tell your dear old pal about it, Bunter!"

But Skinner wanted to hear. He had no objection to Bunter's methods of getting information. He was not above employing such methods himself.

"Well, I don't mind, seeing it's you, Boley," Bunter said affably.

Bolsover grunted, and again his hands clenched. But he very much wanted to hear Bunter's story; and he was quite ready to believe it, though it was Bunter's, because it fitted in with his own theory.

"I was passing Quelch's study-door," began Bunter. "when—"

"Your boozace came undone," put in Peter Todd. "Proceed, fattibus! That's one of the little things that are kept set by the combs because they come so often into your voracious chronicles."

"You think you're funny, Peter Todd, whereas you're merely silly!" retorted Bunter. "My boozace did not come undone, as a matter of fact. I stooped to pick up a pin—his lucky to pick up pins, you know—and overbalanced myself. I came down a frightful whack!"

"It really was a bit lucky that time," observed Delarey. "I hope you'll do it again, Bunter. Never miss a pin!"

"I knocked my head against the vainscot," went on Bunter, unheeding the South African junior's unkind remark.

"Wood to wood! Like to like!" murmured Squiff.

"And for a minute or two I was almost knocked out," Bunter continued, rather pleased with his new lie. "As I was lying there—"

"Oh, you started it then, did you?" inquired the Bounder sweetly. "What audience had you?"

"As I was lying there I heard the sound of angry voices," Bunter went on.

"Angel voices?" asked Squiff, with hand to ear. "No, Bunter, no! You may have thought you were pegging out; but if you imagined you heard anything like that you were making a mistake about the place you're booked for, my fat pippin!"

"Angry voices," repeated Bunter. "Quelch's and another man's. They were slanging one another like fury!"

"I do hope Quelch didn't use any really bad language," said Rake, shaking



Bolsover clutched the loose folds of the antique green coat. The man stopped running and faced the sturdy Removite. "Got you!" howled Bolsover triumphantly. "Now you've got to chuck worrying Mr. Quelch and clear out of this, or you will answer to me!" (See Chapter 6.)

his head. "I shouldn't like to think of Quelch doing that."

"Bunter wouldn't have understood it if he had," said Peter Todd. "Bunter is too innocent for that."

"I'm no more innocent than you are, Toddy, and I dare say I know as many bad words as you do, only I'm much too refined to use them!"

"Oh, my hat! Get on with your yarn!" storted Bolsover, in dire impatience.

"Bolsover knows who the other chap was, and he's going to protect Quelch! Ha, ha, ha!" chorled Wibley.

"If you don't dry up, Wibley—"

"Why should I dry up?" cried Wibley. "I'm not going to be muzzled to please you, do you suppose? It's a screaming joke, you fellows. Bolsy saw this chap—"

"What chap?" struck in Squiff. "Let's have the tale straight if we're going to have it at all!"

"You're not going to have it!" howled Bolsover. "If Wibley says one more blessed word—"

"Rats to you!" snapped the schoolboy-actor. "I'm going to say what I giddy well like, and if you don't like it you can lump it! Don't let him get at me till I've finished, you fellows! I don't care then."

A solid mass of juniors formed up between Bolsover and Wibley. The former was not quite in the best of odour

with the Form at the moment, and they always resented his overbearing ways, while they were curious by this time to hear what all this was about. From Wibley they could expect a straight yarn, and they turned from Bunter to him.

Bolsover was furious; but the odds were too heavy for him.

Bunter was badly disgruntled at the lapse of attention.

"He saw this chap," Wibley continued, "in the quad, and—"

"And I heard him in Quelch's room. It must have been the same man!" broke in Bunter.

"Shurrup, porpoise!"

"I've as good a right to be heard as Wibley, haven't I?" burred Bunter. "And I know more! I heard them rowing while I was tying up a pin—I mean, picking up my bootlace!"

"He's forgotten the new lie already!" said Peter Todd. "Oh, porpoise, porpoise, what a forgetter you are!"

"And Bolsy didn't like the look of him—I don't know why. He certainly is an ugly boulder; but Bolsy's nothing to brag about himself. He says the merchant's Quelch's deadly enemy—"

"So he is!" squealed Bunter. "Bolsy's quite right! I heard him call Quelch a beastly swindler—"

"My hat! You'll catch it hot for that, Bolsover!" exclaimed Squiff.

"It wasn't Bolsy; it was the other rotter!" yelled Bunter.

"Ah; now we've got it!" remarked the Boulder. "Quite clear, isn't it, Bolsover? Not you, but the other rotter!"

"Look here, Smithy—"

"Then Prout came along with a revolver in his hand. You know Prout's little gun," shouted Wibley. "And—I didn't hear the whole yarn, but as far as I could make out—"

"Hold on, Wib!" said Rake imploringly. "Very nice, lurid story, I'm sure; but I think you might have left out Prouty and his little gun."

"For a bit, anyway," agreed Peter Todd. "If you're going in for fiction, Wib, you ought to remember that there are certain rules which should be observed. It's highly inartistic, to say the least of it, to introduce Prouty before you've properly developed the other rotter—of Bolsy, but the deadly enemy of dear old Quelch, you know, I'm sure there's more to be said about him yet."

"Old Prout did come, and he had his revolver, and he thinks the same as I do about it all!" yelled Bolsover.

"Great minds in agreement," said the Boulder drily.

"I've always thought Prouty a bit potty," said Russell.

"It isn't fiction!" roared Wibley.

"Will you shut up being silly asses, and listen to us? Prouty did come—"

"And the other rotter is an enemy of Quelch's!" howled Bunter. "I heard him say that he'd do for Quelch!"

This was a gross invention. Bunter had heard very little that he understood. Voices raised in anger—some hard names from the visitor—a command to get out from Mr. Quelch—that was all. The command had sent Bunter scurrying; he did not want to be found at the keyhole.

Billy Bunter felt desperate now. He simply had to go one better than Wibley. "Did you really hear that, Bunter?" asked Bolsover, with a very serious look on his face.

"Ahem! Something like that, anyway," replied Bunter, drawing in his horns a trifle.

"What did he say exactly?" demanded Bolsover.

"Because Boley's bound to know," jeered Wibley. "Who's going to protect Quelch from his deadly enemy if Boley doesn't?"

That gibe was more than Bolsover could stand. Perhaps it was rather more than he could reasonably be expected to stand, and Wibley admitted afterwards that he would have withheld it if he had understood how very much in earnest Bolsover was.

The burly junior shouldered Squiff aside, burst through the ranks of the rest—who did not remember till too late that they were supposed to be defending Wibley—and cellared the schoolboy-actor.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Wibley's Whacking!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" sang out Bob Cherry, entering the Common-room at that moment with his chums. "What's the matter? Who's being killed, and why? I see it's not Bunter, so I can't make up my mind at once that it's justified."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"I say, Bolsover!" cried Harry Wharton, in shocked protest.

The crowd had fallen away from around Bolsover and his victim now, and the Famous Five could see what was happening.

It was little wonder Wharton was shocked. Bolsover had got Wibley by the throat, and seemed to be doing his best to throttle him. Wibley's half-choked groans had caused Bob's query as to who was being killed.

But before any of the five could get near, Squiff and Tom Brown had dragged Bolsover off.

His face was scarlet. Wibley's was almost purple.

Bolsover struggled frantically in the strong hands that held him.

"Let me go!" he roared. "I'll kill that rotter! I've stood too much from him!"

"Steady does it, Bolsover!" said Squiff. "You'll think better of that when you come to your senses."

"If you don't let go of me, I'll—"

"No use threatening me or Browney, you know, old fella," Squiff interrupted him, his tone still cool and level. "I dare say Wib did get you on the raw, though I'm hanged if I savvy what it's all about! But you mustn't make a habit of slaughtering the people who annoy you."

"We didn't mind so much about Hobby, but we bar having Wib done in," said Dick Rake.

"Let him go, Squiff!" cried Wibley. "I'm going to fight the brute!"

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"You're not!" snorted Bolsover. "Don't you know you're below my weight? But I'm going to give you a dashed good hiding!"

"That's all rot, Bolsover!" Johnny Ball said. "You may be able to lick Wib, but it's not to be supposed that he's going to take a hiding from you lying down."

"No need for him to lick Wib at all," said Bob Cherry, planting himself in front of Bolsover. "He can take on me, instead."

"Or me!" cried Wharton.

"I'm in this!" said Rake.

"I've no quarrel with any of you," replied Bolsover sulkily. "My quarrel's with Wibley."

"Oh, you can soon have one with me!" answered Bob. "Shall I slap your ugly dial, or will you take the slaps as given?"

"Turn him round, you chaps, and I'll kick him!" Rake said.

Public opinion was strongly against Bolsover. His attack upon Wibley had been brutal. But a few there recognised the fact that there was something behind all this, that Wibley, who could be hasty when he chose, had done so earlier when he had given Bolsover offence.

Squiff was one of these. The Bounder was another.

And Wibley himself was not asking for a champion to fight his battle.

"Much obliged to you silly asses!" he said crossly. "But what would everybody take me for if I let you do that? I'm going to fight Bolsover, and I don't care a scrap if he licks me! I expect to be licked, but I'm not going to cave in."

"Wib's right," said Vernon-Smith. "I don't know what you think, Wharton, but that's how I see it."

"Yes, I suppose he's right," answered Harry somewhat reluctantly. "But need they fight at all? If Wib says he's sorry he got Bolsover on the raw—"

"I'll see Bolsover hanged first!" snapped Wibley.

"And I won't take an apology from him, or give him one!" roared Bolsover. "I'll give him nothing but the hiding of his life!"

"Do you fellows know that it's tea-time?" asked Frank Nugent.

But the attempted diversion failed. Tea could be dispensed with for once; but no one there was going to miss that fight, though they all felt sure how it would end.

Bunter did meditate heading straight for Study No. 7, in the hope that Peter Todd's absence might give him a chance to get more than his share.

But a glance around showed him that Tom Dutton was not in the Common-room. He was presumably in their joint study.

Alonzo did not count. Bunter could grab in spite of Alonzo. But Dutton was a different matter. He could lick Bunter, and had no hesitation about doing it when necessary.

So the Owl fell in with the crowd, and the crowd made its way at once to the gym.

There have been many great fights in the history of Greyfriars—fights worthy of detailed description.

But this was not one of them.

Wibley never had a look-in. From the start of the first round to the savage punch on the jaw that put him down for the count in the fourth he was hopelessly outclassed.

Bolsover had never been a clever boxer. Because of that fellows less strong and heavy than he could master him.

But Wibley was not a clever boxer either, and he had not half the strength of his burly opponent.

The best that could be said for him—

and it was something, after all—was that he took his punishment in manful fashion. He came up to the scratch as long as he could, and did his best to ward off Bolsover's swinging fists. But he only once got home effectively on the other fellow; and when knocked out he was battered, bruised, breathless, and quite unfit to last another round at best.

"Nine! Out!" pronounced Vernon-Smith.

Bolsover stood looking down at his fallen opponent, with a queer expression on his heavy face. Wharton thought he was sorry. But Wharton was always inclined to take the charitable view.

He was right, though. For the moment Bolsover was genuine sorry. The tide of fury had ebbed, and he realised that victory over Wibley was no matter for pride.

It was in his mind to stoop and help his enemy up. But he was too slow. Dick Rake and Newland were before him.

He glanced round defiantly at the faces of the crowd. Easy even for one so dull as Bolsover to read disapproval in most of them. Not in Skinner's, perhaps, or in Bunter's. Skinner liked seeing almost anyone hurt, and Bunter did not mind as long as the injured fellow was not William George Bunter.

But it was not for the opinion of Skinner or of Bunter that the victor cared. He told himself that he cared nothing what anyone thought. He shrugged his heavy shoulders and turned away.

"Aren't you going to shake hands after it, Bolsover?" asked Squiff.

Bolsover recognised the fact that Squiff spoke with good intentions, and he answered civilly enough.

"I don't suppose Wibley cares about that," he said.

"I certainly don't!" snapped Wibley, sitting up now, and feeling his battered countenance gingerly.

And there Wibley was wrong, and knew himself wrong. He had the queasy vanity that is not uncommon in the actor tribe, and he could not make up his mind to drop the quarrel at this stage.

He was not going to drop it until he had got even with Bolsover.

He told Rake this when they got back to Study No. 6. Desmond and Morgan were taking tea elsewhere. Wibley found eating a painful process.

"Rot!" returned Rake. "Better drop it! You can't hope to win a return match, and you're not the sort to wait your chance to do Bolsover a bad turn out of revenge."

"I don't know about that," Wibley said. "I'm going to have revenge. But you needn't be afraid that I shall go about it in the way Skinner might. I'm not a hoarsey end. But I haven't forgiven that lost, and I sha'n't forgive him until I've made a complete fool of him, old top!"

"Well, that shouldn't be too hard, Wib. Nature's done quite a lot to help you there. Boley's not exactly a shining light in the matter of brains."

"He's not. But if he were ten times smarter than he is I'd prove him a silly fool before all Greyfriars! As it is, I reckon it will be dead easy, and I know I shall enjoy doing it."

"You're not going to play his shabby cousin from the slums, or the uncle without an aspirate to his name, or anything of that sort, are you, Wib? It would be easy enough to do that, and I dare say you'd make Boley mad. But it wouldn't be much of a score, because it isn't new."

"No, I'm not going to do anything like that, Rake."

(Continued on page 9.)

The Greyfriars HERALD

SUPPLEMENT No. 4.
January 22nd. 1921



EDITORIAL!

Clifford Chumbley Comes Again!
By HARRY WHARTON.

Last week I told my readers of an interview I had with one Clifford Chumbley, extraordinary looking youth applied for the job of office-boy on the staff of this paper. I turned down his application, and promptly showed him the door.

This week he called again. I was quite ready for him, for Bob Cherry, our Fighting Editor, was concealed in the cupboard, ready to pop out in case of emergency.

"Here we are again!" he said cheerfully, as he trickled into my sanctum. "I've written a criticism of the 'Greyfriars Herald' in verse! Will you accept it for publication?"

"All depends what it's like," I said.

"Whereupon, my long-haired visitor drew out a roll of manuscript from his breast-pocket, and started to recite, in wheezing tones:

"Within the 'Magnet,' every week,
The good old 'Herald' will be found.
Its contents fairly make you shriek,
For japes and jokes and jests abound."
"It fairly makes one sob and snivel
To read the editorial drivel!"
But then, nobody but a flat snail
Will read the editorial chat!"

"Look here, that's libel!" I exclaimed wrathfully. "I didn't mind the beginning of your poem, where you said the 'Herald' fairly made people shriek with—"

"I meant shriek with ~~snail~~—not with manuscript," said Master Chumbley.

"Oh, did you?" I said grimly. "Well, carry on!"

And my visitor continued to recite:

"No form of torture could be worse
Than reading Penfold's potty verse!
As for the weekly Limerick,
Such awful stuff makes you sick!
While, as for Cherry's contribution,
He needs a public execution!"

The next instant the cupboard door flew open, and a furious-faced Fighting Editor sprang out.

"You—you——" spluttered the incensed Bob Cherry, glaring at Chumbley. "What do you mean by taking my name in vain like that?"

"Oh, crumbs! I—I——"
Before the amateur poet of Courtfield could get any further, he was seized in a grip of iron, and hustled towards the door.

"Out you go!" said Bob grimly. "Come back again, and I'll scalp you!"

The last I saw of Clifford was his feet as he was hounded in the corridor! Then Bob and I got to work.

HARRY WHARTON.

SOCIETY SNAPSHOTS.

By Bob Cherry.

BARON BUNTER is still a "barren" Bunter. His postal-order has not yet arrived.

MR. WUN LUNG visited the hairdresser's this week, in order to have his pigtail "bobbed."

MR. FRANK NUGENT is suffering from a bad cold in the nose.

MR. GERALD LODER has been banished from the First Eleven for selling an important match. We would remind Mr. Loder that cards who make a practice of selling matches usually wind up their careers by selling matches!

MR. HERRIS KOKER recently rode a dozen miles on his motor-bike without mishap. We learn that the machine is suffering from shock!

MR. GEORGE TUBB will take his annual bath on Saturday. This will stir the cry of the critics: "When does Tubb tub?"

MR. CLAUDE HOSKINS, the musician of the Shell, continues to "pollute the happy morn" with his cornet. It will indeed be a happy year when somebody buries the beastly thing!

THE HON. HERBERT PLANTAGENET MAULEVERER is taking a rest-cure, under the supervision of Dr. Robert Cherry:

OUR WEEKLY CARTOON.



"BULL!"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

(NOTE.—The Editor does not necessarily share the views of silly asses who do not know what they're talking about.—Ed.)

BILLY BUNTER'S CUNNING!

"To the Editor of the 'Greyfriars Herald'.

"My dear old pal Harry—I should like to take a back at the mucking thing I've said from time to time about yore paper. I am ravvuncs at the moment—so much so, that I willigit eat my words!

"I think yore paper is simply stunning, and the editorial is by far the best fectcher of the lot. What it mit't brane you must have! I only wish I was as clever!

"The good old 'Herald' couldn't possibly have a finer editor than yourself. Yore nollidge of jernalistick duties is just wonderf'ul! You are a perf' beyond pryce, and I am proud to be able to bank in the sunshine of yore friendship! As you no, I have always backed you up threic thick and thin, and manacted that you were one of the best.

"All hail to the jolly old 'Herald' and its editor! Long may they rane! I no you hate flattery, Harry, but I simply must say this. I don't care if it snows.—Bvver yore loving, loyal pal, "BILLY."

"P.S.—Mit't I impose upon yore generosity to the extent of asking you to lend me five bob, pending the arrival of my postal-order?"

(We knew that Billy had an axe to grind in landing us up to the skies. But we're not going to fall into the trap. Bunter can eat his words, with pleasure; but he'll eat nothing else—not at our expense, anyway!—Ed.)

THE CAUSE OF CHARITY!

"To the Editor of the 'Greyfriars Herald'.

"My Dear Wharton.—Will you allow me, through the medium of your frivolous periodical, to acknowledge donations to the Society for Providing the Solomon Islanders with Socks, as follows: MP, Paul Prout, 2s. 6d.; "A Pro-Savage," 1s.; P. Bolsover, 4d. (in stamps); H. Skinner, 2d.

"This brings the total sum collected to date up to 10s. 4d. and two waistcoat-buttons.

"May I remind your readers that in this bitterly cold weather the need of socks and mittens is strongly felt in the Solomon Islands?—Yours faithfully,

ALONZO TODD.

(Local Hon. Secretary to the Fund.)
(Our friend Alonzo must be at war with the Solomon Islanders, for he's always giving them rocks!—Ed.)

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THE GREYFRIARS POLICE COURT.

A vivid account of the latest charges and convictions.

HIS WORSHIP'S DILEMMA!

Amusing Photographs Produced in Court.

When Richard Penfold appeared in the dock, the silence in court was so profound that one couldn't hear an acid drop.

Magistrate: "What's this long-haired poet doing in the dock?"

Mr. Robert Cherry, K.C.: "He is charged with theft, your worship."

Magistrate: "Bless my soul! What has he taken?"

Mr. Cherry: "A number of photographs, your worship." (Laughter.)

Magistrate: "There is no law against the taking of photographs that I'm aware of. On looking up the case of Chumpstein versus Chumpstein and Others, I find Mr. Justice Starling laid it down that photography, unlike poetry, was not a criminal offence."

Mr. Cherry: "Then your worship has no objection to the photographs being produced in Court?"

Magistrate: "Not the slightest! You can hand 'em round to the jorymen, and see what they think of 'em."

Mr. Cherry promptly handed the jury a number of photographs.

The result was extraordinary. The foreman of the jury made a queer gurgling noise, and his colleagues ricked with laughter.

Magistrate: "What's the little joke, gentlemen?"

The Jury: "Ha, ha, ha!"

Magistrate: "Something appears to be tickling you!"

The Foreman: "It's these photographs, your worship. They're too funny for words! Hold me up, somebody! Ho, ho, ho!"

Magistrate: "What are the subjects of the photographs?"

The Foreman: "One of them shows your worship being licked by Quelchey and—"

Magistrate: "What!"

The Foreman: "Another shows your worship in a sack after being japed by the High-life bouncers—"

Magistrate: "Oh, help!"

The Foreman: "And yet another shows your worship being chased round the Close by Bessie Bunter!"

Magistrate: "Hand me those photographs at once, you grinning asses!"

Mr. Cherry (smiling): "Now your worship can see where the criminal offence comes in!"

His worship, spluttering with rage, sentenced prisoner to a sound castigation with the court poker. Before the sentence could be carried out, however, prisoner bolted through the skylight.

REPORT IN BRIEF.

A mischievous-looking youth, named Percival Spencer Paget, was charged with tilting a pail of whitewash over the head of Leder of the Sixth.

His worship offered prisoner the contents of the poor-box if he would undertake to repeat the offence.

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WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE DINNER?



An argument on this subject cropped up in the Dining Hall the other day, so we decided to ascertain the views of various well-known people.—Ed.

BOB CHERRY.—Roast beef and Yorkshire, with apple-dumplings to follow!

BILLY BUNTER.—1st course, turtle-dove soup; 2nd course, plaice, codd, or Dover sole; 3rd course, stake-and-kidney pudding; 4th course, lam cutlets; 5th course, boiled beef and carrots; 6th course (if diner is still game), fowl; 7th course, baked sheep's heart; 8th course, rabbit-pie; 9th course, shepherd's ditto; 10th course, veal-and-lam ditto; 11th course, jam rolypoly; 12th course, foobarb pudding; 13th course—
(Next, please!—Ed.)

HURREE SINGH.—My favourite dinner consists of the esteemed and luscious banana; but I do not anticipate that my taste will be shared by my worthy clums. As the English proverb has it, "One man's meatful poison is another man's poisoned meat!"

MR. PAUL PROUT.—My favourite dinner is a pheasant, shot by my own hand. (In that case, we fear Mr. Prout will never get his favourite dinner!—Ed.)

MR. JACKER.—I wish you would refrain, Wharton, from asking such questions of a chronic dyspeptic!

SAMMY BUNTER.—My favorite dinner is a good, skware meal!

MICKY DESMOND.—Shure, an' you can't beat Irish stew!

DAVID MORGAN.—What's wrong with leeks, look you?

HORACE COKER.—I have a sole which rises abov eating and drinking!

DICK PENFOLD (our tame poet).—To tell the truth, I never feel that I have backed a winner, unless I have a wriggling eel—with mustard—for my dinner!

ROVER (the office bloodhound).—Rats!

OUR WEEKLY LIMERICK.

No. 4.

There was a young fag named Hop H,
Who was sneaking jam-tarts on the sly
Behind him came Coker,
And brandished a poker,
And, of course, it made Hop H hop high!

A RHYME OF REMOVITES!

By Our Bold, Bad Bard,
DICK PENFOLD.

(Pen has introduced the name of every fellow in the Remove into this poem. It must have taken him an awful time to write, and I think I'll pay him a tanner for his ditty, instead of the usual four-pence!—Ed.)

First of all comes Harry Wharton,
Always happy when there's sport on,
Then comes sunny-faced Bob Cherry,
He's a topping fellow, very!
After which comes Frank Nugent,
All declare that he's a true gent.
Next we come to Johnny Bull,
Cuff and grumpy, as a rule,
As for Hurree Jamset Singh,
He's a sprightly, gay, young thing,
Sampon Quincey Illey Field,
In a scrap would never yield,
Russell, Redwing, Rake, and Brown,
All as sportsmen well renown.
And I doubt if anybody's
Got such manly ways as Toddy's.
Time flies fast; I must push on, so
I will skip the meek Aloozo
And pass on to deaf Tom Dutton,
And to Bunter—greedy glutton!
As for that outsider Skinner,
Greyfriars has no worse cad in her.
He deserves the stocks or pillory,
Don't you think so, Richard Hillary?
And his cronie, Sidney Shoop,
He wants cutting through the hoop.
And I really haven't got
One good word for William Stott.
As for Anthony Treluce,
He is dapper, neat, and spruce,
But he's neither good nor clever,
Same remark applies to Trevor.
I can name one who is cleverer
(Lazy, though) that's Lord Maulveverer.
Then comes Herbert Vernon-Smith,
Jove! a name to conjure with!
Half a tick, and I will give 'ee an
Instant rhyme for Jimmie Vivian.
Och! a cainy Scot is he,
Robert Donald Ogilvy.

And a Welshman from Glamorgan
Bears the name of David Morgan.
Goo! I'm getting tired, I wish
I'd not tackled this job, Fish!
I feel sure I'll make some slips,
(Don't keep interrupting, Kips!)
(Please remove your pet canary,
It's annoying me, Delaray!)
All the evening it has sung—
(Stop that beastly row, Wu Lung!)
I feel crazy, cross, and quibbly,
Can't locate a rhyme for Wibley!
(Stow that din, and toe the line, or
I will chuck you out, Smith minor!)
(If you don't give over, Newland,
In the cold stone passage you'll land!)
And the same sad fate, I wager,
Will befall Bolsover major.
Now, Napoleon Dumot,
You had better run along!
(At this point, another foul stroke
In to see me—it was Blustrode.)
Blots and smears are scattered thiny
On my poem—thanks to Linley!
Help! I've sat on secotine!
Is this your work, Hazeldene?
Ugh! The stuff is jolly sticky—
(Got a rhyme for "Desmond," Micky?)

Now, exhausted, in his den, fold,
Or study, sinks the poet Penfold!



FRANK FEARLESS - FOOTBALLER!



A Sequel to Vernon-Smith's Thrilling but Incomplete Narrative in last week's issue. A Nailing good yarn, which will rivet the interest of every reader. (Copyright throughout the civilised world, and in Germany.)

By **BOB CHERRY.**

SSMITHY of the Remove is quite a good sort. But I'm afraid he'll never make an O. Henry or a Kipling. He's got a lot to learn in the art of short-story writing.

I. CHARACTERS IN THE STORY.

FRANK FEARLESS, footballer, who loves

BERYL BROWN, a fetching flapper.
SAM SNIPER, villain, who also loves BERYL, and hates FRANK FEARLESS like poison.

FRANK is on his way to Saltsea to play in a Cup-tie. If he bags six goals, he will also bag BERYL BROWN. SAM SNIPER knows this, and with diabolical cunning he tries to put it across his rival. He captures FRANK, and imprisons him in a lonely tower. FRANK escapes. He is chased by SAM SNIPER in a yellow car. By another lucky coincidence, Frank sees an aeroplane standing unattended in a meadow. He hops in. He crashes from a height of untraced thousand feet, and alights on the cliff-top. Up comes SAM SNIPER in the yellow car. Frank is literally between the devil and the deep sea. It is eleven minutes to two, and the great match starts at two!

(Now get on with the story.)

"Got you!" repeated Sam Sniper, with a mocking leer.

The barrel of his revolver glistened in the sunshine, which he levelled at Frank Fearless.

A hunted look came into Frank's eyes, almost blinding him.

"If you move so much as an eyelash," cried Sam Sniper, "you're a goner!"

At that moment the strong rays of the sun caused Frank to blink. Whereupon, the cowardly cur pressed the trigger.

"Yaroooh!"

But Frank cried out too soon.

For Sam Sniper (not being a Pelmanist) had forgotten to load the weapon! Frank Fearless seized his opportunity—and Sam Sniper—at the same time.

Snatching the revolver from Sam's nerveless fingers, he brought the butt-end of it down with a resounding thwack upon the villain's boko.

"Yaropski!" howled Sam.

Frank Fearless laughed. He could afford to laugh now, for the clouds had rolled by, and incidentally Sam Sniper had rolled out of the car.

"I think you'll admit," said Frank, as he leapt into the vehicle, "that I'm top-dog now. As our English proverb says, 'He who laughs laughs, laughs, laughs!'"

And away sped our hero, utterly re-

gardless of speed-limits, police-traps, pedestrians, feathered fowls, and other nuisances.

Arrived at the ground, he flung himself out of the car. Then he flung himself into the dressing-room. After which, he flung himself into his footers-togs. And then, feeling rather tired of flinging himself about, he sat down to take a breather before the great match started.

Despite all the adventures he had passed through—despite the fact that he had had neither food nor rest for hours—despite the numerous hardships and privations he had experienced, our hero was as fresh as a daisy.

Fred Fowler, the skipper of the Red Rovers, clapped Frank Fearless on the shoulder.



Fowler was in the act of shooting when one of the Saltsea backs smote him with great violence. "Foul!" roared the crowd.

"Feeling fit, Franky?" he inquired. "Fit as a violin!" replied Frank, throwing out his massive chest.

"Do you think we shall lick Saltsea?" "I don't think—I know! And, what's more," added Frank grimly, "we shall lick them by six clear goals!"

Just before the teams took the field, there was a swishing of skirts, and Beryl Brown burst into the dressing-room.

"Oh, I'm so glad you've turned up, Frank!" she cried. "I was hoping—I mean, I was afraid that something might have delayed you."

"I have had many hairbreadth escapes since I saw you last, Beryl," said Frank. "I have been in peril of my life by land and sea and air. I have been playing

hide-and-seek and chase-me-Charlie with that arch-plotter, Sam Sniper. Ha, ha! But I have fooled him! You are well rid of the attentions of such a scoundrel, Beryl."

The girl's cheeks paled beneath her rouge.

"Where—where is he now?" she faltered. "You don't mean to say that you—you've—"

"Killed him?" said Frank cheerfully. "Oh, no! He will possibly be bedridden for the rest of his life, but it's nothing serious!"

"I'm glad of that. Do you remember the talk we had last night, Frank?" "Yes. Our compact is that if I bag six goals this afternoon, you will consent to become engaged to me."

Beryl's eyes dropped shyly. Frank Fearless didn't have time to stoop and pick them up, for the referee's whistle sounded at that moment, and the rival elevens—first of all making sure that nobody was looking—took the field.

From the swaying, jostling, surging multitude of spectators behind the ropes came a deep-throated roar:

"Rovers!"

"Saltsea!"

II.

JUST before the ball was kicked off from the centre of the field, Frank Fearless drew his captain aside.

"Lend me your ears!" he said. "Afraid I can't at the moment," replied Fowler. "You see, they're permanent fixtures."

"Don't be an ass! Now, look here. I've undertaken to bag six goals in this match. I shall never be able to bag six goals of my own bat—I mean boot—unless I score them from penalty-kicks. As you know, Saltsea United have the reputation of being rough players. Every member of the team is, like yourself, a Fowler. Consequently, we shall have no end of penalty-kicks awarded us, and I want you to let me take the lot. See?"

"All serene," said the skipper of the Rovers.

The ball was kicked off, and the Red Rovers, ably led by the fleet-footed Fowler, garnered like bees round their opponents' citadel.

Fowler was in the act of shooting, when one of the Saltsea backs smote him with great violence on the nose.

There was a roar of protest from the crowd.

"Foul!"

"Penalty!"

"What could be fouler than fouling Fowler?"

The referee blew a shrill blast on his whistle. Then, after picking up his false teeth, he pointed to the dreaded mark.

(Continued on next page.)

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FRANK FEARLESS— FOOTBALLER!

(Continued from previous page.)

The ball was placed in position, and Frank Fearless took the kick.

He had a glorious chance of registering the first of his six goals, but the silly ass ballooned the ball high over the bar.

"Bother it!" he growled, or words to that effect.

Shortly afterwards the Saltsea back again fouled. He swept Frank Fearless' legs from under him, and then hid the broom inside his jersey.

Again the referee pointed to the dreaded mark.

Frank Fearless picked himself up, and took the kick. But he seemed to imagine he was still in the kite-balloon section of the R.A.F., for the ball sailed high over the cross-bar.

"Oh, help! That's the second one I've muffed!" he groaned.

Just before the interval, Frank Fearless was racing through on his own, when the Saltsea goalkeeper rushed out, seized him by the scruff of the neck, and threw him at the referee. As soon as the official was able to sort himself out, he again pointed to the dreaded mark.

For the third time Frank Fearless failed with his kick. He tried to keep the ball low, but it pitched on the roof of the grand-stand.

At half-time the score stood (it was tired of sitting down) as follows:

SALTSEA UNITED NINE
RED ROVERS NINE

During the interval Frank Fearless was busily engaged in grinding his teeth.

In the second half the Saltsea back, who was a poultry-farmer by profession, continued his foul tactics. Three times he laid himself out to lay out Frank Fearless, and each time he succeeded.

Frank took three more penalty-kicks, and on each occasion he put the ball over the bar.

The score-sheet was still blank when the end came—and so was Frank's expression.

"Ho, was in despair. He had failed dismally. And Beryl Brown was lost to him for ever!

Just as he was debating with the ease and quickest form of suicide, for all his hopes and ambitions lay shattered, the girl he loved came towards him with outstretched arms.

"Oh, Frank!" she cried. And being a skilful artist, she drew a quick, sobbing breath. "You were wonderful—simply wonderful! I knew all along that you'd get those six goals!"

"Eh?"

"And you got them—three in each half. And now I'm yours—all debt do us part!"

For a moment Frank's head was in a whirl.

He had failed to score a single goal, and yet he had won his Beryl! What did it all mean?

And then the light of understanding flashed upon him.

His lady-love, in her ignorance, imagined that every time the ball passed over the crossbar it was a goal!

And that's how Frank Fearless, in spite of the horrible tangle that Smithy got him into, won through to fame and fortune!

THE END.

OUR AGONY COLUMN.



HORACE C.—Saw your message to me in this column. Your spelling is atrocious! Or perhaps you intended the message to be in cipher!—PHYLIS HOWELL

BELLA (Courtfield)—Will meet you on Wednesday evening, adored one, at our usual trysting-place—the old rustic bridge by the mill! Sorry I shan't be able to take you for a moonlight stroll, though. Too much fog!—Your Own MAULY-WAULY.

THE SOLOMON ISLANDERS are still squealing for socks and mittens! Think of their poor clapped hands and their frost-bitten feet, and send a donation immediately to ALONZO TUDOR, Local Hon. Secretary to the Fund, Study No. 7.

JOHNNY HILL.—I here you had a fat remittance sent you the other day, and that it is yore intension to stand all yore chums a feed. I've always liked you, Johnny, and I hereby swear eternal friendship!—W. G. B.

NOTICE! A LECTURE (but quite a friendly one) will be given in the junior Common-room on Saturday evening by MR. G. PROCTOR, D.C.M. (Drover, Clever, Marksman). The lecture will be illustrated by lantern slides (not motion pictures). All the same, the pictures will be most moving! So—

"Use your judgment (if you've got any),

And come to my discourse on Botany!"

EGGS! EGGS!!! EGGS!!! Fresh from the fowl! Real, up-to-date, new-laid eggs—no "Blacque-birds," "Lays of Ancient Rome"! Also a choice variety of sweeties. Instead of getting impositions at Greyfriars, come and try my special line!—UNCLE CLEGG, High Street, Courtfield.

STAMMERING CURED IN FIVE MINUTES!—If you are in the habit of stammering, let us give you a special course of instruction from CLAUDE BOSKINS, President of the G.S.M.O.T.W. (Grand Society of Mouth-Organists and Tin-Whistlers).

CAN anybody at Greyfriars recommend me a cure for wasting disease? I am konshus of a big waik in my konstitution already!—STUBBLE BEXTER, Cliff House.

FUNDS URGENTLY NEEDED for the Remove Football Club! Five-eight balls have already been bought and busted this season through Billy Bunter sitting on them! Send your donation by cheque (or in halfpenny stamps) to FRANK NUGENT, Treasurer, Study No. 1.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION; the furniture and effects in Coler's study (five-eight balls leaving for Colner Hatch). There are lots and lots of Lots, and the sale will take place in the Rag on Wednesday next. Catalogue from the Auctioneer, MR. FISHER T. FISH, Study No. 14.

PRESENTS WANTED URGENTLY.—NOTICE will be met heartily on a Saturday day next and I should be very pleased if any kind persons would send sum presents to me, moni prefera, all cheeca can be crossed s. bunter and other parcels addressed to Bunter of the third form. I shal be looking forward to them to-morrow. s. bunter, (Sum Hoops, Sammy, Ed.)

MY FOOTBOWL KOLLUM.

By Billy Bunter.

Shakespeare, one of the minor poets, has remarked that their is a tide in the affairs of men wick, taken at the flood, is worth two in the bush.

Kousekwently, when I herd that the Remove team was going over to St. Jim's to play a football match, I decided to grasp the oppertunity of going with them.

I maid trax for Studdy No. 1, where I found Harry Wharton engaged in blowing up a football and one of his "Herald" kontributors at the same time.

"Look hear, Wharton—?" I began.

"The Kaptein of the Remove turned to me with a fierce snarl in his eyes.

"What do you want, porpus?" he growled.

I replide that it was my intension to accompany the Remove team to St. Jim's.

"Have you enuff munney to pay yore railway fare?" asked Wharton.

"No," I said. "But it is the duty of the Remove Football, Hopskotch, and Marbles Club to pay all my expensens."

"Trew. I shall be merely a specked tator. But how can I rite my Football Kollum for the 'Herald' if I don't come over to see the match?"

After further arguement Wharton konculed to let me come.

When we reached our destinashun Hazeldene, the Remove zolekeeper, komplained of severce eternal paina. I could simperthim with Hazel, bekause I sometimes get the same sort of thing myself after a big feed)

"What have you bean eating?" demanded Wharton.

"Oh, I havnt a sandwich at the railway buffy, and it's maid me feel kwite billyus!" growled Hazel.

"You sertainly look pail," said Wharton. "Will you be able to play?"

Hazel shook his head.

"Then what are we going to do for a golie!"

"Better play Bunter," said Bob Cherry. "He's no good, but we haven't time to send back to Greyfriars for a better man."

And so, dear readers, I skweezed myself into Hazeldene's sweetter—think best in about four plaices—and took my positon in the gole-mouth.

The St. Jim's fellows seemed to think it was a hooge joke, for they larfed hartily.

However, Johnny Bull and Tom Brown, at fool-back, plade so well that I wasn't called upon to stopp a single shot. I've never seen two foloes put up a better game. I suppose my presense in the team akted as an intensitif.

Well, to cut a long story short, St. Jim's were lickt by a gole to nothing.

"You've got me to thank for this!" I said to Wharton after the match.

"You!" eride Wharton skornfully.

"Why, you didn't have a single shot to save!"

"No; but my presense in the team akted as a preperation to the others."

"Ratts!" growled Wharton.

And he strodde hortly away, leaving me to remunerate on another grate saying of that minor poet, Shakespeare:

"Alas! How black is man's ingratty-clew'd!"

"His Blundering Best!"

(Continued from page 8.)

"It's some giddy play-acting bizney, I'm sure. If it wasn't you wouldn't be so keen on it."

"I've told you all I'm going to tell you, Richard. The rest is my affair," replied Wibley, with a big wink—a wink that made him put his hand to his face in pain. It seemed as though he could not do the least thing with that face of his without pain.

"My hat!" he ejaculated. "I forgot. Let's hope these bruises will go soon, or I may— But never mind that."

"It is some persanation spoof, I'm certain!" cried Rake. "You're afraid you won't be able to make up your mug."

"There isn't anything in the way of make-up I can't do, Rake! You'll see to-morrow. Bet you I'll deal with these bruises so that Quelch never tumbles to it that I've been in a fight—that is, if he doesn't get too near and the light isn't too strong!"

"Leave them as they are. He'll never think it was a fight," said Rake, with a grin. "It looks more as if your poor old dial had been under a steam-roller or through a blessed mangle. Well, there's one thing, Wib, old file—you never showed a trace of funk, and you took as much before you were knocked out as most fellows would have done. But I really think that if I were in your shoes I wouldn't risk getting up against Bolsover again."

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.**Wibley Finds Out Something!**

PERCY BOLSOVER had no intention of giving up his active interest in the affairs of Mr. Quelch. The idea that the Form-master might resent that interest if he became aware of it simply never occurred to him. Probably it would have made little difference to his behaviour if it had.

A talk with Bunter failed to bring out anything of value. The fat rascal was as self-contradictory as usual. He went back on what he had said in the junior Common-room, and told of things that he had not mentioned there. It was true that he had been given no chance to relate a connected and comprehensible story. But then Bunter never did relate stories of that sort.

If Bolsover had not been so very certain that there had been a row between Mr. Quelch and his visitor, he would not have believed a word that Bunter said. As it was, he could not pin his faith in any detail in the Owl's account, but he clung to the bare fact of the row.

"I won't say a word more to Wharton or to anyone," he said to himself, sitting alone in his study that evening. "I'm not out to be jeered at, and I don't want anyone's help. As for old Prout, he's forgotten all about the bizney by this time, I expect. I haven't, and I'm not jolly well going to! After classes to-morrow I'll ride over to Friar-dale and find out whether that rotter's hanging about there. I guess he is, and waiting his chance to lay for Quelch."

And directly he got out of the Form-room next morning he hurried off to the bike-shed and ran out his machine. Coming out of the door, he only just escaped a collision with Wibley.

Neither spoke. They avoided one another's gaze. But Bolsover noticed that Wibley's face looked much worse than it had done in Form, and felt rather puzzled, and just a trifle sorry, that he had marked it so badly.

"Wonder where he's off to?" thought Wibley.

He had made up his face for classes, and had escaped comment from Mr. Quelch, though not from the fellows near him.

Now he had washed off the grease-point, and his battered countenance felt more uncomfortable than ever. A vague suspicion that perhaps grease-point was not the best possible thing for a face in that condition had crossed his mind. But the sight of Bolsover major drove it away. It wasn't the fault of the grease-point. It was the fault of that bullying lot!

Wibley was also going to Friar-dale, and like Bolsover, he was going alone.

But he was not in as big a hurry as the other Removeite, and Bolsover was out of sight before Wibley reached the gates with his machine.

Through the window of the lodge he caught sight of Gosling, and it struck him that there was something the porter might be able to tell him.

So he walked in. "Which wot I says is this 'ere," began Gosling, who looked hot and dirty, and had evidently been hard at work. "if you bres wants to come inter this lodge it's only common p'itiness to knock at the door fust."

"Didn't you hear mo knock, Gossy?" asked Wibley innocently.

"Which I didn't, an' no more you didn't, Master Wibley; an' don't you call me 'Gossy,' 'cause I ain't a-goin' to 'ave it, an' that's straight!"

"Beg pardon, Mr. Gosling! Only a slip of the tongue, you know. Buey, aren't you?"

"I'm allus busy!" granted Gosling, slightly mollified. "The work as is piled on my shoulders is somethink crool. Which what I says is this 'ere—there'll come a day when there won't be no William Gosling to be doin' everything, an' I shouldn't 'arf wonder if Greyfriars had to shut up shop then!"

"Neither should I," replied Wibley in cheery acquiescence. "It's a constant wonder to me how you get through it all, Go-ahem!—Mr. Gosling. Been having a bit of an autumn-spring cleaning now, haven't you?"

It looked rather like that. Gosling had turned his living-room upside down, anyway. Nothing was in its accustomed place, and the table was littered with old newspapers, worn pipes, empty bottles, and the like, among which lay three or four parcels.

Wibley glanced at these. "Why, there's something for Rake here," he said.

Which who said as there wasn't? Which Master Rake can come an' fetch it, or mebbe, if he so be, I 'gpan to be goin' that way, I might take it along, though there's no airs do try my room-matics somethink crool."

The parcel for Rake looked as if it might lately have been delivered at the lodge. But there lay close beside it another parcel which was dusty, and even cobwebby.

Wibley stole a look at this. It had the appearance of being a big book, carefully wrapped up, and upon the address label was the name of "Gideon Marker," with a line or two underneath setting out that the said Gideon was an antique and second-hand bookseller, who

gave close attention to special orders sent him by clients. That was easy to read, but the written address had been blurred. A date, no doubt that of dispatch, under it was clear enough; but Wibley had only just time to see that the parcel was for Mr. Quelch when Gosling snatched it from under his eyes.

"Which what I says is this 'ere!" snapped the porter. "I will not 'ave you bres a-comin' a-pokin' an' a-pryin' about my lodge!"

"I wasn't poking and prying," answered Wibley meekly. "I'll tell Rake there's a parcel for him, if you like. But what I came in for was to ask you something. Did you see a queer-looking bird in a green coat who blew in yesterday afternoon?"

"Which I did, as was my dooty so to do. People don't come in at these 'ere gates unbeknowst to William Gosling, so don't you think it!"

"I don't suppose they do," Wibley said, still with deceptible meekness. "You're a regular Cerberus; I know that."

Gosling looked doubtful as to whether he ought to regard that as a compliment or an insult, and in the event seemed to lean to the more flattering alternative, for his tone was less hostile as he said:

"I dessay I'm all that, an' a bit over, Master Wibley. But what about the old gent in the green coat?"

"Do you happen to know his name?" Wibley asked.

"Which 'e give it, an' said as 'ow 'e wanted to see Mr. Quelch. But I ain't sure as I rightly remember of it, me 'erain' so many names in the course o' my perfession of lodge-keeper, as you might say."

"It didn't happen to be Marks, I suppose?" ventured Wibley.

The sight of that parcel had given him an idea.

"Which it didn't. And yet it were not so unlike that, Master Wibley—Wibley, I should say. Ah, now I got it! Marker! That were the name."

"I believe you're right, Gossy. Here's a little prize for guessing so well," Wibley said, slipping a shilling into the porter's horny hand.

"Thank you, Master Wibley! Which I may ask without offense, I 'ope, what the natur' of your interest in this 'ere Mr. Marker might be?"

"I've half a notion that he's a long-lost uncle of mine," replied Wibley readily. "Did he say whether he was coming again, Gossy?"

"I didn't see 'im when 'e went out. But I shouldn't 'ardly think so. Which when 'e arrove 'e said as, 'appening to be in the neighbourhood, 'e 'ad called to see Mr. Quelch about the matter of a small account between them."

"Looks as if I'd missed him, Gossy. Rotten hard 'nux to miss a valuable long-lost uncle like that, isn't it?"

And Wibley passed on his way, leaving Gosling rather mystified.

That parcel for Mr. Quelch bore the name of Gideon Marker, and the man in the green coat was named Marker.

Gosling ought to have delivered that parcel more than a month ago. He had evidently forgotten it, and it had lain in his lodge out of sight, gathering dust and cobwebs, till to-day.

Mr. Quelch had been away. But the date on the parcel was that of several days before he had gone. He should have had it before he left. But he had not had it yet.

Did that explain Marker's anger with the Remove master?

Wibley thought that it might do, so. If Marker was, as he certainly seemed, a very choleric person, it was quite likely that he had accused Mr. Quelch of some unfair dealings in the matter of the book—perhaps even of stealing it, though that seemed going pretty far. More likely, perhaps of keeping it until he had got all he wanted to know out of it, with design to return it later.

The book would be an old one, no doubt, and valuable. It would probably have to do with the Greyfriars district in ancient days. Mr. Quelch was still at work on his "History of Greyfriars."

Yes, that would be it. Wibley felt that if he had not been destined by Fate for the part of a great actor-manager he might have become a great detective.

But he had no notion of letting Bolsover or anyone else into the secret. He did not mean to tell Mr. Quelch, and he had carefully refrained from any suggestion to Gosling that the parcel should be delivered at once.

It did not suit Wibley better that the porter should keep it back a little while longer. Not Wibley, but Gosling, had been responsible for any annoyance the master had suffered, and that annoyance was surely over now. Marker would probably have gone back to town. Anyway, he would hardly get past Gosling again.

So, feeling that it was rather a pity anatomical difficulties prevented him from giving himself the pat on the back that he deserved, William Wibley rode on towards Friardale; some little time after Bolsover major.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Bolsover the Protector!

WIBLEY was feeling quite sure that the man in the green coat had returned to town and his old musty shop.

Bolsover, who knew nothing about where the man in the green coat lived, and was much more inclined to connect him with a desperate secret society or a gang of criminals than with a shop, felt quite sure that he had not gone back. And Bolsover, though wrong in his lurid imaginings, was right otherwise.

Mr. Marker had told the truth when he had said that he had other clients in the vicinity. He had not come down specially to din Mr. Quelch, but he had stayed on partly on Mr. Quelch's account, and because of his own alleged account against Mr. Quelch. He was determined to see the Greyfriars master again, though he had no hope of getting another interview with him at the school.

The old bookseller, though quite an honest man, was a bad-tempered and somewhat suspicious one. He had sent to Mr. Quelch on approval a book which he valued at ten pounds. This he had done without being asked to do it.

The price had appalled Mr. Quelch, and he had made up his mind to do without the volume. He had ignored the letter suggesting that it should be sent for inspection, and the further letters from Mr. Marker, asking that it should be either paid for or returned were still lying unopened in his study, covered by a vase by a careless housemaid.

Bolsover had not reached Friardale before he saw the enemy coming along the road.

He rode past, wondering whether the desperate rascal would know him again.

Mr. Marker did not even glance at him. He was muttering to himself as he strode along, and Bolsover saw again.

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or imagined he saw, that vengeful gleam in his eyes. It was probably a gleam from his glasses, but Bolsover would have dismissed so tame an explanation.

A hundred yards or so nearer the village Bolsover dismounted, and took his machine into a field. Peering over the gate, careful not to show himself, he saw the man in the green coat stride back again.

But Marker did not come as far as the gate. He turned and headed for Greyfriars once more. For over ten minutes he paced up and down a distance of some fifty yards or so.

"Got an appointment with Quelch near the milestone—that's it!" Bolsover told himself. "Glad I came!" He shan't do the old bird any harm if I can help it. But I do wish I had Prouty's revolver!"

Now, Marker seemed as if unwilling to wait longer. Bolsover fancied that Mr. Quelch must be late.

But there was no appointment at all. The bookseller was laughing about on the chance of seeing the Greyfriars master, and he began to wonder whether he was not wasting his time.

He came past the gate, and Bolsover hid behind the hedge. Then he paused irresolutely, and turned back once more. Even as he did so a tall figure rounded the bend in the road near the milestone, and Marker quickened his pace and went to meet the newcomer.

Peering over the gate, Bolsover saw it was Mr. Quelch who came.

Then he ducked and dived for the shelter of the hedge again. A cyclist had ridden round the bend, and Bolsover had recognised Wibley. Mr. Quelch had passed out of the gates unseen by that rising detective, while Wibley was in the lodge.

Through the hedge, thick but leafless now, Bolsover watched the road for Wibley's passing.

But Wibley did not come.

He had been stopped by Mr. Quelch.

"Boy," the master snapped, "what do you mean by appearing in public with your face in that dreadful condition?"

"I can't help it, sir," replied Wibley, dismounting. "I didn't do it myself, and I don't suppose anyone really minds what my face looks like."

"It looks like—and it is—a scandal to your school! How came it in that condition?"

"Fighting, sir!"

Wibley answered rather absent-mindedly, as though interested in something other than the topic Mr. Quelch had chosen. He was so. He was very much interested in Mr. Marker, who had now approached within a few yards.

"You will go back to the school at once, Wibley!" said the master.

"Very well, sir," answered the junior.

His being sent back did not matter much now. He had seen the bookseller again, and fancied that he had put to good use his second glimpse of him.

He wondered where Bolsover had got to, and he had some curiosity as to the interview between Mr. Quelch and his "enemy" that was evidently coming. But it mattered little about Bolsover, and he knew that he could not expect the master and the bookseller to conduct their argument in his presence.

So he remounted just as Marker came up.

He heard the bookseller say, in a tone by no means pleasant:

"I haven't done with you yet, Mr. Quelch! You ordered me out yesterday, but this is the King's highway, and I have as good a right here as you have!"

The master's reply did not reach Wibley's ears. It was:

"Really, Mr. Marker, I cannot conceive what more can usefully be said between us. You allege that you sent me on approval a book which I never ordered from you." It is true that I inquired concerning it after seeing it listed in your catalogue, but the price you asked was too high. I cannot and will not be made responsible for the apparent loss of a volume which I have never seen. And I object very strongly to interruptions on a public road. You undoubtedly have as much right here as I have, but that right does not include the stopping me in order to discuss a matter which has already given rise to hot words between us."

And Mr. Quelch tried to pass the man in the green coat.

Marker hopped about in front of him, barring his way. He shook his fist in the face of the master. He spoke wild and wrathful things.

"Hot words! Ah, I should say so, and there's going to be more of them, my fine fellow! 'Apparent loss!' That's a good one, that is! If you don't know what's come to that book, no one knows. It was sent to you, and it's for you to prove it wasn't delivered."

"Excuse me, but that is not the case. Neither as a matter of logic nor as one of law is it incumbent upon me to prove anything of the sort," answered Mr. Quelch, labouring to keep his temper. "I deny all knowledge of the book, and you will have to be satisfied with my denial."

"Oh, I've got to be satisfied, have I? Well, see about that!" stormed the bookseller.

"Will you allow me to pass?" snipped Mr. Quelch.

"Not until I've got something better than that out of you!"

"Then I will return to Greyfriars. I had simply come out for a constitutional. You must not suppose that I fear you, Mr. Marker. I am a younger man than you, and probably a stronger one. But I decline to be mixed up in a brawl on the highway, and as you will not move aside I will turn back. Any further communication you desire to make to me should be made through my solicitors, Messrs.——"

"Your solicitors!" yelped Marker, fairly dancing round Mr. Quelch in his wrath. "Hing your solicitors! Where's my book? Give me back that book or pay me ten pounds. That's all I ask."

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"And more than you will get, Mr. Marker. You have only yourself to blame for the loss of the volume, and the insinuations—or, rather, the charges—you made against me yesterday rob you of my sympathy. You will be good enough to stand out of my way!"

Bolsover did not hear a word of all this. But just at this moment, having come to the conclusion that it was useless to wait on Wibley, he had gained a position from which he could see without being seen; and he was a witness of what came next.

Marker caught Mr. Quelch by the arm. The master wrenched himself free. When a second clutch was attempted he put out his hand and pushed the bookseller aside.

It was not a vicious push, but it sent its recipient reeling, and he almost fell. Mr. Quelch hesitated. If the man had fallen he would have hastened to help him up.

But Marker recovered his balance, and Mr. Quelch strode away from him.

The bookseller danced with fury. He shook both fists after the retreating figure. He shouted abuse. He shouted so loudly that now his words came to the eager ears of Percy Bolsover. And Bolsover was surprised to find that anyone could possibly use such vigorous language without having resort to profane swearing. He wondered where the old man had got all his words from.

But now Mr. Marker went beyond the limit of what Bolsover held allowable.

He started to pursue Mr. Quelch.

Bolsover acted promptly. He fairly threw himself over the top of the hedge from the hidden fence upon which he had been standing, and in his turn he pursued Mr. Marker.

The bookseller heard behind him the thud of heavy feet. He turned his head to see a large boy in an Eton jacket, with a heavy, angry face, travelling about two miles to his one.

He stopped, panting hard.

Bolsover clutched him by the loose folds of the antique green overcoat.

"Got you!" he howled. "Now you've got to chuck that!"

He towered over the little man of books, and shook him roughly.

"What do you mean, by this assault? Who are you?" puffed Marker, his face red and furious.

"Never you mind who I am! I know you—that's enough to be going on with, I reckon. And as for assault, what did you mean by catching hold of Mr. Quelch just now?"

"Oh, you are a Greyfriars boy, are you?" snapped Marker.

"You might have told that from my cap, stoopid!" Now see here, you'd better leave Quel—Mr. Quelch alone! You'd better clear out of this quick, sharp—understand?"

"—And what will happen to me if I do not?" asked the bookseller.

"This will happen to you!" roared Bolsover, brandishing a large fist in front of Marker's countenance, and even going so far as to tap him lightly on the nose with it. "Oh, you needn't try to reach your gun, either! I see you've got one, but—"

"The boy is clearly insane!" rapped out Mr. Marker.

It was a pipe-case in his breast-pocket, the outline of which showed plainly through the lining, that Bolsover took for a revolver. Mr. Marker may have guessed that; but he made no attempt to intimidate his assailant by reaching for it. And that was just as well for him, as Bolsover would probably have knocked him down had he made any such demonstration.

"I'm no more insane than you are—not half as much, I dare say," growled Bolsover. "Are you going? It's no use your trying to run after Mr. Quelch, for directly you do that I shall tumble you over and grind your snipe nose in the mud!"

"What do you take me to be?" demanded he of the snipe nose.

"A precious villain, and an enemy of Mr. Quelch's!"

The boy was in dead earnest. Mr. Marker saw that. And suddenly the humorous side of the situation struck him. The little bookseller had a sense of humour, when his all too ready cholera would give it play.

"Oh, that's it, is it?" he chuckled. "You're the long gentleman's protector—kind of bulldog, eh? Well, I don't want to get a bulldog's grip fastened on

afternoon. And Gesling still held on to the parcel, knowing nothing about the trouble it had caused, waiting his chance to pay a surreptitious visit to Mr. Quelch's study, and leave it there, in some place that might suggest its having been left there quite a long time.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Tells the Truth!

"I've got something to tell you fellows," announced Billy Bunter, popping his head into Study No. 1 about half-past five on an afternoon some days later.

The fire blazed cheerily. The board was well spread. There were stink-and-kidney pies. There was a cake that looked large enough for the whole Remove. A savoury odour announced



Peering over the gate, Bolsover saw a man jump out at the Remove Form-master and shake a bony fist into the other's face. "Are you going to give me back my property?" he heard the stranger cry wildly. (See Chapter 6.)

me, so I give in. But that's without prejudice to any action I may take against Mr. Quelch in the future—understand?"

"You'd better keep off the grass for good!" retorted the burly junior. "I shall be on the watch for you!"

"I won't promise anything for the future. But at present I'm going back to the village, so there is no need for you to worry about your beloved master's safety till you see me again."

"You'd better not let me see you again!" growled Bolsover.

And, on the whole, Mr. Marker, hurrying back to Friaralee, was inclined to think that Bolsover was not so far wrong. It would not be really nice to have one's "snipe nose" ground in the mud, and Bolsover was quite capable of carrying out his threat.

The bookseller returned to town that

to Bunter's fat little nose that sausages were cooking.

But there was nothing for Bunter!

With one accord, and without any delay, the Famous Five began to make that plain to him.

"Tell it and go!" growled Johnny Bull.

"No, don't tell it and go!" amended Harry Wharton.

"Get!" said Bob Cherry.

"Shut the door, and be careful to remove yourself to the other side of it first," Frank Nugent said.

"The absencefulness of the gross offence of the esteemed and abhorrent Bunter—"

"Is terrific—anyway, it will be in a minute!" Bob finished for Inky, though not in the same way Inky would have finished for himself.

"Oh, really, you fellows! It's some—"

thing really interesting, and I could eat a sausage or two and a bit of that cake."

"That's not interesting," Johnny growled.

"As a human boa-constrictor, Buntie," Frank said, "you've ceased to be interesting. We know all about you, and you're now merely disgusting."

"Prouty's lost his revolver!" said Bunter desperately.

And on the strength of that item of news to tried to squeeze himself in at the table.

"Well, you have our permission to go and look for it," said Bob, frustrating the attempt.

"And to shoot yourself with it when found," added Johnny.

"I know who's got it!" declared Bunter. "I say, Harry, old pal, you might let a fellow have one of those pies—only one! I'm starving. There never was such a mean beast as Toddy. If there's only four sardines in the tin, he'll insist of sharing them round, one each!"

"Right way to do it," answered Harry.

"Oh, really, Wharton! What's the good of a single scrumpy sardine to a fellow like me, with an appetite that calls for constant nourishment. Now one of those pies—"

"There's one each for us five," Harry said. "Who ought to go without to let you in?"

"I don't mind, really," replied Bunter eagerly. "I should think that it had better be you. You don't mind doing things for other chaps."

"I should mind a good deal giving up my pie to you, porpoise."

"Well, I'm surprised at you, really, I can't! I never thought you were greedy. If it had been Bull now—"

"Get!" snapped Johnny, rising.

"I didn't mean anything, Bull. I only meant that you're more determined than Wharton. Some of the fellows say he's soft!"

"Do any of them say that I'm soft enough to—"

"That wouldn't be soft, Harry, old pal. That would be a real kindness," pleaded Bunter. "I say, I'll tell you who's got Prouty's revolver if you'll give me a slice of cake!"

"Tell us first, and we'll decide whether the news is worth it," said Bob.

"I'm not sure I can trust you, Cherry."

"And I'm jolly sure I can't trust you, fatty!"

"Well, then, Bolsover's got it!" blurted out Bunter.

The five stared at him.

"Rats!" said Johnny. "What would Bolsy want with a gun?"

"That's all you know!" replied Bunter, looking knowing. "You don't know what Bolsy thinks he's doing these days."

Harry Wharton looked up. This fitted in with something that he knew more about than the rest. He had said nothing to them about his talk with Bolsover, not wanting to get the burly junior chipped.

"Look here, Bunter," he said. "How have you found out anything about that?"

Then the other four looked at Harry.

"About what?" inquired Frank Nugent. "You haven't told us anything, you know, Harry."

"I suppose it's got something to do with that row in the Common-room the other day," said Johnny Bull. "We only came in at the finish of it. But they say Wib was japing Bolsy for thinking he could protect Queich from some deadly enemy."

"That's it!" exclaimed Bunter. "I

say, that's worth a piece of cake, surely, Wharton?"

Harry cut him a piece.

"Take that and clear out!" he said.

"It ain't a very big piece!" grumbled Bunter. "I could put it in my eye and hardly feel it!"

"Put it there, then!" snorted Harry. "I don't care where you put it! Only clear out of this!"

"I say, you know, Wharton, somebody ought to speak to Bolsover. 'Tain't safe for a fellow of his sort to be going about with a revolver."

Then Bunter scuttled before Bob Cherry's rush, grasping hard in both hands a chunk of cake that was almost a meal in itself.

The door closed behind him. The sound of his footsteps came to them from the passage.

"For once that fat rotter's right," said Harry. "Bolsover certainly can't be allowed to go about with a gun."

"I don't believe the yarn," said Johnny deliberately. "The fat worm's always making them up."

"Anyway, that fellow they talk about—the chap Buntie said had a row with Queich—must have gone away long before this," Frank said.

"I suppose so," Harry replied. "Look here, don't you fellows get on to Bolsy about this, will you? He's a silly ass, but he means well. I didn't think he'd got it in him to be as grateful to anyone as he is to Queich for being so decent to him in that Hobbinson affair."

"We won't say anything," answered Bob. "I suppose you'll think it your giddy duty to persuade him to give up the gun? Not all violets being a Form-skipper with a strong sense of duty, is it, Johnny?"

"I shouldn't bother," replied Johnny Bull. "What's the use of taking any notice of Bunter's lies?"

But Harry Wharton did not think that this particular tale of the Owl's was untrue, and he tackled Bolsover on the subject directly he got a chance.

He did not find Bolsover in an amiable mood, however.

"Are you accusing me of stealing Prouty's gun?" growled Bolsover, after Harry had told him what was his object in coming.

"No, I didn't look at it that way. I knew you wouldn't do that," Wharton answered.

"Well, I don't admit I've got it. And, anyway, it's no affair of yours! You're too middle-some—that's what's wrong with you, Wharton!"

"I'll say no more about it, since you take that line, Bolsover. I came to you in a friendly way."

"Oh, I know that," returned Bolsover, partially mollified. "But I'm looking after this bizny myself. I don't want anyone's help or anyone's advice, thanks!"

"I'll say no more about it, since you take that line, Bolsover. I came to you in a friendly way."

"Oh, I know that," returned Bolsover, partially mollified. "But I'm looking after this bizny myself. I don't want anyone's help or anyone's advice, thanks!"

Harry went. Passing Study No. 6 he saw Wibley go in with a parcel under his arm. It did not occur to him that the parcel could possibly have anything to do with the matter about which he had just been talking; but it had. Wharton could have done nothing even had he guessed the truth, for William Wibley was as difficult to stir when he had made up his mind as Percy Bolsover.

The latter sat in his study, moody and miserably, after Wharton had gone. By and by he took something out of his desk and gazed at it for quite a long time. Had Mr. Prout come in just then, he would not have had to search farther for his lost revolver.

Four or five days had passed since Bolsover had warned Mr. Marker off the

grass, and he had seen nothing more of the bookseller.

He might reasonably have concluded that Mr. Queich's enemy had left the neighbourhood. But he did not believe that—or, anyway, he felt sure that he had not gone for good.

The notion of protecting Mr. Queich had taken a very strong hold upon the mind of Bolsover. It was not only gratitude to the master that influenced him, though he really was grateful. It was also a feeling that he must do something to redeem himself in the eyes of the Form.

He was hoping—longing—for the return of the man in the green coat.

He spent a considerable part of his leisure-time just then in standing at the gates, or wandering along the Friardale road. And on the afternoon of the day of Wharton's visit to his study he was rewarded for all his long watching.

The enemy had come back!

It was dusk when Bolsover caught sight of him within a hundred yards of the school. But there could be no doubt about his identity.

The same antique green coat, the same spectacles, the same bunch of hair protruding at the collar, the same straggly beard—Bolsover saw, or imagined he saw, them all. It was rather imagination than vision, for he did not get very near his quarry, and there was not enough light to see details at a distance. But Bolsover was certain, and his confidence would not have been shaken by a nearer view.

"I almost wish I'd left the shells in it!" he muttered, fingering the revolver in his pocket.

For it was rather as a threat than as a weapon that he had wanted Mr. Prout's gun. He felt sure he could frighten the enemy with it. The demerit of Mr. Marker when warned off the grass had not given Bolsover a very high opinion of the enemy's courage.

A passing cart hid the green-coated figure from him for a moment, quite near the gates. When it had gone, the figure had gone also.

"My hat! He's gone in!" muttered Bolsover.

And he bolted through the gates.

But in the gloom of the quad he could not discern the figure. He saw no one until he had almost reached the School House.

Then he ran into Wibley, whose face still bore traces of the fight.

"Seen anybody, Wibley?" he asked eagerly.

"Nobody but myself since I came into the quad," replied Wibley.

"Not— Oh, look here, I know you'll snigger, but I do hope you'll be decent enough not to tell the other fellows! Haven't you seen that bouncer in the green coat?"

"Are you going potty, Bolsover?" asked Wibley.

"No, I'm not; though I expected you would take it that way! I've seen him!"

"Much good may it do you!" retorted Wibley.

"I suppose you'll be telling everybody?" snorted Bolsover.

"No, I shan't do that. I'll say nothing. Your delusions aren't my business, are they?"

"It's decent of you to say nothing, anyway, and I know I can take your word for it," growled Bolsover.

But Wibley chuckled as he turned away.

Perhaps it was not quite so decent of him as Bolsover imagined!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Dangerous Game!

FOR the next two or three days Bolsover was kept in a state of nervous tension that was not at all good for him.

By broad daylight he never saw the man in the green coat. He haunted Friardale; he prowled about the quad and the cloisters, looking and feeling morose. But he saw nothing of the enemy at any time when there would have been a chance of tackling him openly.

He saw him when dusk fell, however. Twice he saw him lurking in the shadows. Twice he pursued. Twice he was eluded, as he had been on the evening when he had seen the fellow outside the gates.

And on both occasions he ran against Wibley a minute or two later, as he had done then. Wibley, it seemed to Bolsover, ought to have seen the enemy; but Wibley would not admit having seen anyone.

Bolsover began to think of replacing the shells in the revolver. The man must mean harm; he would not lark about this with any good intent.

But there was still some common-sense in Bolsover's thick head. He did not want to shoot the fellow. He only wanted to lay hands on him, run him outside the gates, and shake him up till he promised to drop his little games.

There was pluck in Bolsover, too, for he believed the man in the green coat carried a revolver. He believed that the weapon might be used against Mr. Quelch, but not against himself.

—funk would never have risked the latter contingency. But then no funk would have thought of taking on Bolsover's self-imposed task. He was acting foolishly; but, in his own obstinate way, he was doing his blundering best.

He made inquiries at Friardale, but could not bear of the enemy there. But that did not affect Bolsover's certainty that he was staying somewhere near. At Courtfield, perhaps, or at some lonely cottage in the neighbourhood.

It was nine days after he had given Mr. Marker that warning that the crisis came.

After classes in the morning of the day on which it came Wibley looked in upon Gosling.

"By the way, Gossy," he said, "have you delivered that parcel of Mr. Quelch's yet?"

Gosling gave a guilty start.

"Which what I mean to say, Master Wibley, is this 'ere. The parcels what it's my dooty to deliver ain't no affair of you eyes, an' I ain't goin' to 'ave you meddlin'. I ain't aware as I ever told you that I'd got a parcel for Mr. Quelch, an'—"

"You didn't need to, Gossy. I saw it, old top! And it's easy to guess that you haven't delivered it. You're finking it, Gossy!"

"Which it's true as Mr. Quelch is a very 'igh an' arbitrary gent when 'e's put out about anything, an' accidents may 'appen to the best of us—midday of things, an' the like of that, an'—"

"Look here, if you like to hand it over to me, I'll sneak it into Mr. Quelch's study for you, and he'll never know but that it's been there ever since the day you ought to have taken it."

Wibley's conscience had begun to prick him about that parcel. It was not his business to report Gosling's neglect of duty to the Form-master, of course; but he had his own reasons for feeling that the matter of the parcel concerned him.

"If you'll promise as you won't let on about it, Master Wibley," said the

porter, hesitating about the handing over of his charge.

"Oh, I'll promise that," Wibley said. "I can't help Mr. Quelch making inquiries about it if he takes it into his head to. But I can't help you telling winking great lies if he asks you anything; and I know you'd do that anyway, so I'm not putting into your old napper anything you wouldn't have thought of yourself."

Gosling winked a big wink, and handed over the parcel.

The junior hid it under his jacket, though it was rather big for complete hiding. But nearly everybody was at footer, and he got it to Study No. 6 unseen. Rake, Desmond, and Morgan were all on Little Side.

muttering to himself. And Dupont says he's got a revolver—it must be the one Mr. Prout lost. Napoleon's a bit afraid. But he needn't be. I really think he's going off his nut!"

"Is he in the quad now?" asked Harry.

"Yes; I begged him to come in, but it was no go. He said he'd slay me if I didn't leave him alone."

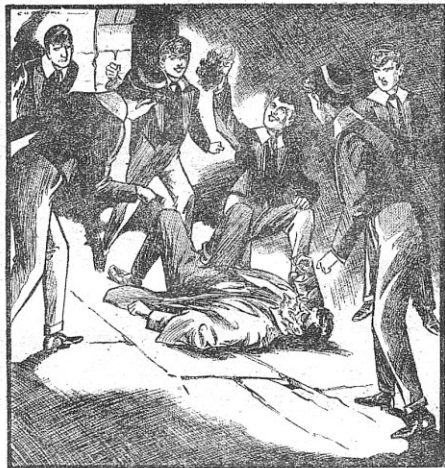
"Do you know what he's after there, kid?"

"No, Wharton. I can't think."

"Well, I know something about it; and you can take it from me that he doesn't mean to do any harm to himself."

"Will you go out there to him?"

"Yes, we'll go, kid. He won't slay us, you know."



"Why he's got false hair and whiskers," cried Wharton kneeling down beside the unconscious figure, and pulling off the false wigs. "My hat, its Wib, Be'sy, you've shot Wib——!" (See Chapter 8.)

Just before tea-time that evening Bolsover minor came to Study No. 1 on the Remove passage.

The fag was a very different type of fellow from his elder brother, quicker of brain, straighter, more likeable. The Fancous Five thought a good deal of Bolsover minor of the Third.

Only Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were there when he appeared. He was glad of that. It was easier to say what he had to say to two, and those two sympathetic beyond the ordinary, than to a small crowd.

"What's the matter, kid?" asked Harry, seeing the trouble in his face.

"It's about my major, Wharton."

"He hasn't been cutting up rough with you again, has he?" inquired Frank.

"No, it isn't that, Nugent. He's always decent to me now—almost always, anyway. But he's so queer lately. He mooches about the quad in the dusk,

"Thank you, both of you. But I knew you'd be decent about it. Tubb and Parget say I'm a young ass to worry. But, after all, he's my brother, isn't he?"

And Bolsover minor fled, just in time to avoid Bob Cherry, Inky, and Johnny Ball, who were coming in to tea.

Tea was postponed, however. A brief explanation from Wharton was enough to induce the trio to join him and Nugent, though Johnny growled at the notion of taking trouble over a sulky idiot like Bolsover minor.

"Still, I don't mind if it will make his minor feel easier," he added.

The five ran downstairs and made their way into the quad.

They could not see Bolsover there. They passed on to the cloisters, where the gloom was deeper, but they could not see him there, either. But he might

have been within a few yards of them and still invisible.

Bob fancied he heard footsteps, and they all stopped to listen.

Then from the ruins of the old chapel came the sound of a revolver-shot.

"My hat!" gasped Nugent. "He's done it now!"

"Come on!" cried Harry.

And the five ran towards the chapel.

Into their midst, running as if for dear life, came Bolsover. He would have broken through, but that Bob and Johnny threw strong arms about his body and held him fast.

"I've shot him!" moaned the burly junior. "I never meant to do it, and I didn't think the thing could go off. Why I took the shells out of it myself! And I swear I didn't press the trigger on purpose! I was only threatening him."

"Who?" snapped Johnny.

"Why, the chap who's been laying for Quelch, of course! I told him to keep off the grass—I told him that! And I can't really feel sorry if I've killed him—not if he did mean harm to Quelch. But it will be rough to be hanged for a murderous beast like that!"

"You idiot!" cried Bob. "Who says anyone means any harm to Quelch?"

"I know—that's good enough for me!" replied Bolsover sullenly.

"Better come along and see what damage he has done," said Harry. "Got that electric-torch of yours, Johnny?"

"Yes. Come along, Bolsover."

"I'll come. I'm not going to shirk it this time, so you needn't hang on to me."

They hurried to the spot where the body lay, as Bolsover put it. It was rather pessimistic of Bolsover to be certain that it was a mere body; but they did not wonder that he took a gloomy view of what he had done, and what he might expect in consequence.

Johnny flashed his electric-torch.

"There lay in the worn furs someone in a green coat. He lay quite still, and there was blood on his left temple."

"It's only a graze, though it's stunned him," said Harry, kneeling beside the unconscious figure. "Why, he's got a wig on, and these whiskers are false, I'm sure!"

He pulled off the wig, and tore away the false whiskers and beard.

"My hat! It's Wib!" he shouted.

"You've shot Wib, Bolsy!"

"Wibley! It can't be!" gasped Bolsover.

But even as he spoke conviction came to him that it was, and, dull as he might be, he understood it all.

Wib had been fooling him! Wib had had him on a string!

This was the schoolboy-actor's revenge for that thrashing!

The man in the green coat had gone away. Whatever his feud with Mr. Quelch was, he had not been following it up as Bolsover had imagined. But the crafty Wib had made up to look like him, and had spoofed Bolsover most completely!

"I'll go and tell Mr. Quelch," said Bolsover.

I don't know whether you need. I believe Wib's coming to. It's a mere graze. I'm sure," said Johnny Bull, also on his knees.

It was curious that none of them, not even Johnny, could feel really angry with Bolsover. Even from the first they recognised the fact that the wrong-headed fellow had done his blundering best.

"I think he's better," said Harry. "We can't keep this dark, I'm afraid. I don't think Wib would kick, but—

Yes, you'd better go, Bolsover."

And Bolsover went alone.

He felt the need of confession. He did not want to make himself out a hero; he did not anticipate being considered anything better than a fool. What he wanted was to get this cleared up, even though it meant the sack for him.

Mr. Quelch and he arrived together in a very short time. The master had not waited to ask a lot of questions.

But, short as the time was, it had been long enough to allow Wibley to recover consciousness, and that was all in Bolsover's favour.

Wibley saw now what a dangerous game, what an essentially cruel game, he had played. He counted himself more at fault than Bolsover, and he said so quite frankly.

"You shut up, Bolsy!" he said. "Let me explain to Mr. Quelch. It's really me you ought to blame, sir. Bolsover was only trying to protect you."

"Protect me, Wibley? But what protection did I stand in need of? And why should Bolsover—"

"He thought I was Marker? Was your deadly enemy, and that he meant to do

you harm. And I found out about that, and made up to look like Marker, and led Bolsover a rare dance."

Ashamed as he felt, Wibley could not repress a grin at the thought of the dance he had led Bolsover. More active than the burly junior, and knowing every corner of Greyfriars quite as well, Wibley had found it easy to dodge into the gloom, get rid of his drape a minute or two round the neck, and whiskers had been thrust into the pocket of the coat, and the coat had been dropped into any odd corner, to be recovered later.

"But what do you know about Mr. Marker? And how do you come to be in possession of that queer old coat of his?" asked the master.

"I found out about him, sir. I've something else to tell you—something that you'll be angry about, I guess. And it isn't Marker's coat; it's one very like it that I remembered seeing in the lumber-room at home, and sent for. The rest of the disguise was dead easy."

"What else is it you have to tell me, Wibley?" demanded Mr. Quelch sternly.

"I am already angry with you; I think your conduct quite beyond excuse. It was a very dangerous game you played, and you may be thankful that nothing graver than a mere scratch came of it—though I promise both you and Bolsover that there is more to come!"

"It's about the lost book, sir," replied Wib meekly.

"What lost book?" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"The one Marker sent you, sir—that all the row was about."

Mr. Quelch was mystified, but Bolsover major was even more so. The supposed enemy had only been a bad-tempered tradesman, then! That he could guess. But how Wibley knew all about it he could not guess.

"If you'll promise you won't drop on to Gosling, sir—"

"Gosling? Is the boy mad? There seems no end to your mysteries, Wibley!"

It was impossible now to keep his word to Gosling. Wibley saw that.

He told how he had come to guess at the truth.

"That story does more credit to your brains than to your sense of right, Wibley," said the master gravely. "Now, Bolsover, how do you account for your possession of a revolver?"

"It's Mr. Prout's, sir," answered Bolsover, hanging his head. "I never borrowed it from his study. I never meant to keep it, of course, or to use it, really. I thought I'd taken all the shells out, but I must have left one in."

Mr. Quelch shuddered at the thought of what might have been the result of that carelessness. But there was something about Bolsover's attitude that disarmed his wrath. He felt furious with the wanton Wib, but not with Bolsover.

"You did this with a view to my protection, Wibley says, Bolsover," he said. "Why?"

"Because you were so jolly decent to me over that Hobkinson affair, sir!" blurted out the blunderer.

And now no one felt inclined to laugh at him.

Mr. Quelch did not answer for a moment. When he did speak his voice was softer.

"You have been very, very foolish, Bolsover, but I must thank you," he said. "I would have given much that this should not have happened; but I should be a churl if I did not recognise

(Continued on page 16.)

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FOOTBALL.

There is a great deal of discussion going on at present over a question raised some months ago as to the forming of a Northern Section of the Third Division of the Football League. I am all in favour of this suggestion, for there are many excellent clubs in the North who deserve more prominence than they are now receiving. Then again, such clubs as Grimsby Town and Northampton, members of the present Third Division, would no doubt welcome such an addition; they would probably apply for a transfer to this section, and so reduce the long railway journeys that they are now compelled to make.

Sheffield United seem unable to do anything right this season, and their record to date is anything but convincing. Has the departure of such a tried player as Fazackerley, who is now with Everton, had a demoralising effect upon the club? This is hardly possible, although in all probability it has weakened their attack a great deal; but still the United should never be in want of players with such support as they receive.

Looking over their past record, I notice that they have not figured once as champions of the Division, but as regards the Cup, they have always stood out as very formidable opponents. Appearing in the Final on four occasions, they were successful thrice as under:

1898-9.—4—1 against Derby County, at the Crystal Palace.

1901-2.—2—1 against Southampton, at the Crystal Palace, after a drawn game at the Crystal Palace 1—1.

1914-15.—3—0 against Chelsea, at Old Trafford.

That the United show improvement in the games to come is sincerely hoped, for to have both Sheffield clubs figuring in the Second Division would be a terrific blow to their town and to local enthusiasts.

The draw for the English Cup proved very interesting, and now it remains for the matches to be played ere we gaze upon the clubs who enter the second round of the strenuous fight for this trophy. The Third Division clubs have fared badly as far as the draw is concerned, for, with the exception of four instances, they have to meet clubs in the senior divisions, and so I cannot see a chance of a member of this division bagging the Cup. London's three senior clubs are in luck's way, and their respective matches should prove "snips" for them in this first round. The present holders of the Cup are drawn against those splendid Cup-fighters, Bristol City, at Villa Park. This game will prove excellent, without a doubt; but, high as I respect the City's prowess, I shall look to Aston Villa to just scrape home.

Although the matches will have been decided by the time you are reading this

paragraph, I will set out here the clubs I shall expect to figure in the next stage:

Millwall	Swansea
Swindon	Southampton
Wolverhampton	Blackburn
Blackpool	Grimsby
West Bromwich	Middlesbrough
Oldham	Burnley
Aston Villa	Arsenal
Everton	Chelsea
Southend	Manchester City
Plymouth	South Shields
Newcastle	Bradford City
Hull City	West Ham
Manchester United	Tottenham Hotspur
Watford	Huddersfield
Birmingham	Preston North End
Sunderland	Clapton Orient

CRICKET.

Australian cricketers are at present very much in the limelight, and a special reference must be made of the remarkable batting feat of W. W. Armstrong, the Australian captain, whilst playing for Victoria against South Australia a few weeks back. In the first innings Victoria made 510, and in the second, 724—a record score for a second innings. Armstrong's share was 157 not out and 245, and so this great batsman established a world's record; the previous best being that of the famous C. B. Fry—325 and 229 for Sussex v Surrey, at Brighton, in 1900. Not only with the bat does Armstrong excel, for on many an occasion he has proved his worth with the ball, and has often been the means of breaking a long partnership on the part of the opposition.

Another new record was also set up by Kelleway (165) and Bardsley (235) for N.S.W. v South Australia, their partnership realising 397 for the fifth wicket.

The first Test Match did not show our representatives up in the limelight—very far from it, I am sorry to say. Not a man on our side was perfect; all made errors—even the great J. B. Hobbs. Surely they were not all suffering from nervousness! However, we do not know the actual circumstances, and therefore cannot fairly judge their play. There is little doubt that Hobbs and Woolley, from their side in the M.C.C.'s first innings, I have a great respect for tall Frank, both with the bat and the ball. He is a man who is as likely as not capable of stopping the rot, and I know for a fact that many a side in the field when he is at the wicket have given a sigh of relief when his wicket has gone down.

In the next Test I shall expect to see a little rearrangement on our side. That Makepeace, of Lancashire, will be included as Hobbs' partner for the first wicket I sincerely trust. Don't get it into your heads that I am going against Russell. Not a bit of it! But really I do think that the Essex man would do better a little lower down in the batting list. Makepeace has already proved himself to be a steady bat, and against the "Aussies" these are the men required. As to the man who should be dropped, I am not going to make a guess or a

suggestion. I leave that to Captain Douglas to decide.

And now a word about the Australian eleven. All did extremely well, but in their first innings they certainly had luck. H. L. Collins is a batsman of the highest standard, but I know that he will admit that it was his lucky day when he was missed by Waddington twice during his seventy runs. Mistakes will happen, but there—they prove the undoing of sides many a time and oft. Still, the M.C.C. have another four of these Test Matches to play, and my faith in them that they will prove successful yet is not a bit shaken.

BOXING.

The heavy-weight contest which took place at the Royal Albert Hall on December 10th of last year between Joe Beckett, heavy-weight champion of Great Britain, and Frank Moran, of America, had a far from satisfactory ending, more especially to British sportsmen. The Pittsburg dentist knocked Joe out in the second round with a blow delivered by his famous "Mary Ann"—or, to be more precise—right glove. This blow, which had all the weight of Moran's big body behind it, sent Beckett to the boards, and, in spite of our champion's efforts to regain his feet, he was counted "out."

The actual boxing was of a very poor nature; both men were slow, whilst Moran's tactics at times were of a doubtful nature. Beckett seemed to me to be nervous, but why I cannot imagine. Moran took the advantage, and soon put fins to the affair.

Georges Carpentier was present as a witness, and took good stock of the proceedings. If by chance the Frenchman signs to meet Moran he will no doubt form his theory of dealing with the American.

The fight which took place at Madison Square Gardens, New York, for the heavy-weight championship of the world, between Jack Dempsey (holder) and Bill Brennan provided an excellent contest. After twelve very strenuous rounds Dempsey, with a powerful right to the heart and a left hook to the stomach, sent Brennan into the boxers' "dreamland," and so retained the title which Georges Carpentier, the Frenchman, is so intent on wresting from him. Dempsey did not have it all his own way in this battle; Brennan more than held his own in the majority of the rounds, and upon this display it is freely discussed that the champion has fallen off a great deal since he met and defeated Jesse Willard for the title of which he is now the proud holder. The American cannot afford to become slack, especially in view of his fight with Carpentier. The quick-fist Frenchman will be at him like a tiger at the sound of the gong which will announce the first round of one of the biggest fights in the history of the Ring, and which will mean much to both men.

SPECTATOR.

"HIS BLUNDERING BEST!"

(Continued from page 14.)

that your feelings—if not your actions—did you credit. I really don't know what the Head or Mr. Prout will say; but I will do my best for both you and Wibley—though, I hardly feel that Wibley deserves it."

"I'm afraid I don't, sir," said Wibley, humbled and contrite. "It was a leastly trick, Bobsy, old man! I'm sorry!"

"That's all right, Wib," returned Bolsover, stretching out a big hand. "Need the Head know, sir?" asked Wharton.

"The Head must certainly know, Wharton!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

But it was Mr. Quelch who told the Head all about it; and the two culprits were not brought up for judgment till next day, when it was easier for Dr. Locke to deal with them coolly. He had been very angry when told the story.

Mr. Prout was not angry at all, however.

"It was very wrong of Bolsover to take your revolver, Prout," said Mr. Quelch mildly.

"Very wrong—ha!—very wrong indeed, I admit that. But he asked me to lend it to him, Quelch, and for a moment I was half inclined to do so. He was so—ha!—so very much in earnest. Well, as far as I am concerned, I forgive him fun—ha!"

The Head was not so easily appeased. Bolsover and Wibley were both heavily punished for their folly.

Wibley handed over the parcel, and

Mr. Quelch, feeling that Marker had had some cause for his impatience and ill-temper, sent him a cheque for the full amount asked for the book, with an explanation of the circumstances. He received in reply a letter of apology, with a rather caustic reference to a certain Greyfriars junior at its end. Mr. Quelch knew that it was Bolsover major who was meant. But he did not pass on that caustic remark.

After all, stupid and reckless as he had been, Bolsover major had done his blundering best, and his Form-master thought better of him than he had ever done before.

THE END.

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