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64 WINNERS' NAMES ON PAGE 2.

No. 933. Vol. XXVIII.

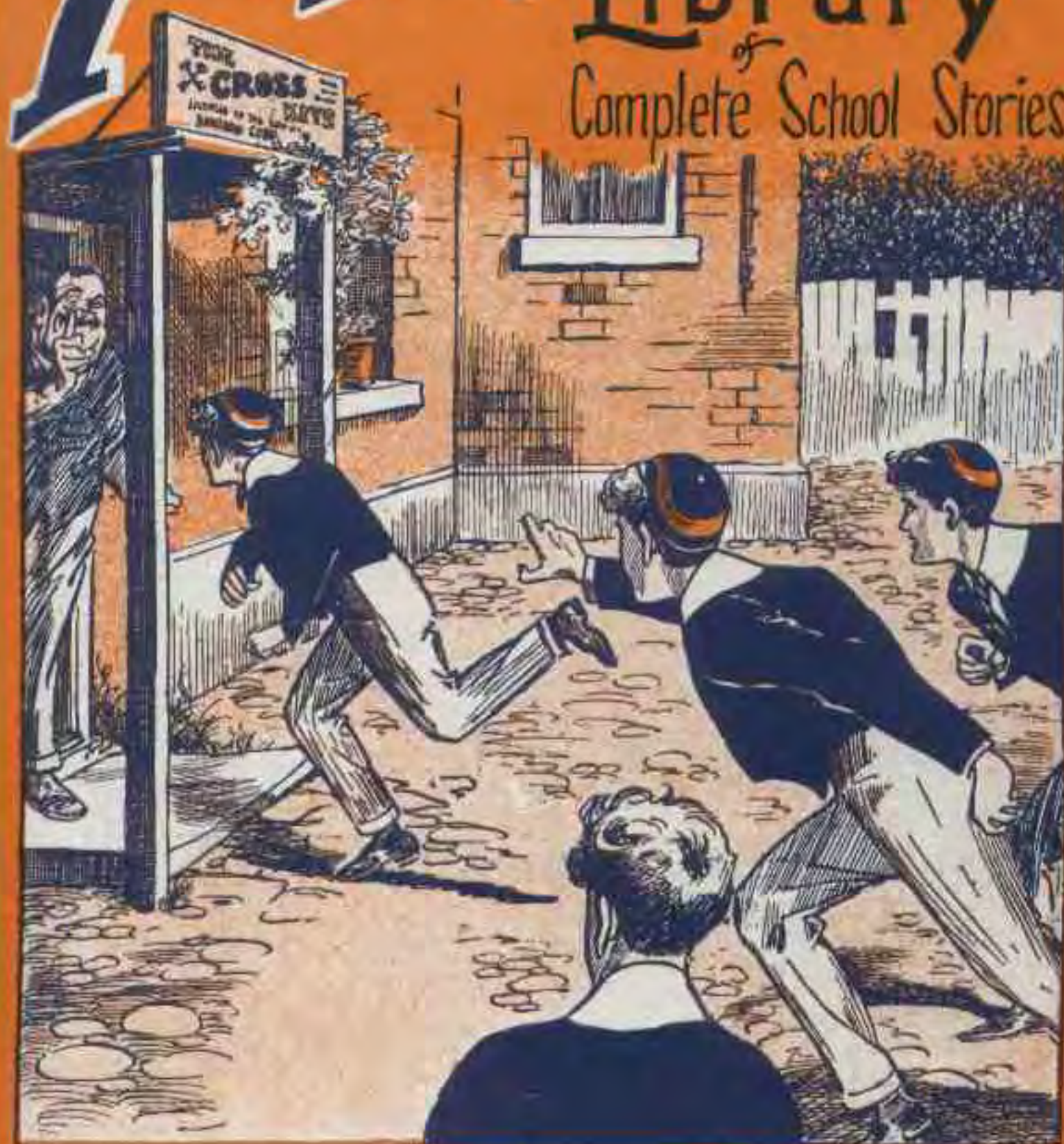
Week Ending October 17th, 1933.

The Magnet 2^d

EVERY MONDAY.

Library

of Complete School Stories.



THE DOWNFALL OF WINGATE MINOR!

TRYING TO SAVE A SCAPEGRACE!

Before Bob Cherry and his chums could stop him, Jack Wingate darted into the side entrance of the Cross Keys.
(A startling incident from the magnificent extra long school story—inside).

RESULT of FAMOUS CRICKETERS COMPETITION!

10/- a week for a year
has been awarded to

WILLIAM BRADBURY,
67, Every Street, Ancoats, MANCHESTER.
Whose solution contained two errors.

5/- a week for a year has been
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A. MOSELEY,
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Whose effort contained three errors.

THE FORTY SPECIAL PRIZES have been increased to **SIXTY-TWO** and
awarded to the following competitors whose solutions contained
four and five errors:—

FOUR ERRORS.

George E. Brown, 6, Shalcomb Street, Chelsea, London, S.W.; Leonard W. Bridger, 8, Holloway Hill, Godalming, Surrey; Percy Bloomfield, 16, Saville Road, Chadwell Heath, Essex; E. A. J. Crook, West Street, Banwell, Somerset; Alexander Huggins, 3, Dudley Drive, Partick, Glasgow; A. W. Jones, The Posting House, Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead; Cyril G. Moon, 64, Sir John's Road, Selly Park, Birmingham; R. N. Nixon, 23, Carlton Avenue, Kenton, nr. Harrow, Middlesex; F. Robinson, 185, Dover House Road, Putney, London, S.W. 15; George Scott, Gatehouse, Craven Lodge, Parkinson Lane, Halifax; Miss Z. Towler, 4a, Northfield Place, Bradford, Yorks; William G. Wooldridge, 16b, Lower Knolly's Terrace, Pennycomequale, Plymouth.

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Robert J. Allan, 9, St. Joseph's Place, Blackrock Road, Cork; Horace F. Ayres, 176, Landells Road, E. Dulwich, London, S.E.; Miss J. Barker, Hillcrest, Carleton Road, Pontefract; Herbert H. Barnard, 70, High Street, Tooting, London, S.W. 17; William A. Barnett, 11, Macclesfield Road, Woodside, London, S.E.; Lance Beustall, 19, Parkin Street, Alfreton, Derbys; Leonard B. Bell, 21, Avenue Road, Weymouth; Harry G. Bewley, 24, Ratlis Terrace, Springburn, Glasgow; E. J. Brown, 87, Rosemary Road, Peckham, London, S.E. 15; Willie Burkett, 17, West End Terrace, Birks, Guiseley, nr. Leeds; Richard T. Burns, 46, Skinner Street, Chatham, Kent; Willie Cook, 26, Windermere Gardens, Antrim Road, Belfast; Jno. Craven, Grand Hotel, Wigan, Lanes; J. R. Dawson, 174, St. Catherine's Grove, Lincoln; Frank W. Forteath, 9, Woodlands Avenue, Church End, Finchley, N. 3; Gussie Fox, 2, King's Avenue, Crumpsall, Manchester; Dennis Gardiner Jr., 59, Pier Road, Littlehampton, Sussex; Nick Gilling, "Lal Koti," Solent Road, Southbourne-on-Sea, Hants; William Green, Market Hall Cottage, Netley Abbey, Hants; Leslie Hammond, 9, Hawthorn Street, Derby; Harold Hawkes, 24, Royd

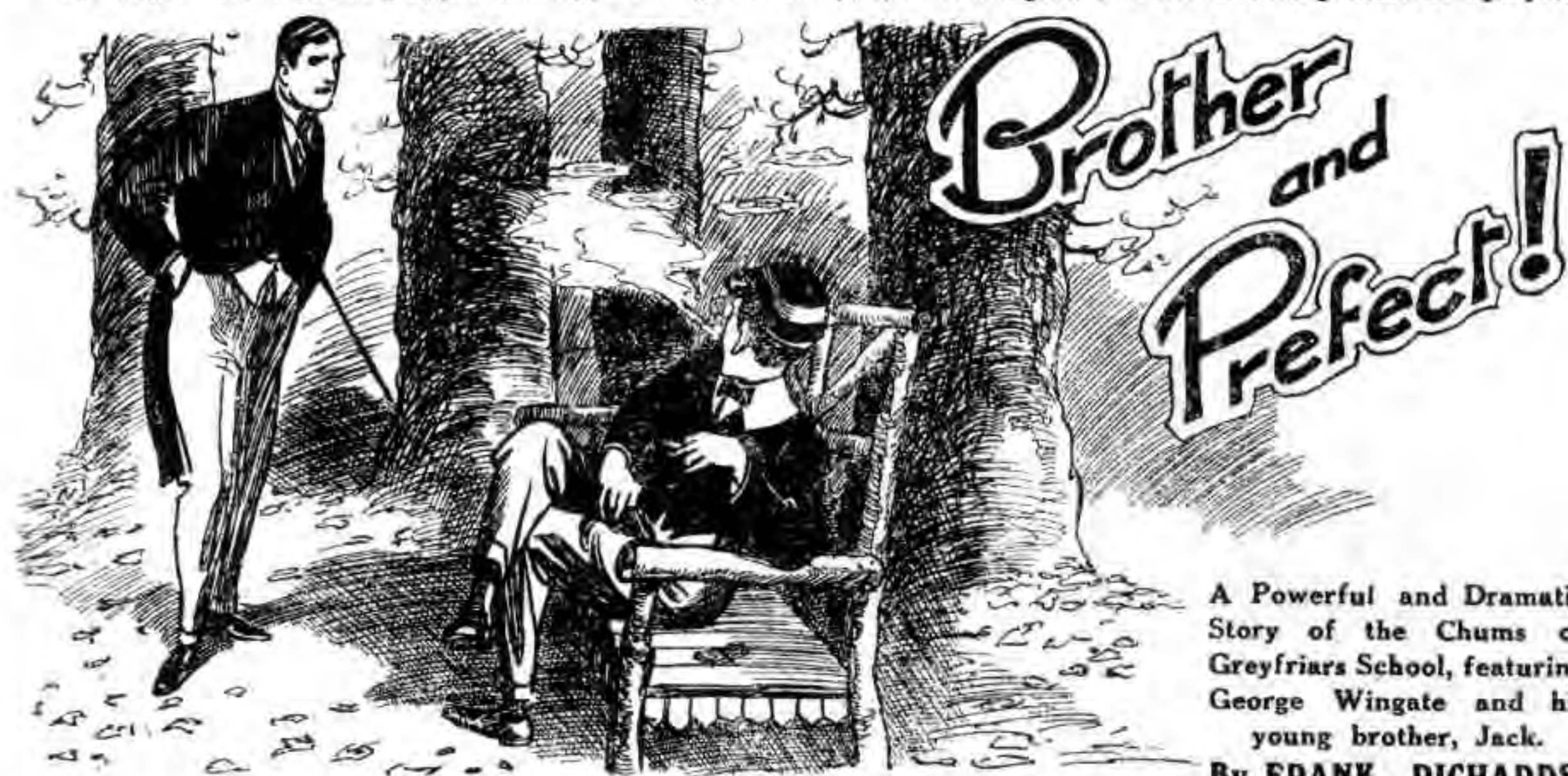
Terrace, Wilsden, nr. Bradford, Yorks; C. Healey, 229, Bowes Rd., New Southgate, London, N. 11; James Hill, 17, Herbert Street, New North Road, London, N. 1; R. A. Hobbs, Stoke House, Frome; Wilfrid K. Huins, 12, Market Place, Redditch, Worcs; Roy Hull, "Lynhurst," 346, Shaftmoor Lane, Hall Green, Birmingham; F. H. P. Jack, 21, Tudor Road, East Ham, London, E. 6; A. Jeffery, 52, Mora Road, Cricklewood, London, N.W. 2; Thomas Kershaw, 28, Clay Bank Street, Heywood; Ronald J. Linford, "Rosaville," Extons Road, King's Lynn; L. Longman, 28, Latimer Avenue, East Ham, London, E. 6; George Morris, 143, Newport Road, Stafford; John G. Phillips, Pelham House, Thornton Road, Clapham Park, London, S.W.; Harry Poulton, High Street, Sutton Courtney, Berks; Ronald Powell, 44, Alston Road, Edmonton, London, N. 18; P. Requejo, 14, Dartmouth Row, Blackheath, London, S.E. 10; Dudley E. Richards, 83, Strathcona Road, Wavertree, Liverpool; Edward Simpson, 31, Basil Street, Heaton Norris, Stockport; K. Simpson, 10, Hound Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham; Cecil Stacey, 3, Merrow Road, Merrow, nr. Guildford; Jack Swindells, 22, Sholebroke Terrace, Chapelton, Leeds; Stanley R. Tapping, 69, Watecombe Road, South Norwood, London, S.E.; Fred Taylor, 89, Baltic Road, Attercliffe, Sheffield; Miss A. Thomas, 50, King Street, Abertridwr, Glam; Fred Townend, 3, Sussex Avenue, Thwaite Gate, Hunslet, Leeds; George Watling, King's House, Boys, Garden City, Woodford, Essex; H. White, 63, Henshaw Street, Walworth, London, S.E. 17; Miss D. M. Williamson, 39, Willoughby Street, Gainsborough, Lincs; William Wilson, 65, Bourne Avenue, Windsor, Berks; William G. S. Wright, 142, Park Road, Portadown, Co. Armagh, Ireland.

CORRECT SOLUTION!

SET 1.	SET 2.	SET 3.
1 TATE	7 WHYSALL	13 PARKIN
2 GUNN	8 VIZARD	14 NOBLE
3 CARR	9 LINES	15 KENRICK
4 FENDER	10 STRUDWICK	16 BLAND
5 ASTILL	11 DOLPHIN	17 SHINE
6 HEARNE	12 SACHS	18 HOLMES
SET 4.	SET 5.	SET 6.
19 HARPER	25 HALLOWS	31 HITCH
20 SUTCLIFFE	26 HOGG	32 DAY
21 CASTLE	27 JEWELL	33 HEAD
22 DIVER	28 WADSWORTH	34 BOARD
23 WATSON	29 CROSSLAND	35 ROPER
24 BIRD	30 BISHOP	36 REED

**LOOK OUT
FOR ANOTHER
SIMPLE
COMPETITION!
COMING SOON!**

THE ONLY WAY! George Wingate, captain of Greyfriars, appeals in a brotherly fashion to Wingate minor to mend his ways. The brotherly appeal failing, the only course left open to Wingate is to exercise his powers as a prefect!



A Powerful and Dramatic
Story of the Chums of
Greyfriars School, featuring
George Wingate and his
young brother, Jack.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Major and Minor!

LODER looks fit!" Bob Cherry, of the Remove, made that remark sarcastically. Gerald Loder, of the Sixth Form, looked, as a matter of fact, anything but fit. His face was pale and pasty; his eyes were heavy; he stood awkwardly, shifting wearily from one leg to the other. But there he was, in the Greyfriars colours, ready to line up with the First Eleven in the Higheliffe match.

Bob Cherry's was not the only eye that noted Loder's extremely seedy looks. All the members of the First Eleven glanced at Loder, as he joined them. Wingate, the Greyfriars captain, was not yet on the ground; for once he was the last to arrive.

Harry Wharton & Co., of the Remove, had turned up as spectators, with a crowd of other juniors. No junior game being on that day, the heroes of the Lower Fourth were honouring the senior match with their presence. They were ready to cheer the goals that were expected from Wingate's hefty foot; ready to cheer their old enemy, Loder, if he played up well for Greyfriars and helped to beat Higheliffe.

But Loder did not look like beating anybody. He looked, as Johnny Bull remarked, readier to go to sleep than to play football.

"Looks fairly on his last legs, doesn't he?" Bob went on. "Must be an ass to turn up to play in that condition. Wingate ought to put in another man, even at the last moment."

"He jolly well ought!" agreed Harry Wharton. "What the dickens is the matter with Loder? He hasn't been sweating hard."

The Famous Five grinned at the idea.

Loder of the Sixth was not given to "sweating." If he was tired that afternoon, it was not due to hard study.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter! What's the matter with Loder, Bunter?" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Eh! How should I know?" asked Billy Bunter.

"Well, you generally know everything," said Bob. "You hear everything that's said, and see everything that's done, especially when you're not supposed to."

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"It's time Wingate was here," said Frank Nugent. "They're waiting for him. Jolly odd of Wingate to keep a football match waiting."

"He, he, he!" chuckled Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, that's something Bunter knows!" said Bob, as the Owl of the Remove gave his fat chuckle. "Well, Bunter, why hasn't old Wingate come along yet?"

Bunter chuckled again.

"He's after his minor!" he explained.

"What the thump is he bothering about his minor for, with the Higheliffe fellows already here?" said Bob.

"Bless his minor," said Johnny Bull. "What has Wingate of the Third been up to now?"

"That young scamp is always up to something," remarked Nugent. "He gives his major a lot of trouble."

"What he wants," said Johnny Bull sententiously, "is a jolly good licking! If I were his major he'd get it, with a five bat."

"He's been smoking," said Bunter. "Third Form fag, you know—smoking cigarettes in the box-room. He, he, he!"

"And how do you know?"

"Bunter will always know things, so long as they make keyholes to doors," observed Bob Cherry.

"I happened to hear old Twigg speaking to Wingate," said Bunter. "He warned him to keep an eye on his young brother. Wingate didn't like it a little bit—I could see that. I dare say he thinks that Wingate minor's Form master ought to look after him. Mr. Twigg seems to think that old Wingate ought to. Not that it's much good looking after him—he's an unruly little beast, just like your minor, Nugent."

"Let my minor alone!" grunted Nugent.

"Wingate looked quite rotten about it," went on Bunter. "Can't say I'm

sorry for him, though. He's rather a brute."

"You fat duffer!"

"Well, he is a brute, you know—suspicious, too," said Bunter. "He saw me at the corner of the corridor, when Twigg was speaking to him, and he seemed to think that I was listening! Me, you know! He pulled my ear!" Bunter rubbed his ear. "Making out that a chap was eavesdropping, you know, and pulling his ear."

"Serve you jolly well right!" said Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull——"

Harry Wharton looked in the direction of the distant House, wondering why Wingate did not come. Both teams were ready to play, and the referee was looking at his watch rather impatiently. But there was no sign of George Wingate yet.

"No good looking for him," grinned Bunter. "I tell you he's busy. He asked me if I'd seen his minor—he, he, he! He's asked a lot of fellows. Can't trust the kid out of his sight on a half-holiday."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he comes."

George Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, appeared in sight at last. He came striding down the field, and a Third Form fag was trotting by his side. Wingate minor had to trot to keep pace with the vigorous strides of his elder brother.

"Good!" said Harry. "The kid's coming to see the game."

"He doesn't look as if he wants to!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"No—not quite."

"There's been trouble in the jolly old family circle," remarked Vernon-Smith of the Remove.

The Famous Five did not need telling that.

George Wingate's usually good-humoured, rugged face was set and severe. Jack Wingate's face was sullen.

The fag was a good deal like his elder brother, but his features were cast in a softer mould. He was a good-looking fellow, much better-looking, in fact, than "old Wingate." It was easy enough to see, from Jack Wingate's looks, as well

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as from his manners and customs, that he was hopelessly spoiled at home, in the holidays; and that he was rather a handful for an elder brother with a strong sense of duty to manage.

It was quite clear that Wingate minor was coming along to Big Side unwillingly. He was coming because he could not help himself; apart from the fact that George Wingate was his elder brother, a fag of the Third was under the authority of a Sixth Form prefect, and Wingate of the Sixth was head prefect of Greyfriars.

"Waiting for you, old man!" Gwynne of the Sixth called out, as the Greyfriars captain came within hearing.

"Right-ho!"

Wingate glanced over the crowd of fellows that had gathered to see the game, and headed for the spot where Harry Wharton & Co. stood. Quite plainly to all eyes, Wingate minor made an attempt to dodge round Coker of the Fifth and get away in the crowd. But his brother's hand dropped on his shoulder, with a grip like iron; and the fag, his face more sullen than before, came on with the Sixth-Former.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, Wingate."

"My brother's going to watch this match—it will do him good to see some football. Will you let him stand with you?"

That was just like "old Wingate." He could have given an order if he had chosen; but he preferred to make a request.

But a request from a popular fellow like Wingate had more weight with the Remove fellows than an order from any other prefect.

"Certainly," said Harry, at once. "We'll see that he has a good view, too. Stand here, kid!"

Wingate minor scowled.

"Stand in front of us, young 'un," said Bob Cherry. "We can see all right over your napper."

He took hold of Jack Wingate's arm to place him in a favourable spot. The fag shook his hand off impatiently.

Bob's blue eyes gleamed for a second. "Stand where you're told, Jack!" said Wingate, in a low, but very deep voice.

The fag sullenly obeyed.

"I want my minor to see the game through, Wharton," said the Greyfriars captain. "Will you see that he does?"

"Oh!" murmured Harry. This was rather unexpected.

"I mean, don't let him clear off," said Wingate. "Do you understand?"

"Oh, yes! All right, Wingate."

"You will keep there till the game is over, Jack."

Grunt from Master Jack!

Without a word more Wingate walked on the field. As soon as his back was turned, Jack Wingate made an attempt to back away through the crowd of juniors. Wharton pushed him back.

"You heard what your brother said, kid."

"I'm not staying here!" muttered Wingate minor.

"You must, you know."

"Well, I won't!"

Wharton shrugged his shoulders at that. He was not specially pleased by the task the captain of the school had assigned to him, but he meant to carry it out.

Wingate minor made another move. Wharton took him by the shoulder and jerked him back again.

"Keep round him, you fellows," he said.

"Yes, rather!"

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"The ratherfulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "My esteemed and fatheaded friend, it is going to be a good game, and the enjoyfulness will be great."

"Oh, shut up!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh looked at the sullen fag. The dusky junior was a good-tempered fellow, but he came very near just then to giving Wingate minor what he was asking for.

However, he refrained. Wingate minor looked from one to another of the chums of the Remove. The five juniors closed round him in a semi-circle, shutting him in against the ropes. There was no escape for the mutinous fag.

"Will you rotters let me go?" muttered Wingate minor.

"Es what?" asked Johnny Bull, with a glare.

"Rotters—cads!" retorted Wingate minor undauntedly. "Can't you mind your own business, you Remove rotters?"

Johnny Bull made a motion with his boot.

"Hold on!" said Harry Wharton; and the indignant Johnny dropped his foot again. "Look here, young Wingate! Your brother—"

"Hang my brother!"

"Well, your brother happens to be the captain of the school," said Harry. "What he says, goes. You've got to stand here and watch the game through, and if you try to bunk you'll be stopped, and you may get hurt. Now, hold your cheeky tongue and toe the line!"

"Rats!" said Jack Wingate.

But he gave up the hopeless attempt to escape, and turned his back on the Famous Five, staring sullenly on the football ground.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Ordered Off!

GEORGE WINGATE threw off his coat and joined the footballers. His face was a little flushed as he met several curious glances.

"Sorry, you chaps!" he said. "I'm afraid I've kept you waiting a bit. It's too bad, but—"

"Better late than never!" said Loder, with a slight sneer.

Wingate glanced at him, and then moved away to speak to Langley, the captain of Highcliffe, and to Mr. Lascelles, who was refereeing the match. He came back to the Greyfriars men, and fixed a very sharp glance on Gerald Loder.

Wingate's keen eyes was not likely to miss what was obvious to every other fellow on the ground. Loder's seedy, pasty look had struck him at once.

"We're ready," said Loder, with another sneer. "I suppose we're not keeping the game waiting any longer, now you're here at last?"

"Another minute won't hurt," said Wingate quietly. "It's rather late in the day to make changes in the team, but you don't look very fit for a hard game, Loder."

"I'm quite fit."

"Well, you don't look it," said the Greyfriars captain. "You may feel better than you look, of course. I don't want to keep the game waiting any longer if it can be helped, but—"

"I think it's waited long enough!"

"But if you don't feel up to a tough game, say so before it's too late," said Wingate. "I'd rather put a new man in, even at the last minute like this, than play a dud."

Loder's lip curled.

"If you mean that you want to drop me out—"

"I don't mean anything of the kind," said Wingate sharply. "We're not friends, and never have been, but that has nothing to do with football. Only, I don't want to play a man who may crook up in the first ten minutes."

"I sha'n't do that!" sneered Loder.

"I say, we ought to get going, you know," said Walker. "Loder's all right; and we really can't keep Higcliffe hanging up while you rearrange the team at the last minute, Wingate."

"Hardly, I should think," said Carne.

"That's rot!" said Potter of the Fifth. "Loder looks as sick as a cat, and my opinion is that Wingate had better put another man in. There's some of the Fifth ready—"

"Oh, blow the Fifth!" said North. "Let's get on with it!"

"Perhaps you'd like to see your pal Coker in the team, Potter?" said Loder sarcastically.

Potter grinned.

"Well, no; but there's Greene—"

"There'll be trouble if I'm chucked out for no reason to make room for a Fifth Form man," said Loder.

"That will do, Loder!" said Wingate sharply. "There's no question of chucking you. The thing is, if you don't feel equal to a hard game, stand out while there's time."

"I've told you I'm fit!"

"That settles it, then."

"If you're ready!" called out Mr. Lascelles.

"We're ready!"

"About time they got going—what?" remarked Coker of the Fifth to Greene as the footballers lined up. "Keeping fellows hanging about when they've taken the trouble to walk down to see a game. I never did think much of Wingate as a football captain."

"Oh, Wingate's all right!" said Greene.

"That may be your opinion!" sniffed Coker. "He's left me out of the eleven. What are you grinning at, Greene?"

"Oh, nothing!"

"That shows he's an ass," said Coker. "But, of course, he's not such an ass as he might be—he's left you out, too. He's got judgment on some points!"

"Why, you cheeky duffer—" began Greene indignantly.

"Don't argue, old man—it's not your fault that you can't play footer!" said Coker cheerily. "But even you would be better than Loder, judging by his looks. Seedy—what?"

"He looks off-colour," agreed Greene.

"Too many smokes in the study!" said Coker, with a snort. "I know his ways—playing the giddy goat! I shouldn't wonder if he was out of bounds last night."

"Oh, rot—a prefect of the Sixth!" said Greene.

"I shouldn't wonder, all the same. He jolly well looks it!" snorted Horace Coker. "Take my word for it, he won't last out the first half. He's no good."

On football matters Coker of the Fifth had strong opinions—generally ill-founded. But for once it looked as if even Horace Coker might be right.

Loder was inside-right in the Greyfriars team, and he joined in the rush of the forwards after the ball. For ten minutes or so Loder played up as well as any other Greyfriars man. But after that any of the spectators could have seen that he already had bellows to mend.

"Look at that!" grunted Coker.

"Oh, my hat!" said Greene.

Loder muffed a pass, and the ball went to Langley of Highcliffe, who bore it up the field.

"Call that football!" snorted Coker.

There was a hot Highcliffe attack, but North, of the Sixth, kept his goal intact, and the game went to midfield again. The Highcliffe men were in good form, and the struggle was fast and furious; and all eyes could see Loder slacking down more and more as his exertions told on him. More than once Wingate's eye was on him sharply. Once or twice the Greyfriars captain was seen to speak a word to him, and Loder was seen to scowl.

There was no doubt that the black sheep of the Sixth was playing up his very hardest, realising that his place in the first eleven was at stake; but there was equally no doubt that he was not fit for the game, and that his endurance was petering out. It was a weak spot in the Greyfriars front line; and with Highcliffe in such good form they could not afford to have flaws in their armour.

"Man down!" grinned Bob Cherry as Loder went spinning from a Highcliffe charge.

Loder sprawled breathlessly on the ground, and the game passed him by. Any other fellow in the team would have been on his feet in a twinkling; Loder had to take his time, and when he was up he was gasping spasmodically.

"Must be an ass to play!" said Harry Wharton. "The silly chump looks at his last gasp!"

"Buck up, Loder!" roared Tubb of the Third; and there was a laugh.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There goes the pill!"

"Goal!"

"First blood to Highcliffe!" said Johnny Bull.

The sides lined up again, with Highcliffe one to the good. It was not till close on the interval that George Wingate equalised, with a really magnificent goal. There was a roar of cheering from the Greyfriars crowd.

"Goal! Goal!"

"Good old Wingate!"

"Why don't you cheer, you young ass?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, clapping Jack Wingate on the shoulder. "Are you blind or dumb?"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" snapped the fag.

"Didn't you see that goal?"

"Blow the goal!"

"Why, you young sweep—"

"Oh, cheese it!"

Bob Cherry drew a deep breath.

"If you weren't old Wingate's minor I'd jolly well give you teco!" he murmured.

"Rats!"

The whistle went for half-time. In the interval Wingate was seen to speak to Loder of the Sixth, intensifying the black scowl on Gerald Loder's face.

"The ambulance will be wanted in the next act!" remarked Bob Cherry. "Loder will have to be carried off soon."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's no good," said Harry Wharton.

"It's as bad as playing a man short; and Highcliffe are in uncommon fettle, too. What the thump is the matter with Loder?"

Johnny Bull gave a contemptuous grunt.

"Ten to one he was out of bounds last night," he said, "and kept it up jolly late, too."

"Phew!"



Gerald Loder received a pass from Wingate and captured the ball, only to be robbed of the leather by a Highcliffe half. And that seemed to be the last straw to Loder's already boiling temper. He turned savagely on the Highcliffe man and kicked, and Roper of Highcliffe went down with a yell. There was a roar at once, and the whistle trilled for a foul. (See Chapter 2.)

"Well, it does look like it," said Bob Cherry. "But the chap may be just seedy, you know. We're all off colour at times."

"Well, he knows whether he's seedy or not, and he should have stood out of the match."

"Yes, that's so."

"There they go again!" said Nugent. During the interval Jack Wingate had looked round him, and moved restlessly, evidently on the look-out for a chance to get away. But the Famous Five were round him, and he had no chance. His face was dark and sullen as he turned an uninterested eye on the game again.

The rest seemed to have done Loder good, and he was playing up once more in good style. But he was tired, he was irritated, he was fed-up with his efforts to keep going, and his temper was savage. He received a pass from Wingate and captured the ball, only to be robbed of the leather by a Highcliffe half. And that seemed to be the last straw to Loder's already boiling temper.

He turned savagely on the Highcliffe man and kicked, and Roper of Highcliffe went over with a yell.

There was a roar at once.

"Foul!"

The whistle shrieked.

Mr. Lascelles came hurrying up to

the spot with a stern face. Wingate's brow was dark with rage.

The foul had been open, palpable, and it had taken place in the penalty area. It was the worst thing that could have happened for Greyfriars; even Loder, savage as he was, regretted, the next moment, what he had done. His bitter temper had betrayed him; and it was too late for repentance.

Langley helped Roper to his feet. The Highcliffe half limped, his face white.

"Loder!" panted Wingate.

Loder gave him a savage, aggressive look. What he had done, he had done, and it was too late to recall the savage act. All that was left for Gerald Loder to do was to brazen it out as well as he could.

"Loder, get off the field!"

"What?" stammered Loder.

Wingate raised his hand.

"Get out! You're ordered off! You're a disgrace to the team! Get off the field, you cur!"

Wingate did not measure his words.

Loder stared at him, with a black and bitter look; and then slowly, with a burning face, tramped off the field.

A deep groan greeted him from the Greyfriars crowd. Gerald Loder was glad to disappear from sight.

"Well, my hat!" said Bob Cherry.

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"The rotter! The worm! A foul on the Greyfriars ground—a rotten foul! Why, the cad ought to be jolly well scragged!"

"And a man short now!" said Nugent. "The game's up for Greyfriars!"

"All over bar shouting!" said Johnny Bull dismally.

The excitement was intense when the penalty kick was taken.

"Goal!"

"Just our luck!" grunted Bob Cherry. "That brute Loder has made them a present of a goal!"

"Two to one—and a man short on our side!" said Harry. "Poor old Wingate is booked for a licking this time."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Where's that young scamp?"

"Oh, my hat! He's gone!"

The Famous Five stared round. In the excitement following Loder's foul Harry Wharton & Co. had quite forgotten Jack Wingate's existence; and the fag had not lost the opportunity. He had slipped away and was no longer to be seen when the chums of the Remove looked round for him.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Playing the Goat!

"PLAY up, Greyfriars!"

"On the ball!"

"Good old Wingate!"

The Greyfriars first were fighting a losing battle now, but they were fighting hard. Wingate was at his very best; at all times the captain of Greyfriars was worth watching on the football field; but now he was beating his own record. His men backed him up well in the uphill struggle, and a swarm of Greyfriars fellows watched eagerly.

Even Coker of the Fifth joined in the cheering for "Good old Wingate!" forgetting his own overlooked claims to figure in the first eleven. Even Carne and Walker, members of the eleven, who had looked sullen when their pal Loder was ordered off, forgot their resentment and played up well under George Wingate's lead.

Again and again Tom North, in goal, drove out the leather when it came whizzing in, and the minutes wore on with the home players holding their own.

Much against the grain, Harry Wharton & Co. had to turn their attention from the match. Jack Wingate was the cause of it. On his own account, they would not have wasted a thought on the sulky young scamp; but George Wingate had given the fag into their charge, and they were responsible for him. Wingate had certainly forgotten all about his troublesome minor in the stress of the game; but when the match was over the Famous Five would have to give an account of their stewardship, so to speak; and they did not want to have to tell old Wingate that they had failed him.

"The young rotter's got to be fetched back," said Harry Wharton. "It's rotten to miss seeing the finish."

"Must!" said Bob. "Wingate had some reason for putting him under our giddy fatherly eyes—he was up to some game or other. We can't tell old Wingate we forgot all about him, and let him slide."

"Let's go and find him, then—two of us will be enough. You chaps can see the match out."

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"Oh, rot! We'll come!" said Nugent.

"All together," said Johnny. "More likely to find him if we all go—he will be dodging out of sight, the young cad! We've got to get him back here before the game finishes."

"Let us hurryfully proceed," said Hurree Singh. And the Famous Five backed through the crowd and left the football ground, sorely against their inclination.

"Seen young Wingate?" called out Wharton, passing Peter Todd, who was scudding down to the ground. Peter had been detained with lines, and had only just got out of the Form-room.

"Eh? How's the match going?" was Peter's reply.

"Highcliffe two to one, so far. Seen young Wingate?"

"Just passed me going in as I came out," answered Toddy, and he ran on to Big Side.

"He's in the House, then," said Harry; and the chums of the Remove went off at a trot, in the hope of recapturing Wingate minor and taking him back to the football ground before the whistle went. But the time was drawing rather near now, and they had none to waste.

Looking for an elusive fag in the School House was not unlike that difficult task, looking for a needle in a bundle of hay.

The Remove fellows scattered for the hunt, and looked in the Third Form-room, in the Common-room, in the Rag, in the passages, and even into Wingate major's study in the Sixth. They gathered again after a time to compare notes—without Jack Wingate.

It was pretty clear that the fag was deliberately keeping out of sight; and there were about a hundred places in the School House where he could hide himself if he wished.

"Nothing doing," said Bob Cherry, with a rueful grin. "I suppose the little beast is in the House somewhere, but where?"

"Echo answers 'Where?'"

"The wherefulness is terrific!"

"We've got to find him," said Harry resolutely. "Looks like missing the rest of the game now; but it can't be helped. Let's draw the box-rooms."

"Let's," agreed Bob.

The Famous Five "drew" the box-rooms. From the window on the Remove landing there was a view of Big Side, and they could not resist the temptation to linger there a minute or two and take a look at the football match.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! It's over!" said Bob Cherry.

The players were coming off the field.

"Bother that young rotter!" growled the captain of the Remove. "I've a jolly good mind to kick him when we find him!"

"We haven't found him yet. First catch your fag!" grinned Bob.

A stair led up from the Remove passage to the Remove box-room. The chums mounted it together, and in that remote spot at last they found the fag they sought.

Jack Wingate was sitting on a big trunk that belonged to Lord Mauleverer of the Remove. His occupation was a curious one for a "kid" in the Third Form.

A box of cigarettes lay beside him; the floor was littered with cigarette-ends and matches. Wingate minor was smoking, and had evidently smoked cigarette after cigarette!

Harry Wharton & Co. stood in the doorway, staring at him.

"Well, you rotten little scamp!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in angry disgust.

"Is that why you sneaked away from the football ground?"

Wingate minor gave the Remove fellows a stare of defiance.

"Mind your own business!" he retorted.

"I've a jolly good mind——"

"Oh, cheese it! Let a chap alone."

"Have you smoked that lot?" asked Nugent, with a glance at the fag-ends that littered the floor.

"Yes, I jolly well have! And I'm jolly well going to smoke some more too, and as many as I like!"

"You won't like, when you begin to feel the effects, you young ass! You've smoked enough to make Loder himself feel queer."

"Bump him!" said Johnny Bull. "The silly young cad's made us miss the football match! Give him a jolly good bumping!"

"Hands off!" snapped Wingate minor. "Can't you Remove fellows mind your own bizney?"

"Your brother asked us to keep an eye on you," said the captain of the Remove.

"Like his cheek—and like your cheek, too!" said Jack Wingate. "Go and eat coke, the lot of you!"

He took the stump of a cigarette from his mouth and proceeded to light a fresh one from it.

"Better stop that," said Harry quietly.

"Rats!"

"Stop it, I tell you!"

"More rats!"

"Then I'll jolly well stop you, you cheeky little sweep!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove; and he strode towards the fag.

"Hands off, you bully!" roared Wingate minor, as Harry grasped him.

Wharton flushed, but he grasped the scamp of the Third hard and twisted the cigarette from his fingers. Then he knocked the box of smokes off the trunk, and its contents were scattered over the floor.

"Bully!" roared Wingate minor.

"You young rascal——"

"I'll jolly well hack your shins!"

"Oh, lick him!" exclaimed Johnny Bull impatiently. "Look here, stretch him over that trunk and I'll spank him! That's what he's asking for!"

"The askfulness is terrific," said Hurree Singh, "and it will do the ludicrous young rascal good."

Wharton released the fag, however, and Wingate minor made a jump for his cigarettes to recover that valuable property. The captain of the Remove caught him by the collar at once, and the fag turned on him a good deal like a wild-cat, struggling and kicking. There was a yell from Harry Wharton as he received a painful hack on the shin.

Wharton's patience was at an end then, and it was highly probable that Wingate minor would have received something of what he deserved; but just then a startling change came over the fag. His face assumed a peculiar greenish look, and he gulped and choked, and then he almost fell across Lord Mauleverer's big trunk, spluttering wildly.

"Oh, my hat! He's got it!" said Bob.

"Serve him jolly well right!"

Too many cigarettes, followed by the excitement of the struggle with the captain of the Remove, had proved too much for Wingate minor. He sprawled over the trunk in a horrid state of sickness, feeling like a Channel passenger on a particularly rough day. Horrid sounds of suffering came from him as he sprawled.

"What a sight!" growled Johnny Bull. "The little idiot thinks himself no

end of a dog, I suppose. He's as sick as one, anyhow."

"Groooooogh!"

There was a tramp of feet in the Remove passage below the stairs. Bob Cherry looked down, and called to Vernon-Smith as the Bounder of Greyfriars passed.

"How did it finish, Smithy?"

Vernon-Smith glanced up.

"Draw—two all," he answered. "Wingate equalised right at the finish—rippingest goal you ever saw! You fellows missed it."

"Glad it wasn't a licking, anyhow," said Bob. "We ought to have won. Loder chucked the game away."

"Wingate's asking after you chaps," said the Bounder, with a curious look up the stairs at the juniors on the landing. "Weren't you keeping an eye on his jolly old minor?"

"Hein! Yes! Where's Wingate now?"

"Just coming along the passage."

"Oh, my hat!"

Wingate's deep voice was heard the next moment.

"Is Wharton here?"

Harry Wharton glanced at the forlorn figure of the wretched fag stretched on Lord Mauleverer's trunk. He stepped out of the box-room to the landing, with a twinge of pain from his hacked shin. He closed the door behind him. He had a natural desire not to let old Wingate see his young brother in his present state, with the evidences of his dingy occupation round him.

"Here, Wingate!" he called out.

The Greyfriars captain stopped at the foot of the box-room stairs, and looked up with a grim brow. He had not yet changed after the match; he had thrown on a coat and muffler, that was all. Evidently he had remembered his minor as soon as the Highcliffe match was over.

"What are you doing there?" he snapped.

"Hein!"

"Is my minor there?"

"Um!"

Wingate came tramping up the stairs. Harry Wharton & Co. stood with their backs to the box-room door, and did not move.

The Greyfriars captain eyed them angrily.

"I asked you to keep an eye on my minor during the match, Wharton," he said.

Wharton coloured.

"So I did, Wingate; only I forgot him for a minute, in the second half, and—and—"

"I think you might have remembered," said Wingate gruffly.

"I—I know; but it was when Loder fouled that Highcliffe man, and—and—just for a minute—"

"I understand; it's all right," said Wingate more placably. "I suppose the young rascal bolted. Is he here?"

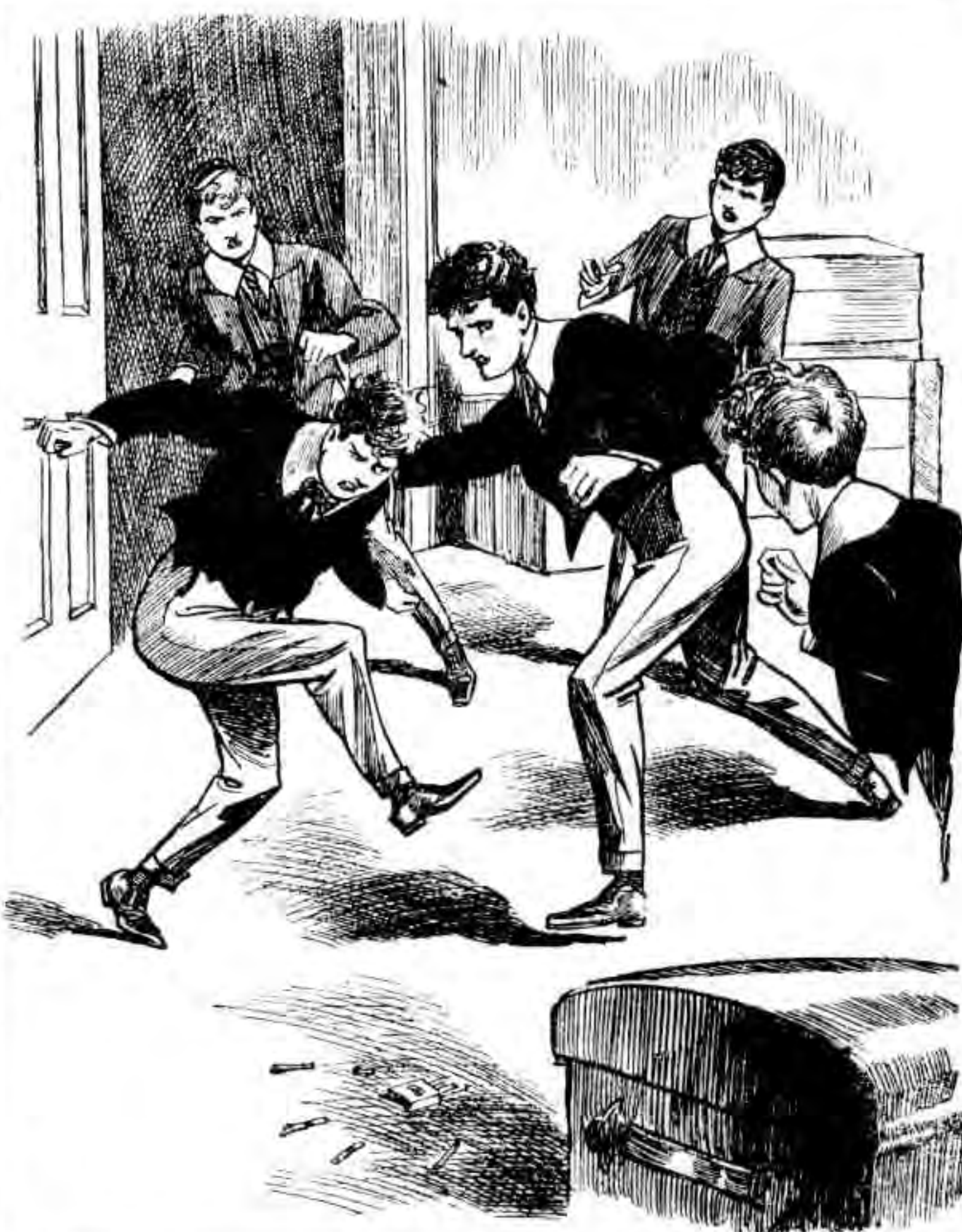
"We—we came after him at once," said Harry. "We looked all over the House for him, Wingate, and missed the finish of the match."

"Much obliged! Is he here?"

"The—the fact is—"

"The fact is, I know he's in that box-room, and you're trying to screen him, you silly young duffers," said the captain of Greyfriars angrily. "Stand aside at once!"

There was no help for it then. Harry Wharton & Co. stood aside, and Wingate threw open the door of the box-room. He strode in, with a frowning brow; but the frown faded away as he beheld the hapless object stretched on Lord Mauleverer's trunk.



As Wingate minor made a jump to regain his scattered cigarettes, Harry Wharton caught the fag by the collar. The Third Former turned on him, a good deal like a wild cat, struggling and kicking, and there was a yell from the captain of the Remove as he received a painful hack on the shin. (See Chapter 3.)

"Jack!"

"Gug-gug-gug! Groogh!"

"You awful young ass!"

"Groogh!"

"I told you to stay on Big Side till the game finished. I knew this was what you were after!" growled Wingate. "You silly young owl! Was it worth while—for this?"

"Oooch!"

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged glances, and went down to the Remove passage. They were not wanted any longer, and they were more than willing to hand Wingate minor over to Wingate major.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Difficult Situation!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter rolled into Study No. 1, where the Famous Five had gathered for tea.

There was a fat grin on the face of the Owl of the Remove; and his unmusical cachinnation showed that something was greatly entertaining William George Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, don't miss this!" he chuckled.

"What's on, fatty?" asked Harry Wharton.

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter. "Young Wingate! He's been smoking in our box-room! He, he, he!"

"Go hon!" said Bob. For once the Peeping Tom of Greyfriars was late with the news.

"It's a fact," said Bunter, grinning. "He's been ill—looks awfully fishy and seedy! Wingate's bringing him down! He, he, he! I say, you fellows, look out and see him pass!"

"Oh, rats!"

"Looks an awful ass," chuckled Bunter. "Smoking cigarettes, you know, in the box-room, and they've made him ill! Can't you hear the fellows cackling?"

There was a sound of laughter from the Remove passage. Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged smiles.

But they did not leave the tea-table to look out into the passage; they had no desire to add to Jack Wingate's humiliation, and they desired to spare the Greyfriars captain's feelings, too. But other Remove fellows were rather less thoughtful and considerate; there was quite a crowd in the passage, as Wingate brought his minor along, and most of the fellows were laughing.

Bunter turned in the doorway of Study

No. 1, to blink through his big spectacles at the entertaining sight.

Wingate of the Sixth was striding along with a grim face, a flush in his cheeks. He was feeling his position very acutely. Jack Wingate limped along at his side—pale, ghastly, forlorn, but with resentment and bitterness in his downcast face. That ridiculous ending to his smoking escapade was bitterly humiliating to the Third Form fag; and the laughter of the Remove fellows was gall and wormwood to him. He hurried along beside his stalwart major, anxious to escape the mocking eyes that followed him.

"What a giddy sportsman!" said the Bounder, with a chuckle. "Pretty cheeky to choose our quarters for his stunts, though."

"Yes, rather!" said Skinner. "You'd better smoke next time in your major's study, young Wingate."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Greyfriars captain gave Skinner a look.

"Take a hundred lines, Skinner!" he snapped.

Skinner looked surprised.

"Because your minor has been smoking?" he asked. "Do you mean that your minor is to take a hundred lines, Wingate?"

The Greyfriars captain affected not to hear that. He hurried on with his brother, as anxious as the fag to escape the laughing crowd in the Remove passage.

They went down the staircase together, followed by chuckles from the Remove fellows.

At the foot of the stairs, Jack Wingate made a movement to scud away. Wingate's hand dropped on his shoulder.

"Come to my study!" he said briefly.

"Are you going to lick me?" sneered the fag.

"Do as I tell you!"

Jack Wingate followed his brother to the Sixth Form passage. Loder and Carne and Walker were standing in a group there, talking; Loder's face savage and scowling. The three Sixth-Formers stared at the captain of the school and the limp-looking fag.

"What's the matter with your brother, Wingate?" asked Walker. "He looks ill."

"Oh, it's nothing!" said Wingate, flushing, and he hurried the fag into his study and shut the door.

Loder of the Sixth burst into a sarcastic laugh, which Wingate heard through the closed door. He knitted his brows angrily.

"You dingy little rotter!" he said.

"Are you going to lick me?" said Jack Wingate again. "You can if you like, you know; you're a prefect."

"You know I don't want to lick you," said the captain of Greyfriars gruffly.

"Let me alone, then."

"This has got to stop, Jack."

No answer.

"Only yesterday your Form master caught you smoking, and mentioned it to me," said Wingate.

"Old Twigg is always prying."

"Is that the way to speak of your Form master?"

"Yes."

"Look here, Jack—"

"Oh, can it," said Wingate's minor. "I know I'm in for a sermon. Where's the harm in a few cigarettes? Besides, it's your fault."

"My fault?" repeated Wingate.

"Yes, yours," retorted the fag. "I shouldn't have smoked this afternoon—not so much, anyway—only you collared me and marched me down to Big

Side to watch your rotten football match. I wasn't going to stand it, and I got away as soon as I could. That's why I smoked in the box-room—just to show you that I'd do as I jolly well liked—see?"

Wingate breathed hard.

"I don't know whether it's any use speaking to you as your brother," he said, "but at least you'd better remember that I am a Sixth Form prefect, and that you are a fag in the Third Form. Do you think I should allow any other fag—Tubb or Paget, for instance—to talk to me like that?"

"Very likely not," said Jack Wingate carelessly. "I don't know, and I don't care very much. After all, a fellow ought to get some benefit from being the captain of the school's brother."

"Do you mean that there ought to be favouritism?"

The fag sneered.

"Oh, a chap can't talk to you! You always get on the high horse!" he said.

"If you're so jolly down on smoking, you can look round the Sixth Form before you worry about the Third. Isn't the Sixth supposed to set an example to the Lower School?"

Wingate looked at him steadily.

"Do you mean to say that you have been following an example set by a Sixth Form man?" he asked.

"You don't know what goes on under your nose!" sneered Wingate minor. "I could tell you some things if I liked. Not that I'm going to."

"You're certainly not going to," said the Greyfriars captain. "I'd rather have you a dingy young blackguard, as you are, than a sneak bringing tales to my study."

"Is that the lot?" asked the fag. "If you're finished, I may as well go. I'm not feeling very chirpy at present."

"You've made yourself ill."

"It was your fault."

Wingate's eye strayed to the cane on his table.

"Go it!" said the fag. "Any other prefect would lick me for smoking, and I'm not asking any favours from you just because you're my brother!"

"I've a jolly good mind—"

"I'm waiting."

"Look here, Jack," said the Greyfriars captain earnestly, "you're not a bad little chap at heart. Can't you see the rottenness of this—as well as the foolery of it? You've set a crowd of fellows laughing at you. You'll get chipped about it in the Third. Doesn't that make you feel fed-up with making a silly young fool of yourself?"

Wingate minor flushed crimson.

"It was your fault I smoked too much," he said sullenly. "I shouldn't have done it if you'd let me alone."

"That will do! I shan't lick you—now, at all events," said the Greyfriars captain. "Think over it, kid, and try to realise the position you put me in. Goodness knows I want to do the best I can for you at Greyfriars, but you make it jolly hard for me."

"Better leave me alone, then."

"That will do. Get out."

Jack Wingate got out. In spite of his cheeky defiance, he was glad enough to have escaped the ashplant. Any other prefect would have given him "six," and he knew it. Wingate, indeed, was not quite satisfied with himself for letting the young rascal off; but he tried to think that it was because the cigarettes had already punished the rebellious fag sufficiently.

"Hold on a minute, kid!" Loder stopped Jack Wingate in the Sixth Form passage, eyeing him keenly.

Wingate minor stopped, with a wary look. Loder, the bully of the Sixth,

was not to be checked with impunity, like the fag's long-suffering elder brother.

"You've been smoking," said Loder.

"Have I?"

"Why, you're reeking with it!"

"Am I?"

"Don't give me any of your cheek!" said Loder grimly. "Now, then, out with it! Have you been smoking, or not?"

"Yes," said Jack Wingate sullenly.

"I thought so."

"I've been before a prefect about it already, though," added Wingate minor. "No need for you to chip in, Loder."

"Which prefect?"

"My brother."

"Quite so!" said Loder, with an unpleasant grin. "It's not for me to interfere with the head prefect of Greyfriars, of course. If Wingate has dealt with the matter, it's at an end."

Jack Wingate looked relieved. But Loder of the Sixth still barred his way along the passage.

"Have you been licked?"

"No."

"Wingate has let you off, then?"

"Ye-e-es."

"Why?"

"I—I suppose he knows best," said Wingate minor.

"I dare say he does," said Loder, unexpectedly amicable. "Don't think I'm down on you, kid; nothing of the kind. You can cut."

Gerald Loder stepped aside, and Jack Wingate "cut," glad to get away, but thinking that Loder of the Sixth was not such a bad fellow after all. Loder stared after him with a sarcastic grin as he went.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Foes of the Sixth!

GEORGE WINGATE knocked at Loder's door, in the Sixth Form passage, and entered the study.

Three Six-Formers were in the room—Loder, Carne, and Walker. The Greyfriars captain's brow was grim as he stepped in. It grew grimmer as he detected a scent of cigarette-smoke in the atmosphere.

Loder & Co. looked at him, with scarcely concealed hostility. There had never been any love lost between Wingate and the black sheep of the Sixth, and the incident on the football field that afternoon had brought matters to a head. Not that even Loder's associates could justify what he had done. Their opinion was that he had made a fool of himself; but they believed, or chose to believe, that the Greyfriars captain had jumped at a chance of scoring off an old rival. Once Gerald Loder had given Wingate a close run in the captain's election at Greyfriars, and they did not believe that Wingate had forgotten it.

"Loder—" began Wingate.

Loder held up his hand.

"I've had enough about that accident this afternoon," he said. "If it's that, you can ring off before you begin."

"It's that, and I'm going to say what I came to say, Loder."

"Oh, dash it all, let's have a rest!" said Carne. "We've heard about nothing else since the match!"

"Man can have too much of a good thing, you know," said Walker.

"I'm out of the eleven," added Loder. "I know that. You boss the committee, Wingate, and you boss the eleven, and you boss Greyfriars generally. Perhaps somebody will give you a bit of a tussle one of these days. Anyhow, you're glad

of the chance to drop me out of First Eleven footer. I was fool enough to give you an opening, and you jumped at it with both feet. You score, and I don't want any sermons in addition."

"You're out of First Eleven football for the present, that's a cert," said Wingate quietly. "You can hardly expect me to let you disgrace the school again in a hurry."

"That ends it, then," sneered Loder. "Shut the door after you, Wingate. I suppose I don't need to tell you that you're not welcome in this study."

"You fouled Roper of Highcliffe in a rotten hooligan way," said the captain of Greyfriars, unheeding. "I've apologised for you, to Langley and to Roper—"

"Like your cheek!"

"But that isn't enough. What are you going to do about it personally?"

"Nothing."

"You'd better think that over, Loder. You deliberately kicked Roper, and there was no excuse at all for it. You are bound to apologise to him."

"Rubbish!"

Wingate's eyes gleamed.

"We'll pass over that—for the present, then," he said. "But there's another matter—"

Gerald Loder yawned portentously.

"You weren't fit for the game to-day," went on Wingate. "I gave you a chance to stand out, and you did not take it. I trusted you, and you let me down, and let down the side. That's a serious matter."

"A man isn't always at the top of his form," said Loder.

"That's not the point. You were seedy and run-down; and now I've thought it over, I haven't much doubt what was the matter with you," said Wingate contemptuously. "More than once I've had an idea—more than an idea, too—that there was smoking in this study, and that you played the goat in still more serious ways. You—a prefect of the Sixth Form—who cane fags if you catch them smoking, and report any juniors who go out of school bounds! I can't help thinking, Loder, that you were out of bounds last night—that you were playing the fool, and kept it up to a very late hour, and that that was what was the matter with you in the Highcliffe match to-day."

Loder coloured.

"If you've got any proof!" he said.

"Do you want me to go to the Head about it?"

Loder eyed the captain of Greyfriars with sullen animosity. Walker and Carne looked decidedly uneasy.

"As for proof," went on Wingate. "That would be easy enough to come by, if I chose to play the spy; but I don't. And I don't want to have to report a fellow-prefect to the Head. I want you to take warning, Loder, and chuck it!"

"Thanks!"

"You've mucked up your football for this season," said the Greyfriars captain quietly. "You don't want to run the risk of being bunked from the school, as well. You know what the Head would think of a fellow in your position playing the goat, and risking getting mixed up in some disgrace! It would be the chopper, short and sharp!"

"I've asked you if you've got any proof!" said Loder, with a sneer. "If you had, I fancy you would go to Dr. Locke without mentioning the matter to me at all!"

"That's a mistake; I've a suspicion that amounts to a certainty," said Wingate, "and I don't want it to become a certainty, which would force me to



Bob Cherry made a sudden rush along the path and charged full into George Wingate. Crash! "Oh!" The captain of Greyfriars, taken quite by surprise, staggered back, and sat down on a heap of fallen leaves with a heavy bump. "Oh, sorry!" gasped the Remove junior. "You young ass!" roared Wingate. "Sorry! D-d-did I hurt you?" stuttered Bob Cherry. "You young duffer!" said Wingate, staggering up. "Can't you look where you're rushing?" (See Chapter 6.)

act whether I want to or not. I want you to take warning, and not drive me to extremes. If you can't take a friendly warning, you will go on your own way; and, in that case, I tell you plainly that if anything comes to my knowledge, I shall do my duty, and you will find the result pretty serious."

"After all, a cigarette or two—" muttered Carne uneasily.

"The juniors are caned for smoking, and the seniors are supposed to set them an example," said Wingate sharply. "I don't need telling that there has been smoking in this study since tea; and I tell all of you that it won't do, and, as head-prefect, I'm responsible, and I won't have it!"

"It isn't exactly a head-prefect's duty to go round meddling with the other prefects as if they were a set of fags!" sneered Loder.

"Not at all!" said Walker.

"You can call it what you like; but it won't do and it's got to stop!" said Wingate. "That's plain English!"

Loder's lip curled bitterly.

"I haven't the advantage of being a relation of yours!" he said. "If I had, you would be a little less particular, no doubt!"

Carne and Walker grinned.

"What do you mean by that, Loder?"

"Your minor was smoking to-day, and

you know it," said Loder coolly. "He confessed to me when I questioned him. I could not take the matter up, as another prefect had dealt with him. But as that prefect happened to be his brother, he had got off scott-free. May a fellow inquire, with all respect, of course, why Wingate minor shouldn't be caned for smoking, like any other Third-Form fag?"

Wingate did not answer.

"I know what a jolly tender conscience you've got, Wingate, and what a jolly old sense of duty," said Loder maliciously. "But it seems to fail a little where your own family are concerned—what?"

Wingate's face was crimson.

"If you want to know, the young ass had made himself sick and ill with smoking, and I thought that was enough for him," he said.

"Enough for your minor, no doubt," said Loder. "Would you have thought it enough for any other fag?"

"I'm not answerable to you, Loder. As I happen to be head-prefect, you are answerable to me. If you kick over the traces, look out for squalls, that's all!" said Wingate abruptly.

And he turned and left the study without another word.

Loder laughed.

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"Rather a hit at our immaculate captain!" he said. "Jolly old Achilles had one spot where they could get at him; and Wingate minor is the flaw in Wingate major's armour. I don't think the Head would approve of favouritism, and he knows it's favouritism as well as we do."

"All the same, we don't want to row with Wingate," said Walker uneasily. "He's too strong for us to back against."

"We've got to back against him, all the same, if I'm not to be dropped out of first-eleven footer," said Loder; "and I'm not going to be dropped without a kick, I can tell you!"

"Well, you did foul that Highcliffe cad, Roper, you know."

"A little accident—"

"Between ourselves, you know, it was a dirty trick," said Walker. "It really was outside the limit, Loder. That sort of thing on the Greyfriars ground doesn't do the school any good."

"You're jolly particular about the school," jeered Loder. "Don't give me any of Wingate's sermons at second-hand. Give me a cigarette."

"Look here, Wingate may come back and—"

"Oh, he's not a spy, meddling cad as he is. He wouldn't think of coming back to catch us."

"I don't like riskin' it."

"Fatehead! I know him better than you do," said Loder contemptuously.

"It's just what you'd do, in his place."

"I'm not a fool—and Wingate is!"

Whether Wingate was a "fool," or not, it was evident that Loder knew him better than Walker, for he did not come back; and the three black sheep of the Sixth smoked their cigarettes in peace, uninterrupted by George Wingate.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Bob Cherry Does His Best!

BOB CHERRY whistled softly.

"My hat!" he murmured.

It was a peculiar position.

In morning "break" the following day Bob Cherry, of the Remove, was strolling under the elms.

Quite unexpectedly, he came in sight of Jack Wingate of the Third. Wingate minor was seated in a secluded nook, where several trees, close together, screened him from general view; and in the mouth of the foolish fag was a cigarette. Evidently the young scamp had retired to that hidden spot to smoke.

It was no business of Bob's, of course; it was not for a Remove fellow to exercise supervision over fags of the Third Form. Bob would have walked on, unheeding, but at the same time he spotted Wingate major of the Sixth coming along the path under the elms.

Bob Cherry stopped, a little dismayed.

If Wingate of the Sixth came on as far as the spot where Bob was standing, he would inevitably catch sight of the mutinous fag, just as Bob had done.

Like most of the Greyfriars fellows, Bob Cherry was a loyal admirer of "old Wingate." He would have liked, if he could, to prevent Wingate making that unpleasant discovery.

Wingate minor deserved a licking undoubtedly, but Bob was aware how exceedingly unpleasant it was to Wingate major to lick him. Any other prefect could have caught the young rascal, and Bob would not have concerned himself about it in the very least. It did

not matter to him if Loder, or Walker or North, or Gwynne laid an ashplant round Jack Wingate of the Third. But it was exceeding "rotten" for old Wingate to find his young brother flagrantly breaking the school laws in this way. He would have no alternative but to punish him, and that would add to the fag's sullen resentment against his brother. So the good-natured Bob was worried.

Standing at the corner of the path, he had a view of both of the Wingates, though they were as yet unseen by one another.

Jack Wingate saw the Remove fellow in the distance, and blew out a cloud of smoke towards him, with a grin, as if to show how little he cared for a Remove fellow's opinion.

Wingate major did not observe Bob.

He was walking with his hands in his pockets and a gloomy frown on his brow, his eyes on the fallen leaves in his path.

It was easy to see that Wingate was in a troubled mood.

As a matter of fact, the captain of Greyfriars was not easy in his mind, and it was of his minor that he was thinking.

Gerald Loder's malicious words of the day before lingered in his memory.

His minor had transgressed, and he had let him off punishment; and he could not help realising that he had done so because he was unwilling to antagonise the sullen fag further. That was all very well as an elder brother, but it was not his duty as a Greyfriars prefect. In his official capacity relationship did not count, or should not have counted, and Wingate had a guilty feeling that he had allowed it to count. He could not help thinking that had the offender been Angel of the Fourth, or Sammy Bunter of the Second, the ashplant would have come into operation. Wingate minor of the Third had escaped scott-free, as Loder said, and Loder's taunt had struck home. He had given the black sheep of the Sixth a lecture on smoking, immediately after letting off his own brother for the same offence. Wingate had a rather tender conscience, and it was troubled now.

He came on towards the spot where Bob Cherry was standing, without seeing the Remove junior in his path.

A minute more and he would reach the corner; and there the sight of his minor, with a cigarette in his mouth, would meet his eyes.

Bob Cherry had not much time to reflect; neither was Bob much given to reflection. He decided that he was not going to let Wingate major spot Wingate minor, if he could help it, and that was enough for him. He made a sudden rush along the path, and crashed into the captain of Greyfriars.

Crash!

"Oh!"

Wingate, taken quite by surprise, staggered back, and sat down on a heap of fallen leaves with a heavy bump.

"Oh! Sorry!" gasped Bob.

"You young ass!" roared Wingate.

"Sorry! Did I hurt you?" stammered Bob Cherry.

Wingate staggered up.

"You young duffer, can't you look where you're rushing?" he exclaimed.

"Do you think you can bowl over Sixth Form prefects like skittles?"

Wingate had his ashplant under his arm, and he slid it down into his hand.

"Bend over!"

"Oh, my hat!" Bob had not quite

reckoned on that, but it was too late now. "All right."

Whack!

"Now be more careful another time!" snapped Wingate.

"Whooooop!" roared Bob.

"Stop that row, for goodness' sake!"

"Oh! Ow! Oh! Ow! Wow!" roared Bob, with all the strength of his lungs, which were very powerful.

Wingate stared at him.

It was quite unlike Bob Cherry to make a fuss over a licking; and, as a matter of fact, he had had only a flick. Wingate of the Sixth was perhaps a little keener than Bob gave him credit for being.

"Well, what's all that shindy about, Cherry?" he asked quietly. "Are you trying to warn somebody that there is a prefect on the spot?"

"Oh!" ejaculated Bob.

"Is there some Remove jape on here, and have I butted in?" asked Wingate, his face breaking into a smile.

"Oh! No; not exactly," stammered Bob.

"Did you run into me by accident?"

"Hem!"

Wingate glanced about him. Then he turned and walked on quickly to the corner of the path where Bob had been standing a few minutes before. Obviously, he was suspicious.

"That does it!" murmured Bob. "If that young ass has taken the tip, well and good. If not—"

Bob Cherry walked away. He had done all he could—at the cost of having to bend over—to save further trouble between Wingate major, whom he liked and admired, and Wingate minor, whom he despised. There was nothing more to be done, except to hope that Jack Wingate had heard him, and taken the tip that it was time to be careful.

Unfortunately, though Jack Wingate had certainly heard Bob Cherry's stentorian roaring, he had not heeded it. No doubt he guessed that some junior had been yelling under the infliction of a prefect's ashplant; but he was either too thoughtless or too reckless to heed the fact that a prefect was probably in the offing. When Wingate of the Sixth reached the turn in the path, and looked round him there—quite well aware that Bob had been trying to keep something from his observation—the fag was still sitting in his secluded refuge, smoking.

Wingate's glance fell directly on him.

"Oh!" murmured Wingate.

He stared at the fag.

He understood now why Bob had been giving the alarm. He understood, too, that it was not concern for his minor, but for him, that had caused the Remove fellow's peculiar action.

His brow darkened as he turned the corner and strode towards Jack Wingate.

The fag started at the sight of him, and removed the cigarette from his mouth, flushing red. Then, in a spirit of bravado, he replaced it, and puffed out a cloud of smoke almost in the prefect's face as he came up.

"Throw that away!" said Wingate, his voice tense with anger.

For a second the fag disregarded the order. But the glint in Wingate's eyes showed that he was not to be trifled with now. Jack Wingate threw the cigarette sullenly to the ground.

"Have you any more about you?"

"Yes, I have," muttered the fag sullenly.

"Give them to me."

"They're mine."

"Give them to me," repeated Wingate quietly, but with a tone in his voice that gave the fag a tremor.

Wingate minor drew a packet of cigarettes from his pocket and passed them over to his brother. The Greyfriars captain threw them to the ground and crushed them under his boot in the fallen leaves.

"Now bend over!" he said.

"Wha-a-t?"

"I let you off yesterday," said Wingate. "I ought not to have done it; I was wrong. You ought to have been licked like any other fag."

"You're not going to lick me, George?" muttered Jack Wingate, eyeing him with sullen apprehension.

"Bend over!"

"I won't!"

Wingate drew a deep breath. It went against the grain; but he had his duty to do, and he did not hesitate. Either he had to deal with his brother like any other fag in the Third Form, or else resign his position as a prefect in the Sixth. There was no middle course for a fellow with a sense of honour.

"Will you be caned by me or by the Head?" he asked. "If I take you to Dr. Locke it will be serious for you. But you can take your choice. Every fellow has a right to appeal to the Head."

Jack Wingate gave him one searching, savage look, and then he bent over. The ashplant rose and fell with loud whacks.

Four cuts were laid on hard.

Then Wingate of the Sixth tucked the ashplant under his arm, and walked on, without a word to his brother.

Jack Wingate stared after him, his face quivering with pain and rage and resentment. He panted for breath, and shook a clenched fist savagely after the captain of Greyfriars.

Wingate of the Sixth was quite aware of the action. He was quite aware that any other fag who ventured to shake a fist at a Sixth Form prefect would be given "six." He paused irresolutely for a moment, and then walked on, affecting to have noticed nothing. Once more the brother had been too strong for the prefect.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter's Little Difficulty!

"I SAY, you fellows——"
"Don't!" suggested Bob Cherry kindly. "You say too much, Bunt, old man—much too much!"

"The too-muchfulness," said Hurree Jamsel Ram Singh solemnly, "is terrific; my esteemed ludicrous Bunter."

"I say——" persisted William George Bunter.

"Ring off, old man," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "You see we're talking football; and that's not a matter you understand."

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Take a little run, Bunter," said Frank Nugent.

"I say——"

"Run away and play!" granted Johnny Bull.

No one could have considered the remarks of the Famous Five as encouraging. But it was not easy to discourage William George Bunter of the Greyfriars Remove. He had joined Harry Wharton & Co. in order to talk, and he was going to talk.

Their interruptions he did not heed; they passed him like the idle wind, which he regarded not.

"When you fellows will give me a

chance to speak, I'll get on," he said, unperturbed. "Blessed if I ever saw such chaps for talking! You'd talk the hind leg off a mule, Bob, really. You're not much better, Wharton—always wagging your chin. As for you, Bull—I say, you fellows, don't walk away when a chap's speaking to you."

But the Famous Five were walking; and, like the celebrated Felix, they kept on walking.

Billy Bunter rolled after them.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Roll off, Bunter!"

"About Wingate, you know——"

Harry Wharton & Co. stopped. Bunter had succeeded in interesting them a little. Matters were not at their best with the popular captain of Greyfriars, they knew; and they liked Wingate of the Sixth, and did not like the trouble his unruly minor was giving him. Johnny Bull, indeed, had suggested giving Jack Wingate a "jolly good hiding," on general principles, as it were. But the Co. had doubted whether that drastic measure would do any good.

"Well, what about Wingate?" asked Harry.

"I'm detained," said Bunter.

"Bother you, and your detention, too!"

"That's all very well," said Bunter indignantly. "But it's a half-holiday to-day, and I can jolly well tell you that I don't like staying in to write out rotten Latin on a half-holiday. I dare say you fellows are going out."

"Buzz off and do your lines, and give us a rest," said Bob.

"The trouble is, I don't want to do my lines!" explained Bunter. "I want to go out of gates. I'm going over to Cliff House to tea with my sister Bessie. She's got a cake from home—I mean, I'm very fond of Bessie."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at. I dare say you fellows aren't fond of your sisters," said Bunter disdainfully. "We're an affectionate family."

"At tea-time, when there's a cake!" grinned Nugent.

"Well, we can't get you off detention, Bunter," said the captain of the Remove impatiently. "Wingate can't, either, if Quelch has detained you."

"It isn't Mr. Quelch. It's Wingate who's given me the lines," said Bunter.



Jack Wingate raced down the garden path breathlessly and reached the gate at the end. He took it with a running leap and landed on the tow-path beside the Sark, rolling over in the grass. "Hallo! What the thump's that?" Coker, Potter, and Greene, who had been strolling along the tow-path, stopped suddenly to stare at the fag who had just come from the Cross Keys garden. (See Chapter 10.)

"He gave me two hundred lines for nothing."

"Rats!"

"Nothing at all!" said Bunter firmly. "I told him I'd come to his study to ask him about—about deponent verbs. A prefect is supposed to help a fellow with his grammar, if asked. Well, I was going to ask him. He jumped to the conclusion that I had had the doughnuts."

"The doughnuts?" repeated Harry.

"Yes; a few measly doughnuts that he had in his study for tea. As if I'd touch his doughnuts, you know. Besides, there were only six, and I was hungry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"How was I to know that the brute would come into the study so suddenly?" demanded Bunter. "Besides, where was the harm in going there to ask him about French irregular verbs?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I never even saw the doughnuts. My belief really is, that there weren't any doughnuts there at all, and Wingate simply wanted an excuse for giving me lines. I offered to pay for them, too, when—when I got my postal-order. I've mentioned to you fellows that I'm expecting a postal-order, I think?"

"Ha, ha! I think so!"

"The mentionfulness has been terrific!"

"Well, that's how it stands," said Bunter. "I'm booked for tea at Cliff House, and I've got lines to do, and that brute Wingate says I'm to stay in this afternoon and write them, because I didn't hand them in yesterday. What do you fellows think of that?"

"Serve you jolly well right!" said Johnny Bull. "Any prefect but Wingate would have given you a jolly good licking for bagging tuck from his study. He's only given you lines. You've got off cheap."

"Is that what you call sympathy?" hooted Bunter. "I jolly well wish I'd left the doughnuts alone now. Besides, I never touched them, as I told Wingate at the time. He didn't believe me!"

"Go hon!"

"He refused to take my word!" said Bunter sorrowfully. "Suspicious beast, you know. He's got to let me off detention, you see. I must go over to Cliff House for that cake—I mean, to see my dear sister Bessie. One good turn deserves another, doesn't it?"

"Eh?"

"If I do Wingate a good turn, he ought to let me off!" argued Bunter.

"Catch you doing anybody a good turn!" said Bob. "And how the thump can you do the captain of the school a good turn, you ass?"

"Well, he's jolly keen about keeping his young brother out of trouble. You fellows may have noticed that."

"What about Wingate minor, then?"

"Well, suppose I tell the Head, or old Twigg, about the young rotter going to the Cross Keys!" argued Bunter. "It means a licking for him. Wingate wouldn't like that. If I keep it dark, old Wingate ought to let me off the lines—what? One good turn deserves another."

Harry Wharton & Co. stared at Bunter.

"What on earth do you mean?" demanded Harry. "Wingate minor seems to be rather a shady young scamp; but he wouldn't go to a place like the Cross Keys—a pub out of bounds! What do you mean?"

Billy Bunter chuckled.

"I happen to know that he's going. He's started already," he said. "Now, it's really my duty to put a stop to it—"

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disgraceful goings-on, and all that. I've got a sense of morality and things, if you fellows haven't. I always was a high-minded chap. I'm disgusted with young Wingate—simply disgusted! I feel it my duty to let old Twigg know where he is gone. But—"

"But if you speak about Wingate minor, or anybody else, you fat frog, your life won't be worth living in the Remove afterwards!" growled Johnny Bull.

"You see, it's a case of a fellow being on the road to ruin, and so on," said Bunter. "That's serious. But I don't want to be hard on old Wingate. That's where it comes in. If he lets me off my lines, I'll keep it dark about young Wingate. That's fair."

"You silly ass!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Look here, Bunter, is this all gas, or do you know anything about young Wingate playing the goat?" exclaimed the captain of the Remove.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"The gasfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Singh, shaking his dusky head.

"Oh, really, Inky—"

The chums of the Remove regarded Bunter very doubtfully. It was a shock to them to learn that the reckless young scapegrace of the Third was going to such lengths; and they realised what a blow it would be to Wingate, if he heard of it. They were not concerned about Bunter's detention—though that, to the Owl of the Remove, was the only important point in the whole matter.

"You see, I happen to know it," said Bunter, blinking at them through his big spectacles. "I'm a fellow to know things, you know. I keep my eyes and ears open. Not like you chaps!"

"No; thank goodness we don't bear even the remotest resemblance to you, you fat rotter!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"But how do you know?" demanded Wharton.

Bunter grinned.

"I saw Loder give him the note."

"Loder of the Sixth?" exclaimed Nugent.

"There isn't any other Loder at Greyfriars, that I know of."

"You saw Loder, a Sixth Form prefect, give a fag a note to take to a place like the Cross Keys?" exclaimed Bob incredulously.

"Just that!"

"Rubbish!"

"I don't know," said Johnny Bull.

"Lots of fellows believe that Loder of the Sixth plays the goat, prefect as he is; in fact, we've seen something of his little games ourselves, last term. I know that he knows that man Cobb at the Cross Keys—I've seen him speaking to him in the lanes."

"Yes, but—"

"And he's up against old Wingate since he was ordered off the field in the Highcliffe match. In fact, he always has been up against him," said Johnny. "He tried once to boost him out of the captaincy, and failed. I shouldn't wonder if this is true. Just like him to get at old Wingate through his silly minor."

"It seems jolly thick to me!" said Bob, shaking his head. "There's a limit, even for a blackguard like Loder."

"If you're sure, Bunter—" said Harry.

"Of course, I'm sure!" said Bunter peevishly. "I tell you I saw Loder give him the note, and heard him say it was for Cobb, and he wasn't to give it to anybody else. I was just round the corner."

"Spying!" snorted Johnny Bull.

"I happened to stop to—to tie up my shoe-lace—"

"Br-r-r-r!"

"It's a fact, you know," said Bunter, blinking at the troubled faces of the Remove fellows. "Now, the point is this. I can get young Wingate into a fearful row by reporting him to a master or a prefect—"

"To Loder?" grunted Johnny Bull.

Bunter chuckled.

"Nunno—that wouldn't do! But I think it's my duty to mention the matter to Mr. Twigg, his Form master."

"Mention it to him, then, and give us a rest."

"That's all very well; but it wouldn't get me off my lines," said Bunter.

"That's the really important point, you see. I want you fellows to advise me. One good turn deserves another; and if I keep mum about young Wingate, old Wingate ought to let me off. But I hardly like tackling him on the subject—that's the difficulty. He might fly into a temper and get hold of his cane."

"He jolly well might!" said Bob. "I fancy that he would, if you tried to drive a bargain like that with him."

"Of course, I don't want him pitching into me," said Bunter. "That's the difficulty. I say, you fellows, do help me out! I've done a lot for you at one time and another. I stood you a splendid holiday at Bunter Court in the vac—"

"Oh, cheese it!"

"I don't expect gratitude," said Bunter. "Still, I think you're bound to play up now. I've got to get off detention. Wingate's bound to let me off if I let his minor off. That's what it comes to. Only he may burst into a beastly temper when I tackle him, and wallop a chap! What would you do in my place?"

Bunter blinked anxiously at the Famous Five.

Evidently he felt the need of sage advice in this difficult position.

It was in his power to make matters very unpleasant for the captain of the school, that was certain. The cancelling of his lines was a cheap price to pay for his silence. But his fat heart failed him at the idea of tackling George Wingate on the subject—as well it might.

"I say, you fellows, what would you do?" he urged.

"The lines!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, you ass! I tell you Bessie's got a cake from home," said Bunter. "I can't do the lines. Look here, Wharton, I think it's up to you."

"What's up to me, fathead?"

"You go to Wingate, and tell him how the matter stands," suggested Bunter. "Point out to him that one good turn deserves another. Put it plain. Tell him I'll keep mum, if nothing more is said about my lines. See? If he gets into a temper you can dodge out of the study. Besides, what's a licking?"

"Well, my hat!"

"I think you might do this for me, Harry old fellow, after I gave you that splendid holiday at Bunter Court!" urged the Owl of the Remove.

"Ring off!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, bump him!" said Bob Cherry.

"Good!"

"The bumpfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed Bunter."

Bunter jumped away.

"I say, you fellows—keep off, you beasts—wharrer you at? I—I say—Oh, my hat! Beasts!"

Bunter fled.



"Hands off, you fools!" shouted Wingate, as the potman of the Cross Keys came at him. Sam, the "chucker-out," was a hefty man, and he had no doubt about being able to handle this schoolboy. But doubt arose the next minute, for the champion athlete was, in fact, rather too hefty for the "chucker-out." Sam went sprawling against the wall, and slid to the floor, gasping for breath. And his companions fared little better. (See Chapter 11.)

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

No Bargain!

GEORGE WINGATE looked up from his work, as a tap came at the door of his study in the Sixth Form passage.

It was a half-holiday; but Wingate of the Sixth was grinding at Greek till tea-time.

Football practice was going on on Big Side; but for once the captain of Greyfriars was giving the game a miss. He was in no humour for Greek, either, for that matter, but he was trying to occupy his thoughts with work. He was in a troubled mood.

The way his minor was going was a trouble to him, and Wingate did not see what he could do to stop it. Talking to Jack Wingate seemed to be no good; and licking him seemed no better.

Wilful and wayward as the fag was, Wingate had always found him amenable to kindness, and had appealed to his better nature—hitherto. But it seemed to him now that Jack had fallen under some evil influence that brought out all the latent evil in him, that hardened him and made him obdurate. Either that was the case, or else the fag was a much worse fellow than his elder brother had ever supposed.

It was naturally a trouble on Wingate's mind. He was attached to his brother, and to a large extent he was responsible for him to his people at home. The possibility that some bad-hearted fellow was leading the foolish fag into rotten ways haunted him, and he gave the matter a great deal of thought. It seemed to him that since the day of the Highcliffe match Jack had been more reckless and obstinate and defiant, more bent on hunting for trouble. Yet if he had fallen into bad associations, what were they?

In the Third Form there was no fellow whom Wingate could suppose to be a "bad egg." Jack Wingate generally consorted with Tubb and Paget, both of them healthy and decent

youngsters—Tubb a rather reckless and obstreperous fellow, Paget a somewhat dandified youth, with a tincture of "swank"; neither of them likely to do any fellow the least harm by his association.

So far as Wingate could observe, Jack had no associations outside his own Form. It was very uncommon at Greyfriars for fellows to associate with others of different Forms, and Jack Wingate could hardly have done so without the circumstance being noticed. There were "bad eggs" in the Remove and the Fourth—Wingate's official eye had more than once been on Skinner of the Remove, and Aubrey Angel of the Fourth. But he had not been able to discover that his minor was even on speaking terms with either of them.

"Bad eggs," doubtless, existed in the Fifth and the Sixth; but it naturally did not occur to Wingate that a senior fellow might be influencing his minor, a fag of the Third.

He was worried.

From his study window that afternoon he had seen Jack Wingate walking down to the gates.

He had noticed that the fag was alone, that his usual companions of the Third were not with him.

He had followed the fag with his eyes till Jack disappeared from sight. Where was the boy going?

Probably only on a ramble out of gates, as he was fully entitled to do on a half-holiday. The bare thought of watching him was revolting to Wingate's mind. He could not play the spy; neither his duty as a prefect, nor his affection as a brother, called on him to do that. Jack Wingate disappeared from his sight; and the captain of Greyfriars returned to his Greek—not in a mood to derive much benefit therefrom.

Instead of Greek he was thinking of his minor. Probably, almost certainly, Jack's occupation for the afternoon was harmless enough. But—there was a but, and it tormented Wingate.

He looked up rather grumpily as the tap came at his door. He was not in a mood for conversation, even with his best chums, Gwynne and North of the Sixth.

"Come in!" he grunted.

It was not a Sixth-Former who entered; it was Billy Bunter, of the Remove.

Wingate major stared at him for a moment, and then he remembered that Bunter had lines to hand in. Important as that matter was to the Owl of the Remove, Wingate had forgotten it.

"Oh, Bunter! Put them on the table!" he said.

"Hem!"

"You've brought me your lines, I suppose?"

"No—"

"Then what do you want?" snapped Wingate. He was not in the best of tempers.

Bunter eyed him warily through his big spectacles.

He kept near the door, prepared to dodge out of the study if necessary. Harry Wharton & Co., having failed him in this emergency, Bunter had resolved to "try it on" personally. But he was fully aware that it was a risky matter; there was no telling how the captain of Greyfriars might take it.

Quite probably he would not realise that one good turn deserved another; he was quite likely to introduce his ashplant into the conversation. So it behoved Bunter to be wary.

"The—the fact is, Wingate, I haven't done my lines!" he said.

"Go and do them, then!"

"I want you to let me off."

"That's enough!"

Wingate turned to Greek again to signify that the interview was at an end.

But it was not at an end yet.

"I say, Wingate—"

(Continued on page 16.)

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No. 244.

THE GREYFRIARS HERALD

HARRY WHARTON, EDITOR

Week Ending Oct. 17th.



The Rivals!

By

DICK PENFOLD



Greyfriars versus Highcliffe!

By
A. VERNON-SMITH,
(Sports Editor)Some thrilling
sporting duels between
the rival schools

YOUNG Pon was a bragging, boastful swell,
And the King of the Nuts was he;
And he cried: "I'll rule the Highcliffe Fourth!
They shall bow the knee to me—
They shall bow the knee to me!"
And he paced his study to and fro,
And look'd o'er the sunny quad;
Then he saw Frank Courtenay down below,
And his look grew grim and odd.
"I've a cricket-stump here!" said he,
"For a stump is the sign for me,
That the world may know, wherever I go,
I wallop such prigs as he!"

CHORUS.

"I've a cricket-stump here!" said he,
"For a stump is the sign for me,
That the world may know, wherever I go,
I wallop such prigs as he!"

Now, Frank was a fellow as true as gold,
And he wandered fancy-free;
And when he was told of Ponsonby's words
A merry laugh laughed he,
And a scornful laugh laughed he!
And he cried: "Ho, ho! And away we'll go!
Come along, you fellows, with me,
And we'll smite this Pon from top to toe,
For a humptious beggar is he!
His way is the swanker's way,
But we'll lower his pride to-day,
When he says he'll reign in the Fourth's domain.
'Tis a game that two can play!"

CHORUS.

"His way is the swanker's way,
But we'll lower his pride to-day,
When he says he'll reign in the Fourth's domain,
'Tis a game that two can play!"

Then he cried: "Come here, you swaggerer queer!
To-day you must fight with me;
For while I rule the Highcliffe Fourth
I'll be second to none," said he—
"I'll be second to none!" said he,
Then right and left his fists shot out
Till he saw his rival fall;
And his comrades cried: "Without a doubt
Our Franky is lord of all!
He is cock of the walk—what ho—
And he fears no blustering foe!
He shall reign and rule at Highcliffe School,
For he's laid the enemy low!"

CHORUS.

"He is cock of the walk—what ho—
And he fears no blustering foe!
He shall reign and rule at Highcliffe School,
For he's laid the enemy low!"

HUNDREDS of footer matches have been played between the Greyfriars Remove and the Highcliffe Fourth; but there is one special game between the two schools every year, and this is the only game which is allowed to stand in the official records. Seventy-five of these annual games have been played, and Greyfriars can claim forty victories. Highcliffe have won twenty-nine, and the remainder of the matches were drawn. It is a flattering record for the 'Friars, but it must be remembered that Highcliffe football was in a bad way before Frank Courtenay became captain of the Fourth. Ponsonby skippered the side for several seasons, and during that period Greyfriars won every match.

ROWING.

ONCE a year the rival schools meet on the river, and some thrilling tussles have taken place in the past. Both crews practise on the River Sark for weeks beforehand, and when the day of the race comes the scenes on the river-banks are almost as exciting as those witnessed at the Varsity Boat Race. This annual boating duel between 'Friars and Highcliffians dates back a very long way, the first race having been rowed when George III. was on the throne. It was a comical race, both boats being swamped in the choppy water. The boats used in those days were clumsy old tubs compared to our modern craft.

In 1840 both boats again became waterlogged, and the race was declared void. After this Highcliffe enjoyed a long run of successes, winning the event seven years in succession. The following year they were disqualified for smuggling a Fifth-Former into their crew. (The rules provide that the crews shall be composed of Fourth-Formers only.)

In 1878 the rival schools rowed a dead-heat, and the same thing happened in 1900. This year's race was won by Greyfriars after a thrilling struggle. The schools have now won an equal number of the annual races, so that the next tussle should be worth going miles to see!

Here is the Greyfriars crew: H. Wharton (stroke), J. Bull, R. Cherry, M. Linley, S. Q. I. Field, H. Vernon-Smith, F. Nugent, and Wuu Lung (cox).

BOXING.

FOR many years past there has been an annual boxing tournament between Greyfriars and Highcliffe. Seniors, juniors, and fags have all taken part. In the senior and junior sections (middle and light weights) Greyfriars have carried off most of the honours; but the feather-weight fags of Highcliffe have proved too good for our babes, although Tubb of the Third put up a really great fight last time against his Highcliffe opponent.

The finest boxing match on record was fought in 1905, between Pat Doyle (Greyfriars Sixth) and Jack Deverill (Highcliffe Sixth). Doyle was an Irishman with a terrific punch, and Deverill was a muster of ringcraft. The bout lasted no less than fifteen rounds, and then Doyle floored his man with a sledgehammer blow. It was a battle of giants, and from beginning to end the spectators were kept in a high state of excitement.

LAWN TENNIS.

THE Highcliffe fellows can afford to smile when tennis is mentioned, for they have a champion in Rupert de Courcy—the "Caterpillar." Tennis is not played to any extent in the Greyfriars Remove, and we have no man who can hold a candle to the Caterpillar. It was his chum, Courtenay, who first persuaded him to take up tennis, and he jumped into the limelight at once. When "mixed doubles" are played, the Caterpillar is partnered by Miss Phyllis Howell, of Cliff House, and they are a formidable pair.

Shrewd judges of the game declare that the Caterpillar will be contesting world's championships at Wimbledon later on. Certainly he is a great player, and we have yet to produce a man to beat him, though Frank Nugent and Dick Russell are making rapid improvement at the game.



DOCTOR VOXSEY.

So called because, like most headmasters, he's a "voxy" individual, whose tones of thunder cause the Highcliffe fellows to shake in their shoes. A stern old buffer in appearance, but there's more bark than bite about him. Plays golf occasionally with Mr. Prout, of Greyfriars, and "puts the kybosh" on the Prouty bird good and proper! Rather a studious old boy, whose hours of leisure are limited. Not a bad old stick on the whole, but we're not swopping him for our own Head, thanks!

MR. MOBBS.

Master of the Highcliffe Fourth, and a contemptible toad. Fawns on the wealthy pupils, and persecutes the poor. Known as "Mobby" to his victims, who would be quite justified in mobbing Mobby. Has had a few skirmishes with the Greyfriars fellows, whom he sneakily reports to Dr. Locke at every opportunity. An anonymous

poet in the Highcliffe Fourth describes Mobby thus:

"I do not love thee, Mr. Mobbs,
You make your victims squirm with sobs;
Of all the hated Highcliffe "Nobs"
You are the most detested, Mobbs!"

FRANK COURTENAY.

Skipper of the Highcliffe Fourth, and thoroughly "true blue" in every respect. Ranks with Tom Merry of St. Jim's, and Jimmy Silver of Rookwood, as a first-rate sportsman. Takes his duties very seriously, and was instrumental in reforming his chum, the Caterpillar, from his slacking ways, by "snatchin' him like a brand from the burnin'," to use the Caterpillar's own expression. Comes over to Greyfriars occasionally, and wines and dines with the Famous Five. (The wine, of course, is merely ginger-wine.) There is the stuff of a real man in Frank Courtenay, and we unanimously vote him a jolly good fellow.

AUBREY DE VERE VAVASOUR.



One of Ponsonby's pet cronies, the others being Gadsby, Monson, Merton, and Drury. A foolish, foppish fellow, whose vocabulary is limited to the one word "Absolutely." Blindly follows Pon's lead, but is not such a bold, bad blade, for the simple reason that he lacks Pon's daring. The Greyfriars fellows' opinion of Vavasour is that he is a silly, stuck-up swanker, without one redeeming feature—"Absolutely."

CECIL PONSONBY.

Of the Nuts nutty. Loud in speech, and loud in dress. No code of honour. A waster of the worst type, against whose sinister influence Frank Courtenay is always fighting. The Highcliffe Fourth would rapidly go to the bow-wows if Pon were given a free hand. Fortunately, Courtenay keeps him in his place, though Pon is a constant thorn in his side. Has had numerous "dust-ups" with the Greyfriars fellows, and generally comes off second best. Far more cunning and crafty than any cad that Greyfriars possesses. Even the wily Skinner is a paragon of the virtues compared with Pon. Not altogether without pluck in an emergency, and has been known to fight like a tiger at times, but this is about all that can be said to his credit. A favourite with Mr. Mobbs; that explains why the gates of Highcliffe haven't clanged behind him long ago.



EDITORIAL!

WE are giving Greyfriars a rest this week, and are publishing a special number dealing with our near and dear neighbours of Highcliffe.

Highcliffe is a very fine school, but it hasn't the history and wealth of tradition behind it that Greyfriars has. Back in the very early days, when Greyfriars was a monastery, and fat monks waddled amiably through the Close, Highcliffe did not exist. It was hundreds of years later—in the reign of Queen Anne; I think—that some philanthropic johnnie, with more money than he knew what to do with, founded Highcliffe School.

Ever since that time the keenest rivalry has existed between our illustrious selves and our near neighbours. It is mainly a healthy rivalry—though at times, when Cecil Ponsonby was the leader of the Highcliffe Fourth, there have been bitter feuds between that Form and the Greyfriars Remove.

I find myself frowning at the mention of Ponsonby's name. Of all the cads I have ever come in contact with, for sheer downright caddishness I think the palm must be awarded to Pon. One could forgive him for being loudly and elaborately dressed, for a fellow can be a Beau Brummel without being a rotter, as witness Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of St. Jim's. One could also forgive Pon's swank, for a fellow can be a humptious ass, and yet a decent chap at the core, as witness Coker of the Fifth. But what is unpardonable about Pon is his unscrupulousness. If he makes an enemy of you, he will stop at nothing in his efforts to drag you down. His chums and cronies—Gadsby, Monson, Merton, Vavasour, and Drury—are all tarred with the same brush, but they are not so "utterly utter," if I may use the term, as Ponsonby.

But Highcliffe has its good men and true as well as its black sheep. You'd have to go a jolly long way to find two such genuine sportsmen as Frank Courtenay and Rupert de Courcy—"the Caterpillar," as he is called. We often trot over to Highcliffe to have tea with them, and they, in turn, are frequent visitors to Study No. 1 in the Remove passage. Courtenay has ousted Ponsonby from the leadership of the Highcliffe Fourth, with the result that Highcliffe now has a topping footer team, and is a force to be reckoned with in the world of sport. Elsewhere in this issue you will find some interesting records of various sporting encounters which have taken place between Highcliffe and ourselves. Vernon-Smith, our sports editor, has dug up all this interesting data.

HARRY WHARTON.

MY VISIT TO HIGHCLIFFE.

By BILLY BUNTER.



THE first thing that struck me when I rolled into the quadrangle at Highcliffe was a muddy football. It struck me on my double chin, and my spectacles bounced off my nose with the shock. Fortunately, they weren't broken, or I should have sued De Courcy, the kicker of the football, for a new pear.

The affair was a pure accident, of course, and De Courcy—they call him the Caterpillar—was full of apologies. He came running up to me, and he wiped my muddy chin with a clean cambric handkerchief, and he said:

"Bogad, Bunter, dear man! I didn't see you come rollin' in. What a very distressin' calamity! As one gentleman to another, I apologise!"

"Granted!" I said, with quiet dignity.

Now, if a Greyfriars fellow had biffed a ball into my face, he would simply have sniggered at me, and told me that it served me jolly well right. But they know their manners at Highcliffe. The fellows there are sons of gentlemen like myself—fine, well-bred fellows, who always eat jelly with a fork in the proper manner instead of spooning it up.

Having rendered first aid, De Courcy asked me if I'd care to join in at footer. I thanked him very much, and peeled off my jacket, and dashed boldly into the fray. All the Highcliffe fellows were greatly impressed with my fine form. They said I was a Buchan. At Greyfriars they say I'm a piegan!

I played on Frank Courtenay's side, and I scored at the rate of a goal a minute. I went through the opposing defence like a

knife through butter. The fellows looked on, spellbound.

"If only we could persuade Bunter to sever his connection with Greyfriars and come to Highcliffe!" said Courtenay, with a sigh. "We'd play him at cover-point in our footer eleven, and we'd win all our matches with ease!"

"Yes, rather!" agreed the Caterpillar. "I've never seen such dazzlin' form! It's amazin', Franky—amazin'!"

And to think that I haven't got a place in the Remove Eleven simply because of the personal jealousy of Wharton and his pals!

After the game Courtenay and the Caterpillar linked their arms in mine, and marched me off to their study for tea.

It was a truly magnificent spread to which I sat down in Frank Courtenay's study. That's another good point about the Highcliffe fellows. They know how to do things in style.

My hosts waited on me hand and foot, and they primed me with tarts and buns and maids of honour. And when the supplies were exhausted, they sent to the tuck-shop for more. They didn't complain that I'd eaten them out of house and home like a Greyfriars fellow would!

When the time came for me to bid farewell to my kind hosts, a big tear splashed down the Caterpillar's cheek. He was as cut up as a currant-cake.

"Bunter, dear boy," he sobbed, "must you really go? Must you return to that hateful school where nobody realises your true worth? Why don't you persuade your pater to transfer you to Highcliffe? Dear fat man, we adore you! Your visits bring sunshine into our dull lives! If you really must go, then you must promise to come again to-morrow. We can't see too much of you. We'd like you to live an' move an' have your beln' with your dear old pals at Highcliffe!"

I returned to Greyfriars with a full heart—and a full stomach—and I got such a chilly reception from Wharton and his pals that I'm seriously thinking of asking the pater to shunt me to Highcliffe.



(Continued from page 13.)

"You can clear!"

"I want to go over to Cliff House to see my sister Bessie. She's got a cake from home."

Wingate smiled faintly.

"Are you asking me for six, Bunter?" he inquired.

"Nunno!"

"Then clear!"

"But I want to get out of gates," said Bunter. "Look here, Wingate, I'll do the lines to-morrow."

Wingate reached for his ashplant. The Owl of the Remove backed a little nearer to the door, which he had prudently left ajar.

"I say, Wingate, you know——"

"Another word, and I shall cane you!" said the prefect. "Get out of my study, you young duffer!"

"Can I go out of gates?"

"Not till your lines are done."

"I want specially——"

Wingate rose to his feet. He was fed-up with William George Bunter and his special wants.

"You've asked for it," he said.

"Bend over that chair."

Bunter backed a little farther.

"Considering that one good turn deserves another, you know," he urged. "I—I—I'm keeping it dark about your minor, you know."

It was out now! Bunter blinked anxiously at the captain of Greyfriars. He did not like the look on George Wingate's face.

"About my minor?" repeated Wingate very quietly. "You're keeping something dark about my minor?"

"That's it," said Bunter, encouraged. Wingate seemed to be taking it reasonably. "No need to go into details, you know. And let's make a bargain. You let me off my lines, and I say nothing about your minor—see? Is it a go?"

"No," said Wingate; "not quite. If you've got anything to say about my minor, say it, quick. No tale-telling, mind, or I'll give you six!"

"I'm not a fellow to tell tales, I hope," said Bunter, with dignity. "It's simply a matter of doing you a good turn, Wingate, if you let me off. I know you wouldn't like your brother brought up before the beaks for pub-haunting."

"What?" roared Wingate.

Bunter jumped.

"I—I say—— Oh! Ow! Leggo!" yelled Bunter, as Wingate, with a sudden stride, reached him and grasped him by the shoulder.

Bunter had intended to beat a hurried retreat, if the "beast" lost his temper. But he had no time to retreat. He was in the big Sixth-Former's grasp, and he was being shaken like a rat in the grip of a terrier. Shake! Shake! Shake!

"Ow! Wow! Groogh! Gug-gug-gug!" spluttered Bunter.

"You young rascal!" roared Wingate.

"Ow! D-d-don't shake me like that!" gasped Bunter. "If you make my specs fall off—ow!—you'll have to

pay for them if they get broken! Yow-ow——"

Shake, shake, shake!

"Now, you young scoundrel——"

"Ooooooh!"

"What's this about my brother?" demanded Wingate fiercely. "Do you know where he is gone this afternoon?"

"Ow! Wow! Yes! Ow! Leggo!"

"Where is he gone?"

"Groogh! He's gone to the Cross Keys! Wow-ow-ow-ow!" wailed Bunter.

"Leggo! Oh! Oh dear! What are you getting your rag out for? I'm not going to tell Mr. Twigg, honest Injun. Ow! I'll keep it dark, honour bright, I will! Yaroooooh!"

Bargaining with the captain of Greyfriars did not seem a paying game. From the bottom of his podgy heart Billy Bunter wished that he had never come to Wingate's study to drive that extraordinary bargain. Certainly, he was the only junior at Greyfriars who would have ventured to do so. It was a case of fools rushing in where angels feared to tread.

Shake! Shake! Shake!

"Oh dear! Ow! I say, Wingate, I'll swear not to tell anybody that your brother has gone to that pub—ow!"

Bump!

Billy Bunter sat on the floor, hurled there by the Sixth-Former's powerful arm. Wingate glared down at him, with a glare that made the fat junior quake.

"I'll look into this," said Wingate. "If you've told me the truth, you're a tale-bearing young cad; if you've told me lies, I'll give you such a licking that you'll never want to tell me any more. Get out!"

"I—I say——"

"Get out!" roared Wingate drawing back his boot.

Billy Bunter got out. He was only too glad to get going. He squirmed out of the study and fled.

Wingate stood in angry, dark thought for a few minutes. He knew—knew quite well—that Bunter had not lied; that Jack Wingate's destination when he left the school without his usual companions that afternoon was the destination that Bunter had mentioned. He knew it in his very heart; knew it as well as if his eye could have followed the wretched fag by leafy lanes to the disreputable inn on the outskirts of Friardale. He knew it! From bad to worse—from reckless folly to arrant blackguardism—that was the way his brother was going! And what was he, the elder brother, to do?

Whatsoever the elder brother might do, there was only one thing for a Greyfriars prefect to do. A few minutes of bitter reflection and then Wingate of the Sixth strode out of the School House and hurried down to the gates.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Harry Wharton & Co. Take a Hand!

"THE catchfulness is the proper caper."

Hurree Janset Ram Singh propounded that opinion. The English was remarkable, but the opinion was sound, in the view of his comrades.

"After all, we were going out for a run," said Harry Wharton. "If it's

true that that young idiot has started for the Cross Keys, we may as well——"

"It's true enough," granted Johnny Ball.

"Looks like it," admitted Bob Cherry reluctantly. "If it's true, Loder must be a frightful worm to play such tricks. He could get some other blackguard to take his rotten notes to Cobb at the pub. Look here, let's go after the little idiot and stop him."

"Let's!"

The Famous Five were out of gates a few minutes later; while Billy Bunter was on his way to propose his remarkable "bargain" to the captain of Greyfriars.

Whether Bunter would be asinine enough to approach Wingate of the Sixth on the subject, the chums of the Remove could not guess. Really, Bunter was ass enough for anything, so doubtless he was ass enough for that. At all events, it was very probable that Wingate would get to hear of the matter now that Bunter knew; the Owl's tattling tongue seldom or never kept still.

For old Wingate's sake, the cheery Co. were more than willing to put in a part of their half-holiday looking after his minor. As they would have taken the trouble even for Jack Wingate's sake, realising that the reckless, foolish fag was being made a fool of by a fellow older and worse than himself. And as it was, Bob remarked, quite a pleasure to put a spoke in Gerald Loder's wheel—Loder, who had almost thrown away a football match, who had disgraced Greyfriars by a foul on the football field; who was a bully and "bad hat" generally, and an old enemy of the heroes of the Remove. And Nugent remarked with a chuckle that it would be no end of a jest to get Loder's note away from the fag, and return it to Loder—throwing it into his study when he was there. Loder would be frightfully wild, but he would not venture to call the cheeky juniors to account; it was a matter upon which the blackguard of the Sixth would desire the smallest possible publicity!

So Harry Wharton & Co. trotted cheerily out of gates, and took the lane that led to Friardale. There they accelerated, and went along the leafy lane, under the trees in autumn brown, at a rapid run. How long Jack Wingate had been gone they did not know, but they knew that he had a good start. If he was to be saved from his folly there was no time to be lost.

The red chimney-pots of the Cross Keys rose into view over trees and fields. That extremely disreputable resort, strictly out of bounds for all Greyfriars fellows, stood on the higher side of the village, back from the lane. Harry Wharton & Co. ran on, putting on a spurt, anxious to catch the fag if there was yet time. And suddenly they sighted him ahead of them in the lane, quite near the public-house.

Jack Wingate was sauntering along carelessly, with his hands in his pockets and his cap on the back of his head.

Certainly he did not look like a fellow who was going to break one of the strictest rules of the school, punishable by a Head's flogging in the case of discovery—perhaps by the "sack" itself.

Probably he did not realise the seriousness of what he was doing. Moreover, he was only going to the side-door of the inn with a note—not actually inside the building. No doubt that made some difference in his estimation of what he was about to do.

Bob Cherry gave a stentorian shout: "Stop!"

Wingate minor looked round.

ANSWERS
Every Saturday — PRICE 2:—

He was not more than a dozen yards from the path that led along to the side of the inn. The Famous Five had caught him none too soon.

The fag did not try to bolt as they came up. He stopped and looked at them inquiringly.

"Did you yell to me?" he asked.

"I called to you," said Bob.

"What a voice! Sounded like an aeroplane at close range, going strong."

Bob Cherry suppressed his feelings. Remove fellows were not accustomed to take too much "back-chat" from the Third; but Bob was a good-natured fellow.

"Well, what did you yell for?" went on Wingate minor. "I'm not keen on Remove chaps."

"Just a word or two," said Harry Wharton. "We happen to know where you're going, Wingate minor."

The fag started.

"You jolly well don't!" he said.

"You're going to that pub yonder with a note from a Sixth Form man, who ought to be jolly well ashamed of himself for sending you."

Wingate minor sneered.

"Are you trying to pump me?" he asked. "It won't be any good. I'm not giving anything away."

"I'm not trying to pump you. I don't care a rap about your silly affairs, you young ass!" snapped Wharton. "It was Loder who gave you a note, and he was seen to do it, too."

"Peeping Tom!"

"What!" roared Wharton.

"Paul Pry!"

"Why, you—"

"Inquisitive Jack!" said Wingate minor.

Harry Wharton looked at him. Those complimentary names, doubtless, were due to Billy Bunter, who was a Peeping Tom, a Paul Pry, and an Inquisitive Jack all rolled into one.

"Can't you mind your own bizney?" sneered Wingate minor. "I know you fellows are un-against Loder of the Sixth—he's licked you lots of times, and I dare say you've asked for it. My opinion is that the more the Remove are licked the better it is for them!"

"By gum!" began Johnny Bull, breathing hard.

"You're not going to pump anything out of me against a prefect you don't happen to like!" said the fag contemptuously. "I don't believe you've seen what you say, either."

"I did not say I saw anything," said Harry, trying to control his anger. "I said that you were seen. Bunter saw you and Loder."

"I've heard you say that Bunter couldn't tell the truth if he tried, and that he's never tried."

"I believe that he told it this time. But if you say it's not so—" said Harry.

"I'm not going to say anything. What the rump are you bothering me for? Has the Head been appointing prefects from the Lower Fourth, by any chance?" sneered Wingate minor.

"Don't be a young ass! We came after you to stop you, before it's too late."

"You cheeky ead!"

"What!" gasped Wharton.

"Cheeky ead! Mind your own business!" exclaimed Wingate minor. "Has my brother set you to spy on me?"

"Look here, I'm not standing this!" bawled Johnny Bull. "I'm going to thrash that cheeky young rotter!"

"Hold on, Johnny—"

"I tell you—"

"Hold on! Wingate minor, will you walk back to the school with us?"

"No fear! Wouldn't he seen with you!" answered Wingate minor, with cool impudence.

"Then we'll jolly well make you!" exclaimed Harry, at the end of his patience. "Now then—oh, collar him!"

The fag darted suddenly away, and raced for the inn.

There was no doubt now of his intended destination, if there had been any doubt before. He ran up the side path of the Cross Keys before a hand could fall on him.

"After him!" panted Bob.

The Remove fellows rushed in hot pursuit.

Wingate minor reached the shabby old wooden porch at the side of the inn, and disappeared within it. He was heard knocking at the side door—or, rather, hammering frantically at it, evidently eager to get it opened before the Remove fellows could collar him.

The Famous Five turned from the lane into the path by the inn, with only a second's hesitation. There they were out of school bounds; there, if a master's eye had fallen on them, the results would have been serious. But their hesitation was only for a moment. They ran on swiftly, and swooped into the porch.

At the same moment the side door of the inn was opened by a beery-looking man in his shirt-sleeves.

Bob Cherry was ahead of his comrades, and his hand was outstretched to collar

the fag. Wingate minor barely eluded it, and darted into the house, pushing past the surprised man in shirt-sleeves.

"Stop!" shouted Bob.

"Ere, what's this game?" demanded the man, blocking the doorway with his burly person, with the fag behind him now inside the house.

"We want that kid—"

Slam!

The door closed.

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob.

"Bust in the door!" shouted Johnny Bull.

"Fathead! Let's get out of this," said Harry. "If we're seen here it means jolly serious trouble. We can't go into the place after him, and scrap with a gang of potmen. Let's cut."

Evidently it was the only thing to be done. The chums of the Remove returned to the lane in an angry and troubled mood. Their intervention had been well meant and nearly successful; but as matters stood it had done no good, but rather the reverse. Jack Wingate had taken refuge in the inn; and it was pretty plain that he would not venture out so long as they were in the offing. And every moment that he stayed in the place added to his danger, and to the danger of disgrace falling upon his brother, the captain of Greyfriars.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes old Wingate!" breathed Bob.



"Out with him!" roared Mr. Cobb, dabbing at his crimson nose. "Chuck him out! Kicking up a shindy in a man's house! Call a copper—I'll 'ave him run in!" Crash! Wingate landed in the middle of the lane gasping, almost at the feet of Mr. Quelch. (See Chapter 11.)

The juniors glanced up the lane in the direction of the school.

Wingate of the Sixth was coming towards them, striding along at a great rate, his brow set and black. One glance at his gloomy face was enough to show that he had heard something from Bunter.

"Hook it!" muttered Harry Wharton. "If he sees us here he's bound to ask us if we've seen that young cad! Hook it!"

And the Famous Five vanished through a gap in the hedge. Wingate of the Sixth was the last fellow they desired to see, in the circumstances. Whether the captain of Greyfriars spotted them as they went, or not, they did not know, and they did not stop to ascertain. As George Wingate came striding on towards the inn, Harry Wharton & Co. disappeared in the green meadows.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Narrow Escape!

"IT'S my brother!"

Jack Wingate breathed the words in tremulous tones as he peered from behind a dirty blind at a dirty window.

His face was a little pale.

Mr. Ben Cobb, landlord of the Cross Keys, fat and beery and shiny, looked curiously at the Greyfriars fag.

Jack Wingate had delivered the note from Loder. Mr. Cobb was rather surprised to see George Wingate's young brother employed on such an errand. But it was no affair of his how Master Loder managed his business.

Jack Wingate had peered from the window to ascertain whether the Remove fellows were gone before he left. He did not see anything of Harry Wharton & Co.; they were gone. What he saw was a good deal more alarming—his brother striding out of the lane into the path by the inn, with a gloomy, determined face.

The fag's heart beat hard.

Those Remove fellows had known where he was going; it looked as if George Wingate also knew. They had told him, then, or Bunter had been rattling; really it did not matter much how he knew—it was clear that he did know.

He was coming there—for him! That was pretty clear! His brother he might have mocked and defied; but his brother happened to be head prefect of Greyfriars. It was his brother's duty to take him to the headmaster and report him; that, at least, was the duty of Wingate the prefect, if not of George Wingate the elder brother. And Wingate of the Sixth was no fellow to deal in favouritism, that was a feeble straw to cling to, after the fag had flouted his affection and spurned his kindness and care.

Wingate minor felt an inward quake.

He had been a fool to come here—a fool—a fool! That brute Loder ought not to have sent him! What was he going to do now? If Wingate did his duty—

Visions of the grim face of the Head, of the hunch rising and falling, of "gating" for the rest of the term, floated before the wretched fag's eyes. Mr. Cobb watched his changing face, and glanced from the window and gave a low whistle.

"He don't know you're here, young 'un?" he asked.

"I—I'm afraid he does!" faltered Jack Wingate.

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"I mean, he ain't wise to it—he ain't a party to it!"

Even in his alarm and terror the fag could scarcely repress a grin at the idea of his brother being a party to his visiting such a place as the Cross Keys.

"No, no!"

"Then he's arter you?"

"I think so."

"All serene," said Mr. Cobb reassuringly. "He never saw you come in, and he won't see you go out agin. I'll take you to a back door, and you can hook it through the gardens and get to the towing-path."

"Oh!" gasped Wingate minor.

His face brightened up at once.

"Quick!" he breathed.

"This 'ere way!"

Knock! came loudly at the side door. Mr. Cobb grinned, but did not otherwise heed the summons.

He led Wingate minor down a passage and across a room, which opened by french windows into the ill-kept gardens behind the inn.

"Foller that path, and you'll get to a gate," said Mr. Cobb. "It's locked, but you can 'op over it, and you'll find yourself on the towing-path. Get back to school as fast as you can, afore your brother shows up there, see?"

"Yes, yes."

Wingate minor ran down the unkempt garden path breathlessly. Behind him, as he ran, he could hear the din of loud and impatient knocking on the door. Wingate major was not in a mood to be kept waiting.

Knock, knock, knock!

Knock, knock! Crash!

While the Sixth-Former hammered at the dirty, unpainted door, every moment was adding to the distance between him and the fag he sought. Jack Wingate raced down the garden paths breathlessly, panting, and reached the gate at the end. He took it with a running leap, and landed on the towpath beside the Sark, rolling over breathlessly in the grass.

"Hallo! What the thump's that?"

Wingate minor sat up, gasping for breath, in the grass and blinked at three Fifth-Formers of Greyfriars who were strolling along the towpath, and stopped suddenly to stare as the fag came bolting out of the Cross Keys garden.

"Young Wingate!" said Coker of the Fifth, with a snort.

"Precious young rascal!" said Potter. "You can see where he's been. I wonder what his major would say."

"Serve him right to tell his major," said Greene of the Fifth in disgust. "The young sweep ought to be brought to order."

Horace Coker glared down at the breathless fag.

"Where have you been?" he demanded.

"Find out!" panted Wingate minor.

"You've been in that low hole, the Cross Keys," said Coker magisterially.

"I know where this gate leads to."

"If you know, you needn't ask me," jeered Wingate minor.

Coker eyed him. Coker of the Fifth was the very last senior at Greyfriars who was likely to take "cheek" from a fag.

"No, I don't need to ask you," said Coker. "I know! And I don't approve of this, Wingate minor. I think you're a rotten young blackguard. Your brother is an ass in football matters. He doesn't understand a man's form, and leaves out his best men. But he's a decent chap, and you're not going to disgrace him like this—and the school, too—my school!"

"Mind your own business, Coker!" panted Wingate minor, scrambling to his feet.

"This is my business," said Coker calmly. "I believe in keeping cheeky fags in order, especially when they're out to disgrace the school I belong to. Bend over!"

"What!" yelled Jack Wingate.

"Bend over!" said Coker loftily.

"Do you think you're a prefect, you long-legged idiot?"

"I think I'm going to give you six, prefect or not," said Coker coolly.

"Bend over! Oh, would you?" Coker's heavy hand grasped the fag as he started to run. Jack Wingate struggled fiercely, but he was no more than an infant in Horace Coker's mighty grasp. He was twisted over in the grass, and Coker's walking-cane came into play.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Oh! Ow! You rotten bully!" yelled the fag.

Whack, whack!

"Oh, you rotter! Ow!"

Whack!

The last whack of Coker's stick was what Hurree Janset Ram Singh would have described, justly, as terrific. It made the hapless breaker of bounds squirm frantically.

"There," said Coker, tucking his stick under his arm, quite in the manner of a prefect with his ashplant. "I hope that will do you good, Wingate minor. You can cut."

Horace Coker walked on, loftily, with Potter and Greene grinning.

"That's the way to handle fags!" said Coker complacently. "When I'm in the Sixth, and a prefect, I shall keep order in the Lower School, I promise you."

"You think the Head will make you a prefect when you go up into the Sixth, old bean?" asked Potter, closing one eye at Greene.

"Oh, certain! He always picks out the best men."

"Oh!"

Horace Coker walked on, satisfied with himself and things generally. Jack Wingate limped away far from satisfied. He had had what he deserved, though Coker of the Fifth was not officially entitled to administer it. The consciousness of his deserts, however, did not comfort Wingate minor. "Six" from a Fifth Form fathead, as he regarded Coker, was humiliating as well as painful. He had a right to complain to his Form master, or to a prefect. In the circumstances he could not, of course, lay any complaint. He did not want it to transpire why Coker had administered that six.

He limped on with a black brow, but he lost no time in getting back to Greyfriars. His face was sullen when he looked into Gerald Loder's study in the Sixth Form passage.

Loder hurriedly put a cigarette out of sight as the door opened, and then smiled and nodded to the fag.

"All serene?" he asked.

"I gave Cobb your note," muttered Wingate minor.

"Good man!"

Loder eyed the fag curiously.

"Anything up?" he asked.

Wingate minor explained. Gerald Loder heard him out, and then laughed lightly.

"It's all right," he said. "Those Remove kids won't give you away, and Wingate's got no proof that you ever were there. He never saw you. You're all right."

"He—he may ask me!" faltered Jack Wingate.

"If you're fool enough to tell him anything, you can take the consequences," said Gerald Loder with a

ner. "Keep a still tongue, and you're all right. Here, shove this in your pocket, kid, and out!"

It was a packet of cigarettes that Wingate minor "shoved" into his pocket before he left the senior's study. Loder grinned, and resumed his cigarette as the door closed on the fag.

Matters were not going well with the captain of Greyfriars. But to judge by Gerald Loder's expression they seemed to be going very well indeed for him.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Sunday at the Cross Keys!

KNOCK, knock, knock!
George Wingate fairly hammered at the door of the Cross Keys.

No one seemed to be in a hurry to open it.

He knocked and knocked, and knocked again with gathering rage. He knew his brother was there—knew, at least, that he had been there. This disregard of the loud summons at the door must mean only one thing, to Wingate's mind. That his brother was in the place, and that his dingy associates there did not mean to let him be discovered if they could help it.

Crash, crash!
The crazy door fairly shook and groaned under the heavy blows that Wingate rained on it.

It opened at last.

Mr. Ben Cobb, with a frowning brow, stared out at the flushed and angry face of the captain of Greyfriars. His manner was early and truculent.

"What the thump does this 'ere mean, banging on a man's private door?" he demanded. "If you want to be served, I s'pose you can go into the bar, like other folks."

"Don't give me any impudence, you blackguard!" snapped Wingate. He was out in a mood to measure his words in dealing with a gentleman of Mr. Cobb's kidney.

The landlord made as if to shut the door. Wingate thrust his boot against it and drove it open again.

"Look 'ere—" roared Ben Cobb.

"My brother's here!"

"Blow your brother! Don't know 'im from Adam, and don't want to," snarled Ben Cobb. "Don't know you, neither, and don't want to. You get off my premises before you land yourself in trouble!"

"You know me well enough," said Wingate, more quietly. "My young brother is here, and I want him at once."

"Your young brother ain't 'ere, and never was," said Ben Cobb. "And now I'll thank you to take your foot out of my doorway. A Englishman's 'ouse is his blooming castle."

"Send my brother out at once!"

"Think I've got 'im in my weskit-pocket?" asked Mr. Cobb with beery sarcasm.

"I know he's here!"

"Then you know more than I do," said Ben Cobb. "Look 'ere, I dessay you're a big gun up at the school, but you ain't nobody 'ere, and you can't bully a man. These 'ere is my premises, and I ain't 'aving a shindy kicked up on my licensed premises, and so I tell you. You get!"

"Will you send my brother out to me instantly?" said the captain of Greyfriars, breathing hard.

Mr. Cobb grinned. By that time, he had no doubt, Jack Wingate was on the tow-path. But he was quite willing to keep Wingate major occupied, and give the young rascal plenty of time to

"MAGNET" PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 7.—George Bernard Wingate (captain of Greyfriars).



The name of George Wingate, captain of Greyfriars, will go down to posterity as one of the whitest men who ever filled that coveted position. Admired by nine-tenths of the Greyfriars scholars, Wingate has proved himself to be a born leader. The remaining tenth represents the "bounders" at the school who, naturally, would have little admiration for anyone possessing the moral courage to condemn such vicious habits as gambling, smoking, and bullying. Even with these undesirable fellows, however, Wingate is exceedingly patient, and is ever ready to help and advise. A good all-round sportsman, captain of Greyfriars First Eleven cricket and footer teams, Wingate has led his men to victory more often than to defeat. Possesses two staunch pals in Tom North and Patrick Gwynne, of the Sixth, also a young brother Jack—in the Third Form—whose character, alas! is not all that is to be desired. Trusted and respected by masters and boys alike, George Bernard Wingate can be summed up in four words—**ONE OF THE BEST.**

escape. Jack Wingate himself did not concern the fat publican much, but Gerald Loder was mixed up in this affair, and Master Loder was the kind of fellow whom Mr. Cobb delighted to honour.

"Like to look for 'im?" he suggested. "Per'aps you think you've got a right to search a man's 'ouse, like as if you was a policeman?"

"If he doesn't come out I shall come in for him," said Wingate savagely.

"Without saying 'by your leave'?" asked Ben Cobb mockingly.

The man's mocking grin gave Wingate a suspicion of the truth. He was being delayed like this in order to give the fag time to get into a safe hiding-place, or to leave the inn by another exit. That suspicion banished the last of George Wingate's self-restraint.

He strode into the doorway.

"'Ere, outside!" said Mr. Cobb angrily.

"Let me pass!"

"You ain't coming in 'ere! My eye! If you think—Oh!" roared Mr. Cobb, as Wingate gave him a violent shove, which sent him sprawling in the dingy passage.

Mr. Cobb sprawled and roared.

"Ow! Ow! By gum! 'Ere, Sam! Lend a man a 'and!"

A man in shirt-sleeves appeared hurriedly on the scene, and blocked Wingate's path. Mr. Cobb staggered to his feet.

"Outside!" he roared.

"Out you go!" said the potman.

"Knocking a man down in his own 'ouse!" gasped Mr. Cobb. "Why, I'll 'ave the law on him! Kicking up a shindy on licensed premises! Shove that rowdy rough out, Sam!"

"Hands off, you fool!" shouted Wingate, as the "chucker-out" of the Cross Keys came at him.

Sam, the potman and "chucker-out," had had a good deal of practice in his peculiar line of business, and he was a hefty man. He had no doubt about being able to handle this schoolboy.

Doubt arose the next moment, however, as he laid his hands on the captain of Greyfriars. Wingate returned grasp for grasp, and the potman found his hands full. The champion athlete of Greyfriars was, in fact, rather too hefty for the "chucker-out."

Sam went sprawling against the wall, and slid thence to the floor, gasping for breath.

"Ow!" he gasped. "My eye! Oh, lor'!"

"Chuck him out!" roared Mr. Cobb.

Wingate, unassailed for the moment, stared round him in doubt. His anger had led him too far, and he realised it. He had no right to search the building for his brother—and no power, for that matter. There were plenty of reinforcements at hand for Mr. Cobb, if he wanted them. The billiards-marker was already on the spot, and another beery-looking man had opened a door and was staring into the passage.

But Wingate was given no time for thought—or for retreat, if he had thought of that. The chucker-out rallied to the attack, and Ben Cobb came on with him, and the two hurled themselves on the Sixth-Former of Greyfriars.

"Out with him!" panted Mr. Cobb. "Here, lend a hand, Isaacs!"

The billiards-marker rushed into the fray. Frays were by means uncommon at the Cross Keys. Many a disturbance there had brought Mr. Cobb within measurable distance of losing his licence. On this occasion, however, the legal rights in the matter were on the side of Mr. Ben Cobb and his dingy myrmidons.

With three enemies clinging to him, Wingate had no time to think about the rights and wrongs of the matter. He had to defend himself; and he put up a hefty defence. Once more Mr. Ben Cobb sprawled on the floor, knocked spinning; and at the same time Wingate went staggering out of the doorway, in the grasp of Sam and the billiards-marker.

They reeled out into the path, struggling and panting, and Mr. Cobb gathered himself up, and panted after them. A stableman came round the corner of the house, and added himself to the struggling crowd. Athletic as he was, and fighting hard, Wingate was hopelessly outnumbered now, and he was dragged and shoved and hustled

along the path towards its junction with Friardale Lane.

Had Harry Wharton & Co. still been on the scene, undoubtedly they would have rushed to his help. But the Famous Five were gone, which was perhaps fortunate. For as Wingate came struggling out into the road, in the grasp of many dirty hands, a severe-looking gentleman came along from the direction of the village. And Mr. Quelch, master of the Greyfriars Remove, stopped dead, almost petrified by the sight of the captain of the school being "chucked" out of a public-house by a gang of rowdies.

"Out with him!" Mr. Cobb was roaring, as he dabbed a streaming crimson nose. "Chuck him out! Kicking up a shindy in a man's 'ouse—raising Cain on licensed premises! Call a copper! I'll 'ave him run in!"

Crash!

Wingate sprawled into the middle of the lane, gasping, utterly spent by the struggle against heavy odds.

Mr. Cobb and his crew returned to the inn, leaving him sprawling there, doubtless considering that they were entitled to liquid refreshment after their exertions.

Wingate sat up dazedly. He was aware of a severe figure that stood before him—of a grim face that looked down at him.

"What does this mean, Wingate?" asked Mr. Quelch, very quietly.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Dark Doubts!

THE captain of Greyfriars staggered to his feet.

His face was dirty—his hat gone—his hair untidy—his face crimson. He was dishevelled and

covered with dust. His breath came in great gasps. He stared almost stupidly at the master of the Remove.

From the direction of the Cross Keys jeers came from several loafers of the public-house.

"Come!" said Mr. Quelch, flushing.

He touched Wingate's arm, and the Sixth-Former moved away with him, still panting painfully.

They walked on rather quickly, both glad to get out of sight of the Cross Keys.

Not a word more was said till they reached the cross-roads in Friardale Lane. By that time Mr. Quelch's face was grim as a gorgon's. Several passers-by had stared at Wingate and grinned. Two or three Remove fellows had passed on bikes, and Mr. Quelch heard Vernon-Smith chuckle as he passed.

The Remove master stopped. He fixed a cold, grim look on George Wingate's crimson face.

"I cannot walk to the school with you while you are in this state, Wingate," said Mr. Quelch icily. "I recommend you to make yourself a little more presentable before you go in."

"Oh, yes, sir!" stammered Wingate confusedly.

"Will you have the kindness to explain what all this means, Wingate?"

Wingate's eyes glinted. His temper had had much to bear that day, and it was frayed now.

"I am not answerable to you, sir; you are not my Form-master!" he almost snapped.

Then Mr. Quelch's eyes glinted, too.

"That is correct, Wingate," he said evenly. "But it is my duty to report this to the Head, to whom you are answerable!"

"You will do as you think best, sir!"

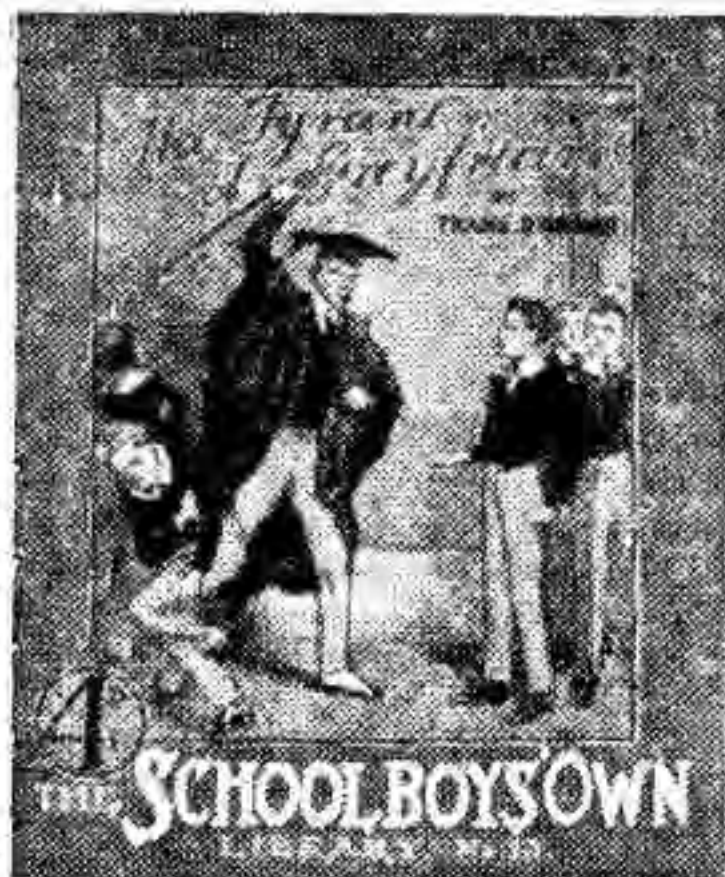
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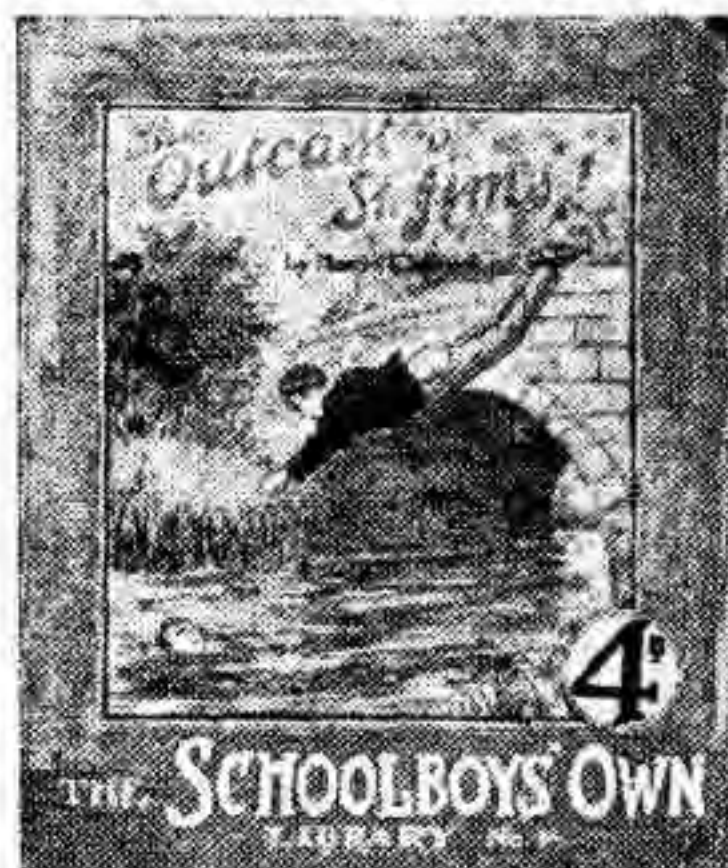
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THE RAIDERS! Neither human nor animal in shape or form, the Bat, as it has come to be styled for want of a better name, continues to plunder Society at will!



A full-of-thrills detective story featuring Ferrers Locke, the private investigator, and his clever boy assistant, Jack Drake.

Spoof!

FERRERS LOCKE entered his consulting-room, and switched on the light.

"Jack's out, evidently," he muttered to himself, looking at the clock. "Humph! Wonder what he's up to? Anyhow, he's sure to have left word."

Approaching a bookcase, the detective took down a certain volume, between the pages of which it was customary for either of them to place written messages when necessary.

Sure enough, there was a short note written in the code they invariably used, which, translated, read:

"Have found where district messenger's uniform was obtained. Expect to come across man who hired it this evening. Report when I return."

"Smart chap!" the investigator remarked to himself. "Suppose he won't be long now. Anyhow, I'll ask Sing-Sing what time he went out."

A touch on the electric-bell brought the young Celestial to the room, who, in answer to the inquiry as to what time Jack had left the house, replied:

"Him go velle chop chop w'en piece clock him not muchee gone seben."

"Thanks, Sing-Sing. Ah, that sounds like him!"

At that moment the door of the house had again been opened, and a second later Jack Drake had entered the room, smothered in an overcoat many sizes too big for him.

"Hallo, Jack! What's up?" Locke queried.

"Been having a swim, guv'nor," the lad replied, as, flinging aside the heavy outer garment, he exhibited his soddened clothing.

The criminologist whistled.

"Better get a rub-down and a change of clothes before you go into explanations," he said sharply. "Not hurt, I hope?"

"Copped a biff on the head that knocked spots off me for the time; but that's ancient history now, guv'nor—"

"That's good! Anyhow, get a jerk on, my lad, and when you come down, you can let me know all about it."

Jack needed little pressing, as he was only too anxious to get out of his dripping garments. In record time he had discarded them, and was once more in the presence of his chief.

He lost little time then in relating the various adventures that had befallen him, concluding by explaining how, after diving into the river, he had been picked up by a patrol boat of the Thames Police. They apparently had landed him at their station on the Embankment, and had lent him the old

CHARACTERS IN THE STORY.

FERRERS LOCKE, the famous private detective of Baker Street.

JACK DRAKE, his clever boy assistant.

INSPECTOR PYECROFT, a leading light of the C.I.D. at Scotland Yard.

"THE CHIEF," a mysterious personage, who directs the coups of the Phantom Bat, the name given to the weird, inhuman-looking object, capable of flying like an aeroplane, about which, so far, very little is known by Scotland Yard.

HUSKY and the **SNARK**, two prominent members of the Chief's gang.

Soon after the Phantom Bat is seen flying over London comes the news of a daring robbery at the house of Juan Fernandez—an agent of a Spanish Grandee—in whose care some priceless emeralds have been entrusted. The emeralds are stolen, and the few clues left behind point to the work being that of the Bat.

Ferrers Locke is invited to investigate the case, and forthwith the sleuth and his assistant make their way to the scene of the robbery.

On his return to Baker Street Locke finds a letter left for him by a messenger-boy. The letter, incidentally, is a fiendish attempt to put the great detective out of the way, for it contains a deadly powder which, when inhaled, brings about instantaneous death.

But the trick doesn't work!

Drake sets out to identify the messenger-boy who brought the deadly missile, and discovers that it was one of the gang working behind the Bat. Eager to learn more, the boy shadows his man for some distance, and then has the misfortune to walk into a carefully laid trap. He escapes from his place of captivity, however, and, with the gang in full cry behind him, heads for the river. Without hesitation, Drake decides that a dip in the Thames is much more preferable to being recaptured, and he promptly plunges in.

(Now read on.)

overcoat, in which the lad had made his way home.

The detective, at the conclusion of the narrative, remained for some moments buried deep in thought, then:

"You're convinced that the handwriting on the postcard addressed to the costumier was the same as that on the envelope delivered here by the supposed messenger-boy?"

"Absolutely certain, guv'nor."

"Humph! And you can't recall having ever seen either of the men before?"

"Dead certain I haven't, though I'm not likely to forget them if I come across them again."

"I suppose not," said Locke abstractedly.

He drew a picture-postcard from his pocket, and handed it to his assistant.

"Suppose neither of them is by any chance in this?" he asked.

Jack regarded the postcard intently. It depicted a tree-bordered, winding lane, whilst printed at the bottom were the words: "Series A, No. 6: The Long Lane." It was not the scenery, however, that arrested the youth's attention, but the figures of three men, who had evidently been making their way along the road at the moment the photographer had snapped it.

Starting up and holding it closer to the light, Jack again studied it. Then he started.

"Well, I'm hanged, guv'nor! That one in the centre. He's the taller of the two men who called at the shop—the one who paid for the uniform."

"Good! That helps to piece the puzzle together, Jack, for the man on the right, although the disfigurement on his cheek doesn't show in the print, is none other than the Shinto priest I came across in the temple."

"Gee! But where was it taken, guv'nor, and how did you get it?"

"One question at a time, my lad!" Ferrers Locke laughed. "I saw it in the window of a small shop at Chesham, and instantly recognising the Asiatic, I bought it. As you will see, it is one of a set of local views, and 'Long Lane,' as it is called, is about a mile and a half away from where I made the purchase."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 923.

"Chesham! Then you've been over there?"

"Looks like it, or I couldn't have obtained that card. I'm rather glad that I happened to see it, for it proves that the Shinto priest and this man who returned the uniform are acquainted, or they wouldn't be coming along the lane together. But there, make yourself comfortable while Sing-Sing's getting our supper. You can do with a rest after what you've been through, and I'll let you know what I've been doing during the day."

Jack curled himself up in an arm-chair, and Ferrers Locke went on.

"To take matters in their proper order, my first business this morning was to analyse the contents of the rubber syringe left on the roof by our nocturnal visitors. This I soon found contained, in concentrated form, a very deadly gas, that, had it been permitted to escape, would have in all probability asphyxiated every one in the house in the space of a few moments."

"Just so, guv'nor," Jack interrupted. "But how could the chap let the gas out, which fortunately he didn't, without settling himself?"

The detective smiled.

"At first glance it would seem impossible, my lad. But there was a short length of brass tube attached to the rubber bulb, covered at the end with a cap. Now, this tubing was filled with a kind of gelatine, acting as a cork. This, I take it, on coming into contact with the air, would dissolve. Thus, enough time would be given the user to make his escape, after he had removed the cap."

"Well, I'm jiggered!" Jack blurted out. "We've struck a few stunts in our time, guv'nor, but this case we're on now takes the whole bakery?"

"Anyhow, it was this rubber instrument that led to further developments," Locke proceeded. "I had good reason to believe that I knew the makers, so I went up to the place I had in mind. As luck would have it, who should come in but the man with the triangular scar on his cheek—the Shinto priest—who, fortunately for my purpose, had to wait. Sending in my card to the head of the firm, I had little difficulty in ascertaining that he had called for a length of a peculiar make of Japanese silk, that had been left with them to be coated with rubber solution."

"The same as the piece you got off the nail outside the window at Myrtle House?"

"Exactly. And now to cut it short. Shadowing the man to King's Cross, I found he booked to Chesham, whilst I—as you may guess—did the same, though only to find on arrival that a magnificent limousine was awaiting him, in which he was whirled off."

"Chesham. Chesham!" Jack repeated. "Why dash it all, guv'nor! Isn't Chesham somewhere in the Chiltern Hills?" he added excitedly.

"You're quite right." "And it was in the Chiltern Hills that, as you worked it out on the map, that the most likely place for the headquarters of the Phantom Bat would be!"

"Right again, lad. But to get on. Once back in town, I first of all got hold of young Harry Dimsdale, and had very little difficulty in persuading him to not only lend us one of his planes, but even come with us to act as pilot."

"One of his planes, guv'nor?"

"That's what I said, my lad—the

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 923.

Midget. You know the machine: the one that's so constructed that both the planes and propeller can be removed at a moment's notice. That'll mean that there won't be any difficulty in stowing the machine away."

"Gee! That's great, guv'nor! I've got you! You mean to hang around till we spot the Bat, and then—"

"Intercept or follow it," added Locke. "But that might mean endless waiting, so in order not to waste time, I've hired a couple of caravans."

"Caravans?" Drake's expression denoted the surprise he felt.

"Yes. One of them will convey the plane, under cover, to some spot we'll fix on as a camping-ground, up in the hills, and the other, well stocked with baskets and pans and things, will provide us with an excellent excuse for calling at any premises we wish to. Do you follow me?"

"Follow you? Rather! I reckon I'm no end backed! Why, if we work this stunt we'll romp home in no time. Though, I say, guv'nor, what about our car?"

"Oh, I hadn't forgotten that!" said Locke. "We'll run that over first, and garage it somewhere handy. Never know if it might come in useful."

"I suppose Pycroft doesn't know anything about this yet?" queried Jack.

"No; I've neither seen nor heard from him to-day. But, of course, I shall inform him, and give him the opportunity of making one of the party if he cares to, though I'm rather doubtful whether he will."

"Why?"

Ferrers Locke laughed.

"He's a thorough good sort, but, as you know, a bit self-opinionated. I feel fairly certain in this case that he'll pool-pool my theories. I have an idea that he's lying low, and hopes to spring a mine on me. Anyhow, you can give him a ring, and if he's still at the Yard ask him to come along and smoke an after-supper cigar."

"Right-ho, guv'nor!"

Drake rose, with the intention of carrying out these instructions, when the voice of the individual in question was heard in the hall.

"Talk of angels!" Locke laughed.

"And their wings appear!" the inspector chimed in, entering the room. "Well, how goes it?" he added as he plumped into a seat.

"I think I ought to ask you that question first," Locke retorted. "Your face tells me that you're brimming over with news."

"Well, I fancy I've got some information that may come as a surprise," admitted the police official, smiling at his non-professional colleague. "You remember I told you about Dimsdale spotting this so-called Bat?"

"Ah, yes, perfectly well."

"And you haven't heard of any further developments since?"

"No," said Locke.

"Well, it wasn't flying about for nothing."

"That so?" murmured Locke, with aggravating coolness.

Inspector Pycroft chuckled.

"Now, who d'you think's the latest victim?" he asked.

The criminologist shrugged his shoulders without replying.

"Why, Count Majorca, the very man who made a bid for the Epstein emeralds."

"Count Majorca!" exclaimed Locke, for a moment roused from his habitual calm. "And what's the extent of the haul?"

"His fine collection of cameos," replied the C.I.D. man impressively.

"Never heard that he had any," Locke commented. "And I should say that this time our friend the crook's been to a lot of trouble for nothing. Cameos, if they are worth anything, are well known and unsaleable and can be neither cut nor put in the melting pot."

"You bet, whoever's got them," knows where to place them," returned Pycroft. "Thought it would surprise you, Locke," he added, "for the chief decided that it was best to keep the matter out of the papers, or else you'd have heard of it up here."

"Anyhow, I suppose you've visited the scene of operations?" Locke asked. "Anything different from the last case?"

"Oh! I was there, and that's just the point. You know the count's place, eh?"

"Can't say I do."

"Well, it's not far from where Dimsdale spotted this aerial curiosity. In this case there was not any safe to force, as the cameos were kept in glass cases."

"And have you picked up any information?"

"Rather!" Inspector Pycroft sat bolt upright. "It's an admitted fact, isn't it, that sooner or later, a crook, however smart he is, makes a slip. And it's been done this time."

"How's that?" queried Locke sharply.

"Finger-prints; six finger-prints on one of the glass cases."

"Finger-prints?" Locke and Jack echoed together as they exchanged glances.

"Sure enough, and we know our man now. You'll remember him, I've no doubt. Chap known as the Ferret, used to work with the old Green Star gang."

"Yes, I remember," replied Locke thoughtfully. "It was thought he went down in that Channel boat that was cut in two."

Pycroft nodded.

"Well, he evidently didn't, or he couldn't leave his finger-prints behind," he said. "And, what's more, we learn from Folkestone that a man answering his description crossed the Channel yesterday. I'm off to Paris at once; so you won't mind if I don't stop any longer," he added, rising to his feet.

"Mind? My dear fellow, not in the least! Wish you luck! Though, I say, you might send me a code wire when you do come across anything," said Locke pointedly as he grasped the hand of his departing visitor.

"What d'you make of these finger-prints, guv'nor?" Jack asked as soon as Pycroft had left.

"Should have thought he was too old a bird to be caught with a pinch of salt," the criminologist laughed. "Those finger-prints, my lad, are spoo!"

The "Phantom"!

FERRERS LOCKE'S great racing-car, the White Hawk, was purring softly as, with the detective at the wheel, it speeded through the lanes on the way to Chesham. There was a faint suspicion of coming dawn in the sky, for the investigator had selected the early hours of the morning for his journey, in order that as little attention as possible should be drawn to the movements of the automobile, which, as he well

here, was equally known to police and criminals alike.

All arrangements had been made. The two caravans had been despatched in advance, Harry Dimsdale deciding to accompany the one containing the aircraft, which, with planes and propeller removed, had been stored away within it.

As an additional precaution, instead of proceeding direct to his destination, Locke had started almost due north on leaving Baker Street. The car was passing Potters Bar, whence he intended to branch off to the left, when, with a sudden ejaculation of surprise, he jammed on his brakes, bringing the vehicle to a standstill.

"What's up, guv'nor?" Jack asked in surprise, peering ahead, though failing to see any reason for the sudden stoppage.

The only reply he received was the switching off of headlights, which done, his chief silently pointed upwards.

Following the direction of Locke's outstretched hand, Jack started, for there, far above, crossing the star-spangled sky, was an object that, even at that distance, he did not fail to recognise.

"My aunt!" he muttered. "The Bat!"

Instantly Locke produced a small pocket-compass, which he studied carefully, glancing from time to time at the object floating above them.

"Yes, that's about it," he remarked at length, more to himself than to the lad at his side.

"What is?" Jack inquired eagerly.

"It's making for Frinton Abbey, at Cheshunt."

"My hat! The place the Nawab of Golecondabad's renting, while on his stay over here. Saw in the 'Evening News' he'd taken up his residence there this afternoon. Great stars, guv'nor, d'you think it's after the nawab's jewels?"

"Ten to one that's the idea, my lad."

"And we can't do anything."

"Not so sure about that. Anyhow, I'm going to have a try. I know every inch of the way to Frinton Abbey, and although we can't travel as the crow flies, the White Hawk can get a move on her when I want it."

Like a flash, the speaker's hand flew out and pressed the electric self-starter, then let in the clutch, and, like a thing of life, the magnificent automobile leaped forward.

Locke settled himself in his seat, his eyes never once straying from the great white shaft of light thrown by his powerful headlights. On and on, till, with the detective's foot hard down on the accelerator, the speedometer flickered to 70 and then past. With a whirr, they were round corners with two wheels whizzing in the air, whilst detached buildings or clumps of trees seemed to fly past them as if borne on the wings of the wind.

Now they thundered over a bridge, then round along the paved main street of a village, in which the half-aroused inhabitants turned in their beds to wonder what madman had passed through.

With head bent low, and gripping firmly at the arms of his seat, Jack

Drake from time to time ventured to look upwards. But the speed at which they were proceeding prevented him from seeing anything beyond a blurred mass of clouds, till a sudden movement of his chief warned Drake that they were nearing their destination. At the same moment the terrific speed began to diminish.

Slower and slower the great car eased down till, with engines that were little above a purr, the speedometer stood practically firm at 30, and then for the first time after starting on that wild rush Ferrers Locke opened his lips.

"Switch off the headlights, Jack!" he jerked out, turning to his young assistant. "Frinton Abbey's just up here on the left."

"Switch off the lights, guv'nor?" questioned Drake.

"Yes; you don't suppose I want to advertise the fact that we're here?"

"Right-ho, guv'nor!"

Instantly the long stretch of lonely road bathed in steely light seemed to rise up against them in a wall of impenetrable gloom. A few yards farther, and the car was drawn up under what Jack could dimly make out to be a clump of trees.

"We'll leave the car here," the investigator remarked in milder tones, as he clambered from his seat. "There's a wall alongside us that separates us from the grounds, so if you give me a leg up first, we'll soon be over."

"And then what's the next move?" asked Jack eagerly.

"Can't say, my lad. We must be guided entirely by circumstances. Don't forget we are not absolutely certain



"Hush!" whispered Ferrers Locke, clutching Jack Drake's arm and pointing upwards. "See there?" The lad drew back in surprise, for swaying backwards and forwards beneath one of the windows was something which looked like a gigantic moth. (See page 23.)

whether the Bat was making for this spot—although it's certainly more than likely."

"And I suppose you've not the least idea where the rajah would have his jewellery stored?"

"Not any more than you do. Though most likely scattered around. These Eastern potentates are proverbially careless. But come on; we sha'n't find out anything if we stand talking here." A hint the youngster instantly took, so that placing his back against the wall, his chief was able by clambering on to his shoulder to throw himself astride it.

The interior of the grounds once gained, the sleuths had little difficulty in threading their way through a small plantation, when, separated only by a long expanse of lawn interspersed with flower-beds and shrubs, the majestic walls of the ancient building were plainly visible.

Clutching the lad's arm, Ferrers Locke drew him back into the shade from which he was incautiously advancing, as with a faint "Hush," he pointed towards the upper portion of the structure.

"See there?" he whispered.

For several seconds the lad let his eyes rove over the ivy-clad walls without being able to detect anything unusual. Then a slight movement amongst the foliage arrested his attention, and it was with difficulty that he forced back the cry of surprise that rose to his lips.

Beneath one of the windows, swaying backwards and forwards, was something indistinct, that in form resembled a gigantic moth.

"Guessed right, after all," came his chief's whispered words. "That's undoubtedly the Bat."

"Then we're too late," Jack whispered back in tones of bitter disappointment; "for if we raise the alarm now it'll be off!"

"Too late to prevent its effecting an entrance, but, I'm thinking, not too late to prevent its escape," answered Locke, with a ring of determination in his voice. "We must wait."

As if fascinated, the two watchers stood rooted to the spot, as, scarcely believing their eyes, they watched the strange object clinging to the wall, gradually shrink smaller and smaller.

Too astounded to speak, Jack could only gasp as, by some means imperceptible to those below, the uncanny

creature raised itself up and then seemed to float, rather than pass, into the interior of the building.

"My hat! It beats the band!" muttered Drake, as the strange object vanished from view.

"It certainly was out of the ordinary," agreed Locke quietly. "Anyhow, if we get a move on now, we'll soon know more about it."

"How?"

"Soon show you. You know which window it entered?"

"Sure; the one in the side of that turret, just below the top one."

"That's it. But what you haven't noticed, though perhaps you couldn't see it from where you were standing, is that half covered by the ivy on the wall there runs, the entire height of the tower, an iron ladder, evidently placed there in case of fire."

"Good!" exclaimed Drake excitedly.

"And some three feet below the window through which the entrance was made, runs a broad stone coping. We can gain that from the fire-escape, and the rest ought to be easy. So off you go."

Keeping as much in the shade as possible by dodging from one clump of shrubs to another, the investigator and his assistant were not long before they gained the foot of the fire-escape that Locke's keen eyes had detected, and up which he immediately began to clamber.

Rung by rung was swiftly mounted, with Jack Drake closely following, till they arrived on a level with the ornamental carved stonework, which Locke had determined to use as a means for following the unknown. With a feeling closely allied to chagrin, Locke came to a dead stop for, unnoticed from the distant point at which he had viewed it, he now found that a length of this stonework had given way, leaving a gap of some five feet between the ladder which supported them and the spot for which he was making.

"Can't you get on, guv'nor?" Jack whispered from below, as his chief paused.

"Yes, I think so, if the ivy's only strong enough," came back the cautious reply.

Thrusting out his hand, Locke seized a gnarled stem and tugged viciously at it. A second time he repeated the attempt.

"Yes; it's secure enough for me, lad," he said; "though I don't know whether you'll be able to manage it?"

And, still gripping the immense creeper, he removed his feet from the rung of the ladder and swung his body forwards.

Twice he swayed to and fro at that giddy height above the ground. Then his feet landed on the ledge he was making for. A grip with his disengaged hand at another protruding stem, and he drew himself upright.

It certainly had been an awkward and risky job, but Jack was not the one to be deterred by dangers. Without a moment's hesitation he grasped the stem that had served as a hold for Ferrers Locke, and possibly owing to being of lighter build, scrambled to safety with less difficulty than the detective had done.

To athletes of their undoubted ability the rest was child's play, so that within a very few moments they were beneath the window they had risked so much to gain.

Though the building itself was of great antiquity, portions of it, including the window in question, had been modernised. The window having been fitted in the casement fashion, the doors

opened outwards; and Jack has often since declared that, should he live to be a hundred, he will never forget the sight that met his gaze as, cautiously raising himself, he peered through!

Dimly lighted from above by a lamp contained in a rose-tinted bowl, the first objects to catch his eye were the crumpled-up forms of two gigantic Nubians, who, judging by their robes and the bared, gleaming scimitars that lay beside them, had evidently been on guard.

An india-rubber syringe lay on the floor plainly informing the investigators that once again that mysterious anæsthetic, "The Sleep of Silence," had been brought into play. But it was the central figure in the scene that caused even Ferrers Locke to start in surprise, for before them, though with back turned, was a form that seemed neither human nor animal.

A squat, misshapen figure, that seemed almost as broad as it was high, possessing protuberances on either side that could be called neither arms nor wings, though each was terminated by a black, claw-like hand; such also being the sombre hue of its entire body, which glistened faintly in the dim light.

Undoubtedly this ghoulish object had been disturbed in its occupation, for at that instant there rang out loud shouts, followed by a shower of heavy blows on the farther side of the door, before which were stretched the senseless guards, causing the intruder to face round towards the window.

Almost letting go his hold, Jack stared at the object as though fascinated. Never even in his wildest dreams had he seen such a nightmare, for of features it practically possessed none. Eyes there were that, seemingly set far back in their sockets, glittered with a baneful light; but of nose or nostrils there was not a trace, whilst a sort of indentation in the lower portion of the head marked the spot where a mouth might have been expected.

But the moment for action on Locke's part had arrived. Springing up, he flung one leg across the ledge of the open window to gain a firmer hold, then, whipping out his automatic, levelled it at the hideous apparition before him.

Undoubtedly taken by surprise, the repulsive-looking object swayed; then with a jerk it swung upwards one of its ill-shapen limbs, clasped in the claw of which was a strangely formed bright object. Instantly a flash of blue light leaped from it, whilst Jack was conscious of a strange, crackling report in the air above him as Ferrers Locke, letting the pistol drop from his hand, plunged headlong into the room.

With a cry of mingled rage and horror on his lips, Jack sprang to the aid of his beloved chief as the loathsome-looking creature, raised by some unknown force, brushed past him with a touch that caused him to shiver, and, floating through the open window, disappeared into the darkness beyond!

Foul Play!

NO sooner was he in the room, than, dashing to the side of his chief, Jack held out a helping hand, only too thankful to see the detective struggling to his feet.

"Thank Heaven, guv'nor!" the lad gasped. "Thought you'd been done in!"

"Not this time, my lad!" came the reply, in somewhat unsteady tones. "Shall be O.K. in a tick. But for goodness' sake unfasten the door and let

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Taken by surprise, the repulsive-looking object swung one of its ill-shapen limbs upwards, in the claw of which was a strangely-formed, bright object. Drake drew back as a flash of blue light leaped from it, but Ferrers Locke plunged headlong into the room. (See page 24.)

those chaps in before they batter it down!"

Striding across the prostrate bodies of the Nubian guards, Jack forced back the bolts, admitting some half-dozen swarthy-faced natives. In their midst was one who, by his commanding appearance, the lad rightly judged to be the Nawab of Golconda. To this latter individual Ferrers Locke related what had happened.

"Even out in India I have heard of you, Mr. Locke, and am pleased to meet you," the Nawab, who spoke English fluently, remarked, as the criminologist concluded.

"I had fully intended placing the more valuable of my jewels in a safer place than this, but have not had time to do so. Though I felt quite at ease leaving them guarded by these men." And the speaker pointed to the Nubians, who showed signs of returning consciousness. "But you?"

"Quite myself again, thanks. Though it was a near squeak, for I had caught the full force of the electric current that emanated from, or was attracted to, the terminal this creature held, there is little doubt that I should have been electrocuted."

"And you have my most sincere congratulations on your providential escape!" the Nawab said heartily.

"As far as I can see," he added, his dark eyes sweeping over a number of brass-bound boxes piled up in the room, "your timely arrival has prevented this mysterious marauder from getting away with anything of great value, and I must—" The remainder of his words trailed off into silence, as with a couple of strides he gained a side table on which rested an exquisitely-wrought silver casket.

Without a word he wrenched back the

lid, to start back with eyes that fairly blazed with rage.

"By the sacred shrine of Vishnu!" he cried. "It's gone!"

"Gone? What is it that is missing?" Locke asked, as he advanced.

"What is missing? Man, can't you guess? The diamond that has descended to the heirs of Golconda for countless generations—the Star of Golconda!"

"Which is of immense value, isn't it?" Jack ventured to ask.

"Value! It's been valued at anything from ten to fifteen lakhs of rupees. But what matters its value? It is the loss of the stone itself that concerns me."

"Which, I trust, we may be able to restore to your Highness," Ferrers Locke interpolated.

"Restore! You—you don't mean to say, after what has happened—"

"I am not in a position to make a positive assurance," Locke replied, one of his quaint smiles wreathing his lips. "But I think, with the help of my young assistant here, Jack Drake, that such a statement would not be beyond the bounds of possibility."

"Then should such a thing happen, Mr. Locke, you may be assured that you will have earned the gratitude of one who—will—er—well, know how to make a suitable recompense."

The criminologist bowed.

"And now, your Highness, with your permission, we will leave," he remarked. "As you may imagine, every moment of our time is of vital importance."

"I can quite understand that, Mr. Locke. I will have a car brought round at once to take you wherever you wish."

"I thank you," said Locke simply; "but my own car is waiting in the lane outside the grounds, so that if you

would not mind our passing through the house, instead of clambering down the fire-escape, which is a trifle awkward on a dark night, I should be obliged."

Some ten minutes later Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake were again seated in the White Hawk, which the investigator urged forward to complete the journey that had been so unexpectedly interrupted.

Leaning back in his seat, Ferrers Locke let the car run easy, from time to time whistling softly to himself, a habit that Jack well knew showed that his chief was engaged in working out some problem.

"Yes," he at length remarked, turning to the lad as though answering a question. "I'm convinced that somewhere amongst the Chiltern Hills we shall find the solution to this mystery."

"Anything that happened to-night caused you to feel more certain on that point, gov'nor?"

"To a certain extent, yes. The Bat, when we first noticed it, was evidently travelling from that direction."

"As near as I can guess, gov'nor."

"No guessing at all, my lad," said Locke sharply. "My pocket compass proved it, so that's one point scored. Now, we know by the picture-postcard that the Shinto priest, the only man in England who knows the secret of the anæsthetic invariably employed, as well as the man who returned the messenger-boy's uniform, and later on caused you to be sand-bagged, undoubtedly visited that locality."

"That's a dead cert!"

"Then there are other points. On the carpet of the room where the robbery occurred there were distinct traces of chalky soil. The Chiltern Hills, as is well known, are practically all chalk,

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whilst there is not any soil of that nature for many miles round Chesham. Of course, the fact of the chalk being there might, after all, be only a coincidence."

"Reckon there isn't much fear of that, gov'nor," said Drake.

"Anyhow, I'm not relying on that alone, but on this. I think it's light enough for you to see now."

Slipping his fingers into his vest-pocket, the criminologist drew out a soiled piece of paper scarcely as large as a shilling.

"Look at it carefully, Jack, and tell me what you make of it," he remarked, handing it over.

Holding the fragment firmly to prevent its being blown away, Jack regarded it intently.

"Fragment of paper torn from a pocket-book," he said. "Here is a faint blue line, and this rounded corner with its gilded edge shows where it came from."

"On that point there's very little doubt," Locke agreed.

Turning the paper over, the lad bent lower to carefully scrutinise a few letters, evidently a portion of word that could be faintly seen.

"Sure as little eggs, gov'nor!" he suddenly jerked out. "It's the same writing as that on the postcard sent to the costumier's in Westminster Bridge Road, and the same as the address on the envelope left at our place."

"Glad you agree on that point," smiled Locke.

"Agree, gov'nor! Couldn't help it. Look here, there are only three letters, i-k-e, but the k-e is identical with the way in which your name was written. There isn't one writer in a thousand who'd form a 'k' as this one is shaped. But when did you come across it?"

"Trodden into the carpet by the damp, chalky soil I mentioned just now."

"Jumping Moses! Then it's as clear as mud that the Bat's mixed up with the same lot. Hurrah, gov'nor! We'll rope them in before long now."

Ferrers Locke smiled at his assistant's enthusiasm.

"We'll rope them in, as you say, sure enough," he agreed; "but as to before long—well, that's a different matter. We've found one end of the trail, my lad, but where it's going to lead us we shall have to leave to the future."

"And, my giddy aunt, won't Pyecroft be wild when he learns of this Chesham business," Jack laughed. "Bunking over to Paris as he did, kidding himself he'd score one before you."

"Anyhow, he'll soon find he's made a bloomer, and be back again, and I shan't be altogether sorry to see him. He's a jolly good fellow when he doesn't get too inflated with high-faluting theories of his own. But hold on, lad! Jump out and have a squint at that signpost. They've cut a new road through here since I was this way, and haven't had the decency to fix the signpost up again."

"Ten miles to Chesham," Jack called back, as, having sprung out, he examined the post resting on the ground.

"Good! Then this new road will save us a long way round."

And as the lad clambered in the White Hawk was again started.

The intervening space was soon traversed, and on arriving at the quaint old town the criminologist soon found a garage, where his car was safely housed.

A couple of miles' sharp walk, and then, on turning a bend in the lane they were following, they were greeted by a cheery shout as the young airman—Harry Dimsdale—emerging from one of the caravans already in position, advanced to meet them.

"Something smells remarkably appetising," the criminologist laughed, as he shook hands; "and I can answer for myself this early morning spin has given me an appetite."

"Then you're just in time. I say, I don't know where you picked up that fellow who drives your van, but he's a peach. Knows how to devil kidneys as

well as a chef at Frascati's," said Dimsdale.

"Ah, it isn't the first time he's done odd jobs for me! But I'm not going to sing his praises till I've sampled his cooking," smiled Locke. "Jack's been tightening his belt for the last half-hour or so. Come on!"

As the airman had predicted, the meal awaiting the arrivals was an excellent one, to which all who sat down did full justice, and during which the investigator rapidly narrated the experiences he and Jack had been through in the early hours of the morning.

"And so the Bat's scored once again, and this time has got off with the 'Star of Golconda'!" Dimsdale remarked. "Hang it all, Locke, if things go on like this, the crook at the back of this will be as rich as Croesus!"

"Till he goes one too far," said Locke.

"Which I bet won't be long," Jack interrupted. "Did you ever hear of anyone the gov'nor started to run down who didn't get lagged?"

"Thanks for your appreciation of my ability, my lad," the criminologist laughed. "But this time we've got not only a slippery customer to deal with, but one who's making use of the most up-to-date discoveries in science to further his ends. But I suppose you've got your plane fixed up?" he added, turning to Dimsdale.

"Not quite in order yet. I've got to overhaul it, to see that all bolts and nuts are firm; and, of course, it'll want a bit of tuning up."

"Quite so. But will it be ready, if required, by the evening? One never knows; but up to now the Bat's not been seen in daylight."

"Oh, you can count on its being in working order in an hour or two from now! You can't see it from here; but I've rigged up the tent that will serve as a hangar in a clump of trees some fifty yards farther down the lane, so as to be out of view."

"Good idea; but, all the same, it would have been better to have had our caravans nearer. Don't say such a thing will happen, but it might be tampered with."

"Oh, so far as that goes, I've arranged with your fellow that when I'm not there to look after it, he'll be on the spot. And now, what are you fellows up to?"

"Transforming ourselves from respectable citizens to about as rough-looking specimens of the itinerant hawker class as the art of make-up will permit," Locke laughed. "So that, if you don't mind bundling these crocks out into the open, we'll set to work. For reasons that are obvious, neither Jack nor myself want to risk being seen coming out of this caravan till we're dressed for the part."

"That's the ticket," Dimsdale agreed. "In a breakfast like this we've all got to make ourselves useful; so, while you are getting into your war-paint, I'll try my hand at a bit of washing up!"

And, gathering up the various articles from the table, the young airman dumped them into a basket, with which he departed.

To those accustomed, as Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake were, to disguises, it needed but a very brief space of time in which to complete the transformation; but with such skill had the

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metamorphosis been effected that Harry Dimsdale nearly dropped the plate he was wiping as Locke and Drake emerged from their wheeled home.

To all intents and purposes, Locke was a hang-dog-looking loafer, unkempt and unshaven, a man whom the average individual would be inclined to give a wide berth; whilst Jack, with a basket affixed to a strap slung across his shoulders, and toes protruding through his boots, no more resembled the Baker Street detective's assistant than, to quote an old saying, "chalk is like cheese."

"By Jove! I'd never have believed it!" Dimsdale gasped, as he stared at his friends. "Of all the thoroughbred ruffians—"

"Thanks for the compliment," retorted the detective, doffing his battered hat. "Anyhow, I flatter myself that, as far as appearances go, Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake have been left behind at Baker Street! Though—Hallo! What's the rumpus?"

"Dashed if I know," Dimsdale answered. "Seems as though our man is having a bit of a row with someone." The voice of the caravan driver could be plainly heard.

"You jolly well clear out of this, you dirty skunk, or I'll make it hot for you!"

A remark that was responded to by a curse, and then the unmistakable sounds of a scuffle.

"Someone's been sneaking round the tent where the plane is," Dimsdale shouted. "Come on! We'll see who it is!"

With a wild rush, all three darted forward. Turning a clump of trees, they saw the custodian of the aircraft engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle with a broad-built, bull-necked stranger, who, at the instant the friends appeared, having freed himself from his adversary's clutches, landed in a blow that sent him crashing backwards.

With a shout, Ferrers Locke leaped forward, but not in time, for the unknown, crashing into the undergrowth, was lost to view.

"Great snakes! What's it all about?" asked Jack, as he assisted their employee to rise.

"The plane—the plane!" muttered the man, who seemed partially dazed.

"The plane!" Harry Dimsdale echoed, as, dashing past his companions, he flung up the canvas flap that formed the entrance to the tent, only to start back, uttering a wild shout that brought his comrades hurrying to his side.

Locke and Drake halted, speechless with amazement, for they saw a column of dense smoke whirling upwards from the cockpit of the machine.

The aeroplane was on fire!

(Who is this broad-built, bull-necked stranger who has stolen into the camp and caused so much havoc? Ferrers Locke and his young assistant are not the ones to let the grass grow under their feet even if they have been taken by surprise! Next week's thrilling instalment is the most exciting yet, chums. Make no mistake, but order your copy of the MAGNET well in advance.)



Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his chums. Write to him when you are in trouble or need advice. A stamped and addressed envelope will ensure a speedy reply. Letters should be addressed "The Editor," THE MAGNET LIBRARY, The Amalgamated Press (1922), Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

BUNTER IN THE LIMELIGHT!

I HAVE received shoals of letters from loyal readers all over the country in response to a paragraph I published in the Chat a few weeks ago dealing with a reader's complaint that there was "too much Bunter." Out of five hundred letters—and they were received well within the week—four hundred odd breathed indignation and anger that any reader should say that we heard too much of Bunter. One of the most spirited replies comes from an ardent reader in Belfast, one Thomas Ryan, who speaks on behalf of a large group of Magnetites in that city. Ryan asserts that the "Loyal Reader" who opened up this controversy in the first place must have a very poor sense of humour. That's certainly straight to the point, and seems to be the opinion of other correspondents. Well, well, I can promise you all that Mr. Richards won't "kill off" Bunter, neither will he put him to sleep for a while. Many thanks, chums, for your spirited defence of W. G. B.!

A VICE-PRESIDENT.

How does a vice-president stand as regards the business of a club? This question reaches me from Ulster. What are the powers of a "vice"? In the general run of cases the powers of this official are no more, no less than those of an ordinary member. He would take no part in committee decisions unless he had been opted as a member of the committee. At the ordinary general meetings of the club a vice-president—every club has a bunch of vice-presi-

dents—would vote as a plain member, unless the chairman was absent, in which event the vice-president might take the chair. Then he would have a chairman's right—a casting vote. A vice-president can make a proposal, or move an amendment, the same as anybody else. His action might carry additional weight, for the distinction of vice-presidency presupposes some considerable service to the club.

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There is, of course, another topping instalment of this amazing serial story featuring the wizard detective, Ferrers Locke, and young Jack Drake. Look out for it! Also keep your peepers open for another portrait of a Greyfriars celebrity. Cheerio till next week.

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