

WELCOME AS THE FLOWERS IN MAY!

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School & Detective Stories.

EVERY MONDAY.



WHEN "HEAD" MEETS HEAD!

BOLSOVER IS CAUGHT IN THE ACT BY THE NEW HEADMASTER!

(A "striking" incident in this week's amazing story of Harry Wharton & Co., inside.)

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PIRATE STORIES!

The Great!

Thrilling Old-Time Pirate Stories!

No. 4.—POMPEY THE GREAT!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Temptation!

THREE-FINGERED JACK emptied his glass, and glanced out of the port-hole window of his cabin at the waters of the Atlantic, which were surging round his ship, the *Cobra*. Then he turned to Noel Bristowe, with what he intended for a genial laugh on his lips, but with an evil cunning lurking in his scabby face, and gleaming in his treacherous eyes.

"I do not be a fool, young sir," he said. "I am the best friend you have in the world. Take my advice, and sail under the black flag, and you will have a jolly life, and make your fortune."

Noel Bristowe drew a deep breath as he stared into the face of his companion.

Three-fingered Jack was a name of terror throughout the Antilles.

He was a full-blooded negro, and had been a slave in Jamaica, and his savage and vicious character had led him to commit countless bad and vindictive actions, so that he had been constantly flogged. He had gained his name by first his right hand mutilated in a fight, so that only three fingers were left on it.

Finally, he had escaped from the plantations, joined a pirate ship, and by his daring and ruthlessness had risen to be a pirate captain himself. He had sworn vengeance against any of the planters of Jamaica who fell into his power.

The man whom Jack hated most was one of his old masters, Samson Shark, a harsh, pitiless old planter.

Noel Bristowe was old Samson Shark's nephew. He was a reckless young fellow, but brave and straightforward also. He had committed many foolish actions, but not even his worst enemy had been able to prove that he had ever done anything really bad or dishonourable.

But old Samson Shark had always been a hard judge, and had shown no sympathy with Noel; but, instead, had been cold and unjust to him. In the end he had accused the youth of robbing him. The charge was a false one, and Noel had protested his innocence, but the old planter had refused to believe him, and had driven him from home.

Noel had found his way to Port Royal, in the hope of finding something to do, but had failed in his efforts, because his uncle had circulated such a bad character of him that no one would give him a chance.

Frenzied and desperate, he had one dark night been wandering along the shore of a lonely bay near Port Royal, when he had fallen in with Three-fingered Jack and a crew's crew, who had stolen ashore to get goods stores.

The black pirate had forced Noel to go on board the *Cobra* with him. On board the pirate craft he had been well treated, but had found himself practically a prisoner, and had been given no chance of escape.

Three-fingered Jack wished to induce Noel to join his crew. He knew that the youth

was daring and clever, and that he was sure to prove a valuable lieutenant.

For several weeks Noel was aboard the black pirate's ship, hesitating as to what he should do. Sometimes he had told himself, with a bitter laugh, that it did not matter what became of him.

But to turn pirate—to sail under the black flag, and the companions of crime-stained scoundrels of the ocean!

The thought had made him hang back.

But now Three-fingered Jack was tired of

wasting what I say, Master Noel Bristowe," he said. "You are an outcast and a beggar. Old Samson Shark will show you no mercy. If you go back to Jamaica, he will very likely have you hanged as a thief. Join me, and you will have a life of adventure, and win as much gold as you want. I have work to do to-night, and I cannot stop with you any longer; but when I return you must answer me."

Noel was sitting at a table with his head bent. Three-fingered Jack looked at him with a wicked grin, and said that he would yield to the temptation.

Click!

The black pirate was gone, the cabin door was locked, and Noel was alone and a fast prisoner. Even had he wished to drop into the sea he could not have done so, for the port-hole was far too small for him to pass through.

"I'm trapped, that's evident!" Noel told himself; "and if I don't agree to do what Three-fingered Jack wants, I shall find myself worse off than ever. He's been very polite to me up to now, but he will be a devil if I make him angry. What shall I say to him—yes, or no?"

It was a hard question to answer.

For hour after hour Noel paced round the cabin, fighting with his temptation, but unable to come to any decision. At last he sat down again, and his head sank on the table. He was worn out, and fell asleep.

His slumber was so heavy that he did not awake for hours.

He did not know that when darkness fell the *Cobra* drew close to the Jamaica shore. A couple of boats were dropped over the side. A long time elapsed ere the pirates returned from their mysterious expedition. They came on board swiftly and silently, and then Three-fingered Jack ordered every stitch of canvas to be hoisted, and the island was soon left far behind.

When Noel at last awoke, darkness was on the sea except for a hint of moonlight. He sprang up with a start, thinking he was dreaming.

Through the port-hole was crawling a tiny black swan, whose eyes were nearly bulging out of his head with excitement.

"Be quiet," he whispered. "I don't want Three-fingered Jack to know his dilly nighan an' a-wittin' you! Nohber y' say die!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Plan!

"POMPEY THE GREAT!" Noel Bristowe was so astounded to see the little black, that he could not have repressed the startled exclamation to save his life.

Pompey the Great was one of old Samson Shark's slaves. He was so small that he could easily have passed for a doll; but he had more pluck and cleverness than a good many people of three times his size. On the plantation he had been Noel's devoted servant and ally, and the youth had been bitterly grieved to part from him.

But how did he come to be aboard the *Cobra*, far out on the waves of the Atlantic?

This question was answered by Pompey the Great himself, after he had crawled through the port-hole, and dropped noiselessly to the cabin floor.

The story the little fellow had to tell was an amazing one.

Bent on being revenged on old Samson Shark, Three-fingered Jack had lured his two boats' crews in the dead of night, and, raiding the plantation, had carried off the old planter before his servants or slaves could strike a blow in his defence.

"And now he's a prisoner on the pirate craft!" asked Noel.

Pompey the Great nodded his head.

"Dat de trufe," he replied, "in' de pirates are goin' to kill him. Dis dilly nighan hear Three-fingered Jack say he's goin' to hab a jolly big revenge for de bogging he get in de old days. His goin' to blow de old massa from de big cannon!"

"You don't mean it, Pompey!"

"It am de body trufe, I tell y'er!" protested the little fellow.

Speaking in the same smoken whisper in which he had spoken since entering the cabin, Pompey the Great explained how he had come to be on board the *Cobra*. He had seen his old master carried off by the pirates, and had followed in the wake of Three-fingered Jack and his men, hoping to do something to help them.

Helped by his diminutive stature, he had managed to conceal himself under a cloak in one of the boats. The pirates had not suspected his presence, and under cover of darkness, as soon as the boat had run alongside the ship, he had crawled from under the cloak and scrambled into the main chains. There he had hung until the boat was hoisted up and the *Cobra* was cleaving her way through the waters, and had then scrambled up until he was level with the outboard rail, and took up quarters with Three-fingered Jack himself, who was walking the deck, talking to his lieutenant.

It was what the black pirate had said which had appalled Pompey the Great of the fact that Noel was a prisoner in the cabin.

He had promptly decided to pay his young master a visit.

"Don't you join the bad pirates, Master Noel," he pleaded. "Dis all bad chaps—jolly bad fellows, who all end up by bein' hanged. You go back to de plantation, an' I'll mean to make you free off de big cannon."

(Continued on page 21.)

"Spare the rod and spoil the child" is a maxim all very well in its way, but, like most things, it can be overdone. Whilst Dr. Locke is away in the country vegetating in health there arrives at Greyfriars a Dr. Sterndale. The temporary Head has his own ideas as to how a school should be run & he rules with a rod of iron. Floggings and canings become the order of the day. But each day sees more fuel being heaped on the fire of rebellion gradually spreading throughout Greyfriars. Unable to "stand" the tyrannics of the temporary Head any longer, the Removites decide to take him down a peg. Read how they do it.



The Iron Hand at Greyfriars!

A Grand New Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Sentence Postponed!

"MASTER CHERRY! You're wanted in the 'endmaster's study!"

Trotter, the page, popped his head round the door of Study No. 1 in the Remove passage, and delivered this ultimatum. Then he scuttled away.

"Master Cherry" looked far from pleased. He was having tea in Study No. 1 with the other members of the Famous Five. It was an extra-special repast, and it had only just started. Trotter's interruption was anything but welcome.

Bob Cherry groaned, and rose from the table.

"Better go and face the music, I suppose," he said.

"How do you know that there's any music to face?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Guilty conscience, old chap," said Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What has the esteemed and worthy Bob been up to?" inquired Hurree Singh.

"Oh, nothing special!" said Bob. "I suppose one of my lively larks has come to the Head's ears, and he wants to address me on the subject—with his cane!"

"Better barricade your bags, and then it won't hurt," advised Johnny Bull.

"Rats! I can take a licking. But I wish the Head had left it until after tea. I was enjoying those muffins no end. But I don't suppose I shall enjoy them much when I come back. They'll be cold, for one thing—and I shall be warm, for another!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry's chums felt sorry for him, but they couldn't help laughing. Bob was always making jokes, even when the

situation was far from funny. He would have jested with the executioner on the scaffold.

"P'raps it's not a licking, after all," said Frank Nugent. "It may be that the Head wants to have a heart-to-heart talk with you about something. Possibly he'll produce a plum-cake and ask you to stay to tea."

"Some hopes!" granted Bob Cherry. He hurried away to the Head's study, for Dr. Locke, the supreme authority at Greyfriars, did not like to be kept waiting.

Bob Cherry tapped on the door of the sacred apartment, and a stern voice bade him enter. In the study, to find that the Head already had a visitor. This was a fiery-looking gentleman of military bearing, who was stamping up and down the room, snorting with wrath. This martinet was Major Thresher, the retired army officer who lived practically next door to Greyfriars, his house and grounds adjoining the school playing-fields.

"Cherry," said the Head sternly, "Major Thresher has just lodged a complaint about you. It appears that this afternoon, whilst playing cricket, you hit a ball over the wall into his garden, and smashed a cucumber-frames."

Bob Cherry admitted the soft impeachment, adding, by way of a rider, that the affair was a pure accident.

"I quite believe that, Cherry," said the Head, "and I am not going to punish you on that score. It is your subsequent behaviour that calls for condign punishment. You asked Major Thresher to return your ball, and he refused to do so, whereupon you made use of insulting epithets—"

There was an explosive snort from the major.

"Yes, begad! The insolent young jackanapes called me a—a mean old buffer! He also hurled the word 'killjoy' at me! I am not old, I am not a buffer, and I am emphatically not a killjoy! I resent such remarks, sir! I—I boil over—"

"Calm yourself, my dear sir," interposed the Head. "I will see that justice is done."

The major continued to stamp and snort and to ramp and rage.

"I insist upon the young rascal being severely caned, sir! An' if you would permit me to administer the punishment—"

The Head frowned.

"I am quite capable of dealing with my own pupils, sir!" he said tartly.

"I'll m'! Well, I hope you won't err on the side of mercy. The young rascal's behaviour was outrageous, sir! How would you like to be called a mean old buffer—a killjoy?"

"I should not like it at all," said the Head. "I can understand your annoyance; but, as I say, I am quite capable of dealing with the matter myself."

So saying the Head picked up the cane which lay on his desk, and turned to Bob Cherry.

Bob was certainly "in for it." He had checked Major Thresher, the major had duly reported the offence, and now came the reckoning.

Even at that grim moment, however, Bob was not thinking of himself. He was looking at the Head's face, which assumed more lined and careworn than Bob had ever seen it. The Head seemed to have aged considerably. Either he was very worried about something, Bob reflected, or he was ill.

"Hold out your hand, Cherry! You have been guilty of gross impertinence to Major Thresher, and I am going to cane you!"

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Bob promptly extended his hand. Then, standing firm, he waited for the cue to descend with stinging force on his nose.

But it never came.

The Head drew aside his gown, in order to have the free use of his arm; then he swung the cane back over his shoulder. At the same instant he reeled, staggered against his desk, and then collapsed on the floor, where he lay motionless and stupid.

"Oh, my hat!" muttered Bob Cherry in dismay.

As for the major, his expression softened at once.

"Pon my soul!" he ejaculated.

"Fallen down in a faint, begad!"

And he promptly dropped on to one knee beside the prostrate form of the Head.

"Boy, fetch some water—quickly!"

Bob Cherry hurried out of the study to do the major's bidding. When he returned with some water he saw that the Head was still unconscious, despite the fact that the major had loosened his collar and moved him to the sofa by the open window.

"There's somethin' seriously wrong here!" said the major, whose animosity towards Bob Cherry was quite forgotten in the present crisis. "Get on to the telephone to Dr. Short, boy, an' ask him to be good enough to come as once!"

Whilst the major was endeavouring to bring the Head round, Bob Cherry crossed over to the telephone and hastily summoned the doctor. The latter happened to be at home, and he said he would come to Greyfriars at once in his car.

Presently the Head revived, thanks to the ministrations of the major; but he seemed very dazed, and was scarcely able to speak.

Dr. Short arrived soon afterwards. He drew off his gloves, placed his silk hat on the table, and examined the Head. His expression was grave, and it grew even graver as the examination progressed.

"An attack of vertigo," he said at length. "I fear it is the first symptom of a severe nervous breakdown. You have been overdoing it, Dr. Locke. Too much study, too little exercise. I advised you a few weeks back, if you remember, to take a holiday. Unfortunately, you disregarded my advice. You will now have no alternative but to take a rest from your duties—and a prolonged rest at that."

The Head nodded without speaking. Feebly he beckoned to Bob Cherry to leave the study. Bob had escaped the raving, and Major Thresher had no wish to press the matter, in the circumstances.

It was in a subdued mood that Bob Cherry went back to Study No. 1.

Four juniors looked up from their plates as Bob entered.

"Had it hot?" asked Nugent sympathetically.

"How many?" inquired Johnny Ball.

"And did you have to extendfully hold out your hand, or stoopfully touch your toes?" asked Hurree Singh.

Bob Cherry shook his head.

"No licking," he said tersely.

"What! No licking?" gasped Harry Wharton. "Why, you look as if you've had a dozen lickings rolled into one!"

"Has been taken ill," explained Bob Cherry. "He was on the point of laming me, when he collapsed in a dead faint."

"My hat!"

"The doctor's here, and he says the Head will have to go away for a long spell."

"Oh crumbs!"

Harry Wharton & Co. looked dismayed. The prospect of losing the Head—ever for a time—was not a cheerful one. Dr. Locke was held in esteem by all Greyfriars, from Wingate of the Sixth down to the youngest fag. He was a kind and wise ruler; and Bob Cherry's chums were very sorry to hear his news.

"This means that we shall have a temporary Head sent here," said Nugent.

The others nodded, and looked uneasy. Temporary headmasters had come to Greyfriars before, and they had not proved popular. Most of them had been iron disciplinarians, who had caused quite a turmoil at the school during their brief reign of office.

Would history repeat itself on this occasion? Would Greyfriars again have to groan under the lash of the tyrant, so to speak? Perhaps—and perhaps not. The uncertainty of it worried the Famous Five; and it worried the other fellows, too, when they heard the news.

"Something seems to tell me that we're in for a rotten time," said Bob Cherry. "I'm not a long-faced pessimist, as you know, but I've got a sort of what-d'you-call-it—a premonition."

"Don't tell us they're going to send a beastly tyrant to take the Head's place!" pleaded Nugent.

"Afraid they will," said Bob. "Temporary Heads are generally brutes. That's why they can't get a permanent job at our school."

Harry Wharton looked glum.

"I've just been reading 'Nicholas Nickleby,'" he said. "There's a schoolmaster in it called Warkford Squares. He was a terror! He ruled the roost at a place called Dotbeboys Hall, and the poor beggars of pupils had a ghastly time."

"Well, if they send a Squares to Greyfriars," said Johnny Bull, "I can see breakers ahead! It's rotten luck, the Head's being bowled over like this!"

And Hurree Singh, with a grave expression on his dusky face, remarked that the bad-luckfulness was terrific.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Comedy and Tragedy!

"**L**END me your ears!"

It was Skinner of the minor audience who spoke. Skinner's major, Snop, and Stott. The quartette had met together in Skinner's study to discuss ways and means of spending the half-holiday, for it was Wednesday afternoon.

"Crickets' out of the question," said Skinner. "It's the maddest game ever invented! You have an innings which lasts about two minutes, then you field for about four hours in broiling sunshine. That sort of thing might appeal to Wharton and his set, but it don't appeal to me."

"Or me," growled Bolsover. "But what's the alternative?"

"A bright wherf has just taken shape in my noddle," said Skinner, tapping his forehead with a bony forefinger. "We'll improve the shining hour by indulging in amateur theatricals. In fact, we'll stage a little comedy of our own."

"Where?" asked Snop.

"Head's study," said Skinner. "There will be no one there. The Head went away this morning. He's gone into the country to cure his breakdown. I've mapped out quite a cute little comedy in my mind. It's going to be a foggin'

scene. You, Bolsover, will play the part of the Head, and will wear his gown and mortar-board for the occasion."

"My hat!" said Bolsover.

"I shall be the professor bringing the prisoner to justice," Skinner went on. "You, Snop, will be the school porter, on whose shoulders the victim will be hoisted, to receive six hard ones with the birch. And you, Stott, will be—"

"The victim!" said Stott. "If so, you can take a little comedy without me. I'm not sickening for a licking!"

Skinner chuckled.

"Don't be alarmed," he said. "You can be a looker-on at the execution."

"But who is going to be the victim?" asked Bolsover. "Strikes me you won't get any volunteers for that part. It isn't likely that any fellow will consent to being birched, even in a horseshoe."

"True, O King," said Skinner. "Nobody will volunteer for the victim's part, so we shall have to use press-gang methods. Supposing we collar young Sammy Dunter, and put him through the hoop? He deserves a licking; he's such a greedy little worm. But we won't hurt the fellow, just a few gentle swipes with the birch. Let's go and collar him, and proceed with the merry entertainment."

Skinner's suggestion of holding a comedy in the Head's study was certainly a novel one, and his cronies decided that it would be good fun. So the four juniors sallied forth in search of Sammy Dunter.

They ran Sammy to earth in the Close. His snub little nose was flattened against the tuckshop window, for Mrs. Minnie had an assortment of freshly-made pastries on view. Sammy was "broke," as usual; but he was thinking how delicious those pastries looked, and wishing for some more. He decided upon him with a loan of half-a-crown.

Somebody descended on him, certainly, but it was no general philanthropist. It was Skinner & Co. They suddenly pounced upon the fat fag from behind, and whirled him round, and marched him away across the Close.

"Here, I say! Hold on—I mean, leggo!" yelled Sammy Dunter, struggling vainly to free himself. "What are you beasts up to?"

"You're wanted," said Skinner, with a grin. "We're just going to perform a little comedy, in which you will play quite an important part."

"Here, I say! Hold on a little at this. He could be a right one that Skinner was being grimly humorous.

"Oh, all right!" he said. "I'm quite game to play in a comedy. Where's it going to be held? You needn't drag me there, wherever it is."

Sammy's captors released him; but they were careful to give him no hope of escape, for two walked in front of him and two behind. In this way the procession proceeded to the Head's study.

Skinner & Co. marched boldly in, and found the room unoccupied, as they had expected. Sammy Dunter entered the study with them, greatly wondering.

"Queer sort of place to give a comedy," he said. "Why not give it in the concert-hall? You'll have no audience here."

"I'm going to be the audience," said Stott, with a chuckle.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner closed the door. Hanging on the door-peg were the gown and mortar-board belonging to Dr. Locke. Bolsover and Snop proceeded to don them.

There was a yell of laughter as soon as Bolsover had effected the transformation. He looked a grotesque figure in

the Head's robes of office. The gown was too long for him, and it flapped around his legs. The mortar-board was tilted at a rakish angle on his bullet head.

"Oh, my giddy aunt!" gurgled Skinner. "What a picture!"

"Silence!" thundered Bolsover, mimicking the Head's manner.

The bully of the Remove then seated himself in the Head's chair, and the comedy began.

"Why have you brought this boy to me?" demanded Bolsover, pointing to Sammy Bunter.

Skinner promptly assumed the role of prefect.

"I have to bring a very serious charge against Bunter minor, sir," he said—"a charge of pilfering, purloining, and pinching a plum-cake from Coker's study."

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Bolsover. "That is indeed a serious charge. There seems to be quite an epidemic of thieving among my pupils. Only the other day I caught a number of young rascals in my orchard. They were taking—er—photographs!"

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

"And a boy was brought before me yesterday for 'lifting' a dumb-bell!" Bolsover went on. "And now I find that Bunter minor has abstracted and appropriated a plum-cake—"

"I didn't!" shouted Sammy.

"Shurrup, you young idiot!" muttered Snoop. "You must confess that you pinched the cake. It's part of the comedy—see?"

"Oh!" Bolsover major fixed a ferocious frown upon the fat fag.

"Bunter minor," he said sternly, "did you, or did you not, steal a plum-cake from Coker's study?"

Sammy pretended to break down and blub.

"I—I p-p-pled guilty, sir!" he wailed. "But I only did it for a lark. Don't be too hard on me, sir! I'll buy Coker another cake, when my major's post-elder comes!"

The "Head" rose to his feet. His eyes were gleaming.

"Enough!" he thundered. "You are guilty, on your own confession, of a mean and despicable theft, and it is my painful duty to administer six strokes with the birch!"

Sammy Bunter grew really alarmed at this. He sidled towards the door, but Stott was standing with his back to it. There was no way of escape. Sammy was caught like a fat rat in a trap.

"Gooding!" thundered the bogus Head, turning to Snoop.

"Yesir?" grunted Snoop, in imitation of the school porter's tones.

"Take this young rascal upon your shoulders!"

"Woop good, sir."

Snoop bent down, and Skinner and Stott hoisted Sammy Bunter on to his shoulders. Sammy protested vigorously.

"Leggo, you beasts! I'm not going to be birched! If you lay so much as a finger on me I'll yell the place down!"

"Yell away!" chuckled Skinner.

"You won't be heard. Everybody's on the cricket ground."

True to his word, Sammy yelled at the top of his lungs. The noise he made would have awakened the celebrated Seven Sleepers. But the Head's study was a long way from the cricket-ground, and Sammy's yells did not penetrate that far.

"Where's the merry birch?" asked Bolsover major, with rather a lack of dignity for a headmaster.



"Hold out your hand, Cherry!" said Dr. Locke sternly. "I am going to cane you." Bob promptly extended his hand. Then, standing firm, he waited for the cane to descend. But it never came. As the Head swung the cane back over his shoulder he reeled, staggered against his desk, and then collapsed to the floor. "Oh, my hat!" muttered Bob Cherry in dismay. "Boy," barked Major Thresher, darting forward, "fetch some water!" (See Chapter 1.)

"Here you are, sir!" said Stott. He handed over the birch, and Bolsover, swinging it aloft, commenced the execution.

Swish, swish, swish!

The strokes were not laid on hard, but they were quite hard enough for Sammy Bunter. He wriggled and writhed, and he squealed and squirmed, as the birch came down.

"Ow! You! Yaroooo! Bolsover, you beast, you're half-killing me! Chuckit! Stoppit! Wow!"

Bolsover grinned, and proceeded merrily with the castigation.

Skinner & Co. were thoroughly enjoying the comedy. So far as Sammy Bunter was concerned it had ceased to be a comedy. It was a tragedy indeed!

To do Bolsover justice, he had no intention of really hurting the fat fag. But he was wielding the birch harder than he realised, and Sammy Bunter was not thick-skinned—not literally, at any rate.

Swish, swish, swish!

No sooner had the final stroke been administered than there was a quick foot-step in the corridor. Then the door of the Head's study was thrown open, before Bolsover major had time to lay aside the birch, or to remove the gown and mortar-board.

There was a startled gasp from the juniors.

Snoop, who was finding it a great strain to support Sammy Bunter on his shoulders, suddenly sagged at the knees

and collapsed. He went sprawling, with Sammy on top of him.

"Ow!"

"Wow!"

And then a voice rang out, sharp and stern—a voice which not only startled the amateur comedians, but terrified them.

"What is the meaning of this? I demand an immediate explanation!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Arch-Tyrant!

SKINNER & CO. blinked nervously at the newmaster. He was a short, thick-set man, with a bull neck, an aggressive jaw, and a pair of piercing eyes that glowed like live coals beneath thick, bushy eyebrows. He was dressed in sober black, and when he removed his silk hat it was seen that he was practically bald. He was not a nice gentleman to look at. Few schoolboys, at any rate, could have faced him without an inward tremor.

Skinner & Co. guessed at once who the newmaster was. He was the temporary headmaster, who had come to Greyfriars to take the place of Dr. Locke.

"I am waiting!" he snapped.

Bolsover major tried to speak, but his tongue seemed to cleave to the roof of his mouth. Bolsover was no funk, but he felt strangely subdued in the presence

of this thick-set man with the piercing eyes.

"Since you appear to be tongue-tied," said the stranger grimly, "I had better do the talking myself." And Dr. Sterndale, and this school will be under my supervision until Dr. Locke has recuperated. I am a man who stands no nonsense; and I am a firm believer in discipline!"

Skinner & Co. groaned in chorus. "This was just what they had expected! Another tyrant as temporary headmaster. And, by the look of him, he was likely to prove a bigger tyrant than all his predecessors put together.

Dr. Sterndale advanced into the study. He beckoned to Bolsover major. "I will trouble you to remove those garments at once!" he rapped out. Bolsover hurriedly divested himself of the gown and mortar-board, and replaced them on the door-peg.

"And now," said the new Head, "perhaps you have recovered the power of speech, and will favour me with an explanation of your extraordinary conduct!"

"Ahem! We—we were only having a lark, sir," stammered Bolsover.

Dr. Sterndale frowned. "I do not approve of 'larks,' as you call them," he said. "You have no right to be in this study. You are trespassers!"

"P-p-please, sir," wailed Sammy Bunter. "I didn't come here from choice. I was dragged here. These beasts have been bullying me!"

"I am aware of that," said the Head. "The reason of your being administered as I came along the corridor. It will be used again presently—not by an unauthorised person, but by me!"

Skinner & Co. looked seared. Cold shivers were running down their respective spines.

"You may go," said the Head, addressing Sammy Bunter.

Sammy promptly scuttled out of the study. Once out in the corridor he took to his heels as if all the demons of the underworld were in hot pursuit. Sammy had seen quite enough of the new Head. Dr. Sterndale's terrifying manner had scared him almost out of his wits.

When the fog had gone, the Head turned to Bolsover major.

"Your name?" he demanded.

"Bolsover, sir."

"You are aware, Bolsover, of the enormity of your conduct?"

"Not at all, sir! As I said just now, we were only having a lark. It's a half-holiday, and we thought we'd amuse ourselves."

"That's so, sir," chimed in Skinner. "We were just holding a little comedy."

"Indeed! Then I fear that your sense of humor must be strangely warped. This study is for the use of the headmaster. It is not a place for irresponsible juniors to play pranks in. And you, Bolsover, have had the audacity to don the headmaster's attire. I will deal with you first. Remove your coat!"

"I—I beg your pardon, sir?" stammered Bolsover, quite taken aback.

"Remove your coat! I am about to flog you."

"But—but Dr. Locke doesn't make us take off our coats when we're flogged!" said Bolsover, with a show of defiance.

Dr. Sterndale looked grim.

"Dr. Locke's ways are not my ways," he said. "You will doubtless find a big disparity between his methods and mine. I am now in charge of this school. Kindly bear that fact in mind. For the third time, I must ask you to remove your coat!"

"Has he arrived, then?"

Bolsover unwilling obeyed. He peeled off his Eton jacket, and laid it over the back of a chair.

"Stand there!" commanded the Head, indicating the centre of an open space, which would give him plenty of elbow-room.

Bolsover did as he was bidden, and the Head picked up the birch. He appeared to be thoroughly familiar with such instruments of torture, for he handled it almost affectionately, as if it were an old friend.

Then he started to wield it.

Swish! The first stroke came with stinging force across Bolsover's scantily-clad back. It was a cruel stroke, delivered with the full force of the Head's right arm. Bolsover winced violently, and a low moan escaped him.

Skinner and Snoop and Stott stood together in a huddled group. Their faces were white as chalk. They had witnessed a good many birchings on various times, but never anything so severe—so brutally severe, as this.

Swish, swish, swish!

The birch rose and fell. Bolsover was not moaning now. His voice had risen almost to a howl. As a rule, the burly Remove could endure a flogging with stoical fortitude. But this was a super-flogging—something quite different from that to which he had previously been accustomed.

"There!" panted the Head, at length. "Let that be a lesson to you!"

Bolsover reeled against the desk. He felt as if he had had half a dozen floggings rolled into one. His back was smarting from the castigation; and he knew that the birch had left its mark there.

Dr. Sterndale then beckoned to Skinner. The cad of the Remove pleaded and protested, but he had to go through the mill. He was not flogged so severely as Bolsover had been; but it was quite severe enough for Skinner. His screams floated out through the open window; and Harry Wharton & Co., coming in from cricket, halted in astonishment when they heard those sounds of anguish.

Snoop and Stott were then flogged in turn. Stott, who came last, hoped that the Head's arm would be tired. But Dr. Sterndale's energy seemed inexhaustible. Instead of growing weaker as he proceeded with the birching, he seemed to gather strength.

"You may put on your coats and go," said the Head, when the painful ordeal was over. "And do not dare to transgress in this way again!"

It was a very sick and sorry quartette that staggered out into the Close a moment later. Skinner & Co. looked as if they had been through a mangle.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "What's been going on! Have you fellows been licked?"

A dismal chorus of groans was the reply to Bob's question.

"Orr, orr, orr!"

"The Hunnish beast!"

"The awful tyrant!"

"It wasn't a licking," groaned Skinner. "It was a slaughter!"

Harry Wharton & Co. looked astounded.

"Who imparted the lickfulness?" asked Hurree Singh. "Was it the Quetch Sahib?"

Bolsover major shook his head.

"A licking from Quetchy would have been a picnic compared with what we've just been through!" he said. "We've got to thank the new Head for this."

"The new Head?" echoed Harry Wharton. "Has he arrived, then?"

"He has! His name's Sterndale, and he's a terror! We were having quite a harmless sort of lark in the Head's study, and he came along and birched the whole jolly lot of us. Made us take our coats off, and then laid into us like a champion carpet-beater!"

"My hat!"

Harry Wharton & Co. could see that the four juniors had been through it badly. They had no love for Skinner & Co., but they were sympathetic on the present occasion. Whatever the quartette might have been up to, they could have done nothing to merit such severe punishment. As a rule, the birch was only administered for very serious offences. In the ordinary way, a caning met the case.

Bob Cherry gave a groan.

"I knew it!" he said. "Didn't I prophesy that the new Head would be a tyrant of the first water? No sooner does he set foot inside the place than he runs riot with the birch! Friends, Romans, and countrymen, we're in for a Legion very much like it," said Wharton, with a frown. "It's a thousand pities Dr. Locke had that breakdown."

"Why have the governors appointed such a tartar to take his place?" asked Nugent.

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"Ours not to reason why," he said. "The governors never consult us before they do these things—more's the pity."

Skinner tenderly caressed his back, which was still smarting painfully.

"I'm not going to take this lying down!" he declared. "I shall write to my mater about it, and tell him they've put a giddy Nero in charge of the school."

"Don't blame you," said Johnny Bull. "What are you going to do about it, Bolsover?"

"Me?" said Bolsover ungrammatically. "I shall go straight to Quetchy, and tell him all about it. It won't be sneaking. It will be acting in the interests of the school. I don't see why a rotten old tyrant like Sterndale should be allowed to come here and ill-treat us, as if we were a set of reformatory kids!"

"Me?" said Bolsover major strode away, looking very grim and purposeful. Harry Wharton & Co. did not call him back. They considered that the new Head had behaved like a barbarian, and that Bolsover was perfectly justified in laying the facts before Mr. Quetch. And they considered what the Remove master would have to say when he heard Bolsover's story.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Stormy Scene!

"COME IN!" Mr. Quetch was seated at his typewriter when Bolsover major stepped into his study. He looked up impatiently at first, but his expression soon changed to one of real concern.

"Why, Bolsover, what is the matter?" he asked. "Are you ill?"

It was Bolsover's pale face and unsteady gait that prompted the question.

"I've been flogged, sir," muttered Bolsover.

"Flogged! By whom?"

"By the new Head, sir—Dr. Sterndale."

"Bless my soul! I had no idea Dr. Sterndale had arrived. He was not expected until six o'clock. And do you mean to say that he has administered a flogging already, before he has been in the place five minutes?"

"He's administered four, sir," said Bolsover. "That's what I come to be rough about. I admit he had cause to punish us, because we were larking about in the Head's study, and I had put on the Head's gown and mortar-board. But it wasn't a just punishment, sir. Dr. Sterndale made us take off our coats, and we were birched until we could hardly stand! As a matter of fact, Snoppy very nearly fainted!"

"Good heavens!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"I can prove to you how brutally we were punished, sir," Bolsover went on. "May I show you my back?"

Mr. Quelch nodded, and Bolsover proceeded to remove his upper garments. He then revealed his back to the Remove master's horrified gaze.

The marks of the birch-rod were plainly visible. Several rows of weals and scratches testified to the vigour which the new Head had employed.

Mr. Quelch was quite taken aback. He was a disciplinarian himself; but he was not a tyrant. He frequently punished his pupils, but he always punished fairly. But here was a case of savage and excessive punishment.

Mr. Quelch had hoped, like the Juniors, that the new Head would be a decent sort. Tyrants were not popular at Greyfriars, either with the masters or with the boys. And the condition of Bolsover major's back was evidence that Dr. Sterndale was a tyrant of the worst order.

"You may put on your things, Bolsover," said Mr. Quelch quietly. "I promise you that this matter shall be taken up."

"Thank you, sir!"

When Bolsover had dressed and departed, Mr. Quelch stepped along to the Head's study. His lips were compressed, and his hand tightly clenched. He had not yet had the doubtful pleasure of meeting Dr. Sterndale, but he disliked the man intensely, from what he had heard of him. He felt that the governors had acted very unwisely in placing such a man in charge of Greyfriars. Dr. Sterndale's name was unknown in the scholastic profession. It was not to be found in any directory of headmasters. Mr. Quelch distrusted the man, in addition to disliking him. He felt that, by some means or other, Dr. Sterndale had hoodwinked the school governors, and secured a post for which he was not fully qualified. But, of course, this was merely a surmise on Mr. Quelch's part. And it was not his place to express criticism of the governors' actions.

The Remove master gave a peremptory tap on the door of the Head's study. A harsh voice bade him enter.

Dr. Sterndale was seated at the desk. He had already donned his robes of office, and in gown and mortar-board he looked a bigger tyrant than ever. The bull neck, the aggressive jaw, and the thick, bushy eyebrows, stamped him as a man who ruled by fear, rather than by kindness.

The new Head glanced keenly at Mr. Quelch.

"Good-afternoon!" he said, with no gentility in his tone. "Whom have I the pleasure of addressing?"

"My name is Quelch, sir, and I am the master of the Remove Form. I have just been visited by one of my pupils—a boy named Bolsover."

"Indeed!"

"He complains of having been flogged with unnecessary brutality," Mr. Quelch went on. "And I must say that his complaint is fully justified. I have seen the boy's back, and I confess I was moved to horror at the spectacle!"

Dr. Sterndale frowned.

"Have you any further observations to make, Mr. Quelch?" he inquired.

"Yes, sir, I have!" answered the Remove master, nettled at the Head's tone. "I feel bound to protest most strongly against such excessive, not to say brutal, punishment. I do not know the exact nature of Bolsover's offence, and I do not wish to know. But, whatever the boy had done, you were not justified in punishing him with such severity!"

Mr. Quelch was growing quite heated. He banged his clenched fist on the Head's desk to emphasise his remarks.

"Have you finished?" asked Dr. Sterndale.

"Not quite, sir. I would point out to you that this is not a reformatory, and that a public school is no place to employ reformatory measures. Had Bolsover been fairly punished, I should have made no demur. He is not a boy of irrefragable behaviour, and I frequently have occasion to punish him myself. But I should not dream of exceeding the bounds of justice, as you have done."

A grim smile hovered on Dr. Sterndale's lips.

"You have finished now?" he queried.

Mr. Quelch nodded.

"Then perhaps you will permit me, as your superior, to make a few observations of my own," said the Head, with crushing sarcasm. "I consider it a gross impertinence on your part, Mr. Quelch,

to come here and deliver sweeping criticism of my methods. I have been appointed by the Board of Governors to take Dr. Locke's place, and I am in supreme charge of the school. You do not appear to have grasped that fact, or you would hardly have dared to come here and talk to me as you have done!"

"I do not dispute your authority," interrupted Mr. Quelch. "I simply came here, in the interests of justice, to lodge a protest against excessive and tyrannical punishment."

The new Head rose to his feet, and frowningly faced Mr. Quelch.

"I refuse to be dictated to by a subordinate," he said. "I shall conduct this school on the lines I think best, and will brook no interference!"

Mr. Quelch was silent.

"You appear to consider that my punishment of Bolsover was excessive," the Head went on. "My own view is that it was a perfectly just punishment. You are entitled to your own opinion, of course; but you are not entitled to come to me in the role of dictator. I will be master in my own house, and I shall expect the masters to co-operate with me, and to carry out my wishes. If they decline to do so, there will be trouble!"

Mr. Quelch realised only too well what form the "trouble" would take. He would be asked to send in his resignation. And he was by no means



Just as Wingate was about to make his stroke his vision was obscured. Somebody happened to pass in front of the bowling screen, thus obstructing his sight of the ball. Crash! The stumps were spreadeagled. Wingate turned and gazed ruefully at the wreckage. And there was a groan from two hundred throats.

(See Chapter 7.)

anxious to give up his comfortable billet at Greystars. He had been master of the Remove for many years; and he hoped to be master of it for many years yet. Either he must knuckle under to the tyrannical Dr. Sterndale or he must go. There was no middle course.

Mr. Quelch felt that the Head held all the cards. He bit his lip, and said nothing.

"Sir, you appear to have nothing more to say," said Dr. Sterndale. "I must ask you not to take up my time any further. This interview is now ended. I wish you a good-afternoon."

The note of triumph in the Head's voice was almost more than Mr. Quelch could stand. He felt that if he remained in the study a moment longer he would say things which would speedily bring about his dismissal from Greystars.

Mr. Quelch turned abruptly to the door, and passed out without a word. But he had an unpleasant conviction that his stormy interview with the new Head was only the beginning of the battle, as it were. It was merely the first round. There were other rounds to follow; and these were grim times in store for Greystars.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Flogging Parade!

DR. STERNDALE very quickly made his presence felt at Greystars. Skinner & Co. of the Remove had felt his presence already, and it was not long before the whole school discovered that the new Head was on the warpath.

That evening the following announcement appeared on the notice-board in the Hall:

"NOTICE!

"On taking up the duties of Headmaster here, I regret to find that the school is in a very slack state, and that discipline is at a discount. I am determined to bring about an immediate improvement. Masters and prefects are asked to co-operate with me in enforcing discipline. Any boy found breaking the school rules must be brought before me at a special parade, which will be held in Big Hall every morning immediately after breakfast.

"(Signed) SAMUEL STERNDALE,
"Headmaster."

Harry Wharton & Co. were among the first to see that announcement, and it left them gasping.

"Well, if that's not the absolute limit!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Sterndale's started on his reign of terror, with a vengeance! He's going to introduce a punishment parade!"

Harry Wharton clenched his hands angrily.

"Sterndale seems to have mistaken Greystars for a reformatory," he said. "He's treating us as if we were a lot of young criminals!"

"I say, you fellows, it's altogether too thick!" chimed in Billy Bunter, blinking indignantly at the Head's announcement.

"What's Greystars coming to, that's what I want to know! If Sterndale's going to start these sort of capers, I shall use my influence with the governors, and get him the push!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's no laughing matter!" said Bunter, glaring at the hilarious juniors.

"Old Sterndale's a beastly tyrant! He isn't fit to be in charge of the sons of gentlemen—like me!" Gooden knows where he sprung from, but he looks more

like a bloated professor than a headmaster. I peeped through his study window, and had a good look at him. He's as ugly as a—^a fifth of November guy!"

"Ugliness isn't a crime," said Vernon-Smith.

"No; but beastly, bullying brutality is!" said Bunter, waxing eloquent.

"You should have seen what Sterndale did to Skinner & Co. He half-killed them! Skinner showed me his back just now, and it looked as if he had been flogged with the cat-o'-nine tails, and then branded with red-hot irons!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Draw it mild, Bunter!" said Wharton, laughing. "You'll be saying next that Skinner had all the skin taken off his back."

"And even Sterndale wouldn't go so far as to skin a Skinner!" said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter gave a snort.

"Sterndale's a pie-faced pig!" he exclaimed, with crashing scorn. "He's as different again from old Locke. Locke's got his faults, we know, and he comes down a bit heavy at times; but he's a perfect gentleman, compared with this new bouncer!"

Whilst Bunter was speaking a sudden hush had fallen upon the group of juniors.

Unseen by the fat junior, who was facing the notice-board, an imposing figure in green and mortar-board had come striding on the scene. The rest of the juniors saw him, but there was no time to give Bunter warning of his approach.

Billy Bunter quite misunderstood that sudden hush. He fondly imagined that he was making an impression, and that his schoolfellows were listening with hated breath, so to speak, to his scathing denunciation of Dr. Sterndale. So he prattled on, blissfully unconscious of the fact that the Head was standing behind him.

"The governors must have been potty to send Sterndale here! They're a set of doddering old fogies, and it looks as if Sterndale bluffed them. That's about it—he's got his job by sheer bluff! I don't believe he's a genuine headmaster at all! He's a pork-butcher, or something like that, and he's thrown dust in the eyes of the governors. He's a thim-gumbyob in what's-a-name's clothing."

"Skerrup, you ast!" hissed Nugent.

"But Billy Bunter, having warmed to his subject, and feeling himself encouraged by the juniors' silence to deliver a long oration, continued his scathing attack on the new Head.

"Old Sterndale wouldn't dare to flog me like he flogged those fellows this afternoon, he went on. He simply flogged Skinner & Co., he if he tried to flog me he'd find he'd woke up the wrong passenger! D'you know what I should do? I should send for my uncle—the one who's an ex-boxing champion, you know—and I'd get him to come to Greystars and wallop that beastly tyrant Sterndale till he couldn't stand! You! Who was that kicked me from behind?"

It was Bob Cherry who had administered the sly kick, hoping to put a

stop to Bunter's flow of eloquence. He succeeded. Unfortunately, however, the mischief had been done. Billy Bunter had already said far too much!

There was a sudden bellow from behind Bunter—a bellow which the Bull of Bashan would have envied.

"Boy! Depraved young rascal! You shall pay dearly for those slanderous statements!"

Billy Bunter spun round from the notice-board with a start. When he caught sight of Dr. Sterndale he gave such a jump that his spectacles nearly bounced off his nose.

"Oh, my hat!" he gasped. "I—I didn't see you standing there, sir!"

"Apparently not!" said the new Head in thunderous tones. "Had you been aware of my presence you would not have dared to malign me in that manner!"

Billy Bunter wobbled at the knees. His complexion had turned a sickly yellow.

"I—I hope you don't think I was talking about you, sir?" he stammered. "I—I was referring to old Quelch—I mean Mr. Quelch—my Form master, sir. He's an awful old tyrant. He's not fit to be in charge of boys. I hope you'll see your way clear to give him the sack, sir!"

Dr. Sterndale's brow was black as thunder.

"Do not lie to me, boy! I distinctly heard you mention me by name on several occasions. When I approached you were saying that I was a—^a pie-faced pig! Subsequently, you alluded to me as a pork-butcher! You also insinuated that I had hoodwinked the governors of this school, in order to obtain an appointment for which I was not qualified."

"Oh crumbs! I—I—"

"I will teach you to keep your tongue under control in future," snapped Dr. Sterndale. "You will stand out on the punishment parade to-morrow morning, and I will deal with you very effectively. I am not alarmed at your threat to send your pugilistic uncle to visit me," added the Head, with scathing sarcasm.

Dr. Sterndale then stalked away with rustling gown.

Billy Bunter's face was a picture of dismay.

"I'm in for it now!" he groaned. "Why didn't you fellows tell me that Sterndale was standing there, listening in?"

"We tried to warn you," said Nugent, "but you wouldn't take any notice."

"You've fairly put your foot in it this time, Banty," said Bob Cherry. "Both feet, in fact. I wouldn't be in your shoes for a pension!"

"The birchfulness in the morning will be terrific!" said Hurree Singh.

"Unless Bunter wires for his pugilistic uncle right away," said Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I won't be birched by that brutal beast!" said Billy Bunter, with a fine flow of alliteration. "If he lays so much as a finger on me, he'll live to rue it! I'm not going to take it lying down!"

"No, you'll take it standing up, like Skinner & Co. did!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Six hard ones will be the prescribed dose, I expect."

"Ow!"

The prospect of being birched by the redoubtable Dr. Sterndale was gail and wormwood to Billy Bunter. He would have given anything to escape the evening ordeal.

That evening a cloud of gloom seemed to hang over Greystars. The arrival of the new Head had thrown a damper

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"Stand aside, Loder!" exclaimed Wharton fiercely. "You're not going out of gates——" began the prefect. "Rats!" There was a rush of feet and Loder went sprawling. The juniors stepped over his prostrate form and passed out of gates. (See Chapter 8.)

over everything. Dr. Sterdale was an arch-tyrant, and he seemed bent upon making things as unpleasant as possible for the school in general.

Everybody agreed that the introduction of a punishment parade was the absolute limit. It was the sort of thing that happened in reformatories and industrial schools; and it had happened in public schools fifty years ago. But to think that it should happen at Greyfriars at the present day!

A wave of indignation swept through the school. In study and Common-room, the new Head and his methods were being discussed. And feeling ran very high against Dr. Samuel Sterdale.

The Greyfriars fellows awoke next morning in a more sober mood than usual. In the Remove dormitory there was none of the usual skylarking. Everyone was thinking of the scene that would be enacted in the Big Hall after breakfast.

Billy Bunter, who had the greatest cause for apprehension, was so panic-stricken that he had no appetite for breakfast. And it took a good deal to rob the fat junior of his appetite.

As soon as the meal was over the school-bell rang. Its notes echoed solemnly through the vast building. It was a summons for the school to assemble in Big Hall.

Harry Wharton & Co. could not help feeling sorry for Billy Bunter, who was in a state of blue funk.

"Keep your pecker up, Bunt!" said Bob Cherry. "It might not be so bad as you think."

But Bunter remembered what had happened to Skinner & Co. on the previous day, and he groaned.

"I'm going to be flogged, and my delicate constitution won't stand it! I shall collapse! Oh dear, it makes a fellow feel like bolting from the school!"

But Bunter had no chance to bolt, even if he had had the courage to take such a desperate step. Loder of the Sixth was shepherding the juniors into Big Hall, and he kept a watchful eye on Billy Bunter.

Rank by rank, and file by file, the fellows filtered into their allotted places.

Two fellows stood out from the rest. One was Billy Bunter, the other was Dicky Nugent of the Second.

On the raised platform at the end of Big Hall stood the Head, terrifying and awe-inspiring in his majesty. Behind him in a row, stood the masters, looking very grave. They did not approve of Dr. Sterdale's methods; and there was likely to be trouble later on.

When the last stragglers had come in, and the door was closed, the Head addressed the assembly.

"I have found it necessary," he began in a rasping voice, "to introduce this punishment parade, as a means of maintaining order and discipline. During my tenure of office here I am determined to stand no nonsense. All misdemeanours will be visited with condign punishment. I have already had occasion to flog four boys, for outrageous conduct. I am now about to inflict a further flogging. This boy Granter——"

"Bunter," interposed Mr. Quelch.

"This boy Bunter has seen fit to traduce me—to make the most defamatory statements concerning me. Such gross disrespect merits a severe flogging. Bunter, remove your coat!"

"Oh, really, sir——" faltered the fat junior.

"Obey me!" thundered the Head.

Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, stepped forward, and said something to the Head in an undertone. Dr. Sterdale promptly cut him short.

"I resent your interference, sir! I has always been my custom to make culprits remove their coats prior to receiving chastisement; and I do not intend to depart from my rule."

Mr. Prout stepped back to his place, looking rather red and ruffled.

Meanwhile, Billy Bunter slowly divested himself of his coat. He handed it to Loder of the Sixth, who stood near. Then he blinked nervously at the formidable birch-rod which the Head was now grasping.

"I—I say, sir, I hope you won't lay it on too thick!" pleaded Bunter. "I'm only a frail fellow, as you can see. I'm

not really in a fit state to be flogged. The doctor said——"

The Head frowned.

"I am not concerned with what the doctor said, Bunter!" he snapped. "Come and stand here!"

Bunter reluctantly obeyed. The Head then instructed Loder of the Sixth to grasp the fat junior by the wrists. Loder did so; and then the execution began.

It was a painful scene—a particularly painful one for Billy Bunter.

The Head wielded the birch with the same vigour that he had employed when dealing with Skinner & Co. It seemed to hiss through the air, and the victim's yells of anguish fairly awakened the echoes.

Swish, swish, swish!

"Yow-ow-ow! Yowp! Yarooooop! Help! Draggimoff, Mr. Quelch! Can't you see he's half-killing me!"

Gladly would Mr. Quelch have seized the Head and dragged him back, for it was a brutal and excessive punishment. But the Remove master knew only too well the penalty of interference. He clenched his hands tightly together, and watched the proceedings with a frown.

From the body of the hall came a low, angry murmur.

"Shame!"

The Head paused for a moment and glared upon the assembly.

"Be silent!" he thundered. "If I catch a boy making a hostile demonstration towards me, I shall deal with him as I am now dealing with Bunter!"

Again the birch rose and fell, and Billy Bunter was a pitiable object by the time the Head had finished. Loder released his wrists, and he collapsed on the platform, grovelling and groaning. It was not a pleasant spectacle, and the faces of the onlookers were tense and set.

The Head then turned to Dicky Nugent.

"Who told you to stand out?" he demanded.

"Loder, sir," muttered the fag.

"Ah! I am pleased to see that one prefect, at any rate, is willing to assist me in my task of maintaining proper order."

discipline at this school. What has this boy been doing, Loder?"

"I caught him trespassing in your garden, sir," said Loder promptly. "He had doubtless been stealing fruit."

"I hadn't!" cried Dicky Nugent shrilly.

"Silence!" thundered the Head. "Whether you committed a theft or not, you had no right to be in my garden."

"Dr. Locke's garden!" interrupted a voice from the back of the hall.

The Head glared at the speaker.

"Stand out, the boy who spoke!" he roared.

But no one came forward. The voice had sounded suspiciously like Micky Desmond's, but the new Head was not yet familiar with the voices of his charges. He realized that it would be futile to insist on the speaker standing forth. His frown deepened, and he turned to Dicky Nugent.

"Remove your coat!" he commanded. Mr. Quelch could keep silent no longer. He stepped forward at once and caught the Head by the arm.

"You are surely not going to birch a diminutive boy like Nugent minor?" he said in horrified tones.

"Do not alarm yourself, Mr. Quelch," said the Head dryly. "I am merely going to cane him."

The caning, however, proved to be almost as bad as the birching which Billy Bunter had received.

Dicky Nugent was a plucky little chap, but he could not repress a series of yelps as the cane fell across his shoulders.

There was a sudden commotion at the back of the hall, and a white-faced junior came hurrying down the centre gangway. It was Frank Nugent.

"Stop, sir!" he panted. "I'm not going to stand by and see my minor ill-treated like this!"

A breathless hush followed Frank Nugent's dramatic outburst.

The Head scowled, and his aggressive jaw thrust out more prominently than ever.

"You forget yourself, sir?" he thundered. "Go back to your place immediately, or I will give you a severe flogging!"

Frank Nugent hesitated. Then he caught Mr. Quelch's eye. The Remove master seemed to be urging him to go back and not make a scene. Slowly and reluctantly Frank turned on his heel and went back to his place.

The Head completed the caning. Then, facing his audience, he delivered a brief but powerful lecture, threatening the boys with all sorts of pains and penalties if they failed to observe the school rules.

"The school will now dismiss," he concluded.

And there was not a single smiling face to be seen as the fellows trooped out of Big Hall. The first flogging parade had indeed been no matter for merriment.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Takes Action!

GREYFRIARS was in a turmoil. The Hunnish methods of the new Head were freely criticised.

In the masters' studies, as well as in the senior and junior apartments, Dr. Sterndale was discussed, and the remarks made about him were the reverse of complimentary.

But the new Head wasn't the only person who came in for criticism.

Loder of the Sixth had made himself very unpopular by toadying to Dr. Sterndale, and by bringing Dicky Nugent to

judgment. True, the fag had been trespassing in the Head's garden, for some reason best known to himself, but he had done nothing to warrant such a severe caning as he had received in Big Hall. Loder could easily have dealt with the matter himself by awarding Dicky an imposition.

Everybody agreed that Loder had acted like a fool. He was trying to curry favour with the new Head, and to get into his good graces. And the Greyfriars fellows could not stand a toady. They showed Loder very plainly what they thought of him. He was hooted and hissed when he appeared in public, and his fellow prefects gave him the cold shoulder.

As for Billy Bunter, he was feeling decidedly firm and sure after the terrible ordeal he had passed through.

Mr. Quelch felt sorry for the fat junior, and actually excused him from lessons. The Remove master had witnessed the flogging at close quarters, and he knew that Bunter's sufferings had been very real.

Bunter limped out into the bright sunshine of the Close. He was glad to be excused lessons. His back was smarting painfully, and he kept twitching his shoulders as he walked.

"Boast! Brute! Tyrant!" snorted Bunter, shaking his fist in the direction of the Head's study window. "I'm not going to take this sort of treatment lying down! I'll write to my pater, and get you kicked out of Greyfriars! And I've a jolly good mind to have the law on you!"

Bunter lowered his fist in the nick of time, for at that moment the window was thrown up, and the hard, cruel face of Dr. Sterndale became visible.

"Bunter!" thundered the Head, "why are you not in your Form-room?"

"Mr. Quelch has excused me from lessons, sir," answered the fat junior.

The Head frowned.

"Go to your Form-room at once!" he snapped. "Give my compliments to Mr. Quelch, and tell him you are to take your lessons as usual. That is an order from me!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Billy Bunter beat a reluctant retreat to the Remove Form-room. He wished he had not gone out into the Close, and then the Head would not have seen him.

Mr. Quelch was surprised to see Bunter come back. He raised his eyebrows as the fat junior rolled into the room.

"Why have you returned, Bunter?" he asked. "I excused you from lessons, my boy."

"Yes, I know, sir; but the Head says it's like your cheek to take the law into your own hands!"

"What?"

"He happened to spot me in the Close, sir, and he wanted to know why I wasn't in the Form-room. I told him you had excused me, and he said 'My hat! What a nerve! Go back to your Form-room at once, and tell Mr. Quelch it's like his cheek to let you off lessons!'"

Mr. Quelch frowned.

"I am certain that Dr. Sterndale did not make use of such opprobrious expressions," Bunter, he said. "You are telling a falsehood, as usual. However, I can quite believe that the headmaster ordered you back to the Form-room. You had better go to your place."

Billy Bunter rolled to his place in the back row and sat down. But he paid no attention to the lesson. Instead of copying out Latin verbs, he proceeded to scribble a note to his father. Mr. Quelch saw that he was thus engaged,

but he did not rebuke him. He was feeling very bitter towards the Head for having sent Bunter back.

When the class was dismissed Billy Bunter beckoned to Harry Wharton & Co.

"I say, you fellows! I'm going to get old Sterndale the order of the boot! I've sent for my pater, and he'll come here and kick up ructions! Shouldn't be surprised if he gave Sterndale a black eye."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I didn't know your pater was a fighting man, Bunter," said Bob Cherry. "Why not send for the pugilistic uncle?"

"That's all right," said Bunter. "My pater will be more than a match for the Head. When he gets his mad up there's no stopping him! Just look what I've written to him. That'll fetch him all right—by the next train, I dare say."

Billy Bunter handed over the letter for the juniors' perusal. It was a weird-looking document, written in a spider-like scrawl, and freely besprinkled with blots.

"My dear Pater,—Just a few lines, hoping you are quite well, as it leaves me at present with all the skin off my back."

"Dr. Locke has got a timid brake-down—or do you call it a nervous brake-down?—and he has been ordered away for a holiday. Who do you think they've sent us in his place? A beastly, boobying tyrant called Sterndale! He's an awful rotter, and he's trying to interfere with the school. This morning he birched me till I was black and blue—in fact, all the collars of the rainbow. I'm not going to sit down tamely under such treatment. I can't stand it, and I'm not going to take it lying down. So I am writing to ask you to come to Greyfriars at once, and put this beastly tyrant in his place, and give him a kick!"

"Please let me have a telegram when I may eggpost you. My back's in a horrible state with wheels and brooms, and give my love to materal."

"Your affectionate son,
"WILLIAM."

Harry Wharton & Co. shrieked when they read this letter. Its quaint phrasings and its even quainter spelling, almost sent them into hysterics.

"Oh, Bunter, Bunter, you'll be the death of me!" sobbed Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Some letter that!" grinned Johnny Bull. "Bunter's pater will have to get an interpreter to make it clear to him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Bull! Nothing wrong with that letter, is there?" demanded Bunter.

"There's nothing right with it, anyway!" said Wharton with a laugh. "But I suppose your pater's used to your letters, and he'll be able to understand it without much trouble!"

Billy Bunter blinked round at the circle of juniors.

"Anybody got a three-ha'penny stamp?" he asked.

Nobody had, but Bunter didn't seem to mind much.

"I'll send it unstamp'd," he said. "The pater will have to pay surcharge for it at the other end, but that won't hurt him. What's tuppence out of all his millions?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter placed the letter in an envelope, already addressed, and he went out into the Close and dropped the missive into the school letter-box.

Dr. Sterndale, who had a habit of springing up suddenly from nowhere, saw

Bunter post the letter. But he made no attempt to intercept it, which was extremely fortunate for William George Bunter!

The fat junior fondly hoped that his father would arrive on the first available train, and that he would come straight up to the school and deal with the tyrannical Head. Bunter bragged to the fellows about his father's wealth and position and influence, and he declared that Dr. Sterndale would be sacked on the spot.

Bunter could not possibly get a reply from his father before the following morning, and he fumed and clafed at the delay.

The reply came all right. It was in the form of a telegram, and it was brought into the Remove Form-room by Trotter, the page, midway through morning lessons.

Billy Bunter jumped eagerly to his feet.

"Telegram for me, sir?" he said excitedly.

Mr. Quelch, who had taken the telegram from Trotter, nodded.

"I will excuse you a moment, Bunter, while you read it," he said.

Bunter stepped out from his place, and took the telegram. He inserted a fat thumb in the buff-coloured envelope and slit it open. His heart was beating furiously; his plump face was flushed and excited.

Was his father coming to Greyfriars by the next train to overthrow the tyrant?

He was not! For this was the cold, cheerless message which greeted Bunter's gaze:

"Serve you right! No sympathy from me.

"FATHER."

Billy Bunter stood thunderstruck. He blinked at that curt message, scarcely able to believe his eyes.

After the harrowing account he had written to his father, of his ill-treatment at the hands of the Head, Mr. Bunter was taking no action. Instead of being moved to righteous indignation on hearing that his hopeful son had been half-skinned, he had sent a callous telegram, saying that it served Bunter right, and that he could expect no paternal sympathy! It was indeed a crushing blow to the fat junior. Perhaps Mr. Bunter was growing weary of getting heartrending epistles from his eldest son. He probably knew that they were grossly exaggerated.

Anyway, there it was. Bunter senior was not coming to Greyfriars to overthrow the tyrant, and the reign of terror seemed likely to go on unchecked.

"Do you wish to send a reply to that telegram, Bunter?" inquired Mr. Quelch.

"Eh? Nunno, sir!" said Bunter, coming out of his gloomy reverie; and he crumpled up the offending telegram and tossed it into the wastepaper basket and rolled dolefully back to his place.

"Is your pater coming?" whispored Bob Cherry, who sat next to the fat junior.

Bunter replied in a savage undertone that his pater was a callous beast.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Last Straw!

"WHAT a life!" said Johnny Bull, with a sigh.

"It hasn't been such a bad one, living since Sterndale came to Greyfriars!" growled Harry Wharton. "What with flogging parades and



"Loder," barked Dr. Sterndale, "do your duty!" The prefect seized Wharton's wrists and swung the junior over his shoulders. The Head stepped back a pace and prepared to wield the birch. He swung it back over his shoulder and delivered the first stroke with all his strength. Swish! Wharton shivered when the blow fell, but he made no murmur. Masters and boys alike admired his pluck.

(See Chapter 10.)

iron discipline and interference with the liberty of the subject, it's perfectly awful!"

"And yet we sing 'Britons never shall be slaves!'" said Nugent bitterly.

"Well, what can we do?" said Wharton helplessly. "The governors have put Sterndale in power, and we've got to acknowledge his authority and knuckle under to him!"

Bob Cherry began singing a fragment from a Gilbert and Sullivan opera:

"He never should bow down
To a domineering frown,
Or the tang of a tyrant's tongue!"

"That's all very well!" said Johnny Bull. "But we've simply got to knuckle under to Sterndale, as Wharton says!"

"We could kickfully rebel against his authority," suggested Hurree Singh. "Start a rebellion, do you mean? Where's the sense in that, unless we have the whole school on our side? It's no use a handful of fellows going on strike, or even a whole Form. Of course, if the whole school rose in revolt, it would be another matter!"

"And that's precisely what will happen if Sterndale goes on in his way," he began," said Wharton grimly.

The Famous Five of the Remove were seated in front of the pavilion, watching the cricket. It was Saturday afternoon, and the green playing-fields

of Greyfriars were bathed in glorious sunshine.

The school first eleven were playing against a military team from Canterbury. And there was every promise of an interesting finish. The soldiers had batted first on a good wicket and rattled up the useful score of 160. Greyfriars were now batting, and Wingate and Gwynne were together at the wicket. The score was 150 for eight wickets, and Wingate, who had gone in first, was going strong for his century. He had made the bulk of the runs off his own bat.

"Well hit, sir!"

"Good old Wingate!" The captain of Greyfriars had opened his shoulders to a half-volley, and the ball sped away over the green turf and bumped against the railings which marked the boundary.

"Another four to old Wingate!" said Bob Cherry. "He must be getting on towards his hundred. If he makes his century, and wins the match into the bargain, we'll give him quite a giddy ovation!"

"Yes, rather!"

The juniors ceased to discuss the hated Dr. Sterndale, and focused their attention on the game. Gwynne's wicket fell at length, and there was only one more man to go in. Greyfriars wanted a dozen runs to win. It was going to be a tight finish.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 651.

Walker was the last man. Padded and gloved, he came down the pavilion steps, and Harry Wharton & Co. called out to him.

"Kiss your end up, Walker!"
"Leave the hitting to old Wingate!"
Walker grinned a trifle nervously—for he was about to brave a big ordeal—and went to join Wingate at the wicket.

All eyes were turned towards the playing-pitch now. The game was drawing to its climax. Everybody was sitting up and taking notice, so to speak.

Walker of the Sixth was not a brilliant bat, but he could generally be relied upon to keep his end up in an emergency. And he kept it up now.

A tall lieutenant was bowling. He had a sweeping over-arm swing and he banged the ball down as hard as he could. But Walker was not to be intimidated by these hurricane tactics. He stopped every ball dead and played out the over.

Harry Wharton & Co. breathed again. "Wingate's turn now!" muttered Nugent.

The captain of Greyfriars took his stance and there was resolute expression on his clean-cut face. A dozen runs were wanted, and Wingate had made up his mind to get them in that over.

The first ball was too good to hit. Wingate had to be content with playing back to it, and he only just prevented it from wrecking his wicket. The next ball pitched short, and Wingate, jumping forward to meet it, sent it soaring through space. It cleared the railings, and dropped with a thud at the foot of the pavilion steps. A mighty hit for six!

Wingate was cheered to the echo. "Only six more now!" said Bob Cherry breathlessly.

"If Wingate has got another hit like that—" began Johnny Bull.

Wingate was smiling as he got into position for the next ball.

"How many have you made?" asked the military wicket-keeper. "Pretty nearly a hundred, I should think." "Twenty-four," said Wingate, who always counted his runs. "I want six to complete my century, and, incidentally, to win the match!"

"By Jove! I believe you'll do it, too!" said the wicket-keeper, crouching low behind the stumps.

Two hundred pairs of eyes were fixed upon Wingate's athletic form. The Greyfriars fellows were confident that another mighty hit for six was coming.

The tall lieutenant started his run. His arm whizzed round like a Catherine-wheel, and down came the ball.

Just as he was about to make his stroke, Wingate's vision was obscured. Somebody happened to pass in front of the bowling screen, thus obstructing his sight of the ball.

Crash!
The stumps were spread-eagled. Wingate turned, and gazed ruefully at the wreckage. And there was a groan from two hundred throats.

Greyfriars had lost the match, and Wingate, the hope of his side, had been clean bowled when within six runs of his century!

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Walker as the players started to leave the field. "How did that happen, Wingate?"

The captain of Greyfriars was bristling with indignation.

"Some fearful idiot walked across the bowling screen just as I was about to make my stroke!" he growled. "I lost sight of the ball for a fraction of a second, and there you are!"

Walker gave a snort of anger.

"Where's the priceless Junatic who walked across the screen?" he shouted. "I'll go and give him a piece of my mind!"

Wingate looked to see who it was who had caused the obstruction. Then he gave a start.

"My hat! It was the Head!"

It was indeed the much-detestated Dr. Sterndale who had caused Greyfriars to lose the match, and who had prevented Wingate from making his century. He had not wilfully done it, of course. It had been done in ignorance. Not being a cricketer himself, the Head had no idea what a bowling screen was for. He probably imagined it had been erected merely as an ornament. And he had calmly passed in front of it just as the batsman was shaping for his stroke.

Wingate looked glum. "I can't very well go and give the Head a dressing-down, can I?" he said. "If it had been anybody else I should have shaken him!"

But there were others who were not disposed to allow the incident to pass without comment. Lots of fellows had seen the Head walk across the bowling screen, and in their wrath and chagrin they started to make a hostile demonstration against Dr. Sterndale.

Quite a chorus of hooting and hissing arose. The Head was in no doubt as to whom it was intended for. Everybody was glaring in his direction, and the hoots and hisses grew louder and more menacing.

"Boo-oo-oo!"

"Beastly old tyrant!"

"What did you want to walk across the screen for?"

"We only wanted half a dozen runs, and we've had got them if it hadn't been for you!"

In vain, Wingate attempted to check the uproar. The fellows insisted on giving full vent to their feelings.

Dr. Sterndale was fairly dancing with rage.

"Be silent!" he raged. "How dare you! How dare you make a hostile demonstration against your headmaster!"

But the more the Head stamped and shouted, the louder grew the uproar. Two hundred fellows were taking part in the demonstration, and Dr. Sterndale could not silence them.

Almost choking with rage, the Head

turned on his heel and strode away. It was not until he had disappeared into the school building that the uproar subsided.

But Dr. Sterndale, in his vindictive way, meant to be amply revenged upon the Greyfriars fellows. He would punish them, he reflected grimly. And he could not have hit upon a more drastic form of punishment.

That evening, a terse announcement appeared on the notice-board, in the Head's handwriting, to the effect that all cricket would be suspended for a month in consequence of what had taken place that afternoon.

"Any breach of this order," the announcement added, "will be severely punished."

And underneath this statement appeared the bold, aggressive signature of Dr. Samuel Sterndale.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Rank Defiance!

NO cricket! It was a bombshell for Greyfriars. The fellows could scarcely believe it at first. But there it was, in black and white, on the school notice-board. No cricket for a whole month!

It was the last straw—the crowning act of tyranny on the part of the new Head.

A wave of fierce indignation swept through the school.

Dr. Sterndale had already interfered with the rights of the fellows to an unpardonable extent. Without any real reason for so doing, he had cancelled the privilege of late passes. He had also introduced compulsory night-classes, which were in addition to prep. Not content with this, he had interfered in the school kitchen, and made drastic alterations in the school diet. The food was of inferior quality, and less plentiful than usual. This, of course, was gall and wormwood to Billy Bunter. The fat junior declared that he was wasting away to a shadow; and his hatred of Dr. Sterndale, like the little apple in the orchard, grew and grew.

And now, to cap everything, the Head had banned cricket!

On Sunday afternoon, when the Greyfriars fellows went on their usual walks, they bitterly discussed the Head's latest act of tyranny.

"It's enough to cause a rebellion straight away!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "No cricket for a whole giddy month! Jever hear the like?"

"Just because we hooted old Sterndale yesterday!" said Nugent. "He thoroughly deserved it, too. It was all through him that Wingate lost his wicket, and Greyfriars lost the game."

"Life without cricket," said Johnny Bull, "won't be worth living."

That was how everybody felt about it. The Famous Five of the Removs were very keen cricketers. They loved the grand old summer game. It was meat and drink to them. And to think that they would not be able to handle a bat, or bowl a ball for a month! It was stark tragedy.

"We're due to go over to St. Jim's on Wednesday afternoon, to play them on their ground," said Wharton. "I suppose I shall have to write to Tom Merry and cancel the fixture."

"Don't!" urged Bob Cherry.

"But, my dear chap, what else can I do?"

"Defy the Head's order," said Bob bluntly.

Wharton gave a low whistle.

"There would be a terrible rumpus if we did that!" he said.

(Continued on page 17.)

STARS OF THE CIRCUS



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THE MAN AT THE HELM!

Some Trials and Tribulations of a Headmaster.

By Dr. Locke.

THERE are people who will tell you that my position is a sinecure—in other words, a "soft job."

I happened to be passing along the Remove passage a short time back, and from the open door of Study No. 7 the voice of William Bunter floated out to me.

"I say, you fellows! Mustn't it be ripping to be a headmaster? No work, no worry, and plenty to eat, including the bread of idleness!"

Naturally, I did not stop to argue the point with a junior—especially an stupid a boy as Bunter. I passed on, smiling grimly at his words.

A headmaster no work or worry? Believe me, he has more than his fair quota of both. Does he eat the bread of idleness? Indeed not! But he certainly has to "devour" a good deal of classic literature, and to "consume" plenty of midnight oil!

My duties are many and various. I have to arrange for the admission of new boys to the school. I have to conduct the Sixth Form at lessons every day. I have to interview parents, and cope with mountains of correspondence. I have to make a monthly report to the Board of Governors, concerning the progress of the school. I have to attend educational meetings in various parts of the country. In fact, there seems no end to my multitudinous duties. And yet, according to the ignorant Bunter, I eat the bread of idleness!

Another task that falls to my lot is the administration of corporal punishment. This is the most unpleasant task of all, but it is one which I dare not shirk. It is no pleasure to me to wield the birch; but that instrument of torture is a necessary evil. There will always be bad characters in a school of the size of Greyfriars, and so long as there are bad characters there will be birchings. One frequently hears a lot of sentimental talk about ruling by kindness; but such methods only succeed with the better type of boy, and are worse than useless in the case of hardened offenders.

Skinner of the Remove was brought before me the other day on a charge of breaking bounds at night. Supposing I had said to him: "Now, Skinner, my dear boy, these things aren't done, you know! I won't punish you this time, but you must be a good boy in future." Would that have deterred Skinner from breaking bounds again? Indeed it would not. Whereas the birching I administered will, I trust, act as a powerful deterrent.

Those who imagine that a Headmaster's life is a bed of roses would do well to readjust their views. I seldom retire to rest until the small hours of the morning, and I have to be up betimes in order to conduct a daily service in chapel. Sunday, which is a day of rest for most people, is my busiest day. If I have to think out my sermons, and conduct several services.

I trust that this article will dispose, once and for all, of the impression that I occupy a "soft job."

BOXING BREVITIES!

By Bob Cherry.

AWAG in the Remove states that boxing was invented on Boxing Day. I warn him that his dooms will come about long before Doomsday.

Billy Bunter says that the worst of a "straight left" is that his nose is never "left straight!"

Alonzo Todd is evidently taking up boxing. The other day I saw him studying a copy of "Punch!"

Boxing contests are not supposed to take place in the dining-hall, but I saw Bolsover major have "a good blow" at his soup!

Micky Desmond is "rale Oirish." In describing his latest fight with Balstrode, he said, "The first time I hit him, I missed him, and the second time I hit him in the same place, he jabbers!"

Dick Russell had an unpleasant experience a few days back. He was strolling through Friarisle when a dog came up and "licked" him!

The funks of the Remove are very fond of quoting the famous passage:

"He who fights and runs away,
May live to fight another day."

To which I would add:

"But he who stands his ground and
Is worth a dozen funky chaps!"

Horace Coker proudly boasts that he is in his element in the ring. In a cattle-ring, perhaps!

Alonzo Todd asked his Uncle Benjamin to send him a pair of gloves. Judge of Alonzo's horror when a pair of boxing-gloves arrived! What Loney wanted was a pair of the white kid variety!

Mr. Prout has been telling us of a fierce encounter he had with a "grizzly" in the Rocky Mountains. A fight with "bear" lists, we presume?

EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

THIS week's special supplement, although dealing with no particular subject, covers a wide range. I have given my contributors their heads, as it were, and the result is, in my humble estimation, distinctly good.

To start off with, we have a special article from the pen of no less a person than Dr. Locke himself. We were promised this article a few weeks back when we published a Special "Headmasters" Supplement, but Dr. Locke was unable to let the printer have his copy in time. The article, however, is none the worse for keeping. We take this opportunity of thanking Dr. Locke for the honour he has bestowed upon us.

You will find a full page contribution from Sammy Bunter in this issue. It is not often that the egregious Sammy "hobnobs" with the literary heads, but this week he has passed the editorial critical eye and the dreaded blue pencil. It goes without saying that William George Bunter has his a lack this week. You will be amused by his communications with a certain weekly paper, and the lucky escape he had from being hauled before the Benks—or worse.

Bob Cherry is well to the fore with his cheery chatter on the noble art, as is Herbert Vernon-Smith with a short, complete story. A good programme, methinks, and one that will drive dull care away.

You would be doing me a good turn if you passed on this supplement—when you have finished reading it, of course—to a non-reader. We are out to break records in circulation figures. Already the "Herald's" followers number many hundreds of thousands, but there's plenty of room for more. Pile in, chums, and help us in the giddy campaign.

If any of you care to submit any subjects for future supplements, I will endeavour to turn them from fancies into realities, as it were. But a word of warning! No suggestions for "Kiss-in-the-Ring" or "Butterfly Catching" supplements, please.

By the way, I have a special "Horse-riding" supplement in course of preparation for next Monday. As the nucleus of our grand parent paper, the MAGNET LIBRARY, appears on the market during Derby week, this subject is, I think, most fitting for the occasion. Our waterword is "Topical"; and without a blush I modestly declare that we live up to it. What do you think?

HARRY WHARTON.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 851.



Skinner's Little Joke!

By A. Vernon Smith.

"I SAY, you fellows," said Billy Bunter, addressing a crowd of fellows in the junior Common-room, "poor old Trotter's ill!"

"And Oliver Cromwell's dead!" remarked Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull," remonstrated Bunter. "It's no joking matter, you know! He's dangerously ill!"

"Not!" said Harry Wharton, grinning. "He's got a cold, I believe, but it's nothing serious."

"That's all you know, Wharton!" said Bunter loftily. "When I left him he was in a bad way. There were—"

"Six nurses holding his hands, and four doctors feeling his pulse—what?" added Bob Cherry blandly.

"Oh, really, you know, Cherry?" asserted Bunter indignantly. "It's no joking matter, I can tell you. His condition's simply critical. I expect the poor chap's transpired by now."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's nothing to chuckle about!" roared Bunter. "Why don't you fellows listen! I'm jolly serious."

"So am I," remarked Johnny Bull grimly, gripping Bunter by the ear. "Now, either say what you're going to say, Billy, or out you go."

"Vorough!" howled Bunter, as Bull gave his ear a gentle twist. "Leggo, Bull, you rotter! I'll not let your boots in if you don't leggo! I say, you fellows, with Trotter being so dangerously ill, I've decided to clean all the Remove chaps' boots at—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"At twopence a time," finished Bunter, jumping away as Johnny Bull released him in sheer astonishment.

There was a gasp, and then a yell of laughter at that. The idea of Bunter cleaning boots was the limit. Bunter hates work like poison. Had it been Fisher T. Fish who had thought of such a wheeze, now—

Billy Bunter blushed rosy at the grinning juniors indignantly. He was evidently in earnest about it.

"Think the fat ass means it," chuckled Harry Wharton. "It's not a bad wheeze for raising the wind, either—for Bunter. Anyway, I've got a pair of boots in a shocking state, and if Bunter likes to tackle 'em—"

"Hand over the dibs and I'll jolly soon show you!" said the Owl of the Remove eagerly.

Harry Wharton handed over his twopence with grin, and other fellows followed his example, also grinning. There was always the risk that Billy Bunter wouldn't carry out his part of the bargain, but they were willing to take the risk. Most of the fellows had odd pairs of boots requiring cleaning, and soon Bunter was besieged by a crowd of grinning juniors with muddy boots and shoes under their arms.

Inside five minutes the Owl of the Remove had realised the princely sum of half-a-crown, and was grinning like a Cheshire cat.

Skinner, Moot, and Snoot, although unwilling to start with any twopences, were quite willing to assist Bunter. They placed the pile of muddy footgear in a basket, and carried them round to the woodshed.

Then Skinner cut off to the kitchen for blacking-brushes and blacking, and when he came back to where Bunter was sitting

amidst a pile of boots and shoes, he was chuckling to himself.

"Here you are, Bunter, old fellow!" he said, planting the brushes and tin before Bunter. "Fire away! No sneaking off before you've done 'em, though, remember! I'll lock the door until they're finished, though. Prevention's better than cure, you know."

"Oh, really, Skinner, you rotter—"

"Bow-wow!"

And, chuckling gleefully, Skinner departed, turning the key in the lock, while Bunter blinked after him wraithfully. It was pretty clear from Bunter's face that he had had no intention of carrying out his part of the contract, as Skinner had guessed.

But Bunter realised there was no help for it now, and soon sounds of labour came from within the woodshed as the fat spoofer brushed away furiously.

A crowd of us swarmed round the little dirty window to watch the unusual sight of Bunter working. He presented a comical picture. There was a dab of blacking on each of his fat cheeks, one on his chin, and he looked as if he had dipped his nose into the Johnny Perry tin, streaked down his face, streaking his likeness to that of an Australian aboriginal.

The floor was littered with boots of all varieties and sizes.

"Oh, my only aunt Martha!" choked Bob Cherry. "What a sight! Good old Day & Martin!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I vote we go round and begin sorting them out," grinned Harry Wharton. "They're mixed up like a blessed pig's breakfast!"

"Hear, hear!"

A moment later we were surging inside the woodshed. Bunter blinked up breathlessly as we entered. There was rather a feeble grin on his fat face; but it didn't stay there long.

"M-m-m-m my hat!" gasped Harry Wharton, picking up a pair of boots. "Whose the dibs do these belong to, Bunter?"

"Oh really, Wharton, old chap," mumbled Bunter. "They're yours, you know."

"Mine!" howled Wharton. "These beastly things can't be mine, you fat—"

Johnny Bull suddenly snatched the boots from his chum's hand with a yell.

"I believe they're jolly well mine!" he howled wrathfully. "Oh crumbs!"

Johnny Bull fairly snorted as he blinked

at his boots. They shone like searchlights. You could almost see your face them.

"Bunter, you fat clam," he roared wrathfully, "what the blump—what on earth have you cleaned these boots with?"

"Oh, really, Bull! Blacking, of course. Why—"

"They're not black, you blundering dummy! They're more blue than black. You—you jolly well tarred 'em, I do believe!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's cleaned 'em with blacklead!" chorled Skinner.

"What-a-ut?"

There was a sudden rush towards William George Bunter, and for the moment things looked very blacking—I mean, black—for the Owl of the Remove. But Wharton held the crowd back.

"Wait a bit, you chaps!" he snapped. "Where did you get this stuff from, Bunter?"

"Skinner gave it me," mumbled Bunter, in alarm.

"Oh!"

"Is that right, Skinner?" demanded Harry Wharton. "Did you give Bunter this filthy stuff to clean our boots with?"

"Ahem! Ye-e-s!" stammered Skinner, glancing rather uneasily around him. "It—it was only a joke, of course. You fellows can take a joke, surely. Vorough!"

Skinner roared feebly as Johnny Bull smote him on the nose.

"Collar him, you chaps!" he yelled. "Wreck our boots up, would he? We'll see if Skinner can take a joke."

"What-ho!"

"Here, I say, you chaps, leggo!"

But Skinner's frantic protestations were unavailing. The innocent juniors made a combined rush, and the joker was seized by many wrathful hands and soundly bumped on the brick floor. Then the juniors streamed out, locking the door after them, and leaving the practical joker to remove all traces of blacklead from their boots at his leisure.

As for Billy Bunter, he ruffled away towards the tackshop, a fat grin on his face and half a crown in his pocket.

But if anyone—save Trotter—suggests cleaning our boots again, I'm jolly sure he'll get respald. I don't suppose anyone ever will, though.

THE END.

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A NEW RELATIONSHIP.

Tommy's mother had married again, and though Tommy didn't in the least object to his new father, he was somewhat puzzled as to their relationship.

"Mamma," he said, "is this man my step-papa?"

"Yes, dear; he is your step-papa."

"Well, mamma," pursued thoughtful Thomas, "you call me your little lad, don't you?"

"Yes, dearie; you are mamma's little lad."

"Then, mamma," concluded Thomas, "I suppose I must be my step-papa's little step-ladder."

[Supplement to



Strategy Unrewarded!

A Rattling, Rousing, Sparkling
Spoffa Story.
By
Sammy Bunter of the Second Form at
Greyfriars.

IT was a grate day at Greyfriars. Jonathan Spunkuss Giveweight, the champion marble-player and quick fire head of the Yewited States of America, had arrived to contend against the champion of the Second Form at Greyfriars.

Flags were flying from the windows, and the whole school was decorated up to a high pitch of festive gaiety. Even gaily coloured balloons were flying from the chimney-pots of that grate seat of learning, Greyfriars.

All eyes were turned upon me, this grate day of days, as I strode modestly about the quad; for wasn't I the champion of the Second, and wasn't I the fellow who had so valiantly taken up the cudgels against that wily snots from across the ocean?

At the commencement-some of our fellows scoffed—and I couldn't play marbles for toffee. But when I had succeeded in knocking spots, Dicky Sulent, George Tab, Gutz, and all the rest of the Form, I sored like a balloon in their constimation. They were forced to conclude that I was the grate and only White Hope of Greyfriars.

"Feeling fit, Sammy?" asked the Head, as I strode with him to the starting-point where the first game of flip-hole was to be contested.

"Fit as the proverbial fiddle, old top!" I replied, heaving with modest confidence. "I'm going to make spots off the American fend. You can bet your last collar-stud that I shall win that meddle, and thus save Greyfriars from a crushing defeat."

The Head smiled, a satisfied smile as I imparted this information. He had obviously been gravely concerned about my flannel fitness.

But there was no horse to worry. I had undergone a very severe training, and I was feeling in the pink of kondishun.

A moment later I had peeled off my boots. The horse was a veritable quagmire. Never before in all the long and eventful history of Greyfriars had such a mity rore been heard as Jonathan and myself lined up in our limnastick attire to commence operations.

Mr. Lascells was in charge of proceedings. "Master Giveweight will lead off," he said curtly. "And may the best man win."

Instantly there was a terrific rore as my rival peeled down in the mud with a brilliantly coloured glass slipper clutched betwixt thumb and fingers. His eyes were gazed intently upon the hole two hundred yards away.

There he stood. The marble sped onwards at terrific speed straight as a arrow towards the hole. And had I not given his arm a sharp nudge at the critical moment, it would certainly have entered.

Fortunately, the referee was blowing his nose at the moment, and my brilliant move succeeded.

The game continued. We were allowed five shots each. The competitor who got the most marbles in the hole, or nearest to the hole, won the match.

Becked by my previous successes, I nudged his arm a second time. Again the marble rolled aside.

Someone cried "fow!" I think it was that beast Wharton, of the Remove; I am not quite sure. But the referee happened to be there, and he heard it. He called it out, and hereing the shout he commanded silence.

Then followed the third, fourth, and fifth. My cute little rose worked like a charm.

The American glared at me horribly, and kept on uttering weird embrokaitions. But nobody could understand him excepting Fishy, of the Remove—and nobody ever wanted to understand Fishy.

Then came my turn—the grate moment of my life had arrived. With five separate meakular flips, I sent the marbles speeding onwards towards their goal. Suddenly a mity rore rent the air as each marble was acute to role within the hole.

"Sammy Bunter wins!" cried Mr. Lascells. "Well done, Sammy!" rored everybody. "Good old Greyfriars!"

Jonathan Spunkuss Giveweight clenched his teeth in helpless, lister mortification. Fishy was dancing about like a cat on hot bricks as he saw the downfall of his nation's representative.

Then followed the second and last hole. In this we each had ten marbles. Which-ever one got the most marbles nearest the hole was proclaimed the winner, and he who the gold meddle with his initials inscribed thereupon.

I was determined to win. To do or to die, like the chaps in that grate poem.

"The Charge of the Light-Cakes"—I mean my rival lead off. This time I didn't nudge his arm. I had another triumph card up my sleeve. And I quickly brought this into action.

Direckly he had flipped his ten marbles I slipped mine. Then I tore towards the hole at express speed—like a stroke of greaced lightning, in fact.

Fortunately I was the first to arrive at the hole. Mr. Lascells came next, with the would-have-been champion close on his heels. Then came the eggited crowd of spectators.

Their eyes opened wide with amazeament as they beheld the scene.

Klattered round the hole were ten marbles—mine. But of Jonathan Giveweight's—of the grate American champion's—there was no sign.

"Sammy Bunter wins, hands down!" exclaimed Mr. Lascells, eyeing me proudly. "And I herewith, hereupon proclaim him the winner."

Again a mity rore rent the air as the Head pinned the gold meddle upon my heaving chest. Then he lifted me sholder high.

It was a grate moment. But, unfortunately, it did not last. Quite suddenly an angry rore of protest rent the air.

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like the ripping of canvas sales. I was torn from the Head's proud grasp, and flung upon the moody fore.

"You rotten spofer!" yelled that beast, Dicky Kujent. "Look at his feet, you chaps!"

Instantly I was the center of a klammering throng of misdirected spectators.

"Well, my hat!" yelled the Head savagely. "He's got klay all over his boots, and all the other klay's marbles are stuck to the souls of 'em. Well, I'm blowed!"

And so it came to lite how I had diddled them—at least, the beasts said I'd diddled them. And all that I did was to get klay over the souls of my boots and tread on the other competitor's marbles. Natureley enough, his marbles stuck to the wet klay on the souls of my boots, and so did my own marbles.

Then I quickly dropped a reserve stock of marbles near the hole. Of course, Jonathan's marbles couldn't be found, and I was proclaimed the winner.

But alas! Alack! The rotters found out, and the rest you see. I lost the championship, and in one fit swoop I was changed from the idle of the skool to the moss skorned.

But so do the mity fall! And if that's not strategy unrewarded, dear readers, there tell me what it is! (Nothing but a lot of bunkum—Ed.)

THE END.

A VERY UNPRACTICAL JOKE!

To the Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald."

Dear Wharton,—My little neevew, aged 10, is very interested in your journal. He is coming to Greyfriars on Wednesday afternoon, and I want you to meet the four o'clock train, bring him up to the skool, show him round the additional sanctum and printing works, and give him a jolly good tello.

You will find my neevew a very nice little fellow in every way; and I feel sure you will grant me this request, and entertain him rite royally when he comes.—Your sincerely,

H. H. QUELLEN.

(We were not born yesterday; and it's not difficult to see that this is Nugent minor's clumsy idea of a practical joke. He has endeavoured to draw up a letter in Queichy's handwriting, but any ass can see that the note was written by an uneducated fag. Evidently young Nugent intended to pass himself off as Queichy's nephew, and to have a rattling good time on Wednesday afternoon at our expense. Let me assure the young imp that there is nothing doing!—Ed.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 851.



MY KORRESPONDENSE
WITH
"THE WEEKLY WELSHER."

By BILLY BUNTER.

I. Greyfriars.
January 1st, 1924.

To the Edditer,

The "Weekly Welsher."

Dear Sir,—I have seen yore football kompetishun in this week's isew, and beg to enclose my 4-cast of the results of the matches.

I no you have a rool wich says, "No korrespondense will be entered into in konekkschun with this kompetishun," but I can't refrain from ritng a few lines to say that if ever a fello deserved to win a prize it's me. I have been a keen reader of the "Weekly Welsher" for seven years—ever since it first came out in 1920.

If you will be good enuff to wangle it so that the prize comes to me I shall be internally greatfull.—Yours hoapfully,

W. G. BUNTER.

II. "Weekly Welsher" Office,
Cheat Street,
London.
January 3rd, 1924.

To Master W. Grunter,
Greyfriars School.

Sir,—In reply to your letter of the 1st instant, the Editor desires me to say that you are quite out of order in enclosing a communication with your coupon. Strictly speaking, you should be disqualified from taking part in our competition; but as you appear to have acted in ignorance, we shall not take this step.

With regard to your request that the prize be "wangled" to you, I am to remind you that this journal is the "Weekly Welsher"—not the "Weekly Wangler."—Yours faithfully,

B. FULLEN DE SEATZ
(Sub-Editor).

III. Greyfriars.
January 15th, 1924.

To the Edditer,

The "Weekly Welsher."

Dear Sir,—I read with horror and disgused the result of yore football kompetishun, published in this week's isew. I see that the prize of one hundred pounds goes to:

Mr. Hymn Luxway,
Ocean View,
Wapping.

who gave eleven korrekt results out of twelve.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 851.

What about me? I gave eleven korrekt results, as well. Only one match on my koopon was rong. I gave Swindon to lose, and they went an won by seven goals to nil! In the rest of the matches I gave both teams to win, so I'm bound to have eleven rize.

Please send me my share of the hundred pounds by return of post, and oblige.—Yours oggspectantly,

W. G. BUNTER.
P.S.—Tell yore sub-edditer that my name's Bunter—not Grunter!

IV. "Weekly Welsher" Office,
Cheat Street,
London.
January 17th, 1924.

To Master W. Shunter,
Greyfriars School.

Sir,—Your letter of the 15th instant to hand, and your claim noted.

Kindly let me know if you desire a scrutiny to be made. In this event you will be liable to a scrutiny fee of ten pounds, which amount you will be required to forward to this office if it is found that your claim is not valid.—Yours faithfully,

I. DUPRE (Editor).

V. Greyfriars.
January 20th, 1924.

To the Edditer,

The "Weekly Welsher."

Of course I want you to make a scrooting, you fool! Go ahead rite away, as I am ravvenus for my share of the hundred pounds!

W. G. BUNTER.
P.S.—B-U-N-T-E-R duzzent spell "Shunter," you prize ijut!

VI. "Weekly Welsher" Office,
Cheat Street,
London.
January 25th, 1924.

To Master P. Hunter,

Greyfriars School.
Sir,—An exhaustive search has been made, and your coupon has been discovered. I find that you failed to predict a single match correctly; therefore, your claim is invalid.

I shall be glad to receive the sum of ten pounds from you by return.—Yours faithfully,

I. DUPRE (Editor).

VII. Greyfriars.
January 27th, 1924.

To the Edditer,

The "Weekly Welsher."
You're a beautifly fraud! Yah! Go and chop chippis!

W. G. BUNTER.

VIII. "Weekly Welsher" Office,
Cheat Street,
London.
January 30th, 1924.

To Master B. Bunting,
Greyfriars School.

Sir,—Before undertaking the manual labour mentioned in your letter of the 27th instant, I must ask you to forward me a remittance for ten pounds.

Unless this amount is paid forthwith, I shall get into communication with your headmaster.—Yours gringly,

I. DUPRE (Editor).

IX. "Weekly Welsher" Office,
Cheat Street,
London.
February 7th, 1924.

To the Headmaster,
Greyfriars School.

Sir,—One of your pupils, Master J. Todhunter, claimed to have won the prize in our recent football competition. A scrutiny was accordingly made, and it was found that the claim was absurd.

I have asked Master Todhunter to forward me ten pounds, being the amount of the scrutiny fee. He has failed to do so, and I am therefore putting the matter in your hands.—Yours faithfully,

I. DUPRE (Editor).

X. Greyfriars.
February 9th, 1924.

To the Editor,

The "Weekly Welsher."

Sir,—In reply to your communication, there is no pupil answering to the name of Todhunter at this school.

Pray refrain from pestering me with any further letters on this subject.—Yours truly,

HERBERT H. LOCKE
(Headmaster).

(A jolly lucky escape for me, dear readers, don't you think so? And all because I didn't rite my signaturre distinctly!—W. G. B.)

[Supplement is.



(Continued from page 12.)

"Blow the rumpus! Besides, there's quite a good chance of the Head's not knowing anything about it."

"A precious poor chance, I'm thinking. Sterndale doesn't miss much of what's going on," said Bob Cherry. "I don't think we ought to knuckle under tamely to this fresh tyranny. I'm all in favour of going to St. Jim's on Wednesday whether the Heads finds out or not!"

"Hear, hear!" said Nugent. "I am in agreement with the worthy and esteemed Bob," said Hurree Singh. "I respectfully propose that we take the lawfulness into our own hands, and play the matchfulness with St. Jim's—and also impart the likelihood!"

Harry Wharton looked thoughtful. "Before we go as far as that," he said. "I think we'll try less drastic methods. Let's appeal to the masters, and try and get them to go in a deputation to the Head, and get him to cancel the order about cricket. After all, he might have written that announcement in a fit of temper. He'll have simmered down by to-morrow, and he might think better of it."

"Some hopes!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Well, we'll put it to the masters, anyway," said Wharton. And the matter was left at that.

As things turned out, however, there was no need for Harry Wharton & Co. to approach the masters. The latter had already met together in conclave, and decided to go to the Head and ask him to remove the ban which he had placed on cricket.

Monday morning brought in its train the usual flogging parade in Big Hall; and the Head was in a very ill humour—possibly because, on that particular morning, there were no defaulters. The previous day having been Sunday, the fellows had behaved themselves; and even Loder of the Sixth had not been able to capture any delinquents. There was no one to flog; and the birch-rod had a much-needed rest.

After the school was dismissed the masters approached the Head in a body. Mr. Froot, being the senior, acted as spokesman.

"On behalf of the masters, sir," he said. "I shall be glad if you can see your way clear to remove the ban on cricket."

The Head frowned. "My decision is final," he said. "But, sir—"

"It is useless to pursue the topic, Mr. Froot. On Saturday afternoon I was made the subject of a hostile demonstration. I was hooted and hissed by practically every boy in the school. Such a state of affairs is intolerable, and calls for salutary punishment. I have, therefore, prohibited cricket for a month; and I shall expect the masters to support my decision."

"Very well, sir," said Mr. Froot, shrugging his shoulders. "But you must not expect the boys to take this quietly. It is a harsh punishment, and it may easily result in a riot—a rebellion against your authority!"

The Head's frown deepened.

"If there is anything of the nature of a rebellion, it will go hard with the rebels!" he said grimly. "Cricket will be suspended for a month; and I have not the slightest intention of revoking my decision."

The masters retired, looking rather crestfallen. The Head was resolved to stick to his guns; and no amount of pressure or persuasion would cause him to cancel his latest order.

When lessons were over that day, Loder of the Sixth made a tour of all the studios, collecting cricket gear. The Head had ordered all bats and balls and wickets to be confiscated.

Loder seemed to take a malicious delight in carrying out the Head's instructions. Loder was a spoil-sport at heart, and he was probably the only fellow at Greyfriars who did not resent the banning of cricket. He was smiling when he stepped into Study No. 1 in the Remove passage. And it was not a pleasant smile.

"Hand over all your cricket gear!" he commanded.

"Why?" demanded Harry Wharton.

"The Head's ordered it to be confiscated."

Frank Nugent gave a snort.

The Head's about the biggest tyrant breathing!" he said.

"Be careful," warned Loder, "or I'll have you out on the next flogging parade!"

Very reluctantly, the juniors handed over their cricket gear. And Loder took his departure, carrying a large cricket-bag, full of bats and balls, stumps and pads, and other cricketing paraphernalia. It was all to be locked up in one of the lumber-rooms for a month.

"That's fairly done it!" groaned Nugent. "How can we play St. Jim's when they've confiscated our cricket tackle?"

The St. Jim's fellows will lend us some," said Wharton.

"So you've quite decided to play on Wednesday, Harry?"

"Yes. If we can do it without the Head's knowing, all well and good. And if he happens to find out—well, we must face the music."

"Sterndale can hardly flog the whole eleven!" said Nugent.

"I'm not so sure of that. He'd flog the whole school if he could find a good enough excuse. But we'll play the match and chance it. We can't possibly disappoint the St. Jim's fellows."

"No; rather not!"

Thus it came about that on Wednesday afternoon eleven innocent-looking fellows strolled down to the school gates. They were dressed in their ordinary Etons. Their cricket flannels had been sent down to the station in advance.

Nobody but a very suspicious-minded person would have imagined that the party of juniors was going to play cricket. They looked as if they were setting out on a harmless half-holiday ramble.

Loder of the Sixth was standing in the school gateway. And Loder was a very suspicious-minded person indeed. He noticed that the party numbered eleven—a very significant number.

"Where are you kids going?" he demanded, planting himself in the juniors' path.

"We're going to explore the beauties of the countryside, Loder," said Bob Cherry gaily. "Topping afternoon, isn't it?"

Loder scowled.

"I believe you're going over to St. Jim's to play cricket!" he said.

"Go on!"

"This is a deliberate attempt to set

the Head's orders at defiance!" said Loder. "Cricket has been banned for a month, and you know it. I won't allow you to pass out of gates. Go back at once!"

But the juniors had no intention of being bullied by Loder. They were in such a rebellious mood that it was very doubtful if the Head himself would have turned them from their purpose.

"Stand aside, Loder!" said Wharton fiercely.

"You're not going out of gates—" began the prefect.

"Rats!"

There was a rush of feet, and Loder went sprawling. The juniors stepped over his prostrate form and passed on out of gates. They knew that Loder, in his fury, would report them to the Head, but they did not care. They were in a reckless and devil-may-care mood. And not even a dozen Loders would have prevented the match with St. Jim's taking place.

The juniors tramped down to the station. Tom Brown led the way, playing "Rule Britannia" on the mouth-organ. And the others joined in the chorus with great heartiness. The substituted the word "Schoolboys" for "Britons." And their tuneful voices echoed down the lane.

"Schoolboys never, never, never shall be slaves!"

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Reckoning!

"DELIGHTED to see you, dear boys!"

Such was the obsequy greeting of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of St. Jim's.

The Greyfriars eleven had arrived, and they were greeted very cordially by their rivals. The Remove cricketers were always assured of a hearty welcome at St. Jim's.

"We haven't brought our bats and pads along," explained Harry Wharton as he shook hands with Tom Merry.

"Fact is, they've been confiscated."

"What?"

"Dr. Locke's away ill, and there's an unspeakable tyrant taking his place as Head," Wharton explained. "He's interfered with our rights and our liberties, he's introduced flogging parades, and he's actually gone so far as to ban cricket."

"Gwent Scott!" gasped D'Arcy.

"We've no rights to be here at all," said Wharton. "But, dash it all, we couldn't cry off and disappoint you!"

"Does the Head know you've come over?" asked Tom Merry.

"He knows by now. I know. Loder will have told him. You expect what a charming fellow Loder is. We had a little rumpus with him when we came away, and we left him lying on his back in the school gateway."

"My hat!"

"We've had a ghastly time of it at Greyfriars since the Head came!" said Bob Cherry. "There's been quite an orgy of floggings! Sterndale's worn out about half a dozen birches already!"

"What a howlid, brutal wuffian!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"He's all that, and much more!" said Wharton. "But we won't weary you fellows with our tales of woe. Let's get on with the cricket!"

Quite a crowd of St. Jim's fellows had turned out to see the match, and the conditions were ideal. The wide expanse of playing-field looked very green and inviting.

Tom Merry won the toss. "We'll bat," he said. "It's a perfect wicket, and we hope to keep you leather-hunting until teatime!"

St. Jim's started strongly. Tom Merry and Talbot opened the innings, and they laid on the willow good and hard. Runs came at a rapid rate, and the Greyfriars fellows were kept busy in the field. Squiff and Hurree Singh shared the bowling, and they sent down some very good stuff. But Tom Merry and Talbot were in tip-top form.

Forty runs appeared on the board before the partnership was dissolved. And then Bob Cherry brought off a wonderful catch, low down in the slips, and sent Talbot back to the pavilion.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy followed on. He made some very stylish strokes, and gathered a useful dozen before Hurree Singh bowled him.

All the St. Jim's batsmen did well. There was not a single failure. Even Patty Wynn, who came in last, and who was not regarded as a run-getter, hit up a lively 15.

The innings closed with the score at 150, of which Tom Merry had made 77, not out.

Harry Wharton looked grim. "We shall have all our work cut out to top that total," he said. "But we'll do it, or perish in the attempt!"

"Yes, verily!" said Bob Cherry. Then he broke off suddenly and gave a violent start.

The tall, athletic young man came striding across the green turf. He was recognised, even at a distance, by the Greyfriars cricketers.

"Mr. Lascelles!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"He's been sent over by the Head to bring us back," said Vernon-Smith.

The cricketers exchanged glances of dismay. Was the game to be spoilt, after all?

Mr. Lascelles bore down upon the group of juniors. He noticed their dismay, and he smiled slightly.

"Good-afternoons, my boys!" said the young mathematics master quite cordial. "So you have chosen to set Dr. Sterndale's orders at defiance?"

"Yes, sir," said Wharton.

"Well, it's an indiscreet thing for me to say, but I can hardly blame you," said Mr. Lascelles. "I do not approve—and neither do my colleagues—of this ban on cricket. But I fear you will have to pay a heavy price for your defiance. Dr. Sterndale is angry. It is not too much to say that he is raging!"

"He has sent you over to fetch us back, sir?" queried Nugent.

Mr. Lascelles nodded.

"How does the game stand?" he asked.

"St. Jim's have had their innings, sir, and made a hundred and fifty," said Wharton. "We haven't started yet, and I suppose we shall be able to now. I suppose you want us to pack up and come straight back with you, sir?"

"Not at all," said Mr. Lascelles.

"True, Dr. Sterndale ordered me to bring you back at once; but I find there is no train until six o'clock. It is now only four. I do not see the fun of waiting for the station for two hours. You had better have your innings."

"There was a trinkie in the master's eyes as he spoke. He was a great sportsman himself, and he realised how keenly the juniors would feel it if the game was suspended. He wanted them to have their innings. They were going to be flogged by the Head on their

return to Greyfriars. That was ample punishment, without having the match abandoned into the bargain.

Harry Wharton & Co. brightened up at once. They could have bugged Mr. Lascelles. And they thanked their lucky stars that it was not Mr. Prout, or Mr. Quelch, who had been sent over to fetch them. Had any other master but Mr. Lascelles been sent, they would not have had their innings.

"You're a brick, sir!" said Bob Cherry heartily.

"The brickfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Singh.

Mr. Lascelles smiled, and strolled away in the direction of the pavilion. He seated himself in a deck-chair, and strolled down to watch the Greyfriars innings.

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry were the opening pair. The captain of the Remove played cautious cricket. Fatty Wynn was bowling, and Fatty's crafty deliveries wanted watching.

Bob Cherry, however, was in a lively mood. He bugged the ball to the boundary on several occasions, and he scored nearly three times as fast as his partner. He took plenty of risks, but it was Bob's lucky day. Everything came off for him.

The score rose rapidly—thanks to Bob's hurricane hitting. The figures on the board rose from 20 to 30, from 30 to 40, and from 40 to 50. Then Wharton was bowled off his pads. He had made a very useful 15. And Bob Cherry was still unbeaten.

When Wharton's wicket fell there was an interval for tea. It was a very short interval, for the Greyfriars fellows explained that they had to catch the six o'clock train.

"I don't want ninety to win, and we've only lost one wicket!" said Johnny Bull.

"I think we shall pull it off," said Mr. Lascelles. "I, too, am hopefully optimistic that we shall work the esteemed oracle," said Hurree Singh. "The worthy Bob is in great form!"

After tea, however, a dramatic change came over the game. Wicket fell with tragic frequency—tragic so far as the Greyfriars fellows were concerned; but the St. Jim's fellows would have called it delightful frequency.

Bob Cherry continued to go great guns, but he could get nobody to stay with him. Nugent and Vernon-Smith and Peter Todd were bowled with three successive balls. And Tom Brown contributed one solitary run to the total, and then spooned up an easy catch to cover-point.

Things looked very serious for Greyfriars, until Mark Linley joined Bob Cherry at the wickets. Then came a brilliant partnership. Both batsmen played fine, forcing cricket, hitting out fearlessly at everything.

Tom Merry changed his bowlers, but this did not lessen the rate of scoring. In intervals of ten the hundred was hoisted amid loud applause, and still the runs came merrily.

"I believe Bob and Marky will win the match on their own!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

And he was right. The remaining 50 runs were hit off in record time; and Bob and Mark Linley received quite an ovation. Bob had made 95. And not for many a long day had such mighty hitting been seen on the St. Jim's ground.

"Well, we've had a jolly good afternoon's sport, and now we must pay the piper," said Harry Wharton. "I expect a bill for a flogging all round, but who cares?"

Nobody did apparently. The members

of the Remove eleven were well aware that a flogging from Dr. Sterndale was no light matter, but they had plenty of pluck. They were not likely to make such a fuss about it as Billy Bunter had done.

Mr. Lascelles took the juniors under his escort. He travelled in the same carriage with them, and chatted cheerfully to them on the journey. In his heart, however, he felt intensely sorry for them, for he knew that they would get no mercy at the hands of Dr. Sterndale.

Dusk was descending when the party reached Greyfriars. Gosling, the porter, greeted them in the school gateway.

"Nice going, lads!" he grunted. "Which the 'Ead's in a terrible state, as ever was! 'E's bin rampin' an' ragin' like a madman!"

"Let him ramp!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Let him rage!" granted Squiff.

"He'll ramp and rage once too often, and give himself an apoplectic fit, if he's not jolly careful," said Bob Cherry.

"Has the Head been inquiring for us, Gosy?" asked Tom Brown, with a grin.

"I should just about think 'e 'ad!" said Gosling impressively. "'E's bin down to these 'ere gates 'alf a dozen times durin' the last hour. 'Gosling,' says 'e, 'ave those young rascals returned?" "No, sir," says 'e. Then 'e works itself up into a chokin', tearin' rage, an' 'e says, 'When they do put in an appearance I will flog them without mercy! They 'ave defied my express orders!'"

"Nice, amiable sort of cove, isn't he?" said Nugent.

"There's 'e goin' to be a general hater in Big 'Alf," said Gosling. "an' you're all goin' to 'ave your 'ides tanned!"

"Well, we've just had our faces tanned by the sun, so we might as well have our hides tanned, to match!" said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"'Obtain, you chaps!" said Wharton.

"We'd better be getting in!"

Mr. Lascelles had gone on ahead. He made his way to the Head's study to report that he had brought back the delinquents.

Dr. Sterndale was seated at his desk with a savage scowl on his face.

"You are very late, Mr. Lascelles!" he snapped.

"Yes, sir. There was no train until six o'clock."

"Indeed! So you took the boys to the station, I presume, and waited there until the train arrived?"

"No, sir," said Mr. Lascelles boldly.

"I allowed them to finish their cricket match."

"What!" The Head sat up with a jerk. "You—you actually encouraged the young rascals to defy my orders?"

"I did not see why they should not be allowed to finish their game, sir. You had already expressed your intention of giving them a flogging when they came back. That, in my opinion, is ample punishment."

The Head grew purple in the face.

"You—your opinion, sir, does not count!" he stormed.

"You are an underling here—a subordinate! You were ordered to bring the boys back at once, and, instead of doing so, you allowed them to finish their game. In other words, you openly aided and abetted them in defying my commands. Such conduct on the part of a game master cannot be overlooked. I must ask you to hand in your resignation, and I will place it before the governors."

"Very well, sir," said Mr. Lascelles quietly.

"In the meantime," said the Head, "you will instruct Gosling to ring the school-bell, summoning all the boys into Big Hall. I will punish the culprits so effectively that they will not dream of transgressing in a similar manner again!"

So saying, Dr. Sterndale rose to his feet, and proceeded to pace to and fro, like a wild beast in a cage. He had worked himself up into a towering rage. His hands were clenched, his face was the colour of a beetroot, and a big vein stood out like whipcord on his forehead. "That man is not fit to be placed in charge of boys," reflected Mr. Lascelles as he left the Head's study. "He is a tyrant of the worst type, with an un-governable temper, and an utterly cruel nature. He has already exhausted the patience of the masters; and if the boys get out of hand—well, to use a vulgarism, there will be ructions!"

A few moments later the school-bell clanged its harsh summons, and the Greyfriars fellows quitted their studies, and made their way with grim faces to Big Hall.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Last of the Tyrant!

"THESE flogging parades are getting much too frequent," said Wingate of the Sixth to his pal Gwynne as they proceeded to Big Hall together. "I hear that a whole cricket eleven's going through the mill this evening. Sterndale's making for trouble. The fellows won't stand his tyranny much longer. They're ripe for a rebellion."

Gwynne nodded. "Faith, an' I'm feelin' in a rebellious mood myself!" he said. "If the fellows get out of hand this evening, and cause a pandemonium in Big Hall, I shan't attempt to check them. In fact, I shall let 'em like joint!"

"Same here. We shall get no peace until Sterndale's kicked out. And if the governors won't do it, the fellows will take the law into their own hands. They'll make the school too hot to hold the beastly tyrant!"

Wingate spoke with warmth. And he echoed the sentiments which had already been uttered in nearly every study at Greyfriars.

Everybody was "fed-up" to the hilt with the new Head's reign of terror. Fierce resentment of Dr. Sterndale and his methods flamed in every breast, as it were. And matters looked like coming to a head that evening. Dr. Sterndale would be made ready to understand that reformatory methods could not be introduced at Greyfriars without serious trouble for the tyrant who introduced them.

Matters had reached an intolerable stage; and, as Wingate had said, the fellows were ripe for a rebellion.

Nevertheless, serious matters fled into their places in Big Hall in quite an orderly manner. A stranger would never have suspected that there was a big storm brewing.

When the Head came striding into the great room there was a slight hiss, but it died away practically at once.

"The Head beckoned to Mr. Quekch. "Have the goodness to call the roll," he said.

The Remove master obeyed. Calling the roll was a long and wearisome business, but it was over at last. There were no absentees. Every fellow was in his place. All the masters, too, were pre-



Suddenly an electric torch flashed out. It was directed straight at the Head, and an excited voice rang out: "Pelt him!" Missiles of all descriptions went hurtling through the air. Roars of rage and anguish escaped the unfortunate Dr. Sterndale. "I will flog—yowp! I will expel—yaroooh! I will report—wow-wow!" (See Chapter 10.)

sent on the platform. They were looking very grave and anxious. Like Wingate of the Sixth, they felt that there was going to be serious trouble that evening. And, truth to tell, their sympathies lay with the boys.

The Head took up his position behind the big desk which stood in the front of the platform. He glared upon the assembly.

"I have summoned you here this evening," he began, in the rasping voice which had grown painfully familiar, "in order to deal with a gross breach of discipline. On Saturday last I posted up an announcement to the effect that cricket was prohibited for a month. I also stated that any breach of that order would be severely punished."

The Head paused. A frozen silence followed his opening remarks. Clearing his throat, he continued, in a voice which gradually became more stern and sonorous:

"My commands have already been set at defiance! This afternoon eleven members of the Remove Form proceeded to St. James' College, and took part in a cricket-match there. They also committed an unexcusable assault upon a prefect who attempted to stop them from going. Those eleven boys will now come forward!"

The members of the Remove eleven left their places and made their way down the centre gangway. Harry Wharton went first, and he carried himself erect. Bob Cherry came next, and Bob was actually smiling. One would have supposed that it was a presentation of prizes, and that Bob was stepping up to receive a bound volume of Shakespeare, instead of a flogging. Not one of the culprits showed a trace of nervousness, and this seemed to annoy the Head intensely. He liked to see his victims quail and quake before him.

"Wharton," thundered the Head, "you were the ringleader in this act of defiance, and I shall punish you with special severity!"

"Very well, sir," said Wharton calmly.

"Remove your coat!" rapped out Dr. Sterndale.

The captain of the Remove promptly obeyed. Meanwhile, the Head selected a brand new birch-rod from the desk. It was a formidable-looking instrument, the mere sight of which would have scared some fellows stiff. But it took more than a birch-rod to scare Harry Wharton.

"Stand over there!" said the Head curtly. "Loder, come and perform your usual duty!"

Loder willingly obeyed. He seized the junior's wrists in a crushing grip, and there was a malevolent gleam in his eyes. The Head stepped back a pace, and prepared to wield the birch. He swung it back over his shoulder, and delivered the first stroke with all his strength.

Swish!

Wharton rocked on his feet when the blow fell, but he made no murmur. Masters and boys alike admired his pluck.

Then the second stroke was delivered, with all the savage energy of a tyrant who delighted in birching boys.

Again Wharton swayed unsteadily, but Loder maintained a firm grip of his wrists.

Suddenly a low murmur was heard—a murmur which gradually increased in volume until it grew into a roar.

"Down with the tyrant!"

"We're not standing this any longer!"

The Head had raised the birch aloft preparatory to delivering the third stroke. But the third stroke never fell. For at that moment all the lights went out as if by magic. Big Hall, brilliantly illuminated a moment before, was plunged into darkness.

The place was in an uproar. Fellows were shouting and cheering wildly. It had come at last—open rebellion against the new Head and his tyranny!

Above the uproar rose the voice of Dr. Sterndale.

"This—this is outrageous! Who has had the audacity to extinguish the

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"James Carker, alias Samuel Sterndale," said the inspector, "I have to arrest you on a charge of absconding from your bail." "No, no!" panted the Head. "Do not read the charge here. If you will accompany me to my study—" "Very well," said the inspector. And the Head, covered with shame and confusion, left Big Hall under escort. (See Chapter 10.)

lights? Turn them on again immediately!"

"Rats!"

"Rotten tyrant!"

"Mob him!"

"Pelt him!"

The school was in a state of seething revolt. Masters and prefects were powerless to check the uproar. As a matter of fact, they did not attempt to do so. The only person who was "backing up" the Head in the crisis was Loder of the Sixth. Loder sprang towards the nearest electric-light switch, with the idea of turning it on. But before he could reach his objective a number of fellows grappled with him in the darkness. They closed with him, and whirled him off his feet, and then pinned him down, so that he was unable to rise.

Seldom or never had such a turbulent scene occurred before in all the long and varied history of Greyfriars. Law and order were cast to the winds. Chaos reigned supreme.

Suddenly an electric torch flashed out. It was directed straight at the Head, and an excited voice rang out:

"There he is! Pelt him!"

The invitation was responded to on the instant. Missiles of all descriptions went hurtling through the air. The masters hurriedly jumped down from the platform out of the danger zone. But the Head was subjected to a veritable bombardment. Books and paper pellets, and

apples which were in a state of decomposition, were showered upon him from all parts of the hall.

Roars of rage and anguish escaped the unfortunate Dr. Sterndale as the missiles crashed upon him. He dodged this way and that way, but the marksmanship of the fellows was remarkable in its accuracy.

The voice of Mr. Quelch came to the Head's ears above the din.

"I should advise you, sir, to beat a retreat! It is the only course open to you. The boys are utterly out of hand. There is no holding them."

The Head was almost inarticulate with rage.

"I will flog—I will expel—I will report to the governors!" he spluttered. "I am getting no support from the masters. This is a conspiracy—a prearranged plot—"

The Head's voice trailed off incoherently.

"This is a terrible situation!" It was Mr. Frost speaking now. "Until you leave the hall, sir, it will be impossible to restore order. If you will take your departure, we will endeavour to quell the uproar."

"Put on the lights!" almost screamed the Head.

"Impossible!" said Mr. Quelch. "Every switch is guarded by a group of boys, who are in no humour to be interfered with."

"This—is unprecedented!" raved the Head.

"You have brought it upon yourself, sir," said Mr. Quelch. "As I informed you when you first came, reformatory methods will not be tolerated at this school."

There was a renewed roar from the excited throng.

"Down with the tyrant!"

"Mob him!"

"Kick him out!"

"Listen to me!" Wingate's voice rang out above the turmoil, which gradually began to simmer down. "This has gone far enough. You have shown Dr. Sterndale what you think of him and his methods. Let that suffice!"

Wingate's words had a sobering effect upon the assembly. The fellows realised that there was nothing to be gained by further demonstrations.

"Let's have some light on the scene!" exclaimed the captain of Greyfriars.

Instantly the switches were turned on, and the fellows blinked at each other in the sudden glare.

Big Hall was in a state of complete disorder. It looked as if a political meeting, with a subsequent free fight, had taken place in it. Forms had been overturned, and practically every fellow was out of his place.

Dr. Sterndale flourished his hat at the assembly.

"You shall pay dearly for this!" he cried hoarsely.

But the Head's threats had lost their terror. The fellows merely laughed at him.

Wingate stepped towards the door.

"I have succeeded in quelling the uproar, sir," he said quietly. "Please don't give the fellows provocation to break out afresh."

So saying, Wingate opened the door for the Head to pass out.

Dr. Sterndale hesitated; and while he hesitated, two men, who had apparently been waiting outside, stepped into Big Hall. The Head's face blanched at the sight of them. One was a police-inspector; the other a tall man in plain clothes—a detective, to all appearances.

The unexpected entry of the inspector and his companion caused quite a buzz. Greyfriars was getting plenty of sensations that evening—sufficient to last them a whole term, as Bob Cherry remarked.

The man in plain clothes stepped forward. He levelled his finger accusingly at the Head.

"That is the man!" he said. "Inspector, do your duty!"

The inspector, a portly and pompous officer, tapped the Head on the shoulder.

"James Carker, I hold a warrant for your arrest—"

The Head spun round, his face working furiously.

"That is not my name!" he blustered. "I am—"

But the inspector went on unheeding: "James Carker, alias Samuel Sterndale, I have to arrest you on a charge of absconding from your bail, which was granted on a charge of maliciously ill-treating boys who were under your care at Burchester Reformatory; in particular, one Henry Jones, upon whom you insisted—"

"No, no!" panted the Head. "Not here! Do not read the charge here, I entreat you! If you will accompany me to my study—"

"Very well," said the inspector.

And the Head, covered with shame and confusion, left Big Hall under escort.

(Continued on page 23.)

BUCCANEERS

THE MAIN!

No. 4.
POMPEY THE GREAT.

(Continued from page 2.)

but don't you do it till die lilly siggah gib you de word. Don't forget you hab been warned!"

After repeating the latter words in an impressive whisper, Pompey the Great hastily but soundlessly crawled through the port-hole and disappeared as completely as if he had tumbled into the sea.

There was ample reason for his abrupt departure.

Securely had he vanished when the lock of the cabin door clicked once more, and Three-fingered Jack appeared on the threshold.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Tables Turned!

THE black pirate's expression was full of triumph, and he was grinning cruelly.

"I have come to tell you something that will interest you," Three-fingered Jack said. "Come with me." Noel, following with a trembling hand, was led to the door of another cabin, which was secured by heavy locks and bolts. These the black pirate unfastened, and then threw open the door. Beyond was a small bare little hole, on the floor of which was lying old Samson Shark, so heavily ironed that he could not move a limb.

The moonlight, gleaming through the port-hole, showed that his face was bleeding as the result of a savage blow, but his expression was full of haughty courage and defiance.

Three-fingered Jack pointed at his old master with a sardonic laugh.

"There is the great Samson Shark!" he cried. "You ought to be grateful to me, Master Noel Bristowe, for capturing the man who has wronged you. He's doomed!"

"Do not be too sure of a captured plianter said, straggling into a sitting posture. "As soon as the authorities at Port Royal learn what you have done they will send a swift-sailing cruiser to overhaul your teeth."

Three-fingered Jack ground his teeth.

"If a King's ship comes near me I'll fire a shot against it as will never be forgotten," he said. "I don't want any more impudence from you, you scoundrel! You're not on the plantation now, but on my ship and in my power!"

He would have kicked the plianter brutally in the side had not Noel dragged him back. But the youth received no thanks for this.

"So you have sunk to joshing the dogs of pirates, and are willing to call an escaped slave your leader," Noel Bristowe's he said. "Be assured that if I ever escape from this ship I will denounce you and do my best to have you hanged!"

Noel could not trust himself to venture on a reply, and followed Three-fingered Jack from the cabin, the door of which was refastened.

"You see, there is nothing for it but to join me," the black pirate said when they had gained the deck. "You shall prove that you mean to be true to me and have revenge on your uncle at the same time."

Noel's gaze was drawn, as by a spell of fascination, towards a huge wide-mouthed, muzzle-loading cannon, which was mounted on a swivel carriage near the bulwarks. It was pointed over the side now, but could be swung round to sweep the deck.

The big gun haunted the youth's thoughts, for he could not forget what Pompey the Great had said to him.

Not a sign of the little darkie was visible, and Noel dared not attempt to seek for him lest he should betray his presence on board to the pirates, and thus put his life in danger.

Nothing further happened during the remainder of that night nor during the next day. No ominous sail appeared in sight, and Three-fingered Jack began to think that he had sown the cruiser a clean pair of heels.

But when midnight came again, while Noel was trying to snatch some brief moments of troubled sleep, he was roughly shaken into wakefulness by the black pirate.

"Come on deck," Three-fingered Jack said. "The cruiser is in sight, and there's a task waiting for you to do."

Noel obeyed. On deck all would have been dark had it not been for the reflection of the stars. When the skipper of the Cobra pointed over the side, the youth saw the dark hull of a ship looming through the gloom.

It was the avenging cruiser from Port Royal.

But Noel Bristowe scantly heeded it. His attention was at once called off by something else, the mere sight of which caused his heart almost to stop beating.

Samson Shark had been dragged on deck, and now stood with his back against the yawning muzzle of the huge cannon, to which he was fast lashed by ropes.

A grey pallor as of approaching death was on his features, but his lips were tightly closed, and he declined to make an appeal for mercy.

Beside him stood a pirate with a lighted match.

Three-fingered Jack snatched the match from his follower and thrust it into the hand of Noel Bristowe.

"Fire the gun and blow your enemy and mine out of the world!" he cried. "I swear to be revenged on him, and the cruiser shall not rob me of him. There is a dead cannon, and we must stop to fight, but Samson Shark shall never be rescued. Fire the gun, I say!"

Noel held the match and stood motionless, as if he had been suddenly turned to stone.

The pirates confronted him, eager as tigers to see him apply the match to the touch-hole. They were all armed to the teeth; and he knew that if he refused to obey they would kill him, while if he did as he was bidden his life would be safe as far as they were concerned.

Why should he hesitate?

The old plianter had treated him cruelly, and had wrongfully accused him and driven him forth as an outcast. Here was a glorious opportunity of taking a full revenge.

For an instant Noel stood there, looking from the pirates to the bound, helpless old plianter. His best and worst self were fighting for the mastery, and the black pirate and his men were growing impatient, and the cruiser was stealing nearer.

"Fire the gun!" cried Three-fingered Jack for the last time.

And the answer of Noel Bristowe rang out clearly, definitely:

"I'll fire that!"

With shouts of raze the pirates rushed upon him in a body. He stood his ground by the gun, mechanically retaining his hold of the weapon. One of the yawning mouth of the gun tumbled a tiny black body, which rolled several feet across the deck and then skipped up.

It was Pompey the Great!

Without the slightest warning, the old plianter staggered away from the cannon's mouth. His legs had been cut by a sharp knife, which had been working from inside the weapon. Out of the yawning mouth of the gun tumbled a tiny black body, which rolled several feet across the deck and then skipped up.

The little darkie, having heard Three-fingered Jack say what he intended to do with Samson Shark, had hidden himself in the hold during the day. When night fell he had stolen on deck, and, after watching the pirates load the cannon, had stowed his small person away in the muzzle of the gun, armed with a knife which he had picked up below.

He had risked being blown to atoms to try to save his master.

"Fire, Mascal Noel!" he yelled. "Let de pirates hab it!"

How it was done Noel Bristowe could never clearly recollect. But as the black pirates and his men recovered from the shock of their astonishment and made a second rush, the youth and the darkie swung the big gun round on its swivel carriage, and the smouldering match rested on the touch-hole.

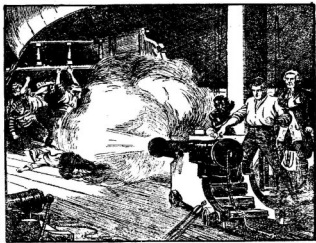
There was a roar and a flash in the night, and the Cobra quivered from stern to bows.

All the pirates were not swept out of existence, but they were so demoralized as to be incapable of a strong resistance when the cruiser's boats came alongside and the boarders swarmed over the bulwarks. Three-fingered Jack himself was taken alive and finally paid the supreme penalty for his lawlessness at Port Royal.

Samson Shark cleared Noel from the shadow of the muzzle charge, and paid the debt of gratitude he owed to the youth and to Pompey the Great!

THE END.

(Another grand pirate story coming along, boys. Look out for it!)



There was a flash and a roar as Noel applied the match to the gun, and the Cobra quivered from stern to bow.

Meet the Greatest Detective of the Age—Ferrers Locke—in

The QUEST of the PURPLE SANDALS



No. 6.

THE KNIFE OF CHINA JOE!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Meeting with Pycroft!

"HALLO!" Hallo! Ferrers Locke!"

The great private detective who, with his young assistant, Jack Drake, was walking from the post-office to the railway depot in Vancouver, British Columbia, stopped in his stride. The voice that had spoken his name, although breathless, was familiar enough. And so it was with no surprise that Locke saw his old friend, Inspector Pycroft, of Scotland Yard, when he faced about.

"So you've turned up again, Pycroft?" said Ferrers Locke in a tone none too effusive. He felt like adding: "Like a bad penny," but he had no wish to hurt the feelings of his old acquaintance.

The stout inspector took a red handkerchief from his hip-pocket and mopped his brow.

"Yes, here I am, Mr. Locke. I followed you and young Drake from the post-office—saw you as I came from Granville Street into Hastings Street. Phaw! You fellows have got long legs!"

"Ay—and long thirsts, too," replied Locke. "We've been on the hustle ever since landing in this town this morning."

"I came in on the same train," answered Pycroft. "There was nothing left for me to do in Montreal. But, by heaven, it was wonderful the way you two fellows brought the train from the Black Rock into Spuzum! I was on board it when the hold-up took place, and the engineer and fireman of the locomotive were killed. That rock slide would have swept away the train and every soul aboard it but for your leaping on the engine and opening the throttle!"

"Dry up, there's a good chap!" said Locke wearily. "It happens we'd both had a little experience in the cab of a locomotive before, and it came in handy—that's all."

"That's all!" echoed Pycroft. "Why, bless me, you and Drake are the talk of the town, and the two big newspapers, the 'World' and the 'Province,' will be full of your exploits when they appear this afternoon. It wouldn't surprise me if they come out with special editions at noon."

"Oh corks!" groaned Drake. "What have we done to deserve this, guv'nor!"

"What indeed," said Locke. "Publicity is the last thing we want. By a little ruse and a slice of luck we avoided the swarm of reporters who were at the railway depot when the train pulled in."

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It will be a case of resorting to disguise again soon."

Inspector Pycroft, who was wearing plain clothes instead of the blue uniform which made him so familiar a figure in the streets of London, pointed to a little store across the street.

"Come over the way and have a brace of milk-shakes with me, you fellows," he said. "I want to talk with you for a few moments on important business."

"Right!" agreed the famous private sleuth. "But we haven't much time to spare. We have more important business to attend to in North Vancouver this morning."

In the little store opposite, where maple fudge and other delectable candy was sold, together with soft drinks of various kinds, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake and the Scotland Yard man seated themselves at a round marble table. Each was supplied with a long glass containing a tasty drink known as a pineapple milk-shake, and a couple of long straws through which to imbibe it.

For some moments the three conversed themselves with quenching their thirst, each wrapped in his own thoughts.

In truth, Ferrers Locke was none too pleased at Pycroft's unexpected advent at Vancouver. He and Drake had left the C.I.D. man in Montreal some days previously, and for strictly business reasons they had hoped they had seen the last of their old friend for a week or so.

For Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake were in Canada on no pleasure trip. They were engaged on the most intricate, delicate, and important case of their career. Their client was none other than the British Home Secretary himself! Their quest was a pair of purple sandals of Indian design, in pursuit of which they had made already a journey nearly half-way round the world.

Some time before, a noted scientist, called Professor Arnold Erskine, had been foully murdered in his London home. Locke proved that the slayer was a former well-known Harley Street specialist in tropical diseases—Dr. Harvey Kruse. But Kruse had slipped through the net of the law, and it was the hope of bringing him to justice that was responsible for Inspector Pycroft's visit to Canada.

Locke and Drake concerned themselves chiefly with finding the sandals in which it was believed that Professor Erskine had been slain. An amazing document relating to his greatest scientific discovery. This formula was nothing less than a secret method of converting base metal

into gold. The Home Secretary had feared that if his secret became public financial chaos would follow. Therefore, Locke had been commissioned to spare no expense in finding the formula and destroying it.

The famous private sleuth—after a series of adventures—was confidently expecting to lay his hands upon the precious sandals within a couple of hours.

In Montreal he had learnt that a certain Mr. Edmond Goodenough had purchased the sandals, and had despatched them as a birthday present to his aged mother who lived at a quiet residence called Burrard View, situated across Burrard Inlet. The parcel had been sent per registered mail, and Locke had moved heaven and earth in the attempt to get the post-office authorities to hand him the parcel.

But the postal people insisted that the parcel must be delivered to the person to whom it was addressed. Locke had seen the postmaster in the Vancouver office that very morning, and the only satisfaction he had got was that the parcel would be delivered in North Vancouver some time during the forenoon.

Therefore, the sleuth was determined to be at Burrard View on its arrival. Already he had sent a wire to Mrs. Goodenough notifying that good lady of his coming.

The one fear he had at the back of his mind was in regard to the amazing crook who had murdered Professor Erskine in London—Dr. Kruse. Besides himself and Drake and the Home Secretary, Kruse was the only man alive who knew of the professor's secret discovery. Even Pycroft was not aware of the green issues at stake in the case upon which he was engaged.

Where was Dr. Kruse? That was the question that bothered Locke more than anything else at the moment. Time and again the wily doctor had slipped through the net spread for him. But for the stolid Pycroft's putting his foot into the middle of Locke's scheme of things in Montreal, Kruse would certainly have been behind iron bars. And it was the genial blundering of Pycroft which made Locke and Drake so luke-warm in their welcome of their old friend of the force upon his appearance in Vancouver.

Having drained his glass and wiped his moustache with the back of his hand, Pycroft leaned forward intent on business.

"Mr. Locke," he said, "I know you haven't much time to spare, and nor have I. Can you tell me anything of the movements of Dr. Harvey Kruse since you left Montreal?"

"I can tell you this much," answered Locke: "the supposition that Kruse would have joined up with that railway hold-up gang known as the Vultures was correct. I have every reason for believing that Kruse himself took part in the train hold-up near the Black Rock in the Fraser Canyon. But for the rock slide caused by that madman Dago Louis, I do not think Kruse would have got away. The fellow was being hunted by the posse and simply vanished."

Inspector Pycroft nodded. "Is that so?" he said in a tense whisper. "I will tell you something that you don't know, Mr. Locke. Dr. Harvey Kruse is right here in Vancouver."

Ferrers Locke stopped in the act of filling his pipe and gazed at the C.I.D. man in astonishment.

"You know that, Pycroft—for certain?"

"I do," replied Pycroft emphatically. "I know it seems incredible. But I've raked up evidence that he's here."

"Then you're a mighty smart man, old chap," said Locke. "The city police superintendent himself didn't know it when I spoke to him this morning."

"He knows now," said Pycroft with dignity; "for I myself told him. You may say it was a bit of luck on my part, but I saw him myself."

"You saw him!" Pycroft, you amazed me!"

"I saw him with my own eyes," averred Pycroft. "In plain clothes I went and engaged a cubicle in one of the worst doss-houses in the city. My idea was to get to know a few of the underworld characters who can be mighty serviceable at times. Happening to look out of a window at the back of the building, I saw a burly man in trousers and singlet preparing to wash in an encaustic basin. As I looked he took off his singlet, and I saw the brand-mark of the poised serpent on his right arm."

"'Corks!" muttered Drake. "Then it was Kruse."

"Not a doubt of it," said Pycroft. "I could only see his profile, and he must have been wearing a disguise, for I couldn't recognise his features. But that brand-mark decided me. I drew my gun on the fellow, intending to keep him near the window of the opposite building until I could send someone for the police to go in and arrest him. The beggar slacked like lightning when I spoke, and my bullet smashed a mirror."

"Seven years bad luck!" groaned Locke.

"It was thunderin' unlucky for me," said the Scotland Yard man. "The buildings were too far apart for me to leap from one window to the other. So I rushed out into the street, called on a couple o' uniformed officers who were handy, and raided the other place then and there. Kruse had vanished. Since

then the whole force of the city have been on his trail, and he may be in gaol at this moment for all I know."

"By Jove, this is news indeed!" said Locke. "It's disconcerting to know that Kruse is in Vancouver, but things look hopeful for his capture as the police got on his track so promptly. He must by some means have beaten his way on the very train that Drake and I took out of the canyon, or else on a following freight."

"It was the passenger train, in my opinion, Mr. Locke," said Pycroft. "One of the posse was found laid out up the slopes of the canyon. This fact may have suggested the idea to Kruse of joining the posse and hunting himself. It was dark, and no one had any idea of his appearance, anyway. Then, with consummate nerve, the doctor must have gone back to the train and boarded one of the cars as calmly as though he had been a member of the posse. It was the colossal cheek of the thing that enabled him to get away with it."

Ferrers Locke glanced at his watch and rose abruptly to his feet.

"I agree that your theory is probably the correct one, my dear Pycroft. Now, Drake and I must hop down to the ferry. If anything further develops in the case of Kruse, send a message to me at the Georgia Hotel."

Taking leave of the burly Scotland Yard man, who announced his intention of proceeding to the police headquarters then and there, Ferrers Locke and Drake hastened down to the waterfront. Catching the ferry-boat with a minute to spare, they crossed Burrard Inlet to North Vancouver and made their way towards Burrard View. Mrs. Goodenough's pretty residence above the picturesque Capilano Canyon.

Both the famous sleuth and his young assistant felt that at long last they were reaching the end of the adventurous

quest of the purple sandals. Little did either guess what fresh amazing mystery and adventures lay just beyond the towering pines that screened the house they sought.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Mystery at Burrard View!

BURRARD VIEW, the residence of Mrs. Goodenough, was a pretty wooden building painted white and with an artistic roof of cedar shingles. It was of the bungalow type, and had a broad veranda before it. The house was set in a picturesque countryside north of that popular holiday resort, the Capilano Canyon, and was flanked on either side with the market gardens of Chinamen.

"A pretty place, but jolly lonely for an old lady," was the comment of Jack Drake, as they entered the garden. "Still, I suppose Mrs. Goodenough is past caring for the gay life of the town." "A very nice place for a holiday this," said Ferrers Locke. "It's a little too remote from the hub of life to suit me for long. Edmond Goodenough said his mother lives here alone, except for a female companion and a Chinese servant. So the good lady must be fond of this place."

Going to the front door, he knocked. A minute slipped by and there was no response.

Ferrers Locke knocked again—louder this time. Not a step sounded from within the house; the place was as though deserted.

Suddenly, Jack Drake's fingers closed upon the sleuth's arm.

"Look, sir!" he whispered tensely. But Locke had already glimpsed the cause of Drake's excitement. For a second, a yellow face with high cheekbones and black, staring eyes, had appeared dimly behind the curtains of a window to the right of the front door.



Drake and Locke's fists whirled like the sails of a windmill, and two of the Chinese slipped to the ground with cracked jaws. China Joe drew a knife, but Locke kicked it out of his hand. Hardly had he done so when, by weight of numbers, he was borne to the ground, and the precious parcel was pulled from his grasp. (See page 24.)

The detective's hand went to the knocker and brought it down with a crash that caused some magpies in an apple-tree nearby to fly screeching to the pines.

This time there was a shuffling footstep. The door was opened cautiously, and the same yellow face that had been seen by Locke and Drake at the window appeared in the portal.

"Goo-mornin'! What you want, please?"

The tone of the Chinese was as oily as coco butter.

"You're very deaf, my man!" said Locke, whose temper had risen during the long wait. "Didn't you hear us knocking before?"

"No hear knocking," said the Chinaman. And he repeated: "What you want, please?"

The sleuth choked back his annoyance with an effort.

"We wish to see Mrs. Goodenough," he said shortly.

"No here," answered the Chinaman with equal curtness.

The steel-grey eyes of the detective caught the slanting orbs of the Asiatic and held them in a vice. Locke did not believe the fellow, but if the Chinese was lying, his stolid, expressionless face well concealed his duplicity.

"Kindly inform me where your mistress is if she is not here," said Ferrers Locke without removing his eyes from the servant.

"Miss allee same gone Vancouver with Miss Carr," replied the Chinaman.

"H'm! Then you are quite alone in the house, my man?"

The Chinese servant nodded.

There was a brief pause. It struck Locke as curious that Mrs. Goodenough should not be at Burrard View for two reasons. In the first place he had learnt from her son, Edmond, in Montreal, that she was an invalid lady who seldom did take journeys. In the second place he had wired to Mrs. Goodenough announcing his intending visit on this very day. The Chinese servant stolidly waited a few moments, and then made as though to terminate the conversation by shutting the door. But Ferrers Locke quietly inscribed his foot.

"Two more questions, my man, if you please," he said. "Why did Mrs. Goodenough and her companion, Miss Carr, find it necessary to go to Vancouver to-day?"

"No savvy."

Locke shrugged his shoulders and put his second query.

"Which way does the postman take on his way to this house?"

"No savvy."

Ferrers Locke knew the Chinese characteristics too well to waste any more time with the fellow.

Removing his foot from the doorway he turned on his heel and walked slowly through the garden with Jack Drake at his side.

"Well, I'm blowed!" mumbled Drake. "That's a rummy go! If Mrs. Goodenough isn't here, how the dickens are we going to get the sandals when the registered parcel is brought to Burrard View?"

"The parcel won't be delivered at Burrard View," said Ferrers Locke, his jaw setting with fresh determination.

"You and I, my boy, are going to take it from the postman—and by force, if necessary."

"Phew!"

The whistle that Drake gave showed that he realised the seriousness of the plan. Locke had formed.

"Yes!" said the great sleuth. "I know

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full well that we shall be guilty of high-way robbery, and render ourselves liable to a long spell in a Canadian penitentiary. But I shall see that none of the blame falls on you, my lad. It is in Britain's interest that we secure the sandals and destroy the secret which we believe them to contain."

The two left the garden and walked slowly through a path that led from Burrard View towards the Capilano suspension bridge. It was a little-used track that skirted some of the allotments of the Chinese market-gardeners. About two hundred yards from Burrard View it took a sharp turn to the right, and part of the track then was hidden for some distance by a jutting arm of the bank.

It was within half a minute of their leaving the grounds of Burrard View that Locke and Drake saw a figure, dressed in civilian clothes and wearing a peaked cap, come ambling into view along the trail. Over the back of the figure was slung a small, dark-coloured sack. And with the blood thrilling through every vein, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake realised that this was the postman—the man who, in all likelihood, had in his possession the sandals which had brought them almost half-way round the world!

Drake made a quick step forward, but Locke detained him by a sharp touch on the arm.

"Not so fast, my boy!" he said. "We had better curb our impatience and wait here a few moments. If trouble we must have, it is better that we should have it here, and not farther along the track near where those Chinese gardeners are working."

"Right, chief! You start the merry obsequy, and you can rely on my fists to take care that postman Johnny gets obstreperous."

He turned and glanced back towards the pretty residence where he and his master, the great sleuth, had interviewed the Chinese. At once an exclamation left his lips.

"Look, sir! There's that beastly Chink scuffling across the allotment next to this garden. What's he up to, d'you suppose?"

With wrinkled brow Locke stood and gazed at the fleeing figure of the Chinese.

"By Jove!" he muttered. "The fellow's heading for that postman. He's taking a short cut, too! Come with me, Drake!"

He set off hot-foot along the path. Drake came at his heels. The Chinese reached the postman first, and appeared to be talking rapidly to the man. That the Chink had inquired for the mail was clear, because the postman whipped the sack from his shoulder and opened it.

"Great pip!" panted Drake. "As that chap is Mrs. Goodenough's servant, the fat-headed postman may hand over the registered parcel to him."

"And it was this thought that lent wings to the athletic sleuth and his young companion. As they approached they saw the postman bring a brown-paper parcel from his sack and feel for the receipt-book that he carried in his breast-pocket. The Chinese glanced furtively round at Locke and Drake, and snatched the parcel from the hands of the postman.

"He's taking the blame!" howled the astounded victim of this piece of impoliteness.

But before he could lay hands on the Chinese thief the latter turned tail, and dashed headlong across the market-garden next to Burrard View, away from the residence of Mrs. Goodenough.

The bounds in full cry, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake sprinted after the

Asiatic. Their powerful hands descended on the fellow simultaneously and bore him to the ground. The Chinaman shrieked and kicked and struggled, clinging to the registered parcel in his hands like grim death.

As though conjured up by magic a swarm of Chinese descended on the fighting three.

The first of the Chink market-gardeners clutched Drake by the collar and endeavoured to drag him off the prostrate form of Mrs. Goodenough's servant.

"You allee same let China Joe alone!" he shrieked. "You atleee him; me killee you!"

This seemed to be the sentiment of the rest of the Oriental mob. It did not, however, deter Locke and Drake from their attempt to secure the precious registered parcel to which China Joe, for some reason of his own, had taken such a fancy.

By a superhuman effort Locke snatched the package from China Joe's grip and staggered to his feet. He and Drake were surrounded by a frenzied mob of the servant's fellow-countrymen, who were falling over themselves in their eagerness to get at the white men.

Drake's fists whirled like the sails of a windmill, and two of the Chinese slipped unheeded to the ground with cracked jaws.

China Joe drew a knife, but Locke kicked it out of his hand. Hardly had he done so when he was borne by weight of numbers to the ground, and the precious parcel pulled from his grasp.

Matters were desperate, and Locke strove to get at the revolver in his pocket. His efforts were hampered by the snarling yellow men. The postman pluckily hurled himself into the fray, but was struck unconscious, and sank into an inert heap on the ground.

This had the effect of frightening the Asiatic assailants. Immediately they dispersed like mist before the morning sun.

Dazed, breathless, and bruised all over from their efforts to stem the onslaught of the Chinese, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake gazed about them to catch a glimpse of who might have the precious parcel. But of the parcel they saw nothing, and neither did they see anything of the man who was known as China Joe and employed by Mrs. Goodenough.

"It—it was China Joe who dragged it from you, I'm certain," panted Drake. And he added, as he picked up a short, broad-bladed weapon from the ground: "I've got his knife here."

"Drake!" gasped Locke suddenly. "The suspension bridge!"

That was the only direct way of crossing the Capilano Canyon. And it was to prevent any of the Chinese from getting over and making their way back to Burrard Inlet and Vancouver City that impelled Locke to head for this swing bridge, which is one of the sights of Capilano.

With hearts thumping against their ribs and almost bursting with the strain, the great sleuth and the boy dodged through the arm of the canyon, and reached the edge of the canyon near the bridge. Locke had drawn a revolver, and held it ready for instant use.

At the far side of the suspension bridge a familiar figure was running.

"It's China Joe!" panted Drake.

Hardly had he spoken than the Chinese reached the end of the bridge and disappeared among the pines and firs on the other side.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Find in the Shed!

DURING the few hours following the riot near Burrard View Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake underwent one of the busiest periods of their lives.

Hastening down to the Inlet, Locke telephoned particulars of what had occurred to the police headquarters in Vancouver. Particularly he warned the officials to watch the incoming ferries. While he was doing this Jack Drake hurried to the jetty to make inquiries respecting China Joe. No one seemed to have noticed the Chinaman. But a ferry-boat had left for Vancouver ten minutes before the boys arrived on the pier. If the Chinato had succeeded in catching that, he was well on his way to Vancouver.

Crossing to the city by the next ferry-boat, the slouth and his assistant joined in the general bus and cry for China Joe, of whom no news had been obtained. From Inspector Pycroft they learnt that the police had been no more successful in the case of Kruse, for the wily doctor was still at large.

Kruse, China Joe, and the purple sandals seemed to have vanished off the face of the earth. It was a galling turn of events as far as Locke was concerned. That China Joe had known the registered parcel addressed to his mistress to be of considerable value was clear from his eager desire to possess it. Yet Ferrers Locke could scarce credit that the Chinaman was in league with Dr. Kruse. Although Kruse was anxious to gain possession of the sandals, it was entirely unlikely that he could have communicated with China Joe even had he known of the existence of that sinister individual.

It was not until five o'clock in the afternoon that Locke and Drake, in company with Inspector Pycroft, partook of a hasty meal in a small restaurant in Hastings Street. By this time they were weary and utterly baffled. Clues which promised to lead them on the trail of China Joe had proved worthless when

put to the test. And not a single trace could they glean of the stolen registered parcel.

"It seems to me, Pycroft," said Locke, as he sipped a cup of steaming tea, "that Drake and I must go back to Burrard View and start from the beginning again to get on the track of the Chinese servant. Among other people whom I have interviewed this afternoon was Miss Carr, the companion of Mrs. Goodenough. That lady stated that she did not accompany her mistress to the city. Miss Carr came here yesterday to visit a niece who has been very ill. When she left Burrard View Mrs. Goodenough had not the slightest intention of leaving home."

"Thunderin' suspicious, I call it, too," said Pycroft, tugging at his moustache. "I'm going across the Inlet on the five-thirty ferry-boat with one or two police-officers. So we shall all travel together. None of us has been able to find a trace o' the old lady's whereabouts. It looks to me as though there's been foul play."

And it was with this deep suspicion of foul play in their minds that Locke, Drake, and the police officials journeyed to Burrard View to conduct further investigations. Even in the mind of Locke the question, "Where was Mrs. Goodenough?" had assumed a greater importance than the mystery of the whereabouts of China Joe.

It took the investigators less than half a minute to break into the house. Then began a thorough examination of the premises and their contents. The floor was examined for any signs of the recent removal and replacement of boards. But there was no trace of the house having been disturbed in any way.

In the presence of Pycroft, Locke himself removed the cover from the large round stove in the basement—for the house was centrally heated. There were but a few cold ashes at the bottom, and these the slouth examined by the light of his electric torch.

Carefully he scraped them out with a small piece of cardboard picked up from the floor, and from them selected a tiny piece of half-burnt cloth.

"Hub, nothing to help us here, Mr. Locke," granted the inspector, turning away.

"Perhaps you are right, my dear Pycroft," murmured Locke. "Perhaps not."

Very carefully he put the tiny piece of cloth between the leaves of his notebook, which he then restored to his breast-pocket.

After making a swift, but thorough, inspection of the house the investigators turned their attention to the gardens and an outhouse. Equally barren was the result. Even the dragging of a deep well near the house was resorted to. Still the mystery of the disappearance of Mrs. Goodenough remained as much a mystery as when they had started.

It was Jack Drake who found the clue that set them all on another scent. While Locke and Pycroft had been superintending the dragging of the well



With a herculean effort Locke broke away from the millmen and tried to stop the escape of the wanted man. China Joe dodged and tripped over a shaft. His overalls caught between a fast revolving belt and a pulley. And before a hand could go out to help him he was being whirled round and round at fifty revolutions per minute in the machinery. (See page 27.)

the boy had examined the path that ran parallel with a low, broken fence which separated the kitchen garden of Mrs. Goodenough's residence from the market garden of a Chinese neighbour.

An exultant cry from the boy brought Locke and Pycroft running to his side. "See!" said Drake. "There are marks on the ground by this path as though something heavy had been dragged through the fence towards that tool-shed next door."

"Pon my word, I believe you're right, my lad!" exclaimed Ferrers Locke. "Unluckily, there has been a spell of fine weather and the ground is hard, so no very clear impressions have been left. Let us cross into the market-garden and have a dekho into that shed!"

"We've no warrant to enter the premises or grounds of Fong Lee, who owns that market-garden," put in one of the local police officials.

"Hear the Har!" said Locke. "You stay here, my man, and put your telescope to your blind eye. I'll take the responsibility for any trouble that Fong Lee cares to make."

The owner of the shed was not in sight. If he were at home at all he was in his shack, which was at least two hundred paces from the tool-shed in question.

The interior of the shed was lumbered with old gardening tools and rubbish. Stooping down, with his electric torch held in his hand to obtain the best light possible, Ferrers Locke nosed about like a terrier after a rat.

Suddenly he picked up something and stooped erect.

"What is it, Mr. Locke?" asked Pycroft eagerly.

The famous private sleuth swung round and revealed the object he had found. It was a screwed-up piece of newspaper, damp and crimson-hued!

"My aunt!" muttered Drake tensely.

"Get this rubbish cleared off the floor!" ordered Locke curtly. "Then we must tear the floor up—every board, if necessary!"

There were a couple of axes and a lever in the shed among the other tools. With these the three quickly stripped the flooring after the rubbish had been cast aside. And then the dread discovery was made. Mrs. Goodenough had been slain.

A shuffling footstep sounded outside the shed, and a yellow face peered in. The slant eyes bulged at the sight that met them, and the visitor gave a shriek that caused Locke, Drake, and Pycroft to spring round.

Inspector Pycroft was nearest the door, and he bounded out to see the lean form of a Chinese dashing across the garden.

Nothing loth, the burly Scotland Yard man sprang after the fellow. Locke and Drake followed suit.

But the loose-limbed Chinaman was a sprighter of no mean order. He leaped the fence bordering the outer path of the allotment and made for the woods. Jack Drake whipped up a small chunk of hardwood which he glimpsed lying on the ground and hurled it with all his force. It struck the fleeing Chinaman full on the back of the head and sent him stumbling forward on his face. Before the fellow could rise, Locke and Drake threw themselves upon him. Pycroft, who had been outstripped in the pursuit, came panting on the scene and snatched a pair of darbies on the captive's wrists.

They dragged the protesting Chinese gardener back to that grim tool-shed of his, and there a preliminary examination of him was held. The local police officials, astounded by the turn of events, stood by and left the main questioning to the Scotland Yard man.

"What's your name?" was Pycroft's first sharp inquiry of the captive.

"Fong Lee," replied the Chink, in a scarcely audible tone.

"Did you know Mrs. Goodenough?"

"Yes, me allee same savvy her," answered Fong Lee, with a shudder. Then he burst out violently: "Me no killee—no killee! Velly close ole lady—no like her. She, me no killee."

"Oho, cross was she, and you didn't like her, heh?" said Pycroft sharply.

"D'you mean you used to quarrel with her?"

That the inspector had hit the nail on the head was evident from the shifty attitude of the man under examination.

"Missis Goodenough's chickens allee same too much scrape-scrapes my nice veges!" mumbled Fong Lee sulkily.

"I see," drawled Pycroft. "The fowls owned by Mrs. Goodenough used to do damage in your market-garden. And no doubt you had some very hot words with the old lady upon the subject?"

Fong Lee was silent.

During the examination of the Chinese, Ferrers Locke was strangely silent. He appeared to be utterly lost in thought, but came to earth when Pycroft suggested that Fong Lee's shack should be examined.

Here a fresh discovery was made. At the back of a chopper was found a chipper of the type used for cutting firewood. It still bore traces of crimson, and a number of tiny white particles adhered to the blade. These latter were easily discernible under a magnifying glass.

"Me killee pig with chopper," babbled Fong Lee—"no killee ole lady!"

"The case is as clear as daylight," said Pycroft, pompously, addressing the others. "Fong Lee bore Mrs. Goodenough a grudge, and, as you know, the tendency of the Chinese is to magnify small grievances to very large ones. The old lady and he evidently had a row. He was standing on his side of the broken fence and she on hers. Then Fong Lee lost control of himself and struck her."

"With the chopper, sir?" asked Jack Drake. "Surely there would have been bloodstains on the ground by the fence?"

"With the back of it, my boy," explained Pycroft patiently. "Having stoned her, he dragged her into the tool-shed a few yards away and savagely finished his work. When he had done the grim deed he wiped the chopper with the newspaper we found and buried the body beneath the floor. On that chopper you will find human bloodstains, and those little white flakes you can see are fibres detached from the newspaper. And, therefore, conclude the inspector, turning to the police,

?

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"you may take Fong Lee back to Vancouver and charge him with the willful murder of Mrs. Goodenough."

"Er—yes," murmured Locke dreamily. "But I shouldn't charge Fong Lee with the murder if I were you."

The Scotland Yard man swung round, his red face glowing.

"What do you mean, Mr. Locke?" he snapped.

"Simply because he didn't do it," returned the private detective. "That's all!"

"Ho, ho, ho!" chuckled Pycroft unsmilingly. "Then perhaps you'll be good enough to tell us who did, Mr. Locke?"

"With pleasure," answered Ferrers Locke quietly. "It was China Joe!"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Paid in Full!

IN the scientific laboratories of the Vancouver police headquarters the assertion of Ferrers Locke that China Joe was the perpetrator of the crime was proved to the hilt.

The blood on the chopper found in Fong Lee's shack was found to be that of a pig. This corroborated the statement made by the market-gardener.

A clerical discovery which has been made use of by Scotland Yard in criminal cases proved of extreme value in this case. When treated with a certain variety of chemical re-agent, the fibres of cotton stain pink, while those of newspaper made from wood pulp stain yellow.

The tiny fibres found adhering to the chopper of Fong Lee were put to this test, and they turned yellow in colour. This further bore out the Chinaman's statement that he had slain a pig and wiped the stain on the wall paper of the shed.

Along the edge of the knife of China Joe, which had been retrieved by Drake, were found other fibres, easily discernible under a microscope. These turned pink in hue when submitted to the chemical re-agent. And a small dark stain on the wall paper of the shed found by Ferrers Locke in the store in Mrs. Goodenough's house was chemically proved to be human blood.

Locke and Drake were present in the laboratories with the police when the tests were made.

"You see, my dear Pycroft," said the famous private sleuth to the Scotland Yard man who was also there, "you have done poor Fong Lee an injustice in charging him with this diabolical crime. It was China Joe who slew his mistress and cunningly concealed the evidence of his crime in the tool-shed of the allotment adjoining Burrard View. What his motive was, we have yet to discover. Before you release Fong Lee, I should like personally to submit the man to a thorough examination."

The privilege was willingly accorded to the sleuth, and the interview with Fong Lee took place in a room at headquarters.

Grateful beyond bounds at the news that he was to be released, Fong Lee showed a gratifying willingness to be of assistance. He had known his compatriot China Joe well. Joe, it seemed, had borne a standing grudge against his mistress because of her exacting and cantankerous disposition.

It appeared to the fact that China Joe had been gambling heavily, and had been in the habit of stealing from his employer. Unwisely, Mrs. Goodenough had told

him about the wonderful scandals which were due to arrive, and he hinted that they were of exceptional value. Apparently, too, the foolish old lady had let slip the news that the world-famous detective, Ferrer Locke, was anxious to become possessed of them. And from this it seemed that China Joe had got the idea into his mind that if he himself obtained the precious footwears, he might use them as a means of securing some advantage for himself should he ever be apprehended by the police. The crime itself had been committed entirely in cold, calculating revenge for the many grievances, real or imagined, which China Joe had borne against his mistress.

For two or three days after the release of Fong Lee, the police raked Vancouver and district with a tooth-comb. That portion of the great city referred to as Chinatown was scoured through and through, and the Powell Street area swept from end to end.

Inspector Pycroft worked hard in glow with the police. Locke and Drake on their part adopted various disguises, and tried to pick up information among the Chinese colony and on the various ships in the harbour which employed Chinese crews. But of China Joe and the scandal, they could discover nothing. Dr. Kruss himself might have stepped straight out of the world, so completely had he vanished.

Ferrer Locke had left the expensive Georgia Hotel for lumber quarters in a waterfront rooming-house. And it was to this place he repaired on the third day after a fruitless morning spent in making inquiries in the nearby city of New Westminster.

He was washing in his ill-furnished room when the proprietor of the place entered to inform him that he was wanted on the telephone. Slipping on his coat, the sleuth hastened downstairs and entered the untidy room which the proprietor called his office. He placed the telephone receiver to his ear and gave an inquiring "Hallo?"

In reply, a familiar voice came over the wire.

"This is Jack Drake speaking, chief. I'm in a public telephone booth near the mill of the Red Cedar Lumber Company at False Creek. There's a jobbie working as an order in the mill whom I suspect to be China Joe."

"The dickens!"

"It's the straight goods this time, I think, chief. The chap in question was engaged this morning." He calls himself a Jay, and goes by the name of Tomi. His hair's cropped close, and his face is unsmiled with grease. But I caught him once doing that curious lopping walk which is the characteristic of a China

man. You might care to come along and have a squint at him yourself."

"You bet!" said Locke. "How did you spot the fellow, my boy?"

"I was watching the mill-workers, including the Asiatics, going to their places this morning," replied the voice of Drake.

"Being suspicious of this class I've mentioned I got a job in the mill, which is short-handed, and watched him more closely. If you could get down here before two o'clock this afternoon you could get taken on yourself. Apply to Robson, the sawmill foreman. This chap Tomi, who may be China Joe, works immediately under the sawmill deck, filling the oil-cups of the shafts."

"Right, my boy; I'll be along."

Ferrer Locke hung up the receiver and left the office. Within a quarter of an hour he was aboard a trolley-car on the way to False Creek, which cuts through the city just north of the residential suburb of Fairview.

He found Drake sitting on some lumber in the yard of the Red Cedar Mill, and throwing the boy a wink, sought out Robson the foreman. As Drake had said, the mill was short-handed, and the sleuth was engaged immediately for the humble task of assisting to remove the edgings of wood cut by the edger-saws as the lumber passed on its way to the trimming tables.

After the sounding of the siren for the commencement of work that day, Locke was kept fully employed for nearly an hour. Then a breakdown occurred on the big double-cutting bandsaw which dealt with the logs in turn as they rose on the bull-chain from the waters of False Creek. It was the opportunity he sought, and quickly he ran down the wooden steps that led to the compartment filled with shafts and pulleys and belts beneath the sawmill deck.

The man he sought was there. Locke drew a pipe from his pocket and struck a match. The older swung round, his yellow face illuminated in the glare of the match.

"Whaffo! you slikee light? You alee same get fired plenty quick if bosseman catchee you!"

The detective blew out the match and put his face close to that of the Asiatic millman.

"Thanks for the warning—China Joe!" he said quietly.

The other started back as though shot. He half turned as though to flee, but Locke's powerful hands went out and caught him by the throat.

The Oriental kicked, and used his teeth like a wild animal, but the sleuth threw him violently to the ground and knelt on him.

"Now, China Joe," he said, "what did you do with that parcel you stole in North Vancouver?"

The man struggled and made weird, gurgling noises, but he said nothing.

"You—allee same choked—takee hands off—"

Ferrer Locke relaxed the pressure of his fingers.

"Me throw parcel in Capilano—no have got now."

"That's a lie!" hissed Locke. "I saw you cross mine sawmill bridge, and see they throw nothing in the stream. The truth—hang you—the truth!"

He shook the Asiatic like a terrier does a rat, and the man gulped out two words:

"Bhanna Singh!"

He followed this strange remark by emitting a terrified shriek that brought Robson, the foreman, and two or three other men, running down the stairway. Hardly had they set foot below than the mill machinery started up. The shafts and pulleys and belts began to revolve once more, and the song of the mill rose in crescendo to a steady roar.

"Stop him! Stop him! Is the matter here?" roared the foreman.

Locke shouted a reply, but the roar of the mill distorted his voice. Next instant powerful hands dragged him from the prostrate form of China Joe.

The wanted man sprang to his feet like lightning.

"Stop him! Stop him, you idiots!" roared Locke.

With a Herculean effort he broke away from the grasp of the millmen and tried to stop the escape of the wanted man. China Joe dodged and tripped over a shaft. His overalls caught between a fast revolving belt and a pulley, and before a hand could go out to save him he was being whirled round and round at fifty revolutions a minute in the machinery.

"Jehoshaphat!" shrieked Robson, covering his eyes. "Stop the mill!"

One of the men rushed to the engine-room and notified the engineer of the accident, and the machinery gradually came to a stand-still as the steam was shut off.

China Joe was taken from the belt by reverent hands and laid upon the crimsoned sawdust nearby.

"Poor beggar! Poor beggar!" muttered Robson, pale as a piece of spruce-bark. "Every bone in his body smashed, and as dead as a doornail."

Locke took off his cap and gazed down at the battered body of his foe.

"Yes," he said solemnly. "China Joe has paid his account in full."

THE END.

(Another grand story featuring the world's most detective star, Monday, June, entitled "The Case of the Black Dust." Be sure and read it!)

LOOK OUT FOR



BY FRANK RICHARDS

Next Monday's Extra-Long Story of the Chums of Grevfriars, featuring Peter Todd, the schoolboy lawyer. A tip-top yarn, boys!



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JUNO

YOUR EDITOR'S CHAT!

"PETER THE PLOTTER!"

LOOK out for the above title in next Monday's bumper issue of the MAGNET, chums. This particular yarn is extra long, and extra good besides. It shows how a practical joke in the cause of a long and bitter feud between the scholars of Greyfriars and Major Thresher, a retired Army officer, who owns property adjoining the school.

OUT OF BOUNDS!

The major, who is a magistrate, creates a sensation by closing a "right of way" that passes between his property and Greyfriars. Moreover, he threatens to prosecute anyone found trespassing on this path. To make matters worse, Dr. Locke, possibly, no doubt, with the idea of avoiding a long and costly lawsuit with the major, issues a notice to the effect that the path in future will be out of bounds.

A DANIEL COME TO JUDGMENT!

Into the breach, as it were, steps Peter Todd, the schoolboy lawyer. He points out the law on the subject to his indignant schoolfellows, and declares that Major Thresher has no legal right to close the path. The Remorvites decide that upon Peter's learned shoulders shall fall the "honour" of visiting the major and pointing out to him his mistake. But Peter has no intention of entering the lion's den as a mere schoolboy. He adopts—an excellent disguise, and eventually calls upon the irate major as

a lawyer. His eloquence impresses his host until such time as something goes wrong with the disguise.

WHAT IS THE OUTCOME?

That ends the discussion on law, at any rate. Major Thresher, taken at his visitor, unmasks him, and thrashes him. From there the plot takes a rare turn. Peter Todd finds himself mixed up in a regular tangle, with the Famous Five doing their utmost to get him out of trouble. I will not delve further into the story—far better that you should read the culmination of this yarn without knowing what's in store for you. But take my tip—Mr. Frank Richards has excelled himself. "Nuff said!"

"THE CLUE OF THE BLACK DUST!"

Another grand complete story in our splendid series of detective stories, dealing with The Quest of the Purple Sandals. Ferrers Locke seldom, if ever, allows a clue to pass him by, and we see some rare deduction in this coming story. Don't miss it, boy!

"HORSE-RIDING!"

A subject dear to every boy and girl, I feel sure, and one that takes its place in the "Herald" at a period when the chances of potential Derby winners. Well, there are winners at Greyfriars, for the old school has a "Derby" all to itself. It matters little that Bunter chooses to mount a donkey—there's a pair of them, at any rate—or that Gosling allows "esses. Next week's supplement will be like the first horse post the post in the great Epsom classic—a winner. Mind you are "on" it.

Your Editor.

The Iron Hand at Greyfriars!

(Continued from page 20.)

Next day the full facts were made known.

Samuel Sterndale—whose real name was James Carker—had formerly been the superintendent of a reformatory. He had behaved with savage brutality to the boys under his care; and upon one particular boy he had inflicted serious injuries. This had led to his prompt arrest. As James Carker, he had been brought to justice, and committed to the next Assizes, bail being allowed. He had not surrendered to his bail, but had changed his name to Sterndale, and, by means of forged references, he had hoodwinked the governors of Greyfriars, and secured the temporary appointment as headmaster. In the meantime, Scotland Yard had been busy, with the result that the fugitive from justice was apprehended in Big Hall.

The astounding affair caused quite a sensation at Greyfriars. The school no longer groaned beneath the oppressor's rod. The tyrant was gone to meet the fate he so richly merited, and the rights and privileges of the fellows were restored in full.

Mr. Pront was placed in charge of the school until such time as Dr. Locke returned; and under the mild rule of the master of the Fifth everything went smoothly, in striking contrast to the miserable days spent under The Iron Hand at Greyfriars.

THE END.

(Now look out for "Peter the Plotter"—next Monday's grand, extra-long story of the chums of Greyfriars. A winner all the way, boys!)

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