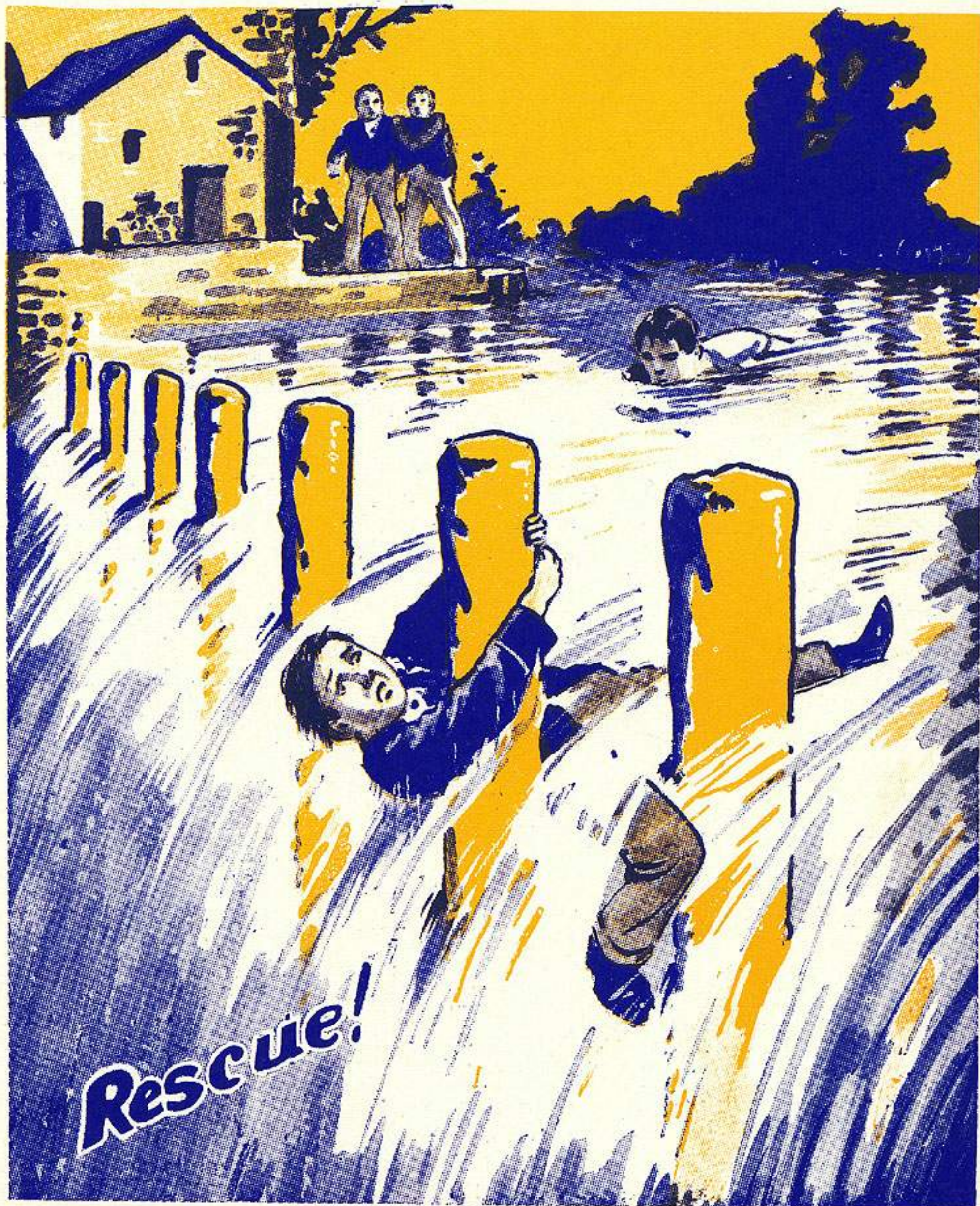


BOYS! THIS COSTS TWOPENCE, BUT IT'S WORTH A BOB!

The **MAGNET** 2^D



FOES of the REMOVE!



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Mysterious Disappearance!

TWO dozen jam tarts!" Billy Bunter pricked up his ears.

"And a dozen doughnuts!" Bunter blinked round, deeply interested.

"And a plum cake!"

The voice of Coker, of the Fifth Form at Greyfriars, was not musical in itself. But at that moment it was music to the ears of Billy Bunter.

Billy Bunter was adorning the doorway of the school shop at Greyfriars with his fat person.

Coker of the Fifth was standing at the counter, giving orders—in Coker's well-known lavish manner.

Bunter would gladly have been doing likewise. It was an hour since dinner, and tea was still distant, like an oasis in the desert afar.

But Bunter was in his customary state of impecuniosity. He had been disappointed about a postal order—not for the first time.

He haunted the tuckshop like a fat Peri at the gate of Paradise; but, like the Peri in the poem, he could only regard with longing eyes the attractive things he might not share.

Outside, in the keen winter air, a number of Remove fellows were punting a footer about. Harry Wharton & Co. were enjoying themselves in their own energetic way. Bob Cherry bawled to Bunter to join up, receiving only a sniff in response. The strenuous life did not appeal to William George Bunter.

What did appeal to him was that fascinating enumeration of edibles.

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Bunter loved jam tarts, he adored doughnuts, and he was passionately attached to plum cake. He loved them all with a deep and abiding love. But the course of true love never did run smooth. Only too frequently Bunter was parted from the objects of his adoration.

"And a seed cake!" went on Coker. Billy Bunter's eyes glistened behind his big spectacles.

"And one of those boxes of chocolates," said Coker.

Coker of the Fifth had plenty of that useful article—cash. He spent it right royally. A spread in Coker's study was something like a spread.

Billy Bunter gazed at the pile of good things that was growing before Coker on the counter.

"I—I say, Coker—" he gasped.

Coker glanced at him carelessly. A fag in the Lower Fourth was scarcely worth Horace Coker's lofty notice.

"Like a chap to carry the things to the House for you, Coker?" asked the Owl of the Remove.

Coker grinned.

"Think they'd get as far as the House if you carried them?" he asked.

"Oh, really, Coker—"

"I think that will do, Mrs. Mimble," said the Fifth Form man, deigning to take no further notice of Bunter.

Mrs. Mimble proceeded to wrap up Coker's extensive purchases. They made quite a good sized bundle.

Bunter blinked longingly at the bundle. The Remove did not fag, especially for the Fifth; but Bunter would willingly have fagged for Coker just then. He would have given all his postal orders—past, present, and future—to have had that bundle in his

fat hands. Certainly, it would not have been likely to reach Coker's study in the Fifth.

Coker paid for his purchases, shoved his change into his pocket without counting it, picked up the bundle, and started for the door, regardless of Bunter.

Bunter rolled after him.

"I say, Coker—"

Coker strode out of the tuckshop, unheeding.

Billy Bunter blinked after him sadly from the doorway.

"On the ball!"

"Look out!"

"Don't get in the way, Coker!"

A rather muddy footer flew past Coker, with a mob of juniors in pursuit. Coker frowned wrathfully at the merry Removeites.

"Clear off!" he snapped.

Coker of the Fifth was between the juniors and the ball they were pursuing. He could have stepped aside quite easily, and avoided the rush.

But Horace Coker was not the man to step aside. A common mortal might have done so; but Coker of the Fifth was not a common mortal. Not an inch—not a fraction of an inch—would Coker of the Fifth yield, at the behest of a mob of barging juniors.

He stood like a rock.

"Look here, you cheeky fags!" exclaimed Coker. "If you jolly well barge into me I'll jolly well—Yaroooooooooop!"

Crash!

Bump!

Coker had no time to finish his remarks. Neither did he continue to stand like a rock. He did not stand at all. He went over headlong as five or

six juniors barged into him, and the next moment he was strewn on his back on the hard, unsympathetic earth, and half a dozen Removites were strewn over him.

No doubt Harry Wharton & Co. could have avoided that accident. They could have gone round Coker. But they did not seem to want to avoid an accident by going round Coker. Perhaps they found it entertaining to up-end the lofty Horace and strew him on the earth.

Anyhow, he was strown! He smote the earth with a heavy smite, sprawled, and roared. His bundle flew, unheeded by Coker. He had no time to heed his bundle. It landed at a distance, and rolled. What Coker heeded at that wild and whirling moment was an elbow that jammed in his eye, a knee that jammed in his ribs, and a boot that was planted on his waistcoat.

"Yoooooooooop!" spluttered Coker.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Gerroff!" shrieked Coker, struggling wildly.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Pocr old Coker!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Always asking for it—and always getting it!"
"Ow! You young sweeps! I'll smash you!" roared Coker. "Gerroff! I'll pulverise you! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
The Famous Five of the Remove seemed in no hurry to get off Coker. Bob Cherry was sitting on his chest, Johnny Bull sat on his head, Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent and Hurree Janset Ram Singh were standing on his legs. Under that cargo of hilarious youth Coker struggled and squirmed and spluttered in vain.

"Ow! Gerroogh! Gerroff!" he gurgled. "I'll smash you! I'll—
Oooogh! Oh, my hat!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! 'Ware prefects!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

Wingate and Gwynne of the Sixth came along towards the tuckshop. They stared at the struggling heap.

"Now, then, what—" began Wingate.

The Famous Five jumped up and rushed after the football. Horace Coker sat up, dizzily, gasping for breath, his cap gone, his hair wildly ruffled, his tie streaming, and his collar hanging by a single stud.

"Ow, ow, ow! Oooogh!" gasped Coker.

Wingate stared down at him.

"You ass!" he said. "You ought to know better than this, Coker."

"What?" gurgled Coker.

"This sort of horseplay is all very well for juniors," said the captain of Greyfriars. "But a Fifth Form man—"

"Dash it all, Coker, a Fifth Form man's a senior," said Gwynne. "A senior's not supposed to lark about like this! You look a pretty sight!"

"Why, you—you—you—" gurgled Coker, breathless with indignation.

Wingate and Gwynne walked on, leaving him gurgling.

Coker staggered to his feet.

He glared round for the offending Removites. They were far away, in pursuit of the footer. They were done with Coker.

And Coker, for the present at least, was done with them. He was feeling altogether too winded and weary to deal with those cheeky young rascals as they deserved.

He remembered his bundle. He stared round for it. But he stared in vain.

It was gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream.

The fat figure of Billy Bunter was no longer adorning the doorway of the tuckshop. Bunter was gone, and the bundle was gone. Coker was not thinking of Bunter for the moment. He was thinking of the bundle and wondering what on earth could have become of it.

Billy Bunter, who was travelling up Friardale Lane at that moment on his highest gear, with a bundle under a fat arm, could have enlightened him. But Billy Bunter was quite unlikely to give Coker any information on the subject.

Bunter, like the shepherd in the poem, was seeking fresh woods and pastures new, while Coker of the Fifth, in amazement and wrath, sought for that bundle of tuck, and found it not.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bitter Blood!

"NUGENT!"
Frank Nugent stopped.
"Yes, sir!"

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, was looking out of the doorway of the House when Frank came up. He was scanning the fellows in the quad. There were plenty of Greyfriars fellows in sight, but the Remove master did not seem to see the fellow he wanted among them.

"Do you know where Carlow is, Nugent?" he asked.

Carlow and Nugent are the worst of foes, but a life and death adventure makes them the best of friends!

"Carlow?" repeated Frank.
"The new boy," said Mr. Quelch. Frank Nugent compressed his lips.
"No, sir."

Mr. Quelch glanced at him. Mr. Quelch was an observant gentleman, and little that went on in the Remove escaped his gimlet eye. But he was not aware of the feud between Frank Nugent and the new fellow in the Remove. He was blissfully unconscious of the fact that the mere name of Eric Carlow had on Frank Nugent rather the effect of a red rag on a bull.

"Well, Nugent, please look for Carlow, and give him a message from me," said Mr. Quelch.

Nugent opened his lips and closed them again. He was not on speaking terms with the new junior, but it was useless to tell the Form master so.

"The Head has received a telephone message from Sir George Cheyne, one of the governors," continued Mr. Quelch. "Sir George will be at Greyfriars this afternoon, and he desires to see Carlow. It will be necessary, therefore, for Carlow to remain within gates, although it is a half-holiday. Kindly find him and tell him this, Nugent."

"Very well, sir," muttered Nugent.

Mr. Quelch walked back into the House, leaving Nugent to deliver that message to the new fellow, wherever he was.

Nugent remained at the door for a few minutes, with a dark look on his face. He was extremely unwilling to have anything to say to the junior for whom he had a bitter dislike. But there was no choice in the matter, and he started at last for the Remove passage. Carlow

was not in the quad, so it was likely that he was in his study, and Nugent went to seek him there.

Herbert Vernon-Smith was loafing on the Remove landing when Nugent came up, and Frank called to him.

"Seen the new cad?"

The Bounder grinned.

"Scrappin' again?" he asked.

"No," grunted Nugent, colouring.

Any reminder of his scrap with Carlow was irritating to him. He could not forget that the new fellow had licked him on his first day at Greyfriars, and there were some fellows in the Remove who found amusement in rubbing it in.

"Well, I fancy you'll be scrappin' again if he hears you speakin' of him like that!" grinned Smithy.

"I'll speak of him as I choose!" snapped Nugent. "Do you know where he is? It's a message from Quelch."

"In his study, I think."

Nugent went along to Study No. 3 in the Remove. Carlow had been placed in Study No. 1, with Wharton and Nugent, when he first came, but since then he had changed into Study No. 3, with Russell and Ogilvy.

All the Remove knew that he had changed out of Study No. 1 on account of his feud with Frank Nugent, and it was said that Nugent had ordered him out, and that he had taken it like a lamb.

That, at least, was Billy Bunter's account of the episode, Bunter having been present at the time, and Bunter, of course, having related it to every fellow who would listen to him.

Nugent threw open the door of Study No. 3 and stepped into the study.

Only one fellow was in the study. He was standing at the window, looking out into the quad; but he turned as Nugent entered.

He raised his eyebrows at the sight of Nugent.

"What the thump do you want here?" he asked. "If you want Russell or Ogilvy, they're both gone out."

"I don't want Russell or Ogilvy," snapped Nugent.

Carlow smiled faintly.

"You don't want me, I suppose?" he remarked. "You weren't keen on my society when I was in Study No. 1."

"Certainly, I don't want you!" snapped Frank. "Quelch has given me a message for you, that's all."

"Cough it up, then!"

"You're to keep within gates this afternoon."

"Oh, my hat! What am I gated for?" demanded Carlow.

"You're to see one of the governors who's coming to the school this afternoon, Quelch says."

Carlow started.

"One of the governors?" he repeated slowly.

Nugent's lip curled.

"Yes. It looks as if you've been found out, doesn't it?"

"You silly ass!"

"Well, it's rather uncommon for a governor of the school to want to see a fellow in the Lower Fourth," sneered Nugent. "First time it's happened, that I know of. I suppose you haven't any relations on the Governing Board—if you have any relations at all?"

"I haven't any relations at all," said Carlow quietly. "But that's not a thing to throw in a fellow's face, Nugent."

"That depends," answered Nugent. "If you haven't any relations, what are you doing here? You're not paying your own fees, I suppose, out of what you earned as bootboy at the Regency Boarding House, in Brighton?"

"No," said Carlow, in a low voice.

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"Well, that's Quelch's message," grunted Nugent. "I shouldn't have spoken to you if I could have helped it, that's all."

"Hold on a minute," said Carlow, in the same quiet tone. "You've found out that before I came to Greyfriars I was boot-boy in a seaside boarding-house. You've no right to know anything about it—"

"I didn't want to know anything about you. If one of your old friends finds you out and talks to you in my hearing it's not my fault. Greyfriars fellows are not supposed to have shady secrets, either," added Nugent scornfully.

"You've made up your mind that I've a shady secret?"

"Naturally!"

"Because on my first day here you got into a silly row with me over your minor, and got the worst of the scrap."

Frank Nugent crimsoned.

"Nothing of the kind, you rotter!" he broke out savagely. "Six months ago you were a boot-boy, without a bean in the world. Then you suddenly turn up at Greyfriars as a Greyfriars fellow. It's a swindle of some sort. How you've done it I don't know, but it can't be anything but some sort of a cheat."

"Don't you think the Head knows all about a fellow before he lets him into a school like Greyfriars?"

"You must have spoofed the Head somehow. He can't know what I know since I heard that man Hookey talking to you the other day."

"The Head isn't a snob," said Carlow, "and your own friends, Wharton and the rest aren't snobs either. You've had the decency not to repeat what you heard. But if you told your friends, I don't think they'd be down on me for having been a page-boy—even a boot-boy."

"It's not that," snapped Nugent. "I'm not a snob either. I don't care two straws what you were before you came here. I've got a pal in the Form whose father is the village cobbler at Friardale. But you're here on false pretences, somehow. You're not on a scholarship."

"No."

"If you'd come into a fortune you could say so—no need to make a secret of that."

"I haven't come into a fortune."

"Six months ago you hadn't a bean, according to that man Hookey, who, I suppose, was a servant in the same boarding-house—"

"Quite."

"Now you've plenty of money. That man, who knew you, didn't believe that you'd come by it honestly."

"He wouldn't; he's dishonest himself."

Nugent clenched his hands.

"Do you mean—"

"Oh, keep your wool on," said Carlow contemptuously. "I could explain easily enough if I liked, but my business is my own, not yours. You're glad to think badly of me, because you can't get over that licking. Any stick is good enough to beat a dog with. Coker of the Fifth knows as much about me as you do. He was staying at the Regency when I was employed there in the summer; he recognised me my first day here. He hasn't said a word about it. And it never even crossed his mind that there was any swindle in it; he doesn't suspect me of anything underhand—"

"Coker's a fool!"

"Possibly! Better to be a fool than to be a rotter!"

"So you're calling me a rotter?"

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said Nugent, between his teeth. "You, a cheating swindler and impostor—"

"That's enough!" said Carlow curtly. "You've given me your message—now you'd better go. No good scrapping again. You bar me and I bar you, and now I've changed out of your study there's no need for us to meet at all. You can keep clear of me so long as I'm at Greyfriars."

"That won't be long, I think," sneered Nugent. "A governor of the school is coming to see you this afternoon. It looks to me as if you'll have to give an account of yourself."

"You haven't told me the governor's name."

"Sir George Cheyne, Quelohy said."

Carlow burst into a laugh.

"Oh, good!"

Nugent stared at him.

"Good, is it?" he repeated. "You'd like me to believe that you're not afraid to see a governor of the school when he comes?"

"I don't care a rap what you believe, old bean, but I shall be jolly glad to see Sir George Cheyne," said Carlow, with another laugh.

"You've got plenty of nerve," said Nugent. "You wouldn't be here if you hadn't. But I fancy we shan't see you here much longer after one of the governors has interviewed you."

Carlow pointed to the door.

"The other day you ordered me out of your study—my own study!" he said.

"I went—to keep your tongue quiet! Now it's my turn! Get out!"

Frank Nugent's eyes flamed.

For a moment he looked as if he would spring at the new junior. Carlow eyed him quietly, coolly, and contemptuously.

But Nugent controlled his anger. Without another word he turned and left the study.

Carlow shrugged his shoulders and turned to the window again.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Bunter Up a Tree!

"**O**h lor'!" groaned Billy Bunter. Billy Bunter pricked up his fat ears and listened, like a startled rabbit, to a sound of running feet.

Bunter was having a good time. The contents of Coker's bundle of tuck were grateful and comforting. But the Owl of the Remove was well aware that after the feast might come the reckoning, and he dreaded pursuing vengeance in the shape of Horace Coker.

Bunter had been very cautious. Attractive as the contents of that bundle were, he had not ventured to open it till he was at a safe distance—a very safe distance.

While Coker of the Fifth was rooting up and down and round about in search of the bundle that had so mysteriously disappeared, Billy Bunter was hitting the open spaces with his plunder.

After he had disposed of that plunder internally, Bunter was prepared to face Coker, or anybody else. But until then he preferred to understudy the shy violet, and retire from the public eye.

He did not even slow down till he had turned from the lane into the footpath through the wood; and there, though he slowed down, he did not halt.

He blinked cautiously back through his big spectacles.

Coker, he was sure, had not seen him annex that bundle and depart with it. Coker had been too busy at the time.

But a good many fellows might have seen him; and Coker might be on the track at any moment. And the bare thought of being captured by Coker, with the plunder in his possession, was really blood-curdling. Coker of the Fifth had a short way with fags; he had a heavy hand, and the largest boot in the Fifth Form. Bunter had sampled both in his time, and he hated the idea of sampling them again.

He had to find cover—deep cover! In the summer it would have been easy to seek some deep thicket; but in the winter the wood was thin and bare, and the leaves were all on the ground. There was no safe cover among the leafless underwoods.

But Billy Bunter knew a safe spot, and he headed for it. Close by the footpath was a big beech-tree, with a thick, gnarled trunk easy to climb. Bunter had climbed that beech once when Ponsonby, of Highcliffe, was looking for him, and he remembered it now. Foliage was wanting, but where the branches jutted out from the parent trunk there was ample cover. And the fat junior, with much exertion and many grunts, dragged himself and the bundle up into the old beech, and there, feeling secure at last, settled down to enjoy life.

The jam tarts were good. They vanished like oysters. The doughnuts were ripping, and they went on the downward path almost as swiftly as the tarts.

Bunter, sticky and happy, felt that this was something like life!

Fellows like Harry Wharton & Co. might find entertainment in punting a footer about in the keen wind. Billy Bunter had far better ideas of enjoyment. This was something like!

The plum cake followed the tarts and the doughnuts more slowly. But it followed and disappeared to the last plum and the last crumb.

By that time Bunter was conscious of a pleasant feeling of fullness under his extensive waistcoat.

Squatting in the beech, leaning back against a jutting branch, he regarded the seed cake and the box of chocolates with a thoughtful eye.

Even Bunter had his limits. He merely nibbled at the seed cake. The chocolates went down with pauses between.

And then came the sound of running footsteps on the path below the branches of the beech, and Bunter started and listened in dire apprehension.

He had no doubt that it was Coker.

Some beast who couldn't mind his own business had seen Bunter on his travels with that bundle, and given Horace the tip! Bunter had no doubt of it, and he blessed his forethought in seeking such secure cover. Flight was impossible. With the jam tarts, the doughnuts, and the plum cake, stacked inside him, Billy Bunter could not have fled from a mad bull.

"Oh lor'!" he murmured, as he listened. "Beast! Rotter! Oh crikey!"

The running footsteps came nearer and nearer along the footpath.

Bunter's fat heart beat fast.

Coker—if it was Coker—could not possibly see him in the tree. He would pass below, leaving the fat plunderer behind, unseen and unsuspected. Bunter felt sure of it, but he listened in deep trepidation.

The footsteps stopped under the tree. Bunter barely repressed a squeak of terror.

The beast was not passing on! He had halted under the beech, and the

hapless Owl of the Remove expected the next moment to hear Coker's voice bawling to him to come down.

But he heard nothing save a faint rustling sound. Then he caught a sound of hard breathing.

Bunter grinned with relief.

It was not Coker! It couldn't be Coker! Whoever it was that had run up the footpath had stopped at the beech and was taking cover behind the trunk. Apparently it was someone who, like Bunter himself, was seeking to escape observation. Certainly it could not be Horace Coker.

The faint rustling had ceased, but Bunter could still hear the hurried breathing as of a man who had run hard.

He ventured to stretch out his fat neck at last and peer down from the beech. Obviously, the newcomer was not Coker, and Bunter wondered who he was, and what on earth he was up to.

His first view was of the crown of a dingy bowler hat. It was a man who stood crouching behind the beech, watching the footpath; a man in shabby clothes, too intent on his own business to think of looking up into the branches above him. The knobby end of a stick protruded from under his right arm.

Billy Bunter's little round eyes opened wide behind his big round spectacles.

Even as he blinked down, the man slipped the stick from under his arm into his hand, taking a business-like grip on it.

Bunter caught his breath.

There was no mistaking the man's attitude—or his intention. Stick in hand, he was watching the path from behind the trunk—evidently for someone whom he expected to see!

"Oh crikey!" murmured Bunter inaudibly.

The man was a footpad! There could be no doubt of it. He had run along the path and stopped for someone else to come up—someone who was taking a short cut by the lonely footpath through the wood. No doubt he had watched his intended victim turn out of the road into the footpath, and cut ahead, to wait for him in a solitary spot.

The spot was solitary enough; there was no one at hand save Billy Bunter, unseen in the beech; and Bunter, certainly, would not have been there but for the raiding of Coker's tuck.

Bunter's heart thumped again.

The man below pushed back his dingy bowler hat and wiped his forehead. Cold as the afternoon was, his brow was dewed with perspiration from the rapidity of his run up the path.



"What does all this mean?" asked Wingate. "You look a pretty sight for a Fifth Form senior!"
 "Ow! Groooogh! Oooogh!" gasped Coker. He sat up dizzily, gasping for breath, and was just in time to see the offending Removites disappearing round the corner.

Bunter had a glimpse of an oily-looking, unpleasant face, with shifty eyes and a gash of a mouth.

The next moment the hat was replaced and the man was bending again, watching the footpath, a good deal like a wild animal in ambush.

Bunter had been glad that he was safe in the tree when he had fancied that it was Horace Coker below. He was doubly glad now. Not for worlds would Bunter, if he could have helped it, have established contact with that hard-featured, shifty-eyed man, crouching under the tree, stick in hand. The fat junior almost stilled his breathing, fearful of the shifty eyes turning upward.

There was a sound of footsteps on the path, under the leafless branches that crossed it from side to side.

The footsteps were leisurely—those of a man walking at an easy pace—and Bunter did not need telling that this was the traveller for whom the hidden man was watching. Possibly someone who had come down to Friardale by train.

From the beech, high over the path, Bunter blinked at the man as he came. He beheld a stout, portly gentleman, in overcoat and silk hat. He was not unfamiliar to the eyes of the fat junior; Bunter had seen him at Greyfriars two or three times, when there were meetings of the governing board at the school, and he recognised him now. It was Sir George Cheyne, a wealthy iron-master, who was a member of the Governing Body.

Bunter opened his lips to call out a warning. But before he could utter a word there was a rustle below, and the

hidden man behind the beech leaped out into the path.

"Old on, old bean!" Bunter heard him rap out.

The baronet came to a sudden halt under the beech. The man with the shifty eyes was planted fairly in his path, the stick lifted threateningly.

"What—?" began Sir George. "What the dooce— Why—what— I know you, you rascal! Hookey—your name's Hookey! What are you doing here, you scoundrel?"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter Takes A Hand!

BILLY BUNTER watched breathlessly from the beech.

Neither the portly baronet nor the rascal with the stick had the faintest idea that eyes were upon them. Round them, the wintry woods were silent and deserted, the footpath solitary.

Sir George had grasped his umbrella, as if to use it in defence. Hookey grinned, and made a motion with the thick, heavy stick.

"You know me, old bean?" he grinned.

"I remember you!" rapped Sir George. "Your name's Hookey. You were a waiter at the Regency Boarding-House, in Brighton, where I stayed in the summer. You purloined a bag from my room, though it could not be proved that—"

"I was sacked for it, old bean," said
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Hookey cheerfully. "Whether I had it or not, I was sacked for it."

"You had it, you rogue!" said Sir George sternly. "What are you doing here now? Have you turned to highway robbery, after petty pilfering?"

"You've got it!" said Hookey coolly. "I've been on tramp for months, old bean, and a man's got to live. Take my word for it, I was glad to see you roll out of the railway station, half an hour ago!"

He chuckled.

"You have been watching me——"

"Right on the nail!" assented Hookey. "And when I saw you was going to take the footpath, I cut ahead. Now I've got you where I want you!"

He came a step nearer to the baronet. "Hand it out!" he said, in a low, threatening voice. "All you've got about you—and I fancy it's enough to see me through for a long time to come. I don't want to crack your silly old head—but I'll crack it as soon as look at you if you give me any trouble."

Sir George Cheyne gave an angry snort.

He was a portly gentleman, of middle age, and his only weapon was an umbrella; but evidently he had no intention of submitting to robbery. He glared at the shifty-eyed, oily-featured Hookey.

"Stand aside, you rascal!" he boomed. "By gad! Stand aside, or I will knock you down!"

"Think again, old bean!" grinned Hookey. "Stop, you ole fool, you! Well, if you will have it!"

The baronet was striding straight at the footpad.

Hookey aimed a blow with the stick. Sir George caught it on his umbrella and partly turned it aside. But the stick landed on the silk hat, which crunched

under the blow and rolled from the baronet's head.

Hookey drew back his arm swiftly for another blow.

But Sir George, portly and middle-aged as he was, seemed an active man, as well as a determined one. He came straight at the ruffian and struck with the umbrella, landing it across the oily face. Hookey gave a yelp and struck, the blow missing the baronet's head and grazing his shoulder.

Before he could strike again, Sir George Cheyne had grasped him and wrenched the stick from his hand. It dropped on the path.

"Now, you rascal!" panted the baronet.

"S'help me!" gasped Hookey; and he returned grasp for grasp, with a strength that was far beyond Sir George's, and the baronet went down to the earth with a heavy crash.

"Ooooooh!" he gasped as he collapsed, with the ruffian sprawling over him.

He struggled manfully.

But Hookey had the upper hand. Twice his clenched fist dashed in the baronet's face, and as the portly gentleman lay dazed under the blows the rascal reached out to grasp the stick he had dropped.

Bunter, from the branches above, was blinking down in terror. His eyes were almost starting through his spectacles.

Sir George was still resisting, though feebly, and Bunter could see that Hookey would have hold of the stick again in a few moments. Then he knew what would happen—a crashing blow on the unprotected head!

Bunter's teeth chattered.

The Owl of the Remove was not of the stuff that heroes are made. He simply dared not drop from the beech and face the ruffian and risk a smashing blow

from the stick. But even Bunter could not remain idle while the ruffian carried out his savage intention. Billy Bunter's wits, as a rule, did not work swiftly. Now he acted with a celerity that surprised himself. Hookey's fingers touched the fallen stick, his grasp closed on it. A moment more, and he would have swung it up, to bring it down with a crash on the helpless man sprawling under him. But in that moment Bunter acted.

Whiz!

It was a seed cake—Coker's seed cake—that whizzed down from the beech and landed on the head of the footpad.

Hookey gave a startled yell.

The sudden crash on his head from above sent him reeling sideways. The attack was utterly unexpected.

Whiz!

It was Coker's box of chocolates that came next. Bunter hurled it with all the force of his fat arm.

It crashed on the side of the ruffian's face and burst, smothering Sir George Cheyne with scattering chocolates.

Hookey sprawled over.

"Oh gad!" gasped Sir George.

He was as startled and amazed by the sudden diversion in his favour as the footpad was. But he took instant advantage of it. He scrambled to his feet as the footpad reeled off him.

"Help!" yelled Bunter. "Help! Help! Murder! Help!"

Hookey leaped to his feet.

Bunter's frantic yell rang far and wide through the wood.

Who was yelling the footpad did not know; but he knew that someone was at hand, and that was enough for him. He turned and bolted through the thickets.

"Stop!" roared Sir George. "Scoundrel! Stop! Help! Help me to secure that rascal! Help!"

Billy Bunter was not likely to accede to that request. He was safe in the tree—and he stayed safe. But he yelled and yelled with all the force of his lungs.

"Help! Murder! Help! Help!"

Echoes answered far and wide.

There was a crashing in the thickets as the footpad fled. Sir George made a stride in pursuit—and then stopped. He picked up his damaged umbrella and his crunched hat and stared round him. Hookey's fleeing footsteps died away in the woods.

"Good gad!" ejaculated Sir George, staring blankly. He had taken it for granted that someone was coming to his aid, but he could see no one. "Who—what—what— Good gad! What—what—"

"Help! Oh crikey! Help!"

Sir George stared upward. His ears told him that the yells came from above, and he jumped at the sight of a fat, excited face and a large pair of glimmering spectacles in the beech-tree.

"Who the dooce are you?" he gasped. "What are you doing up there? What?"

"Help!"

"That's enough!" snapped Sir George testily. "The man's gone! You can come down, whoever you are."

Billy Bunter ceased to yell.

"Sure he's gone?" he gasped.

"Yes, yes!"

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter.

He came slithering down from the beech. Sir George Cheyne stared at him in amazement.

"Who the dickens are you?" he demanded.

"I—I—I'm Bunter!"

"Oh, you're Bunter, are you? What the dooce were you doing in that tree?"

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"I—I wasn't hiding—"
 "What?"
 "I—I got into the tree to—to rest," explained Bunter. "I—I rather like resting in a—a—a tree."

"Good gad!" said Sir George. He stared harder at Bunter. "You're a Greyfriars boy, from your cap."

"Yes, sir! Bunter of the Remove, sir! I say, we'd better cut, in case that beast comes back!" gasped Bunter. "Of course, I'm not afraid of him, but—"

"I'm much obliged to you, my boy," said Sir George. "You flung something at that scoundrel—from the tree, I suppose—"

"Yes, sir—Coker's cake—I mean my cake! And Coker's—I mean my box of chocolates! They're done for now!" added Bunter dismally. Cake and chocolates had been trampled on, and even the Owl of the Remove had no further use for them. "I—I say, sir, let's cut! That beast—"

"If you had come to my assistance we might have secured that rascal!" snorted Sir George. "Why did you remain in the tree?"

"I—I—I—"

"However, I am much obliged to you," said Sir George. "You have been very useful—very useful indeed—though you have not acted with the courage I should have expected of a Greyfriars boy. But we had better go; that scoundrel might return if he learned that it was only a schoolboy who was here. Come, come!"

Sir George started back towards Friardale Lane, the way he had come, giving up his intention of taking the short cut through the wood. Billy Bunter rolled after him.

They reached the lane, and there Sir George paused to punch his crunched headgear into some semblance of a hat again.

Then he started along the road towards Greyfriars. Billy Bunter blinked after him morosely.

He had sacrificed a cake and a box of chocolates, and there was no doubt that he had saved Sir George from injury and from robbery. Bunter expected gratitude. But Sir George really seemed to think less of the service he had rendered than of the service he might have rendered had he jumped down from the tree and helped to tackle the footpad. He really seemed to think that Bunter had not acted with the pluck that might have been expected of a Greyfriars man. He had told Bunter that he was obliged and left it at that. Now he was walking off to Greyfriars, apparently dismissing Bunter from his mind altogether.

Billy Bunter blinked after him in deep indignation, and ejaculated:
 "Beast!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Nothing In It!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! I've seen that sportsman before!"
 Bob Cherry made that remark as a portly gentleman came in at the gates of Greyfriars—very respectfully saluted by Gosling—and walked towards the House.

The Famous Five had been at football practice. Now they were killing time before tea, sauntering in the quad. Four members of the famous Co. were talking football—the coming match with Highcliffe School being the chief topic at present among the footballing fraternity in the Greyfriars Remove. Frank Nugent was silent, apparently occupied with his thoughts—which were not of football.

The Co. glanced round at the portly gentleman and "capped" him politely as he passed on his way to the House.

"That's one of the jolly old governors!" remarked Bob. "I remember seeing him here last term."

"It's Sir George Cheyne," said Frank Nugent.

"Yes, that's his name, I believe," assented Bob. "I wonder what he wants? He hardly ever shows up here."

"I fancy I know."

"You do?" said Bob, staring at him. "What the dickens do you know about him, Franky?"

Nugent smiled rather sourly.

"He's here on Carlow's account," he answered.

"Carlow!" repeated Wharton.

"Yes."

Four members of the Co. exchanged glances. Nugent, noting those glances, coloured, and his eyes glistened.

A POCKET KNIFE IS ALWAYS HANDY!
CRACK A JOKE and win one like Fred Fowler, of 8, Christina Terrace, Hotwells, Bristol, who sent in the following ribtickler.



NOISES ON!
 Jones: "You're looking seedy to-day, old man. What's the trouble?"
 Brown: "I've got noises in the head."
 Jones: "Don't worry about that; it must be the band on your hat!"

His chums had not exactly told him that they were fed-up with his feud with the new junior. But Frank did not really need telling. The fact was plain enough.

"You fellows fancy I've got my knife into that cad for nothing," he said, with a sneer. "Well, we shall see this afternoon."

"I don't see any harm in the fellow," said Harry Wharton, rather curtly. "You rowed with him his first day here over your minor—well, it came out that Dicky was to blame. He said so himself—"

"The fact is, Franky, you're rather making a fool of yourself," said Johnny Bull, in his slow, stolid way. "You make out that that man Carlow is some sort of a rank outsider; but the actual fact is that you can't get over the licking. And it's rot! Chap ought not to bear malice for a licking in a fair fight."

"My esteemed Johnny—" murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh. Nugent's face was flaming.

"I say what I think!" said Johnny Bull. "You fellows think the same, if you'd only say so. So does every man in the Remove, if you come to that! Carlow licked Frank; and fellows like Bunter and Skinner, and that set have been sniggering over it, like the measly cads they are—and that's all there is about it. There's nothing wrong with the chap."

Wharton and Bob Cherry and Hurree Singh were uncomfortably silent. In point of fact, their opinion rather agreed with Johnny's. But they were rather more blessed with tact than Johnny Bull, whose plainness of speech was not always grateful or comforting.

"So you think—" breathed Nugent.

"Oh, let it drop!" said Harry. "You can keep clear of the chap; he's nothing to us, anyhow."

"I've told you he's a rank outsider, a cad, and a swindler of some sort!" said Nugent. "I've told you that I know it as a fact."

"Rot!" said Johnny Bull.

"I've told you that I heard a man speaking to him—a man who knew him before he came here," said Frank. "I don't think I ought to repeat what I heard, and I haven't done so; but I'm down on the fellow because I know he's a bad egg, and not because—"

"I dare say you think so!" said Johnny Bull. "But I fancy you wouldn't think so, if you hadn't had that row with him first day here."

"Well, you'll see!" said Nugent bitterly. "A governor of the school has come down specially to see him—"

"How can you possibly know that?" asked Harry.

"Quelch gave me a message for him, to stay within gates because old Cheyne was coming."

"Oh!" said Wharton, rather taken aback.

"The old sportsman may be a relation, or something," said Bob.

"Carlow hasn't any relations—he's said so."

Wharton made a restless movement.

"Well, what the thump do you think the old merchant has come down for?" he asked. "To root Carlow out of the school, or what?"

"It can't be anything else," said Frank. "The fellow's been found out, and the game's up for him here."

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"What do you think a governor of the school wants to see him for, then?" snapped Nugent.

"I can't make it out! But the fellow's all right, I believe," said Harry. "Bunter says that Coker of the Fifth knew him, or met him somewhere, before he came to Greyfriars; and Coker doesn't seem to think there's anything wrong with him. I've noticed Coker speaking civilly to him more than once, and Coker doesn't waste a lot of civility on the Remove."

"Coker's a silly fool!"

"That's all very well," said Johnny Bull. "But you ought not to have said anything about what you heard a man saying to Carlow, Franky. You heard it by accident, and—"

"I haven't said anything; except that I've told the fellow I know he's an impostor, and ordered him to keep out of my study. Do you think he would have taken orders from me if his conscience had been clear?"

"That's queer, I admit!" said Harry. "He cleared out of our study when you told him to, that's a fact."

"And it wasn't because he funked!" sneered Nugent. "He licked me once, as you fellows are rather fond of reminding me!"

"Oh, don't be an ass! Fellows have been licked before, without all this fuss," said Harry. "I had a fight with old Bob once, and he licked me to the wide, and I've forgotten all about it."

"It's not that, I tell you," said Frank savagely. "You keep on making out that it's that—"

"So it is—only you can't see it—or won't!" said Johnny Bull. "You pitched into him over your minor; and Dicky owned up afterwards that he was to blame; and you can't stand having made an ass of yourself!"

Nugent set his lips hard.

Perhaps at the back of his mind there was a lurking consciousness of truth in Johnny's words; perhaps he half realised that his suspicion of the new junior was founded on his dislike of him—not, as he tried to think, his dislike on his suspicion!

"Well, if you're right, we shall soon see," said Johnny. "The jolly old governor's here; and if he's down on Carlow we shan't be long in hearing about it."

"I'm sure of that!" said Frank.

"If the surefulness is terrific, the discussfulness is preposterously superfluous," suggested Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "Let us drop the esteemed and ridiculous subject. Speech is silvery; but the golden silence is the cracked pitcher that saves a stitch in time from a bird in the bush, as the English proverb says!"

And even Frank Nugent's frowning face cleared, and he grinned, under the influence of that English proverb!

The Famous Five went into the House. Within, they sighted Sir George Cheyne again, in talk with Mr. Quelch, the Remove master; and they caught some of the words as they passed.

"A ruffianly footpad! The police must be set on his track at once—if you will allow me the use of your telephone, Mr. Quelch—"

"Certainly, sir!"

"Though I have no doubt that the rascal is far enough away by this time! A dastardly rascal—"

The Famous Five went up to the Remove passage. Carlow was on the landing above the Remove staircase, leaning on the banisters, and he glanced at the Co. as they passed. Frank Nugent gave him an icy stare, and walked on to Study No. 1. The other fellows looked uncomfortable. As Frank's chums, they were more or less dragged into his feud with the new fellow; but they could not help a feeling that it was not upon Carlow's side that the blame lay.

It occurred to Wharton that Carlow had seen Sir George Cheyne from the landing window. If so, he certainly did not seem alarmed in any way by the sight of that particular governor of Greyfriars. From a good-natured impulse he paused to speak.

"There's a jolly old governor just blown in, Carlow," he said.

"I know," said Carlow, with a smile. "I'm expecting to be sent for."

There were six or seven Remove fellows within hearing, as well as the Famous Five. Carlow, evidently, did not mind the fellows knowing that Sir George Cheyne had come to see him at the school.

"Nothing up, I hope?" said Harry.

"Not at all."

"Old Cheyne a relation of yours, Carlow?" asked Skinner, who was lounging by the banisters.

"No!"

"I hear that he's come to see you."

"Yes."

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"What does he want, then?" asked Skinner.

"Better ask him!" said Carlow, and he turned away.

Harry Wharton & Co. went into Study No. 1 to tea. A few minutes later Carlow passed the open door, going to Study No. 3, with Russell and Ogilvy, who had just come in.

Tea in Study No. 1 was rather a silent meal that afternoon.

Nugent was in a state of expectancy, and his friends in a state of discomfort. Frank, having made up his mind that Carlow was an impostor of some sort, had no doubt that the visit of a governor of the school, specially to see him, meant that he had been found out, and that it was the finish for him at Greyfriars. The other fellows did not believe anything of the kind; but they were rather puzzled.

With Frank, perhaps, the wish was father to the thought, though he was hardly conscious of it. If Carlow was sent away from the school it would be a justification for his "down" on him; it would prove to the other fellows—and perhaps to Nugent himself—that he had been right in barring the rather mysterious new boy.

Tea was over when Trotter, the page, put his chubby face into the doorway.

"Master Carlow here, sir?" he asked.

"The 'Ead wants him."

"This isn't his study now, Trotter," answered Wharton. "Trot along to Study No. 3—you'll find him there."

Trotter "trotted" along to Study No. 3. A few minutes later he repassed Study No. 1, and Carlow was following him to the stairs.

Nugent breathed rather hard.

Carlow had been sent for to the Head's study; and Sir George Cheyne was with the Head. It must mean the finish for him. What else could it mean?

Frank rose from the table, and strolled out of the study. His friends followed him in a rather worried mood. A number of Remove fellows were in the passage, and they were discussing Carlow. Skinner, it appeared, had followed Carlow down, and seen him enter the Head's study, and had a glimpse of Sir George there. The fellow was still shut up with the Head and the governor, and what was going on was a matter of keen interest to many of the Remove.

Nugent's feud with Carlow had drawn a good deal of attention to the new fellow in the Form.

Except among his own friends Nugent had not talked of his suspicions; but Billy Bunter had heard things and repeated them; and it was known to all the Form that Carlow had been turned out of Study No. 1, and the fact that he had allowed himself to be turned out of his study was, at least, odd.

There were a good many surmises about him in the Remove, and general attention had been drawn to the circumstance that he had no relatives, and that nobody knew who paid his fees at the school.

Skinner, who would have been glad to find out anything discreditable about anybody, surmised that there was something exceedingly "fishy" about the new man; and many other fellows wondered if Skinner was right.

Now the discovery that a governor of the school had come down specially to Greyfriars to see Carlow, caused quite a buzz.

"They've found him out!" said Skinner oracularly.

"What was there to find out, fat-head?" asked Ogilvy.

"Blessed if I know! But I fancy Nugent knows."

"The knowfulness is not terrific, my esteemed, wormful Skinner!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

Many glances turned on Nugent, but he did not speak.

"Rot!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Well, what does old Cheyne want to see him for?" asked Snoop.

"No bizney of mine—or yours!"

"They're having a jolly long pow-wow, anyhow," remarked Vernon-Smith. "Poor beast! Up between a Beak and a governor!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! He's going!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"What!"

"There goes George!" said Bob, alluding thus familiarly to Sir George Cheyne, and pointing to the landing window.

The portly figure of Sir George could be seen going down to the gates. The baronet's visit to the school was over.

"Not takin' Carlow away with him, anyhow," said the Bounder. "I fancy there's nothin' in it—though goodness knows what the old sportsman wanted here at all!"

Frank Nugent compressed his lips. The governor was gone, after seeing Carlow in the Head's study. What was the next news to be?

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "Here he comes!"

Carlow was coming up the Remove staircase.

All eyes fixed on him.

His face was bright.

Nugent stared at him, almost dumb-founded. Judging by his looks, at least, Eric Carlow was not in the least disconcerted by his interview with the governor. He looked quite bucked.

Carlow reached the landing and glanced round in surprise at the crowd of staring Removites.

"All serene, old bean?" called out Russell.

"Eh—yes! What do you mean?" asked Carlow. "There's nothing up, is there?"

"Didn't old George jump on you?" asked the Bounder.

"No. Why should he?"

"Then what the thump did he want to see you for?" demanded Skinner.

Carlow laughed.

"There's still time to cut after him and ask him if you're curious!" he answered. "You'll catch him at the gates."

"Oh, rats!" grunted Skinner.

Carlow walked on to his study. The juniors stared after him, and stared at one another, and some of them laughed.

"All moonshine!" said Peter Todd.

Frank Nugent went back into Study No. 1 with compressed lips. It was, as Toddy said, all moonshine. The governor had come and gone, and nothing had happened.

Was he, after all, mistaken about the new fellow—or what did it mean? Whatever it meant, it was evident that nothing had happened, and that nothing was going to happen. Carlow, whoever he was, and whatever he was, was still at Greyfriars, and was staying at Greyfriars.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Major and Minor I

RICHARD NUGENT of the Second Form at Greyfriars waved a hand, that would have been none the worse for a wash, to Eric Carlow in the quad.

It was a few days after the visit of Sir George Cheyne—that visit of which

Frank Nugent had expected so much, and which had led to nothing.

Carlow of the Remove went on the even tenor of his way, undisturbed; indeed, so far as anyone could see, he seemed to have derived pleasure from the visit of the baronet.

Hardly any fellow gave any thought to the matter, or even remembered it, excepting Nugent major. Nugent's "feud" was still going as strong as ever, more and more to the impatience of his friends. But in that feud young Dicky Nugent of the Second Form certainly had no share. If Dicky was even aware of it, he certainly did not allow it to affect him in any way. He liked Carlow, who had heped him in some difficult exercises for Mr. Twigg; and though Dicky, as a rule, had little use for Remove men, he made an exception in Carlow's favour.

He waved a rather grubby hand to the new junior in a friendly way as he sighted him in the quad.

Carlow gave him a nod from a distance, and changed his direction a little. He rather liked the cheeky, cheery fag; but, in the circumstances, he felt that it was judicious to keep clear of Frank Nugent's brother.

"Come on, you men!" said Dicky Nugent, the "men" he addressed being Gatty and Myers of that important Form, the Second.

"Here, hold on!" said Gatty. "What do you want to jaw to a Remove tick for? Blow the Remove!"

"Blow 'em, your major and all!" said Myers.

"You let my major alone, young Myers!" said Dicky severely. "My major's a good sort, though a bit of an ass! He does a lot of work for me that makes old Twigg sit up and purr and call me a pains-taking lad!"

Gatty and Myers grinned.

"That man Carlow's a good sort!" went on Dicky. "I had a regular corker to do for old Twigg last week, and my major was out, and Carlow did it for me. He was rather a rotter, though; he made me go through the thing with him, instead of doing it on his own like old Franky. But it turned out jolly lucky, I can tell you. Old Twigg was a bit suspicious, and he took me through it, and I stood up to him and never turned a hair! I might have got six, but for that man Carlow!"

"That's all right," said Gatty. "But we don't talk to the Remove. You let him alone!"

"Fathcad!" said Nugent minor. "We're going out in old Baker's punt on Wednesday afternoon, ain't we? Well, Carlow's a new man here, and I'm going to take him."

"We're not taking a Remove man!" bawled Gatty.

"Oh, don't be a silly ass!" urged Dicky. "We want a man with us who can handle a punt, don't we? I can tell you, it's not jolly safe down by the weir, and you kids are no use—"

"Oh, rot!"



Before the ruffian could carry out his savage intention Bunter acted. Thud! The seed cake whizzed down from the beech and landed on the head of the footpad. "Ooooh! Yoooh!" gasped Hookey.

"I can't ask my major to come," explained Dicky. "He's all jaw! He would just say that it's not safe to take Baker's old punt out, and tell me not to go. Franky's no use, but we want somebody with us."

"I don't see—"

"You never see anything!" answered Nugent minor.

"I think—"

"No, you don't! You can't! Just leave the thinking to me," said Dicky, "and come and speak to Carlow, and mind you're civil!"

Gatty and Myers grunted expressively; but they followed their leader, and the three fags trotted off to intercept Carlow. As a matter of fact, Dicky's faithful followers had to admit that if they were going out in Baker's old punt next half-holiday, it would be judicious to have an elder fellow with them. The reach of the Sark near Baker's mill was out of bounds for all fellows below the Fifth, and was well known to be dangerous.

Certainly Nugent of the Remove would not have taken part in any such excursion, and would have been more likely to take measures to prevent the reckless fags from carrying out their intention.

Carlow had to stop, as the three fags

raced up and planted themselves in his path.

"Hold on, old bean!" said Nugent minor amicably.

"What is it?" asked Carlow. "If it's another exercise for Twigg, you'd better take it to your major!"

"Tain't!" said Dicky. "I say, are you still scrapping with my major? I say, I shouldn't mind him, if I were you. Franky's a jolly good old sort, only a bit peevisish at times. Look here, are you doing anything Wednesday afternoon?"

"Nothing special," answered Carlow.

"Well, then, you're a new man here, and we'll show you about a bit," said Dicky. "If it's fine, we're going out in a punt."

Carlow shook his head.

"Look here, don't you put on Remove airs and graces, and you a new kid here!" exclaimed Dicky. "I can jolly well tell you that it isn't every Remove man we'd take with us!"

"Highly honoured, I'm sure!" said Carlow, laughing. "But—"

"Oh, blow your 'buts'!" said Dicky. "Look here, we want you to come. It's a bit out of bounds down by Baker's mill, but you needn't mind that. Being

a new man, you needn't know it's out of bounds—see—if we're spotted."

"Oh, my hat!"

"It's no end of a lark, mucking about in Baker's old punt!" said Dicky persuasively. "It's a bit leaky, but that don't matter. We'd jolly well like you to come, and—"

"Dick!"

It was Frank Nugent's voice.

He came up to the group with quick steps, his brow knitted. Gatty and Myers looked at him, grinned at one another, and walked away. Nugent major had his rag out, and Dicky's friends did not want to be mixed up in a row between him and his major.

"Oh, don't bother, Frank," said Nugent minor, "I'm talking to Carlow."

"You're not to talk to him," snapped Frank.

"Rats!"

"What?" exclaimed Nugent.

"Rats!" repeated Dicky. "I'll talk to whom I jolly well please, and you can put that in your pipe and smoke it, Franky. What the dickens are you butting in for, I'd like to know? Think you can give me orders, because you happen to be my major? Go and eat coke."

Frank Nugent breathed hard.

"Carlow's not a fellow for you to speak to, Dicky!" he said, as calmly as he could.

"Rot!" said Dicky. "I can jolly well tell you that if I were Carlow I'd jolly well punch your head for that. He could do it."

Frank Nugent gave the new fellow a bitter look.

"You're going to leave my brother alone, Carlow," he said. "Dicky, I tell you you're not to have anything to do with that fellow."

"Rats!" retorted Dicky.

Carlow was breathing rather hard. Undoubtedly, at that moment, he was strongly tempted to punch Frank Nugent's head, as Dicky cheerfully suggested. But he restrained his rising temper.

"Your brother's right, Nugent mi," he said quietly. "Anyhow, I couldn't have come, and I advise you to chuck up the idea."

"If you're going to give me sermons like my major, you can ring off right now," said Nugent minor.

Carlow laughed.

"You're a young ass," he said. "But you'd better not speak to me, young'un; do as your brother tells you."

"Catch me!" said Dicky disdainfully.

Carlow walked away, followed by a black look from Nugent. But his face cleared as he turned to his brother again.

"Look here, Dicky, I've told you that that fellow's no good," he said. "I want you to keep him at a distance."

"Haven't you got over that licking yet?"

"Wha-a-t?"

"Blessed if a man wouldn't think that a fellow never had been licked before, the fuss you make about it."

"You young sweep, it's not that—"

"Gammon!"

Nugent clenched his hands. He had a strong affection for his young brother, and a strong sense of duty towards him. But at that moment he came very near giving the cheeky young rascal the thrashing of his life.

Dicky eyed him warily, prepared to dodge.

"It's all your own fault," he continued coolly. "You had to butt in when Carlow was ragging me, his first

day here. I never asked you to. I barged the chap over and banged his napper on the ground, and he was wild, and so would any fellow have been. I never complained, did I? But you had to butt in, without knowing anything about it, making out that I was a poor little kid being bullied, and his big brother coming to the rescue. Yah!"

Frank's face was crimson.

He had not been left in any doubt that he had made a fool of himself, in his "row" with Carlow, and certainly Dicky's remarks on the subject could not have left the shadow of a doubt about it. Richard Nugent, the most warlike fighting-man in the Second Form, did not like being regarded as a little fellow who had to be protected by his brother. He disliked the idea very much indeed. Frank had bagged a severe licking for coming to his rescue, and Dicky's gratitude took the form of calling him an ass for his pains.

"You young sweep!" muttered Nugent.

"Oh, can it!" said Dicky derisively. "Let a fellow alone! Who's asking to be protected, I'd jolly well like to know? Making a fellow look a fool before all the men in the Second!"

Frank Nugent turned away, without another word. There was deep bitterness in his heart; but not towards Dicky. He could not feel bitter towards the unthinking fag. All his bitterness was concentrated on Carlow. It was unjust, and perhaps he realized at the bottom of his heart, that it was unjust; but if so, he refused to listen to the "still small voice." His dislike of the new fellow in the Remove was growing into something very like hatred now.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Halves for Hookey!

"ONE for you, Carlow!" Bob Cherry called out cheerily.

It was morning break, and a number of fellows had gathered round the rack to look for letters.

Carlow was at a distance, and he was not looking for letters. No letter had come to the school for him since he had been at Greyfriars, and he certainly was not expecting one.

He glanced round in surprise as Bob called.

"One for me?" he repeated.

"Yes; here you are."

"I say, you fellows, isn't there one for me?" asked Billy Bunter, with an anxious blink through his big spectacles. "I say, I was expecting a postal order—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! Look here, Bob Cherry, don't you give Carlow that letter if it's for me."

"Fathead! It's for Carlow," said Bob, taking it down from the rack.

"Well, Carlow never gets any letters," said Bunter argumentatively, "and I'm expecting a letter from one of my titled relations. Look here, if there's a crest on that letter, it's for me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here you are, Carlow!" Bob tossed the letter across, and the new junior caught it.

Several fellows glanced at him. The fact that Carlow never had any letters had not, of course, escaped notice. And it was easy to see that he was surprised at getting one. Skinner—who noticed

everything—had noticed that the post-mark on Carlow's letter was the local one of Friardale. Apparently the new junior was getting correspondence from someone quite near at hand.

"Who's your friend in the village, Carlow?" called out Skinner.

Carlow, with the letter in his hand, looked at him.

"I've no friend in the village," he answered. "What do you mean?"

"Well, that letter's post-marked Friardale," said Skinner. "I happened to notice it—"

"You happen to notice a lot of things that don't concern you," said Carlow, and he walked away with the letter in his hand.

"I say, you fellows, fancy Carlow getting a letter!" said Billy Bunter. "He never gets any; he hasn't any relations or anything. I say, I wonder who pays his fees here?"

"Can't mind your own bisney, can you, old fat bean?" asked Peter Todd.

"Oh, really Toddy—"

Carlow had gone out into the quad with his letter. He stopped under the old elms to open it. There was a single sheet within, and as the new junior unfolded it and looked at it, he gave a sudden start.

"Oh!" he ejaculated.

The colour wavered in his cheeks. Something like a hunted look came into his eyes.

Then he set his lips, and quietly read the letter through. It was a strange enough epistle for any Greyfriars fellow to receive. It ran:

"Dear old Buttons.—I fancy you won't expect to hear from me. But I noticed that day that you had a school cap, and I've found out the school. So you're going to hear from your old pal Hookey.

"How you've worked it I don't know. You was boot-boy at the Regency Boarding House at Brighton when I was waiter there. I left you there when I was sacked. Now you're a schoolboy at a big school, and any cove could see that you've got plenty of dibs.

"I ain't giving you away, if you do the pally thing. But halves is what I say, and I mean it. You're on to a good thing; and you ain't leaving Hookey out in the cold. Not half!"

"I'll wait for you Tuesday afternoon at the stile in Friardale Lane. Come if you want to see me and talk friendly. If you don't turn up at two o'clock, or thereabouts, I'll come on to the school. Your old pal,

"JIM HOOKEY."

Carlow crushed the letter in his hand. His cheeks had paled, and there was a deep, dark line in his brow.

He had feared that something of this sort might come. Since his meeting with Hookey two or three weeks ago—the meeting that Frank Nugent had witnessed by chance—he had seen nothing of the man, heard nothing from him, and had hoped that the dingy rascal had gone on his way. But he had doubted whether he had seen the last of him—and now he was face to face with what he had feared.

The man had found out that he was at Greyfriars School, and—prompted by his own dishonest nature—concluded that it was by means of some trickery, some sort of swindling, that the startling change in his circumstances had been brought about. Carlow's lip curled as he remembered that Nugent of the

(Continued on page 12.)

FOOTBALL FAVOURITES!

No. 5.
PETER SIMPSON,
of
CRYSTAL PALACE!
F.C.



A sharp-shooting centre-forward, who notched no fewer than forty-six goals for his club in League matches last Season.

A Lad Fra' Leith!

PETER SIMPSON, the great young centre-forward of the Crystal Palace team, does not display the faintest of Scottish accent in his speech.

I was at Selhurst Park only a week or two ago, when one of the player's friends asked young Peter if he knew why the authorities had passed him over when selecting an England team last winter.

"England?" queried Simpson. "Why, I'm a Scotsman!"

I first met Simpson in the autumn of 1919 at Leith, where, by the way, he was born. He was then about twelve years of age—a fine sturdy lad with fair skin, fair hair, and clear blue eyes. On the occasion of our first meeting he was in the playing fields of Trinity Academy, where he was educated, and to which seat of learning I was paying a visit at the invitation of one of the masters.

It was in September, and some of the boys were playing cricket, while others were indulging in football. My friend, the dominie, pointed to a youngster who was bowling a fastish ball which appeared to be dangerous on a not too plumb wicket.

"That boy," he said, "will make a fine bowler one of these days. His name is Peter Simpson, and he's quite good at most games. You ought to see him play football!"

I did—on the following Saturday, and I never saw a speedier forward at twelve years of age.

Football Every Time!

YOUNG Simpson left school soon after his fourteenth birthday, and was apprenticed as a draughtsman in a shipyard, where he remained for a period of two years.

Soon realising that he was not making a lot of headway, he went into a shipping office as a clerk, and joined a strong team called the Leith Amateurs. It was while he was with this side that he changed his position from outside-right to centre, which came about as a result of the regular pivot being injured. But once young Peter played in that position his ability was recognised, and he never went back to the wing.

As time went on he was approached by more than one professional team, but he preferred to remain an amateur. Then the manager of St. Bernard's, a side playing in the Second Division of the Scottish League, suggested that Peter could remain in his job at the shipping office and merely play on Saturdays for a fee of £2 a week. This Simpson agreed to do, and so signed professional forms.

I was present at the match at which he first appeared as a paid player. It was St. Bernard's v. Stenhousemuir, on the latter team's ground near Falkirk, and St. Bernard's lost.

Quite a lot of Leith people, including women supporters, went to see the game, and the train back was crowded, so that young Simpson and I had to elbow our way into an already over-full compartment. Everybody was indignant at the defeat of St. Bernard's, and a woman who was present held forth on the idiocy of "pleein' sik a bairn as Peter Simpson, who didna' ken his ain goal fra' th' ither side's."

I looked across at Peter, and saw a gleam of amusement in his eyes.

"You'll be sorry for those words," I said to the woman, who thereupon

prophesied that Simpson would not be in the side on the following Saturday.

But he was, and scored four goals, which not only gave him confidence in himself, but the confidence of the club's supporters—a great help for a young player.

In his second season with St. Bernard's, Peter was badly injured with a displaced cartilage, and was informed by a specialist that he would have to be operated on if he ever wanted to play football again. He entered the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, was operated on, and went back to business a sound young man. Then came a blow from the manager of the shipping firm, who told Peter that he would have to choose between football and business; that he was allowing play to interfere with his work.

It happened that at about this time David Stevenson, the Old Hibernians' professional, met another Scottish International, named Collier, who had become the manager of the Kettering Town Football Club; and the latter confessed that his visit to Scotland was for the purpose of finding a real "class" centre-forward.

"I've got him for you!" said Stevenson. "He's just wavering between football and an office career."

In the evening of the following day Peter Simpson became a fully fledged professional footballer, signing on for Kettering at a wage of £5 a week in the winter, and £3 10s. in the summer.

Leading Goal Scorer!

FOR two seasons the young Scotsman remained with his new club, gradually building up a fine reputation as a dependable player and a clean-living youngster, whose every action was an object lesson to junior professionals.

During Simpson's second season with Kettering Town his club was drawn against Crystal Palace in the Association Cup Competition. In this game, which resulted in Kettering's defeat by 2-0, Peter imagined he was a failure; but the eagle eye of one of the best judges in the country—Mr. Goodman, the Palace secretary—saw in him the makings of a really great centre, with the result that the young Scotsman is in his third season with the Selhurst Park team.

In the two seasons he has so far played his scoring has been extraordinary. In the first he commenced by playing four games with the reserves, after which he got and retained his place in the first team, scoring thirty-six goals. Last season he scored forty-six goals in League matches, being the top scorer in the Southern section of the League, and second in all League games, his best match being v. Exeter, in which he scored six goals.

In addition to being a keen cricketer, Peter Simpson is a capable golfer and a motorist, having recently acquired a car, in which he takes some of his colleagues for long runs into the country. He is always in the very pink of condition, and as he came off the running track two days ago I was forced to admire the glow of youth which radiated from him. And then my eye caught the same sort of expression upon the face of my friend Goodman.

"What do you think of him?" I asked, nodding in the direction of the dressing-room to which Simpson had gone.

"Think?" echoed Goodman. "There is no need to think! WE KNOW!"



Office life didn't appeal to Simpson; his mind was always on football!

FOES OF THE REMOVE!

(Continued from page 10.)

Remove, on the same evidence, had the same suspicion.

But Hookey was evidently planning to turn the matter to his own advantage. "Buttons," as he called Carlow, was on to a good thing, and Hookey wanted to share! It was blackmail, pure and simple.

Carlow's face hardened.

He tore the letter into fragments, and scattered them on the wind. Then he walked under the leafless elms, his hands driven deep into his pockets, thinking.

He had nothing to fear—in the way that Hookey believed, and in the way that Nugent supposed. But, so far, no one at Greyfriars knew his antecedents—except Coker of the Fifth, who had stayed at the Regency in the summer, and seen him there; and Nugent, who had heard Hookey call him Buttons. Coker had said nothing about him, and Nugent, bitter as he was, suspicious as he forced himself to be, had shrunk from repeating what he had overheard. So far, the school did not know.

What would they think if they knew that Carlow of the Remove had been, only six months ago, a servant in a seaside boarding-house—a boot-boy and page-boy, running errands, tipped by the guests? He wondered.

He had been warned to say nothing about it at the school, and his own good sense had warned him that silence was golden. There were all sorts of fellows in the school—plenty of fellows who would make things unpleasant for him if they knew—fellows like Skinner and Snoop of the Remove, or Angel of the Fourth.

But now he had been some weeks in the school Carlow was not so sensitive about it as he had been. He had seen something of Greyfriars now—judged the fellows he had met there.

Most of them, he believed, would be quite indifferent. Fellows who were friendly with him would, he believed, remain friendly. There were other fellows in the school who had not had the advantages most Greyfriars men had had. There was Mark Linley, who had worked in a factory before he gained the scholarship that brought him to Greyfriars; there was Dick Penfold, the son of the village cobbler at Friardale; both of them were liked in their Form and respected in the school.

If the facts came out, it would not be the blow he had fancied it would be when he had first come to Greyfriars. Harry Wharton & Co., he was certain, would think none the worse of him. Even Nugent, who was down on him, was no snob.

Anyhow, whatever might betide, he was going to make no terms with Hookey; he would rather leave the school than yield to the threats of a dingy rascal. His mind was quite made up about that.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" bawled Bob Cherry.

Carlow glanced round.

"Deaf?" roared Bob. "The bell's stopped!"

"Oh, all right!"

It was third lesson, and Carlow had not noticed the bell. He cut off to the House after Bob.

"Day-dreaming, old bean," asked Bob, with a grin, as they trotted to the House, "or getting deaf in your old age?"

Carlow laughed, and they ran into the House together.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Straight from the Shoulder!

ERIC CARLOW sauntered out of gates after dinner. He sauntered down Friardale Lane, his hands in his pockets, his manner quite casual. But there was a glint in his eyes, and his lips were set.

Half-way to the village was the stile, and as he came in sight of it he sighted a dingy figure leaning on the stile.

The man with the oily face, the shifty eyes, grinned as he came up, and lifted his dingy bowler-hat in mocking salute.

"Ain't we a toff!" grinned Hookey.

Carlow came to a halt, facing the dingy rascal. The contrast between the well-dressed, quiet-mannered schoolboy and the dingy rogue leaning on the stile was great. Fow, looking at them, could have guessed that only six months since both had been servants in the same house. The difference was that Carlow had been a good servant, and Hookey a bad one. He had kept his self-respect, and done his duty; dreaming, perhaps, of better things that might come, but in the meantime doing his duty in his sphere quietly and conscientiously.

Hookey had never had any self-respect, and had never been troubled by any sense of duty. And they had fared according to their deserts.

"I reckoned you'd come, Buttons," said Hookey. "You don't want an old pal from Brighton to drop in at the swell school, what?"

"No!" said Carlow.

"It would show you up a bit, what?" chuckled Hookey.

"Yes."

"Ow did you work it?" demanded Hookey curiously. "You was a careful and saving sort, but you never put by more'n a few pounds out of what you earned cleaning boots and knives at the Regency. You ain't doing this on your own money, Buttons?"

"No!"

"Did you get a chance at the bag, like I did?" asked Hookey.

"No!"

"Well, 'ow did you get 'old of your luck?" asked Hookey. "Can't you tell a bloke?"

"No!"

"You want me to fancy you come by it; but you've brought off some sort of can't begin to guess how you've worked it; but you've brought off some sort of a swindle, Buttons. Ain't that so?"

"No!"

Hookey gave an angry grunt.

"Can't you say anything but 'Yes or 'No'?" he snarled. "I can tell you, Buttons, it will pay you to be civil! I only got to open my mouth, to give you away at that school!"

"I know that!"

"Well, then, if you don't want a copper's 'and on your shoulder——" said Hookey threateningly.

Carlow's lip curled in contempt.

"Don't be a fool, Hookey! You're judging me by yourself. You're a thief and a rascal, and you think me the same. You're mistaken."

"Better language, Buttons!" growled Hookey. "And if you ain't brought off a swindle, tell a bloke how you've jumped out of a kitchen and a boot-room into a Public school."

"That's my business, not yours," said Carlow, "and I shall tell you nothing. But if you had the sense of a bunny rabbit, you'd know that no fellow could spook or swindle his way into a school like Greyfriars. My fees are paid there. The Head knows all about me; and I've

nothing to fear from the police or anybody else."

Hookey's shifty eyes scanned him.

"You want me to believe that?" he sneered.

"Believe it or not as you choose, it's true!"

"Well, I don't catch on!" said Hookey, after a long pause. It seemed that the schoolboy's quiet and contemptuous manner impressed him with the truth of Carlow's statement.

"No need for you to catch on," answered Carlow coolly. "It's no bizney of yours. All I want of you is for you to keep your distance."

"You can want!" jeered Hookey. "I'll lay that the swells up at the school don't know you was boot-boy in a boarding-house afore you wedged in at Greyfriars!"

Carlow did not answer that.

"Ow you did it, I ain't guessing," went on Hookey. "If you ain't worked some sort of a swindle, I don't catch on. But I know this much—you don't want me to butt in at the school and give you away."

"No!"

"You got plenty of money now," said Hookey. "Come down to brass tacks. What's it worth for me to hook it and leave you alone?"

"I haven't plenty of money," answered Carlow quietly. "I'm well looked after, but I have only the same pocket-money as any other fellow. I'm not in a position to bribe you if I wanted to, Hookey. I've nothing to give you—and that's what I've come to tell you."

"There ain't a lot of green in my eye," said Hookey sarcastically, "and if you don't want me to walk into Greyfriars and give the whole show away, you'll 'and out a fiver now, on the spot, and you'll 'and out more to follow."

It was out now; the blackmailer undisguised. Carlow breathed rather hard, but his face remained quite calm.

Hookey held out a grubby hand.

"A fiver to begin with," he said; "and sharp!"

"I shall give you nothing," said Carlow quietly. "I could not give you five pounds if I wanted to; but I would not pay you a penny to save my life! I warn you to keep away from my school. If you have the impudence to show yourself there, you will be thrown out on your neck!"

Hookey gave him a black scowl.

"Not afore I've opened my mouth!" he jeered.

"Please yourself," said Carlow. "I've never done anything to harm you, Hookey. I never liked you, but you've nothing to complain of. Why can't you go on your way and leave me alone?"

"I said halves, and I mean halves," said Hookey. "You're making money somehow, and I'm not going to be left out in the cold."

"I'm not making money, you ass! I'm a schoolboy at Greyfriars like any other, with a small allowance."

"Come off!" said Hookey. "Anyhow, I dessay you could make some money if you liked, with the run of the place. I wish I had half the chance!"

Carlow's eyes gleamed.

"That's enough from you!" he said. "Now, I want a plain answer, Hookey. Are you going to leave me alone?"

"Not half!" said Hookey. "I come in on halves, or I come in and give the show away."

Carlow drew a deep breath.

"I've only one answer to make to that," he said.

"And what may that be?" sneered Hookey.



"Don't let that man go, sir!" yelled Bunter. "He's the chap who knocked old Cheyne—I mean, Sir George Cheyne—down, sir, and tried to rob him!" "Wha-a-1!" "Oh, crimes!" gasped Hookey. The next moment he was racing for the gates.

"This!"

The Greyfriars fellow stepped towards the dingy rascal, his hands up. Hookey jumped back, but not in time. A crashing fist caught him between the eyes, and he rolled over in the dust of the lane with a yell.

Carlow looked down at him as he sprawled, with gleaming eyes.

"If you want some more like that follow me to Greyfriars!" he said; and with that he turned and walked back towards the school.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Surprising Visitor at Greyfriars!

GOSLING frowned.

"Houtside!" he said briefly.

"This 'ere is Greyfriars, ain't it?"

"Yes; and your sort ain't wanted," said Gosling. "Houtside! Wot I says iz this 'ere—you 'ook it!"

Mr. James Hookey did not "hook" it.

Instead of hooking it, he came into the old gateway of Greyfriars and stared curiously towards the old quad and the grey old buildings. It was not yet time for class, and there were plenty of fellows in sight, and some of them glanced towards the dingy figure in the gateway.

Gosling, the porter, eyed him with grim disapproval. Mr. Hookey certainly did not look like the kind of visitor to the school that Gosling was delighted to honour.

"I said, houtside!" remarked Gosling, with dignity.

"Can't a bloke call on a friend?" demanded Hookey belligerently.

"You've got no friend here," said Gosling. "You take yourself off, my man!"

"That's your little mistake, old whiskers," said Hookey. "I've got a

young friend in this 'ere school—feller that used to work with me at Brighton. Name of Carlow."

"Rubbish!" snapped Gosling.

"I've called to see young Carlow," said Hookey. "Buttons was what we used to call him when he was boots at the boarding-house. And I tell you straight I'm going to see him."

With that Hookey pushed past Gosling, and, eluding the ancient porter's grasp, dodged in at the gates. Gosling stared after him angrily.

"Here, you! You get hout!" he roared.

"Rats to you!" retorted Hookey.

With cool impudence the dingy rascal walked into the quadrangle.

After the interview at the stile, Hookey had given up the idea of extracting blackmail from his one-time fellow-servant at the Regency Boarding House in Brighton. That was a chicken that would not fight, as Hookey would have expressed it. But his disappointment, and the blow that had laid him in the dust, had to be paid for. Hookey had come on to the school for revenge.

Whether, as he suspected, there was some mysterious swindle involved in Carlow's presence at Greyfriars, or not, Hookey was quite assured that "Buttons" was keeping the boots and the boarding-house dark in his new quarters. They were not likely to remain very dark after Jim Hookey's visit.

"Here, Fatty!" called out Hookey to a fat junior in a large pair of spectacles who was blinking at him in amazement. "You know where young Carlow is? Friend of mine."

Billy Bunter blinked at him with his eyes almost bulging through his spectacles.

Hookey had never seen Bunter before, but Bunter had seen Hookey from the branches of a beech in Friardale Wood!

The Owl of the Remove was simply astounded to see the man who had attempted to rob Sir George Cheyne walk into the school quad.

It was nearly a week since that episode, and Bunter had forgotten it till he was reminded by the unexpected apparition of Hookey.

"Deaf, Fatty?" demanded Hookey. "Can't you hear a bloke? I'm a friend of young Carlow, and I've called to see him."

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He backed rapidly away. The proximity of the footpad was rather alarming to Billy Bunter, though certainly in the crowded quad Hookey was hardly dangerous.

Hookey stared at him, far from guessing what was in the mind of the fat Owl, and slouched on towards the House.

Dozens of fellows stared at him, wondering who he was and what he wanted. Hookey left them in brief doubt as to what he wanted.

"Young Carlow here?" he called out, addressing Wingate of the Sixth.

Wingate jumped.

"What? What do you want?"

"I've called to see young Carlow," answered Hookey. "He's a friend of mine; we was servants together in the summer at Brighton. I 'ear that he's at this school now."

"Great pip!"

"Carlow!" said Gwynne of the Sixth. "That's the name of some new kid in the Remove, I believe."

"Oh, my hat!" yelled Skinner in great delight. "Here's a friend of Carlow's, you men! Some friend! Where's Carlow?"

"Carlow!" yelled Snoop. "Come and see your friend!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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FOES of the REMOVE!



(Continued from page 13.)

Wingate was staring blankly at Hookey.

"Look here, my man, what do you mean?" he demanded gruffly.

"Jest what I say, me lad!" answered Hookey. "No 'arm in my calling on an old friend, I s'pose. Carlow will be glad to see me. He ain't forgotten how I used to help him with the boots."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Carlow!" yelled Skinner. "Where's Carlow?"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Where's Carlow? Call Carlow!"

Hookey walked on towards the House, Wingate still staring at him. The captain of Greyfriars did not know precisely what to do in these curious circumstances.

The Famous Five were on the steps of the House and their eyes were on Hookey. Nugent recognised him at once as the man he had seen in conversation with Carlow. And Hookey, as his eyes fell on Nugent, recognised him also. He touched his dingy hat.

"Called to see young Carlow," he said. "You've seen me meet him afore, sir! Remember seeing me?"

Nugent nodded, without speaking.

His chums looked at him, and then looked at the dingy, shifty, unpleasant-looking rascal.

"Look here, what do you want here?" asked Harry Wharton.

"I want to see my old pal Carlow!" said Hookey. "Him that was page and boot-boy in the Regency Boarding House at Brighton last summer, and cleaned the boots and waited on the visitors, and so on."

"What rot!"

"The rotfulness is terrific!"

"He ain't told you about it?" grinned Hookey. "No, I s'pose he wouldn't! I fancy he must have robbed a bank since he was boot-boy at Brighton! Or p'raps found a purse that wasn't lost! What?"

"Carlow!" yelled Skinner.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Carlow!" muttered Bob Cherry.

Carlow of the Remove was coming towards the House. A dozen fellows had gathered round him—a hundred were staring at him. As his eyes fell on Hookey he was seen to wince.

Wingate called out to him.

"Here, Carlow! Here's a man says he knows you! Do you know anything about him?"

Carlow caught his breath. His face was scarlet.

Hookey looked round and waved a grubby hand to him.

"Oh, here you are, Buttons!" he shouted. "I told you I'd look in, didn't I? Bit of a change since you was boot-boy at the boarding-house, ain't it? Do you wash the dishes 'ere?"

Carlow stood dumb.

He had known that it must come after

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the way he had dealt with the black-mailer. He had tried to steel himself to face it. But now that the blow had fallen, it seemed overwhelming.

From a study window a pair of gimlet eyes were watching the scene. Mr. Quelch glared, and then whisked out of his study. A few moments later he whisked out of the House, and some of even Hookey's brazen impudence left him, under the stern eyes of the Remove master.

"Who are you? What are you doing here?" rapped Mr. Quelch.

Hookey touched his dingy hat, with leering civility.

"You the schoolmaster?" he asked. "No 'arm intended, sir—jest calling in to see my old friend Buttons—him you call Carlow! He was in a job along with me last summer at Brighton, cleaning boots and washing dishes."

"Bless my soul!"

"I 'ope," said Hookey, with a grin, "that now he's set up as a gentleman he's come by it honest! It don't look like it, but I 'ope so!" He leered at Carlow. "If you've been up to some swindle, Buttons, you're for it now, and you can look out for a copper."

Every eye was on Carlow's burning face. At a sign from Mr. Quelch he came up to the steps, and a hush fell on the crowd of Greyfriars fellows.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Hookey!

"CARLOW!"

"Yes, sir!" Carlow's voice was low, but it was calm and clear. He had pulled himself together.

"Do you know this—this man?" asked Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir."

"Did you ask him to come here?"

"Certainly not."

"He is not, as he states, a friend of yours?"

"No, sir!"

"Oh, draw it mild, Buttons!" interjected Hookey. "Wasn't we pals at the old Regency in Brighton? Didn't I often 'elp you with the boots and the dishes, though me being a waiter I was above you?"

Carlow gave him a look of contempt. The crowd of fellows standing round exchanged glances, and many of them grinned.

Mr. Quelch fixed his grim eyes on Hookey.

"You will leave these premises at once," he said. "You had no right to come here, and I can only believe that you came with a bad motive. Leave at once."

"Can't a man drop in and speak a word to an old friend?" asked Hookey. "Ain't young Buttons going to ask me in even for a cup o' tea?"

Bob Cherry made a movement forward.

"Shall we see him off, sir?" he asked. His eyes glinted at the leering, impudent rascal. Bob would have been glad to see Hookey off—with the largest boot in the Remove to give him a start.

But Mr. Quelch waved him back.

"Go!" he said sternly to Hookey.

"You will leave at once, or you will be ejected. If you venture to repeat your visit you will be dealt with severely. Now go!"

"I say, sir——" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"You may be silent, Bunter!"

"Yes, sir, but I say, sir——"

"Silence!"

"Shut up, you fat ass!" muttered Johnny Bull, jerking the Owl of the Remove back.

"Oh, really, Bull——"

Hookey was grinning round him with undiminished impudence. He took no notice of Bunter, little guessing what the fat junior was trying to get out. A hundred staring faces were round the spot, and many curious and some amused glances were turned on Carlow's burning face. The disreputable rascal had carried out his threat—he had "given away" the new fellow at Greyfriars; not a fellow in the school would be in ignorance now of what Eric Carlow had been only a few months before.

Whether that strange alteration in his position in life had been brought about by honest or by dishonest means, Hookey could not tell, though he hoped for the worst. But the facts, whatever they were, had to come out now; Carlow would be known, as he was, by all Greyfriars. Hookey had had his revenge; he had done all the mischief he could, and he was ready to go.

Mr. Quelch was pointing a stern forefinger towards the gates. Wingate and Gwynne and Loder of the Sixth had drawn near, ready to escort Hookey to the gates—not gently—at a sign from the Form master.

"Go!" said Mr. Quelch sternly.

"Well, if I ain't welcome 'ere, I'll go!" said Hookey. "If my old pal Buttons turns me down I ain't the man to butt in. Shake 'ands before I go, Buttons, old bean?"

Carlow gave him no heed.

"Well, p'raps you're too proud, now you're up in the world!" sighed Hookey. "You wasn't so proud when you was boot-boy——"

"That is enough!" rapped Mr. Quelch. "Go!"

"I say, sir——"

"Be silent, Bunter!"

"But, I—I—I've got to tell you, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Don't let that man get away, sir!"

Billy Bunter fairly shoved himself forward, his fat face red and excited, his eyes almost popping through his spectacles. He pointed a fat forefinger at Hookey.

"That's the man, sir!" he gasped.

Mr. Quelch gave him a freezing glare. "What do you mean, Bunter? Do you know this man?"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Yes, rather, sir!"

Hookey stared at Bunter. He had never seen him before, and he was not alarmed—yet.

"He's the man!" gasped Bunter. "Don't let him go, sir! Keep him here till a bobby comes, sir——"

"What? A what?"

"A bobby, sir—I mean, a peeler—that is, a slop——"

"What?" roared Mr. Quelch.

"I mean a policeman, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Nonsense! Say no more, Bunter! Take a hundred lines——"

"Oh crikey!"

"Stand back, Bunter——"

"But he's the man, sir!" yelled Bunter.

"What do you mean?" exclaimed the exasperated Mr. Quelch. "What man? What do you mean, Bunter?"

"The—the man, sir!" gurgled Bunter. "The footpad—the man who knocked old Cheyne—I mean, Sir George Cheyne—down, sir, and tried to rob him!"

Mr. Quelch jumped.

"What?" he ejaculated.

"Oh crimes!" gasped Hookey. He gave Bunter one startled glare, turned, and ran for the gates.

But it was too late. A thick crowd was round Hookey, and they did not

open to let him pass. Wingate dropped a heavy hand on his shoulder.

"Hold on, my man!" said the captain of Greyfriars grimly. "You're not going just yet."

"You let a bloke go. I—I—" stammered Hookey. He strove to wrench himself free, and Wingate's grasp tightened like that of a vice. Gwynne and Loder stepped up on either side of the wriggling rascal, and took hold of his arms.

"Bunter!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "What do you mean? What do you know of this man?"

"I know him, sir!" chirruped Bunter. All eyes were on the fat Owl now, and Bunter was enjoying the limelight. "I saw him, sir. I know him! He's the man who tried to rob old—I mean, Sir George Cheyne! He never saw me, sir, but I jolly well saw him! I biffed him—"

"What?"

"I mean, I bunged a cake at him, sir, when he was pitching into the old bean, sir, and biffed him over, and—"

"I remember Sir George Cheyne mentioned the circumstance, Bunter. Are you certain that this is the man?"

"Yes, rather, sir!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "I fancy the sportsman will be rather sorry he called, after all."

"The sorrowfulness will be preposterous!" chuckled Hurree Singh.

"Keep him secure, Wingate!" said the Remove master.

"We've got him safe, sir!"

There was no doubt that Hookey was sorry by this time that he had called. Bunter's denunciation had fallen on him like a bombshell, taking him completely by surprise. But he was quick to realise all that it meant to him, and he knew that he was in a trap, a snare of his own setting. He wriggled in the grasp of the prefects, but he had no chance whatever of getting loose.

"Bunter, you positively identify this man as the footpad who attacked Sir George Cheyne last week?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir! What-ho!" grinned Bunter. "I know him!"

"It's a lie!" gasped Hookey. "I never seen that lad before. Don't know him from Adam."

"I jolly well know you, though," grinned Bunter, "and old—Sir George Cheyne will jolly well identify you, too!"

"If you are absolutely certain, Bunter—" said Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, yes, sir!"

Carlow had slipped away quietly from the crowd, hardly noticed in this new excitement. Bunter held the spotlight now.

"The man seems pretty keen to get away, sir," said Wingate, as the Remove master seemed to entertain some lingering doubt. "He wasn't in a hurry to go before Bunter spoke."

"That is true," said Mr. Quelch. "If we indeed have a lawless ruffian in our hands, it is our duty to detain him for the police to make an inquiry. Do not let him go, Wingate."

"Look here!" gasped Hookey.

"You will be detained for inquiry," said Mr. Quelch. "I shall telephone for a constable from Courtfield at once. I have no doubt that you will be taken into custody on this boy's evidence, and retained in custody until Sir George Cheyne can see you and identify you. Wingate, take the man into the House, and lock him in a box-room."

"Certainly, sir!"

Hookey wriggled spasmodically as the Sixth Form prefects marched him into the House. He was still wriggling and

protesting when he disappeared from sight.

Mr. Quelch hurried to his study at once to call up the police station on the telephone, and the crowd broke up, buzzing with excitement. Before the bell rang for classes the Greyfriars fellows had the further excitement of seeing Hookey taken in charge by a constable from Courtfield, and walked away from the school with an official hand on his arm, and an extremely dismal expression on his face. Undoubtedly Hookey was sorry that he had called!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Only A Boot-boy!

"BOOT-BOY—"

"And washer-up!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner & Co. were distinctly entertained. Carlow, passing the cheery group on his way to the Form-room as the bell rang, flushed scarlet.

"What's Greyfriars coming to?" asked Skinner.

"Goodness knows!" said Snoop.

"Oh, shut up, you worms!" growled Bob Cherry, coming along in time to hear the remarks of Skinner & Co.

"Let the chap alone."

"Who's touching him?" smiled Skinner.

"I wouldn't touch him with a barge-pole, for one!"

"I draw the line at boot-boys!" sniggered Snoop.

"I say, you fellows, it's rather thick,"

said Billy Bunter, with a serious blink through his big spectacles at the Remove fellows gathering outside the Form-room door.

"It's rather the limit, isn't it? I don't think the Head ought to let such—such persons into the school, you know."

"Better tell the Head so," suggested Peter Todd. "He would be awfully obliged by a tip from the Remove!"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"The thickfulness is not really very terrific, my esteemed idiotic Bunter," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Well, this sort of thing won't do," said Bunter. "I hardly dare to think what my titled relations would think if they knew!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at—letting a low blighter into the school!" said Bunter indignantly.

"You needn't complain of that," said the Bounder.

"If they didn't let a low blighter into the school, how would you have wedged in?"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"I suppose this is what Nugent knew about the chap," said Skinner.

"He had something up against him," said Snoop.

"He never let on what it was or how he knew," went on

Skinner, "but I fancy this was what Nugent knew all the time. Naturally, he wasn't going to stand such a tick in his study."

"That's rot!" snapped Bob Cherry. "Nugent is no silly snob, if you are, Skinner. Nugent doesn't care a rap about such rot."

"Well, he turned the fellow out of his study," sneered Skinner. "He must have known this. That's why."

Bob gave an angry snort, but he had nothing to say. It was evident that what Hookey had revealed to all Greyfriars was what Nugent had known earlier.

"Well, I'd never have thought Nugent would be a snobbish ass," said Peter Todd. "It's not like him."

"He's not, you fathead!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Why did he turn the fellow out of his study, then?" sneered Skinner. "I say, where's Nugent? Let's ask him if he knew."

It was time for class, and most of the Remove had gathered at the Form-room door. Mr. Quelch had gone to the Head's study, and was not so punctual as usual. Some of the fellows guessed that he was discussing the scene in the quad with the headmaster, and wondered what the outcome might be for Carlow. Carlow was in the corridor, at a little distance from the crowd of juniors, his eyes on the floor. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent came up the passage together.

"Here's Nugent!" squeaked Billy Bunter. "I say, Franky, old chap, you knew about Carlow all along, didn't you?"

Nugent did not answer.

"Nugent knew all right," said the Bounder. "But if that's why he turned him out of his study—" Smithy paused.

(Continued on next page.)



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"I'd have turned him out of mine," said Skinner. "I've no use for jumped-up menservants!"

"You would!" assented the Bounder, with a curl of the lip. "But I shouldn't have expected a decent chap to take the same line as you would."

"Look here, you rotter—"

"Oh, can it!" said the Bounder. "Whose business is it that the kid was in a job before he came here? What's the good of being a silly snob? If Nugent was down on him because he had cleaned boots for a living, Nugent is a silly ass, and ought to be jolly well ashamed of himself!"

Frank flushed crimson.

"It was nothing of the kind, Smithy," he broke out angrily. "Do you think I care two straws about such rot?"

"All serene," grinned the Bounder. "It wasn't the boot-cleaning. It was the licking you couldn't get over."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, I back up Nugent," squeaked Billy Bunter. "I'm down on low rotters shoving themselves in among their betters. I'm jolly well not going to speak to him."

"Not even to ask him for a loan?" asked Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, Toddy, you beast—"

"Nugent was right, and I agree with him," said Skinner.

Frank Nugent bit his lip hard. It was not pleasant, by any means, to find himself backed up by fellows like Bunter and Skinner. Certainly, it was not for any snobbish reason that Frank had been down on the new junior. He had not given a thought to that.

It was fixed in his mind that it was by some dishonourable means, by some sort of a swindle, that the one-time boot-boy of the Regency Boarding House at Brighton had gained such a remarkable rise in the world. The thing was unaccountable otherwise, to Nugent's mind. And he was far from realising that it was his personal dislike of the new fellow that made his suspicion so strong. He was blind to the fact that the same evidence, such as it was, was now before his chums, and that it did not give rise to the same suspicion in their minds.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes Quelch!" said Bob Cherry.

And the buzz of discussion died away as the Remove master came up the corridor and opened the Form-room door.

Mr. Quelch glanced for a moment at Carlow, standing apart from the rest, his face painfully flushed, his eyes on the floor. His glance swept, more severely, over the rest of his Form. Probably he was aware what had been the topic, that had been dropped so suddenly as he arrived.

The Remove took their places in the Form-room. Carlow went to his place as usual, looking neither to the right nor to the left. He was the cynosure of all eyes, and, though he did not look about him, he was fully conscious of the derisive grins of some of the fellows. Bob Cherry whispered to him as he passed.

"Buck up, old bean!"

Carlow looked up at that.

Bob gave him a cheery grin.

"Don't get down in the mouth," he said. "Nobody cares a brass button about the boots and the dishes, old pippin."

And Carlow smiled a little, though his face clouded again as he sat down in his place.

Nugent looked across at him, perplexed. Carlow had come into the

Form-room as usual; obviously he was still staying at the school, and Nugent could not understand it. If there was some sort of a swindle in connection with his coming to Greyfriars, it would be known now—now that the whole truth about him was known. Yet Mr. Quelch gave the new junior in his Form no special attention.

It was a puzzle to Nugent. Carlow had said that his headmaster and Form master knew all about him; but Nugent had not believed a word of it, for if they knew how was he there—why was he there? Greyfriars was an expensive school—and Carlow had no money of his own—no money that he could have come by honestly. Where did the money come from?

There was a swindle somewhere—he was certain of it. He knew, too, that Skinner & Co. were already making surmises on the same lines, though it was far from agreeable to find himself in such company. Yet Quelch took no notice of the fellow—and the fellow seemed as cool as ever.

It was mysterious enough—all the Remove were aware that it was mysterious—and Nugent's chums, little as they concurred in his suspicions of the new boy, could not help wondering what it all meant.

But, as it happened, that mystery was about to be cleared up.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Trouble in the Co.!

MR. QUELCH glanced over his class.

Under that glance from his gimlet-eyes the murmur of whispering died away.

The Remove fellows realised that something was coming, Quelch had something to say before lessons began.

"My boys," said Mr. Quelch, "most of you, I think, were witnesses to a somewhat disagreeable episode in the quadrangle. In the circumstances, it is my intention to make a brief explanation to my Form."

Carlow looked up quickly, and lowered his eyes again. Frank Nugent breathed hard. It was coming now, whatever it was.

"There is a new boy here," went on Mr. Quelch. "I refer to Carlow! This boy's circumstances, before he came to this school, were—hem!—somewhat unusual. On my advice, and the advice of the gentleman who now acts as his guardian, Carlow said nothing on this subject—the matter was purely his own concern, and was of no interest to anyone else."

"Wasn't it?" murmured Skinner.

"But after what has happened," continued Mr. Quelch, "the headmaster thinks, and I think, that an explanation should be made in order to clear up any possible misapprehensions. Carlow, as you now know, was in employment before he came here—honourable employment, of which no right-minded boy need to be ashamed."

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry.

"You will kindly be silent, Cherry," said Mr. Quelch severely.

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"Carlow was employed," resumed Mr. Quelch, "in a boarding-house at Brighton, and I am informed that he carried out his duties there in an honourable and satisfactory manner. It was owing to his being a lad of uncommon courage that he is no longer in such employment, but has been given a chance in life."

There was a movement of interest among the Remove. Carlow's eyes were

fixed on his desk, and his cheeks were burning.

"At the boarding-house where Carlow was employed," went on Mr. Quelch, "a governor of Greyfriars stayed as a visitor last summer. That governor was Sir George Cheyne. While bathing one day Sir George was attacked by cramp, and Carlow saved his life."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"I may add," continued Mr. Quelch, "that Carlow risked, and almost lost, his life in saving that of an elderly gentleman. He was, fortunately, an excellent swimmer, and he succeeded in keeping Sir George afloat till they were picked up. But it was a very narrow escape for both of them, and for a time it looked as if both would be drowned. Carlow, however, who could have saved himself with ease, remained holding Sir George, and ultimately both were picked up at the very last moment."

Mr. Quelch paused.

The Remove were hanging on his words now.

"Such courage," went on Mr. Quelch, "Sir George Cheyne felt should be rewarded. He naturally took a very deep interest in the boy, and, finding that he was intelligent, painstaking, and of the most exemplary character, he finally decided to place him in his own business. As a preparation for this he decided on placing him at Greyfriars for a term, and Carlow was therefore taken away from his employment and placed with a tutor, who prepared him for entering this school. Dr. Locko fully agreed with Sir George's views, and Carlow was entered at Greyfriars and placed in the Remove."

Carlow's eyes were still on his desk.

"I have made this explanation," said Mr. Quelch, "because since the facts about the boy have become known it is certain that there will be curiosity and surmise on the subject, unless the whole truth is known. That would be disagreeable and painful for Carlow. I desire all my boys to know that Carlow is here as the ward of a governor of the school, his school fees being paid by Sir George Cheyne, and that he is destined to take an honourable position in Sir George's ironworks in the North. He will be with us only this term, and during that period I have no doubt that my boys will treat him in every respect as one of themselves."

Mr. Quelch's voice rumbled a little as he concluded. Perhaps he had some doubts about some members of his Form!

"So that's it," murmured Bob Cherry.

He glanced at Nugent.

Frank sat quite still, his face pale and set.

Harry Wharton rose to his feet. Mr. Quelch's eye lingered on him as if he expected something from his head boy.

"Nobody in the Remove will think any the worse of Carlow, sir," said Harry, "and we all think he was jolly plucky, and we're jolly glad to have him at Greyfriars."

"Hear, hear!" roared Bob Cherry, this time unrebuked by his Form master.

"Bravo!" said the Bounder.

Mr. Quelch smiled.

"I am glad to hear this," he said. "I was sure that there was no boy in my Form so foolish as to be guilty of snobbery. We shall now commence."

The subject was dismissed, and the Remove commenced. But it was probable that most of the fellows were thinking more of Mr. Quelch's surprising communication than of the valuable



"The current's pretty strong here, Gatty," said Dick Nugent, "so take care of that pole." "I'm looking after it, all right," answered Gatty, swinging the pole round. Crack! "Yow-ow-ow!" Nugent minor gave a yell as the punt pole came in contact with his jaw.

instruction he proceeded to impart to them.

When classes were over, and the Remove left the Form-room, a good many of the juniors gathered round Carlow; prominent among them four members of the Famous Five. Skinner and Co sneered, and Billy Bunter turned up a fat little nose even farther than Nature had already turned it up. But most of the fellows made it quite clear to Carlow that the boots and the dishes, as the Bounder expressed it, did not worry them.

Frank Nugent, however, was not among them. Nugent, with a set face, went away to his study.

He was there, moving about restlessly, when the Co. came in to tea. Carlow came up to the Remove passage with the chums, but he went on to his own study with Russell and Ogilvy—who linked arms with him to demonstrate to all the Form that they did not care twopence about the boots and the dishes.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" sang out Bob Cherry, as he tramped into Study No. 1 with the rest. "You here, Franky! You might have spoken a word to the new kid."

"Might I?" said Nugent bitterly.

"Well, yes; now you know it's all bunkum, old bean. It was jolly sensible of Quelch to have it out in the Form-room," added Bob. "Lots of fellows would have wondered—and might have fancied all sorts of things—just as you did, old chap! Quelch is a downy bird."

"The downfulness is terrific," agreed Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "But the clearfulness of the air is now preposterous."

Harry Wharton gave Nugent a quick look.

"You're satisfied about the new man now, Frank?" he asked.

"Not in the least," answered Nugent coolly.

"But Quelch has explained the whole thing!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove. "For goodness' sake don't be an obstinate ass, Frank!"

"I suppose I can keep to my own opinion."

"That depends," said Johnny Bull, rather grimly. "You believed that Carlow was some sort of a spoofer and swindler, because he was here, after having been a boot-boy without a cent in the world—"

"I still believe so!"

"Then the sooner you chuck it the better! You know now as well as we do that he's all right. Old George played up like a sportsman in giving him a chance."

"Look here, Frank," said Wharton quietly, "let's have this out. Carlow was sent here by a governor of the school. His fees here are paid by Sir George Cheyne. You're not a snobbish fool like Bunter, or a snobbish cad like Skinner—you don't care about the boots and dishes—"

"You know I don't!"

"Well, then, what have you got up against the fellow now?"

Nugent compressed his lips.

"I think the same of him as I did," he answered deliberately. "I wondered how he wangled it—and now I know! He has spoofed that old fool somehow—"

"What?"

"Some rotten theatrical stunt—saving the old donkey's life!" Nugent sneered. "Some sort of rotten trickery, in my opinion."

Wharton looked at him steadily. He opened his lips, but closed them again.

Johnny Bull gave an expressive grunt.

"Does that mean that you're still down on the new kid, Nugent?" he asked.

"It does."

"You're not going to speak to him civilly?"

"No!"

"Then you needn't trouble to speak to

me either!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Not till you get over your rotten sulks, and make up your mind to own up that you were wrong and do the decent thing!"

And with that Johnny Bull stalked out of Study No. 1. The other fellows hesitated.

Nugent gave them a steely look.

"Do you agree with Bull?" he asked.

"Well—" began Bob, hesitating.

"Let's have it plain! I'm barring that rank rotter, the same as before—or more so. If you're not barring him, too, you can bar me."

"That does it, then," said Bob; and he walked out of the study after Johnny Bull; and after a moment's hesitation the Nabob of Bhanipur followed him.

Harry Wharton paused.

"Look here, Frank—" he began. He could scarcely understand his old chum in this bitter, sulky, and unreasonable mood.

"Are you barring Carlow?" demanded Nugent.

"No!" answered Wharton promptly.

"Then leave me alone."

"Look here—"

"That's enough!"

Frank Nugent turned his back. The captain of the Remove stared at him for some moments, his face setting hard; then, without another word, he followed his friends, and Nugent was left alone.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Keeping It Up I

ERIC CARLOW came out of the House on Wednesday afternoon, with a cheery look on his face. Judging by his looks, life seemed bright to the new junior at Greyfriars—and indeed it was. He hummed a tune as he strolled down to the gates, and broke off to laugh aloud as he caught Billy Bunter's eyes—and spectacles—turned on him with scorn.

The scorn of the aristocratic Owl did not seem to disturb Carlow's equanimity unduly.

He walked on and left Bunter scorning, as it were.

Near the gateway four members of the Famous Five were standing, and they nodded cheeryly to Carlow. He noticed that Nugent was not with his friends, and his bright face clouded a little.

Since the revelation made by Hookey—now reposing in a cell at Courtfield—and the statement Mr. Quelch had made in the Form-room, all that was to be known about Carlow was known at Greyfriars.

And, rather to his surprise, he did not find himself a penny the worse.

Fellows like Skinner might sneer, fellows like Bunter might turn up their noses, but there were not, after all, many of that sort. He found that nine fellows in ten did not care two straws about his personal affairs; and that it was probable that the whole thing would be forgotten in a day or two.

Indeed many fellows went out of their way to be civil, as if to demonstrate that they did not share the views of Skinner and Bunter.

Hookey, intending to deal a deadly blow, had missed the mark. He had done "Buttons" no harm at all, or very little.

And Carlow, rather surprised, was still more delighted. Life seemed very bright to him now. He was at Greyfriars for only one term; but it looked as if that term would be a happier one than he had anticipated.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, old bean!" said Bob Cherry, as he came along. "Enjoying life, what?"

"Yes, rather," said Carlow, with a smile. But his face clouded again. "I—I say! I've noticed that you fellows haven't been with Nugent—since yesterday. I suppose he's still got his back up—and I'm bound to say I think he's rather an ass; but—but—" He hesitated.

"Get it off your chest!" said Harry.

"Well, you're Nugent's friends," said Carlow, colouring a little. "He bars me—and if he's going to get his back up because you don't bar me, too, I—I shouldn't mind if you did. I don't want to make trouble among friends."

"Oh!" said Harry, rather taken aback.

"I'm not here for long," said Carlow.

He smiled again. "Sir George Cheyno doesn't want a chap to have a classical education to fit him for the ironworks, you know. His idea was that it would be a useful experience for me, a chance of mixing with some decent fellows, before I take up training for business—and getting a touch of the Public school polish you know. He's right. But it's only for one term—and I don't want to leave trouble behind when I go. It's decent of you fellows to treat me as you do—but I'd rather you chucked me than quarrelled with your pal. You—you don't mind my saying so?"

"Not a bit," said Wharton, smiling. "But we're not going to bar a decent chap because Nugent chooses to play the goat. But he will come round all right—he's really one of the best, though you haven't had a chance to see it."

"We're waiting for him now," said Bob, with a cheery grin. "We're going over to Highcliffe, and we're going to make him come. It's all right."

"Right-ho!" said Carlow; and with a nod he walked on out of gates.

Frank Nugent was coming down from the direction of the House, and his brows knitted at the sight of Carlow in talk with his friends.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here you are!"

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called out Bob Cherry. "Coming over to Highcliffe, Franky?"

"No!"

"Look here, we've arranged it with Courtenay," said Harry. "You'd better come, Frank."

"I'm not coming."

"What are we to say if they ask about you, you ass?"

"Why not tell the truth?" asked Nugent satirically. "Tell them you've thrown me over for a rotten cad who's wedged his way into the school by pulling the leg of a silly old chump!"

Wharton set his lips.

"That will do!" he said. "Come on, you men; we don't want any more of that!"

And the four juniors walked out of gates, leaving Frank Nugent staring after them grimly.

He remained in the gateway after they had disappeared along the road. Several fellows who passed him, going out, looked at his darkened face and exchanged glances; but Frank did not heed them. He did not even glance up till three fags of the Second Form came by—his cheerful minor, and Gatty and Myers. Then it was a remark of Gatty's that drew his attention.

"Here's your major, Nugent mi. What about asking him?"

"No fear!" answered Dicky Nugent promptly. "Solemn old stick! He doesn't look in a good temper, either."

"My hat! He don't!" grinned Myers.

And the three fags grinned at Frank Nugent as they passed him and walked away towards the river.

Nugent drew a deep breath.

He left the gateway at last and walked away, with his hands in his pockets and a black look on his brow.

He had fairly forced his chums to leave him to himself, but he felt "left" and lonely now they were gone. He would have been relieved and glad had his young brother shown any desire for his company that afternoon—his brother, who was the original cause of his present trouble. But Dicky evidently did not want him, and made the fact known with the frankness habitual to the Second Form.

Frank was feeling gloomy and dispirited as he reached the towpath and tramped along the river—solitary enough at that time of the year. It was a fine winter's day, clear and cold, with a bright winter sunshine, and, gloomy as he was, the exercise in the sharp, clear air raised Nugent's spirits a little.

He was thinking, and his thoughts were not happy ones. Had he, after all, been in the wrong? Had he, as his friends obviously considered, made a complete and unmitigated ass of himself? It was not a pleasant possibility to reflect upon.

What was there, after all, against Carlow? How he had come to Greyfriars "without a bean" was cleared up now; there was no hint of a "swindle" in it now that the thing was explained, unless— It came into Nugent's mind that he was clinging to his suspicion and distrust as an excuse for his continued dislike of a fellow who had given no offence—that he was deliberately taking the view that Carlow had somehow imposed on old Sir George—rather than part with a justification for his feud with the fellow.

But it was only for a moment or two that that clearness of vision came to him. He caught sight of Carlow on the towpath, and immediately his face hardened and the old dislike welled up in his breast.

Carlow's face was bright and smiling. He whistled a merry tune as he walked

along, kicking dead leaves before him, a striking contrast to Nugent himself. And as he glanced round and caught sight of Frank, it seemed to Nugent that a mocking gleam came into his eyes.

Nugent clenched his hands.

It was in his mind and in his heart to pick a quarrel with the fellow on the spot. Then, with a rush of anger, came the recollection of his "scrap" with Carlow. Little use scrapping with the fellow who had knocked him out, and could easily knock him out again. Blacker and more bitter Nugent's face grew at that thought. The fellow had licked him. No doubt he was thinking of it now as he looked at him with that mocking gleam in his eyes. Nugent strode towards him, his hands hard clenched.

"You rotter!" he breathed.

Carlow stepped back.

"Keep your distance, Nugent!" he said.

"You rotter! You had the best of it once, and you fancy you can crow over me!" muttered Nugent.

"Nothing of the kind. You're a fool to think anything of the sort," said Carlow quietly. "Keep your temper, and don't be an ass! What's the good of rowing?" Then he smiled. "Look here, Nugent, you know the facts now. It's just sheer obstinacy that's the matter with you. If you'd listen to your own friends—"

"Yes; I know the facts," said Nugent. "You're what I've always thought you—a rotter all through! And that old fool—"

Carlow's face hardened.

"Are you speaking of Sir George Cheyno, my benefactor?" he asked, very quietly.

"I am, and you know it!"

"Cut it out, then!" said Carlow.

"Another word like that—"

His eyes were gleaming.

"So you think you can bully me?" said Nugent, between his teeth. "I'll show you whether you can! Put up your hands, you cad!"

He came at Carlow with clenched fists even as he was speaking. Carlow had no choice about putting up his hands.

In a moment they were fighting.

In sheer desperation, Nugent put all he knew into it. But he was no match for Carlow, and in five minutes he was lying on his back in the grass on the towpath, staring up dizzily, beaten to the wide.

Carlow glanced down at him.

"I'm sorry for this, Nugent!" he said quietly. "I wish you'd have a little more sense! Look here, let me help you!"

"Let me alone, you rotter!" said Nugent thickly.

Carlow turned and walked on along the river. It was some minutes before Frank Nugent scrambled up and limped down to the margin of the Sark to bathe his heated, bruised face in the cool water.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Three in a Punt!

"LOOK here, Dicky—"

"Don't yell!" said Nugent minor.

"Well, look here—"

"Don't bawl!"

"Who's bawling?" demanded Gatty in a fierce whisper.

"Well, don't!" said Nugent minor.

"If anybody's making a row," said Myers, "it's you, Nugent mi!"

"Oh, all right!" said Dicky, with an air of exaggerated resignation. "If you want to wake up old Baker and

bring him down on us, go ahead! I don't mind, I'm sure!"

The three fags had reached their destination, which was a rather dilapidated shed near the old mill. That old shed served as a boathouse for a punt that was nearly as old as the shed.

The punt had not only seen its last days, but had seen the last of them long ago. Mr. Baker sometimes used it for fishing; at other times it lay in the shed, whence it was easy to extract it if an eye did not fall on the raiders from the mill.

Nobody was likely to steal that punt, which was hardly worth the trouble of transport, and Mr. Baker would not have objected to lending it to any Greyfriars senior; but certainly he would have intervened very promptly had he been aware that three fags of the Second Form were going to borrow it.

Below the mill was a dangerous reach of the Sark, strictly out of bounds for juniors. Dicky Nugent & Co. had a confidence in themselves which was certainly not shared by their headmaster.

So it was necessary to be cautious—a necessity that Richard Nugent rather noisily impressed on his comrades. He was leader, and a leader's business was to lead; so Dicky gave orders liberally.

Three pairs of hands dragged at the heavy old punt, and shifted it out of the shed and down the bank. Gatty brought the punt pole, which he found leaning in a corner.

"Now, shove her in!" said Nugent minor. "Ow! Don't bang her on my knees, you silly chumps! Wow!"

"Who's yelling now?" asked Myers.

"If you're asking for a thick ear, Myers——"

"Better shut up, Nugent mi!" said Gatty victoriously.

"If old Baker hears you yelling——"

"He won't let us have the punt if he hears Nugent mi shouting at the top of his voice!" agreed Myers.

Richard Nugent breathed hard and deep. He was tempted to let go the punt and use his hands in a clenched form on the noses of his comrades. But a scrap on the bank, in sight of the mill, was likely to draw unwelcome attention, and put "paid" to the scheme of borrowing that punt without the permission of the owner.

"Will you shut up?" said Nugent minor. "Can't you use your hands instead of your chins? Never saw such men for jawing!"

"Look here, Nugent mi——"

"Shove her in!" hissed Nugent mi.

And the punt went walloping through the reeds and rushes, and slid into the shallows under the bank.

"That's all right!" said Dicky, more cheerfully. "Now get in! All aboard! Hold that blessed painter, Myers! Don't let her get away before we're in, you fathead! The current's pretty strong here."

"I say, it's jolly strong, and no mistake!" said Myers dubiously, as the punt rocked under the pull of the water. "I say, think it's risky?"

"If you've got cold feet, young Myers, you can stay on the bank!"

"Who's got cold feet?" shrieked Myers.

"Well, if you haven't, get in!"

Myers, with a snort, leaped into the punt, which rocked wildly under the impact. It rocked away from the bank, with the three fags scrambling in it.

"Fathead!" gasped Dicky Nugent. "No need to land like a sack of coke, that I know of!"

"Yah!" retorted Myers emphatically if not elegantly.

"Take care of that pole, Gatty—don't lose it! Nice fix we should be in if you lost that pole!"

"I've got it!" said Gatty, swinging the pole round. "I say, get out of the way, you know," he added as the punt pole came into contact with the side of Nugent minor's jaw.

"Yow-ow-ow!" howled Dicky.

"Who's making a row now?" asked Myers.

Dicky rubbed his head.

"Give me that pole, Gatty, you ass! Do you want to brain a chap?"

"Couldn't!" said Gatty. "You haven't any brains to brain."

"I'll jolly well——"

"Oh, let's get off before old Baker spots us."

"Give me the pole, then, ass!"

Dicky Nugent punted out into the stream. There was a strong pull on the current, and the old punt got going fast enough—in fact, a little too fast for Myers' uneasy eyes.

"I say, I wish your major had come, Dicky," he said.

"Rot!" said Dicky.

"Or that man Carlow," said Myers. "I don't believe this is safe."

"Cold feet!" jeered Dicky.

"If you say cold feet again I'll punch your head!"

(Continued on next page.)

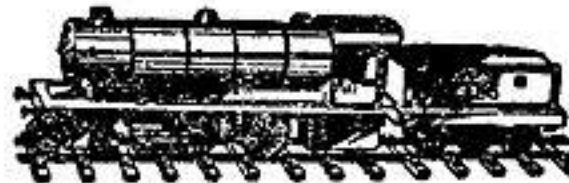
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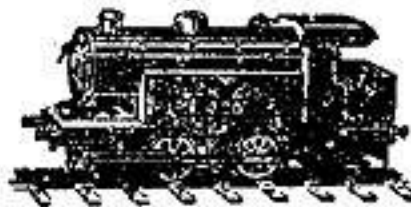
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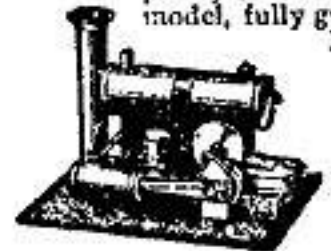


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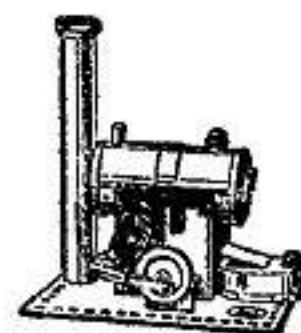
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FOES OF THE REMOVE!

(Continued from previous page.)

"Well, shut up! I asked Carlow, didn't I, and he wouldn't come. Did you want me to carry the chap along under my arm?"

"Well, I wish he'd come. He's a good swimmer, from what I hear. They say he saved the life of a governor of the school at Brighton, or something of the kind."

"Who's going swimming, fathead?" "Shouldn't wonder if we are!" retorted Myers.

"Oh, dry up!" "Shove her along, Nugent mi!" said Gatty. "I say, this is ripping! It was a jolly good idea having this punt out! Old Baker will never know, if we shove her back safe. Anyhow, he's a good old sort! Get her out in the middle, Dicky! Shove!"

"I'm shoving," answered Nugent minor.

The punt rolled and rocked out into the Sark. It was rather exciting to the three fags. All the more exciting because the Sark, swollen by the autumn rains, ran deep and swift, with a pull in the current that they had not quite anticipated.

"Hallo, there's that man, Carlow!" said Nugent minor.

He lifted the punt pole and brandished it in greeting to a junior who was strolling along the bank.

Eric Carlow glanced across the water at the fags in the punt. He smiled and waved a hand in response to Dicky's salute. But a moment later his face became grave.

He came to the edge of the water and shouted across.

"I say, you'd better chuck that, you kids! You're not safe in that punt. Get in to the bank, Nugent minor!"

"Bow-wow!" called back Dicky.

"Pole in!" shouted Carlow. "You young asses, you'll be carried down to the weir if you're not jolly careful!"

"Teach your grandmother!" retorted Dicky independently.

"Cheeky ass!" said Gatty. "These Remove men think they know everything."

"I say, though——" began Myers.

"Rats!" said Dicky. The punt surged on faster than before. Carlow stared from the bank, and Dicky, glancing at him, grinned at the alarm in his face. The Remove junior began running along the bank, to keep pace with the punt.

"Pole in!" he shouted. "Nugent minor, you young idiot, pole in! Do you hear me—get into the bank!"

"Rats!" yelled back Dicky.

"Look ahead!" yelled Carlow. Dicky Nugent stared ahead. The motion of the drifting punt had been swifter than he had realised.

Ahead, the tops of a row of posts showed over rushing water. There was a low roar of falling water beyond the line of posts.

"I say, we'd better not get into that," said Myers. "I say, if the blessed punt went over the weir where should we be?"

"Rot!" said Dicky. "Who's going over the weir?"

"Well, look here, you shove in to the bank!" said Myers. "I jolly well don't want to get too near that blessed weir. It's dangerous, I can tell you!"

Perhaps it dawned on Edwin Myers that his headmaster had reason for placing that dangerous reach out of bounds for juniors. He eyed the row of posts, with the deep water rushing between them, very uneasily.

"It's all right, fathead!" said Dicky Nugent. "I'll get into the bank if you're nervous."

"Who's nervous?" yelled Myers.

"Well, we may as well get near the bank," said Gatty. "I can tell you, I don't like the look of it myself."

Carlow was racing along the bank. The obvious alarm in his face communicated itself to the fags. Dicky Nugent poled laboriously, but he found it difficult to get into the bank. The punt was fairly in the grip of the current, and it was torn away.

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated Dicky.

"Look here, get to the bank!" ejaculated Myers.

"Ain't I trying, fathead? Shut up!"

Nearer and louder sounded the dull thunder of falling water. Dicky

Nugent realised the danger now, though he was far from realising its full extent. He poled frantically, and the fags almost gasped with relief as the heavy old punt bumped, at last, on the bank.

Dicky drove the pole in hard, seeking to hold it there. Gatty made a flying leap ashore and sprawled in the grass. Myers, holding the painter, scrambled after him, knee-deep in water. But the punt gave a sudden whirl as he landed and tore the painter from his hand.

"Look out, Nugent minor!" yelled Carlow, coming up panting.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Dicky.

He had the pole planted firmly, but the punt was whirling round it. Carlow came into the water up to his knees, but the punt was beyond his reach.

"Get in!" he shrieked.

Dicky gave a desperate shove at the pole. The punt whirled in the tear of the current and shot away from under his feet.

Splash!

"Oooooogh!"

A gurgling gasp from Dicky as he plunged headlong into the water.

"Oh heavens!" gasped Carlow.

Gatty and Myers had scrambled up. They stood staring at Nugent minor in horror. His head came out of the water and a white face was seen for a moment. The punt was whirling far away—and Dicky had lost the pole in his plunge. He made an attempt to strike out for the bank, but it was futile. And almost in an instant he was swept away from the horrified eyes of his friends.

"He's gone!" gasped Gatty.

"Dicky!" shrieked Myers.

Carlow stood as if turned to stone, knee-deep in water, as the hapless fag was whirled away from his sight. But his eyes followed. Twice Dicky disappeared under the rushing water. Twice he came up again, still struggling feebly, far beyond the reach of help. Then he was in the whirl of water rushing over the weir. One of the heavy balks of timber was in his way, and as he struck it Nugent minor clutched at it instinctively, and held on, with the water tearing at him.

The force of the water jammed him against the post, and he threw his arms around it and clutched frantically. Deafened and stunned by the roar of the water, he held on, knowing that he could hold on for only a few minutes, at the most, and that when he could hold no longer he would be swept over to death in the deeps below.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Between Life and Death!

CARLOW stared across the racing water.

He panted with relief as he saw that the whirling fag had struck the balk of timber, and was clinging on.

He scrambled up the bank, tore off his jacket, and kicked off his shoes. Gatty and Myers stared at him, dumb with horror. Gatty found his voice.

"You—you're not——"

"Yes. Get help! Run along the bank—get somebody—call the miller—get a rope! Don't stand there blinking! Get a move on!"

Carlow jerked out the words, the last of them over his shoulder. There was a splash as he plunged into the river.

"Oh!" gasped Gatty. "He can't do it—he can't! Wingate of the Sixth couldn't swim here. He can't do it!"

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His starting eyes followed Carlow.

The current caught the strong swimmer and bore him away, but with steady strokes Carlow was swimming out into the middle of the stream. Cool as ice, steady as a rock, he swam, though he knew that the chances were a hundred to one that he was going to his death. He could reach the little pitiful figure that clung to the balk on the edge of death; he knew that. But to swim back was past his powers, or any swimmer's powers. His life, as well as Dicky Nugent's, hung on rescue.

Like an arrow he shot through the racing water.

"He's got him!" panted Myers.

Carlow was swept against the balk. It seemed, for a second, that he would shoot past; but he caught and held. And Dicky Nugent, with his numbed hands slipping from their grasp, suddenly found a strong arm round him, holding him to the timber, and stared dizzily into a face close at hand—a white face set hard.

"Stick it, kid!"

Dicky Nugent could not speak. He was at the end of his tether. But Carlow, clinging to the post, held him there, while the water thrashed and crashed round him.

Gatty and Myers ran up the bank. There was help at the mill, if the miller was there, and if it came in time— If it came before Carlow was torn away from his hold— They panted along the bank, and almost ran into a Greyfriars junior at a turn in the path.

"Nugent major!" panted Gatty.

He caught the Remove fellow by the arm, while Myers ran breathlessly on. Nugent stared at him.

"What's up—what—"

"Your minor," panted Gatty.

Frank started.

"Dicky! Where's Dicky? What—"

"In the river—Carlow's got him. We've got to get help!" panted Gatty incoherently.

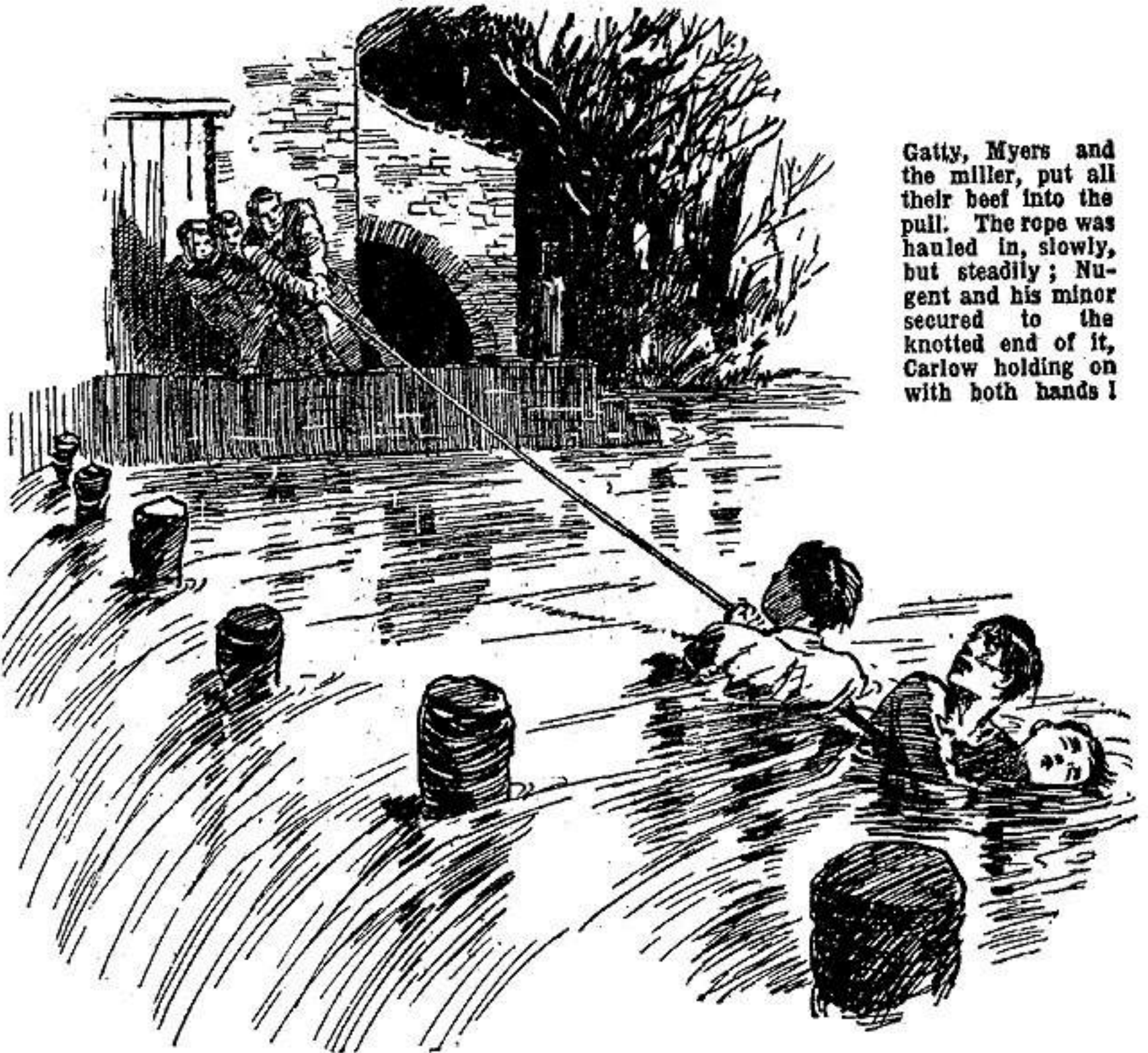
Nugent gave him a blank stare for a second, and then started to run. In a minute or less he was in sight of the row of balks that stretched across the water—and his eyes fixed in horror on the two figures clinging to a balk far out in the Sark.

"Dicky!" he panted

He recognised his brother—and Carlow. Dicky, crumpled against the post in the circle of Carlow's strong arm, made no sign. But Carlow's eyes turned to the junior on the bank.

"Help!" he shouted.

Frank ran down to the water's edge. Carlow shouted again desperately. He read Nugent's intention.



Gatty, Myers and the miller, put all their beef into the pull. The rope was hauled in, slowly, but steadily; Nugent and his minor secured to the knotted end of it, Carlow holding on with both hands!

"Stop! Stop! Get a rope—a rope! Stop! Get a rope, you fool!"

Nugent halted on the margin. His first impulse was to plunge in and join his brother. But Carlow's words recalled him to common sense. He was a good swimmer, but he would have been of little use in the whirling waters over the weir, and it was useless to reach the balk to which the two clung—he could give no help when he got there. He stopped in time.

"Hold on!" he shrieked. "Carlow, hold on—for heaven's sake, don't let him go! Hold on!"

"I'm holding on!" Carlow's voice came back. "Get the miller—get a rope—a rope!"

Frank stared wildly along the bank. There was a shout from the distance. Myers and Gatty were running back, and with them came a burly man with a coil of rope over his arm. It was Baker, the miller. Frank waved to him.

"Help! Help! Quick!" He hardly knew what he was shouting. "Quick! My brother—oh, quick!"

The miller panted on. He reached the spot where Frank Nugent stood, and uncoiled the long rope. Frank Nugent snatched the end of it, and began to knot it about him under the armpits.

"Better let me—" gasped Baker. "I'm all right—with the rope! You hold on—I couldn't hold on if you went—"

Frank panted the words out. With the rope knotted securely round him, he plunged into the water.

The miller held the rope and paid it out. Gatty and Myers grasped hold to give him help. Strength was needed to

hold the rope, for the racing current tore Frank Nugent away like the grasp of a giant's hand. Without the rope Frank would have been swept away helplessly; and as it was, he found it hard enough to fight his way out to the balk where Carlow clung with the exhausted fag.

But he reached it. He grasped and missed; but grasped again as he was swept by, and caught Carlow's arm. The jerk almost tore Carlow from his hold—but not quite. With every muscle strained he held on, and Nugent clung to him, almost stunned by the buffeting of the water.

"Good man!" breathed Carlow. Nugent had left a long loose end to the rope when he knotted it under his arms. Holding to Carlow with one hand, he passed the rope-end with the other round Dicky Nugent. It was hard work, with the rushing water tearing at him, but he worked frantically, desperately. Carlow released one hand to help him. The rope was passed round Dicky at last, and a knot made. The fag was safe now.

"All serene!" panted Carlow. "I can hold on! If they can pull us in, all serene."

He shouted to the miller. There was a steady drag on the long rope from the bank, and Carlow released the balk of timber.

Baker braced himself, his heels dug in the bank. Gatty and Myers put all their beef into the pull. The rope was hauled in, slowly but steadily; Nugent and his minor secured to the knotted end of it, Carlow holding on to it with both hands.

The water splashed and roared over (Continued on page 27.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,240.

OOM, The Terrible!



crew of desperadoes, hovering like a vampire bat waiting to descend to suck the life-blood of its victims!

"I dunno where we're a-goin', but we're hon th' way!" said Alf Higgs. "For 'Eaven's sake, Dick, keep 'er nose dahn a bit! Yer'll be spillin' me hoverboard in 'arf a minute! Any more for the swings and the rahndabahts? Oo-er, I shall 'cave me 'oart up if yer does that ag'in, Mister Rick! 'As 'e gorn clean barmy, or wot is it?"

Alf Higgs might ask himself the question, for Rick, without a word to his engineer, had dashed down to the lake shore, flung himself bodily into the cockpit, kicked the self-starter into action, and, as the prop whirled, had taxied down to the water's edge and risen from the surface in a cloud of spray.

Alf had had just time to grab the side of the wing, give an acrobatic jump, and land into the tiny cockpit, more or less breathless. Then had ensued an exhibition of crazy flying that nearly turned poor Alf's remaining hairs from ginger to snow-white.

The little machine climbed upwards, almost standing on her tail. She zoomed,

side-slipped, and then soared up again like a rocketing pheasant, all the time emitting crackles and howls from her exhaust that made Alf's heart fairly jump into his mouth.

It sounded like a youngster with his first motor-bike.

"Crumbs! 'E wants to let everybody know we're comin'!" ejaculated Alf. "Is 'e afraid that th' blinkin' road's hup, or wot? Good job there ain't no speed-cops up 'ere, for 'e's breakin' all th' limits."

The Cockney leant over the narrow partition and placed the headphones over Rick's head, for the pilot had not attempted to don these, with the result that communication had been impossible.

"Wot's hup, guv'nor?" howled Alf, as soon as the earphones were in place. "Put me wise. Do yer want tip no out o' the blinkin' plane, or wot is it?"

"Get the Lewis-gun loaded and ready, and keep your mouth shut!" replied Rick sharply. "Stand by to fire at a second's notice! Oom's somewhere up above the house, and he's got that vacuum of his on the job. I've got to locate him and put that out of action, if I can. Keep your eyes skinned, Alf, and if you see the plane, let her have it!"

OOM, THE TERRIBLE, IS A FLYING BANDIT WHO AIMS TO BE MASTER OF THE WORLD. HE HAS KIDNAPPED TOM DARE, A CLEVER INVENTOR, HIS BROTHER RICK, AND TWO CHUMS. RICK IS COMPELLED TO TAKE PART IN A RAID ON A MILLIONAIRE'S HOUSE. IT IS RICK'S INTENTION TO WARN SILAS MERCER THAT HIS DAUGHTER IS IN DANGER OF BEING KIDNAPPED; BUT OOM HAS LAID HIS PLANS SO CUNNINGLY THAT THE MILLIONAIRE REFUSES TO LISTEN. INSTEAD, HE ACCUSES RICK OF BEING A DOUBLE-DYED VILLAIN AND A THIEF.

A Duel in the Air!

"HERE, cut that out, sir; that's all nonsense!" snapped Rick tersely. "I can explain the whole thing—you've been spoofed. As a matter of fact, it is Beryl who is in danger, and that is what I've come to warn you about. Is that detective still in the house?"

"He has gone to phone for assistance—knowing that you and your associates were about to break into my house—though how he got the information I know not—"

"By hokoy, sir, but they've played you for a mug right enough!" Rick blurted out. "It was the 'tec who was in with Oom and his gang, and he was waiting to let me in, thinking I was one of Oom's— Oh, I couldn't make you believe my story in a hundred years, but for the love of your daughter get her to a place of safety, or in half an hour she'll be carried off—"

"Ah-h-h! Cease your confounded lies!" cried the sturdy old man. "I caught you red-handed, and you can do nothing better than invent a string of the most transparent— What's that?"

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From above their heads came a curious, low, droning sound, followed by a gurgling, sucking snort—"glug-glug, glug-glug!"—like water running out of a bath.

As Mercer turned his head to listen, Rick seized the opportunity. His foot flashed out in a high kick, and the revolver went flying from the old chap's hand.

"Sorry, and all that!" Rick cried, as he sprang for the window. "But you won't listen to reason, and every moment's of consequence, or Beryl will be spirited away and you'll not see her again. I'm going to save her, though, in spite of you! Take my tip and get every living soul in the place as far away from the house as possible, for the moment Oom discovers that he's been forestalled he'll bomb the blessed place to the ground. Hop it, whilst the going's good. Meantime, I'm going to give this Flying Bandit something to keep him busy!"

Like a deer Rick was over the balcony and racing through the grounds towards the tiny bomber, whilst overhead sounded that low humming and the hideous sucking sound that told of the presence of the Flying Bandit and his

"Very good, sir!" replied the Cockney, and muttered to himself as he jerked the belt of cartridges into the machine-gun. "Spoke like a hoffer an' a gennelman, like 'is brother. No beg pardings, but a straightforrard horder as a hinfant c'ud hunderstand. Oo-er, guv'nor, look at that!"

He pointed excitedly over the roof of the great house to where a small light flickered for a moment and then disappeared. It had been there long enough to show them the dim outline of the great plane, with the suction vacuum-tube suspended from it.

With a yell, Rick stepped on the gas, and as the little bomber shot upwards, shouted to Alf to let drive when they were within shooting distance.

As the little machine tore upwards like a mad sparrow attacking a hawk, Rick took her daringly close, in a wild attempt to cut off that figure that clung close to the suction vacuum-tube. But it had been withdrawn so quickly that he stood no chance, though they could hear the glug-glug! of the infernal machine, so close did they pass.

"Let rip—one!" roared Rick through the phone, as the bomber zoomed up underneath the hull of the larger plane and climbed parallel with it. "Another—two!"

As the staccato bark of the machine-gun rattled forth, they could hear the bullets patter against the sides of the wireless plane. Then the De Hay climbed right above her, turned completely over in a long loop, and zipped away out of sight and range.

Rick and Alf saw flashes from the sides of the big machine, and heard the faint rattle of rifle-fire above the roar of the bomber's exhaust.

"Never 'it one of 'em!" Alf grumbled through the phone. "Yer might lemme know when yer goin' to loop, sir. I can't tike aim and 'old meself in th' blinkin' ship at the same time! I ain't got no bloomin' belt hon; I ain't 'ad time to git it out since we started!"

"Sorry, old fellow!" grinned Rick. "I know I've been hurrying you a bit, but it couldn't be helped. It doesn't matter about your not hitting 'em so long as I can distract their attention. I want to get 'em away from the house!"

"Cunnin' young blighter!" Alf grinned to himself as he seized the opportunity to get into his safety-belt. "Strategy, gen'ral—strategy's wot wins! I'd forgot wot Oom said abaht bombin' th' 'ouse if 'e found that 'is plans 'ad failed. Rick's idea is to dror 'im orf, as it were." He turned towards Rick again. "We'd better give 'im anuvver pepperin'. Go heasy, sir, the blinkin' sea serpent's got adrift ag'in!"

Rick had succeeded in one thing, and that was in drawing the big wireless plane away from hovering over the house itself.

Moving at top speed, Oom's plane soon caught up with Rick's agile Tiger, and something dropped out from beneath her hull—something that flicked about like the questing head of a serpent with that hideous glug-glug suction sound.

Rick swooped the little bomber round in a steep bank to avoid the questing, clinging thing, and though the vacuum-tube itself missed them by feet, the terrific draught from its nozzle almost stopped their prop revolving, and made their little plane stagger like a yacht in a strong gust of wind.

"Go!" yelled Rick. And Alf ripped off about half a belt from the Lewis-gun, and Rick had the satisfaction of seeing two men in the big plane fall. At the same time he heard a muffled groan through his head-

phones, and, glancing over the partition, saw, to his dismay, that Alf had fallen forward over it.

He had all his attention taken up at the moment, however, as bullets were coming thick and fast, and he had to manoeuvre the plane over the tops of some high trees, for the wireless machine had gradually been crowding his little bomber farther and farther towards the land.

"Have they damaged you much, Alf?" he called through the phone, seeing a slight movement on the part of his observer.

Alf sat up and gave him a reassuring grin.

"Ricochet 'it me on th' napper; knocked me out for a tick. All right now, sir! Ain't we goin' to turn and 'ave another cut at 'em, sir?"

"We'll see. I wonder— No, by gum, they're going to chase us! That's good! Oh, look at those silly fools! If that isn't asking for it!"

What Rick had been afraid of all along had happened. The firing had aroused everybody in the house, and lights were gleaming everywhere, making the place an easy target, and every second he expected to hear the dull boom of the bombs.

But, for some reason unknown, Oom elected to chase the elusive little plane which had so harried him, and in a few minutes both machines were careering over the tops of the forest trees, the little bomber "all out," and the great wireless plane humming like an angry bee with the tremendous speed she was putting in.

Now and again Rick would cast a quick glance over his shoulder to observe the chase, and he was appalled at the rate at which the huge machine was overhauling him. Not only was she catching him up, but she was climbing gradually so as to bring the bottom of her hull above him with the object of being able to make use of the vacuum suction tube, as he guessed.

"We're goners if she once fastens on to us at this pace!" muttered Rick, for the speedometer registered three hundred and was still gradually climbing, as he "gave her the gun" and jockeyed the wonderful little plane to even more speed. "I'll bet something'll crack if we keep this up for long!"

Almost as he uttered the words, there came a vicious spatter of fire from behind, and bullets came whizzing overhead—sure proof that the pursuing plane was moving a lot faster than the little bomber.

Z-z-zipp! Twang-g-g-g! Buck-a-bobble-buck-a-bobble! Plop-plop-buck-a-plop!

Rick knew the machine had been struck, that a wire had gone and that "bobbling" sound, together with a distinct diminishing of speed, told him that disaster was on them.

"That's torn it, Alf!" he rapped out. "Top of a cylinder head's gone, to say nothing of a strut or two, and— Hold on tight!"

He had seen the nose of the bandit plane rise in the air, then the machine

(Continued on next page.)

GREYFRIARS HEROES.

No. 10.

HORACE COKER.

This week the Greyfriars Rhymester pictures in verse the hero worshipped by the great Horace Coker.

OLD Coker has a hero—yes!
A stirring one, as you may guess,
In point of fact, a man no less
Than "The Master of Detection!"

You'll see this hero catch a crook
Whenever you may chance to look
At any yellow-covered book
In Coker's large collection.

Burglars groan, and forgers slip,
Crooks and gunmen get the pip
At the dread name of Gorespot Gripp
And his assistant, Creeper;
Kidnappers will steal away
And race gangs tremble in dismay—
(At sixpence every Saturday
These thrills could not be cheap).

Though Coker has no cash to lend
His last threc-halfpence he would spend
To read, with all his hair on end,
The following choice libel:



"The fight went on until The Rat
Brought down his club and snarled
'Take that!'
But Gorespot Gripp produced a gat
And shot him through the eyeball!"

Observe old Gorespot hunting clues,
Measuring prints of hobnailed shoes,
And watch from that, how he'll deduce
The burglars came in motors.
He sees some ash upon the floor
And says: "The man was five feet
four;
He has some cousins in Lahore
And doesn't care for bloaters."

A scratch upon the window-frame
Suggests to him the felon's name
And, knowing where to find his game,
Old Gorespot goes directly
And nabs the bad lad in his lair.
(P.S.—We really must declare
That Gripp's deductions, to a hair,
Had all turned out correctly.)

Old Coker worships Gorespot G.
And every night he dreams that he
Is helping his divinity
In cool and hardy manner.
Oh, yes! He's happy when asleep
And, though these dreams are rather
steep,
Yet, after all, such bliss is cheap
For one small weekly tanner.
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,240.

levelled out again, and came on with tremendous speed. In another few seconds they would have been at the mercy of that deadly suction apparatus, but Rick executed a daring manoeuvre, just as Oom's machine was practically "on his tail."

Banking steeply, he made the little bomber roll completely over, missing the underneath of the big plane's prow by feet. But the manoeuvre gave him the chance he wanted, and he swung back on to an even keel, completely turning around whilst the discomfited flier whirled past, unable to follow in so rapid a turn.

Rick felt that this was the last gasp of his gallant little fighter, for the knocking noise was more insistent now, and he knew that another cylinder head had blown off with the terrific pressure.

"Hall right, sir! 'Old 'er as she is!" came Alf's voice through the phone. "I can git out on the wing and repair 'er whilst yer carries hon if yer can only dodge that big mule for a bit longer! She's got bellers to mend, same as we 'ave!"

Rick shot a glance behind, and saw that the big plane had not only slowed down, but was losing height until the Dare stabiliser came into play, humming loudly as it held the plane stationary over the tree tops.

"By gum! I believe she's either got engine trouble or her wireless power has failed for some reason!" yelled Rick, in excitement, as he saw that her great props were stationary. "Alf, there's a chance—"

"'Ope so, sir, in case not!" responded the Cockney cheerfully, as he climbed out over the fuselage and clung to the wing like a monkey on a branch. "'Old 'er steady! I've found a couple o' spare 'cads, an' I'll go an' fix 'em whilst th' goin's good. If yer goes loopin' any more, though, yer'll spill me dahn there, an' it'll be nappoo!"

Deadly Guardians!

WE must return now to Tom Dare, in the stronghold away in the Andes, for it was due to that daring young inventor that Oom had been foiled, the lives of Merger and his guests saved, and Rick's escape from the wireless plane just in the nick of time!

But, to a smaller extent, each of these persons owed quite something to Ham, that ebony Hercules who made up in brawn what he lacked in brain.

It will be remembered that Ham had been selected by Oom to be his personal servant, and at Tom's command he had taken on the job. In this way he had been able to gain access to Oom's own particular domain, the big stone building which dominated the basin in which the Flying Bandit's stronghold was quartered.

It was a pitch black night, and all in the camp seemed wrapped in slumber, save where a light shone in the power house, where work never ceased day or night, and one great arc lamp right in the centre of the basin which was sufficient illumination for the outside.

Since Oom had taken Ham on as body servant, the big black had exchanged no word with Tom, for that was part of the bandit's system for bringing the young engineer to heel. Cut off from all intercourse with his friends, Oom considered that Tom would be more malleable to his will. He let the

engineer know that if he once consented to join the band of his own free will, he could have absolute liberty within the rules of the stronghold, and his own servants would be restored to him.

Ham knew nothing of this, of course; but at the back of his somewhat slow-witted mind he had the fixed idea all the time that it was up to him to do something for "the young massa's," if chance and opportunity came his way.

When Oom left the stronghold the big nigger took advantage of the chance afforded to explore the house, and anywhere else he could get, in the hope of finding some means of escape for Tom Dare.

Ham had his own ideas about the best costume to wear in a night excursion which might or might not end in a "scrap." He preferred freedom of movement to anything else, and accordingly took off such garments as might hamper his actions. In fact, he took off everything with the exception of a very tight pair of old black boxing-shorts.

Thus, owing to his colour, he would be practically invisible in a poor light, and as he had taken the precaution of oiling his massive frame, he reckoned to be able to slip anyone who laid hands on him. Ham had had some experience in the fighting ring in his early life, and he knew the value of a slippery skin.

"Dis am what Mass' Tom w'ud call de zoological moment fo' explorin' an' findin' out de lie ob de land!" he muttered to himself, as he tiptoed up from the basement and moved as softly as a cat towards the room which was known as the "Chief's Office," in which Tom and Rick had interviewed Oom on their arrival.

Inch by inch Ham thrust the door open, rather surprised to find it unlocked. He had got it into his woolly head that this would be the place to find out some of Oom's "secrets," and nothing would satisfy him but a good, personal search.

"If dere's any bu'glar alarms here, dere's gwine to be one big bobbery!" he muttered, as he stole into the darkness and closed the door after him.

And as he did so he thought he heard it "click," and his attempt to reopen it proved that a spring lock had effectually stopped his exit.

"Golly, dat's tored it! I guess dis nigger's runned up ag'inst somet'in' dis time. But so long as it's human it don't matter. Aw, shucks—it don't smell too good in hyar!"

He sniffed loudly as a peculiar animal smell met his nostrils, and at the same time two small glowing sparks at the other end of the room met his eyes.

Then came a low, whirring sound like an alarm clock with the bell removed, and for a second Ham's hair fairly stood out on his head. Ham gave a grin as he recognised the sound as the deep-throated growl of a disturbed animal, working up its wrath to scare away an intruder.

Stretching out a long arm, he switched on his torch, and then screened himself behind a big armchair. It was well he did so, for a high, excited, and very surprised chattering voice gasped out something, and a solid substance whizzed past his ear and pinged against the wall.

Ham immediately switched off the torch, and with it still in his hand, rolled over and over noiselessly until he had put the length of the room between him and the other occupant.

His gaze had fallen on the distorted dwarfed figure of Maleze, who had apparently been sleeping in a corner next to the cage of a beautiful black leopard, whose lithe form Ham had caught one glimpse of. It was the animal's eyes he had seen glaring green in the darkness, and it was its snoring purr of rage he had heard.

But though he knew the ferocity of the native leopard, though he knew that if it were loose he would stand but little chance against it in the darkness; it was not this which had sent a chill shiver down the big negro's spine.

It was those little dabbling pats which he had heard upon the wall behind him, for he knew that it meant death in a very unpleasant form if one of the tiny darts should penetrate his skin.

Crouching perfectly still, he tried to think of some way out of the difficulty.

He had not long to decide, however, for there came a movement at the other end, and he saw those two gleaming sparks of emerald light flash across the wall, and heard the clank of a steel chain as the lithe brute leapt the length of its tether in an endeavour to get at the intruder, purring deep down in its throat as it lashed itself into a fury.

Ham got only a split second's warning of what was to happen next. There came the creak and slam from the cage as the door was drawn back, the fumbling of the chain as it was unloosed—then the glint of green eyes as the ferocious brute launched itself across the room for the negro's throat.

With his boxer's instinct and speed of movement Ham put his forearm up to protect the vital part, and the leopard fixed his fangs deep into the muscle. Quick as lightning the negro's great right flashed up and gripped the black beast by the throat, and the mighty hand closed in a grip of iron that forced the beast to open its jaws.

Then he held the struggling, clawing, scratching fury at arm's length, and Ham's arms were long even for his six-foot-seven of height, for they reached below his knees. Only once or twice did the leopard's claws touch the black skin to leave scars which would be visible for the remainder of Ham's life.

Gripping the beast by the fur of its stomach with his left hand, Ham held it out at arm's length, and then crossed the room to the massive high-backed mahogany chair in which Oom was wont to enthrone himself when passing judgment upon any of his myrmidons who offended against his laws.

As he did so some instinct warned him of danger, and he ducked low. It was well he did so, for another little dart smacked against the wall as the light was switched on.

If it had not been for the writhing body of the leopard the poisoned missile would inevitably have hit the huge form; but the animal's frantic struggles had spoiled the little man's aim. Ham uttered an exclamation, and then his foot, hard as the ebony it resembled, shot out and lifted Maleze from one end of the room to the other, where he crashed into a corner and lay stunned and helpless.

(Ham's certainly not one to "get the wind up," is he, chums? He's determined to learn Oom's secrets, and nothing will stop him! Look out for another instalment of this great thrill yarn in next week's MAGNET.)

FOES OF THE REMOVE!

(Continued from page 23.)

them; blinding, deafening, suffocating. But the steady pull on the rope did not relax, and Frank Nugent found himself suddenly bumping in the rushes. Gatty plunged at him and got hold of his collar. The next moment Myers had hold of Dicky by the hair. The miller was still dragging on the rope. Three drenched figures rolled on the bank.

Frank Nugent sat up, Carlow rose to his feet, panting, streaming water. Dicky Nugent gasped and gurgled and spluttered, and found his voice.

"Myers, you idiot—"
 "What!" gasped Myers.
 "What did you let go the painter for?"
 "Oh, my hat!" said Myers.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

The End of the Feud!

BOB CHERRY looked into Study No. 1, in the Remove. Harry Wharton was there, kneeling before the fire making toast, and he turned a rather ruddy face round to his chum.

"Nugent come in?" asked Bob.
 "No!"
 "Oh, blow!" said Bob.
 Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh were behind Bob at the doorway. Wharton smiled faintly.

"Come in, you men," he said.
 "If Nugent's still got his back up it can't be helped. I thought he might come over to Highcliffe, after all, but—"

"But he didn't!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Silly ass!"
 "Fathead!" remarked Bob Cherry.
 "The fatheadedfulness of the esteemed Franky is terrific!" assented Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But let us be patient with our ridiculous chum, my absurd friends."

"Let's!" chuckled Bob Cherry.
 And the four juniors sat down to tea, not, perhaps, in the best of humours. There was no doubt that the Co. were fed-up with Frank Nugent's feud—fed-up to the chin. It was difficult to keep patient with a fellow who persisted in being unreasonable.

rather late to tea, after their visit to Highcliffe. But Nugent seemed to be later still. Vernon-Smith passed the door of the study, and Wharton called to him.

"Know if Nugent's come in, Smithy?"
 "Yes," answered the Bounder. "He came in with Carlow."

"With Carlow?" repeated Wharton. The Bounder grinned.

"I fancy they've been scrappin' again—Nugent's chivvy looks like it. But they came in together."

Smithy passed on, and the four juniors in Study No. 1 looked at one another rather grinly.

"Scrapping again!" granted Johnny Bull. "We needn't inquire who started it."

"You needn't!" said a voice at the doorway.

Johnny stared round at Frank Nugent.

Nugent entered the study. His face was a little pale, and he had rather a dishevelled look. He had dried his clothes at the mill, and rested there before returning to the school; but he showed plenty of signs of what he had been through.

"Quite right, Johnny, old bean," he said, with a faint smile. "It was my fault! You fellows mind if I bring in a friend to tea?"

"Of course not, ass!" said Wharton. "What—"

"Come in, Carlow, old man!"

Eric Carlow smiled in at the doorway. The chums of the Remove stared at him blankly.

"Trot in, old chap!" said Nugent to the dumbfounded amazement of the Co.

And Carlow "trotted" in.

"What the thump—" ejaculated Cherry.

"Jolly glad to see you, Carlow, old bean!" said Harry Wharton. "Take a pew! Tons of toast, lots of eggs, and no end of a welcome!"

"Thanks!" said Carlow, laughing. "If you fellows aren't worried about the boots and the dishes—"

"Don't be an ass, old chap!"

"So you've got over it, Nugent?" asked Johnny Bull, staring blankly at Frank.

"Oh, quite!"
 "Well, you've been a silly ass!"
 "I agree!"
 "Oh!" said Johnny Bull, quite taken aback and nonplussed. "So you don't think any longer that Carlow is what no other fellow ever dreamed of supposing he was—"

"I don't think I ever really thought so," said Nugent calmly. "It was just sheer obstinate fatheadedness, because I couldn't get over having made a fool of myself, and bagged a licking that I jolly well deserved!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Don't be an ass!" said Carlow.

"I'll try not—though I'm afraid I've been rather a prize ass," said Frank.

"Pass the toast, you men; I'm jolly hungry after my swim!"

"You've been swimming!" gasped Bob.

"Yes; so has Carlow—in the Sark."

"In November!" yelled Bob.

"Couldn't be helped, as my minor chose this afternoon to try to get drowned, and Carlow was ass enough to go over the weir to save the little idiot."

"Oh!" gasped the chums of the Remove, beginning to understand.

"I've asked Carlow to make it up," said Nugent. "He's licked me twice—and he can lick me again if he likes—"

"Fathead!" said Carlow.

"Well, I'm jolly glad!" said Harry Wharton.

"The gladfulness is terrific!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "It is a preposterous pleasure to see the frown of infuriation dismissed by the smile of idiotic friendship. As the poet remarks, the cloudfulness has rolled by, and all is calmly bright!"

"Hear, hear!" chortled Bob.

And when the chums of the Remove came down to the Rag after tea Carlow was with the Famous Five, his arm linked in Frank Nugent's—evidence to all the Remove that the "feud" was ended at last.

THE END.

(Like a good laugh, chums? Then be sure to read: "COKER'S FOOT-BALL FEVER!"—next week's ripping long story of Harry Wharton & Co. You'll vote this yarn absolutely IT!)

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TRAGIC SEQUEL



It was Bob Cherry's idea to take an old piece of vellum, soaked in tea, to look like an old treasure chart relating to the buried hoard of one, Black Bill, who left his ill-gotten doubloons deep down in a cave near Pegg.

It was also Bob Cherry's idea to drop the treasure chart, apparently quite by accident, so that Bunter would pick it up. And it worked—like a charm!

A few seconds later Bunter was in his study poring over the ancient document, and dreaming wildly of doubloons and ingots and pieces of eight—and tuck and tuck!

It was bad luck for Bunter, though, to have his dream interrupted by Skinner, who had seen the Owl's excited look and followed him, out of sheer curiosity.

"I say, porpoise, what have you got there?"

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"Let's see!"

"Shan't! Leggo, you rotter—yooop!"

Bunter sat down—hard! And Skinner, in possession now of the chart, gazed at it, with dawning hopes of gold: gold and silver, smokes and little flutters on horses and infinitum!

A few moments and Skinner had taken counsel with Snoop and Stott, and a party was hastily formed to investigate the hoard in the cave at Pegg-by-the-Sea.

At the gates they met Bunter with a pickaxe and shovel! Bunter was evidently getting in first, and this time Skinner & Co. did not waste time in words. The three of them swooped on Bunter, who yelped hastily:

"Woop!"

"Stop that! What are you kids doing to Bunter?" demanded an angry voice—Coker's voice!

Coker of the Fifth, outraged at bullying, grabbed Skinner and Snoop by their necks and cracked their heads together. He then called Stott. While Bunter scrambled up, gasping, Coker read through the chart—and gasped, too.

"You kids leave this to me! This is important!" gasped Coker.

Coker dashed for his motor, like, and Skinner & Co. and Bunter exchanged glances. A moment later and they were all en route for the cave at Pegg, in advance of Coker.

Meanwhile, Coker routed out Potter and Greene, and swiftly convinced them that for once he was not talking through his hat. It was sheer ill-fortune that Coker & Co. piled on the motor-bike, should have run into Loder in the quad.

The chart had fallen under him, and now he clutched it in his hand. A quick examination convinced Loder that it was valuable—very valuable indeed!

"I'll show this to the Head!" he said, his eyes gleaming. "You can leave this to me, Coker!"

And Loder left Coker & Co. gasping while he strode away to get his bike. When Loder returned, Coker & Co. were gone—on the trail, like Skinner & Co. and Bunter.

Loder slipped on to his push-bike and peddled furiously across the quad.

"Oh, Loder!"

Savagely Loder dismounted at Mr. Quelch's voice.

"Would you mind posting this letter for me in the village, if you are going that way?" asked Mr. Quelch. "It is important, and I do not wish to trust it to a junior."

"I'm not going that way, sir," answered Loder. "I've very important business at—"

"What—what—?" began Mr. Quelch. "Then he saw the chart which Loder feverishly clutched."

"What is that, Loder?"

In his excitement Loder dropped it. Mr. Quelch bent down and his gaze fastened on the ancient chart.

"You may leave this matter in my hands, Loder!" said Mr. Quelch finally. Mr. Quelch went into the House, and Loder did not hesitate. In a trice he was peddling in the direction of Pegg!

Mr. Quelch, together with Mr. Prout, left Greystones for the same destination very soon after him. And, last of all, looking a little alarmed, came Bob Cherry with the rest of his chums.

At Pegg that afternoon there was quite a run on the boats. First, Bunter and Skinner & Co. hired one and rowed away towards the cave. Then Coker arrived and set sail with Potter and Greene. Laker, Loder went off in a small row-boat, followed by Mr. Quelch and Mr. Prout, who set off in a motor-boat.

The two masters were the last to arrive, and they started at the sight of four juniors and four seniors all digging and delving in the old cave.

"What—what is the meaning of this?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"Treasure, sir! We've found it!" gasped Bunter, as his spade clinked on something hard.

Many hands lent aid to drag an old, iron-bound box into the light of day.

"Black Bill's hoard!" said Skinner, with bated breath.

"It's mine!" gasped Bunter.

"It's mine!" echoed everybody else as one man.

"Open it!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

Coker prised the lid and, with a resounding creek, it split. Flashed with triumph, Coker reached in and brought out a heavy canvas bag. With trembling fingers he unlocked the leather thong, and there was a gasp as he suspended it, allowing the contents to stream out on the sand.

Stones—stones—and more stones!

Nothing but stones!

There was a dismal groan from Bunter and a snort of rage from Coker. He reached in the box again and took out a card. On it, in capitals, was the legend: "SOLD AGAIN! BLACK HILL."

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Bunter groaned, Skinner wailed, Coker snorted, Loder gnashed his teeth. And Mr. Quelch crimsoned, while Mr. Prout fairly boiled.

Bob Cherry & Co. watched them all return to Pegg with deep misgivings. Bob's chums urged him to explain to Mr. Quelch before he was called up for judgment. But Mr. Quelch's face as he handed did not suggest that he was feeling in a merciful mood.

"Cherry!"

"Sir?"

"You will accompany me back to the school."

When Harry Wharton & Co. saw Bob later he was looking pale and wan. But he summoned a grin.

"Real bad?" asked Wharton.

"Not so bad as Coker and Loder and Quelch and Prout will feel when this story gets round!" grinned Bob.

And he was right!

Coker and Loder in particular were not allowed to forget their treasure-hunting for a long time. And Skinner and Bunter were even more sore-mentally—than Bob Cherry's palms!

Answers To Letters We Have NOT Received

P. Borsoren: I can quite understand how your conscience smote you after you had ousted that innocent fag. I suggest that you go to him and apologise humbly on behalf of your friend for a few tarts and he will be your friend for life.

H. Coker: You have had a row with Potter and Greene, and you know they were in the right all the time? Good man! We suggest that you left them so and bury the hatchet. If they need any reparation, why not make them a present of that glassy motor-bike of yours?

HENRY S. QUENCH, M.A.: You feel you have been giving too many lines just lately and would like to make a reduction of fifty per cent on all impositions? We are only too glad to offer you the publicity of our columns. This is the kind of conduct which makes us look back on our schooldays as the happiest time of our lives!

THE MENACE OF THE "WRINGER"

Bold Bad Bandit

"LEAVE A BIG BAG OF TUCK IN THE CLOISTERS TO-NIGHT, OR YOUR LIFE WILL BE FORGOTTEN—THE WRINGER."

That remarkable legend confronted Skinner as he entered his study. It was dashed on the looking-glass with whitewash.

Snoop had Stott stared at it also. It might almost have alarmed them if they had not remembered that the ceiling in Study No. 7 in the Remove passage had been whitewashed only the day before. And Study No. 7 was the home of the Owl of the Remove—Bunter!

"Bunter, for a cert!"

"Cheer!" opined Stott.

"He's teaching a lesson!" grinned Skinner. "Well see the fat as-to-night!"

That evening Skinner and Snoop waited helpfully in the cloisters. They had not long to wait before a fat figure rolled confidently in sight, looking this way and that, apparently in expectation of beholding a "big bag of tuck" as per request.

If he was looking for that, he was disappointed!

A sheet suddenly descended over his head, and in a few moments the "Wringer" was a helpless prisoner in the net of his prospective victims.

In deep silence he was conveyed to the old by-room at the end of the Remove passage. There, in complete darkness, he was dumped in a box and the great taken off his head. He gazed wildly as his hands were bound.

"I—I—I say, you know—"

"What's the egg-game?"

"We are about to execute summary vengeance on you," answered a sepulchral voice, "who dare to take the name of our noble chief!"

"Oh—oh—oh—I—I—I say, really, I was only looking!" pleaded the Wringer.

A Pithy Chat with Lord Mauleverer

Calling on his lordship last Wednesday afternoon, I found him stretched at his ease on the sofa, already far gone in slumber, though I had dashed to his study almost immediately after lunch.

I roused him by the simple expedient of inserting a friendly toe in his ribs.

"Ow! Yow-wow-wow!"

His lordship sat up and regarded me with a far from friendly gaze.

"I represent the Greystones Herald," I began, "and I am appointed to ask you to give some original views on sleep."

"Oh, sleep?" repeated Mauleverer, appearing quite interested.

"Oh, yes, perhaps I can oblige," when do you find yourself unable to sleep, you find it efficacious to count sheep, going through a hole in a hedge? Begged, yes!" said his lordship.

STUDY WRECKING A SPECIALITY

Terms Moderate

reckless if not artistic hand. Fishy was busy putting jam in Loder's slippers and gum in the remaining pot of jam, when Loder interrupted him.

Loder's wrath knew no bounds. Fishy came out of Loder's study, shortly after, looking and feeling "wrecked!"

A further surprise was in store for him on his return to his own study in the Remove passage.

Some joker or outraged client had been there during his absence—and had done his work well! Not a stick remained where it had been before.

Fishy's study was wrecked in a more thorough-going manner than any study he had tackled in his professional capacity!

ADVANCED ARITHMETIC.

Questions: If you added £50 18s. 14d. to £13 7s. 4d., and multiplied the total by 5, what would you have?

Answer: Nearly enough to tea at Chumley's.

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