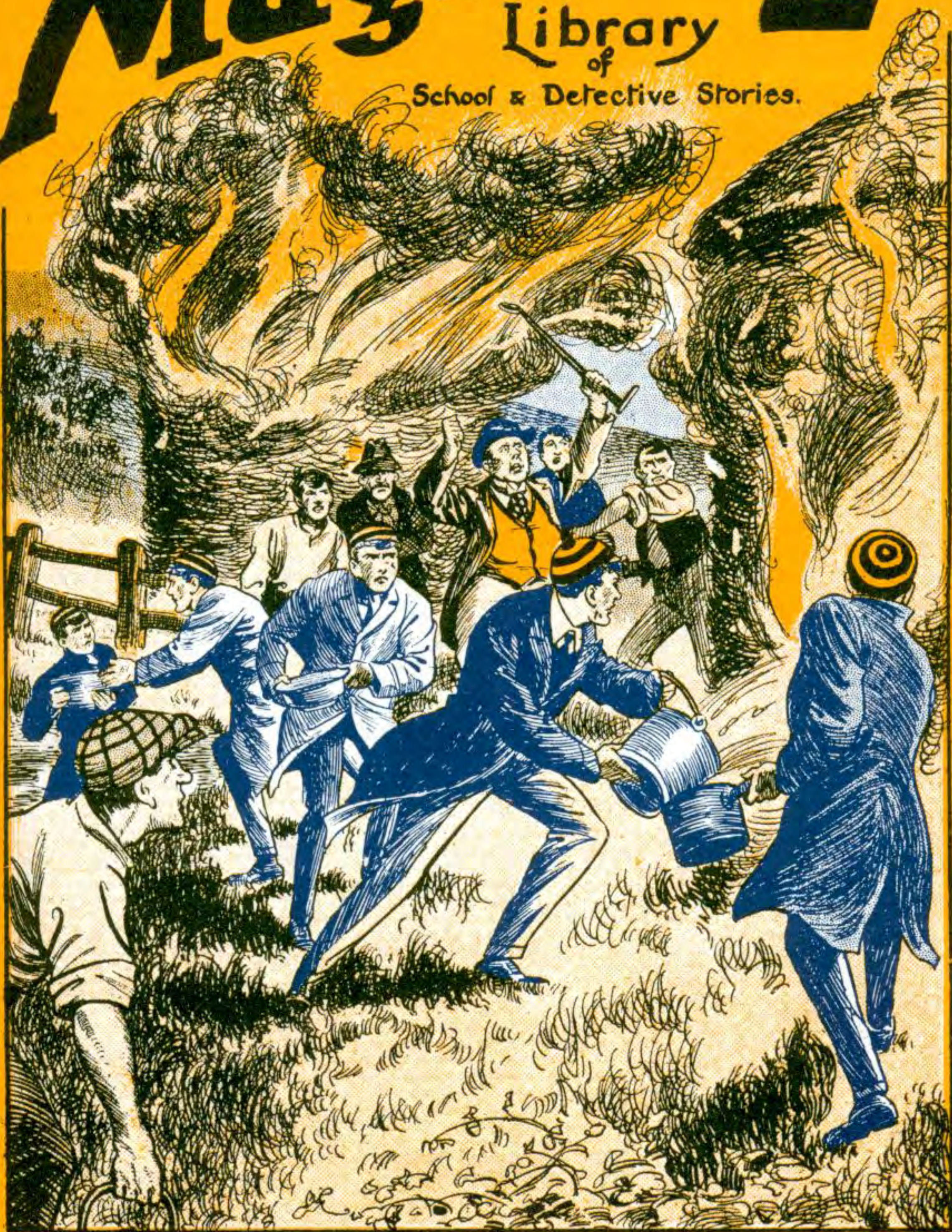


THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR STORY PAPER IS 

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The Magnet 2d

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School & Detective Stories.



THE FIRE THAT STOTT STARTED!

(Helping their old enemy, Farmer Jason! A thrilling incident from the long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., inside.)

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"BILLY BUNTER'S BOAT-RACE PARTY!"

Just as you might suppose, Bunter goes to the Boat Race. Look out for next Monday's copy of the MAGNET, and read the great yarn of the aquatic struggle. It is a refreshing and hilarious business, and reveals the porpoise in his true colours. Boat Race Day is a time noted for colours, so all is well. And, of course, the great event down at Putney—where porpoises have been sighted ere now, take it from me—is the first open-air fete of the year. When Boat Race favours are seen in the street, you may be sure the springtime has set in with matchless vigour.

ONE UP TO FRANK RICHARDS.

You will admit right away, once you have set eyes on next Monday's yarn of Greyfriars—and of the Boat Race, so don't go and forget that part—that the author has tackled the theme with unexampled adroitness. I do not want any uncalled-for comments about the party who went to Putney to buy a pig. References of that nature might be taken as a hit at Bunter, the "slim" young athlete of Greyfriars, whose fame is world-wide. But to come back to our muttons. You know how it feels like on a Boat Race morning when there is a cheery elasticity in the air, and the sunshine is bright and beckoning. You feel you just must bolt down to Putney, or to Chiswick, or to Mortlake, and see the mighty struggle between the champions of the Isis and the Cam.

JUST WHAT BUNTER LIKES!

It is so. That interprets the feelings of the noble, generous-hearted William George. He experienced that subtle nostalgia which we can all understand. Permit me the use of that word. It is not Esperanto for a bad cold; it merely means homesickness, and to Bunter any sporting rendezvous is like home; all true Britons are built this way. Bunter yearned to be on the spot, to mingle with the joyous crowd, to see the stilt-walking acrobat collecting pennies from the first-floor windows; to smell the ozone of Chiswick; to cheer with the rest of the public; for the riverside that day is "on feet," so to speak. Everybody is out; the banana merchant trundles his wares through the press; musicians ply their risky trade; trains are packed; it is a general holiday, and cares are thrown to the winds of heaven, to dispose of as said winds elect.

BUNTER'S BENEVOLENCE!

Not much can be said here on this subject, but I may as well point out that the Head of Greyfriars gets a phone call from town. It is a Boat Race call—an invitation to the course. No matter whence it comes. Dr. Locke is satisfied, and the consequence is that the great festival is honoured by a visit from the Greyfriars fellows. Behind all this lurks a particularly cleverly designed plot, but

that can wait till Monday, when the Special MAGNET Boat Race Number is in your hands.

"THE MAN IN THE LIGHT-BLUE VEST!"

Ferrers Locke shows his dexterity in a brilliant yarn describing a Boat Race adventure. The detective is faced with an immense difficulty, but he grapples with the problem. As the philosopher has said, "Do the thing and you shall have the power." Those who do not make the attempt do not have the power—or the kudos of achievement. The meaning of the success of Ferrers Locke is just this—he goes slap bang for the difficulty without counting the risks. In detective work no timorous wight need apply.

A BOAT-RACE SUPPLEMENT!

It is a touching and inspiring spectacle to see Greyfriars at grips with a Boat Race number. The Supplement is devoted to the great sport of the river. Next week's "Herald" is unique. Heaps of good and great things have already appeared in its pages, but the coming Supplement beats them all hollow. Harry Wharton & Co. have been sleeping on it for long weeks. They have had pencil and paper handy by the bedside lest some grand, glad notion came to them in the dim watches of the night. The result of this epistolary zeal is to be found in next Monday's special edition of the "Greyfriars Herald." It is immense!

OUR WIRELESS DICTIONARY FOR BOYS!

The MAGNET never introduced a better feature than this dictionary. It is triumphing all along the line. And why? Just because it gives a fellow all the information he really needs as to installation, and the working and handling of same. The whole subject is made as clear as a bell.

A GOOD TURN!

Pass the news on to all your friends who are interested in wireless, so that they, too, may benefit from this brilliant series of articles written specially for this paper by an eminent electrical engineer.

THE FOOTBALL PICTURE COMPETITION!

This attractive special extra of the good old MAGNET will be found as usual in its right place, and, if possible, more alluring than ever.

Your Editor.

School and detective stories every Monday!

The Greyfriars Parliament.

THERE was a spirited debate, carried on from the last meeting, on diary-keeping. Several members had been misinformed about the matter, or else they had misread their papers. The idea got round that there was a movement at Greyfriars to keep a dairy. This was far from the truth. Mr. Bunter said he did not keep either a dairy or a diary. He had no use for either.

Mr. Wibley: "I have been keeping a diary for years. I have always made it a rule to jot down my theatrical impressions and experiences."

Mr. Frank Nugent: "I tried the business, but gave it up."

Mr. Peter Todd: "Of course, keeping a diary is not easy. I believe many chaps fall into the error of putting down trivial things that don't matter a row of beans. Now, if you write up a camping-out trip, or a walking tour, the account is bound to be interesting. Why not take a little trouble—draw a map, say? It's sure to be a bad map—at any rate at the first attempt—but it will help you in your general knowledge."

The Speaker: "I now propose to give a short speech on the benefits derived from walking."

Mr. Bunter: "Who's going to walk if he can get a bike?"

Mr. Bob Cherry: "If I had my way, Bunter should never look another bike in the face again."

Mr. Bunter: "Oh, really, Cherry? You know what a first-class cyclist I am, and—"

Mr. Bob Cherry: "My jigger was a mangled mass after the porpoise had sat on it."

The Speaker: "The subject is walking. Reader C. C. ANTHONY, 16, College Road, Penygarn, Pontypool, Mon. says: 'It is with much pleasure that I refer to the vastly important subject of walking. There are often times in a person's life, more especially a boy's life, when the mind is depressed. There is a feeling of being out of sorts, and, puzzle the brain as one will, there is no solution forthcoming. The real reason is want of exercise, and I think a great number of people will agree with me that that is the cause. Now, walking is one of the best forms of exercise. Some may criticise this statement, and say that football comes first, but some of us are not fortunate enough to possess a football rig-out. Others cannot spare the time to play football, but there is always time for walking. You can walk before breakfast, or after dark. I am positive that walking will cure the feeling of being out of sorts. A brisk walk to drive away the blues.'"

An animated discussion ensued, and the Third took part. Mr. Gatty said he did not care about walking unless it was a giddy walking-tour. Mr. Myers thought the business was jolly tame.

Mr. Johnny Bull: "Does Mr. Reader Anthony mean just a walk—apparently that's his idea—an amble up and down the same old road?"

The Speaker: "You can't expect a new road each time." (Laughter.)

Mr. Bull: "That's just the point. I like a walking-tour well enough, but there doesn't seem much fun in covering some bit of ground simply for the sake of walking."

The Speaker: "I am disposed to think Reader Anthony has made his bullseye. Walking is excellent." (Hear, hear!)

(Continued on page 21.)



— BY —
Frank Richards.

A powerful story of Greyfriars, introducing a noble character in the person of Clifford Stott—brother of William Stott of the Remove—who takes upon his shoulders a double burden and pays the penalty. A gripping yarn with humour, pathos, and tragedy uncommonly interwoven—a story that adds yet another laurel to the triumph of your favourite author.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Stott's Ingratitude!

"GOING to rain," said Harry Wharton.

"Or snow," added Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Let's hope so, anyhow!"

"Well, it's certainly cold enough for that," said Harry, with a glance up at the lowering skies. "Anyway, we'd better be hoofing it. Come on!"

"Yes, rather!"

And hastening their leisurely walk to a brisk stride the five Greyfriars juniors hurried on along the wintry lane. It was as yet quite early on in the afternoon, and there was no reason why they should return to Greyfriars so soon, except the threatening rain—or, as Bob Cherry had suggested, the promise of snow.

Not that the Famous Five were afraid of rain—certainly not of snow. But there was no sense in getting wet for no reason at all.

So the juniors of the Remove turned their backs on Friardale and made tracks for Greyfriars and shelter.

As they trudged on through the mud they overtook a young fellow who had been tramping on ahead of them.

He was a trifle taller and obviously a few years older than themselves. He wore a rather shiny bowler hat and a somewhat threadbare coat, and the bag he carried was well worn and shabby. In fact, he presented altogether anything but a smart and well dressed appearance.

He stopped and looked round as the five chums came up to him.

"Excuse me," he began, smiling at the juniors, "am I right for Greyfriars? I see you are Greyfriars fellows, so I suppose I am?"

Harry Wharton liked the stranger's frank smile, and he returned it.

"Yes, you're right for Greyfriars," he said cheerily. "If you care to walk with us—"

"Thanks, I will!"

The stranger fell into step.

"I'm visiting Greyfriars to see my

brother," he explained. "I expect you fellows will know him—Stott—William Stott of the Remove."

"Er—yes, of course, we know Stott," remarked Harry rather quietly. "So—so you're his brother. I hardly thought you could be a new chap—rather too old, I mean."

"No such luck!" said Stott's brother, with a peculiar grin. "I only wish I— But it's no good wishing. I finished with school long ago—in fact, ever since—"

He paused.

"Is Stott expecting you?" asked Harry Wharton, breaking into the silence.

"No; he doesn't know I'm coming. I wanted to surprise the old chap," chuckled the elder Stott. "The fact is, I've got some jolly good news for him!"

"That's good!" remarked Bob Cherry politely.

"It's what I've been trying to bring off for a long time—though I wasn't telling old Bill until I'd managed it. I expect he's told you about me—that is, if you happen to be pals of his—"

The juniors flushed rather uncomfortably. William Stott of the Remove was, in their view, a smoky rotter, a dingy cad, and never likely to be a pal of theirs. But they could hardly tell his brother that.

"We—we're hardly pals," said Harry. "But we're in the same Form, of course. I can't say I've heard him mention you."

"No? Well, my job's in a bank—Bartlett's—and I've just managed to get transferred to the Courtfield branch," explained the young fellow, with obvious satisfaction. "Naturally, I'm bucked about it. It means I shall see a lot of Bill now—no end of walks together and all that, y'know. He'll be jolly glad to hear the news."

The Famous Five said nothing. They had their doubts about that. It was evident that the elder Stott was very much attached to his young brother; it was still more evident that he knew very little about that young brother's real character—at least, the character he showed at Greyfriars.

They suddenly began to feel very sorry for Stott senior. In their view, it was more than likely that the sulky William would be anything but glad at the news.

By this time the six had reached the corner of Highcliffe Lane, and, happening to glance that way, Harry caught sight of three slouching figures coming from the direction of Highcliffe. They were Skinner, Stott, and Snoop, the three slackers of the Remove.

"There's your brother," said Harry.

The face of Stott senior brightened as his eyes fell on the three.

"Oh, good! See something of you fellows again, I hope!"

And with a hurried word of thanks, the young fellow rushed away.

The Famous Five tramped on along Friardale Lane.

"Seems a decent chap!" exclaimed Nugent.

"Jolly sight more decent than his brother!" granted Johnny Bull. "I fancy he's booked for a shock, though. Unless I'm mistaken, little William won't be so glad to see him as he thinks."

"Not likely. If he's the chap I take him to be," said Bob Cherry, "he'll soon put a stop to William's shady little habits. I'm sorry for the chap, though. It'll be a bit of a shock to find out the sort of a rotter his brother is."

"I'm afraid so," agreed Harry Wharton, with a troubled frown. "I rather liked the chap's face and— Hallo! Here comes the rain!"

There was no doubt about that. There came a few heavy warning drops, and then with startling suddenness the storm that had been threatening, broke.

"Phew!" gasped Harry Wharton. "We're fairly in for it now! Better run for it. We'll be drenched to the skin long before— Here, where are you making for, Bob?"

"Jason's old barn!" grinned Bob, vaulting a gate near by.

"But what about Jason—"

"Blow old Jason! Any port in a storm!"

And the cheery Bob dashed helter-skelter across the field beyond the gate.

For a second Harry halted; and then, with a grin, he followed over the gate, with the others at his heels.

Farmer Jason was a grumpy old chap, with a long-standing feud against Greyfriars. Only recently there had been trouble over fellows trespassing on his property, and the Head had placed the farm and adjoining land out of bounds.

The juniors were taking a big risk; but they were some distance from Greyfriars yet, and, as Bob had remarked, it was a case of "Any port in a storm."

The barn stood less than fifty yards from the lane, and they reached it in next to no time.

Harry Wharton came last, and as he pulled the heavy door to after them he caught a glimpse of a burly figure plodding across the field towards the barn, his head bent before the slanting shafts of stinging rain.

"My hat, you fellows!" panted Harry. "We're nabbed! Here's old Soapy Sam! Better get out of this, and run for it!"

"Too late to bolt; but I don't think the beggar's spotted us!" snapped Bob Cherry. He glanced quickly around him. "Quick, you chaps! Up here!"

It was not the first time the juniors had been in the barn, by any means. In a flash they saw Bob's plan; and next second they were swarming up a rough wooden ladder to the loft above.

They had scarcely vanished through the hole in the floor of the loft when the door below creaked open, and the burly figure of Soapy Sam entered.

Soapy Sam—or, to give him his proper name, Samuel Jason—was Farmer Jason's hopeful son. Besides being big and burly, Sam was a heavy-faced, moody individual; he was also very deaf—which probably accounted for his moodiness.

The truth of Cherry's surmise was soon evident—that Soapy had not spotted the juniors—for on entering the barn he stood just inside the doorway, watching the rain pelting down, with a gloomy face. Then he turned suddenly from the doorway and strolled into the gloomy barn. He stopped immediately below the juniors and seated himself on the tail-board of the cart, with his back against the bottom. Then, having made himself comfortable, he took out a plug of tobacco and began to fill his pipe leisurely. Apparently Soapy Sam had decided that the rain was not likely to abate yet awhile.

"Phew!" gasped Bob Cherry, coughing, as the fumes from the strong tobacco began to assail his nostrils. "I hope we don't have to stick this long. Anyway, we may as well make ourselves comfortable, too."

And he perched himself upon a sack of potatoes, while his chums seated themselves on the straw-strewn floor. There was nothing else for it but to wait patiently until Soapy Sam decided to move.

But barely had the juniors settled themselves when there came an interruption. From outside came the sound of footsteps and voices. Next instant two forms slipped through the half-open door into the barn.

The juniors could not see the newcomers, but they soon recognised their voices.

"Here we are, Clifford," said one in sulky tones. "We can shelter here and talk as well. Hang the dashed rain!"

"Stott, by Jove!" muttered Bob Cherry, staring across at Harry in the gloom. "How the thump can we warn 'em?"

Wharton shook his head warningly.

At the moment, the possibility that they would hear a conversation not intended for their ears did not occur to him. He was only thinking of the danger Stott and his brother stood of being caught by Soapy Sam.

Certainly Soapy Sam could not see them, being behind the huge farm cart, neither could he hear them, being extremely deaf. But at any moment the burly farmer's son might leave his shelter. And while he realised this, Harry knew it was impossible to warn the brothers. They would have to take their chance.

Stott of the Remove was speaking again now. From his words it was evident that he had just parted from Skinner and Snoop.

"You—you don't understand, Cliff," he muttered, as if continuing a broken-off conversation. "You—you oughtn't to have said what you did. Those rotters don't know anything about—about the pater."

"The—the pater?"

"About the pater going smash, I mean, of course," was the sulky reply. "I—I've told nobody—why should I? All these months I've kept mum, and now you come along saying—"

"I don't know that I said anything which mattered," said Clifford Stott quietly.

"You'd no need to rub it in about the bank, either," grumbled Stott. "I've told nobody you were only a clerk at a bank. I knew what the chaps would say. Though I suppose everybody will have to know now. Didn't you see how that ead Skinner sniggered when you told him?"

"No. I—I didn't notice," said Clifford Stott in a low tone.

"Well, he did. He spotted your shabby clothes, too; anybody would. You might have considered me a bit, Cliff, before coming here like a blessed tramp. Couldn't you—"

"They're the best I've got," was the quiet reply. "You should know, Bill, why I can't afford better clothes. I'm sorry, but—but—"

"It—it's like this, Cliff," went on Stott uneasily. "Greyfriars is a jolly 'toney' school, and a fellow's got to keep his end up. You—you don't understand. The fact is, you ought never to have come here!"

"Oh!"

"I'm—I'm glad to see you, of course. But—but the chaps would never have known you were a clerk in a third-rate bank if you hadn't transferred to Courtfield, Cliff. Hang it, you've got to consider these things! I—I suppose you couldn't get transferred back again? It would be best, you know."

—

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Drop in Potatoes!

CLIFFORD gave his brother a deeply-hurt look. Then he spoke. "I—I'm afraid it's too late now. I couldn't very well ask again so soon, could I? I—I didn't dream—"

"Well, it can't be helped," grunted Stott sulkily. "But you can at least keep clear of Greyfriars. Hang it all, be reasonable, Cliff! Only Skinner and Snoop know, and I think I can square them."

"I'd hoped to see over the old school," muttered Clifford Stott slowly. "But—but—"

"Look here, you mustn't!" said the

younger Stott savagely. "What difference does it make to you? But it means a lot to me. I'll be able to trot over to Courtfield to see you. It's the best way."

There was a silence. Up in the loft the Famous Five were eyeing each other speechlessly. They had not wanted to hear the conversation, but they had heard it. They couldn't help themselves. And to say that they were disgusted with William Stott's brutal words, his snobbish and caddish conduct, would be putting it very mildly.

"I'll keep away, of course, if you wish it, Bill," muttered Clifford at length. "But—but this is rather a staggerer for me. I—I thought you'd be glad to see me—to have me near you. I imagined we'd have some good times together. I was wrong. You don't seem to care."

"I do!" muttered Stott desperately. "You don't under—"

"I think I do. But—but there was another reason why I wanted to be near you, Bill." Clifford Stott's voice had taken on a new note now. "It was to keep an eye on you, old man."

"To—to spy on me, I suppose?" muttered Stott sullenly. "I guessed that."

His brother winced.

"Put it like that if you like," he said quietly, "though you ought to know me better than that. Look here, Bill, I may as well tell you now. You know what happened to me when the smash came—I had to leave school and take a job in an office. I didn't want to, but I had to. But when the pater talked of taking you from Greyfriars, I wouldn't hear of it. I'd lost my chance in life, but I didn't intend you to lose yours. I vowed to work night and day to prevent you having to leave Greyfriars. And I've done so. With what bit of cash the pater could spare I've managed to keep you here."

Stott shrugged his shoulders.

"No need to be always rubbing it in," he muttered.

"I'm not. I'm not bragging about it, either. I'm stating a fact. My screw at the bank wasn't much, and, as you know, I took up spare-time journalism. Luckily I can write a bit, and—well, I've managed to keep things going. But it's meant hard work—harder than you will ever know, Bill. And it's meant pinching and scraping. I've done it for your sake!"

"I didn't ask you to do it," muttered Stott, kicking the ground viciously with the toe of his boot.

"I know you didn't," said his brother, after a tense pause. "But—but the least you can do, old man, is to play up—to play the game, and work hard. Instead of that, you're wasting your opportunities. Your school reports get worse and worse. And you're too extravagant. You're always writing home for cash, though you know how matters stand."

"A chap must have pocket-money."

"I know. And what you get should be enough without always falling into debt as you seem to be doing. But now I've seen those two chaps—the sort of pals you have—I fancy I can guess why—"

He was interrupted. It was a startling interruption, too.

From above their heads came a sudden startled gasp, followed by a queer, scrambling noise. Next instant the two Stotts had a swift vision of a form, with wildly sprawling limbs, come headlong through the trap-door above them. It was followed almost immediately by a solid stream of huge potatoes.

Crash!

The Boat Race fever catches on at Greyfriars—

"Yowp!"

The farm cart shook and rattled violently under the impact as the hurtling form dropped upon it. Then came a wild roar, like the roar of a mad bull, from behind the cart; a howl of pain in a boyish voice, and the rattling thud of the falling shower of potatoes.

It was the luckless Bob Cherry.

Bob had been balancing himself precariously on the sack of potatoes, and swinging his legs carelessly, when suddenly he overbalanced and fell headlong through the opening, and after him shot the potatoes in one continuous stream.

Clifford Stott and his brother were startled almost out of their wits. They stared transfixed at the cart from behind which came sounds which suggested strife and woe.

But Bob Cherry had no thoughts for the Stott brothers just then. Luckily Bob had not fallen directly on the cart, or he might have been badly hurt. As it was, he had dropped full upon the half-somnolent form of Soapy Sam, who acted as a sort of cushion. But Bob was hurt for all that, and he made no bones about letting everyone know it.

Soapy Sam gave a strangled yelp and collapsed limply backwards into the angle formed by the bottom and tail-board of the cart.

"Quick! Run for it, Bob, you ass!" muttered Wharton, who, with the remainder of the Co., had raced down from the loft.

But Bob needed no advice on that score. As the farmer's son fell back gasping, the junior streaked for the door. Stott had already bolted, but Clifford was still standing bewildered on the doorstep.

Harry fairly pushed him outside, and as his chums raced out, he followed them and banged the door behind him.

From within the barn came a howl of wrath, and Wharton waited no longer. He pelted after the flying figures of the others, and joined them in the lane a few seconds later. Luckily, the heavy down-pour had ceased just as quickly as it had started, and only a few stray drops were falling now.

"Oh crumbs!" groaned Bob Cherry, panting as he leaned against the gate. "I believe every bone in my blessed body's smashed. Ow! Oh, my hat! Fancy that happening! Oh dear! My head's fairly singing!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No need to laugh that I can see," mumbled Bob, glaring at his hilarious chums as he rubbed his head. "I might have been thumping well killed!"

But his chums could not help laughing. Wharton stopped, however, on seeing Stott and his brother, who had stopped a few yards away. Clifford was looking a trifle puzzled, but his young brother's face was red and savage.

Meaning to explain matters, Harry walked over to the two.

Stott of the Remove gave him a bitter look as he came up.

"I say," began Wharton, flushing a little, "I'm beastly sorry for what—"

"You—you rotters!" muttered Stott through his teeth. "You were listening to us—spying! I thought you were too dashed high and mighty to act the spy. Wharton."

"You silly young ass!" said Harry warmly. "You know we couldn't help ourselves. Couldn't you see—"

"I did see. It was plain enough, Wharton. You—"

"Here, I say, easy on, Bill!" interrupted Clifford Stott uncomfortably. "I'm sure these chaps couldn't help themselves. They're not the sort to

listen to other people's affairs, I'm certain."

"Your brother knows perfectly well we're not," said Wharton. "It was just bad luck. We entered the barn to shelter, and that farmer Johnny trapped us up in the loft. We couldn't let you know we were there without risking our own skins and yours. I'm sorry—"

"Look out! Run for it!"

The warning yell came from Bob Cherry. There was a thudding of heavy boots from the field they had just left, and next instant the red, furious face of Soapy Sam appeared over the gate.

"You young 'ounds!" he yelled. "So there you are! Thought you'd settled me, did you? Hang you, I'll soon show you what's what!"

But the juniors didn't wait to be shown "what's what." They had taken it for granted that Soapy Sam had been finished with, and they did not intend their error to be pressed home by the horny hands of the farmer's son.

As Soapy Sam clambered awkwardly over the gate they broke and scattered.

The Famous Five scudded away along the rain-soaked lane towards Greyfriars. But William Stott—probably for reasons of his own—took the opposite direction; and Clifford Stott hesitated a second and then followed him.

The thought of running away from the hulking farmer's son did not appeal to him; but he felt he had no choice in the matter under the circumstances.

Soapy Sam dropped from the gate into the lane, and stood a moment undecided. Then, seeing that Stott and his brother were considerably nearer to him, he went thudding after them, breathing threats and imprecations.

Stott, who had not expected the fellow to follow them, gave an alarmed gasp as he heard the thud of pursuit.

"He's after us! Run like blazes, Cliff!" he panted. "It's a flogging for me, if I'm caught!"

Clifford said nothing; but he increased his speed, and easily caught up his brother. He was in fairly good condition, and very soon he had to slow down rather than leave his brother behind. Smokes and slacking had played havoc with the wind of the cad of the Remove.

"He's catching us up, hang him!" panted Stott, hearing the heavy foot-steps pounding nearer. "Better take to the woods. Stand a better chance of giving him the slip there. Over that stile, Cliff!"

Clifford nodded grimly, and followed his brother as that junior made a dive for the stile leading into Friardale Woods.

An angry bellow from the roadway told them that Soapy Sam had seen their move, and soon they heard him lumbering in pursuit. Out in the lane it had been bad enough, but the going was worse here. Stumbling into ditches hidden by dead undergrowth, scratched by briars, and drenched with miniature showers of rain from disturbed brambles, they plunged on blindly, until presently the crashing of pursuit died away.

Breathing and panting, Stott called a halt then, and leaned against a sodden tree-trunk, coughing and gasping and exhausted.

"Thank goodness that beastly lout's given up! Couldn't have stuck it another second!" he gasped, clenching his fists savagely. "This is all the fault



The two Stotts had a fleeting vision of a form with wildly sprawling limbs come hurtling through the trap-door above them. It was followed almost immediately by a solid stream of huge potatoes. Crash! "Yowp!" Soapy Sam awoke from his slumbers with a strangled yelp. (See Chapter 2.)

—and Billy Bunter falls a victim!

of those howling cads! Hang them! I'll pay 'em back for this, the sneaking rotters!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Stott's "Friends"!

CLIFFORD STOTT gave his brother a disgusted look, but was silent for a moment.

"It wasn't their fault, Bill; you must know that. Anyway, what are we to do now?" he said at last.

Stott scowled.

"Only thing to do is to make for Courtfield," he said sulkily. "Won't be safe to go down Friardale Lane again for a bit. Have you got your digs yet, Cliff?"

"No; but I've been given one or two addresses," said his brother quietly. "As you don't want me to visit Greyfriars, perhaps we'd better go on to Courtfield—that is, if you want to come."

"I may as well," was the obviously unwilling answer. "We'll catch the four-fifteen from Friardale, and have tea there somewhere. I don't—"

He broke off with a gasp.

From behind them came the tramp of feet and the sound of voices. Next moment three youths, wearing Highcliffe caps, tramped into the clearing in which the brothers stood. They stared at the two, and then stopped on recognising Stott.

Stott groaned. The newcomers were Ponsonby, Gadsby, and Vavasour—three "knuts" of the Highcliffe Fourth Form, and, incidentally, three of the biggest cads there.

"Why, dash it all, if it isn't old Stott!" said Ponsonby, with a curious glance at Clifford. "What the thump are you doing here, Stott? Come for shelter, or a quiet, comfortable smoke—what?"

Stott bit his lip.

"We were chased here by that beastly farmer lout Soapy Sam!" he muttered. "I—I—"

Ponsonby laughed.

"Funny—that!" he said. "Matter of fact, we were chased into these beastly woods, too. That brute Coker, of your dashed school, caught us having a little game with that fat rotter Bunter. There were half a dozen Greyfriars chaps with him, or we'd have stopped and scrapped, of course."

Stott didn't question that statement, though he might have done, knowing Ponsonby & Co. as he did. But he hardly heard it. The wretched young snob was wondering how he could get his brother away without Pon & Co. becoming aware he was his brother. The sight of Ponsonby's sneering grin as his curious eyes ran over Clifford's shabby, muddy clothes, made him grind his teeth with bitter chagrin.

"Well, Stotty," resumed Ponsonby blandly, "aren't you going to introduce us to your friend? New Greyfriars chap, I suppose?"

"No."

"Relation—what?"

Stott bit his lip hard. But there was no help for it now.

"My brother Clifford," he muttered sullenly. "Cliff, these chaps are from Highcliffe School, near here—Ponsonby, Gadsby, and Vavasour—friends of mine."

Ponsonby grinned broadly. He had marked the resemblance between the two, and had guessed as much. He winked slyly at his chums, and held out his hand with a studied heartiness in which there was more than a trace of mockery.

Gadsby and Vavasour took their cue from him and did likewise.

Stott's brother shook the proffered hands rather hesitatingly. He couldn't quite make out the position. But Ponsonby could—quite well. He saw that the brothers were uncomfortable. And the unprincipled Highcliffe cad always made a point of making uncomfortable persons more uncomfortable still.

"Over on a visit—what?" he remarked, addressing Clifford. "Staying long?"

Stott gave his brother a warning glance, which Clifford quite failed to see.

"For good," he smilingly rejoined. "At least, I'm staying in Courtfield. My job's at the bank there—Bartlett's & Kent County Bank, you know—"

He broke off and flushed, suddenly realising he had said more than his brother wished him to say.

Stott gave him a bitter look.

RESULT OF PLYMOUTH ARGYLE PICTURE-PUZZLE COMPETITION.

In this competition one competitor sent in a correct solution of the pictures. The first prize of £5 has therefore been awarded to:

L. WOODFORD.

Dinton,

Near Aylesbury,

Bucks.

The second prize of £2 10s. has been divided among the following six competitors, whose solutions contained one error each:

A. Adams, 1, Herbert Rd., South Willesbro, Ashford, Kent.

Frances Morton, 7, Ayre St., Pallion, Sunderland.

H. Knighton, 46, Wellingboro' Rd., Northampton.

F. Howarth, 17, Churnet St., Collyhurst, Manchester.

E. Marshall, Sunnyside, Elm Grove, Thorpe Bay, Essex.

L. Bachelor, 19, Kettering Rd., Levenshulme, Manchester.

Twenty-one competitors, with two errors each, divide the ten prizes of 5s. each:

Charles H. Morton, 7, Ayre St., Pallion, Sunderland; Cyril Darbyshire, 8, Bennett St., Higher Broughton, Manchester; R. A. Camp, Baddow Park, nr. Chelmsford; R. Cole, 103, Sheen Lane, Mortlake, S.W. 14; R. B. Curtis, Hillside, Taplow, Bucks; Richard Wimberley, 15, Wheatfield St., Edinburgh; Annie Ringham, 45, Petersburg Rd., Stockport; John Campbell, 148, Kensington St., Keighley, Yorks; E. Shooter, 15, Manor Rd., New Village, Askern, nr. Doncaster; Alex. Welland, 237, Winchester Rd., Highams Park, E. 4; William Ramsdale, 3, Foundry St., Stourport, Worcs; Donald Rains, 15, North Evesham Rd., Reigate; Ted S. Newton, Littleover Lane, Normanton, Derby; Mrs. Phillips, 27, Strelly St., Bulwell, Notts; W. Edgington 45, Playford Rd., Finsbury Park, N. 4; Albert E. Jeffrey, 14, Park St., Southend-on-Sea; E. McHugh, 6, Perth St., Belfast; J. B. Hughes, 6, Perth St., Belfast; Alfred Carr, 70, Bargate, Boston, Lincs; William Mitchell, 5, North Shore St., Campbelltown, N.B.; Dorothy Moore, 146, Vine Place, Rochdale.

SOLUTION.

Plymouth Argyle's ground is almost ideal. Few teams in this country can boast more delightful headquarters. The Argyle's success was mainly due to Mr. Brettell, its first manager. Although Plymouth has not yet been in the Final for the Cup, it may come their way in the near future.

"We'd better be going now. Miss that train if we don't," he said through his teeth. "Come along Cliff! See you later, Pon."

Ponsonby grinned.

"Half a mo!" he said, repressing a chuckle. "That's no end interesting—about the bank, I mean." He turned to Clifford with an air of supercilious geniality. "Here's where I can be no end useful to you! Fact is, my pater's a director of that bank. What's more, I know the manager. He'll do anything for me. There's influence—what? I can easily put a good word in for you—"

"Thanks. But I'd rather fight my own way," retorted Clifford Stott a trifle shortly.

"Oh!"

Ponsonby was quite taken aback for the moment.

"Well, as you like, of course," he said blandly. "Just come to me, though, when you do want anything arranged. And now what about coming up for a little game and a smoke, Stotty? No need for such a hurry, is there?"

"Game—smoke—I don't understand," said Clifford Stott, with sudden suspicion. "You mean to say—"

Ponsonby laughed. As a matter of fact, Ponsonby was more than a little nettled by Clifford's curt refusal of his "influence." The elegant and dandified knut's lofty dignity was hurt. His was a mean, spiteful nature, and he meant to have his own back, whether he harmed Stott during the process or not.

"Why, a little flutter with the cards, of course," he said innocently. "You needn't play for high stakes unless you wish, though. Come up for half an hour. Any friend or relation of old Stotty's is welcome, eh, you chaps?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Oh, absolutely!" grinned Vavasour.

"You—you mean to say my brother plays cards for money with you, and—and smokes?"

"Of course. It's quite safe in our den with the door locked. Old Stotty will tell you that. He's lost and won many a quid with us. Haven't you, Stotty, old man?"

Stott stood white-faced and speechless. His brother gave him one look, and then he turned a scornful glance on Ponsonby & Co.

"So you're the sort of friends my brother makes," he said quietly. "You smoky rotters! No, I certainly won't join you, nor will my brother. Come along, Bill! Let's get away from here."

Clifford Stott tramped away through the leafless trees. Stott was about to follow, when he turned upon the grinning Ponsonby, his face flushed with suppressed rage and dismay.

"You—you howling cad, Pon!" he hissed. "You gave me away on purpose, you rotter! Hang you! I'll get my own back for this—see if I don't."

"My dear man, what are you talking about," smiled Ponsonby. "I merely made your dear brother a kind offer—two kind offers, in fact. What—"

"You were pulling his leg all the time, you cad!" muttered Stott savagely. "You were—"

"Was I?" grinned Ponsonby. "Well, what if I was? Think I'm going to have my offers of help turned down by a dashed cad of a bank clerk! My hat, who'd have thought old Stotty's family had a budding banker in—"

He got no farther. The sarcastic sneer in the Highcliffe fellow's words was too much for the enraged Stott. Livid with passion, he shot out his fist. It struck

The great W. G. astonishes the natives—next Monday!

the grinning Ponsonby full on his long nose, and he staggered back with a howl.

For a moment he stood hugging his injured nose, dumbfounded by such an attack from the usually cowardly Stott. Then, with a hoarse growl, he flung himself at the Greyfriars junior.

"I'll—I'll smash you for that!" he hissed. "Gaddy, Vavasour, come on—flatten the cad!"

Gadsby and Vavasour obeyed their leader without hesitation. They were three to one, and such odds appealed to them. In a flash the luckless Stott was down, with the three pummelling him mercilessly.

But the Highcliffe knuts had forgotten Stott's brother.

Hearing the commotion and guessing its meaning, he came rushing back. As his eyes fell upon the scene he set his lips hard.

"Enough of that!" he snapped sharply. "Three to one's a little too good. Stop it!"

He stooped down, and at his touch Gadsby gasped and scrambled out of the fray. Vavasour also suddenly decided it wasn't his affair, after all, and jumped away, eyeing Clifford rather apprehensively.

But Ponsonby hardly noticed Clifford Stott's arrival in his fury, and he continued punching viciously at the hapless Stott.

He was soon to realize it, however. A hand fell on his collar, and he was wrenched from his victim and flung to one side. He reeled back at the unexpected interruption, and at that moment his feet slipped from under him on the sodden ground, and he went flat on his back, striking his head on the roots of a tree as he fell.

"Sorry," gasped Clifford Stott. "I didn't mean to do that. Hope you're not hurt much?"

Apparently Ponsonby was. He lay for a brief moment nursing his head, and then he staggered to his feet.

"You—you low cad!" he hissed, his eyes glittering. "You—you dare to lay your filthy hands on me? I'll—I'll—"

He hurled himself at Clifford Stott, hitting out furiously.

At any other time Ponsonby would have hesitated before attacking any fellow his own size, much less a youth several years his senior. But he was reckless with rage now. Moreover, Clifford Stott's appearance had not impressed him in any way. He was about Ponsonby's size, but his face was pale, and his frame none too well covered. Ponsonby took him for a weakling.

But, weakling or not, Ponsonby soon discovered that Clifford had a stout heart and a cool head. In his turn Clifford also might have hesitated before attacking a fellow his junior in years, though for a different reason. But he had no choice in the matter now. Ponsonby was hitting out with all his force, and Stott's brother was obliged to defend himself by striking back.

Gadsby and Vavasour did not interfere; they had not had Ponsonby's incentive to courage. Neither did they attempt to touch William Stott, who leaned against a tree-trunk, too done up to interfere if he had wanted to.

To and fro the two staggered, fighting fiercely, slipping and stumbling on the wet clay soil. Ponsonby's face was soon crimson, and he panted heavily with the unusual exertion. Smokes and hard living were telling the tale now. Clifford Stott, however, was as cool and fresh as when he had started. His face was white



A hand fell on Ponsonby's collar, and he was wrenched away from his victim and flung to one side. His feet slipped from under him on the sodden ground, and he went flat on his back, striking his head on the roots of a tree as he fell. (See Chapter 3.)

and strained, certainly, but his eyes gleamed with the zest of battle. At first he had contented himself with defence. Now he had warmed up to the fray, and he drove the exhausted Ponsonby all over the clearing, hitting out straight from the shoulder.

The end came quickly, and in a manner characteristic of the Highcliffe leader.

A clever left hook had sent Ponsonby down with a thud, and for a moment he stayed down. His face, with a thin stream of red flowing from his nose, looked a sight, and he glared up through half-closed eyes at his enemy. Then quite suddenly he scrambled to his feet, cowered before his waiting opponent, and then bolted, lurching and stumbling through the trees.

Stott did not move; he was too astounded.

Thirty yards away Ponsonby paused and glanced back, his battered face convulsed with fury.

"All right, you—you cad!" he shouted, his voice trembling violently. "I'll—I'll pay you back for this, you'll see. I'll get you, you brute! I'll never rest until I've hounded you out of the district, hang you!"

He stumbled away and vanished amid the trees.

Gadsby and Vavasour followed him without needless delay. They had no desire to don Ponsonby's discarded mantle, as it were. When they had vanished, Clifford Stott turned slowly to his brother, standing silent and apprehensive near by.

"Come on, out of this," he said.

Stott followed his brother through the trees. In silence they tramped through

the wood to the roadway. There was no one else about, and here Clifford turned to his brother, a subdued expression on his face.

"This settles your coming to Courtfield, of course," he said quietly. "We're both wet through, and hardly fit to be seen. You'd better hurry back to school now. I'll write you soon, and you can come over to see me at Courtfield."

Stott's head was averted.

"You—you don't believe what that cad Ponsonby said about me, do you?" he muttered desperately.

Clifford Stott did not reply for a moment.

"I—I don't know what to believe," he said huskily at last. "Not yet; not until I've thought things over. Bill, old man, I've been bitterly disappointed over several things this afternoon. I've learned many things I hadn't expected to learn. But never mind that now; I'll talk to you again. Best thing you can do is to cut off hard for school and get those wet things off. Good-bye, old man."

He shook Stott's limp hand, and tramped heavily away towards Friardale. Stott watched him go, and a queer feeling of self-loathing took possession of the wretched young snob for a moment. Then he shrugged his shoulders and turned away.

"Hang it!" he muttered. "He—he oughtn't to have come here at all. Must think I can't look after my dashed self."

And Stott started moodily back for Greyfriars. Both brothers seemed to have forgotten Ponsonby and his threats. But Ponsonby, nursing his injuries as he made for Highcliffe, hadn't forgotten

Who wins the Boat Race?

them. Had he only known it, Clifford had made a bitter and revengeful enemy in Cecil Ponsonby, of Highcliffe.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Disaster!

FROM the distance Harry Wharton & Co. had watched Stott and his brother's mail dash away, with Soapy Sam on their heels, in no little apprehension. But when they saw the farmer's son returning alone some moments later they breathed freely again, and made tracks for Greyfriars. The rain had stopped altogether now, and a wintry sun shone on the glistening trees and hedges. But they had had enough adventure for one afternoon.

They were not surprised to see Stott return to Greyfriars in time for tea, and alone. They had expected it, after what they had overheard. In the Common-room that evening they noticed Stott's bitter glare fixed on them. But he said nothing to them; nor did they say anything to him. What they had overheard was no concern of theirs, and they felt it was none of their business to interfere in any way.

But they could not help discussing it among themselves. Stott's snobbishness, his base ingratitude to his brother, had disgusted them.

"He's a bigger cad than ever I dreamed he was," was Wharton's comment. "It's not our business, or I'd jolly soon tell him so, too. I only wish we could help his brother in some way—take that young waster in hand for him."

"Only make matters worse if we did," remarked Frank Nugent sagely. "It's never wise to chip in in matters like this. Only turn him against his brother more than ever."

"I'm afraid so," said Wharton.

And the Famous Five left it at that. But they kept a close eye on Stott during the next few days. Stott knew it; but it didn't worry him. He knew his secret, such as it was, was safe with Harry Wharton & Co. With Skinner and Snoop it was different. They did not know all, of course! But Stott knew them, and he knew they would make the most of what they did know, unless he stopped them. As he expected, he easily managed to do this. Skinner and Snoop shared too many secrets of their own with Stott to risk a split in the dingy Triple Alliance for so little.

Stott's only worry was Ponsonby & Co., and he took good care to give Highcliffe a wide berth during the next few days.

He had had one letter from his brother, a short note stating that he had started work, had found comfortable rooms, but not mentioning a word concerning other matters. It ended, however, by asking Stott to visit him on the following Wednesday afternoon.

Stott did not want to go, for many reasons. But he felt he had better. And when his chum Skinner approached him after dinner on the Wednesday he felt a little relieved at having to go.

"Buck up and get your cap, Stotty," remarked Skinner. "We're paying old Pon a visit this afternoon. We'll walk over and—"

"I'm not coming," said Stott. "Got another engagement."

"What rot!" said Skinner grinning. "We haven't seen Ponsonby for a fortnight, and I want to get back some of the cash I lost. Of course you're coming."

Stott had not, as yet, mentioned his meeting in the woods with Ponsonby to anyone, and he felt glad now of an excuse to stay away.

"I can't come, I tell you," he said. "I've got to meet my—my brother in Courtfield."

"Got to, eh?" said Skinner with a faint sneer. "My hat! If I'd a brother like that I'd watch taking his dashed orders. Come with us, and let him stew, you ass."

"I tell you I've got to go, it's important," lied Stott sulkily. "Anyway, I'm going. Hang Ponsonby! I'm catching the 2.30 train."

"Oh, as you like, then," grinned Skinner, wondering a little at Stott's manner. "We're starting now, so you can walk along with us—what?"

Stott followed Skinner to the study, and in a few moments they started out. It was a fine, keen, wintry afternoon, and most of the fellows were wending their way towards the playing fields. But Skinner and Snoop—and Stott, for that matter—preferred such dingy pursuits as smokes and cards in a stuffy, locked Highcliffe study to football and the clean open air.

They slouched along, hands in pockets, and it was not until they reached the spot where the Highcliffe Road joined Friardale Lane that Stott began to realise that the afternoon was not going to be a lucky one for him.

As he was about to part from his shady companions there came the whirr of bicycles, and four Highcliffe fellows rode up and sprang from their machines. As he recognised them Stott's face paled.

They were Ponsonby, Gadsby, Vavasour, and Monson—and Ponsonby's eyes were fixed in a glare of hate upon him.

"So I've got you at last, you little cad!" exclaimed Ponsonby, ignoring the astonished Skinner and Snoop. "I've been looking out for you, my pippin! I've got you now, though! I'll teach you to punch my nose! Your own dashed brother won't know you when I've finished with you! Nab him, you chaps!"

"Here, what the thump—" began Skinner.

He broke off and gasped as Ponsonby dropped his machine into the hedge and dashed past him at Stott.

But Stott was too quick for him. Dodging the outstretched arm, he turned and bolted back along Friardale Lane. Ponsonby went in hot pursuit. His legs were longer than Stott's; but sheer desperation lent Stott wings.

Seeing that the Greyfriars junior was outdistancing him Ponsonby wheeled suddenly and dashed back for his bike.

"He'll get away, you fools!" he shouted angrily. "After him! The bikes, you fellows!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Oh, absolutely!" chimed in the parrot-like Vavasour, rushing for his machine.

In a moment all four were mounted and pedalling hard on Stott's track. As he panted along Stott heard the whirr of cycles behind him and spurted desperately.

"Got you!" yelled Ponsonby, racing alongside the junior and springing off his machine.

But Ponsonby had shouted too soon. Seeing escape by straightforward running was impossible, Stott resorted to strategy. He wheeled abruptly and dived for the low hedge.

Crashing recklessly through, he set off across the ploughed field beyond. That he was trespassing once again on Farmer

Jason's land did not trouble Stott for the moment. All he thought about just then was escape from the threatened vengeance of Ponsonby.

The knotty Highcliffe juniors, however, did not relish muddying their elegant shoes on the ploughed field even to catch Stott.

After stumbling a few yards into the field Ponsonby turned and retraced his steps to the lane and joined his companions. They did not ride away, however, and Stott concluded, with a groan, that they intended to wait for his return.

Stott saw that things were going to be awkward. By going inland he would have to approach the farm buildings, and with Ponsonby & Co. patrolling the lane it would be impossible to escape that way.

There was nothing else for it but to wait until Ponsonby & Co. chose to give up the thing as a bad job and clear. Meanwhile, decided Stott, he might just as well make himself comfortable.

A tarpaulin-covered haystack stood near the hedge some yards away, and the junior moved towards it. Halting in the narrow opening between the hedge and the haystack, he tugged handfuls of dry hay from the stack into a heap and seated himself upon it.

He was now sheltered on both sides, and through the interstices of the hedge he could easily spot anyone coming from the roadway.

"Might have been worse!" mused Stott, making himself comfortable. "It's given me a jolly good excuse to stop away from Courtfield. Anyway, I can play the waiting game as long as that beast Pon—and a jolly sight more comfortably!"

And, with a grin, William Stott took from his pocket a packet of cigarettes, and selecting one, he struck a match and lit up. Then, leaning back against the stack, he puffed away cheerfully.

He was still puffing away when he heard the thudding of heavy feet coming towards the stack. He gave a sudden jump of alarm, and, more from force of habit than anything else, he stuffed the cigarette behind him.

But that was all he had the chance to do. Next instant a burly form loomed above him and a heavy hand grasped his collar.

"Gotcher, me lad!" came a hoarse, triumphant yell; and the luckless Stott felt himself hauled out into the open.

With a strangled gasp he twisted round, to find the red, somewhat vacant features of Soapy Sam leering above him. Stott had expected this, but the sight made him shudder with fear.

Not only had he been caught on strictly forbidden ground, but he had been caught smoking as well! Stott saw black trouble ahead, and he groaned.

"You didn't know I seed yer come 'ere, did yer?" chuckled Soapy Sam, grinding his knuckles into the nape of Stott's neck. "Well, you comes along o' me now, me lad! Trespassing—eh? And smokin' as well!"

"I—I wasn't—"

"Ho, ho! Wasn't yer? I seed yer—I seed the smoke! Mister 'Eadmaster'll be glad to 'ear this! Come along—step it out!"

And almost lifting the unfortunate Stott from off his feet, Soapy Sam began to propel him across the field towards the distant farm buildings.

For a moment the junior had a wild idea of kicking his captor's shins and attempting to bolt. But he could not pluck up the courage to do this.

As they tramped on to the muddy

The inventive mind of the "Owl" is equal to the occasion—

farmyard a burly, red-faced man came hurrying towards them.

"What you got there, Sam?" he demanded eagerly. "Not one of them young rips from the skool?"

"Jest that, father!" grinned Sam. "Copped him red 'anded. Smokin', he was, too—behind one of them haystacks, the young himp!"

Farmer Jason's features went purple. "What? Smokin', by George!" he yelled. "Behind a haystack, too! By hokey! That settles it, then. The young villain! Here, I'll take the little varmint, Sam. You shove the pony in the dogcart, and I'll run 'im over to his 'cadmaster meself—blowed if I don't!"

He took charge of the shivering Stott, and his hopeful son started across the yard. Even as he did so a wild shout rang out, and a farmhand came dashing into the yard, pointing frantically across the fields as he did so.

"Them haystacks, mister. Them haystacks is afire!" he yelled.

"What?" roared the farmer.

"Them 'aystacks is afire! Look at 'em!"

Farmer Jason looked. Then he jumped. The two haystacks were clearly visible, and from one of them a thin wisp of smoke was rising. As he stood, transfixed with sudden alarm, the wisp burst suddenly into a thick column of flame-flecked smoke.

"By hokey, he's right!" he yelled. "This young whelp's done it! The—the villain!"

He fairly swung the hapless Stott towards the nearest shed, and then with one powerful swing of his arm sent the junior head-over-heels into the dark interior. Next he slammed the door and swung the heavy bar across.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Costly Smoke!

"FIRE! FIRE!"

Farmer Jason's powerful voice rang out like the angry bellow of a mad bull. A moment later the startled farm folk were tumbling out of house and outbuildings. In less than three seconds a scene of the wildest fear and confusion reigned.

"This way, you idjuts!" bellowed the frantic farmer. "Don't stand there like a lot of blamed sheep! Come on!"

He led the way at a lumbering trot across the fields, his eyes blazing. His startled son and some half-dozen excited farm-workers followed in a ragged stream.

But they were of little use when they arrived there. The hay was by this time well alight and burning with almost incredible fury. For some moments they ran about helplessly, shouting various wild suggestions, but attempting to carry none of them into practice.

Only Soapy Sam, curiously enough, tried anything useful. He snatched bundles of branches, dragged from the hedges, and made a gallant but futile attempt to beat out the flames; but the burning mass was scorching hot and unapproachable.

Like the rest of them, Farmer Jason had completely lost his head. He danced about like an intoxicated monkey, roundly cursing his men for their helplessness, but just as helpless himself.

Other people were rushing up now, and numbered among these were the Famous Five. There happened to be no Remove match for that day, and the juniors had decided to walk over to Highcliffe, where the Greyfriars first

team were playing the Highcliffe seniors.

But on seeing the fire they had naturally abandoned that idea for the moment. They came rushing upon the scene, feeling they were entitled to trespass under the circumstances.

"Can we do anything?" asked Wharton, approaching the almost demented farmer. "What about water?"

"Do anything?" roared Farmer Jason, dancing in his indignation. "Look at it. 'Aven't you done enough—one of ye dratted kids, anyways! Clear out of this, or—"

"But—but surely something can be done," gasped Wharton, surprised at the farmer's words and fury. "The pond there—plenty of water. Get these fellows—"

"I tell yer—"

"Wake up, man!" urged Harry curily. "You can at least save the other stack. Get these men on the job with buckets. Quick!"

The farmer stopped his dancing suddenly. Harry's calm words seemed to have a sobering effect upon him.

He turned suddenly upon the helpless crowd.

"You blamed lot of sheep, get doin' summat!" he howled. "Fetch buckets—water! Off with you, drat you!"

He himself started off for the farm with a rush, and the others followed quickly enough. They had something to do now; and they did it. The juniors went also, anxious to help even their enemy.

Armed with buckets, pans, basins—anything that would hold water—they came rushing back to the fire. It was easy to see now that nothing could save

the stack, however, and at Wharton's suggestion their energies were confined to saving the remaining stack, which was now well alight in places.

It was also at Harry's suggestion that a human chain was formed, along which the buckets and other receptacles were passed from hand to hand, and the contents flung over the second stack.

Luckily, the pond was but a short distance away, and luckily there was plenty of water. Also there was little wind, and after some minutes' hard work the last spark was extinguished, and the fight was won.

Not, however, until the first stack had burned low did they relax their efforts. Then, with blackened hands and faces, and smelling strongly of burnt hay, the juniors approached the exhausted farmer.

"Safe enough now, I think, Mr. Jason," remarked Harry. "What about a wash and brush up for us? Can we get it at the farm?"

The farmer glared at the juniors.

"No, that you thundering well can't!" he snapped savagely. "I'll thank yer to get off my land, me lads."

The juniors were staggered.

"That's a bit thick, Mr. Jason, after what we've done," said Wharton hotly. "But for us you'd have lost the other stack, too, and you know it. You might show a little gratitude and decency."

The farmer gave a grunt. Though irascible and passionate, he was not a bad-hearted man, and he saw the justice in Harry's words.

"Come up to the farm, an' I'll fix you up," he granted. "I'll admit you've worked 'ard, young gents, an' I admits



Stott opened the door and started violently. His brother was seated at the table. Before him was a typewriter and a pile of manuscript, but he was not working. His arms were on the table and his head sunk upon them. (See Chapter 8.)

—and Harry Wharton & Co. have the time of their lives!

it wasn't your fault what that rascal of a schoolfellow o' yours done."

"I don't understand!" exclaimed Wharton, with a start. "Do you mean to say—"

"I'll soon show you," said the farmer grimly. "You'll be witnesses then. Come on."

He ordered his exhausted men to stand by the second haystack, and led the juniors towards the farm. The juniors were perplexed; but they already had a suspicion of the truth. It was confirmed when the farmer flung open the door of the shed, to reveal the white, chalk-like face of William Stott.

"My hat!" gasped Wharton. "Stott!"

The farmer grasped the shivering junior with a blackened hand, and hauled him out into the open. Stott's glance immediately went across the fields, and as his eyes fell on the blackened desolation there, he went white to the lips.

"Yes, yer may well look," snapped the farmer. "That's your doings, an' you've got to pay for it. That stack wasn't insured, an' I ain't goin' to lose by it—not me. I've got summut to lay afore your 'leadmaster this time."

Stott trembled.

"I—I—I— You're not going to report me!" he panted, licking his dry lips. "It—it will be the sack for me if you do. For Heaven's sake don't, Mr. Jason."

"Some use talkin' like that, now—it's too late," said the farmer gruffly. "Strikes me the skool'll be well rid o' the likes of you. You can stay in there until I'm ready to take you to Greyfriars, lad."

He pushed the shaking junior back into the shed, and fastened the door. Then he turned to the juniors.

"How did it happen, Mr. Jason?" exclaimed Wharton gravely. "Was he—"

"Smokin', the little rat!" retorted the farmer. "My son Sam caught him red-handed—it was him right enough. Must have chucked his lighted fag among the hay, and that fool Sam never noticed it. B'raps this'll be a lesson to you young gents. Come, you shall have your wash now."

He stumped away towards the farm

kitchen, and the juniors followed. Harry Wharton's face was troubled. Several times during that term the wilful, rascally Stott had been before the Head for wrongdoing, and he knew what this last and more serious offence would mean. It would undoubtedly mean the sack, as Stott himself had said.

But Harry was thinking, not only of the wretched Stott, but of his brother, too. He knew William Stott's character, and he knew that expulsion would hurt his brother Clifford far more. It would mean that all his toil, all his hopes and self-sacrifices would go for naught.

The thought of this brought a sudden resolve to Wharton. He ran after the farmer and took him on one side.

"Look here, Mr. Jason," he began earnestly. "Do you mean what you say about taking Stott to the Head?"

"Of course I does! Hasn't he deserved it? Darn me—"

"But can't you punish him in some other way, Mr. Jason? A good thrashing would satisfy you, surely?" pleaded Harry. "You don't realise what the sack means to a fellow; it may ruin his whole life. Not only that—his family suffers, too. In this case—"

"I won't hear a word!" snapped the farmer angrily. "What about that damage—think I can afford to lose that? I won't hear a word."

But he did, for all that. He listened, grumpily enough, as Wharton pleaded Stott's case. The captain of the Remove talked of the lifelong disgrace—of the sorrow and bitter disappointment to his family if Stott weresent home. And then, as a final resort, Harry told of the trouble in the Stott family, and of Clifford's stout fight to keep his brother at Greyfriars.

Mr. Jason's grim features relaxed then.

"Wel, I don't know as if 'ud help me much gettin' the lad kicked out," he grunted at last. "But—"

"Then—then you'll let him go—you won't report him?" exclaimed Harry eagerly.

"I'll let the young rascal go—yes," was the grumpy response. "But there's that stack. I can't afford to lose the hay, and what's more, I don't intend to, young fellow. If he can find the money

to pay for the damage I'll let it go at that. That's my last word, young gent."

"Oh, good! I'll see you get the money all right—you can take my word for that," said Wharton promptly. "It won't be much, will it?"

"Fifty pound, if a penny," was the response. "I don't know, but I'll—"

"Fifty pounds?"

Harry echoed the words aghast. He had never dreamed that it would mean such a huge sum. He looked at the farmer's face, but a glance told him the man was in earnest, and he knew from report that he was honest, whatever his faults in other directions.

"You—you can't make it less than that!"

"Not a penny less. It's worth much more than that," said the farmer stolidly. "I'd already arranged to sell it this week."

"Phew!"

Wharton was staggered; but he did not hesitate long. From the conversation overheard in the barn that day, Harry knew that Clifford Stott would have the utmost difficulty in finding such a sum. Still, it obviously meant that or expulsion for his brother. Perhaps, in such an extremity, Clifford could find the money somehow. At all events, it was up to him to decide.

"Very well, Mr. Jason," said Harry firmly. "Let Stott go, and I'll guarantee you the money. I'll sign a paper to that effect if you like. You'll give Stott's brother time to pay it, of course?"

"I'll give him a fortnight—not a day longer!" was the angry response. Apparently Mr. Jason was already regretting his decision. "And I don't want no signing papers—I can trust you, my lad. Now clear off before I changes my mind. You can release that rascal as you go out. If I gets near him I shall not be able to keep my hands off him."

And the farmer stamped into the house, growling to himself. With a deep breath of relief, Harry ran over to join his chums, who were in the kitchen across the yard. He explained matters as he hurriedly cleaned himself. Then he ran back across the yard and released Stott.

As Wharton flung wide the door and called him out, Stott eyed the juniors in astonishment.

"It's all right!" snapped Harry, scarcely hiding his contempt. "We've managed to save your skin, you smoky rotter!"

"Oh—oh, good!" breathed Stott.

"But it's going to cost someone fifty pounds," added Harry grimly. "That hay's got to be paid for—we've promised that."

"Fifty quid!" Stott muttered the words hoarsely. "Why, I haven't fifty pence! What on earth do you mean, Wharton?"

"I mean what I say," said Wharton. And he told Stott what had taken place. Stott groaned when he had finished.

"It's no good, Wharton!" he gasped. "My brother can't pay it! I—I daren't even ask him to—I simply daren't!"

"Don't be a fool! Do you want to be sacked? You must go over at once and tell him everything. Whether you're sacked or not, someone will have to pay it, in any case."

"I—I daren't! My brother would—"

"You miserable coward!" cried Bob Cherry, in disgust. "That's just like you! But you've got to go—if I have to boot you over to Courtfield myself! Hang it all—"

"He'll have to go—it'll be worse for

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The Chums of the Remove in Town—next Monday!

him if he doesn't," said Wharton impatiently. "Off you go, Stott! You'll just about catch the four-fifteen!"

Stott stood silent for a moment.

"I—I'll go!" he muttered at last. "I—I suppose it's the only thing."

"Come on, then."

The juniors tramped across the fields to the roadway. And there, Harry Wharton & Co. parted from the quaking Stott, and returned to Greysfriars.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Skinner, the Spy!

AFTER tea that evening the Famous Five looked out for Stott's return in no little anxiety. They had managed to save the wretched cad of the Remove's skin for a time; but they were not very hopeful as to the outcome. Fifty pounds was a big sum for a fellow like Clifford Stott to find.

But they had done their best. It now remained for Stott's brother to decide whether the money was to be found in the time allowed, or whether Stott was to suffer the penalty. In any case, it was clear that the damage would have to be paid for some time or other.

The juniors were standing by the gates when Stott came tramping in at last.

"Well?" asked Wharton quickly. "What does your brother say? You've seen him, of course?"

"Yes. He—he's going to find the money somehow," muttered Stott. "But—but he can't possibly do it in the fortnight; it's impossible, Wharton. Even if he could earn that much by slaving night and day for a fortnight, he couldn't get the ready money for it in time."

"You mean with his writing?"

"Yes. It's hopeless. But—but he thinks he can manage it if old Jason will extend the time. Anyway, he's come back with me now, and he's going to see Jason. I've got to meet Clifford at the cross-roads in an hour's time to hear what's happened."

Wharton's face clouded. From what he had gathered from Farmer Jason's remarks and attitude, he had little hope of Clifford Stott succeeding in his quest.

"What did your brother think about it?" asked Bob Cherry curtly.

Stott flushed, and was silent for a moment.

"He—he was upset," he mumbled reluctantly at last. "But—but he wanted me to thank you fellows for what you did. Things aren't going well with him at the office. The manager's got his knife into him. That brute Ponsonby's at the bottom of it."

"Ponsonby? But what on earth has Ponsonby to do with your brother?"

Stott hesitated. He had forgotten that the others knew nothing of what had happened in the woods that afternoon.

"We—we met Pon and his pals in the woods the day my brother came," he said sulkily, at length. "We had a row, and my brother gave the cad a hiding. He swore he'd hound my brother out of the place. And as Ponsonby's pater's a director of the Courtfield bank, and he knows the manager, Pon's getting his own back that way."

"Phew!"

"What a howling shame!"

The juniors eyed each other gloomily. They knew what a bitter and relentless enemy Ponsonby was. It seemed as though the unfortunate Clifford was to be dogged by bad luck at every turn.

The juniors pressed Stott for further particulars; but he was sulky now, and



Clifford stumbled over something—something lying in a limp heap on the ground—and he went headlong. The lamp flew from his grasp and crashed to earth some yards away. Then from the huddled heap came a faint groan, and Clifford knew that his quest was ended. (See Chapter 9.)

refused to tell more. Leaving him to "stew in his own juice," as Bob Cherry put it, the five went indoors.

But Stott remained in the Close, pacing restlessly up and down. His brow was dark, and his mind full of bitter thoughts. He hated Wharton and his chums, and he resented their questions and interference. And he resented the thought that he owed them anything. Gratitude did not enter into the miserable, sulky junior's make-up.

For half an hour he paced up and down, his face haggard, and his eyes burning. Then he looked at his watch and moved towards the gates. As he reached them, two juniors, who had been standing there, joined him.

They were Skinner and Snoop, his study-mates and chums. Both eyed him very curiously as they stopped him.

"Here he is!" said Skinner, with rather a malicious grin. "My hat, Stotty, what's been happening to you? You were collared by Soapy Sam, weren't you?"

Stott nodded sullenly. He knew what that sneering grin on Skinner's face meant. Obviously Ponsonby had told Stott's precious "fair-weather" pals of the trouble between them in the woods. The thought made Stott clench his fists hard.

At the same time he felt relieved. Obviously Skinner, while knowing he had been captured, did not know he had been charged with causing the fire. On seeing him in the hands of Soapy Sam, they had probably departed, Ponsonby & Co., at least, more than satisfied.

"Yes; the brute collared me," he responded, his mind working rapidly.

"We spotted that!" grinned Skinner. "What happened—a licking, or is he going to report you?"

"A—a licking," said Stott, grasping the chance. "The brute of a farmer was going to report, but—but I asked for a licking instead. He thrashed me with a—"

"Ha, ha, ha! Oh, my hat!"

Skinner and Snoop roared at that. The thought of William Stott, perhaps the biggest funk in the Remove, asking for a licking, was to them screamingly funny.

Stott bit his lip savagely.

"You fools—you grinning fools!" he hissed. "You can go to blazes, hang you!"

He was striding on when Skinner grasped his arm.

"Half a sec., Stotty," he remarked with a chuckle. "We want to talk to you. We'll let that joke about the licking pass. Look here, there's something up; we can see that. What's the little game? I spotted you chatting with Wharton just now. What—?"

"I'll tell you nothing, hang you!"

"But—"

"Go and eat coke!"

And savagely wrenching his arm free Stott strode on through the gates.

Skinner looked after him, his eyes glittering. Then he winked at Snoop.

"That settles it," he remarked. "Snoopy, old bird, are we going to let our dear old pal turn us down like that? Not likely! There's a bit of a mystery here. As his dear pals, it's our bounden duty to investigate—what?"

"Must be something up," said Snoop.

Look out for "Billy Bunter's Boat Race Party!" It's great!

"Where's he going—out of gates at dusk? Shall we—"

"We will!" snapped Skinner, his eyes gleaming. "We'll see that no harm comes to the dear chap. We'll also see what he's up to, hang him! We can go and eat coke, can we?"

And Harold Skinner led the way through the gates. He could see the figure of Stott hurrying along the lane ahead, and the two sneaks followed, keeping close to the hedge.

Dusk was falling rapidly on Friardale Lane. The lane was winding, and it was an easy matter to keep on the track without being seen by their quarry.

Not once did Stott look round. The possibility of being followed had not even occurred to him. He was too worried and agitated, as it happened, to think of possible spies.

He stopped at last at the cross-roads, where the Highcliffe Road joined Friardale Lane, and Skinner and his companion stopped also, and slipped into the hedge.

It was well for them that they did so, for scarcely a minute later there came the sound of feet behind them, and a form came striding past. Skinner recognised the face in a moment.

"Stott's brother!" he whispered to Snoop. "My hat! What's he doing in that direction, I wonder?"

They watched breathlessly as Clifford strode up to his waiting brother, who was standing on the grass beneath the leafless trees. Then Skinner touched Snoop's arm, and squeezed cautiously through the hedge.

Snoop followed, not a little nervously, and next instant they were treading stealthily along the inside of the hedge. Luckily—for their purpose—it was high and thick hereabouts, and they had no need to crouch down. Skinner halted at last.

They were within a few feet of the brothers now, and they could hear their voices clearly. William Stott was speaking, and his voice was low and trembling.

"I knew it was no good," he was saying hopelessly. "What did that brute Jason say?"

"He saw what I've told you—that he couldn't afford to wait for the money," was the quiet answer. "He was fairly decent about it, though, and I believe it's as he says; he badly wants the money to settle outstanding bills at the end of the month—that's a fortnight hence."

"But how are you going to find the money?" panted Stott wildly. "You can't; it's hopeless! It means the sack for me—or a flogging, at least. Can't you do something? You're my brother; you ought to."

There was silence after that for a moment. Clifford's eyes were deeply troubled at he looked at his brother. He was not angry at the bitter outburst, only hurt.

"I don't know, Bill. I wish I did know," was the husky reply. "If Jason had only given me a month I'd have done it—yes, I'd have done it somehow, though Heaven knows I'm working hard enough as it is! I know it's no good lacking the pater—hopeless! I'm afraid you'll have to face it. I only wish I could face it for you. Believe me, Bill, old man, I'd gladly take your flogging—if it came to that—on my shoulders, if I could."

His brother gave a bitter sneer. "It's easy to talk like that!" he muttered savagely. "You know you can't. You won't even do what I asked you just now, though it's easy enough; it would

put everything right. Lewis, in Courtfield High Street, would lend it you like a shot."

"Moneylenders! No—a thousand times, no!" said Clifford hoarsely. "I won't do that!"

"Then what does your brotherliness amount to?" cried Stott, his voice trembling hysterically. "It's only pride—rotten pride—that won't let you!"

"It's a case of principle—not pride, as you mean it," was the low retort. "Besides, if the bank people knew it, I should be ruined. I should be sacked at a minute's notice for dealing with moneylenders. The bank-manager—Watson—is up against me enough as it is. That fellow Ponsonby is carrying out his threats only too—"

"Hang the brute, the howling cat!" snarled Stott passionately. "He's to blame for it all; he's at the bottom of everything. I'd—I'd like to—to—"

His voice broke hysterically. Fear and passion had wrought the wretched junior to a high pitch, and now he broke down completely.

And his pitiable weakness brought about what his cruel taunts and cowardly pleadings could not accomplish.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Clifford's Desperate Resolve!

QUITE suddenly his brother stepped to him, and laid a gentle hand on his shaking shoulders.

"It's all right, Bill; I'll do it. Don't do that! Chuck it, old fellow!" he muttered huskily. "You hear? I'll see these people in the morning and get the money. They'll let me have it all right when they know I'm at the bank. Yes, I'll do it!"

"You—you'll borrow the money?"

"Yes. I'll pay the farmer to-morrow. You've no need to fear anything now, old man. Then I'll settle down to work to pay it back. It'll mean work; it'll mean burning the midnight oil a bit more than usual. But my stories are going well now, and I'll soon pay it back."

Stott averted his head. He was trembling with relief.

"Oh good! Then—then it's all right?"

"Right as rain!" exclaimed Clifford with obviously forced cheerfulness. "Now, cut off to school; you'll be late for call-over if you don't."

He gripped his brother's hand, and turned away hurriedly, as if he feared himself that he would change his mind. William Stott watched him go. He walked away slowly, his shoulders bowed.

Then Stott drew a deep breath of relief. He felt as though a great load had been lifted from his shoulders. And it had. But it had descended upon the shoulders of his brother—shoulders that already were too overburdened to bear more.

But the selfish junior gave no thought to that. He was saved. That was all that mattered.

He turned off the grass on to the road, and walked away with a light step. He had gone a dozen yards when a sudden thought struck him.

He ought to have asked his brother to let him know if he got the money. With the thought, Stott wheeled abruptly. But even as he started to run there came a sudden rustle in the hedge some yards away, and two figures stepped into the lane. They jumped back hastily on seeing him; but it was too late then.

"Skinner!" breathed Stott fiercely.

"Skinner, you hound, you were listening! You've been spying! You—you must have heard everything!"

Skinner wilted before Stott's furious glare; then he laughed uneasily.

"Well, what if I did, old top?" he said coolly. "Quite an entertainin' chat, it was—touching and pathetic, too, by gad! En, Snoop? Dear old Stotty! Wouldn't have missed—"

Skinner said no more, unless wild shrieks could be termed conversation. For Stott, as he realised that Skinner had heard and seen all—that he now knew his secret—utterly lost control of himself. He flung himself upon the terrified Skinner, hitting out blindly, savagely.

"Stott, you fool, stop!" panted Snoop in alarm. "You're mad! You'll kill him!"

But Stott was mad—for the moment, at least. To the accompaniment of wild shrieks and yells for help from the luckless Skinner, he drove him before him all over the lane, until at last the unhappy eavesdropper stumbled and went flat on his back.

And, wisely, Skinner stayed on his back, still howling. At any ordinary time Skinner was more than a match for Stott. But this was no ordinary time. Not for worlds would Skinner have faced the enraged Stott just then.

And, curiously enough, the fall of Skinner was the signal to Snoop to bolt. He had no intention of playing second fiddle to Skinner, by waiting for his turn. He turned and bolted for his life.

But Stott ignored him. He knew that Skinner was the prime mover in it.

"You—you hound!" he breathed, his burning eyes fixed on the cowering spy. "I'll—I'll—"

"Keep off!" gasped Skinner, half-sobbing with rage and pain. "You're mad, Stott! Oh, won't I pay you for this! I'll pay you out in a way you don't dream of! And I'll smash you when—you've got over this, hang you! Oh, you—you—"

With a sudden desperate scramble he leaped to his feet. Stott leaped back, ready; but Skinner did not attack. He wheeled abruptly and dashed away—not along Friardale Lane, but in the direction of Highcliffe.

The significance of this did not dawn upon Stott then. He stood a moment, astounded, and then he turned and tramped after Snoop towards Greyfriars.

His brain was in a whirl, and he was half-dazed. But as he walked his brain cleared and his passion began to evaporate. By the time he had reached the gates he was limp and exhausted, and he was beginning to count the cost.

As he stumbled through the gates two juniors came hurrying out. They stopped as they saw him. They were Wharton and Cherry.

"Stott—what's the matter?" demanded Wharton, staring at the junior's wild, agitated face. "Snoop says you've been attacking Skinner—half-killing him! What's happened?"

Stott hesitated, pushed past Wharton, and then he stopped and turned. His hate, and suddenly acquired and just as suddenly evaporated "courage," had now given place to fear—fear of what Skinner would do in return. It would be just as well to gain Wharton's sympathy—and his protection.

"It—it was Skinner's fault," he muttered. "He was spying on me—on my brother and me. I—I caught him and went for him."

(Continued on page 17.)

Frank Richards was never seen to better advantage!



CHAMPION OF THE SNEAKS!

By Harold Skinner.

They ducked me at the fountain
For sneaking, don't you know;
To Mr. Quelch I promptly squelch,
And tell my tale of woe.
You ought to hear the chorus,
One universal shriek
That follows me right thunderously:
"Sneak! Sneak! Sneak!"

If anyone should strike me
He's asking for disaster;
If bullies tease, or shake and squeeze,
I promptly tell a master.
I toddle off to Quelch
In manner mild and meek;
With furious eyes, the bully cries:
"Sneak! Sneak! Sneak!"

If Wharton and his fellows
Go breaking bounds at night;
If midnight feasts, by these same beasts,
Are planned with keen delight,
I promptly tell a prefect,
It's like my blessed cheek;
Then Brown, and Toddy, and everybody
Cries: "Sneak! Sneak! Sneak!"

If Bunter loots the larder,
I give the game away;
I tell the cook, he's brought to book,
And flogged that very day!
He turns on me in fury,
And, with a wrathful squeak,
He yells a word I've often heard:
"Sneak! Sneak! Sneak!"

The stealthy art of sneaking
Is one for which I'm famed;
I sneak and sneak, from week to week,
And never feel ashamed.
I oft betray my brethren,
My record is unique;
It makes me scowl to hear the howl:
"Sneak! Sneak! Sneak!"

EDITORIAL!



By HARRY WHARTON.

SNEAKING does not rank as a capital offence—more's the pity! To my mind, a sneak is the most loathsome and contemptible of all creatures. There is something stealthy and snake-like about sneaking. No decent fellow would dream of playing the part of a tale-bearer. It is an offence against the Public School code of honour to give a schoolfellow away.

Yet sneaks exist, even at Greyfriars. In fact, we have quite a gallery of them.

The most notorious sneak in the Remove Form is Skinner. Billy Bunter runs him a good second. Snoop and Stott are also guilty at times of this despicable offence.

These fellows I have named are deliberate and malicious sneaks. But there is such a person as an innocent sneak—a fellow who sneaks without intending to. Alonzo Todd comes under this heading. The frank, ingenuous Duffer of the Remove often gives a fellow away without meaning to get him into trouble. It is because of his high regard for the truth, and his utter lack of tact, that Alonzo blurts out to his Form master the story of his schoolfellows' misdemeanours. This is quite pardonable, so we cannot justly include Alonzo in our gallery of sneaks.

Skinner is a sneak of the most poisonous and mischievous type. He not only sneaks, but exaggerates when sneaking, thus making it all the worse for his victims.

No decent master or prefect will countenance sneaking. But I am sorry to say that masters like Mr. Hacker and prefects like Loder are only too ready to lend an ear to sneaks.

Bob Cherry suggests that there should be a Society for the Suppression of Sneaks. I quite agree with him. The sooner the S.S.S. is formed the better. Greyfriars would be a better place if it were purged of its sneaks.

This is our Special Sneaks' Number. And although none of my readers have the slightest sympathy with sneaking, they will be able to extract a deal of amusement from this issue. Even a sneak can cause merriment when he puts pen to paper; and the articles written by the ignoble army of sneaks will, I venture to think, cause side-splitting laughter.

HARRY WHARTON

THINGS I SHALL TELL QUELCHY!

By Billy Bunter.

That Bob Cherry wakes me up with a wet sponge every morning, thus giving a severe shock to my frail and delicate constitution.

That Harry Wharton persistently refuses to give me a place in the Remove Eleven, because he is jealous of my superior debility.

That Peter Todd is always nocking me about, as if I were a punching-ball, and that he duzzent give me a little bit of piece.

That the Removites have planned a midnight feast for Satterday night. (I shall tell Quelch this because I've not been invited to share the spoils!)

That the beasts, broots, and boollies of the Remove have made me run the gornlet for sneaking.

That I peeped through the keyhole of the fags' Common-room the other afternoon, and saw Dicky Nugent smoking. (I sha'n't menshun that he was meerly smoking a herring!)

That Loder of the Sixth intends to brake bounds on Friday night, to visit the Sun Inn when the sun's out!

That I overheard Vernon-Smith say, "Quelch's an old tirant! He deserves to be tard and fethered, and then boiled in oil!" (Won't Quelch be pleased when I tell him this!)

That Bull gave a mity bellow, and tost me in the air, for borrowing his bike without permission.

That my studdy-mates make my life a mizzery, and I therefore require a studdy to myself.

That Harry Wharton is always libelling me in the GREYFRIARS HERALD by saying that I'm a fat duffer, a braneless porpuess, and seterer and seterer.

That I'm sick and tired of being in the Remove, and want a shift into a higher Form.

That a sneak is always despised instead of hero-worshipped, as he ought to be.

Look out for next Monday's Boat Race Supplement!



Scoring Off a Sneak!

By DICK RUSSELL.

"TOD-NIGHT'S the night!" said Bob Cherry.

He spoke in a loud tone, knowing full well that Billy Bunter, the Paul Pry of the Remove, was listening at the keyhole.

"When the clock strikes eleven," said Harry Wharton, "we'll steal downstairs and raid the pantry. Is that so?"

"The raidfulness," said Hurree Singh, "will be terrific."

"We'll collar everything we can lay our hands on," said Nugent, "and take it up to the dorm, and have a midnight feast."

"That's the idea," said Johnny Bull. "Sharp at eleven o'clock the deed shall be done."

Billy Bunter, with his ear glued to the keyhole of the door of Study No. 1, trembled like a fat table-jelly in his excitement.

Bunter had never suspected the Famous Five of being pantry-raiders. As a rule, they drew the line at that sort of thing. But the fat junior could not mistake the evidence of his ears. He had overheard every word the juniors had said, and he chuckled softly as he scuttled away.

"The beasts!" he muttered. "They've never shown me any mercy when they've caught me raiding the pantry. And I won't show them any mercy now. I'll give their precious plans away. I'll tell the first master I see."

The first master Bunter happened to see was Mr. Prout. Bunter not only saw him, but felt him. For the master of the Fifth, rounding a bend in the passage in a great hurry, cannoned full into Billy Bunter.

"Ow!"

"Wow!"

Billy Bunter staggered away against the wall, half dazed by the collision.

"Wretched boy!" barked Mr. Prout. "You should look where you are going."

"Yow! It wasn't my fault, sir. When you come tearing round the bend like that you ought to sound a hooter or something."

"Boy! Bunter! How dare you address me in that impertinent manner?"

"No offence meant, sir," said Bunter hastily. "I was just giving you a bit of advice."

"Do you presume to give advice to a person twice as old as yourself, Bunter?"

"Four times as old, you mean!" muttered Bunter under his breath.

Fortunately, Mr. Prout did not catch that remark. He was very touchy on the subject of his age, and if he had heard what Billy Bunter said there would have been ructions.

"I say, sir," went on Bunter, "I've got something to tell you. Some fellows would say it was sneaking, but personally I consider I am only doing my duty. It may interest you to know, sir, that five fellows in the Remove are going to

raid the pantry to-night. When the clock strikes eleven they will steal downstairs and—"

"And then?"

"Why, sir, they will steal downstairs," said Bunter, chuckling at his little joke. "They are going to loot the pantry, sir."

Mr. Prout frowned.

"I do not approve of sneaking, Bunter," he said, "but this is a serious matter. There is no difference between looting a pantry and common theft. I will trouble you for the names of these boys."

Bunter gave them. Mr. Prout jotted down the names in his notebook, and went on his way, with the intention of lying in wait for the Famous Five at eleven o'clock that night.

Not content with sneaking to Mr. Prout, Billy Bunter went in search of Mr. Quelch, and confided his story to the Remove master. He also informed Loder



The Master of the Fifth, rounding a bend in the passage, cannoned full into Billy Bunter.

of the Sixth. Loder had little love for the Famous Five, and he determined to catch them in the act of raiding the pantry.

"I'll lie in wait for the young rascals with an ashplant," he muttered.

So eager was Loder to get to grips with the Famous Five that he took up his position outside the kitchen door at a quarter to eleven. It was quite dark, and the prefect felt satisfied that he would not be seen.

The minutes passed, and at length the school clock boomed the first note of eleven. Loder drew himself up rigidly, clutching his ashplant in his hand, and listening intently.

When the last stroke of the hour had died away, a sound of stealthy footsteps came to Loder's ears.

"Here they come!" was his instant reflection.

The footsteps drew nearer. Peering through the intense gloom, Loder could just discern a shadowy form. Without hesitation, he sprang towards it, lashing out with his ashplant.

"Take that, you young rascal!"

"Varooopoh!"

There was a loud yell of anguish. It was not the yell of a junior.

Loder drew back with a gasp of dismay, wondering who it was he had struck.

"Boy! Base rascal! How dare you attack a Form master?"

Loder gave a violent start, for the voice was the voice of Mr. Prout.

"Oh, crams!" faltered the prefect. "I—I'm awfully sorry, sir! I wouldn't have had this happen for worlds. I—I thought you were one of the young rascals coming to raid the pantry, sir."

"So it is you, Loder?"

"Yes, sir."

"What are you doing here?"

"Bunter informed me that Wharton and his pals were going to raid the pantry at eleven, sir, so I came along to prevent it."

Mr. Prout tenderly caressed his left arm, on which the ashplant had fallen.

"I wish you had been less impetuous, Loder," he said. "We will watch and wait together."

They did. And when Mr. Quelch came along, in dressing-gown and carpet slippers, he had the shock of his life; for two figures leapt at him from the shadows, and grappled with him, and bore him to the ground.

After a short, sharp struggle, Loder realised that he had made a second mistake, and Mr. Prout had made his first. An indignant roar from the victim showed that he was Mr. Quelch.

Apologies and explanations followed, after which the trio arranged to watch and wait together for the appearance of Harry Wharton & Co. But the Famous Five never turned up, nor had they intended to do so.

After waiting in the cold and darkness for half an hour, the three vigilant watchers stamped furiously away to bed.

Billy Bunter caught it hot and strong next morning. He received a swishing from Mr. Quelch, and another from Mr. Prout, and yet another from Loder. But nobody had a shred of sympathy to waste on him. It was the universal opinion in the Remove that a sneak deserved all he got.

It was a very dismal Bunter who walked, or rather crawled, into Study No. 7. But even that haven of refuge, so to speak, was denied him, for Peter Todd was awaiting his fat study-mate, a grim looking cricket stump in his hand.

Peter strongly disapproved of sneaks, and his method of curing such undesirable persons was drastic in the extreme, as Billy Bunter speedily found out!

THE END.

One long, big lark—



THE SNEAK OF ST SAM'S!

By DICKY NUGENT.

“WHAT are you crying for, my little man?”

It was Mr. Stiggins, the master of the Fourth Form at St. Sam's, who spoke. A whimpering youth stood before him. This was Snipe of the Fourth—a hopeless little sneak.

“Boo-hoo!” wailed Snipe. “Larry Larkins hit me, sir! He dotted me on the nose! Ow-ow-ow!”

“Dear me!” said Mr. Stiggins. “This is very distressing. Did Larkins strike you with malice aforethought?”

“No, sir—with his fist.”

“Had you given him any provocation, Snipe?”

“I hadn't given him anything, sir. I egg-spect that's why he hit me! I had a hamper from home to-day, and I refused to give Larkins a peace of cake.”

“So he struck you with grate violence on the nasal piano?”

“Yessir.”

“Very well!” said Mr. Stiggins. “Send Larkins to me at once, and I will see that he gets it in the neck!”

“Thanks awfully, sir—”

“Don't munch!” said Mr. Stiggins.

Snipe went in search of Larry Larkins, the leader of the Fourth. He found him in the tuckshop.

“Mr. Stiggins wants you, Larkins,” he said.

“What for?”

“I told him you punched my nose, and he's going to give you a licking.”

“You sneak!” hissed Larry.

And Larry's two chums, Merry and Bright, glared at Snipe as if they would eat him.

Larry made his way to Mr. Stiggins' study. The master of the Fourth threw a stern glance at him, and Larry ducked his head just in time to avoid being hit.

“I here you've been hoodlying poor Snipe again, Larkins,” said Mr. Stiggins. “I am going to put my foot down on hoodlying with a firm hand. You will get across my table!”

Larry obeyed, and Mr. Stiggins picked up an ashplant and wheeled it with grate vigour. Larry had to bite his upper lip to keep from crying out.

“There!” panted Mr. Stiggins, when he had administered the 99th stroke. “Let that be a lesson to you, Larkins! If you dare to lay a finger on Snipe again, I shall take you before Dr. Sackemhall! You here me?”

“I here you, sir!” moaned Larry.

“Then go!”

Larry limped out into the quad, and there he saw Snipe. He went straight up to him and tweaked his nose, and blacked his eyes, and thickened his ears, and punched his jaw, and pulled his hare. Snipe backed away like a frightened rabbit.

“Yarooooo!” he yelled.

“That's for being a rotten sneak!” said Larry Larkins fiercely.

Snipe ran, howling, into the building. Talboys of the Sixth was coming along the passage.

“Please, Talboys,” whimpered Snipe. “Larry Larkins has been hoodlying me!”

“You yung monkey!” he cried angrily. “Don't come running to me with your tails! I can't stand sneaks!”

Snipe was half-dazed. But he drew a coil of rope from his pocket and pulled himself together. Then he went along to his study.

Meanwhile, Larry Larkins & Co. were plotting a deep, dark plot.

“Tell you what,” said Larry, “let's play a hokes on yung Snipe.”

“A good idear!” said Merry. “What shall we do?”

“We'll wait till Snipe comes lissening at our studdy door, and then we'll pretend to

diskuss a skeem for brakng bounds at mid-night. Snipe will think we mean it, and he'll go and tell Mr. Stiggins. And old Stiggy will lie in wait for us at the foot of the staires, and we sha'n't brake bounds after all!”

“Ripping!” said Bright.

The juniors waited until they heard a stealthy footmark in the corridor. They knew it was Snipe. The sneak of the Fourth was wearing rubber-soled shoes.

“I say, you chaps,” whispered Larry Larkins, in a loud voice, “what do you say to brakng bounds at midnight, and going down to the Dewdrop Inn?”

“That's an egg-sellent wheeze!” said Merry.

“Here, here!” said Bright.

“We'll lay awake till the clock strikes twelve,” said Larry, “then we'll dress ourselves, and sally fourth.”

“Yes, rather!”

Snipe, with his ear gloed to the keyhole of the studdy door, digested this information. And he gave a soft chuckle.

“All right, you beests!” he muttered. “I'll jolly soon put a spoke in your weal!”



Mr. Stiggins turned the sneak over and proceeded to cane him.

And he rushed away in serch of Mr. Stiggins.

The master of the Fourth was playing marbels in the quad with Mr. Stinks, the science master. Snipe went up to him.

“I say, sir, would you like to here what Larkins & Co. are up to?”

“Not half!” said Mr. Stiggins.

“Then I'll tell you. Not kontent with brakng your window the other day, sir, they intend to brake bounds to-night.”

“Bless my sole!”

“I never brake things myself, sir,” said Snipe. “At the same time, I thought I ought to brake this news to you. At mid-night Larkins & Co. will get up and dress, and make their way from the school presinks. They intend to visit the Dewdrop Inn. If they do drop in at the Dewdrop Inn, I suppose you'll cane them, sir?”

Mr. Stiggins frowned.

“They won't have a chance to get any farther than the foot of the staires!” he said. “I will lie in wait for them there, in the darkness, and when they appear I will pounce upon them with my cane. And then I will thrash them so soundly that wheels will appear on their backs!”

“Oh, good!” mermered Snipe. And he went on his way in high spirits.

At a quarter to twelve that night Mr. Stiggins took up his position at the foot of the staires. His long, skinny fingers were tightly clutching a cane.

Minuit after minuit passed, and Mr. Stiggins grew more and more egg-sited. His hart was thumping against his ribba.

“They will soon be hear!” he muttered. “And when they do come, they won't have half a chance to escape, bekwase I shall give them no quarter. On the whole, I think Master Larkins and his companions will have a sorry time of it.”

Tinkle, tinkle!

It was the school clock booming the hour of midnight.

Mr. Stiggins egg-spected to here the soft patter of footsteps on the staires. But egg-sept for the booming of the school clock and the howling of the wind, and the chirping of crickets, and the snoring of the slumbering schoolboys, no sound disturbed the sollum silence of the night.

The minuits went by, but it was too derk for Mr. Stiggins to see them.

The master of the Fourth was cold and cramped and uncomfortable, crouching at the foot of the staires. He longed to be up and doing. Why didn't Larry Larkins & Co. put in an appearence?

Still the minuits passed—five minuits, ten minuits, twenty minuits, half an hour. And there was no sign of Larry Larkins & Co.

Mr. Stiggins waited till one o'clock, by which time he was frozen stiff, and his nose was blew with cold. His feet were frost-bitten, and the only thing that was hot about him was his temper.

“I have been tricked!” he cried, rising to his feet. “That mizzerable boy Snipe has deseved me! Larkins and his friends do not intend to brake bounds at all!”

Snorting with rage and fury, Mr. Stiggins bounded up the staires, four at a time, and rushed into the Fourth Form dormitory.

Snipe happened to sleep in the bed nearest the door. Mr. Stiggins jerked his bedclothes off him, turned the slumbering sneak over, and proceeded to cane his pyjama-clad form. Snipe awoke with a wild yell.

Swish! Bang! Biff! Thud! Crash! Clatter!

A perfect avalanche of blows descended upon the unhappy sneak. His yells of anguish could be heard all over St. Jim's.

Larry Larkins & Co. woke up, and the yells of the victim were like musick in their ears.

“Snipe's catching it hot!” muttered Merry.

“Serve him jolly well right!” said Bright.

And Larry Larkins shook the dormitory with his larfter.

Mr. Stiggins continued to wheel the cane with grate vigger.

“Yow-ow-ow! What are you licking me for, sir?” wailed Snipe.

“You brought me on a wild-duck chase—a fool's errand!” snorted Mr. Stiggins. “You led me to beleieve that three boys were going to brake bounds at midnight, and they have not left their beds! Take that—and that—and that—and that—and that—and that!”

Swish! Crash! Plonk! Wallop!

Poor old Snipe had a terribul time. What was left of him was conveyed to the sanny, where he lay for many days in a crittical condition. And when at last he came down, covered in bandages from head to foot, he registered a sollum vow that he would never, never sneak any more.

I hope the sneaks of Greyfriars will read this story and prophet by it!

THE END.

—the “boys” on the Sark!

THE ART OF SNEAKING!



By Sidney Snoop.

"SNEAK not to live, but live to sneak." That is my motto.

I can claim the proud distinction of being one of the biggest sneaks in the Greyfriars Remove. I was trained by Skinner, who is the principal of the School of Sneaks.

Some people despise sneaks, but, of course, this is all wrong. A sneak is the most generous fellow alive, because he is continually "giving things away"!

Now, in order to be a successful sneak, you must first learn how to spy and find out what is going on.

Keep a constant watch on your school-fellows. Shadow them and spy upon them wherever they go. Then, when you hear them plotting a deep dark plot to blow up the school with gunpowder, or kidnap the Head, or steal the school trophies, you should run with all speed to your Form master, and tell him what is going on. If he is a decent sort he will give you a handsome reward, and pat you on the back, and say: "My dear boy, you have saved the school!" or "You have saved the Head's life!" If he is a rotter he will kick you out of his study, and say: "How dare you come running to me with tales!"

There are some fellows it is very unwise to sneak about. Bolsover major, for instance.

When I was a new kid Bolsover came up to me in the Close, and asked me the usual string of questions that a new boy gets bombarded with. "How old are you?" "Where did you get those socks?" "Which prison is your pater in?" "Are you any good at blow-football?" and so on. I refused to satisfy Bolsover's curiosity, whereupon he picked me up between his thumb and forefinger, as a giant might pick up a kitten, and carried me to the school fountain and ducked me.

"I'll tell of you!" I spluttered.

"Tell away!" growled Bolsover.

I sped away to Mr. Quelch's study, whimpering and snivelling.

"Please, sir, Bolsover ducked me at the fountain, sir!" I wailed. "Will you, sir, be good enough, sir, to tan his hide for him, sir?"

"Most certainly!" said Mr. Quelch, with a frown. "Send Bolsover to me at once!"

The bully of the Remove got a terrible swishing, but he took it out of me afterwards.

You must also use discretion as to which master or prefect you run to with tales. If you go to Wingate of the Sixth he'll refuse to listen to you, and toe you to the door. On the other hand, if you go to Loder or Carne, you'll always get sympathetic consideration.

You will find lots and lots of things to sneak about. In fact, a professional sneak has a very busy time. All the same, I can't advise you to take up the study of sneaking, because on the whole the sneak gets more kicks than pence, and his lot is not a happy one!

HOW WOULD YOU PUNISH SNEAKS?

Some Novel and Startling Suggestions.

BOB CHERRY:

I should revive the Pillory and the Stocks. Skinner in the pillory would be a rare spectacle, and so would Stott in the stocks! A special pillory would have to be constructed for Billy Bunter, because no ordinary pillory would stand the strain of his fourteen stone. Of course, we should collect all the old vegetables and prehistoric eggs we could lay our hands on, and pelt the precious sneaks for all we were worth. I'll wager that sneaking would soon be a thing of the past if my suggestion were adopted! (Hear, hear!—Ed.)

MARK LINLEY:

A sneak should be soundly bumped at the first offence, sent to Coventry for a week at the second, and made to run the gauntlet at the third. Then, if he still persisted in sneaking, he should be given up as a hopeless case and shunned by all decent fellows.

BILLY BUNTER:

Every time a fellow sneaks, he should be dragged by force to the tuckshopp, and compelled to eat a duzzen doe-nutts, a duzzen jam tarts, and a duzzen cream-buns. His schoolfellows should stand over him with cricket stumps and see that he does it! (Very nice, too—from Bunter's point of view!—Ed.)

TOM BROWN:

No punishment can be too severe for a sneak. If I had to sit in judgment on one of these miserable worms, I should sentence him to ninety years' penal servitude. (On his release, after all that time, everybody would shout "Beaver!"—Ed.)

DICKY NUGENT:

I don't like sneaks at all and I think they ought to get it in the neck good and proper. Why not have them hanged, drawn, and quartered? That would be a capital punishment. Failing this, why not lynch them, and then boil them in oil, and then flay them alive? (Quite a good wheeze, Dicky! But how could you flay them "alive" after they had been boiled in oil?—Ed.)

JOHNNY BULL:

I consider that masters ought to regard sneaking as a serious offence, on a par with stealing, breaking bounds, etc. The sneak should be publicly flogged, and I go so far as to say that he should be sacked from the school, if he is an incurable sneak. But I think it would be found that the birch-rod would be a powerful deterrent to sneaking. (Rather drastic, Johnny, but quite sound. Sneaking is viewed far too leniently by the majority of people.—Ed.)

WILLIAM GOSLING:

Wot I says is this here—a sneak should be horsewhipped through the Close. And if a public executioner is wanted, then I'm the man for the job! (Bravo, Gossy!—Ed.)

Fun and mirth every Monday!

WUN LUNG'S WARNING!



By Himself.

When a fellow sneakee,
Why, my course is plain;
His nose I tweekee tweekee
Till he dance with pain!

If he run to Capper,
Or tellee tales to Prout,
Me hit him on the napper
And lay the rotter out!

If he go to Loder,
To get me in disgrace,
Or put me in bad odour,
Me pulverise his face!

Sneaky, stealthy Skinner
Tellee Quelch lies;
Said me stole his dinner,
So me blackee eyes!

Sneaky Sidney Snoopey
Tellee tales as well;
Put him through the hoopoes,
Made him dance and yell!

Cunning, crafty Stottee
Also play the sneak;
So his nose I dottee,
And he squeakee-squeak!

Ll'l Wun Lung no likee
Boys who tellee tales;
And he strikee-strikee,
Hear their mournful wails!

Other sneaks, take warning!
Mark these words of mine,
Or bumps will be adorning
Those thick heads of thine!

Wun Lung is a chappee
Who can do ju-jitsu;
You will not be happy
If he throws or hits you!

Those who sneakee-sneakee,
Take these words to heart;
Tell no tales to "beakee,"
Or me make you smart!

**SPECIAL
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THE SUPREME SACRIFICE!

(Continued from page 12.)

"What do you mean?" said Harry. "Did Skinner—"

Stott told him the details with trembling voice.

"And where is Skinner now?" demanded Harry at last.

"I don't know—unless—" Stott paused, and his face paled. He remembered all of a sudden Skinner's threats, and he guessed their meaning. "Gad, I believe he's gone to Ponsonby—to tell the rotter what he's learned. That's it! He's gone to tell Pon what my brother's going to do. He'll tell him about the moneylender, and then—"

He broke off and covered his face with his hands.

"Moneylender?" echoed Harry. "What on earth do you mean?"

In a low tone Stott told them of his brother's intention, and of how Skinner must have heard Clifford express the fear that it would get to the ears of the manager.

The chums grasped the significance of this in a flash.

"He'd do it, too—like a shot!" breathed Harry. "Look here, Stott, there's just time to catch the post. You must warn your brother—tell him to do nothing yet. My hat! What a shame it's had to come to that! But write, for goodness' sake! That reptile Ponsonby will do it, sure as fate. Quick!"

Wharton fairly pushed Stott towards the School House. The wretched junior went up the steps and hurried to his study. Snoop was out. He entered, lit the gas, and drew pen and paper towards him.

Then he paused.

What if he did write? What if he did warn his brother? Clifford would not dare to risk the sack—he would not get the money. What would happen then?

Stott rose and paced the study restlessly.

"I won't do it!" he muttered at last, shivering. "I daren't do it! I'm not going to risk a flogging. I'd rather have to leave than that. And perhaps Pon won't tell the manager. Perhaps Skinner hasn't even gone to him. And in any case, Cliff can easily get another job. It's his own fault. It's all happened through him coming here. I'm hanged if I'll write!"

Nor did he. Stott contrived to dodge both Wharton and Skinner that evening. In the dormitory Harry Wharton came up to him.

"Have you sent it, Stott?" he whispered. "The letter, I mean?"

"Yes; I posted it. It's gone all right," answered Stott.

And with that lie the wretched, worthless young coward climbed into bed and made himself comfortable. He was safe!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.**Black Despair!****"BOTHER!"**

It was Mr. Quelch who made that exclamation in a tone of annoyance. It was a little after tea-time at Greyfriars on the following day, and the master of the Remove was taking advantage of a quiet hour to put in some work on his famous "History of Greyfriars." He had been engrossed in

his task, when the sudden clamour of the telephone-bell on his desk had caused him to give vent to that expressive word, "BOTHER!"

Mr. Quelch loved his task, and he detested the telephone. He grabbed and almost bellowed into it:

"Hallo! What is it?"

"Is that Mr. Quelch speaking?" came a faint voice.

"It is Mr. Quelch. Who is—"

"Oh, good! I want to make a report to you with regard to that fire on Farmer Jason's land yesterday. Can you hear me?"

"I can hear you—yes!" snapped Mr. Quelch testily. "But, really, I know nothing of any fire on Mr. Jason's land, neither do I see what concern it is of mine, or the school's. Who is that speaking?"

"That doesn't matter, sir. And the fire does concern you—very much so. It was the burning of a haystack, and it was caused by one of the boys in your Form—William Stott."

"What?"

"Just so. Stott did it! He was caught by Farmer Jason's son, smoking, behind the stack just previous to the fire. If you will inquire at the farm, Mr. Quelch, you will find my statements are true."

"Do—do you actually mean to—"

Mr. Quelch stopped speaking. There was little use in saying more, for the person at the other end had rung off. Apparently he had said all he desired to say.

The Remove master jammed the receiver on the rest and frowned angrily. Mr. Quelch did not like anonymous messages.

"It is possibly a hoax," he mused grimly. "But the message was undoubtedly sent by someone who has a grudge against Stott. I would like to horse-whip the cowardly informer."

He reflected for a moment, and then he strode to the door and passed out. Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, happened to be passing, and Mr. Quelch motioned to him.

"One moment, Wingate. Do you happen to know if there was a fire on Farmer Jason's property yesterday?" he queried.

Wingate looked surprised.

"Why, yes, I believe so—a haystack."

BOXING MADE EASY *by* Bombardier Billy Wells



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he said. "I did not see it. I was at Highcliffe with the team. But I've heard the fellow's mention it."

"Ah! And you have no idea, I suppose, how the fire originated?"

"No, sir," exclaimed the astonished Wingate.

Mr. Quelch's face set grimly.

"Very well. I have been informed by an unknown person on the telephone, Wingate, that the fire was caused by one of my boys—Stott of the Remove. I wonder if you would mind very much running over to the farm and making discreet inquiries? It is, of course, my duty to see into the matter."

"Of course, sir. Yes, I will bike over at once. It won't take me long," assented Wingate.

And a moment later Wingate made his way to the cycle shed, leaving Mr. Quelch to return to his room. It was twenty minutes before Wingate came back, and he made straight for the Remove master's study. He was a little breathless and rather excited.

"It was quite true, sir," he said, in response to Mr. Quelch's questioning look. "Stott was found smoking a cigarette behind the stack just before the fire. Mr. Jason refused to discuss the matter at first. He said he had no wish to get Stott into trouble now, as someone—Stott's brother, I believe—had undertaken to pay for the damage."

And Wingate told in detail of his interview with the farmer. Mr. Quelch's brow was dark when he had finished.

"Very well, Wingate. And thank you very much," he said at last. "The matter is serious. Will you kindly send Stott to me."

Wingate left the room, and it was a shivering and apprehensive Stott who presented himself before the Remove master some moments later.

"Stott," began Mr. Quelch, "I wish you to tell me all you know concerning the fire which took place at Mr. Jason's farm yesterday. I have received a communication from someone unknown, as yet, stating that you were responsible for the fire. Well?"

Stott went white to the lips. He was staggered. He had expected trouble, but not this.

"I—I—I don't know anything about the fire, sir," he stammered.

Mr. Quelch gave him a searching look.

"Be careful, Stott," he warned gravely. "It will be best for you to tell the truth about this. I have already made inquiries of the farmer, who states that his son caught you smoking behind the stack just previous to the fire."

"It—it's a lie!" muttered Stott fiercely. "He caught me all right. But—but I wasn't smoking, sir."

"You deny it, then?"

"Yes, sir!" panted Stott desperately. Soap—Sam Jason's lying. You—you can't take that half-witted cad's word before mine, sir?"

"If I cannot take your word, Stott," said Mr. Quelch, "it is your own fault. I know you to be untruthful and deceitful. This, however, is too serious a matter for me to deal with. Dr. Locke is in Courtfield at the moment. When he returns I will lay the matter before him. You may rest assured that the matter will be thoroughly investigated. When the time comes, I strongly advise you, for your own sake, to speak the truth, Stott."

"I—I swear—"

"That will do for the present, Stott. You may go. On no account, however, are you to leave the precincts of the school."

Meet Harry Wharton & Co. at Putney Bridge—next week!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 788.

Stott stumbled blindly out of the room. His heart was thumping, and his mind chaotic. The worst had happened—the blow had fallen. And he had imagined himself safe—secure. A feeling of seething rage came over him as he thought of Ponsonby, the rascal who, in pursuance of his bitter feud and hate, had brought this ruin upon him.

Almost mechanically he got his cap and stumbled shakily towards the lighted hall-way. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were standing there. As his glance fell on Stott, Harry gave an exclamation.

"Stott! What's the matter, Stott?" he demanded. "Has—has it—"

"It's all come out, Wharton," muttered Stott through trembling lips. "That—that cad Ponsonby has blabbed—he's given me away. Quelch knows! It's all up with me!"

Wharton's face clouded. He was stunned by the hopeless misery in the wretched junior's face.

"I—I'm sorry, Stott," he said. "But—here, where—"

But Stott did not wait. He passed on down the steps into the dark quad. He wanted to be alone. In a short time, he knew, he would be before the Head. And he dreaded the ordeal before him. He dreaded still more the certain reckoning to follow.

"I—I won't be flogged!" he muttered. "I couldn't stand it. I'll run away first, hanged if I won't. I'm sick of the place, anyhow. If I could only see Cliff—he would help me. He could plead with the Head, anyway."

He paced the quad restlessly, and the thought gained strength.

"I'll do it!" he breathed with sudden decision. "If he won't do anything to save me, then—then I'll bolt. I won't be—"

He turned abruptly and hurried towards the cycle shed. In a moment he had hauled his machine out and was rushing it towards the gates. In his agitation he had completely forgotten Mr. Quelch's order not to leave the school. It was already close on lock-up, but he gave that not a thought.

In a few moments he was riding hard for Courtfield. Over the dark fields a white, wintry mist was falling like an icy shroud. The bitter chill of it struck through his clothes, and seemed to enter his very bones. But he rode hard, scarcely noticing the cold, and as he went on the exercise warmed him somewhat.

He arrived at last in Courtfield, panting and exhausted, and made straight for the little street of villas where Clifford had his room. He knocked on the door, and the landlady, a big, motherly sort of woman, opened the door.

"Oh, it's you, sir," she said, recognising the junior. "Come inside. Your brother is ill, I'm afraid."

"Ill?" echoed Stott. "You mean in bed?"

"No. Though he ought to be," was the grim response. "It's sheer overwork, that's what's the matter with him, sir. As I say, he ought— But you'll be wanting to see him?"

She led the way up a narrow flight of stairs, and stopped at the door of Clifford's bed-sitting room. But before she could knock, Stott, with a muttered word, had pushed past her, and opening the door, he entered.

Then he stopped. Clifford was seated at the table. Before him was a type writer and a scattered pile of manuscript. But he was not working. His arms were on the table and his head sunk upon them.

At first glance Stott thought he was

asleep. He stepped forward, and as he did so his brother jumped up with a start.

"Oh, it—it's you, Bill," he faltered. "I—I— But what has happened? What is the matter?"

Clifford Stott's face was haggard. His eyes were hollowed and tired-looking. He looked at his young brother's white, miserable face in alarm.

But Stott scarcely noticed his distress, or the obvious signs of illness. He was thinking only of himself—of his own troubles.

"Cliff!" he burst out tremulously. "I'm done! That beast Ponsonby has blabbed. He's reported that fire affair to Quelch."

"What?"

"It's true. He got to know all about it, and he's told, to get his own back," groaned Stott. "I've already been up before Quelch, and I've got to go before the Head. I'm done."

Clifford reeled.

"Then—then what are you doing here? Why have you come, Bill?" he muttered in a low tone. "You—you haven't run away?"

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"No; not yet," said Stott with a bitter laugh. "But I will—I will before I'll be flogged. I won't be flogged. I—I couldn't stand it, Cliff. I won't stand it."

His words ended passionately, and his brother gripped his arm gently.

"Steady on, kid," he said, though his own voice was unsteady. "What do you mean? A flogging! You—you should be thankful it's no worse. It might be worse. You might be expelled."

"Thankful!" echoed Stott, his voice rising hysterically. "That's just what you would say. You haven't to go through it. What do you care if I am flogged? But I tell you I won't. You've got to help me, to see the Head for me. If you don't, I swear I shall bolt. I'm sick of the beastly place, anyway, and I'll be glad to go."

Clifford eyed his brother sadly. Other people—at Greyfriars and elsewhere—considered the cowardly Stott a worthless young slacker, a youth eaten up with selfishness and self-indulgence. But Clifford only saw a weak and wayward young brother, a boy to be helped and defended.

"Don't talk like that, youngster," he said quietly and patiently. "You're unstrung, you're not yourself. What can I do to prevent your being flogged? You know I would do anything if I could. And as for your being glad to go—I'm

afraid you will now have to leave Greyfriars in any case."

"What do you mean?" gasped Stott. "You—you don't mean that—that you've been—"

"Yes, I've been sacked," said Clifford, his voice husky. "I've been sacked in disgrace. That chap Ponsonby has also done me down. As I promised you, I saw the—the moneylenders this morning, and—and I got the money. This afternoon the manager called me into his private office. He—he charged me with having dealings with moneylenders. I could not deny it. And now—you! I don't think you need fear a flogging; I'm afraid it will be expulsion for you. It's the end of everything. I'm ruined, and you—"

His voice broke. He dropped into the chair again, and hid his face in his arms. His shoulders shook with dry sobs. The disgrace, the loss of his job, had been bad enough for the hapless Clifford. But this last crushing blow broke his hard-earned courage completely.

Stott stood as if turned to stone. He had never before seen his brother give way to tears, and the sight stunned him. He stared for a moment at the bowed figure at the table, and then, quite suddenly, a queer revulsion of feeling overtook him.

In a blinding flash he saw everything in its true light; he saw himself as he really was. And the sight filled him with self-loathing.

It was all his fault; he saw it now—his cowardice, his vile snobbishness, his selfish pride and wicked folly. The bitter, remorseful tears rushed unchecked to his eyes.

He rushed impulsively to his brother and placed a trembling arm round his shaking shoulders.

"Listen, Cliff," he cried, almost frantic, hardly knowing what he said. "Don't do that. I don't care what happens to me now. I'm a selfish brute, and I don't deserve your help. Oh, what can I do? I'll run away, I'll be a burden to you no longer. I'll—I'll—"

His voice broke off hysterically. He gazed wildly around him, and then, beside himself with remorse and despair, he grasped his cap and ran from the room.

The slamming of the door roused his brother abruptly. He looked up dazedly, and then leapt to his feet. He took two steps towards the door, put his hands suddenly to his head, and then pitched to the floor like a log.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Too Late!

CLIFFORD STOTT opened his eyes again to find his landlady and her husband leaning anxiously over him. He was lying on the bed, and his head was throbbing madly.

"What—what has happened?" he muttered dazedly. "I seemed to go queer, and—"

"You must have fainted," said the landlady gently. "I heard you fall, and rushed upstairs. I found you unconscious on the floor, and my husband here helped me to lift you on to the bed. You've been working too hard, Mr. Stott. Shall my husband go for the doctor, or do you—"

"No, no! I feel better now, thanks," muttered Clifford. He passed his hand dazedly over his head. "Did—did you see my brother go out just now, Mrs. Mason?"

"No. The kitchen door was closed, and

The schooldays of your popular author, Frank Richards—

he must have let himself out," replied Mrs. Mason with a strange look. "Why—"

"It's all right. I only wondered. You can leave me now. I'll be as right as rain presently."

The lady hesitated, and then, after advising Clifford to get to bed, she reluctantly left the room with her husband.

After they had gone, Clifford lay motionless for some moments. Then he slipped from the bed, his face anxious and agitated. He had scarcely heard his brother's parting words; but he was afraid—strangely afraid.

He stood swaying weakly for a moment, and then, with a resolute look on his face, he took his hat, and, softly descending the stairs, left the house. He shivered violently as the cold night air struck through him.

Then he caught his breath. Leaning against the railings of the garden was a bike, with lamps still burning. It was his brother's bike. The sight of it sent a sick feeling of dread sweeping over him.

He looked round him hopelessly. The fog was thick in the street, and only a couple of flickering lamps were visible. Even as he stood, however, several vague figures loomed before him. Then came an exclamation.

The figures stopped, and next instant Clifford found himself staring into the face of Harry Wharton. Behind Harry were Bob Cherry, Nugent, Singh, Bull, and, lastly, Mr. Quelch—though Clifford did not recognise him.

"We were just coming to see you, Mr. Stott," said Harry gravely. "This is Stott's brother, sir," he added, turning to Mr. Quelch.

The Remove master did not waste time in a needless introduction.

"We are looking for your brother," he said quietly. "Do you know what has become of him? He is missing from school."

Clifford Stott nodded. He had rather expected this, though hardly so soon. He did not know of Mr. Quelch's order to Stott that on no account was he to leave the school, and that when time passed and the boy did not return the Remove master had become alarmed, though even now Mr. Quelch hardly believed he had actually run away. He had sent for Wharton, as head boy in the Remove, and it had been Wharton's suggestion that Stott had gone to his brother. Wharton had then offered to go over to Courtfield, and with his chums' aid to bring Stott back if necessary. And at the last moment Mr. Quelch had decided to accompany them.

He was soon to feel thankful he had done so.

"He—he has been here," said Clifford dully. "But he left some ten or more minutes ago. I had—had hoped that he had gone back to school, but—here is his bike. I—I am afraid he has—has run away."

Mr. Quelch's stern features went grim.

"You have no idea what his plans are—which direction he would be likely to take?"

"No; unless—unless he intends to make for home. Yes, I believe he would do that; he would make for London," breathed Clifford suddenly.

"But—but we have already made inquiries at both Friardale and Courtfield stations on our way here," said Mr. Quelch. "If he had made for Courtfield Junction we should doubtless have met him."

Harry Wharton gave a sudden start.

"I don't think he would do that, sir," he said quietly. "He would guess that Courtfield Junction would be the first place inquiries would be made at. It's more possible that he has gone on to Wapshot Station. Don't you think so, sir?"

"That is a very sound argument, Wharton," said Mr. Quelch. "And yet, why should he have left his machine behind?"

"He was much agitated—hysterical, when he left me," interposed Clifford. "He—he would not think—he was not himself. But Wapshot—that is the next station on the main London line—"

"Yes; it is no great distance," said Mr. Quelch. "But—but the road is rough—it is across Wapshot Common. On a night like this, in this bitter fog, it would be a terrible tramp. If the wretched boy has attempted to—"

"I must follow him—I must!" muttered Clifford suddenly. "If harm should—"

"But—but—"

Clifford grasped the bike unheeding, and ran it out into the road. He mounted it somehow, wobbled unsteadily, and then he rode way into the enveloping fog.

"We should have stopped him," murmured Mr. Quelch, in alarm. "The fellow is obviously ill—he is in no fit state to be out a night like this. Come, boys, we must follow."

They tramped away into the clinging fog. Clifford Stott's lights had already vanished from sight. Not that he was riding hard—it was impossible to do that in the blinding mist. Nor had he the

strength to ride hard. Not until he was in the saddle did he realise how weak and ill he felt. A dozen times in the first few yards he swayed and almost went over.

But each time he clenched his chattering teeth, and stuck to his guns with desperate resolution. It was extremely difficult to see his way, but the glimmering street lamps were some guide, and he had a fairly clear idea in which direction the station lay. He guessed that the Wapshot road ran past the station.

He was right there. But his real difficulties only commenced when he had passed Courtfield Station. There the street lamps ended, likewise the houses. And after riding for some moments, the hedges fell away, too, and the road became rough and hard to discern.

But he knew he was right now. He was on Wapshot Common. The deathly silence, the eerie loneliness and utter desolation around him told him that. The mist grew thicker and thicker. It swept round him in a drenching, blinding cloud. His eyes were clogged with icy wetness, and his head swam dizzily. The bitter chill of the drenching mist seemed to clutch like an icy hand at his vitals.

There came a sudden violent jolt—he felt himself falling. He went over with a hollow crash and lay where he had fallen, scarcely feeling the impact as he struck the ground.

But the sudden shock had roused him from his dream-like trance. He lay motionless for a moment, and then he staggered to his feet. He stooped and picked up his machine, and tried to wheel it. The right pedal jammed against the



With a last supreme effort Clifford dragged himself over the still form of his brother and wrapped his arms around him, lending him the warmth of his own body. Vainly he strove against the miasma that was stealing over him. Then the chill fog, the bitter cold—everything faded away. And thus the searchers found them. (See Chapter 9.)

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forks. The pedal crank was twisted—the bike was useless.

He took the front lamp from the bracket and lighted it again. Then he gazed dazedly about him. He knew what had happened now. He had wandered from the road—when, he knew not—and his wheel had struck something—a hummock or a stone.

He stared hopelessly about him for fully a minute. Then he began to stumble away. He must keep going—he must search for the road—for his brother.

How long he stumbled on Clifford never knew. He was lost to his surroundings most of the time. But he knew he was lost—hopelessly lost. And then, suddenly, his wandering came to a dramatic end.

He stumbled over something—something lying in a limp heap on the ground—and once again he went headlong. The lamp flew from his nerveless grasp, crashed to earth some yards away, and went out, and the fog descended upon him like a blanket.

But he had heard a groan—a faint groan of pain—from the bundle lying at his feet, and he knew that his quest was ended. His heart leaped with hope and joy.

The fall had half-stunned him; but he did not feel or think of his own pains—his hurts. In a moment he was stooping over the still form, shaking it frantically.

"Bill—I've found you then, Bill!" he

choked, half-sobbing with deep thankfulness. "Wake up, Bill—speak!"

The eyes in the ashen face flickered open, and a deep groan came from the stiff lips of the hapless runaway.

"Who—What's the matter? I—I—Where am I? Oh!" Stott's words ended in a moan, as though he had remembered. "It—it was awful! Wandered off the track! Hurt my ankle—"

His mumbling voice trailed off into a whimpering wail.

"But—but it's me—your brother!" panted Clifford, half-frantic with fear. "Wake up, Bill—rouse yourself. If you don't, you'll die from exposure! Wake up!"

Feebly Stott tried to push his brother's hands away.

"Leave me alone!" he mumbled. "I—I don't care! Go away! I don't—"

His voice ended. He had lapsed into unconsciousness.

Clifford gave a bitter groan. With a nameless fear clutching at his heart, he chafed his brother's stiff, chilled hands and face. Then suddenly he took off his own jacket and wrapped it swiftly round the limp form of his brother.

Then, shaking with cold, he stood up in his shirt-sleeves, and blinked through dimmed, hopeless eyes around him. Nothing was to be seen—nothing but the still, ghastly fog.

With a sob of hopeless despair he stooped and—how he never knew—lifted the unconscious form in his arms. Then

he staggered away, his brain reeling, his body shivering as with the ague, hardly conscious from fatigue and utter exhaustion, deep sobs shaking him.

But he did not get far. The weakness of his body overcame the stoutness of his heart. He swayed suddenly, stumbled to his knees and sank with his burden to the ground.

He lay there motionless. His senses were leaving him—he knew it. With a last mighty effort he dragged himself over the still form of his brother, and wrapped his arms about him, lending him the warmth of his own body. Vainly he strove against the miasma that was stealing over him. Then the chill fog, the bitter cold—everything faded away.

And thus the searchers found them—Clifford, still hugging his brother in that devoted last effort to keep the deadly chill from the junior's body. Though he had not known it, Clifford had collapsed within half a dozen yards of his disabled bike; within a dozen yards of the road. He had travelled in a circle, to return to the spot he had started from.

It was Bob Cherry who found them. The road, little more than a cart track, took a sudden turn at that spot, and, like the brothers, the Famous Five and Mr. Quelch had wandered off the track, and Bob Cherry's torch had picked out the still forms on the ground.

In a flash greatcoats were off and wrapped round the chilled figures. Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull rushed away for

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help. By a stroke of luck a motorist was met—a motorist who proved to be a doctor returning from a late visit to a patient.

Stott was very soon brought round. But when the doctor made a brief examination of his brother, he shook his head gravely. Under his quick orders, the brothers were wrapped in rugs and placed in the car. Well within an hour, after an anxious drive through the fog, Greyfriars was reached, and the sanatorium staff aroused.

Then, and not until then, having done all they could, did Mr. Quelch and the juniors retire.

That is nearly all the story. Would that there were no more. But a chronicler must tell all.

Within a week Stott was out and about, little the worse from his bitter experience. But his brother did not get up. His father was wired for. He came, bringing good news, but news which came too late to be of help to Clifford Stott. A distant relative had taken Mr. Stott into partnership, and all their money troubles were over.

Across the dark Close, in the window of the sunny, night after night the juniors saw the twinkling light, and waited anxiously for the shadow which had descended upon Greyfriars to rise.

But it was not to be.

And then, one day, Harry Wharton and his chums were called out during morning lessons. Clifford Stott had expressed a wish to see them. They entered the sick chamber on tiptoe, subdued and grave. As they looked upon the thin, wasted features, their eyes dimmed, and they felt shocked beyond measure.

The patient greeted them with a pitifully brave smile.

"I only wanted to say good-bye, you fellows," he said weakly. "And to thank you for what you've—you've done—and tried to do. I—I—"

His voice failed him, and he sank back, closing his eyes. Harry Wharton pressed the thin hand. He could not speak. The nurse motioned them to go.

They crept out, with lumps in their throats, their eyes filled with tears. As they passed out, William Stott went in. His eyes were red, and his face like marble.

That was the last they saw of Clifford Stott. That same night, just after tea, they heard the news; and as they looked across at the dimmed light in the sunny window, queer lumps came to their throats.

Stott's brother had fought his last fight.

Stott was away from Greyfriars for a week after it was all over. Nothing was said to him about the fire affair by Dr. Locke or anyone else. His father had paid the fifty pounds, and the matter was closed.

Stott came back, very quiet, very subdued. His sulkiness, his unpleasant characteristics seemed to have vanished.

But whether it will be a lasting lesson or not—whether he will profit by the lesson, by his brother's example—or whether his weak, wayward nature will prove too strong for him, only time can show.

THE END.

(There is another brilliant story from the pen of Frank Richards next week, entitled "Billy Bunter's Boat-race Party!"—a yarn full of punch and humour. Order next Monday's MAGNET right now!)

THE GREYFRIARS PARLIAMENT!

(Continued from page 2.)

The Speaker: "Reader AGNES ALLEN, 12, Farfield Terrace, Heaton, Bradford, says: 'I read, a week back, that Reader Annie Taylor said that boys should do housework. I quite agree with this statement. But how about helping the girls on with their games? You ought to be more reasonable. The girls have made footer popular by playing themselves, so why don't you play alongside the girls? Hockey you play; but Greyfriars ought to take more interest. For instance, Wharton & Co. give all their time to trying to beat Highcliffe and St. Jim's. Play up for the girls for once, as all my friends and lots of other girls say you might do. You ought to be proud of the chance. Of course, you can leave out Skinner, Snoop, and Bunter. They would spoil the whole affair. So let the rallyfulness be terrific, my esteemed Captain Wharton.'"

Mr. Bob Cherry: "The only thing to be said here is that we are always willing to oblige."

The Speaker: "Agreed. I am a bit in doubt as to the next item on our programme. Mr. Bunter might not like it."

Mr. Bunter: "Don't mind me! I am used to personalities and sculleryless abuse. Basement assertions never trouble me."

The Speaker: "There is nothing scurrilous at all. To my thinking, good feeling is shown here. But let's get to facts."

"Reader WINIFRED G. DUDLEY, 145, George Street, West Brookfields, Birmingham, says: 'Why not have a jumble sale in aid of Bunter? He seems to be in a state of chronic impecuniosity. In spite of his failings, he is a valuable asset to his renowned school. Personally, I have been greatly entertained by reading of his exploits. I feel sure the Cliff House girls would help the sale. Coker might be able to contribute some cycle parts. In this way a fund could be started to supply the Bunter needs, thus protecting other fellows from his begging. Is it a go?'"

Mr. Bunter was understood to say there was something in it.

Lord Mauleverer: "Something—not much."

Mr. Bunter: "I consider that a Bunter Fund might meet the case, though most of you chaps are so stingy."

The Speaker: "As spring has come—"

Mr. Bunter: "If we are going to hear funny things about the spring—"

The Speaker: "We are not—unless you say them. The subject is serious enough in all conscience."

Mr. Bunter: "Whose conscience?"

Mr. Bob Cherry: "Not yours, my fat tulip! You haven't got one."

"Mr. Bunter: "I am fed up with the spring."

The Nabob of Bhanipur: "Wonders will neverfully cease. The ludicrous Bunter is fedfully up."

The Speaker: "We had better get to business. Reader R. GIBSON, 97, Empress Road, Bevois Valley, Southampton, says, 'To my mind there is nothing better than a day away from the town, into the country fields and lanes, far away from the noise and the traffic, and the hooting of the sirens from the docks. Ever since I can remember, I always picture the happy times I have spent roaming through the lanes, or bathing in some shallow stream. It is a good cure for the blues. My advice to anyone, whether old or young, who begins to feel the lack of fresh air, is to slip away quietly, or with a friend, if possible, and roam the countryside.'"

"For instance, a boy who is working will complain that he has no time to enjoy himself except holidays, when all is in too much of a hurry to think about things. Well, my idea is this. If a boy, or anyone else, makes up his mind to do a thing, let him do it. Don't be put off by the least obstacle. He must plan things beforehand, so that things will fit in smoothly, and when the time comes have everything ready. I believe Harry Wharton could explain what I mean, because he has had some camp experience."

"I believe in the saying that fresh air is a better tonic than medicines. The person who intends to do some camping this summer will find my words come true. He will come back as brown as a berry, and feeling as though he could push a tramcar over. Get as light an equipment as possible. You don't want to get a hump on your back."

Mr. Frank Nugent: "Hear, hear! That hits it!"

The Nabob: "Reader Gibson has suggestfully struck the giddy caper."

Mr. Bunter: "As for me, I would clear off now and roam the lanes if you chaps of the Remove were not so lazy. Last time I helped you with a camping trip you left me to do the work."

Mr. Bob Cherry: "The porpoise means that time when, in France, he cleared off to play at the casino—where he lost all our cash. He would!"

The Speaker: "I am thankful to say that Reader Gibson keeps to the point. His idea is sound all through. A spell of the country beats anything. I do happen to know something about camping, but when Bunter talks of us leaving the bulk of the work to him, I must differ. If I remember rightly, Bunter cooked a couple of stews, then grew tired. He declined to wash up, and ended by leaving us all in the lurch, and so gravely imperilling the success of the tour. But Reader Gibson opened with a reference to the simple country walk."

Mr. Bunter: "He calls it a roam—when you are roaming in the gloaming."

The Speaker: "Let Bunter keep his wit and his lyrics for the next comic number of his 'Weekly.' I was going to say that the half-holiday ramble is an excellent stunt."

The house adjourned at a late hour.

Another magnificent Greyfriars yarn next Monday!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 788.



THE object of this dictionary is to explain in simple language the meaning of the technical terms or expressions used in connection with electricity and wireless telephony.

STATIC INDUCTION.—It has been observed that two charged bodies attract or repel one another. Now let us consider the effect on an uncharged conductor when it is brought near to a charged body.

In the accompanying illustration, "A" is a charged glass ball, and "BC" is a metal conductor uncharged. Both ball and conductor are supported by glass rods to prevent the escape of electricity to "earth," and "b" and "c" are two small pith balls hung on the ends of the conductor.

When the charged glass ball "A" is moved near to the conductor "BC" a charge of electricity is induced on the surface of the conductor, both ends of which will attract small pieces of paper. As the glass ball is moved nearer, the pith balls are repelled at both ends with greater and still greater force, thus demonstrating that both ends of the conductor are in an electrified state. It will also be found that this state only applies to the ends, because the middle region of the conductor shows no signs of electrification.

Further investigation will show that the charges at each end are of opposite kinds, the charge at the end nearest to the positively charged ball being a negative charge, and the farther end will be a positive charge. Both charges will be equal.

As the glass ball is moved farther and farther away from the conductor, the induced charge will become weaker and weaker, until it finally disappears altogether, when the conductor is no longer within the field of influence of the glass ball.

It was explained that electricity was supposed to be present in all things, and that bodies in an active electrical state had either more or less than their normal quantity. It was also explained that a conductor allowed electricity to flow freely through or over it. It would therefore appear that when an overcharged conductor is approached by a charged glass ball the uniform distribution of electricity is disturbed in the conductor; that because likes repel and unlikes attract, the conductor is induced into a negative state near the ball, because the electricity flows over the surface of the conductor away from the positively-charged ball, thus causing the farthest end to become positively charged.

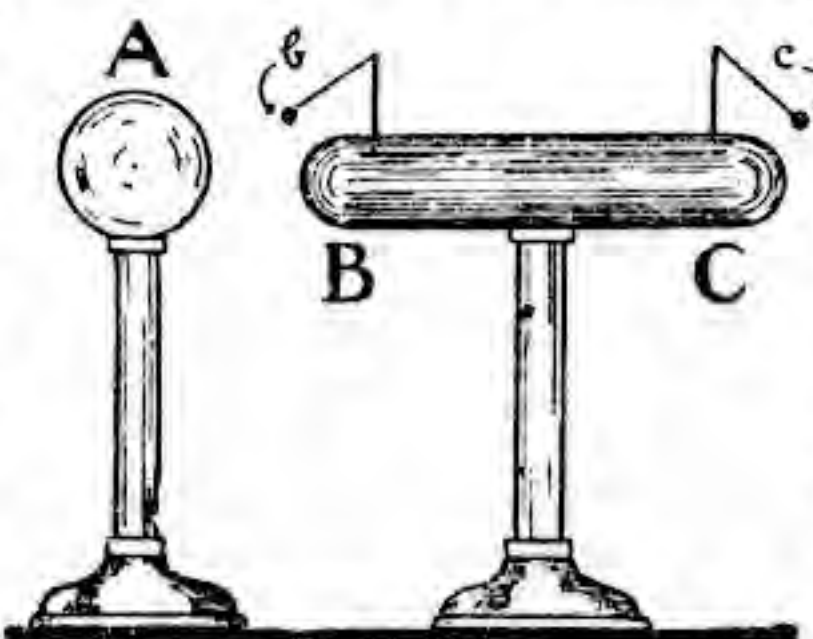
If the charged body was negatively charged it would have the same effect on the conductor, with the exception that the positive charge induced in the conductor would be nearest to the charged body, and the negative charge would be farthest away. In any case, as soon as

the conductor is removed from the field of influence of the charged body it is no longer electrified, but assumes its normal condition.

If the conductor were not supported on insulators the electricity at the end farthest from the charged body would escape to "earth," but the end nearest to the charged body would remain, being bound there by attraction.

Supposing the conductor to be made in two parts, so that it could be separated whilst under the influence of the charged body, it would then be found on removing the two halves separately from the field of influence that they would still retain their charges and would not return to normal condition, as they would have done had they been joined together.

The amount of the charge induced depends upon the amount of the charge inducing it, and also upon the distance separating the two bodies. It is also



affected by the medium across which the influence acts. Thus if the intervening space was filled with glass instead of air a better result would be obtained. In any case, however, the charge induced could not exceed the charge of the body inducing it. In most cases it is never so great, because when a heavily-charged body approaches too near the conductor the charges of opposite polarity attract each other more strongly and become so dense that a spark leaps across the intervening space, with the result that the conductor becomes permanently charged—that is, when it is removed from the field of influence it remains charged and does not return to normal.

ELECTRO-STATIC FIELD.—This is the area or range of space over which an electrified body has the power of inducing a charge in another body, no matter how small the charge may be.

INDUCTANCE CAPACITY.—It has been observed that inductance is caused by the electricity in a charged body acting across a medium, and thereby inducing a state of electricity in that body. It was stated that if glass had filled the intervening space between two bodies, instead of air, the induced charge would

have been greater. Inductance capacity is the capacity of a body or substance to permit the inductive influence of an electrified body to act across it.

DIELECTRICS.—This is the name given to substances which have inductive capacity to a large degree. All dielectrics are insulators, but all insulators are not necessarily good dielectrics. The best dielectrics, in their order of merit, are as follow: Flint glass, mica, ordinary glass, shellac, pure indiarubber, ebonite, paraffin, and air.

DIELECTRIC CAPACITY OR SPECIFIC INDUCTIVE CAPACITY.

—These terms are used to denote the inductive capacity of a substance. The following is a table of the specific inductive capacity of the dielectrics quoted above, air at ordinary pressure representing 1.

Flint glass	...	...	...	5.5	to	10.1
Mica	...	...	...	4.0	"	8.0
Ordinary glass	...	...	...	3.0	"	3.2
Shellac	...	...	...	2.7	"	3.6
Pure indiarubber	...	...	...	2.2	"	2.5
Ebonite	...	...	...	2.0	"	3.1
Paraffin	...	...	...	1.6	"	2.3
Air	...	...	...	1		

DIELECTRIC CONSTANT OR DIELECTRIC COEFFICIENT.

—These terms are synonymous, and have reference to the figures giving the specific inductive capacity of a substance.

DIELECTRIC STRENGTH.—The substance used for the dielectric must be a good insulator. The greater the insulating property of the dielectric, the greater electrical pressure it will stand without puncturing—that is, without allowing a spark to pass. The maximum voltage, electrical pressure, which may be applied to a dielectric of unit thickness without it breaking down or puncturing is called the dielectric strength.

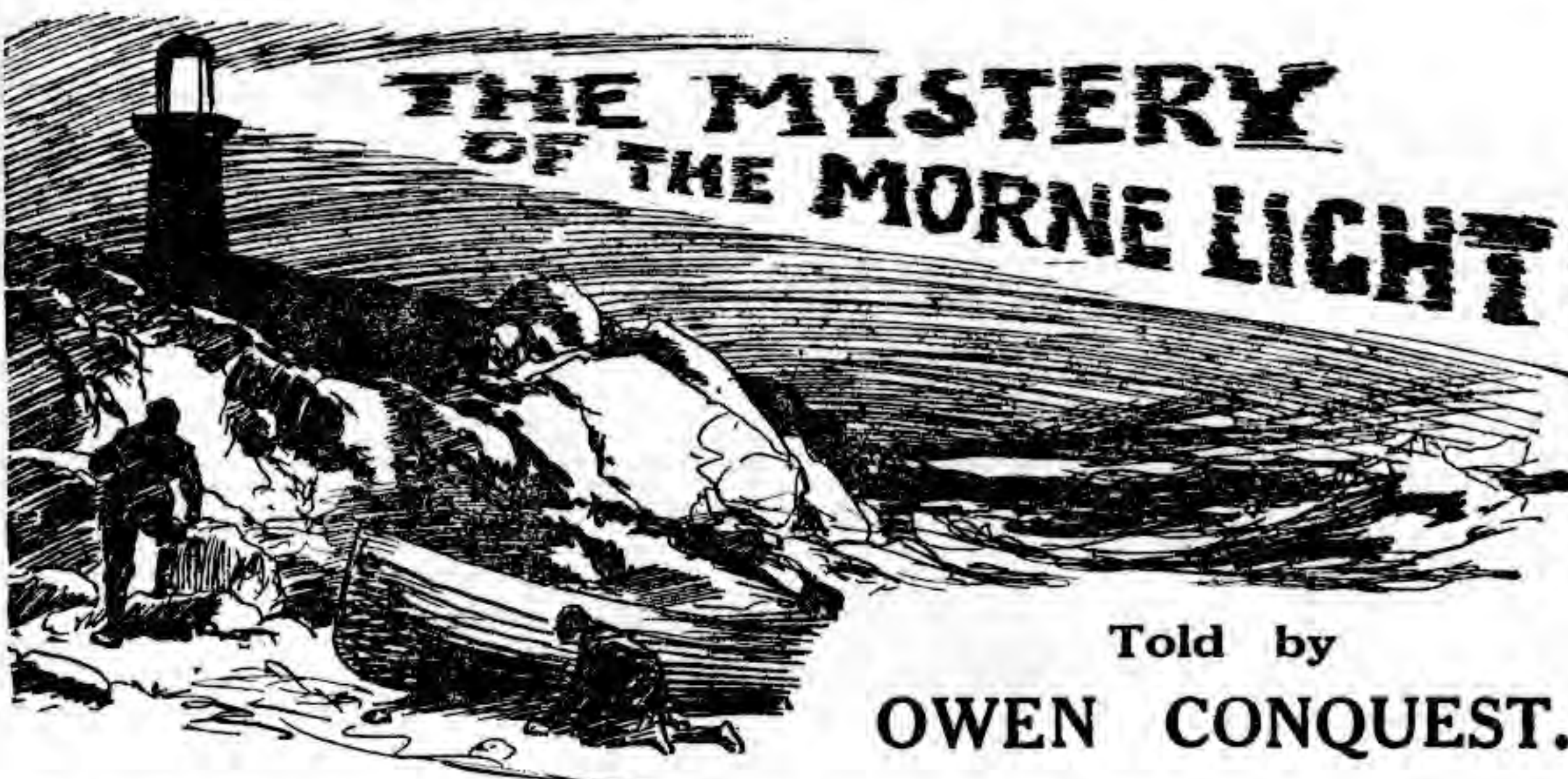
DIELECTRIC HYSTERESIS.—When a charge is induced in a body the dielectric is in a state of strain. When the body is discharged it does not always free itself entirely from this strain; if it is left alone for a short time another, though a smaller, discharge may be obtained. This is due to electric absorption, and is the cause of residual charges. This state is referred to as dielectric hysteresis.

Supposing that two plates of the same area were suspended in air at a fixed distance from each other, then if, without altering the strength of the charge or the distance between them, it was desired to increase the inductive capacity of the system by, say, three times, this could be done by inserting a sheet of ordinary glass between them, the glass being of the same thickness as the distance between the plates.

(To be continued next Monday.)

Broadcast the above feature, chums!

THE MYSTERY OF THE MORNE LIGHT!



Told by
OWEN CONQUEST.

An enthralling story of mystery and adventure staged on the Cornish Coast, featuring the world-famed sleuth, Ferrers Locke, and his assistant, Jack Drake.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Demon of Morne!

TING-a-ling-a-ling!

Without taking his cigarette from his lips, Ferrers Locke reached across his desk to the telephone and detached the receiver from its hook.

"Hallo!" he said, in a quiet, clear voice. "Yes, this is Ferrers Locke speaking!"

For a few moments he enacted the role of listener. Then, with a "Very well, I'll come," he hung up the receiver and arose from his chair. Turning to his young assistant, Jack Drake, who was seated at a table in the consulting-room attending to some secretarial work, he said:

"I have been requested to pay a call on Sir Fulgarth Sternley, my boy. I do not anticipate being away long. And, by the way, be ready to leave for Cornwall at five minutes' notice. I expect we shall soon find ourselves with a very interesting case on our hands."

Leaving the house in Baker Street, Ferrers Locke hailed a passing taxi. It was a somewhat ancient vehicle, but it got Locke to Sutton Place, Kensington, where Sir Fulgarth had his residence, without any undue delay.

The famous detective was ushered into the house by a smart-liveried flunkey. Sir Fulgarth Sternley was in the study, and he received his visitor cordially.

"I expect, Mr. Locke," he said, "you wondered why I requested you to call on me this morning?"

"No, Sir Fulgarth," replied the sleuth, with a smile. "I am not given to wondering about matters of this kind. But, as a matter of fact, I guessed in this case you wished to consult me about the affair of the Morne Light."

The baronet showed his surprise.

"You're right, Mr. Locke," he said; "though how you guessed, I cannot conceive. Everything pointed to the fact that the lighthouse-keeper, Morris, met his death by an accident, and the jury at the inquest returned a verdict of accidental death. There was nothing else in the papers, to my knowledge."

"No; but I remember that there have been other untoward occurrences at Morne. If my memory serves me, Morris is not the first man to meet a violent death there."

"Too true," said Sir Fulgarth. "The other cases occurred several years ago, however. But there has lingered an unpleasant feeling in my own mind about them."

"Tell me everything, Sir Fulgarth, and I'll try to assist you to the best of my ability."

Taking up a ruler from his desk, Sir Fulgarth crossed to a large map of the western

coast of England and Wales which hung on the wall of his study. With it he indicated a headland some little to the south of Trevoze Head, on the northerly coast of Cornwall.

"That is the situation of the Morne Lighthouse," he said. "It is exactly half a mile south of the little fishing village of Morneham. And now, with the situation of the Morne Light clearly in your mind, let me proceed to tell you the strange history of it."

Seating himself in his chair, Sir Fulgarth Sternley drummed the tips of his fingers on his desk.

"As you may know, Mr. Locke," he began, "I am the chief warden of the western coast lighthouses. The first untoward affair in connection with the Morne Light occurred when I held a lesser position than I do to-day. But I remember it very well, for it created a big stir at the time. The four-masted barque, Douglas Day, ran hard and fast aground on the Morne Rocks off the headland one night when there was a bit of mist about. At the time there was no light showing from the Morne Lighthouse. Muir, the keeper, was found lying unconscious near the unattended lantern with an empty bottle beside him. The assistant keeper was seen later in an intoxicated condition in a village some four miles away."

"Yes," murmured Locke, as the other paused; "and it was proved that Muir had been heavily drinking, too. He was tried and sentenced to prison?"

"That's right. There is not the faintest doubt that the two men were guilty of criminal neglect of the light, due to their having been drinking heavily together. Fawkes, the assistant keeper, got clear away. It is supposed he found his way to one of the Welsh ports and shipped abroad. Muir, however, was put on his trial. He protested vehemently that he had only had a small portion of drink given him by Fawkes. He claimed that his drink must have been drugged. But the medical evidence did not bear out this, and James Henry Muir was sentenced to nine months' hard labour."

"Fawkes, on the other hand, has never been apprehended from that day to this?"

"No. All I know further about that particular case is that Muir himself, after serving his sentence, went out to India. I heard from a friend of mine out there that he had struck a bad patch up on the North-West Frontier, and he may be dead now, for all I know. However, all this is not very much to the point, although I thought it best to tell you the darker history of the Morne Light from its beginning."

Locke nodded.

"Quite right," he said. "Proceed in your own way. I am keenly interested."

"Very well, then," said Sir Fulgarth. "I now come to the first real tragedy in the Morne's grim story, for, fortunately, there were no lives lost in the Douglas Day disaster."

"Five years later, a man called Miles—one of our most reliable lighthouse men—was in charge of the Morne. His assistant, returning from Morneham village one evening, found Miles lying dead on the stone steps leading up inside the lighthouse to the lantern. Miles' neck was broken, and it was supposed that he had fallen while descending the steps."

The baronet halted in his narration to pass Ferrers Locke his cigarette-case.

"And now," resumed Sir Fulgarth, "I come to that tragedy which, occurring but a few days after the death of poor Miles, created a stir throughout the length and breadth of England."

"An elderly man named Arnold had been transferred to the Morne Light. There was a new assistant—a sturdy, stout-hearted chap called Jones. But Arnold had not been on the Morne headland for more than a couple of days when he was found with a broken neck, lying close to the big lantern at the top of the lighthouse."

"Yes," murmured Locke, gazing at the other through half-closed eyes; "that was a very amazing affair. I was abroad at the time, but I can call it to mind."

"Amazing is certainly the word to describe it, Mr. Locke," said the lighthouse official. "And, by Jove, it was almost a tragedy for young Jones, too. It seemed so strange that Arnold should be found with a broken neck in a place where it would be difficult to sustain any fall, that the police suspected Jones of murder. No bruise was on the body of the lighthouse-keeper, and they suspected that Jones might have struck him with a sandbag, which would have left no mark. Luckily, Jones was able to clear himself, and the affair became an absolute impenetrable mystery."

"Except, of course, to the near-by Cornish villagers," drawled Locke.

"What do you mean?" asked Sir Fulgarth, puzzled.

"I mean that doubtless the locals were thoroughly convinced that some evil spirit or fiend had performed the foul deed."

"I understand. Yes, the folk in Morneham particularly gave their superstitious fancies full play. They claimed there was a ghostly inhabitant in the lighthouse—the Demon of Morne they called the thing!"

"No further tragedies occurred for some years?"

"No—nothing more untoward occurred at Morne until, three days ago, poor Morris

Ferrers Locke at the Boat Race—next week!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 788.

was found lying at the foot of the lighthouse with a broken neck. How he came to fall from the railed balcony which borders the top of the lighthouse outside the big lantern compartment is a mystery, though. The jury returned a verdict of suicide."

Ferrers Locke flicked the ash from his cigarette into the tray at his elbow.

"You mentioned the police at the beginning of your recital, Sir Fulgarth," he remarked. "Am I to understand they are still investigating this case of Morris' death?"

"They have been," replied the official. "The death of Morris revived all sorts of superstitious rumours in the village. At my request the police have been making a number of inquiries. But they have now notified me that there is no sign that Morris met with any foul play. The assistant keeper, Gregory, was in Morneham village at the time Morris met his end, according to the evidence. He it is who is now tending the light, with the help of a man named Mansfield. I don't wish him—or anyone else—to be imperilled. So, Mr. Locke, I have sent for you to request you to go down to Cornwall and investigate matters for me."

"That I will, with pleasure," Locke paused, and contracted his brows in thought for a few moments.

"There is one thing that strikes me as decidedly peculiar about the cases you have told me about, Sir Fulgarth. Each of these men who have met their death at Morne have died from a similar cause—a broken neck. That is not so queer in the cases of the men found on the steps and at the foot of the lighthouse, but it was very suspicious in the case of the man found near the lantern itself."

"Ay; and when I think of poor Morris, who is supposed to have fallen from the top of the lighthouse, suspicious well up within my mind which I hardly dare put into words."

"Tell me your theory, Sir Fulgarth," commanded Locke quietly.

"I—I wonder sometimes whether Morris may not have met his death before he fell. Supposing someone—something—"

"Quite so," interposed Locke. "You fear that he may have been killed by means of a sandbag or some other such death-dealing instrument and his body thrown over the balcony directly afterwards by the murderer. Now answer me this: Has anyone, to your knowledge, actually seen a stranger about the lighthouse?"

"Never."

"There is no secret approach to the lighthouse of which you are aware?"

"None."

Ferrers Locke rose to his feet. "My assistant and I will proceed to-day to Cornwall to begin our inquiries on the spot," he said. "Should I think it advisable a little later, could you arrange to transfer the present lighthousemen, and allow my assistant and myself to tend the Morne Light?"

Sir Fulgarth shook his head.

"I'm afraid that would be out of the question," he said. "It is essential that our own qualified men attend the light. But I will give you a note to Gregory, and you will be granted every facility for conducting your investigations. Police detectives have been at work there recently, and the lighthousemen and the villagers will welcome you and help you in your work."

"Thank you, Sir Fulgarth. I'll bid you au revoir, and I hope I shall soon be able to report that the mystery of the Morne Light has been solved."

Leaving the house in Sutton Place, Ferrers Locke hailed a taxi and drove rapidly back to Baker Street. Looking up a time-table, he found that there was a train due to leave Paddington for Cornwall in "twenty minutes' time. Locke, accompanied by Jack Drake, had no difficulty in catching this, and on the journey the detective gave the boy all the information at his disposal regarding the mysterious happenings on the Morne headland.

They had to change at Newton Abbott, and then went on by slow stages to Cragdale, the nearest station to Morne village. Thence they proceeded to the village itself over a rocky road in a ramshackle, jolting conveyance.

It was nine o'clock at night by the

time Locke and Drake had engaged rooms at the solitary inn. Then, having unpacked their limited supply of luggage, and had a refreshing wash and brush-up, they proceeded on foot to pay a visit to Gregory, the keeper of the lighthouse, half a mile distant. In the sleuth's breast-pocket was the letter of introduction given him by Sir Fulgarth Sternley.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Locke, as they strode along. "It does one good to drink in the salt-laden sea breezes of the Cornish coast after the smoky atmosphere of old London!"

And both found something extremely invigorating in battling their way up the rocky headland towards the gaunt form of the ill-omened lighthouse, with its steady white finger of light pointed out over the dark, tumbling waters of the Atlantic. The roar of the surf beating in upon the beach below the headland was like music to their ears after the din of traffic in the metropolis. With the fresh, clean sea wind buffeting their faces, it was hard to conceive that before them was the scene of grim and mysterious tragedies.

Reaching the lighthouse, they found, somewhat to their surprise, that the stout wooden door was ajar.

"We'll go in and announce ourselves to Gregory," said Locke. "We shall have to be careful lest he or his assistant mistakes us for intruders of fell design. Ah, here's a lantern. We may need this."

No one was in the living rooms at the base of the lighthouse, so Locke lighted the lantern. Then, followed by Drake, he began cautiously to mount the stone, spiral stairway which led upwards to the great lantern.

Step by step the two picked their way aloft between the dank grey walls. Then, half-way up, both stopped suddenly, their blood running cold in their veins as a wild howl smote upon their ears.

They looked from one to the other with wide, staring eyes.

"Gad!" gulped Drake. "What's that?"

For answer, Locke began running up the stairway. Drake followed close at his heels. What further dread thing had taken place in this grim building? That was the question that throbbed in the brain of each.

Then as they ascended they became aware that someone was coming down. A man came into view, staggering down the stone steps, his hands clutching feverishly at the walls, and his face a picture of terror.

"What is it, man—what is it?" cried Ferrers Locke.

The man halted, trembling like an aspen. "It—it's up there!" he gulped.

And with those words he came crashing down the steps in a dead faint.

Locke and Drake caught the man, and laid him gently on the lighthouse steps.

"Look to him, my boy!" cried the detective.

Drawing his revolver, he dashed madly up the steps, two at a time. By an alcove in the wall, close to the compartment which contained the great lantern of the lighthouse, lay a dark, huddled form. It was the body of Gregory, the lighthouse-keeper!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Man with the Black Scarf!

FOLLOWING the inquest held at Morne village on the unfortunate Gregory, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake were sitting in the former's room at the local inn.

The brow of the famous detective was contracted in deep thought. Seldom in his career had he felt himself up against so baffling a mystery.

"It's amazing—amazing!" he said, at last. "The jury were quite right to bring in a verdict of 'Murder against some person or persons unknown.' They could not have done otherwise on the doctor's evidence. But let

us go over in detail again exactly what we know of the case."

Before commencing, the sleuth reighted his pipe and settled himself more comfortably in his chair.

"In the first place, the medical evidence definitely established that poor Gregory had been dead half an hour before I saw the body. He had apparently broken his neck, but there were no marks that he had sustained a fall. Mansfield, the assistant keeper, was able to establish a complete alibi."

"And jolly lucky that was, too, sir!" commented Drake. "Naturally, the first suspicion fell on Mansfield, whom we met charging down those stairs that night."

"Naturally," said Locke. "But Mansfield had left the lighthouse to tend some night-fishing lines he was leaving on the beach. It was fortunate that he had some distance to go and a well-known fisherman of Morneham was with him at the time. So it was clearly established that Mansfield himself had no hand in the murder. Someone else must have entered the lighthouse in his absence."

"But we could find no trace that anyone had been there."

"No; of course, it was hopeless to expect to find footmarks on the rocks of the headland or beach. Mansfield swore, however, that he had locked the lighthouse door when he left, and that it was open on his return, which must have been a few minutes before we arrived."

"There is the chance that Gregory himself opened the door, sir."

"Yes; but I do not think he did. We must remember that he knew the dread reputation of the lighthouse. He would feel safe with the door locked, for he was aware that only Mansfield had a key. But we must not overlook the possibility of there being another key in existence which is in the possession of the scoundrel who commits these terrible crimes. It is certain that we are up against a fiend of the utmost cunning. My own theory is that the murderer lay in hiding near the lighthouse, and saw Mansfield safely out of sight. Then he unlocked the door, and crept up the stairs to fulfil his dread purpose."

Drake made a gesture almost of despair.

"But for what motive, sir?" he said. "For what possible reason could anyone seek to repeat the crime of killing the keeper of the Morne Light? Always it is the chief keeper and always the neck of the man is broken. How, goodness only knows! It takes a rope or something of the sort to break a man's neck. The criminal must be a madman!"

"A madman perhaps, my boy," said Ferrers Locke. "But there are the most curious degrees in mental disorders. Here, I think, we are up against a person whose mind is deranged only in one way. The fellow—if it is a man—suffers from one terrible obsession. Otherwise his mind may be clear-thinking and even abnormally cunning."

"Well, sir, we don't seem to have got much forrader in the case. We've made inquiries about most of the inhabitants in this district. Hitherto we've found nothing to connect any of 'em with the Morne mystery."

"That's true," admitted Locke, "though there are one or two whose past history has not been so clearly defined as I should have liked. However, we must peg away, my boy."

"But what's the next move, sir? I feel as though we've run up against a blank wall."

"Not yet, Drake. If the theory I have in mind is correct, the slayer of Gregory and the other men of the Morne Light will speedily attempt a fresh outrage. Mansfield has resigned. He said he will never enter a lighthouse again in his life. The new keeper is a Devonshire man, Jack Lewis—a fine fellow, I should say. His assistant is another good chap—George Baydon. Until to-day they have had the protection of the police, and our work has been lighter than it might have been."

"But the police seem to have cleared off now, sir."

"Yes; they have heard a rumour which has sent 'em on a wild-goose chase to Cragdale. If the Demon of Morne—as the villagers dub the murderer—is as cunning a scoundrel as I take him to be, he will be perfectly aware of all the movements of the police. From

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY—PRICE 2:

The master-sleuth averts a catastrophe!

to-day we must constitute ourselves the faithful bodyguard of the keeper of the Morne Lighthouse. No one, other than Lewis and Baydon, both of whom are above suspicion, must enter the lighthouse without our knowing it. To-night, as the police protection has been withdrawn, we will begin our vigil."

Just before dusk that day Ferrers Locke and Drake made their way to the lighthouse. They were well wrapped up, and had a thermos flask and some sandwiches. They had prepared themselves, in fact, for an all-night watch.

First they called upon Jack Lewis in his living-room, and Locke explained that they would be hovering in the vicinity of the lighthouse during the hours of darkness.

Lewis laughed, and tapped his hip-pocket.

"Pshaw! Don't you worry about me, Mr. Locke!" he said. "I don't believe in no demons nor ghosts. And I've got something here that'll settle the hash of any human being that comes trying tricks wi' me. George has got a gun, too."

"I don't think there is any danger to Baydon," said Locke. "It is you I am concerned about. Still, we've examined the lighthouse thoroughly, and it's clear there is no secret entrance to the place. Any intruder must come in by the door. And we shan't fail to see him."

It was nearly dark when the detective and Drake stepped outside again, and Lewis locked the stout door behind them.

"Now, Drake," said Ferrers Locke, "I shall remain within sight of this door. You may have a roving commission. Quietly make your way about, and imitate the cry of a night-hawk twice if you see anyone approaching."

While Locke settled himself under the lee of some rocks, Drake made his way along the headland, picking his way cautiously between gaunt boulders and bushes. The wind-swept cliffs on which the lighthouse stood were deserted.

He descended the lower end of the headland to the beach, where a dark object had caught his eye. Crawling forward, he saw it was a small open fishing-boat.

"That's queer," he muttered to himself. "That wasn't there when we arrived this evening."

The boats of the Morneham fishermen were beached in the bay farther down the coast. There seemed no object in the presence of this solitary craft so near the headland. Gradually, as the boy crept nearer, he became convinced that the boat was void of any occupant.

He thought of giving the warning night-hawk's cry, but as he prepared to do so he saw a burly form moving towards him from the base of the cliffs.

Jack Drake lay flat by the boat. He was determined to get a clear sight of the man, whoever he was, and, if possible, take him to Ferrers Locke to interview. He drew his revolver ready for instant action.

The man came closer, picking his way with cat-like tread over the shingles. Once he turned and made his way back towards the cliffs again. Then he stood stock-still, gazing up at the white finger of the Morne Light. After remaining thus for about half a minute, he retraced his steps down the beach.

During all this time the man's form had been to Drake but as a black blur in the night. All that the boy could gather was that the fellow was likely to prove a remarkably powerful customer.

As the stranger came nearer, every fibre of Drake's being was a-tingle with suppressed excitement. He saw that the man wore the coarse garb of a fisherman, and that the whole lower part of his face was wrapped about with a black scarf. The fellow's cap, moreover, was drawn down on his eyes, so it was impossible to see any portion of his features. This gave him a weird, sinister appearance in fit keeping with his stealthy manner of progression down the beach.

The man came nearer—ten yards—five yards—now his hand was on the stern of the boat. Jack Drake quivered like a crouching leopard. Then, springing to his feet, he presented his revolver dead at the stranger's breast.

"Get your hands up!"

Simultaneously with the curt command there came a gasp from the fisherman. His hands shot up—and so did one of his heavy-booted feet.

So swiftly and dexterously was the

movement performed that all Drake knew of it was that something that felt like a chunk of iron struck him under the right wrist. His revolver went hurtling over his shoulder into a ripple of surf which ran in along the boat's sides.

Drake lashed out with all his force at the other's scarf-covered face. But he had been slightly off his balance, and his fist shot harmlessly past the man's neck. Next moment the youngster was sent crashing to the pebbles by a powerful right swing that caught him full on the left temple.

Completely dazed, Jack Drake lay like a log on the beach until an incoming surf rippled across one of his hands before receding back to the ocean. This partially roused the lad.

Picking himself up, he staggered painfully along the water's edge, trying to discover the position of the boat, which was no longer on the beach. As his eyes cleared of the film which seemed to have descended over them, he saw what he sought. The boat was being tossed in the white horses of surf not ten yards out.

though the most experienced detective might well have been outwitted in similar circumstances.

He found his chief in the lee of the rocks from where the lighthouse door could be seen.

"You've seen no one, sir?" he whispered.

"No one. I heard your warning, though."

Jack Drake narrated his adventure.

"Come, don't be downhearted, my boy," murmured the famous sleuth, as his assistant finished. "You did your best, and we all bump up against snags at times. It's a pity you did not get a sight of that fellow's face. But, of course, that was impossible in the cires."

"Well, if that chap was the so-called Demon of Morne, I don't suppose he'll come miking round again to-night," said Drake somewhat dolefully.

Certainly nothing else occurred during the night, and at daybreak Locke and Drake, tired with their ceaseless vigil, returned to the little fishing village.

By making inquiries, they discovered that



As Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake ascended they became aware that someone was coming down. A moment later a man staggered down the stone steps, his hands clutching feverishly at the walls and his face a picture of terror. "What is it, man? What is it?" cried the detective, elevating the lantern he held. (See Chapter I.)

A great wave lifted it up and revealed the interior of it. The boat was empty!

"Egad!" gulped Drake. "Surely the beggar can't have been hurled out into the water!"

Propelled by a big sea, the boat came running towards him. Drake waded in and grabbed the gunwale, and hauled it as far up from the water as he could. An examination of the craft revealed that the oars were fixed with the blades in a small locker in the bow, as they had been when he had first seen the boat. Obviously, the man had pushed the boat out into the water, and had himself made his way either along the beach or up to the headland. Drake raised his head and sent two harsh cries echoing down the wind. An excellent mimic, the lad had given the warning notes of the night-hawk back to his chief.

Unable to pick up the trail of the mysterious stranger, the youngster began to pick his way up the cliffs back to Ferrers Locke. He felt somewhat sheepish over his failure,

the boat by the headland belonged to an aged fisherman named Furby, who owned two or three craft. Who had appropriated his boat from Morne Bay he did not know—and nor did anyone else. Moreover, although the sleuth and his assistant remained up all the morning, not a single clue could they discover regarding the identity of the man who had laid Drake out.

When, worn out, they turned into their beds in the inn, after lunch, the mystery of the Morne Light was as deep a mystery as ever.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Locke's Successful Stratagem!

THAT night Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake again mounted guard over the lighthouse on the headland. The detective felt that this was absolutely necessary, though he sensed that

Jack Drake is well to the fore in "The Man in the Light-Blue Vest I"

nothing would occur. But time was needed to mature a fresh plan he had evolved for trapping the perpetrator of the mysterious crimes.

This plan the detective partially explained to Drake as they strolled back to the village together.

"Hitherto, my boy," he said, "every advantage has been on the side of the unscrupulous scoundrel we have been trying to catch. We have been working very much in the dark. He, on the other hand, has known of the presence of the police while they were here, and he knows of our presence. It is of little use to leave the village and return in disguise to resume our vigil. We should have to live somewhere in this neighbourhood, and accommodation is limited. Our presence would be suspected by this unknown criminal, who is clearly as cautious as he is cunning."

"Then what do you propose to do, sir?"

"I have written to Sir Fulgarth explaining my views, and urging him to order Lewis away home for a couple of days' holiday. The old man, who lives four stations the other side of Cragdale, would be glad of the chance to be with his family. Officially, I ought not to take on a job of lighthouse-keeper, but I want to do so for at least a couple of nights. I have told Baydon about my plan. He hasn't quite so much pluck as Lewis, and is keen for me to have a greater

opportunity for removing the peril which enshrouds the Morne headland. The fact that I myself will take Lewis' place will be a secret between you, Sir Fulgarth, Baydon, and myself."

The following day brought a reply from London. Sir Fulgarth Sternley, though reluctantly, as it appeared, agreed to Locke's request. The detective was frankly pleased, and developed his plans more fully. In his breast was the hope that by strategy he might induce the mysterious criminal to attempt another crime while he himself was in the lighthouse.

On the morning of his receipt of the letter from Sir Fulgarth, the detective visited the lighthouse with Drake. Lewis received them cheerfully.

"Shan't be seeing you fellows for two days," said the lighthouse-keeper. "I've just got a letter from the authorities. They're letting me have a couple of nights at home."

"Well, that's a bit of luck!" commented Locke with a smile.

"You bet it is! I suppose they think that there's an extra strain working here at the Morne Light, with all these demons and things which are supposed to be scullin' about. Anyway, they tell me they're sending another man to take my place for a spell. I'm pushing off directly after breakfast."

By chatting to the innkeeper's wife a little later, Locke soon had the news spread all over the village. Everyone in Mornham became aware that old Jack Lewis was going away and another lighthouse-keeper was coming up that evening to take his place. Moreover, Locke let it become generally known that he and his assistant were packing up their traps and going back to London.

Quite a throng of the fisher-folk saw Locke and Drake take their departure from the inn in the ramshackle old carriage after dinner that day. But once on board the train at Cragdale, the detective's rather subdued air dropped from him like a cloak.

As the train jolted along, he opened a bag and took out a large make-up box. In less than ten minutes he had completely transformed his appearance with a beard, blue jersey, and a peaked cap.

"My aunt, that's topping!" said Drake, in frank admiration. "Dan'l Legg, the lighthouse-keeper, would fit you to a 'T.'"

"Right!" said Locke with a chuckle. "Dan'l Legg will suit me as well as any other name. Now I'll make a graceful exit at the next station, and make my way back to Cragdale. You must travel on to Newton Abbott with the luggage; I'll wrap up all the gear I want in a bit of newspaper. Book a room in an hotel at Newton Abbot, and wait until you hear from me."

Jack Drake was disappointed that he was not to be "in at the kill," so to speak. But he knew that Locke was acting for the best, and he gave no sign of the regret he felt.

As the train drew into the next station, Ferrers Locke gripped the hand of his young assistant, leaped out of the train, and hurried away down the platform. He had a long wait for a train back. Part of the time he occupied by visiting the leather shops in the town. At one of them he purchased a dog collar of flexible steel and stout leather, such as was suitable for a mastiff or bloodhound. On the train journey back to Cragdale he adjusted his strange purchase about his neck, drawing the top of his woollen blue jersey well up over it.

"Beastly uncomfortable!" muttered the sleuth to himself. "But it may prove jolly useful!"

By the time the detective reached the Morne headland dusk was settling over the grim Cornish coast. He entered the lighthouse, and introduced himself to Baydon, who was plainly very glad to have him there.

The first portion of the night passed with out incident. Locke assisted Baydon with the ordinary duties of the lighthouse. On occasions either the detective or the assistant lighthouse-keeper stepped outside to where a number of fishing-lines lay coiled on the ground. This they did in the hope of being able to obtain a glimpse of anyone lurking in the vicinity.

Once Baydon after an expedition of this sort came back with a face bereft of colour.

"I—I think I saw him, sir," he whispered to the sleuth. "There was someone—"

"Listen to me!" muttered Locke. "Have your revolver ready for instant use, and do what I say. Go outside, gather up those fishing-lines, and take 'em down to the beach as though you were going to set 'em for the night. Lock the door as you go out, and when you return scrape twice with the key down the woodwork before you unlock it. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir. But—but you aren't going to stick in this place alone?"

"That is my intention," said Ferrers Locke calmly. "And I only hope this mysterious Demon pays me a visit."

Proud to be of assistance to the world-famous sleuth, Baydon set out to fulfil his task, though not without considerable misgivings. He locked the stout wooden door of the lighthouse on the outside, and departed with the fishing-lines for the beach.

Meantime, Ferrers Locke quietly crept down the stone steps inside the building, and took up his position immediately behind the door. In his hand he held an automatic pistol, his forefinger resting lightly on the trigger.

The minutes dragged slowly by. All the detective could hear was the moaning of the wind without and the steady thump-thump of his own heart-beats.

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Then gradually another sound obtruded itself into his consciousness. It was the stealthy approach of footsteps over the rocks beyond the closed door. Locke listened intently for the double scrape of the key on the woodwork. But nothing of the sort occurred. A key was gently inserted into the lock without preamble, and the door pushed slowly inwards.

Inch by inch the waiting sleuth gave ground as the door moved wider and wider. A head wrapped in a black scarf gradually inserted itself. It was followed by a burly body.

With a lightning movement Ferrers Locke stepped forward.

"Put your hands over your head or I fire!" he rapped out.

A fierce snarl left the lips of the intruder. His hands went upwards and outwards. A long, twisted coloured handkerchief which they held, enwrapped itself about Locke's neck. The sleuth threw back his head contemptuously and thrust the muzzle of his pistol hard against the other's body.

"Cut that out!" he commanded curtly. "I'm not to be caught that way. The game's up, you Thug!"

It was Locke's intention to take the fellow alive. But at the last word a fury possessed the man. Thrusting one hand down, he tried to wrest the automatic from Locke's grip. The detective's forefinger tightened ever so slightly on the trigger. There was a flash of flame and a deafening report—and the Demon of Morne sank in a motionless huddled heap at the detective's feet!

On the following afternoon Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake were seated in a room of the inn at Morneham receiving the congratulations of Sir Fulgarth Sternley, who had journeyed down from London. Every newspaper in the kingdom had got the "story," and it had been a hard job for the famous detective to get clear of reporters for a few minutes. Morneham and the whole Cornish coast rejoiced that the terror which had beset the guardians of the headland light had been exterminated.

"And now that we have a few minutes at last in quietude, Mr. Locke," said Sir Fulgarth, "I should like to hear from your own lips how you solved the mystery."

"There is not much to tell," replied Locke modestly. "Frankly, I'll admit that at first I was completely baffled. But gradually I pieced together a theory which seemed more or less watertight. By the very nature of the crimes, I deduced that sheer blind hatred was the motive. Then there was the method by which the crimes were committed. There are several ways in which a man's neck may be broken without showing external marks of violence. It was after Drake had described the man who wore a scarf round his face that I definitely plumped for the method adopted by this criminal."

"And what was that, Mr. Locke?"

Ferrers Locke answered the question by asking another.

"Have you ever heard of the Thugs, Sir Fulgarth?"

"Why, bless me, yes! They were—er, some sort of semi-religious robber sect that existed in India at one time, were they not?"

"Quite right! A Thug used to kill his victim instantly by means of a kind of scarf or handkerchief known as a roomal. The roomal was drawn round the victim's neck; the Thug gave a twist of his powerful wrists, and the unlucky victim's neck was dislocated. It was a feat requiring much skill and practice. In fact, if I hadn't adopted that beastly uncomfortable dog's collar, my own neck would have paid the price!"

"By Jove, it sounds awful!"

Locke calmly lit his pipe.

"Gradually, as I developed my theory, I became more and more convinced as to the identity of the scoundrel who had committed the crimes on the headland. To my idea, it was someone with a reason for hating the chief keeper of the Morne Light, and who had spent some time in India. Someone, too, who might have a key of the lighthouse door. My theory, as it happened, proved correct. The Demon of Morne was none other than James Henry Muir, one-time keeper of the light himself, who was sentenced to imprisonment after the ship, Douglas Day, had grounded on the rocks. You told me about his case when I first visited you in London, Sir Fulgarth."

"Yes, I remember. Muir must have been mad for years—raving mad!"

"Not exactly," said Locke. "Obviously, he believed he had been unjustly treated. He brooded upon it. His mind became unbinged on this one matter. He hated to think of any other man occupying the job he considered his by rights. While in India he learned from someone the trick of the Thugs. He developed deadly skill himself. Then he returned to England. So changed had he become in appearance after his life in the East that no one knew that Jake Hawken, the fisherman, who came to live near Morneham, was none other than James Muir, the former lighthouse-keeper."

"Then it must have been Muir that Jack Drake saw watching the light from the beach the other night," said Sir Fulgarth.

"Undoubtedly. But it is now clear that it was shortly after Hawken, alias Muir, took up his residence here that the first of the crimes were committed. I have also discovered by inquiries that Hawken left Morneham again for a time. Apparently he endeavoured to keep away, but his madness, recurring with greater force, drove him back. So it came about that other fine fellows met their death at the hands of this cunning maniac who lay in wait for them."

Sir Fulgarth Sternley gave a shudder.

"It has been terrible—terrible!" he muttered. Then, in a tone of heartfelt relief, he added: "But, thank goodness, owing to your splendid efforts, Mr. Locke, the lighthousemen on the headland no longer need fear the dread Demon of Morne!"

THE END.

Next Monday's long complete story of Ferrers Locke, dealing with the greatest river sporting event of the year, is entitled: "The Man in the Light-Blue Vest!" Don't miss it!

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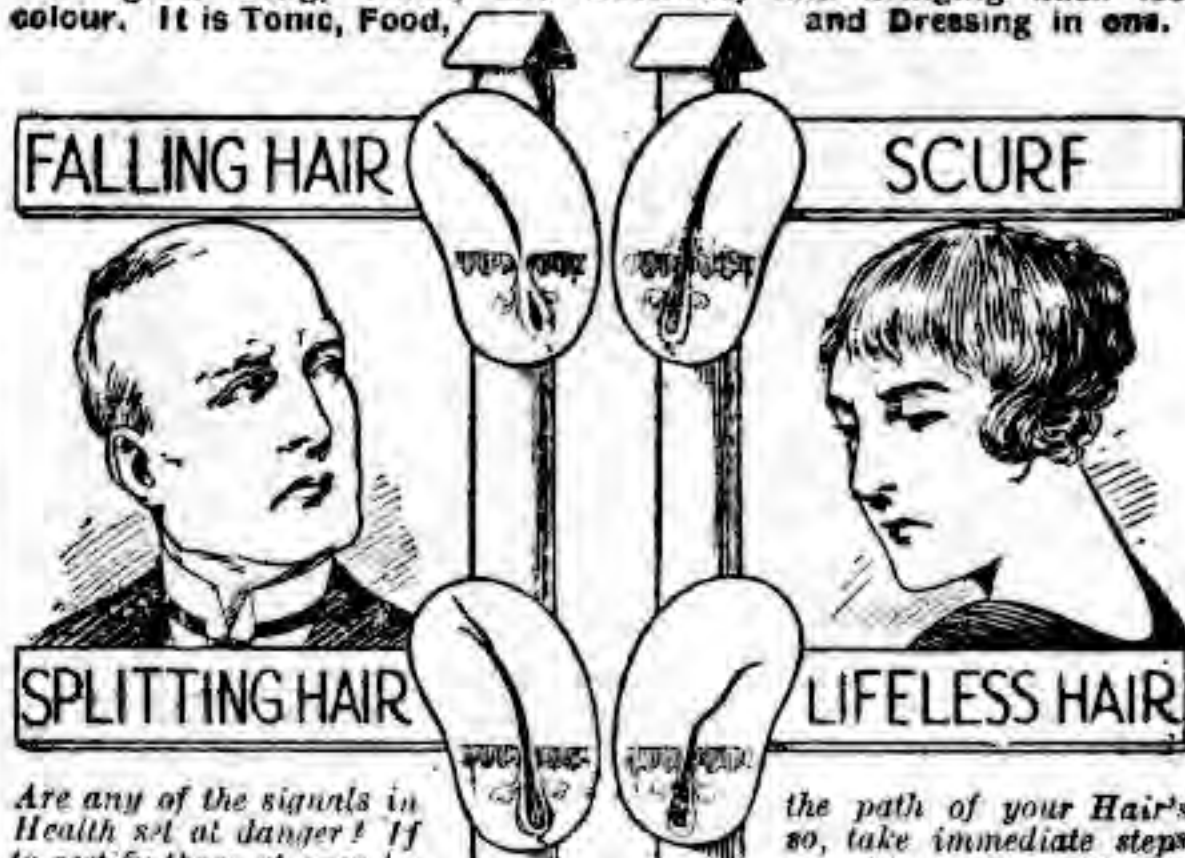
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