

THE BEST BOYS' PAPER BAR NONE!

898. Vol. XXVII

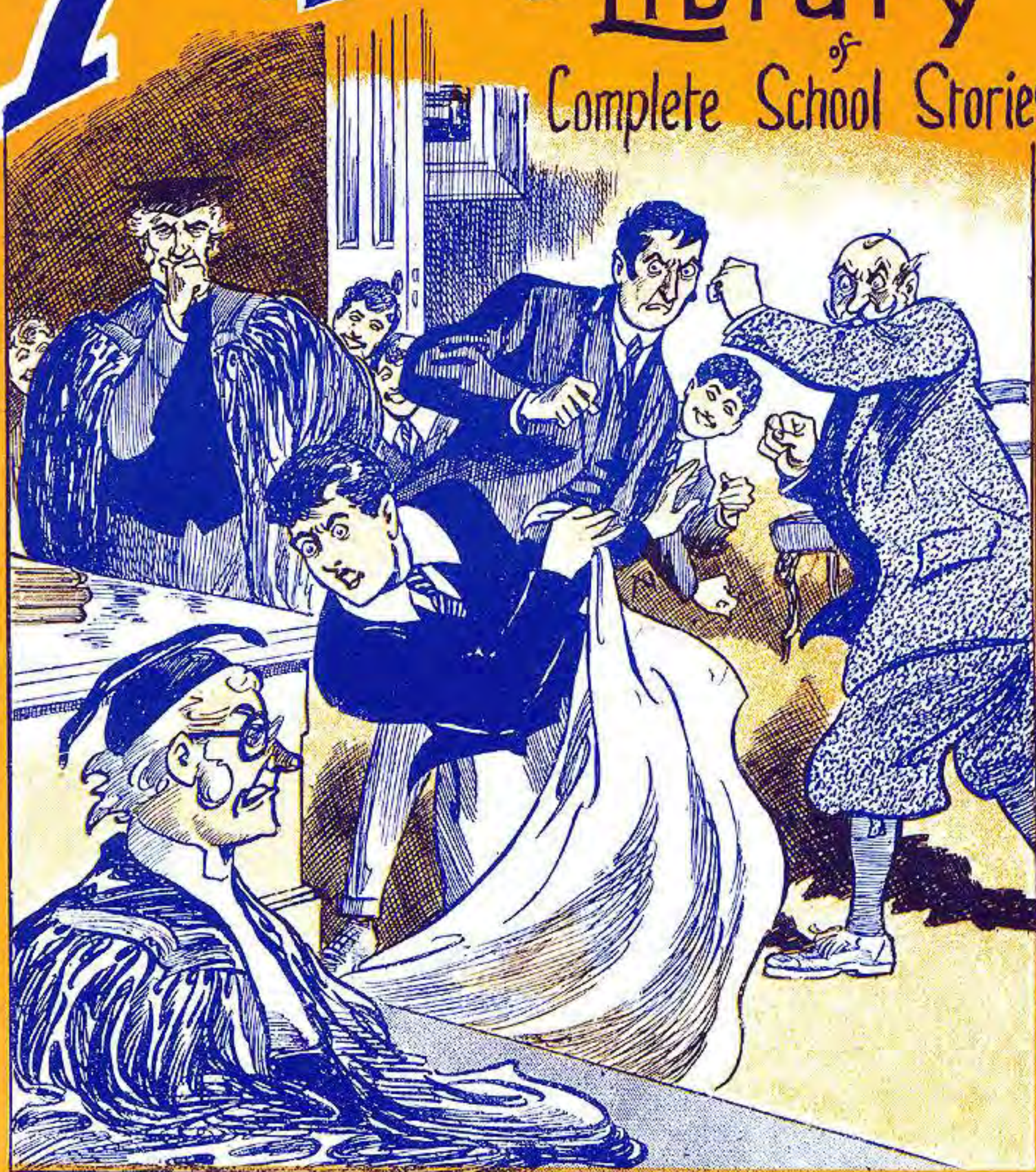
Week Ending April 26th, 1925.

The Magnet²

EVERY MONDAY

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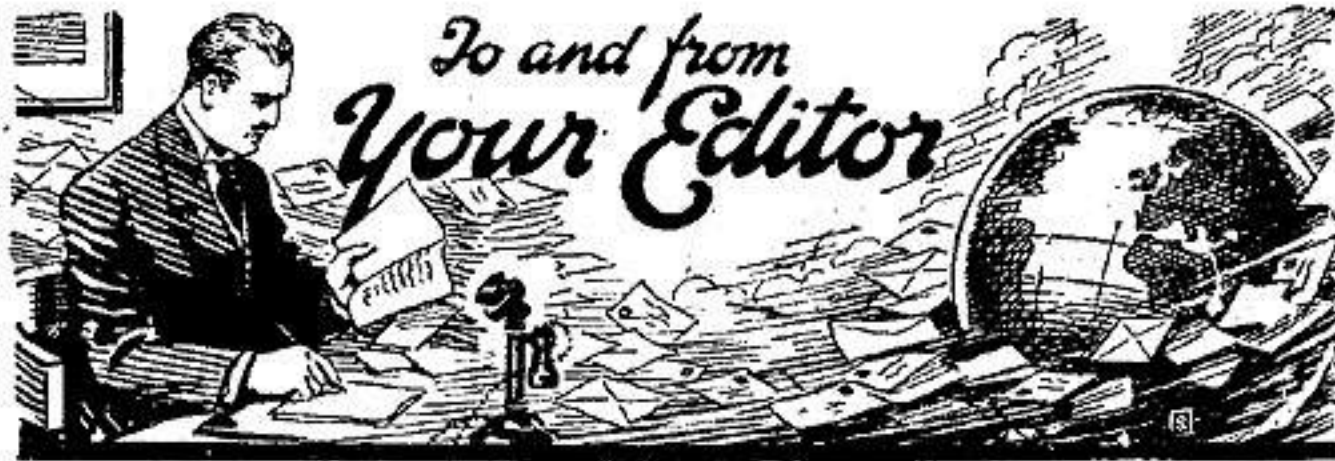
of
Complete School Stories.



THE UNVEILING CEREMONY!

A SHOCK FOR THE SCHOOLBOY SCULPTOR!

(A humorous incident from the long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greffrars, inside.)



"PLAYING THE GOAT!"

By Frank Richards.

NEXT Monday's fine story of the Greyfriars chums features Vernon-Smith, who, on account of his "goey" ways, was once nicknamed the Bounder. The name has stuck to him ever since. It has been said by a learned scribe that the leopard cannot change its spots. That little saying had all the truth knocked out of it when the Bounder reformed, a whole-hearted reformation at that. No smoking, no blagging, no breaking of bounds—the Bounder surprised everybody by his sudden return to the paths of virtue. But—and there's always a "but" in a character such as Smith's—the reform, while it lasted, was good, distinctly good. Then the old yearnings for freedom, the old promptings to overthrow authority, rose in rebellion against that praiseworthy reformation. Bitter struggles took place in the Bounder's heart, and it is to his credit that he withstood the temptations of his "other" self for some time. The truth of the old saying, however, was being revived. The leopard does not change its spots, and neither could the Bounder throw off absolutely his earlier habits.

A LAPSE!

Occasionally the Bounder skipped back into his "goey" ways—to do wrong is far easier than to do right—for him! And in the Bounder's case it carried a certain amount of notoriety with it. Smithy loves the limelight—whole chunks of it. These patches of the old Smithy come to light at uncertain intervals, bringing trouble in their train for those who, not constituting themselves his friends in the full meaning of the word, have always endeavoured to bear with him. Smithy, in this case, falls foul of the captain of the Remove cricket eleven, and, with due regard to the nature of his offence, is suspended from the club. Then the fun begins to fly with a vengeance. The Bounder is not a meek-and-mild fellow like Stott or Snoop, and he makes no secret of his intention to force Harry Wharton's hand. His manner of going to work is decidedly "shady" and in bad taste, but the reckless Bounder cares little for the opinion of his Form fellows. The end is in sight, however, when he runs foul of Cecil Reginald Temple, the captain of the Upper Fourth. How this comes about I'm leaving your favourite author to describe in his own way next Monday. On no account, chums, must you miss

"PLAYING THE GOAT!"

Look out, too, for another ripping instalment of our powerful detective story,

"THE GOLDEN PYRAMID!"

In which Drake and Ferrers Locke near the end of their quest. Mr. Mar-
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 898.

dyke, the rascally master of the Fifth, is far too downy a bird, however, to walk into the arms of the police. He gives a lot of trouble. Then there's Arthur the Dude—Arthur Bristow—who has yet to be accounted for. This arch scoundrel has a few trump cards up his sleeve yet. Steadily and surely, however, the world-famous detective follows on his heels, like some persistent agent of retribution—always a fear-haunting shadow with the most hardened criminal. Don't miss this coming instalment, whatever you do, chums.

"CRICKET!"

The "Herald" staff contribute a special supplement on this grand summer sport in our next issue. All the leading lights air their views, including Dicky Nugent of the Second. His description of a St. Sam's cricket match will send you into screams of laughter.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 9.

Next Monday's issue of the MAGNET will contain another list of prizewinners in connection with our simple Limerick Competition, which proved so popular. For all you know, chum, your name might be amongst the fortunate ones. Make certain for yourself by getting, in good time, a copy of this paper.

GRAND NEW SERIAL!

I have something up my sleeve, as it were, in the form of a brilliant new serial by that popular author, Hedley Scott. As you might guess, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake are the central characters. And here's the titbit of news—Dr. Fourstanton, the rascally

chief of the motor bandits, plays no mean part in this story of baffling mystery and adventure. You have sampled the quality of Mr. Scott's work. All of you will be keen to read his new story when I say that, in all honesty, it is the finest story he has ever written. Keep your eyes on this page in the future, chums. The date of this new treat must not slip by unnoticed.

CARTOONS!

There will be another humorous cartoon in our next issue dealing, this time, with William Gosling, than whom there is no funnier gate-porter living. Mr. Chapman has caricatured Gossy splendidly, "as ever was."

THE "SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY."

Two more numbers of this wonder school-story library make their appearance next Friday, May 1st. Number 3 describes the rollicking adventures of Fisher T. Fish, the get-rich-quick junior from the States. The title, "The Greyfriars Business Man," is a fair indication of this extra-long story of Greyfriars. Don't miss it. Number 4 recounts the adventures of Willy Handforth & Co., of St. Frank's. Handforth is a cheery youth who won't be bullied, and Mr. Marmaduke Muggles is—But that's letting the cat out of the bag! Mind you get "The Fighting Form of St. Frank's." Ask for the May editions of the "Schoolboys' Own Library."

CRUISING ON A CANAL!

For a nice, leisured holiday the canal offers peculiar inducements. Any old canal will do. The sleepy waterway which laps through Birmingham and gets itself mixed up with the Rea River will serve. That of Liverpool, or the sinuous affair which slopes past Basingstoke may serve at a pinch. All you have to do is to come to terms with the skipper of a monkey-boat or a nice, tarry barge, and—well, there you are! As an adventure there are many worse things than seeing your own country from the deck of such a craft.

Your Editor.

RESULT OF "CROSS WORDS" LIMERICK COMPETITION No. 8.

In this competition the FIRST PRIZE of £5 for the best "last line" sent in has been awarded to:

JAMES E. EGAN,
182, Widnes Road,
Widnes, Lancs.

for rounding off the following verse:

Came a "Honk!" and a crash—and a shriek!
"Silly fowl!" Coker roared (like his cheek).
On his bike he sped by,
Leaving one fowl to die—

with

"Tyred" out of its life, so to speak.

CONSOLATION PRIZES of POCKET KNIVES have been awarded to the following twelve competitors:

BERT BILLINGS, 92, Rotherfield Street, Canonbury, London, N.
C. BOVINGDON, 66, Colville Road, Sth. Acton, London, W. 3.
STANLEY BRAMLEY, 4, Cemetery Road, Heanor, Derbyshire.
J. FREDK. COLBY, 49, Garden Road, Dunstable, Beds.
H. DAVIES, 1, Lee Street, St. Thomas, Swansea.
L. GRIFFITHS, 46, Eleanor Road, Stratford, London, E. 15.
W. T. C. JOHNSTON, St. Michael's Villa, Linlithgow.
R. J. LONG, Green Garth, Staveley, Westmorland.
L. LOVELL, 272, Eastern Road, Kemp Town, Brighton.
D. NEWMARK, 64, Palmerston Road, Rathmines, Dublin.
IRENE M. SMITH, Ellerton Grange, Newport, Salop.
A. TURNER, "Pendennis," Elton Road, Clevedon, Somerset.

THE TWO ARTS.—Dick Russell has a genius for sculpture; Harold Skinner possesses a genius for practical joking. Apart as these two "arts" are, each in its way contributes towards the solution of a mystery that surrounds a cheap two-and-sixpenny plaster cast of Julius Caesar!



The Schoolboy Sculptor!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., the Chums of Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Otherwise Engaged!

"RUSSELL here?" Harry Wharton asked the question as he looked in at the door of Study No. 3 in the Remove passage at Greyfriars. Behind Harry Wharton were his chums, Frank Nugent, Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh. The latter four juniors wore broad grins, but Harry Wharton wore an expression of grim determination.

Donald Ogilvy, Dick Russell's chum and study-mate, was alone in the study, and he looked up with a grin at the group in the doorway.

"Going blind?" he asked genially.

"Eh? You silly dummy——"

"You can see he isn't here," said Ogilvy. "Why ask silly questions, Wharton?"

"Oh, rats! Look here, Ogilvy, if that ass Russell isn't here, do you know where he is?"

"He's about the school somewhere."

"I suppose he is, as dinner's only just over!" snapped Harry Wharton crossly. "But I want to know where, you idiot!"

"Why not ask him?" suggested Ogilvy. "He's the most likely chap to know, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry's chums roared at the expression of wrath on their leader's face.

"Look here, Ogilvy, you burbling idiot!" he snorted. "I believe you know perfectly well where Russell is! And I believe you know jolly well where he's been putting himself lately."

"Do I?"

"Yes; I believe so. What game is he up to, Ogilvy?"

"Is that a conundrum?"

"It's what I want to know, and what I jolly well mean to know. What's his little game?"

"Ask me another!"

Harry Wharton drew a deep breath. Ogilvy's manner was certainly exasperating, and it was plain he did not intend to answer those questions—if he did know the answers to them.

"Look here, Ogilvy," he said, calming

himself with an effort, "you know jolly well that Dick Russell is up to something. He's never to be found when he's wanted, for one thing."

"Lots of fellows are like that," said Ogilvy, yawning. "Anything else?"

"Yes. He's slacking, too," said Harry grimly. "He's dodging cricket practices, and games in general."

"Naughty boy!" said Ogilvy. "Anything else?"

"Yes," said Harry, his manner becoming serious. "I woke up last night about eleven, and spotted him leaving the dorm, Ogilvy."

"Oh!"

It was clear that, whatever else he knew, Dick Russell's chum did not know that.

"You saw the ass leave the dorm last night, Wharton?"

"Yes; I kept awake until he returned. He came back about two o'clock—been away three hours."

"Well, the silly chump!" said Ogilvy.

"He'll be knocking himself up!"

"Then you know——"

"Anything else?" asked Ogilvy hurriedly.

Harry Wharton gave him a keen look.

"Isn't that enough?" he asked. "He's dodging games, slacking, and now he's started breaking bounds at night; may have been doing it for ages, for all I know. Anyway, it's beginning to look queer, Ogilvy. You're his chum, and it's up to you to stop him making a fool of himself. He was a decent chap enough, and I don't like to see——"

Donald Ogilvy burst into a laugh.

"Well, you chump, Wharton!" he grinned. "You surely don't suspect him of blagging, and shady games?"

"Well, I certainly can't see Russell doing that sort of thing. But it's getting rather thick. He wouldn't be leaving the dorm at night for hours just for the fun of it, Ogilvy."

"Sleep walking, perhaps?" suggested Ogilvy helpfully.

"Don't be an ass! Anyway, that's not what I've come about now. You know it's compulsory games' practice to-day?"

"I do. I'll be along presently, old chap."

"I know you'll be along all right," said Harry impatiently. "It's Dick Russell I'm after. Do you know if he means to come?"

"Better ask him, Wharton."

"You funny idiot——"

"I'm quite serious, old scout. If you're too lazy to turn round, then you can talk to him out of the back of your neck, can't you?"

"Look here, Ogilvy," said Harry sulphurously. "If you don't stop trying to be funny, I'll dot you on the nose!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Something in his chums' laughter made the skipper of the Remove turn round, and then he jumped as he saw the reason.

Standing in the passage, just behind his chums as if politely waiting to be allowed to enter, was a junior with rather a serious face. It was Dick Russell. He had just come along, unheard and unseen by Harry Wharton.

He grinned cheerily as he met Harry's look.

"Want me, Wharton?" he asked.

"Yes, I do!" grunted Harry. "I want to know if you're coming down to cricket, Russell?"

Dick Russell shook his head.

"Nothing doing, old chap," he said promptly. "I've something more important on."

"You know it's compulsory games to-day?"

"Yes; but I want you to let me off this afternoon. You see——"

"Why should I? You've jolly well missed practice enough lately, Russell. You'll be getting slack and unfit. Besides, it isn't fair to others. What have you got on, anyway?"

"My clothes," said Russell innocently. "And my watch, and——"

"Rats! Ogilvy's funny enough without you starting, Russell," said Harry wrathfully. "Why do you want to cut practice?"

"Sorry, old chap, but I'm not explaining that."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 898.

"Then I'm not excusing you!" snapped Harry. "You're coming down to the changing room now."

"I think not," said Russell calmly. "I'm going to be otherwise engaged this afternoon."

"Do you want me to report you to Wingate?" asked Harry Wharton grimly.

"I can't see you doing that, Wharton!" grinned Dick Russell. "Anyway, I'll risk it. I've got a job on this afternoon. I'm not coming."

"I think you are," said Wharton. "I've brought these chaps along to help you to change your mind, Russell. If you won't come willingly, you'll be yanked there."

"That's the programme!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Better come, Dick. It's compulsory games, and we're the compulsors."

"But look here——"

"Are you coming?"

"No; I tell you——"

"Collar him!" ordered Harry Wharton.

"What-ho!"

"Here, you silly asses!" gasped Russell in alarm. "I tell you I've something important on!"

"Can't be as important as cricket, old chap."

"But I'm not jolly well—— Ow! Leggo!"

Russell yelled as the Famous Five grasped him and whirled him off his feet. Donald Ogilvy, feeling called upon to aid his chum, rushed to the rescue, but Bob Cherry turned his attention to him, and sat him down on his own study carpet. The next moment, with arms and legs working frantically, Dick Russell was being frog-marched along the Remove passage.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Grub-hunter!

BUMP; bump, bump!

Amid gasps and wrathful protestations from Dick Russell, the little procession went along the Remove passage with a rush.

At every half-dozen steps or so Russell's person struck the linoleum with a resounding bump, which was entirely owing to the junior's frantic struggles, as Frank Nugent pointed out to him.

But Dick Russell wasn't grateful, neither did he cease to struggle. It was all the Famous Five could do to hold him, much less carry him, without such little accidents.

Bump, bump, bump!

"There you go again!" grinned Bob Cherry. "It's your own fault, you know! Stop wriggling, you ass!"

"Ow!" gasped Russell. "Ow-wow! You—you frightful rotters! Ow! I say, I sha'n't turn out if you do yank me there! I shall bunk at the first chance——"

Bump!

"Ow!" howled Russell.

It was not an accident that time, as the grinning faces of the Famous Five testified.

"Bump him again if he talks like that," said Wharton calmly. "We can't have insubordination or cheek."

"Ow! You—you——"

"You're coming," said Harry. "And every time you slack we'll touch you up with a boot or a bat. I've had enough—— Here, out of the way, Coker!"

The little procession, with the yelling Russell in its midst, came to a sudden halt.

Barring their path was the burly form of Horace Coker of the Fifth Form. Coker was a very great man at Greyfriars in his own estimation, and he had a perfect genius for "butting in" on other people's business.

He was evidently intent upon "butting in" now.

"Hallo! What's all this?" he snapped, eyeing the scene sternly. "Bullying, eh?"

"Don't talk like an ass!" said Harry Wharton politely. "Out of the way, Coker, or we'll put you out!"

"Half a minute, Wharton," said Coker grimly. "This looks to me jolly well like a case of bullying. I'm down on bullying—you fellows ought to know that."

"Rats! Out of the way, funny ass!"

"Not yet. I want to know what you chaps are doing with that kid?"

"Ow! Make 'em lemme go, Coker, old man!" gasped Russell, seeing a chance of escape. "Good man, Coker! Go for the rotters, old chap!"

"I'll jolly soon do that if they don't release you, kid!" snapped Coker, a warlike gleam in his eyes. "Now, you kids——"

"Get out of the way," said Harry, "or we'll shift you, Coker!"

"I'm doing nothing of the sort!"

"March, chaps!" said Harry.

"What-ho?"

"Look here! Don't your kids dare—— Yaroooooh!"

Crash!

It was more of a rush than a march on the part of the Famous Five. Russell's head struck the Fifth-Former on his waistcoat with the force of a battering-ram, and the officious Coker sat down in the passage with a bump and a roar.

Over him tramped the Famous Five like an incoming tide. Bob Cherry released his grasp on Russell for a brief moment in order to wipe his feet on Coker. This done he rejoined his chums, and the procession proceeded on its way to the changing-room.

But it did not proceed far—Horace Coker saw to that. He came rushing after the Removites, and he charged into the group like a maddened bull.

The juniors went spinning in all directions, and the hapless Russell went to the floor with a heavy thud and a howl of pain and wrath.

"Walk over me, would you? Wipe your dashed feet on me, eh?" roared Coker. "I'll teach you! Take that!"

Harry Wharton took it—a thump in the chest that sent him reeling.

"Back up!" gasped the captain of the Remove wrathfully. "Down the cheeky, interfering ass!"

"Yes, rather!"

Forgetting Russell in their excited wrath, the Famous Five flung themselves on the Fifth-Former as one man and brought him crashing down. Russell—grinning now—saw his chance, and took it. Like the Arab, he silently stole away.

But the other juniors were too busy to notice Russell. At any time Horace Coker was a big handful, and he was in a towering rage now. The struggling six rolled over and over on the cold linoleum.

The hubbub was at its height when a master in cap and gown rustled up. It was Mr. Quelch, and he stared at the group in angry amazement.

"Coker—boys!" he gasped. "How—how dare you? Cease this tumult at once."

"Oh, my hat!"

With gasps of alarm the combatants sorted themselves out and staggered to

their feet, rearranging their dishevelled attire as they did so.

"What does this disgraceful scene mean?" snapped the Remove master, looking sternly from Coker to the juniors. "Wharton, why were you fighting with Coker?"

"Ahem!" murmured Harry Wharton. "It—it was nothing, sir. Just—just fun."

"A little argument, sir," added Bob Cherry helpfully.

"I was just whopping them, sir," said Coker candidly, glaring at the juniors. "They cheeked me, sir."

"Oh, indeed!" said Mr. Quelch, with heavy sarcasm. "Very well. You must learn that a Form passage is not the place for disgraceful disturbances of this nature. I shall report you to Mr. Prout, Coker. The rest of you will take a hundred lines each."

"Yes, sir."

"Disperse at once!"

They dispersed—Coker growling below his breath, and the Famous Five eyeing each other in disgust.

"Well, my hat!" snorted Harry Wharton. "A hundred lines, eh! And that rotter Russell's got away after all. Come on! We're going to hunt for the beggar!"

"Oh, let him rip!" sniffed Johnny Bull. "Let's get along to the changing-room."

"Not yet!" said Harry, his eyes gleaming. "Dick Russell's not sneaking out of it like this! Come on!"

He led the way back towards Russell's study, his jaw set. As the captain of the Remove, it was his job to round up the slackers for games practice, and he meant to carry out that job in so far as Russell was concerned. Russell had flouted his authority, and Harry did not like it.

They had almost reached Study No. 3 when a fat junior came rolling towards them. It was Billy Bunter, and there was a discontented expression on the fat junior's face.

"Seen Russell, Bunter?" asked Harry Wharton.

A sudden gleam of interest came into Bunter's eyes.

"You chaps looking for Russell?" he asked eagerly.

"Yes."

"I'll soon tell you where the greedy beast is!" grinned Bunter. "He's just gone up to the top box-rooms. He's going to scoff all the grub himself, the mean beast!"

"Grub? What grub?"

"Didn't you fellows see that whacking great box that came for him this morning?" asked Bunter. "My hat! You should have seen it! Old Gosling carried it up to the box-room this morning."

"How the thump d'you know it contains grub?" grinned Nugent.

"Eh? What else could it contain?" grunted Bunter. "I say, you fellows, you ought to make him whack it out. Other chaps whack out when they get hampers and boxes from home. Why shouldn't he?"

"You're sure he's up there, Bunter?" said Harry grimly.

"Haven't I said so? The beast caught me up there and kicked me downstairs," grumbled Bunter, rubbing himself ruefully. "I suppose he thought I was after his grub, the awful, suspicious beast!"

"Of course you weren't?" grinned Bob Cherry. "Wouldn't be like you, would it, Billy?"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"We've wasted enough time," said Harry Wharton quickly. "Come along,

you chaps! If Russell is up there we'll jolly soon have him out of that!"

"Oh, good!" grinned Billy Bunter. "I say, you fellows, come on—quick—before it's all gone!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Apparently Bunter was under the impression that the Famous Five were also after the "grub"—if grub there was in Russell's mysterious box. With Billy Bunter, delighted and gleeful now, at their heels, they raced upstairs to the top box-room. One room was open and empty, but the other was closed and locked.

"He's inside!" said Bob Cherry. "Listen!"

From behind the locked door of the box-room sounded a queer tapping sound.

"I say, you fellows," said Bunter, almost trembling with eagerness. "He's opening the box now. Shall we smash the lock?"

"No; we won't go as far as that!" grinned Harry. "Oh, hang the ass!"

He rapped sharply on the door. From inside came an exasperated voice.

"That you again, Bunter, you fat clam?"

"No, it isn't!" called Harry Wharton, in an ominous tone. "Better open the door, Russell; you ass! What the thump are you up to in there?"

"Run away, Wharton."

"Eh? You cheeky rotter!"

"Run away!" roared Russell, his voice wrathful. "What d'you want to come pestering me for like this? I'm not coming down to cricket practice, and that's flat! Shove off!"

"You'll get it hot for this, my pippin!"

"Rats! Run away and play hop-scotch! Go and eat coke! Go and chew brick-bats! Run away and chop chips!"

Harry Wharton drew a deep breath. He was biting his lips with anger, but his chums were grinning. They didn't take Dick Russell quite as seriously as their leader did.

"I say, you fellows!" said Bunter. "Don't let the mean beast beat you, you know. Smash the door down! He'll soon be starting on the grub now!"

And Bunter stooped suddenly, and peeped through the keyhole—or, at least, he tried to do so. The key was in the lock still, however. So he shouted through instead.

"Yah! Mean beast! Greedy beast! Keeps all his grub to himself! Yah! Beast!"

The tapping inside the box-room suddenly ceased, and the next moment the key rattled in the lock. But the door didn't open. Stooping down again, Bunter saw that the key had been merely withdrawn from the lock.

"I say, you fellows!" yelled Bunter, as he peered through. "I can see now! The beast's got the box open nearly! I can see it! Yah! Russell, you beast! Greedy rot—Ow! Grooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five roared as Bunter suddenly withdrew his eye from the keyhole with a muffled howl. His fat face was streaming with ink. It was clear that Dick Russell had merely withdrawn the key in order to insert the end of a squirt.

"How's that, Bunter?" called Russell, in sulphurous accents from inside. "That's what you'll get again if you come here worrying. I specially prepared that little surprise in case any silly asses came quizzing round. Now shove off!"



The Famous Five grasped Russell and whirled him off his feet. "Yaroooh! Leggo! Chuck it, you silly owls!" roared Russell. "Up with him, chaps!" chuckled Bob Cherry. Next moment, with arms and legs working frantically, Dick Russell was being whirled along the Remove passage. (See Chapter 1.)

"Ow! Wow-wow! Grooooh!" spluttered Bunter, in a tearful wail. "Ow! Grooooh! The awful beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The unfortunate Billy Bunter mopped away desperately at his streaming features with a dingy-looking handkerchief. Then he rolled dismally away, and stumbled down the stairs en route, apparently, for the bath-rooms. For the time being he had evidently given up the grub-hunt.

"Ha, ha! What a scream!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "It's no good, Harry. We can't smash the giddy door down, you know. We'll have to give old Russell best over this."

Harry Wharton bit his lip. It went much against the grain with him to let Russell have best even for the time being. But there was nothing else for it, apparently. They were on the wrong side of the locked door, and, like his chums, Harry was impatient to get down to practice. So he nodded after a pause.

"All right!" he said. "We'll settle things with Russell another time. But—but what on earth can the chap be up to, you fellows? I don't like it!"

"It isn't grub!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Russell isn't a chap like Fishy, who scoffs grub on the quiet! Not much!"

"You know I don't mean that," said Harry Wharton, his brow wrinkling in troubled thought. "I mean what is the chap up to lately? He's always missing, and he seems to have given up games altogether. And what about his sneaking out of the dorm at night?"

"Ask me another!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"It's nothing to joke about, you ass!" snapped Harry crossly. "I mean to keep an eye on the idiot! I'm going to put a stop to his breaking bounds at night, anyway. If he goes out to-night, or any other night, we're going after him. Blow him now! Let's be getting down to the nets, for goodness' sake!"

And with that, Harry Wharton led the way downstairs again, his brow not a little ruffled in rather worried thought. He liked Dick Russell, and though not one to trouble much about another fellow's business, Harry felt he ought to chip in. And he meant to chip in.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Secret Out!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. scarcely saw Dick Russell again until bed-time that evening—nor had they sought him out at all. Despite his wrath at Russell's disregard of his own responsibility, and of Harry Wharton's authority regarding games, the captain of the Remove decided to let him rip—for the time being.

None the less, Harry Wharton & Co. had not forgotten Russell by any means. Apart from the question of sports, Harry was genuinely disturbed in regard to Dick Russell's conduct of late. The junior had always been a decent chap, keen at games and sports, and one of the most reliable chaps in the Remove.

And now, here he was, cutting even compulsory games, and more significant still, breaking out of dorm at night. How long he had been doing so, Harry THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 898.

did not know; but he remembered noticing that, in class, Russell had been strangely dull and drowsy in the mornings of late. Harry wondered if it was a more or less regular occurrence.

He was determined to discover that. That night Harry Wharton & Co. remained awake until long after silence had fallen on the dormitory, and their self-imposed vigil was rewarded.

After what seemed hours to the watching juniors, a dim figure sat up on Russell's bed, and his voice was heard in a whisper.

"Any of you fellows awake?"

There was no answer. Evidently all the fellows, excepting the Famous Five, were asleep, and the latter took good care not to answer.

Only a moment Dick Russell waited, and then he slipped silently out of bed and started to dress in the darkness. Then he stole quietly out of the dormitory.

"Buck up, you fellows!" whispered Harry Wharton.

He slipped out of bed, and his chums followed in a flash. They were as keen as he was to discover the secret of Dick Russell's mysterious nocturnal excursions.

At top speed they rushed on a few clothes, and then they left the dormitory. Quick as they had been, Dick Russell had already vanished when they got in the passage outside.

"The lower box-room," muttered Harry, staring up and down the silent corridor. "Come on!"

That Dick Russell had left the school the juniors had little doubt, and they stole along to the lower box-room. But there they met with a surprise. The window was closed, and securely latched from the inside.

"Well, this beats the band," whispered Harry Wharton. "He's not gone out after all, then. I wonder—Great pip! What asses we are!"

"What d'you mean?"

"This afternoon!" snapped Harry. "he was up in the top box-room, wasn't he? He may have gone there now—"

"But what on earth does he want there at this time of the night?"

"Goodness knows!" said Harry. "It looks to me like it, anyway."

"To me, too!" grinned Bob Cherry. "My hat! Suppose there was grub in that box? And suppose Bunter was right?"

"Ass!" said Harry. "Dick Russell isn't that sort. It's pretty clear he's got some game on up there, though. We'll investigate, at all events."

"Yes, rather!"

The juniors hurried along to the back staircase, and hurried quietly up to the box-rooms. Harry had brought a pocket torch, and as they reached the little landing, they saw that, as before, one door was open and the other closed.

"Hark!" breathed Bob Cherry.

From behind the closed door came a strange tapping sound. In their slipped feet the juniors had made no sound, and now Harry softly tried the door. It was locked.

"What on earth can the chump be up to?" whispered Frank Nugent wonderingly.

"Taken up fretwork, perhaps?" suggested Bob Cherry.

"Sounds more like stonework!" grinned Johnny Bull. "See if the ass will let us in."

"He won't do that, you may bet!" said Harry, in a puzzled tone. "This is no end queer, you fellows. But we ought to—My hat! I've got it! This way, you chaps!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 393.

Harry slipped through the open doorway of the next box-room, and his chums followed curiously. Their leader pointed his torch up at the skylight.

"If we get on the roof, we'll be able to see through the next skylight," he said grimly. "I don't like the idea of spying on the idiot, but there is something jolly rummy about this business, and I mean to find out what it is."

"He won't like it," said Johnny Bull doubtfully.

"He must lump it, then," said Harry quietly. "For the reckless dummy's own sake we ought to look into the matter. Give me a hand with these boxes."

The juniors dragged some empty boxes to the middle of the floor, working cautiously to prevent any sound reaching to the next room. The skylight was not high, and a moment later Harry had clambered on to the boxes, and had drawn back the bolts of the skylight.

It was soon done, and, shoving the torch in his pocket—it was scarcely needed as the moonlight lit up the room—he pushed up the heavy skylight, and climbed out on to the roof.

His chums followed, one by one, and soon all were on the roof in safety. It was almost as light as day, and every detail of the roofs and turrets of the old school buildings showed up clearly.

"Jove! It's ripping up here!" whispered Frank Nugent.

In the sleepy silence they stared round on the unusual scene for a few seconds, and then Harry moved to the next skylight through which showed a flood of light.

His chums followed him, and the next instant they were gazing down at a scene that made them stare.

In the box-room below the gas was burning, and they could see every detail of the room. And Dick Russell was there right enough. He was standing before a little pile of boxes on which stood something that puzzled the juniors for a moment. It was a misshapen lump of stone which the junior was working on with chisel and mallet.

Tap, tap, tap!

The astonished and mystified Harry Wharton & Co. blinked down at the strange scene in amazement. Dick Russell's clever face wore an expression of keen absorption. He worked away, engrossed in his extraordinary occupation, oblivious of the fact that five pairs of curious eyes were watching him.

"Well, I'm hanged!" breathed Harry Wharton. "So—so that's the game!"

"But—but what—"

"Can't you see?" whispered Harry Wharton. "He's taken up sculpture, then. He always was a clever, artistic beggar, you know. He's working on a bust!"

"Bust is it?" murmured Bob Cherry. "Looks to me like a chunk of stone that's been busted!"

"Ass!" grinned Harry. "It's only in the rough now! Great pip! Fancy the ass daring to work in the box-room at night, though! The nerry-bounder!"

"Let's give him a fright!" grinned Bob Cherry.

And before Harry could stop him, Bob had tapped sharply on the glass of the skylight.

It was rather thoughtless of Bob, and the junior beneath almost jumped out of his skin. With the mallet and chisel in his hands, he blinked up at the skylight in alarm.

"Who—who's there?" he called, a trifle shakily.

Realising it would be better to reassure the startled junior, Harry pressed his face close to the glass.

"It's all right, Russell!" he called

back. "It's only me—Wharton! I say, let us in, you bounder!"

"Oh!" gasped Russell. "You—you asses! You startled me no end! What the thump do you want, Wharton? Can't you jolly well let a chap alone?"

"We've bowled you out, Russell!" called Bob Cherry. "Might as well let us in and explain, you know."

"Go and eat coke!" snorted Dick Russell. "Likely, isn't it? Rats!"

"I tell you it's all serene," said Harry Wharton, grinning. "We'll let you off for this afternoon. We only want to know what the game is, you ass!"

Dick Russell pondered a moment. But he realised that the Famous Five had discovered his secret, and he also realised that it would be necessary to swear them to secrecy if he intended it to remain a secret.

He nodded at last, and dragged a couple of big boxes under the skylight. A moment later he was withdrawing the bolts, and the skylight was lifted up. Harry Wharton dropped through first, and soon the Co. were standing in the box-room below.

"Well, my only hat!" breathed Harry, eyeing Dick Russell in amazement. "So this is your game, eh? How long has this been going on, Russell?"

"Not long," said Dick Russell, flushing a little. "I expect you chaps will grin, but I'm no end keen on this sculpture; always wanted to take it up. You chaps will keep it mum, won't you?"

"Well, yes," said Harry hesitatingly. "But look here, Russell, old chap. It strikes me you're overdoing it more than a bit. A hobby like this is all right as far as it goes, but you can't go on cutting sports and everything else for it. And as for leaving the dorm at night like this—well, you're taking a jolly big risk, my lad. Chuck it!"

"I'm only overdoing it, as you call it, for a time!" grinned Russell. "You've heard there's an art exhibition coming off in a few weeks at Courtfield, Wharton—at the town hall?"

"I have seen something about it—yes!" grinned Harry. "Franky here wanted to send in some of his comic sketches until we pointed out they only wanted highbrow stuff. Why, thinking of entering?"

Dick Russell nodded and blushed again.

"It's cheek, I know," he said modestly. "But I've done quite a lot of this in the hols at home. I'm going to send in a bust—a bust of the Head."

"Oh, my hat!"

"You'll get busted if you do!" chuckled Bob Cherry, blinking at the mass of stone which they could see now was already taking the shape of a head and shoulders. "My hat! And is this thing going to be it?"

Again Dick Russell nodded, and pointed to a heap of sketches on the table.

"I've been secretly sketching the Head for days now," he explained. "I think I'll be able to manage it all right, though it isn't the same as modelling from life, of course. I can't expect the Head to sit for me, you see."

"Not quite," grinned Bob Cherry. "Sure he'll be pleased as it is, Russell, old man? He may not like it—especially if it turns out a dud."

"It won't!" said Dick Russell calmly. "I don't see why he should mind—in fact, he ought to feel honoured, I think. Anyway, I'm going to let him see it before it goes in, of course."

"Be sure to put some exercise books in your bags before you take it to him," advised Bob Cherry, shaking his head

sagely. "He's got a pretty hefty arm, you know."

"Rats! It'll be all right, you see," said Russell confidently. "Anyhow, you fellows know my secret now, and I want you to keep it mum."

"We'll do that all serene," said Harry. "I suppose Ogilvy knows—I could see he did this afternoon."

"Yes, he's the only chap I've told," said Russell. "Anyway, I want to get on with the job. You chaps can shove off now."

He walked to the door and turned the key in the lock.

"Half a minute!" grinned Harry. "You're coming with us, old chap. This game of working all hours of the day and night won't do, Russell. You'll be having a giddy breakdown. Come on to bed."

"Bed—fiddlesticks!" snorted Russell. "I'm sticking here for an hour or two yet, Wharton."

"You're not," said Harry coolly. "I'll back you up over this, of course, Russell. But not to the extent of encouraging this night work."

"But I've got to do it!" snorted Russell, eyeing Wharton in sudden alarm. "Don't be an ass! I've got to slog at nights, or I'll never get the thing done in time. Besides—What's that?"

Russell stopped suddenly, his hand raised for silence. On the stairs beyond the landing outside had sounded a creak, followed by a sound like a stumble on the stairs, and a low grunt.

"My hat!" breathed Russell. "Somebody coming! Quick, you chaps! Hide!"

The other juniors had already heard the sounds, and as Russell dived behind a big pile of trunks at the far end of the box-room, Nugent, Bull, Cherry, and Singh followed him.

Only Harry Wharton kept his head, and he slipped swiftly to the gas bracket and turned the light out. Then he also took cover behind the boxes and trunks.

With hearts beating a trifle faster than usual, the juniors crouched there and waited. They were startled and puzzled. The sounds outside were stealthy and creepy, and they knew that no master would approach in that manner.

Who could the midnight marauder be? The next instant they heard the soft turning of the door-knob, and the door swung open slowly.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Shock for Bunter!

CREAK, creak, creak!

With a rusty creaking the door swung slowly back, and then a form showed dimly in the doorway—a short, fat form wearing a coat over pyjamas, and big round spectacles that glimmered weirdly.

"Bunter!" breathed Harry Wharton. "Well, my hat!"

It was Billy Bunter right enough, and the sight of him bewildered the juniors until they remembered about Russell's mysterious box. Then they understood, and they grinned. Bunter, finding it hopeless to get at the box by daylight, had determined to raid it by night. He was "grub-hunting"—a very frequent occupation of Bunter's.

"Quiet!" breathed Harry Wharton softly. "Let's see what the fat burglar does."

In high glee the juniors in hiding watched the Owl of the Remove enter the room and close the door very carefully after him.

In the fat junior's hand was a lighted candle, and he stuck this to the top of a box. Then he blinked rather nervously about him. Bunter was not a brave youth by any means, and it was plain that the shadowy box-room did not appeal to him at that late hour. Bunter was obviously in a state of trembling indecision, torn between feelings of hunger and of fear of the dark and silent night.

He almost jumped out of his skin as he suddenly sighted the misshapen mass of stone on the pedestal of boxes.

"Ow! Oh, dear!" he gasped in an audible mumble. "Ow! I—I thought it was a-alive! Groooh!"

For a moment Bunter blinked in wonder at the rough stone bust and at the mallet and chisels on the boxes, and then he looked about him for the box.

"Wonder what the thump those silly things are doing here?" he mumbled. "Blow 'em, though! Where's that blessed box? Beast! Russell's a mean beast! Oh, dear! Suppose the awful rotter's scooped all the grub?"

The fat junior's eyes suddenly fell on the box he was looking for, and he grunted his satisfaction. It was quite a large box, and only one half of the lid had been torn off. The sight of this gave the grub-hunter hope, and he dropped on his knees beside the box.

"I'll teach the mean beast not to be so greedy!" he mumbled. "Hallo,

fancy packing grub in shavings and blessed rags and stuff!"

Mumbling this, Billy Bunter fumbled with one hand in the box. Then a puzzled expression came over his face, and he took the stub of candle and held it over the box.

He could see dimly into the shadowy interior now, and quite abruptly he stopped groping, and peered with his short-sighted eyes downwards.

And as he did so he leaped to his feet with a yelp of sheer horror and terror. His groping fingers had felt the unmistakable curves of a face, icy-cold and still. And at the same moment his staring eyes had glimpsed the features, white and corpse-like.

Naturally it was a shock to Billy Bunter.

For a single instant he stood, trembling from head to foot with sheer, petrified horror, and then he leaped madly for the door and tore it open, shrieking for help as he did so.

"Help! Murder! Police! Oh dear!" he howled. "Oh help! Groooh! Ow! Help!"

Shrieking at the top of his voice with terror, the fat junior shot through the doorway like a bullet from a gun, and, rushing to the top of the narrow staircase, he fairly hurled himself down the stairs.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Harry Wharton in great alarm. "That's done it!"



"I say, you fellows!" yelled Bunter, as he peered through the keyhole. "The beast's got the box open, and—Ow! Yooooop! Grooooooh!" "Ha, ha, ha!" The Famous Five roared as Bunter suddenly withdrew his eye from the keyhole, with a muffled howl. His fat face was streaming with ink. "Ow-wow!" roared Bunter. "The awful beast!" (See Chapter 2.)

"What's bitten the fat idiot?" gasped Frank Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!" gurgled Dick Russell, almost exploding with hysterical mirth. "Oh crumbs! What a giddy scream! Ha, ha, ha!"

"You burbling ass!" said Harry. "What is it? What the thump was in the box, Russell?"

"Only a bust—a plaster bust!" gurgled Russell. Ha ha, ha! He must have taken it for a corpse!"

"Oh, great pip!"

The juniors understood now, and, hardly knowing whether to laugh or not, they rushed out on to the landing after Bunter. That fat youth was still yelling, and as they reached the top landing Bunter reached the lower landing.

He reached it in a sprawling heap, sending two fire-buckets that stood there spinning away.

Crash, crash! Clatter, clatter! Crash!

The landing was very tiny, and the two water-filled buckets swamped their contents over the prostrate Bunter and the landing, and then they rolled down the stairs with an appalling crashing and clattering.

The noise added the final touch to Bunter's terror, and he leaped to his feet and went flying downstairs after the buckets, yelling like a wild Indian.

"Help! Murder! Police! Yarrroooh! Help!"

The clattering crash of the falling buckets, and Bunter's piercing yells fairly awakened the echoes of the silent, sleeping school.

On the dim landing Harry Wharton & Co. and Dick Russell eyed each other, alarmed now, despite their grinning faces.

"Well, the fat's in the fire now, you chaps!" said Harry Wharton. "We'd better make ourselves scarce."

"My hat! Yes, rather!"

"We're fairly trapped up here, though," said Harry. "No good making a dash for the dorm; we'd bump into someone sure as fate."

"What about the roof?" suggested Russell. "Hide up there until all's quiet?"

"Too risky," said Harry. "Some silly ass may notice the bolts of the skylight aren't shot, and shoot 'em. Where should we be then?"

"Oh, great Scott, yes!"

"We'd better hide in the next box-room," said Harry, coming to a hasty decision. "Bunter's bound to bring the beaks up to investigate, and we'll get a chance to slip out and join the crowd."

"Good wheeze!"

Though it was far from being a safe scheme, the juniors realised it was the only one, and they followed Harry into the next box-room.

The six juniors arranged boxes and trunks swiftly, and dropped down behind them, hoping for the best. And, meanwhile, Billy Bunter had soon found the help he was yelling for.

By the time Bunter had reached the floor below doors were opening all along the passages, and questioning voices were heard on every hand.

The terrified juniors almost rushed full-tilt into a crowd of startled, wondering Sixth-Formers grouped round the Sixth Form dormitory door, and Wingate promptly grasped Billy Bunter and brought him to a halt.

"You—you fat ass!" he snapped. "What on earth is the matter? Stop that awful row!"

"Ow! Oh dear! It's you, is it, Wingate?" panted Billy Bunter almost hysterically. "Ow! Oh dear!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 898.

Wingate stared in astonishment at the luckless fat youth. Someone had lighted the passage gas, and Bunter's face showed up ghastly white, and he was shaking like a great jelly.

"What on earth's the matter, Bunter?" repeated Wingate. "Why, kid, you're shaking like a leaf!"

"Ow! Oh dear!" gasped Bunter faintly. "I—I've had the fright of my life, Wingate! Oh! It was awful! I—I touched it, you know! Groooh!"

At that moment Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, and Mr. Quelch, and Mr. Hacker, of the Upper Fourth came hurrying up, their faces alarmed and anxious. Behind them was a swarm of juniors and seniors in all stages of dress and undress.

"What ever is the matter, Wingate?" boomed Mr. Prout in alarm. "Who was that shouting and shrieking? Ah!"

Mr. Prout stopped short as his eyes fell upon the shaking Billy Bunter. All eyes turned upon the fat youth.

"It was Bunter, sir," said Wingate, eyeing the fat youth curiously. "He came rushing along just now, and—well, look at him, sir. He seems to have had a fright."

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch, eyeing Bunter in some concern. "The boy has undoubtedly had a fright. He is literally trembling with fear. Bunter, what has happened, my boy?"

Bunter licked his fat lips, which were dry.

"It—it was awful, sir!" he groaned. "All white and—and cold! I put my hands right on it—saw it, too! Ow!"

"What ever is the boy talking about?" ejaculated Mr. Quelch. "What do you mean, Bunter? What was white and cold?"

"The—the corpse, sir!"

"The what?" almost yelled Mr. Quelch.

"The corpse, sir! I saw it—touched it, in fact!" Bunter shuddered. "Oh dear! It was awful! I put my hand in the box and touched it! Ugh!"

"A—a corpse?" stuttered Mr. Quelch faintly. "In—in a box? Bless my soul! Is the boy mad?"

"I tell you it's true, sir!" stammered Bunter, almost beside himself with hysterical excitement. "It's in a box in the top box-room, sir! Come and look for yourself, sir!"

And hardly knowing what he was doing, Billy Bunter grabbed the master's dressing-gown as if he would drag him there.

Mr. Quelch shook his fat hand off impatiently.

"Bunter, you ridiculous boy!" he gasped. "What are you talking about? There is no corpse, either in the box-room or anywhere else in the school. Stuff and nonsense!"

"Utterly absurd!" puffed Mr. Prout.

"Outrageous!" snorted Mr. Hacker. "This is some wretched practical joke, Mr. Quelch."

And so thought both juniors and seniors, from their grinning faces.

"The foolish boy has had a nightmare, I suspect," said Mr. Prout. "He has been consuming vast quantities of indigestible foodstuffs, and has had an unpleasant dream."

"Possibly so, Mr. Prout," remarked Mr. Quelch dryly. "But that does not explain what Bunter was doing up in the box-room at this hour of the night. Bunter!"

"Oh dear!" groaned Bunter.

Up to then Billy Bunter had been too terrified to think of his own position, but now he suddenly realised that his presence in the box-room at that hour of the night would take some explaining.

"Bunter," said Mr. Quelch sternly, "what were you doing up in the box-room at this hour?"

"Ow! I—I made a mistake, sir. I haven't been near the box-room, of course."

"Bunter—"

"No, sir—I mean, yes, sir!" stammered Bunter. "It was—was like this, sir. I went out for a—a little stroll, sir."

"A stroll?"

"Oh dear! Yes, sir—I mean no, sir! I—I just went out, sir. I heard a noise—a faint noise from the box-room. That was it, sir."

"Nonsense! How could you hear from that distance?"

"Oh dear! I mean, I heard a slight noise outside. And—and when I went out in the passage I heard another noise from the back stairs, sir—see? And—and when I went there I heard another noise from—from the box-room, sir. That was it, sir. Exactly!"

There was a chorus of chuckles—instantly suppressed by Mr. Quelch.

"Bunter!" he snapped in an ominous voice. "You are prevaricating, you foolish boy. I demand to know instantly why you went up to the box-room, and what this disturbance means?"

"Oh dear!"

Bunter groaned again. He realised he would have to explain now—there was nothing else for it.

"It—it was the box, sir—Russell's box," he mumbled. "It came this morning, and I thought it contained grub or—"

"What?"

"I mean, cakes and things," said Bunter dismally. "I knew it was up in the box-room, and when I woke up hungry—I was frightfully hungry," explained Bunter pathetically—"I got up and went up to—to see if the grub was all right, sir."

"Bless my soul!"

"But it wasn't grub," muttered Bunter, his face whitening again at the recollection of his fright. "It was a corpse. I saw it and felt it! Ugh!"

"Rubbish!" snapped Mr. Quelch, as a buzz went up. "You have undoubtedly received a fright, Bunter, but such a thing as you claim is utterly impossible."

"The wretched boy has undoubtedly been badly frightened, Mr. Quelch," agreed Mr. Prout. "In order to allay the wretched boy's fears I would suggest that we investigate this—this box he mentions."

"Very well, Mr. Prout," said Mr. Quelch grimly, with a glance round at the half-scared faces. "I think it will be just as well, as you suggest. Come, Bunter!"

"Ow! Oh dear! I—I'd rather not, sir."

"Come at once!"

"Ow!"

Bunter went; he could not ignore the note in Mr. Quelch's command. He followed, trembling, as the Remove master led the way to the stairs and began to mount them with the whole crowd at his heels. Most of the fellows were grinning, but more than a few looked a trifle scared.

They passed the upturned fire-buckets, and the flooded landing, and reached the box-room. By that time Billy Bunter was at the tail end of the crowd with only Wingate's hand preventing him from bolting back. Bunter obviously had seen "something."

With the candlestick he carried held up high, Mr. Quelch looked round the shadowy box-room. Almost at once his glance fell on the roughly-hewn lump of stone on the boxes.

"Ah!" exclaimed the master, his mouth setting grimly. "A person of an artistic turn of mind has been at work here, I see. Bunter?"

"Ow!"

With Wingate's grasp on his collar, Billy Bunter was propelled through the gaping crowd.

"Bunter," went on Mr. Quelch, "is this your—your corpse, boy?"

The master pointed to the rough bust, and Bunter shook his head and pointed a trembling finger at the box on the room floor.

"It—it's in the box there, sir—look and see, sir!" faltered Bunter with a shudder. "Ow! I touched it, sir."

Still looking grim, Mr. Quelch stooped over the mysterious box and plunged his hand in. He felt about a moment, and then with a somewhat startled exclamation he shone the flickering gleam from the candle into the box. Then he grunted.

"Corpse—rubbish!" he snorted.

With that the master withdrew something from the box—something shaped like the head and shoulders of a man. He tore off a torn covering of tissue-paper, and revealed a plaster model—a bust of Shakespeare!

As the staring, breathless crowd saw it they blinked for a moment, and then a perfect howl of laughter went up.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh—oh dear!" gasped Bunter. He gazed as if thunderstruck at his "corpse."

"Silence!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "Bunter, you utterly foolish boy—"

"Ow! I—I sus-say, say. It wasn't my fault!" gasped Billy Bunter. "I—I made a mistake. I thought it was alive—I mean I thought it was dead—a dead corpse, sir."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The box-room fairly rocked with laughter. Mr. Prout was chuckling throatily, and even the acid features of Mr. Hacker twitched slightly. Mr. Quelch hid his face by stooping and reading the label on the box.

"This box belongs to Russell, apparently," he murmured. "Is Russell here?"

Dick Russell pushed his way through the crowd in the doorway. Russell was grinning slightly. As Harry Wharton had expected, they had found no difficulty in slipping from the box-room and joining the tail end of the crowd.

"This box belongs to you, I presume; Russell?"

"Yes, sir," said Dick Russell. "My people sent it this morning—that plaster model and another one in the box. I—I'm rather keen on things like that, sir."

Mr. Quelch nodded.

"I am aware that you are interested in objects of art, Russell," he said, smiling kindly. "And am I right in supposing that this stone—ahem!—bust and the tools are your property?"

Dick Russell groaned inwardly. He saw it would have to come out now.

"Y-e-s, sir," he mumbled, flushing crimson. "I—I'm awfully keen on sculpture, sir. I—I was hoping to enter something for the art exhibition at Courtfield."

"That is a very praiseworthy ambition, Russell," said Mr. Quelch, glancing at Mr. Prout. "But why work up here in secret, my boy?"

"I—I was afraid the fellows might laugh, sir," stammered Russell.

"Nonsonse! No right-minded boy would. You should have asked permission to use the box-room, Russell."



"Let's give him a fright," chuckled Bob Cherry. Before his chums could stop him, Bob tapped sharply on the glass of the skylight. Dick Russell, engrossed in his task below, nearly jumped out of his skin as the rapping sound reached his ears. With the mallet and chisel in his hands, he blinked up at the skylight in alarm. "Who—who's there?" he asked, in a hoarse whisper. (See Chapter 3.)

However, I see no harm in your using it nevertheless. Do you, Mr. Prout?"

"Not at all," puffed the portly master. "I admire the boy's enterprise and ambition."

Mr. Quelch replaced the plaster model in the box.

"I will see you in regard to this matter to-morrow morning, Russell," he said. "Bunter!"

"Ow! Oh, yes, sir!"

"I will see you also in the morning," snapped Mr. Quelch, a significant note in his voice. "You have caused a disgraceful disturbance, and aroused the whole House by your idiotic and disgraceful conduct! Wingate, kindly see these boys back to bed without delay."

"Yes, sir."

It was all over—all over, that is, for all but Billy Bunter and Dick Russell. In a laughing, giggling crowd the crowd was shepherded down the narrow staircase by Wingate, and back to their dormitories. Even Dick Russell was grinning cheerfully now. Mr. Quelch's kindly remarks had lifted a load from his mind.

But Mr. Quelch's remarks—far from kindly in his case—had merely added to the heavy load on the fat mind of Billy Bunter. And as he rolled dismally back to the Remove dormitory, surrounded by grinning faces, Billy Bunter groaned, not once but many times.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Skinner's Joke!

ALL Greyfriars laughed loud and long over the absurd affair of Bunter's "corpse" the following day. The only fellow who saw no humour in the situation was Billy Bunter himself.

That hapless and unfortunate youth had little to laugh at, in fact. His interview with Mr. Quelch proved to be anything but a humorous affair. And when Billy Bunter at length left the Remove master's study he was almost doubled up, and his fat features wore an expression of the keenest anguish. Leaving the dormitory at night without permission—even when one was fainting with hunger—was a very serious matter, and with the aid of his cane Mr. Quelch pointed this out to Billy Bunter.

Dick Russell's interview with Mr. Quelch, however, was of a different nature altogether. Though a strict disciplinarian, Mr. Quelch took a very deep interest in his pupils, and a fellow who showed promise and a desire to excel, whether in sport or work—was sure of encouragement and aid from him.

He listened with kindly interest as Dick Russell stammered out his hopes and ambitions, and told the junior that he had full permission to turn the box-room into a studio. But when the

junior explained that he was working on the bust of the Head, Mr. Quelch looked doubtful.

"As it is for exhibition purposes, I think you had better obtain the Head's permission first, Russell," he said reflectively. "However, I will mention the matter to Dr. Locke; and in the meantime you can be working away at it. Personally I see no reason why you should not do so."

Russell thanked the kindly master, and left his study in high feather. That Mr. Quelch's attitude might have been far different had he known he had been working up in the box-room after lights-out, Russell knew full well, and he thanked his stars he had managed to escape so luckily.

The junior reported his interview to Harry Wharton & Co., and they congratulated him, and wished him luck in his ambitious venture. Most of the decent fellows of the Remove did likewise. With the exception of a few fellows like Skinner & Co., none of them laughed at his ambition, as Russell had feared they would. But they took great interest in it, for all that.

Even Fisher T. Fish, the American junior, took an interest in the matter—though it was a financial interest, as Dick Russell soon discovered.

That evening, just after prep, the Transatlantic junior marched into Study No. 3 and planked a large brown-paper parcel on the study table carefully.

"I guess I've come to do a bit of business with you, Russell," he said crisply. "I'm jest askin' you to cast your optics on this hyer."

And, carefully unwrapping the paper, Fishy revealed to view a plaster model of Julius Cæsar.

"Great pip!" exclaimed Dick Russell, his eyes lighting up. "Where did you get that, Fishy?"

He picked the model up and looked at it keenly. It was fairly large, but light and obviously hollow. And though far from being clean and new, it was an excellent model, as Dick Russell soon noted.

"I guess I remembered seeing that in a shop-window in Courtfield, Russell, when I heard about this hyer rumpus last night," grinned Fishy. "And so I hiked over to Courtfield this very evening and snapped it up for you."

"You're going to make me a present of it, Fishy?" asked Russell, winking at Ogilvy.

"I guess I ain't!" snapped Fishy promptly. "I kinder reckon I'm a slick business man from the word go—not a durned philanthropist babe. Not me! I guess I want seven and a tanner for this hyer bust, Russell."

Russell grinned as he examined the model closely.

"Well, it's a jolly good cast, and worth the money, Fishy," he said. "I'll give you seven-and-six for it, all serene, if you'll take five bob now and the rest on Saturday."

"I guess that's good enough," grinned Fishy. "I sort of cal-cu-lated that an artistic guy like you falls for objects of art like this hyer."

"Where did you buy it, Fishy?"

"Tomlin's—second-hand furniture dealer in Courtfield," grinned Fisher T. Fish. "I guess there's no harm in spilling the facts. Is it a deal, then, Russell?"

Dick Russell nodded, and handed over five shillings into the grasping palm of the business man of the Remove.

"I'll hand over the rest on Saturday, Fishy," said Dick.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 898.

"Yep! I guess your word's good enough, Russell," grinned the Transatlantic junior. "I'll look in hyer for the half-dollar Saturday morning, then."

Grinning all over his cute face, Fisher T. Fish hustled out of the study. He had paid just half-a-crown for the plaster cast, so he was more than satisfied with his "deal." Five bob profit was quite good—even for Fisher T. Fish.

Donald Ogilvy eyed his chum in disgust.

"You paid that swizzler seven and a tanner for that thing?" he gasped. "Well, you are an ass! I bet he didn't give two bob for it."

"I'd have given him ten, if he'd asked me," said Dick Russell, gloating over his purchase. "It's just what I want, Don. You don't realise what it means to me to have things like this about me. I'll just trot up to my—ahem!—studio with it now."

"Oh, shove it down somewhere!" grunted Ogilvy. "Let's get along to the Common-room, you mad ass! Blessed if you aren't going potty over those dashed things! Come on!"

Russell grinned, and placed the plaster model carefully on top of the bookshelves.

"Oh, all right!" he said. "Lead on, old chap!"

The two chums walked out of the study, leaving the gas on and the door open. They had scarcely gone, when three juniors came along the passage. They were Skinner, Stott, and Snoop, and as they strolled past, Skinner's eye happened to catch sight of the plaster cast on the bookshelves.

He stopped and peeped into the study.

"Hallo!" he grinned, his eyes gleaming wickedly. "Old Russell's got another of those busts, then, the silly ass! I say, we ought to be able to get some fun out of that thing, chaps!"

"Oh, blow it!" said Stott. "Hang Russell!"

"Those rotters have gone down to the Common-room, I expect," grinned Skinner, unheeding. "Plenty of time to have a lark with that thing. Come on!"

He dragged his unwilling chums into the study and closed the door. Then he gazed reflectively at the model. Skinner was an inveterate practical joker, and he was bent upon a practical joke now.

Skinner was a lazy slacker, both at games and work, but where trickery and practical joking were concerned he showed plenty of energy and a fertile brain.

He very soon thought of an idea, and he grinned gleefully as he lifted the model on to the table.

"Loder's down in the quad, chatting with Walker," he chuckled. "I spotted 'em from our study window just now. They're strolling up and down just below here. The cad licked me this morning!"

"What's the game?" asked Snoop uneasily.

"I mean to repay Loder by kindness," said Skinner. "He's always trying to catch chaps smoking, isn't he? Well, we're going to help him catch a smoker now. We'll make him look a thundering ass, you chaps. Who's got a cigarette?"

Stott grinned, and produced the required article. Skinner & Co. were never short of cigarettes. Both Stott and Snoop were beginning to get a glimmering of the idea now.

Skinner chuckled, and examined the model closely. Then he took his pocket-knife out, and started to bore a hole in the mouth of the model with the point

of the blade. Skinner was never very particular about other people's property.

He was just engaged in this interesting occupation when the door opened and a fat face, adorned with a pair of big round spectacles, looked in.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, kick that fat rotter out!" hissed Skinner, without looking round.

"Oh, really, Skinner!" said Bunter, with a grin. "I saw you sneak in here, you know. I say, what are you up to?"

Stott took the fat junior by the scruff of the neck, intending to kick him out.

"Here, leggo!" howled Bunter. "I say, I'll tell Dick Russell! I know what the game is! Leggo, Stotty!"

"Oh, let the fool go!" snapped Skinner. "He'll only go blabbing to that cad Russell. How's that?"

The job of boring a small hole in the mouth was a very simple operation, and after sticking the end of the cigarette in the small hole, Skinner stood back to view the result.

Julius Cæsar smoking a cigarette was certainly something new, and Stott chuckled.

"It looks A1," he said. "But I don't quite see the wheeze, Skinner."

"I say, why not shove it in the Head's study, Skinney?" grinned Bunter.

"Go on then, Bunter—take it along," said Skinner. "Shut up, you fat idiot!"

Skinner picked up the model, and placed it carefully in the window, on a small table that stood there. It was only then that Stott, Snoop, and Bunter saw the "game," and they chuckled gleefully.

With the lighted gas behind it, the bust cast a perfect shadow on the blind—a clear-cut silhouette of a head and shoulders, with a cigarette sticking from the mouth.

"Jolly good wheeze!" grinned Stott. "But how are you going to make Loder see it?"

"He'll spot it, you bet!" grinned Skinner. "But we're going to make sure, of course. Hark!"

The window was slightly open at the top, and to their ears came the mumble of voices outside, and the crunch of strolling feet on the gravel path below the window.

"Keep clear, you fellows!" hissed Skinner. "Now for it!"

As he spoke, Skinner rapped sharply on the window. Then he withdrew his hand and stooped, so that his form did not show on the blind. Snatching matches from his pocket, he struck one, and, stretching up his arm, he applied the flame of the match to the end of the cigarette.

It was cleverly done—only Skinner's arm showing as it rose to apply the flame to the cigarette in the model's mouth. The result looked realistic in the extreme.

"Jolly good!" giggled Billy Bunter. "He, he, he! That's done it, I bet!"

It had—that much was soon clear. From the quad below came a startled exclamation in a voice all recognised as Loder's. Then followed a few excited words, and the crunch of hurriedly departing feet.

"Come on!" chuckled Skinner gleefully. "Here's where we do a moon-light flit, my infants."

"Ha, ha! Yes!"

And Skinner & Co., and Billy Bunter hurriedly left the study, carefully closing the door after them.

In the passage outside they almost ran full tilt into Harry Wharton & Co., who were on their way to the Common-room.

Harry Wharton eyed Skinner's grinning face suspiciously.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed grimly. "What game are you up to, Skinner?"

Skinner chuckled. "We've just been arranging a little surprise for dear old Loder!" he grinned. "I don't profess to be gifted with prophetic powers, but I'm willing to bet ten to one that his officious mightiness will be along here in about two ticks."

Even as Skinner spoke, there sounded hurried footsteps in the passage, and Gerald Loder appeared in sight. The unpopular prefect was looking excited, and his eyes gleamed triumphantly.

At the same moment Mr. Quelch appeared from the opposite direction along the passage. The two met just outside Study No. 3.

"Mr. Quelch!" exclaimed Loder eagerly, stopping the master. "Will you please come into this study with me, sir?"

Mr. Quelch looked at him in astonishment.

"Why should I do that, Loder? Is anything the matter?"

"Yes, sir!" said Loder, the suspicion of a sneer in his tone. "Yesterday I reported to you a boy whom I suspected of smoking. You reprimanded me, saying there was no proof, and that I should not act on mere suspicion, sir."

"That is so, Loder."

"Very good, sir," said Loder grimly. "I have now clear proof that a junior is smoking in this study at this very moment. Walker and I were strolling in the quad just now, and we saw him distinctly—we saw his shadow clearly outlined on the blind. He was just lighting a cigarette."

"Oh, indeed!" said Mr. Quelch ominously. "Then we will look into the matter, Loder."

He turned the knob, and marched into Study No. 3, with the delighted Loder at his heels. Curious to know what was on, Harry Wharton & Co. crowded round the doorway, whilst Skinner & Co. remained in the background.

They very soon knew what was on, as

did Gerald Loder and Mr. Quelch. As he stepped into the room and looked towards the window, Loder nearly fell down at sight of the "junior" in the study.

"What—what—?" he stammered. Mr. Quelch stared at the plaster cast in dumbfounded amazement, and then his brow grew thunderous.

"Loder!" he thundered. "Is—is this the—the junior whom you saw smoking?"

"It—it's a trick, sir!" stammered Loder, his face flushing crimson with mortification and sudden rage. "It—it's a trick of those young fiends—"

"Loder! Kindly moderate your language!"

"They—they know I was in the quad, sir!" snarled Loder furiously. "They planted this to trick me! Look, sir! It's a real cigarette—that proves they use them, sir, doesn't it?"

"That proves nothing of the sort, Loder," said Mr. Quelch, his tone icily sarcastic. "It proves that the juniors are perfectly aware of what I myself am aware—that your methods of discipline are far too severe and unreasonable, Loder. They resent your suspicions and induce fault-finding, and this sort of thing is a natural result."

He turned suddenly and grimly upon the grinning crowd around the doorway.

"Who is responsible for this absurd trick?" he snapped, fixing his keen eyes upon them. "Wharton, is it possible that you have had a hand in this practical joke?"

"Oh, no, sir!" said Harry promptly. "We had no hand in it."

"Very good!" said Mr. Quelch, apparently concluding that Harry's "we" included the rest of the juniors in the doorway. "I will leave you, Loder, to discover the perpetrator. When you have done so, kindly report the offender to me."

And with that Mr. Quelch rushed away angrily.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Treasure Trove!

"H A, ha, ha!" The juniors in the doorway roared with laughter when once the irate Remove master had disappeared. Though they had plenty of respect for Mr. Quelch, they had little, if any, for Gerald Loder.

That discomfited prefect stood in the middle of the room and glowered in speechless fury at the juniors. He knew that Mr. Quelch would have more to say to him in regard to the spoof than he had already said, before the juniors. There was a scathing lecture in store for him, and Loder knew it.

"You little fiends!" he articulated at last. "I'll make you sit up for this, confound you! I'll teach you to play your dashed practical jokes on me. I'll make you sorry for this, Wharton, you little sweep!"

"It's your own fault, Loder!"

"What? Take fifty lines for insolence, Wharton!" snapped the prefect.

Harry grinned.

"I'll take 'em all serene, but I shan't lo 'em, Loder," he said calmly. "If you try to make me I shall appeal to Mr. Quelch!"

"You—you refuse to obey my orders?"

"I had no hand in this trick, Loder," said Harry quietly. "And you're not going to take it out of me. If you like, I'll ask Mr. Quelch if I'm to do the lines."

Harry moved as if to walk away, but the prefect called him back hastily. He knew what Mr. Quelch would say.

"It—it's all right, Wharton!" he snarled. "You—you needn't do them, then. I—I thought you had a hand in this. But I'll find the fellow, and I'll make him dashed well smart for planting this—this thing on me!"

And in a sudden burst of fury Loder raised his hand and sent the innocent plaster cast spinning. Had it gone



With a yelp of terror, Billy Bunter darted back. His groping fingers had felt the unmistakable curves of a face—icy cold and still. And at the same moment his staring eyes had glimpsed the features—white and corpse-like. Bunter leaped madly for the door, shrieking for help as he did so. "Help! Murder! Police! Ow! Help! Wow!" (See Chapter 4.)

directly to the floor, it would, doubtless, have been smashed to pieces.

But it fell into the armchair and rolled off on to the carpet. Yet it was smashed for all that. The bust thudded against a leg of the table and broke into two pieces at the neck.

"Now you've done it, Loder!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Old Russell will—"

"Hang Russell—and hang you!" hissed the raging prefect.

With that Gerald Loder marched out of the room, sending the grinning juniors to right and left as he did so.

As he stormed away, Harry Wharton looked at Skinner grimly.

"You've done it now, Skinner, you ass!" he chuckled. "Old Russell will make shavings of you for smashing his model. I suppose it was his, anyway."

Skinner was looking rather thoughtful now. He had suddenly realised that Dick Russell would want a reckoning with him for smashing his model—and Russell was an artist with his fists as well as his hands!

"Oh, my hat!" groaned Skinner. "I say, Wharton, help me stick the dashed thing together again. It's Russell's right enough, and he'll play Hamlet—"

"Not much!" grinned Harry. "We've enjoyed the joke, Skinney, very much, and now we're off. Cheerio! Hope Russell doesn't bust you altogether."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five passed on. Skinner's jokes usually did have a habit of recoiling upon his own head. But Harry Wharton & Co. had no sympathy for him—or help.

"Mean cads!" growled Skinner. "Come inside, you fellows, and close the door. We've got to get the thing mended somehow."

He stooped, and, picking up the model, looked at it with a groan.

"Oh crumbs! We'll want Seccotine or something for this job. I say, Stotty, just run and get— Hallo! Why, the dashed thing's hollow! Look! Hallo!"

Once again Skinner said "Hallo!"—this time with some surprise and excitement in his tone. He had suddenly caught sight of something stuck in the interior of the base of the model.

It appeared to be a roll of paper, and, inserting his fingers into the narrow opening through the neck, Skinner got a grip of the roll and drew it out.

"Phew!"

With a low whistle of excitement Skinner opened out the roll. It rustled musically.

"Great Scott!"

"Great pip!"

"Money, by jingo!"

"Treasury notes!" breathed Skinner.

At the sound of the word "money" Billy Bunter, who had been too afraid to enter the study, now pricked up his ears. At the sound of the words "Treasury notes" he rolled into the study, his eyes gleaming.

"I say, you fellows—"

Skinner shoved the roll into his pocket hastily.

"Get out, Bunter!" he snapped with sudden heat. "Kick that fat beast out, you chaps!"

"No, you won't, Skinner, you beast!" snapped Bunter, his eyes glittering greedily behind his big spectacles. "I'm in on this, my pippin!"

"You fat toad—"

"That's enough," said Bunter. "Unless you want me to go straight to Quelch and report what you've found, Skinney—"

Skinner bit his lip hard. He realised that it was hopeless to keep Bunter's mouth closed, unless he was allowed to be "in on this."

"All right!" he hissed, his eyes gleaming. "Come along to my study, you fellows. Come on, Bunter! Half a mo, though."

He stuck the base of the plaster model back on to the bookshelf as he had found it. Now he came to look at it Skinner saw that a round plug of wood had been fitted into the base, obviously to keep the hidden treasure in. Then Skinner took the head of Julius Caesar, and stuck it carefully on the broken base of the neck.

It fitted perfectly, and stuck into place safely.

"Good egg!" breathed Skinner. "We'll leave the thing like that— No, by jingo, we'd better not! Less we have to do with the dashed thing the better. We'll leave it on the carpet just as it was when Loder knocked it over."

"Much better!" agreed Stott, almost trembling with excitement. "For goodness' sake buck up, and let's get out, Skinney."

Skinner took the two parts of the broken model again, and placed them carefully on the carpet where they had rolled when Loder sent the thing spinning. Then the four juniors hurried out of the study.

Skinner led the way to Study No. 11 in a state of trembling excitement, and the other three followed in a like state. They passed into Skinner's study, and Skinner carefully closed the door. Then he drew out the rolled-up wad of notes. His hands shook as he ripped off the rubber band.

"They're genuine!" he breathed. "Oh, good egg! I—I thought they might not be, you fellows."

"I say, you fellows!" gasped Billy Bunter. "Share and share alike, you know. Oh crumbs! What ripping luck!"

"Shut up, Bunter!" panted Skinner.

He ran through the notes quickly. They were soiled and crumpled, but they were genuine enough undoubtedly. He counted twenty-five—fifteen one-pound notes, and ten ten-shilling notes.

"Twenty quid!" breathed Skinner, his eyes sparkling with joy. "Twenty blooming quid! Look here, Bunter, not a word of this, mind!"

"Not likely!" chortled the delighted Bunter. "I say, wonder how they got there?"

"Goodness knows!" muttered Skinner. "Fishy bought it in Courtfield, I believe, and sold it to Russell. I fancy I've seen the thing stuck on the counter of a second-hand furniture shop there. Anyway, it's treasure trove, you chaps—anybody's money."

"Ours, you mean," corrected Snoop, with a chuckle.

"Oh, yes—ours!" said Skinner in a tense voice. "It's been hidden in there for ages, I expect. Nobody knows about it but us, and it belongs to nobody but us now. It's treasure trove. But—but, we'd better keep it mum, of course."

"Of course," agreed Stott and Snoop, avoiding each other's glances. "Nobody could blame us for collaring it if they did know."

"And some of 'em might even think it ought to belong to Russell," said Bunter. "Better keep it mum!"

"We will," snapped Skinner. "Look here, Bunter, we'll let you in on this, as I said we would. Here's your share—a quid, old chap!"

Billy Bunter chuckled at the generous offer.

"You're very kind, Skinner, old man," he grinned. "But I think I said share and share alike. That's five quid each, isn't it?"

"You fat cad—"

"Of course, if you'd rather not agree to that," said Bunter, "I'm afraid I shall feel it my duty to report this matter to Quelch. You never know—some people might think this cash ought to go to Russell, or Fishy, or the blessed second-hand dealer, you know. Quite likely! In fact, I think it's my duty to report the find."

And Billy Bunter, with a conscientious smirk, rolled towards the door.

"Come back, you fat rotter!" hissed Skinner.

Billy Bunter chuckled and rolled back.

"Pay up, then," he grinned, holding out a fat hand.

Skinner gritted his teeth with chagrin. It hurt him badly to be forced to part with any of the cash to a "fat idiot" like Bunter.

"Look here, Bunter," he muttered, "you shall have the five quid all right. But you'll have to be careful. You know what a fool you are. If you go splashing the money about right and left someone will be spotting something. And you never know. Somebody may come along after it yet."

"What rot!" grinned Bunter. "Leave it to me, old top. I'm not the fellow to give the game away, I can tell you. I'm keen—keen as Colman's, you know. Hand it over, Skinner."

Skinner drew a deep breath. He saw he would have to pay out in any case. But he was afraid—afraid that the egregious Bunter would go "splashing" the money about, and thus cause comment.

"Look here, Bunter," he muttered. "I was the one who found the money, and I'm taking charge of it. I'll see you get your whack, though—honour bright. I'll treat you the same as I'm going to treat Stott and Snoop. I'll give you ten bob now, and another ten bob next week, and each week after until you've each had your five quids."

"Oh, but I say—"

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"Don't you see," hissed Skinner, "if we all start spending money at once the fellows will talk and wonder? I sha'n't spend mine either, for a bit."

Billy Bunter snorted.

"I want my fiver, Skinney!" he snapped. "I know you, Skinney! If you don't, you'll know what to expect!"

"Don't give it to the fat fool!" said Snoop. "Why give him five, Skinner? He's only bluffing you, can't you see? If he reports he gets nothing, and he knows it."

"Oh, really, Snoop—"

"Shut up, you fat clam!" snarled Skinner. "It's ten bob or nothing!"

"Oh, all right! I'll show you!"

Billy Bunter rolled towards the door. But Skinner had profited by Snoop's advice, and he allowed him to go on rolling. At the door Bunter paused, obviously surprised that Skinner had not called him back.

"Go on!" grinned Skinner. "Go and report, old top!"

"Beasts!"

Bunter rolled back into the room again. After all, ten bob now and more later on was better than revenge—and nothing else.

"Gimme the ten bob, then," he grumbled. "But no games, mind, Skinney; I know you, you rotter! Hand it over!"

Skinner took a ten-shilling note from

ANSWERS
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the wad, and handed it to Bunter with a very bad grace. Bunter pocketed the note, and Skinner placed the wad back in his pocket.

"What about us, Skinner?" asked Snoop, with a nasty look.

"Don't you fellows be fools—" Skinner was beginning, when he broke off abruptly as the door went back with a crash and a junior marched into the study.

It was Dick Russell, and he was obviously in a wax.

"Oh, here you are, Skinner!" he snapped. "I want a word with you, my lad. What about that dashed plaster model of mine, eh? You howling rotter! I'm going to teach you to let my things alone! Put your fists up!"

Skinner started back in alarm. He knew that Wharton and the others must have told Russell, and he knew it was useless to deny anything.

"It was only a lark, you ass!" he granted. "In any case, I didn't smash the thing. It was Loder. He knocked it over in a temper. You can ask Wharton."

"I know what happened!" snapped Dick Russell wrathfully. "You didn't smash it, but it was all your thumping fault, you cheeky rotter. You bored a hole in the mouth of it, and stuck a filthy cigarette in, didn't you—ruined the model altogether."

"Can't you take a dashed joke?"

"Yes, I can. But smashing other people's property isn't my idea of a joke, Skinner. I'm going to lick you for your dashed cheek, and you can take that to start with!"

With that Dick Russell tapped Harold Skinner on his prominent nose. It was far from being a gentle tap, and it brought a smothered yelp from Skinner.

"Ow! Ow—wow! You—you rotter!" he hissed, jumping back. "Go for the cad, you chaps! Sling him out of the study!"

But the chaps hadn't enough in them to do that. Bunter had already discreetly vanished through the doorway. And as Donald Ogilvy had just appeared in the passage, Stott and Snoop decided to leave the matter for Skinner to deal with.

This was unlucky for Skinner, for that junior had rushed at Russell, fully expecting his chums to back him up. And within two minutes the cad of the Remove was flat on the carpet, gasping, and nursing a streaming nose and a rapidly darkening eye.

"There, you rotter!" said Dick Russell. "Get up and have some more! I haven't nearly finished with you yet!"

But Skinner had no intention of getting up. In that brief, but exciting, two minutes Dick Russell had fairly pounded his anatomy, and he did not want more. He lay on the carpet, gasping and panting and growling.

"You—you cad, Russell!" he panted. "You know you're too good for me. I've had enough! Leave me alone!"

"Had enough?" ejaculated Russell. "Do you hear that, Don? He hasn't touched me yet, and he says he's had enough. Some people are easily satisfied!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Ogilvy laughed, and Russell looked down at Skinner.

"We'll let it go at that, then," he said grimly. "And perhaps you'll keep out of our study in future, Skinner. If it wasn't for the fact that I fancy I can patch the model up again, I'd give you more, you cheeky cad!"

And with that Dick Russell joined his chum, and they went out, Dick Russell feeling he had given Skinner good cause



Mr. Quelch turned the handle of the study door and, with Loder at his heels, marched in. Then he gasped! "What—what—" Standing on the table by the window was a plaster cast, with a cigarette in its mouth! "Loder!" thundered the Form-master. "Is—is this the—the junior whom you saw smoking?" (See Chapter 5.)

to regret having tampered with his precious model.

But he was wrong there. Though the "licking" had been painful enough, Harold Skinner had no regrets—far from it. He had a consolation that Russell knew nothing about. And that was the wad of notes in his pocket. Harold Skinner would have taken more than one such licking for five pounds—though the crafty junior had no intention of being satisfied with five pounds as his share. Share and share alike was not Skinner's idea at all.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Who Had It?

"HALLO! Who's this merchant, I wonder?"

"I fancy I've seen him before somewhere," said Bob Cherry. "Hallo, Gossy's stopped him!"

It was just after dinner the following day, and Harry Wharton & Co. were strolling towards the gates. A stranger had just walked through the gateway towards them. He was an elderly man, rather untidily dressed, and at a glance Harry Wharton guessed he was a tradesman. He walked in slowly and hesitatingly.

"Taken the wrong turning," grinned Johnny Bull. "Old Gossy will soon put him right."

But, apparently, Gosling, the porter, was finding it no easy matter to put the stranger "right." The raised voices of the porter and the stranger reached the

juniors, and they hurried on towards the gates, curious to see what was amiss.

As they came up to the two they saw Gosling plant himself in front of the stranger, as if barring his path.

"I tell you this 'ere ain't the tradesman's entrance, mister!" snorted the porter. "Round these here gates to the right, and the fast turnin' hon the left."

"But it's one of them young gentlemen as I want to see," protested the elderly man, rather hoarsely. "I've come from Courtfield to see him—a thin-faced young gent, he was. My daughter tells me he spoke like one of them Americans. She says he talked like an American and bargained like a Jew."

"Fishy!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Fishy, for a pension!"

"Ha, ha! Yes!"

It certainly did sound like Fisher T. Fish.

Anxious only to help the man, Harry Wharton went up to the two.

"What is it, Gosling?" he asked. "One of our chaps wanted?"

"Which as 'ow this gent wants to see Master Fish, I suppose," granted Gosling. "But what I sez is this 'ere—he can't go marchin' inter—"

"Here's Fishy now!" grinned Bob Cherry suddenly.

He sent a yell across to Fisher T. Fish, who had just emerged from the tuck-shop. Fish looked round, and came running over to the group.

"I guess you howled for me, Cherry," he said. "What's the hustle?"

(Continued on page 16.)

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THE GREYFRIARS HERALD

Supplement No. 221.

HARRY WHARTON
EDITOR

Week Ending April 25th, 1925.



London Gossip!

By
BOB CHERRY.

GREYFRIARS names are often come across in London. Here are a few thoroughfares bearing the names of Greyfriars fellows:

Bolsover Street, W.1.
Brown Street, W.1.
Bulstrode Street, W.1.
Fish Street Hill, E.C.3.
Gwynne Road, S.W.11.
Morgan Street, E.3.
North Drive, S.W.16.
Nugent Terrace, N.W.8.
Russell Square, W.C.1.
Skinner Street, E.C.1.
Temple Avenue, E.C.4.
Tubb's Road, N.W.10.
Wharton Street, W.C.1.
Wingate Road, W.6.

I have searched in vain for a Cherry Street, and I can't understand why the gents who christen our streets overlooked my illustrious name! Billy Bunter is also annoyed that there is no Bunter Street. But our prize porpoise is well acquainted with Pudding Lane and Bunhill Row!

Greyfriars is seventy-five miles from London, as the crow flies. Unfortunately, the Southern trains are not crows, and a train journey up to town is a wearisome business. There are so many delays, that you expect to be an old man with a flowing beard by the time you step out at Charing Cross! Personally, I prefer biking to London, especially if it is a sunny, spring day. There's rather a lot of traffic on the roads, these days, but the humble "push-bike" has not yet been driven off the road.

The Remove Cycling Club had a "spin" to London last Saturday, and we spent a thoroughly enjoyable day. We started out after breakfast, and did the journey in just over six hours, which was "going some," as our American friends would say. We wandered round and saw the sights, and spent a small fortune in the process, but we didn't mind that. We had tea at a rather swell place in the West

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End, and returned to Greyfriars by train. It was a very weary, but cheery, party that rolled up at the school gates in the April dusk.

Some fellows have expressed a wish that Greyfriars could be taken down, and transported, lock, stock, and barrel, to London. They don't see why the school should be poked away in this quiet corner of Kent. But if these agitators had their own way, and the school was removed to London, they would soon be squealing—especially when the warm weather came! They would miss the sea, and the cool, shady river, and the green countryside. They would miss other delights, too. Much as I like London, I think Greyfriars ought to stay where it is.

Lord Mauleverer loathes London. The roar of the traffic, he says, gives him insomnia, and he can't sleep day or night. In that case, a week in London would do his lazy lordship all the good in the world! Mauly badly needs shaking out of his sloth; and if he wants a shaker-in-chief, I'm his man!

Extract from an "Essay on London," by Gatty, of the Second:

"London is a mity city standing on the Tems. Its ancient name was Laudanum, but it was changed by deed of pole. There are many places of interest in London, the chief of which being the Houses of Parlyment, the Tower, the Mint, and the Fleetway House, where the MAGNET Library is published."

Micky Desmond does not take very kindly to London. Micky is one of the few people living in England who "leads everyone up the garden" with his Irish brogue. When Micky arrived in London he had a deuce of a time trying to make himself understood. He was heard to remark when he got back to Greyfriars that London is "shure a broth of a place," but "Londonderry beats it, bejabbers."

COKER'S EXCURSION!

COKER, Potter, and William Greene, Mounted Coker's bad machine. Potter was on the pillion seat, Greene in the sidecar stretched his feet. And off they shot down Friardale Lane, While Coker chanted a gay refrain:

"Soon we'll be in London town,
Sing, my lads, yo-ho-ho!
Unless we pitch in a ditch and drown.
Sing, my lads, yo-ho!
Heave-ho! On we go!
Sing, my lads, yo-ho-ho!
Who's afeared to let her go?
Sing, my lads, yo-ho!"

On they flew, o'er hill and dell,
With many a wild and warlike yell,
Scattering chickens left and right,
Putting the populace to flight.
Through town and village they fairly
flashed,
And Coker chanted, unabashed:

"Soon we'll be in London town,
Sing, my lads, yo-ho-ho!
Unless the jolly old bike breaks
down.
Sing, my lads, yo-ho!
Heave-ho! On we go!
Sing, my lads, yo-ho-ho!
Where'er we go we fear no foe.
Sing, my lads, yo-ho!"

They came to grief on a lonely hill,
With a sudden swerve and a sudden spill.
Coker pitched into a prickly hedge,
For Potter the ditch they had to dredge.
And Greene sat up on the road and
groaned,
While Coker's voice from the hedgerow
moaned:

"Soon we'll be in London town,
Sing, my lads, yo-ho-ho!
A towrope costs but half-a-crown.
Sing, my lads, yo-ho!
Heave-ho! On we go!
Sing, my lads, yo-ho-ho!
A lorry will take my bike in tow.
Sing, my lads, yo-ho!"



They came to grief on a lonely hill.



What I Think of London!

Our Contributors describe some of the pleasures and perils of the British Capital.

BILLY BUNTER: London is a wonderful place—a capital capital, if one may say so! Give me a ten-pound note, and let me loose in London, and I'll undertake to have the time of my life. There are no end of nice restorings where a fellow can get a decent feed. London swarms with them, in fact. But I was awfully disappointed about Grub Street. I thought it was a place flowing with milk and hunny, so to speak, a place where a fellow could eat, drink, and be merry. But it turned out to be a street inhabited by down-at-heel orthers, and I saw no sign of a cook-shop. Then there was Pudding Lane, off Eastcheap. I eggspected to get a lovely stake-and-kidney pudding there, but there was nothing doing. Bread Street was also a beastly sell, and so was Fish Street. But in spite of these disappointments, I remain loyal in my love for London. Wish Greyfriars was in Fleet Street instead of Friardale! What lovely snacks I should enjoy at Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese!

ALONZO TODD: London is a dreadful place, in my opinion. Whenever I am compelled to visit it, I go in fear and trembling. The traffic congestion is so terrible that I dare not cross a street unless I can get a friendly constable to lead me by the hand. As for boarding a bus, I consider it is a dreadful ordeal! Not having learned how to play Rugby, I am rather handicapped in the wild scramble for seats. "Why not take a taxi?" some will say. Never again shall I travel in one of those dangerous vehicles! The last time I chartered a taxicab, it ran down Ludgate Hill out of control, and turned a complete somersault in Ludgate Circus. I felt like a dice, and you know how a dice feels—completely shaken up! Another of London's perils is the tottering dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. I feel sure it will come crashing down at any moment. And that reminds me. I must send a subscription of three-half-pence in stamps to the Restoration Fund!

FISHER T. FISH: I guess London's the doziest, dreamiest li'l hamlet in this dozy, dreamy li'l island! It's too slow and sleepy for words. Last time I went there, it took me over an hour to cross from one side of London to the other. Why, I guess you can shoot across New York within ten seconds of buying your ticket! "Hustle!" is our motto; but you can't hustle in London without getting hung up in a traffic jam!

DICKY NUGENT: I like to take a trip to London now and then, to see the places of interest. The tower is my faveritt beauty-spot. hope you won't think it bludthirsty of me, but I like to see where lady Jane Gray and all the rest of 'em got it in the neck! I also like to climb up to the top of the monument, and get a bird's-eye view of London from the summit. It's grand! makes you feel that you are monarch of all you survey. another place I like to visit is madam two-swords, where all the wax figgers of criminals are. if somebody will lend me a screwdriver, I'll screw up my curridge and spend a night in the chamber of horrors!

WILLIAM GOSLING: Which I 'ates Lunnon. like poison. It's always an 'opeless maze to me. I gets lost, an' wanders round an' round, an' finds meself back at the place I started from! I don't 'old with them Toob Railways, or moving stairways. I never knows which foot to step off with, an' I generally turns a somersault when I gets to the bottom. As for ridin' on a homnibus, it fair gives me fits! Lunnon's a death-trap to a pore old feller like me, wot don't know which way to turn. I prefers Friardale Lane to Piccadilly, any day!

LOST IN LONDON.

A nutshell narrative By DICKY NUGENT.

NIGHT fell upon the mity city of London—but nobody was injured.

The cool east wind shrieked and whistled along the Embankment, that last hidden refuge of lost soles. The huddled figgers on the seats were frozen to the marrow, and nobody heeded their terrible plight. Prosperous City men, muffled in warm overcoats, swaggered past with heartless indifference. And the poor yewman derelicks sat and shivered on the seats.

Harry Homeless was among them. He was a lad of thirteen—once hansom, but now haggard and wasted with hunger. His clothes were in tatters, and he looked as sorry a specimen of yewmanity as you ever saw.

Poor Harry was an often. That is to say, he had neither father nor mother—at least, he could not remember having had a father's care or a mother's love. He had been brought up by a wicked uncle, who had given him a dog's life. And Harry had run away to London, on his thirteenth birthday, in the hope of winning fame and fortune.

But, alas! His rosy dreams were roodly shattered; and he tramped the streets in vain, seeking for work. And now all his munny had gone, all his hope had fled, and all his curridge had buzzed off. Harry Homeless was at the end of his tether.

"I—I can't stand it any longer!" muttered the poor wail. "Hunger and privation have made me desprit! I will sever the nodd of life and all its troubles!"

The unforchunitt lad had actually been driven to suicide!

Harry Homeless staggered to his feet, and tottered across to the parapet, and stood gazing down at the dark waters. It would be the work of a minnit, he reflected, to climb to the top of the parapet, and then dive down to his deadly doom!

He had actually started to climb, when a hand fell on his sholder.

Harry spun round, eggspecting to see a perliceman. But it was a plump, prosperous-looking man in evening-dress who confronted him.

"Don't you know that stealing is against the law, kid?" demanded the man.

"I wasn't stealing!" protested Harry.

"But you were just going to!"

"I wasn't—"

"You needn't deny it! You were about to take your life! And it's a jolly good job you didn't, bekawse I've just recognised you! I perseeve you have a wart on the nape of your neck. That is coneloosive evidence that you are my son—my long-lost son!"

Harry Homeless gave a gasp.

"How can I be your son when I ain't got no father?" he said. "I'm an often, that's what I am!"

"That is not so," said the prosperous-looking gentleman. "I am your father, and, to my shame, I deserted you when you were a baby! I was a poor man in those days, but I have made my fortune since then. I am a big diamond-merchant in the City."

"Ah! I wondered why that pot of paste was sticking out of your pocket!" said Harry. "So you are really my father? It—it seems too wonderful to be true! You turned up in the nick of time. Another minnit, and I should have gone to a watery grave!"

Harry's father smiled as he hailed a taxi. "Come, my dear boy!" he said. "We will dine at the Ritts, and then I will take you home to my mansion in Mayfare. At last I have found my sun and air, and I shall never desert you again!"

Father and son were driven away in a taxi, and from that day life was one long dream to the lad who had been lost in London!

THE END.

EDITORIAL.

MANY of the Greyfriars fellows were born and bred in the metropolis, and they wish that the old school could be transplanted from its present position to the Thames Embankment. And those who, like myself, are not London-born, have a high regard for the great city. There is nothing we like better than to take a trip to London, when funds and other circumstances permit, and to visit the Tower, and the Monument, and the British Museum, and other places of interest. Why, even Billy Bunter is a lover of London! And the reason is not far to seek. London abounds in restaurants and pastry-cooks' shops and tea-rooms! And any town or city which is plentifully supplied with places of refreshment is sure of a warm corner in Bunter's heart. I once heard Bunter singing the praises of a very black and grimy town in the Midlands. I marvelled how he could prattle of the beauties of such a drab, smoky place. And then Bunter explained that the "beauties" consisted of two first-class restaurants in the High Street!

A Special "London" Number of the "Greyfriars Herald" is an entirely new departure; but I am confident it will appeal to town and country readers alike. Our contributors have quite a lot to say about London, both for and against; and their reasons for liking London—or hating it, as the case may be—make amusing reading.

Fisher T. Fish suggests that we follow on with a Special New York Number, but I hardly think this advisable. We should get too many "tall storeys" from Fishy!

Look out, chums, for our "Cricket" Supplement next week.

HARRY WHARTON.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 898.



(Continued from page 13.)

"You're wanted, Fishy," said Harry Wharton, nodding to the stranger.

"What the jumping crackers—"

Fishy stared at the man, who stared back at Fish a moment, and then he seemed to be satisfied with his scrutiny.

"It's—it's about a bust—a plaster bust that you bought from my shop yesterday, young sir!" he exclaimed, his lined face trembling with eagerness. "You—you're the right young gent, I suppose?"

Fishy grinned and nodded.

"I guess I am," he chuckled. "I guess I paid a silver half-dollar for that bust, mister. I kinder reckon you've come to sell me some more of the same goods, eh? Well, I calculate you'll find me ready from the word go, friend!"

"It—it was a plaster bust of Julius Cæsar, mister," said the man, in a shaky voice, gazing fixedly at the Transatlantic junior. "Have you got it now, young sir? I don't want to sell you more—I've come to buy that one back, if you'll sell it, young sir."

"Waal, I swear!"

Fisher T. Fish stared at the stranger in astonishment. Then he grinned.

"You want to buy it back, stranger? Waal, I guess that won't be easy. I sold it yesterday—"

"You sold it?" ejaculated the man.

"Yep. It was a business deal, and I reckon I netted a bit of profit—sure!" grinned Fishy, his eyes gleaming again. "But if you want that Roman guy back, I reckon I can get it—at a figure, friend. Name a reasonable figure, and I guess I'll try to get it back."

"If you could, young sir—if you only could—"

"You know the thing's smashed, Fishy," reminded Harry Wharton. "Don't be a rotter, you ass!"

"Oh, great jumping crackers!" groaned Fishy. "I guess I heard something about that. Oh, Jemima!"

"Smashed?" echoed the second-hand furniture dealer, his face going suddenly white. "You—you say the bust is smashed?"

"Yep! Some goldarned guys got going with it—the pesky galoots! But, look hyer—"

The dealer interrupted him. The old fellow was wringing his hands in hopeless dismay.

"Smashed!" he articulated. "My bust smashed! I feared it—I feared I should be too late! Tell me, boys, was anything found in the model?"

"Found in the model?" echoed Harry Wharton blankly. "Not that I'm aware of. What do you mean? Was there something inside it?"

The old fellow hesitated, obviously in a state of great agitation. But Harry Wharton's frank, open face was one to invite confidence, and he seemed suddenly to make up his mind.

"I—I'll tell you all about it, and then perhaps you will very kindly help me, gentlemen," he said shakily. "There was twenty pounds in that plaster bust—takings of my shop that I'd hid there."

"My hat!"

"Great pip!"

"Waal, I swear!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 892.

"You—you hid twenty pounds in a place like that?" ejaculated Harry Wharton.

The old man nodded and groaned.

"It was a mad thing to do, young gents!" he mumbled. "But I'd had that there bust in my shop for years and years, and I never expected nobody would want to buy it. I was afraid of these here robberies happenin' every day, and I bin in the habit of hiding bits of money there."

"Waal, I swear!" said Fishy again.

"But—but why on earth did you sell it, then?" gasped Bob Cherry, looking sharply at Fish.

"I didn't," groaned the old fellow. "It was my daughter as did it when I was out at a sale. The missis knowed I used to hide money there, but my daughter didn't, and she sold it to—to this young gent. I only found out this morning, and I've rushed here quick. I—I can't afford to lose all that money, young gents. Can I see this feller who bought it off this other gent?"

Harry Wharton looked keenly at Fisher T. Fish.

"You haven't seen anything of the money, I suppose, Fishy?" he said sharply.

Fisher T. Fish gave a hollow groan. He was almost weeping with disgust and dismay.

"Seen it?" he gasped, with another groan. "Oh, great jumping snakes! I guess you've no goldarned need to ask me that question, Wharton, you galoot! Twenty quids for half-a-dollar! Oh, Jerusalem! And I've missed 'em! I guess I've been left! Aw, shucks! I reckon—"

"Shut up!" snapped Harry Wharton angrily. "You rotter, Fish! The money wouldn't have been yours, would it? You couldn't have stuck to it—"

"I guess I could!" snorted Fishy, his eyes beginning to gleam. "I guess it was a business deal. I guess I paid half-a-dollar for that pesky model, and what was inside it was mine. Yep. Gee! I reckon I'll see that guy Russell, and—"

Without finishing, the American junior started off with a rush. As he did so, Bob Cherry shoved out one foot like lightning, and Fisher T. Fish went sprawling over it, and ploughed up the gravel with his nose.

Bob Cherry chuckled, but Harry Wharton did not grin. He turned abruptly to the trembling dealer.

"You'd better come with us, I think," he said quietly. "If the cash can be found you can rely on us doing our best to get it back for you. Gosling, we'll see to this."

Gosling grunted, and ambled back into his lodge. The juniors started for the School House steps, with the dealer behind them, a gleam of hope in his face. Johnny Bull and Hurrec Singh lunged back to deal with Fisher T. Fish, who had jumped up, bowling, and made a rush after them. As they crossed the hall Mr. Quelch met them, and he stopped and eyed the dealer in astonishment.

"Wharton," he exclaimed sharply, "who is this person?"

"His name is Mr. Tomlin, sir," said Harry Wharton quietly. "He—he wants to see Russell, I think, sir."

Mr. Quelch eyed the furniture dealer questioningly.

"May I ask what is your business with Russell?" he asked grimly. "The rules of this school—"

"I'm sorry to trouble you like this, sir," stammered Mr. Tomlin. "But—but it means a lot to a man like me."

He hesitated a moment, and then he began to tell his errand. The Remove master listened in amazement.

"Bless my soul!" he ejaculated, staring at the dealer. "To place such a sum of money in an article on view for sale was an extraordinary thing to do. But—but Russell must be questioned at once, Wharton. Please find him and send him to me, also Fish. Will you come this way, Mr.—er—Tomlin?"

With the unfortunate dealer at his heels, Mr. Quelch marched away towards his own study, while the juniors went in search of Russell and Fish. The latter was easily found, and sent to the master's study, and after a long search Harry Wharton found Russell up in the box-room working on his bust.

He briefly related the facts to the astounded junior, and then, after getting the broken model of Julius Cæsar, they took it along to Mr. Quelch's study. Harry had guessed it would be wanted.

They found Fisher T. Fish already being cross-examined by Mr. Quelch.

"Ah," said the Remove master, as the juniors entered, "here is Russell now! Russell, has Wharton told you why I require you here?"

"Yes, sir," said Dick Russell quietly. "He told me that Mr. Tomlin claims there was some money hidden in this model."

"Very well. I see you have brought the model. Have you examined it, Russell? I understand it was broken last evening. Fish tells me that it was found broken on the carpet in your study. Who broke it?"

Russell hesitated. But he saw it was useless to hide the truth now.

"Loder broke it, sir, I believe," he said, flushing uncomfortably. "He—he was waxy—I mean, angry—about that—that trick played on him. He knocked the bust over, and it broke into two pieces, just as it is now."

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch, in a grim tone. "Kindly ask Loder to come here, Wharton."

Wharton hesitated.

"Excuse me, sir," he said, after a pause. "But Loder could know nothing about any money. He walked straight out after knocking the bust over. We were there, sir."

"Oh, indeed! In that case, then, please do not call Loder," said Mr. Quelch. "You say that you were there, Wharton?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you see anything at all resembling a wad of Treasury notes in the model, or, rather, on the carpet?"

"No, sir," said Harry promptly. "We didn't examine the thing, though. We left almost immediately after Loder did."

"H'm!" murmured Mr. Quelch, frowning. "And you found it lying there, Russell, when you returned from the Common-room?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you see anything resembling Treasury notes?"

"No, sir."

"Did you examine the broken halves of the model?"

"Yes, sir. There was nothing inside them. I'm absolutely certain of that. If there had been I couldn't possibly have missed seeing it."

"You assure me that you know nothing whatever of any money being found in connection with the bust, Russell?"

"Certainly, sir! If I had found the money I should have brought it straight to you."

Mr. Quelch pursed his lips. In his own mind he did not believe that the money had been placed in the plaster cast at all. He was convinced that the man had made a mistake.

He turned to Mr. Tomlin, who was looking more hopeless and dejected than ever.

"You have heard what these boys have stated, Mr. Tomlin," he said quietly. "They deny all knowledge of the money which you state was hidden in that model. Indeed, it is perfectly inconceivable to me that any boy from this school would find such a sum of money and keep silent regarding it. Such a possibility is out of the question. I fear you have made a mistake, Mr. Tomlin."

"Mistake!" echoed the dealer desperately. "Was I likely to make a mistake over twenty pounds, which is more than I make in a month sometimes? I put it in that there plaster model. I swear I did! Don't I wish I hadn't. I put it in there, sir."

He pointed a trembling finger at the hollow in the base of the plaster model.

Mr. Quelch coughed a trifle uncomfortably.

"I am sorry," he remarked kindly. "But I fear I can do nothing further to help you in the matter. No boy from this school would keep such a sum if he found it, I can assure you. He would know it did not, and could not, belong to him, and he would never be so dishonourable, whether he had purchased the model or not. If, however, a search and inquiries bring anything to light I will let you know at once."

With that the Remove master rose to his feet, a hint that the interview was at an end. He nodded a dismissal to the juniors, and they filed out.

"Well, my hat!" breathed Harry Wharton, when they got some yards away from the Remove master's study. "What do you fellows think about that?"

"I'm blest if I know what to think!" said Dick Russell uncomfortably. "It's rotten! That poor old chap seemed pretty convinced. I believe he really did shove the cash in the model."

"I'm pretty certain he did!" snapped Harry Wharton. "As he says, it wasn't a thing a poor chap like that could make a mistake about."

"You—you fellows don't think I've seen it, then?" said Dick Russell suddenly.

"Of course not, ass!" said Harry. "I think we know you better than that, Dicky. But that doesn't say nobody else didn't see it. Old Quelch seemed to think no Greyfriars chap could have collared it; but he doesn't know 'em all as we do."

"Fishy, for instance!" grunted Dick Russell frankly. "Look here, Fishy, you're sure you haven't collared the dibs and conveniently forgotten about it?"

"I guess I didn't, you footling galoot!" snorted Fishy wrathfully. "I'm feeling sore over this hyer bit of business, friends. Jumping snakes! Twenty quid for half-a-dollar! Gee! I reckon no guy would have got the dibs from me—Yaroooh! Ow!"

Thump!

As one man Wharton and Russell grasped the Transatlantic junior and sat him down in the passage with a bump. The morals of the cute business man of the Remove did not appeal to the juniors. They had heard enough from Fishy. They walked on, leaving Fisher T. Fish sitting on the linoleum and roaring.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER. Who Did It?

HARRY WHARTON related what had taken place to his chums, and they fully agreed with him that it was more than possible that someone at Greyfriars had found the money—if it ever had been hidden in the plaster bust.

GREYFRIARS CELEBRITIES. No. 2. JOHNNY BULL—AND HIS CONCERTINA!



And Harry Wharton & Co. had more than a suspicion that it had, and that Skinner & Co. knew something about it. That same day the Famous Five visited Study No. 11 to interview Skinner on the subject. They were deeply disturbed by the happening, and they felt sorry for the old dealer in his loss, and they were determined to do what they could to help him.

But their visit to Study No. 11 came to nothing. Skinner & Co. swore emphatically that they knew nothing of any Treasury notes, and without proof Harry Wharton & Co. were helpless.

Nor did the inquiries and search set on foot by Mr. Quelch come to anything. Nothing was found, and nothing was discovered concerning the Treasury notes that Mr. Tomlin claimed were hidden in the plaster model. That unfortunate man visited the school every day during the next week, but each time he was obliged to depart more dispirited than ever and empty-handed.

Naturally, the fuss and excitement of the inquiry had terrified Skinner & Co. and Billy Bunter, and neither Stott nor Snoop had dared to spend a penny of the money. Bunter, however, spent the ten shillings very quickly indeed; but when he went, like Oliver Twist, for more, Skinner turned him empty away. And though Billy stormed and threatened, Skinner merely grinned at him. Bunter had accepted ten shillings of the money, and Bunter knew, and Skinner knew, that he dare not split after that.

In the meantime Dick Russell had

been working night and day on his bust of Dr. Locke. Mr. Quelch had instructed the junior to take it to him on completion, and when it was finished at last the junior did so.

Mr. Quelch showed obvious delight as he examined the junior's handiwork. It was certainly a striking likeness of the kindly old Head, and the master of the Remove was amazed at the skill and the artistic ability it displayed.

"It is an excellent piece of work, Russell," said the Remove master quietly. "I confess I did not anticipate anything so good as this. You have undoubted talent, and I can assure you that Dr. Locke will be highly pleased with, and will instantly approve of, your project to exhibit the bust."

Mr. Quelch proved to be quite right there. Dr. Locke was more than pleased, and the bust found a temporary resting-place, until the exhibition should open, in the school library.

Practically the whole school went to see it, and there was general admiration for the clever youngster whose work it was. A few certainly, such as Skinner & Co., sneered openly, charging Russell with "sucking up" to the masters. Skinner, especially, was particularly objectionable. He had not yet forgotten nor forgiven the licking Dick had administered to him, and he lost no opportunity of showing his vicious spite and jealousy.

But Dick Russell could afford to ignore Skinner. All the decent chaps—Harry Wharton & Co. especially—were loud in

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 398.

their praises of his work, and they were proud of the junior who had honoured the Form thus.

All this day and the next Dick Russell went about feeling he was walking on air. He was a modest junior, and the praise he had received had by no means turned his head. But he was only human, nevertheless, and he was happy in the knowledge that his work had met with almost universal approval in the school.

But on the evening of the second day the bombshell fell—the bombshell which dismayed Dick Russell as much as it did the rest of the Removæ. That evening Sir Hilton Popper, a local magnate and a governor of Greyfriars, was dining with the Head, and naturally Dr. Locke brought up the subject of the bust. He was proud of his pupil's work, and he did not hesitate to acquaint Sir Hilton of what Dick Russell had accomplished.

Naturally, Sir Hilton thereupon expressed a desire to see it, with the result that a crowd of juniors who were chatting in the junior Common-room got the surprise of their lives when Dr. Locke walked in, followed by Sir Hilton Popper and Mr. Quelch.

It was entirely unusual for the Head himself to enter a junior Common-room, much less bring a visitor there, and the juniors stood up and stared.

"Ah!" exclaimed Dr. Locke, running his eyes over the juniors and singling out Dick Russell. "Will you step forward, Russell, my boy?"

"Yes, sir."

With a groan Dick Russell stepped forward, blushing to the roots of his hair as he did so. He felt he could guess what was coming. He was right.

"Sir Hilton Popper," explained the Head, beaming over his glasses at the junior, "has expressed a desire to view your—ahem—work of art, Russell. I feel that you should be the one to exhibit the—er—bust, Russell. Will you kindly follow us to the library, my boy?"

"Oh—oh, y-yo-e-es, sir!" gasped Dick Russell.

He gave a dismal glance at his fellow-Removites and moved after the two masters and Sir Hilton as they passed out. After him went most of the juniors. They understood how Russell was feeling, and they felt sorry for him. But they could not help grinning for all that.

Straight to the library went the procession, the juniors following at a respectful distance. Before the bust, which stood on a wood pedestal and was covered with a dust sheet, the Head paused, smiling.

"Now, Russell, my boy," he beamed. "you shall have the honour of unveiling your handiwork. This is not, of course, an official ceremony, Sir Hilton. The sheet is merely to keep the dust off the bust."

The Head laughed at his little joke, and Mr. Quelch echoed the laugh as in duty bound.

Dick Russell, blushing again to the roots of his hair, took hold of the sheet and swept it off the bust. And as he did so a gasp went up—a simultaneous gasp of utter stupefaction.

For, instead of a stone bust, cold and dignified, showed a head and shoulders that was a riot of colour.

On the head was a dinged and battered mortar-board, and round the shoulders was draped a dusty, torn scrap of gown. The delicately carved curls of the head were painted a vivid green, likewise the side-whiskers and the eyebrows. The face was a striking blue, and the nose a vivid scarlet. Round the cleverly carved spectacles were broad rings of black.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 898.

The Head, Mr. Quelch, Sir Hilton, and the juniors and seniors present stared speechlessly at the amazing and horrifying sight.

"G-gug-good gracious!" gasped the Head faintly.

"Bless my soul!" articulated Mr. Quelch.

"By gad!" ejaculated Sir Hilton Popper. "Is this—this your work of art, doctor? By gad!"

"G-gug-good gracious!" gasped the doctor again.

There was another moment's silence, and then a howl of laughter went up. Despite the awe-inspiring presence of the masters and the baronet the fellows could not help it.

"Silence!" thundered Dr. Locke, almost speechless with indignant rage. "Silence, I say!"

The howl of laughter died down as quickly as it had arisen. In the dead silence which followed the Head turned a face, white with passion and outraged dignity, to the hapless and utterly stupefied Dick Russell.

"Russell," articulated the Head, his eyes glittering behind his spectacles, "is it possible—can it be possible that you are responsible for this—this insult to me, your headmaster?"

Dick Russell's face was enough answer for that. He was white as a sheet and trembling. The Head saw that even as he asked the question.

"N-no, sir," stammered the junior, his lips quivering. "I know nothing about it, sir. It—it was all right this morning."

"I am sorry I asked you that question, Russell," said the Head, in a more kindly tone. "I can see—indeed, it is impossible to suppose that you could have taken part in such an outrage."

The Head turned towards the crowd round the door—scared into dead silence now—and eyed them with eyes that gleamed with anger.

"Boys!" he exclaimed in a voice trembling with emotion, "I order the rascal, the miscreant who has so disgracefully insulted and humiliated me, to step forward if he is amongst you."

There was not a movement round the door. The Head waited a moment or two, and then he set his lips.

"Very well," he said grimly and ominously. "I shall not rest, however, until I have discovered the culprit. If he will confess now he will be suitably punished. But should he delay confession, and should I discover him, his

punishment will be severe indeed. That is not all, however."

The Head paused and his lips tightened.

"If the culprit has not confessed by nine to-morrow morning," he went on grimly, "then the whole school must suffer. If the culprit has a spark of honour and fair play he will not hesitate to own up rather than that his school-fellows shall suffer for his fault. Until that happens there will be no half-holidays. Mr. Quelch, will you kindly arrange for a notice to be placed on the board to that effect?"

"Very good, sir," said Mr. Quelch quietly.

"Dismiss!" snapped the Head.

The juniors and seniors present dismissed, in a stunned and scared crowd. That night all Greyfriars went to bed in a state of smouldering resentment and dismay. The culprit had not owned up, and there were few who expected him to own up.

THE NINTH CHAPTER

Bunter in Funds!

"ROTTER!"

"Beastly rotten!"

"A howling shame!" groaned Harry Wharton.

And that was the kind of expression being used all over Greyfriars the following day. For nine o'clock had passed, and dinner-time had passed, and still the unknown culprit failed to own up. It was a pretty hopeless position.

"No footer, no walks, no nothing!" groaned Bob Cherry. "Stuck inside the blessed school walls like—like birds in a cage. Good job we've got a bit of birdseed, though."

"Birdseed!" ejaculated Harry Wharton. "What the thump are you gassing about?"

"That quid I had from the pater this morning," grinned Bob Cherry, who was wont to joke under any circumstances. "We can sing if we are little birds in a cage—with that quid. It's going to buy us birdseed to cheer us up, see? I vote we trot down to the tuckshop and blue some of it."

"On birdseed?" asked Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"No, on grub, you brainless noodle!" chuckled Bob. "Let's go and cheer the soul by fortifying the inner man with tarts and ginger-pop."

"Good wheeze!" grinned Frank Nugent. "Nothing else to do as far as I can see, blow it!"

And there was certainly little else the juniors could do. It showed every promise of a glorious afternoon, and the juniors and seniors writhed under the sentence that Dr. Locke had placed upon them.

So Bob's chums jumped at his suggestion. They were always ready for tarts and ginger-pop. Getting their caps, they left the study and wandered downstairs. On the way they overtook Dick Russell and Donald Ogilvy, and the latter two juniors willingly accepted Bob's invitation to join in the "bluing" of his "quid."

Dick Russell spoke little as they crossed to the tuckshop, though the conversation was concerning the trick that had been played on his bust. With the help of his chum and Harry Wharton & Co. the precious would-be exhibit had been thoroughly cleaned, and, luckily, the paint had all come off without any visible damage to the surface of the stone. But, for all that, Dick Russell had been bitterly mortified by the cruel trick, and he had by no means

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got over it yet. The fact that the whole school was to suffer owing to it was not a happy thought to Dick Russell.

He was just as mystified as were the rest of the school as to the author of the outrage. Johnny Bull had suggested the name of Harold Skinner, but though they knew only too well of Skinner's leanings towards practical jokes of such a nature—and especially considering his enmity towards Russell—even Harry Wharton & Co. could scarcely credit that Skinner would ever dare to attempt such a risky trick.

The subject dropped, however, as the juniors entered the tuckshop. Bob Cherry chuckled on seeing that the only fellow in the shop happened to be Billy Bunter.

The fat junior's face was jammy, and he appeared to be very happy indeed. Before him was a piled-up plate of jam-tarts.

"I say, you fellows," he mumbled, as the juniors blinked at him. "Have a ginger-pop with me, will you? I'm in funds, you know."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Great pip! What next?"

To be asked by Billy Bunter to have anything, at his expense, was something new indeed. The juniors almost collapsed, or pretended to do so.

"Fan me!" gasped Bob Cherry faintly. "Bunter has asked us to have a ginger-pop, at his expense, too. Great pip! It's time for the skies to fall."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"No, we really can't sponge on you to that extent, old fat lard-tub," went on Cherry solemnly. "Besides, you might forget to pay, you know. And we'd rather you used your superfluous cash to better purpose—to pay your creditors with, frinstance."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beasts!" mumbled Bunter. "Oh, all right! If you decline to accept my hospitality, I don't mind. All the more for me, y'know. Hee, hee, hee!"

And Billy Bunter started another jam-tart with a snigger. The juniors turned their attention to the tarts and "pop." Bob ordered, and left Bunter to his own devices, until suddenly Bob Cherry gave a startled exclamation.

"I say, just look at this, you fellows!" he cried, picking something up from the counter.

The juniors looked at it. It was a ten-shilling note that had just been given in change by Mrs. Mimble, the tuckshop dame, to Bob.

Bob pointed to some scribbled writing on the back of the ten-shilling Treasury note. It was a name written there, and the name was F. T. Tomlin. While underneath was a short list of articles—articles of furniture.

"One bentwood chair, three-and-six; one oak coal-scuttle, five bob; one iron kitchen fender, one-and-six," read out Bob. "Great pip! Total ten shillings. Phew!"

The juniors stared at the pencilled words and figures on the back of the Treasury note. It was an extraordinary list to find written there. But to the juniors, having regard to recent circumstances, it was significant and illuminating. The name of the second-hand furniture dealer from Courtfield alone was enough for the juniors.

"Well, my only hat!" breathed Harry Wharton. "It's pretty clear where that's come from, you fellows. Old Tomlin's written that, to remind him of some things he's sold at some time or other. Well, if that isn't a queer thing, tell me what is."

"And—and it's from Mrs. Mimble!" breathed Bob Cherry blankly. "I say, Mrs. Mimble," he added eagerly,



Suddenly Skinner caught sight of a bundle of paper stuck in the centre of the plaster cast. Wonderingly, the cad of the Remove drew it out. Then he gasped, for the paper contained a wad of Treasury notes. "Great Scott!" exclaimed Skinner. "Money!" And at mention of the word money, Billy Bunter rolled into the study. "I say, you fellows—" (See Chapter 6.)

addressing the tuckshop dame. "Can you tell us where you got this particular Treasury note from?"

"I—I say, you fellows—" Bunter was stammering, but the juniors did not heed Bunter then.

"Why, I've just taken that from Master Bunter," said Mrs. Mimble, wonderingly. "I hope it's all right, Master Wharton?"

"You—you're sure it came from Bunter, ma'am?"

"Oh, yes, Master Wharton. It's the only ten-shilling note I've taken in today."

"I—I say, you fellows!" gasped Billy Bunter, his fat face going a strange, sickly colour. "Mrs. Mimble must be mistaken, you know. I—I didn't give her a Treasury note at all."

"Oh, Master Bunter!"

"Really, Mrs. Mimble—"

"Bunter, you fat clam!" snapped Harry Wharton. "None of your silly fibs, now. We want to know where you got this Treasury note from, my pippin."

"Don't I tell you I know nothing about it. Never seen it, in fact!"

"Then you won't mind us taking this to the Head, of course, Bunter?" said Bob Cherry, starting for the door. "He'll start an inquiry, of course, but you won't mind that, will you?"

"Ow! I—I say, Cherry, you beast, come back!" yelled Bunter in sudden terror. "I say, it's all right. I'll explain where I got it from."

"Well?" demanded Harry Wharton, as Bob turned back. "Where did you get this note, Bunter?"

"I—I say, you fellows, I found it, you know. In—in the quad this—this morning!"

Bob Cherry started for the door again grimly, and Billy Bunter howled to him this time to return.

"I—I say, that—that was only my joke, Bob, old fellow!" gasped Bunter. "I'll explain. You—you see—"

"Out with it!" snapped Harry Wharton grimly. "Now, no fibs, mind. We won't give you another chance, Bunter."

"Ow!" groaned Bunter. He saw that further prevarication was useless and dangerous. "It wasn't my fault, you fellows. It—it was all Skinner's fault. I say, you—you won't tell Skinner I told you, will you? He'll smash me if he knows I told you. Ow!"

"You've no need to be afraid of Skinner, Bunter," said Harry Wharton. "We'll see he does not harm you, at all events. I suppose you got this from Skinner?"

"Ow! That's it! The rotter! Skinner found them, you know. Twenty quid in—in that rotten bust thing. The beast promised to share and share alike, and then he wouldn't. Ow! It's all his fault. If he'd shelled out properly it would have been spent, and this wouldn't have happened. Ow!"

"Well, my hat!"

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The Co. fairly blinked at the obtuse fat junior.

"Look here, Bunter!" said Harry quietly. "Have you had any more of that money besides this ten bob?"

"Ow! Only ten bob," groaned Bunter. "I spent that last week, and the mean beast wouldn't give me more. Said it wasn't safe. As if I'd give the game away."

"And now he's given you this—"

"He jolly well had to!" snapped Bunter, a spiteful gleam appearing in his eyes. "He knew I'd split about that trick he played on the Head's bust if he didn't shell out. I—I mean—that is to say—Oh dear!"

"So—so Skinner played that trick, after all, then, Bunter?" breathed Harry Wharton, his eyes gleaming with excitement. "Is that the truth?"

"Ow! Oh dear! D-did I say it was Skinner?" stammered the fat junior, in great alarm. "Ow! I say, you won't tell Skinner I happened to mention it, you know."

Harry Wharton grasped the fat youth and shook him impatiently.

"Now listen to me, Bunter!" he said soberly. "You've already said quite enough. Do you want to be sacked?"

"Ow! Nunno! Oh dear!"

"Then if you want to save your fat skin I'd advise you to tell us all you know about this affair, Bunter!" snapped Harry. "You can take it from me that Skinner sha'n't touch you."

Bunter groaned. But he did not hesitate long. The mention of the "sack" had been quite enough for him.

"Ow! I'll tell you all about it," he groaned. "It was all Skinner's doing. He found the notes in that plaster model, you know. Just after you fellows had gone. He said he'd whack 'em out, and then he wouldn't. You fellows know what a swizzling beast—"

"We know all about that now, Bunter," said Harry, almost breathlessly. "But what about the other matter—the painting and rigging up of the bust Russell here did of the Head? How do you know Skinner did that?"

"I—I saw him," stammered Bunter.

"I—I say, you won't split to Skinner?"

"I've told you you've no need to fear Skinner, Bunter. Get on with it."

"Oh dear! I spotted the beast sneaking into the library, you know. I guessed he was up to some game," said Bunter, his eyes gleaming a trifle. "I watched him paint the thing and shove the cap

and gown on it. He had his knife in Russell. Russell licked him, and Skinner did it to get square. He thought the Head would blame Russell for it."

"So—so that's it?" muttered Harry Wharton, exchanging glances with his chums. "Well, you rotter, Bunter, you'd stand by and see the whole school suffer?"

"I-daren't split! You know what that beast Skinner is."

"Oh, dry up!" snapped Harry, in disgust. "Come on, you fellows! We'll go and have a chat with friend Skinner."

"Yes, rather!"

"Here!" howled Bunter, in great alarm. "You aren't going to tell Skinner—"

But Harry Wharton and his chums were going to tell Skinner. They left Billy Bunter to his own dismal fears, and they tore across to the School House in search of Harold Skinner. Skinner's sins were coming home to roost.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Skinner Climbs Down!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. and Dick Russell and Ogilvy dashed into the School House and raced up the stairs two at a time.

Their faces were grim, and their eyes gleaming with excitement. The truth was out now—they did not doubt it—and they were one and all determined to see justice done, both to the unfortunate Mr. Tomlin and Greyfriars.

They arrived at the door of Study No. 11 with a rush. Harry Wharton knocked on the door and twisted the doorknob. The door was locked.

"Skinner!" called Harry sharply. "Open this door, will you?"

From within the room sounded a startled exclamation.

"What do you want, Wharton?" came Skinner's voice.

"We want you!" yelled Bob Cherry.

There was a silence. Then came Skinner's voice again, a trace of fear in it this time.

"We're busy, Wharton. Clear off! Go and eat coke!"

"If you don't open this door, Skinner," called Harry, in a determined voice, "I shall go straight to Mr. Quelch!"

Apparently Skinner & Co. had very guilty consciences, for almost at once the key was turned and the door opened, showing Skinner's face pale and anxious.

"What—what do you want, Wharton,

you cad?" he breathed. "We—we're busy!"

"We can smell that," sniffed Bob Cherry. "You dingy, smoky bounders! Inside, you chaps!"

And Bob Cherry marched into the room, sending the obviously scared Skinner staggering before him. Bob's chums tramped in after him.

"Look—look here, you cads!" hissed Skinner, his eyes plainly showing the fear that gripped him. "What's this game mean, you—you cheeky cads? What are you barging in here for, hang you?"

"We'll explain that in a very few seconds!" snapped Harry. "We want you to answer a question or two, Skinner. First of all—"

Harry was interrupted by Bob Cherry.

"Skinner, old chap," he said coolly, "you've got some red paint, or something, on your shirtcuff. Rather silly not to rub it off, wasn't it?"

Skinner staggered back, hurriedly shooting back his cuff, which was just showing beneath his jacket. His face had gone white as death.

"It—it wasn't paint, Cherry," he panted. "It—it was blood. I cut myself with my pocket-knife at noon."

"And the green paint, just showing on your shirtfront there, Skinner," added Bob innocently, dragging back the front of Skinner's waistcoat. "It looks as if you've been trying to rub that off. Is that blood, too?"

Skinner went livid.

"What—what do you mean, Cherry?" he breathed. "You interfering cads! If—if you think—"

"We've got past thinking, old chap," said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "Go ahead, Harry!"

"I'll soon do that," said Harry promptly. "Now, Skinner, I'll tell you why we're here. We want you to go over to Tomlin, the second-hand furniture dealer in Courtfield. We want you to take him back the twenty quid which you found in that plaster cast of Russell's. Got that?"

"You—you liar! It—it's a lie, Wharton!" hissed Skinner. "I've already told you we know nothing about the dashed money," he added, with sudden rage. "What right have you to come here charging us, you cads?"

"You won't do it, Skinner?"

"Of course I won't, you fools!" snarled Skinner. "What proof have you got?"

"Only a ten-bob note—and Bunter," said Harry calmly. "The Treasury note has Tomlin's name on it, and a list of furniture, proving it came from him. It was passed over the counter by Bunter to-day at the tuckshop. I've got it now, though. I fancy that's proof enough."

"What's it got to do with me what that fat fool does?" breathed Skinner, almost trembling with fear.

"I fancy the Head will very soon get that out of Bunter," said Harry. "But that isn't all, Skinner. We also want you to go to the Head and own up to having played that dirty trick on Russell's bust of him. Sooner you do it the better, Skinner."

"You—you charge me with that, too?" Harry nodded.

"What proof have you, Wharton?" stammered Skinner, pale to the very lips now.

"Only the word of the fat ass who saw you do it," was the calm reply. "But I fancy the Head will soon get the truth after a few minutes' cross-examination of Bunter."

"Bunter!" hissed Skinner, gritting his teeth. "I'll—"

(Continued on page 27.)

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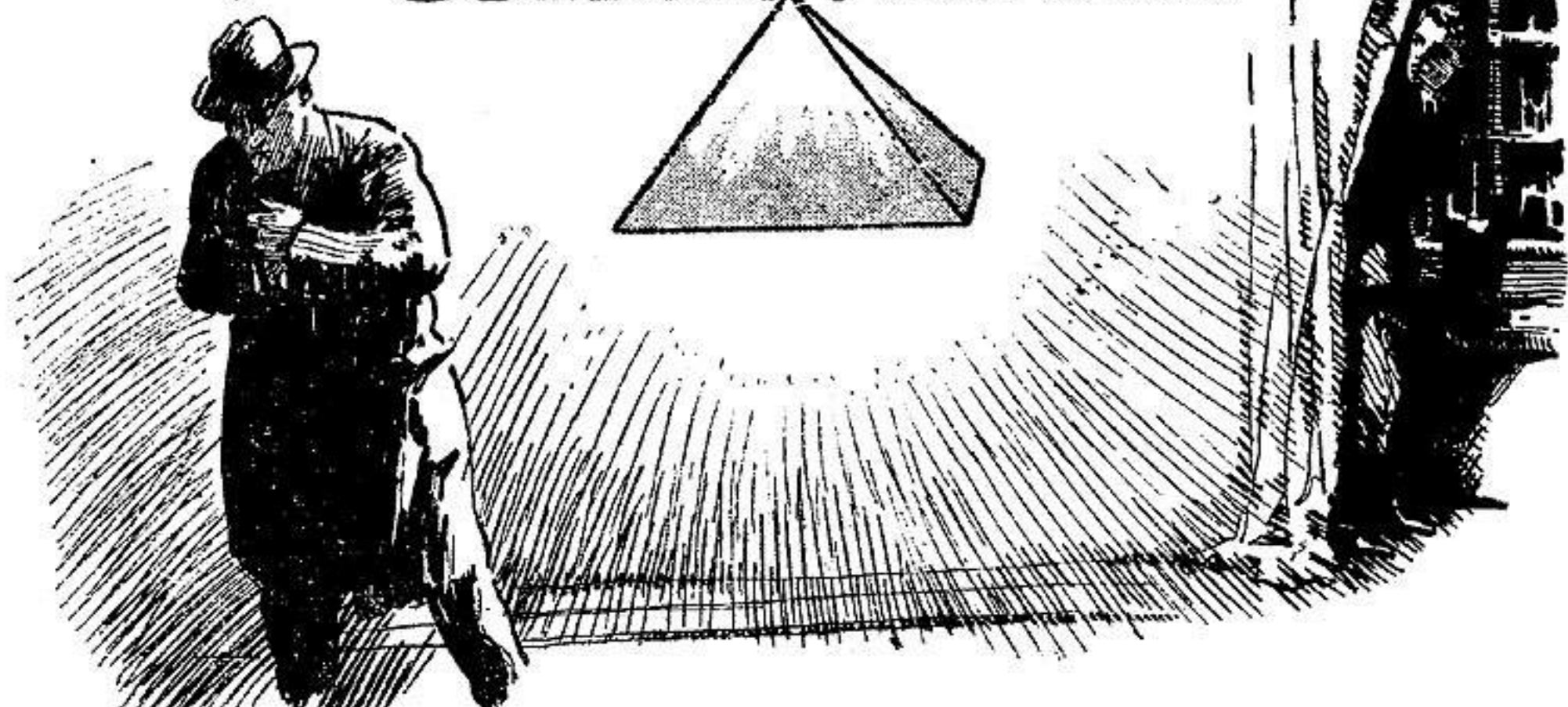
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FOUND!—For Jack Drake to come across Gordon Carr, around whose remarkable disappearance from school a whole web of mystery is woven, is no mean achievement. But has he rescued the schoolboy in time?

The GOLDEN PYRAMID



Hot on the Trail!

"REALLY, Drake," protested the Phantom, "I don't know what you're talking about! Of course, if you are referring to that mysterious fragment of a letter which I was so good as to inform you had been typed on old Mardyke's typer—"

"You know very well that's what I'm talking about, you miserable bone-shaker!" hissed Drake. "And if ever I hear you mentioning it to a soul—"

"I should never think of doing any such thing!" The Phantom's beady eyes blinked indignantly behind his immense tortoiseshell spectacles. "As I was saying to that beast Strood, how can anyone be certain that it was old Mardyke's typer—"

"Wha-a-t?" gasped Jack, seizing the junior by the collar and shaking him till his teeth rattled. "Do you mean to say you actually said all that to Strood?"

"Here, let me alone, Drake, you rotter! You're spoiling my clob— Ow, yow, yo-o-o-p!"

"Answer me truthfully, then, you elongated stick of rubber!" cried Jack angrily. "Did you or did you not say to Strood—"

"I—I only said— Ow, ow! You're choking me, you beast! I—I only—I mean, I was about to say, when—when you barged in and—and interfered with us— Here, what're you doing, you awful beast? Lemme go, or you'll ruin all my clobber, you rotter! I—yow-ow! Yo-o-o-p!"

With a grunt of disgust, Jack Drake flung the long-legged, bony junior from him and strode off. It was impossible to get anything even approaching the truth from the Skeleton of the Remove, and Jack gave up trying.

Whether van Dom had actually spoken all those words to Strood before Jack had arrived on the scene, Locke's assistant could not guess. It was an awkward business altogether, and Jack realised that he could do nothing. But he made a mental resolve to keep a watchful eye on Strood—as also on the Phantom—for the future.

The rest of the day passed uneventfully enough, Jack even finding time to

spend an hour or so in company with his chums Val Terry, Dick Meredith, Howard Rayne, and the Blot—an interval in his labours which he greatly enjoyed, more especially when the chums of Study No. 14 clubbed together and prepared a gorgeous spread at which Jack found himself to be the guest of honour.

That highly entertaining event over, and dusk having fallen, Jack excused

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

FERRERS LOCKE, the world-famous detective.

JACK DRAKE, his clever boy assistant.

INSPECTOR PYECROFT, of the C.I.D. at Scotland Yard.

SIR MERTON CARR, a South African mining magnate.

GORDON, his son.

GERALD ARTHUR BRISTOW, a professional crook, nephew of Sir Merton (known also as Arthur the Dude.)

Ferrers Locke is engaged to find Gordon Carr, who has mysteriously disappeared from Stormpoint College. Hardly has the famous sleuth set out on his quest when news reaches him that Mr. Rennie, the master of the Remove at Stormpoint, has also unaccountably disappeared.

Drake is sent down to Stormpoint to investigate, while Locke and Pyecroft proceed to Moorvale. The private detective runs across Sir Merton Carr, who begs him to throw up the case. This, naturally, Ferrers Locke refuses to do.

Some time later Locke finds the Golden Pyramid, around which is some deep mystery, and incidentally bumps into Gerald Bristow, who demands the ting cone of gold at the point of the revolver.

Locke manages to give Bristow the slip.

Meantime, Drake is operating at Stormpoint College. He discovers that Mr. Mardyke, the master of the Fifth Form, keeps company with a "tough" in the pay of Arthur Bristow. He learns also that Mr. Mardyke is responsible for Mr. Rennie's disappearance. The thing now is for Drake to collect his evidence. He is in constant danger of having his plans betrayed, however, by the idle chatter of Adolphus van Dom—a Removite, thin as a rake, more commonly known as the Phantom. Drake has occasion to "thrash" Strood of the Remove for bullying Van Dom, and after he has finished with Strood, Drake takes the Phantom grily by the shoulder and threatens him with dire penalties if he lets his tongue wag.

(Now read on.)

himself from the study and made his way towards the masters' quarters, pausing as he drew near to the room occupied by Mr. Mardyke.

There was a light under the door, proving that the Fifth Form master was within, but almost as Jack drew level the light suddenly snapped out, and Locke's assistant barely had time to slip into a window recess, a few yards farther along the passage, ere the door opened and the thin, emaciated figure of Mr. Mardyke crept, in his customary stealthy way, out into the corridor.

Jack Drake noticed that the master had his hat and coat on, and was carrying a small handbag. The detective's assistant was instantly alert, and waited with ill-concealed impatience just long enough to permit Mr. Mardyke to vanish round a bend in the passage. Then he crept forth and sped silently in his wake.

Down the stairs and along another passage went Mr. Mardyke, with Jack Drake creeping noiselessly along a few yards behind. Evidently the Fifth Form master was making his way out of the school by a rear exit.

Presently Jack found himself traversing the long, empty corridors flanking the servants' quarters, and at length they emerged, as he had expected, through a back door, into the open air.

Across an open yard went Mr. Mardyke, to pass eventually through a little wicker gate, usually reserved for the household staff.

Jack Drake followed, taking care to keep at a good distance now that they were out in the open, and creeping along well in the shadow of a thick hedge that lined the narrow country road which they were now traversing.

The dusk was rapidly deepening into darkness now, but with the approach of night a bright moon swung in the heavens, casting a silvery radiance over the quiet countryside.

For perhaps half an hour the Fifth Form master plodded along, now and again pausing and glancing back, as if half afraid he was being followed. But Jack was too quick for him, slipping into the hedge itself and remaining as

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immobile as a statue till his quarry again resumed his march.

At length Mr. Mardyke turned out of the narrow road and began to cut across an open field. Jack followed, but rather more slowly now, for he was forced to dart to and from the clumps of holly-bush which dotted the field, in case the man ahead of him should again peer round and catch sight of him.

It was almost like a game of hide-and-seek so far as Jack was concerned, and was distinctly exasperating. But Drake was used to the shadowing business, and kept patiently on, till at last Mardyke came out on to another and much broader road which stretched like a long, white ribbon upwards to the summit of a hill.

As Jack, following in the master's wake, drew steadily nearer to the top of the hill, he discerned the outlines of what looked like an irregular line of buildings silhouetted in bleak loneliness against the moonlit sky. His interest increased considerably as he saw that Mr. Mardyke was evidently making straight for this objective.

"Looks like an old castle or something," muttered Jack. "Anyway, it's a collection of ivy-clad ruins, and—Jove! I wonder if it's Stormpoint Abbey? Old Val Terry was saying something to me only this afternoon about there being an old abbey knocking around in the district."

He increased his pace suddenly as he noted that Mr. Mardyke, evidently satisfied now that he was on safe ground, had hurried forward, breaking almost into a run.

The Fifth Form master had turned abruptly off the road now, and was cutting across the grassland towards where the long, irregular line of ivy-covered stonework marked the outer walls of what had once been an imposing Benedictine structure.

At last Mr. Mardyke vanished through an opening in the wall. Jack Drake broke into a run now and reached the same opening just in time to catch a glimpse of his quarry bearing off to the right.

He stole through the opening, and crept along in the shadow of the wall.

Mr. Mardyke seemed to be making in a direct line for a clump of bushes which stood out, almost like a ghostly hill, almost in the dead centre of an open space.

"I'll bet he's got something hidden away in that jolly old bush!" muttered Jack, as he drew to a halt and stood watching the other intently.

Still Mr. Mardyke plodded on. Nor did he slacken speed as he drew level with the bush.

Jack gasped. "Has he suddenly gone blind?" he muttered in astonishment. "If he takes another couple of paces he'll smash clean into that bush, and—Jumpin' caterpillars! Where on earth—"

He started forward, his face a picture of blank amazement.

Barely a second or so before, Mr. Mardyke had been hastening towards the bush—walking straight into it, in fact. And now—

Now he had completely disappeared!

And only the bush, as silent and still as everything else about this queer, shadowy place, remained!

Jack Drake's Amazing Discovery!

AS the personal assistant to Ferrers Locke, Jack Drake was more or less used to surprises. But the complete disappearance of Mr. Mardyke before his very eyes was something which caused him to catch up his THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 898.

breath and rub his eyes, as if to make sure he was not dreaming.

Mr. Mardyke had been hurrying through the ruins of the abbey, making in a direct line for a clump of bushes. And then he had vanished, as if the bushes themselves had parted and closed over him again!

It was astounding, uncanny!

But Jack's association with Locke had soon taught him the fallacy of believing in anything supernatural. He knew that there was always a reason for everything that happened in this world, however weird or apparently inexplicable it might appear. Superstitious fear had no place in his mind.

Quickly he overcame the shock which this apparent phenomenon had caused. Then he moved forward, still, however, keeping within the shadows of the ruined walls, but edging steadily nearer to the mysterious clump of bushes.

But he had not covered more than about half the distance when he suddenly drew back, pressing his body against the wall.

Out of the shadows cast by a ruined turret which almost immediately faced him, something had suddenly moved.

The lad stood stock-still now, striving to pierce the darkness, and in a moment or so he was just able to make out the vague, but unmistakable, figure of a man.

The figure crept out from the shadows and moved stealthily towards the clump of bushes into which the Fifth Form master had disappeared.

Jack watched it intently, and saw that the man was evidently bent on exploring the bush, as if searching for something. He walked all round it, disappearing from sight, but reappearing again in a few moments. He carried a stick in his hand, and with this he seemed to be busily engaged in prodding at the bush, though without any satisfactory result, so far as Jack could see.

Then, with startling suddenness, the man sprang back, at the same time glancing quickly round, as if desperately seeking a hiding-place.

But he was just a fraction of a second too late.

There came a stirring among the bushes. Jack watched them fascinatedly, and gasped as he saw the head and shoulders of Mr. Mardyke appearing through them!



GREAT CUP FINAL NUMBER

Here are some of the features in this week's FOOTBALL FAVOURITE (on sale Wednesday, April 22nd): "FINALS—FAME AND FAILURE," a Special Cup-tie Chat by STEVE BLOOMER; Great New Serial Story, "For Football and Thrills"; FIFTY YEARS OF CUP FIGHTS; and ALL ABOUT THE MEN WHO MATTER AT WEMBLEY. Make sure of this bumper number. Ask for

FOOTBALL FAVOURITE

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A moment, and the master again stood clearly outlined, the bushes now forming a background. His crafty eyes seemed to be searching about him for a second or two, and then, with a sudden snarl of fury, he turned and sprang towards the other figure.

The unknown man fell back, obviously astonished. Up to now, there had been no sound, but now, as Jack watched, he heard the rasping voice of the Fifth Form master, raised scarcely above a whisper, yet hoarse with anger:

"Who are you? What do you want here?"

The challenge—for it was scarcely less—was followed by a tense silence. The other man seemed at a loss for an answer.

But at last he spoke, and his voice was scarcely less angry:

"I think I might ask you that question, sir. Your behaviour is a deal more suspicious than mine!"

Mr. Mardyke hesitated. Then he took a step forward, and strove to peer into the other's face.

"You've been spying on me, confound you!" he snarled. "You were prodding into that clump of bushes with your stick—"

"I certainly was," came the answer at once, "and I should be vastly interested to know what you, a respected master at one of the most famous colleges in the country, are doing, prowling about here like a thief in the middle of the night!"

A low cry of fear escaped the lips of the master.

"You—you know me?" he faltered, falling back a step.

Something strangely like an ironical laugh came from the other.

"I've known you for a long time, Mr. Septimus Mardyke," he replied at once. "Almost from the outset I have suspected you, and now I've got all the proof I need—"

"What—what do you mean?" The question came almost in a scream from the master's lips.

"You know very well what I mean!" flashed the other angrily. "A boy named Gordon Carr disappeared recently from Stormpoint College. What could you tell the police, if you were forced to speak? How would you explain away your frequent, mysterious visits to this place under cover of darkness?"

"It's a lie!" Mr. Mardyke lurched forward, his face ashen, the words literally tumbling from his quivering lips. "It's an infamous lie! I know nothing about Gordon Carr—nothing at all! You understand? And who are you, anyway—who are you, I say?"

"You'll know soon enough who I am!" returned the other. "And when the time comes for the reckoning, I've a stiff bill to settle with you, Mr. Mardyke! I'm going to make you pay, and pay heavily, and—Here, keep your paws off me, you dingy scoundrel!"

His voice broke into a cry of alarm, and he sprang suddenly backwards, for the Fifth Form master, with a snarl like that of a wild beast, had suddenly flung himself upon the other.

"You'll never get the chance!" he hissed. "I'll settle your hash for you, you spy! I'll make you sorry you ever set eyes on me, whoever you are!"

The Fifth Form master seemed momentarily to have taken leave of his senses. He struggled with his unknown opponent with all the fury of a madman, to the accompaniment of a string of oaths and threats which almost made Jack Drake's blood run cold.



Instinctively Drake's eyes roamed about the place, noting the presence of a packing-case, a heap of straw, some fragments of food and water, and— "Good heavens!" he gasped at last, and started forward towards what looked like a bundle of packing, but which he now saw to be a human figure, bound and gagged and propped clumsily against the wall. (See page 24.)

But the encounter had scarcely begun ere it came to an abrupt and startling end.

With a quick, dexterous twist, the unknown man wrenched himself free of Mr. Mardyke's frenzied clutch. Then, without so much as a word, the fellow turned and fled pell-mell through the ruins, disappearing entirely in the darkness.

For an instant it seemed that Mr. Mardyke would give chase. But after a few quick steps he halted and, muttering furiously to himself, turned and crept away, passing almost within a yard of where Jack Drake still stood, entranced by all he had witnessed.

Jack waited only until the sound of the master's footsteps had died away. Then he crept forth from his hiding-place.

His mind was in a whirl. The meshes of this astounding mystery seemed to get more and more entangled with the passing of the hours. But Jack realised that it would be a sheer waste of time to try to discover, here and now, the meaning of it all—the identity of the newcomer, or the reason for his self-confessed spying upon Mr. Mardyke. That would have to be investigated later. The all-important matter at this moment was the discovery of Mardyke's secret—the unravelling of the mystery of his stealthy visits to this place.

And, thanks to the keen watch which he had kept on the clump of bushes from the moment that Mardyke had first disappeared, Jack believed that he had at least solved one mystery—the explanation of how the master had so uncannily disappeared as if the bushes had themselves opened up and swallowed him whole.

More than this, Jack realised that he had made another and even more

momentous discovery. The sight of that clump of bushes and the general appearance of the ruined walls had brought something back to his mind with unaccustomed vividness, and his eyes sparkled now as he realised just what his new discovery meant.

Ferrers Locke's discoveries at the Hotel Meridian, in London, were still very fresh indeed in Jack's memory. And, freshest of all was the remembrance of that queerly drawn plan, sketched clumsily on tissue-paper and hidden in the lining of one of Sir Merton Carr's trunks.

At the time, the meaning of the plan had been an impenetrable mystery, both to Jack and to the great detective. But now it was no longer so—at least, so far as Jack Drake was concerned. To him it was now as clear as daylight.

For that plan, as Jack now saw, was an exact copy of the very spot on which he now stood. The crude, irregular boundaries were meant to represent the crumbling walls of the ruins; the curved, shaded lines would stand for the clump of bushes.

"Gee! I begin to see daylight!" muttered Jack, as the details of the secret plan flashed again before his mind's eye. "Let's see—there was a letter 'W' on the plan, near to the shaded lines representing the bushes. The gov'nor said something about that initial letter probably meaning 'Wall.' And the shorthand notes, when transcribed, read, 'Wall has secret entrance, but looks solid.'"

He moved quickly forward now, towards the clump of bushes. Fortunately, he had brought his electric-torch with him, and he did not hesitate now to make use of it, at the same time poking and prodding into the bush.

"Got it!" he gasped at last, his eyes sparkling triumphantly as the electric-torch revealed the unmistakable outlines of the first of a flight of crumbling stone steps at the base of the bushes.

As it happened, the bush at this point was not nearly so dense, though it appeared to be outwardly, and Jack had no difficulty whatever in thrusting his way down the steps, which seemed almost to lead into the very depths of the earth.

But, after a few moments, he found himself brought to a dead-stop against what appeared to be a solid wall of stone. Instantly, the meaning of that note in shorthand on the plan flashed into his mind:

"Wall has secret entrance, but looks solid!"

He began at once to shine the light of his torch over the wall, which was obviously part of an underground chamber, probably a crypt, connected with the general scheme of the ruined abbey.

As the plan had stated, the wall certainly seemed to be absolutely solid, and, after ten minutes of the most painstaking search, Jack began to feel somewhat discouraged. He could find absolutely no sign of a secret entrance anywhere.

"But old Mardyke must have got in somehow!" he muttered at last. "And I'm not going to be beaten by a ferret-eyed old scoundrel like him!"

He set his teeth, and began again. The air all round was damp and earthy, and he was beginning to feel intensely cold. But he was determined that, having got thus far, he would not relinquish his efforts till he had solved this additional mystery.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 898.

Suddenly his hand, in roving over the crumbling masonry, pressed against something which gave to his touch. There came a slight grating noise, and then he stepped back with an exclamation of triumph.

A portion of the wall, extending from the floor up to about the height of his shoulder, had suddenly fallen away, revealing a yawning, black hole!

It took him some moments to get accustomed to the utter darkness of the hole—darkness which his electric-torch seemed rather to intensify. But as his eyes got used to his surroundings, he glimpsed the edge of a further flight of steps, leading steeply downwards.

He moved forward, and began to descend, holding his torch before him, and keeping, at the same time, a grip with his right hand on the butt of his automatic, which he carried concealed in the pocket of his overcoat.

The flight of steps was surprisingly short, though unusually steep, and at last he found himself treading a soft, earthen floor, with here and there what appeared to be the fragments of a set of stone flags.

A long, narrow passage yawned before him, and he began at once to traverse this, his heart thumping erratically as he caught a faint glimmer—a mere pinpoint of light—at the far end of the passage.

"Trail's end!" he muttered to himself. "Wonder what I'm going to run into now?"

The passage did not take long to traverse, and as he drew steadily near the end of it, the light which had at first seemed a pin grew till it revealed a sharp turning to the right.

Jack followed the turning, and almost at once found himself on the threshold of what was obviously a ruined crypt, or dungeon.

It was a long, narrow apartment, almost like a cell, but with towering walls, at the topmost heights of which could be seen a couple of narrow slits in the masonry, crude openings no doubt once used as "air-holes" for the unfortunate prisoners entombed here.

But the discovery of the underground crypt did not startle Jack so much as the sudden realisation of what it contained.

Almost in a straight line from the point at which he stood, Jack noticed a narrow ledge—a sort of recess and seat, cut in the stone wall. On this ledge stood a broken-necked bottle, from which a fast-guttering candle threw fitful rays over the cell-like chamber.

Instinctively, Jack's eyes roamed round the place, noting the presence of a packing-case, a heap of straw, some fragments of food and water, and—

"Good heavens!" he gasped at last, and started forward towards what looked at first like a bundle of sack- ing, but which he now saw to be a human figure, bound and gagged, and propped clumsily against the wall.

It was the figure of a boy, whose clothes, though pitifully bedraggled, still were recognisable, while on the stone flags a few yards away was a cap on which Jack Drake instantly recognised the familiar crest and monogram of Stormpoint College.

The boy's eyes were closed, and he appeared to be either asleep or unconscious.

But there was no mistaking his identity, and Jack Drake's heart gave a wild leap as he recognised the hapless prisoner.

"Jumpin' Jupiter!" he almost shouted. "It's Gordon Carr!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 898.

The Boy Who Forgot!

SWIFTLY Jack Drake crossed the cell and dropped to one knee beside the helpless, prostrate figure. Then, whipping out a knife, he severed the cords which bound the boy's wrists and ankles, and removed the cruel gag which had been thrust between his teeth.

The boy moaned slightly as this was being done, and as the gag was taken from his mouth, he opened his eyes wearily, and his lips parted in a wan smile.

Drake was much relieved to find that he was conscious, though it was obvious that he was in a very weak state.

"Thanks, old chap!"

The words came in little more than a whisper from Gordon Carr's lips, and he made an effort to stagger to his feet.

Jack Drake sprang forward again and assisted him, and at last the other stood erect, swaying giddily for a moment, his hand pressed against his forehead.

"Jingo, but you are in a rotten state, old chap!"

Jack Drake's tone was expressive of mingled horror and genuine pity. The boy seemed so utterly weak, so down-and-out, and apparently took only the slightest interest in his surroundings.

"Y-yes, I do feel a—a bit groggy," he muttered, trying to smile again.

"Where am I, do you know?"

"You're in a sort of underground crypt, beneath the ruins of Stormpoint Abbey," replied Jack.

"Stormpoint Abbey?" repeated the other vaguely.

"Yes—you know, the old, ruined place close to the college."

But the boy only shook his head again helplessly.

"I don't know what you're talking about," he muttered, staring around him curiously.

Jack Drake looked at him keenly. Obviously, he was in a very bad way.

"Well, we won't argue about that now, old chap," he said, with an attempt at cheeriness. "We must get you out of this awful hole at once, and turn the doctor loose on you. Come on, I'll give you a hand! Can you manage to walk?"

The boy nodded, and began to move forward. He staggered slightly, and might have fallen but for Jack's timely aid. But Drake slipped one arm around his shoulders, and together they moved slowly out of the crypt and along the dark passage.

How they ever got clear of the underground passage and into the open air once more Jack Drake never really knew. Gordon Carr was in a pitiable state of weakness, and more than once threatened to collapse in a dead-faint, so that Jack had all his work cut out to climb those steps to safety.

But at last it was done, and they rested for a moment in the shadow of the old turret, breathing the fresh air with real gratitude.

"Now look here, old son," said Jack at last. "By all rights, I ought to take you straight back to Stormpoint College—"

"Stormpoint College?" interrupted Carr, surveying his rescuer with that queer half-lost expression which Jack had noticed before. "Why Stormpoint College?"

"Because you belong there, ass!" retorted Jack, amazed at the question. "I'm sorry, old chap," he added quickly; "but your question rather startled me. I thought perhaps you were trying to pull my leg—"

But Carr shook his head.

"Oh, no, I wasn't," he replied at once. "You said something about taking me back to Stormpoint College, just—just as if I'd been to that—that place before—"

Drake swung round and stared in blank amazement at him.

"Well, haven't you? You're a school-boy at the col, aren't you—in the Remove?"

Again the other shook his head uncomprehendingly.

"Am I?" he returned vacantly. "I don't know!"

"You—don't know?" gasped Jack Drake, peering at him suspiciously. "But—but you must know! Look here, you're Gordon Carr, aren't you?"

"I—don't know!" came the startling reply.

"Son of Sir Merton Carr, the Johannesburg mining magnate?" persisted Jack wonderingly.

But still the other shook his head.

"Really, I don't know," he repeated stupidly.

"Oh, hang it, that's all piffle, you know!" exclaimed Jack impatiently. "I'll swear you're Gordon Carr—you're the very image of him, according to the portraits I've seen. And it's not quite playing the game to go on pulling my leg like this!"

"But I tell you I'm not pulling your leg!" protested Carr wildly. "I'm not pulling anybody's leg. I don't know what on earth you're talking about!"

For a long minute Jack Drake stared at him, a look of growing horror and pity creeping into his face.

Then the truth burst upon him.

"Heavens!" he muttered to himself. "The poor chap's lost his memory! He doesn't even know who he is or where he comes from!"

But, startling though this latest discovery was, there was no time now to give any thought as to its probable cause. A low moan came again from the lips of the schoolboy, and he swayed as if about to fall.

Jack Drake sprang forward just in time. But after a moment or so Carr pulled himself together.

"I—I'm all right now, thanks!" he gasped, with an attempt at a laugh. "What a frantic ass I'm making of myself, anyway! Look here, let's get away from here, shall we?"

He glanced up at Jack, and shivered slightly. Something akin to fear seemed to flash momentarily in his eyes.

Jack Drake nodded.

"That's just what I want to do," he rejoined, "but I've been wondering where to take you. I can't waltz you back to Stormpoint now. Apart from the fact that it's so late, there's—well, there's a jolly good reason why you should not show up there just yet."

Drake was thinking of Mr. Mardyke, the Fifth Form master, though he said nothing to Gordon Carr about this.

He knew that if he turned up at Stormpoint College with Carr, the master would get the fright of his life, realise that everything was up, and probably take to precipitate flight. Which was the very thing Jack wanted most of all to avoid, for he knew that, although Mardyke was unquestionably associated with the whole mysterious affair of Gordon Carr's and Mr. Rennie's disappearance, there were also others in the plot. And he wanted, above all things, to avoid putting them on their guard just at this critical juncture.

After a few moments' hard thinking, he decided to take his new-found charge to Harchester, a small market town situated about a mile or so from the



Jack Drake had just reached the bottom of the staircase, when he started back with a cry of amazement and dismay. Framed in the doorway, an ugly expression on his ferret-like face, was the thin, emaciated figure of Mr. Septimus Mardyke, the Fifth Form master. (See page 28.)

ruins of Stormpoint Abbey, where they now were.

He had luckily remembered that in Harchester there was an old friend of Ferrers Locke's in the person of Dr. Peter Quill, for whom Locke had at one time been able to perform a service.

Jack knew he could rely on Dr. Quill, despite the surprise he would get on receiving such a visit and at such a time, to maintain strict secrecy, while the doctor could also, in his professional capacity, tend to Gordon Carr's bodily needs.

He explained things quickly to Gordon Carr, being careful, however, not to say too much. After all, he argued, Carr had obviously lost his memory, and seemed, in fact, almost to be not responsible for his actions. In this way he might easily become an enemy to his own interests. Therefore it was the wisest course to maintain secrecy.

Jack anticipated some possible difficulty with Carr, but was relieved to find that the boy was apparently only too willing to do anything he was told so long as he was permitted to get clear of the ruins, which seemed to him to hold some mysterious dread.

They set out, Jack striking what proved to be a useful short cut, and in a short time they reached the little market town of Harchester.

Jack had no difficulty in finding Dr. Quill's house, and the elderly medico, once he had recovered from the double shock of seeing Jack Drake and then his mysterious charge, at once agreed to do as Jack suggested.

Just before Jack took his leave—Carr having meantime been led into another room—Dr. Quill spoke to him in an undertone.

"That poor boy has undoubtedly lost his memory," he said quickly, "and I'm

afraid it will have to be a case for a London specialist. I don't know what your plans are, Drake, but I do honestly think that Mr. Locke ought to be informed without delay."

Jack nodded.

"That is what I had already decided to do," he replied. "In fact, I'd be much obliged if you would allow me to make use of your telephone for the purpose of sending a wire."

Some ten minutes later, having despatched the telegram to Locke, Jack hurried back to Stormpoint, being fortunate in catching a train from Harchester Station.

Dr. Lampton had provided against contingencies such as the present one by giving Jack the key of a door usually utilised by the masters whenever they happened to be out late at night. By this means Jack was able to let himself in and proceed to his room unobserved.

He was very glad to be able to get to bed, for he was feeling worn out.

But it was some time ere he could manage to get off to sleep. The thought of what had happened, of the amazing series of discoveries he had made, culminating in the finding of Gordon Carr, kept him awake for hours. But at last he managed to drop off.

It seemed to him, however, that he had barely done so ere he was jerked back into wakefulness, sitting bolt upright in bed and blinking in the full glare of the electric light.

"Why—what—where—" he began sleepily.

Then he started in astonishment as he caught sight of a tall, lean, almost ghostly figure standing at the foot of his bed.

"Van Dom!" he exclaimed. "What the thump are you doing here, at this time of night?"

The Mystery of the Box-Room!

THE long, lank figure of Adolphus van Dom, the Skeleton of the Remove, was visibly trembling with fright, and his beady eyes goggled behind his huge, tortoiseshell spectacles. He was attired only in his pyjamas, plus a gaudy-looking dressing-gown of Oriental design.

He moved forward quickly as Jack Drake addressed him.

"I—I had to c-come!" he breathed, in frightened accents. "Drake, old man, for mercy's sake save me!"

And, with a stifled howl, he flung himself across the bed, gripping hold of Drake in a frenzy of fear.

Locke's assistant fell back, with a gasp.

"Here, gerroff my chest, you ass!" he exclaimed. "Your miserable bony frame is like a bundle of spikes! What the dickens is the matter with you, anyway? You look as if you'd seen a ghost!"

The phantom started back, still trembling.

"That—that's just what I have seen!" he panted. "Or—or, at least, I heard it. Moaning it was, and clanking its chains!"

"What the dickens are you talking about?" snapped Jack irritably. "I suppose you've been stuffing yourself full of tuck, as usual, you wretched gourmet, and been having a nightmare—"

"No, it wasn't a nightmare, Drake. I swear it wasn't!" protested Van Dom hysterically. "It was the real thing—a horrible ghost, moaning and clanking its chains—"

"Pull yourself together, you lanky idiot!" snapped Jack. "There's no such thing as a ghost, and you jolly well know it! What have you been up to? Raiding some of the fellows' studies in search of tuck, I suppose?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 398.

"Well, as a matter of honest fact," returned the Phantom, calmer now, "I—er—I was feeling a trifle peckish, not having had more than a bag of meringues, a Madeira cake, some sausage-rolls, and a dab of apple-pie, besides the measly tea they give you in Hall—"

"M-m-my hat!" gasped Jack. "Meantersay you were peckish after all that lot?"

"It wasn't a lot!" retorted the Phantom indignantly. "Scarcely enough to keep a flea alive. And, besides, I'm so wretchedly thin, and it's all because of the rotten way they starve a chap in this beastly establishment. Only last week, I wrote, for the tenth time this term, to my Aunt Agatha about it—"

"Never mind about your Aunt Agatha!" growled Jack. "Get on with the doings, and tell me what it was that has scared the life out of you!"

"Well, as I was saying," went on the Phantom, glancing nervously behind him, "I was feeling a trifle peckish, and, knowing how rottenly mean and stingy the fellows are in this rotten college, especially that beast Val Terry—"

"You can leave my friend Val Terry out of it, if you don't want a thick ear!" breathed Jack sulphurously.

"N-n-o—I—I mean, yes, cer-certainly. Drake, dear old fruit!" returned Van Dom hastily. "As a matter of fact, I'm very fond of dear old Terry—one of the very best, and— Ow-yow! Whar'er you tryin' to do now, you beast? Keep your paws off me! You're spoiling my clobber—"

"Will you get on with the washing!" hissed Jack, who had suddenly sprung out of bed, and rammed his amazing visitor against the wall. "Do you think I'm going to be kept awake all night listening to your blithering rot, you walking penknife? Where have you been, and what is it that has scared you? Come on, cough it up!"

"Th-that's just wh-what I'm trying to do!" howled the Phantom. "B-but you keep interrupting me, you rotter! I'm trying to tell you that, feeling a trifle peckish, I just strolled round the Fifth Form studies—you know, they're on the top floor—and was trying to find a bite or two to postpone the terrible tragedy—"

"What terrible tragedy?"

"My death, by slow starvation, of course! I'm gradually fading away, though nobody here seems to care a fig— Here, keep off, you beast! I'm trying to explain, you rotter, if you'll give a fellow half a chance, you burbling chump! Well, as I was saying, I'd just looked in to Norris' study when—when I heard the most awful moans and shrieks coming from—from the box-room."

"From the box-room?" repeated Jack, mystified. "That's at the end of the east wing, isn't it?"

"Yes. Norris' study is the last one in the corridor, and the steps leading to the box-room are almost opposite."

"And you say you heard groanings coming from there?"

"Awful groans! And shrieks, too! And the clanking of rusty chains—"

"More likely a dose of conscience!" grunted Jack. "Tackling you for

sneaking other fellows' grub in the middle of the night. However, as you seem so blessed scared about it, we'll go up and have a look—"

The Phantom's eyes rolled again, and he fell back.

"N-not me, Drake, old bean!" he muttered. "I—I'd rather not, if you don't mind. You go yourself, by all means. After all, you don't belong to the col., so you wouldn't be missed—I—I mean, of course, you'd be missed terribly, especially by me. B-but I'd see that they put a wreath on your grave, old fruit, honest I would, and— Hi, where are you going, you rotter?"

He broke off with a gasp of astonishment.

Jack Drake, with a scowl of disgust and impatience, had slipped into his dressing-gown and slippers, and, thrusting Van Dom unceremoniously aside, strode from the room, leaving the skeleton of the Remore gaping in blank amazement.

Jack Drake did not know what to make of what the Phantom had told him, but he felt instinctively that, for once, at any rate, Van Dom had not been weaving his accustomed fairy tales. And he—Jack—had been so enveloped in mystery in the past few hours that he had somehow become suspicious of anything untoward that happened in the college.

He hurried noiselessly up several flights of stairs till he reached the top floor. Then he made his way along the corridor to the end, where a small door gave on to a flight of steep wooden steps.

He paused a second, listening, but all around was complete silence.

Then he moved forward, and, with the utmost caution, turned the handle of the door and dragged it open, inch by inch, disclosing the wooden stairs.

Glancing round to make sure he was not observed, Jack began forthwith to mount the stairs, pausing at almost every step to listen.

But the same utter silence was maintained. Everything seemed quite normal, considering the time of night, and Jack was already beginning to feel he had made a fool of himself for taking any serious notice of the Phantom's wild statements. Doubtless the fellow had imagined it all, and had worked himself up into such a state of funk that he was unable to distinguish reality from the fanciful nonsense created in his own stuffy mind.

The wooden steps ended on a tiny landing, beyond which was a closed door.

Jack reached the summit at last, and, after once again pausing to listen, crept towards the door and gently tried the handle.

The latch gave readily to pressure, and the door moved inwards.

Again Jack Drake waited, but, the silence continuing, he pushed the door open and slid his hand along the wall till it encountered an electric switch.

He pressed this, and the room was instantly flooded with light.

"As I expected!" he growled, glancing keenly about him. "There's nothing here! I—I'll wipe the floor with that burbling flatfish for disturbing my rest— Hallo! What's this?"

He broke off as his eyes, sweeping round the room, dropped to the floor.

Within a foot of where he was standing was the fag-end of an almost completely smoked cigarette. He moved forward and picked it up.

"I suppose Strood and his cronies have been up here smoking on the quiet," he muttered. "Just the sort of thing they would do! But they'd hardly be mugs enough to leave fag-ends about, and— By Jove! It's one of the Head's special cigarettes!"

His eye had caught the tiny monogram on the rice paper, partly burnt away but still recognisable. He knew at once that this was one of the cigarettes which Dr. Lampton ordered specially from London and smoked himself. The Head was a connoisseur where cigarettes were concerned, and had these specially made for him.

"But it's not like the Head to be smoking up here in the box-room!" went on Jack wonderingly. "Besides, what would he be doing up here at all?"

He began to look about him suspiciously now, and presently stooped and examined an imprint in a film of dust on the floor. It was the unmistakable indent of a rubber heel, and Jack whistled softly as he recognised it.

"That's old Mardyke's clodhopper, as sure as there's fish in the sea!" he muttered. "And I'll bet it was he who was smoking this cigarette—no doubt Dr. Lampton stood him one or two, or perhaps he pinched it. I don't suppose he'd be above helping himself if he felt like it. I smell more mystery here."

He put the fag-end of the cigarette carefully away in a pocket of his dressing-gown, first wrapping it in a piece of newspaper which he raked out from a corner of the box-room.

Then he began a careful survey of the room itself. If the Phantom, after all, had heard sounds from the room, that suggested that someone was imprisoned within it.

But, despite the most rigorous search among the piles of trunks and boxes, mostly belonging to boys in the school, Jack could find nothing else. The room was completely void of anything even remotely suggestive of the presence of a human being.

Finally, he turned his attention to an iron staircase which wound its way, spiral fashion, towards a trap-door in the roof.

"Don't suppose there's anything up there, except a lot of rats," he murmured at last. "That trap-door leads to the rafters, and looks as if it hasn't been opened for years. Besides, the iron stairway is thick with dust, and— Jingo! What's this?"

He bent down and peered intently at one of the iron stairs. It was covered with a film of dust, but there was the clear and unmistakable imprint of a boot upon it!

He glanced further up, and noticed another and similar imprint. Then, climbing the steps, he followed a blurred but none the less distinct trail on almost every single stair!

He reached the top at last, and, reaching up, pressed his hand against

(Continued on page 28.)



(Continued from page 20.)

"Never mind Bunter," said Harry. "There's also the matter of your clothing, Skinner. Cherry here just pointed out the—er—bloodstains, as you choose to term them. I fancy the Head will be no end interested in them, my lad. But enough of this rot. Look here, Skinner, it's no good beating about the bush! You're bowled out on both counts, and you jolly well know it."

Skinner did know it. He licked his dry lips. Stott and Snoop were looking on with ashen faces. They did not speak once, however. They were quite content to leave things to Skinner—until Skinner started to drag them into things.

"Look—look here, Wharton!" groaned Skinner, staring with glittering eyes at Harry. "What do you want me to do, you cads?"

"I've already told you that, Skinner. Take or send that twenty pounds back to poor old Tomlin—every penny of it. If any is spent, then you'll have to make it up between you. That's your lookout. If you do that, the Head or anyone at Greyfriars will not hear of the matter from us—I promise you that much. You can easily persuade old Tomlin to send the Head a letter saying the money's turned up. He'll only be too thankful to do that once he gets his money."

"And—about this—this bust affair?"

Harry's mouth set hard.

"You've got to face the music about that, Skinner!" he snapped. "You did it, and you must pay the piper. It means a flogging, of course. That's certain!"

"I won't! Hang you! I admit nothing!"

"Very well, then! The Head shall

deal with both matters, Skinner. You idiot! Don't you see that the trick you played with Russell's bust, though bad enough, was nothing in comparison with the other. The Head might be merciful over a practical joke—cruel and thoughtless as it was. But he won't be merciful about the other. It means the sack, Skinner. You all knew perfectly well the money wasn't yours; you hadn't even bought the model. You've kept silent—stuck to the money, though that poor old chap was tramping here day after day in the hopes of it turning up. It was the act of howling cads. It would get you the sack—what you jolly well deserve, too! Well, what is it to be? A flogging and nothing said about the money matter, or the sack and disgrace on both counts? I'll give you two minutes to decide."

Harry took out his watch. His face was grim and resolute.

"Give in, Skinner, you fool!" breathed Stott, his face white and trembling with agitation and fear. It—it means the sack for us all if you don't. And you dragged us into it—that money matter! We had nothing to do with painting that bust!"

"Yes, give in!" panted Snoop. "The cads have got us!"

Skinner gave his pals a savage, bitter look.

"That's all you think about—your own dashed cowardly skins!" he snarled, bitter rage and chagrin in his voice.

But he gave in, for all that. Before the two minutes were up, he nodded savagely to the juniors.

"All right, Wharton!" he said thickly. "You've got me! I'll go to the Head now!"

"That's good enough, then, Skinner," said Harry quietly. "I'm sorry, but—but it's got to be done. Come on, you chaps. We've finished."

And Harry Wharton and his chums left the room.

Harold Skinner kept his word to the letter—there was nothing left for him to do if he wished to remain at Greyfriars. Before tea-time that afternoon the great bell in the tower rang for a general

assembly. It was a flogging—as Harry Wharton had anticipated. Skinner had confessed, and before the whole school Skinner was flogged. It was not a pleasant scene, and Harry Wharton especially was glad when it was over. Richly as Skinner had earned it, the captain of the Remove was sorry for him.

Skinner did not go over to Courtfield that day, needless to say. He spent the evening in the seclusion of Study No. 11, and he did not leave it until bed-time. But the following day he kept his word. Luckily neither himself nor Stott and Snoop had dared to spend any of the money—only Bunter had spent the two ten shillings, and this amount—the irony of it!—was made up by Harry Wharton—Skinner's bitterest enemy at Greyfriars.

Later that day Mr. Quelch called Wharton and Russell into his study, and told them that he had just received a communication from Tomlin, saying that the missing money had now been recovered. Mr. Quelch waxed wrathful regarding the man's carelessness, but Wharton and Russell smiled grimly to themselves.

Russell duly sent in his bust of Dr. Locke to the exhibition, and to his joy, and the delight of his admirers, his exhibit won a high prize. Moreover, it was actually purchased by that crusty old stick, Sir Hilton Popper, who, for once, broke through his crustiness by presenting the bust to the school library. He gave quite a decent sum for it also, and after standing the whole Remove a feed, Dick Russell still had a substantial amount left, most of which went in plaster casts and other works of art, as might be expected.

The following week Greyfriars was granted an extra "half," partly to make up for the lost "half," and partly—the juniors suspected—in honour of Dick Russell, the Schoolboy Sculptor!

THE END.

(Now look out for next Monday's ripping story of the Greyfriars chums—"Playing The Goat." The Bouncer is the central figure, and yarns with "Smithy" playing a "fat" part are always extra special. This one is no exception. Don't miss it!)



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(Continued from page 26.)

the trap-door. But it did not budge by so much as an inch, despite the utmost pressure.

For a minute or so he stood staring up at it, all manner of queer thoughts chasing themselves through his brain.

Then he turned half round and riveted his gaze upon what appeared to be a dark patch on the ceiling almost immediately above his head.

By standing on tiptoe and stretching

out his arm, he was just able to touch the spot with the tip of his finger. And when he looked at his finger he saw that there was just a trace of moisture upon it.

"Grease!" he muttered. "Or oil. Not sure which. But what's it mean, anyway? It hasn't percolated through from the other side, otherwise the grain of the wood would be seen. I wonder

He studied the dark patch steadily for some moments, but finally gave it up.

In any case, he reflected, it was extremely difficult to examine it with any degree of thoroughness now. He must come back again in the morning, when there was a bit more light about. The

electric lamp only threw awkward shadows, which interfered with his vision at this particular point.

He began to descend the spiral staircase, and had just reached the bottom when he started back with a gasp of amazement and dismay.

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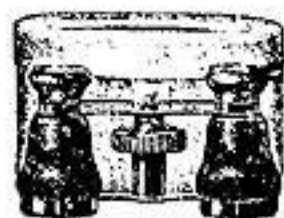
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