

THE WORST FORM AT GREYFRIARS!

THIS WEEK'S GRAND SCHOOL STORY.

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Week Ending November 28th, 1925.

The Magnet 2^d

Library EVERY MONDAY.

Complete School Stories.



A SURPRISE IN STORE FOR THE CAPTAIN OF THE SCHOOL!

HURREE SINGH "FAGS" FOR LODER OF THE SIXTH!

(An amusing incident from the magnificent school story of Harry Wharton & Co. inside.)



ENCOURAGEMENT!

A READER from Wales writes and tells me that, although he works jolly hard, he receives no encouragement, either from the firm he works for, or from his people. Now there's something wrong there. Encouragement is a fine thing, we all know; it helps the ambitious spirit to accomplish great things, but we mustn't sit grousing and waiting for it, neither must we go looking for it. Encouragement comes spontaneously at work or at play. The fellow who does everything with the fixed idea that he is going to receive encouragement for his labours is a fool to himself. Let him plod on diligently, and in time he receives the encouragement that perhaps will mean the making of him. If he waits continually for encouragement, his work must undoubtedly suffer, for he is never giving of his best. Always there comes up before him that dissatisfaction which claims that he is not being encouraged. If my Welsh chum really is a hard worker, I strongly advise him to do his best at all times without worrying about whether he is going to be encouraged. After all, I take it he is being paid for his work—that, in itself, is an encouragement. Does he expect the "boss" at his works to go round his work-rooms, where there are two thousand employees, and say to each one of them every day: "Jolly good, old fellow"? It sounds all right in theory, but the boss has got more important things to attend to. We are all blessed or cursed with much the same feelings, and too much of "jolly good, old chap" would doubtless have the effect of making us think that we were doing too much! If my Welsh chum pegs away at his work and doesn't "grouse,"

the day will come when his chief will say—"Jolly good, old fellow!"

CLEAN BOOTS!

A correspondent writes me to the effect that he is constantly falling foul of his people and his master at school because he only cleans the toes of his boots. It's an old trick that has unjustly been claimed to have started with the soldiers in the Army of pre-war days. But to return to my reader chum. He waxes indignant that he should be "pulled up" every day over so trivial a matter. He goes on to say that, after all, it's the toes that count—nobody looks at the heels of his boots. But they do—hasn't he found that out? Isn't that why his master at school "goes for him"? And it is not so trivial a matter as he thinks, either. It is the starting-point of a slipshod life. And I'm sure he's an ambitious young fellow. To my way of thinking he's a trifle obstinate. In his heart of hearts he knows that it isn't quite "the thing" to walk out of doors with a fine polish on the toes of his boots and a thumping lot of mud on the backs of them. Start in now, my chum, and give those boots of yours a thorough good cleaning.

THE REMOVE FORM!

Here's a letter from a reader who is puzzled about the Remove. Is it, he asks, a distinction of honour? It is, and yet not quite in the way my chum means. The Remove Form was started because the Fourth Form was too big for one master to handle. The Fourth was, therefore, split into two Forms, namely, the Upper and Lower. The

Lower Fourth is the Remove, and stands between the Fourth and the Third. But the noble Removites have won fame, and made their Form one of the most important at Greyfriars. It is not a question of scholarship or of sport, but a combination of the two. It has undoubtedly become an honour to belong to the Remove because of the spirit of comradeship and humour which distinguishes the Form. There are backsliders, as in all Forms, but the standard is high. Of course, the name is just an arbitrary affair. It has no special significance.

Next Monday's Programme.

"REBELS OF GREYFRIARS!"

By Frank Richards.

There is another topping story dealing with the new captain at Greyfriars in next week's MAGNET. Gerald Loder, captain and prefect though he is, finds the Remove a difficult Form to handle. Harry Wharton & Co. are determined to stand up for their rights, and this leads to open conflict between them and Gerald Loder. Don't miss this story, chums.

"THE MYSTERY OF LONE MANOR!"

Next week's instalment of this amazing detective story is the real goods. We see Ferrers Locke, Travers, and Jack Drake fighting a desperate battle with the Wolves. Mind you're in this scrap, boys!

"CONCERT" NUMBER!

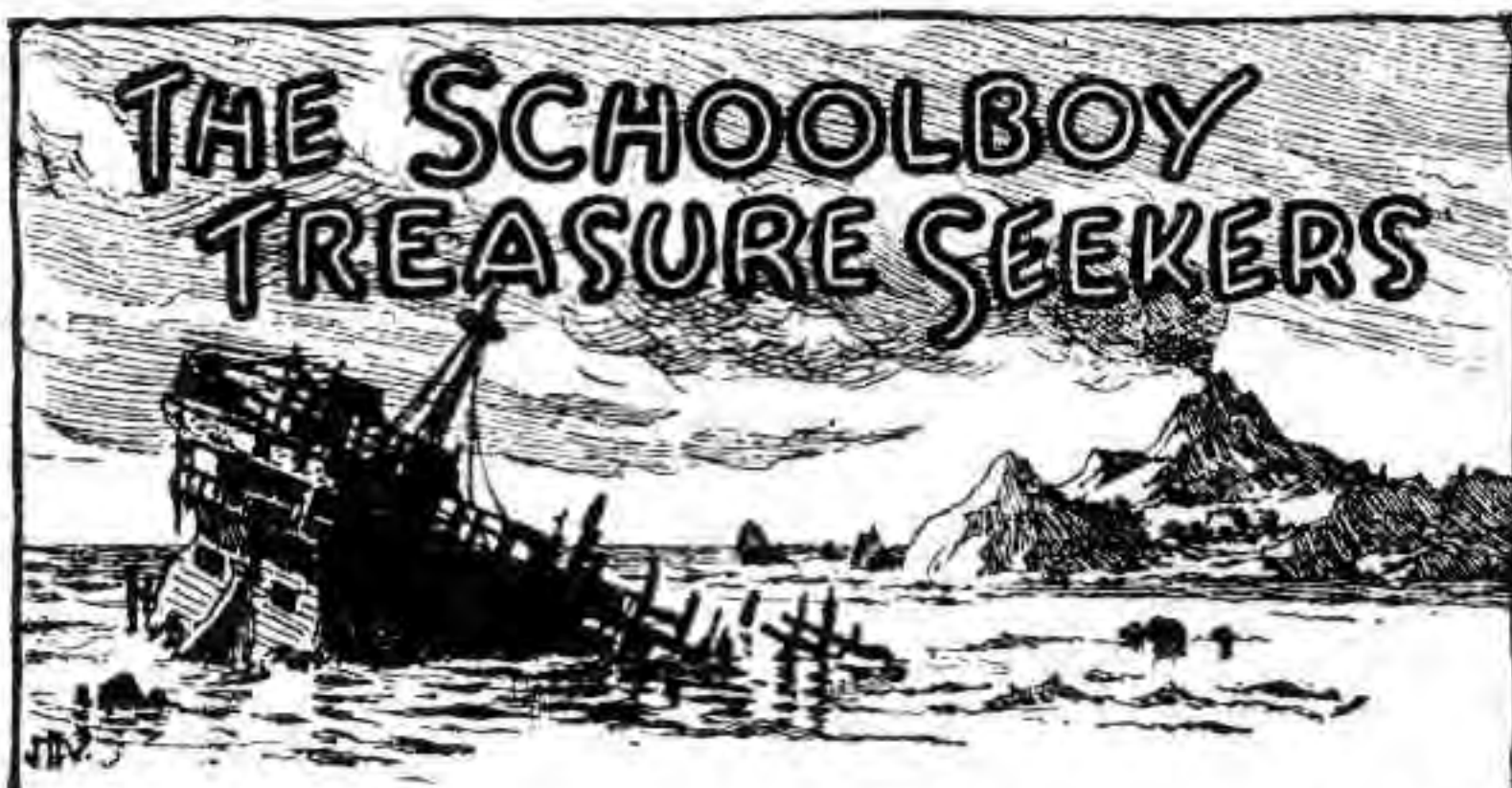
Harry Wharton & Co. have set to and given us a special issue of the "Herald" dealing with Concert life at Greyfriars. Dicky Nugent, too, has turned in a St. Sam's story that will send you into "fits." Be in your seats when the curtain goes up!

"PORTRAITS!"

Tom Brown takes his place in our Portrait Gallery next Monday. Mind you add his cheery phiz to your collection.

Till next week, chums,

Your Editor.



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THE KINEMA COMIC 2

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A HANDFUL! Gerald Loder is fond of declaring that he will bring the Remove to heel; that he will so tame them that they will eat out of his hand. Alas for Loder's hopes! The Remove Form is a tough proposition to tackle and is quite prepared to live up to its title of—



The Worst Form at Greyfriars!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars, dealing with Gerald Loder's repeated attempts to "fag" the Remove.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Wharton Does Not Go!

"SIX!" said Bob Cherry.

Six strokes boomed out from the clock-tower of Greyfriars.

"Six!" murmured Frank Nugent.

There were five juniors in Study No. 1 in the Greyfriars Remove. They listened, counting the chimes as they rolled out.

"Six!" murmured Johnny Bull.

And Hurree Janset Ram Singh, in his weird and wonderful English, remarked:

"The sixfulness is terrific."

Harry Wharton smiled faintly.

It was Harry Wharton, captain of the Remove, who was chiefly concerned; but his loyal comrades were concerned for him, if not for themselves.

For Wharton had been ordered by Gerald Loder, the new captain of the school, to present himself for punishment in Loder's study, at half-past five that afternoon. At half-past five Wharton was in his own study, not in Loder's; and his chums were with him. There they sat down to tea; but it was rather an anxious tea. And now it was six o'clock; and there had been, as yet, no sign from the captain of Greyfriars.

"Six!" said Johnny Bull. "Loder will have given you up by this time, Harry."

Wharton shook his head.

"Loder can't very well let it drop," he said. "He gave me his order before a crowd of fellows on Big Side. Every chap in the Remove knows that I'm ordered to go to his study to take a licking. Every chap in the Remove will know if I don't go. Loder can't let it drop."

"But you're not going."

"No fear!" said Harry Wharton decidedly.

"If the giddy mountain doesn't go to Mahomet," said Bob Cherry, "jolly old Mahomet has to hike off to the giddy mountain. Which being interpreted means, that if you don't go to Loder's study to see Loder, his highness will come to your study to see you."

"I think so."

Johnny Bull gave a warlike grunt. Frank Nugent rose to his feet, crossed to the study cupboard, and sorted out an Indian club. Nugent, the least warlike of the Famous Five, was prepared for war; apparently on a drastic scale.

Johnny Bull nodded approval.

"Good!" he said. "That will come in useful if Loder cuts up rusty. If he gets that on his napper, he may understand that he can't fag the Remove."

"Yes, rather!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton looked very grave.

"The fact is, you fellows, that this is a jolly serious matter," he said slowly. "It's been established a long time that our Form don't fag for the Sixth. Loder is trying to make new rules now that he's butted into old Wingate's place, and become captain of the school. We're not going to stand it! But—there's no getting out of the fact that Loder is now head-prefect and captain of Greyfriars. Scrapping with Loder will mean trouble—it may mean going up before the Head."

"We'll all go together, then," said Bob Cherry.

"It may mean a Head's flogging."

"We'll take it together."

"The togetherness will be terrific."

"Cheese it, Wharton!" grunted Johnny Bull. "We're all standing together in this. Even if we weren't your pals, it would be common sense. It's you to-day—but it might be any one of us to-morrow. We've got to keep our end up

Hurree Singh leaves by the window
—after fagging for Loder!

against Loder, and we can only do that by sticking together."

"Hang together, lest we hang separately, you know," grinned Bob Cherry.

The situation was serious; and all the chums of the Remove realised that very clearly. But Bob Cherry could not help taking a humorous view of it; the most serious state of affairs never had a depressing effect on Bob's exuberant spirits.

"But I don't know whether I ought to let you fellows butt into the trouble, all the same," said Wharton uneasily.

"You can't help it, old bean," said Bob. "We're going to butt in, whether you like it or not; like a whole family of billy-goats."

"Hear, hear!"

Wharton did not argue further. He realised, more clearly perhaps than his comrades, how serious the matter was, and how doubtful was its termination. But whatsoever the outcome, he was grimly resolved never to give in to the new captain of the school. The Lower Fourth had never sagged in Wingate's time, and Wingate had been a captain of whom all Greyfriars was proud. Loder was a captain of whom nobody was proud; and the heroes of the Remove were not likely to stand from Gerald Loder what they would never have stood even from George Wingate. And it was up to Wharton, as captain of the Form, to lead the way; the post of danger belonged to him. There were responsibilities as well as honours attached to leadership.

"I say, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter put a grinning fat face into the study.

He blinked at the juniors through his big spectacles. For the moment he did not observe Wharton, who was seated in the big high-backed armchair.

"Hasn't he come back yet?" asked Bunter.

Nobody answered.

"I say, he's staying a long time with Loder," went on Bunter. "He had to turn up at half-past five, and it's six now. Loder can't be laying on the ashplant all this time, can he? If he is, Wharton must be feeling pretty bad. He, he, he!"

The chums of the Remove grinned.

Evidently William George Bunter supposed that Wharton had kept his appointment in Loder's study, and was there still. The captain of the Remove, screened from Bunter's short range of vision by the back of the armchair, did not speak.

"He, he, he!" Bunter chortled. "I say, you fellows, it's rather a come-down for poor old Wharton, isn't it?"

"What is, fathead?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Well, he said all along that he wouldn't fag for Loder," grinned Billy Bunter. "Said it everywhere, up and down the passages, in the Rag, in the quad—everybody's heard him. Now he's gone to Loder's study when he's told, like a little lamb. He, he, he!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter grinned, encouraged by the laughter of the juniors.

"Funny, ain't it?" he said.

"Oh, no end funny," said Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"The fact is, you fellows, I knew it was all gas," said Bunter confidentially. "I knew Wharton would toe the line all right. I knew he'd hike off to Loder's study at half-past five sharp."

"Did you?" said Nugent.

"Oh, yes! In fact, I thought he'd go early to make sure, and so he did," said Bunter triumphantly.

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"Oh, he went early, did he?" asked Bob. "How do you make that out, Bunter?"

"Because I was looking out for him at half-past five, and I didn't see him go," said Bunter. "So he must have gone early, see?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"After all his gas, he's fagging for Loder at this blessed minute," said the Owl of the Remove. "After all his swank! He, he, he! Rather a come-down for poor old Wharton! But I'm bound to say that I knew it all along. Lots of the fellows thought Wharton meant business, and would tell Loder to go and chop chips. I knew better."

"Oh, you knew better, did you?" said Johnny Bull, staring at the fat and fatuous Owl of the Remove.

"Lots better!" chuckled Bunter. "Of course, I wouldn't say anything against a fellow behind his back. That's not my sort. But I never did think that Wharton had much pluck."

"Oh!"

"All gas, you know," said Bunter, nodding his head, still in blissful ignorance of the fact that the captain of the Remove was in the study, listening to every word. "Just swank and gas! After this, Wharton will have to sing small."

"You think so?" smiled Bob.

"Oh, yes! After knuckling under like this, it won't go down, you know. I certainly shall take no notice of him," said Bunter. "In fact, if I have any more cheek from him personally, I shall not hesitate to give him a licking, after he's had one from Loder."

"You'll give Wharton a licking?" ejaculated Bob.

"As soon as look at him!" said Bunter.

"Oh, my hat!"

"He's let down the Form," said the fat junior scornfully. "Let us all right down! If I'd been captain of the Remove, I should have stood up to Loder! I should have defied him. If he'd gone so far as to lay his paws on me, I should have knocked him spinning! Who cares for prefects?" exclaimed Bunter valorously.

"Nobody—when they're not in hearing," said Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"You fat idiot—" began Johnny Bull.

"Well, he's let us all down," said Bunter. "The Form will follow where the Form captain leads—that means fagging for the Remove. I shall refuse; but I fancy most of the fellows won't have my pluck and determination. We're for it! Next time I see Wharton I shall tell him plainly what I think of him. I shall tell him plainly that I despise him."

The armchair creaked as its occupant moved.

Harry Wharton's sturdy figure rose into view. He fixed his eyes on the Owl of the Remove.

"Go ahead!" he said.

Bunter's fat jaw dropped. He blinked at the captain of the Remove, as if he could scarcely believe his eyes or his spectacles.

"Oh!" he gasped. "You—you—you're here!"

"Yes—waiting to hear what you think of me!"

"I—I didn't see you come back!" stammered Bunter.

"I haven't come back, fathead, as I haven't been to Loder's study at all."

"You haven't been—"

"No!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"But I'm waiting to hear what you think of me," said Harry. "Go ahead with me! You had a lot to say a minute or two ago."

"I—I—"

Bunter's voice trailed away.

"Bunter seems to have lost his voice," remarked Wharton. "Perhaps I can help you find it, Bunter."

The captain of the Remove grabbed Bunter's collar.

Bang!

Bunter's bullet head knocked against the door of Study No. 1. A fiendish yell rang along the Remove passage.

"Yaroooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "He's found his voice! It's not a pretty one, or worth finding; but he's found it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaroooh! Leggo! I say, you fellows—I say, Harry, old chap, I—I—I was only j-j-joking!" howled Bunter. "I—I think you've got lots of pluck, I do really. I—I think—I—I say—I mean to say—yaroooooooop!"

Bang!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter's fat form twirled round in Wharton's grasp. A boot was planted on Bunter's tight trousers.

Bunter flew.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Wingate's Warning!

GERALD LODER, the new captain of Greyfriars, sat in his study, with a deep frown on his brow, and a cigarette in his mouth.

An ashplant lay on the study table.

That official instrument of punishment had been selected for Harry Wharton, and laid in readiness.

But Wharton had not come!

Loder had had many experiences with the Famous Five of the Remove; there never had been any love lost between the cheery juniors and the bully of the Sixth. Loder of the Sixth had had many powers as a prefect, and had exercised them unscrupulously; but in one way or another, Harry Wharton & Co. had kept their end up fairly well. But now that Loder was head prefect and captain of the school, all that was changed—or Loder believed that it was. His powers were now too great to be resisted.

Even his own pals in the Sixth—Walker and Carne—had remarked that Loder seemed to think himself a little tin god, now that he was captain of Greyfriars. Fellows in all the Forms watched his newly-developed swank, and grinned at it or frowned at it, or shrugged their shoulders at it, as the spirit moved them.

There was no doubt whatever that Loder had become considerably "windy" in the head since he had attained the summit of his ambition, and was, in his own eyes, monarch of all he surveyed. There was no longer "old Wingate" over him to keep him in check; the Lower School found Loder the captain a much more formidable bully than Loder the prefect had been. Wingate had put the brake on, so to speak, many a time; there was no one to put the brake on now. Loder regarded his word as law; and in the fulness of his self-conceit, he had ordained that the Remove should fag like the Third and the Second Forms—ruthlessly invading and over-riding a long-established right. Loder had not the slightest doubt of success.

In fact, he was rather glad to hear



that the Remove intended resistance. It gave him a chance he might not otherwise have found of coming down heavy on his old enemies in the Lower Fourth. It was a chance to feed fat his ancient grudges against Study No. 1.

The Famous Five of the Remove, who never would bow the knee to Loder, were going to be brought to heel. Loder had boastfully told Walker and Carne that in a few days the "worst Form at Greyfriars," as he dubbed the Remove, would feed out of his hand.

Walker and Carne wished him luck, but they had their doubts. Loder was making so many enemies all over Greyfriars, that his friends had begun to wonder whether his captaincy would last very long. Loder had no doubts; and it did not even occur to him that in his struggle with the Remove he might meet his Waterloo.

Wharton had refused to fag; and Wharton had been ordered to come to his study to take the punishment of disobedience. That punishment was going to be extremely severe; and then Wharton was going to be fagged—he was going to fag for Loder under terror of the ashplant. Gerald Loder had it all cut and dried; Wharton was to be broken in, and the rest of the Lower Fourth would follow him like sheep. There was satisfaction in the thought.

Only Wharton had not come.

Loder was ready, the ashplant was ready; but the captain of the Remove, apparently, was not ready! At all events, he was not there!

It was difficult for Loder to believe that Wharton meant to defy his command. It would be all the worse for the young rascal if he did! But he could not think so. Only—Wharton hadn't come.

Tap!

Loder grinned as he heard the tap at the door. It was the cheeky young sweep at last, and he should get a few extra strokes for keeping the great man waiting.

"Come in!" called out Loder, throwing his cigarette into the fire.

The door opened, and Loder reached

out for his cane. Then he dropped it again. It was not Harry Wharton who entered the study; it was Wingate of the Sixth.

Loder stared at him angrily.

"What the thump do you want?" he asked.

"Only a few words, Loder," said Wingate quietly.

"You can get on," grunted Loder. "Cut it short—I'm expecting a fag here to be licked, any minute."

"It's about that," said the ex-captain of Greyfriars. "I'm no longer captain, Loder, and no longer a prefect. I have no authority to interfere—"

"I'm glad you can see that!" sneered Loder. "I thought you would come to your senses in the long run, George Wingate. You've had a prefects' beating, and it's done you good, I can see."

Wingate's eyes gleamed for a moment. But he went on calmly:

"We're not friends, Loder—you've made yourself my enemy, though I don't know that I ever gave you cause. But you're captain of the school now, and I've got the school a good deal at heart. I don't like to see the captain of Greyfriars riding for a fall, and coming a mucker."

"So you think I'm riding for a fall?" sneered Loder.

"I know you are."

"Thanks. Is that all?"

"You've started a new rule of fagging the Remove," said Wingate quietly. "The Remove don't fag—that was established long ago. Most of these kids, if I know them, will stand up for their rights—they will resist."

Loder glanced at the ashplant, and grinned.

"Let them!" he said carelessly.

"I know I should resist, if I were in the Lower Fourth," said Wingate.

"I daresay! And I know I should jolly soon bring you to heel!"

"I don't think you'll bring the Remove to heel, as you call it."

Loder yawned.

"You're welcome to your thoughts," he said. "Who the thump are you to speak to me? You were a big gun in

your time, and now you're nobody—turned out of the football, even. You'll never play for Greyfriars again so long as I'm captain. You've had a prefects' beating for punching the captain of the school—and you'll get another if you don't take care. Shut the door after you, Wingate."

Wingate did not stir.

He stood looking at the conceited fellow, and his lip curled. He had never had a high opinion of Gerald Loder; but as captain of Greyfriars, Loder had sunk even below the low place he had previously held in Wingate's estimation. The fact was, that Loder was quite unsuitable for first place in anything. His authority had got into his head like wine, and his arrogance made even his own pals sore and resentful. Really, it was a case of a beggar on horseback, riding to disaster as fast as he could.

"I didn't come here to row, Loder," said Wingate, at last. "There's no love lost between us; and the less we see of one another the better. But I've been captain of the school, and have had some experience that you haven't had yet."

"I'll ask for some instruction when I feel the need of it," yawned Loder.

"There will be trouble, if you persist in this unfounded claim to fag the Remove. It means a lot of trouble—and very likely the Sixth Form brought into contempt. Juniors who disobey and defy the prefects in one matter, will get into the way of disregarding them in other matters. For your own sake, Loder, let the thing drop before it goes any further. You can let it drop, and save your face, at present. Later on, if you let it drop, it will be backing down to the juniors—and what will your position be worth after that?"

Loder sneered.

"And you're so anxious to make my position safe and secure?" he said, with a laugh.

"I'm anxious not to see the school at sixes and sevens, and Sixth-Form prefects brawling with the juniors," said

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Wingate. "Only harm can come of it, to all concerned."

"Especially if the cheeky fags find that they have support in the Sixth!" sneered Loder. "I daresay you've put them up to it. You'd like to make all the trouble for me you could."

Wingate set his lips.

"It's useless to talk to you, Loder," he said. "I felt bound to put in a word, before things went from bad to worse. That's all."

Wingate quitted the study.

Loder laughed sneeringly, and glanced at the clock.

Wharton had not appeared. It was borne in upon Gerald Loder's mind at last that Wharton was not coming!

That circumstance, taken in conjunction with Wingate's earnest warning, might have given a more thoughtful fellow pause. But it was not like Loder to pause while he felt power in his hands, and his inclination was strong to use it.

He rose, and picked up the cane from his table. With the cane under his arm, he left his study.

Gwynne of the Sixth was standing in his study doorway, farther along the passage, and he glanced at the captain of Greyfriars as he came along.

"Six for somebody, what?" he asked, with a sarcastic glance at Loder's cane.

"Yes; Wharton."

"Oh, the kid didn't turn up, didn't he?" said Gwynne, with a smile. He had heard the order given to Harry Wharton on the football ground that afternoon, and his impression had been that the captain of the Remove would disregard it.

"No," said Loder grimly, "I'm going to his study to see him."

Gwynne laughed.

"Look out for a hornets' nest!" he said.

"Oh, rot!" said Loder.

And he marched on unconcernedly. He had had plenty of trouble with the Famous Five; but that they would dare to lay rebellious hands on him, now that he was captain of the school, he did not believe for a moment.

Full of confidence, without a doubt in his mind, Gerald Loder tramped up the Remove staircase, and headed for No. 1 Study.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

No Surrender!

PETER TODD stepped into No. 1 Study in the Remove, and glanced round inquiringly. Five cheery faces met his view—serious faces, but quite cheery. Harry Wharton & Co. knew that the matter was serious now; but they were not allowing it to affect their spirits. Peter made a grimace as he noted that the captain of the Remove was there with his comrades.

"You haven't been to Loder's study, Wharton?" he asked.

"No!"

"Going?"

"No!"

"This study doesn't fag!" remarked Nugent.

"Nonsense!" agreed Peter. "The Remove never does, and this is the leading study in the Remove—after mine, of course."

"The afterfulness is not terrific, my esteemed Toddy."

"But—" said Peter.

"We know it's serious," said Harry quietly. "But it's settled that I'm not going. We're bound to come to a struggle with Loder sooner or later, now

that he's captain of Greyfriars; and it may as well come sooner as later."

"The sooner the better!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"On the subject of fagging, yes," said Peter. "But when Loder ordered you to his study, he didn't say it was for fagging."

"It was to lick me for refusing to fag," said Harry.

"Well, you know that, and I know it," said Peter. "But Loder didn't say so."

"What difference does that make, when we all know it?" demanded Bob Cherry.

Peter Todd smiled. As the son of a solicitor, Peter was supposed to know lots and lots about law, and to have a legal mind. Certainly he had a way of weighing up pro and con, for and against, and pointing out all sorts of subtle distinctions that escaped other fellows' notice. Apparently Peter was in a legal frame of mind now.

"You see, that depends," he said.

"The Remove don't fag, and if we refuse to fag, we're within our rights. We have to deal with Loder; but he can hardly call in the Head in such a dispute, Savvy?"

"That's so!" agreed Bob.

"But as captain and head-prefect, Loder's word is law," went on Peter.

"Head-prefect tells a junior to come to his study, and the junior is bound to go. It's an end of all authority in the school, if he doesn't."

"I agree!" said Harry Wharton.

"The Head delegates some of his authority to the Sixth-Form prefects," said Peter. "The system works pretty well, so long as the prefects are decent chaps, as they generally are; a head-master knows how to pick out the right sort. Every now and then he makes a bloomer, of course—even head-masters are only human, and to err is human. If the Head knew Loder better, he would cancel his prefectship fast enough, I fancy."

"If he knew him as well as we do!" grinned Bob.

"Exactly. But he doesn't—there are black sheep in every flock, and in a school as big as Greyfriars there's bound to be at least one or two rotters among the prefects."

"That's rather against the giddy system, isn't it?" said Bob.

"Not at all. If there were no prefects to take on some of the Head's work, there would have to be more under-masters," said Peter. "There would be black sheep in that flock as much as in any other. A bad hat among the masters would be as bad as a bad hat among the prefects, or worse."

"A Daniel comes to judgment!" said Wharton, with a smile. "I can see that Toddy has been thinking this out."

"I do some thinking," admitted Peter modestly. "There ought to be some done in the Form, and I'm the only fellow with the brains to do it."

"Why, you ass—"

"But to get back to our mutton," said Peter. "When a real rotter like Loder comes to the top, we see the giddy prefect-system at its worst. In my opinion it can't and won't last."

"That's good news—if you're right."

"Well, I'm generally right—you may have noticed it."

"Never!"

"But facts are facts, all the same," said Peter calmly. "My belief is that Loder is riding for a fall about as fast as he can. Sooner or later he will come a mucker. The trouble is, that he's still in the saddle at present."

"Hence these tears!" grinned Nugent.

"At least, hence this Indian club that I've got ready on the table."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But what are you driving at all this time, Toddy?" asked Johnny Bull.

"I'm coming to the point—"

"Oh! There's a point to come to?"

"Yes!" roared Peter.

"Right-ho! Get on with it," said Johnny amicably. "Only I'd like to remind you that dorm is at half-past nine, and it's nearly half-past six now."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd glared at Johnny, and resumed.

"This is the point. You refuse to go to Loder's study because you're to be licked for declining to fag. You know it, and we know it; but Dr. Locke doesn't. Loder may report you to the Head."

"But he can't report a Remove man for refusing to fag!" said Bob. "The Head himself acknowledged the rule, long ago."

Peter gave him a compassionate smile.

"He won't report Wharton for refusing to fag, or for refusing to take a punishment for refusing. He will report him for refusing to obey a prefect's order."

"But it comes to the same thing—if Wharton goes up before the beak, he will say what he was ordered to Loder's study for."

"And what proof will he give?"

"Proof?" repeated Bob.

"Yes. Suppose Loder says he sent for Wharton to tell him there must be less noise in the Remove passage—"

"Eh?"

"Or to give him some instructions about practice grounds—Loder's head of the games now."

"Oh!"

"But that would be lying," said Nugent.

"Dear man! How much do you think a whopper would cost Loder?"

Harry Wharton nodded.

"It's quite true," he said. "Peter's right. Loder is a bad egg all through. If he reports me to the Head for disobeying a prefect's order, he will make out that the order was quite a usual and harmless one. It will look to the Head like a junior being recklessly disobedient."

"My hat!" said Bob. "If that's the case—if Loder's really such an unscrupulous cad—he's got you in a cleft stick."

"Just what I was pointing out to you," said Peter. "So long as a bad egg like Loder is captain of the school, he's got us all in a cleft stick. If we refuse to fag, he will lick us—not for refusing to fag—oh, dear no—nothing of the kind—but for cheeking the Sixth, or for sliding down the banisters, or for kicking up a row in the passages, or because he doesn't like the way we do our back hair! Not for refusing to fag."

The Famous Five grinned, but rather ruefully.

The schoolboy lawyer had made the position of affairs rather more clear to them, and made them realise that it was more serious than ever. But the resolution in Study No. 1 did not falter.

"That's how it stands, so long as Loder's top dog," said Peter.

"That's it," said Harry. "But we're backing up against Loder all the same. I'm not going to his study to be licked."

"It may mean a Head's licking instead."

"Let it."

"Hear, hear!" said Peter. "Of course, I'm standing by you, and so, I fancy, will most of the Remove. I'm only pointing out just how the matter

stands—we shall be in the right, and we shall be made to look in the wrong all along the line, and it will mean jolly serious trouble, very likely with a few Head's floggings thrown in. But my advice to you is to stick it out—and I'm with you to the last ditch."

"Good man!" said Harry.

"If Loder has any sense, he will report you to the Head, with some plausible yarn to back up the report," said Peter. "But Loder hasn't much sense, and he seems to have still less since he's become captain of the school. That's where we come in. Being a swanking and hot-headed ass, he may come here and kick up a shindy, and give his own case away."

"That's what we're expecting," said Bob.

"We're ready for him," growled Johnny Bull.

"Little me, too," said Peter. "I'll take a seat for the proceedings, if you don't mind."

"The more the merrier," grinned Bob, as Peter Todd seated himself on a corner of the study table.

Vernon-Smith of the Remove looked in.

"You haven't seen Loder, Wharton?"

"No."

"I thought not," grinned the Bounder. "He's just coming up the Remove staircase with his ashplant under his arm."

"Good egg," said Peter. "If he had the sense of a bunny rabbit, he would report to the Head. Lucky he hasn't."

"You're not going to knuckle under, Wharton?"

"No fear."

"Then it means handling the captain of the school?" said the Bounder, with a whistle.

"Yes, if he goes over the limit."

"Then I'm with you."

Herbert Vernon-Smith lounged into the study. He was heart and soul with the Famous Five in resistance to Loder's tyranny; but in any case, it was not likely that the reckless Bounder would have kept out of any trouble that was going on in the Remove. Smithy thrived on trouble.

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

The Owl of the Remove blinked in.

"Wharton, you beast! You kicked me—"

"Come in, and I'll kick you again," said the captain of the Remove. "Kicking does you good, Bunter."

"Yah! Loder's coming! He's going to lick you! I'm jolly glad!" hooted Bunter.

And the Owl of the Remove rolled away, and his place in the doorway was taken by Loder of the Sixth.

The juniors in the study rose to their feet.

The captain of Greyfriars had arrived, and the crisis had come! Loder's eyes gleamed into the study.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, Loder."

"So you're here?"

"I'm here!"

"I ordered you to my study at six."

"I know."

"It's half-past six now."

Wharton glanced at the study clock.

"Twenty-five minutes past!" he said gravely.

"You know what to expect if you disobey a prefect's order?"

"Quite."

Loder slipped his cane into his hand.

"Bend over the table, Wharton."

Wharton did not move.

"You hear me, Wharton?"

"I'm not deaf."

"Bend over that table."

"I won't."

And then there was a pause—a long and a breathless pause.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Something Like a Hornets' Nest!

GERALD LODER was swishing the cane in the air, all ready to be laid on as soon as the captain of the Remove was bending over to take his punishment.

But there was not much sign of bending about Harry Wharton. His face was grim, his eyes were steady; he looked as if he could be broken sooner than bent.

The seven juniors gathered together, watching Loder. Powerful fellow as the Sixth-Former was, seven juniors were quite able to handle him; if once they had screwed up their determination to the point of laying hands on the head prefect of the school. And they had! The next move depended on Loder.

"So you set yourself up to disobey a prefect's orders—the orders of the captain of the school, Wharton?" said Loder at last.

"In this case, yes," said Harry. "The Remove do not fag, and you know it. I refused to fag to-day for Carford major, and I refuse now to be punished for it. Is that plain enough for you, Loder? You can like it or lump it!"

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry.

Loder glanced at Bob.

"Take care, Cherry! You've already had a pretty severe licking for cheeking me."

"You won't get me to your study again in a hurry, though," said Bob disdainfully. "Next time you want me you can look for me in the Remove passage, where my friends will stand by me."

"We're all together in this, Loder," said the Bounder coolly. "Isn't it about time you went?"

"Silence, Vernon-Smith!"

"Same to you, old bean!"

"Take five hundred lines!"

"Not from you!" said the Bounder.

"We shall see!" said Loder, with a disagreeable grin. "I shall expect those lines to-morrow at tea, Vernon-Smith."

"You can expect!" said the Bounder, shrugging his shoulders.

Loder of the Sixth turned to Wharton again.

"I've ordered you to bend over, Wharton."

"I heard you."

"I give you another chance to obey my order."

"You needn't!"

"Very good! I'll take some of the cheek out of you, you young cad!" said Loder, between his teeth.

And he strode at the captain of the Remove, his left hand outstretched to grasp him, his right swishing the cane.

"Touch me, and I shall hit out!" said Harry Wharton, with a flash in his eyes.

Loder laughed. He did not believe that statement for a moment. The captain of the school was much too tremendous a personage for a junior of the Lower Fourth to "hit out" at him! And, indeed, in Wingate's time such a thing would have been unheard-of. But things had changed very much at Greyfriars in the few weeks that had elapsed since George Wingate had resigned the captaincy.

Loder's grasp dropped on Wharton's shoulder, and he dragged him over a chair to lay on the cane.

The captain of the Remove was as

good as his word. With all his force he struck, and his clenched fist crashed into Loder's ribs.

Loder gave a gasping howl and staggered, and Wharton tore himself loose. He sprang away from the bully of the Sixth and faced him, with his hands up and his eyes glittering over them.

"Now, come on, you bully!" he panted.

Loder glared at him for a second, and then he rushed at the captain of the Remove, lashing out with the cane.

The lash did not reach Wharton. Vernon-Smith put out his foot, and Loder stumbled over it and crashed to the floor, fairly at Harry Wharton's feet.

"Man down!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Pin him!" shouted the Bounder.

"Yes, rather!"

"Pile on the cad!"

The die was cast now! Before Loder could get even on his knees the seven juniors were piling on him.

He rolled and sprawled on the floor of the study, with the Removites rolling and sprawling over him.

Loder roared.

He had not expected this. He might have expected it, knowing the heroes of the Remove as he did, but he hadn't—not in the least. He realised that Gwynne's warning of a hornets'-nest had been well-founded as he sprawled and struggled under the juniors, with Peter Todd sitting on his head, the Bounder trampling recklessly on his legs, Bob Cherry squatting on the small of his back, Johnny Bull gripping his ears, Nugent his hair, Hurree Singh his collar.

He was in the hands of the Philistines now with a vengeance.

"Release me, you young scoundrels!" panted Loder.

"Bow-wow!"

"Let go, you young villains, let go! Gerroff!"

"Not just yet!" grinned Bob Cherry breathlessly.

"Bump him!" shouted the Bounder.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Rag him!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Let go!" shrieked Loder.

"I say, you fellows, they're ragging Loder!" yelled Billy Bunter in the passage. "They're ragging the captain of the school! I say, you fellows, they're slaughtering Loder! He, he, he!"

There was a rush of Removites along the passage.

The doorway was crammed with excited fellows.

Ragging the captain of the school was a new departure even for the Remove, always a rather unruly Form.

"They've got him!" shouted Bolsover major. "Good egg! It was bound to come! Here, give me a hold of him!"

"Give a chap room!" shouted Squiff.

"Me, too!" chortled Tom Brown.

Fellows crowded into the study. It had long been agreed among the leading spirits of the Remove that Loder's claim to fag the Form was to be resisted to the very end; it was to be a fight to a finish if Loder persisted. There were a good many fellows in the Form who did not intend to take part in such a desperate kind of dispute, but the majority of the Remove were solid behind Harry Wharton.

More and more fellows crowded in, till Study No. 1 was fairly swarming.

Loder had disappeared under the juniors.

There was standing room only, so to speak; and as Loder was on the floor the Remove fellows stood on Loder.

He gasped and panted and gurgled, breathless with his efforts, and untidy.

and dishevelled and dusty; his tie and collar gone, half his buttons burst off, his face crimson and dusty, his hair like a mop, his coat split up the back. Now that they were "for it," the rebels of the Remove did not use him ceremoniously.

Never had a captain of Greyfriars been handled like that in a junior study before. But Greyfriars had never before had a captain of the calibre of Gerald Loder.

There was an excited howl from Bunter in the passage.

"I say, you fellows, here comes Walker."

"Let him come!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Down with the prefects!" roared Bolsover major.

"Hurrah!"

The Remove had tasted blood, so to speak. Walker of the Sixth had no terrors for them now—at least, so long as the excitement lasted, even had he come backed up by the rest of the Greyfriars Sixth.

"I say, you fellows, Carne's with him!"

"Blow Carne!"

"Let 'em all come!"

"Hurrah!"

"We'll handle them!" shouted Bolsover major.

"Yes, rather!"

"Rally round, Remove!" bawled Bob Cherry.

Skinner and Snoop, who had been looking in at the doorway, exchanged a glance and walked away rather quickly. They were not feeling disposed to rally round in such an exceedingly serious affair as a row with the Sixth Form prefects. Fisher T. Fish followed their example, and then Stott and one or two other fellows. But most of the Remove stood their ground.

Loder, wriggling wildly under a crowd of excited fellows, panted out a yell for help.

"Roll him under the table," said Bob Cherry. "Clear the decks for action, you know!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder was rolled, hustled, and kicked under the study table. He was rather glad to get into the refuge, ignominious as it was for the captain of the school.

"Kick him if he puts so much as his nose out," said the Bounder.

"What-ho!"

"Yarrah!" came in a fiendish howl from under the table, as Bolsover major stamped on a foot that Loder had left out.

The foot was instantly withdrawn into shelter. Loder of the Sixth crouched under the table, making himself as small as possible, only too thankful to escape the innumerable feet that surged round him. And in that ignominious position he was gasping and panting for breath when his fellow-prefects of the Greyfriars Sixth arrived at the doorway of Study No. 1.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Kicked Out!

WALKER and Carne came up the Remove passage, with their canes under their arms, in a rather dubious mood.

As prefects, they were bound to interfere, with such an uproar raging in a junior study; and they knew that Loder was there, and that the authority of the Sixth was suffering in his person.

But they were not keen on it.

Loder had been so complete a "beggar on horseback" since he had gained the captaincy of the school, that his friends

fully expected him to bite off more than he could chew; he had made enemies in every Form in the school, and on every side there was irritation and resentment. Now he was mixed up in a shindy with a crowd of fags, and Walker and Carne did not see why they should be dragged into it. However, feeling that they had little choice in the matter, they came; but if the voice of authority failed, they did not intend to stir up a hornets'-nest as Loder had done. They did not desire in the least a fight with a mob of excited fags.

The two big Sixth-formers filled the doorway of No. 1 Study, as they halted there, and stared in.

The study was crammed with juniors—the passage was crowded—almost all the Lower Fourth were on the scene. And their looks showed that, for the moment at least, they were not afraid of the Sixth.

"Where's Loder?" demanded Walker, staring into the study with a puzzled look. "I thought Loder was here."

"I heard him shouting," said Carne.

"Well, I don't see him."

"I'm here!" roared Loder. "Help!"

"We keep him under the table, you chaps," explained Bob Cherry. "He's a bit obstreperous, and he's out of the way there."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"For goodness' sake, Loder, come out of that!" exclaimed Walker.

"You fool—"

"What?"

"How can I come out, through this mob of fags?" yelled Loder. "Don't be a silly fool! Come and help me, you idiot!"

Walker breathed hard and deep.

"Look here, you kids, let Loder out!" he exclaimed. "Don't play the goat—is this the way to handle the captain of the school?"

"Yes—a captain like Loder," answered Johnny Bull.

"Yes, rather."

"We'll jolly well handle you 'too, Walker, if you butt in!" roared Bolsover major truculently.

"Hear, hear!"

"Kick those Sixth-form cads out!" shouted the Bounder.

"Will you stop this?" roared Walker, his anger rising. "By gad, I'll thrash the lot of you."

"Go ahead!"

"Pile in, Walker!"

"Yah!"

"Let Loder out at once," exclaimed Carne. "You can't handle a prefect like this. Let him out."

"Can't we?" grinned Bob. "Why, we're going to keep jolly old Loder as long as we like, and we'll paint him blue and pink if we choose, before we let him out."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you help me, instead of standing there jawing?" howled Loder. "Are you funky of these fags? Come in and help me."

"Help yourself," snapped Walker.

"I never heard of a Sixth-form man hiding under a fag's table before."

"Blessed if I ever did," said Carne.

Loder, crimson with rage, struggled out from under the table. In an instant he was a mark for a dozen boots. Kicks fairly rained on the hapless captain of Greyfriars, and he roared with anguish.

That was too much for Walker and Carne. They charged into the study lashing out with their canes.

There were wild yells from the packed juniors, as the canes lashed. But the Famous Five closed round the two prefects, backed up by Smithy, and Peter Todd, and Redwing, and Squiff, and Tom Brown, and Mark Lanley, and every other

fellow who could get near enough in the swarming crowd. Walker and Carne were collared on all sides by the excited juniors and hurled headlong out of the study.

They crashed and rolled in the Remove passage.

"After them!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Kick them out of our passage."

"Hurrah!"

"Fetch the Head!" screamed Loder, crouching under the table again. "Fetch Dr. Locke! Do you hear?"

Walker and Carne heard, though they did not stop to reply. A dozen Removites were rushing them down, in the passage, and the two prefects ran for the stairs. Loud yells and cat-calls followed them, as they went down the Remove staircase with more haste than dignity.

At the foot of the staircase, they came on Wingate of the Sixth. Evidently the terrific din above had drawn the ex-captain of Greyfriars to the spot. But Wingate was no longer a prefect, and he had no official power to interfere.

"They've broken out," gasped Walker. "You hear them, Wingate—a whole mob of them—"

"They've got Loder in the study, and won't let him go!" panted Carne.

Wingate shrugged his shoulders.

"Look here, the juniors would listen to you, Wingate—"

"I'm not a prefect now," said Wingate quietly. "I can't interfere."

"Well, I'm going to fetch the Head!" panted Walker breathlessly. "I hope there will be something left of Loder by the time he gets there."

And James Walker rushed away.

Wingate of the Sixth walked moodily out into the quadrangle. He had warned Loder, and his warning had fallen on deaf ears. There was nothing more he could do; but it was bitter enough to him to see the discipline of the school going to rags and tatters like this. He had the good of Greyfriars at heart, in a way that Gerald Loder never could have understood.

"They're gone!" shouted Bolsover major, coming back to Study No. 1. "I got Walker with my boot as he went and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, they've gone for the Head—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Loder, you cad, come out!" roared Bolsover major. "Have him out, you chaps. We'll see whether the Sixth can do anything for him now."

"Have him out!" bawled Johnny Bull.

Loder roared as he was dragged out from his refuge. Excitement was at fever heat now; the juniors had forgotten all about consequences. The habit of discipline was broken; Loder was now, in the eyes of the Removites, only a bull who had fallen into their hands, and whom they could deal with as they chose—and they were going to make him sorry that he had ventured into the Remove quarters—came in hand.

"Fag the Remove, will you?" jeered Bolsover, as the hapless Loder was dragged out. "You look like fagging anybody just at present, I don't think."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hands off!" yelled Loder desperately.

"Sit him up!"

Loder was sat up, on the carpet, with the Removites swarming round him. He gasped for breath.

"Now, you cad!" said Bob Cherry.

"Now, you bully!" shouted Nugent.

"Now, you worm!" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Are you going to fag the Remove?" demanded Harry Wharton.

"Grooogh!"

"That isn't an answer. You've asked for this, Loder, and you've got it, and you're going to get some more if you don't draw in your horns. Take that fives bat, Bob, and give him jip if he doesn't toe the line."

"You bet."

"Loder! Speak up!"

"Oh! Ow!" Loder glared apprehensively at the fives bat, flourished in the hand of Bob Cherry. "What—what do you want? Ow!"

"Do you still claim to fag the Remove?"

"Yes!" howled Loder.

Whack!

The fives bat descended on Loder's shoulders at a sign from Wharton, and Loder roared. There was a yell of laughter from the juniors swarming round him.

"Do you still claim to fag the Remove, Loder?" repeated Harry Wharton.

Loder glared round him. He was helpless, outnumbered by a swarm of foes, all of them eager to handle him and rag him. His heart failed him.

"Speak up, Loder!" chuckled Squiff.

"Answer me, Gerald Loder! Do you still claim to fag the Remove?"

"I—I— No!"

"Good!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

In Loder's place, George Wingate would have been cut to pieces before he would have made such a surrender. But Loder was not made of the same stuff as the ex-captain of Greyfriars.

"Are you sorry you tried to fag the Remove?" proceeded Wharton.

Loder hesitated, and the fives bat flourished over him.

"Yes!" he gasped.

"Do you apologise to the Remove?"

"Oh! You young hound—"

Whack!

"Oh! Ow!"

"Do you apologise to the Remove?" roared Peter Todd.

"Ow! Yes!"

"Do you ask pardon, like a good little boy?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Oh! Ow! Yes!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Remove passage rang with laughter. Loder was climbing down now with a vengeance. Certainly he did not mean a word that he uttered; but his humiliation was none the less complete.

"Will you promise never to fag the Remove again, or to attempt to do so?" demanded Peter Todd.

"I—I—"

Whack!

"Ow! Yes! I'll promise anything!" howled Loder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He won't keep his promise, but we'll let all Greyfriars know that he's made it!" chuckled Peter Todd. "Some captain!"

"You young scoundrel—"

Whack!

"Better language," said Bob, chidingly. "This sort of talk will do for the Sixth-Form studies, Loder; but we're rather more particular in the Remove passage."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give him six!" said Tom Brown. "Turn him over and give him six! He gave me six yesterday."

"Bravo!"

And that last humiliation would indubitably have been inflicted on Gerald Loder; but at that moment Hazeldene of the Remove put a scared face into the study.

"The Head, you fellows!"

"MAGNET" PORTRAIT GALLERY.

No. 13.—Dick Penfold (of the Remove).



As he worked in his father's cobbler's shop at Friardale Richard Penfold used to dream of being a scholar one day at a "great public school" like Greyfriars. The chance of entering the school at last came his way, for he won a scholarship. But the snobs at Greyfriars were down on him—or rather his poverty—from the start, and they made his life as uncomfortable as they could. Through these troublous times, however, the spirit of determination that had helped Dick to win his scholarship now helped him to win popularity. It must be recorded, too, that Harry Wharton & Co. stood by him through thick and thin. A clever fellow in the Form-room, a good athlete, and, who knows?—a future "poet laureate," Penfold has a great future in front of him. Shares Study No. 9 with Monty Newland, Trevor, and Treluce.

"Oh!"

There was a sudden silence, in the midst of which a slow and stately tread was heard in the passage. Like a bubble that is burst, the wild excitement in the Remove vanished, leaving the juniors uneasy and dismayed. The steady step of the Head was a reminder of the existence of authority, which they had quite forgotten. All eyes in the study were turned to the door; and there was a deep, dismayed silence as Dr. Locke, the headmaster of Greyfriars, appeared there—stately, calm, frowning, awful!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Head Comes Down Hard!

DR. LOCKE looked into the study. In the deep silence, a pin might have been heard to fall.

Loder lifted himself to his feet, his cheeks burning, ashamed to be seen by the Head in such ignominious circumstances, though very glad that the headmaster had arrived to the rescue.

He did not speak. For some moments the Head did not speak. The juniors stood silent and downcast. Even the cool, iron-nerved Bounder had his eyes on the floor. Wharton was troubled. The Remove rebels had gone rather far,

perhaps; but they were in the right. But they knew only too well that they would not seem to be in the right in the Head's eyes. To the Head, what had happened was a flagrant outrage on constituted authority. They could see that, in his frowning face.

Dr. Locke broke the silence at last.

"What does this mean?"

The Head did not pause, like Brutus, for a reply; he went on at once.

"Loder! I was informed by Walker that you were in this study, seized and mishandled by a number of Lower boys. I could scarcely believe that Walker was not misinformed. Never, in the course of my long career as a schoolmaster, have I heard of such a thing! A captain of Greyfriars mobbed in a junior study!"

The juniors listened in silence.

This impressive exordium was a sign of the wrath to come. They waited for the thunderstorm to burst on their devoted heads.

"I—I came here, sir, to speak to Wharton—" began Loder.

Dr. Locke raised his hand.

"You need not explain, Loder! I desire to hear nothing—my eyes tell me enough."

"Very well, sir," said Loder.

"You are captain of the school,"

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elected only a few weeks ago by the suffrages of all Greyfriars. You are head prefect, appointed by me. It is my duty as headmaster to uphold you with all my authority."

"Thank you, sir."

Dr. Locke turned a scathing look on the silent Removites.

"Who is the ringleader in this riot?" he asked.

"I am leader, sir," said Harry Wharton respectfully. "If you will allow me to explain, sir—"

"There is nothing to explain, Wharton."

"Loder claims—"

"That is beside the point. If you receive injustice, or imagine that you receive injustice, from my head prefect, you are at liberty to appeal to me personally, or to your Form-master, Mr. Quelch. If Loder were utterly to blame in this dispute, it would be no excuse for laying violent hands on the captain of the school. You are well aware of that, Wharton."

Wharton was silent.

He could see that that was so, from the point of view of authority. It was a matter upon which the Head and the Remove could not see eye to eye.

"I will hear nothing!" said the Head sternly. "The time for that is past. If Loder commits faults, you know very well what to do. Your Formmaster will always give you a hearing, and in the last resort, you may appeal to me. Under no circumstances whatever could you be justified in laying hands on my head prefect."

Silence!

"Every boy who has taken part in this riot will be caned by Loder," said the Head. "I shall inspect the punishment myself."

Some of the Removites looked grim, and Loder's eyes gleamed with anticipation.

"The Remove will proceed to their Form-room at once," said Dr. Locke. "Every boy in the Form will go there, and the culprits will be identified by Loder. Go at once."

"But, sir—"

"Silence!"

"Loder—" began Bob Cherry.

"Not a word! Go!"

In silence the juniors cleared out of the study. Word was passed along the passage that the Remove were to assemble in their Form-room, and the whole of the Lower Fourth proceeded to obey the order. Dr. Locke went down the staircase with his slow and stately tread; and Gerald Loder dodged away to his study to get himself into a rather more presentable state.

The Head went directly to the Remove Form-room, where he stood in chilly dignity watching the silent juniors gather in their places.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, stopped Wharton on the way to the Form-room. The Remove master had been out, and he had just come in, to learn with surprise that his whole Form was in disgrace.

"What has happened, Wharton?" he asked, stopping the captain of the Remove in the Form-room corridor.

Wharton coloured.

"We had some trouble with Loder, sir—"

"Indeed! I hear that there has been a riot in the Remove passage," said Mr. Quelch coldly. "The Head has intervened personally."

"Yes, sir."

"I should have expected better things of you, Wharton, as head boy in my Form."

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"I don't think we were to blame, sir," said Harry, uncomfortably. "Loder came to my study with a cane—"

"Loder is head prefect of the school, Wharton, and entitled, and indeed enforced by his position, to administer punishment when required."

"Yes, sir; but when a prefect is a bully and a cad—" began the captain of the Remove, rather hotly.

"It is only a few weeks, Wharton, since Loder was elected captain of the school, and I believe many boys in my Form voted for him in the election."

"That is so, sir. But—"

"The school would not, I suppose, have elected, by a large majority, a Sixth Form man who was unfit for the position."

"That's what happened, sir."

"And you constitute yourself the judge of a Sixth Form prefect's fitness or unfitness for his post, Wharton?"

"Well, no, sir; but—"

"You had better go into your Form-room, Wharton," said Mr. Quelch dryly; and he walked away, evidently very perturbed and annoyed.

Bob Cherry made a grimace.

"We're in the wrong, of course," he said. "Quelch's got his back up now. What a life!"

The Famous Five went on to the Form-room. Most of the Lower Fourth had assembled there, and the rest of the Form came trailing in, one or two at a time, from various quarters, till the whole Form was assembled.

Loder came in at last.

He was washed and brushed, and had changed his coat, and had a newly-swept and garnished look, though he still showed a good many traces of the severe ragging in Study No. 1. He had a new cane under his arm.

Dr. Locke glanced at him.

"You will identify the boys who took part in the attack on you, Loder," he said. "The rest will be dismissed."

"Very well, sir."

"The boys identified by Loder will stand out," said the Head.

Loder moved along, signing to Removite after Removite to stand out from the Form. The Famous Five were first, then Vernon-Smith, Redwing, Peter Todd, Tom Brown, Mark Linley, Bolsover major, Ogilvy, Russell, Dutton, Penfold, and Squiff. Loder had a good memory, and he was sure of these. He was not sure of others, but he did not mean to leave anything to chance. He would have preferred to punish the whole Form without exception; but he had to play up to the Head's severe sense of justice.

"You, Vivian! You, Mauleverer."

Jimmy Vivian joined the growing crowd of delinquents, but Lord Mauleverer hesitated for a moment. Then he walked out.

"Mauleverer had nothing to do with it, sir," said Bob Cherry, addressing the Head. "He wasn't present, sir."

"Is that the case, Mauleverer?" asked Dr. Locke.

"Yaas, sir."

"Then why have you stepped out?"

"The fact is, sir, I feel rather in the wrong about this, sir," said Lord Mauleverer. "I think I ought to take it with the others. I was takin' a little rest on my study sofa, sir, when the rumpus was goin' on, and I was too jolly lazy to turn out. I know I ought to have, but I didn't."

Some of the Removites grinned, serious as the situation was.

"I do not understand you, Mauleverer," said the Head. "If you took no part in the disturbance—"

"No, sir; but I ought to have. I'm as much up against that bullyin' cad Loder as the others, sir. It was just laziness."

"Silence, Mauleverer! You will be caned."

"Yaas, sir."

"Are there any others, Loder?"

"I think Bunter was there, sir—in fact, I saw him—"

"I wasn't!" howled William George Bunter, in great alarm. "I was in my study all the time, sir; I was doing Latin verbs, sir. I was putting in some extra work, sir. Besides, I begged the fellows not to touch Loder; I pointed out to them how disrespectful it was, sir."

"Bunter!"

"It's true, sir; I hope you can take my word! I was in my study, working hard at Latin, sir, and never knew anything about it till afterwards."

"You are contradicting yourself, Bunter, and speaking untruthfully," said the Head sternly. "You will stand out with the others."

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter.

"Bunter had nothing to do with it, sir," said Wharton.

"Silence!"

"But you hear what Wharton says, sir," stuttered Bunter. "I had nothing to do with it, sir. I wasn't even there—"

"You have told me that you urged your Form-fellows not to lay hands upon Loder."

"So I did, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Begged them, sir, almost with tears in my eyes, sir—"

"That will do, Bunter! I am satisfied that you took no part in the riot and—"

"Oh, thank you, sir!"

"But you will be caned with the rest, for untruthfulness."

"Oh crikey!"

"Silence!"

One or two other fellows were called out by Loder, leaving only five or six of the Remove.

"These are all, Loder?" asked the Head.

"I think so, sir. I saw one or two others in the crowd, but am not sure that they took part in the disturbance. I should be sorry to risk punishing any fellow undeservedly."

"Quite so, Loder. The others may go."

Skinner and his friends gladly quitted the Form-room.

"You will now administer six strokes to each of these boys, Loder," said the Head.

"Very good, sir."

"You first, Wharton."

Harry Wharton stood very still, as Loder gripped his cane, and signed to him to bend over a desk.

His eyes were gleaming, and his hands clenched hard. Bob Cherry gave him an anxious nudge.

"Don't play the goat, old chap! You can't back up against the Head!" he whispered.

"Silence, Cherry!"

"Oh, yes, sir!" stammered Bob.

"Wharton, you will submit to your punishment at Loder's hands immediately. Any boy who hesitates to obey my order will be expelled from Greyfriars this day."

"Oh!"

With a set, savage face, Harry Wharton advanced to the desk and bent over it. Then Loder's cane rose and fell.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

WHACK, whack! whack! Any fellow passing the Remove Form-room just then, might have had an impression that the beating of carpets was going on there, so continuous was the sound of whacking.

One after another, the hapless rebels of the Remove went through it, bending over the desk, and receiving six hefty strokes from Loder's cane.

Loder was a powerful fellow, but his right arm was getting a little tired before he was through.

Harry Wharton & Co., being first on the list, had the worst of it. Vernon-Smith came next, and the Bounder was quite pale when Loder had finished with him. Squiff and Tom Brown wriggled painfully; Peter Todd seemed to be understudying a professional contortionist as he limped away. After that the strokes fell lighter, in spite of Loder; he was getting tired. The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak, as it were.

Billy Bunter, much to his satisfaction, came last on the list. He was hardly more than flicked; but he made enough noise for the whole of the Remove. His yells rang far beyond the Form-room.

"Silence!" exclaimed the Head, frowning.

"Yaroooh!"

"Bunter—"

"I'm hurt, sir! I'm suffering fearfully!" howled Bunter. "Yow-ow-ow! Wow-wow-wow! Wow!"

"If you are not immediately silent, Bunter—"

"I'm sorry, sir, but I can't help it. Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"I shall cane you myself, Bunter."

Bunter was silent at once. He found that he could endure his sufferings in silence after all.

Dr. Locke surveyed the mumbling, wriggling crowd of Removites with a stern eye. His face, usually kindly in expression, and indeed benevolent, was severity itself now.

"You have been punished, my boys, for an outrageous breach of discipline," he said. "I trust there will be no recurrence of this disorderly conduct in the Lower Fourth Form. Should it recur, it will be dealt with still more severely. You may go."

In grim silence the Removites went.



The captain of the Remove looked round.

"Go to my study, Wharton."

"What?"

"You will find a volume of Livy on the table. Bring it to me in the Prefects' Room."

Wharton's eyes flashed at the bully of the Sixth. The Remove fellows had expected even Gerald Loder to give them a rest, after what they had just been through. But evidently Loder believed in striking the iron while it was hot. His impression was that the Remove would be in a subdued

mood now, and ready to feed out of his hand, as he had expressed it to Walker and Carne. Never had he made a greater mistake; though he had made a good many since he had become captain of Greyfriars.

"You hear me, Wharton?"

"I hear you, Loder."

"Don't keep me waiting."

"You'll wait long enough before you get me to fag for you, Loder," answered the captain of the Remove contemptuously.

"So you haven't had enough?" asked Loder unpleasantly. "Are you obeying my order or not, Wharton?"

"Not!" said Wharton tersely.

"Come here!" said Loder, slipping his cane down into his hand.

Wharton did not stir.

"Will you bend over, Wharton, or will you be taken directly to the Head?" asked Loder, with a malicious grin.

"Neither."

Harry Wharton walked to the door of Mr. Quelch's study and tapped. Loder followed him, surprised and frowning.

Wharton entered his Form master's study. Mr. Quelch looked at him in surprised inquiry.

"What is it, Wharton?"

"I am ordered to fag, by Loder, sir," said Harry quietly. "The Remove do not fag for the Sixth."

"That is the case, Wharton, but—"

"Loder threatens to cane me for refusing. The Head has ordered me to be caned for resisting Loder. What is a fellow to do, sir?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 929.



Dr. Locke departed, stately and dignified. As soon as he was gone, Gerald Loder walked down the corridor, with a grin on his face, and looked round for the Remove fellows.

The Famous Five stood in a group by the big staircase, talking in low tones. Loder called out:

"Wharton!"

Walker and Carne were collared on all sides and hurled headlong out of the study. They raced for the staircase with a mob of Removites giving chase. And they descended the stairs with far more haste than dignity. (See Chapter 5.)

"Good man!" murmured Bob Cherry to his chums in the passage. "Quelech is bound to stand by us."

Mr. Quelch looked perplexed. Gerald Loder stepped into the doorway. His eyes glittered at Wharton, but he gave the Remove master a respectful and conciliatory look.

"I am sorry you should have been disturbed, sir," he said smoothly. "It is rather a new thing for a Lower boy to appeal from a prefect to his Form master; but I am more than willing to leave the matter in your hands, sir, if you so desire."

"What is the dispute?" asked Mr. Quelch, with a troubled look.

"Loder claims to fag the Remove, and we refuse to be fagged, sir," said Harry Wharton.

"Let Loder speak, please. Proceed, Loder."

"I asked Wharton to fetch a book from my study, sir. He refused in a cheeky and impudent manner, for which I felt it my duty to cane him. Whether the Remove may be fagged or not I presume that any junior may be asked to perform a trifling service for a Sixth Form man?"

"Most certainly."

"However, I would concede the point," said Loder magnanimously. "But I cannot allow a junior to speak to me impudently and disrespectfully in the presence of other Lower boys. There would be an end of all discipline in the school."

"Quite so," said Mr. Quelch. "Really, Wharton, this is a trifling matter with which to trouble me. I see no reason whatever why you should not perform a simple service for the captain of the school. You cannot expect me to encourage idleness and disrespect."

"The Remove do not fag for the Sixth, sir."

"That is a matter for the Head to decide; but fagging or no fagging, you should not be idle and disobliging, Wharton, and, above all, you should not answer a Sixth Form prefect disrespectfully."

"Does that mean that I am to appeal to the Head, sir?"

Mr. Quelch's face set grimly at Wharton's tone. The captain of the Remove, just after receiving a severe "six," was not in the best of tempers, and perhaps his manner lacked respect a little.

"That is not the tone to take with me, Wharton!" snapped the Remove master. "You may appeal to the Head, if you think fit; but I warn you that it is scarcely judicious to waste your headmaster's time on so frivolous a matter."

"Very well, sir; I will appeal to the Head," said Harry.

He left the study, and Loder closed the door and followed him. Wharton rejoined his comrades in the corridor.

"Are you fetching that book, Wharton?" asked Loder, with a grin.

"No; I'm going to the Head."

And Wharton went.

He tapped at the door of the Head's study, and Dr. Locke's voice bade him enter.

The Head frowned as Wharton came in. It was rather an injudicious moment for appealing to the Head; after he had just inspected a wholesale punishment of the Remove for insubordination, especially as Wharton had been the leader—the ringleader, as the Head termed it—in the riot in the Remove passage.

"What is it, Wharton?" asked Dr. Locke sharply.

"Loder has ordered me to fag, sir. I have refused."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 929.

"Indeed!" said the Head sternly. "Have you come here to tell me that you are carrying on the insubordination for which you have been punished only ten minutes ago?"

"The Remove do not fag, sir. We did not fag in Wingate's time."

"That is largely a matter to be decided by the captain of the school, Wharton, in consultation with the other prefects."

"Oh!"

"It appears to me that there is a spirit of mutiny abroad in the Lower Fourth," said the Head sternly. "I warn you that it must not continue. Wharton, for the results may be serious for those concerned. Loder is captain of the school, and you are to obey his orders."

Wharton's face set stubbornly.

"The Remove do not fag, sir," he answered. "Wingate did not put it on us, sir, and Loder has no right—"

"You are not the judge of the rights of the matter, Wharton. I am afraid that you are a headstrong boy, rather in need of a firm hand," said the Head. "The matter you speak of I leave to the discretion of the Sixth Form prefects. I uphold Loder, as captain of the school and head prefect, with all my authority. Take warning, Wharton, and learn the lesson of respect and obedience."

The Head made a sign of dismissal, and Harry Wharton left the study. It was useless to say more. Loder was loitering at the corner of the corridor. It needed only a glance at Wharton's set, clouded face to show that his appeal to the Head had not prospered. Loder smiled complacently.

"Wharton!"

The junior looked at him.

"Bring that book to me in the prefects'-room."

Loder walked away without waiting for a reply. Harry Wharton looked after him, and then went on his way—to the Remove passage. If Loder waited for the book in the prefects'-room he waited in vain.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Up Against It!

THERE was deep discontent in the Remove the following day.

Mr. Quelch, in the Form-room, found that there was a good deal of suppressed excitement in his Form.

Fellows who had been model pupils were giving much less attention to their Form master than was their wont.

Even Mark Linley, who was considered rather a "swot" in the Remove, had other matters than lessons in his mind. Even Lord Mauleverer, the laziest fellow at Greyfriars, was, as Bob Cherry expressed it, sitting up and taking notice. On the question of fagging for the seniors the Remove had only one opinion, and most of them were prepared to stand up for their opinions. Even Billy Bunter had a pronounced objection to fagging, but that was not from a lofty spirit of independence, but from a general disinclination for exertion of any kind. Skinner & Co. fully agreed that they wouldn't fag if they could help it, but they did not mean to enter into conflict with the captain of the school. But the greater part of the Remove were prepared to follow Harry Wharton's lead in the matter, and the captain of the Remove had the deciding voice—all depended on him.

To the Remove it was a burning question.

But it was born in upon their minds that to the rest of Greyfriars it was a matter of very small moment.

In fact, outside their own Form, the rebels were not likely to receive much support or sympathy.

The Third and the Second fagged; and Tubb of the Third, and Gatty of the Second, declared that they jolly well didn't see why the Remove shouldn't jolly well fag, too. Indeed, with more fags to be called on, things should be easier for the Forms at present fagged; so it was distinctly to the interest of the Third and the Second that the Remove should be drawn into the net.

The Fourth Form, headed by Cecil Reginald Temple, took the view that the Removites were cheeky, and that fagging would do them good. Why the dooce shouldn't they fag like other dashed fags? Temple inquired. And his pals Fry and Dabney agreed that there was no earthly reason why they shouldn't. Had Loder claimed to fag the Upper Fourth it would have been a different proposition. But the Lower Fourth—what were they? Nothing, or rather less than nothing, in Cecil Reginald's opinion—cheeky fags, who had the cheek to beat Temple & Co. at football, among their other sins. The more they were fagged the better it was for them, according to Cecil Reginald Temple.

Shell fellows thought much the same, so far as they condescended to give any thought to the matter at all. As for the Fifth, a good many of the Fifth—especially Coker—considered that the Remove ought not only to be fagged by the Sixth, but by the Fifth as well!

On that subject Horace Coker held forth at considerable length in his study, and his friends Potter and Greene, for once, agreed with him. Why shouldn't the Fifth fag, the cheeky little sweeps? Coker demanded; and Potter said cordially, why shouldn't they? and Greene declared that echo answered, why?

Fortunately for the Remove, they were sufficient unto themselves. With all the other Forms indifferent or hostile on the burning question of the day, it was fortunate for the Remove that they found plenty of vigour within their own ranks, and were indifferent to outside opinion.

Indifference or hostility from the other Forms, derision from the fag Forms, did not hurt them very much; but they were a little dismayed to find that the Head and his staff were apparently in favour of Loder and his new system.

The fact was that what was a burning topic in the Lower Fourth, was "only another row in the Lower School," in the estimation of elders.

Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, remarked to Mr. Capper of the Fourth that there always seemed to be something going on in Mr. Quelch's Form. Mr. Capper agreed that there was. Mr. Hacker, master of the Shell, stated his opinion quite openly in Masters' Room that the Remove were an unruly Form, careless whether Mr. Quelch heard him or not.

As for the Head himself, he sailed in lofty majesty so far above the Lower Fourth, that really he was rather out of touch with Lower School politics.

The tremendous question of Remove fagging seemed, to that eminent gentleman, of less importance than some trifling dubious passage in Sophocles, which he flattered himself he was elucidating in his new edition of that great but rather obscure poet.

It was quite possible that he had even forgotten that the Remove did not fag! It might even have passed from his majestic mind that there had been a dispute on the subject in Wingate's time, settled finally in favour of the Remove, with the concurrence of the then captain of Greyfriars.

Such a matter loomed large in the imagination of the Lower Fourth. But it was not very big on the Head's horizon.

Had George Wingate, when captain of the school, pronounced decidedly in favour of fagging the Remove, there was little doubt that the Head would have concurred.

Loder was now captain of the school, and the Head had confidence in him. He gave him the same support that he would have given Wingate.

And so it dawned on the rather dismayed Removites that this tremendous question, which stirred the Remove to its depths, was a matter of small moment to everybody else, and regarded as absolutely negligible by the Head!

"They don't seem to think that it matters at all," Bob Cherry remarked in the Remove passage—"they" being

"His friends are against it—North and Gwynne. It's only Loder's set in the Sixth that are keen on it."

"Loder happens to be captain of the school, with the Head behind him," said Skinner, shrugging his shoulders. "I'm not asking for a Head's flogging, I know that. I'm no keener on fagging for Sixth Form cads than you are; but I'm not going to butt my head against a stone wall."

"Please yourself," said Harry. "It looks like being a risky business, as it turns out. I'm not asking any fellow to take risks unless he chooses. Fellows can back me up if they like."

"We're all backing up—all of us that matter, anyhow," said the Bounder. "And if we have to give in about fagging, we'll make it a feud, and keep on till Loder gets tired of the game."

Wharton nodded.

"It was established clearly enough that the Remove don't fag," he said. "I expected Mr. Quelch and the Head to put Loder in his place, as soon as they knew his game. They don't seem to think it matters."

"They don't know what important

shrilly from the head of the Remove staircase:

"I say, you fellows, here comes Carford major."

Wharton looked round.

Carford major of the Sixth glanced along the Remove passage. He signed to the captain of the Remove.

"I want you, Wharton."

"What for?" called back Harry.

"To fag!"

"Now's your chance, old bean," grinned Skinner. "Tell him to go and eat coke, and let us hear you."

Wharton gave him a look of contempt.

"This way, Wharton," called out the prefect.

"Go and eat coke!"

"What?"

"Coke!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Do you want me to come and fetch you?" shouted Carford angrily.

"Yes, if you want to go down those stairs head-first!" answered the captain of the Remove.

"Come on!" roared Bob Cherry beligerently.

Carford major stared angrily at the juniors. The Famous Five stood in the Remove passage, a dozen paces from him, grimly defiant. Half a dozen other fellows gathered round them.

"We're waiting!" jeered the Bounder.

Carford major made a stride towards them, and then thought better of it. "Handling a prefect" was a risky feat, followed by condign punishment, as the Remove had already learned. But Carford major had no desire to be treated as Gerald Loder had been treated the previous day. Any amount of punishment for the Remove, afterwards, would not have compensated him for that.



Loder, with a crimson face and blazing eyes, was hammering furiously on the door of his study, and shouting to Hurree Singh to open it. Evidently it had not yet occurred to him that the astute nabob had escaped by the window. Through the keyhole, Loder had had a glimpse of the interior of his study and it riled him.
(See chapter 10.)

the rest of Greyfriars, from the Head down to the Second Form.

"Well, it doesn't matter to them," said Nugent.

"But to our esteemed selves the matterfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"We're sticking it out!" said Bob.

"Yes, rather!"

"To the very end!" said Harry Wharton grimly. "If it comes to be flogged, or expelled from Greyfriars, I, for one, will never knuckle under to Loder!"

"Hem! That's a large order, you know," said Peter Todd, a little uneasily.

"I mean it," said Harry quietly.

"If the Head orders us to fag——" said Skinner.

"He hasn't."

"Well, he's left it to the prefects, and it comes to the same thing."

"Not at all. Wingate's against it."

"Wingate's not a prefect now."

chaps we are, especially our Form captain," suggested Skinner, and there was a laugh.

"Well, I'm not giving in," said Harry.

"Talk sense!" suggested Hazeldene.

"Suppose Quelch tells a chap to fag when he's called on. Are we disobeying our Form master?"

"That's impossible, of course. If Mr. Quelch gives us an order, we must carry it out," said Harry. "But Loder and Walker, and Carne and Carford major, can't always be calling on Quelch or the Head. They'd get jolly fed with the whole crew of them pretty soon. If we get a master's order, we've got to toe the line; but if we get an order from Loder and his gang, we can tell them to go and eat coke. I shall, anyhow."

"Till the time comes!" murmured Skinner.

Wharton was about to make an angry reply, when Billy Bunter squeaked out

He stopped.

"I shall report this, Wharton," he said.

"Report, and be hanged!"

"Oh! You're not coming to fetch Wharton now, Carford?" jeered the Bounder. "Why not?"

Carford major, without answering that question, turned and went down the Remove staircase—without a fag. And the Remove fellows, much encouraged by this backing-down on the part of one of "Loder's gang," sent a yell of derision after him.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Fagging for Loder!

"HURREE SINGH!" The Nabob of Bhanipur stopped.

Another day had passed, without, so far, any further friction.
(Continued on page 16.)



THE GREYFRIARS HERALD

No. 250.

HARRY WHARTON, EDITOR

Week Ending Nov. 28th.



TO DANCE—OR NOT TO DANCE?

Some say "Yea" and some say
"Nay,"
We'll keep on dancing, anyway!

recreation is highly beneficial. I have no patience, however, with those who contract "dance-fever," and spend nearly all their spare time—and a great deal that is not spare—in a ballroom. My own dancing days are over, but I still visit the school dances occasionally, and act as judge in the fancy-dress competitions.

WILLIAM GOSLING:

I don't 'old with this 'ere dancin' an' prancin', an' waltzin' an' fox-trottin'. Wot I says is this 'ere—wot's the present jennyration a-comin' to? They spends 'alf their lives in the ball-rooms—brawl-rooms, I calls 'em—when they ought to be educatin' their-selves up to me own standard. If I 'ad spent all my nights dancin' instead of studyin', I shouldn't be able to speak King's English so perfectly as I'm a-speakin' of it now.

(What can we say to this? Gosling's astounding remarks have left us speechless!—ED.)

A DANCING SONG!

By DICK PENFOLD.

I sing of the dancing throng
That flocks the ball-room gay;
And side by side they gaily glide,
While the loud musicians play.
Whisking, whirling, twisting, twirling,
See how the pairs advance!
Swaying, swinging, laughing, singing—
On with the merry dance!

I sing of the fairy feet
Which Billy Bunter owns!
His hefty shoes cause many a bruise,
And his dancing-partner groans!
How he scuffles! How he shuffles,
Attracting every glance!
Blundering, barging, crashing, charging—
On with the merry dance!

I sing of the antics wild
Of burly Horace Coker;
Infusing "pep" into every step—
He's an amazing joker!
Tearing, tramping, fiercely stamping,
Flee while you've the chance!
Every antic drives you frantic—
On with the merry dance!

I sing of the graceful girls,
From Cliff House School they come;
And through the throng they glide along,
Each with a Greyfriars chum.
Dainty dancers, perfect dancers,
How their ways entrance!
Gaily tripping, lightly skipping—
On with the merry dance!

I sing of the dancing throng
That flocks the ball-room gay;
They twist and twirl, they wheel and whirl,
They dance the night away!
Hurry and hustle, scurry and bustle,
See how the pairs advance!
Fun uproarious, grand and glorious—
On with the merry dance!

EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

ON with the dance! Let joy be unconfined."
Byron wrote that a hundred years ago, when dancing wasn't so popular as it is to-day.

Practically everybody trips it on the light fantastic toe nowadays. Doctors says that dancing is a jolly good exercise, and keeps you fit. Our ball-rooms are crowded, not only with youth and beauty, but with people who are in the prime of life, or even in "the sere and yellow."

Of course, we all dance at Greyfriars. Billy Bunter dances with glee at the sight of a big plum-cake; Skinner dances with anguish when Mr. Quelch's cane bites into his palm; and Loder of the Sixth dances with rage when we "cheek" him from a safe distance!

When it comes to serious dancing, Frank Nugent is our star performer. Being lithe and graceful, Franky is a natural dancer, and he's very fond of it, too. Bob Cherry also likes dancing, but, unfortunately, Bob wears boots instead of shoes, owing to his having an outsize in feet! Poor old Bob! He is more at home on the footer-field than in the ball-room.

Coker of the Fifth dances about as gracefully as an elephant, and Billy Bunter barges and charges through the ball-room like a hippopotamus. Yet Billy declares he is the champion dancer of the Remove. His bump of conceit is colossal.

Lord Mauleverer can be a positively brilliant waltzer and fox-trotter when he cares to shake himself out of his normal sloth. But the young ladies of Cliff House School are rather chary about dancing with Mauly. On one occasion, when his partner was Marjorie Hazeldene, Mauly went to sleep in the middle of a waltz! It's a fact. He went to sleep standing up, like a horse. "All this dancin' and prancin'," complains his lordship, "saps a fellow's energy, don't you know!"

The Greyfriars masters, on the whole, are not very nimble on their pins. Mr. Larry Lascelles dances divinely—most athletes do by the way—and Mr. Wally Bunter is as graceful as his cousin Billy is clumsy. But Mr. Prout's antics in a ball-room are akin to those of a bull in a china-shop. Purple of face, and puffing and blowing like a grampus, the master of the Fifth is a man to be feared when he is let loose in a ball-room. And if his partner happens to have a pet corn, Mr. Prout is certain to find it!

Mr. Quelch, when he dances at all, dances indifferently, and he can't concentrate on his steps. His brain is too busy thinking out the next chapter of his "History of Greyfriars." And an absent-minded dancer is an abomination. Neither Mr. Hacker, Mr. Twigg, nor Mr. Capper can truthfully call himself a dancing-man; but Monsieur Morny, the French master, is an excellent performer. The Head doesn't dance at all. He is inclined to regard dancing as rather undignified for a gentleman of his years. In this respect he differs from the headmaster of St. Sam's, whose weird and wonderful antics in the ball-room are described by Dicky Nugent in this issue. Dicky's story is calculated to make our readers dance—with merriment!

HARRY WHARTON.



BILLY BUNTER:

I'm all in favour of dancing; but I can't dance unless I'm well fortified with food. "After supper, walk a mile," says the old proverb. I agree! But you won't catch me waltzing *before* supper—unless it's to the school tuckshop! Dancing is good sport, and very enjoyable to a handsome fellow like me who is popular with all the ladies. At the last school dance the Cliff House girls were tumbling over each other to bag me as a partner.

(The only person we remember seeing tumble over was Billy Bunter himself.—ED.)

ALONZO TODD:

I do not altogether approve of dancing. A gentle fox-trot may be all right, but we dance much too strenuously nowadays. I once heard of a fellow who got "fox-trotter's feet"—a distressing malady of the pedal extremities—through over-indulgence in dancing. He was unable to walk, let alone waltz, for weeks. Another fellow, a friend of mine, contracted "two-stepper's toe"—a complaint which laid him on the shelf for about six months. There was yet another fellow—but I cannot vouch for the accuracy of this statement—who had a most alarming experience. The waltz music got into his head, and he had to undergo a special operation to have it taken out! All things considered, dancing is a very dangerous pastime. I have said nothing about the risk of slipping on polished floors and breaking one's nose, but there is an ever-present risk. Even the "sitting-out" part of dancing is extremely perilous. I once knew a fellow who sat out on the balcony on a cold winter's night, and contracted inflammation of the lungs, pleurisy, lumbago, sciatica—

(Enough! We don't want to fill this issue with a list of all the ills which flesh is heir to!—ED.)

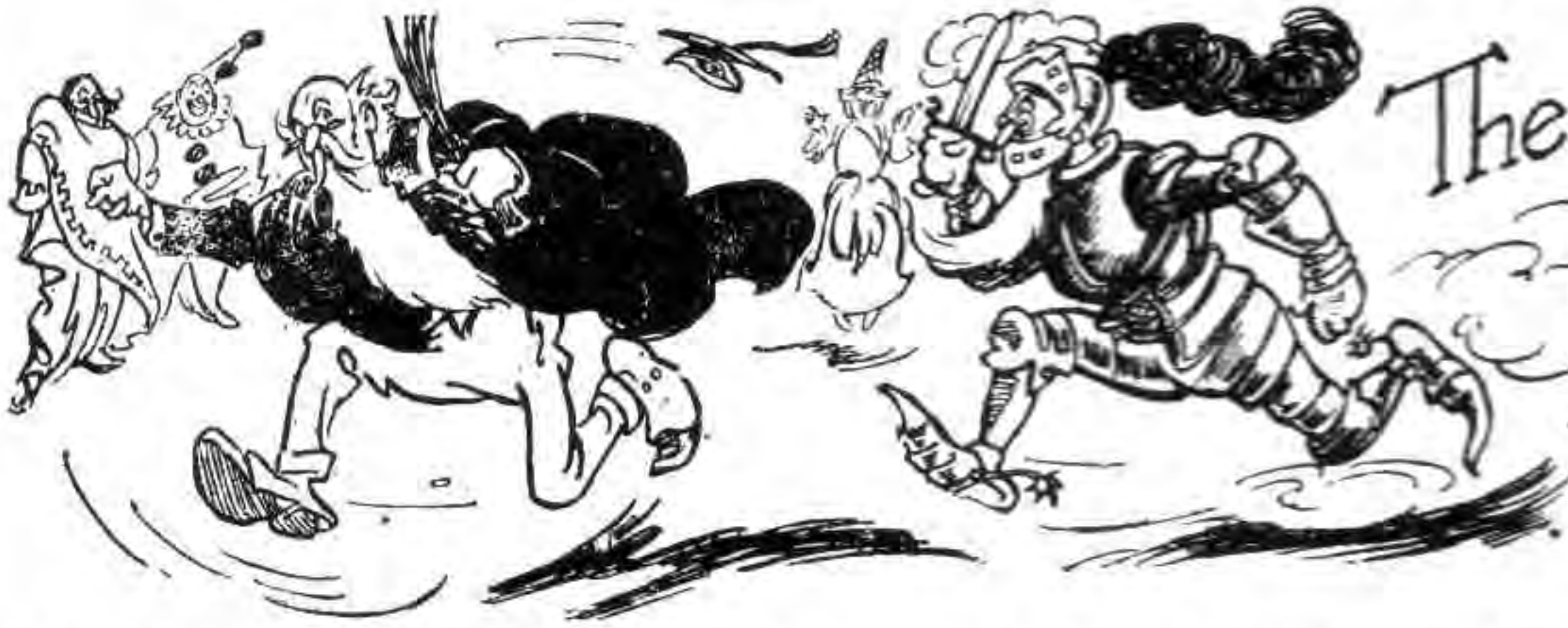
DICKY NUGENT:

people who don't like dancing are frumps and killjoys. dancing is ripping sport. it warms the cockles of your hart, and it strengthens the mussels of your legs. i'm only a shrimp in the Second, but i'm one of the cleverest dancers at Greyfriars. i don't want to blow my own trumpet, however, so please keep as mum as an oyster about this!

(I agree that Dicky can dance better than a good many Removites, Fifth-Formers, and—Shellfish!—ED.)

THE HEAD:

I do not deprecate dancing, as some well-meaning folks do, because I consider that a moderate indulgence in this delightful



The St. Sam's Maskerade!

DICKY NUGENT

Showing the Headmaster of St. Sam's in a New Role.

"I AM the Sheek of Araby!" said the Head.

Mr. Lickham, the master of the Fourth, looked astonished.

"Sir, you surprise me! I had always been under the impression that you were the headmaster of St. Sam's."

"So I am, my dear Lickham. But this evening, at the fancy-dress ball, I shall be the Sheek of Araby. With my long beard and dark, sinister face, I shall make a topping Sheek. By the way, what do Sheeks wear, Lickham?"

The master of the Fourth shook his head. "I'm not well up in these matters, sir," he said. "I'm not sure whether they wear coats of mail or bathing-costumes. Wait a minnit, though! I believe a Sheek wears flowing robes."

"Oh cums! It's a wash-out, then!" said the Head. "I don't possess any robes, flowing or otherwise. And a Sheek never wears a gown and mortar-board, does he?"

"Well, I've never heard of a Sheek doing so," confessed Mr. Lickham. "But, look here, sir! Why not adopt a roll that will suit you better—such as one of the dubble-died villans of history? If you go as a villan, you won't need any disguise!"

The Head looked sharply at Mr. Lickham. "Are you trying to be funny, Lickham?" he demanded. "Are you having me on toast?"

"Certainly not, sir! The only things I ever have on toast are poached eggs."

"What part do you suggest I should take?"

Mr. Lickham debated the point. "Why not go as Guy Fox?" he suggested, after a pause.

The Head shook his pole. "Guy Fox was a tletcherus Spannyard," he said. "I prefer to go as an Englishman. If I went as Guy Fox, I should probably be mobbed by the boys. I want to be a commanding and imposing figger—not an object of scorn and ridicule."

"You're not broad enuff in the beam to go as Henry the Eighth," said Mr. Lickham, looking at the Head's spare form. "And you're not hansom enuff to go as Richard Cœur de Lion."

The Head bristled up at this. "Not hansom enuff?" he ekkoed. "Find a more hansom man than me within the four walls of St. Sam's—"

"You're talking to one now, sir!"

"Bah! Likewise bosh! If I had a face like yours, Lickham, I should be compelled to wear a mask for very shame! On dew consideration, I think I will go to the fancy-dress ball as Sir Walter Rally. He was a great and noble night in his day."

"But he was hansom—" said Mr. Lickham.

"And so am I. I am Sir Walter Rally's dubble, in fact. People have often remarked on my wonderful resemblance to him. My stately and courtly bearing, my polished manners, make me eminently fitted to take the part of Sir Walter."

"Oh, can it!" said Mr. Lickham, who was fed-up with the Head's swank.

"Eh? Can it what?"

"Cork it! Bottle it!" snapped the master of the Fourth. "Without wishing to be in the slightest degree disrespectful, I may say that you are the most bombastick, conceited, stuck-up swanker I have ever struck!"

The Head turned pale and pink and purple by turns.

"Take a month's notiss!" he thundered. "I will not be insulted in this manner! Leave my study at once, sir!"

Without a word, Mr. Lickham turned and stamped out of the study.

As for the Head, he made his way to the school museum, where he selected a suit of

armor, such as used to be worn in the days of Good Queen Bess.

"I shall look top-hole in these trappings!" he murmured. "Everybody will think it's the real Sir Walter Rally come back to life again!"

The Head carried the heavy, clanking armor away to his study, where he changed from his skollastic attire into that of a knight of old.

The fancy-dress ball at St. Sam's was going to be a very grand affair. Everybody was going, with the exception of Mr. Lickham, who said he couldn't be bothered with fancy-dress balls, and had work to do in his study.

Burleigh of the Sixth was going as Julius Seizer, in a Roman toga. And Jack Jolly of the Fourth, who had his arm in a sling, and a closed eye as the result of a scrap, was going as Nelson.

The most daring part of all was being played by the Bounder of the Sixth. Bounder had borrowed a gown, and a mortar-board, and a false beard, and he was going to impersonate the Head. It required plenty of nerve to do this, espeshally as the Head himself would be at the ball, but the Bounder didn't falter. He knew that the Head wouldn't recognise him in his disguise.

The fun commenced at eight o'clock, and Big Hall, which was the scene of the festivities, was thronged with gay Crusaders, and Cavaliers, and pirates, and highwaymen, and Sheeks, and Apaches. Kings and Queens of every period in history mingled with the crowd.

Prezzantly there was a sensation. The door of Big Hall was thrown open, and a night in armor came clanking in. He was the weerdest night the St. Sam's fellows had seen for many a day. Instead of entering with an upright carriage and a nightly gate, he came shuffling in with bent knees and bowed shoulders. His long, white beard swept the floor of the ball-room.

"Oh, my giddy aunt!" eggscclaimed Jack Jolly. "Who's this old buffer supposed to be?"

"Methusalem in male!" chuckled Merry.

"Or the Old Man of the Mountain!" suggested Bright.

There was a peel of laughter as the bent figger came tottering in.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"What a giddy guy!"

The Head—for it was he—halted and glared around.

"Silense!" he thundered. "I am Sir Walter Rally, the hansom, dashing, debon-nare night who flurried in the days of Good Queen Bess!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Some night!"

The Head was furious. He drew the wooden property sword he carried, and flurried it at the laughing throng.

"Have at thee, thou scurvy naves!" he shouted.

And the company fell back, gasping, as the Head danced and pranced with levelled sword.

Then came another sensation. Again the door of Big Hall was thrown open, and in

marched Bounder of the Sixth—a majestic figger in gown and mortar-board. His long, white beard—a splendid imitation of the Head's, trailed along the ground, and in his hand he grasped a fearsome-looking birch rod. Pinned to the front of his gown was a placard with the words;

"DR. BIRCHEMALL—THE TIRANT OF ST. SAM'S!"

When the Head caught sight of the new-comer, he gave a roar like that of the Bull of Basin.

"What! Who dare to take my name in vane—to invest himself with my robes of offis? Speak! Tell me at once who you are, you bearded buffoon!"

Bounder of the Sixth gave a chuckle. Feeling confident that his disguise would not be pennytrated, he wagged his birch rod at the angry Head.

"Go and eat coke!" he said in guttural tones.

This was more than the Head could stand. Grasping his sword, he made a furious rush at Bounder, who fled for his life. He dodged out of the Hall, and fairly streaked down the passidge, with the Head—somewhat handicapped by his armor—clanking in pursuit.

Bounder knew that he would get no mersy if the Head got hold of him. He reached the end of the passidge, and went up the stares four at a time, and found himself in the corridor where the masters' studies were situated.

Before the Head had reached the top of the stares, Bounder had darted into Mr. Lickham's study.

The master of the Fourth had fallen asleep in his armchair. Quick as lightning Bounder whipped off the mortar-board he was wearing and planted it on Mr. Lickham's head. Then he whisked off his gown and flung it over the dozing Form-master. After which, he removed his long, white beard and affixed it to Mr. Lickham's chin. He also placed the birch rod across the master's knees.

Footsteps became audible without—the furious, clanking footsteps of the Head!

Bounder rushed to the window and clambered through it, and disappeared down a rainpipe. He was only just in time, for the next minnit the Head stamped furiously into Mr. Lickham's study.

"Bless my sole!" he eggscclaimed, striding towards the sleeping master, and wrenching away the false beard.

"So it was you, Lickham, all the time! You have had the ordassity to impersonate me! Doubtless it was your idea of revenge bekwase I had given you a month's notiss! And now you are pretending to be asleep! I will deal with you, sir, as a scoundrelly practical joaker should be dealt with!"

Whack, whack, whack!

The wooden property sword, wielded with great vigger by the Head, descended with stunning force upon Mr. Lickham's shoulders.

The master of the Fourth awoke with a wild yell.

"Yaroooooop! What's happening? Is it an earthquake?"

Whack, whack, whack!

The Head desisted at last, when he was quite out of breath.

"There! That'll learn you!" he panted.

Mr. Lickham rose panefully to his feet and staggered towards the tellyphone, with the intention of ringing up the nearest asylum, for he made sure the Head had taken leave of his senses.

How it all ended nobody ever knew. But it will be a long, long time before Mr. Lickham forgets his terribul eggspereience on the night of the St. Sam's Maskerade!

THE END.

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SEEN THE
HOBBY
SUPPLEMENT
IN THIS WEEK'S
"POPULAR"?

THE WORST FORM AT GREYFRIARS!

(Continued from page 13.)

between the Remove and the new captain of Greyfriars. Vernon-Smith had been asked for his lines; and, as they were unwritten, the impot had been doubled, and the Bounder had a thousand lines to write for Loder, instead of the original five hundred. But they were still unwritten. Harry Wharton had been told to come to Loder's study, to answer for not having brought Livy to the prefect's room as commanded. He had not obeyed; but nothing further had been said, so far. Some of the Removites thought that Loder was already getting fed-up with the dispute, and was letting the thing slide.

Harry Wharton & Co. did not think so, however. But Loder, in his official position as captain of the school, had plenty of other matters on his hands, as well as his dispute with the Remove; probably he was busy. Probably, too, he was going warily. His ridiculous experience in Study No. 1 had been talked of all over Greyfriars; it was known to all the school that he had crouched under a junior study table, that he had been kicked by Lower School boots, that he had apologised at the order of the captain of the Remove.

Even his own chums, Walker and Carne, grinned over it; the rest of the Sixth laughed, Wingate was openly contemptuous. The Fifth Form fellows laughed loudly over it, and talked of it when they could in Loder's hearing. Such an episode required to be lived down; and, in spite of the heavy punishment that had fallen on the Remove, it was likely to be a long time before Loder ventured into their quarters again.

If the punishment had quelled the mutinous spirit of the juniors, all would have been well—for Loder. But evidently it had not. And even the "bunking" of the offenders from the school afterwards did not make Gerald Loder willing to repeat his painful and humiliating experience in Study No. 1. So long as the heroes of the Remove were recklessly ready to face punishment, it behoved Loder to imitate the ancient king who "walked delicately."

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had just come into the House with a bag from the school shop, bringing in supplies for tea in the study. Loder and Walker stopped him, and the former addressed him, with a sarcastic grin on his face. The Nabob of Bhanipur regarded them warily.

"My esteemed Loder!" he murmured. It was clear that Loder was "beginning again," after giving his victims a rest. It was equally clear that he preferred to begin at a safe distance from the Remove passage, and with only one member of the famous Co. at a time.

"I'm looking for a fag, Hurree Singh," said the captain of Greyfriars.

"I shall have great pleasure in calling a fag for you, my excellent and honourable Loder," said the dusky junior. "I thinkfully believe that Tubb of the Third is your fag."

"You will do, my pippin," said Loder. "Go to my study."

"The esteemed Loder is already acquainted with the fact that the Remove do not perform fagful services for the honourable and ludicrous Sixth."

"Do you want to be taken before the Head?"

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"It is always an honourable pleasure to go before the august and awful countenance of my respectable headmaster," purred Hurree Singh. "The delightfulness will be terrific."

"Will it?" grinned Loder. "Well, I'm not taking you to the Head! I'm taking you to my study. Come on!"

He grasped the dusky junior by the shoulder.

Hurree Singh's black eyes gleamed.

But he had no chance in the powerful grasp of the Sixth-Former; and even had resistance been possible, he realised that it would not have done. A struggle with a Sixth Form prefect in the hall of the schoolhouse would have brought a crowd to the spot—among them his Form master, and possibly the Head. Fagging or no fagging, he knew what view the Head would take of resistance to the prefectorial authority.

The question of fagging the Remove was a question of absolutely no consequence to anyone outside that Form; even Mr. Quelch pooh-poohed the fuss the juniors seemed bent on making about what seemed to him a trifle light as air. Wingate had warned Loder to expect serious trouble if he persisted, and Wingate was a level-headed fellow; but so far, at least, it seemed that Loder was winning all the way.

So Hurree Singh, though his dark eyes blazed, walked meekly beside Loder into the Sixth Form passage.

Once in that passage, out of the general view, Loder released the nabob's shoulder, and bestowed a kick upon him that sent him staggering along as far as the captain's study.

"Ow!" gasped Hurree Singh.

"That's a tip to behave yourself, and not to argue with a Sixth Form man," grinned Loder.

"My esteemed blackguardly Loder

"Get into the study."

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh dodged a lifted boot, and got into Loder's study. Loder and Walker followed him in.

"Put that bag on the table," said Loder.

The nabob obeyed.

"What's in it?"

"Tuck for tea in our study in the Remove, my esteemed and execrable Loder."

"Open it."

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh opened the bag. It contained an assortment of eggs, and ham, and a cake, and a pot of jam, and several other articles. Loder smiled quite genially.

"This stuff will come in useful," he said. "You can leave it here, Hurree Singh. I don't approve of juniors stuffing at this rate in their studies, and this tuck is confiscated."

James Walker chuckled. Walker had had his doubts about the success of Loder's campaign against that restive and unruly Form, the Remove; but he had to acknowledge that Loder seemed to be "getting away with it," so to speak.

"You hear me, Hurree Singh?"

"To hear is to obey, esteemed Loder," said the nabob meekly.

"Now, you're to tidy up the study and lay the table for tea, and boil the eggs, and make the toast, and so on," said Loder, in a bullying tone. "You've got

Tubb's job for to-day—see? I'm letting Tubb off. A man must be just. I'm not going to have all the fagging done by Third Form kids, while the Remove slack about with their hands in their pockets. In my position, I'm bound to be just and impartial."

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Walker.

"Shut up, Walker! Now, get on with it, Hurree Singh, and have everything ready in a quarter of an hour, when I shall be bringing a couple of friends here to tea. Stay in the room till I come."

The nabob's eyes glimmered.

"I fancy the black rascal will bolt the minute your back is turned, Loder," remarked Walker.

"He won't!" said Loder coolly, taking the key from the lock and placing it on the outside of the door. "Come on."

The two seniors left the study, and Loder turned the key on the outside. They walked away grinning.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was locked in the study. There was no escape for him; and if he had not fagged as commanded, by the time Loder arrived for tea with Carne and Walker, it was likely to go very hard with him. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh realised that very clearly; but it was a fixed determination of the Famous Five never to fag for Loder, and that determination was as immutable as the laws of the Medes and the Persians.

Loder had given Hurree Singh a quarter of an hour, and told him to get on with it. The dusky nabob proceeded to get on with it, though not in a way that Loder would have liked, had he been present to witness it.

The usually smiling and good-tempered face of the nabob was very grim. He glanced round the study, and started "tidying-up" with the mantelpiece. He tidied the mantelpiece by sweeping his arm along it, and sweeping off everything it contained to the floor. There was a crashing and a smashing as Loder's clock, and a couple of vases, and two or three other articles, went down.

The study table came next. It was up-ended, and an inkpot, a stack of books, and a heap of papers went into the fender together.

The nabob's eyes were gleaming now. Loder had ordered him to fag, and he was fagging with a vengeance.

Crash!

A teapot landed in the middle of the mirror over Loder's fireplace. The teapot fell into the fender in fragments, and in the centre of the looking-glass appeared a large gap, with cracks radiating from it.

"The esteemed Loder will be pleased!" murmured Hurree Singh.

He reached into Loder's study cupboard. Loder's crockeryware was shovelled out with a reckless hand.

Tubb of the Third was accustomed to getting a cuff, or a caning, if he so much as cracked a saucer. It was difficult to imagine what Loder would have considered an adequate punishment for Hurree Singh's breakages. All his cups and saucers, his jugs and his jars, lay in fractions on the carpet.

Another terrific crash resounded through the study as Hurree Singh swung the bookcase from the wall, and toppled it over on the up-ended table. There were glass doors to Loder's bookcase. The next moment the doors were minus glass, and myriads of fragments were strewn over the study amid scattered books.

The handle of the door turned. But it did not open—Loder had taken away the key.

ANSWERS
Every Saturday — PRICE 2:

"What's up here?" It was Gwynne of the Sixth calling. "Anything wrong in this study?"

"Nothing, my esteemed Gwynne."

"Hullo! Is that young Inky of the Remove?"

"Quitefully so."

"What are you doing in Loder's study, you young sweep?"

"Fagging for the esteemed Loder."

"Oh, my hat!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh dragged the ashpan from the grate and hurled it among the other things on the floor. Dust rose in clouds all over the study. Then there was a crash as the coal-box was flung into the air and dropped on to the wreck of Loder's crockery, scattering its contents far and wide. Outside the locked door Gwynne of the Sixth burst into a roar of laughter.

"Oh gad! Is that what you call fagging for Loder, you young rascal?"

"That is the Remove style of fagging for the esteemed and disgusting Loder."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gwynne.

He walked away, chuckling. It was no business of his; the now captain of Greyfriars was handling the Remove in his own way. If he did not like the result, that was his own look-out. He was pretty certain not to like it when he saw the terrific state of his study.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh looked about him. He had done pretty well, so far; in fact, not wisely but too well. But he was warming to the work, as if, like Alexander of old, he sighed for new worlds to conquer. A large bottle of ink from the study cupboard was circled in the air till it was empty, and ink streamed over everything in the room. Loder's bed in the alcove was dragged out, blankets and sheets, pillow and bolster, added to the growing stack in the middle of the study. The "confiscated" tuck was added; jam and broken eggs added to the ghastly state of Loder's wrecked possessions.

Ten minutes had passed. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had filled in his time well. Never in all the history of Greyfriars, even at the time of the famous barring-out, had so much havoc been wrought in so short a time.

Loder was likely to return soon, but he was not likely to obtain an easy entrance into his study. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh proceeded to jam wedges under the door, making his wedges by snapping the legs off Loder's chairs. One chair was left intact, to be jammed firmly with its back under the lock, thus effectually fastening the door from the inside.

By the time Hurree Singh had finished there were footsteps in the Sixth Form passage, and Loder's voice was heard.

"Tea's ready now, you fellows."

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh grinned a dusky grin. Loder & Co. had arrived for tea, little dreaming of the condition of the study. The key grated into the lock and was turned back.

"Hullo, this door doesn't seem to open," said Loder.

He shoved at the door, but it did not give. It was jammed and wedged too effectually for that.

"Has that young rascal stuck it somehow?" asked Walker.

"Hurree Singh!" shouted Loder.

"Adsum, my esteemed, rascally Loder!"

"Open this door at once!"

"Rats!"

"What—what did you say?"

"Rats! The ratfulness is terrific!"

Gerald Loder breathed hard.

"The cheeky young rotter has jammed the door somehow," he said. "Shove

your shoulders against it, you fellows. I'll skin him for this!"

The door creaked under the shove of three powerful shoulders. But it did not give.

"You young rascal, will you unfasten this door at once?" panted Loder.

"No!"

"I'll give you a dozen with the ash-plant."

"My esteemed Loder, I regard you with contemptible scorn," said the Nabob of Bhanipur. "You are a bully and a coward, and I despise you terrifically! Go and eat coke!"

"Oh, my hat!" grinned Carne. "That doesn't look as if you've got the Remove to feed out of your hand, Loder." And Walker of the Sixth chuckled.

Loder scowled savagely.

"I'll give him a lesson when I get my hands on him," he said. "Shove at this confounded door, and shut up!"

And the Sixth-Formers shoved again, and again in vain. Meanwhile Hurree Singh was softly opening the study window. It was a good drop to the ground, but the Nabob of Bhanipur was a light and active fellow. He climbed out of the window, held to the sill with his hands, and dropped as actively as a cat.

While Loder & Co. were still shoving savagely at the wedged door, Hurree

Jamset Ram Singh was making his way to the Remove passage by a circuitous route, having finished fagging for Loder.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Shiny in the Sixth.

"I SAY, you fellows, there is a row on!"

Billy Bunter brought that news to Study No. 13 in the Remove passage. Possibly Bunter had selected that study to hear the news first, because a feast was toward in Bob Cherry's quarters.

Bob Cherry, at the table, was slicing a loaf for toast. Mark Linley and little Wun Lung, the Chinese, were kneeling before a glowing fire, making toast. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent, guests in the study, were standing at the table buttering toast. Johnny Bull, another guest in Study No. 13, was stacking buttered toast on a dish in the fender to keep warm. Toast seemed to be the order of the day. It filled the study with quite a pleasant fragrance—very pleasant indeed to fellows who had come in hungry from football. But there were more solid things to come, when Hurree Singh returned from the school shop. But he had not yet returned when Bunter's fat face beamed into Study No. 13.



A SURPRISE FOR THE CAPTAIN
OF GREYFRIARS!

Crash! "Whoop!" Loder emitted a loud roar as he jumped into the study. For just inside the window was a legless chair, with the frame of a broken mirror dangling on it, a wrecked clock, a stack of smashed crockery, and a fender bent double. It was upon this collection that Loder landed—and he rolled over on it, and crashed against an up-ended table and bookcase. "Oh! Great gad! Ow!" he yelled. (See Chapter 11.)

"Frightful row on in the Sixth, you fellows!" he exclaimed. "He, he, he!"

"Frightful row on here, too, now," said Bob cheerily. "If you must cackle, old fat man, why cackle like a cheap American alarm-clock?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Where the dickens is Inky all this time?" said Bob. "Seen anything of Hurree Singh, Bunter? He ought to have been back long ago."

"He, he, he!"

Bunter cackled loud and long.

"That's the row!" he explained.

"Loder's got him!"

"What?" exclaimed Harry Wharton, looking round.

"He's fagging for Loder!" chortled Bunter. "I say, you fellows, he's in Loder's study, and he's fastened the door, and Loder's simply raging outside, and he can't get in! He, he, he!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Half the Sixth and the Fifth are there!" said Bunter. "I say, you fellows, Inky will get a rough time when they get hold of him. Loder's hanging at the door like billy-ho!"

There was a light step behind Bunter in the Remove passage, and a dusky face looked over his shoulder into Study No. 13.

It was the smiling face of the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Bunter did not look round, however, and he rattled on:

"Inky can't get out of the study, you know; he's got the door jammed, and Loder's outside with Carne and Walker, raging. There's no end of a crowd. Of course, they'll smash Inky when they get in. I'm rather sorry. Though Inky's rather a black blighter, isn't he?"

Inky grinned serenely over Bunter's fat shoulder at his chums. There was a chuckle in Study No. 13.

Bunter blinked at the juniors in a puzzled way through his big spectacles. He did not see what there was to chuckle at.

"I say, you fellows, it's a bit unfeeling to laugh, with poor old Inky shut up in Loder's study, and Loder raging like a tiger outside," he said. "He will be fairly scragged when they get him. He's a bit of a rotter; he refused to cash a postal-order for me only this morning. But I'm really sorry for him when Loder gets him. He, he, he!"

A hand dropped on the back of Bunter's collar—a dusky hand—that gripped like a vice.

"My esteemed, fatheaded Bunter—" The Owl of the Remove jumped.

"Oh! Great Scott!"

He blinked round at the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"You!" he stuttered.

"Little esteemed me!" smiled the nabob. "I thinkfully believe that you were alluding to me as a rotter, my excellent and execrable Bunter!"

"No—oh, no—not at all!" gasped Bunter. "Leggo my collar, old chap."

"I think you referfully mentioned me as a black blighter?"

"Nothing of the kind! I—I was speaking of—of—of—"

"Of what, my esteemed, lying Bunter?"

"Of—of— The fact is I—I was— was using a figure of speech!" gasped Bunter, wriggling in Inky's grip. "I—I really meant that I was frightfully cut up, you know, on your account—you being such a pal, Inky— Ow!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh twirled the fat junior out of the doorway and sat him down in the Remove passage.

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Then he came cheerfully into Study No. 13.

"All serene?" asked Harry.

"The sereneness is terrific."

"That fat ass was saying that you'd been fagging for Loder, and was shut up in his study."

"Accidents will happen, my esteemed Wharton. Bunter was telling the truth for once."

"Where's the grub?" asked Johnny Bull.

"I had to leave it in Loder's study. The esteemed rotten Loder confiscated it," explained Hurree Singh.

"Confiscated our grub!" roared Bob Cherry.

"He will not enjoy the eatfulness of the tuck," said Hurree Singh; "the eggs and the jam are smotherfully spread over his study."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Tell us what's happened, Inky," said the captain of the Remove.

Hurree Singh cheerfully explained. His comrades fairly gasped at his description of Loder's study.

"There'll be fearful trouble over this!" said Mark Linley anxiously.

"The esteemed Loder will learn that he cannot fag the Remove," said Hurree Singh. "I am surefully certain that he will not request me to fag in his study again."

"Ha, ha, ha! Not likely!" roared Bob. "Oh, my hat! Let's get along and look at it, you chaps. You'd better stay here, Inky; you'll have to lie doggo for a bit."

"I am not yearning to meet the esteemed and enraged Loder," admitted the nabob. "I will remain here and masticate the excellent toast."

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh remained in the study while the Co. hurried downstairs, eager to see what was going on in the Sixth Form passage. They found crowds of Greyfriars fellows converging in that direction. The Sixth Form passage, usually an extremely quiet and select spot, rang with uproar, and the din drew half Greyfriars in that direction. Harry Wharton & Co. had to elbow their way to get into the Sixth Form quarters at all.

Loder, with a crimson face and blazing eyes, was hammering furiously on the door of his study and shouting to Hurree Singh to open it. Evidently it had not yet occurred to him that the astute nabob had escaped by the window. Most of the onlookers were grinning. The sight of Loder, with a furious face, giving free rein to his savage temper was not edifying. He was captain of Greyfriars, but he had quite forgotten that a captain of Greyfriars was supposed to exhibit self-control, and to keep a steady head in the most trying emergencies. Some of the Sixth were openly sneering as they looked at Loder.

Loder was quite regardless of their opinion, however. He was fairly beside himself with rage.

Through the keyhole he had had a glimpse of the interior of his study. He could not see a tenth part of the havoc from that coign of vantage, but he had seen enough to put the lid on, so to speak. He hammered at the door with clenched fists and roared at the supposed occupant of the study—who was far away in the Remove passage now.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes old Wingate!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Nothing like this in Wingate's time, you chaps! The jolly old Sixth is on the wane!"

Wingate, with a frowning brow, came striding along the Sixth Form passage, the fellows making way for him.

"What's this fearful row?" he exclaimed.

Loder glared round at him.

"Mind your own business!" he snapped.

"Look here, Loder—"

"Do you think you're still captain of Greyfriars?" hooted Loder. "Don't give me any of your lip, Wingate! Get back to your study and stay there!"

Wingate looked at him steadily.

"This isn't the kind of thing to go on in the Sixth, Loder," he said quietly. "Can't you keep your temper a little better than this? You're making an exhibition of yourself and disgracing your Form!"

"Hear, hear!" murmured Coker of the Fifth.

"I've ordered you back to your study, Wingate!" roared Loder. "Are you asking for another prefects' beating?"

"Oh, can it!" broke in Gwynne of the Sixth. "Look here, Loder, there's enough of this! If you can't manage the fags in any better way than this it's time you chucked up playing at captain of the school."

"Yes, rather!" said Hobson of the Shell.

"Some captain!" jeered Coker. "Shut out of his own study by a fag of the Lower Fourth! I'd like to see any fag shut me out of my study!"

"This has got to stop!" said Wingate.

"Why, you cheeky cad—" shouted Loder. "How dare you interfere!"

"As a Sixth Form man, I won't allow this to go on," said Wingate coolly. "You can't turn the Sixth Form passage into a bear-garden, Loder, with your rowing with Lower School fags. If you keep up that din I shall fetch Dr. Locke here."

"Better chuck it, Loder," muttered Carne uneasily. "You can't burst in the door with your fist, you know. What's the good of a shindy?"

"Go it, Loder!" shouted a fag, safe behind the crowd. "This is as good as a circus!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Fetch old Quelch here, Walker!" panted Loder. "He's that black scoundrel's Form master, and will order him to open the door."

"Some captain!" jeered Coker. "Can't get his orders carried out without calling on a Form master!"

Walker hurried away, and returned in a few minutes with Mr. Quelch, who looked very disturbed and angry.

"What is all this, Loder? I heard the noise in my study! Cannot you keep better order than this in the school? Why am I brought here?"

"A boy of your Form has fastened himself up in my study, sir, and refuses to let me in!" gasped Loder in a choking voice.

"Absurd!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"That's how it is, sir," said Walker.

"Hurree Singh—" "If Hurree Singh is in your study, Loder, I will order him to open the door."

Mr. Quelch stepped to the door and tapped.

"Hurree Singh!"

There was no reply from within.

"Hurree Singh! If you are there, answer me at once!" exclaimed the Remove master.

Silence! Not a sound came from the study, and the Remove master turned from the door with an angry sniff.

"The boy is not there, Loder! You are mistaken! He would not venture to leave me unanswered."

"He is there, sir—"

"Nonsense!"

"I tell you he is there! He answered

me only a few minutes ago—besides, I left him in the study—”

“Wharton!” called out Mr. Quelch.

“Yes, sir.”

“Do you know where Hurree Singh is?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Is he in Loder’s study?”

“No, sir.”

“It’s a lie!” roared Loder furiously.

“What, what! How dare you use such language in my presence, Loder?” exclaimed Mr. Quelch angrily. “How dare you, I say?”

“Wharton is not telling the truth!” hooted Loder. “I am perfectly well aware that Hurree Singh is in my study, and Wharton knows it well enough.”

“Nonsense!”

Mr. Quelch rustled away, with a very angry face. He stopped to glance back at Gerald Loder.

“This uproar must cease, Loder. If there is any continuance of it, I shall complain to the Head.”

And with that the Remove master whisked away, leaving Gerald Loder choking with rage.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Pleasant for Loder!

HURREE JAMSET RAM SINGH glanced inquiringly at his friends, as they came back to Study No. 13 in the Remove. The dusky junior was sitting at the table with Wun Lung, disposing of toast and tea. Owing to Loder’s intervention, that was all there was for tea in No. 13 after all. The nabob looked quite cool and unconcerned, but his comrades were very grave as they came in. The uproar in the sacred quarters of the Sixth had its entertaining side; but all the juniors knew that the result would be serious for the fellow who had ragged Loder’s study.

“Is the esteemed Loder still going it strongly?” asked Hurree Singh cheerily.

“Quelch’s put a stopper on the row,” said Bob. “But Loder’s still at his door, saying things to you through the keyhole.”

The nabob chuckled.

“He does not guessfully spot that I have eloped through the excellent window,” he remarked. “But sooner or later the wheezy idea will occur to his feeble brain, and he will come looking for me searchfully. The dodgefulness will be the proper caper.”

“But you can’t dodge after call-over,” said Harry. “You will have to turn up in hall for roll.”

“I shall cut call-over missfully.”

“You can’t put trouble off too long,” agreed Johnny Bull. “It will be better for the matter to come before the Head than Loder—a Head’s flogging isn’t so bad as what Loder wants to hand out.”

“That’s so!” said Bob.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh nodded his dusky head cheerfully.

“Just what I was thinkfully reflecting,” he said.

And it was agreed that the nabob of Bhanipur should lie “doggo” as long as he could.

Along the Remove passage there was much chuckling; all the fellows knew that Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was in his study, while Loder remained convinced that he was in the Sixth-form quarters. Not a fellow said a syllable about it, outside the Remove passage; even Skianer and Snoop, even Billy Bunter, played up loyally. They had no desire to help Loder in his campaign against their own Form; and so, although all the Remove knew that Inky

was in Study No. 13, no one outside the Remove had the slightest suspicion of it.

Roll-call was early in the November days, and at the due time the chums of the Remove went down to Hall, leaving Hurree Jamset Ram Singh in the study.

Missing call-over meant lines; but in the circumstances, lines were not very serious. Besides, Loder handed out so many lines to his old enemies in the Remove, that a few more or less mattered little. Hurree Singh did not worry about the prospect of a few more lines.

There were many grinning faces among the Greyfriars fellows who took their places in hall. Mr. Quelch, who was to take the roll, was frowning. Loder of the Sixth stood talking with Walker and Carne, with a scowling brow; but there were lurking smiles on the faces of Carne and Walker. The cynical philosopher has told us that there is always something not displeasing in the misfortunes of our friends; and that was true, at least, of fellows like Loder and his set.

Walker and Carne found not a little secret entertainment in the stormy career of their pal as captain of Greyfriars. Moreover, Loder had displayed so many airs and graces since he had reached that eminent position, that every fellow in the Sixth, friend or foe, liked to see him taken down a peg or two. And a Sixth-form prefect who was shut out of his own study by a cheeky junior was undoubtedly being taken down a considerable number of pegs.

“After dark, yes,” Loder was muttering, in response to a suggestion from Walker. “How the deuce can a man be seen climbing into his own study window in open quad, by all Greyfriars? Too ridiculous!”

Harry Wharton & Co. caught the words, as they passed the group of seniors, and they grinned to one another. Apparently, Walker had suggested entering the barred study by the window.

Certainly the sight of the captain of the school clambering up to his study window from the quad would have made all Greyfriars stare. Loder had already made a pretty exhibition of himself; but he was not quite prepared for that.

“Too ridiculous!” agreed Carne, closing one eye at Walker. “The fact is, the whole thing’s rather ridiculous.”

“There’s a lot of cackling going on about it,” assented James Walker. “This really isn’t doing you any good, Loder. Lots of fellows are saying that you’d have done better to let the Remove alone.”

Gerald Loder gritted his teeth.

“I’ll bring the cheeky young cads to heel yet,” he said.

“Well, you were tellin’ us that you’d soon have them feeding from your hand,” said Walker blandly. “I hope so, I’m sure. But it seems rather a long time coming about.”

“It does,” said Carne.

“Look here—” began Loder fiercely.

“Silence!” called out Gwynne of the Sixth, as Mr. Quelch prepared to take the roll; and Loder gave Gwynne a savage look, and relapsed into silence.

Mr. Quelch, with a grim face, called the roll; and his face grew grimmer, as one member of the Remove failed to answer “adsum!”

“Hurree Jamset Ram Singh!” he repeated.

No answer—though there were grins and winks among the Remove fellows.

The nabob of Bhanipur was marked down as absent. Loder knew where he was—or thought that he knew. Loder had “tea’d” in Walker’s study; and

he was still under the impression that his own study was occupied by the rebel of the Remove. He had, in fact, locked the door again on the outside, so that Hurree Singh should not escape unseen. Loder did not intend to report that culprit to the Head; he intended to deal with him himself; in fact, he was yearning to deal with him himself, with his stoutest ashplant.

As soon as roll-call was over, Loder hurried away to the Sixth-form passage.

He thumped on the door of his study. “Hurree Singh!” he called out.

No answer.

“You black scoundrel!” breathed Loder. “Do you hear? If you don’t open this door at once, I’m coming in at the window, and then I’ll skin you! I’ll cut your black skin off your back! Do you hear?”

Silence.

Loder set his teeth. Darkness had fallen, and he made up his mind at last to try the window. It really seemed that there was nothing else to be done; he could not be shut out of his quarters all the evening. His belief was that the junior was too frightened by what he had done, to venture out—the fact that he had cut call-over was a proof of that, from Loder’s point of view. He was going to show him that his fright was well-grounded.

He called Walker and Carne and Carford major to his assistance, and the four seniors left the House together, to walk round to Loder’s study window. They passed a crowd of grinning faces as they went.

It was known far and wide that Loder was going to “burgle” his own study, as Temple of the Fourth had termed it; and the peculiar situation was the one topic in the House now, and evoked endless laughter. Such a situation in Wingate’s time as captain of Greyfriars was unthinkable; and a great many fellows were thinking that a captain of the school who could not enforce his authority more effectively than this was not likely to retain his eminent position long. It had not crossed Loder’s mind that he was unfit to hold the position he had gained by trickery; but certainly it had crossed every other mind at Greyfriars.

Coker of the Fifth, standing in the doorway with his friends Potter and Greene, was openly jeering. Coker had had his own troubles with the new captain of the school. Fifth-Former as he was, he had had the ashplant, and his feelings towards Loder were Hunnish and implacable.

“Some captain!” jeered Loder. “Who ever heard of a captain of Greyfriars barred out of his study and sneaking in at the window? Did you, Potter?”

“Never!” grinned Potter.

“Did you, Greeney?”

“Well, hardly ever!” chuckled Greene.

Loder affected not to hear those remarks as he passed, though his eyes gleamed. His fellow-prefects looked very uncomfortable, and were glad to get out of the general observation of Greyfriars into the shadows of the quad.

Loder had hoped to scale his study window unseen and unnoticed; but he found that the windows on either side of his own were brightly lighted. The two adjoining studies belonged to Gwynne and Tom North; and both of them had their light on, and were standing at the open windows, with smiling faces. Gwynne had two or three friends in his study, too, and they all looked out and smiled at Loder & Co.

"Go it, Loder!" came a junior's shout from the shadows.

Loder glared round.

"Who's that?" he called out.

"Find out!" shouted back the voice, the owner thereof being safe in cover of the darkness.

"That's a Remove fag!" hissed Loder. "He's out of his House after dark! That's a licking for him!"

He made a stride in the direction of the mocking voice. Carford major caught him by the arm.

"For goodness' sake, Loder, chuck it! Let's get through with this before we're laughed to death by all Greyfriars."

"Look here, Carford——"

"Get on with it, I tell you!"

"Yes, for goodness' sake get on with it, Loder!" said Walker. "Suppose the Head should look out of his window! What the thump is he going to think of a captain of the school who has to get into his study in this way?"

"How can I help it, when that cheeky young cad has barred my door?" hissed Loder. "Don't be a fool!"

"Wingate would have helped it, somehow!" said Walker tartly. "This kind of thing never happened in Wingate's time, Loder; and I can jolly well tell you that all Greyfriars is thinking the same, too!"

"Go it, Loder!" yelled a voice from the gloom. "We're watching you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Show him the way to go home!" roared another voice. "He's tired, and he wants to go to bed!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the unseen juniors in the shadows.

Loder glared round furiously. Where he stood, he was well lighted from Gwynne's and North's study windows, but at a little distance the misty darkness was impenetrable. Undoubtedly a good many juniors were out of their House, which was against the rules,

after dark; but even Loder realised that it was futile to chase them in the deep gloom. Evidently his wisest course was to get into his study as quickly as he could and end this extraordinary scene.

"Bunk me up, you fellows!" muttered Loder, husky with rage.

"Bunk him up, you fellows!" mimicked the voice from the darkness. "Show him the way to go home!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Walker and Carne "bunked" Loder upon the window-sill. He found the lower sash of his window partly open—as it had been left, as a matter of fact, by the nabob in making his escape. It was easy for Loder to shove the sash up and jump into the study.

Crash!

"Whoop!" came in a roar from Loder.

In ordinary circumstances, it was easy enough to jump into the study from the window without accident. In fact, Loder had done so a good many times at a late hour of night, after some of his secret nocturnal excursions to the Cross Keys. But the circumstances in Loder's study were not ordinary now.

Just inside the window was a legless chair, with the frame of a broken mirror dangling on it, a wrecked clock, a stack of smashed crockery, and a fender bent double. It was upon that collection that Loder landed, and he rolled over on it, and crashed against an up-ended table and bookcase.

"Oh! Great gad! Ow!"

"What on earth's the matter?" called out Walker.

"Oh! Oh, gad! I'll skin him!" yelled Loder. "Mind he doesn't dodge out of the window before I get a light."

"We're watching!"

Loder groped his way about his wrecked study and put on the light. He glared round for Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. The dusky nabob was not to be seen; but the fearful state of his study struck Loder's eyes at once, and

he fairly gasped. If two or three earthquakes had occurred all at once they could scarcely have done more havoc than Hurree Jamset Ram Singh in "fagging" for Loder.

"Good heavens!" gasped Loder, aghast.

Walker pulled himself up on the sill and looked in.

"Got him?" he asked. "Oh, great Christopher Columbus! What on earth's happened to your study, Loder?"

Loder looked almost dumbfounded.

"He—he—he's done this!" he stammered at last. "I knew he'd done some damage, but—but—but——" Words failed Loder.

"Great gad! I say, take a friend's advice and give up fagging the Remove," said Walker. "It's not a paying game, it isn't, really."

"Shut up, you fool!" hooted Loder.

"Polite, I must say!" said Walker. "As you're so jolly good-tempered, I'll leave you to it, old man."

James Walker dropped from the sill again, and walked away to the doorway of the House. Carne and Carford major followed him.

Loder, in his study, grasped a cane, and rooted about the room for Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. His supposition was that the dusky junior was hiding somewhere amid the wreckage he had made. But he soon discovered that the Removite was not in the study.

"The—the young scoundrel!" hissed Loder, comprehending at last. "He must have cleared by the window. Why, lots of fellows must have seen him, and nobody's said a word to me! I—I—I—I'll skin him! I—I—I—I'll——"

The captain of Greyfriars unwedged his study door, and opened it. He could hear sounds of laughter from the other studies along the Sixth Form passage. But he did not heed. Cane in hand and fury in his face he rushed away in search of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

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THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 929.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Baffling a Bully!

"BED!" Loder of the Sixth looked into the Rag with a scowling face. It was a few minutes to half-past nine, which was bedtime for the Lower School at Greyfriars.

Loder's eyes roved over the crowded room, full of juniors of the Fourth and Lower Fourth. But he did not see the dusky face he sought.

For most of that evening Loder had been seeking Hurree Jamset Ram Singh; but he had not found him.

In the Rag, in the passages, in the Remove studies, everywhere he could think of, even to the box-rooms, he had sought the elusive nabob, and had found him not.

His search for Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was quite a jest in the House. Fellows gathered in groups to watch Loder rooting about, cane in hand.

Never had a captain of Greyfriars cut so ridiculous a figure; but Loder was too



When the door closed behind Loder, Bob Cherry rolled out of bed and crossed to the door and turned the key. Harry Wharton lighted a candle-end. "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" called out Bob. "You can show up, Inky!" From under a bed at the end of the dormitory emerged the smiling face of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "You can turn in now, Inky, old man," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "All serene until to-morrow, at any rate." (See Chapter 12.)

enraged to think of that. He cared for nothing but to inflict the most condign punishment upon the Remove who had ragged his study. But he was disappointed; Hurree Singh was lying low—very low.

But at bed-time Loder felt sure of his prey. The nabob would have to come out of his hiding-place, wherever it was to go to the Remove dormitory. Then he would be at Loder's mercy.

Loder had guessed, by this time, that the study-raggers desired the matter to come before the Head. If fagging the Remove meant continual trouble to the Head, fagging the Remove was not likely to continue long, as Peter Todd had sagely pointed out to his friends. And though the Head was certain to flog the junior who had ragged the captain's study, a Head's flogging, severe as it was, was preferable to a thrashing from Loder in his present mood. From every point of view, it suited Harry Wharton & Co. for the Head to be dragged into the row.

But it did not suit Loder.

So after a long and fruitless search for the nabob, he bided his time till half-past nine. It was Gwynne's duty to see lights out for the Lower Fourth; but Loder, as head prefect, had power to take over that duty if he liked—and he did so. So it was Loder who came along to the Rag, with an ashplant under his arm, to shepherd the Remove off to their dormitory.

But Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was not in the Rag; and he did not join the procession of Remove fellows to the dormitory.

"Wharton!" rapped out Loder.

"Yes, Loder," said Wharton, quite meekly.

"Where is Hurree Singh?"

"I haven't seen him for some time."

Loder gritted his teeth.

If a junior was absent from dormitory, he was bound to report the matter to the headmaster. But he did not intend to do so. He was fairly certain that Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was lurking in some hiding-place, ready to dodge into the dormitory when lights were out. After that, Loder would be able to deal with him.

"Turn in!" he snapped.

The Removes turned in.

Loder put out the lights, and left the dormitory, making no further reference to the absence of the Nabob of Bhanipur.

But he did not go far. He went as far as the end of the dormitory corridor, where he leaned on the wall and waited. If Hurree Jamset Ram Singh came sneaking up to the dormitory in the dark, Loder was ready to collar him as soon as he came. If he reached the dormitory by a more circuitous route, a visit to the dormitory would unearth him. It was certain that he had to go to bed sooner or later; Loder had only to wait. So he waited, with what patience he could muster.

There was a soft chuckle in the Remove dormitory when the door closed behind Loder.

Bob Cherry rolled out of bed and crossed to the door and turned the key. Harry Wharton lighted a candle-end.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! You can show up, Inky!" called out Bob.

From under a bed at the end of the dormitory emerged the smiling face of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I say, you fellows, Loder will come back, you know," said Billy Bunter. "You'd better go and take your licking, Inky. Loder's just the sort of beast to pitch into other fellows when you make him waxy. You've got to have it, you know, and I think—Yaroooooh!" Bob Cherry's pillow cut off the rest of Bunter's remarks.

"Turn in, Inky, old man," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "All serene until to-morrow, at any rate."

"The sereneness is terrific."

And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh turned into bed.

Billy Bunter's deep snore was soon heard; but he was the only Remove fellow who went to sleep. The Removes expected Loder to return; and they waited for him. In about a quarter of an hour they heard the door-handle turn. Then Loder's voice was heard.

"Open this door! Have you locked this door? Open it at once."

"Not a word!" whispered Wharton.

There was a faint chuckle in the dormitory; otherwise, silence. Loder knocked loudly at the door.

"Wharton!"

No answer.

"Open this door! I know Hurree Singh is there! Hurree Singh, come and open this door at once."

Silence.

"Do you hear me, Hurree Singh?"

Loder was quite well aware that Hurree Singh was there, and that he heard. But there came no reply from the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Only Billy Bunter's deep snore answered Loder.

There was another pause; and then Loder's retreating footsteps were heard in the corridor, and they died away towards the stairs. The new captain of the school had given up, temporarily, his tussle with the worst Form at Greyfriars!

THE END.

(Mind you read the next story in this remarkable series, boys. The title alone—"Rebels of Greyfriars!"—gives you an idea of this treat in store. Order your MAGNET early.)

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WOLVES v. TIGER! A secret society, the Wolves, declares war upon Ferrers Locke; but in the celebrated detective they meet a tiger, and a tiger is the master of a wolf, or a pack of wolves, any day!



The MYSTERY of LONE MANOR

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A Tight Corner!

IN a moment Jack Drake had dragged the heavy tablecloth from the table in the centre of the room. Locke wound it round Drood's mouth and limbs, leaving him helpless, glaring up with his dreadful, unseeing eyes.

Locke and Jack stood listening. There was not a sound. It seemed as though Silva was upstairs with the rest of the gang who were in the house, preparing Adam Guelph for his removal by the aeroplane.

"Wonderful luck!" muttered Ferrers Locke grimly. "Young 'un, take this!" He held out a snub-nosed automatic. "You may need it. Stand by in case of trouble, though don't betray the fact we aren't all that we seem if things go all right."

Between them they dragged Drood across the room, concealing the helpless man behind a screen.

Jack shuddered.

"It's rotten, fighting a blind man!" he whispered. "But there's something uncanny about Drood, gov'nor! He gives me the creeps somehow—"

"Had to be done," said Locke. "Look here, the plane's in the field beyond the garden, behind that line of willows. You have to cross the dyke and the ditch by a plank bridge. Get off and hide yourself among the bushes overlooking the field—I want you ready to hand if you're wanted! I'll tell Silva you've cleared off. Sharp's the word!"

"Right, gov'nor!"

Jack slipped the automatic into his pocket and walked out into the garden.

There was the chance that he was being watched from an upstairs window, so he made his way leisurely down the path to the gate. As soon as he was outside the garden he scouted back, making his way to the line of willows by the dyke.

The plank bridge was out of sight of the house, and he ran across the field beyond. The plane was lying with her tail towards the house. A few moments later the youngster was concealed in a

clump of bushes fifty yards from the machine, at the foot of the dyke.

Before long Silva appeared through the trees, followed by Locke in his airman's kit, and two men carrying an inert form—Adam Guelph, the man who

so mysteriously had vanished from Lone Manor!

He was a good-looking old man, Jack could see, though his face was white as death and the eyes were closed—drugged, as Locke had said.

The little knot of figures hurried towards the waiting aeroplane, and the drugged man was put into the little cabin behind the pilot's seat. One of the two men who had been carrying him climbed in, too.

"That's a nuisance for the gov'nor," thought Jack. "Still—"

The youngster broke off.

Locke and Silva had been standing by the plane, talking earnestly together. No doubt Silva was giving the man he believed to be Harrison his last instructions. But now Silva swung round, startled, as a sudden cry rang out somewhere behind him.

A staggering figure was crossing the plank bridge—a man who reeled and swayed as he came. One arm was outflung, pointing to Ferrers Locke.

A wild, high-pitched voice came to Jack Drake's ears:

"That man—that's not Harrison!"

Consternation flashed into Silva's face. He swung round to Locke, with a startled cry.

The staggering figure came on, and even before the newcomer spoke again a flash of intuition had told Jack Drake who this man was.

"That's not Harrison! I—I'm Harrison—"

Locke had told Jack that he had "collared" Harrison. The detective, Jack realised, had stripped the man of his flying kit and left him trussed up somewhere among the bushes not far from the house, as they had left Drood trussed up in the house itself. But Harrison had managed to get free.

The airman had come in time to tell Silva the truth—in time, it seemed, to foil Ferrers Locke utterly!

"Stop him! That's not Harrison!"

As the wild cry rang out again, Silva sprang with a shout at Ferrers Locke.

There came a gleam of steel in the morning sunlight. Ferrers Locke was standing his ground coolly, an automatic held carelessly in his hand.

INTRODUCTION.

TOM TRAVERS, a young goalkeeper of great promise, playing for Larkham City, receives an urgent message—"Come at once"—from

ADAM GUELPH, his uncle, an old miser, who resides at Lone Manor, a gloomy old house, complete with moat and drawbridge. Fearing that something has happened Travers confides in

FERRERS LOCKE, the world-famous detective of Baker Street, and

JACK DRAKE, his clever boy assistant.

In company with Travers, the detective and his assistant journey to Lone Manor. On their arrival they find the house empty, although ample traces remain of an interrupted meal. Even the servants have disappeared. Locke discovers a playing-card, the Jack of Diamonds, lying at the foot of the stairs. Pricked out on this card are the words, "Los lobos," a Spanish term meaning "the wolves." Further investigations bring to light a box floating in the moat. Inside this box is an unfinished message addressed to Travers. Locke makes a sudden departure from the Manor, and during his absence the old house is visited by a stranger. Travers and Drake engage this intruder, and in the struggle Drake is pitched into the moat. The sluice-gate being open, the plucky lad is swept through a tunnel for some considerable distance, but at last he manages to clamber out of the water. He is unable to find his way, however, on account of the heavy mist overhanging the marshland, but, sighting a house, he asks the inhabitants to direct him to Lone Manor. At mention of the Manor the occupants of the house—Silva, and Drood, a blind man—show some signs of interest. Drake's curiosity is aroused. Then, to cap it all, he discovers that a third man at the house, dressed as an airman, and passing under the name of Harrison, is none other than Ferrers Locke. And in the house is the missing man, Adam Guelph! While Drake and Locke are swiftly explaining matters Drood, the blind man, comes upon them. He has overheard all. With a cry of rage, he springs at the detective, but Ferrers Locke brings him to the floor.

(Now read on.)

At sight of it Silva halted dead.
"That's right," murmured Locke.
"Best keep your distance, Mr. Silva."
The detective backed towards the aeroplane.

"Get out!" he ordered curtly to the man in the cabin, and with that menacing steel-blue barrel hovering in his direction, the man hastened to obey. From Silva came an unexpected cool laugh.

"Fooled!" he said silkily. "Fooled, by gad! I don't know who you are, but you're a clever specimen."

The real Harrison was at Silva's side now, his eyes burning resentfully at the man who had borrowed his name. The four men were in a little group, eyes on Locke, watching eyes that waited absorbedly for an opportunity to rush in.

Ferrers Locke moved backwards towards the pilot's seat.

He was wondering—could he get aboard and fly off without calling in the aid of Jack Drake? He wanted to if he could, so that Jack could stay to observe the movements of Silva and Drood.

But Silva was no coward. Locke was not going to escape with Adam Guelph without an effort on his part. Again he gave that disarming laugh.

"I congratulate you, sir! A very neat little impersonation. But I am afraid it is rather dangerous to interfere with the Wolves. In the end, of course, we shall be revenged. But, meanwhile, I am willing to admit that you score!" Then suddenly the silky voice hardened. Two quick, incisive words: "Rush him!"

As one man, the four sprang at Ferrers Locke.

Crack!

The automatic spat fiercely, and one of Silva's companions clapped a hand to his arm with a cry; in cold blood the detective could not bring himself to shoot with deadly effect. But the other three were on Ferrers Locke, dragging him down. The weapon was wrenched from his hand.

Silva reeled back from a smashing blow between the eyes. And then from behind came a sudden sharp command: "Hands up!"

Silva gave a quick cry, and turned his head. Jack Drake was standing with automatic raised, and slowly the man's hands rose above his shoulders. The others followed his example. Ferrers Locke picked up his own weapon with a little laugh.

"Good for you, young 'un!"

With a desperate, passionate gleam in his eyes, Silva glanced from Jack to Locke. He was like an animal at bay. But, covered as they now were on two sides, the four crooks saw that the game was up.

Again the wonderful coolness of Silva asserted itself. With a spirit that Jack could not help but grudgingly admire, he laughed softly.

"Checkmate!" he murmured.

"Glad you've noticed that!" answered Locke pleasantly. He moved towards the head of the plane. "Keep 'em covered, Jack. And if they try any more games, shoot to hit!"

Locke dragged the great propeller round, and the engines started.

"In you get, Jack," he said. "Keep 'em covered from the cabin."

"Right, guv'nor," answered Drake cheerfully. "Now then, keep 'em up! And get back—quick!"

Before that threatening barrel the four men moved slowly away from the plane, their arms raised. While Locke covered them, Jack climbed into the cabin beside the drugged man.

"Right, guv'nor!"

With Jack covering them from the cabin, Silva and his companions watched impotently while Locke swung himself up into the pilot's seat behind the great engine, slowly ticking over. He moved the throttle, and they roared out, the propeller thrashing the air. The plane began to move, and swiftly gathered speed.

Jack had a glimpse of Silva racing instinctively forward. Down the field the plane taxied, bumping over the rough grass. The long dyke at the farther side seemed to come rushing towards them, and for an instant it seemed to Jack that they would foul it. But the machine took the air in fine style, soaring above the dyke with yards to spare. Up into the crisp, cool air,

round in a sweeping half-circle—away over the great expanse of flat marsh-land, with water gleaming below them, away towards the distant hills.

Already Ferrers Locke had succeeded in locating and rescuing Adam Guelph, the missing man from Lone Manor! The Wolves had been outwitted by the wizard detective! But in them Locke had found a foe cunning and ruthless; the duel between them was not over yet—the reason of it all, the secret of Lone Manor, had yet to be discovered.

The plane droned on, higher and higher into the clouds, swerving northwards till, to the watching, smouldering eyes of Silva, it was a mere dot in the blue.

A Set Back!

IT was soon after eight o'clock that the biplane came dropping out of the sky into a broad meadow on the outskirts of Birmingham. The big red-brick house close by was that of Ferrers Locke's old friend, Dr. Grieve.

Jack Drake was pacing restlessly up and down the terrace behind this house twenty minutes later, when Locke appeared from the doctor's study and came towards him.

"Well, my lad," said the detective, clapping his young assistant on the back, "I suppose you're bursting with questions?"

Jack nodded.

"That's the truth, guv'nor! There's one thing, anyway. I've just discovered that the automatic you gave to me this morning wasn't loaded."

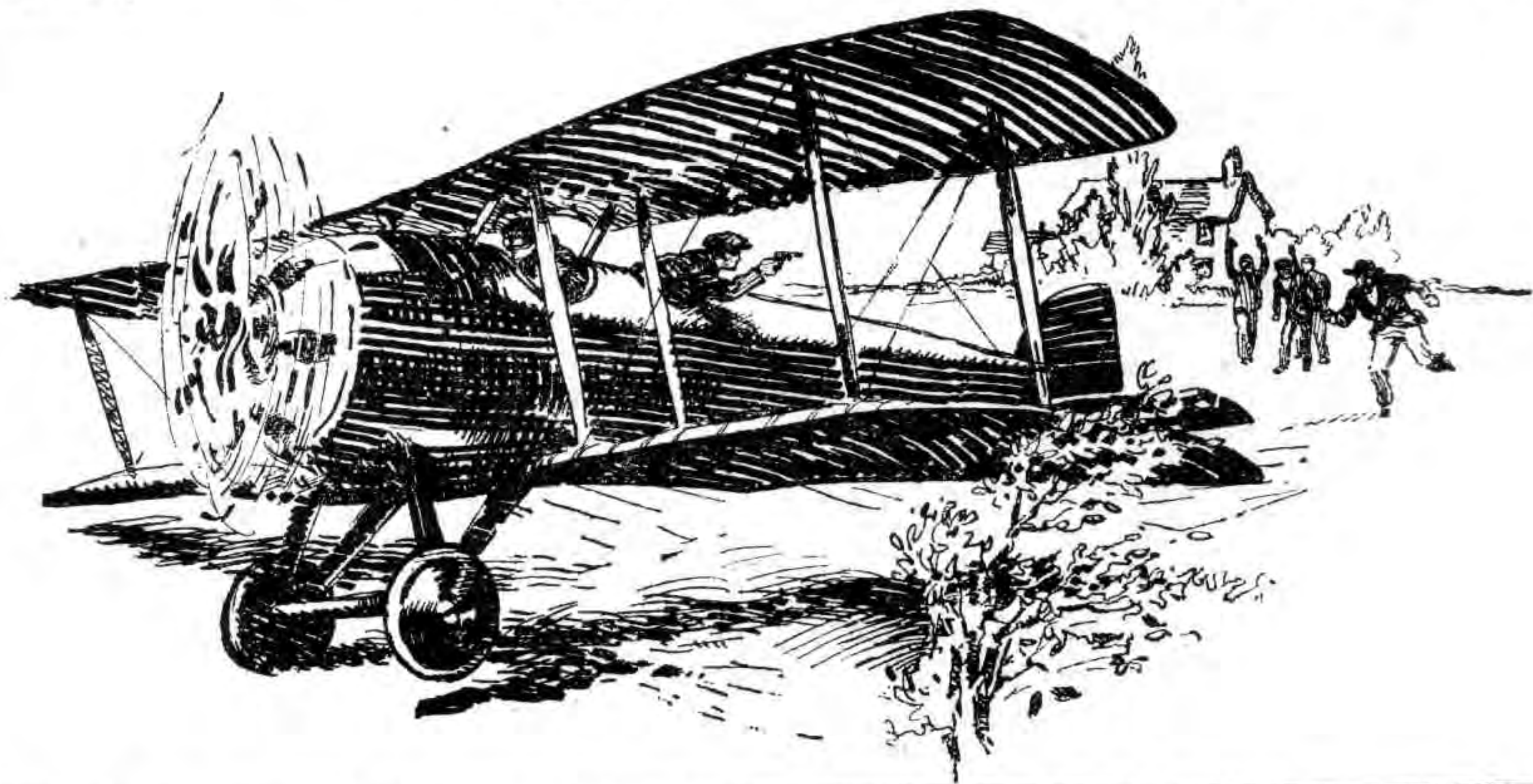
Locke chuckled.

"You've found out that, eh? I didn't tell you then because I wanted you to look convincing if you had to tell our Spanish friends to put 'em up! Saved you the bother of having to act, didn't it?"

"But suppose I'd needed to shoot, guv'nor?" exclaimed Jack. "I should have been in the soup then! You were loaded—there'd have been time to slip me a round or two—"

The detective shook his head. There was an odd twinkle in his eyes.

"That's where you're wrong, young 'un. Do you know, I had only one



While Jack Drake covered the four men Ferrers Locke swung himself into the pilot's seat. The next moment the propeller was thrashing the air and the plane began to move off. (See this page.)

round with me? And I fired that, you remember. When that was gone we were unarmed! If they'd liked, they could have collared us easy! But they never dreamed: it was all a big game of bluff—a real leg-pull, Jack! That's why we had to get away, of course. D'you think if we'd been loaded that I would have cleared off like that? Good heavens, no! I should have rounded the lot up there and then and brought the police along and seen 'em safe in good by now!"

Jack Drake drew a deep breath.

"Crumbs, guv'nor! What a wonderful leg-pull! If Silva knew!"

"If he knew," laughed Locke, "he'd be kicking himself still!"

"How's Mr. Guelph?" put in Jack.

"The effects of the drug haven't yet worn off. When they do, we should learn a good deal! He'll be able to tell us a lot we want to know badly."

As the two paced up the terrace, Locke explained to the youngster how he came to be impersonating Harrison at the house on the marshes.

"I was coming back from London early last night," he said. "On my way to Lone Manor I spotted that house, and, being so lonely, and about the nearest habitation to Guelph's place, I decided to have a look round. I did a bit of scouting—was nearly pinched, too!—climbed up drain-pipes and things, Jack, like a circus star, and altogether made myself thoroughly nosy! It was worth while. I overheard things—learnt that Adam Guelph was a prisoner in the house, and learnt something about the Wolves!"

Locke was filling a pipe. He struck a match and lit it.

"They're a secret society from Spain or South America; that's why we first came across their name in Spanish—*los Lobos*. They are, however, more or less international, both in their activities and their members. There are several Spaniards, and several English—Silva is half and half. There's a Greek member, a German, an American, and even a Japanese as well. Adam Guelph has got something they are after. They are all of 'em out-and-out crooks; the high-class criminal business is what they go in for."

"Where does Harrison come in?" asked Jack.

"Oh, he's not a member, but he's done work for the gang once or twice since they've been in England. I overheard details of his coming; learnt, too, that Silva didn't know the fellow by sight. They were using him, as you know, to get old Guelph away to a safer place, for they dared not use the roads in case the police were watching the roads in that part of the world."

"Well, young 'un, I waited around, and when Harrison landed just before dawn, I was on the spot first, and collared him, left him trussed up not far away, and impersonated him up at the house. If I'd had more time, I would have been more careful tying him up, and he'd never have got loose, nearly to upset my plans at the last moment."

"Yes, it was a near shave," grinned Jack. "Jove, guv'nor, you've been pretty slick in keeping your promise to Tom Travers about finding his uncle for him."

"There are still a lot of points that are puzzling me, though," said the sleuth thoughtfully. "Where are the three servants who disappeared with Adam Guelph? And what's the meaning of that Jack of Diamonds we found at Lone Manor, with 'Los Lobos' pricked on it? And you say someone's

been trying to empty the moat? Why? Oh, there's a lot we don't know!"

"Yes, and the chief thing I want to find out is what's hidden at Lone Manor that the Wolves are such dead nuts on getting their claws on," nodded the youngster. "D'you remember that rum message we found in the box in the moat, guv'nor? 'Guard the secret of Lone Manor! Where the stone fingers point—' Something like that, wasn't it?"

"That's a mystery we shall solve with the rest, I suppose, when the old man comes to himself," said Ferrers Locke, drawing at his pipe. "Hallo, here is Dr. Grieve!"

A figure had appeared down the terrace. Dr. Grieve was a tall, good-looking man, with an iron-grey moustache, at which he was pulling thoughtfully as he strode towards them.

"He's come round!" cried Locke.

Dr. Grieve nodded gravely.

"Yes, Locke, he's come round."

The detective had told his friend the whole story, knowing that he could rely implicitly on his secrecy.

"Can I see him? Question him?" asked the sleuth.

But the medical man shook his head.

"I am afraid not. I fear it will be a long time before he can help you in any way to solving this mystery."

"Why? How's that?" cried the detective.

"He is an old man, Locke. He has had a terrible experience, resulting in great shock. He is now quite unbalanced, in raving delirium, and until that passes it is, of course, quite impossible to learn anything from him. And even when the delirium has gone, if his life is to be saved we must not worry him in any way. To get him to talk of what he has been through would be fatal. You have asked me to take him in and look after him. If I do that, it can only be on the condition that his health is put before everything else, of course. I have no wish to impede you in your necessary investigations, but as a medical man I—"

"Of course, of course!" put in Locke swiftly. "He is in your hands entirely. But it is very disappointing. How long will it be before I may question him?"

The doctor shrugged his shoulders.

"Impossible to say. Days, at least. Perhaps even weeks."

"Crumbs," muttered Jack Drake, "what a sell!"

"Yes, young 'un," agreed Ferrers Locke. "We had hoped to learn a lot to-day from Adam Guelph. Well, we can't wait for him, for I'm afraid the Wolves won't wait for us! It means that we've got to get back to Lone Manor and fight 'em as we stand!"

"That's it, guv'nor!" cried Jack grimly. "I dunno what the secret of Lone Manor is—what's hidden there, or why the Wolves want it. But we'll find out, and—well, they're jolly well not going to get it!"

And Jack Drake voiced the opinion of Ferrers Locke.

Besieged!

BEFORE midday, Locke and Jack Drake were in London, having flown down from Birmingham in Harrison's biplane. Locke was an expert pilot, and with his fingers nursing the throttle of the big, four hundred horse-power Beaulivard engine, it did not take them long to cover the intervening miles. In London he got into immediate touch with Scotland Yard.

"No good going to that house in the marshes where we found Silva and Drood; the birds will have flown by now, of course. Still, the C.I.D. may like to have a look round the place. And though I don't want 'em around Lone Manor," Locke said to Jack on their way to the Yard, "we can't keep all the fun to ourselves! They'd better know what's going on. Later on they may be useful to us."

So, leaving the biplane at the North London aerodrome, where they had landed, in charge of Scotland Yard, Locke motored off into Kent that afternoon, accompanied by three men of the C.I.D., as well as Jack Drake. One of the three Yard men was Locke's old friend, Inspector Pyecroft.

As the private detective had known would be the case, when they reached the house where Adam Guelph had been kept prisoner after having been kidnapped from Lone Manor, the birds had flown.

Locke left Pyecroft and his two subordinates searching the house for anything that might prove of use in the case. If they found anything, it was agreed that they were to communicate with Ferrers Locke.

"Good-bye, then, Locke," said Inspector Pyecroft, glancing shrewdly at the detective. "I take it you don't want me at Lone Manor yet awhile?"

"You've said it!" laughed the detective. "You don't mind? But too many cooks spoil the broth, as you know well."

Pyecroft nodded with a laugh.

"That's so—and it's your case, anyway."

Locke and Jack sped in the detective's car along the lonely road. Before long the chimneys of Lone Manor rose above the belt of trees ahead, and a little later they had arrived at the moated house, and Tom Travers was questioning them excitedly.

"I spent a ghastly day," he said, "wondering what on earth had happened to you, Jack! But thank Heaven my uncle has been rescued from those villains! It's great to know that!"

Locke told the young footballer all that had taken place. When he had finished, Travers nodded.

"Wish I'd been there," he said grimly, "instead of missing all the fun! But there'll be lots more fun yet, I'm thinking! The Wolves won't leave us in peace here for long. They have left that house. But they'll be still in the neighbourhood, I suppose, Mr. Locke?"

"Sure enough," said Locke laconically. "Oh, they'll be paying us a visit before long!"

Travers told them that he had closed the sluice of the moat, and at high tide that morning had refilled it.

"Why they tried to empty the moat beats me!" said Jack. "What was their giddy game? They—"

He broke off.

The three were in the dining-room at the front of the house, and suddenly a loud call had come ringing across the moat. Jack crossed to the window, and a startled cry broke from him, bringing the others swiftly to his side.

"My hat! Look!"

Startled bewilderment in his eyes, the youngster was staring across the moat at a figure standing by the end of the lowered drawbridge.

"Silva!"

The dark, handsome Spanish-English scoundrel had seen them at the window and he bowed mockingly. He was



The dark, handsome Spanish-English scoundrel had seen Locke and Drake at the window, and he bowed mockingly. He was carrying a stick to which a white handkerchief had been tied, and his smooth voice came clearly to Drake and Ferrers Locke. "Welcome back to these marshes, Mr. Ferrers Locke!" (See this page.)

carrying a stick to which a white handkerchief had been tied, and his smooth voice came clearly to their ears as he cried:

"Welcome back to these marshes, Mr. Ferrers Locke!"

"He's learnt who I am!" muttered the detective.

"May I come in?" Silva went on in the same careless, mocking tones. "You see, I bear a flag of truce! I know you to be a man of honour, Mr. Locke, so I am relying upon the white flag to have a few words with you!"

"We shall be honoured, Mr. Silva!" retorted Locke, answering in the same tone that Silva had adopted.

Jack chuckled. But Silva, quite unperturbed, bowed again and slipped the handkerchief into his pocket. His feet rang out on the drawbridge as he strode across it with his easy, panther-like grace.

"This takes the biscuit!" murmured Locke. "Of all the cool blackguards it's been my luck to meet, he's got first prize easy for sheer unadulterated cheek!"

Jack Drake went to the big front door and opened it. Silva's silky smile greeted him.

"Ah, my young friend of the wet clothes! Delighted to meet you once more. Drake, I fancy, is the name?"

"Right first time," said Jack coolly. "This way, please, Mr. Silva!"

He led their amazing visitor into the big library, where Locke and Travers joined them. Silva held out his hand, which Ferrers Locke ignored. The other shrugged his shoulders.

"As you like," he purred. "I have come, gentlemen, as an emissary from a certain society, a powerful society, which

in Spain has long been used to having its own way—"

"This is not Spain," murmured Locke; and for a moment Silva's eyes flashed.

"No!" he rasped; "but here, too, the Wolves mean to have their own way! I come from them, as I say, as an emissary—an emissary of war!"

"War?" repeated Locke coolly.

"War!" echoed Silva cheerfully, his smile at its silkiest. "You see, we have not left the neighbourhood, Mr. Ferrers Locke. We shall not do so until we have in our hands what we came into this part of the world for—that which is hidden here in this house!"

"Suppose we come to the point," put in Locke. "My time is valuable. What do you wish to say to me?"

"Simply this. The Wolves have watched your arrival. We know that you three are alone in this house. It is a very lonely house, Mr. Locke—extremely lonely, and that is very convenient for us. The Wolves wish to search this house for something—possibly you know what. We mean to search it, in fact. Either we do so with your permission—"

Ferrers Locke broke in with a grim laugh. Silva's eyes gleamed.

"Yes!" he cried. "You would be wise, too, I warn you, to stand aside and let us come undisturbed. But if you are fools enough to defy us, we shall take the law into our own hands!"

"You are rather fond of doing that, I believe," smiled Locke. "But tell me, since we are being so frank, why did you not attack the house earlier to-day, when there was only one man to defend it, if you mean to take the place by storm, as you seem to be proposing?"

"Obviously," purred Silva, "we waited

to see if you were bringing large numbers of police with you when you returned. If you had been, it would have been awkward for us to have been here. Now we know that you are relying on your own powers—"

He shrugged his shoulders. Locke thoughtfully filled his pipe.

"It's an ultimatum, then?" he said. "Unless we knuckle under, you are going to—er—attack in force, and take the place by storm?"

"Exactly!" said Silva mockingly. "We have an odd dozen men ready to attack Lone Manor. They are surrounding the house now. I should think well before you answer. If you defy the Wolves, you will learn that they make unpleasant enemies!"

"Most unpleasant, I am sure," answered Locke. "Mr. Silva, you came here under a flag of truce. Thank you for the compliment. But now, please, get out before I forget myself!"

Silva's jaw dropped. Then his easy nonchalance returned, and he swung on his heel with a light laugh.

"You are a fool!" he said coolly.

"You, too, are a fool!" said Locke. "I wonder which is the bigger. I'll give you twenty seconds to get to the far end of that drawbridge."

The moment Silva had crossed the drawbridge Locke sprang to the machinery for raising it. He dragged round the starting-handle of the petrol-engine, and put over the big lever connecting it with the great chains.

Slowly, creaking and groaning, the drawbridge began to rise. From Jack Drake, staring out through the window into the falling twilight, came a quick cry.

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"My hat! Not a moment too soon!"

A knot of men had come racing out of the trees in answer to a sign from Silva. Cries of consternation had broken from them at the sight of the rising drawbridge. Silva himself had leapt for the foot of it as the gap slowly widened, his hands catching the ironshod end of the bridge.

Already the Wolves were besieging the old moated house, while clinging to the rising drawbridge as it swung slowly higher was the lean figure of Silva, outlined against the sky!

Open Warfare!

JACK DRAKE stared breathlessly through the great window at the figure clinging to the rising drawbridge.

Silva was already regretting his rash leap. He had acted on an impulse. But now he saw that unless he jumped soon he would be separated from his followers by the width of the broad moat.

He dropped, splashing, into the dark water, and struck out for the bank. With the drawbridge fully raised, Ferrers Locke cut off the little engine. Tom Travers laughed grimly.

"Besieged, by gum! Makes you think of the olden days, doesn't it, this being in a moated house, with the drawbridge raised, surrounded by enemies?"

Ferrers Locke smiled; but his eyes were like steel.

"It'll seem more than ever like it before to-night's out!" he said coolly. "There's going to be hot work. The Wolves are here in force, and they mean business. Whatever it is that is hidden in this house they mean to get, and they aren't sticking at much, it seems! We—"

The detective's words snapped off.

A sharp report had come from the far side of the moat, and a pane of the big window through which Jack had been staring shivered with a sudden startling crash. The youngster leapt back with a cry.

Travers' fists clenched. But Locke laughed.

"The odd part of the whole business," he murmured, "is the amazing cheek of it! In England, while it's still daylight, for these men to attack this house as they are doing—why, it's the most glorious nerve I've come across! But what's to stop them, after all? Here we are, in the heart of the marshes, miles from the nearest village—"

He broke off and shrugged his shoulders. His hand went to his pocket, drawing out a heavy automatic. Crossing to the window, Locke peered out cautiously. Instantly a bullet came humming within an inch of his head, to bury itself in the wall behind him. Coolly the detective raised his own weapon and fired.

That the bullet had found its mark was obvious from the sharp cry that came to

them across the moat. Another bullet crashed into the hall through the broken window, and Locke drew back with a grim smile.

"Winged one of 'em," he murmured easily. "Made the chap drop his gun, anyway—then a second nearly potted me! They seem to have posted snipers among the bushes, who know their job!"

"They'll be swimming the moat, or getting a boat of sorts before long," muttered Travers. "What's the programme, Mr. Locke?"

"We must barricade every window and door on the ground floor," rasped Locke. "Then we'll get up on to the roof and try an' dislodge their snipers!"

Before long the barricades had been dragged into place; heavy furniture backed every shutter and the outer doors. When they had finished, Jack Drake chuckled gaily.

"It's like a giddy fort!"

"And now the garrison is going to show its teeth," murmured Locke. He turned to Travers. "You know this house. Where's the best point on the roof for us to take up? We've got to defend on all sides, mind—and there are only three of us!"

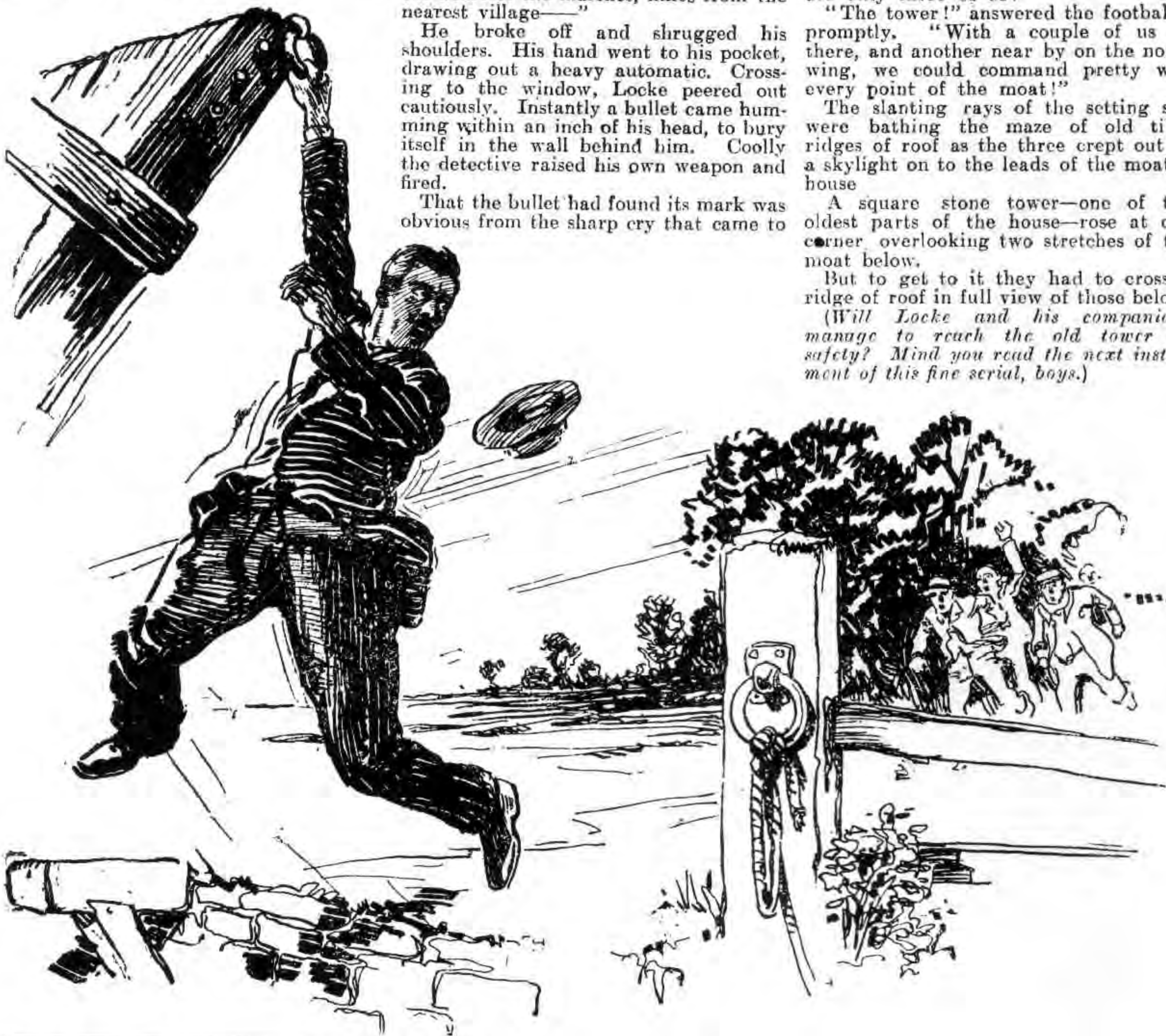
"The tower!" answered the footballer promptly. "With a couple of us up there, and another near by on the north wing, we could command pretty well every point of the moat!"

The slanting rays of the setting sun were bathing the maze of old tiled ridges of roof as the three crept out of a skylight on to the leads of the moated house.

A square stone tower—one of the oldest parts of the house—rose at one corner, overlooking two stretches of the moat below.

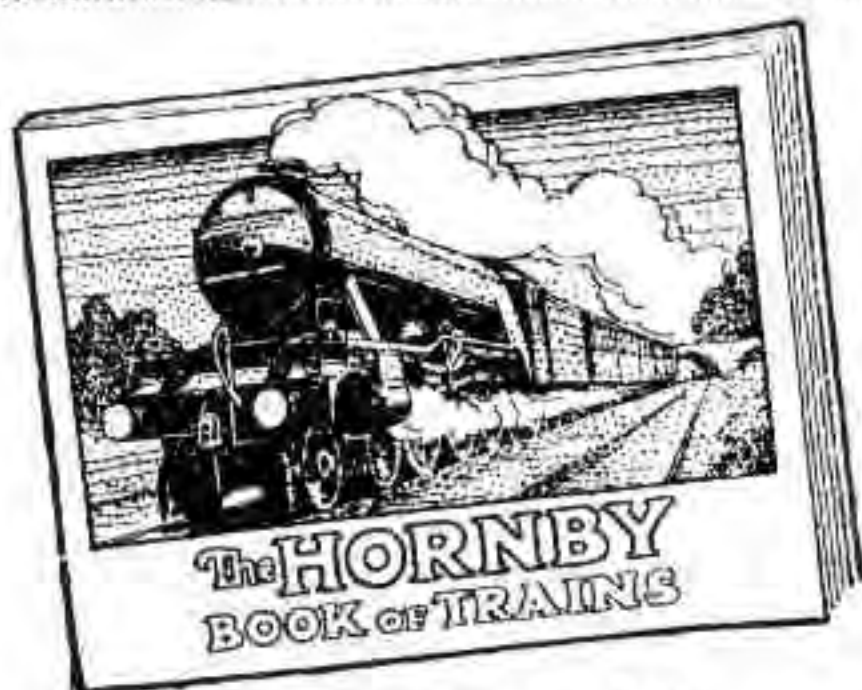
But to get to it they had to cross a ridge of roof in full view of those below.

(Will Locke and his companions manage to reach the old tower in safety? Mind you read the next instalment of this fine serial, boys.)



Clinging to the rising drawbridge as it swung slowly higher was the lean figure of Silva, outlined against the sky.
(See this page.)

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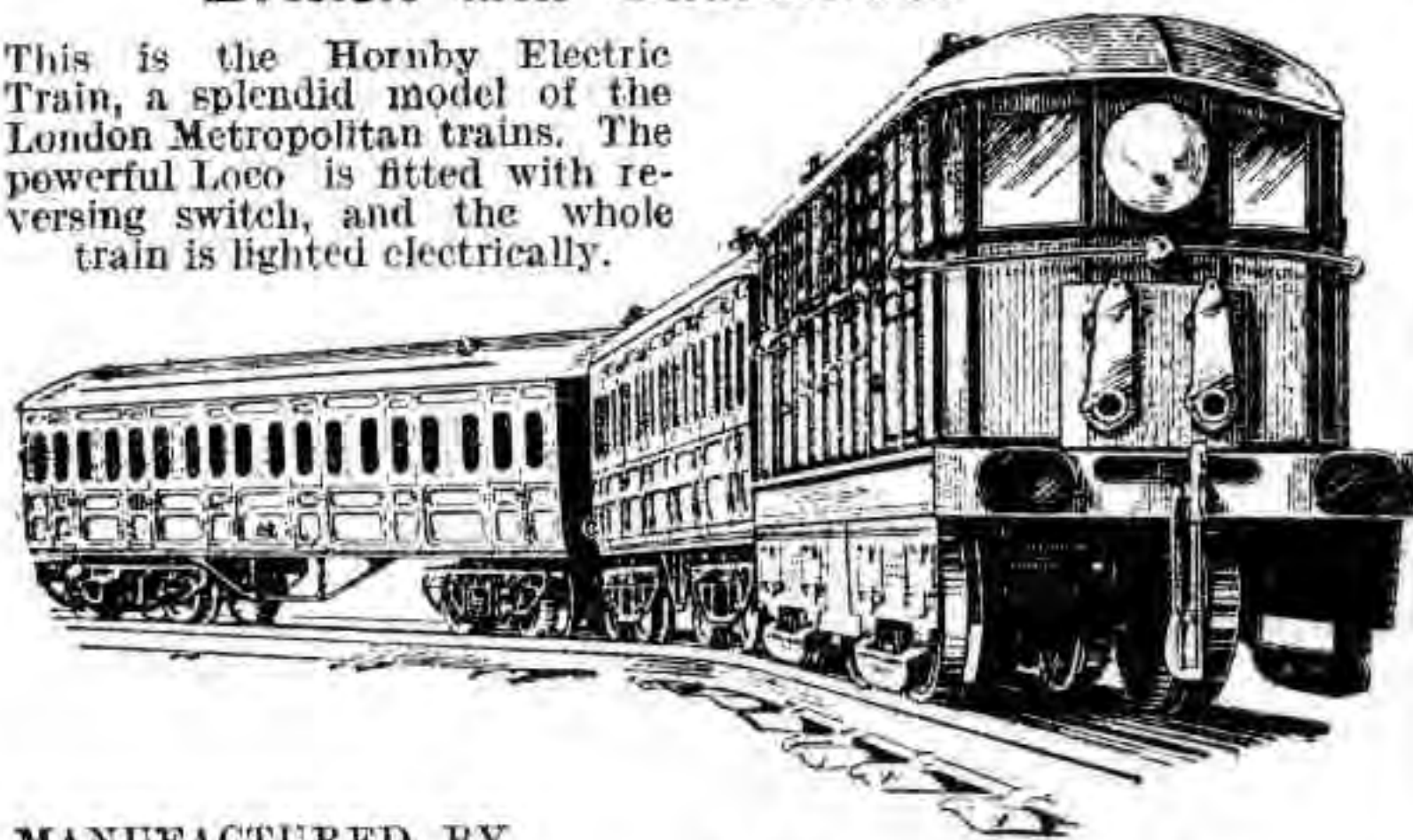
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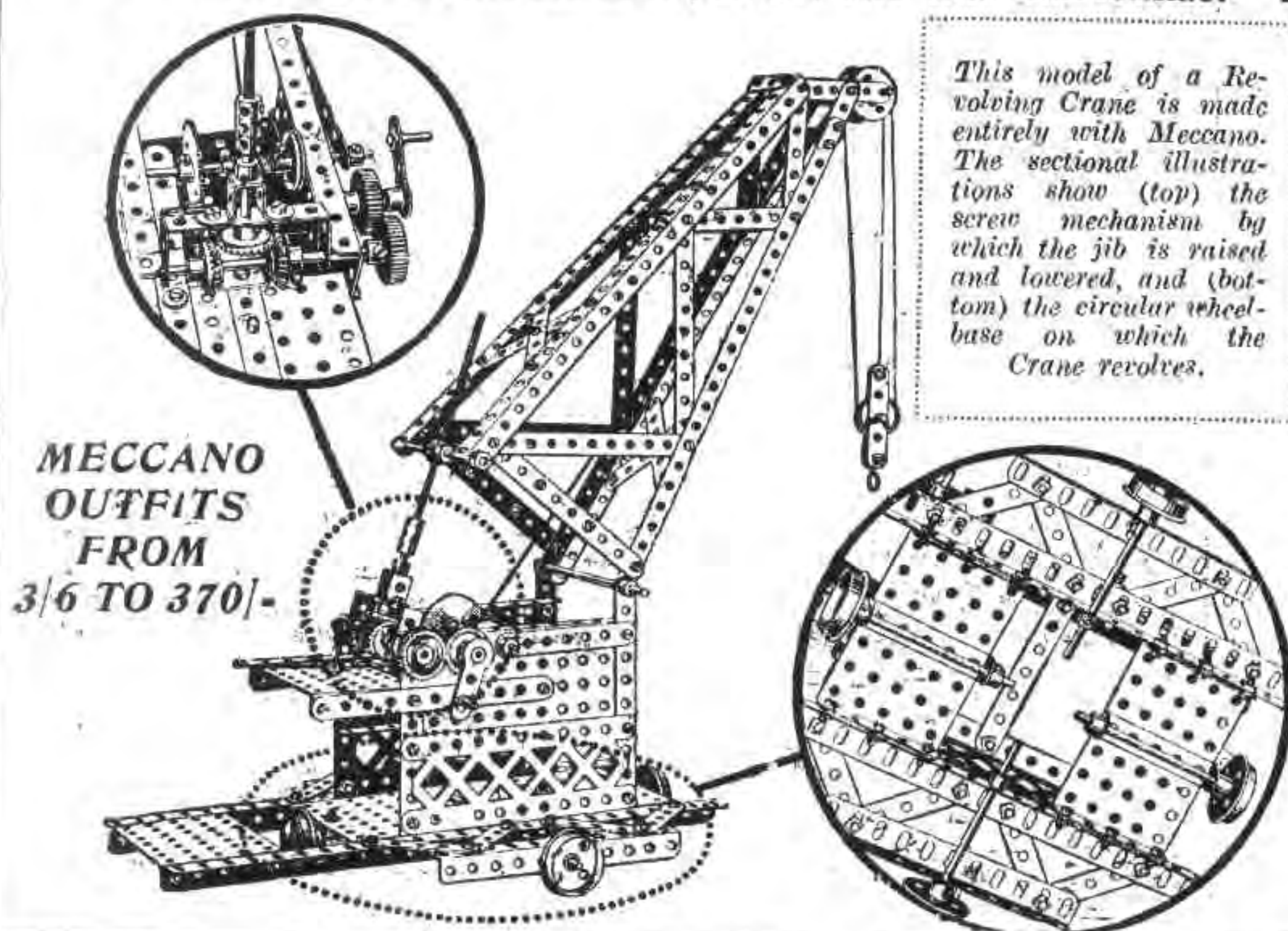
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