

THE FAVOURITE ALL-SCHOOL PAPER FOR BOYS!



The Magnet

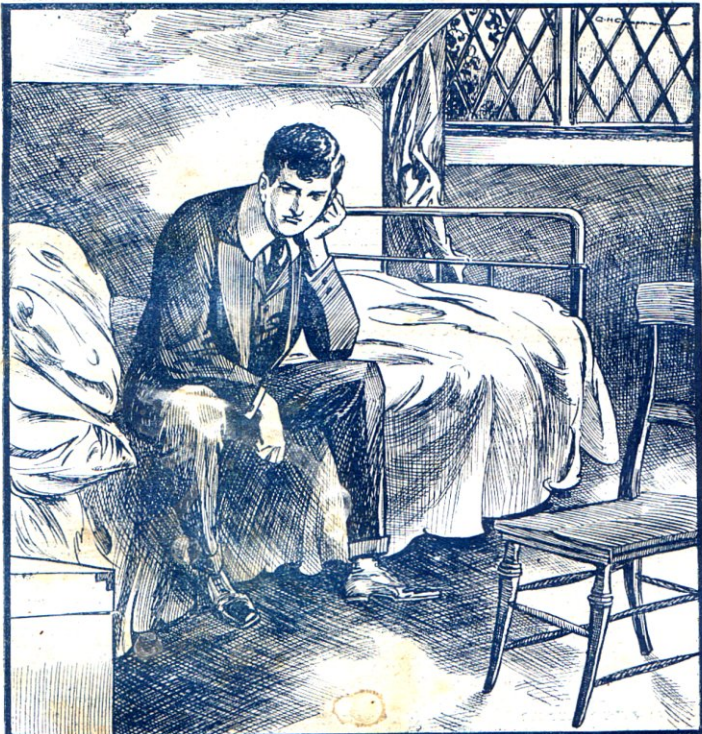
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With which is incorporated
The Greyfriars Herald.

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No. 679. Vol. XVIII.

February 12th, 1921.



CONDEMNED FOR THE SAKE OF HIS FORM!

(Harry Wharton's lonely wait after his great sacrifice.)



FOR NEXT MONDAY.

Once again we have a magnificent programme for next week's issue of the MAGNET LIBRARY. The grand long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. is entitled:

"THE FORM-MASTER'S DISGRACE!"

By Frank Richards.

It is seldom that a Form-master gets into trouble, but in next week's story we find that Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, incurs the enmity of Gerald Loder, of the Sixth. Loder, as you all know, is not by any means a nice fellow—and when one gets on the wrong side of the bully, trouble is sure to follow.

Mr. Quelch has often been alluded to as "a beast, but a just beast," but he is, nevertheless, liked by the Removites. In protecting a junior from the prefect's savage fury, Mr. Quelch makes an enemy—and the act costs him not a little. All Greyfriars become astounded at the story of

"THE FORM-MASTER'S DISGRACE!"

"THE GREYFRIARS HERALD."

I have had many hundreds of letters from boys and girls all over the country concerning the supplement in the MAGNET LIBRARY, and I am very pleased indeed that the work of the juniors concerned is popular. Next week we shall have another splendid supplement, entitled:

"THE GREYFRIARS HERALD."

and it will, as usual, be packed full of fun and fiction.

I think readers of the MAGNET LIBRARY now have the finest three-half-pennyworth of stories it is possible to wish for. Harry Wharton's journal was once published quite separately from this journal but it is now contained in the MAGNET LIBRARY. That alone shows how much more readers of the MAGNET are getting for their money!

However, so long as you are all pleased with the change, I am satisfied. If you are not pleased, boys and girls, then all I can say is—you are difficult to please.

I should like to thank all readers here who have written to me in such glowing terms of

THE MAGNET LIBRARY SUPPLEMENT—THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD."

ARE YOU UNLUCKY?

Have you been unlucky enough to have missed the first "Poplets" Competition in the "Popular"?

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 679.

That is a question which you can ask yourself—and you are assuredly unlucky if you missed last week's grand issue of our companion paper. There is a simple competition in that paper, and money prizes are offered to readers every week—if they did not order their copy in advance.

But that is not all. I have had letters from readers who missed "Billy Bunter's Weekly" when it was published in the MAGNET LIBRARY. I am quite prepared to learn that many readers of the "Popular" missed their copy of that paper last week—for I warned all Magnetites that Billy was getting busy again, and they are sure to have made a rush to the newsgate for a copy. Thus the "Popites" were unlucky—if they didn't order their copy in advance.

Chums, this week's issue of the "Popular" will contain a four-page supplement, **"BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY,"**

two grand complete school stories of Harry Wharton & Co., and Jimmy Silver & Co. respectively, an easy competition for money prizes, and a fine detective serial.

Don't be unlucky, chums, and find that all the copies have been sold by the time you go for yours on Friday morning. Order the "Popular" now, and you will be very glad.

NOTICES.

Correspondence.

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.

C. Cooper, "Harrow," Castlefield Street, Bondi, Sydney, N.S.W. Australia, wants letters from stamp-collectors. All are answered.

John O. Nicholls, Battsams Road, Payneham, South Australia, is on the look out for readers in India, Africa, and South America interested in stamps.

"The Companion Papers Club," a new and novel club for readers of the six companion papers. Monthly magazine issued. Full particulars on application to Arthur Q. Moore, 2, Marine Road, Douglas, I.O.M. Please enclose stamped, addressed envelope. Reply per return post.

Arthur Cohen, 49, Height Street, Doornfontein, Johannesburg, South Africa, wants correspondents in Malta and Corsica. His chum, H. Goldstein, 50, Height Street, also wants a correspondent.

Neale H. Edwards, c.o. Wilcox Mofflin, 24, St. John Street, Llanconnet, N.S.W., wants correspondents, 15-16 years of age.

Robert Rudd, 12, Princes Street, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, is eager for correspondents.

Cecil Rhodes, 24, Central Terraces, Lordsmill Street, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, would like to hear from D. M. Reindorf, King's Palace, Winnebago.

P. D. Erasmus, 22, Sebastian Street, North End, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, asks for correspondence with readers.

D. Shannon, Westholme, 78, Clarence Road, King's Heath, Birmingham, wants to correspond with reader in Colonies, aged 14.

C. A. Downs, 73, Dover Street, Folkestone, wishes to hear from a reader who possesses a typewriter, with a view to giving paid assistance in the production of an amateur magazine.

Evelyn Levene, 1,397b, St. Dominique Street, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, wants correspondence with readers, age 14 upwards.

Correspondence is asked for by P. D. Erasmus, 22, Sebastian Street, North End, Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Maurice Rotstein, P.O. Box 656, Cape Town, South Africa. Dan Taylor, 35, Austin Street, Nechells, Birmingham (stamps and postcards). Edward D. Wills, 3, Gower Street, St. John's, Newfoundland. Harry Dickman, Ceylon Cottage, 54, Constitution Street, Cape Town, South Africa (stamps, coins, etc.). Louis Dickman, 123, Caledon Street, Cape Town (coins, etc.).

Replies in Brief.

W. S.—Thanks for your kind wishes. I, and my staff, most heartily reciprocate—though we are a bit late! Glad you like the stories.

B. S. G. (Hale, Cheshire).—Welcome, new reader! Here goes to answer your questions. 1. Mark Linley comes from Blackpool; 2. Billy Bunter is heavier than Baggy Trimble of St. Jim's; 3. Sammy Bunter weighs just over eleven stone; 4. There is no recognised captain of the Third Form. Tubb, however, has assumed that office—and nobody tries to turn him out! "Billy Bunter's Weekly," as you will have seen, is now a weekly feature in our companion paper, the "Popular." He's got four fat subs, too, who have quite as funny ideas as himself!

Your Editor



Harry Wharton's Sacrifice

A Magnificent, Long, Complete
School Story dealing with the
adventures of Harry Wharton
& Co. of Greyfriars. :

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Ponsonby's Threat!

A BRISK and animated discussion was taking place in Study No. 1 on the Remove passage at Greyfriars. Besides Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent, its owners, Bob Cherry was there, likewise Johnny Bull and Hurree Janset Singh. All appeared to be talking at once, and the subject of discussion was the forthcoming match with Highcliffe School—seemingly a much more important matter than prep to all but Harry Wharton.

The captain of the Remove was as keen on footer discussion as anyone. But it was long past prep-time, and he wanted to get on with the job.

"What about prep, you fellows?" he demanded for the twentieth time.

"Hah! you better—"
"Blow prep! Now, if Highcliffe—"
"We ought to give 'em a good game—"

"The ground's as hard as iron, you know—"

Harry Wharton groaned and tried again.

"It's ten-past seven, you chaps—"
"If Courteney plays as well as he did—"

Harry Wharton grinned and gave it up. It seemed hopeless to end the discussion by words. Deeds were wanted, not words; and Harry proceeded to adopt them.

He grabbed Bob Cherry by the jacket-collar, and before the stalwart fighting man of the Remove knew what had happened he found himself whirled to the door and shot into the passage outside like a sack of potatoes.

Then Harry Wharton rushed for Johnny Bull. But, unlike Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull was not taken by surprise. As Harry Wharton grabbed him he resisted vigorously.

"Leggo, you silly chump!" gasped Johnny Bull warily. "What the thump are you playing at Harry, you ass—"

"Chucking you out!" grinned Harry. "Out you go! You can come back and gas footer after prep. Outside, my bonnie boy!"

"Rats, you silly dummy— Leggo!"
"When you're outside, old Top! It's time for prep, and— Here! What—"

Harry Wharton gasped as a third junior took a hand in the scuffle. It was the wrathful Bob Cherry. He came charging into the study again, breathing fire and slaughter, and next instant the three juniors were waltzing round, struggling mightily.

"Here, chuck it, you idiots!" panted Harry Wharton. "You'll have Quelch here in a tick—"

"Blow Quelch! I'll teach you to chuck me out!" roared Bob Cherry. "We'll see how you like it, old son! Out with the chump, Johnny!"

"Yes, rather!"
But this was easier said than done.

Harry Wharton struggled desperately to hold his ground, and it took all the combined efforts of Cherry and Bull to shift him. But shift him they did. Inch by inch the whirling group lurches towards the open doorway.

"Help me, Nugent, you ass!" gasped Harry Wharton desperately. "Help me chuck these silly dummies out!"

But Frank Nugent was too helpless with laughter to help his study-mate, and a moment later it was too late. With one mighty, simultaneous effort Cherry and Bull sent their wrathful chum staggering through the doorway, to collapse on the linoleum outside with a thump.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Slam! Click!

The door slammed, followed by the sound of a key turned in the lock.

Harry Wharton sprang to his feet and was about to commit assault and battery upon the door, when Peter Hazeldene of the Remove came along the passage. The junior's somewhat weak face was pale and harassed. Evidently he did not notice anything amiss, for he approached Harry Wharton at once.

"I—I say, Wharton," he began haltingly. "I was just coming to see you. I wanted to speak—I wonder if you'd mind coming to my study? Brown and Bulstrode are out at the moment, and we can talk there."

"All serene, Hazel!" he exclaimed kindly. "I'll come. Lead on, old son!"

Harry Wharton's tone was cheery, but he was frowning uneasily as he followed Hazeldene to Study No. 2. He knew the weak and wayward Removeite's character only too well. And while it was obvious from the junior's downcast face and harassed manner that he was in

trouble, it was fairly plain, also, that he hesitated as if ashamed to confide that trouble, whatever it was, to Harry Wharton.

"Well, what's the trouble?" he asked, when the door had closed upon them. "I hope you've not been playing the giddy goat again, Hazel?"

Hazeldene coloured and hung his head. "It—it's—the fact is, Wharton," he stammered. "I'm in a bit of a hole, and I wondered if—if you could help me. You— you see—"

"Well?" demanded Harry Wharton suspiciously.

"It's that cad Ponsonby," said Hazeldene, in a low tone. "I own the rotter five quid, Wharton. And—he's threatening to give me away."

Harry Wharton frowned angrily. It was out now, and it was as he suspected. He did not need to ask what the five pounds was for. The name of Cecil Ponsonby, the biggest cad and rotter of Highcliffe School, told him that.

"I thought as much," he said, with a curl of the lip. "You've been betting with that cad Pon again, then? My hat! And I imagined you'd chucked up those rotten games for good! You are a silly, weak fool, Hazel!"

"I know I am!" mumbled Hazeldene miserably. "But if I only get out of this hole, Wharton, I've finished with Ponsonby for good. I mean it this time!"

"You've said that before!" snapped Wharton bitterly. "You jolly well deserve to be given away! But I don't see why you should worry so much. Ponsonby thinks too much of his own skin to give anyone away. You know too much—"

"But that's not it!" muttered the junior wretchedly. "He doesn't mean to the Head. He means to show me up to my sister—you know what a cad he is, Wharton. If I don't pay him by Thursday morning, he's going over to Cliff House to see Marjorie."

Harry Wharton gave a start and frowned. Marjorie Hazeldene of Cliff House, Hazel's sister, was one of the best, and a great chum, of the Famous Five's. Marjorie, like himself, had hoped and believed that her brother had dropped his old, reckless ways and shady habits for good. He knew 'at

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a shock it would be to her to learn otherwise.

"The howling cad!" he muttered fiercely, at last. "Look here, Hazel, we've got to stop the cad doing that! Can't you put him off—"

"No—worse luck! He says he's in low water himself, and must have the cash. It was wild too, because I wouldn't bet on to-morrow's match. I—I thought perhaps you—you could lend me the money, Whartoa? I'll—"

"I've only five bob in the wide—unfortunately," said Whartoa glumly. "And I know my pals are in the same boat."

"Yes; but—but I thought—perhaps you could—could raise the money, Whartoa. I know it sounds frightful cheek; but the fellows all trust you—"

"Hazeldene's voice faltered as he noted the hot flush on Whartoa's face. It was just like Hazel to suggest such a thing. "All right, Hazel!" he growled. "I'll get that money somehow. Perhaps Smithy or Maudy will lend me it. Anyway, I mean to get the five quid you somewhere."

And, without waiting for Hazeldene's reply, Harry Whartoa quitted the study, slamming the door after him.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Raising the Wind!

"H E, he, he!"

That unmusical giggle proceeded from the lips of William George Bunter of the Remove. The fat junior had just rolled along the passage in time, to hear the tail end of the latter's remarks to Hazeldene.

"I say, Whartoa, old fellow," grinned Bunter, as Whartoa started along the passage. "Were you trying to borrow five—Leggo, you beast!"

Bunter howled as Whartoa gripped his fat ear, and twisted the Owl of the Remove impatiently out of his path. Apparently he had no time or inclination to listen to Billy Bunter. That pudgy busbybody glared after him furiously.

"Yow! The howling rotter!" he spluttered angrily. "Ow, my ear! But, my hat! Fancy Whartoa trying to borrow five quid! I wonder—"

Bunter paused, and blinked curiously after the captain of the Remove. Then he rolled cautiously in his tracks. The unusual face of Harry Whartoa wishing to borrow five pounds interested him greatly.

Harry Whartoa stopped outside the door of Study No. 8. The junior's face was troubled and angry. It was not the first time that Hazeldene had got into a hole by his own foolishness. It was not the first time, also, that he had come to Harry Whartoa to help him out of it.

But Whartoa was more troubled than angry. If the rascally Pousibly carried out his threat, he could imagine how the news of her brother's back-sliding would upset Marjorie Hazeldene. At all costs, that must be prevented.

For a brief instant, Harry hesitated outside his own study, and then he set his lips and moved on to Vernon-Smith's study.

The Boulder was the son of a millionaire, and always had plenty of cash—more, perhaps, than was good for him. And Harry intended to try his luck first with him.

He found Vernon-Smith seated at the table with his chum Redwing. Both juniors looked up as Harry entered.

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"Hallo! Come in, Whartoa!" exclaimed the Boulder genially. "Come to that about the match?"

Harry Whartoa hesitated, and flushed. Redwing could be trusted not to chatter. But the task of borrowing money for such a purpose was repugnant to him. Bunter couldn't be helped.

"No. It's not the match. Look here, Smithy," he began awkwardly. "I—I called to know if you happen to have five quid you could lend me for a few days?"

The Boulder gave a jump. Such a request was somewhat unusual, especially coming from the captain of the Remove.

"Four-five quid? Oh, my hat!" he ejaculated, waggling an admonishing finger at Whartoa. "I hope—I really hope you're not straying from the merry path of virtue, an' entering upon the career of a bold, bad blade, Whartoa? Fellows who want fivers in a hurry usually—"

"Don't be an ass," muttered Harry Whartoa, grinning faintly. "The fact is, Smithy—I—I happen to want the money urgently for—for a certain reason. I'll let you have it back."

"I would, like a shot," said the Boulder, dropping his bantering tone, and staring curiously at Whartoa. "But, unfortunately, I ain't got it. I've got a quid, though—you're welcome to that."

"It would help. Perhaps I could raise the rest from—"

"Here you are, then," grinned Vernon-Smith, tossing a Treasury note on to the table. "Why not try Maudy—he's a peer of the giddy Realm, an' rolls in filthy lucre?"

"I'm going to," stammered Harry Whartoa. And thanks, Smithy."

And leaving Smithy and Redwing looking at each other, Harry Whartoa picked up the Treasury note, and left the study abruptly—too abruptly for Billy Bunter, who happened to be kneeling outside the door with one fat ear at the keyhole.

"You're you fat spy!" muttered Harry Whartoa, glowering at the fat youth.

"Listening again?"

"I didn't—I wasn't!" stammered Billy Bunter, stopping back hastily.

"That's a rotten thing to say, Whartoa. I was just—"

Harry Whartoa sniffed, and passed on, frowning. The job of raising the five pounds was becoming more and more distasteful to him. And he had little patience to waste on Bunter.

At the door of Study No. 12 Whartoa knocked and entered. Lord Maulvever was there with his study-mates, Delaney and Sir Jimmy Vivian. Delaney and Vivian were doing their prep, but his lordship was otherwise engaged. On the table before him were a few tradesmen's bills, and other odds and ends, including two five-pound notes. Evidently his noble lordship was engaged upon financial matters of a domestic nature.

"Busy, you fellows, I see?" asked Harry Whartoa, nodding to the table.

"I'll look in again—"

"Don't mouch! Come in, dear old boy!" drawled Maulvever, glancing up wearily. "We're frightfully busy—I am, at any rate. I'm just sendin' a fiver to my tailor-man at Courtfield—fearful fag, you know. But the fellow's pressin' for it—actually askin' for his money, y'know. Only a dashed fiver. I've forgot to let the doc' man have it before. But what's the fellow to do? You might help me to send the dashed thing, Whartoa—"

"Some other time, Maudy," laughed Whartoa. "I think I'll look in when you're not so busy, old chap."

And, without waiting for further remarks from his lordship, Whartoa

nodded to the grinning Delaney and Vivian, and quitted the study, not because Lord Maulvever was so busy, but because he had no desire to state his business before Vivian and Delaney—good fellows as they were.

For a moment Harry stood undecided in the passage.

"Better give it up for the present," he decided at last. "If we don't want trouble with Quetchy, we'd better make a start on prep—that is, if those silly asses will let me in."

And, grinning a little, Harry Whartoa proceeded to Study No. 1. He found the door still locked, and from behind it sounded the murmur of voices. Apparently his chums were still discussing the forthcoming match.

"I say, you idiots," called Harry, rattling the door-knob. "Let me in, you chumps!"

There was a chuckle from within, and then came Bob Cherry's voice.

"Poor old Harry! Run away and chop chips, old scout!"

"He, ha, ha!"

Instantly Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh laughed merrily as Bob Cherry made that unsympathetic remark. Frank Nugent, however, frowned a little.

"I say, you fellows, he'll be awfully ratty about this!" he muttered. "Unlock the blessed door!"

"Rata! If Harry thinks we're going to allow a piffing matter like prep to interfere with his footer, he's mistaken. My dear chap, he'll soon get over it."

"Yes, but Harry's right about the prep. We ought to be getting on with it. We don't want trouble with Quetchy on the morning of the match, you know. I'll perhaps end in gating—"

"Oh, my hat!"

That was a dismayed chorus at the bare thought.

"Oh, crumps! You're right!" passed Bob Cherry. "I'd better let him in. Let's hope he won't want to chuck us out again!"

As he spoke, Bob Cherry unlocked the door and threw it open. But Harry Whartoa, though he glared a little at his grinning chums as he entered, did not attempt any more chucking out.

"You bubbling chumps!" he exclaimed warmly. "You're simply asking for trouble with Quetchy in the morning. Buzz off, and get your prep done, and let Franky and me do ours."

"Just going to," grinned Bob Cherry. "Sorry we found it necessary to. Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's the Bunter bid!"

As Bob Cherry spoke, the fat features and grinning spectacles of Billy Bunter stared down at him.

"I say, you fellows," he began, rolling into the room, "have you seen—Oh, there you are, Harry old chap. Now about that loan. I'm going to make you an offer—"

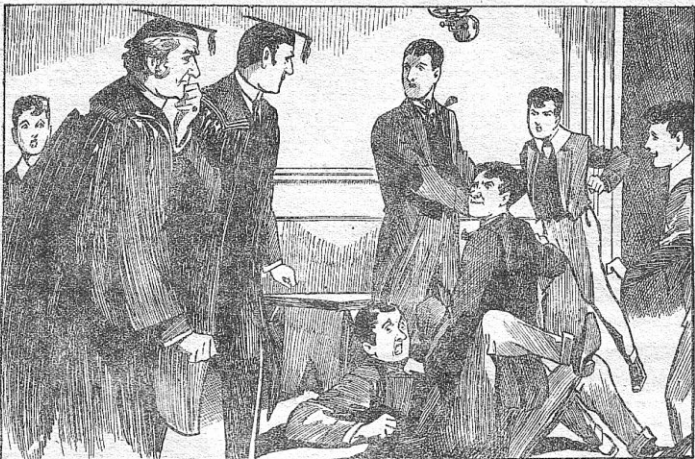
"Get out, you bubbling ass!" stamped Harry Whartoa, frowning.

"But really you know, I mean it," said Billy Bunter indignantly. "I can't understand you, Whartoa. You've been trying to borrow five quid all over the place, but when a really wealthy chap like me comes along, and offers to lend you the money, you—"

"Oh, buzz off!" roared Whartoa angrily. "Give me a hand with the fat frog, you fellows—"

"What ho!"

Harry Whartoa's chums, though they looked not a little astonished at Bunter's queer words, lost no time in obliging. They had no more desire for Bunter's charming society than had their leader. Many hands were laid upon the tubby Removite, and, despite that youth's protesting howls, he was bundled to the door and deposited outside in the passage with a bang.



There was a rustle of gowns and Mr. Quelch, with the Head behind him, arrived upon the scene. The Head's brow was dark and ominous. "What—what does this appalling uproar—this disgraceful riot mean, boys?" he thundered. "Coker, get off Loder this instant. How dare you, boy!" (See Chapter 4.)

"Exit Bunter!" grinned Bob Cherry, as he closed the door again. "But what on earth was the fat idiot burbling about, Harry?"

Harry Wharton coloured and frowned. Though Hazeldene had not sworn him to secrecy, he did not feel justified in making the matter known even to his chums.

"Nothing—that is," he stammered, "the fat spy overheard me talking to—a chap—"

"Not trying to borrow a fiver?" grinned Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton was silent for a moment.

"Well, if you want to know," he muttered slowly, at last, "yes; but—"

"Wha-a-at?"

Harry Wharton's chums were staggered. They looked queerly at their leader, and then at each other.

"M-m-m-my hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "But—but what on earth do you want five quid for, Harry?"

"I—I— The fact is, I'd rather not say, you chaps!" muttered Harry uneasily. "What about prep?"

And with the obvious intention of closing the subject, Harry Wharton sat down to the table, and took out his books.

Bob Cherry and the others stared for a moment. What their chum wanted with five pounds they could not imagine. They did not like it. It was unusual, to say the least of it, for him to be secretive with them.

"All serene!" exclaimed Bob Cherry gruffly. "Blessed if I want to know, come to that. Anyway, we'll be trotting now, you chaps!"

And as Harry Wharton did not reply, Bob Cherry left the study with Johnny Bill and Harroo Singh, and leaving Wharton and Nugent alone. Nugent was looking troubled, but he did not venture

to speak. And the two chums settled down in silence to prep.

But not for long. Wharton, at least, could not settle his mind upon work. His thoughts were too full of Hazeldene—and Marjorie. And then a sudden fear struck him. Mauly was about the only fellow in the Remove from whom he could hope to borrow the four pounds now needed. And Mauly, he knew, was as prodigal with his money as he was careless. It would be just as well to make sure of the cash before his careless lordship parted with any of it.

At the thought Harry closed his books, and rose to his feet.

"Going out again?" asked Nugent in surprise.

"Yes. Going to look up Mauly," said Harry briefly.

And, leaving Nugent shaking his head perplexedly, Harry Wharton left the study.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

"Lights Out!"

"HERE, put that blessed fag out, Pou, you ass!"

"Why, my dear man—"

"Because it's jolly risky. Supposing you meet Quelch or someone who—"

"Blow your dashed Quelch! What's it got to do with him? I'm not a dashed Greyfriars chap," grinned Ponsonby.

And Cecil Ponsonby of Highcliffe, having completed his business with Skinner & Co., whom he had paid a sudden visit to, puffed at his cigarette, and strode jauntily to the door of the former's study.

Skinner frowned uneasily, and Stott and Snoop, his study-mates, looked more than a little alarmed. The three shady Removees were as fond of a surreptitious

cigarette as anyone. But to smoke a "fag" openly in the passages of Greyfriars was, in their opinion, asking for trouble. True, Ponsonby wasn't a Greyfriars chap—happily for Greyfriars—but Skinner & Co. had a fairly clear idea as to what Mr. Quelch's course of action would be if he caught a junior from another school smoking in the sacred precincts of Greyfriars.

"Put it out!" repeated Skinner frantically, as Ponsonby turned a grinning face from the doorway. "Wait until you get outside, you fool! If Quelch sees you, he'll report you to your Head—you know he will, you madman!"

"Rats! You Greys are afraid to call your souls your own. I'll show you fellows how we do things at Highcliffe, begad! Bye-bye!"

And, evidently determined to show Skinner & Co. how they did things at Highcliffe, Ponsonby left the study, still puffing at his cigarette.

"The silly, dragging fool!" sneered Skinner, closing the door. "He wouldn't dare to do it, only he knows the chaps are at prep, and no one's likely to be about."

"Serve him jolly well right if he does get collared, the swanking ass!" commented Stott.

"It's not our funeral, anyway," grinned Skinner. "If he chooses to set the goat, let him. Now for prep, blow it!"

And Skinner & Co. reluctantly took out their books. They had barely started prep, however, when Skinner looked up, with a start, as a sudden commotion was heard outside.

"That's Quelch's voice!" muttered Skinner. "I wonder if— What—"

Skinner broke off with a jump, as the door flew open, and a junior dashed into the study, and closed the door hastily behind him.

It was Cecil Ponsobny. But the Highcliffe nut was neither smoking nor jaunty now. In fact, he was looking considerably flustered and alarmed.

"Quick! Hide me, Skinny," he panted breathlessly. "Old Quelch spotted me!"

"Serves you jolly well right, grinned Skinner heartlessly. "I told you—"

"But he's after me, you dashed rotter!" snarled Ponsobny, glaring around him frantically. "Hide me somewhere—"

"What's the good, if he's seen you he'll—"

"No only spotted my cap, you fool! Quick, hide me—"

Ponsobny stopped and gasped, as footsteps and the sound of doors opening and closing came nearer; and then, as a knock fell upon the door, he dived desperately beneath the table. And barely had Skinner & Co. bent studiously over their books, when the door opened, and Mr. Quelch, the Remove master, looked in.

"His face was grim, and his eyes gleamed angrily.

"Ah, Skinner," he said sternly, with a sharp glance round the room, "have you seen anything of a Highcliffe boy in this study?"

"High-Highcliffe?" stammered Skinner, standing up. "I—"

"Yes, or, at least, a boy wearing a Highcliffe cap. I did not discern his features. But I see he is not here," went on Mr. Quelch, apparently satisfied with his scrutiny. "You may proceed with your work, boys."

And, to their intense relief, the Remove-master departed. Skinner drew a deep breath, and chuckled, as he lifted the tablecloth, and looked down at the grovelling Ponsobny.

"Narrow escape, that, Pon," he grinned sneeringly. "Good thing this cloth hangs low, or he'd have spotted you for a cert. If this is how you do things at Highcliffe, Pon—"

"Shut up! It was just a bit of rotten luck running into him!" snapped Ponsobny from beneath the table. "Dash it all! Is it safe to come out now, Skinner?"

"Nunno! Better wait a minute, in case he comes back," chuckled Skinner. "He's a suspicious bird, and— Hallo, here he is! Smash!"

As Skinner spoke footsteps sounded in the passage. They stopped outside the door of Study No. 11, and Mr. Quelch's voice was heard, evidently speaking to Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars.

"Well, Wingate, have you seen or heard anything of the boy?" he demanded testily.

"He's certainly not in any of the studies higher up, sir," was Wingate's answer. "Perhaps you were mistaken, sir. Ahem!"

"I certainly was not mistaken, Wingate. I am certain the boy ran this way!" snorted Mr. Quelch heatedly. "I distinctly saw a junior wearing a Highcliffe School cap walking across the hall smoking. I could scarcely believe my eyes, Wingate."

"Y-yes, sir. But he doesn't seem to—"

"You must take immediate steps to see that the boy does not leave the school!" snapped Mr. Quelch angrily. "I have never experienced such insolence—such brazen impudence. If you find the boy, bring him at once to my study, and I will see that his headmaster is acquainted with his disgraceful conduct!"

"Yes, sir."

They heard Mr. Quelch stamp away wrathfully, and Wingate walking along

the passage in the opposite direction. Then the daring Ponsobny crawled from beneath the table, his face flushed and alarmed.

"I—I say, you know, Skinner," he mumbled feebly. "What the dickens am I to do? I ought to be back at Highcliffe now. You've got to get me out of this hole!"

Skinner & Co. grinned unfeelingly. Apparently their friendship for the Highcliffe black sheep was neither deep nor staunch. They seemed to take an unholy delight in the unhappy Ponsobny's predicament.

"I told you how it would be!" exclaimed Skinner, with an unpleasant grin. "Best thing you can do, Pon, is to give yourself up. You can't get out unseen now. Old Wingate's bound to be watching the Hall."

"But, dash it all, I've got to!" panted Ponsobny wildly. "There'll be the dickens of a row at Highcliffe if I'm collared. Old Gadsby will get it, too; he's answering my name at call-over. Dash it, there must be some way out, Skinner, you rotter! What about the window?"

"Shouldn't advise you to try that," said Skinner. "It's a twenty-foot drop at least. I tell you, you're stumped, Pon. Better clear out, and risk it. Besides, if you're caught here, we'll get it hot, too!"

"My hat, yes! Better cut off, Pon!" said Snoop, suddenly alarmed for his own skin. "You were calling us funks just now. Clear off and face the music yourself, as you're such a brave chap."

"Hear, hear!" chimed in Stott.

Ponsobny scowled at his Greyfriars friends. It was only too clear that his Greyfriars pals did not care a hawt what happened to him. Their only fear was for their own precious skins.

"You—you mean rotter, Skinner!" he muttered through his teeth. "You could get me out of this if you wanted to. There must be—"

"Don't be an ass! What can we do?" exclaimed Skinner sharply. "Old Wingate will be watching in the hall."
"You could engage him in talk and take his attention away while I slip out," snapped Ponsobny. "I could make a rush—"

"No jolly fear! Old Wingate's too wide awake for that. Besides, he'd spot you in the lighted hall. If it was dark now, you might—"

"My hat!" gasped Ponsobny, with a start.

"What's the matter?"

"I've got it!" Ponsobny muttered, his eyes gleaming. "Just the dashed wheeze I want. Look here, Skinner, have you got a bike-pump here—quick!"

"Yes. But what on earth for?" demanded Skinner suspiciously. "What's the game?"

"Just a little scientific experiment," grinned Ponsobny. "If you want to know, I'm going to douse every gim in the dashed place! And if I don't get clear in the darkness call me a Dutchman! It's a great wheeze!"

"You silly fool—"
"Shut up, an' get that pump!" snapped Ponsobny briskly, feeling in his pocket, and producing a short length of rubber tubing. "You needn't be afraid; it's safe enough. But I shall want you chaps to keep cave—"

"That we jolly well won't!" grinned Skinner promptly. "I don't know what your silly game is, but I'm not such a fool as to play any risky tricks here, Pon."

"No fear!" said Snoop and Stott in one voice.

"Oh, won't you?" started Ponsobny threateningly. "Very well, then, I'll

give myself up. But don't think I'm going to cop it alone, my dear meen. I shall own up what came here for—"
"You aren't!" breathed Skinner unsteadily.

"Daren't I? They're not so down on betting at Highcliffe, my pippin. And I guess you chaps will catch it hotter than I shall," said Ponsobny savagely. "So now will you help me?"

Skinner turned pale, and exchanged alarmed glances with his study-mates. Ponsobny's tone was vicious, and they knew the rascally Highcliffe junior was quite capable of carrying out his threat. And Skinner & Co. knew what it would mean if it came out that they had been betting on a footer match.

The possibility did not bear thinking of.

"Half a mo'! We'll help you!" panted Skinner, as Ponsobny grasped the door-knob. "It's a fool's game! But how are you going to do it?"

Ponsobny grinned and stopped.
"Hand out that pump, an' I'll soon show you!" he chuckled. "It's quite safe, so you needn't be funky. I did it over at Highcliffe one night last week, and they never found out who did it—and they won't! It works a treat!"

"But where do we come in?" demanded Snoop sullenly.

"You don't come in at all, except to keep cave, an' hold when the lights go out, my dear man."

"Oh!"

Skinner hesitated a brief moment, and then in sulky silence he rummaged in the lower cupboard, and producing a bicycle-pump, handed it to Ponsobny.

The Highcliffe junior chuckled, and fixed the connection on to the pump, afterwards the nozzle of this into one end of the rubber tubing. Then he opened the door, and glanced out into the passage.

"All clear!" he muttered briskly. "Now for it! You, Stott, keep cave at one end of the passage. And you, Snoop, at the other. Fit the study gas in an' press-and-er; it'd be safer in here. Anyway—"

There was no help for it. In great trepidation, and no little curiosity, Ponsobny, watched by the measy Skinner, carefully lifted a form beneath the nearest gas-jet, and turned off the gas. After waiting a moment for the burner to cool, he jammed the loose end of the tubing over it, and turned on the gas again.

"Now watch!" he grinned. "And get ready!"

Ponsobny paused, and started as Snoop came along the passage in alarmed haste. "Look out! Here's Wharton coming!" he hissed frantically.

"Blow Wharton! Anyhow, here goes!" exclaimed Ponsobny hurriedly.

And the Highcliffe eed began to pump with desperate energy—a energy that was scarcely necessary, for almost at the first inflation the inevitable happened.

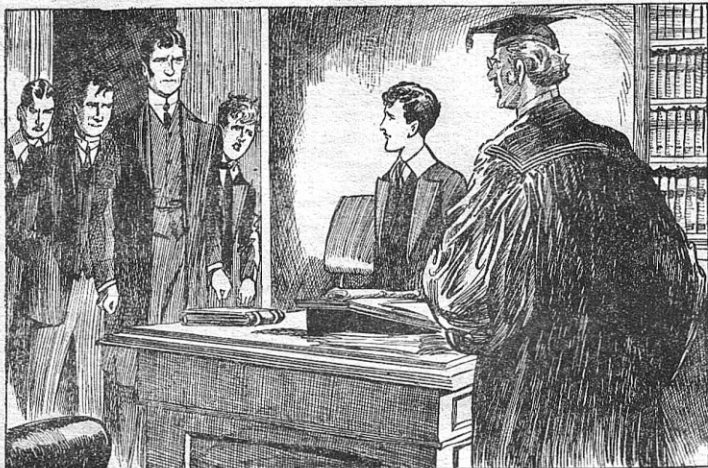
From every gas-jet in the passage—and, indeed, in all Greyfriars—the light spluttered feebly, jumped jerkily, and went out. The whole school, practically, was in darkness.

"Beat it!" hissed Ponsobny's voice in the Stygian gloom.

But Skinner & Co. needed no telling to do that. For one brief second they stood helpless, stupefied with terror at what they had helped to do; and then, as the sudden silence was followed by a clamour of excited, questioning voices, and a commotion of opening doors, they hesitated no longer.

They took Ponsobny's advice, and "beat it."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 679.



A knock sounded at the door, and Mr. Quelch entered. Behind him came Bob Cherry, Bolsover, and Mauleverer. The two former juniors had a battered appearance and had obviously been fighting. "I've brought these juniors before you on a very grave matter," said Mr. Quelch. (See Chapter 7.)

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Fiat Goes Forth!

"MUM-MY hat! What the thump—"
Harry Wharton stopped dead, and gasped in sheer astonishment.

He had just turned the corner of the passage on his way to Mauleverer's study, when the gas-jets flickered, jumped, and went out, plunging the whole place into darkness.

To say that Harry Wharton was astonished would be to put the case too mildly. But the captain of the Remove did not stay long to wonder. This hissing of escaping gas aroused him to the urgency of the situation. He felt his way to the pitch-blackness to the nearest gas-bracket and, by standing on tiptoe, managed to turn the tap off.

Guided by the hiss and smell of escaping gas, he moved to the next, and turned that out, too. He had almost reached the one at the end of the passage when he gave a muffled howl as his shin struck something with unexpected and painful force. It was the form upon which Ponsonby had stood when carrying out his little experiment.

"Oh, blow it!" grunted the junior.

Without stopping to caress his aching shin, the junior sprang up on the form and fumbled for the gas-tap above his head. He had scarcely turned the tap when a dazzling beam of white light from an electric torch flashed upon him. Above the general uproar he heard the triumphant voice of Gerald Loder of the Sixth quite close to him.

"Got you, you young scoundrel!" he exclaimed, flashing the light in the junior's face. "So it's you, Wharton! I thought it must be the work of you young rascals! Come down at once!"

Harry Wharton blinked down at the dimly-seen figure behind the light.

"You—you silly ass!" he gasped, too angry to mince his words. "Can't you see I was turning the taps off! Don't be an idiot!"

The prefect gave a snort of disbelief.

"You can tell that yarn to the Head, my pippin!" he rapped out, in triumph. "I've caught you red-handed! If it wasn't you, then what does this mean?"

Loder flashed the light on the bracket, and as Harry Wharton, for the first time, saw the bike-pump and tubing still swinging from the burner he gave a jump.

"Oh crumbs!" he muttered. "So that's how the trick was—"

"How you did it, you mean!" said Loder harshly. "You'll come with me to the Head at— Yow-wow!"

Loder howled as, in his eagerness to grasp the junior, he stumbled over the form, and, losing his balance, grasped the junior in a wild effort to save himself.

Crash!
The form toppled over, and next moment the senior and junior followed it. The pocket-torch flew from Loder's hand, and in the darkness the two rolled over and over on the passage floor.

They had scarcely done so when a burly form came barging out of the gloom. Unable to stop himself, he sprawled headlong over the rolling forms of Harry Wharton and Loder.

It was Horace Coker of the Fifth. He immediately grappled with Gerald Loder, and next moment his powerful voice boomed along the passage.

"Help! Burglars! Rescue, Fifth! Rescue, Greyfriars!" he yelled frantically.

"Yoooop! You—you howling ass!" roared Loder, as Coker's fist smote his

head. "Leggo! What the thump—I'll—"

"Take that, you rotters! I'll give you burglars!" shouted Coker, who was too excited to hear, much less recognise, the prefect's voice. "Give in, you rotters! Help! Rescue!"

And Horace Coker banged Loder's head on the passage floor with all his force, evidently under the impression that he had desperate burglars to deal with, though why the egregious Horace should jump to that extraordinary conclusion, only he himself could know. But the fact remains that he did, and his wild appeals for help did not go unheeded.

There was a rush of feet in the passage, and from either direction a crowd of Removites dashed up.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came Bob Cherry's booming voice. "What on earth—"

Bob Cherry stopped and stared. For a brief moment they blinked down at the struggling figures at their feet. And at that moment one of Coker's wildly waving fists struck Harry Wharton under the chin.

"Whooop!" yelled the junior angrily. "Stop it, Coker, you madman! What—help, Remove! Stop the idiot!"

It was enough for the Removites. They could not see much of what was going on, but they had heard Coker's war-cry, as it were, and also Harry Wharton's fierce protests. Quite naturally, they imagined it was a Fifth Form "rag" against the Remove.

"Rescue, Remove!" bawled Bob Cherry. "It's those Fifth rotters! Pile in, my hearties!"

And they "piled in." In less time than it takes to tell, a wild and whirling melee was taking place in the darkness.

and the uproar was terrific. It was impossible to tell friend from foe, but the chery Removites did not worry about that. Other fellows—Remove Fourth, and not a few Fifth—came rushing up to see what the row was about. They sprawled over the struggling forms, and found themselves mixed up in the scrum before they knew where they were.

The uproar was at its height when Harry Wharton—how he never knew—contrived to disengage himself from the melee. He was leaning against the passage wall, panting and breathless, when a few yards away a gas-jet flared, revealing the astounded features of Wingate beneath it.

The captain's voice rang out above the uproar.

"Stop!" he thundered angrily. "Have you all gone mad? Stop this, I say! Wharton, wake up, man! Run along and see that all the study gasses are turned off—quick!"

"Right, Wingate!" Harry Wharton turned his back on the whirling battle, and hurried away without delay. He realized the danger of escaping gas, and next moment was rushing from study to study, seeing that the gas-taps were turned off. It was but the work of a few moments, and when he returned a little later, the disorder was abated. Even as he hurried up to the spot, Wingate succeeded in removing the rubber tubing and pump from the apparatus. Next instant a light lit up the scene.

And what a scene it was! A scene of wildly sprawling forms, battered faces, and disarranged attire. Most of the juniors looked as if they had been through a threshing-machine. They sat up and blinked at each other stupidly in the sudden light.

One by one the battered warriors sorted themselves out, and staggered to their feet, most of them looking sheepish and alarmed. And then Coker and Loder, the authors of the trouble, became visible. Horace Coker was still sitting on Loder's chest, and he looked a sight for men and fishes.

But what could be seen of Loder looked a sight worse. The great Coker was staring down at Loder's white, passion-filled face with a ludicrous expression of astonishment on his rugged features. Apparently he had only just discovered that Gerald Loder was not a desperate burglar, after all.

George Wingate jumped down from the form, his face set and grim. He was just about to speak, when the quick rustle of a gown was heard, and Mr. Quelch, followed almost immediately by Dr. Locke, came swishing up. Mr. Quelch was looking grim, but the Head's brow was dark and ominous.

"What—what does this appalling uproar, this disgraceful riot, mean, boys?" thundered the Head. "Tell me, Wingate! Never—Bless my soul! Coker, get off Loder this instant! How dare you!"

Coker gasped, and lumbered to his feet. Loder's eyes were glittering with rage. But his face was white with something more than rage, as he tottered to his feet, and leaned weakly against the wall, gripping one ankle convulsively.

"G-goo-good grackles! Why, you are injured, Loder!" ejaculated the Head. "What has happened? What—how—?"

The prefect, balanced on one foot, gasped as he hugged his other foot.

"It—it's my ankle! I've sprained it, or something!" he said slyly, with a furtive glance at the unhappy Coker. "It's all that fool Coker's fault. He attacked me—"

"What do you mean, Loder?" snapped the Head, ignoring Loder's insolent tone. "Did you attack Loder—a prefect, Coker?"

Coker blushed.

"Ahem! You—you see, sir," he stammered. "I—I thought—that is—"

"Well, I'm waiting, Coker!"

"I—I thought he—he was a burglar, sir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" thundered the Head, glaring round at the laughing onlookers. "This is not an occasion for hilarity. This affair is disgraceful—scandalous! I am astounded—dugusted. Is it possible, Coker, that you are the miscreant who plunged the house into darkness? Is it possible that even you were imbecile enough—?"

"Mo!" ejaculated Coker indignantly. "Of course not, sir! I wouldn't be such a—"

"It wasn't Coker, sir," interrupted Loder, with a deadly look at Harry Wharton. "Coker blundered along just as I had captured the culprit. The junior who put out the lights, sir, was Wharton, of the Remove."

"What?"

The Head and everyone else stared blankly at the prefect. If he had said it was Horace Coker, they would not have been surprised. They knew the great Horace only too well. But the level-headed captain of the Remove—it seemed impossible! Loder was biting his lips, and his face was drawn and pale with pain. But he seemed determined not to give in until he had made his charge against Harry Wharton.

"Yes, sir," he continued faintly. "I caught him in the act. When the lights went out I immediately guessed it was a trick of the juniors. I pounced up my trusty bicycle pump, hoping to catch the culprits, and I did. I found Wharton standing on the form there. He had a bicycle-pump in his hand, which was fixed to the gas-burner, and had been pumping air down the pipe. It's an old trick—"

The injured senior broke off and swayed, and would have fallen had not Wingate and Glynn caught him.

"What'll you do, Loder," said Dr. Locke, in great concern. "I will hear your report later. You must have your feet seen to at once. Wingate and Glynn, you had better help Loder to his dormitory."

Loder made no demur, and a moment later the two seniors helped him along the passage. When they had gone, Dr. Locke turned to Wharton, who was looking like a fellow in a dream.

"Wharton," he demanded harshly, "is this correct? Are you responsible for this disgraceful disturbance?"

"No, sir," said Harry Wharton quietly. "Loder came along just as I was turning the tap off to prevent the gas escaping."

"Then were you in the passage when the lights went out?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you deny any knowledge of the outrage?"

"Absolutely!"

"Very well," said the Head grimly. "Loder will doubtless be better in the morning, when I intend to hold a full inquiry into the matter. You will then have every opportunity to defend yourself against the charge Loder has brought against you. And in any case," went on Dr. Locke sternly, and raising his voice, "it is obviously the work of a junior, or juniors. Only a junior would attempt such a reckless and dangerous experiment. And as I am determined to discover the culprit, the whole Lower

School will be gated, and all half-holidays cancelled until he is discovered, or chooses to confess."

The Head turned to Mr. Quelch, seemingly oblivious of the consternation his words had aroused.

"Mr. Quelch, will you kindly see that these boys are made presentable, and order restored?" he said grimly.

And Dr. Locke rustled away in a state of great anger and indignation, and leaving behind him a silence of stupefaction.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Trouble in the Remove!

There was burning indignation and profound dismay among the Lower School at Greyfriars that evening.

It was generally admitted that to plunge the house into darkness in such a manner was a practical joke as foolish as it was dangerous, and might have had far more serious consequences than it had. They could hardly blame the Head for taking such a serious view of the affair, and had expected afterwards they had had expected trouble.

But the fact had expected a punishment anything like so severe and—in their opinion—so unjust as this. To punish the whole Lower School for the crime of one or more of their number seemed to them a little too thick. It was little wonder that feeling so high against the perpetrator of the trick, whoever he might be.

True, there was still a chance—a very remote chance—that the culprit would confess or be discovered before morning. But, in view of the severity of the punishment he would undoubtedly receive, this was unlikely, to say the least of it.

It was, therefore, with a bitter anger and fierce indignation. The great match with Highcliffe would now have to be cancelled, and this was a bitter disappointment to both players and non-players. And in the Common-room, later that evening, they gave vent to their feelings in no uncertain manner. "A thoroughly shame, I call it!" said Balstrode warmly. "Gated indefinitely, and all half's stopped! Oh, my hat! I'd like five minutes with the fool who played the mad trick! I'd—I'd—"

"Nobody in the Remove, I'm certain," said Mark Linley quietly. "Especially with the match on to-morrow. But who on earth could it—"

"I think there's no need to ask that question," declared Harold Skinner. "It's plain enough. It was—"

"You yourself, I expect!" sniffed Peter Todd promptly. "Just the sort of rotten trick you would do!"

Skinner scowled and shivered. Peter Todd's thrust had been a little too near the mark for his liking. The astounding and alarming results of Possonby's little experiment had terrified Skinner & Co. out of their wits. And when Loder had charged Harry Wharton with the offence, they had been dumfounded. But it had delighted them more than a little, and they intended to make the most of Loder's accusation, to cover themselves.

"You know jolly well I had nothing to do with it!" said Skinner, to make sure that Wharton & Co. were well present. "You heard what Loder said? He caught Wharton in the act. It was Wharton, of course!"

"Don't talk rot!" snapped Peter Todd. "We all know what Loder's word is worth—about as much as yours! Wharton's the last fellow in the school who would do such a silly-ass trick!"

(Continued on page 9.)

The Greyfriars HERALD

SUPPLEMENT No. 7.
February 12th, 1921



EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

Bob Cherry said we might do worse than have this number all in verse. "A topping wheeze!" he chuckled. "Go it!" But I replied, "I'm not a poet."

"Of course, I'm well aware," said Bob, "your verse will make the readers sob. But do your rhymes! No desperation! There may be some who'll understand 'em!"

"So here we are! I think this beats the work of Shakespeare or of Keats. No finer feat you ever saw, sir. 'Twould rouse the eury of a Chaucer."

Some folk would say it was a crime to bring a paper out in rhyme. But such a quaint experiment is bound to cause much merriment.

I made the fellows understand, all contributions would be banned, unless such features were sublimated in verse, and from my heart I pitied the struggling bands who were required to hunt for rhymes till they were tired!

Dick Penfold says my present task is simple. (Pass the lime-juice cask! That I may drink, and drink again, to stimulate my baffled brain.)

Of course, Dick Penfold is a bard to whom no feat like this is laid. For in his earliest infancy, he learned to rhyme "beckslee" with "tea." And now, in any sort of weather, you'll find him stringing rhymes together. No need to say, "Why is it he can work with such simplicity?" I'd have a bulging purse if I, with Penfold's skill could versify!

Pen writes his poems with the ease of Mrs. Kobbie stelling peas. You wonder how much drops it is he gets for his atrocities? I will explain. In normal times, he gets a shilling for his rhymes. And on occasions he has shown us, that he's deserving of a bonus. But if the paper's doing badly, the lord of the Remov fare sadly. Instead of paying without stint, we make Pen pay for what we print!

And now, my worthy chums, I wish you to write and tell me if this issue appeals to you as much as those which have been done in honest prose. And please don't criticise and slate us, because our thinking apparatus is worn and weary with much toil. (We're burning stinks of midnight oil.)

Huge lumps of ice adorn my head. I'd give the world to be in bed! But duty calls. The foreman printer has pestered me through-out the winter; and now he rings me up to say he wants my "copy" right away!

Time, tide—and printers—wait for no one. And though my present job's a slow one, I must buck up and get it done. The printer's raving like a Hun. The awful threats of such a con as he, will drive me to a state of lunacy!

HARRY WHARTON.

SOCIETY SNAPSOTS.

By Bob Cherry.

Poor Hurree Singh is in the sunny. He cheeked old Quetch in Hindustant!

The well-known sportsman, Harold Skinner, has fallen once more to back a winner!

That charming fellow, Robert Cherry, is feeling gay and lively—very!

I much regret that Johnny Bull was licked for missing morning school!

That lazy, horn-tired slacker, Mauly, is writing lines from Lord Macaulay!

And that indiated barrel, Bunter, is still as hungry as a hunter!

I had a note from fair Miss Phyllis, who at the moment—very ill is. She took a trip with Horace Coker, whose petrod substitute did choke her.

That hefty lout, Bolslover major, fought fifteen fellows for a wager!

I hear young Tubb has got detention. And Gosling's drawn his Old Age Pension!

That cheerful mortal, Mrs. Mimble, continues to be smart and nimble. Her latest order—have you read it?—is "Nothing served to boys on credit!"

The Shell are signing a petition for hanging Hoskins, their musician!

OUR WEEKLY CARTOON.



"WALKER!"

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS!

By Harry Wharton.

MISS BESSIE B. (CHR Home).—I'm very sorry, Bessie, I can't invite you—here to tea. My chums and I are stony-broke; and, really, it's beyond a joke! I swear, by Jupiter and Venus, we can't raise half-a-crown between us. And if we had you to feast, 'twould cost a five-pound note, at least! You see, the other girls inform us your appetite is most enormous. I therefore state, with deep regret, that there is nothing doing—yet! I hope you will not think me funny; but really, we've more sense than money!

HORACE C. (Greyfriars).—I've read your intrest contribution for which you merit execution! And all the school will soon be yelling at your most novel style of spelling! You're suffering from insanity! This will not please your family. But it's a fact, and we're agreed, a "spell" in Colney Hatch you need!

DICKY N. (Second Form).—You are a very cheeky nipper, to ask me how to fry a kipper. First, get a punkin, then a fire; then fry the fish till you perspire! Then serve with apple-and custard; some jelly, marmalade, and mustard!

"LONZY".—Thanks for your sixty-stanza poem. Even the longest words, you know 'em! 'Tis strange that you can sit and write 'em, with speed and skill, ad infinitum! Your "Ode to a Performing Frog," was eaten by the office dog. Next time you serve a poem up, we'll feed it to the kitchen pup! Pray cease from these poetic habits, and have a shot at keeping rabbits!

MR. PROUT.—Dear Sir, I thank you for your letter, in which you say we can't be better, than publish, at an early date, your article on "Shooting Straight." My answer, sir, is short and terse. I really think we can't do worse! Don't think me rude when I say this. It'll give your article a miss. A "straight shot" feature such as this is, I cannot take—from one who misses!

LORD M.—Your article on "Dress and Fashion" is both a foolish and a rash 'un! You talk of flannels, and of blazers, that win the envy of all gazers. In hot July your work would pass; but now it's February, as! There's really neither rhyme nor reason in sending stuff that's out of season.

W. G. B.—Your verse has given me a fit. I can't make head or tail of it! How can I understand your scrawling? Your spelling, too, is most appalling! And pretty nearly every canto seems to be done in Esperanto! In future, write King's English, as! Or else keep off the merry grass!



A Magnificent, Long, Dramatic, Strong,
Delightful, Gripping and Really Ripping,
Story of Greyfriars School,
Related by Johnny Bull.

THE moon had raised her lamp above; there was a fearful storm. And Harry Wharton shivered as he peered around the dorm.

"Is anyone awake?" he asked. There came a soft reply. "I'm wide awake," said Peter Todd. "Yes, rather!" "So am I!" The midnight chimes were sounding from the ivy-mantled tower. And everybody slumbered as the clock tolled forth the hour.

"Now, what about this midnight feast?" Bob Cherry softly said. And all the fellows gave a cheer, and tumbled out of bed. The candles glimmered in the gloom, and everything was jolly. But Harry Wharton gave a frown—a frown of melancholy.

"We haven't got the grub," he said. "Now who will volunteer, to journey to the village shop, and fetch the hamper here?"

"Then on the dormitory there fell a long and chilling silence. Had anybody dropped a pin, it would be heard a mile hence!"

"Come, come!" said Wharton. "Who'll agree to undertake this mission?"

Said Billy Bunter. "I'm quite game. But this is the position. I sprained my ankle yesterday, and cannot wade a yard; and so far as I'm concerned, this midnight trip is barred!"

Then Harry Wharton turned to Squiff, and ordered him to go.

"Oh, crumbs!" groaned Squiff. "But what a night! The stormy winds do blow! The trees are swaying in the Close, the rain is pelting down. I really think you ought to give the job to Bull or Brown."

"I think our Squiffy chum should go and fetch the worthy hamper," said Hurree Singh. And we exclaimed:

"Yes, rather! Off you scamper!"

And then, while Squiff got up and dressed, we made a rope of sheets, and lowered him into the Close—the trickiest of feats!

Away went Squiff, with grim intent, to bring the hamper back. And peering through the gloom, he saw old Queelch on his track!

Squiff ran like fury, and old Queelch was panting at his heels. (You should be in that plight yourself, to know just how it feels!)

"Come back! Come back!" cried Mr. Queelch. But Squiff ran all the faster. Then Queelch stumbled on a stone, and met with dire disaster.

Squiff scaled the wall, and down the lane he sped just like a hare. He'd come about a dozen yards, then met a blinding glare. The fat and portly Tozer flashed his bulge-eye on the scene. "Young rip!" he growled, surveying Squiff. "Wet does this conduct mean?"

For answer, Squiff shut off his left, and Tozer hit the mud. "Yaroooooh! Young 'oolligan" he raved. "For this I'll 'ave yer blood!"

But Squiff had taken to his heels; he sped on through the night. And when he came to Friarland, he had another fright.

For Loder of the Sixth was there, emerging from a "pub." "What are you doing here," he cried. "You insolent young cub?"

Squiff leapt upon the prefect like a tiger from a cage. He snipped peppered him with blows, and Loder snarled with rage.

"You-ow! Stand clear, you cheeky brat!" the angry prefect yelled. "For this night's work I'll see that you are publicly expelled!"

Then Loder hit the pavement with a most resounding thump. His nose was swollen, and his eyes were swiftly turning black!

Meanwhile, our hero rushed away, and reached the village shop. He got the hamper, which was crammed with tuck and ginger-pop.

He bore the hamper on his back in safety to the school. "My hat! I'm jolly warm!" he gasped. "I wish I could keep cool! I wonder if the rope of sheets has been hauled up again? No, there it is, still dangling down, and sodden by the rain."

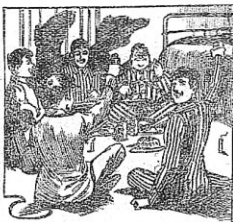
He gave a low, soft whistle, and a voice from overhead responded to his signal. "We will haul you up!" it said.

"You'd better take the hamper first; I'm tire it on the end," said Squiff, and shortly afterwards he watched the thing ascend.

"It's all serene. We've got the tuck!" came Harry Wharton's voice. "And now we'll haul you up, friend Squiff, and revel and rejoice!"

"Back up!" said Squiff. "I'm frozen stiff, and soaked right to the skin!"

"It won't take long to haul you up!" said Wharton, with a grin.



We gathered round the candle-light and started on the tuck. Then drank Squiff's health in ginger-pop, and praised him for his pluck.

Squiff clutched the knotted rope, and then a voice cried, "Haul away!" And soon he was inside the dorm, where all was bright and gay.

"I've had an awful time!" he said. "First Queelch came on my track. Then Tozer intercepted me—I put him on his back! Then Loder of the Sixth loomed up, and asked me what I meant. I threw him off the pavement—and I threw him off the scent!"

"Well done!" said Wharton. "You're a sport! I think we all agree that you deserve a knighthood, or at least an O.B.E. No other chap would take the risk—not even Bull or Brown."

"I would," said Billy Bunter, "but that foot of mine broke down!"

"Come on, you chaps!" said Cherry. "We will now attack the feast. I feel so hungry I could eat a rabbit-pie, at least."

We gathered round by candle-light, and started on the tuck. Then drank Squiff's health in ginger-pop, and praised him for his pluck!

THE END.

WHAT IS YOUR MOTTO IN LIFE?

(We asked this question far and wide. The following at once replied!—Ed.)

BILLY BUNTER:

A motto that you cannot beat:
"Eat not to live, but live to eat!"

LORD MAULEVERER:

"When the storms of life are brewin',
Lay an' read some sweet romance.
Let us, then, be up an' down
Nothin'—while we have the chance!"

BOB CHERRY:

I've got three:
Here they be:
"Never get slack when things look black."
"A miss is as good as a mile."
"Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag,
And smile, boys, smile!"

HURREE SINGH:

"Look before you jumpfully leap."
"Let sleeping dogs jumpfully sleep."
"A penny saved is a quid of gainfulness."
And "Pleasure follows after painfulness."
"A friend in need is a friend indeedfully."
"More excellent haste, less speedful speedfully."

HAROLD SKINNER:

"Eat, drink, and be merry!"
An excellent motto, very!

DOLSOVER MAJOR:

"Twice armed is he who hath his quarrel
just;
But three is he armed who gets his blow
in first!"

SIDNEY SNOOP:

"He who fights and runs away
Will live to fight another day.
But he who stays, and takes his chances,
Will exit on the ambulance!"

ALONZO TODD:

"A little deed of kindness,
A little word of cheer,
Will heal poor Bunter's blindness,
And make Tom Dutton hear!"

PETER TODD:

"All that glitters is not gold,
And Bunter's "ticker's" not, I'm told."

FISHER T. FISH:

"He who whispers down a well
About the goods he has to sell,
Won't reap the shining silver dollars,
Like he who climbs a tree, and hollers!"

or,

"Gather ye dollars while ye may.
Oh! Time is still a-dying;
And in my study, every day
Will find some stuff worth buying!"

CLAUDE HOSKINS:

My favourite motto knocks out all the rest:
"Music bath charms to soothe the savage
breast!"

THE GREYFRIARS GALLERY! BY DICK PENFOLD.



No. 1.

BOB CHERRY.

He's like an elephant
at times.
His boots are
rather "roomy";
And yet (in spite of
Penfold's rhymes)

He's never sad or gloomy,
No long-faced pessimist is Bob;
He laughs as if by magic;
He'll never tell you, with a sob,
That life is simply tragic!

His energy is wonderful;
Yes, slacker, you can snigger!
But not a fellow in the school;
Possesses half Bob's vigour.
He rises with the merry lark,
No matter if it freezes;
And fills his time, from dawn till dark,
With breathless japes and wizzes.

His sporting qualities are great,
His methods free from censure;
He has a heart for any lark,
He revels in adventure.
He is the cheeriest chap on earth,
With laughter always rippling;
His motto's "Honour and clean mirth"
(A've bagged the words from Kipling!)

But if you "check" him, mind your face—
You'll absolutely wreck it!
His blows have power, punch, and pace,
Just like the blows of Beckett!
I think I'd rather be a chum
Of Cherry's, than a foeman.

Don't fear my slaps—they'll become
Quite crooked, like a Roman!
Good luck to you, my worthy Bob!
I'm quite sincere and solemn;
(You galled for me my present job,
At eightpence a column.)
And may your suite of gay goodwill
Be ever bright and cheering
To Heraldites, who up Life's hill
Are gamely persevering!

No. 2.

MARK LINLEY.



Mark Linley, with
his winning ways,
Composes our ad-
miration:
The way in which he
works and plays

Thrills boys of every station,
It needs a worthier pet than mine
To tell of Linley's praises;
And all agree he's shown up fine
Through life in all its phases.

He's not a high-falutin' chap,
A paragon of virtue;
He's always ready for a scrap—
(His well-timed punches hurt you)
Of course, he only fights with foes
He'll never smite or spank you
If you're his pal; and I suppose
I'm one of them, Mark?—Thank you!

When first he came to Greyfriars School,
His skies were far from sunny;
The cads all dubbed him sweet and fool,
They seemed to think it funny.
For many moons, Mark Linley bore
Bolsover's persecution;
And then the bully hit the floor—
A timely execution!

Mark's battles now are fought and won,
His stormy times are over;
Upon him shines the friendly sun,
And Marky is as dapper.
But if he'd failed to persevere
In wrestling and contending
With all his foes, his school career
Would have a tragic ending!

Hate off to Marky! for he ranks
With all the best and famous;
Though not averse to boyish pranks,
He'll never slight nor shame us.
Dame Fortune will be very mean
If she should favour Linley;
Upon this steadfast, straight, serene,
And lovable Mark Linley!



No. 3.

LORD
MAULEVERER.

Here lies our languid,
lazy lord,
Upon his couch re-
posing;
With everything on
earth's he bored,

His listless eyes are closing.
He's not content with forty winks,
He takes a greater number;
The ideal life his lordship thinks,
Is spent in soothing slumber!

I fear that Mauly's not renowned
For energy and quickness;
And yet Bob Cherry's often found
A cure for sleeping-sickness!
He shatters Mauly's sweet repose
(For Bob can't stand a loafer);
He tweaks his lordship's noble nose,
And yanks him off the sofa!

On schoolboy fashions Mauly's quite
An oracle of knowledge;
His socks are the most startling sight
At this historic college.
His fancy waistcoat is a dream,
No Bond Street swell could whisk it;
Of dazzling hue, from seam to seam,
Like Joseph's famous jacket!

He is a member of the staff
Of this illustrious journal;
The Fashion Expert (please don't laugh)
His slackness is infernal.
In fact, he never writes a line
Of prose-work, gay or solemn—
And I, with these smart rhymes of mine,
Fill Mauly's weekly column!

For laziness, this languid Nat
He fairly takes the biscuit;
I'd criticise him fully, but
I hardly like to risk it!
And you searched the whole world through
From Greenland to Malacca,
You'd find (and what I say is true)
There's not a slacker slacker!

No. 4.

CLAUDE
HOSKINS.

Mark! What is that
unearthly din
That comes from
Hoskins' study?
From footie we have
just come in,

Our legs are torn and muddy,
And every fellow steps and stares—
To speak we quite unable;
It sounds as if the couch and chairs
Are waltzing with the table!

In earliest infancy I found
I had an ear for music;
But such a wild excess of sound
When make both me and you sick!
Apollo's lute, the pipes of Pan,
I like with keen devotion;
But both of them are "alro ran"

Compared with this commotion!
Oh, help! the roof is falling in!
The merry walls are shaking;
And, thank you to this appalling din,
The very earth is quaking!
The thunder booming through the air
Would frighten any man—oh!
It's caused by Hoskins' lute-case!

He's thumping the piano!
The long-haired merchant of the Shell
Is busy; and the fact is
You cannot hear each other yell
When Hoskins is at practice!
His fingers bash the battered keys,
They're eager, too, to do so;
His voice is like a lion's sneeze—
Far different from Caruso!

Come, let us open wide the door,
And knock the mad musician;
Lay him face downwards on the floor
(An excellent position)
Then lam him well with stumps and staves
(O think it's safe to risk it!)
For he'll do all the noisy knaves
Claude Hoskins takes the biscuit!

No. 5.

VERNON-SMITH



A sporting genius is
he
He blows up foot-
ball bladders,
And scribbles, for a
handsome fee,

On chess, and snakes-and-ladders.
He also writes the gag reports
Of every footer tussle;
He is the very best of sports,
And strong in mind and muscle.

To see him now, you'd hardly think
He once was quite a slimmer;
A rank outsider, who would sink
To cunning schemes, like Skinner.
He goaded masters to despair,
His pater to distraction;
But nowadays, he's frank and fair,
And scorns a shammy action.

All honour to him! for he fought
With grim determination
To overcome his ways, and sought
A nobler destination.
It's easy, boys, to go downhill,
But when it comes to climbing,
You need to work with pluck and will
(And so you do when rhyming!)

The past is dead and done with now,
Pushed out of sight for ever;
And Vernon-Smith has made a vow
To work with keen endeavour.
He now has won a foremost place,
And knows the way to stick it;
He'll never let his foot be disgraced,
And hates what isn't "icket."

Bravo, then, Smithy! may you shine
In sport and classic knowledge;
And may the doughty deeds of thine
I delight this ancient college.
And may you have the luck to miss
The editorial curses
Such as descend on me for this
Delightful set of verses!

No. 6.

HORACE COKER



Of all the chumps at
Greyfriars School
The most amaz-
ing joker,
The clumsiest clown,
The funniest fool,
Is Master Horace
Coker!

He cannot spell for monkey-ants,
Long words? he can't compile 'em;
And we'll rejoice that someone smiles
The clump is in an asylum.

He owns a motor-like, you know,
A costly gift and pleasant;
But when the beastly thing won't go
It's well the Head's not present.
For he would have the car as shock
To hear old Coker raving;
(The motor-bike is now in dock
For madly misbehaving!)

It would disgrace a scrap-heap, sure,
(The motor-bike, not Coker.)
The sight of it we can't endure,
We wish some jobbing broker
Would take the thing away for good
And slow it in a manger;
Our lives and limbs in that case, would
Be free from devil's danger!

Poor Horace! he's a hopeless case;
At times he's sad and broody.
But you should see his beaming face
When "tipped" by his Aunt Judy!
She lights him Coker's hour of need,
And often he has got
Substantial sum, wherewith to feed
The friendly Greene and Potter!

And yet, despite his ugly phiz,
And nose that's like a radish,
We all agree that Coker is a viz,
Well—neither mean nor caddish.
It's really only fair to say
He's brave and lion-hearted;
But I must stop—he comes this way—
(I wish I'd all the noisy knaves)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 619.

OUR AGONY COLUMN.



A LANGUID YOUTH, of noble birth, desires the softest job on earth. Some pleasing task that won't require sufficient energy to tire. He'd like to be a food inspector, or else a company director. He wants no hard or mental duties; but some snug billet, where much loot is! Please send full details, if you will, to LORD MAULEVERER, "Stackers-villo."

DRER FILLIS—Speak to me again! This dreadful silence gives me pause. If I have given you offense, most humbled is my penitence! I simply cannot live without you; there's such a grace and charm about you; of all the girls at Cliff House school, you are by far most beautiful. I hope your silence duzzent mean that you prefer that bouncer Greene; or that you're fedd rather totter down Friarlane Lane, with that clump, Potter. Meet me at Wending, please, at 3. Your own devoted HORACE C.

LOST near the ruins of the Manor, a postle-order for a tanner. The order is made payable to "W. BUNTER, Greyfriars School." My uncle sent it—he's a lord. Finder will get a big reward!

LOST—probably in Friarlane Lane—a solid silver-mounted cane. Returning from a mid-night "stutter," I dropped the dashed thing in the gutter. If any reader of the HERALD should find it, please return to GERALD.

(Advertisements of this sort, Loder, will quickly get you in bad odour!—Ed.)

HAS anybody seen my fag? Has he been hidden for a "rag"? I've ransacked Greyfriars through and through, but the young brat is not on view. His name is Tubb, and should you find him, then kindly put your hook behind him! And thus return the brainless fool, to WINGATE, captain of the school.

NOTICE! To all the mean yung rippis who never thinks to give me tips, I'll never carry no more trunks for such a skindint set of skunk! And when they comes in late at night, I'll see that they gets flogged all right! To say such things I never offer; but I'm a werry fed-up porter!—WILLIAM GOOSLING.

SOME bouncer chupes pictal ofice. Me gives handsome lump of toffee for information that will lead to him, correctee, swift and speedy! Last night, I lay in bed asleep; the beastly cad came creepycreepy. And with a pair of shears he cuttee the pictal off my handsome nutty. When caught, me burse out his tongue, sure as my namee is WUN LUNG!

I SORTER guess and calculate that all galoots will look first-rate, when wearing Fish's Patent Spats. They're fifteen bob a pair, and— (Hats!—Ed.)

Will all Greyfriars make this note, and be sure not to miss the note? To the "Popular my little 'Wreck's'" please, so be sure—get your order on. The "Herald" is but ootid tripe; my paper's given it a fearful swipe. Read neel good stuff, and be no grunter, and follow your pal—Bill Bunter.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

(The views of my readers, given below, are not necessarily mine, you know.—ED.)

BOLSOVER MAJOR'S STARTLING WAGER!

To the Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald." Dear Wharton,—I should like to state—this is a sort of Hymn of Hate!—that I will meet the Form's best boxer, and give him an electric shock, sir!

For next time when and where he pleases, and punch his nose until he sneezes! I'll give him such a fearful drubbing, he'll fall upon his knees, sir, blubbing! His handsome chinky, I will wreck it; and he'll imagine I'm Joe Bockett!

The reason why I'm writing thus, is that there's been an awful fuss. The clumps are saying that Dick Russell can hold his own in any tussle; they also say that Johnny Bull makes his opponent look a fool. And someone mentioned that Tom Brown could flout me and knock me down.

I can't help saying that this fuss is stupid and ridiculous. Because of boxers I'm the best. What's more, I'm game to stand the test.

I'll bet your one of Mimble's pies that I will beat, and black the eyes, of any so-called fighting-man. Let him defat me—if he can.

I hope that you'll accept this wager.

Yours faithfully,

BOLSOVER MAJOR.

(I really think pugnacious Percy's a genius at writing verses. His checky challenges will be taken by Greyfriars if I use initials, and I'm afraid that Percy B., a crowd of shooting-stars will see! The gym—two-thirty—what is fairer; and I shall be the stretcher-bearer!—Ed.)

FROM COKER, THE AMAZING JOKER!

To the Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald." Wharton, you checky littel worm! I've a good mind to make you skwim. I sent you in some ripping stuff, and asked you to be good enuff to publish it without delay. Where have you stowed the stuff away? I want a yarn that will be like—"Adventures on a Motor-Bike." Unless you publish it this week, your editorial nose I'll tweak! Or else I'll bash you with the poker.

I am, yours grimly,

HORACE COKER.

(dear Sir, I regret to say your manuscript was thrown away. My chery chucked it on the fire, it was the editor's desire, and any further stuff from you, we'll bundle in the fireplace, too! The published work of such a clown, would send our skerkulation down!—Ed.)

GENTLE GERALD WARNS THE

HERALD.

To the Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald."

Dear Wharton,—Let me inform you on this point—if you don't want your nose out of joint—stop putting things about me and Walker in your detestable little paper. should such tommy-rot reach the ears of the Head, it would sure make him see much red and should the evidence be too damning; I will give you all a lanning.

Take warning, young ons of the "Greyfriars Herald," & listen to—

Yours grimly,

GERALD.

OUR WEEKLY LIMERICK.

No. 7.

There is a tall profane named Gwynne,
Who punishes us for our synne;
His likings are smart 'uns,
We bear them like Spartans,
But find it a hard job to gryne!

A DAY'S OUTING!

By Horace Coker.



I rose and dressed at half-past six. They poked me out with a hockey-stick!

Old Potter mermered, with a grin:

"What price an early morning spin?"

"That motor-bike yours," said Greene,

"will take the three of us, old bean!"

I got my motor-bike in action, and oiled

it to my satisfaction. Old Potter in the

sidecar lay. And Greene, behind, cried,

"Rite away!"

Ge! Talk about John Gilpin's ride! He

couldn't beat it if he tried. We went at

such a scorching pace, you'd think it was a

giddy race!

Hedges and trees went rushing by. And

Potter gave a startled cry.

"Coker, you are the blessed limit! You see

that pond? We'll have to swim it!"

We did! There was a sudden crash a fearful

yellow—a mity splash!

The bike went—and so did we! Gaspd

Greene, "You'll be the death of me!"

With silly weeds around my neck, I looked

round wildly for the wreck.

The handle-bars were badly bent; the

housely tires were torn and rent. The lamps

were smashed to smithereens. It looked

the sorriest of machines!

"You raving madman!" spluttered Potter.

"You ass! You dumm! You awful rotter!"

We're in the dickens of a fix. We've had a

shower-bath, too, for nicks!"

"'Twill do you good," I said with scorn.

"You never wash your neck at morn!"

"We're miles away from anywhere!" said

Greene, in toms of deep despair. "The bike

has fairly broken down. And how can we

get back, you clown?"

We crawled out slowly from the pond. (Of

duckings I am never fond!) And my

machine of such renown, was salvaged, and

termed upside-down. I tried my best to put

it rite. Groned Potter, "We'll be hear all

mile!"

"These spare parts drive me to despair.

They will not fit in anywhere!" I cried, and

worked with desperaban. And down my face

streamed perspiration.

At last, I had to let it slide. "We'll have

to hoof it!" Potter cried. "Greyfriars is such

a fearful distance, we can't get there with-

out assistance."

Then off we tramped, three mud and slush.

When people stared, we had to blush. The

mud and ooze upon our chivries provoked

loud larks from dames and skivvies.

It was a Greene and Potter, not six each.

I dragged the wreckage in the rear.

We got to Greyfriars nearly dead. 'Twas

dinner-time, so Gosling said.

I felt like an egg-spurring tortoise; and Gosy

said he would report us. You see, we had

missed morning school, and now we had to

pay in fool, for our adventure on the high-

way! And Greene and Potter, not six each.

My hat! You should have herd 'em skreech!

And afterwards the villains bumped me. They

slogged me, bitted me, broozed and thumped

me, and I got it fairly in the neck; and now I

feel a totle wreck!

Experiences like these, you know, make

this world seem a veil of woe!

"Harry Wharton's Sacrifice!"

(Continued from page 8.)

"I'm not so sure about that!" growled Bolsover. "Wharton was in the passage at the time—he admits it himself. Everyone else was at prep. We ought to make the beggar own up."

"Anyway, it's up to him to explain what he was doing in the passage just then," added Skimmer, with a sneer. "Everyone else was at prep."

"Then now's your chance to ask him, old top!" grinned Vernon-Smith, as the door opened to admit the Famous Five. "And don't stand any nonsense, Skinner!"

Skinner scowled and turned away. He had no intention of asking anything of the sort. He had too wholesome a respect for Harry Wharton's fists to do that.

Percy Bolsover, however, had no such qualms.

"If Skinner funks asking, then I will!" he growled angrily. "The Remove has a right to know, and it's up to Wharton to explain."

As the Famous Five came in, the crowd of Removites eyed them keenly. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! More trouble!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, glancing curiously at the excited juniors. "Is this a merry indignation meeting? If so, then count us in. And what's that about Wharton?"

"I should think you could guess that," said Bolsover, with a meaning glance at Harry Wharton. "It's about the missing five quid of course. The Remove thinks that the rascal who played the trick with the lights should own up and face the music."

Harry Wharton's face darkened. It was obvious that Bolsover was aiming at.

"I suppose you insinuate that I did it and ought to own up?" he said hotly.

"We know what Loder said—we all heard it," said Bolsover doggedly. "And we all think it's up to you to explain what."

"Not so much 'we,'" said Peter Todd coolly. "Speak only for yourself, Bolsover. I've heard Wharton's explanation, and it satisfies me, old scout."

"Same here!" agreed Mark Linley and one or two others.

"The Remove as a whole, then!" corrected Bolsover savagely. "We think it's up to Wharton to explain—"

"I've explained to the Head what I was doing!" snapped Harry Wharton, holding his temper with an effort. "And I'm hanged if I'll explain again to you silly asses!"

"Yes; but you haven't explained what you happened to be doing in the passage just at the time when the lights went out, and when all the rest of the chaps were at prep," said Bolsover quickly.

Harry Wharton hesitated and shrugged his shoulders. His first impulse was to ignore their questions. But all eyes were upon him, and he knew it would be unwise to defy them.

"I was going to see Mauly about something, if you want to know," he answered quietly, at last. "But I don't see why I should explain that. Chaps often knock about during prep, don't they?"

"Admitted. But inquiries have been made, and at the moment when the lights popped out you are the only fellow who admits being on the spot. Everyone

else can prove they were in their studies just then," said Bolsover, with a sneer. "Saying you were going to see Mauly about something won't do," put in Bulstrode curtly, "unless that something sounds jolly feasible."

There was a silence. Harry Wharton's face paled a little. To explain his intended errand to Mauly was about the last thing he wished to do before a whole crowd of Removites. And yet if he didn't—

His uneasy thoughts were interrupted by a giggle from Billy Bunter.

"Ho, he, he!" he sniggered knowingly. "Shall I tell 'em, Harry?"

Harry Wharton shot a sulphurous look at the fat youth. He had forgotten Bunter's knowledge of his desire to borrow five pounds. But evidently Billy Bunter hadn't. It was useless, however, to say 'yes' or 'no' to Bunter's question. Billy Bunter could be trusted to "tell 'em" in either case.

It was Bob Cherry who answered the fat junior.

"Bazz off, you fat frog!" he growled. "We don't—"

"Oh, really, you know, Cherry!" said Bunter warmly. "I don't see why I shouldn't tell these chaps. I'm blessed if I see any harm in a fellow borrowing five quid—especially from Mauly. He's rolling in it. Besides—"

"What on earth is the silly ass jabbering about?" ejaculated Peter Todd, eyeing his portly study-mate in astonishment. "Who's talking about borrowing five quid, you fat barrel of lard?"

"I am, Toddy," said Bunter, with a lofty stare at Harry Wharton's flushed face. "These chaps want to know what Wharton went to see Mauly about, and I'm telling 'em. He was going to borrow five quid from him."

"You fat idiot!" exclaimed Peter Todd, grasping Bunter by the collar and shaking him. "What the thump are you telling such fibs for?"

"Ow! Stop it! Mind my glasses, Toddy, you beat!" roared Bunter indignantly. "It's true enough—ask him. He went to Smithy first and squeezed a quid out of him. He must have been backing gee-gees, you know—"

There was a silence. Billy Bunter's yarns, though always entertaining, were rarely ever true. But even-Billy Bunter would hardly dare to make such a statement before Wharton himself unless he was sure of his facts. For a fellow like Wharton to go round borrowing fivers was something unusual. The juniors stared at Wharton curiously. Billy Bunter grinned. He was enjoying the sensation. He was also enjoying the novel experience of getting some of his own back for the bumping Wharton had administered that evening.

"Oh, sit on the burbling chump, carelessly," remarked Vernon-Smith sarcastically, at length. "You're a set of silly duffers, thinking old Wharton would risk trouble by playing such a footing trick just before the Highlife match. Blessed if I can see what Bunter's yarn's got to do with this bizney, in any case!"

"You don't say it's true Wharton tried to borrow five quid from you," remarked Bolsover quickly.

"If Bunter says it's true, of course it must be so," said the Bounder, with biting sarcasm.

"But Wharton doesn't deny it!" exclaimed Bulstrode.

Harry Wharton bit his lip. He saw it was useless trying to keep back the facts now.

"I won't trouble to," he said, with a curl of the lip. "Bunter's spoken the truth for once. I was going to ask

Mauly for a loan of four quid, if you mean to know. Now are you satisfied?"

"Great pip!"

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Bulstrode, with a sneer. "Fancy Wharton, the shining example of the Form, the giddy paladin of all the virtues, going about borrowing five quid! Have you been backing gee-gees, as Bunter suggests, Wharton?"

The captain of the Remove took a threatening step towards Bulstrode, but Cherry pulled him back.

"Oh, let him guess, and we'll clear out of this!" he growled in disgust. "The silly asses are not in their right senses to-night."

And Bob Cherry was about to lead his angry club out of the Common-room when Lord Maulverer lounged in with his study-mates, Delaney and Vivian, behind him. The noble lord was looking tired and bored, but his claims were both grave and concerned.

"I say, you fellows," he began wearily, "have any of you chaps seen anything of a stray fiver lying about?"

"A—A whatter?" exclaimed Peter Todd, staring.

"A fiver, dear boys. It's an awful fag having to ask you chaps. But these asses insist on my asking everybody, you know—"

"I should jolly well think so, if you've lost one!" remarked Bob Cherry, with a faint grin. "Have you?"

"Yaas. You see, I left it on the study table when the lights went out, and when I came back afterwards—you fellows will hardly believe me, but the dashed fiver had gone—absolutely gone!"

"Not really!" said Peter Todd sarcastically. "And you such a careful chap with your money, too—leaving fivers on the study-table and going out!"

"Yaas. I'm rather glad you admit I'm a careful chap with my money, Toddy. These silly asses say I'm careless, remarked his lordship, turning a reproachful eye upon Vivian and Delaney. "Anyway, I've asked you fellows, just to satisfy the asses. So it's all right now."

"But, you fathead, it isn't all right!" said Delaney warmly. "Chaps—even silly asses like you—can't be allowed to lose fivers and let the matter drop."

"I should jolly well think not!" said Peter Todd, shaking his head gravely. "That fiver's got to be found, Mauly! I suppose you've thought of the brilliant notion of searching your pockets!"

"Oh, yaas! But it isn't there. And it isn't anywhere in the dashed study. These idiots actually made me turn all my things out! It was a frightful fag, you know."

"And it's gone?"

"Yaas!"

"You're sure you didn't take it with you?" demanded Peter Todd, in the professional manner of counsel cross-examining a witness.

"Nunno. You see, it was like this. I had two fivers on the study-table, and I was just scud-din' one of 'em by post to my tailor-man in Courtfield. He was askin' for his money—actually dunnin' me, y'know! I usually pay—"

"Cut that out and stick to the point!" snapped Peter Todd sternly.

"Oh, gad! Don't shout at me like that, Toddy," said his lordship plaintively. "You quite put me in a flutter. Now, where was I, Oh, yaas! I put one of the fivers in the envelope, and was just stampin' the letter, when all of a sudden the light went out—"

"And you followed it?"

"THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 679.

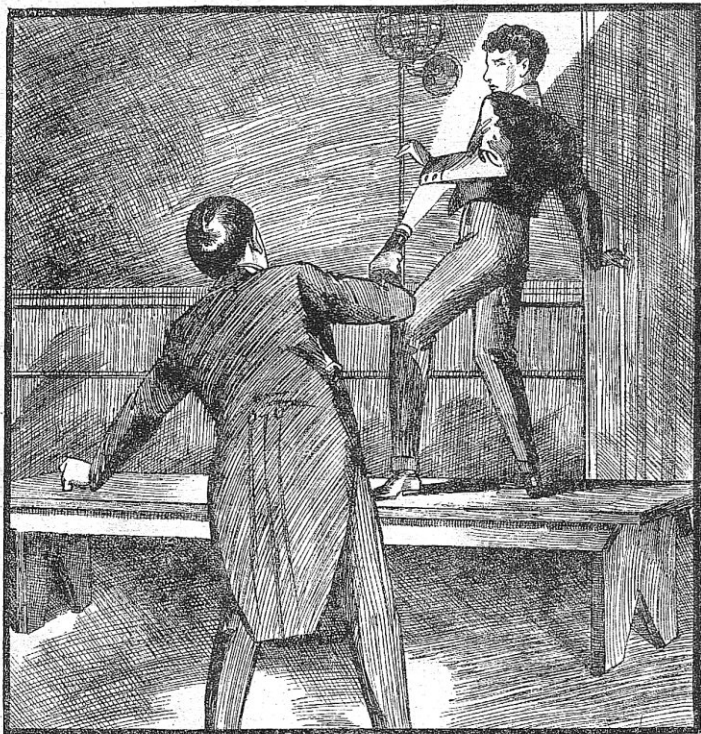
But in the Remove, there was something more than mere speculation. Harry Wharton's enemies made no secret of their suspicions. The rest of the Remove were gloomy and doubtful. The gating order and stopping of "halfs" was no joke, and the almost certain cancelling of the Highcliff match was a great disappointment. And, on top of all this, was the strange affair of Lord

happening was known only to the Remove. But as Billy Bunter knew all about it, it was too much to hope that it would remain a Remove secret long. Curiously enough, also, the only fellow who seemed to find anything to be cheerful about that morning was Peter Hazeldene. When the Famous Five came out from breakfast, he joined them, his face bright and relieved.

"Oh!"

Harry Wharton & Co. made that exclamation together. It was rare—almost an unknown thing—for Hazeldene of the Remove to have fivers sent him. They stared at him intently, and then exchanged glances. Evidently Hazeldene noticed this, for he coloured, and went on hastily.

"It's all right, you chaps," he said,



Harry Wharton was just about to turn on the gas when a dazzling beam of white light from an electric torch flashed upon him. "Got you, you young scoundrel!" said a voice in his ear. Wharton turned round and blinked at the figure of the projector. (See Chapter 4.)

Manleverer's "fiver," which made every one feel uncomfortable.

Curiously enough, the most unconcerned fellow appeared to be Wharton himself. He certainly did not look like a fellow who was guilty, or one who had any qualms as to the outcome of the inquiry. If he was troubled at all, it was not on his own account, but on account of the missing money and the suspicious circumstances under which it had vanished. As yet, that strange

"I say, Wharton!" he muttered eagerly. "I've news for you—good news—for me, at any rate!"

"Well, what is it?" asked Wharton gruffly.

"It's this. I got a letter this morning from an uncle—an uncle abroad, who rarely writes to me. But—his actually sent me a fiver. Isn't that providential, you chaps? I'll be able now to settle with that red-Pousoy. So I—"

with a faint grin. "It's not Mauly's fiver. It's genuine enough. Here, read the letter!"

And he handed over the letter. Harry Wharton took it, and, as he scanned the missive, his brow cleared. The letter was genuine—as was the reference to the enclosed tip.

"Oh, good!" he muttered, in great relief. "You'll be able to shut Pousoy up now, Hazel. So that's that! THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 679.

All the same, you must be careful to keep this thing quiet. The fellows will chatter, and it may get to the Head's ears."

"Wharton!"

Wingate came up to the juniors, his face grave.

"You're wanted at once in the Head's study, Wharton," he said briefly.

"Buck up!"

The captain walked away, and Harry Wharton gave his chums a rueful grin.

"Here's where our old friend Loder scores, and I do the merry manly, walking to the giddy stake set," he said.

And with that somewhat cryptic utterance he left his chums and strode towards the Head's study. He knocked firmly at the door, and the Head's deep voice bade him enter. As he expected, Gerald Loder was present. He was seated with his injured leg stretched out before him.

Dr. Locke's piercing gaze rested on the junior as he entered.

"I have sent for you, Wharton," he began quietly.

"Answer the charge Loder made against you last evening. As you are aware, Loder claims he discovered you tampering with one of the corridor gas-jets immediately after the lights went out. You have now every opportunity to defend yourself, my boy, and I shall be glad to hear what you have to say. I hope and trust you are in a position to refute the charge.

Otherwise—"

The Head paused. Harry Wharton hung his head and was silent. It was Loder who answered.

"There's nothing Wharton can say, sir," he exclaimed quickly. "I caught him red-handed, and he knows it."

"Kindly be silent, Loder," said Dr. Locke sharply. "I am waiting for you to speak, Wharton."

"There is nothing I wish to say, sir," said Wharton, clearly and deliberately.

"What?"

The Head appeared to be quite taken aback. Loder looked astounded. Whether the bullying prefect really believed Wharton's guilt is doubtful. He certainly had not expected the junior to refrain from defending himself.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the Head at last. "Is it possible, then, that Loder's charge is correct, Wharton? Is it possible that you, a boy in whom I had placed implicit trust, and who I had imagined was incapable of such a senseless trick, was responsible for a disgraceful tampering last night? Answer me, boy!"

Silence—during which Dr. Locke's frown deepened as he waited, his eyes fixed upon the silent junior.

"Wharton," exclaimed the Head at last, "though I can scarcely bring myself to believe you guilty, yet your silence can have only one explanation. I will, however, allow you one minute longer. If, at the end of that time, you do not speak, I shall be forced to assume you are the culprit, and will punish you accordingly."

Silence again. Loder's face was becoming jubilant. Dr. Locke's face was grave and perplexed as he eyed the junior, whilst the clock on the mantelpiece solemnly ticked off the seconds, and still Harry Wharton did not speak.

"Very well," said the Head ominously, when the time was up. "Loder has made his charge, and you have had every opportunity to defend yourself. You are apparently not in a position to do that, and by your silence you are admitting that you are the culprit. As the whole Lower School is under sentence until this matter is cleared up, I shall deal with you without delay."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 672.

You are aware, of course, that the punishment for such conduct must be severe, Wharton?"

"Yes, sir," said the junior, without faltering. "I am quite ready to take the punishment."

There was a silence. For some moments the Head regarded the junior curiously and doubtfully. Then he closed his lips tightly and abruptly.

"Then I will deal with you here and now!" he said grimly. "The punishment I had intended to administer to the culprit was a public flogging. But as you have wisely chosen to admit your folly, and are ready to take your punishment, I will save you that disgrace. Loder, you may go now—and will you kindly ask Mr. Quelch and Gosling to come here?"

"Yes, sir—oh, yes, sir!"

Loder quitted the study. He was inwardly delighted, but just a little disappointed. The prefect would have liked to witness the forthcoming flogging very much. But, as it happened, Loder would not have witnessed that interesting proceeding had he stayed. Barely had he left the room, when a knock came to the door, and Mr. Quelch entered. Behind him were Bob Cherry, Bolsover, and Mauleverer, of the Remove.

The two former juniors had a battered appearance, and had obviously been engaged in a fight. His lordship was spick and span as ever, but he looked about as happy as a centipede with sore feet.

"I have brought these boys before you on a very grave matter," began the Remove-master, as the Head gave him an inquiring look.

"I came upon Bolsover and Cherry fighting in the passage, and in defending his conduct, Bolsover told me an alarming story. He has also made a very grave charge against one of his school-fellows."

The Remove-master passed, and quitted curiously at Harry Wharton.

"Yes, yes! Pray proceed, Mr. Quelch," said the Head, a trifle impatiently.

"It appears, sir," proceeded the master quietly, "that Mauleverer has lost a five-pound note under questionable circumstances. The note disappeared from his study during the few brief moments when the school was in darkness last night, and cannot be found."

"Bless my soul!" gasped the Head, in great alarm. "I am amazed—astounded! Wharton, you are the head boy of the Remove; why was not the loss of this note reported to Mr. Quelch or myself last night?"

Harry Wharton's face was pale and troubled. He had not anticipated this unlooked-for happening. It looked as if his plan was to be upset at the eleventh hour.

"The fact is, sir," he stammered, flushing, "I felt certain that the note would turn up—that it would be found before this."

"You should have reported such a serious matter without delay," said the Head tartly. "Mauleverer, you will kindly give me the facts of the case."

His unhappy lordship groaned, and told his story.

"Of course, sir," he ended eagerly, "it's all rot, saying the five was left—I mean, taken! I expect I've mistaken it for something—I do, really, sir!"

"That remains to be seen!" snapped the Head. "You have been extremely careless, Mauleverer. It is not the first time you have lost money. However, Bolsover, what do you know about this matter?"

Nothing loth, the bully of the Remove

gave his view of the matter, and, as he listened, the Head's brow darkened.

Mr. Quelch, however, could scarcely restrain his anger and impatience.

"In my opinion, sir," he said heatedly, "the charge is ridiculous—monstrous! It is nonsense to bring such a charge against Wharton or any other boy on such so-called evidence! I do not place

"One moment, Mr. Quelch," interrupted the Head quietly. "Whether there is any connection between the gas outrage and this alarming affair I do not know; but the boy who was responsible for causing the lights to go out last night has confessed. Wharton has admitted—or as good as admitted—that he is the culprit, and I was about to punish him when you entered."

"Good gracious!"

It was Mr. Quelch's turn to be astonished. He glanced at Wharton in amazement.

"Now, however," continued the Head gravely, "of course his punishment must be held in abeyance until this other affair has been thoroughly investigated. Cherry and you, Bolsover, may go, and as you go out will you ask Wingate to come to see me, Mauleverer!"

"Y-yaas, sir!"

"You will go without delay, and submit your belongings and study to a thorough searching. You may get your friends to help you, and will not cease the search until you have established beyond doubt that the note is really missing. Afterwards you will report the result to me."

"Y-aas, sir!" groaned Mauleverer. His lordship left the study, and until Wingate made his appearance there was silence.

"Wingate," said the Head grimly, "You will kindly conduct Wharton to the detention-room."

"Come along, Wharton!"

Harry Wharton pale and followed the captain of Greyfriars out of the room. Out in the passage he turned to Wingate.

"I—I say, Wingate," he muttered, "I'm going to be flogged for what happened last night. I—I suppose the gating order—"

"You—you mean to say you've admitted playing that silly trick?" ejaculated Wingate.

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" said Wharton, smiling grimly.

"Anyway, now the culprit's been named I suppose the gating order will be cancelled at once."

"I expect so. It all depends—"

Wingate stopped, and stared at the junior in astonishment. Then a sudden gleam of understanding came to him.

"You—you thundering young idiot!" he growled, not unkindly. "I do believe you've taken the blame just to get the gating—"

"But I'd better not believe that, or it will be my duty to upset your little game," he added, with a smile.

"Anyway, it's your own funeral. And now, come along, you young ass!"

And Wingate led the way to the detention-room.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Lets it Out!

BOB CHERRY came away from the Head's study looking like a fellow in a dream. The startling news that Harry Wharton had confessed himself as the culprit was a tremendous shock to him, and he was still dazed and bewildered. As he tottered rather than walked down the passage, Johnny Bull, Frank Nugent, and Hurree Singh joined him.

"Well, what's the result?" asked Frank Nugent anxiously.

"Oh, dear! Don't ask me!" groaned Bob Cherry, almost collapsing on the passage floor. "Pinch me, someone! Am I awake, or is it a dream? Oh, my!"

"What's happened? What the thump's the matter?" asked Johnny Bull impatiently. "Are you potty?"

"No, but Harry Wharton is!" babbled Bob Cherry. "Oh, my hat! He's confessed that he had done it!"

"What?"

Bob Cherry nodded helplessly.

"But—but it's impossible! Wharton couldn't have done it!" ejaculated Frank Nugent blankly. "You mean to say—"

"The Head said so, anyway. You could have knocked me down with a coal-hammer!" groaned Bob Cherry.

And he told his amazed chums what had taken place in the Head's study. He had just finished his recital when the bell for afternoon classes rang, and the four proceeded to the Form-room, their faces gloomy and bewildered.

They arrived there to find the Remore in a buzz of excitement. It was very plain that Bol-over had lost no time in making known the astonishing news. It was evident, also, that the news was received with delight by many of the Removites, for it was generally expected that the gating order would now be cancelled.

The four chums were still discussing the mysterious affair when Vernon-Smith came along the passage. The Bounder was smiling grimly, and he grinned as he noted the juniors' glum faces. As a matter of fact, the astute Bounder was as certain as any of Harry Wharton's innocence. He had guessed long ago that the captain of the Remore had taken the blame solely to get the gating order removed in time for the match to be played.

"Hallo, you lot of moulting owls!" he greeted them cheerfully. "Have you heard the news?"

"What news?" granted Bob Cherry.

"That last night's order is cancelled," said Smithy. "Isn't it ripping! So now the match can be played!"

"Blow the match!" growled Johnny Bull savagely. "Blessed if I care whether—"

"My dear man," said the Bounder blandly, "but you must care! If you don't, then, as far as you're concerned, dear old Harry's sacrifice and giddy martyrdom has been all in vain!"

"You thumping ass!" snapped Bob Cherry. "What on earth are you gassing about?"

"Never mind that now!" grinned Vernon-Smith. "The point is—who's to take Wharton's place in the forward line? I fancy Hazeldene myself. He's a bit erratic, but—"

"Blow Hazeldene!" said Bob Cherry. "You can go and eat coke, Smithy!" And the four chums left the Bounder, and passed on, still grumpy. They reached the hall, and there they found that Vernon-Smith's news was quite correct. Pinned to the green baize notice-board was a note in the well-known hand of Dr. Locke, cancelling the order of the previous evening.

And, strangely enough, the four chums were not the only ones to whom the news was received with not unmixed feelings. Skinner & Co. were glad enough that the restrictions were removed, for they were also more than pleased that the fellow they hated was in detention, awaiting sentence. But the fact that Greyfriars would meet Highcliffe that afternoon with their best player absent did not please them at all.

"I suppose you chaps know what this means?" growled Stott, as the three slackers lounged along to their study after reading the notice. "It means that we stand a good chance to lose our cash this afternoon. We've backed Greyfriars heavily, and now Wharton isn't playing. Highcliffe will simply walk over us."

"Never mind!" Skinner grinned. "It'll be worth the loss of a quid to know that old Wharton's going to get the chopper! I'm blessed if I know what his little game is, owing up to what he hasn't done. And I don't care. But it's jolly queer!"

"Jolly funny, if you ask me!" chuckled Stott. "My hat! Won't old Pon roar when we tell him about it all! Ha, ha, ha! It was a jolly good wheeze of Pon's! Blessed if I ever knew you could put all the lights out with a simple trick like that! It was the neatest—"

"Shut up! Not so loud, you fool!" snarled Skinner sharply. "Shut the blessed door before you shout like that!"

Stott grinned, and shut the door. But, though the rascally trio did not know it, Skinner's warning had come too late. For a certain junior, who was well-known for the possession of a keen pair of ears, had been crouching behind the opposite study in time to hear part of Stott's remarks. And he heard enough to make him give a startled jump, and to make him curious to hear more.

"Mum-mum-my hat!" murmured Billy Bunter—for it was he. "Well, the rotters! So it was that beast Ponsbury and those rotters who played that trick! I must look into this; it's my duty!"

And, anxious to do his duty, and with eyes gleaming behind his huge glasses, Billy Bunter tiptoed across the passage and placed a fat ear to the keyhole. He was still in that interesting position, some minutes later, when Peter Todd came along.

Peter Todd grinned as he spotted the curious busybody. He hesitated a moment, and then he crept on tiptoe towards the unobtrusive eavesdropper. Not until Peter Todd was a yard from him did Billy hear him, and then it was too late.

Even as Billy Bunter straightened himself with a gasp of alarm, Peter Todd sprang. With one hand he grasped the door-knob, and flung the door wide open. Then he grasped the startled Bunter, and, with a mighty heave, sent him headlong through the doorway.

Crash!

"Yaroop!"

There was a startled gasp from Skinner & Co., followed by a howl from Billy Bunter, as he sprawled into the study, and his head struck the table-top with a resounding crack.

"Ow! Oh crumbs! Who did that?" wailed Bunter. "Ow! The rotters—"

Bunter broke off with a gasp as Skinner awoke to life and grasped him savagely. "You—you spring rotter!" he hissed, in a rage. "You sneaking frog! You were listening at the keyhole—"

"I did-didn't! I wasn't!" gasped Bunter, blinking in alarm at the enraged Skinner. "I was only— Yaroop! Oh, help! Stoppit! Murder—"

Bunter shrieked frantically as Skinner began to punch and pummel him in a frenzy of passionate rage. The thought that Billy Bunter, of all people, had overheard that conversation was too much for Skinner. He lost all control of himself. He was still pummelling the unfortunate junior, and Bunter's howls were ringing through the study, when the door was flung open and an awe-inspiring figure in cap and gown entered in the doorway. "Who was Mr. Queech?"

"Skinner, how dare you!" he shouted angrily. "Release that unhappy junior at once! Bunter, cease that ridiculous commotion!"

Skinner stopped, panting, and released the almost weeping Bunter.

"What does this mean, Skinner?" demanded Mr. Queech. "Why were you striking that boy in such a brutal manner?"

"I—I—I," stammered Skinner, paling.

"I was—"

"He—he haven't tell you, sir!" panted Billy Bunter, his eyes glittering behind his glasses. "He knows I've bowled him—"

"Silence, Bunter!" thundered Mr. Queech. "I have no doubt that you are as much to blame for this disturbance as Skinner. You will both do me two hundred lines!"

Mr. Queech paused, and Skinner & Co. breathed freely again. Evidently the master was not going to press his question. But the guilty trio did not breathe freely for long.

"And now, Bunter," snapped Mr. Queech. "you will accompany me to Dr. Locke's study. I was just about to send for you—"

"Mum-mum-me, sir?" gasped Bunter.

"But—but what for?"

"That you will quickly discover, Bunter," said Mr. Queech drily. "As you appear to have a guilty conscience, however, I will speedily allay your fears. You are merely required in regard to last night's affair of—"

"But—but I know nothing about it, sir!" gasped Bunter, in great alarm, and quite mistaking Mr. Queech's meaning. "It was all these three rotters and Ponsbury, sir! They did it all. I only heard 'em talking about it. It was that rotter Ponsbury who put the lights out. He did it—"

"What?"

"It's true, sir!" gasped Bunter. "It was Ponsbury, of Highcliffe, sir! He did it because you were after him for smoking in the passage—so that he could sneak out in the darkness. I had nothing to do with it—nothing at all, sir! Skinner was bullying me because—because I overheard 'em talking about it. I'm as innocent as—"

"Ah!"

There was a wealth of meaning in that exclamation of Mr. Queech's. The astounding happenings of the previous evening had quite banished the little

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affair of Ponsoby from his mind. But now, in a flash, it all came back to him, and a great light dawned upon the master.

"Skinner," he said in steely tones, "is this true?"

Skinner licked his dry lips. "The game was up, and he knew it. But before he could reply Mr. Quech went on again.

"It is useless to deny it, Skinner!" he said sternly. "The whole disgraceful truth is now clear to me! You three boys will accompany me without delay to Dr. Locke."

And, leaving Bunter gasping in mingled relief and surprise, Mr. Quech left the room, followed by the unhappy Skinner & Co., their faces white and wetched.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Clearing Up!

MEANWHILE, in the detention-room, Harry Wharton had spent a miserable morning. He had chosen to take the blame for the outrage, in order to get the restrictions removed so that the match could take place. But whether he had succeeded or not—whether his sacrifice had been in vain—he did not know. He had not expected this to happen. He had hoped that a flogging would have ended the matter. It was cruel luck that this banknote affair had erupted up when it did, and, in any case, it seemed certain now that he himself would miss the match, and this was a bitter disappointment to him.

But, for all that, if he could have known that his plan had succeeded, he would have been satisfied. Better for one to suffer than the whole Lower School, he reasoned, and he did not know and the uncertainty was galling. Added to this, he was more than a little worried about the strange affair of Maul-everer's banknote. Now the matter was in the Head's hands it had become serious, and Harry Wharton was becoming increasingly uneasy as to the outcome.

To Harry Wharton, as he restlessly paced the detention-room, that long morning of inaction and solitude seemed endless, and he was more than a little relieved when the door of the room opened at last, and Wingate appeared.

"Wharton," he said, with a queer smile, "you are wanted again in the Head's study! Back up!"

Harry Wharton nodded, and followed the captain in silence. As Wingate ushered him into the study a moment later he gave a start of surprise. With Dr. Locke was Mr. Quech, and standing before the Head's desk were Skinner, Stott, and Snoop, their faces downcast and pale.

Mr. Quech gave him a kindly reassuring glance, but the Head eyed him severely.

"Wharton," he began quietly, "I have just received an astounding confession from Skinner in relation to last night's outrage. Skinner has confessed that it was he, in conjunction with Stott and Snoop and a boy named Ponsoby from Highcliffe School, who was responsible for the crime, and not you. I shall be glad, therefore, to know why you made that extraordinary confession to me this morning—why you admitted that you were the culprit?"

There was a silence as the Head waited. Harry Wharton was too astounded at this unexpected development to speak for

the moment. To think that Skinner & Co., who had been the prime movers in charging him with the affair, should be the culprits quite took his breath away. He coloured violently as he noticed the Head's searching glance fixed upon him.

"I—I did not exactly admit that I was guilty, sir," he stammered at length. "I—I only said I was ready to take the blame."

"You led me to assume that you were guilty, which amounts to the same thing!" said the Head sternly. "I demand to know why you did this extraordinary thing, Wharton?"

"To—to get the gathering order cancelled, sir!" stammered the junior slowly. "I—I thought that, if someone took the blame and punishment, the matter would be allowed to drop. You—you see, sir, it's the Highcliffe match this afternoon, and—and the fellows have been looking forward to it for weeks. So—"

"Bless my soul!" gasped the Head heatedly. "Do you mean to say, Wharton, that you were willing to undergo a flogging—that you actually deceived me, your headmaster, in order that a football match might be played?"

Harry Wharton started, and his face flushed red.

"I—I'm awfully sorry, sir!" he said in a low voice. "I did not think of that. I did not think I was deceiving you. I'm sorry now!"

"I am quite ready to believe that, my boy," said the Head quietly, after a pause, "otherwise I should punish you severely. Also, I cannot but admire your unselfish and self-sacrificing spirit, wrong as it advised as it was. As far as you are concerned, Wharton, that matter is now closed. With regard to the matter of Maul-everer's banknote, it is now obvious, of course, that the two affairs are in no way connected, and, therefore—Come in!"

Dr. Locke called out testily as a knock sounded at the door. The door opened, and Maul-everer of the Remove entered, his aristocratic countenance flushed and excited.

"What is it, Maul-everer?" demanded the Head. "Cannot you see that I am busy—"

"Ahem! It's rather important, sir!" explained the junior, with a reassuring

glance at Harry Wharton. "You—you see, sir, I thought I'd better bring the five-pound note along at once!"

"F-five?" stammered the Head. "What do you mean, boy? Do you mean to say you have found the missing banknote, Maul-everer?"

"Yess, sir, that's it!" said Maul-everer cheerfully. "My tailor-man's just sent it back! You—you see, sir, it was like this; I was sending one of the five-pound notes in Courtfield last night, and—ahem—I must have sent both of 'em by—by mistake! You see, the tailor-man's just sent it back. Here it is, sir! So it's all right now, isn't it, sir?"

Dr. Locke took the missive handed to him, and, as his eyes scanned the crisp banknote and the explanatory note enclosed, his brow darkened.

"But—but it is not all right, Maul-everer!" he snapped. "You have been grossly careless, boy! By your careless act you have caused unnecessary worry to all concerned, and have been the means of a boy, at least, being unjustly suspected! You may go now; but I will send for you later, when I intend to reprimand you severely!"

"Oh dear!" His lordship groaned, and left the study. The Head exchanged a look of deep relief with Mr. Quech, and then he turned to the shivering Skinner & Co. "An exceedingly sorry affair, I will deal with it!" he exclaimed grimly.

And Dr. Locke picked up a cane, and proceeded to make good his word, to the sorrow and suffering of Skinner & Co. It was a record licking, even for those study scoundrels, and when the Head laid down the cane at last the unhappy practical boys were bent double and nearly weeping with pain. At the Head's curt nod of dismissal they scurried from the dread apartment, limp as rags. Then the Head's face cleared, and he turned to Harry Wharton.

"Wharton," he exclaimed kindly. "I am exceedingly sorry that your name should have been connected with those matters, and I regret that I, even for one moment, doubted your innocence! You may go now, my boy!"

"Thank you, sir!" stammered Harry Wharton, flushing.

And he quitted the study, his face radiant.

So the strange affair of Maul-everer's banknote, and the still stranger affair of the unauthorised "lights out" at Greyfriars, ended happily for all concerned—all, that is, with the exception of Skinner & Co., and possibly Gerald Loder, the prefect. It was a happy ending also for Hazeldene, for he cycled over that evening to Highcliffe, and paid Ponsoby the amount—a proceeding that evidently satisfied that rascally junior even more than the thought of revenge, for Marjorie Hazeldene never did get to know of her brother's folly.

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