

**SPECIAL EXTRA-LONG COMPLETE STORY  
OF GREYFRIARS INSIDE!**



No. 721. Vol. XX.

Week Ending Dec. 3rd, 1921.

# The Magnet <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

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This Week:

**"PENFOLD THE BLADE!"**



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*(A Dramatic Moment in the Long Complete Story in this issue.)*

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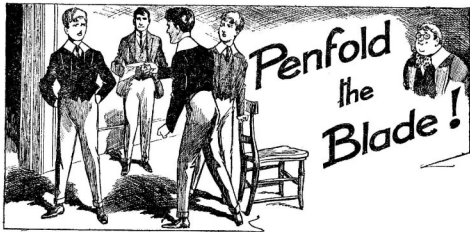
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By FRANK RICHARDS.

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.**  
**The Morning After!**

**"Y OOP!"**  
That strange remark left Skinner's lips in a startled howl.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
Harold Skinner, the cad of the Remove Form at Greyfriars School, sat up in bed and blinked at the laughing juniors. In the dim light of the chair, early morning he saw that many of his Form-mates were half-dressed. Then his eyes roved to the floor. By the side of his bed lay a big saturated sponge. It was this sponge which had been responsible for Skinner's violent awakening.

The cad mopped the wet from his brow by dabbing his face with the sheet.  
"Who did that?" he demanded savagely.

There was no reply. Billy Dunter, in the act of buttoning his shirt, gave a low gurgle.

Harold Skinner turned on the porpoise angrily.

"So you think it's funny, eh, you fat toad!" he snarled. "Did you throw that sponge?"

An expression of righteous indignation superseded the smile on Bunter's rotund face.

"Mo!" he exclaimed. "I shouldn't do such a thing. I wouldn't throw my nice clean sponge at you, Skinner, not for worlds!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The laughter of the others roused the cad to a perfect fury. He bent over the side of his bed and picked up—not the sponge, but one of his own ample boots. This he hurled with deadly aim at the grinning fat junior.

"Take that!"  
Bunter took it. The toe of the boot caught the unfortunate Owl right on the lowest button of his shirt. He doubled up almost in two, and grasped that region sometimes referred to as the "bolt."  
"Wof!" he gasped. "Ooch! My poor chest!"

Skinner grinned maliciously.

"That'll teach you perhaps not to chuck sponges about!"

"Grough! Oo-er! You b-bentley coward!" panted Billy Bunter. "I—phew!—didn't chuck the sponge!"

"Then who did?" demanded Skinner. "You must have seen the rotter who threw it."

"Yes—I—er—that is to say—er—" Billy Dunter caught the steely eye of Percy Bolsover, the bully of the Remove, and he came to a stammering halt.

Skinner picked up the saturated sponge, and held it carelessly between his fingers.

"Well!" he said.  
"D-don't throw it, Skinny!" implored Bunter. "I didn't see Bolsover throw the sponge, really I didn't. Oh—er—I mean to say that—"

"So it was you, Bolsover!" snarled Skinner. "I might have guessed that you did the rotten trick!"

Percy Bolsover gave his tie a final adjustment, and laughed easily.

"I tried to do you a good turn, old top," he explained. "The rising-bell went a quarter of an hour ago."

"Well, thank you for nothing!" growled Skinner, and he sent the sponge hurtling across the room at Bolsover's head.

It would have been a bad thing for Harold Skinner if he had hit his mark. But he missed, and so far luck was on his side. Unfortunately, however, Gerald Loder, a prefect of the Sixth Form, happened to enter the door. The Sixth-Former was just in time to stop the saturated sponge from careering into the passage.

"Squelch!"  
Gerald Loder staggered back as the wet object flattened itself against his face and sent a stream of water sporting inside his high collar.

"Phoo! Who did that?"  
The prefect shook the water out of his eyes, and, pale with anger, glared at the juniors of the Remove. Nobody spoke, but as his eyes lighted upon Harold Skinner's guilty, frightened face, Loder hid the answer to his question. Like an avenging deity, he strode through the

**Penfold  
the  
Blade!**

dormitory, and grasped Skinner by the collar of his pyjama jacket. Twice his hand rose and fell upon the junior's ears.  
"You-ow! Yaroooh!" yelped Harold Skinner.

"That's for throwing the sponge, you young beast!" panted the cad of the Sixth. "And take a hundred lines for not being out of bed!"

Almost blubbing, Harold Skinner scrambled from between the sheets and hastily commenced dressing. Meanwhile Gerald Loder glared round the dormitory in an effort to find other dilatory juniors on whom to wreak his ire. He had not far to look.

"Who the thump's in that bed?" he demanded of Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove.

Wharton followed the direction indicated by the prefect's finger. In a bed near the window, snugged beneath the blankets, was a sleeping figure.

"My hat!" muttered Wharton to himself.

Well he knew who the slumbereer was, but he could not bear to speak the name that rose in his mind. Until the prefect had asked the question, he had not noticed that anyone was still in bed.

But Loder soon settled the matter himself. With a couple of swift bounds he reached the bed, and jerked away the coverings. The sleeping figure gave an uneasy grunt and rolled over.

"Penfold!"  
The prefect stood, with arms akimbo, bending over his bed. Thus, should Dick Penfold awaken, he would have the doubtful pleasure of gazing into the malicious face of the big Sixth-Former. But Penfold's eyes remained closed. Only his lips stirred.

"Fifteen quids!" muttered the boy.  
Harold Skinner, who was scrambling into his clothes, heard the words, and his sleep-dimmed eyes flashed with the light of a sudden memory. He had induced Dick Penfold to break bounds with him and pay a visit to a gambling house in the little village of Friarade near the school.

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and fifteen pounds represented the total of Penfold's winnings.

But Penfold's unconscious remark had no meaning to anyone else.

"I'll teach the young beast to lay dreaming at a quarter to eight in the morning!" granted Loder. And, grasping the foot of the sleeping junior, he hauled him unceremoniously out of bed.

Dick Penfold was just raking in piles of banknotes in his dreams when, literally, he came to earth with a bump. He hit the hard floor of the dormitory with a crash that rudely awakened him and caused an involuntary cry of pain to leave his lips.

"Take a hundred lines, you lazy yonking boulder!" snapped Gerald Loder. "And if you're not into your clothes in two twos, I'll cane you into the bargain!"

Without a word, Dick Penfold rose to his feet and stared at Loder contemptuously. His lips moved as though he were about to say something. But, thinking better of it, he closed his mouth, and started to don his things.

Loder, meanwhile, hustled up others of the tardy juniors.

Twice, when the prefect's back was turned, Dick Penfold slipped his hand under his pillow, as though searching for something. Each time Loder half-turned, and the scholarship boy withdrew his hand and resumed his dressing. Penfold had got as far as the bonnet, shirt, and trousers stage when he made his third attempt. As he did so, Loder swung round to see how he was progressing with his toilet. Dick started back, with a guilty look that immediately roused the prefect's suspicions. Loder glanced at the boy's hands, and saw that they were empty.

"What have you got under that pillow, Penfold?" he asked.

Penfold forced a smile to his lips.

"What do fellows usually keep under their pillows," he said, "pet rabbits?"

Billy Banter gave a soft chuckle as Loder advanced threateningly on the defiant junior.

"You cheeky lag!" spluttered the prefect. "Show me what you have concealed under that pillow at once!"

Outwardly as calm and cool as an iceberg, the scholarship boy turned round and thrust his hand under the pillow and drew out—a handkerchief.

"There you are, Loder!" he murmured sweetly. "Do you wish to borrow it?"

For a moment Gerald Loder looked as though he were about to slaughter the Remove lad. Then, with a loud snort, turned on his heel and strode from the dormitory.

As Dick Penfold resumed his dressing operations, his Form-mates looked at him curiously. A week ago Penfold had been a normal healthy lad, like most of them, but a curious change had come over him. At first he had merely exhibited a listlessness that had speedily brought him drastic punishment at the hands of his Form-master, Mr. Horace Samuel Quelch, M.A. Then he had shown him- self all colour in the foster-field, and finally had acted so strangely that he had lost his position in the team. To crown all, he had quarrelled with the best fellows of the Form, like Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, and Johnny Bull, and had taken up with such queer customers as Harold Skinner, William Stott, and Smokey James Snoop.

It was, indeed, to Skinner that he addressed his first remark after Loder had left the dormitory.

"You're a precious sort of pat,

Skinny!" he growled. "Why the thump didn't you give me a shake?"

"Hang it all, I didn't hear the rising-bell myself!" said Skinner. "That beast Loder gave me a hundred lines for being late!"

"I'd have given you a call like a shot, Pen," said Harry Wharton, "but neither I nor any of the other fellows noticed you hadn't shown a leg!"

"Thank you and your set for nothing!" said Penfold icily. He stooped down and flicked an imaginary speck of dust from his boot to avoid the Remove captain's gaze.

Wharton shook his head sadly, and then, with sudden resolution, he walked across to the scholarship boy and touched him on the shoulder.

"See here, Pen," he said, "how long are you going to keep up this rotten farce? The other day you accused me of sneering about you to Bob Cherry behind your back. Do you still think I'd do a caudish thing like that?"

Penfold rose upright, while the memory of a conversation he had overheard a day or two previously rankled in his mind.

"As I told you before, Wharton," he said, "I can believe the evidence of my own ears. You referred contemptuously of me as being only a cobbler's son. So I am; but I'm not a thumping liar!"

For a moment Harry Wharton saw red. He had done his best to help the lad before him, but even his temper was being tried too far. But instead of striking Penfold, as it appeared likely he would, he dropped his hands and turned away.

"Come on, Bob!" he said to Cherry. "Let's get down. We shall be late for chapel!"

The captain of the Remove, followed by the other members of the Famous Five of Greyfriars School—Bob Cherry, Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Ramset Jan Singh, the Indian junior, left the dormitory. Others hastened after them until only Penfold and Skinner were left in the place.

"Well," said the latter, "how do you feel after your night on the razze?"

"Jolly sleepy!" yawned Penfold. "If that cad Loder hadn't turfed me out, I should have gone on snoozing all the morning. Those late hours don't suit me!"

"They suited you pretty well last night!" said Skinner meaningly.

"You're fifteen quids richer for your night out. But I'll talk to you later; I don't want to get in the report for missing chapel, if you do!"

After Skinner had hurried from the dormitory, Dick Penfold gave a slow, happy smile.

"My aunt, I diddle Loder, after all," he muttered to himself; "but it was a near thing! Lucky I thought of whipping out that handkerchief, or the beast might have asked more awkward questions!"

He lifted the pillow of his bed and chucked softly as a little heap of Treasury-notes came into view.

The boy picked up the notes and fingered them lovingly. Then, taking a seat on his bed facing the window, he slowly counted the money. There were fifteen pounds exactly. That was the amount he had estimated on his return to the dormitory, after his night out with Harold Skinner. The pair had set out together at midnight. While scaling the school wall they had almost dropped into the arms of P.-c. Tozer, the local constable. But in the end they had reached the little gambling-den run by a

notorious Courtfield character known as Housley Walker. There Penfold had had "beginners' luck," and his flutters at the roulette-wheel with ten bob borrowed from Skinner, had brought him in the gratifying sum of fifteen pounds.

For a few moments Dick sat gazing at his winnings. The fact that the longer he remained in the dormitory, the more trouble he was piling up for himself, did not worry him in the least. All thoughts of attending chapel had quite left his head.

The all-absorbing topic with the boy was—what should he do with his fifteen pounds? His only object in gambling, in the first place, was to win some money for his father's sake. The doctor had clearly stated that only a long sea-voyage would set the old cobbler of Friarale on his feet again. But fifteen pounds was not enough to pay for a voyage to Australia and back, such as Dr. Pillbury had had in mind.

"Hang it all," muttered Dick Penfold, "if Skinner hadn't been in such a thumping hurry last night, I might have won a cool hundred quids!"

Should he send his father on a holiday to Scotland with the fifteen pounds he had won? Alternately, should he use the money in a fresh gambling venture? Those were the two questions that recurred in the mind of the scholarship boy.

A sense of worry in Dick's mind erased the feeling of happiness at his own good luck of the previous night. At last he rose from his seat on the bed and stuffed the Treasury-notes into his breast-pocket.

"I'll think it over more carefully!" he promised himself.

With that, he left the dormitory, and made his way down to the quad. He was so late that he decided to skip chapel altogether. For ten minutes he made himself as inconspicuous as possible behind a tree. Then, when the fellows departed from chapel, he mingled among them. Well he knew, however, that the duty prefect would have made a note of his absence, and that further punishment was in store for him. But Dick Penfold had got used to punishment during the last week, and the prospect left him undismayed.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### A Visit from P.-c. Tozer!

"HALLO! Here you are, Pen, old man!"

The remark was made by Harold Skinner. He linked his arm into Penfold's, and fell into step with the cobbler's son. Dick Penfold for his part had got quite used to the company of the cad. Indeed, the fact that Harry Wharton & Co. and other decent fellows disapproved of this queer companionship, gave him a keener zest for it. Perhaps, though, had Penfold known all that was in the malicious mind of Harold Skinner, he would not have been so pleased about things.

"Let's take a turn round the quad, Pen, before brekker," suggested the cad.

"I want to talk to you."

"About last night's affair?"

"About that money you won."

"Sh-sh!"

Penfold put a finger on his lip. A number of juniors were walking or lounging about in the quad, chatting together. Near by Billy Banter was pointing out to Fisher T. Fish, the American junior, the defects of a second-



hand penknife which he had bought, but not paid for.

The scholarship boy waited until Bunter and Fish were out of earshot before replying to Skinner's question.

"You want to talk to me about the money I won?" he said. "Well, what about it?"

"I—er—was just thinking in chapel about it, that was all," said Skinner. "I was thinking we could have a slap-up spread at Chunkley's, that swell place in Courtfield, y'know. Not too many of us—just you and I and Stott and Snoop. Not a bad scheme—eh, old top?"

"N-no!"

There was such a lack of enthusiasm in Penfold's tone that Skinner gazed at him searchingly.

"You don't seem so mighty keen about it!" sneered the cad of the Remore. "Considering I put up the ten bob by means of which you won the dice, you might celebrate the occasion, I think."

Penfold walked a few steps in silence. Of course, this was just what he might have expected. Naturally, Skinner would expect him to celebrate his luck, and it was just like Skinner to remind him of that ten bob which he had borrowed and paid back. But Dick Penfold wanted that money for a more serious purpose than gorging Skinner & Co. at Chunkley's. It was an awkward position.

"Don't you think, old man," mused Penfold at length, "that we might try our luck again in Hokey Walker's parlour first?"

Harold Skinner's face brightened somewhat. He had rather expected Penfold would be content to lie low for a time at least after his midnight escapade. It suited the books of the cad to a nicety to learn that he was game for further adventures.

"All right!" he said. "We'll let the giddy celebrations stand over for a time, and then—Ow! My hat!"

Skinner's last remark was made in a hoarse, frightened whisper. He faltered in his stride, and his eyes gazed towards the school gates with a glassy stare.

Penfold followed his companion's gaze, and his heart gave a sudden thump against his ribs.

Striding across the quad directly towards them was none other than P.-c. Tozer.

"My—my aunt!" stammered Skinner. "And I'd have sworn he didn't recognise us last night!"

A guilty conscience is a great har-binger of fear, and both Skinner and Dick Penfold imagined in those few moments the direst consequences to their expedition of the night before. But, as it happened, P.-c. Tozer was only walking in their direction because they happened to be on the direct route from the gates to the entrance of the school building.

Both juniors breathed heartfelt sighs of relief when the burly limb of the law passed them by, giving a brief nod as he did so.

"Safe as houses!" whispered Skinner in Penfold's ear.

When P.-c. Tozer had proceeded on his way another few yards he was addressed for the first time by one of the juniors. Stott and Snoop, who were strolling across the quad with the intention of attaching themselves to Skinner and Penfold, stepped directly in his path.

"Good morning, officer!" said the former, with exaggerated politeness. "Are you in search of our revered headmaster?"

"Which is how I be," said P.-c. Tozer, coming to a stop. "Is he up at the school?"

"He'll be coming through the quad in a few minutes," said Stott. "He's talking to one of the fellows in the chapel."

"That bein' so, I'll wait here," said the man in blue.

He stuck his thumbs into his belt, spread his legs apart, and glanced round the quad. Somewhere, he mused—probably among those juniors within his view—there were the two young scamps who had so upset his official dignity on the previous night. To his intense chagrin, he had not been able to glimpse their faces, and, therefore, he had little hope of bringing the culprits to book. Nevertheless, he had come to report to Dr. Locke, the headmaster, the fact that two of his pupils were abroad at the chill, dark hour of midnight.

William Stott gave a prodigious wink in the direction of his companion Snoop as the two moved away.

"Buck me up, old top," he murmured. "I see a chance for a nip."

Thereupon, Stott walked direct across to where Bunter and Fisher T. Fish were still arguing.

"What rotten luck, Billy!" he said to Bunter in a sympathetic voice. "How the dickens Tozer got wise of you I'm hanged if I know! But he's found out somehow, and now he's going to split to the Head!"

Every vestige of colour left the Out's fat face. His eyes assumed a fishy glaze through his little round spectacles. His knees sagged.

"T-T-Tozer's f-found out!" he stammered in a far-away voice.

The sight of a policeman entering the quad always gave Bunter severe quins. Like most of the other juniors, his conscience was never quite so clear of mis-doing as to enable him to regard a visit from Tozer with anything else but secret dread. Now the misdeeds of the past few weeks photographed themselves on Bunter's mind with startling clearness.

There was that episode when he had sallied forth with his minor, Samuel Tuckless Bunter, and a stout sack in quest of apples from Colonel Curry's orchard. There was that time when he had crawled under the tent of Wangie's Travelling Circus into the best seats without paying. There was the more recent occasion when he had consumed fourteen doughnuts in Chunkley's, and then had blankly refused to pay for them, on the grounds that the goods were not—

—to use his own words—"fit for a pig to eat." In this last case the manager of Chunkley's had shown distinct signs of annoyance. He had assisted Bunter to leave the premises with his boot, and had threatened to "summons him before ze beak."

Therefore, Billy Bunter decided in his own mind that it was in connection with the Chunkley affair that P.-c. Tozer had paid this early morning visit to the school.

"D-did T-Tozer t-tell you what it was all about?" said Bunter to Stott.

"He did!" lied Stott solemnly. "He told us everything. Didn't he, Snoop?"

"Yes," said Snoop. "And he's now



Tozer dragged Billy Bunter by the scruff of the neck towards the astonished headmaster. "Good gracious, constable!" said Dr. Locke. "What is the meaning of this?" "Which as how he has been breaking bounds and gallivanting about the countryside with suspicious characters!" said Tozer.

(See Chapter 2.)

waiting to see Dr. Locke about the affair. Why did you do it, Billy?"

"I—I was hungry!" groaned Bunter miserably. "You fellows know I'm jolly nearly starved here. But it's no good telling old Locke that. I was so weak and hungry that afternoon in Courtfield that I should have dropped from exhaustion if I hadn't staggered into Chunkley's. Of course, if I'd had the money I'd have paid like a shot for the few measly doughnuts I ate to keep body and soul together. I hadn't the money. That wasn't my fault, was it? A chap can't help being shot of dibs at times!"

"Certainly not, Billy!" said Stott solemnly. "I quite agree with you. It wouldn't have been fair to Greyfriars for you to have allowed yourself to succumb to the pangs of starvation. It was a far, far better thing you did than the— But what are you going to do about it now?"

"What can I do?" whined Billy Bunter. "Old Locke has never known what it is to starve, so he won't make any allowance for the sufferings I've been through."

A self-pitying tear rolled down one of Bunter's fat cheeks.

Stott patted the fat junior on the shoulder.

"Cheer up, Billy," he said. "Maybe you won't have to go to prison. Probably old Locke will only give you a couple of dozen with the cane."

"Ow!" groaned Bunter.

"Why, look on the bright side of things, man. The pain will all be over by next week."

"Gr-roooogh!"

Billy Bunter squirmed as his imagination ran riot.

"But if I were you," said Stott, "I should go and speak to Tozer. As a friend, I strongly advise you to make a clean breast of everything. Get on the right side of the old boy, and he'll be content to take your apologies back to that chap at Chunkley's, without telling old Locke about the affair."

"Gee, I guess that's a real sensible suggestion!" put in Fisher T. Fish, who had detected the twinkle in Stott's eyes.

"Try and choke the galoot off, Bunter!"

Summoning his courage in both hands, the Owl of the Remove rolled across the quad to the waiting Tozer. The worthy policeman saw him coming and smiled. Tozer knew Bunter of old, and he was not particularly partial to the fat junior.

Billy Bunter noted the look and trembled inwardly.

"I—I say, Tozer—that is, I mean officer," he blurted out, "I—er—understand you want to see the Head."

"Which as how I do, Master Bunter."

The Owl gave a forlorn sniff which would have touched the heart of a crocodile.

"Look here, Tozer!" he said, with a catch in his voice. "I admit I did it. Supposing I apologised, would you let up on me?"

P.-c. Tozer opened wide his eyes. His face gradually assumed the hue of a ripe plum. Then his hand went out, and he grasped the unlucky porpoise by the collar.

"So it was you, you young varmint!" he snorted. "I might ha' guessed that."

Bunter squirmed and wriggled uncomfortably while a number of the other juniors began to collect.

"P-please, it was my only fat since I've been at Greyfriars," he began. "My conscience—"

"So you fell, did you, young rip!" growled the local constable. "I thought you dropped on me for the porpoise."

Billy Bunter looked up in blank astonishment.

"D-d-dropped on you?" he stammered.

"Which is how you did," said Tozer, "and well I know it. I could hardly move my neck this morning. It felt like a ton weight coming on top of me. I might ha' known it was you; and then you booted me!"

"B-b-booted you?" And P.-c. Tozer, purple with righteous indignation, swung one of his number thirteens, and brought it behind Billy Bunter with a resounding thud.

"Ooooh! Ow, you beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Stott and Snoop.

At that moment Dr. Locke emerged from the chapel, in company with George

Wingate, the captain of the school. P.-c. Tozer saw the Head as he stepped into the quad.

"Now, you young rip," he said to Bunter, "you can explain to your worthy headmaster how he it you came to be takin' fresh air at the hour-roughous hour o' midnight."

The juniors who had gathered round stepped aside as the officer dragged the Owl by the scruff of the neck towards the astonished headmaster.

Thoroughly alarmed and mystified, Billy Bunter began to loudly protest his innocence. But P.-c. Tozer cut in to impress him "which as how anything he said would be used in evidence against him."

Dr. Locke held his spectacles to his nose, and glared through them at the squirming Bunter.

"Good gracious, constable!" he said. "What is the meaning of this extraordinary scene? What has this boy done?"

The policeman took a deep breath.

"Which as how he's committed assault and battery, using his boot in a manner liable to cause serious bodily harm, breaking out o' school, gallivanting about the countryside with another suspicious character with intent to commit a felony, and violently precipitatin' hisself on the neck o' your humble, with malicious intent aforethought!"

"Dear me!" gasped the headmaster.

"B-but I didn't!" howled Billy Bunter, now on the verge of tears.

P.-c. Tozer regarded his struggling victim scornfully.

"You lyin' young varmint!" he grunted. "Didn't you confess to me your misdoings? Didn't you try to persuade me not to see your worthy headmaster!"

"Y-yes—that is, n-no—I mean to say that I—"

"Unhand the boy, constable!" ordered the Head. "Now, will you explain, without reverting to official language, exactly what you have against Bunter?"

"I saw him breakin' bounds last night with another young rip," replied the man in blue. "When I stopped the other one outside the school, this varmint dropped off the wall on to my neck. Then he planted his boot behind me when I wasn't looking, and off they went!"

Dr. Locke turned to Bunter, a deep frown on his forehead.

"Do you confess to having broken bounds last night, Bunter?" he said sternly. "Did you also assault Policemaster Tozer?"

"Nunno, sir!" cried Bunter hastily. "It was all a mistake. I never left the dormitory last night. Ask any of the chaps."

But none of the fellows who were standing near could definitely state whether Bunter had been in his bed all night or not. They had been asleep themselves, and could only say that no one had left the Remove dormitory to their knowledge. But when it became apparent that the Head placed great weight in the policeman's statement that Bunter had actually confessed, Dick Penfold came to the fat junior's rescue.

Penfold and Harold Skinner had remained on the outskirts of the ring of juniors which had formed round the principal actors in this little comedy. The latter, who had been thoroughly

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enjoying Bunter's discomfiture, went pale with fear as his companion stepped forward. For one awful second Skinner imagined that Penfold was going to confess.

But Penfold had no intention of making a clean breast of his own misdemeanors. On the other hand, he had no intention of allowing a Form-mate to suffer for the sins of himself and Skinner.

"Excuse me, sir!" he said, approaching the Head. "But I happened to be very restless last night, and was awake until well after twelve o'clock. I am certain Bunter did not leave his bed!"

The headmaster looked searchingly at the junior.

"Then, perhaps, Penfold," he said, "you may be able to tell us who did leave the dormitory?"

"I can't tell you that, sir!"

Penfold thought he had saved the situation admirably, without telling what he considered to be a lie. But Dr. Locke's next remark was a poser.

"Do you mean by that, Penfold, that you did not see anyone leave the dormitory, or that you cannot give away an erring Form-mate?"

The Head, with his keen perception and vast experience of boys, had not been deceived by Penfold's ingenious answer to his previous question. Now the scholarship boy dropped his eyes and remained silent.

After waiting patiently for a few seconds for a reply from Penfold, Dr. Locke turned to P.-c. Tozer.

"You may safely leave this matter in my hands, officer," he said. "It appears to me to be obvious that there has been some misunderstanding in the case of Bunter. But you may rest assured that I shall institute the fullest investigation into the whole extraordinary affair, and will communicate the result to you."

"Which as how I have to thank you kindly, sir!" said P.-c. Tozer, touching his helmet. Then, giving a final scowl at Billy Bunter, he marched solemnly out of the quad.

The breakfast-bell had rung, so the Head dismissed the assembled juniors with a brief word. Before morning classes, however, the whole Lower School was ordered to attend in Big Hall. There Dr. Locke exhorted the boys who had broken bounds and assaulted the policeman to step forward. There was no response.

"Then," said the Head sternly, "the Lower School will be gated for the next half-holiday, unless between now and Saturday the two culprits come forward and confess."

The juniors gazed from one to another in blank dismay. Those fellows of the Remove who had happened to be in the quad at the time of P.-c. Tozer's conversation with the Head cast many a suspicious glance in the direction of Dick Penfold. Some even began to think that Penfold himself might have been concerned in the affair.

"You were a thumping idiot to butt in and tell the Head that you were awake last night!" whispered Skinner savagely into the ear of the scholarship boy. "Hang it all, if Bunter had got a thundering good lickin' it wouldn't have been any more than he deserves! Besides, it would have kept suspicion off us."

"That sort of thing might suit your look!" said Penfold contemptuously. "It's not my way of doing things! We know jolly well Bunter was innocent, and I wasn't going to let him suffer on my account!"

"Well, what about the rest of the Lower School?" sneered Skinner. "You



Evading the hands that sought to lay themselves violently upon him, Dick Penfold snatched up a chair. Then he hastily backed to the wall. "Stand back, you lunatics!" he yelled. "I tell you I didn't write that doggerel about Wharton!" (See Chapter 4.)

ain't going to turn pie and confess, so's they shan't lose their precious half-holiday, are you?"

Penfold hesitated a fraction of a second.

"That's a different thing!" he said. "Hang 'em, it'll do 'em good for once in a way!"

As the juniors were dispersing from Big Hall, Billy Bunter robed across to Penfold, who was strolling out with Skinner.

"I say, Penfold," he said, "if you were awake at midnight and anyone left the dormitory, you must have seen 'em, you know. If so, it's your duty to tell the Head. I don't want to be gated—"

"Stow your cackle, you fat worms!" cried Penfold angrily. "Thank your lucky stars I saved your ungainly carcass from a thundering licking!"

"Surly beast!" muttered Bunter to himself.

And, unable to get any satisfaction out of Penfold, he turned to give his views of the affair to a group of indignant Removites, who were as upset as himself at the prospect of losing the next half-holiday.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Bunter Takes a Hand!

"HALLO! You've become jolly industrious all of a sudden!"

That remark was made by William Stott as he entered Study No. 11, after dinner that day. It was brought forth by the sight of Harold Skinner sitting at the table, surrounded by sheets of notepaper. There was an intent look on the lad's face, and his

fingers guided a pen carefully over the writing-pad immediately in front of him. At the sound of Stott's voice, Skinner looked up.

"Shut the door, old top!" he said. "I've hit upon a bright wheeze for further widening the breach between Wharton and Penfold!"

Stott closed the door, and dropped into an armchair close to the table.

"The breach seems to be pretty wide, as it is!" he chuckled. "That last stunt of yours, when you imitated Wharton's voice outside Penfold's study, helped do the trick. Penfold still thinks that Wharton sneered about his being a cobbler's son. You can tell it rankles in his mind!"

"Yes, I admit that my first plan was a thorough success!" murmured Skinner modestly. "Now my intention is to give Wharton a bigger grudge against Penfold. Read that!"

Stott took the piece of notepaper Skinner handed him, and read the following verse written in a small, neat hand:

"Marjy has a little lamb,  
It's name is Harry Wharton,  
And though it follows her each day,  
Poor Wharton hasn't caught on!"

"My hat!" said Stott. "What drivelling rot! Did Penfold compose this doggerel?"

Harold Skinner glared angrily at his friend.

"That poetry," he said, with emphasis, "was written by me! It's jolly good—as good as Penfold himself could write. And, of course, I've written it in Penfold's hand!"

"What for?"

"Why, so that Wharton and the rest shall think that Penfold composed it, fathead!" snapped Skinner. "Wharton is so touchy as an old woman with bunions about the subject of Marjorie Hazeldene. Two or three times lately he's managed to get himself invited with her brother, Peter Hazeldene, over to Cliff House School to tea. And when Wharton sees this little verse he'll want to punch Penfold's head for a cert! I'll pin it up on the notice-board in the Common-room this evening!"

He rose and gathered up all the pieces of paper on which he had been practising Penfold's writing. Crossing the study, he placed them in his pocket, and he locked. Later in the day, when a fire was lighted in the study, Skinner intended to burn these scraps of evidence, keeping only the best example of his industry to pin on the notice-board.

Skinner and Stott left the study together, throwing a facetious greeting to Bunter, who waddled past them in the studies passage. The Owl walked in the opposite direction until the two had passed down the stairs, and then he turned back.

"The artful rotters!" muttered Billy Bunter to himself. "I'll take a hand in this little game!"

As a matter of fact, though, the purpose of the Remove had already taken a hand—or, rather, an ear—in the "little game." Passing down the passage, he had heard voices in Study No. 11. His back had come untied conveniently enough, and, stooping down with his ear to the keyhole of the door, he had heard most of the conversation between Skinner and Stott. Now he was in possession of most of the details of Skinner's little scheme—and a touch of ecarache. The latter was due to the draught through the keyhole.

There were a few minutes to spare before afternoon school, and Bunter decided to take advantage of them. He wished to get hold of some of those pieces of paper that Skinner had been writing upon. With those scraps of evidence in his possession he would have a hold over the cad which might prove to his—Bunter's—advantage.

Billy Bunter cautiously opened the door of Study No. 11, and inserted his large bulk into the room, then he quietly closed the door and tiptoed to Skinner's desk.

"Hang it," he muttered, as he tried the lid, "it's locked!"

He looked round the room, as though searching for the key, or something with which to open it. Seeing a sharp-pointed poker lying in the hearth, he stooped to pick it up, with the idea that he might be able to lever open the lid of the desk with it. As he was bending down, the study door was flung violently open, and Harold Skinner dashed into the room.

Skinner had forgotten some lines which he had been ordered to bring into class by Mr. Quelch, and he had left Stott, darted swiftly upstairs and along the passage, and burst into his study just in time to catch the Owl bending.

Billy Bunter sprang up in alarm.

"S-Skinner!" he gurgled.  
"Yes; it's me!" said Skinner ungrammatically. "And what the thump are you doing in my study, you fat toad? After my coal—eh?"

Billy Bunter blinked through his little round spectacles. Left to himself, he would have been utterly at a loss to explain his presence in the study. But Skinner, who had been misled by seeing

his fat Form-mate stooping near the hearth, had given him a cue.

"You—you don't mind my borrowing one little bit of coal, Skinny?" he murmured. "We've used most of ours already, and we shall want a bit extra for this evening!"

"I thought as much, you fat fraud!" snorted Skinner. "We're on short rations ourselves to-day! If you aren't out of this study inside three seconds, I'll boot you out on your neck!"

But Bunter didn't want to be kicked out; he left the study on his own account, and slammed the door after him.

During recreation the Owl went to spy out the land. Most of the other juniors were in the Common-room in anticipation of a scrap between Fisher T. Fish and Vernon-Smith, who had "bought a pup" from the American junior. Creeping cautiously to the door of the study shared by Skinner, Stott, and Snoop, he bent his head down towards the keyhole. As he did so the odour of tobacco smoke assailed his nostrils. Next he placed his right eye to the aperture. Through it he could just discern the head, shoulders, and hands of Dick Penfold, who was holding some playing-cards. As he stooped he heard the voices of Stott and Snoop raised in argument.

"Now to give that beast Skinner a scare!" said Bunter to himself. "A little ventriloquism will come in useful here." He quietly moved away a matter of a few yards, then he turned about.

"Skinner, Penfold, Stott, Snoop!" he cried, in the exact tones of Mr. Quelch. "How dare you sit in that study smoking! I can smell tobacco smoke from here. Come to my study at once! I shall await you there!"

Billy Bunter heard the sounds of muffled exclamations and of chairs being pushed back. Then he marched with the swinging stride of the Form-master down the passage. But he did not go far. When he reached Study No. 7—his own room—he slipped inside to await developments. They were not long in coming.

The door of Skinner's study opened, and the cad emerged, followed by Stott, Snoop, and Penfold. All four juniors looked as though they were about to attend the funeral of their pet rabbits. In a sad little procession they made their way down the passage. Dick Penfold himself had not been smoking. He had been learning "banker" at the hands of Skinner & Co. But he had no intention of explaining that fact to the Form-master.

No sooner had the unlucky four disappeared than Billy Bunter hastily rolled down the passage, and entered the deserted study of Skinner & Co. The place was pungent with tobacco smoke, but there was no visible evidence of the card-playing which had been taking place.

But the Owl had a definite object in view, and this he sought to accomplish in the least possible space of time. He made straight for Skinner's desk and grasped the lid. To his delight it lifted easily in his hand. Inside the desk were a number of playing-cards, which had the appearance of having been hastily pushed out of view. Beneath them were the scraps of paper that Billy Bunter sought.

The Owl of the Remove, his eyes

glittering with triumph, selected a few of these scraps. All he wanted was enough to secure evidence against the cad. And he was careful not to take too many, lest Skinner's suspicions were aroused.

Five minutes after Billy Bunter had departed with a few hurriedly-selected samples of Skinner's handwriting practice, the real owners of the study returned. They, with Dick Penfold, were looking as sheepish as can well be imagined. The unlucky four had knocked nervously on the door of Mr. Quelch's private room, and had entered with fear and trembling. Their Form-master, who had been busily engaged in typing a chapter of his never-ending "History of Greyfriars," had regarded them with a frown.

"Well, boys, what do you want?" he had demanded.

And, taken aback, Harold Skinner had replied:

"P—please, sir, we've come!"

"What for?"

"For smoking in the study," Skinner had blurted out. "Y—you ordered us to come here, you know, sir."

"Nonsense! Your guilty consciences must have played a trick on you. Take a couple of hundred lines each for your self-confessed breach of the school rules! Close the door as you go out!" No sooner, therefore, Skinner, Penfold, Stott, and Snoop were feeling sheepish and upset on their return to Study No. 11.

"You can bet it was that fat fraud, Bunter, who pulled our legs!" said Skinner bitterly. "He's a bit of a ventriloquist, and he had a grudge against me. My hat! I'll slaughter the worms when I come across him again!"

They had no heart for playing cards again just then, but for a time they sat commiserating with one another. Finally, Stott and Snoop left the study together to go to the tuckshop. When they had gone Skinner turned to the scholarship boy.

"I say, Pen," he said, "how about another little visit to Hooker and Walker's gambling parlour in Friarisle?"

"I'm game," said Penfold. "I want to make that fifteen quid into fifty or a hundred before I'm done."

"Well, we'd better wait a day or two until the Tozer affair has blown over a bit," said Skinner; "then we'll go down to the village again."

After some more conversation Penfold adjourned to his own study to do his prep. Knowing then that most of the other fellows would also be engaged on similar tasks, Skinner took the opportunity of slipping down to the deserted Common-room. In his hand was a folded half-sheet of notepaper and a drawing-pin.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### A Score Against Wharton!

**A**FTER preparation that evening there was a gathering of the class in the study shared by

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent. The other members of the Famous Five—Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and Hurrell Singh—occupied seats on the table, while William Wibley and Peter Hazeldene occupied the armchair near the fire.

William Wibley was the best actor and imitator at Greyfriars, and he and Hazeldene had called on Wharton & Co. in connection with a forthcoming production by the Remove Dramatic Society.

"See here, you fellows," said Wibley,

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"It's time we decided the question as to what we're going to do about Penfold's part. We've had two rehearsals during the last week, and at neither of them has Penfold showed up. It's not fair to the other chaps who are getting word-perfect in their parts to have to rehearse without that slacker."

"Has Penfold studied his part at all?" asked Frank Nugent.

"To my knowledge he hasn't looked at it for at least a week!" replied Wibley. "If he knew anything of it before he's probably forgotten it now. When I spoke to him about it he told me to mind my own business!"

"It seems to me," said Peter Hazeldene, "that we had better hand the part to someone else right away. It's not worth risking the show being let down on the night owing to the slackness of one chap."

"Certainly the slackfulness of the ludicrous Penfold is terrific!" murmured Hurree Singh.

After further discussion it was left to Wibley to definitely ask Penfold what he intended to do about the part. If Penfold's reply was unsatisfactory, then the role was to be offered to Lord Herbert Mauleverer. Hardly had the decision been arrived at than a knock sounded on the study door. A moment later the fat face of Billy Bunter peered round the portal.

"I say, Wharton," said the Owl, "you'd better go down to the Common-room."

"Why, what's on the boards, Billy?" inquired the Remove captain. "A scrap, or something?"

"You'll see!" replied Bunter. And, chucking to himself, the porpoise rolled hastily away.

Curious to know what was taking place, Harry Wharton, followed by the other members of the Famous Five, and Wibley and Hazeldene, made his way to the Common-room.

A crowd of juniors were clustered round the notice-board, upon which was pinned a half-sheet of notepaper. At the entrance of Wharton the group burst into excited murmurs, and hastily gave their Form-note a clear path to the board of green baize.

Standing slightly in advance of his chums, Harry Wharton read the doggerel which had created such interest and amusement among the other Removites.

"Marjy has a little lamb.

It's name is Harry Wharton,  
And though it follows her each day,  
Poor Wharton hasn't caught on."

For a few moments the captain of the Remove stood regarding the offending verso, his face growing deeper and deeper in tint. Then he swung round and faced the other fellows in the Common-room.

"Who was the outsider who put this up?" he demanded.

"Don't glare at me, old top," said George Bulstrode, edging away. "I didn't do it!"

"Whose writing is it?" asked Harold Skinner.

Wharton turned and gazed at the doggerel again, and the recollection of having seen similar handwriting came to him.

"Penfold!" he muttered. "I might have guessed that!"

He snatched the piece of notepaper from the notice-board and swung round. Vainly his eyes searched for the scholarship boy.

"Where's Penfold?" he asked.  
"In the study," replied Monty

Newland. "He hasn't finished his prep yet."

Without another word Harry Wharton thrust his chums aside and made towards the door. As he did so a junior walked slowly into the room and stopped as Wharton blocked his path. It was Dick Penfold himself.

A murmur of intense expectation arose from the other Removites as the two juniors stood facing each other.

"One moment, Penfold!" said Wharton. "Why did you pin this on the notice-board?"

Penfold, who had guessed from the expression and manner of the Remove captain that something was wrong, took the scrap of notepaper from Wharton and examined it.

"Well, what do you want me to do about it?" asked the scholarship boy, deliberately misunderstanding. "I'm afraid I can't advise you how you can make a better impression with the lady."

He handed back the offending doggerel and made as though to turn away. Wharton, however, grasped his arm and swung him round.

"You beastly cad!" cried the enraged Remove captain. "You've become absolutely impossible lately! Only a rotten outsider would write and exhibit doggerel of this sort. Put up your fists!"

Wharton tore the notepaper to pieces, which he scattered on the floor of the Common-room. Then he slipped out of his coat.

Penfold watched him, white of face, but immovable.

"I neither wrote nor exhibited that verse, Wharton," he said evenly. "I won't fight you, for I want no truck neither with you nor anyone else."

"Yah! Coward!"

Billy Bunter gave vent to that shout. He had been licking his chops, so to speak, in anticipation of an interesting evening. Now it seemed as though the tri-bit of the evening was likely to fall flat.

Wharton struck the scholarship lad a sharp blow on the shoulder. Many a lad would have landed a harder blow where it would have done some harm. But that was not Wharton's way. Even in his anger he could not meet out dire punishment to an enemy in cold blood.

But Penfold kept his hands to his sides. He had no intention of fighting the Remove captain over a matter that did not concern him, and he told Wharton so again.

"The verse was in your handwriting, Penfold!" said Peter Hazeldene sternly. "And let me tell you I have nothing but contempt for the mean spirit that led you to put a reference to my sister on the notice-board of this Common-room!"

"Hear, hear!" cried Percy Bolsover. "It was a rotten trick! Let's bump him, you fellows!"

Percy Bolsover was not so concerned with the fact as to whether it was a rotten trick or not. But he had received a licking at the hands of Dick Penfold a few short days before. Therefore, Bolsover was anxious to see the cobbler's son well and severely bumped.

"That's it! Bump him!" howled Bunter.

There were not wanting volunteers to bump Penfold. Even the best fellows in the Remove had turned against the scholarship boy lately. Wharton was swept aside in the rush that followed.

Unfortunately for Billy Bunter, he had



Marjorie Hazeldene laid a slim hand upon Penfold's clenched fist. "I believe you're too straight and decent a fellow at heart to go on playing the fool like you have been doing," she said. "Can I help you?" (See Chapter 5.)

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been violently pushed forward by the crowd of applauding juniors. Penfold promptly smote the Owl a severe blow on his fat little nose.

"Wow!" roared Bunter. "Oooch, you coward!"

Evading the hands that sought to lay themselves violently upon him, Dick Penfold snatched up a chair. Then he hastily backed to the wall.

"Stand back, you crazy lunatics!" he yelled. "I tell you I didn't write that doggerel about Wharton!"

He swung the chair above his head threateningly.

Skinner, Stott, and Snoop, the professed friends of the lad, looked on from a safe spot near the fireplace. Amused smiles wreathed their faces. From the other juniors, who had hesitated before the threat of the chair, burst forth a chorus of angry shouts.

"A likely tale!"

"You're a low-down beast, Penfold!"

"Yah, you rotten outsider!"

Bob Cherry relieved a situation which closely approximated that phase in the game of chess known as stalemate. He wasted until Penfold's gaze was averted to someone else. Then he dived low and tackled Penfold's legs, bringing the boy and the chair to the floor with a resounding crash. Then he bound his wrists together to prevent him from doing any damage.

"Let him get up!" said Harry Wharton, pushing his way through the angry juniors.

Dick Penfold staggered to his feet and glared at the captain of the Remove.

"You're a rotter and a low-down cad to pin that notice on the board!" said Wharton hotly. "However, we can let that go for the time being, as you won't take a licking. What the Form wants to know is—did you, or did you not, go out the other night and sock old Tozer?"

Dick Penfold maintained a stony silence.

"That settles the thing! You did go!" continued Wharton grimly. "And, therefore, I sentence you to be sent to Coventry until either you own up that you broke bounds, or you tell us who were the rotters who went out!"

"That's it—send the cad to Coventry!"

It was obvious that the sentence was a highly popular one with the majority of the juniors present. Johnny Bull and Bob Cherry took off the handkerchiefs that bound the prisoner's wrists and stood by on the alert, in case Penfold should show fight.

Beside himself with all the indignity he had been put to, Dick Penfold no sooner found himself free than he made a wild dash at Wharton, whom he considered to be the chief cause of his troubles. Bob and Johnny Bull tried to stop the infuriated lad, but Penfold shook off their hands.

"Look out, Harry!"

Nugent's warning cry caused the Remove captain to swing round in time to meet the scholarship boy's onslaught. Penfold lashed out at the Remove captain's head. Wharton ducked, and the fierce blow passed harmlessly over his head. Then, before Penfold could deliver himself of a second punch, Harry Wharton intercepted him to the chin. Penfold described a graceful curve backwards to the floor, where he lay groaning feebly, with all the senses knocked out of his body.

One by one the juniors marched out of the Common-room, until only Skinner, Stott, and Snoop remained. The first-named helped the injured lad to his feet, and tried to soothe his wounded spirits.

"Never mind, Pen, old man!" he said. "What's the odds even if those boasts—Wharton and the rest—won't have anything to do with you? You can trust us to stand by you!"

And over his shoulder Harold Skinner threw a prodigious wink to his two precious cronies.

#### THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

##### The Meeting on the Bridge.

ON the following afternoon, to the great delight of the school, classes were dismissed an hour earlier. This was to celebrate the promotion of a very "Old Boy" to the rank of Cabinet Minister. Knowing nothing whatever of the politics of that old Greyfriars scholar, the juniors, nevertheless, were duly grateful that the country had such a man to take up a Government portfolio.

Dick Penfold decided to seize the opportunity for visiting his ailing father at the little cobbler's shop in Friar-dale. But as he stepped out of the school-room into the quad, Harold Skinner, William Stott, and James Snoop attached themselves to him.

"Hallo, old chap!" said Skinner cheerfully. "Going for a walk? We'll come along with you!"

"I'm—I'm only going down to Friar-dale," said Penfold. "Don't trouble to."

"We can do that, too!" murmured Skinner, linking his arm into Penfold's. "Hallo! Here comes that beast Wharton!"

The Remove captain had detached himself from a group composed of the other members of the Famous Five. He strode across to Skinner & Co., a look of determination on his face.

Penfold walked on a little way apart.

"It is my duty, Skinner," said Wharton, "to remind you that Penfold has been sent to Coventry!"

"Well, what about it?" said Skinner innocently.

"Simply that you and Stott and Snoop must drop his companionship entirely!"

"Indeed! And supposing we don't choose to?"

"Then you'll be sent to Coventry, too!"

Stott and Snoop looked glum at this cheerless prospect, but Harold Skinner forced a laugh.

"Go and eat cake!" he said. "Who wants you and the other silly asses to speak to 'em, anyway? You can do as you jolly well like about sending us to Coventry—and be hanged to you!"

"Very well. If you persist in being pals with Penfold it will be your own funeral!"

Harry Wharton turned away, and, with a sneer, Skinner, Stott, and Snoop moved off towards Penfold.

Hardly had the trio taken half a dozen steps, than Billy Bunter rolled across the quad and caught Skinner by the arm.

"I want to speak to you, Skinny," he said—"privately!"

"Oh, go and fry your fat face!" cried Skinner peevishly.

"You'd better hear what I have to say on the quiet," said Bunter darkly. "But, of course, I don't care if every-one else hears who wrote that—"

"What's that, you fat toad?" exclaimed Skinner, in sudden alarm. "You'd better keep your silly mouth closed, or—"

"Well, hear what I've got to say, Skinny!" pleaded Bunter. "After all, it won't hurt you to ensure a minute!"

Harold Skinner had heard enough to

make him distinctly uneasy. He turned to Stott and Snoop.

"Go over to Penfold, you chaps!" he said. "I'll just find out what the thump this silly ass is really braying about!"

Skinner waited a few moments, until his cronies were out of earshot.

"Well, what is it?" he demanded.

"It's like this, Skinny," said Bunter. "I'm a bit short of oaf at the moment. A postal order I was expecting must have been lost in the post. However, I thought perhaps you'd lend me five bob—"

"Well, you jolly well thought wrong!" snapped Skinner. "Is that all you've got to say?"

"You're a mean beast!" said Billy Bunter. "Considering I could have told the chaps how you forged Penfold's handwriting and put that poem up on the—"

"You fat sneak! I'll burst you for making up that pack of lies!"

Billy Bunter backed in alarm.

"They're not lies, Skinny, and you jolly well know it!"

The anger faded from Skinner's face, and a contemptuous smile took its place.

"I suppose you've been putting your ear to the keyhole of my study again, you overfed worm!" he sneered.

"Well, tell the other chaps what you think you heard. They're not likely to believe you!"

"Oh, yes, they will, Skinny!" replied Bunter smoothly. "I'll provide 'em with proof of what I say. I've got in my possession some of the scraps of paper on which you practised writing the poem. I found 'em in your desk, you know!"

For a moment it looked as though Harold Skinner was about to spring at the fat junior's throat. His brows contracted, his fists clenched, and his lips worked convulsively.

"You howling fat sneak!" he gulped.

"Found the papers in my desk, did you? You stole 'em, you mean, you beastly burglar!" I thought, there seemed mighty few bits of newspaper there when I went to burn 'em!"

"I took the pieces of paper as a matter of duty," said Billy Bunter. "I'd show the chaps the evidence against you like a shot, if it wasn't for the fact that you're a pal of mine!"

"I'm no pal of yours, you big sneak!"

"But you can be, you know!" murmured Bunter. "I consider any fellow a pal who lends me five bob!"

Skinner threatened to burst, but at last, with a savage gesture, he drew five shillings from his pocket, and planted the coins in the grubby palm of the Owl.

"There, you fat toad!" he hissed.

"Keep your mouth closed about that poem business. If you drop so much as a hint to anyone that I was concerned in it, I'll skin you alive!"

"I never go back on a pal, Skinny!" said Billy Bunter readily. And, beaming all over his fat face, he hurried away towards the tuckshop.

With his heart filled with bitterness against the world in general and Billy Bunter in particular, Harold Skinner re-joined Stott, Snoop, and Penfold. He satisfied Skimmer's inconvenient curiosity with a yarn made up on the spur of the moment, and then changed the conversation.

Greatly to Penfold's relief, when they reached Friar-dale, Skinner & Co. showed a marked inclination to journey on to Courtfield. The cad and his cronies did their best to persuade their companion to accompany them. But Penfold

(Continued on page 13.)

# The Greyfriars HERALD

SUPPLEMENT No. 49.  
Week Ending Dec. 3rd, 1921.



Assisted by BOB CHERRY (Fighting Editor),  
VERNON-SMITH (Sports Editor), MARK  
LINLEY, TOM BROWN, and FRANK NUGENT.

Address all letters to HARRY WHARTON,  
c/o The Magnet Library, The Fitzway House,  
Farrington Street, E.C. 4

## CONCERT NOTES!

By BOB CHERRY.

There was a grand concert in the Rag on Saturday evening, the proceeds being devoted to the Courtfield Unemployment Fund, which will be the richer by over five pounds. Everybody worked hard to make the show a success; and it was certainly an amusing evening.

Herbert Coker sang "Speak to me, Theora" but I shouldn't think anybody would want to speak to him after the hash he made of the song. Coker congratulates himself that he possesses a voice. Let him go on hugging the fond delusion. Personally, we found it difficult to decide whether Coker was singing, or whether the boards of the platform were creaking!

Three Sing sang some of the Indian Love Lyrics. His rendering of "Less than the dustfulness" was great. Inky, my dusky pal, your esteemed and ludicrous vocal talents are terrific!

Wun Lung obliged with the Chinese National Anthem. Nobody quite knew what it was all about. It sounded very much like the Siamese Anthem:

"Ah wah tah nah Siam,  
Ah wah tah nah Siam.  
Ah wah tah nah!"

Although possessing only "Wun Lung" the little Chinese has heaps of lung-power!

Harry Wharton sang "Trooper Johnny Ludlow," and he sang it rippingly. Tom Brown rendered a Maori song which nobody could get the drift of. Morgan obliged with "The Men of Harlech," and Micky Desmond with "When Irish Eyes are Smiling." Altogether, there were six different National Anthems sung, and a whole crowd of eons sang. The platform collapsed just before the concert came to a close, but there were no casualties.

Supplement 4]

## EDITORIAL!

By HARRY WHARTON.

"Amusement" is rather an elastic term. What may be amusing to one fellow may be anything but amusing to another.

Tom Brown's gramophone, for instance. In a moment of weakness, one of Browney's uncles was misguided enough to present him with a gramophone. Browney, who occupies Study No. 2 in the Remova passage, finds it vastly amusing. The editorial staff of the "Greyfriars Herald," who occupy Study No. 1 in the same passage, object to having rag-time dinned into their ears during office hours.

It seems that whenever we write down to work, Browney puts a fresh record on.

I don't mind eating my dinner to the strains of music (so-called). But I strongly object to being informed, by gramophone, that "the roses round the door make me love mother more," whilst I am trying to write an editorial.

My sympathies go out to Eulstrode and Hazeldene, who share No. 2 with Browney. If they are not already off their rockers, methinks they jolly soon will be! That gramophone is fast driving them to distraction.

We have asked Browney to take the boring thing away and bury it. As an alternative, we have requested him to take it to some lonely meadow, where its unmelodious strains may not be heard except by the owner himself.

So far, Browney has turned a deaf ear to our appeals. That gramophone is going to cause endless friction, one way and another.

As I was explaining, one fellow's meat is another's fellow's poison, so far as amusements are concerned. What gives joy to one is positively hateful to another.

But so long as everybody is agreed that this Special Amusement Number is amusing, I shall be more than satisfied. Every effort has been made to make it so; and our staff has worked hard and well, despite the unwelcome musical accompaniment of Tom Brown's gramophone.

It is not a far cry to Christmas, and we shall soon be busy with our Christmas Number. That it will be an extra special number, crammed with good things, goes without saying. Tell all your chums to look out for it!

HARRY WHARTON.

## MUSIC HATH CHARMS!

A Poetical "Dig" at  
Tom Brown,  
By MARK LINLEY.

What deed of violence is this?

I hear a shriek, and then a groan.  
And then I close my eyes in bliss;  
It's only Browney's gramophone!

What is that awful snarling noise,  
Like bulldogs fighting for a bone?  
All right; don't look so scared, dear boys,  
It's only Browney's gramophone!

Hark at that weird, unearthly sound,  
That dismal, doleful monotone,  
That scores the studies all around—  
It's only Browney's gramophone!

Sometimes the clamour sounds as if  
A mighty avalanche of stone  
Was crashing loudly down a cliff—  
It's only Browney's gramophone!

At other times, it jangles like  
The clanging of a telephone,  
Or Coker's noisy motor-bike—  
It's only Browney's gramophone!

From off the study window-sill  
The robins have in terror flown.  
Come back, sweet birds, and eat your fill;  
It's only Browney's gramophone!

Young Desmond wishes he was back  
To Tipperary, or Athlone.  
But stay! He need not quickly pack—  
It's only Browney's gramophone!

So if, in future, you should hear  
Discord and din, or wail and moan,  
You need not think an earthquake's near—  
It's only Browney's gramophone!  
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## Concerning my Gramophone!

By TOM BROWN.

**S**HAKESPEARE, one of the minor poets who lived in the days of Good Queen Bess, says somewhere that

"The man that hath no music in his soul,  
That is not moved by concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treason, stratagems, and spoils,  
Let no such man be trusted."

Billy Shakespeare—if we may speak thus familiarly of the departed—knew what he was talking about. He was probably a musician himself. We can picture him prancing down the main thoroughfare of Stratford-on-Avon, making weird noises with the aid of comb and tins-paper. We can imagine him footing it to London town, making merry music with his mouth-organ en route. Possibly Bacon used to accompany him with a concertina; while honest Ben Jonson's red face resembled a full moon as he blared on his cornet.

Oh, yes, they appreciated music in those days.

Now, however, we live in an unmusical age. If Hoskins or the Shell dares to thump the piano he is dubbed a fanatic, if he should take up his violin a dozen wrathful fellows are at hand to bump him. And if he is bold enough to sing, he is promptly gagged, and his song is stifled in his throat.

"Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast." Music increases the joy of life by fifty per cent. It is a tonic and an uplift. Its influences are as far-reaching as the tentacles of Fisher T. Fish when he is trying to lure greenhorns into his net.

Harry Wharton & Co. will probably say that music is a plague worse than all the plagues of Egypt; but I will have none of it. I, Thomas Brown, have discovered that music is sublime. It is as necessary to me as meat and drink. Without it I should peck and pine.

An uncle of mine, appreciating my taste for music, has just sent me a gramophone. He also sent fifty song records. Some of the songs are noble and uplifting, and contain such inspiring poetic passages as:

"When the moon shines on the covehead  
I'll be waiting at the o-e-cookhouse door!"

Other songs are of a humorous nature. They make you split your sides with laughter. There's one real screamer about poor old Joe. I can't remember the words offhand, but I think the chorus goes something like this:

"Poor old Joe has gone to rest,  
We know that he is free;  
He's now in his Little Gray Home in the West,  
Way down in Tennessee."

There are other fine songs, such as "Many Brave Hearts are Asleep in the Deep," and "It's Nice to Get Up in the Morning." I haven't quite decided yet whether these songs are humorous or tragic or farcical. Anyway, they all sound very nice on my gramophone.

I had rather a job at first to get the thing to work properly. I used to turn the handle until my arm was nearly out of its socket, and the perspiration came off my face in a cascade. But nothing would happen. The record refused to revolve.

Then I found that the operating handle wasn't properly fixed. As soon as I got it adjusted all went merrily.

Sweet strains of music floated through my study, and echoed into the Close.

Even the kitchen cat came up to listen. And the robin-breasters, hopping about in the snow, responded gallantly with a series of chirps.

Goatleg, the porter, suspended operations with his broom, and stood like one transfixed. Mrs. Mumble stood at the backstop door, with soulful eyes upturned to the sky. Mr. Front passed in the act of taking his daily constitutional, and folded his arms rapturously across his chest. Verily, music hath charms to soothe the savage breast!

But there is one great drawback to my gramophone. To appreciate it properly, you want to stand about a mile away. At close quarters it just spoils a sensitive ear.

The studies in the Remove passage are separated by narrow partitions. Consequently, when Harry Wharton & Co. are at work next door, and the gramophone is going, they know all about it!

Even Tom Dutton, who is as deaf as the proverbial doorpost, hears the din as far away as Study No. 7.

It won't surprise you, then, when I tell you that my gramophone has been the cause of a little friction.

The first time I put a record on there was a frantic knocking on the wall. I took no notice.

Presently the door of my study was thrown open, and in rushed Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, and Frank Nugent, brandishing cricket-stumps.

Three separate and distinct glares were bestowed upon me.



The door burst open and Harry Wharton & Co. rushed in, brandishing cricket stumps.

"Browney, you ass!" growled Wharton. "How do you suppose I can write my editorial to the accompaniment of 'Everything is Peaches down in Georgia'?"

"And how do you imagine I can do my Comic Column?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"And how can I write stories with that hideous din going on?" roared Frank Nugent.

"My dear fellows," I said, "this gramophone is delightful! It soothes jaded nerves; it brings sunshine into people's lives."

"Rats!"

"Go and paws it!"

"Take it away and bury it!"

"I refuse to do anything of the sort!" I said indignantly. "You fellows can't appreciate good music when you hear it."

"Good music!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Oh, my hat! I thought it was somebody sawing wood!"

"If you don't put a stop to this unwholly row at once, Browney," said Harry Wharton, "we'll be in and slaughter you!"

"Hear, hear!" said Nugent.

And they kept their word. I was slung face downwards over the table, and the cricket-stumps rose and fell, making the dust rise in a cloud from my tight-fitting trousers.

There was a terrible ordeal, but I had my own way in the end. For the jolly old gramophone is still going. And it will keep going, too, in spite of all opposition!

## A SENSE OF HUMOUR!

By DICK RUSSELL.



I always think a sense of humour is one of the greatest assets in life. The fellow who can see the funny side of things, and who can face an ordeal with a merry jest upon his lips, is the sort of fellow my heart warms to.

I must say, however, that some fellows have a most perverted sense of humour.

Last night, some practical joker smuggled a hedgehog into my bed. If I could have got hold of him—the joker, not the hedgehog—I should have curbed his queer sense of humour a good deal.

Another fellow considered it screamingly funny to pour a hefty volume of "Thyridides" on the door of my study, so that when I entered the apartment I should receive a crack on the head, which would make me see stars. If I could discover the inventor of that booby-trap, he would get his sense of humour up for auction at the earliest opportunity! Or he would take it to Mr. Lazarus' shop in Courtfield and pawn it.

There are some fellows who can extract amusement from things which in themselves are far from being amusing. The other day I happened to overhear the following conversation between two fags:

"Hallo, old sport! Heard about young Tubb?"

"No. What about him?"

"He's broken his leg in the gym—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And they've had to carry him to the sunny, and put him in splints—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It'll be ages before he gets about again."

"Oh, what a scream!"

"They say he's suffering terrible torture!"

"Oh dear! I'm sure I shall burst a sealer in my minute! It's the funniest job I've heard for whole terms!"

I went on my way, and marvelled. It beats me how anybody could find humour in the fact that a fellow had broken his leg. I don't see anything humorous in it at all, either from the victim's point of view or from anyone else's.

Coker, of the Fifth, is another merchant whose sense of humour is, to say the least of it, somewhat weird. I heard him remark to himself:

"I say, old man, fancy Front being in bed with the flu! Ha, ha, ha! They say that his temperature is a hundred and three—ho, ho, ho! He won't be able to take lessons again for about a fortnight! Hold me up, somebody! It's too funny for words!"

I don't want you to suppose that Coker is a callous beast. He isn't. In his heart he felt as sorry for Front as anybody. But he chose a queer way of showing his sorrow!

All of which boils down to the fact that if we possess a sense of humour, we should keep it within decent limits. There are times to laugh; and there are times when laughter is not quite the thing.

I always consider it wise to refrain from chuckling over another's misfortune.

We never know when that same misfortune will be visited upon ourselves; and then we shall wish we had laughed less loudly.

Let us spread and promote as much amusement as possible in this dull old world. But let us do it if that is to be healthy amusement, which gives harm to none and pleasure to all.

There! I think that just about concludes my contribution to Harry Wharton's Special Amusement Number.





# Alonzo Provides Amusement!

By H. VERNON-SMITH.

PREP was in progress in Study No. 7. Four heads were bent over the table; feet and hands were scratching away industriously.

Alonzo Todd was the first to finish. Alonzo was a brainy youth, and prep had no terrors for him.

The other three occupants of the study—Peter Todd, Tom Butten, and Billy Hunter—were growling like souls in torment.

"Confound these beastly Latin verbs!" growled Peter Todd. "Never could understand why they make us learn a dead-and-dumb language like Latin. What earthly use is it to a fellow after he leaves school?"

"Don't talk, Toddy!" said Billy Hunter. "I'm trying to get my brain to work!"

"Then you've never succeeded," said Peter. "It's as hopeless as Coker of the Fifth trying to start up the engine of his motor-bike!"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

Peter Todd closed his book with a bang. Billy Hunter and Tom Butten followed suit. All three were aware that they would show a lamentable lack of knowledge in the Form-room next morning. Had they were too fed up to pass up their prep.

Silence reigned in Study No. 7. It was broken by the soft voice of Alonzo Todd.

"My dear fellows," he said, "I have been consulting to memory a very noble and inspiring poem suitable for recitation."

Peter Todd gave a snort. Billy Hunter gave a grunt. Tom Butten, who had not heard a word Alonzo said, sat and gazed into space.

"The poem concerns an inviolid lad named Eustace," Alonzo went on. "He went away to school, and speedily won the hearts of his fellows by his charitable temperance, his magnanimous disposition."

"Shut up!" snapped Peter.

"In short, he was a very winning youth," said Alonzo, unabashed. "To look at him was to love him. But stay! Why should I tell you of poor dear Eustace, in soiled prose? I will recite the poem."

Alonzo cleared his throat, and began:

"Do you know poor dear Eustace.

The pigeon-chested lad

Who laid upon his study couch

Where'er his spine was bad?"

Peter Todd sprang to his feet, with a book in his hand. It was the poem lint moved him—though not in the way Alonzo had intended.

"Don't spout that rot in here!" growled Peter. "If you want to amuse anybody with it, go and amuse Quelch."

"You think Mr. Quelch will appreciate my recitation, my dear Peter?"

"I'm sure he will!" said Peter, with a grin.

The gullest Alonzo, who always believed every word that was said to him, turned to the door.

"I will go and amuse Mr. Quelch," he said. "For some days past he has been wearing a worried and preoccupied look. My little recitation will bring a gleam of sunshine into his dull and prosaic existence."

So saying, Alonzo made his way to the Remove-master's study. He tapped on the door, and, without waiting for a response, entered.

Mr. Quelch was seated at his typewriter. His deft fingers glided swiftly over the keys. Long experience had made Mr. Quelch a skilled operator.

The Remove-master looked up.

"Well, Toddy?" he said sharply.

Alonzo gave a preliminary cough. Then he began:

"Do you know poor dear Eustace?"

Mr. Quelch frowned. His first impression

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was that Alonzo had been smitten by the new craze—that absurd craze which consisted of asking insane questions and giving insane answers. As a sample: "Do you know Phyllis?" "Phyllis who?" "Phyllis cup ver' nain!" Or: "Do you know Percy Uper?" "Who?" "Perseverance brings success!"

Mr. Quelch concluded that Alonzo Todd had suddenly fallen a victim to this absurd craze.

"Todd!" he thundered.

"Yes, sir! Pray do not interrupt me, or I shall lose the thread of the piece! Let me begin again:

"Do you know poor dear Eustace?"

Mr. Quelch rose to his feet. The thunder-

clouds were gathering on his brow.

"Todd! Boy!" he thundered. "How dare you attempt to make such idiotic jests to your Form-master! I know perfectly well that you are going to say! You ask me if I know poor dear Eustace, and then, if I said 'Eustace—who?' you would reply, 'Eustace sit next to me in class!' or some innuity of that sort!"

Alonzo looked quite distressed.

"I can assure you, sir," he said, "that nothing is farther from my thoughts. I did not come here to jest with you. I do not speak of the trouble of poor dear Eustace



Snatching up his cane, Mr. Quelch bore down upon Alonzo Todd. "You impudent young rascal!" panted the angry Form-master.

in a spirit of levity. The mere mention of his misfortunes almost causes the tears to well to my eyes. I am informed, however, that the recital of Eustace's troubles will afford you said amusement, sir."

"What?"

"You have been looking very dejected lately, sir," said Alonzo. "My object in coming here was to cheer you up—to show you that you are not the only unfortunate individual in the world.

"Do you know poor dear Eustace?"

"No, Todd; I do not!" roared Mr. Quelch. "And I have no wish to know him! This is an unparalleled piece of impertinence!"

"Not at all, sir! Pray give me an opportunity of proceeding:

"Do you know poor dear Eustace, The pigeon-chested lad,

Who laid upon his study couch

Where'er his spine was bad!"

"Todd!"

Mr. Quelch's voice was charged with concentrated wrath.

Alonzo, who had now got into his stride, so to speak, went merrily ahead:

"The milk of human kindness  
Flowed in his gentle heart;  
Though undermined and weak and ill,  
He played a hero's part."

"Boy!" thundered Mr. Quelch, "desist! Desist immediately!"

But Alonzo, lost in his recitation, had neither eyes nor ears for anything else. He plunged into the third verse.

"Poor Eustace did no lessons—  
He took no part in sport or game;  
He thought them much too rough,

"But in his cosy study  
He sometimes used to play  
A strenuous game of dominoes  
To while the time away."

At this point Mr. Quelch took drastic action. He was not a patient man at the best of times, and what little store of patience he possessed was now exhausted.

Snatching up his cane, the angry Form-master bore down upon Alonzo Todd.

Swish, swish, swish!

Alonzo hopped and jumped as the cane lashed about his shoulders.

"Oh dear!" he gasped. "Ow-ow-ow! Why are you inflicting this unnecessary violence upon me, sir?"

"Because you are an impertinent young rascal!" panted Mr. Quelch. "I am amazed that any boy should dare to come into my study unasked, and pour such drivel into my ears!"

Swish, swish, swish!

"Yoo-hoo! I—I thought I was rendering you a service, sir!" wailed the hapless Alonzo. "I was under the impression that you wanted cheering up!"

"How could I possibly be cheered by such absurd doggerel?" snapped Mr. Quelch. "I sometimes think, Todd, that your mental condition is not normal! Go! Leave my study at once!"

Alonzo would fain have lingered to recite the remaining fifty-six verses of the ode to Mr. Quelch, but there was an expression on the Remove-master's face which terrified him. Moreover, Mr. Quelch was following up with the cane.

In these circumstances Alonzo deemed it prudent to depart, and that speedily. He fled through the doorway and along the passage like a champion of the cinder path.

"Well," grinned Peter, when Alonzo presented himself in Study No. 7, "did you succeed in amusing Quelch?"

"Ow! No!" gasped Alonzo, sinking into a chair. "He did not seem a bit amused—in fact, he became most aggressive!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo blinked reproachfully at Peter.

"I fail to see any reason for unseemly ribaldry," he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shall I recite to you the ode about poor Eustace?"

"If you do," said Peter, in measured tones, "you'll go out of this study on your neck!"

And Alonzo subsided. He has now given up trying to amuse people, least of all Form-masters.



By HAROLD SKINNER.

# Bolsover Buys a Bike!

“NONE of your second-hand bikes for me!” said Bolsover major. “They are more noise than they’re worth. A fellow goes and buys a heap bike—gives about fifteen bob for it—and then expects it to carry him along the roads. It’s exporting too much of the poor old crack. It’s not being fair to it. No; when I buy a bike, I shall see that it’s a brand-new one, fresh from the manufacturer.”

“You’re a lucky dog to be able to give twenty quid or so for a bike!” said Stott. “Most of us have to be content with the ancient and rusticated gridirons that they sell at the old-iron shops.”

“And they go wrong as soon as you get ‘em,” said Bolsover. “Bliss you, I know these bikes: Either the axle gives way, or the brakes won’t act, or the tyres go pop. Pick Penfold’s get a bike like that. The other day he set out to go to Courtfield and it was hours before he returned. I had a jolly walk to Courtfield,” he said. “I took the bike with me—pushed it all the way!”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“So you won’t be bothered with a second-hand bike, Bolsover?” said Snoop.

“No jolly fear! Directly I get the money from my pater, I shall go to the Courtfield Cycle Company, and get one of their latest models. My bike will be the envy of Greyfriars. Even Cove of the Fifth will offer to swap his motor-bike for it.”

“Perhaps!” said Stott.

“Have you asked your pater about the bike yet?” inquired Snoop.

“I expect the twenty quid by any post,” he said.

“My hat! If my pater sent me such a winking remittance as that, I should spend ten on the bike, and have a jolly good time on the strength of the other ten.”

Stott glanced from the window of Bolsover’s study.

“Postman’s coming!” he announced. Bolsover went to the window, and struck his head out.

“Got a letter for me?” he bellowed, in his booming voice.

“Yes, Master Bolsover!”

“Good! Hand it up, then!”

The study window was sufficiently near to the ground for the postman to comply with Bolsover’s request.

Snoop and Stott looked questioningly at their companion.

“From your pater?” asked the former.

“Yes.”

Bolsover opened the envelope, and drew out a letter and a couple of ten-pound notes. He thrust the letter into his pocket without a glance at it. The notes he gazed at long and lovingly.

“Cheers!” he said. “I shall be able to get my bike right away. I’ll stroll over to Courtfield now, and in an hour’s time you’ll see me come riding back to the school in state!”

Bolsover departed joyfully on his mission. He walked over to Courtfield with giant strides, and bawled a merry tune as he went.

Bolsover was a fellow who pined for great possessions. To have something which nobody else had was his ever-present ambition. And there was nobody at Greyfriars who possessed such a thing as a brand-new bike.

Most of the bikes in the school shed were considerably the worse for wear.

The manager of the cycle-shop beamed natively at Bolsover.

“What can I do for you, sir?” he asked, rubbing his hands together.

“I want one of your latest model bikes,” said Bolsover. “I believe the price is eighteen guineas. Complete with pump, lamps, and so on, it’s twenty pounds.”

“That’s so, sir. And here is the very machine that you require. It suits your budget exactly. One would think it had been—or—made to measure, so to speak.”

Bolsover examined the machine critically. He could find no fault with it. So far as he could see, it was without flaw or blemish.

“This is my mark,” he said. “Here’s your money!”

And with a great flourish, the purchaser handed over the two tenners.

The transaction being completed, and the pump, lamps, and so forth, having been affixed, Bolsover major, his face beaming with the pride of possession, wheeled the bike out.

He did not mount the machine at once. He walked the length of the High Street, so that all the urchins would be able to gaze with envy at his newly-acquired treasure.

At the end of the street he paused, waited until quite a crowd had collected, and then mounted.

Bolsover expected no difficulty with the machine. But our expectations are not always realised.

The saddle collapsed completely beneath Bolsover’s weight, and he went sprawling into the gutter. The bicycle crashed heavily to the ground, as if in imitation of its owner.

Bolsover sat up in a dazed condition.

“E duuno where ‘e are!” observed a small urchin.



Bolsover pitched head-first over the handle-bars, and finished up on the far side of the railings.

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“That’s the worst of them cheap saddles!” remarked another. “They let you down so much!”

And there was a fresh burst of merriment. Bolsover major staggered to his feet.

“Fancy the beastly saddle giving way like that!” he growled. “Why, it wouldn’t support a fag, let alone a fellow of my weight. I’ve got some tools in my bag. I’ll see if I can readjust the thing.”

After a hard struggle, Bolsover succeeded in forcing the saddle back into something like its normal position.

By this time the crowd of urchins had swollen to a great multitude. They looked on with grinning faces while Bolsover made a fresh start.

He managed to go about a dozen yards without mishap. Then a stationary brewer’s dray, which took up the whole width of the street, came him to ring his bell.

At least, he tried to ring it; but no sound came. That bell was as mute as the harp which hung in Tara’s hall.

Bolsover fumbled desperately with the striker of the bell, but still there was no sound.

The situation was critical.

If Bolsover went straight ahead, he would inevitably crash into the brewer’s dray. Either he must apply the brake, or swerve to one side and go into the railings, trusting to a kindly Fate to watch over his interests.

He promptly pressed the brake, but it seemed to be similarly afflicted to the bell. It would not act.

Bolsover therefore shot off at a tangent, and the bicycle hit the railings with a bump and a jolt, which caused the front wheel to be badly buckled.

As for Bolsover, he pitched head first over the handle-bars, and tumbled up on the far side of the railings. He happened to land in a clump of stinging nettles—a soft landing-place, but a jolly painful one.

Bolsover was stung about the hands and face, and he roared.

The crowd roared, too—with laughter.

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“Ho, ho, ho!”

“This beats the picture ‘olow!”

“Arsk ‘im to do it again!”

When Bolsover had managed to sort himself out, he clambered over the railings and examined the bicycle.

The machine was no longer in a rideable condition. Not only was the front wheel locked, but all sorts of screws had worked loose, and were irretrievably lost.

The mudguard was badly battered, the three-speed gear was reduced to a piece of useless wire, and the saddle had again given way.

To make matters worse, certain small boys who could not tell the difference between a noun and a turn had been helping themselves to the cranks of the saddle-bag. Spanners and other useful accessories had vanished.

The cranks of the crowd began to get on Bolsover’s nerves. Red and wrathful, he started to push his machine towards Greyfriars. A few moments before it had been a thing of beauty. It was now only too clear that it was neither a thing of beauty nor a joy for ever.

Snoop and Stott were standing in the school gateway when Bolsover appeared, half-dragging, half-carrying his battered machine.

They nudged each other in the ribs, and cried:

“A brand-new bike, fresh from the manufacturer!” grinned Stott, quoting Bolsover’s own words of an hour before.

“This is the bike that’s going to be the envy of Greyfriars!” gurgled Snoop.

“Ha, ha, ha!”

Flustered and furious, Bolsover strode on.

As soon as he had deposited the wreckage in the cycle-shed, he made out the following claim to send to the Courtfield Cycle Company.

To provision of a new saddle . . . . . £ s. d.

To provision of a bell which is guaranteed to ring . . . . . 5 6

To general repairs rendered necessary owing to smash-up . . . . . 2 0 0

To cost of fresh spanners, oilcan, etc., to replace those appropriated by the Courtfield rabble . . . . . 10 0

To personal damages and indignity sustained through having a bike which refused to function . . . . . 1 9 6

Amusement Tax . . . . . 2 0

Total . . . . . 5 0 0

Up to the time of writing, Bolsover has not received the money!

[Supplement ip.]

**"Penfold the Blade!"**

(Continued from page 8.)

resisted their entreaties, and took leave of them near the station. Then he made direct to his father's cottage.

The old cobbler was stooping over his last, every now and then passing in his work to cough distressingly. He greeted Dick warmly, and bade the boy take a seat and talk to him for a while. It wrung Penfold's heart to see his father looking paler, thinner, and more worn and tired than ever. Mentally he vowed that, come what might, he would stake all to win sufficient money to send the old man for the sea voyage he so sadly needed.

For half an hour father and son chatted together, the boy rattling on cheerfully to keep up the spirits of the stricken man. Then a customer entered the little shop, and Dick went.

Leaving the village, Dick Penfold walked aimlessly through some fields until he found himself upon the bank of the River Sark. Lost in his own depressing thoughts, he wandered down the towing-path, his coat collar turned up to keep the wintry chill of the late afternoon from his throat. Reaching the bridge he stood leaning over it, gazing westward to where the setting sun smouldered the murky sky with somber crimson.

How long he remained there ruminating upon his troubles he had no idea. But he was brought from the reverie into which he had fallen by the butterfly touch of a slim hand on the sleeve of his overcoat. He turned, to see Marjorie Hazeldene of the Cliff House School for Girls at his elbow.

"Why, good evening, Miss Marjorie!" he said, lifting his cap. "What are you doing in these parts alone at this time of day?"

"I've been paying a visit to an old lady who lives on the far side of the river," replied Peter Hazeldene's sister. "The girls raised a small subscription to help her pay the rates, and I took the money over to her. But what are you doing here, Dick? It struck me you were looking jolly downhearted about something."

Dick Penfold gave a rather hollow little laugh.

"Did I?" he said lightly. "I was thinking, that was all. A fellow never hardly has a grin on his face when he's deep in thought, you know."

Marjorie looked at the boy with eyes filled with sympathy.

"Don't be offended with me, Dick," she said softly. "But I've heard from Peter, my brother, something of what has been happening at Greyfriars lately. It seems such a pity that you should be up against Peter and Harry Wharton, and all the very best and straightest fellows of the school."

"They've turned against me, you mean?" growled Dick, averting his head. "They started by chucking me out of the footer team, and now they've sent me to Coventry."

"Yes, but you began by playing the goat, Dick, you know," said Marjorie. "My brother said so. It's not like you to be thick with fellows of Skinner's type."

Dick looked and felt ashamed of himself. He was not at all pleased that Marjorie Hazeldene was aware of his newly-made friendship with Skinner. He also felt more than a little resentment against

Peter Hazeldene for talking about his affairs outside the school.

"Don't you worry about me, Miss Marjorie," he said. "I'm not so black as some of the fellows paint me."

A wistful smile hovered at the corners of the girl's pretty mouth.

"That's a polite way of telling me to mind my own business, eh, Dick? Well, I'm going to risk your anger. You've always been a jolly decent, straightforward fellow, and I hate to think you're travelling with Skinner and his lot. Your own conscience tells you you've not been playing the game lately, Dick. Now, pull yourself together—if not for your own sake, then for the sake of your father, who thinks you're the best son and the whitest boy in the world."

Dick looked into the girl's face in surprise. The big eyes that looked into his were dimmed with moisture. A strange nervousness took possession of the lad unused to this kind of display of feminine emotion.

"Don't think too hardly of me, Miss Marjorie," he said. "I may have been a lot of a blade lately. But—but it is for my father's sake that I—I've been acting—er—differently."

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Marjorie shook her head sadly.

"Your father would never wish you to act in any way but up to your best ideals," she said. "If you have any troubles that have been worrying you, why don't you go to him for advice?"

"You don't understand," replied Dick. "The dad's the last person I could go to about my troubles. Now that the chaps at the school have turned against me I haven't a friend at all, bar Skinner and his ilk."

Marjorie laid one of her slim, gloved hands upon the boy's clenched fist that rested on the parapet of the bridge.

"You have a staunch friend in me, Dick," said the girl simply. "I believe you're too straight and decent a fellow at heart to go on playing the fool like you have been doing. If I can ever help you in any way—"

She stopped short as a ripple of cheery laughter was borne through the misty air. Coming down the towing path some distance away were Harry Wharton and his chums of the Famous Five.

Marjorie held out her hand to Dick, who clasped it warmly.

"Good-bye, Dick," she said. "I won't stop to meet Wharton and the others. Pull yourself together, revert to the old code of honour, and play the game! Then things will begin to go all right for you again at Greyfriars!"

"Good-bye!"  
Dick watched the girl as she hurried away in the direction of Cliff House. Then, not wishing to meet his fellow-Renovites, he walked rapidly away in the direction of the school, Marjorie's last words ringing in his ears.

**THE SIXTH CHAPTER.**

**What Bunter Heard!**

THAT evening Dick Penfold was doing prep alone in his study, when the door opened, and Harold Skinner entered the room.

"Hallo, Pen!" cried the cad cheerfully. "We've only just got back from Courtfield. Pack up that work and come and take a hand at banker with Stott and Snoop and myself."

"No thanks!" said Penfold. "I won't now. I—I've got a touch of headache."

"Well, swotting over that beastly Latin won't do it any good," said Skinner. "It's a pity, though, you aren't feeling up to a scratch. I just found out that this is the last night Hokey Walker will be at the tobacconist's with his roulette wheel. He's going to shift to pastures new to-morrow."

Dick Penfold looked up with an interest he had not displayed hitherto at the cad's conversation.

"Hokey Walker leaving Friarsdale," he muttered, as though to himself. "Then there won't be an opportunity of winning any more money."

"Not from Hokey," replied Skinner—"at least, not after to-night. I was going to suggest we should go down to the village and have a final flutter. It's a fine chance for you to turn that fifteen quid you won last time into a thumping big wad. But, of course, if you're not feeling up to the mark—"

The cunning cad of the Remove broke off, and gave an expressive shrug of the shoulders.

The scholarship boy shifted uneasily in his chair. The words spoken to him by Marjorie Hazeldene stuck in his mind. Playing cards or at the roulette wheel for money on the sly was not "playing the game." On the other hand, the situation in so far as his father was concerned was getting desperate. Was he to sit idly by while perhaps the best chance of his making enough money to send the old man on his badly-needed sea voyage slipped through his fingers?

Dick Penfold was on the horns of a dilemma. He wanted to do the right thing, for the girl's words had stirred his conscience. But what was right and what was wrong in this case? It was a breach of the school rules to break bounds and gamble—a severe breach punishable by expulsion. But to the boy's harassed mind it appeared even more wrong to allow his father to drift from bad to worse in health when there was a possibility of his securing the money that might prove his salvation.

Harold Skinner watched the boy contemptuously as he sat with drooping eyes. The cad knew that Penfold was turning the matter over in his mind, but he put down the other's hesitation to fear of being caught.

"I expect that meeting with old Tuxer last time has put the wind up you," said Skinner. "We're not likely to walk into his hands again."

The scholarship boy roused himself at last.

"Hang Tozer!" he cried. "I don't care a rap for him! I'll come with you to Hooley Walker's parlour to-night. What time shall we leave the dormitory?"

"At midnight—same as last time," replied Skinner, a satisfied smile spreading over his lean face. "I'll be todding back to Stott and Snoop now; they're waiting for me. Sure you wouldn't care to join in a game at banker?"

"Quite sure, thanks," I'll be fit for to-night's stunt, though," said Skinner, leaving Dick Penfold to himself. Skinner returned to Study No. 11, where Williams Stott and James Snoop sat waiting his return. On his arrival he found that Percy Bolsover had dropped in, and was lolling back in an armchair, chatting to the other two. Little did Skinner guess that all his movements were being watched by the prying eyes of Billy Bunter.

Knowing that the cad of the Remove was quite capable of breaking bounds, and remembering the fact that Skinner was so thick with Penfold, who had acted so queerly over the Tozer affair, Bunter's suspicions had been aroused. Through a crack in the slightly open door of his own study the Owl saw Skinner leave Penfold's room and return to his own. Then he crept forth, in the hope of discovering fresh secrets.

Harold Skinner, upon entering his own room, greeted Bolsover effusively.

"Ah, glad to see you, old top! You'll make fourth in a little game of nap or something, won't you?"

"Right-ho! I'm game—that is, if Penfold isn't coming along to play." "Pshaw!" sneered Skinner. "That fellow makes me tired. Sometimes he's as keen as mustard to have a flutter, and then another time he makes excuses that wouldn't deceive a child. Anyway, he won't be coming here this evening."

Skinner turned the key in the study door and, to defeat the prying eyes of Billy Bunter, hung a silk handkerchief over the keyhole. Then he took two pecks of cards out of his desk and a box of cigarettes. He tossed the cards carelessly on the table and handed round the smokes.

When the others had lighted up, Skinner helped himself from the box, and, leaning against the mantelpiece with his back to the fire, gently tapped the cigarette against the palm of his hand.

"Before we start playing, you fellows," he said, "I'd like to tell you about a brainy little scheme that's struck me. None of you here have any cause to love Mr. Richard Penfold; he's given you each a licking within the last fortnight or so."

"Well, there's no need to rub it in!" growled Bolsover surlily. "It was a beastly fluke that he knocked me out. Anyway, he could lick you with one hand tied behind him!"

"All right, don't get shirty!" sneered Skinner. "It wasn't my fault he gave you a thumping good hiding—"

"Oh, drup up about that, you silly owl!" snapped Stott impatiently. "You started off to tell us about some giddy scheme or other. Get that off your chest."

Harold Skinner applied a match to his cigarette, blew out a cloud of blue smoke into the air, and made a fresh start.

"When I see you here any more," he said, "First of all, I want you to promise to keep mum about every word I tell you!"

"Mine's the word!" came the chorus. "Good! Well, as you know, Penfold

and I wore the giddy bounds-breakers who socked Tozer."

"I didn't!" exclaimed Bolsover, in astonishment.

"Well, you jolly well know now, then!" said Skinner, with a trace of pride in his voice. "And he is also known to you that the cobbler's kid and I have arranged to go on the tiles again to-night!"

"My giddy aunt!" cried Stott. "You must be potty! Since that last little stunt of yours one or another of the prefects has been on the prowl almost every night. I expect that old Gussling, the porter, and Tozer himself are also keeping a sharp look-out. Take it from me, old top—the game's not worth the candle these days; it's too jolly risky!"

"I know that, you chump!" replied Skinner.

"And yet you're going on the razzle with Penfold to-night?"

"Oh, no, I'm not!"

The other three looked at Skinner in surprise.

"But just now you said you were, you idiot!" exclaimed Snoop.

"I said I have arranged with Penfold to go with him, my dear ass," corrected Harold Skinner calmly. "That's a very different matter. When the time comes to sneak out of the dormitory I shall pretend to be feeling too ill to go. Penfold's so keen to win a big sum with the fifteen quid he raked in last time that he'll push off on his own, I'll be bound. Then he'll get nabbed and expelled."

"But supposing no prefect sees him?" said Stott.

"I'll fix that up, trust me!" said the cad. "Directly after Penfold has left the dormitory I shall go and wake Wingate, the captain of the school himself, and tell him that I suspect Penfold of having gone to Hooley Walker's gambling-parlour in Friarale."

"And Penfold will squeal about the part you played in that Tozer affair," said Snoop.

"No, he won't!" said Skinner. "Penfold's one of those weak-headed asses who'll never split on a pal in any circumstances. Needless to say, I shall speak to Wingate in confidence, so Penfold shan't know who gave him away. A pretty brainy scheme—eh?"

Percy Bolsover rosb to his feet and tossed his cigarette-end into the fire.

"Yes, very brainy!" he said dryly.

"It's just the sort of rotten scheme your distorted brain would evolve. If I hadn't said I'd keep mum about what you had to say, I'd go and put Penfold wise to what a leastly hypocritical sneak you are in reality. I'm no particular myself, but I draw the line at that sort of low-down trick."

So taken aback was Skinner at this outburst from Bolsover that he could find no words with which to retort.

"Why, you—you—you—" he began. But before he could get any farther Percy Bolsover gave the key in the door a sharp twist, and threw the portal open.

As he did so there was a grunt, followed by a stifled exclamation, and into the room rolled Billy Bunter.

Percy Bolsover stooped and grabbed the fat junior by the collar to prevent his escape. Then Skinner, Stott, and Snoop darted across and helped to drag the fat junior into the room.

"Ow! Lemme go!" cried Bunter, in alarm. "I haven't done anything!"

"Shut the door, Snoop!" ordered Skinner. "That's the ticket! Now then, you fat sneak, Bunter, what d'you

mean by eavesdropping outside our study?"

"I wasn't—really I wasn't!" protested Bunter, with a great air of injured innocence. "I was looking for—for a button that burst off my waistcoat. I was just stooping down to pick it up when—"

"Well, I don't see any button off your waistcoat, you fat fraud," said Skinner. "That tale won't wash."

Billy Bunter gave his ample vest a look of intense reproach.

"Maybe it was a brace-button then," he said, "or perhaps it—it was only a ha'penny. I—I know I heard something drop."

"Oh, kick the fat beast out!" said Stott. "I don't suppose he heard anything. We weren't talking loudly."

Billy Bunter looked at Stott indignantly.

"Are you suggesting that I was trying to hear what was said between you fellows?" he remarked. "I'll have you know that a Bunter wouldn't stoop to such an act. The Bunter motto—quid sinit—adopted by Sir Bellingbrooke Bunter before the Conqueror landed at Margate, is the proud motto of your humble, William George. I strongly resent the alligator—er—I mean, allegation that I was eavesdropping. On my word of honour as a Bunter, I never heard you talking about Penfold and the bounds-breaking—Ow!"

Billy Bunter suddenly realised that in his over-eagerness to rid himself of the imputation against his character he had given himself away.

"So you were eavesdropping, you fat load!" said Skinner furiously. "How much did you hear?"

Billy Bunter drew his nose a few inches farther away from Skinner's fist before replying.

"I—I wasn't eavesdropping; really I wasn't, Skiny! I couldn't help hearing you say you were going to leave Penfold in the lurch and go sneaking to Wingate."

"Did you hear anything else before that?"

"No, nothing. I shouldn't have heard about that rotten—I mean, clever trick you intend to play, if it hadn't been for my waistcoat—that is, my brace-button."

Harold Skinner looked suspiciously at the fat junior, who was being held by Bolsover and Snoop. Like the others, he was of the opinion that Bunter was speaking something approaching the truth at last.

"Well, listen to me, you fat rotter!" he growled, giving Bunter's ear a tweak. "If you so much as breathe a word about what you've heard to a soul we'll slaughter you. And if you don't promise now to keep your silly tongue still we'll give you a thunderin' licking to go on with!"

"I'll promise," said Bunter hastily. "I shouldn't dream of doing such a dishonourable thing as sneaking on a pal. Now leave go, there's a good chap!"

Red with anger, Skinner stepped to the study door and threw it wide open.

"Kick him out, you fellows!"

For a huffy boots assisted Billy Bunter into the passage with surprising celerity.

"Yow-wow! Yoop! Yarrooh!" yelled Bunter. "Yah, you beasts!"

Percy Bolsover hurled the fat boy to his feet from the sitting posture he had assumed, and ran him down the passage. At the head of the stairs the bully gave Bunter a further well-planted kick on his own account. Then Bolsover repaired to the Common-room, leaving the

unfortunate porpoise mumbling threats from a safe distance.

Billy Bunter waited awhile, nursing his injuries, and then he crept along the passage. As he quietly slipped past Study No. 11 he could hear Skinner, Stott, and Snoop debating in heated tones as to who had played the King of Hearts in the last trick.

"The beastly gamblers!" muttered the Owl. "I'll make 'em sit up!"

Once clear of the danger zone, he rolled hastily to the study shared by Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent. He knocked softly, opened the door, and peered in. A beautiful sight caught his eyes to sparkle behind his little round spectacles.

Besides the owners of the study, the three remaining members of the Famous Five—Cherry, Bull, and Hurree Singh—were present. On the table were some freshly-cooked herrings, while other tasty members of the same fishy species spluttered merrily in front of the roasting fire.

"Hallo, Billy! What do you want?" said the Remove captain. "Come to watch us dissect these giddy kippers?"

Billy Bunter stifled the air like an old warhorse. Then he inserted himself into the study, and closed the door to prevent the escape of any of the fragrant aroma. "I say, you fellows," he murmured admiringly, "I didn't know you went in for fish suppers. You should have sent for me before, you know, I'd have shown you a quicker way of cooking 'em than that."

"And a jolly sight quicker way of eating 'em, too!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Sorry we haven't a couple of dozen more, then we could have given you enough for a taster!"

"Look here, you chaps!" said Billy Bunter. "I didn't come here on the cage. That's not like me."

"Oh, no! Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter ignored the derisive laughter of the Famous Five with superb contempt.

"I came here," he went on, "to tell you what Skinner told me not to tell—"

"Here, go easy, Billy!" cried Wharton, in feigned alarm. "You're getting yourself tied into knots!"

"I wish you'd listen," said Bunter peevishly. "It's serious. I happened quite by accident to hear Skinner tell Stott and Snoop and—Here, let me take that backbone out for you, Johnny."

Billy Bunter reached across the table and drew the plate containing a freshly-cooked, sizzling herring from under the very nose of Johnny Bull.

"Hi, put that back, you fat freak!" howled Johnny Bull. "You've got the nerve of the very dickens!"

"The nervefulness of the esteemed Bunter is terrific!" murmured Hurree Singh between mouthfuls.

"All right; keep your wool on!" said Bunter. "I was only going to show you—"

"You buzz off!" said Johnny Bull, holding on to his captured plate with both hands. "Vasnoose, you fat thief! Best it!"

"But I've got some news to tell you." "Well, we don't want to hear it," said Wharton. "You sniffed these kippers-frying; that's why you came here. Buzz off before you're put on for your fat neck!"

To sit there calmly and watch others stowing away the luscious toasted herrings was too much for Billy Bunter. He had hoped to have become the possessor



Bob Cherry darted to the window and gave a startled cry. "Come here, Penfold, quickly!" Penfold dashed to Bob Cherry's side. He gave a hurried glance through the window. Coming up the main street was the tall form of George Wingate. (See Chapter 8.)

of at least one fat, sizzling kipper in exchange for news of Skinner's plot against Penfold. But he was doomed to disappointment. He rose to his feet and made for the door.

"You're a mean lot of beasts!" he announced. "I was going to tell you that—Ow!"

Bunter's last remark was caused by the backbone of a herring, well aimed by Johnny Bull, striking him hard upon his little round nose. After that plain hint that he was not wanted Bunter sped his departure.

As Skinner had thought, Bunter had not overheard the first part of the conversation, in which the former had admitted his connection with the Tozer affair. But he had learnt enough of interest to warrant his belief that he could obtain a good price for the news somewhere among his Form-mates of the Remove. By a good price Billy Bunter had in mind a liberal allowance of tuck. Accordingly the Owl rolled along to the study occupied by Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing. Receiving no response to his knock he opened the door.

The room was in darkness. Evidently Vernon-Smith and Redwing were down in the Common-room.

"I'll see whether there's any tuck in their cupboard," mused Bunter. "I feel nearly starving!"

He took a step forward into the darkness, tripped, and fell with a loud splash into a shallow bath of water.

"Woo! Garrogh! Ooer!" spluttered the Owl.

Some joker had evidently set a trap for the owners of Study No. 4, and

Bunter had walked into it. After this depressing experience he gave up the idea of relating his great news in exchange for tuck as a last job.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Skinner the Sneak!

**B**OOM! The last stroke of the clock on the school-tower tolling the eerie midnight hour reverberated through the Remove dormitory. Hardly had the sound died away than there was a stealthy movement in a bed close to the window. A moment later Dick Penfold slipped quietly to the floor, and hastily rolled on a few clothes. When he had reached the socks, shirt, and trousers stage he glided across to a near-by bed and shook the reclining figure it contained by the shoulder.

"Are you awake, Skinky?"

In response to a hoarse whisper Skinner slowly drew himself up in his bed.

"Yes. I haven't been to sleep yet," lied the cad of the Remove. "I—oo—garrogh!"

Harold Skinner clutched the bedclothes and gave a violent squawk.

"Great pip!" cried Penfold hoarsely. "What's the matter?"

"I—er—er—I'm not well," groaned Skinner. "I've a fearful pain—yow—yow!" It must have been that tinned rabbit I had for supper."

"My hat!" muttered Penfold in consternation. "You—you won't be able to come to Friarhole, then?"

"I can't move without doubling up," said Skinner pathetically. "But don't let my bad luck spoil your evening,

old man. You can borrow that rope from my box to let yourself out."

Dick Penfold hesitated. Here was bad luck, indeed. It was the last night that Hookey Walker was to occupy his gambling parlour over the tobacconist's in Friardale, and he was desperately anxious to increase his winnings. But Skinner exhibited such alarming symptoms that the boy felt genuinely anxious about the cunning rascal. The fear that Skinner might be suffering from ptomaine poisoning occurred to his mind.

"Look here, Skinny," whispered Penfold. "I think I'd better slip down and wake Mr. Quelch. He might think it advisable to send for the doctor to—"

"It's jolly good of you to think of spoiling your evening on my account, Pen," murmured Skinner, with a catch in his voice, "but I'm jolly well not going to let you. You're better than I was an hour ago by a long chalk, and if I rest quietly I shall be as right as rain in the morning."

Dick Penfold breathed a sigh of relief. It eased his mind to know that Skinner was on the road to recovery, and he was desperately anxious to seize this last opportunity of relieving Hookey Walker of the latter's surplus money. Dick refused to admit to himself that instead of fleeing Walker that gentleman might flee him.

"All right, old man," he whispered to Skinner. "I'll push off on my own. Thanks for loaning me the rope."

He was just about to move away from the other's bedside when Skinner laid a hand on his arm.

"I—I say, Pen," murmured the cad. "As you know, there's always a slight risk of being nabbed. If you're caught, you won't let on that you were using my rope, or that I've ever been out with you."

The scholarship boy flashed a glance of contempt in the direction of the speaker. "You needn't fear that," he said. "My blood shall be upon my own head. Your precious name shall be kept out of it."

"No offence meant, old man," said Skinner. "Being out of sorts has made me feel a bit shaky. I suppose."

Without further delay Dick Penfold finished dressing. Then he quietly obtained the rope from Skinner's box, and hitched it securely to the steel radiator near the dormitory window. Having cautiously opened the window and dropped the other end down against the ivy-clad wall of the building, he scrambled out of the dormitory and disappeared into the night.

No sooner had Dick Penfold departed than Skinner made a recovery to health with miraculous speed. Slipping out of bed, and throwing a coat over his shoulders, the cad packed his way out of the dormitory and downstairs to George Wingate's study on the ground floor. He rapped quietly on the door, and heard the captain of the school, who was a light sleeper, rise from his bed and switch on the electric light.

A moment later the door was opened and Wingate looked out upon the Remove junior.

"Hallo!" he said. "What the dickens do you want at this time of night?"

"Please, Wingate," said Skinner. "I felt it was my duty to come and tell you that Penfold has left the dormitory."

"Left the dormitory?" exclaimed the head prefect. "Where has he gone?"

"To a gambling parlour over the tobacconist's in Friardale," replied Skinner. "I woke up with the tooth-

ache and saw someone getting out of the window. He told me he was going on the razzle to the village, and asked me to go with him. Of course, I refused, and tried to persuade him not to be a silly ass. He took no notice of my advice, so I thought I had better let you know about it. The Lower School is going to be gotten already on account of two rotters who broke bottles and soaked old Tozer, so—"

"You leave it to me, kid," said Wingate. "I'll bring the young fool back!"

Skinner repressed a grin with an effort. "Please, Wingate," he said, "I hope you'll keep my name out of the affair. Some of the chaps have got queer ideas, and would call it sneaking on my part. But I've only done what I thought was my duty, and—"

"You buzz off back to bed, kid!" snapped Wingate. "You'll catch your death of cold hanging about here. I shall act as I think fit, so far as you are concerned."

George Wingate knew Skinner far too well to swallow the cad's hypocritical remarks about "duty." But as captain of the school his main concern at the moment was to do all he could to put a stop to the bounds-breaking that was going on. Closing the door of his study, he dressed preparatory to setting forth to catch Penfold red-handed.

Meanwhile, Harold Skinner returned to the Remove dormitory, chucking inwardly at the initial success of his cunning scheme. Despite the fact that recently he had professed friendship for Penfold, he had always detested the scholarship boy. Now there was every likelihood of his having the pleasure of seeing the despised schoolboy's son publicly expelled from Greyfriars.

He was ruminating on this amusing prospect as he crept silently through the darkness of the dormitory. It was just as he was imagining himself back safely in his own bed without any of the fellows being any the wiser about his midnight errand, that the unexpected happened. One of Skinner's bare feet struck up against a tin box that was protruding fully a couple of feet from under Billy Bunter's bed.

"Yoop!"

The cad's yelp of agony left his lips as he went sprawling to the floor.

"My hat! What's that?"

The explanation came from Bob Cherry, who awoke on the instant. Most of the others juniors came out of their slumbers more or less violently. Only Billy Bunter's porpoise-like grunts revealed the presence of one still soundly in the land of dreams.

In deadly fear, Skinner clambered to his feet, and made a dive to get between the sheets. Swift as thought Bob Cherry whipped out the electric torch he kept under his pillow, and shot a stream of light on the disturber of the peace.

"Skinner! What the thump are you doing sneaking about at this time of night? Up to some rotten trick, I'll bet."

Well practised in the gentle art of lying and deceit, the excuse came readily to the cad's tongue.

"I woke up with the raging toothache, if you're so jolly anxious to know" he growled. "I've been down to my study to get a bottle of dope I left there."

Bob regarded the other suspiciously as Skinner got into bed.

"You hadn't anything in your hands when I switched the torch on," he said. "No; I—I couldn't find the stuff."

"That yarn won't wash, my pippin!" put in Harry Wharton. "You were out for the purpose of playing some low-

down game on somebody, or I'll eat my Sunday topper!"

A startled exclamation from Bob Cherry caused him to look towards the far end of the dormitory, where the light from Bob's electric torch rested upon an empty bed.

"Great pip! Penfold isn't here!" cried Cherry.

There was an excited buzz from the other juniors who were awake, and Vernon-Smith jumped out of bed and made for the electric light switch.

"Don't switch out!" said Wharton. "We can see quite well enough. Look! The window's half-open! That silly ass Penfold must have climbed out by that way!"

"Look here, Skinner!" said Bob Cherry, getting out of bed. "You know a jolly sight more about this than you want us to believe! Did you see Penfold leave the dormitory?"

"I'm not Penfold's keeper! Hang it!" growled the cad evasively. "It's none of my business if he cares to go on the tiles!"

Switching the electric torch downwards to the floor, Bob Cherry crept towards the open window. Harry Wharton followed at his heels.

"See this!" muttered Bob. "Here's a rope tied to the radiator!"

He peered out of the window, and with his eye followed the rope down the ivy-covered wall towards the ground. No sooner had he looked than he drew back with a jerk, at the same time switching the light off from the electric torch.

"What is it, old man?" whispered Wharton hoarsely.

"There's someone standing on the ground examining the rope," replied Bob in his chum's ear—"a prefect, by the look of him!"

"I say, Wharton," said Bolsover from his bed, "what's all the thumping row?"

"Sh—sh!"

There was a silence in the dormitory. Then footsteps were heard crossing the quadrangle outside. At the sound Harry Wharton peered over the window-sill.

"My giddy aunt!" he whispered, as he made out a tall, dark figure in the dim light. "That's Wingate, or you can call me a blind bat! He's on Penfold's track!"

"But how the dickens did he know that Penfold had left the Remove dormitory?" asked Bob. "He hangs out on the far side."

A gulp from Harold Skinner caused him to swing round on his heel, his mind suddenly illuminated.

"I can see it all now," he went on. "It was you, you sneaking rotter, Skinner, who put Wingate up to Penfold's little game! I guessed you'd been skulking about for some underhand purpose! Where has Penfold gone?"

"How the thump should I know, you silly goat!" cried Skinner. "Why should you have a down on me because Penfold's gone on the razzle? Serve him jolly well right, if he does get copped!"

"It's that sort of thing that causes old Locke to gate the Lower School of its half-holidays!"

"Hear, hear! I agree with you, Skinny!" called out Stott. "I hope the beast does get nobbled by Wingate!"

And this was the wish of several others whom Dick Penfold had run up against since his new role of a "blade."

"Stow your cackle, you silly owt!" said Harry Wharton. "After all, the chap's a Form-mate of ours. He's been a crazy lunatic lately. I'll admit; but I'm not going to stand by and let him get

himself expelled, for all that. I'm going out to warn him."

"My hat! You're crazy yourself!" snorted Percy Bolsover.

"Look here, Skinner!" said Wharton sternly. "Where has Penfold gone? You've been his chief pal lately. He must have told you what he intended to do."

Skinner gave a crafty smile. If he gave the information Wharton and Cherry would be caught, too, and the prefect was more likely than not to suspect them.

"He's gone to Hookey Walker's parlour over the tobacconist's in Friarislead," he said—"at least, I believe so from what he said."

"Well, if you're going after Penfold, I'm going with you, Harry," said Bob Cherry decidedly. "We must get a sport on, though."

### THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

#### For Penfold's Sake!

**N**O thought of their recent enmity against the scholarship boy rankled in the minds of the two chums as they simply threw on their clothes. Their one thought was to save their erring Form-mate from the results of his own stupendous folly.

With a final word to their fellow-members of the Famous Five to keep a watch for their return, they put up their overcoat collars, pulled their caps over their foreheads, and sallied forth into the night.

Slipping down the rope, Wharton and Cherry reached the ground and dashed across to the school wall. This they scaled, and then set off down the road towards Friarislead at a steady double. After some minutes they turned off the

road and ran along by the hedges. Once they stopped as they heard a strong, swift step on the road ahead of them. Rightly they guessed that the hurrying wayfarer was George Wingate.

After this the two chums ran side by side across the fields, where the soft earth deadened their own footsteps. So at length, panting and breathless, they reached Friarislead and the door of the tobacconist's shop.

In response to their knock the door was opened by a slim, untidy youth in shirt-sleeves, an assistant in the employ of Hookey Walker, the Courtfield gambler and bookmaker.

"Wot do you kids want?" he growled sleepily.

For reply the two Greyfriars juniors pushed him roughly aside and dashed up the rickety staircase.

"Hi! Where are you goin', you young rips?"

Wharton and Bob took no notice of the shout. The drinking of coins and lost talking led them direct to the room occupied by Hookey Walker and his clients.

Round a roulette-wheel, operated by Walker, in the smoke-laden parlour, sat three or four local worthies and Dick Penfold.

Penfold sat directly opposite the Courtfield gambler. In front of him was a pile of Treasury notes and silver. There was the intense, fevered look of the gambler on his face, giving him the appearance of being far older than his years. In his absorption he had accepted a cigarette from Walker, and he was pulling away furiously.

A smile lingered about the lips of Hookey Walker as the wheel stopped, and he raked in the stakes that were laid. The fact that the Greyfriars junior

had won a few pounds didn't worry the Courtfield man in the least. Well he knew that with Penfold becoming more reckless with every passing minute it would only be a question of a short time before he lost everything.

The professional gambler and those about him gazed up in amazement as the two Remorvets burst into the room.

Penfold leaped to his feet as though stung, keeping his hands carved like talons over his precious winnings.

"Wharton! Cherry!" he gasped. "What the thump are you doing here?"

"We've come to save you from yourself, you howling ass!" cried the Remove captain. "Clear out of this at once! Wingate's on your trail!"

Dick Penfold appeared startled for a moment, and then a look of suspicion crept over his face.

"You leave me to myself," he said. "I'm in Coventry, you know! If Wingate comes here, my friend Mr. Walker will see that I'm kept out of view."

"That I will, young gentleman!" said Hookey Walker, with a broad grin. "The night's young, and I've a lot more money for you to win yet. You two little boys toddle back to your by-byes—unless you're goin' to have a flutter."

At that instant Bob Cherry, who had gone to the window of the room, gave a startled cry.

"Penfold, come here quickly!" The tone was so imperative that the scholarship boy darted from his seat and peered through the narrow aperture of the blind, which Cherry had drawn slightly.

Striding towards the tobacconist's, some couple of hundred yards away, was a tall, manly form, as he could see by

(Continued on the next page.)

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**PENFOLD THE BLADE!**

(Continued from page 17.)

the light from a lamp-post in the village street.

"George Wingate!"

At the actual sight of the school captain Penfold's nerve gave way somewhat. There was something so resolute and purposeful in the appearance of the head prefect.

"Now let's beat it!" said Bob Cherry. "We have just got time to slip out without being recognised."

"One last flutter!" muttered Penfold breathlessly. "I must have one more flutter!"

He reached the table, and before either Wharton or Cherry could stop him, he grabbed all his money—just on twenty-five pounds—in both hands, and plucked it on the black. Hockey Walker, who had not heard the boy's last muttered remark, set the wheel spinning. With glazed, staring eyes, Dick Penfold watched it as it gradually slowed down, and came to a stop.

"Black wins!"

The scholarship boy gave a frantic cry of joy. He feverishly gathered up the money Walker paid out, an unhealthy expression of combined joy and greed lighting his features.

"Now come out of it, you crazy lunatic!" cried Harry Wharton, in disgust. "It'll be neck or nothing as it is!"

But Penfold now possessed fifty pounds. By retaining longer he saw himself likely to become the possessor of enough money to send his ailing father for a voyage round the world.

"I'm not coming!" he growled. "Clear out yourselves and leave me alone!"

Little did Penfold suspect that Hockey Walker, who had not heard his remark about "a last flutter," had engineered the win for him. By so doing the astute gambler had hoped to induce the other two Greyfriars lads to play also. By a little magnetic attachment he could always manipulate his roulette table to make his unsuspecting clients lose when the time arrived.

But neither Wharton nor Cherry were impressed by the fact that Penfold had won nearly twenty-five pounds in less than a matter of seconds. They were both disgusted and angry.

"Look here, you idiot!" cried the Remove captain. "If you don't pack up immediately I'll report you to the Head. That'll mean public expulsion for you and disgrace for your pater!"

Wharton had no intention of doing anything of the kind, but the threat had the desired effect of scaring Penfold as

nothing else would have done. He was gambling for the sake of his father, but it was essential that the sick man should never become aware of his method of raising the wind. He scrambled to his feet and crammed the Treasury notes and silver constituting his winning into his pockets.

"Hi! Where're you goin' you young rip?" demanded Walker, in alarm.

"Back to the school!" replied Penfold. "Send me your Courtfield address and I'll come and see you later."

He took his overcoat from the back of the chair, and hastily got into it, and pulled his cap down over his eyes. Hockey Walker arose as though to stop him, but Wharton and Cherry grasped their fellow-Removite and hurried him from the room. Dashing downstairs, the three hesitated by the closed door.

"Maybe Wingate's gone to the wrong place," whispered the Remove captain. "Anyway, we must risk whether he's about. Keep your heads low and run for it!"

He threw open the door, and the three juniors dashed out—crash!—into the burly form of George Wingate. The school captain had been standing examining the tobacconist's, and wondering if that innocent-looking shop was really the place he sought. Therefore, his surprise, when he was suddenly bowled head-over-heels by three charging juniors, who suddenly burst out of the place, was complete.

With an exclamation of anger he scrambled to his feet and gave chase down the deserted village street. But few lent wings to the three juniors. They ran as they had never run before, and managed to give the prefect the slip by taking a short cut through the fields.

Having covered about half a mile, the three pulled up gasping for breath by an old cowshed near the side of the road.

"M-my hat!" panted Wharton. "We can't expect to reach the school before Wingate. He's the best long distance runner at Greyfriars, and if he gets back we're done." By hook or crook we've got to stop him.

A sound of swiftly-running footsteps came to their ears along the road from the direction of Friaraldale.

"Listen to me!" said Bob Cherry hurriedly. "Tie a handkerchief across the lower part of your face, each of you. We'll spring out and noble Wingate. Then we'll throw him in this cowshed and lock the door. This rusty old key works quite O.K. I'll take him ten minutes at least to break out of the place by smashing the rotten old boards at the sides."

The others saw nothing else for it. Each junior tied a handkerchief over his nose, mouth, and chin as Cherry had suggested, and drew his cap well over

his eyes. At least, they were safe from recognition.

Waiting behind the far wall of the old cowshed, they saw the head prefect pounding up the road, his head thrown back, and his fists working like piston-rods. Then, as Wingate drew almost level, they hurled themselves like one man upon him.

Wingate gave a yell of surprise and rage as he was borne to the ground by the suddenness and vigour of the attack. "Glad! I'll slaughter you, you young rotters!"

But with the strength of despair the three juniors held the fellow firmly, and dragged him through the open door of the darkened cowshed. They gave a final heave, and flung Wingate well inside, then darted out, slammed the heavy wooden door, and turned the rusty key.

"Let me out! I'll have you expelled for this, you desperate young beasts!"

But, secure in the knowledge that they had not been recognised, Wharton, Cherry, and Penfold took to the road, and steadily ran the whole distance back to Greyfriars.

Only Johnny Bull, Frank Nugent, and Hurree Singh were awake to greet the returned truants. Penfold noiselessly closed the dormitory windows, unbuttoned the rope he had borrowed from Skinner, and hid it in the box. Then he glanced out over the darkened quad to see George Wingate striding towards the School House.

"That was a narrow squeak for you, old top!" muttered Wharton at his elbow.

Dick Penfold drew back from the window.

"It—it was jolly decent of you and Cherry to come and warn me," he said haltingly. "Thanks awfully, you fellows!"

"Perhaps after this you'll quit being a blade!" said Wharton. "Will you promise to give up Skinner's companionship, and never gamble again?"

For a moment or two Dick Penfold remained silent. He remembered he was the possessor of fifty pounds. That fifty pounds he had won for the sake of his father with astonishing ease. The gambling spirit obsessed him. Why shouldn't he have a few more flutters? In less than a week the races would be on. Then, in one gamble, he might make enough to send his father for a six-months' sea voyage, a voyage which would effect a complete cure of the old man.

"No, I'll promise nothing," said Penfold. "I'm jolly grateful to you chaps for your sporting action in coming to warn me about Wingate. But I've earned the name of a blade now, and a blade I'll jolly well remain!"

THE END.

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THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 721.



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(No. 4.)

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# The Editor's Chat



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I am always pleased to hear from my chums.

## FOR NEXT MONDAY.

### "BACK TO THE FOLD!"

By Frank Richards.

The above is the title of our next grand, long, complete school story dealing with the further adventures of Dick Penfold and Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars. In this story we see an end to the amazing and almost unforgivable behaviour of the poet of the Remove, and there is no doubt whatever that much of the credit for bringing Dick Penfold

### "BACK TO THE FOLD!"

belongs to the Famous Five. However, the story will tell you of the trials and tribulations of the Famous Five in their efforts to save Penfold, and their triumph in the end is a worthy reward for their endeavours.

### THE GREYFRIARS POSTCARDS.

I wish to point out that the postcards offered in connection with the scheme outlined on page 19 of this issue are rapidly being distributed to keen readers of the MAGNET. If you have not as yet obtained your set, I advise you to see about it right away, or you may miss the chance of possessing the finest portrait gallery ever published.

### THE HERALD.

Next week's issue of the "Greyfriars Herald" will be a Special Breaking-up Number, and it is once again full of the most interesting contributions from the gifted fellows at Greyfriars.

A Breaking-up Number suggests Christmas, does it not? Then look out for THE MAGNET LIBRARY BUMPER CHRISTMAS NUMBER—the finest issue of the most famous school story paper ever published. It is coming shortly—watch the Chat!

### A LETTER AND A REPLY.

I recently received the following letter from one of my chums, and I am printing it here and answering it here because I think it touches upon an important matter. Here is the letter:

"Swansea,

"My Dear Editor,—I am going to take you to task. In fact, I might say I am surprised—nay, disgusted! I don't know what Uncle Benjamin would say if he knew all that I thought of you! The stories in the MAGNET are AL, and the stories in the "Pop," ditto. But what I want to know is—why haven't we got our comic paper? I am not saying that

I want a comic paper for myself; but when one's young brother and one's young sister wants one to sit down and read the funny parts of the MAGNET to them—especially when I want to get on with the story more quickly, to see what's happening—well, it's annoying! Can't you get us a comic for them to read while we read our own papers in peace?

Order a block of ice, Mr. Editor, and think a great think. Then let me know, through the columns of the MAGNET LIBRARY, what you think about my suggestion.—Yours blockfully,

"DAVID LEWELLYNS.

"P.S.—Please don't put your reply thus: 'Many thanks for suggestion, which I will carefully consider.'"

There you are—that's the letter.

Now for the reply. David, my chum, I like you! I like the bright way in which you have written to me. But the ice won't be necessary! You see, there is already a companion paper of the MAGNET LIBRARY which appeals to children, and I can only say that I find cause to wonder how on earth you have not seen it! I don't know what Uncle Benjamin would say if he knew how you must keep your eyes on the ground when you walk about! There you are—that's one back!

Seriously, my dear David, I don't think you really mean you are annoyed when your young brother and sister ask you to read the MAGNET LIBRARY to them. I am certain you really mean that you'd rather they ask you to read to them when you had finished the MAGNET LIBRARY. But you must find much pleasure in listening to their roars of laughter as they hear of the adventures of such as Billy Bunter.

"Chuckles" is our companion paper—a champion coloured comic picture paper which appeals greatly to all children. It comes out on Friday, David, so there is still time to get a copy of the current issue. I take a great deal of pride in my only comic paper, and I flatter myself that it is the finest picture paper for children all over the world. I have the best artists and the best authors only, and they work wonderfully well.

Send us your address, David, for I would like to write to you through the post.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

Fred Pearce, 10, Thoru Street, Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere, ages 14-15.

W. Ridley, 105, Taylor Street, South Shields, wishes to hear from readers anywhere, ages 15-17.

Gerald van Langenberg, 36, Tamby Abdullah Road, Kuala Lumpur, Federated Malay States, wishes to hear from readers of the companion papers.

Joe Lovino, 230, Laval Avenue, Montreal, Province Quebec, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers in the United Kingdom. Subjects: boxing, athletics, postcard-view collecting.

Miss Lilian Clarke, 64, Beech Road, Luton, Beds, wishes to correspond with readers; ages, 14-16.

Miss Winnie Tompkins, 60, Princes Street, Luton, Beds, wishes to correspond with readers; ages, 14-16.

R. Perry, 10, Jamieson Street, Cape Town, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers interested in stamps.

C. Kerria, 4, Adrian Street, Moston, Manchester, would like to correspond with readers anywhere.

M. J. Bowleson, 62, Southam Street, Westbourne Park, London, W.10, wishes to correspond with readers, age 16, especially in America.

Stanley G. Kitchell, 21, Westhamphlett Road, Chichester, Sussex, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere, particularly those interested in amateur journalism. All letters answered.

L. Stebbings, 2, Bontflower Road, Clapham Junction, S.W.11, wishes to hear from readers about his amateur magazine, the "Monthly Herald." Contributions invited.

Miss Effie Henderson, 162, Den Road, Kirkcaldy, Fife, N.B., wishes to correspond with girl readers anywhere, ages 14-16, interested in photography, dancing, and poetry.

Fred Ogden, 46, Durners Lane, Radcliffe, nr. Manchester, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere; ages, 17-18.

Faul Conway Joyce, 32, Crosby Road, Birkdale, Southport, wishes to correspond with anyone who runs an amateur magazine anywhere; ages, 10-14.

James E. O'Halloran, Orion Street, Sebastopol, Ballarat, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere, interested in French.

N. McNeil, 103, Baron Street, North Broken Hill, N.S.W., Australia, wishes to correspond with readers in Canada and Africa who are fairly advanced stamp collectors; view, exchange.

Miss Ruby L. Pepper, 37, Sutton Road, Walsall, Staffs, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere.

T. Allen, 15, Wilton Street, Birmingham, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere.

## Your Editor.

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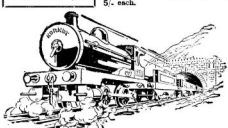
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Write your FULL name and address clearly on a plain piece of paper, pin this coupon to it, and post as directed above. (Mark envelope "Gift Dept.")

S. R. H. your hair is GREY, please extra 2d. stamped. In all cases a FREE bottle of "Aval" for Grey Hair will also be sent you.



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GIFT  
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From this imposing building at 20-26, Lamb's Conduit Street, thousands of Free "Harlene Hair-Drill" Outfits (with instructions) are being sent out. If yours have not yet received one, cut out and send the coupon on right, and you will have the package delivered at your address per return of post.



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INSIDE EVERY  
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BUILT WITH DOUBLE-LIFE DRI-PEE SOLES—NON-  
SLIP—WATERPROOF—DOUBLE-WEAR—FLEXIBLE

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3-12-21