

A BUMPER ISSUE—FULL OF GOOD THINGS!

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The Magnet 2^d

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School & Detective Stories.



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IS
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MAG. L., 1923.



"UNDER THE SHADOW!"

THAT is the title of next Monday's ripping story of Greyfriars, by your popular author, Frank Richards. The advent of Ernest Levison in the Greyfriars Remove has awakened many doubts in the minds of the juniors as to whether his reform is really genuine. Even the best fellows cannot forget that Ernest Levison was once a young blackguard of a very deep and shady order, and with such mean-spirited schoolfellows as Skinner & Co. occasionally adding fuel to a fire that will burn despite Levison's attempts to extinguish it, so to speak, the atmosphere is charged with dark doubts and whispered statements that Levison is just as big a "blade" as he was in the old days.

Peter Hazeldene plays a very prominent part in next week's fine story—a part that promises a nasty entanglement for a certain junior who attempts to help Hazel out of a difficulty. To say anything more about the theme of this coming treat would be giving away too much; but, my chums, if you miss "Under the Shadow!" the regretfulness, as Inky would describe it, will be terrific!

"THE MAN FROM CHINATOWN!"

Yet again does the mysterious Mr. Fang come into conflict with the world's cleverest crime investigator, Ferrers Locke, and yet again does the "Tiger" prove his superiority in wits and pluck. You will like this ripping yarn, of that I feel certain, so make a point of ordering next Monday's MAGNET early.

KING CRICKET!

The hard-working crowd of contributors on the staff of the GREYFRIARS HERALD have turned out a special Cricket Supplement, and now that his majesty the sun condescends to smile upon us, such a feature could not have been produced at a more opportune moment. Therefore, chums, look forward to a special supplement packed with fun and mirth. Not a dry line in it!

LIMERICKS!

I am very glad to see that hundreds of my chums have responded to the call of the Limerick, so to speak, but it's thousands I'm wanting. Surely YOU can think of a suitable last line to this week's verse. I am perfectly well aware that there are innumerable readers who think that they are out of their depth when it comes to Limericks. Such is not the case, take it from me. Why, even the office-boy goes about his business "spouting" last lines to Limericks, and if he can do it with such apparent ease, surely you can go one better after a few moments' quiet study? Have a shot at this week's verse NOW!

THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL!

For the benefit of those of my readers who are eager to obtain a copy of the Holiday Annual, I have much pleasure in informing them that there is still a limited number of copies available. Readers are requested to apply to their newsagent without loss of time. Remember, there's a deal of truth in the oft-repeated warning—Place your order NOW and avoid disappointment.

£10 IN PRIZES!

Every week the MAGNET offers the above amount of cash to successful entrants in the simple PICTURE PUZZLE competition. Have you attempted to solve the picture in this week's issue? It's quite easy, really. Try your hand TO-DAY!

Your Editor.



A long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., with Ernest Levison—ex-scholar of Greyfriars—as the central figure. A yarn that will bring home to the reader the manifold difficulties Levison, now a reformed character, has to face on account of his shady past.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

To Meet Ernest Levison!

"SOMEBODY ought to meet him."
"Yes, rather!"
"He's an old Greyfriars chap—"

"And not a bad sort."
"Somebody certainly ought to meet him at the station."

"Five somebodies, if possible," suggested Bob Cherry. "Us, in fact!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

It was Friday, and nearly time for afternoon classes at Greyfriars. The weather was beautifully fine; a golden sun shone in a sky of cloudless blue. It was an afternoon that seemed designed by Nature for a half-holiday. But it was not, unfortunately, a half-holiday—and that afternoon there was Euclid. There was not a fellow in the Greyfriars Remove who wouldn't gladly have given Euclid a miss, and rambled out of gates to enjoy the sunshine. And that afternoon Levison, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, was coming over to Greyfriars.

The Famous Five discussed the matter seriously.

Obviously, it would be only polite to Levison for somebody to meet him at the station. Equally obviously, it ought to be a member of his old Form, Levison once having been in the Greyfriars Remove. Still more obviously, it ought to be one of the Famous Five—or all of them—because it was such beautiful weather, and because there was Euclid!

"Let's ask Quelch!" said Johnny Bull. "After all, he can't do more than say 'No.'"

"After all, we're the chap's friends," said Nugent. "We didn't pull with him when he was at Greyfriars; but since then—"

"We pull all right now, when we see him," said Harry Wharton. "I really think we ought to meet him in Friar-dale, and—give him a greeting and a welcome back to his old school."

"Look at the weather!" said Bob Cherry. "Even Mr. Quelch ought to understand that it's a sin and a shame to stick indoors on a day like this!"

"Form masters don't understand those things," said Harry, with a shake of the head. "But this being a special occasion—"

"Very special!" said Nugent.

"The speciality is terrific!" said

Hurree Singh. "Let us proceed to the esteemed Quelch and put it to him."

"Catch him before lessons," said Bob.

"If we leave it till we see him in class, some rotter may shove in before us and ask him. Skinner or Bolsover major would be jolly glad to get out of lessons. You know what slackers they are!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, buzz off, Bunter!"

"I heard all you were saying," said Billy Bunter, blinking at the chums of the Remove with an indignant blink through his big spectacles, "and you've got to keep off the grass!"

"What?"

"I'm going to ask Quelch for leave to meet old Levison at the station," explained Bunter. "As he used to be my best pal when he was at Greyfriars, it's up to me. In fact, Levison will expect it."

"Scat!"

"It's rotten Euclid this afternoon," went on Bunter. "I want to get out of it as much as you fellows do."

"You fat slacker!" said Bob Cherry witheringly. "Do you think we're only thinking of dodging classes?"

"Of course!" said Bunter. "No gammon, you know! You want to cut classes, and so do I. But I've got first claim as Levison's old pal!"

"Rats!"

"Now, look here, you fellows—"

"Bosh!"

"I'm jolly well going to ask Quelch!" snorted Bunter. "You cheeky rotters can keep off the grass."

Billy Bunter rolled hurriedly into the School House, evidently with the intention of getting in the first word with the Remove master.

"The cheeky, fat bounder—" began Nugent indignantly.

"Let him rip," said Bob. "Quelch won't let Bunter off—he knows the fat slacker only wants to cut lessons."

"And we don't!" murmured Wharton. Bob grinned.

"Well, we want to meet Levison, as well," he said. "If it were a half-holiday we'd go to the station to give him a welcome. Bunter wouldn't."

"That's so. We're disinterested," said the captain of the Remove, with a laugh.

"And it's such a ripping afternoon—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Smithy!"

Vernon-Smith of the Remove came up to the Famous Five. There was a

thoughtful expression on the face of the Bounder of Greyfriars.

"You fellows know that Levison's arriving this afternoon?" he began.

The chums of the Remove chuckled.

"Just a few!" said Bob.

"I was thinking of going to the station to meet him," said the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Vernon-Smith looked surprised.

"What's the joke?" he asked.

"Well, we were thinking of the same thing," said Harry Wharton. "As it's such a ripping afternoon—I mean, as Levison is an old schoolfellow of ours—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bounder grinned.

"I see! Well, I was thinking of asking Quelch," he said. "Levison did me a good turn once when he came over here—"

"I remember," said Harry.

"I'd like to give him a welcome. But if you fellows thought of the wheeze first—"

Peter Todd joined the group outside the School House.

"You fellows know that Levison—" he began, interrupting the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat! Is the whole giddy Form thinking of meeting Levison at the station?" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Levison would be flattered if he knew how jolly popular he is here!"

"Oh! You fellows thinking of it, too?" asked Peter.

"Just a trifle!"

"Bunter's gone to ask Quelch, and we're going," chuckled Frank Nugent.

"I dare say there will be a regular procession to Quelch's study to ask him for an exeat. Some fellows may have started already."

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "We're wasting time. Let's start at once, and take it in turns."

"Good egg!"

"I suppose I ought to go in first, as captain of the Form!" murmured Wharton, as the juniors entered the School House.

"Wouldn't alphabetical order be best?" asked Johnny Bull, with a grin.

"Hardly—unless we begin at the end of the alphabet—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter!"

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Billy Bunter came away from Mr. Quelch's study. There was a frown on his fat face, and he passed the Removites with a sniff. Evidently, Billy Bunter's application for leave had not been successful.

"First wicket down!" grinned Bob. "Now then, man in!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But who's the man?" asked Peter Todd. "We can't all squeeze into Quelch's study together."

"He's not likely to give leave to more than one," said Vernon-Smith. "I'll try first if you like."

Hazeldene of the Remove came hurriedly along the corridor. He passed the group of juniors with a suspicious glance, tapped at Mr. Quelch's door, and entered. Harry Wharton & Co. could guess easily enough what he wanted there.

"Hazel will bag it!" grunted Johnny Bull.

The juniors waited. Hazel was less than a minute in Mr. Quelch's study. To the relief of the waiting juniors, he came out with a scowling face.

"Second wicket down!" said Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now then, next man in, before a whole giddy army comes along," said Bob Cherry. "I can see Bolsover major in the offing."

"Oh, give Smithy a chance!" said Wharton. "You try your luck, Smithy, and we'll wait."

"Thanks!" said the Bounder.

And he tapped at the Form master's door, and went in, and Harry Wharton & Co. waited for the result.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Skinner's Luck!

MR. QUELCH glanced up at Vernon-Smith, with a slight knitting of the brows. Possibly he was not prepared to hold a reception just then. How many requests for leave he had already had Smithy did not know; but he looked as if he had had a good many, and had grown tired of them. So the Bounder began diplomatically.

"Excuse me, sir——"

"What is it, Vernon-Smith?"

"May I ask how Levison minor is, sir?" asked the Bounder.

Mr. Quelch unknitted his brows.

"Levison minor shows a slight improvement, Vernon-Smith," he answered. "I am afraid that he will not be able to leave the sanatorium for some weeks to return to his own school. But he will be able to see his brother, who is arriving here this afternoon."

"Levison is coming over from St. Jim's to-day, sir?" asked the Bounder, as if that was news to him.

"Yes; he arrives by the two-thirty train at Friardale."

"I suppose he knows his brother is ill here, sir?"

"Certainly. Dr. Locke has communicated with Dr. Holmes, at St. Jim's, and explained how Levison minor was found wandering by Wharton and his friends, and brought here."

"Will Levison major stay here, sir?"

"He will probably remain so long as his young brother is obliged to remain, Vernon-Smith. In that case, he will attend classes with the Remove—his old Form here. I understand that that has been arranged between the two headmasters."

"I'm rather friendly with Levison of St. Jim's, sir," said the Bounder diffidently. "Could I——"

He was coming to business at last. But Mr. Quelch lifted his hand, and interrupted.

"If you are about to ask me for leave to meet Levison at the station, Vernon-Smith——"

"Yes, sir! I——"

"I have already given Skinner leave for that purpose."

"Skinner!" exclaimed the Bounder.

"Yes; I understand that Skinner was on very friendly terms with Levison when he was a Greyfriars boy."

"Sold!" ejaculated the Bounder involuntarily.

"What—what did you say, Vernon-Smith?"

"I—I mean——" stammered the Bounder.

"You had better go, Vernon-Smith."

Smithy left the study with a glum face. Harry Wharton & Co. fixed their eyes upon him inquiringly as he closed the Form master's door behind him.

"Third wicket down!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Who's next man in?"

"No go!" said the Bounder. "We've been forestalled. Skinner's got leave already."

"Skinner!" yelled Johnny Bull.

"Yes, bother him!"

"Oh, blow Skinner!"

"The blowfulness is terrific!"

"Rotten!"

"Just like that mean rotter Skinner, butting in!" said Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We may as well hook it."

The Removites drifted down the corridor. They met Bolsover major of the Remove, evidently on his way to Mr. Quelch's study. Bolsover major gave them a suspicious look.

"I say, I suppose you fellows have heard about Levison coming over from St. Jim's this afternoon——"

"We've heard of nothing else for some time," answered Bob.

"I'm thinking of asking Quelch for leave——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why shouldn't I?" demanded Bolsover angrily.

"No reason why you shouldn't, if you want to, old top," said Bob. "Go in and win!"

Bolsover major swung on towards the Form master's study. Harry Wharton & Co. continued on their way, and at the corner of the passage encountered Snoop and Stott.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! You two merchants want anything?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Levison's coming——"

"This afternoon——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We're going to ask Quelch for leave to meet him at the station."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. walked out into the quadrangle. The fine weather that sunny afternoon had evidently had a considerable effect on the whole Remove, and Levison of St. Jim's was in great demand as a reason for getting out of classes.

In the quad the Co. came on Skinner, strolling with his hands in his pockets, and a satisfied smile on his thin, sharp face.

"So you've bagged it?" demanded Bob Cherry.

Skinner stared at him.

"Bagged what?" he asked.

"Leave for the afternoon. When did you put in for it?"

Skinner grinned.

"I came early to avoid the crush," he

explained. "I caught Quelch before dinner. The early bird catches the jolly old worm, you know!"

"You'd better resign in our favour," said Bob. "After all, we're friendly with Levison, and you're not."

"What rot!" said Skinner. "Levison's quite an old pal of mine—more in my line than yours, too. You don't want to drop in at the Bird-in-Hand with him for a smoke and a game of billiards, do you?"

"Why, you young blackguard——" began Bob hotly.

Skinner yawned.

"Levison's chuckled that kind of thing long ago, Skinner," said Harry Wharton quietly. "He's quite different at St. Jim's, from what he was like when he was at Greyfriars."

"So I've heard," assented Skinner.

"Well, then——"

"But I don't believe all I hear, you know," said Skinner, with a grin. "I've done some spoofing myself in my time, you know."

"It's not spoof in Levison's case——"

"Bow-wow!"

"Look here, Skinner——"

"Rats!"

"Gentlemen, chaps, and fellows," said Bob Cherry. "Skinner isn't the right person to meet Levison—now a reformed character, and worthy of association with our noble selves. Skinner is called upon to resign in our favour."

"I'll see you hanged first!" said Skinner.

"Or else," continued Bob, "it will be our duty to bump Skinner, as a warning that the way of the giddy transgressor is hard!"

"Hear, hear!"

Skinner jumped away.

"You silly owl—you—you—— Hands off! Oh, yaroooh!"

Bump!

"Oh crumbs! Ow!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's the bell!"

The juniors crowded away to the Remove Form-room, leaving Harold Skinner to pick himself up rather breathlessly. While the golden sun sailed westward that afternoon through cloudless blue, the Removites devoted themselves to instruction in the Form-room; and Harold Skinner, with more luck than he certainly deserved, sauntered down to Friardale with a straw hat on the back of his head, and a smile on his face, to meet Levison of St. Jim's, and to enjoy a "razzle" with the fellow who had once been the black sheep of Greyfriars. At all events, that was Skinner's happy anticipation—which was not destined to be realised.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Skinner!

"FRIARDALE!"

Ernest Levison started.

The St. Jim's junior was thinking—thinking deeply—as he sat in the carriage. Ernest Levison had plenty of food for thought—not all of it pleasant—as the train rolled on towards the old school of which he had once been a member.

He was thinking of his young brother Frank, now ill in the sanatorium at Greyfriars. He was thinking of the good news he had for the runaway fag. He was thinking, too, of old days at Greyfriars, when he had been in the Remove, and on the worst of terms with Harry Wharton & Co. That old enmity

Don't forget—Frank Richards writes only for the MAGNET and the "Popular"!

had long passed. More than once he had met the chums of Greyfriars, on the occasion of school matches, and he believed they had learned to respect him—perhaps to like him. He knew that they liked his young brother.

But it was strange to be going back to Greyfriars to stay. Often and often had he thought of the reckless folly that had closed against him the doors of his old school; thought of it, and repented of it. He had done well at St. Jim's; he was glad to be there. He was friends with Tom Merry & Co. Perhaps it was, indeed, all for the best. If he had remained at Greyfriars he would never have known Clive or Cardew, his best chums. Yet there was, deep down in his heart, a loyal affection for his old school, and a pain in remembering that he had left it in disgrace.

That was all forgotten now, or almost forgotten, by others; not by Levison himself. He stood well with the Greyfriars fellows now. The Head had offered to take him back if he chose to return. He was welcome now at Greyfriars; welcome to remain with his former schoolfellows, till Frank was well enough to return to St. Jim's with him. He wondered what it would be like in the old Form-room, with his old Form-fellows, his old Form master. It would be like old times, but not quite the same.

"Friardale!"

The old porter's voice called out the name of the station. Levison of the Fourth rose hastily, caught up his bag, and stepped from the train.

He did not expect to be met at Friardale; he knew the fellows would be in class at that hour. But as he walked along the platform to the exit, a rather weedy figure detached itself from an automatic machine, and stood in his path.

"Hallo, old bean!"

"Hallo, Skinner!"

"Fancy seeing you here again!" said Skinner, with a grin.

Levison nodded, making an attempt to look pleased. It was civil of Skinner to come along and meet him; but he would rather have seen anybody but Skinner. Skinner had been an associate in the old days, and in doings that Levison would rather have forgotten.

Skinner shook hands with him warmly.

"Jolly to see you here!" he said heartily.

"You're very good," said Levison. "Did you come to the station specially?"

"You bet!"

"Thanks!" said Levison. "Isn't it class now?"

"I got leave to come, as your old pal at Greyfriars," explained Skinner. "You've come at a lucky moment."

"How's that?"

"Euclid this afternoon," explained Skinner.

Levison laughed. But his face became grave again at once.

"My brother—" he began.

"Right as rain!" said Skinner. "Laid up in sammy with a sort of cold, that's all. Queer the kid coming along like that. Wharton and his pals picked him up in a barn, or a shed, or something, over by Lantham. He ran away from school, what?"

"Yes."

"Up to some game, of course?"

"No; all a mistake, as it turned out."

Skinner winked.



"I'm sorry," said Bunter, waving a fat hand at Levison. "But in the circumstances I can't have you to tea in my study. We're rather particular in No. 7. Sorry; but there it is!" "You cheeky owl!" roared Levison, wrathfully. (See Chapter 5.)

"Right-ho! Don't tell me if you don't want to. I'm not curious. You've got off from school?"

"I'm to stay at Greyfriars till Frank is well."

"You're a deep card!" said Skinner admiringly. "I remember you always were, old chap. You'll bag two or three weeks off from lessons by working the brotherly-love stunt."

Levison knitted his brows a little.

"I shall join the Remove while I'm at Greyfriars, and work with the other fellows," he said. "That's understood."

Another wink from Skinner.

"Only Quelch won't be able to drive you as he does us, in the giddy circumstances," he said. "Deep—very deep! By the way, your minor doesn't seem much like you."

"Doesn't he?" said Levison, rather gruffly.

"No. A spooney sort of young ass, so far as I can make out."

"Look here, Skinner—"

"How on earth do you stand him at home?" asked Skinner. "Shoo him off, I suppose? How do you stand him at St. Jim's? Must be rather rotten to have a spooney, whining little rotter like that at your school!"

Levison breathed hard.

"Still, he's useful," went on Skinner. "He's got you a holiday from school. I suppose your headmaster believes you're awfully concerned about him."

"He does!" said Levison quietly.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skinner. "Deep—very deep!"

Levison of the Fourth set his lips and walked on. He wondered how he had

ever been friendly with Skinner in his Greyfriars days. He remembered that in those days he had looked on Harold Skinner as a clever fellow, and had rather admired his cynical disbelief in everything and everybody. It jarred on him now. Where was the cleverness in looking always for a base motive, and finding it whether it was there or not?

Skinner walked beside Levison in high good-humour. In the old days in the Remove, Levison would not have hesitated to intimate to Skinner that his room was preferred to his company; but as a guest at Greyfriars, he did not care to be uncivil. Skinner had come to the station to meet him, too, and evidently meant to be friendly.

"Leave your bag here, old chap," said Skinner. "They'll send it on by the carrier."

"I can carry it all right," said Levison.

"What rot! We're going for a stroll round before we go in."

"Can't be done."

"Eh? Why can't it be done?"

"I want to see my brother."

"Oh, I know all that, of course," assented Skinner. "Keep up appearances, and all that. I haven't forgotten your old style, Levison. But you can spin Quelch a yarn easily enough. I'll back you up in it."

Levison walked out of the station without answering. Skinner followed him out, looking, as he felt, puzzled.

"I've got it!" he said. "We'll make out that your bag went back in the train, and we had to walk to Courtfield for it."

Next Monday's story of Greyfriars is a real scorcher!

That will fill up the afternoon till tea-time."

"Rot!" said Levison tersely.

"It will work, I tell you. They'll never dream of inquiring."

"Possibly not."

"Well, then, what's the matter with the scheme?" demanded Skinner, rather warmly.

Levison drew a deep breath. It was evident that some plain speaking was required to enlighten Harold Skinner.

"I want to see my brother," said Levison.

"Keep that for the Head!" urged Skinner. "No need to practise on me!"

"It happens to be true."

"Draw it mild, old chap!" Skinner blinked at him. "You're about the last fellow in the world to be bothered by family affection, I should say!"

"Are you coming?" asked Levison.

"Now, look here," said Skinner, "don't be an ass, Levison! I've got off lessons to have a little fun this afternoon. I'm in funds, if that's what you're doubtful about!" Skinner sneered. "I'm not going to borrow any money of you!"

"I'm going straight to the school," said Levison. "I may as well speak out, Skinner. I'm done with all the dingy rot I used to go in for at Greyfriars."

"Did the sack reform you?" sneered Skinner.

Levison winced.

"I didn't exactly get the sack," he said. "It wasn't quite so bad as that."

"About as near as makes no difference," said Skinner. "You were the hardest case in the school—tougher than the old Bounder. I suppose you're not asking me to believe the fluff you've given Wharton and his pals?"

"You can believe what you like. I mean what I say. I'm going straight to the school, and I'm not starting there by telling lies. And I want to see young Frank."

"Cut it out!"

Levison shrugged his shoulders in quite his old way. He turned his back on Skinner, and started up the High Street, bag in hand. Skinner stared after him, with growing rage in his face. Not for one moment did Skinner believe in that "reform" of Ernest Levison, of which he had heard a good deal. His own belief was that Levison, finding that he had made things too hot for himself, had found it judicious to put in a little hypocrisy—a thing quite in Skinner's own line when it suited him. Skinner's opinion now was that Levison, having no use for him, intended to "stuff" him, as he had stuffed simpler fellows.

He broke into a run, and overtook the St. Jim's junior in the High Street near Uncle Clegg's tuckshop. He caught Levison by the shoulder.

"Hold on!" he said. "Come in and have some tarts, anyhow."

"I had lunch on the express."

"Look here, Levison, I'm not going back till after classes!" exclaimed Skinner savagely. "If I go in, I shall have to go back to the Form-room. Well, I'm not doing it!"

"Please yourself."

"I can't stay out unless you stay out. You know that."

"Well, I can't stay out."

"And you call that pally?" exclaimed Skinner.

"I'm afraid you won't find me pally, Skinner. I'm sorry, but we haven't much in common, anyhow."

"We used to have!" sneered Skinner.

"That's over."

"Oh, keep that for duffers who

swallow it!" said Skinner angrily. "What are you trying to stuff me for?"

Levison's face set, and he walked on. Skinner hurried after him again.

"Look here, I'm not going back to classes," he said. "You may be right in making a good impression the first day—I know you're jolly deep, and know your way about. But I'm not going in. If you won't stay out—"

"I can't."

"Say you won't!" snapped Skinner.

"Well, I won't, then."

"Well, if you won't, give me your bag," said Skinner, "we'll make out that it was left in the train, as I said, and I've gone looking for it alone, as you were in a hurry to see the interesting invalid. That will go down all right."

"I dare say it would. But—"

"Well, hand over the bag. I suppose you don't think I want to steal your shirts and collars?"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" snapped Levison. "Look here, Skinner, I'm not going to pitch any lies to Mr. Quelch on my own account or yours. It's not good enough."

"You'd only have to back up my yarn about the bag."

"I'm not telling any lies, I tell you."

"You weren't so jolly particular once!"

"That's enough!"

Levison strode on again. Skinner gave him a look of the deepest animosity as he went. His scheme for a whole afternoon out of gates was knocked on the head now; it could not be carried out without Levison's aid and a good deal of hard lying by both of them. It had never even occurred to Skinner that Levison objected to it now. Levison, for reasons of his own, was trying to "stuff" him as he had stuffed others—that was Skinner's fixed belief. And for the sake of that spoof he was to lose the extra half-holiday he had planned for himself!

There was only one consideration that kept Skinner from hurling himself upon this disappointing old acquaintance and smiting him hip and thigh. That consideration was the fact that Levison could have knocked Skinner out in one round without any difficulty.

Skinner had to swallow his wrath, and he marched back to Greyfriars with a black brow, without speaking another word to the St. Jim's junior. And a little later Skinner had the pleasure—or otherwise—of entering the Remove-room to join the class at lessons, while Ernest Levison, of St. Jim's, was reporting his arrival to the head.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Shadows of the Past!

"**E**RNIE!"

Frank Levison was in bed in the big, cool room, with the big windows looking out over the Head's garden. His face was pale and looked thin; his eyes seemed larger than usual in his pale face.

But he brightened wonderfully as Ernest Levison, of St. Jim's, stood by his bedside.

A thin hand sought Levison's over the white coverlet.

"Ernie! You've come here!"

"Yes, Franky, old chap."

Levison pressed his brother's hand. The matron, with a smile, left the two together.

"I can't stay with you long, Franky," said Levison. "They've given me five minutes—doctor's orders. You've got to

pull yourself together. Franky, old man, I've got good news for you from St. Jim's!"

The fag's eyes sought his face.

"I was a fool, a brute, not to believe what you told me, Frank!" said Levison remorsefully.

"You believe me now?" whispered Frank.

"As soon as you cleared off from St. Jim's I knew what a fool I'd been," said Levison huskily. "Franky, old man, I'm sorry—"

"It's all right, Ernie. Only—only it did hit me hard that you wouldn't take my word—" He checked himself at once. "It's all right, Ernie, old man. I'm glad you believe me! But the rest—"

"I believed you, Franky, before the truth came out," said Ernest Levison. "I'm glad I can say that."

"Then it's come out?"

"Yes. Cardew found it all out, somehow. Piggott of the Third owned up that he played that rotten trick on Mr. Selby—after he was found out. The Head's sent a message for you. You're to return to St. Jim's as soon as you're well—and nothing will be said about your running away. Dr. Holmes can't do less than overlook that, as it's come out that you were suspected for nothing. You've only to get well, kid, and you're coming back with me."

"Oh, Ernie!"

Frank Levison's eyes danced.

"It will be all serene," went on Levison, with a smile. "I'm to stay here till you're well; I've got leave. I'm going back into my old Form here for a week or two, so as not to waste time. I shall see you as often as the doctor allows."

"Oh, Ernie! I—I say, I feel better already," whispered Frank. "I—I'm not really ill, you know—not what you'd call ill."

"Of course not, old chap," said Levison, with a catch in his voice. "But you've got to be careful, and pull round. I'm afraid I sha'n't see you again soon. The doctor only let me in now because he thought the good news might do you good, after I'd told him about it."

"It has done me good, Ernie."

The matron approached the bedside, and made a sign to the St. Jim's junior.

"Good-bye, Franky, I must cut now!"

"Good-bye, Ernie! I—I say, I'm feeling no end better! Come in for a few minutes to-morrow, if you can."

"Rely on that."

And Ernest Levison left, leaving Frank with a bright face, pale and ill as he was.

Levison looked thoughtful as he quitted the sanatorium. His heart had been heavy with fear for his brother. Frank, though a sturdy little fellow, did not possess his elder brother's frame of iron and nerves of steel. And Levison realised that his fears had not been groundless—Frank had been ill, and was ill now—and it was certain to be some weeks before he could leave the sanatorium, longer before he would be in a fit state to return to St. Jim's. But he was mending, and the good news from his own school helped him on the way to recovery. There was no ground for anxiety now—only patience was needed. Levison knew, too, that the knowledge that he was at Greyfriars would be good for Frank.

Classes were still going on, as Levison walked out into the quadrangle and sauntered round, looking about him.

The old elms were showing the green of spring—there were flowers in the Head's garden—the sun shone cheerily

Ernest Levison finds himself the centre of suspicion—

over all. Levison looked about him with a curious interest.

Nothing seemed to have changed since he had been a Greyfriars fellow. The high, stained windows, the grey old walls were the same; old Gosling, sunning himself at the doorway of his lodge, looked unchanged—perhaps a trifle more gnarled. Levison sauntered over to the lodge to exchange a word with the old porter, and Gosling touched his hat, with a searching blink at the junior.

"You know me again, Gosling?" said Levison, with a smile.

"I don't never forget faces, Master Levison," said Gosling. "I remember you, and a precious young rip you were!"

"Was I?" said Levison.

"You was!" said Gosling, with emphasis. "'Ow many times 'ave I had to report you when you was here?"

"Plenty, I dare say," said Levison, rather moodily.

"'Undreds, and you wasn't 'ere long," said Gosling. "Pretty goings hon, I must say. Wot I says is this 'ere, Master Levison—if the 'ead took my advice——"

Gosling paused at that, and Levison's lip curled. It was pretty clear that Gosling had seen no reason to change his old opinion of Ernest Levison—once the hardest case at Greyfriars.

"Never 'appened before in all my experience," said Gosling, shaking his head. "'Tain't often a feller's expelled, but it's happened sometimes in the years I've been 'ere. And wot I says is this ere, this is the first time such a feller has had the nerve to show his face in the school arter!"

Levison crimsoned.

"I wasn't exactly expelled, Gosling," he said quietly.

"You was sent away for bad conduct," said Gosling grimly—"and bad it was, too. Now I 'ear that you're in your old Form, Master Levison, for a few weeks. Don't let me catch you, that's all!"

"Catch me?" repeated Levison.

Gosling snorted.

"Out of bounds arter lights out, and all that!" he said. "Don't let me catch you at the game, that's all!"

"You're cheeky, Gosling," said Levison. "Don't let me have to report you to the Head for cheek, that's all!"

And Levison turned and walked away, leaving Gosling breathless with wrath and indignation.

The St. Jim's junior strolled towards the tuckshop, which Mrs. Mimble was reopening, in anticipation of custom after the close of lessons. He stopped at the open shop window, and raised his cap politely to the old dame. Mrs. Mimble peered at him over her glasses.

"Why, it's Master Levison!" she said, in astonishment.

"How do you do, Mrs. Mimble?"

"Poorly, Master Levison, in these east winds," said the old dame, still peering at him curiously. "You haven't come back, sir?"

"For a week or two," said Levison.

"I suppose the Head knows——"

Levison burst into a laugh.

"I couldn't very well come back without the Head knowing, Mrs. Mimble," he remarked.

"No, I s'pose not, Master Levison. But——"

"But what, ma'am?"

"Oh, nothing!" said Mrs. Mimble.

Levison strolled on rather moodily. There were some, at least, at Greyfriars, who remembered him unfavourably, after a long interval. He had been a dog with

a bad name, and, apparently, the bad name was clinging.

He glanced over the fence into the Head's garden, where Mr. Mimble, the gardener, was pruning. Mr. Mimble touched his cap as Levison bade him "Good-afternoon!" and Levison caught the surprised look in his eyes. He walked on without stopping to chat with Mr. Mimble.

"A dog with a bad name!" Levison's lip curled rather bitterly. "I—I wonder what it will be like among the fellows?"

He walked away towards the School House.

—

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Is Particular!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"Here you are, old bean!"

"Levison!"

"Glad to see you!"

"The gladfulness is terrific!"

The Famous Five spoke all at once. The Remove were out of class, and Harry Wharton & Co., spotting Ernest Levison in the quad, bore down upon him in a cheery crowd.

Levison's face brightened up. He had not been cheered by his meetings with Gosling and Mrs. Mimble, and Mr. Mimble. But there was no doubt about the heartiness of the Famous Five's greeting. They were glad to see him, and, apparently, they did not look upon him as a dog with a bad name.

Levison shook hands all round with the five.

"Seen your minor?" asked Harry.

"Yes, I saw him almost at once. I understand that it was you fellows who found him and brought him here," said Levison.

"Little us!" said Bob.

"I'm no end obliged to you. I suppose you know I'm staying on till he's well enough to go back to St. Jim's?" asked Levison, with rather a keen look at the chums of the Remove.

"Yes; Mr. Quelch has said so," answered Wharton. "You're coming into classes with the Remove, I think."

"That's it."

"Quite like old times," said Nugent.

"Not quite!" said Levison, with a faint smile. "I'm rather different in some ways since I was a Greyfriars chap. It's awfully kind of you fellows to welcome me like this, considering——"

"Bygones are jolly old bygones!" said Bob Cherry cheerily.

"The bygonefulness is terrific, my esteemed Levison!"

"Some here haven't forgotten," said Levison, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Gosling has warned me not to let him catch me out of bounds after lights out!"

"Gosling's an old donkey!" said Bob. "We know that you're all right, Levison."

"Here's Smithy!" said Nugent.

Vernon-Smith came up, and shook hands with Levison.

"Glad to see you!" he said. "Glad you're staying, too! I should have come to the station for you, but Skinner bagged the job. You're coming to tea in my study."



"One of your giddy guests has been dropping his property around the place," said Bob Cherry. "What are you driving at?" asked Wharton. "Look there," replied Bob, pointing to the floor. A fat Turkish cigarette lay where Levison's chair had been. (See Chapter 6.)

—owing to his generosity in helping a "black sheep"!

"No, he jolly well isn't!" said Wharton. "Levison's coming to tea in Study No. 1."

"Make it Study No. 13," said Bob Cherry. "We'll kill the fatted calf for you, Levison!"

"Study No. 1, and you fellows come, too!" said Harry Wharton. "We'll make a tea-party of it; home-coming party to celebrate the return of the native."

"Good egg!" agreed Bob.

"Right-ho!" assented the Bounder.

Levison nodded, with a smile. If he had had any doubts about his welcome from the Remove they were gone now. His face was bright and cheerful as he walked along with Harry Wharton and Bob, the other fellows leaving them to prepare the festive board in Study No. 1. In the quadrangle, they came on Skinner, Snoop, and Stott—old friends of Levison in the old days. Skinner's thin lip curled in a sneer at the sight of Levison strolling between Wharton and Bob Cherry.

"He doesn't seem to want us," grunted Stott.

"He's pulling their leg, for some reason," said Skinner. "Blessed if I quite see the game. I don't see why he can't trust his old friends. We shouldn't give him away to the beaks."

"I've heard that he's been a very different sort of chap at St. Jim's," remarked Snoop.

"You've heard a lot of rot," answered Skinner. "Anyhow, if he's sucking up to the Eric brigade, we may as well put a spoke in. Come on!"

The three black sheep bore down on the St. Jim's junior, with agreeable smiles. Levison had to stop; and Wharton and Bob Cherry stopped with him.

"Jolly to see you here again, old top!" said Snoop, with a grin.

"Welcome as the flowers in May!" said Stott.

"You're coming to tea with us, old fellow," said Skinner.

"Thanks! These fellows have asked me to tea," said Levison. "Thanks all the same!"

"Dash it all, you might have stuck to your old friends, the first day," said Skinner. "I don't call that kind. Anyhow, come to supper in our study."

"Do!" said Snoop.

Levison hesitated a moment.

He did not want to be ungracious; and these fellows, after all, had once been his associates. He had nothing in common with them now; but apparently they wished to be friendly.

"Thanks!" he said. "I'll come."

"Half-past eight!" said Skinner.

"Right!"

Skinner & Co. strolled on, smiling. Levison looked rather thoughtful, and not pleased. He did not feel pleased. He was quite keen enough to see that Skinner & Co. looked on his reform as so much humbug, and were not to be convinced to the contrary; even if he had regarded it as worth while to convince them. Evidently, Skinner & Co. had not changed their ways; and it was Levison's desire to keep clear of all old shady associations during his stay at Greyfriars. He resolved to keep clear of Skinner's study after one civil visit there.

"I say, Levison, old chap—" It was Billy Bunter.

"Hallo, Bunter! Fat as ever?" said Levison, with a smile.

"Oh, really, Levison—"

"A little wider, I think," said Levison, surveying the fat Owl of the Remove.

Bunter grinned feebly.

"He, he, he! You always would have your little joke, Levison. I say, you remember the day you left Greyfriars—"

"Well?"

"I was awfully sympathetic, wasn't I?" said Bunter.

"I don't remember that."

"Didn't I tell you it was hard lines to be kicked out, just for playing the giddy goat a little?" asked Bunter.

"Shut up, you fat ass!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Any more pleasant reminiscences, Bunter?" asked Ernest Levison grimly.

"Well, you remember you owed me half-a-crown when you left—"

"I don't!"

"Oh, really, Levison—"

"Roll away, old barrel!" said Wharton.

"Don't butt in when I'm talking to my old pal Levison, Wharton. It's bad form."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I want you to come to tea in Study No. 7, Levison," said Bunter hospitably.

"Toddy will be glad to see you. Not that Toddy matters; I'm head of the study. Will you come?"

"Booked already, thanks," said Levison.

"It will be rather a jolly spread," said Bunter. "Ham and eggs, and cake, and three kinds of jam—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Have you come into a fortune?" asked Bob Cherry.

"You were trying to borrow a tanner of me this morning. Has your postal-order come at last?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Or hasn't it come, and are you going to ask Levison to cash it in advance?" chuckled Bob.

CASH PRIZES TO £10 THE EXTENT OF

Result of Fulham Picture-Puzzle Competition.

In this competition no competitor sent in a correct solution of the picture. The First Prize of £5 has therefore been awarded to the following competitor, whose solution contained one error:

ALFRED CARR,
79, Bargate,
Boston, Lines.

The Second Prize of £2 10s. has been divided among the following three competitors, whose solutions contained two errors each:

Wilfred Barnes, 5, Grange Street South, Grangetown, Sunderland.
John Kennedy, 4, Fishers Vennel, Perth.
Mrs. A. Barrie, 19, Barrie Terrace, Ardrossan.

Twenty-eight competitors, with three errors each, divide the Ten Prizes of 5/- each. The names and addresses of these prize-winners can be seen on application at this office.

SOLUTION:

Fulham had its beginning, like many other renowned football teams, in a Sunday-school. It was commenced in 1880 by a band of young fellows from St. Andrew's Church, West Kensington. Their ground at Craven Cottage has been a source of much cash to them.

"If an old pal chooses to lend me ten bob till my postal-order comes, it's no bizney of yours, Bob Cherry!" said the Owl of the Remove, with dignity.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You see, Levison, old chap—"

"I see!" grinned Levison. He had not forgotten the remarkable manners and customs of William George Bunter.

"I'm expecting a postal-order for exactly ten shillings," explained the Owl of the Remove, blinking at Levison. "It ought really to have come by this afternoon's post—"

"From one of your titled relations?" asked Levison.

"Exactly!"

"The same one who forgot to send you a postal-order when I was here before?" inquired Levison.

"Ahem!"

"That was your uncle, the duke, wasn't it?"

"You—you see—"

"Or was it your cousin, the marquis?" asked Levison, with great gravity.

Billy Bunter blinked at him suspiciously.

"The fact is, Levison, that postal-order is coming to-morrow morning by the first post. If you care to hand over the ten bob now, I should be obliged," said Bunter, with dignity.

"I shouldn't."

"If you can't trust me with ten bob, Levison—"

"Exactly; I can't!"

"In that case, I decline to ask you to tea in my study."

"Go hon!"

"I don't quite see how I could have you, when I come to think of it," said Bunter. "Toddy would kick up a shindy if there was smoking after tea."

"You fat duffer—" began Levison, reddening.

"And he would never have nap or banker in the study," pursued Bunter. "No; it wouldn't do, when I come to think of it. Sorry!"

"You—"

Bunter waved a fat hand at him. "I'm sorry!" he repeated. "But in the circumstances, Levison, I can't have you in my study. We're rather particular in No. 7."

"You cheeky owl!" roared Levison.

"No need to lose your temper, Levison," said Bunter calmly. "I'm merely stating the facts. A fellow with your juicy old reputation can't expect to be asked into a respectable study. Sorry; but there it is."

And Billy Bunter rolled away victoriously, leaving Ernest Levison with crimson cheeks. Bunter's celebrated postal-order had not been cashed; but the fat junior felt that he had scored. He rolled away in triumph; but his triumph was short-lived. Bob Cherry made a wrathful stride after him, and let out his right boot.

"Yooop!" roared Bunter.

He rolled over on his hands and knees. And Levison grinned as he walked away with his companions, leaving Billy Bunter roaring.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Suspicious Find!

STUDY No. 1 presented quite a cheery and festive appearance. There was a spotless tablecloth borrowed from the House-dame, and cups and saucers and plates of various patterns, borrowed up and down the Remove passage. In the jam-jars

Will he put himself right with his schoolfellows ?

on the mantelpiece there were fresh-cut flowers, borrowed from Mr. Mimble. The Co. had made quite an effort in this celebration of the return of the native. The Famous Five, and Vernon-Smith, and Ernest Levison gathered there, and Smithy's chum, Tom Redwing, had come with the Bounder, and Peter Todd had dropped in. Squiff and Tom Brown joined the party.

There was quite a crowd in Harry Wharton's study, all in high good humour. When Hazeldene and Lord Mauleverer passed the open doorway they were called in to join the festive party. Levison was the guest of honour, and every fellow had something kind and agreeable to say. The St. Jim's junior was looking very happy. Perhaps he understood Wharton's tact in gathering that little party of the best fellows in the Remove, which made it clear to all concerned that Levison, of St. Jim's, was regarded as one of the best, and that the old Levison, of Greyfriars, was quite forgotten. Bygones were bygones, and no references was made to the past. Some of the fellows present had not been at Greyfriars in Levison's time, and they knew him only by what they had heard—and they had heard a good many contradictory things about him. Probably, of all the Greyfriars juniors, Levison was the one that had been most talked of. Good or bad, or drifting between the two extremes, he had always made his mark.

But fellows who had not known him before were willing to accept him at the valuation of fellows who had known him.

So all, so to speak, was calm and bright.

Skinner, passing the study and glancing in, smiled sarcastically, and informed Scott and Snoop, in No. 11, that Levison was pulling the leg of the Eric brigade in great style. Skinner's opinion was that Levison was making sure of his position in his old school, before he ventured to break out into his old ways; that was the only explanation Harold Skinner could think of. And he admitted that it was clever of Levison.

"Might be genuine, you know," Stott remarked, in his slow way.

Stott was not nearly so bright and clever as Skinner, but sometimes he arrived, in his slow way, at facts to which Skinner remained blind, with all his cleverness.

Skinner sneered.

"Don't be an ass, old chap," he said; "or, if you can't help being an ass, don't be a silly ass!"

"Well, it looks——" said Stott.

"Wait till we get him in here to supper, with the door locked," said Skinner. "Wait till we get the cards and the smokes out."

"Of course, he's just pulling their leg," said Snoop.

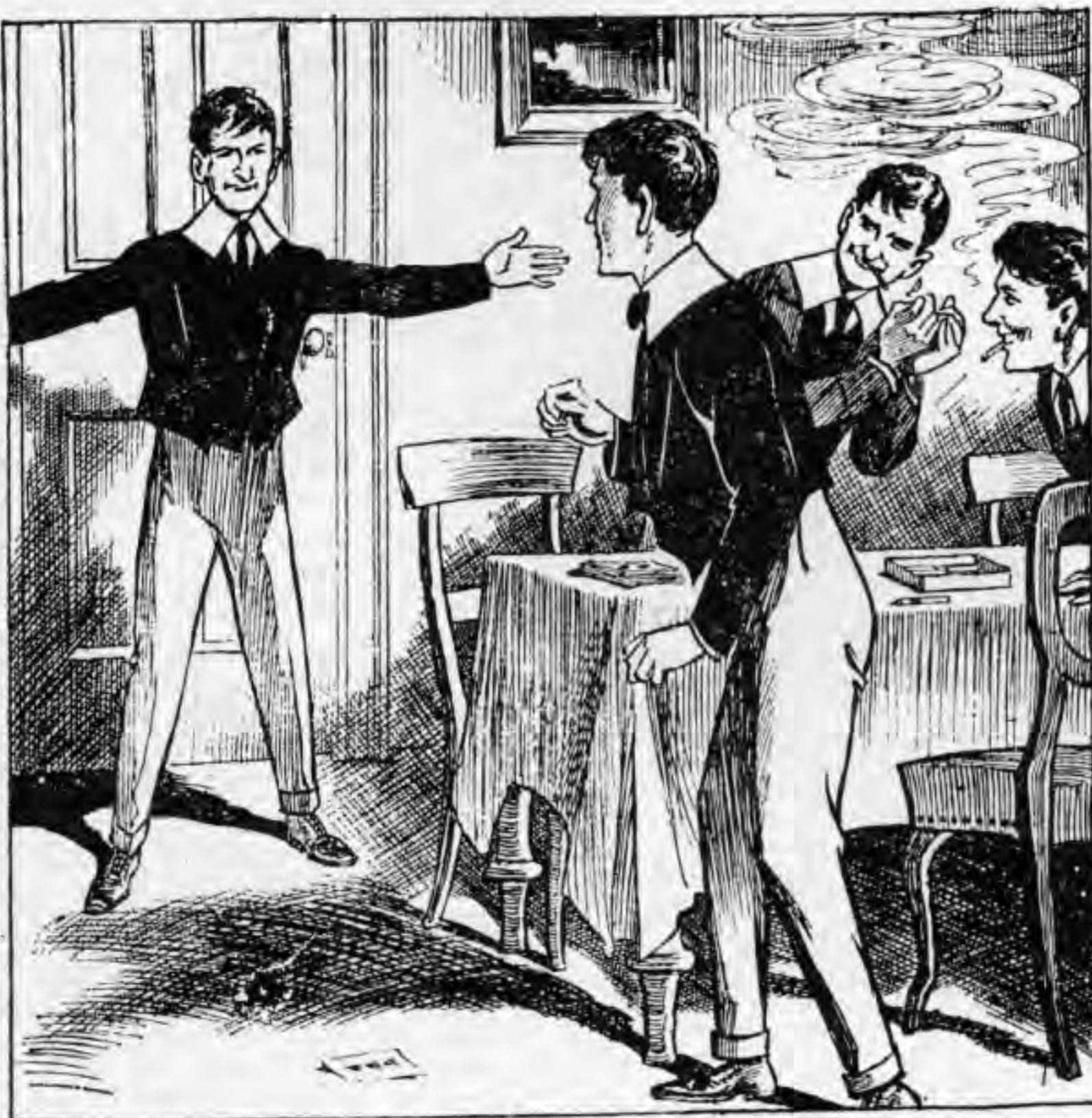
"Of course."

"Well, it looks to me——" persisted Stott.

"Oh, rats!"

Skinner spoke crossly, as if a doubt were crossing his own mind. Perhaps it was.

But nobody in No. 1 Study was wasting a thought upon Skinner, or upon his opinions. There was a cheery buzz of conversation in No. 1. Harry Wharton & Co. asked Levison a good deal about his life at St. Jim's, and Levison talked frankly and cheerily. That he was a regular member of Tom Merry's eleven was evidence enough that he had turned over a new leaf—though Skinner was too clever to be convinced by evidence.



"So long," said Levison, carelessly. "I'm willing to be friendly, but I don't smoke or gamble." Skinner stepped before him and put his back to the door. "What's this game, Levison?" he asked grimly. (See Chapter 8.)

Ernest Levison enjoyed that tea in No. 1 Study. All his doubts were gone, and he was on the best of footings with the fellows in the Remove that he liked and respected. So long as Frank, in the sanatorium, kept on the mend, there was no reason why his stay at Greyfriars should not be happy and unclouded.

The guests dropped off one by one, and Levison was left alone with Wharton and Nugent. He glanced at the clock, and rose to his feet.

"I'd better get off and see Mr. Quelch," he remarked. "He's going to tell me about a study while I'm here. It will be pleasant to dig in the old Remove passage again."

"I fancy you'll be welcome in any study," said Wharton, with a smile. "This among the others."

"Yes, rather!" assented Nugent.

"Thanks!"

"We'll see you as far as the lion's den," said Nugent.

And the three juniors left the study together, and went downstairs for the interview with Mr. Quelch.

Skinner was in the Remove passage, and he glanced at them with a sneering smile. When they were out of sight Skinner glanced up and down the passage, and slipped hastily into Study No. 1. He remained there only a few seconds, and came out as hastily as he had entered. He was smiling agreeably as he strolled away to his own quarters.

Wharton and Nugent returned to Study No. 1 a few minutes later, having left Ernest Levison with the Remove master.

They proceeded to put the study tidy, and to clear up the numerous tea-things.

"Levison's changed," Nugent remarked.

"Yes, rather," assented Wharton. "Not much like the old Levison who was here long ago. I believe he always had good in him."

"And it's come out strong," said Nugent, with a smile. "I'm glad of it. I'm rather glad he's staying on here for a few weeks."

"Same here!—As he will be in the Remove he can play for the Remove team," said Harry. "From the way we've seen him play for St. Jim's, I fancy he will be a valuable recruit, too."

"I fancy so."

Bob Cherry looked in at the doorway. "Clearing up the ruins?" he asked.

"I've come to lend a hand, and to carry off some of the chairs that belong to my study."

"Pile in!" said Harry.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob suddenly. "You young sweeps——"

"What?"

"Which of you has taken to smoking in his old age?"

"Smoking?"

"Yes, you reckless young sweeps!" said Bob. "Take warning, my young friends—the first step on the downward path——"

"Cheese it!" said Wharton. "What are you driving at? Don't be a funny goat, old chap, if you can help it!"

"Well, look there," said Bob, pointing to the carpet under a chair he had just moved.

Look out for "Under the Shadow!"—next week's fine story!

A fat Turkish cigarette lay on the carpet.

Wharton and Nugent stared at it. They had provided well for that little tea-party—it had been quite a magnificent spread. But most assuredly they had not provided smokes.

"My hat!" ejaculated Nugent.

"One of your giddy guests has been dropping his property around your study!" chuckled Bob. "Never mind my little joke; I know it doesn't belong to you chaps."

"Of course it doesn't," said Wharton, with a frown. "Some silly ass—Blessed if I can guess—unless Hazel is playing the goat again, in his old style."

"Let's see—who was in this chair?" asked Bob. "The fag must have been dropped by whoever was in this chair."

"Levison!"

"Oh!"

Bob Cherry looked a little queer as he stooped and picked up the cigarette. From its position under the chair, it certainly looked as if it had been dropped accidentally in taking something from the pocket. It was difficult to explain how it could have got there otherwise.

Wharton looked very uncomfortable.

"All rot!" he said. "It certainly didn't belong to Levison. We can't think that of a giddy guest. I know he used—"

"Dash it all, he wouldn't play his old games, when he's really a guest here!" said Nugent. "Besides, we know he's chucked up that dingy rot!"

"Hazel," said Bob—"Hazel's always going in for the giddy ox business, on and off. I'll give him a jaw!"

"Better chuck it in the fire," said Wharton uneasily.

Hazeldene, he knew, had been sitting on the other side of the table, and it did not seem probable that a cigarette belonging to him had found its way to the carpet under Levison's chair.

But Bob Cherry shook his head.

"My dear chap, you know Hazel," he said. "When the fit comes on him to play the giddy ox he goes ahead, and doesn't repent till he lands himself in a row—and then it's all hands to the mill to get him out of the scrape. I'm jolly well going to give it straight to Hazel."

And Bob Cherry quitted Study No. 1 with the cigarette in his hand. Wharton and Nugent exchanged a glance, and went on tidying their study in silence; but both of them were feeling extremely uncomfortable. A fellow might have a cigarette in his pocket, from sheer foolishness or thoughtlessness; and if it was that it did not matter. But if it was a sign that Levison of St. Jim's was Levison of the Remove over again, playing a more cunning game—But that uncomfortable thought the two juniors resolutely drove from their minds.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Past Revived!

ERNEST LEVISON came up the Remove staircase, and stopped at the door of Study No. 2, just as Bob Cherry thumped on the door of that apartment. Bob glanced round at him, and smiled.

"My study!" remarked Levison.

"You're going to dig in No. 2?"

"Yes. Mr. Quelch has just told me so."

"Come in, fathead!" called out Tom Brown, the New Zealander, in the study. Bob Cherry hurried the door open, in his usual energetic manner, and strode into the study with Levison.

Tom Brown and Hazeldene were in the study, which they shared. Bulstrode, who had shared the study with them the previous term, had left at the end of the term; and for the present there were only two in the study. Levison of St. Jim's was to make it three again.

"Trot in, Levison," said Hazel, with quite a cordial look. "Are you for this study, by any chance?"

"Mr. Quelch has sent me here," answered Levison. "No objection from you fellows, I hope."

"No fear!" said Hazel.

"Welcome, little stranger!" grinned Tom Brown. "Hallo! What have you got there, Bob? What the thump are you bringing cigarettes into this study for? You know I don't smoke, and Hazel's given it up."

"Has he?" grinned Bob.

"Yes, I have," grunted Hazeldene, not very amiably.

"This doesn't look like it."

Hazel stared at him.

"What the thump do you mean?" he asked. "If you're offering me that cigarette—"

"I'm not! It was picked up in Study No. 1 after the tea-party," explained Bob Cherry. "I'm looking for the owner, to tell him what I think of him."

"You silly ass! Do you think the owner's here?"

"Naturally."

"Look here—" began Tom Brown warmly.

"Peace, sonny!" said Bob Cherry, soothingly. "I know you're not the giddy goat. It's Hazel I'm going to scalp, for chucking cigarettes around in respectable studies."

"If it's yours, Hazel—"

"It's not," growled Hazeldene.

Bob Cherry looked at him sharply. Levison looked at the fire, carefully avoiding taking a part in what looked like becoming a warm argument. He did not want to signalise his arrival in his new study by taking part in a row.

"Mean that Hazel?" asked Bob, after a pause.

"Of course I do, fathead."

"Well, if you give me your word—"

"I don't take the trouble," growled Hazeldene. "Why should you suppose that the rubbish belongs to me?"

"Well, you're always playing the ox, on and off," said Bob amiably, "and I'm blessed if I can think of the owner, unless it was you, Hazel. But if you say it's not yours, that ends it, of course. It's jolly odd."

"You picked that up in Wharton's study?" asked Hazel.

"Yes; dropped under a chair."

"Then you'd better ask Wharton or Nugent about it. They're most likely to know, as owners of the study," sneered Hazel.

"I shouldn't think of asking them," said Bob coolly. "You see, I know they're not silly fools or silly goats. You've been licked more than once for smoking, so naturally I thought of you."

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

"Easy does it!" interposed Tom Brown amicably. "If you're keen on finding the owner, Cherry, you've only got to ask all the fellows who were at the tea-party. Besides, if a fellow dropped it there, it would be picked up near where he was sitting, I suppose."

"Was it found by my chair?" sneered Hazel.

"No; under Levison's chair."

"Levison!"

"Mine!" exclaimed Levison, looking round very quickly.

"Yes," said Bob.

"You might have suspected me, then," said Ernest Levison, with a faint smile.

"Oh, rot!" said Bob. "I thought it was Hazel's, of course. But if it wasn't, there's an end of the matter and of the cigarette, too!" And Bob threw the cigarette into the fire, and walked out of the study, and went along the Remove passage whistling.

Tom Brown gave Levison a very curious glance, but did not speak. He strolled out of the study, leaving Levison staring at the fire—with Hazeldene's eyes fixed on his profile.

There was silence in the study for some minutes. Hazel was the first to speak.

"Your old game, Levison, what?"

Levison looked round.

"How's that?" he asked.

"I suppose you dropped the fag in Wharton's study," said Hazel, with a light laugh.

"No."

"Who did, then?"

"Blessed if I know, or care."

"Queer that somebody else should drop it under your chair, old scout," said Hazel banteringly.

"Very," said Levison dryly.

Hazel crossed to the door, which Tom Brown had left open. He closed it, and then came back to the fire.

"What's the good of rotting?" he said.

"I'm not down on a fellow who puts on a fag occasionally. You can speak out to me, if you can't to Wharton."

Levison looked at him steadily.

"I suppose I can't blame you for that, Hazeldene," he said quietly. "You know that when I was at Greyfriars I was a smoky, shady bouncer, like Skinner and Stott. I don't deny it. I played the fool, and I had to pay for it. But fellows who know me now believe that I've turned my back on that kind of silly rot. I did not drop a smoke in Wharton's study, because I don't carry smokes about me, and so I couldn't. From what you say, though, I shouldn't be surprised if you did."

"I'm not a saint," sneered Hazel.

"I've chucked that kind of thing up. I came a cropper over it. Some fellows had to help me out, and they've rubbed it in ever since. But you used to go the pace, Levison, if half what they say about you is true."

"Probably it isn't."

"Well, fellows know what they know," said Hazel, sneering again. "You were turned out of Greyfriars for pub-haunting and other things, I know that. You may have turned over a new leaf at St. Jim's, but I can remember hearing St. Jim's fellows speak of you as the hardest case in the school."

"That was true, once," said Levison, wincing.

"Then this jolly old reform is quite recent?" said Hazel, in a bantering tone.

"More or less; but genuine, all the same."

Hazel looked at him, and his eyes dropped under Ernest Levison's steady gaze. He gave an impatient shrug of the shoulders, and dropped into his chair, and took up a book moodily.

"Well, if you're a giddy reformed character, don't let me lead you from the straight and narrow path," he sneered.

"You couldn't," said Levison coolly.

"And if you'll take a tip, Hazel, you'll stick yourself to what you call a straight and narrow path. It pays in the long run, besides being more decent."

"Satan rebuking sin!" chuckled Hazel.

Have you met the mysterious Mr. Fang?

"Fancy Levison of the Remove preachin' to a chap about being decent!"

"Well, I'm done," said Levison quietly. "I chucked up all that rot, and found that it was a good thing for me, that's all."

"That cigarette under your chair looks like it," grinned Hazel.

Levison flushed. "Can't you take my word about that?" he asked.

"Draw it mild! When you were a Greyfriars chap, did any fellow ever dream of taking your word?"

"I—I suppose—" Levison bit his lip hard. "Wharton takes my word now, at all events."

"He may, if he likes. What's the good of rotti'n'? I remember you pulled a St. Jim's fixture-card out of your pocket at tea to show us. I suppose you dropped the smoke at the same time."

"If that's what you think, Hazel, I can't help it," said Levison, keeping his temper. "I don't want to quarrel with you. Let's drop the subject."

"Any old thing," yawned Hazel.

He started on his prep, with a weary and dissatisfied look. Levison glanced at him once or twice half-compassionately, half-contemptuously. Hazel, always weak and wayward, was on his good behaviour at the present time, and likely to keep on it till temptation came in his way—not much longer than that.

Had Levison been his former self, Hazel would have welcomed the temptation to break out again, in his company, as a "giddy goat"; and there were few examples of reckless folly into which he could not have been led. Levison reflected grimly that it was as well for Hazel that he was not his old self. Hazel, however, was evidently vaguely disappointed and dissatisfied, and he did not speak again, maintaining a sullen silence towards his study-mate.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Not a Ragging!

"TROT in, old bean!"

Skinner spoke with effusive hospitality.

Snoop and Stott grinned as amiably as they could.

Prep was over in Study No. 11 early. Supper was on the table—the supper to which the St. Jim's junior had been invited. Levison came promptly to time.

He was smiling and polite, and his expression did not indicate that he wished himself anywhere but in Skinner's study. He had felt that civility constrained him to pay at least that one visit to his former friends; and he did not want to make enemies even of Skinner & Co. during his stay at Greyfriars. But he could not help seeing that Skinner & Co. were welcoming him as the "old Levison," and that they expected him to act up to his old character. He intended to keep friendly with the black sheep of the Remove, if he could; but there was a rigid line that he did not intend to pass, as Skinner was to discover.

For the moment, however, all was calm and bright. Quite a nice supper was on the table; and Levison, who had been for a sharp trot round the quadrangle, was ready to do it justice. He accepted the civilities of Skinner & Co. at face value, and sat down to supper hoping for the best.

Over supper, Skinner led the conversation to Levison's old exploits, which

had preceded his enforced departure from Greyfriars. Snoop and Stott chimed in with reminiscences. Levison avoided the topic as much as he could, with a feeling of more and more discomfort as the talk proceeded. He introduced the topic of the coming cricket-matches at Greyfriars; but that topic did not appeal to Skinner & Co. They knew and cared nothing about the matches; it was doubtful whether they even knew all the names on the Greyfriars fixture-list. Cricket had no chance as a topic in Study No. 11.

Levison was glad when supper ended. He was quite keen to join Harry Wharton & Co. in the Common-room downstairs. Once or twice his eyes wandered involuntarily to the clock on the mantel piece; and Skinner's eyes glittered as he noted it. Apparently Levison was bent on keeping up what Skinner persisted in regarding as his "humbug."

Supper over, Skinner produced a box from the table drawer.

"Here you are, old fellow!" he said.

"Chocs?" asked Levison.

"Ha, ha, ha! I keep them in a chocolate-box, in case they're spotted," grinned Skinner. "Give Levison a light, Snoopey!"

There were cigarettes in the chocolate-box when it was opened. Skinner and Snoop and Stott took one each, with an air, as they fondly believed, of men of the world. Levison did not take one.

"Here's your light, Levison," said Snoop.

"Thanks—I don't smoke!"

"Think Bunter's listening at the door?" asked Skinner.

"Eh! Why?"

Skinner opened the door, glanced into the passage, and closed it again.

"All serene," he said. "Put it on, Levison! Nobody to give you away to your pastors and masters in Study No. 11."

"I've said I don't smoke."

"Among pals, you know—" urged Skinner.

"I'll be getting along," said Levison, rising. "Thanks for the supper, Skinner!"

"You're not going yet," said Skinner amicably. "Dash it all, Levison, don't I keep on tellin' you it's all safe! We're goin' to have a round or two at banker."

"You used to win, you know," remarked Snoop. "I dare say you'll clean us out, Levison. We're going to chance it!"

"Here's the cards!" said Stott.

"Sit down, Levison."

Ernest Levison did not sit down. A gleam came into his eyes.

"So-long!" he said carelessly, and turned to the door.

Skinner stepped before him, and put his back to the door. Harold Skinner's look was decidedly unpleasant now.

"What's this game, Levison?" he asked. "Why don't you take a hand at banker? You used not to be afraid of losing your money. By gad, you used to win a good deal more than you lost."

"A jolly good deal more," said Snoop, with a nod. "Why, I remember you cleaned out Loder of the Sixth in the old days. You haven't seen Loder yet, Levison?"

"No; and don't mean to!"



Stott came at Levison with a spring. There was a brief struggle, and then Stott was swept off his feet. Crash! He landed on top of Skinner and Snoop, roaring. "Ta-ta," said Levison. "You'll find me in the Common-room if you want any more." (See Chapter 8.)

Read of his exploits in "The Man from Chinatown!"—next Monday!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 794.

"He was quite interested to hear you were coming," said Skinner. "You remember you used to smuggle in smokes for him."

"He can keep his interest! I intend to have nothing to do with him while I'm here."

"Or with us, it seems!" said Skinner, with a threatening look.

Levison shrugged his shoulders.

"I'm willing to be friendly if you choose," he said. "But I don't smoke, I don't gamble, I don't break bounds after lights-out; in fact, I don't do anything in your line. I'm afraid you'll find me so decent that I shall bore you to death."

"That sounds a bit more like old Levison," grinned Skinner. "You always had an edge to your tongue. I remember Wharton pitching into you—"

"You remember a good many things I'd rather forget, Skinner. Let me pass out, will you?"

"No, I won't," said Skinner coolly. "I've not done with you yet. I want to know what this silly game means. You've stuffed up the Head and Quelch; that's all right. You've stuffed up Wharton and his friends. I dare say it's a good idea—at first, at any rate. But I want to know why you're standing there telling blank lies to your old pals, who know you inside out and through and through."

"No good telling you it's the truth?" asked Levison.

"No good at all. I'm not exactly a fool!"

"Then it's not much good prolonging the conversation, is it?" asked Levison. "I want to speak to the fellows downstairs before dorm, so I'll go now."

Skinner's eyes glittered.

"You cheeky cad—"

"That will do, Skinner. Let me pass!"

"I'm not letting you pass, you cheeky hound!" said Skinner, between his teeth. "I'll give you another chance, Levison. We counted on you backing us up while you're here. You've got more brains than all Wharton's gang put together, if you choose to use them. If we stick together, we might even give those cads a fall. But if you're going to throw over your old friends, and back up those rotters—"

"Rotten sneak!" said Stott.

"Just like old Levison," said Snoop. "Nobody ever could depend on him for ten minutes together."

"Well, what do you say, Levison?" resumed Skinner.

"Nothing, except that if you don't let me get at that door, I'll sling you out of the way!" said Levison coolly.

"You mean that?"

"Quite."

"Then you're booked for a ragging!" said Skinner savagely. "Collar him, you fellows!"

"Dash it all!" muttered Stott. "You can't ask a fellow into your room, and then rag him. Chuck it, Skinner."

"Don't be a fool, Stott! Collar him, I tell you!"

Skinner advanced on Levison, and Snoop followed him up. Stott, after a moment's hesitation, back up his comrades.

Levison smiled, a grim smile. The Levison of old days, the weedy slacker Skinner had once known, would have been booked for a ragging, with three against him in the study. But Levison the footballer, Levison the cricketer, was quite a different Levison. He did not

step back a pace as the three black sheep of the Remove advanced upon him.

"Better chuck it," he suggested. "I don't want trouble in this study. Let a chap pass in peace, and don't play the goat!"

"Down him!" growled Skinner. And he rushed on.

Levison had not been known as much of a boxer in his old days at Greyfriars. But at St. Jim's he was known as a fighting-man of the best quality.

What happened next Harold Skinner hardly knew; but he knew that his savage drive at Levison went nowhere, and that something that seemed like a lump of iron collided with his chin.

The next he knew he was rolling under the study table, feeling as if his chin had been driven through the back of his head; and his next discovery was that Sidney James Snoop was falling with a crash across his sprawling legs.

"Ow! Ow! Ow!"

"Whoop! Oh, my hat! Groogh!"

"Oh dear!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Stott came at Levison with a spring, and closed with him. There was a brief struggle; then Stott was swept off his feet.

Crash!

Frederick Stott sprawled over Skinner and Snoop, roaring.

Ernest Levison set his tie straight, and smiled as he glanced down at the three. He opened the door.

"Ta-ta!" he said lightly. "You'll find me in the Common-room if you're keen on more trouble."

And he walked out of the study.

"Ow! Gerroff!" gasped Skinner.

Skinner shoved Stott off, and sat up breathlessly. He clapped both hands to his chin.

"Ow! Ow! Ow! Wow!"

"Oh crumbs!" groaned Snoop. "Oh, my eye! I believe I'm going to have a black eye! You idiot, Skinner! Ow!"

"M-m-m-m-m-m-m-m-m!" came from Stott.

Skinner staggered to his feet. His face was white with rage.

"Let's go after the cad and handle him!" he panted.

"Ow!"

"Wow!"

"Come on, you funks!" howled Skinner.

"Go after him if you like!" gasped Snoop, sinking into the armchair, and clasping his damaged eye with anguish.

"Ow! You silly idiot! What did you want to rag the chap for! Ow! Ow!"

"Stott—"

"Oh, shut up!" snarled Stott.

Evidently the fighting-blood in Study No. 11 had cooled down. And Skinner, when he reflected a little, realised that he did not want to "go after" Levison. Ernest Levison was altogether too hard a nut to be cracked by Skinner & Co. —in the fistful line, at least!

"I'll make him sit up!" groaned Skinner, nursing his chin.

"Ow! Ow!"

"Wow!"

It was not a happy evening in Skinner's study.

Long after Levison had joined Harry Wharton & Co., the three cads of the Remove were nursing their injuries in Study No. 11.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Very Clever of Skinner!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. greeted Levison pleasantly when he came into the junior Common-room. Once or twice Levison was noticed to rub his knuckles; and the chums of the Remove made no remark on it, though they could guess that there had been trouble somewhere—especially when Billy Bunter rolled in with the news that Skinner & Co. were bathing damaged features.

Levison made no allusion to the trouble in Study No. 11. He seemed chiefly interested in the coming cricket features; possibly regretting a little that he would not be playing at St. Jim's. It was when Wingate came along to shepherd the juniors off to their dormitory that Levison made a quiet allusion to the incident of the cigarette in Study No. 1, as the Removites were going down the corridor.

"Somebody picked up a smoke under my chair in your study, after tea, I understand, Wharton?" he said, in a low voice.

"That's so," said Harry.

"It did not belong to me."

"I'm sure of it, old scout."

"Good!"

Harry Wharton was puzzled, for he believed Hazel's denial, which Bob had reported to him—and he believed Levison's. He had asked the Bounder; and Smithy had also denied all knowledge of the cigarette. There was no other member of the tea-party who could be supposed to have had smokes about him: so it was rather a mystery how it had come into the study. Skinner could have explained the mystery, no doubt; but the captain of the Remove naturally did not think of Skinner. He was puzzled; but he was glad that Levison had spoken out frankly on the subject.

In the dormitory Skinner scowled blankly at Levison, and Stott and Snoop gave him inimical looks. With all his desire to be friendly with every member of his old Form, Levison had made enemies already. But he could scarcely blame himself for that. Skinner & Co. had given him no choice in the matter.

Some of the juniors grinned at the sight of Skinner's chin and Snoop's shadowed eye. They connected those indications, with Levison's rubbing of his knuckles. Possibly some of them had wondered whether the one-time "hard case" of Greyfriars had gone to Skinner's study to play the old game, nap or banker. But it was clear enough now that the St. Jim's fellow was on the worst of terms with his former associates at Greyfriars.

Levison paid no heed to the trio.

He went to bed and was soon sleeping soundly—as soundly in the Remove quarters as in the Fourth Form dormitory at St. Jim's.

Skinner remained awake a good deal later.

An ache in his chin worried him, and his bitter, revengeful thoughts had a still more disturbing effect. Skinner was not a fellow to forgive an injury, real or fancied; and he considered that he had been deeply injured in this case. He had been prepared to welcome back Levison on the old terms—indeed, to make much of him. Levison had changed, and Skinner persisted in regarding the change as humbug, pure and simple. A

(Continued on page 17.)

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Supplement No. 122.

HARRY WHARTON
EDITOR

Week Ending April 28th, 1923.

BEDS OR A LIVELY DEBATE IN BY OUR SPECIAL

AT the last general meeting of the Remove Form, Tom Redwing came out with the astounding proposal that hammocks should be substituted for beds in the Remove dormitory.

The Chairman (Harry Wharton): "That's just the sort of potty suggestion that one might expect from the son of a sailor!"

Tom Redwing: "Hammocks are a jolly sight more comfy than beds! You can curl up like a dormouse, and sleep as sound as a top. Besides, you can swing yourself to sleep."

Dick Russell: "That's so. Let's put up a petition to the Head, asking for hammocks to be provided in place of beds."

Mingled chorus of "Hear, hear!" and "Rats!"

The Chairman: "What has Lord Mauleverer, the soundest sleeper in the Remove, to say on the subject?"

Lord Mauleverer: "I'm not in favour of hammocks, begad! It's bad enough to be pitched out of bed when risin'-bell goes, but a fellow who was pitched out



of a hammock would fall farther an' fare worse!" (Laughter.)

The Chairman: "What are the views of the Remove prize porpoise on this matter?"

Billy Bunter: "I say, you fellows, it would have to be a mighty big hammock that would accommodate me!" (Laughter.) "I'm not at all keen on the idea. Supposing the blessed thing broke down in the middle of the night?"

Bob Cherry: "You'd share the fate of Humpty-Dumpty. We should have to revive the nursery rhyme, as follows:

HAMMOCKS? THE COMMON ROOM! REPORTER.

"Bunty, Bunty, in a hammock did lay,
The hammock-cords broke, I'm sorry
to say.

All the King's horses, and all the
King's men,
Couldn't put Bunty together again!"

Micky Desmond expressed the opinion that sleeping in hammocks would be great fun. "Shure, an' I think we ought to put the petition to the Head right away!" said Micky.

A spirited debate followed, in the course of which there was a lively scrimmage, resulting in several black eyes and swollen noses.

Order having been restored, the Chairman put the question to the vote, and Tom Redwing's proposal was defeated.

The voting resulted as follows:

Against Hammocks	...	...	24
For Hammocks	...	...	18
Majority			6



THE night life of Greyfriars has a special romance of its own.

Let not the gentle and guileless reader imagine for one moment that we go to bed in order to sleep! Beds are made to be slept upon, it is true; but we prefer to play leap-frog over them, or dance on them, or stand on them and wield our pillows and bolsters against the attacks of the enemy.

The real fun of the day doesn't begin until "Lights Out." Then we get up to all manner of larks, and "Vex with mirth the drowsy ear of night," as old Byron has it.

EDITORIAL!

What a tame thing life would be if we laid our heads on the pillows at bedtime, and slept soundly until rising-bell! No pillow-fights; no midnight feasts; nothing to brighten the monotony of existence. It is unthinkable!

Judging from the many letters I have received, our readers are very keen to hear all they can about the night life of Greyfriars. Lots of exciting things can be written about the revels in which we can take part between dusk and dawn; and so the fiat went forth that we were to have a Special Dormitory Number of the "Greyfriars Herald." My contributors have put their shoulders to the wheel, the result is now in your hands. I don't want you to think that there is anything very harmful about our nocturnal escapades. We do not follow in the footsteps of Loder of the Sixth, who breaks bounds in order to visit undesirable places. Oh dear, no! We can get all the fun we want at Greyfriars, and jolly good fun it is, too.

A dormitory would be a pretty cheerless sort of place if nothing ever happened in it except snoozing and snoring. Fortunately, lots of other things do happen in it, as you will find on perusing this issue.

And here I am going to take the opportunity of giving my chums a few tips regarding the MAGNET'S Limerick Competition. I don't know that our Editor will agree with me, and he might blue-pencil this little lot. But as he has always been a sport, I think he will let it go through. (Lucky you put that in! I fall by your flattery, Harry!—Ed. C.P.)

My first tip is—do not try and make a pun on the names of the fellows. Every boy and girl will be trying that. For instance, "Bolsover—Bowls Over," has been done time and time again. "Skinner—Skin Her," is as old as the hills also. The great thing to aim at is originality. The Competition gives plenty of scope for real tryers—and the money prizes will go to readers who show that they have been really trying, not slapping down any old thing! That's plain, chums, and I hope it will be helpful!

More Special Numbers to come, my chums! Pass round the joyful tidings!

HARRY WHARTON.

A special "Cricket" Supplement next on the programme!



THE MIDNIGHT CRUSADERS!

A tale of a glorious mix-up.

By TOM BROWN.

I.
HARRY WHARTON sat up in his bed in the Remove dorm.

"What's the programme for to-night, you fellows?" he asked. "I vote fully propose that we toss the fat and ludicrous Bunter in a blanket," said Hurree Singt.

"Oh, really, Inky!" protested the fat junior. "What have I done?"

"Nothing. But I want to see how high you bounce."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What about raiding the Fifth, and treating them to a good, slap-up pillow fight?" suggested Bob Cherry.

The idea caught on. Fellows leapt out of bed, arming themselves with pillows and bolsters. Everybody was keen to have a smack at the high-and-mighty Fifth-Formers. Even such weaklings as Alonzo Todd and Snoop turned out, armed to the teeth.

"Better wait till the clock strikes midnight," said Harry Wharton. "Then I'll lead the way into the enemy's camp."

"Good!"

And the Remove warriors, on tip-toe with excitement, prepared for the fray.

II.

Horace Coker sat up in his bed in the Fifth Form dormitory.

"It's high time we declared war on those cheeky Remove fags," he said. "They want a jolly good wallop, just to put them in their places. Let's arm ourselves with pillows and things, and take the Remove dormitory by storm."

"Quite a good wheeze," said Blundell. "But we're not going to have a clumsy idiot like you in command, Coker. I'll lead our army into battle. You can be my first lieutenant, if you like. But for goodness' sake don't put your boots on, or the Remove kids will hear you coming when you're a mile off."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We won't commence hostilities till midnight," said Blundell. "I've an idea that old Prout's on the prowl, and we don't want to run into him."

"No jolly fear!"

Arming themselves with pillows and bolsters, the Fifth-Formers turned out of bed, and waited impatiently for the midnight chimes.

III.

Cecil Reginald Temple sat up in his bed in the Upper Fourth dormitory.

"You fellows awake?" he asked.

"Yes, rather!"

"'Tis many moons," said Temple, "since we had a pillow fight. What about raiding the Shellfish in their den?"

"I'm game!" said Dabney. "It's about time Hobson & Co. were put through the mill."

"Supposing we pay a surprise visit to their dorm at midnight?" said Fry. "We'll take our pillows and bolsters along, and lay about us right lustily."

"If any fellow has no stomach for the fight, let him speak out now, or for ever hold his peace," said Temple dramatically.

But nobody backed out. The Fourth-Formers were very keen on getting to grips with the Shell. They promptly turned out, under the command of Cecil Reginald Temple, straining their ears for the first stroke of midnight, which would be the signal for hostilities to commence.

IV.

James Hobson sat up in his bed in the Shell dormitory.

"That fellow Temple's been getting too big for his shoes lately," said Hobson. "I'm simply spoiling for a scrap, and it would be a good idea to spring a surprise on the Upper Fourth at midnight, and sock into 'em with our pillows."

"That's quite a happy wheeze of yours, Hobby," said Claude Hoskins. "'Tis now the very witching hour of night—anyway, it's on the verge of midnight."

"Tumble out, everybody!" commanded Hobson. "And as soon as the clock strikes we'll sally forth to the fray. Temple & Co. will have the shock of their lives."

"Yes, rather!"

Chuckling gleefully, the Shell fellows turned out in the darkness, and groped for their implements of warfare.

V.

Boom!

Midnight began to sound from the old clock-tower.

At the first stroke of the hour there

MY BENEFACTOR!

By Lord Mauleverer.

Who puts me in my little bed,
And piles the pillows round my head,
Then steals away with noiseless tread?
Bob Cherry!

Who wakes me up at half-past four,
And murmurs, "Maully, please don't snore,
Because it shakes the blessed floor?"
Bob Cherry!

Who, when the rising-bell rings out,
Leaps out of bed with merry shout,
And gets a sponge—for me, no doubt?
Bob Cherry!

Who squeezes water down my back,
And says I'm stodgy, slow, and slack,
Who makes me groan "Alas! Alack!"?
Bob Cherry!

Who hurls me forth upon the floor,
Mixed up with sheets and clothes galore,
Who bumps me till I'm bruised and sore?
Bob Cherry!

Yet who, despite his playful ways,
Deserves a special word of praise
For all the vigour he displays?
Bob Cherry!

was a general exodus from the Remove dormitory, the Fifth Form dormitory, the Upper Fourth dormitory, and the Shell dormitory.

Four rival armies, all unknown to each other, were going into battle. And they all collided on the same landing!

Pandemonium, almost beyond description, broke loose in the darkness.

"What the thump—" began Harry Wharton.

"Who the dickens—" gasped Temple.

"What on earth—" muttered Hobson.

"The Remove are here!" thundered Coker's voice above the uproar. "I heard Wharton's voice. Pile in!"

The next moment a wild and whirling fight was in progress on the landing.

Everybody hit out blindly. Nobody could tell who was friend and who was foe. There were biffs and thuds and crashes and howls, and the uproar was truly terrific.

There was a terrific crash as somebody's pillow caught the globe protecting the gas-mantle in the corridor.

"Careful, you asses!" roared Coker. "Mind the broken glass!"

There was a slight movement, and that part where the splintered glass lay was carefully avoided. But the battle went on, and the din increased every minute.

"Ow!"

"Yow—yooooop!"

"Ow! My napper!"

The battle was at its height when Mr. Prout came on the scene. The blinding glare of his electric torch revealed an extraordinary scene.

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry, rolling over and over, were pummelling each other for all they were worth. So were Coker and Blundell. So were Temple and Dabney. And so, also, were Hobson and Hoskins.

"Stop!" thundered Mr. Prout. "Let this unseemly hooliganism cease! How dare you resort to such horseplay when you ought to be fast asleep? Coker! Blundell! You both belong to a senior Form—my own Form—and I shall hold you jointly responsible for this outrage. You will wait upon me in my study after breakfast in the morning. To your beds, all of you!"

Friends and foes sorted themselves out, and there was a general stampede to the dormitories.

What happened to Blundell and Coker I can't say. But the Remove got off scot-free—except for the fact that Wharton has a black eye, and Bob Cherry a swollen nose. It transpired afterwards that Wharton had mistaken Cherry for Coker, and Cherry had mistaken Wharton for Blundell!

THE END.

"Cricket in the Stone Age!" by Tom Brown. Look out for it!



THE PLUCK OF "GINGER" NOBB!

A "nailing" good story, which will "rivet" your interest from start to finish.

By DICKY NUGENT.

"COWARDS! Yah!"

"Ginger" Nobb threw a scornful glance round the Fourth Form dormitory, and the fellows ducked distinctively.

"There's not one of you who has got curridge enuff to go down to the villidge in the silent clocks of the night and fetch some grub so that we can have a mid-night feast!" said Ginger.

"It's a dark and stormy night!" said Freddie Funck.

"There are lots of masters on the prowl!" said Charlie Craven.

"Better go yourself, Ginger!" advised Chris Coldfeet, who was kaptin of the Fourth Form at St. Cuthbert's.

"I will," said Ginger. "I'll put a dummy in my bed first so that if one of the beaks happens to come in he'll think it's me."

Ginger Nobb got hold of a bolster, and put some pijjamers on it, and a wig, and painted a pear of eyes, a nose, and a mouth, so that the dummy resembled a human figger. Then he placed the dummy in his bed and drew the bed-clothes over it.

After these manoeuvres, Ginger dressed himself swiftly in the darkness. Then, flicking his fingers in his skoolfellows' faces in scornful content, Ginger quitted the dormitory.

It was, as Freddie Funck had observed, a dark and stormy night. And Ginger's mission was frawt with peril. But he didn't falter. Was he afraid of the dark? Bah! Was he afraid of prowling masters? Yah!

Although he didn't happen to have a screwdriver on him, Ginger screwed up his curridge and stole down the dark stares. Then he made his way to the boxroom-window and clambered through, and dropt down into the quad.

He was over the skool wall in a flash. Then he raced away towards the villidge. The thunder flashed around him, and the lightning rumbled and roared. But he didn't falter. Was he afraid of the raging elements? Bah!

The midnight chimes were sounding when Ginger reached the bunshop. The old dame who kept the shop had gone to roost many hours since.

"Having knocked the prefecks down, I might as well knock the old dame up!" chuckled Ginger. And he beat a tattoo on the door with his nuckles.

An upper window was thrown open and the nightcapped head of old Dame Stuffingham appeared.

"Who is it?" she asked. "Borglars?"

"It's only me!" cried Ginger.

"Mercy me! What do you want at this time of night, Master Nobb?"

"A hamper of tuck," was the reply. "Buck up and get one ready for me."

After a long delay the old dame appeared with the hamper. It was a hefty thing, but Ginger heaved it on to his sholder without any trubble.

"Thanks, ma!" he said. "I'll pay for this when my ship comes home. It's

been on the way for years. Good-night!"

Ballancing the hamper on one sholder, Ginger raised his cap with the other, and set off along the villidge street.

He hadn't gone very far when the portly form of P.-c. McNabb loomed up in the darkness.

"Alt!" cried the constable.

"Ratts!"

"Alt! That's wot I'm a-tellin' of yer!"

"More ratts!"

Snorting with rage, McNabb seazed his trunchon, and the next minnit it would have dessended on Ginger's scull had not our hero dodged to one side.

Placing the tuck-hamper on the ground, Ginger then rushed at the constable with clenched fist and gave him a broadside amidships.

The blow landed in the bread-basket, and the portly McNabb kollapsed on the pavement, making a noise like a punk-chered football.



Ginger rushed at the constable with clenched fists.

Having placed the constable hors-de-combat, Ginger hurried away in the direckshun of St. Cuthbert's. He hoped to get back to the skool without Miss Happ, whoever that young lady might be. But alas!

The Head had already paid a visit to the Fourth Form dormitory to see if everything was all right.

"Coldfeet!" wrapped out the Head, addressing the kaptin of the Form. "Is everybody hear?"

"Yessir!"

The Head looked far from konvinced. "I beleave you're kidding me," he said. "Anyway, I'll make sure that you are all prezzant. Answer your names! Funck."

"Hear, sir!"

"Nobb!"

No reply.

"Nobb!" repeated the Head in toans of thunder.

Still no reply.

The Head's brow was black as ink as he strode towards Ginger's bed.

"Can't you hear me shouting, Nobb?" he roared. "Getting deaf in your old age? My only aunt! If you don't answer me I'll birch you till you squeel for mersy!"

Not a sound came from Ginger's bed. The Head grabbed hold of the occupant and started shaking it.

"Why, bless my hart and sole alive!" he gasped. "It's a dummy figger!"

A number of beds began to creak owing to the violent shivering of the occupants.

"Where is Nobb, alias 'Ginger-nut'?" demanded the Head.

"Please, sir," whimpered the mizzervable Funck, "he's gone down to the villidge."

"What 4?"

"I hezzit-8 to say, sir."

It was at this drammatick moment that Ginger Nobb came into the dormitory with the tuck-hamper. He nearly dropped the hamper with a sickening thud when he caught sight of the Head.

"So you have returned, Nobb?" said the Head sternly. "What's in that hamper?"

"Tuck, sir."

The Head's stern countenance melted as if by magic. Trooth to tell, he was feeling rather peckish. His wife had given him a very froggal supper.

"Any doe-nuts in that hamper?" asked the Head.

"Duzzens of 'em, sir!"

"You haven't a rabbit-pie, by any chance?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

"Good! That's my mark! I've been saying a lot of unkind things about you, Nobb, but I will now eat my words—also a portion of the rabbit-pie, if I may."

"Pile in, sir!" said Ginger cheerfully.

The Head squatted on the floor and took part in the midnight feast. He piled in like a ravvenus skoolboy, and he was so fool at the finish that he could hardly totter to his feet.

"Mum's the word, my boys!" he said, winking at the Fourth-Formers. "This little orgy is strickly between ourselves. Not a word to the rest of the skool. Twigg?"

"Eye, eye, sir!"

The Head swept out of the dormitory with russling gown.

"He's a real brick!" said Ginger Nobb, sotto vocey.

"Thank you!" sed the Head, coming suddenly back into the dorm. "There's one thing more, you fags. If I ever catch eny of you bunkin down to the villidge after lites out, I'll have to give you a thick ear a peace just to keep my end up! Dizzy plin must be kept up. Savvy?"

He chuckled, and, pooting his finger along his nose, he gave the boys a saucy wink. That was the end of that feast.

THE END.

Some brilliant treats in store, chums!

DORMITORY SPORT!



By H. Vernon-Smith.

I SINCERELY hope the Head won't happen to read this column, or he will come down with a heavy hand on our nocturnal revels! The fact is, we held a Grand Sports Meeting in the Remove dormitory a few nights ago. There were no prizes, but the competitors threw themselves heart and soul into the various events.

The first event was an obstacle race. The competitors had to jump over beds, vault over washstands, and take flying leaps over lockers. Billy Bunter entered for this contest, but the first obstacle—his own bed—proved too much for him. He simply floundered on to the bed, and lay there like a newly-landed fish, while the others jumped over him. The honours went to Frank Nugent, whose prowess

as a high-jumper stood him in good stead.

The second event was one which called for a good deal of acrobatic skill. We had to walk round the dormitory on our hands, and a fellow who lost his balance and toppled over was promptly disqualified. It was a most amusing race. Wun Lung and Oliver Kipps outdistanced everyone else, and finished first and second, respectively. Needless to state, Bunter did not compete. It was no race for an unwieldy porpoise!

The next item on the programme led to much smashing of crockeryware. We had to balance water-jugs on our heads, and the fellow who kept it up longest was adjudged the winner. Unfortunately, lots of fellows couldn't keep it up at all! Seven jugs were broken altogether, and we were afraid that the din would bring a master on the scene. But we were in luck's way. The winner was Bolsover major, on whose big cranium the jug rested safely and securely.

The pillow-fighting contest was the most exciting event of all—a sort of grand finale. We were drawn in pairs, and you had to swipe at your opponent until either he or you were knocked down. After a series of thrilling bouts Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull reached the final. And they went for each other hammer-and-tongs. There was a chorus of Biff! Thud! Biff! Thud! And there were cries of "Sock it into him, Bob!" and "Paste him, Johnny!" For a long time there was nothing to choose between the combatants; but at last Bob Cherry got the upper hand, and Johnny Bull went to the floor with a crash that fairly shook the room. We then hopped into bed, tired out with our exertions. And we are eagerly looking forward to the next Dormitory Sports Meeting.

DORMITORY DITTIES!

By DICK PENFOLD.

When Bunter beholds a wash basin
He never, by chance, puts his face in;
Says Gosling, the porter,
"He'll never touch water,
This 'ere school he is surely disgracin'!"

When Mauly gets up with the sparrow,
"I'm frozen," he says, "to the marrow!"
We rise, at this school,
By a hard-and-fast rule,
I wish they would shunt me to Harrow!"

"I'm famished!" old Bunter once said,
"With hunger I'll soon be quite dead!"
We felt very sad
For the ravenous lad,
So we made him an apple-pie—bed!

A bully named Bolsover major
Broke bounds in the night, for a wager;
Old Quelch gave chase,
But soon slackened his pace,
And panted: "I'm quite an old stager!"

A fellow named Oliver Kipps
Once sighted a total eclipse;
'Twas such a strange sight
He saw in the night,
That he quaked, and went white to the lips.

A comical master named Prout,
With his rifle went prowling about;
A burglar he sighted,
And aimed, quite delighted,
But found he had left his shot out!

A merry young joker, Tom Brown,
Togged up in the night as a clown;
He hopped and he danced,
And he revelled and pranced,
But he fled when he saw the Head's gown!

DORMITORY RULES!



How they would be drawn up if
DICK PENFOLD happened to be
Headmaster of Greyfriars.

The boy who holds a midnight feast
Will be chastised, the gorging beast!

The boy who dances on his bed
Will be reported to the Head.

The boy who snores just like a siren
Will write a hundred lines from Byron.

The boy who wanders in his sleep,
Tied to his bed with straps I'll keep.

Eating in bed is strictly barred:
The penalty is six months' hard!

The infant tossed up in a blanket,
I'll catch it when it falls, and spank it!

The boy who shouts and screams at night
I'll castigate with all my might!

The boy who rises with the lark
Will win from me a kind remark.

The boy who sleeps till half-past nine,
I'll send cold shivers down his spine!

When the lights are once put out,
Do not talk and do not shout!

Keep windows open through the night,
Fresh air's good—it will not bite!

When you wash in early morn
Take care the walls you don't adorn!

When you hear the rising-bell
Jump up at once—all will be well!

The boy who carries out each maxim
Will find that no one ever smacks him.

If you've a dread of castigations
Pray don't defy these regulations.

Let peace prevail in every dorm,
Or, by my beard, I'll make things warm.

Broadcast the wonderful value in the MAGNET!

THE BOY WITH A BAD NAME!

(Continued from page 12.)

quarrel had been inevitable, in the circumstances; and Skinner had had the worst of the quarrel.

Somewhat or other he was going to make the St. Jim's junior suffer for it; somehow or other he was going to "show up" the humbug by which Levison was imposing on the other fellows—any means that came Skinner's way were welcome.

Heedless of his enemy—in fact, forgetful of his existence—Levison of St. Jim's slept well that night, and turned out bright and cheerful in the morning. He was one of the first down of the Remove, and he spent a pleasant hour before breakfast in strolling round the old school, visiting every place he had known in the old days.

After breakfast he called at the sanatorium. He was unable to see Frank, whose chief need was to be kept perfectly quiet and in repose; but the matron gave him a favourable account of his brother, and there was nothing for Levison to worry about. He began to think that his few weeks at Greyfriars would be spent very agreeably; as for Skinner & Co., he dismissed them from his mind. He supposed that he had done with Skinner.

In the Remove Form-room that morning, Levison received a kindly nod from Mr. Quelch. He had been very far from being in the Remove master's good graces in the old days, having been, in fact, the most troublesome member of the Form, and generally under the eye of suspicion. That was all changed now. Mr. Quelch knew Levison's record at his new school; and the junior's quiet attention to his work was a proof of his change. Mr. Quelch was quite satisfied with him now, and Skinner, as he saw it, marvelled at Levison's wonderful power of spoofing in deceiving even the lynx-eyed Remove master. Skinner was not inclined to admit that Mr. Quelch saw more clearly than Harold Skinner himself.

Levison acquitted himself well that morning, quite to Mr. Quelch's satisfaction. He came out of the Form-room after class, with Harry Wharton & Co.

Skinner watched them as they walked out cheerily into the quadrangle, with a sour and bitter grin.

"Thick as thieves now!" he remarked to Snoop and Stott.

"Looks like it," said Sidney James Snoop. "You've made a mistake about him, Skinny. He's really gone goody."

"I told you so!" remarked Stott.

Skinner sneered.

"Gammon!" he answered. "He's keeping it up well; but he will give himself away sooner or later. You know what Levison was always like. He's bound to break out."

"Rot!"

"Hazel's been telling me about a smoke picked up in the study after Levison had tea there," said Skinner. "They thought Hazel had dropped it there, and he seems to have had a row with Bob Cherry about it. I don't believe it was Hazel."

"Levison?" asked Snoop.

"Well, what does it look like?" argued Skinner.

"I'll tell you what it looks like," said Stott grimly. "It looks as if you've been

playing tricks, Skinner. And you'd better be jolly careful not to get spotted!"

And Stott walked away with that.

Snoop chuckled.

"Is that it?" he asked.

"Suppose it is," growled Skinner. "Why shouldn't a fellow show up a rotten humbug who's pulling the wool over the other fellow's eyes?"

"I'm with you, all the way!" said Snoop cordially, rubbing his damaged eye. "I'd like to show him up, and get him cut by those fellows while he's at Greyfriars! It would serve him right!"

"There are ways and means!" remarked Skinner.

And the two worthy pals discussed ways and means till dinner-time. The afternoon being a half-holiday, Levison borrowed a bicycle to go on a spin with the Famous Five; and he came back at tea-time looking ruddy and cheerful.

In the evening Skinner looked into Study No. 2, where he found Levison with Tom Brown and Hazeldene, the three studying a section of that great poem, "Paradise Lost," in readiness for the morrow. Skinner gave Levison a nod.

"Busy?" he asked.

"Yes!" answered Levison tersely.

"Well, I won't interrupt!" said Skinner. "Do you mind if I let that little account stand over till next Saturday?"

Levison stared at him. Brown and Hazeldene looked up.

"What little account?" demanded Levison.

"The half-crown I owe you!"

"You don't owe me a half-crown."

"Eh?"

"What do you mean?" demanded Levison, puzzled and angry. "I haven't lent you any money that I know of."

"I know you haven't. I mean—" Skinner paused. "All serene, old top; I see I've put my foot in it. I'll see you later."

"Look here, Skinner—"

But Skinner retired, and shut the door, leaving Levison with his brows knitted. Tom Brown looked astonished.

"What's the giddy mystery about?" he asked.

There was a chuckle from Hazeldene.

"So that's the jolly old new leaf, is it?" he said. "After sermonising me, Levison, you went playing cards with Skinner!"

"I did nothing of the kind!"

"You were in his study last evening."

"That was for supper. And, if you want to know, we had a row because I wouldn't play cards!" grunted Levison.

"Then, how does he come to owe you half-a-crown?"

"He doesn't."

Hazel whistled.

"Don't you believe me?" snapped Levison.

"Well, it sounds rather thick, doesn't it?" grinned Hazel. "Skinner's about the last fellow in the world to part with money if he can help it. Isn't he, Brownie?"

"The very last, I fancy!" assented the New Zealand junior, with a curious look at Levison.

"And he says he owes Levison half-a-crown, and Levison says he doesn't. He's going to pay next Saturday a half-crown he doesn't owe!" Hazel chuckled explosively. "I can see him doing it!"

Levison rose from the table. His face was set and grim.

"I'm going to have this out with Skinner!" he said. "If it's one of his little jokes, I don't see the point of it."

"I don't, either!" grinned Hazel.

"Same here!" said Tom Brown dryly.

Levison, with a dark brow, quitted the study. Hazel and the New Zealander looked at one another.

"Same old game!" remarked Hazel.

"Looks like it. But—"

Tom Brown shrugged his shoulders, and returned to his study of Milton. He did not know what to make of the incident, and, as it was no business of his, he dismissed it from his mind.

Levison returned to the study a few minutes later. His brow was still dark and his tie disarranged.

"Been scrapping with Skinner?" asked Hazel.

"Yes."

"Does he still owe you half-a-crown?"

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

And Levison said no more.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Hav'ng It Out!

ON Monday, Skinner made himself conspicuous in the Remove by attempts to borrow half-a-crown.

He even applied to Billy Bunter, which had the natural effect of making it known far and wide that Skinner was hard up and trying to borrow money. After lessons he applied to Harry Wharton. The captain of the Remove eyed him grimly.

"The fellows are saying that you owe Levison a half-crown that he never lent you," said Harry.

"That's the case. If you'll lend me half-a-crown, I'll settle up with the chap," said Skinner, amiably. "I don't care to remain in his debt, as we've had a row about it."

"Levison says you don't owe him anything."

Skinner laughed.

"I'm likely to part with money I don't owe!" he remarked.

"You're not, that's a cert!" said Harry. "It's not easy for fellows to get from you money that you do owe. Do you mean to say that Levison was gambling in your study on Friday?"

"Certainly not! If I'd known that he was keeping it dark, I shouldn't have let out a word."

"Then you do say so?" exclaimed Harry.

"I don't! I'm saying nothing." And Skinner walked away with that, making no further reference to the half-crown he had been trying to borrow.

Harry Wharton knitted his brows. He went to his study for prep, trying to dismiss the matter from his mind. But it was not easy. The thought that Levison was pulling his leg and laughing at him in his sleeve was not a pleasant one. He hated to think so; but he could not help being aware that that was the general impression in the Remove.

Skinner was playing what he considered a very deep game. He was making no accusation. He was even appearing to make some efforts to keep the whole affair dark. Fellows were left to draw their own conclusions—and the conclusions they drew were, naturally, coloured by Ernest Levison's old and unforgetten reputation as a "hard case." There was a constraint growing up already between him and his friends. No fellow likes to feel that he is being made a fool of and mocked behind his back.

Wharton and Nugent did not speak on the subject; but each knew that the other

There's pocket-money going begging! See pages 20 and 27!

was thinking of it as they sat down to prep on Monday evening. Prep had just been finished when the study door was hurled open with a crash, which announced that Bob Cherry was there.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob. "Finished?"

"Just!" said Harry. "Good! You're wanted."

"What's the row now?"

"Dear old Skinner," chuckled Bob. "Levison wants us all to go with him to Skinner's study and witness him having it out with Harold. He's punched Skinner's nose once or twice, but that doesn't seem to do Skinner any good."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"We'll come," he said.

"Yes, rather!" asserted Nugent.

Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh and Johnny Bull were in the passage. Levison came out of No. 2 with Tom Brown and Hazeldene. Six or seven other juniors gathered on the scene, and all of them looked at Levison with interest, some of them with smiles.

Ernest Levison's face was cool and calm. The old time "hard case" was a more dangerous customer to tackle than Skinner dreamed, with all his cleverness.

"I want you fellows to be witnesses," said Levison. "Skinner's making out that I played cards with him in his study last Friday. I'm going to make him own up."

"He hasn't made that out," said Bolsover major. "He seems to be trying to keep it dark, so far as I can see."

"Yes—and letting every fellow in the Remove see him trying!" remarked Levison. "That's about the best way of getting it talked up and down the house, I suppose."

"Something in that," said the Bounder. "We all know that Skinner is a deep card."

"Not so deep as Levison!" sneered Hazel.

"I hope not," said Levison coolly. "Let's see what Skinner has to say before all of you."

"That's only fair!" said Bob.

"The fairness is terrific."

And the juniors proceeded in an interested crowd to Study No. 11, where Skinner & Co. were enjoying a smoke—

one of their pleasant little customs—after prep.

Bob Cherry hurled the door open, and the juniors crowded in. Skinner stared at them.

"Hallo, what's the jape?" he inquired. "You fellows getting up a testimonial to me, or something of that kind?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a giddy inquiry," said Peter Todd. "You've got to tell us just what happened here on Friday evening."

Skinner laughed.

"Let me speak," said Levison quietly. "Skinner, you've stated up and down the Remove that you owe me half-a-crown."

"I'm not denying that I owe it," said Skinner. "I can't settle till Saturday, and I've told you so. I'm not going to fight you about it again, if that's what you've come for."

"Dash it all, give the chap time to pay!" said Bolsover major.

"Oh, don't be an ass!" snapped Levison.

"Look here, if you're hard up for money, I'll lend Skinner the dashed half-crown to pay you!" said Bolsover contemptuously.

"Give me a chance to speak. Skinner doesn't owe me anything. He makes out that he does to get me into bad odour with the fellows I'm friendly with here," said Levison quietly.

"Oh, draw it mild!"

"That's his game!" said Levison coolly. "I didn't tumble at first—but I'm on to it now. Skinner's got to own up. I can guess now how that cigarette was found in Study No. 1 the other day, too."

"Skinner?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Exactly."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Skinner. "Pile it on, Levison! This is quite in your old style!"

"Quite!" grinned Snoop.

"Oh, quite!" chuckled Stott.

"I think I can prove it," said Levison coolly. "Bob Cherry, you found the cigarette and took it to Hazel's study. You looked at it. What sort of a smoke was it?"

"Turkish," said Bob.

"What brand?"

"Sultan." Levison jerked open the table-drawer and took out the cigarette-box in which Skinner kept his smokes. He rolled them out on the table.

"Now look at those," he said: "Turkish cigarettes, Sultan brand. It was one of Skinner's cigarettes."

"My only hat!" ejaculated Bob.

"You awful rotter, Skinner!" exclaimed Harry Wharton indignantly.

"It was yours—"

Skinner breathed hard for a moment. "It had been mine, I dare say," he yawned. "I remember giving Levison half a dozen when I met him at the station as he took a fancy to them."

"Oh!"

"That's untrue!" said Levison between his teeth. "You never gave me any cigarettes."

Skinner shrugged his shoulders. There was a glimmer of triumph in his eyes. He had neatly countered Levison's move—and the matter remained where it was! Levison realised that. The crowd of juniors in the study and the doorway looked at one another. Skinner collected the smokes again and replaced them in the drawer coolly. But Levison was not finished yet.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Checkmate!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. stood silent. They did not know what to think, and they waited for Levison's next words.

Skinner & Co. were grinning. So far as Skinner could see, there was not a chink in his armour anywhere. Witnesses were on his side, as the three young rascals were standing together in the matter. And Levison's old reputation was on his side, too, and that was a more powerful witness. It was not necessary for Skinner to prove anything—so long as his implied charge was not disproved that was enough for him. He felt perfectly secure, though he was a little disturbed by Levison's icy coolness.

There was a pause in the study. The juniors waited, and Skinner, with a vaunting air, blew out a little cloud of smoke from his cigarette.

Levison looked round at the expectant faces.

"I accuse Skinner of trying to blacken me, and make trouble that way between me and my friends here," he said quietly and incisively. "I will tell you what happened in this study the other night. These three fellows wanted me to play banker; I refused, and they tried to rag me, and there was a row. That's all, so far as I am concerned. Skinner has started his half-crown story to give a different impression. Now let Skinner give his version of what happened."

"That's fair," said Harry Wharton. "Go ahead, Skinner."

"I don't want to say anything," said Skinner.

"It's a bit too late for that; you've said too much already. If you don't speak out we shall take it for granted that you are slandering Levison."

Skinner shrugged his shoulders.

"Blessed if I know what Levison's making the fuss about," he said. "Everybody knows the kind of fellow he is."

"Never mind that; let's hear what happened."

"Oh, I don't mind," said Skinner with a yawn. "We had supper, and a smoke all round, and then a game of banker. Levison won."

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MYSTERY

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ADVENTURE

Once a black sheep always a black sheep?—

"Do you say the same, Snoop?"
 "Yes, that's what happened!" said Snoop, rubbing his darkened eye viciously.

"And you, Stott?"
 "That's all I remember," said Stott.
 "Snoop and Stott were able to square, but I ran out of cash," said Skinner blandly. "I was left owing Levison a half-crown, and he rowed with me for not settling up a debt of honour on the spot. After that I don't want to have anything more to do with him—after I've paid my debt, of course!"

"Is that all?" asked Levison.
 "That's all. I never wanted to tell your friends about it; you've forced me to!"

"That's so!" said Bolsover major.
 Levison looked round.

There was a slight smile on his lips—a smile that puzzled Skinner, and worried him a little. He remembered that Ernest Levison had always been a "deep card," and he felt an inward tremor. Was it possible that Levison had some trump card to play yet? How could he possibly disprove the story? Only Levison and Skinner & Co. had been present at the time, and the three young rascals had concocted their story carefully.

Bob Cherry looked worried.
 "It's a dashed case of 'not proven,' he said. "But—but we're bound to take Levison's word."

"What utter rot!" said Hazel. "If it's three fellows' word against one, I'm for the three!"

"Same here!" said Bolsover major.
 "Don't worry!" said Levison coolly.

"The matter doesn't end here."
 "What have you got up your sleeve?" asked Skinner, with a sneer.

"Levison—" began Wharton uneasily.

"It's word against word—and three words against one, so far," said Levison cheerfully. "My friends here will try to take my word, I suppose; but they can't help remembering that what Skinner says of me now would have been true of me in the old days. Well, I'm not leaving it at that. I'm going to the Head!"

"The Head!" yelled Skinner.
 Levison nodded.

All eyes were fixed on him now. Levison was cool as ice.

"If what Skinner says is true, I'm not a fit chap to stay in this school!" he said. "Dr. Locke has allowed me to return here on the understanding that I chucked that kind of blackguardism long ago, and that nothing of the kind would ever recur. If I have deceived him, and started gambling in the studies on my first night at Greyfriars, I ought to be kicked out of the school!"

"That's right enough," said Wharton.
 "But—"

"Dr. Locke can sift out the matter, and get at the truth," said Levison. "Snoop and Stott are backing Skinner up in his lies. I fancy they will think twice before they tell lies to the Head. The Head will see through them easily enough, and catch them tripping. If he decides that I have done what Skinner says, he will turn me out of Greyfriars, and serve me right. I'm taking the risk!"

Bob Cherry burst into a chuckle.

Levison was cool and calm; but Skinner & Co. were looking the personification of terror and dismay.

Ernest Levison made a move towards the door.

"Come on, you three fellows!" he said. "You'd better come with me. You'd be sent for, anyhow!"

"Hold on!" gasped Stott.



Levison jerked open the table-drawer and took out the chocolate-box in which Skinner kept his smokes. He rolled them out on the table. "Now look at those," he said. "Turkish cigarettes—Sultan brand! The same as the one you found, Cherry!" (See Chapter 10.)

"D-d-d-don't be a fool, Levison!" panted Snoop. "You'll get kicked out if the Head knows—"

"I think not," said Levison coolly. "Dr. Locke hasn't been a headmaster for twenty years without being able to sift truth from lies. I'm relying on his judgment." He laughed lightly. "Why, you three duffers, before the Head has asked you half-a-dozen questions, you'll be contradicting yourselves and one another."

"If it's not true—" said Hazel.
 "Well, it isn't!"

"You're right, Levison," said Harry Wharton quietly. "Go to the Head."

"I'm going!"

The fellows in the doorway made room for Levison to pass. Harold Skinner looked at his comrades, with white lips. Skinner, perhaps, might have found the nerve to face the Head; but it was a different case with Snoop and Stott. The bare thought of standing before Dr. Locke's severe, searching gaze, and telling barefaced falsehoods, made their knees knock together.

"Hold on!" panted Snoop.

"Stop!" yelled Stott.

Levison did not stop; but Bolsover major caught him by the arm.

"Hold on a minute," he said. "Now, Skinner—"

"Do you own up that it's all lies, Skinner?" asked the captain of the Remove sternly.

"N-n-no!" panted Skinner. "But—but we should get a flogging all round if the Head found out we'd been playing cards. That's what Levison is banking on."

Levison's lip curled.

"You'd get flogged, very likely," he said. "But I should get kicked out, which is a good deal worse, if you prove your case. I'm risking more than you are. If you can stick to your story to the Head, and convince him, I shall be sent back to my own school in disgrace—to get the sack there! That's a good deal harder than a flogging!"

"I—I—"

"Let go my arm, Bolsover!"

"Stop him!" shouted Snoop, as Levison shook his arm free. "You ass, Skinner, you—you dummy, can't you see it's time to own up?"

"I own up!" shouted Stott. "Stop him! Come back, Levison! It—it was only a joke."

Skinner licked his dry lips.

There was nothing else for it; his nerve was not equal to the test, and certainly his falsehoods could not have been told to the Head, with a confession from his confederates at the same time. Skinner realised that Levison had been too much for him.

"Stop him!" he gasped.

"Levison!" shouted Bob Cherry.

He rushed after Ernest Levison, and fairly dragged him back into the study.

"No need to worry the giddy old Head!" grinned Bob. "The rotters are owning up!"

"It's got to come out clear," said Levison. "Skinner, do you own up that it was all lies, and that I never played cards in this study?"

"It—it was a joke—"

—the question that is worrying the juniors of Greyfriars!

"Do you own up, or not?" roared Bob Cherry ferociously.

"Yes!" panted Skinner.

"And you others?" asked Levison.

"It was Skinner's rotten idea!" growled Stott. "I never thought much of it. But Skinner would have his way, the silly fool!"

"Skinner fairly bullied us into it," mumbled Snoop. "I—I thought it couldn't come out. I—I mean—"

Levison looked round.

"Are you fellows satisfied now?" he asked.

"Yes, rather," said Harry. "And if we let a doubt come into our minds for a moment, Levison, we're sorry for it."

"The sorrowfulness is terrific, my esteemed and ridiculous Levison!"

"And as for those rotters—" said Bob Cherry sulphurously.

"Rag the cads!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Give them beans!" exclaimed Tom Brown.

Levison left the study. But the other fellows did not leave it just yet. Skinner & Co. had to receive the reward of their rascality, and they received it in full measure.

The three cads of the Remove backed towards the wall as the juniors surged forward. They were repenting of their rashness in trying to drag Ernest Levison into their shady fold, and their repentance was accelerated by the fact that the Removites were angry.

"Collar 'em!" roared Bob Cherry.

"We'll teach the measly rotters to play the game! We'll knock it into them!"

"The knockfulness will be terrific," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Hear, hear!"

"Hold on," began Skinner. "It was only a— Yowp!"

Skinner's explanation ended in an unintelligible yell as Bob Cherry's grasp closed upon him and sent him hurtling to the floor.

"Bump the rotters!"

But there was no need for the indignant Bob to offer advice—the juniors were already piling in.

The next ten minutes or so was a lively time for Skinner and his precious pals.

"Yowp!" howled Stott, as a cricket-stump, in the hands of an energetic junior, found a resting-place, as it were, on his nether garments. "Groooough! Chuckit! I tell you it was— Ow—wow!"

Sidney James Snoop was also faring badly. He did not know whether he was on his head or his heels, but his yells rang through the study, and the burden of his plaint was exactly the same as his study-mates:

"Yowp! Groooough! Ow—wow!"

"Decorate the study for them, chaps!" cried Johnny Bull. "It will give the cads something to do to put it to rights afterwards; they won't be able to spin a lot of lying yarns about a decent chap, then."

"Good wheeze!" assented Harry Wharton. "Pile in!"

In less than three minutes Study

No. 11 presented a miniature battle-field. Chairs were overturned, likewise the table, whilst every other article of furniture occupied any position but that which it had originally adorned.

The juniors called a halt in their labours at last.

"I think that does the trick," breathed Harry Wharton. "Let this be a warning to you, Skinner, you rotter!"

It was not only a punishment, but a warning for the future, that Skinner required. And he had received it! Now that the incensed chums of the Remove had finished, Study No. 11 looked a wreck, and Skinner & Co., sprawling breathlessly in the midst of the havoc, looked more wrecked than the study.

Then the juniors trooped out, followed by deep and anguished groans from the hapless schemers.

The next day Skinner & Co. were still feeling the effects of that well-merited ragging, and they were not feeling in the humour for any more plotting. And, in spite of Skinner, the most complete concord reigned between Harry Wharton & Co. and Levison of the Remove.

THE END.

(Another ripping story of Harry Wharton & Co., with Ernest Levison well in the limelight, is on the programme for next Monday. It is entitled "Under the Shadow!" On no account should you miss it!)

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The FIRST PRIZE of £5 will be awarded to the reader who submits a solution which is exactly the same as, or nearest to, the solution now in the possession of the Editor. In the event of ties the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. The Editor reserves the right to add together and divide the value of all, or any, of the prizes, but the full amount will be awarded. It is a distinct condition of entry that the decision of the Editor must be accepted as final. Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

This competition is run in conjunction with the "Gem," "Popular," and "Boys' Friend," and readers of those journals are invited to compete.

I enter "Leicester City" Competition, and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final.

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LAST week's article concluded with a reference to the medium through which magnetic lines of force act, and we now continue from where we left off.

It is obvious that energy cannot be transmitted from one point to another unless there is some medium linking the two points together, through or over which the energy is conveyed. For example, when a man draws water from a well by means of a rope and bucket, the medium by means of which his energy is applied to the raising of the bucket is the rope to which the bucket is fastened.

Because energy cannot be transmitted except through some medium, scientists have imagined this invisible medium, to which they have applied the name of ether. Ether fills the space between the earth and the sun, thus enabling the light and heat rays to travel to the earth. Careful scientific research proves that this substance forms a part of all other substances; for example, a piece of steel is made up of molecules surrounded by ether.

If a magnet is suspended in a space from which all air has been extracted it will still exert its magnetic force outside the vacuum surrounding it. This proves that there is some medium other than air which enables this force to act across it, and it is assumed that the space immediately surrounding the magnet is filled with ether.

This assumption is supported by the fact that an ordinary filament electric lamp, burning in a vacuum, transmits light and heat to the space surrounding the vacuum in the same manner that the sun transmits light and heat to the earth. It may, therefore, be safely assumed that ether does exist, and that it is the medium across which a magnetic force acts.

In the articles dealing with waves we will show that the presence of ether makes wireless telephony possible; but for the moment we must learn what it

each molecule is in itself composed of a nest or universe of atoms, and around each atom electrons revolve at terrific speed, these electrons being particles of negative electricity.

Now because these electrons revolve they must be in a state of energy, that is, they do work. These atoms, each with their electrons revolving around them, in large numbers form molecules, and these molecules, surrounded by ether, form the substances of which our earth is composed. Thus, for example, a piece of iron is formed of millions of these molecules, each one of which is surrounded by ether.

These electrons, constantly revolving round their atoms, cause a strain in the ether surrounding the molecules, and as magnetism is ether in a state of strain, it will be readily understood why each molecule is a complete magnet in itself, having a north and south pole, and, therefore, a magnetic field.

To explain the effect of force on ether, it is necessary to remember that when magnetic lines of force leave the north pole of a magnet they endeavour to return to the south pole of the magnet by the shortest possible route. This is because the strain causes the ether to contract in its effort to overcome the strain; the result is that the force acts in direct lines between the north and south poles.

If a magnetic line of force seeks the shortest path, it would appear to be contradictory to the diagram shown in the last article, in which the lines of force were observed to travel in ever-widening circles to the south pole of the magnet. This curvature in the lines is due to the fact that like magnetic poles repel, and as all the lines of force leave the north pole, they are of like polarity, and endeavour to push each other as far away as possible, so that the weaker lines are forced far out into the magnetic field before they make their way to the south pole.

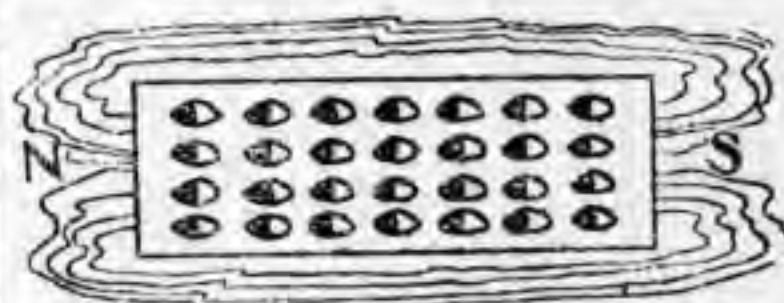
Two forces act on the lines of force: the ether which endeavours to contract them into as short a space as possible, and their natural repulsion, which causes the lines to get as far away from each other as possible.

The question naturally arises that, if all the molecules which compose an iron bar are magnetic, why is the bar itself not magnetic? The reason for this is that the ether, in trying to minimise the strain set up by the magnetic molecules, arranges the molecules in such a manner that their poles neutralise one another. This is shown diagrammatically in sketch No. 1.

When an iron bar is induced into a magnetic state by rubbing it with a magnet, it is so induced because the action of rubbing it with the magnet causes the ether surrounding the molecules to become so strained that the molecules are rearranged, so that the north poles all point in one direction,

and the south poles point in the opposite direction. The bar then exerts magnetic force because all the magnetic lines of each molecule are moving in the same direction, and their accumulated effect sets up a magnetic field. This is also shown diagrammatically in sketch No. 2.

ELECTRO-MAGNETIC INDUCTION.—If a magnet is passed right through the centre of a coil of wire, having its two ends connected with a galvanometer, it will be observed that the needle of the galvanometer is deflected, thus showing that an electromotive force has been induced in the coil. If the magnet is left at rest in the coil the galvanometer needle will return



Sketch No. 2.

to normal, thus showing that there is no longer an electromotive force induced; but on withdrawing the magnet from the coil the needle will again be deflected, but the deflection will be in the opposite direction to that which occurred when the magnet was being passed into the coil.

From this experiment we learn that, so long as there is relative movement between a coil of wire and a magnetic field, an electromotive force is induced, and that the induction is effected by the number of magnetic lines of force passing through the coil. We also learn that the direction of the current depends upon whether the movement increases or decreases the number of magnetic lines of force passing through the coil. Thus, when thrusting the magnet into the coil and thereby increasing the number of lines of force, the direction will be opposite to that which occurs when we withdraw the magnet from the coil, thus reducing the number of magnetic lines of force passing through it. We learn that when there is no relative movement between the coil and the magnetic field no electromotive force is induced.

The next article will show that, when these magnetic lines of force are broken, under certain conditions, certain electrical effects are caused, and these effects are of the greatest importance in making wireless signals from one point to another.

(Readers would do well to collect these instructive articles from week to week and bind them together. With such a reference at hand the technicalities of modern Wireless are rendered simple and comprehensible to the enthusiastic amateur.)



Sketch No. 1.

is that causes magnetic force, and the effects of that force on the ether through which it acts.

We have stated that if a magnet is ground to powder each grain would still retain its magnetic properties, and would, in fact, be a complete magnet in itself, having a north and a south pole. The reason for this is that all substances are composed of molecules. A molecule is the smallest fragment into which a substance may be physically broken, so small that it cannot be seen through the most powerful microscope;

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A powerful story of adventure and mystery, featuring the re-appearance of the Yellow Spider—the amazing criminal from out the mystic Orient.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Interrupted Message!

FERRERS LOCKE, sitting in his consulting-room with Jack Drake at Baker Street, closed his memorandum-book and returned it to his pocket.

"I thought I was not mistaken," he murmured; "to-day's the day."

Drake's eyebrows lifted slightly.

"What's on to-day, sir?" he asked.

The famous sleuth lighted his pipe and got it drawing well before replying.

"Do you remember, my boy, the case of the Yellow Spider?"

"My aunt! Do I not, sir! It's been a wonder to me that we've been so safe from that tong, or Chinese secret society, which you stirred up."

"The dread Hoa Hongs never forget nor forgive, Drake," said the detective solemnly. "But unbounded patience is a virtue of the Oriental races. In my opinion, it is because one of the Chinese we were instrumental in sending to gaol was the leader of the English branch of the tong, that the society has been lying so low. But to-day's the day when Mr. Fang, or the Yellow Spider, is released from prison. We must be on our guard. If Li Fang tries any tricks, we shall act accordingly."

Just then the bell of the telephone on the detective's desk rang. Locke took off the receiver and murmured a gentle and inquiring "Yes?" into the mouthpiece of the instrument.

A gruff voice came in response over the wire.

"Is that Mr. Ferrers Locke?"

"Yes—speaking."

A sigh of relief sounded from the other end, and the unknown voice began speaking again with a curious foreign accent and in a jerky, nervous fashion.

"You—you may not recollect me, Mr. Locke. I am Amoy—Charles Amoy—only just got back from Hankow, China."

"Ah, yes; pleased to hear again from you, Amoy. When did you get home?"

The sleuth well remembered the name. Charles Amoy—or Red Amoy, as he had been called on account of his bright-coloured hair—was a roving, devil-may-

care fellow to whom Locke had rendered a service at least two years before the great war. Since then the sleuth had heard nothing of him save that Red Amoy had been sojourning somewhere east of Suez. Now he felt rather curious as to why Amoy had telephoned him. The jerky sound of the voice over the 'phone seemed to indicate that the man at the other end of the wire was labouring under some nervous tension.

"I only landed at Tilbury yesterday," replied Amoy to the sleuth's question. "I'm speaking from Florenzio's Hotel, in Soho, where I've booked a room. I wondered whether you could spare me a few minutes of your time? I—I could come and see you any time to-day, and—"

The intent expression on Locke's face suddenly changed to one of startled amazement as the other's sentence finished in a wild, long-drawn shriek. Then came a harsh, metallic, clattering sound, as though the receiver at the other end had been hastily dropped. Almost simultaneously there was a dull, heavy thud; then only a faint buzzing over the wire.

By mere force of habit when cut off suddenly, Ferrers Locke snapped the holder of the receiver up and down. But no reply came.

The sleuth hung up the receiver and turned to his young assistant.

"Come, Drake," he said, "put on your hat, and we'll see if we can get a taxi."

As they descended the stairs Locke briefly explained the situation.

A taxi was picked up almost outside the house, and a short drive brought the sleuth and his assistant to the little hotel owned by the Italian, Antonio Florenzio. They found the proprietor himself behind the clerk's desk, and Locke explained the reason of his call.

The Italian shrugged his shoulders.

"That is strange," he said; "there are three rooms in this hotel which have telephones. It is queer that the Exchange did not notify me down here in the foyer that a receiver was off. I was not aware that anything was wrong."

He turned to his clerk, who had been at the desk and who remembered putting through a call to Locke's number for the

inmate of room No. 5. By reference to the little hotel switchboard he found that he had neglected to observe that the hotel number was still engaged. This clearly meant that the receiver of the telephone in room No. 5 was still off its hooks.

"Who occupies No. 5 room?" asked the detective.

The clerk pointed to a name in the visitors' book.

"Charles Attwood, sir. He arrived here yesterday evening. Would you like to go up to the room, sir?"

Ferrers Locke signified his assent, and the clerk led the way up a flight of carpeted stairs, followed by Locke, Drake, and Antonio Florenzio.

What was the secret of No. 5 room? Why had Red Amoy, just back from the China coast, stopped short in his telephone conversation with Locke, shrieked with fear, and dropped the telephone receiver? Why had he not afterwards hung up the receiver or again tried to get the detective's number?

Arriving outside the room of Charles Amoy—or Charles Attwood, as he had preferred to call himself at the hotel—the clerk knocked and turned the handle. The door was locked.

Locke dropped on one knee and applied his eye to the keyhole, as there was no response from inside the room.

"H'm," he muttered, "the room is locked on the inside; I can see the key."

After the clerk had again knocked loudly, the sleuth obtained permission from the hotel proprietor to effect an entrance into the room. With a special stiff wire attachment on his jack-knife Ferrers Locke managed to turn the key a trifle and push it through to the floor inside the apartment. Then he borrowed the master-key possessed by Florenzio himself, threw back the catch, and thrust open the door.

Jack Drake, Florenzio, and the clerk followed the detective into the room. As they did so a startled cry burst from the Italian's lips. For Red Amoy, fully dressed, was spread-eagled over a small table by his bedside. He was perfectly motionless, his head down between his

Will Ferrers Locke prove a better man than the "Spider"—

outstretched arms and his rigid fingers dug like talons against the oaken tabletop. A telephone lay on its side and with its receiver hanging down on the cord from it.

With a strange, uncanny feeling of dread at their heart-strings, Locke and the others knew that the grim Reaper had passed by that way. Red Amoy was dead!

But hardly had they sensed that fact and become cognisant of the general upset of the room, when they noticed something that glistened and quivered between the rigid hands of the dead man in the stark, white light that streamed through the open window. It was a giant yellow spider!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Room in the Leonardo!

"SNAKES!"

The exclamation left the lips of Jack Drake in a gasp of horrified amazement. But a comparatively few short minutes before he and Locke had been discussing the Hoa Hongs and their dread symbol. And here, in so stark and uncanny a fashion, they were brought face to face with the terrible activities of the tong again!

Antonio Florenzio and his clerk shrank back towards the doorway with eyes starting almost from their sockets. Drake made as though to take hold of the stricken man and to raise him, but Locke rather sharply told him to wait.

The sleuth took a step forward to the little table. The giant spider quivered. Locke halted and watched intently for a few moments. The spider was now motionless.

Then to the dismay of the others in the room with him the famous detective put out his hand and picked up the frightful-looking thing.

"M-my aunt!" burst out Drake. "Be careful! It may be poisonous! Perhaps that's how poor Amoy met—"

But the sleuth interrupted with a grim laugh.

"Red Amoy was not poisoned with this thing, Drake," he said. "This is but a toy—a thing of tinsel and paint. See, the legs are formed of fine spiral springs, and these gave the object the appearance of quivering with life as we walked across the room and so shook the table slightly."

He placed the yellow-coloured spider back on the table and gestured to Florenzio to use the telephone.

"Get a doctor here as soon as you can—and the police. The latter will have more to do than the former, I'm afraid. There's no doubt about it—this unfortunate man is quite dead."

"But—but how did he come to die?" cried the hotel proprietor, wringing his hands. "His door was locked on the inside, and—"

"We will try to find a solution of the mystery after you have phoned," broke in Locke brusquely. "I fully sympathise with you, Florenzio, but I fear that your excellent little hotel cannot well avoid a certain amount of unenviable publicity."

While the Italian was telephoning to the doctor and police Ferrers Locke made as careful an examination of the victim of the grim tragedy as he could.

As far as the sleuth could see there was not a mark on Red Amoy to account for his sudden death. The man had expired immediately following the dreadful cry Locke had heard over the phone—that is how the detective figured it.

There were no signs that anyone had been in the room with Amoy. The door had been found locked from the inside. This could not have been accomplished unless the assassin had left by the window. But the window revealed not a single clue to indicate that anyone had entered or left the room.

By the time the doctor arrived Locke had evolved his own theory of the unfortunate man's death. This was confirmed by the medico.

"Death due to severe heart disease, and accelerated by a severe shock or fright."

Ferrers Locke inclined his head.

"As I thought, doctor," he said. "And it was the sudden appearance of this that provided the severe shock which proved too much for Amoy's weak heart."

He held up the yellow spider, which, but for its colour, was exactly similar to one of a certain species of poisonous spiders which inhabit certain parts of tropical India and China.

As the doctor looked at the fearsome yellow object the police arrived at the hotel. They took notes of the evidence of Locke and the hotel-keeper, and particulars of the occupants of the rooms adjoining, above, and opposite to room Number Five. But it was soon made clear that the folk who had taken these other rooms at the hotel were out, and had been out at the time of Amoy's tragic end.

Scotland Yard had been notified of the strange occurrence, and by this time Locke's old official friend, Inspector Pycroft, came up in the company of two plain-clothes men.

"Well, Mr. Locke," said the inspector after he had rapidly surveyed the scene of the crime, "what do you make of it? It looks on the face of things as though the Hoa Hongs have come to life again."

"It wouldn't surprise me, Pycroft," said Ferrers Locke. "It may be that in some way during his sojourn in China poor Amoy, who had a dash of Chinese blood in his veins, offended this powerful tong, whose vengeance is reputed to extend to the ends of the earth. Possibly, even, he may have been a member himself, for undoubtedly there are a few of the tongmen who are not full-blooded Chinks. But reasons and motives for the crime can wait. One question needs the fullest attention just now. How did that yellow spider get on Amoy's table?"



FERRERS LOCKE.
The Yellow Spider's Greatest
Foe!

"You think that it was the sight of that hideous thing which gave Amoy the shock that killed him?"

"I do, Pycroft. My theory is that Amoy rang me up because he knew that he had offended the Hoa Hongs and was in danger of his life. While he was telephoning this great yellow spider suddenly materialised on the table before him. It was sufficient. The sight of the symbol of all that he most dreaded in the world proved fatal to him."

"The room was locked on the inside?"

"It was; but the window was open. You see, the window looks out upon the side wall and windows of a building which, Florenzio has informed me, is an apartment house run by a compatriot of his. It is called the Leonardo, and it appears to me as possible that the toy spider was tossed into this room from a window across there."

This seemed feasible, and, after telling his men to remain in the Florenzio Hotel, the inspector made his way with Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake to the Leonardo apartment house.

Already a knot of curiosity-mongers, chiefly of foreign extraction, had congregated in the narrow Soho street, attracted by rumours of a mysterious tragedy in the Florenzio. They followed the burly inspector and his two companions to the next building, which was separated from the hotel by a few yards of waste ground.

The ill-favoured owner of the apartment-house—a naturalised Italian named Mellini—received his visitors in fear and trembling. He had a wholesome respect for the British police, and the uniform of the "Yard" man caused him to assume a painfully deferential air. He was not such an educated man as Florenzio, his English leaving much to be desired, but he willingly agreed to admit his visitors and let them carry out whatever investigations they liked.

"How many boarders have you got staying here?" asked Pycroft, as Mellini led the way upstairs.

"I gotta sixa da signors," replied Mellini.

"How long have they been with you?"

"All stay plenty da long time—'cept one. He da verra good Japanese signor who worka da clerk in da Daimyo Shipping Company."

Further information was obtained from the Italian that this Jap was named Morosaki, and had only taken a room in the boarding-house that morning.

The rooms on the side of the apartment-house faced the Florenzio Hotel. None of the occupiers of them were in. The room of the Jap was almost in a direct line with that in which the unfortunate Red Amoy had met his fate, though on a somewhat higher elevation.

Looking out of the window, Locke, Drake, and Pycroft could distinctly see the men gathered in Amoy's room, as well as the small table across which the deceased had been found.

Ferrers Locke took out his tobacco pouch and weighed it critically in his hand.

"About the weight of that toy spider," he remarked, as though to himself.

Then, taking careful aim, he tossed it out towards the room in the Florenzio Hotel. It entered this latter room through the open top half of the window. Locke and his companions saw the men in the opposite apartment start back with surprise as the pouch fell and remained on the small table on which the yellow spider had rested.

—or will the dreaded Chinaman add yet another to his list of victims?

"By Jove, I understand!" said Inspector Pycroft. "It was a good shot of yours, Mr. Locke. But someone else made an equally good aim from this window a short time ago. That yellow spider could only have been thrown on to Amoy's table from this window."

"I don't think there's a doubt about it," said Ferrers Locke. "Do you know, Mr. Mellini, whether Morosaki was in this room about half an hour ago?"

"Yessa, da Japanese signor in here den, I think. He go out twenty, maybe thirty, minutes ago."

"He doesn't appear to have taken any luggage with him."

Mellini scrutinised the room.

"No," he said slowly; "da luggage is all here—all that da Japanese signor walk in with."

"I think, Pycroft," said Ferrers Locke, turning to the inspector, "that we should be justified in glancing through this Jap's luggage, considering all the circumstances."

The inspector readily agreed, and the cheap-looking suitcase and trunk which constituted the luggage was speedily opened with keys of a type Locke always carried with him. Both articles contained only a few old bricks, wrapped about with dirty sacking!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Clue of the Olive-green Paint!

"EGAD, this is suspicious!" ejaculated Locke. "Obviously, the man was prepared to leave his luggage here. It indicates he was here for no good purpose, and expected to take a sudden and secret departure. I think, Pycroft, the next thing to do is to make a few inquiries with the object of learning the whereabouts of the man who engaged this room. We can institute a move in that direction, while Drake telephones through to the Daimyo Shipping Company of Nagasaki, whose London offices are in Pall Mall, to see if they actually have a clerk named Morosaki in their employ."

Leaving the Leonardo apartment-house, Locke and the Scotland Yard man instituted inquiries as to which way Morosaki had proceeded. No one living in the immediate vicinity of the place remembered to have seen him.

When, after their own few brief inquiries, Locke and Inspector Pycroft returned to the little street in Soho, they were met by Jack Drake, who had been to telephone.

"The Daitayo Shipping Company have no clerk in their employ of the name of Morosaki," the boy briefly informed them.

When the body of Red Amoy had been removed to the mortuary, Ferrers Locke suggested a return to the Leonardo. Together they went upstairs again with the proprietor, to make a more detailed examination of Morosaki's room and the luggage—such as it was—that he had left behind.

"It occurs to me," said Locke, "that this man may not have been a Japanese at all. I don't think that friend Mellini would know the difference between a Jap, a Korean, or a Chinese. But let us make a more detailed examination of this suitcase and trunk."

"There's no maker's name on 'em," said Pycroft, who had been scrutinising the articles in question. "There's nothing else to be learnt from 'em."

But Ferrers Locke took a magnifying-glass from his pocket and began looking carefully over them.

"You're wrong, Pycroft," he said, rising, after a brief interval. "Look at this!" He pointed to a small daub of olive-green paint on the side of the suitcase. "That may be of the utmost importance if you fail to get on to the so-called Japs trail by other means."

Having learnt from Mellini that there was no fresh paint anywhere about that neighbourhood, Locke shaved off the leather of the suitcase bearing the paint daub. Next he scraped off a little of the olive-green paint with his jack-knife, and put it on a small scrap of paper, which he folded and placed in his notebook. The shaving of leather he presented to Pycroft.

"There you are, Pycroft," he said. "With the great organisation of the Criminal Investigation Department behind you, you ought to be able to discover where in London there is fresh paint of that colour and quality."

Before leaving the Leonardo, Pycroft obtained a very detailed description of the Oriental who had gone by the name of Morosaki. The fellow was small and pock-marked, and with the prominent cheekbones and almond eyes of the Far Eastern races.

Within a short time this description had been circulated to every police-station in the country. By telephone and telegraph the mighty organisation of Scotland Yard had drawn a gigantic net round the whole coast of the United Kingdom, through which it was extremely unlikely that the wanted man would be able to slip.

Moreover, Inspector Pycroft, who, although not possessed of a brilliant imagination, or any marked originality, was extraordinarily thorough in all routine work, followed up the clue of the paint daub.

Here, again, the wonderful organisation of Scotland Yard was prominent. Inquiries which would have taken Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake at least a week of hard work to conduct, were performed by numbers of trained officials in a few hours.

Firms of painters and house-decorators throughout the City of London and the suburbs were systematically communicated with or canvassed.

Several firms had used olive-green paint on either indoor or outdoor jobs, but samples of these paints tested in the laboratories failed to correspond identically in composition with the sample taken from the Jap's suitcase.

But on the morning of the day following the death of Red Amoy, Inspector Pycroft called at Baker Street to acquaint Locke and Drake with a certain measure of success which he had achieved. The private detective had just brought to a conclusion a private case on which he had been engaged, and Drake and he were interested to hear what Scotland Yard had accomplished in the yellow spider mystery.

"Well, Mr. Locke," said the inspector, smiling triumphantly, "we've found the place where that chap Morosaki picked up the paint. It was at the railings of a large house in Verdan Gardens, Hampstead. At first we thought we had lighted on something really good. It's a strange coincidence that No. 6 Verdan Gardens, which is being redecorated, is a large mansion owned by a Chinik."

"A Chinese!" exclaimed Locke, with a keen glance at the inspector's ruddy face. "Are you sure that is a coincidence?"

"Not a doubt," replied Pycroft, somewhat dolefully. "I and my men have made the closest inquiries about Wong

Moh, who owns the house. He is a Chinese who was educated at Cambridge, and he's lived in England for over twenty years without going to the East. He's manager of the West End branch of the well-known and respected Hong Kong and Cochin Bank—a mandarin of the most unimpeachable character. Wong Moh and the Chinese servants he employs affirm that they have never seen a pock-marked man answering to Morosaki's description about the place, nor can we find anyone else in the neighbourhood who has. Apparently Morosaki simply passed by there."

When Inspector Pycroft had left the house, Ferrers Locke evinced almost boyish energy. He suggested that as he and Drake had nothing particularly to do, they should disguise themselves and saunter round to Verdan Gardens. The fact that the house with the olive-green railings was owned by a Chinese appealed to Locke with far greater force than it had done to Pycroft.

Having altered their facial appearance and donned workmen's garb, Locke and his young assistant took the Tube to Hampstead. They strolled by the house of Wong Moh, and got into conversation with one of the painters, who was still engaged upon the front of the premises. From this man the sleuth discovered something which set him furiously to think. According to the workman, the railings outside the house had not been painted until the afternoon of the previous day. He himself had painted the iron gate with the olive-green first thing in the morning, but at ten o'clock he had left the job to go and help his mates rig some ladders.

"By Jove!" said Locke to Drake, as they walked away, "this puts a different complexion on the case! It looks as though that so-called Jap passed this way shortly after ten o'clock yesterday morning en route to Soho. But he never got any paint on his suitcase by walking past Wong Moh's house; the gate is set well back from the pavement. Therefore, Morosaki passed out from the house itself. And, egad, I'm going into Mr. Moh's residence myself to see if I can discover there any of the signs and symbols of the Hoq Hongs!"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Cupboard of Death!

AMONG other things which he had learnt in conversation with the workman outside Wong Moh's residence, Locke had discovered one thing which he now thought would prove useful. This was the mere fact that on the morrow the painters were going to start some interior decorations of the house. They were to have begun that afternoon.

In a small oilshop in Hampstead Ferrers Locke purchased a pot of paint, a brush, and a white overall.

"Drake, my boy," he said. "I'm going to begin the interior decorations of Mr. Moh's residence to-day. You can hang about in the vicinity of the back of the house, and if I'm not out of the house by five o'clock this afternoon you should notify Pycroft."

With a great deal of misgiving in his heart, Jack Drake took leave of his intrepid chief, who made his way alone back to Verdan Gardens.

Going to the back, or tradesmen's, door of No. 6, Locke knocked, and was readily admitted by a Chinese servant.

"Say, Johnny," said Ferrers Locke, "is your boss, Mr. Moh, in?"

When you've the time, drop me a line!

"Missa Moh no here," replied the stolid Chink. "He allee same at business. Where you wanchee start paintee—bath-room?"

"Yes, the bath-room—that's the spot, Johnny. Where's that—on the first landing?"

The servant, utterly unsuspecting of the identity of the "painter," led Ferrers Locke up a flight of stairs, and showed him into a spacious bath-room. Then he withdrew, to allow the workman to get on with the job.

Locke heard the Chinese descend the stairs, and began talking in a low tone to someone whom the sleuth gauged to be a fellow-servant. Then, opening his freshly-bought pot of paint, the detective set to work to paint the bath-room door.

But he had not made very much progress when he laid his brush aside, and crept noiselessly forth, to make a preliminary survey of this London home of the respected banker, Mr. Wong Moh.

The first room he looked into was a bedroom, sumptuously furnished in the Oriental style. This he estimated to be the sleeping apartment of Mr. Moh himself. Next to it was a slightly larger room, also furnished in Oriental fashion. Locke entered, and began looking at the magnificent ornaments of ivory and brass, the silken tapestries, and the beautifully-carved ebony furniture. A box wrought of silver and sandalwood attracted his attention, when he heard a soft, persuasive voice address him:

"May I trouble you to put your hands above your head, Mr. Locke?"

Startled beyond measure, for he had heard not the slightest sound to indicate the presence of another, Locke sought to snatch his revolver from beneath his overalls as he swung round. He drew the weapon only to find that he was confronting—not a human being, but a cynical, uncanny laugh!

For a moment Ferrers Locke was completely baffled. He had heard a voice somewhere from the direction of the door. But no one was to be seen. Only that dread, chill, gurgling laughter rang in his ears. Whence it proceeded he could not quite make out. Then the voice spoke again, in the same oily, polite tone as before:

"Be so good as to drop that lethal weapon you hold in your hand, Mr. Locke. It might be dangerous, you know—for you. The muzzle of my own pistol is pointing directly at your heart, Mr. Locke. Ah, thank you! Now kick your revolver away from you, and remain standing motionless!"

Angry and puzzled at the way he had been trapped, Ferrers Locke saw no alternative but to obey. As he regained an upright position after kicking his pistol aside, he distinctly saw a small aperture in the wall near the door close up. Then in the doorway appeared a small figure, hooded and draped in yellow silk, and Locke, with a cold chill at his heart, knew that he was in the presence of the Yellow Spider!

Beneath his robe the new-comer had an arm extended, and the sleuth knew full well that he was covered with a revolver.

"So we have met again, Mr. Locke," murmured the Spider. "We parted rather suddenly last time, if I remember rightly."

"We did!" retorted Locke grimly. "You thought then that you had left me for dead, Mr. Fang!"

The uncanny laugh came in a muffled ripple from beneath the silken hood of the long man.

"Some men call me Mr. Fang, some the Yellow Spider," admitted the sleuth's captor. "I do not mind you knowing that Li Fang and the Yellow Spider is one and the same person. That knowledge will not be with you far long, Mr. Locke. Last time I thought you had succumbed to the accident which befell you behind my laundry in Limehouse. You escaped, but this time we must remedy our bungling of that previous occasion. You were shadowed here, and I still retain samples of your fingerprints. They corresponded exactly with marks on the bath-room door."

The Spider gave a curious hissing noise. Locke swung round sharply as he heard a crash behind him. Two carved wooden panels in the room burst open, and a couple of Asiatics emerged, and hurled themselves on to the detective. One was the servant who had let him into the house; the other was a short-haired individual, whom the detective

"And killed him, you fiend!" hissed Locke.

"Yes," drawled the Chinese; "but it was of little account. Amoy would have met with a most painful end before the week was out, I can assure you. He ran foul of our organisation in Hankow. He was most rash. Luckily for himself, he had a weak heart, so he was spared much distress."

"Well, and what do you intend to do with me, you gaol-bird?" asked Locke, trying to control the bitter anger that surged within him.



The Spider gave a curious hissing noise. Immediately two carved panels in the wall burst open and a couple of Asiatics emerged and hurled themselves on Ferrers Locke. A sack whirled aloft, and before the detective could recover from his surprise he was made a prisoner. (See Chapter 4.)

recognised instantly from the description given by Mellini. It was the so-called Jap, Morosaki!

So swift was the onslaught that Locke would have had no proper chance to defend himself, even had he not been covered by a revolver. He attempted to stall off his assailants, but one of them threw a sack over his head, while the other tripped him violently to the floor. In less than a minute he was bound hand and foot.

Nothing more was said to him for a time. He felt himself lifted and carried down two flights of stairs. The sack was torn from his head, and he saw that he was in a cellar.

"You may make all the noise you like here, Mr. Locke," said the mysterious Chinese in the yellow robes. "But let me properly introduce you to a person I believe you are interested in—Tung Lee, alias Morosaki, a humble member of the Hoa Hang Tong, who was sent to warn your friend, Red Amoy."

The chief of the English branch of the Hoa Hangs drew in his breath with a short, savage hiss, like a roused snake.

"Yes, thanks to you, Mr. Locke, I spent three months behind the walls of an English prison. I only came out yesterday afternoon, or I should have prepared something very lingering for you. Unfortunately, this is the house of a very respected member of society, and so you must be sent rather more quickly to your doorn than I should wish. However, it can't be helped, Mr. Locke—it can't be helped. If you will be patient for a few minutes, until Wong Moh arrives home, you shall see the manner in which you will bid adieu to this pleasant world."

Hardly had he spoken than footsteps sounded on the stairway leading down to the cellar. A stout Chinese, wearing tortoiseshell spectacles and smart English clothes, appeared, and bowed low before the Spider.

"This is Mr. Wong Moh," said Li

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Tang, with a gesture under his yellow draperies. "He is most respected in the City. Mr. Moh has proved most hospitable to me. Many of our meetings have been held in this very house, for it has been made peculiarly fitted for such a purpose. You would never dream, Mr. Locke, how many secret passages and burrows abound here."

A short conversation took place in Chinese between the four Orientals present. Locke noticed that their eyes wandered towards a curious grey-painted cupboard, which had the appearance of being used for storing wines. Tung Lee walked across and opened the door, and the sleuth saw that the place was empty and devoid of shelves.

For a few moments Tung Lee fumbled about in the grim-looking cupboard beneath the light of a lantern the Chinese servant held up.

"Look, Mr. Locke," said the Spider. "Tung Lee will give a demonstration that will interest you."

Standing between his captors just outside the cupboard, Ferrers Locke saw that the floor of the compartment consisted of a trap-door. To this trap-door was attached a catch, and to this was tied a thin length of rope, which ran through a small pulley in the ceiling. To the loose end of the rope which hung down from the pulley was tied a four-pound weight. This Tung Lee held in his hand.

The Chinese, standing close to Locke outside the cupboard, dropped this weight suddenly. There was a sharp click as the catch was released, and the trap-door dropped downwards. Beneath was a fast-flowing black stream of water!

"An underground stream which flows into the Thames a mile from here, Mr. Locke," said the Yellow Spider, with a grim chuckle. "You will shortly make a journey down it."

The trap-door was adjusted in its former position after some slight difficulty. Ferrers Locke was pushed roughly upon it. His bonds were so rearranged that he could extend his left arm from the elbow. And finally the four-pound weight was thrust into his left hand and the length of rope altered slightly by re-tying it on the trap-door catch.

"When you wish to die, Mr. Locke," drawled Li Fang, "just drop that weight. The trap-door will fall, and you will be precipitated into the underground river, to find your way in due course to the Thames. Long before your body is found by the River Police the inmates of this house, including myself, will be far away from Hampstead. If you are very strong, Mr. Locke, you will doubtless be able to retain the weight in that position for half an hour. I have never known anyone to hold it longer. Now, good-bye, Mr. Locke—and a pleasant voyage."

Bowing mockingly, the Spider and the other three Chinese left the cellar and went upstairs into the house.

More to relieve his feelings than for any other reason, Ferrers Locke shouted

defiance at the fiends who had left him to his fate.

At first he saw a faint hope of escape. The four-pound weight seemed light in his extended left hand, and he tried shuffling off the trap-door. But he quickly discovered that the thin rope was so adjusted that, unless he remained near the centre of the door, he would most assuredly cause the trap to fall. The minutes slowly dragged by, and the weight seemed to grow heavier and heavier. Cramp began to seize the muscles of his arm. At the end of twenty minutes he felt as though a hundred-weight was bearing down—down upon his left hand, while the agony of his weary muscles caused the perspiration to rise in beads upon his forehead.

More than once he almost decided to throw up the sponge, let his arm drop, and take that last fatal plunge into the

clawed wildly at the sides of the cupboard to prevent himself from falling; but with a crash he descended full length into the cupboard of death!

Right in front of the detective's feet he fell with a crash. Locke's left hand, unable to bear the terrible strain longer, dropped. There was a metallic click, and the trap fell! Locke hurtled downward against the prone form of the Chinese, which was now stretched across the open trap-door, forming a human bridge. His left hand, relieved from its cramped position, grasped wildly at the clothes of the Chink, and he held on grimly, his feet emersed in the black, rushing water of the underground river.

His left elbow rested on Tung Lee's body, and, with the strength of despair, Locke strove to raise himself. In making the effort his bound feet struck against the fallen trap-door. Thus he was able to get a slight leverage to push himself higher.

Tung Lee struggled and shrieked, but, with a final Herculean twist of his body, the detective succeeded in rolling off the Chink and on to the edge of the cupboard flooring. Hardly had he done so than Tung Lee, in an effort to regain an upright position, lost his hold entirely. Bound as he was, Locke was helpless to save the fellow. There was an ominous splash, and the black waters of the underground river rolled over the head of the slayer of Red Amov!

Rolling out on to the cellar floor, Locke sawed his bonds against a broken glass bottle. Then he made his way up into the house. The Chinese servant met him in the hallway and, with a shriek of surprise, drew a short length of lead piping from his sleeve. But Ferrers Locke felled the fellow with a crashing right to the chin. Dashing out of the house, he sought Jack Drake, who had been keeping a patient vigil.

"Have you seen anyone leave that house, my boy?" panted the sleuth.

"No, sir—no one."

In a few words Locke narrated his adventures. The police were summoned, and Inspector Pycroft, at Scotland Yard, was notified. In less than ten minutes the whole house was surrounded by a cordon of police. The Chinese servant was arrested, and subsequently received a heavy sentence. The house in Verdun Gardens was found to contain some amazing secret passages and outlets. But, although the death of Red Amoy had been in a measure avenged, the mysterious Mr. Fang and the highly respectable Wong Moh had disappeared as completely as though the earth had opened and swallowed them!

THE END.

Although Mr. Fang has disappeared he has sworn to rid the world of its most brilliant detective. Ferrers Locke, on the other hand, is determined to bring the cunning Oriental to justice. Who will win in this exciting battle of wits? See next week's final story "The Man from Chinatown!"

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underground river. But each time the temptation assailed him, the love of life bade him hold on for a minute more.

Then, just as though he felt that his left arm was being torn from its socket, he heard halting, unsteady footsteps descending the cellar stairs. It was Tung Lee, alias Morosaki!

The man had been indulging in Chinese rice wine, and now, unknown to the others in the house, the wretch had come to gloat over the last moments of the doomed detective.

He came to the door and peered in, and made some coarse joking remark in English. Swaying unsteadily, he waited for the Englishman to let drop the weight which would release the catch of the trap-door. Then, as he swayed, he seemed to lose his balance. His yellow hands

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