

THE BOY WITH THE £1,000,000 SECRET!

(Read about him inside.)

No. 974. Vol. XXX.

Week Ending October 16th, 1926.

The Magnet 2^d

EVERY MONDAY.

Library



A ROUSING HOME-COMING FOR "THE SUSPECTED FORM-MASTER!"

(A lively incident from this week's powerful school story of Greyfriars—inside.)

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Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his chums. Write to him when you are in trouble or need advice. A stamped and addressed envelope will ensure a speedy reply. Letters should be addressed: The Editor, THE MAGNET LIBRARY, The Amalgamated Press (1922), Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

HE WANTS TO LEARN TYPING!

A READER from Wales wants a few tips on the best way to learn typewriting. He tells me that he cannot afford a machine and that his parents cannot afford to send him to a Business College. But there is no reason why my chum shouldn't join one of the Council Evening Schools. He will learn all there is to know about typewriting in a very short time; that is, of course, if he tackles the job in earnest. "Is it useful," he asks me, "to have a knowledge of typing?" Of course it is. There are very few businesses where typewriting doesn't enter into the daily work and, in any case, it is very nice to know something about it, even if there is no actual need for it at the moment. If my chum is extra keen on learning to type I would advise him to buy a model "key-board" in addition to attending evening school. By practising on this he will learn the sequence of letters in the alphabet as they appear on practically every typewriter made—that is made for English-speaking people, of course. It is quite a cheap affair, when one considers the sterling service it renders, costing roughly twelve-and-sixpence. And, once you have learnt to type, my chum, you have got it at your finger-tips for all time; not like so many things we learn only to forget.

REGRETS!

It really is extraordinary how many readers have written me on the subject of the recent Indian series of yarns that appeared in this paper. And, I'm pleased to say, not one letter contains a grumble against the quality of these stories. On the contrary, without exception, the writers express their regret that the series came to an end. So was I, as a matter of fact, but, of course, a theme such as Mr. Richards used in this history-making series could not go on like the proverbial brook. Everything comes to an end some time or another, and I think the climax our favourite author brought us to was ideal in every way. This appreciation of the Indian series—there were eleven yarns in all—tempted me to give Frank Richards an idea for a Bob Cherry series—staged, of course, in the school precincts. That you will like this coming series I have not the slightest doubt, for Bob Cherry is as popular with most of you as Mr. Richards is himself. And the first yarn will appear in Next Week's MAGNET! How's that?

For Next Monday!

"THE SWOT!"

By Frank Richards.

That's the title of the opening yarn in the "Bob Cherry series" of which I made mention in the par above. Mind you read it, chums.

"THE BOY WITH THE MILLION-POUND SECRET!"

By David Goodwin.

And look out, too, for another excellent instalment of this fine adventure serial. You'll enjoy every word of it!

THE FOOTER SUPPLEMENT!

There will be another topping 4-page supplement devoted to King Football, also the result of "Boundaries" Competition No. 10 will be published in next week's bumper issue. Order your copies early. Chin, chin, chums.

YOUR EDITOR

A SHOCK FOR GREYFRIARS! It isn't often that Mr. Capper, the meek and mild master of the Fourth, comes into the limelight. But he gets more than his share of publicity on this occasion!



The Suspected Form-Master!

A Powerful New Long Complete Story of the Chums of Greyfriars, with Mr. Algernon Capper filling the principal role.

By **FRANK RICHARDS.**

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Queer!

GET a move on, you chaps!"

Harry Wharton, the captain of Greyfriars Remove, uttered that remark.

He was returning to school from a visit to the pictures in Friardale village. His four chums—Bob Cherry, Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur—who, with himself, made up the combination better known as the Famous Five, were with him.

Owing to a slight breakdown of the projector, the programme at the picture-house had finished a little later than usual, and the five chums were endeavouring to make up for lost time on the walk back.

"We shall be late for call-over!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Why the hurry all of a sudden?" demanded Bob Cherry in stentorian tones. "I said when we left the show we'd missed the boat. Since we're bound to be late in any case, we might as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb."

"Even the hangfulness of the absurd sheep is not pleasantly agreeable, my worthy chums," purred Inky in his weird and wonderful English, "and as your honourable poet says, the battle is never lostfully gone until it's won."

"Ha, ha, ha! There's something in that, Inky," agreed Frank Nugent. "Come on, chaps, let's step it out."

Harry Wharton & Co. continued their march up Friardale Lane at an increased pace.

"We needn't break our blessed necks, all the same!" grumbled Johnny Bull. "If you ask me, I reckon—"

The burly Removeite broke off short as a figure appeared round a bend in the road swaying slightly from side to side.

"I seem to have seen that chap somewhere before," muttered the captain of the Remove thoughtfully.

"Same here!" said Bob Cherry.

"It's Capper!" ejaculated Frank Nugent suddenly.

"Capper?" echoed his chums.

"The Upper Fourth master?"

"Of course it is!" said Nugent. "I wonder what the thump's up with him? He looks a bit seedy to me."

The master of the Upper Fourth proceeded another few paces in the Removeites' direction. He stopped for a few moments and tottered slightly, then he stumbled on again. But if he saw the Famous Five he heeded them not. He lurched to the left, almost overbalancing into a ditch at the side of the road.

Harry Wharton & Co. stared in amazement.

"Quick, you chaps!" exclaimed Wharton. "He's ill!"

Led by the captain of the Remove, the juniors dashed forward.

Almost at the same moment that they reached him Mr. Capper lurched yet again towards the ditch. But with a powerful tug Bob Cherry clutched at his sleeve and dragged him away just in time to save him from an immersion.

"Mr. Capper, aren't you well, sir?" asked Wharton anxiously.

Mr. Capper made no reply; instead, he turned a dull and heavy gaze on the five juniors.

"He's bad," whispered Johnny Bull.

"Wonder what's up?"

"Why don't you sit down and rest for awhile, sir?" suggested Frank Nugent.

"Or perhaps you'd like us to help you back to the school, sir," said Harry Wharton.

"I'm all right," muttered the Form master huskily.

"H'm! You can't be too careful, sir," went on Wharton doubtfully.

"Are you sure you wouldn't rather—"

"It's all right, I tell yoush!" interrupted Mr. Capper in a thick voice.

"Mind your ownsh bishness an' clear off! Unnerstansh?"

And he lurched against Johnny Bull, almost knocking the burly junior off his feet.

The captain of the Remove emitted a low whistle of amazement, while his chums stared at each other questioningly, wondering for the moment whether they had heard aright.

"I—I beg your pardon, sir?" gasped Wharton at length.

"Clearsh off, I tell you!" repeated Mr. Capper, turning a pair of bleary eyes at the Removeites. "Clearsh off! How manysh times you want telling? Lemme alone!"

"Great Scott!" ejaculated the captain of the Remove feebly.

"My giddy aunt!"

"But—but, sir—"

"Look here," said Mr. Capper, blinking solemnly at the juniors. "I'm not nicesh to know. If I want help I'll shay sho. Now clearsh off."

And without another word Mr. Capper lurched away from the juniors and continued his way down the lane, swaying from side to side, muttering inaudibly to himself, and leaving a powerful and unmistakable odour of spirits behind him.

His departure was followed by a deep silence.

"My only sainted Aunt Jemima!" gasped out Bob Cherry at length. "He must be—I mean— Oh, my hat!"

The Famous Five gazed at each other stupidly for a few minutes. There was no need for Bob Cherry to finish his sentence. For Mr. Algernon Capper, the usually mild and polite Form master of the Upper Fourth, to behave in the manner he had done was amazing—more than that, it was astounding. And there could be only one explanation.

He was in a state of intoxication.

The thought passed through the mind of each junior at the same moment. It did not seem true; and yet—and yet—

"We must be dreaming," said Wharton slowly.

"The dreamfulness is of the terrific and unworthy order."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! He was nearly in the ditch that time!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly.

"We can't let him go on like that!" said Frank Nugent, gazing after the form of the retreating Form master. "Suppose—suppose anyone were to see him—"

"He won't thank us if we interbero again," said Johnny Bull bluntly. "If you take my advice you'll leave him alone."

"Yes, perhaps you're right," agreed

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 974.

Wharton quietly. "But at the same time— Oh, it's rotten!"

"Absolutely!"

"The rottenfulness is terrific!"

"Look here, you chaps," said the captain of the Remove, after an uncomfortable pause during which Mr. Capper vanished from sight in the gloom, "I don't believe—that is to say, perhaps we're barking up the wrong tree after all. It's not like Capper, of all men, to go off the rails!"

"Hear, hear!" agreed the rest of the Famous Five heartily.

"That's it! Very likely there's a simple explanation of it all!" exclaimed Nugent in a tone of relief. "We're just a set of asses to jump to conclusions. But at the same time—"

"Well, he did reek of—of spirits, anyhow," put in Johnny Bull. "But very likely he hasn't been well. Might have had a cold and taken something for it at the doctor's suggestion and got knocked over through not being used to it."

"That's about it!"

There was an uncomfortable silence. Bob Cherry broke it:

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Look at the time!" he gasped. "We're for the high-jump sure enough now! Buck up!"

"Oh, I'm not worrying about that," said Wharton, as the five juniors continued their interrupted journey to Greyfriars. "We're not often late, and if we explain to Quelch that the programme was late finishing we'll get off with a few lines. It's poor old Capper I'm thinking about."

"Yes, we'd better keep what we've seen to ourselves, I think," remarked Johnny Bull. "As Nugent says, very likely there's some simple explanation."

"Of course, mum's the word!" agreed Bob Cherry. "We'll see if Capper makes any reference to this bizney himself."

The five chums, their minds still revolving around what they had witnessed in Friardale Lane, arrived at the school gates and tugged at the bell.

"Wot I says is this 'ere—" began Gosling, the school porter.

"Ninety-nine," murmured Bob Cherry quickly.

"Eh?" gasped Gosling. "I didn't say ninety-nine."

"Well, say it now—quickly!"

"Ninety-nine!" gasped out Gosling, considerably puzzled.

"And another one makes a hundred!" yelled Bob. "Ever been had, Gossy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gosling emitted a snort of wrath. But Harry Wharton & Co. were not listening. The school porter's remarks did not seem to interest them just then. Five minutes later, having received twenty lines apiece for missing call-over, an extremely lenient punishment, they left Mr. Quelch's study and made their way to their own quarters in the Remove passage.

The rest of the evening was spent in prep and discussion as to the merit of the Remove footer team that was to meet St. Jim's the following week. But even the latter interesting task did not prevent their minds from reverting once again to the incident with the Upper Fourth master in Friardale Lane.

"It's dashed funny, that's what it is!" remarked Harry Wharton; when, eventually, the Removites trooped up to the dormitory. "But funnier things have happened before and had simple explanations."

A remark with which his chums heartily agreed.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Shock for the Famous Five!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo, you lazy slackers! What about punting a footer in the quad before dinner?"

Bob Cherry put his head into No. 1 Study as he asked the question. Morning lessons were over, and the mid-day meal was not until another half-hour.

"We were just coming to root you out, Bob!" laughed the captain of the Remove, picking up a football from the corner of the study. "Come on, you chaps!"

The Famous Five made their way along the passage, down the staircase, and into the quad. But they had not proceeded more than twenty yards from the School House steps when a dapper figure, in cap and gown, emerged from the side of a clump of elms.

"Capper!" ejaculated Nugent softly. The master of the Upper Fourth observed the juniors at the same moment that they observed him.

"Good-morning, boys!" he greeted them genially. "What a glorious day!"

"My h—er, that is to say, quite so, sir!" gasped Wharton, somewhat taken aback.

"If—if it doesn't rain!" murmured Bob Cherry feebly.

"Or snow!" added Frank Nugent, staring at Mr. Capper foolishly.

"No fear of that!" chuckled Mr. Capper, who appeared to be in a remarkably good temper. "By the way," he added, in a sharper tone, "I trust you are not indulging a misplaced sense of humour at my expense?"

"Oh, no, sir!" said the captain of the Remove hurriedly. "You see, sir, we were rather surprised to see you looking so well after—after last night."

"That's all!" put in Nugent helpfully. "Hope you are feeling quite better, sir."

"Bless my soul! What do you mean, boy?" demanded Mr. Capper, with a puzzled expression. "I have not been unwell recently—at least, not to my knowledge."

"My hat! But you looked pretty bad when we saw you in Friardale Lane last night!" blurted out Johnny Bull, almost before he had time to realise what he was saying.

"Friardale Lane!" repeated Mr. Capper, still more puzzled. "I can assure you that you did not see me in the vicinity of Friardale Lane last night—and most certainly I was not feeling unwell."

The five juniors unconsciously emitted a faint gasp of astonishment.

That Mr. Capper should utterly deny that he had been either ill, or in Friardale Lane when they had seen and spoken to him there was almost beyond their comprehension. Certainly he was not bound in any way to give them an explanation of his conduct unless he chose. Why, then, should he elect to meet their well-meant inquiries with a denial of his actions?

"Do I understand you doubt my word, boys?" demanded the Upper Fourth master, with some heat.

"Nunno, sir! Certainly not!" gasped the captain of the Remove. "But—but—"

"But what, Wharton?"

"Nothing, sir. Only it's strange, all of us having spoken to you. However," concluded Wharton feebly, "we must have made a—a mistake!"

"You actually spoke to me, you say?" demanded Mr. Capper.

"Yes, sir."

"And did I reply?"

"Certainly, sir! Several of us spoke to you. And, then, you—ahem!—you left us, you know, sir!"

"I do not know, my boy!" snapped Mr. Capper, his face reddening.

"I don't suppose you do," murmured Johnny Bull to himself. "You looked as though you didn't know what you were doing at the time."

"I believe you are deliberately attempting to—ah!—pull my leg, as you call it," resumed Mr. Capper.

"Really, sir—"

"Silence, Wharton! I repeat, you are trying to jape me for some purpose of your own. You will take fifty lines each for insolence to a Form master, and I will acquaint Mr. Quelch with the punishment I have awarded you. I thought, Wharton, that you and your friends knew better than to behave like members of the Second Form."

And, with a snort of wrath, the master of the Upper Fourth strode indignantly away, leaving the Famous Five choking with a mixture of amazement and anger.

"My only Sunday topper!" gasped Johnny Bull, at length. "Of all the nerve!"

"The nervefulness is terrific!"

"He denied the whole bizney!"

"There's something about this I can't understand!" said Bob Cherry, gazing reflectively at his big boots. "The burbling ass needn't have pitched a fairy tale like that to us. If he didn't want to explain he could have just said that he was feeling better, thanks, and let it go at that."

"I don't know what to make of it," said Wharton slowly. "There's only one conclusion I can come to, and that is—"

Wharton broke off short.

"Oh, we know what you mean, Harry!" said Johnny Bull. "To put it bluntly, he must have been squiffy!"

The captain of the Remove nodded.

"It does seem like it," he said quietly. "It's possible in that case that he doesn't remember seeing us last night, and doesn't remember where he was."

"Or else that's a tip to us that he doesn't want to remember, and that we're to forget it, too," added Nugent. "My hat, old Capper taking to drink! Who'd have thought it?"

"Well, that's put paid to footer practice!" grunted Bob Cherry. "Time for dinner now. And fifty lines to do to-night. Quite a profitable little interval, I don't think. Let's get back."

"No one would have guessed to have seen Capper just now that he was squiffy last night!" said Johnny Bull. "He looked as fit as a fiddle."

"The fitness of the esteemed and ridiculous Capper is of the remarkable order."

"Well, let's hope there's still a mistake somewhere, and that the whole rotten business will blow over!" said Wharton. "If we're the only fellows who saw him I don't think there's anything to worry about, anyway."

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Angel Backs a Loser!

"ANGEL!"

The voice of Mr. Capper rang out sharply in the Form-room of the Upper Fourth.

It was a couple of days after the adventure of Harry Wharton & Co. with Mr. Capper in Friardale Lane. Since then the Famous Five had put in most of their spare time practising on Little Side, in anticipation of a forthcoming



As Dr. Locke stepped out into the road a figure lurched past one of the lighted windows of the inn. The light from the lamp illuminated the man's features clearly. "Bless my soul!" gasped the Head of Greyfriars in amazement. "I—I must be dreaming! Capper—" There was no doubt about it; the face was that of Mr. Capper, the master of the Upper Fourth. (See Chapter 5.)

fixture with St. Jim's. As for Mr. Capper himself, having duly received the Removites' impositions, he had, apparently, dismissed the matter from his mind.

But this sharp October morning, for some reason or another, he seemed to be in a somewhat irritable mood, and Aubrey Angel, the dandy of the Fourth, came in for a lion's share of his Form master's displeasure.

"You were not paying attention to the lesson," snapped Mr. Capper, fixing Aubrey Angel with a stern gaze.

"I beg your pardon, sir?"

"Don't answer me back, boy!"

"Certainly not, sir!" drawled Angel. "But you said—"

"Take fifty lines, and remain silent, Angel!" snapped Mr. Capper.

Angel grunted, and resumed his seat. The lesson proceeded uneventfully for about ten minutes.

But the thoughts of Aubrey Angel seemed to be elsewhere. From time to time his gaze wandered from the book on the desk before him to the windows at the far side of the Form-room. Once he was heard to emit a low chuckle, for which he was awarded another fifty lines.

"Wonder what's up with Angel this morning?" whispered Temple to Dabney. "He seems to be asking for trouble with both hands."

"Oh, quite!" grinned Dabney. "And he'll get it, too!"

Towards the end of the lesson, however, Mr. Capper's patience seemed to be getting a trifle worn.

"Angel," he snapped suddenly, "kindly inform me in which work mention is made of Mokanna, the veiled monk of Khorassan."

"Certainly, sir!" replied Angel. "Er—er—"

"I am waiting, Angel."

"The—the—that is to say, sir—"

"Bless my soul! I told you not five minutes ago!" rasped Mr. Capper.

"Have you forgotten already, or did you fail to hear me?"

"No, sir. The—the Garden of Allah!" replied Angel desperately, with a dim recollection of having seen a monk in the play of that name some time ago.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the rest of the Form, rocking to and fro with merriment.

"Silence!" thundered the Upper Fourth master angrily. "I will severely cane the next boy who laughs. As I suspected, Angel, you have not been paying attention. Come out here at once!"

Aubrey Angel rose to his feet and did as he was requested.

"Hold out your hand, boy!" ordered Mr. Capper.

"Look here, sir—" began Angel.

"At once, boy!"

"Wow! Certainly, sir!"

Swish, swish!

"Ow! Yaroooooh!" gasped Angel, as the Upper Fourth master administered two stinging cuts. "I'll make you sit up for this! Ow!"

"Wha-a-at? How dare you, boy!" rasped Mr. Capper angrily. "How dare you threaten me in that manner! Hold out your hand again. I will teach you not to be insolent to your Form master in future."

But the slacker of the Fourth did not hold out his hand again. Instead, he retreated a pace, and stood glaring at Mr. Capper with his teeth set and a curious expression of defiance in his eyes.

"You touch me again, and you'll be sorry for it!" he muttered.

There came a gasp of astonishment from the rest of the Form, while Mr. Capper's somewhat pale face turned a deep beetroot hue.

"The silly ass! Old Capper will slaughter him for that!" whispered Temple.

"Oh, quite!" agreed Dabney. "He must have gone off his giddy rocker all of a sudden."

"How dare you, Angel!" thundered Mr. Capper, having partly recovered from his astonishment. "How dare you, I say! This is—is—"

Words seemed to fail the master of the Fourth. But if words failed him, actions did not. He made an angry dive at the junior before him, the cane upraised ready for action in his right hand. But Aubrey Angel retreated behind the master's desk, his face white with passion.

"Leave me alone!" he said savagely. "It'll be the worse for you, if you don't. You know what I mean, Mr. Capper!"

"My giddy aunt! What's the silly ass driving at?" murmured Fry in amazement.

Mr. Capper stood regarding the junior uncertainly for some moments.

"Boy," he said, controlling himself with difficulty, "will you kindly explain to the Form exactly what you mean?"

"You ought to know what I mean!" retorted Angel insolently.

"What?"

"I say you should know what I mean," repeated Angel in a louder voice, a grin of triumph on his sallow face. "If you don't, and you touch me with that cane again, you'll soon find out!"

"Bless my soul!" murmured Mr. Capper feebly, wiping his brow with his handkerchief. "The boy must have taken leave of his senses!"

"What about what happened three nights ago?" demanded Angel with a sneer. "In Friardale Lane, I mean."

"Friardale Lane?" repeated Mr. Capper in amazement. "I fail utterly to understand you, boy."

"I don't suppose you do, sir," retorted Angel with a sneer. "You've probably got a— Yaroooooh! Wow! Stop it!"

Aubrey Angel broke off with a gasp of pain, as Mr. Capper, his face white

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 974.

with rage, gripped him suddenly by the scruff of the neck, and commenced to lay into him with the cane as though he had been some unruly Second Form fag.

Swish, swish, swish!

"Stop it!" roared Angel, endeavouring vainly to free himself from the infuriated master's grip. "Wow! Oooer! Yaroooooh!"

"How dare you, boy!" panted Mr. Capper.

Whack, whack, whack!

Again and again the cane descended across Angel's shoulders, causing the dust to rise in clouds from his garments.

"My hat! Poor old Angel!" grinned Temple. "Old Capper's laying it on, and no mistake."

Swish, swish, swish!

"Yaroooooh! Yow! Stop it!"

"There, wretched boy," panted Mr. Capper, desisting at last. "I think I have taught you the foolishness of being impertinent to your Form master. If there is any more of this nonsense, I will take you before Dr. Locke. Indeed, I would do so now, but that I think you are nothing more than a young fool. You may go!"

Groaning and twisting, Angel resumed his seat, his teeth gritted and his face white and set, while a buzz of excited conversation broke out from the rest of the juniors.

"Take fifty lines for talking in Form, Dabney!" snapped Mr. Capper.

"Oh—er—yes, sir!" gasped Dabney, while Temple grinned.

It was obvious that the master of the Fourth was still on the war-path.

The noise subsided somewhat and the lesson was resumed.

For the rest of the morning, however, Aubrey Angel sat in a sullen silence. From time to time he was observed to gaze at Mr. Capper curiously. Mr. Capper, however, affected not to notice him. At length the lesson ended, and the juniors trooped out of the Form-room. In the passage outside Aubrey Angel was immediately surrounded by a crowd of curious juniors, who all tried to question him at once.

"My giddy aunt! What a nerve you've got to stand and threaten old Capper like that," said Fry.

"Especially when you were bluffing all the time," remarked Temple.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Was I bluffing?" demanded Angel in a hard voice.

"Well, you let old Capper wallop you pretty well, anyway," said Dabney. "And I can't say that he seems particularly sorry for it, as you told him he would."

"Wait and see," growled Angel savagely. "Capper doesn't realise what he's done yet. But he'll find out it's the worst day's work he's done since he's been at Greyfriars. I haven't finished with him by long chalks. The rotter! I'll make him sit up!"

"Look here, Angel," said Temple. "It's all very well to be mysterious, but I think it's playing a bit low down to make threats that you don't follow up. What were you driving at when you tackled him about Friardale Lane?"

Aubrey Angel regarded his Form-fellows silently for a moment.

Then he grinned.

"You ask Capper," he replied at length. "He knows."

"But what the thump—"

"I don't want to be badgered by you lot, anyway," snapped Angel, pushing his way through the crowd which surrounded him. "You think I'm bluffing when I say I'll make Capper sit up. But I'm not. You mark my words, I'm

going to make him sorry for the day he was ever born before I've finished with him. I can tell you this, Capper's not a fit man to be a master at Greyfriars, and if the Head knew as much about him as I do, he'd sling him out at a moment's notice."

And with that Angel lounged away down the passage, leaving Temple and Co. and a host of Upper Fourth fellows staring after him in amazement.

"Great Scott! What does this silly ass mean?"

"Not fit to be a master!"

"Satan rebuking sin!" said Fry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, Angel's talking out of his hat!" remarked Temple.

"Quite!" agreed Dabney. "If he knew anything about old Capper we should have rumbled it by the way Capper behaved."

"Hear, hear!" chimed in several voices.

But, despite their words, the juniors were considerably puzzled. For the rest of the dinner time, speculation was rife as to exactly what Angel was driving at. The more they thought of the matter, the more puzzled they became. On second thoughts, it seemed hardly likely that Angel would have the nerve to stand and threaten Mr. Capper in the manner he had done unless he thought he was aware of something. On the other hand, however, it certainly did not seem from his conduct that the master of the Fourth had been guilty of any deed which he feared might be exposed.

"If there's anything in what Angel was burbling about we shall jolly well soon know all about it," remarked Temple to Dabney and Fry. "And if there isn't, it'll just die a natural death."

"Oh, quite!" agreed Dabney. "And very likely that ass Angel will die an unnatural one."

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Knows!

"PASS along the jam, Franky!" "These doughnuts are jolly good. I'll have some more."

"The goodness of the esteemed and luscious doughnuts is of the mouth-watering order," grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "If the worthy Cherry will kindly refrain from scoffing the lot, I will have another my dishonourable self."

Bob Cherry grinned, and passed two small doughnuts on a very large plate along to the anxious Inky.

Harry Wharton had received a remittance from his uncle, Colonel Wharton, that morning, and was celebrating the fact with a special tea in Study No. 1, to which the rest of the Famous Five had been invited.

Tea had not been in progress long, however, before the study door opened, and the fat, bespectacled face of William George Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, peered in.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Scat!" roared the Famous Five in one voice.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"There's nothing to give away, Bunter," said Harry Wharton, his gaze wandering to a cricket-stump in a corner of the study. "Not even a crust or crumb."

"And we're not cashing any postal orders in advance, either," put in Bob Cherry. "That's all. Shut the door, Bunter."

"Really, Cherry," wheezed the Owl

of the Remove, blinking rapidly behind his big spectacles. "I'm rather particular whom I feed with, for one thing—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Not as much as we are, though!" chuckled Nugent.

Bunter scowled.

"And, for another thing," he went on. "I trust that a fellow with a lot of titled relatives like myself doesn't have to rely on anything so common as a postal order for a remittance. As a matter of fact, I'm expecting a cheque—"

"Ha, ha, ha! A gilt-edged one, I suppose," roared Frank Nugent.

"Really, Nugent. I wouldn't ask one of you rotters to cash the cheque, in any case. Coming from my titled relatives as they do, the banks simply fall over themselves for the honour of cashing 'em for me—"

"And throw in a quid or so for the privilege," grinned Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"As a matter of fact, I was going to tell you about old Capper," went on the Owl of the Remove. "I hear he's been seen in Friardale Lane half tipsy—"

"What!" gasped the chums of the Remove, starting visibly.

"He, he, he!" sniggered Bunter, feeling that he had made an impression at last. "I knew that would get you."

"You—you fat clam!" snorted Wharton, leaping from his chair and making a sudden dive at the fat junior and gripping him by one of his ample shoulders. "Where did you learn that?"

"Wow! Yow! Really, Wharton," gasped Bunter, as the captain of the Remove proceeded to shake him vigorously. "I—I happened to be passing down the Upper Fourth passage when my shoe-lace broke, and—and—"

"You stopped to listen," concluded Wharton grimly.

"The fat sneak!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

The Famous Five knew William George Bunter of old. It was really most unfortunate for Bunter that whenever he purchased a pair of shoe-laces, some unscrupulous shopkeeper always took advantage of his trusting nature and palmed off a faulty pair on to him.

Usually the fault was not discovered until Bunter was passing some spot or study where someone was discussing something confidential, and, quite by accident—or so he said—Bunter overheard their conversation while making the repair.

"Who were you spying on?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"Yow! Leggo my ear. Yoop! I wasn't spying. But it was that beast Angel who said it. He said he saw Capper half-tipsy in Friardale Lane three nights ago—Yaroooooh!"

"Listen to me, you porpoise," said Harry Wharton, in a hard voice. "We were talking to Capper the day after Angel was supposed to have seen him in the lane, and from something Capper told us, we know he couldn't have been anywhere near Friardale. That's that! And now we're going to teach you not to go around spying on people and making mischief with a lot of idle gossip which probably you didn't half understand."

"Hear, hear!" exclaimed Frank Nugent. "Bump the fat rotter!"

"The bumpfulness is terrific!"

"Yaroooooh! Wow!" howled Billy Bunter, as many hands gripped him and swung him off his feet out into the Remove passage. "You'll—you'll

b-break my g-glasses and then you'll have to pay for 'em—Yooop!"

The last howl was wrenched from Bunter as his fat carcass smote the hard and unsympathetic linoleum with considerable force.

Bump, bump, bump!
"Give him another!"

"Yaroooh! Wow! Help!" roared Bunter.

Bump, bump, bump!

The five chums desisted at last from sheer exhaustion.

"Let me hear of you repeating that little tale again," panted Bob Cherry, as Bunter lay wriggling and squirming on the floor, "and what you've just had will be a giddy picnic compared with what you'll get."

And with that the Famous Five re-entered Study No. 1.

"Yah! Beasts!" groaned the Owl of the Remove, staggering to his feet and glaring at the unoffending door. "I'm hurt! Wow!"

Glaring at the door did not afford Bunter much satisfaction, however, so, with another grunt, he turned and rolled away down the passage, still groaning.

"So something's leaked out, after all,"

out into the Remove passage. But before they had proceeded half way towards the junior Common-room they encountered Fisher T. Fish, the hustling and enterprising youth from the United States.

"Hallo, Fish, old chap—I mean chap," grinned Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why the noble brow so wrinkled in thought, Fishy?" demanded Wharton, observing the serious expression on the American junior's lean face. "The bottom dropped out of the dollar?"

"See hyer, you jays," drawled Fisher. "I guess it ain't no laffing matter. No, sirree! I calculate some slick guy's going tew get it right where the chicken got the chopper for criminal libel—and then some."

"It's impossible to libel you, if that's what you mean, old scout," grinned Frank Nugent.

"Yeah—nunno, I mean!" gasped Fish hurriedly. "I reckon it's not about me. But I thought I'd tell yew fellows, so yew'd know. It's about old Capper—"

"Capper!" echoed the Famous Five, the grins quickly vanishing from their faces.

to do with it," he said, "but other people must have been talking about it first for Bunter to have got hold of the tale. I'd like to know who the thump it can be, though."

"Hear, hear!"

"We've done our best to keep it quiet, anyway," said Nugent. "But, at the same time, whether our suspicions about Capper are right, or not, I can't help feeling sorry for him."

And Nugent's feelings were shared by the rest of the Famous Five.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Head, Too!

"IT'S all rot, of course."

"Oh, quite!"

"But, at the same time, a good few fellows seem to have got hold of the tale, and—and, well, there's no smoke without fire, you know."

"No, I suppose not," agreed Fry.

The rumour concerning Mr. Capper had spread.

It was already public property in the Upper Fourth as well as in the Remove.

USEFUL MONEY PRIZES FOR "MAGNET" READERS!

RESULT OF "BOUNDARIES" COMPETITION No. 9.

The First Prize of £2-2-0 for the best "last line" sent in has been awarded to: F. B. Moon, 38, Frederick Place, Brighton, Sussex, for the following:

The mantles of "Ranji" and Fry
Have fallen on Bowley, and why?
He bats in such style
That the Sussex folks smile:
"Hungry bowlers" must eat "humble pie".

The six prizes of 10/6 each have been awarded to the following:

G. Astin, 6, Summer Street, C.-on-M., Manchester; W. A. Harris, Bockmer Farm Cottage, Medmenham, nr. Marlow; G. Hennell, 1, Clavering Avenue, Barnes, S.W. 13; I. M. Jackson, "The Chawtons," Rustington, Sussex; A. Nield, 58, Augustus Street, Brooks's Bar, Manchester; J. Yeadon, Gladstone Road, Rawdon, nr. Leeds.

said Wharton, seating himself at the study table again.

"I haven't breathed a word, anyhow," said Johnny Bull.

"Same here," chorused the rest of the Co.

"Of course not," agreed Wharton thoughtfully. "Some one else must have spotted him and told Angel."

"Yes, or more likely Angel spotted him and was telling someone else."

"Well, that's stopped Bunter opening his mouth for a bit, anyhow," grinned Frank Nugent, rubbing his elbow where one of Bunter's boots had caught him. "After all, from what Capper told us, he couldn't have been in Friardale Lane that night. Whether we believe what he told us or not's another matter, though."

"It might have stopped Bunter, but it hasn't stopped that dingy rotter Angel," said Johnny Bull slowly. "And Capper's his Form master."

"I thought it had all blown over by now," said Nugent. "Which just shows you never know. Well, let's clear the tea-things away and buzz up to the Common-room for a bit."

"Good egg!"

For the next ten minutes the five juniors were busy clearing the table and putting the study straight. The task finished, they emerged from the study

"That's it," nodded Fish, peeling himself a stick of chewing gum. "Some silly galoots are prancing around saying the guy's been seen in Friardale Lane squiffy."

"Who told you that, Fishy?" demanded Johnny Bull. "If it's that fat ass Bunter I reckon you've got the wrong end of the stick. He came and sprang the same tale on us a little while ago, but we just slung him out."

"It's not Bunter," replied Fish. "I guess I heard it from one or two quarters. Skinner told me first of all. Then, about ten minutes later, I heard it from several other quarters. I guess it's all bunkum, of course, but there'll be trouble for someone if it gets to the ears of the Head."

"My hat! You're right," agreed Wharton, slowly recovering from his astonishment. "There's probably a mistake somewhere, and if I were you, I don't think I'd mention it to anyone else, Fishy."

"Nope, I guess not," agreed Fish, passing on. "But I reckon it's no deep secret, no, sirree!"

"Here's a pretty kettle of fish," remarked Bob Cherry, when the American junior had gone. "I wonder if that fat ass Bunter—"

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"Very likely Bunter had something

Temple, Dabney & Co. were puzzled. Several times when the yarn had been repeated to them they had endeavoured to trace it back to its source. But their efforts had been futile. The whole thing seemed to move round in a circle—after the manner of most rumours.

"I wonder if that's what Angel was hinting at when old Capper walloped him the other day," said Fry.

"Possibly," answered Temple. "But I should hardly think so. Angel's a queer sort of kid, I know. He threatened to make Capper sit up; but from what I know of Angel, I should think he's too old a hand to rely on spreading a yarn of this sort to do it. For one thing it's too dangerous—unless he's able to prove it."

"And Capper's word is as good as Angel's," said Fry.

"Oh, rather!"

"Angel's probably got some deeper stunt on. That's my opinion."

"Well, it's a blessed mystery, anyway," grunted Temple. "I heard that that fat clump Bunter got hold of the tale a couple of days ago, and raced along to Wharton and his pals with it—but they slung him out on his neck."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Serve him right!"

"It's no use chewing the rag, as far as

as I can see," said Fry. "The silly ass who concocted this yarn about old Capper will get it in the neck before long."

"You're right, old man!"

"I am! Then I propose we don't talk about it any more. It can't do any good, and it might do a lot of harm. Least said soonest mended. Let's go for a wander round the Close before it gets dusk."

And the trio went:

They passed Dr. Locke on the way. The Head was evidently leaving the school to make a belated call.

He nodded briefly to Temple & Co., and passed out of the school gates.

It was a good hour later before he left Friardale on his way back. By then it was dark.

After ten minutes' walk Dr. Locke was approaching the Cross Keys Inn standing on the left of the road. Already some of the lights of the Inn were lowered.

"Hurry along, gentlemen, please!" shouted the voice of the potman.

"Give a fellow a chanch," came a familiar voice. "It's not time yet. You've put the clock forwardsh—cheats!"

The Head started.

There was something about that voice which was vaguely familiar.

"Get along out of it, I tell you," retorted the potman. "You've been here nearly all the evening. 'Ow much longer do you want? Hurry along, please!"

There came a mutter of hoarse voices, and the slamming of a door. Several figures moved away in the direction of Friardale which the Head had just left.

"Bless my soul!" he muttered. "Can it possibly be—"

When next he stepped out into the road again a figure lurched past one of the lighted windows of the Inn. The light from the lamp inside illuminated his features clearly.

"Bless my soul!" gasped Dr. Locke in amazement. "I—I must be dreaming! Capper—"

There was no doubt about it; the face was that of Mr. Capper!

Unaware that he was under observation the Upper Fourth master lurched up the lane towards Greyfriars.

"Bless my soul!" murmured Dr. Locke again, wondering whether his ears and eyes were playing tricks with him. "This—this is amazing!"

The Head of Greyfriars hesitated for a few brief minutes, and then strode up the road. The lurching form ahead was vanishing in the gloom. The Head caught up with the Upper Fourth master and continued to walk along by his side. Mr. Capper, however, did not seem to notice him.

"Capper!"

At the sound of Dr. Locke's voice Mr. Capper turned suddenly, lurching against the Head, and sending him staggering back several paces.

"Sorry!" gasped Mr. Capper. "Look where I'm going!"

"G-good gracious!" ejaculated Dr. Locke, quickly recovering himself. "How dare you, sir!"

"Not my fault," came the reply thickly. "Look where I'm going—wheresh you're going, I mean. Nicesh day."

"Capper!"

"Whamarrer now? Can't you leave a fellow alone?"

"How dare you, sir!" thundered Dr. Locke, clapping his handkerchief to his nose as a strong odour of fumes came

back at him. "How dare you, I say! You are intoxicated, sir! You are—"

"Wha'? Still at it? Run away, you old fool!"

And the speaker lurched up the road again.

"Bless my soul! This is terrible!" murmured the old Head, placing a hand to his brow. "This is indeed terrible!"

Dr. Locke continued his way up the road in the wake of the lurching figure like a man in a dream, or, rather, a nightmare.

But the mood of Mr. Capper seemed to have suddenly changed. He sank down on to a grassy bank, and waited until Dr. Locke was level with him.

"Here we are," he mumbled, patting a vacant patch of grass next to him. "Come and sit downsh and tell me all about it, there's a good fellow."

Dr. Locke's face assumed a deep purple hue, and his eyes gleamed.

"Are you aware to whom you are speaking?" he asked, controlling his indignation with an effort. "You forget yourself, sir!"

"Aren't you gonna sit down?"

"Certainly not!"

"Then clearsh off, and don't worry a man."

"Pull yourself together, my dear Capper," urged the Head, feeling that perhaps the master of the Upper Fourth needed humouring. "Suppose anyone should come along and see you in this condition. It would be a terrible thing. Pray try and collect yourself, I entreat you, Capper. I feel sure you can if you will but make the effort. Permit me to assist you to rise."

The only reply was a faint snore.

"Bless my soul! He has gone to sleep!" ejaculated Dr. Locke.

The Head gazed helplessly about him for several moments. Never before in his life had he encountered such an experience. He tried to recall the best manner in which to deal with a man in Mr. Capper's state. He recollected reading that a strong cup of tea, with a pinch of soda, sometimes had a beneficial effect. But to obtain a strong cup of tea in the middle of Friardale at past ten o'clock at night was a sheer impossibility.

There came the sound of approaching footsteps some distance up the road.

Dr. Locke felt the perspiration break out on his brow. For Mr. Capper to be seen in his present state by other people was the last thing in the world that he desired. But, instead of approaching closer, the solitary pedestrian turned off up a footpath. Dr. Locke breathed a sigh of relief.

Taking the still gently snoring Mr. Capper by the shoulder, he shook him vigorously.

"Pull yourself together, sir!" he exclaimed.

Mr. Capper awoke with a start.

"What! Not gone yet!" he mumbled, blinking at the Head with a childish expression of scorn.

"It is I—Dr. Locke. Pray rise, Capper, and permit me to assist you to the school. If we remain here longer we shall be observed."

Mr. Capper staggered to his feet.

"Look here," he said solemnly, "why don't you clear off and lemme alone when you're asked? I shall be alri', I tell yoush."

"But, my dear Capper—"

"Can't a fellow have a li'l drink without all this fuss?" hooted Mr. Capper, his mood changing again.

"Here you are, been hanging around me all the eveningsh. I'll tell you for the last time—clear off! If you don't, there'll be trouble."

And as he spoke the master of the Upper Fourth lurched heavily against the Head, who emitted a mingled snort of wrath and disgust.

"Very well, Capper," retorted Dr. Locke. "I shall most certainly leave you. You are not in a fit state to reason with. But let me tell you, before I do so, that never before in my long career as a headmaster—or, for that matter, the whole of my life—have I been subjected to such treatment. You have behaved in a most disgusting manner. Indeed, I will go further—you have behaved in a beastly manner!"

"Yesh, I know. I deserve it. Rub it in!"

But Dr. Locke was not listening. Already he was stalking angrily up the road towards the school, leaving Mr. Capper to follow on as best he might.

Dr. Locke suffered a night of broken sleep.

Directly after breakfast the following morning he summoned Mr. Capper to his study.

"You sent for me, sir?" the Upper Fourth Form master remarked, in response to the Head's invitation to enter the study.

Dr. Locke glanced at Mr. Capper and started. He had expected to see him haggard and ill after his previous night's experience; but Mr. Capper looked far from ill. Indeed, he looked extraordinarily healthy. His eyes were bright and his skin glowed; his manner was calm and easy, and he had none of the appearance of a man so recently under the influence of alcohol. He met Dr. Locke's searching gaze with a steady eye and a slight and attentive smile, and waited for him to speak.

But it was some moments before Dr. Locke was able to do so. Mr. Capper's appearance had thrown him somewhat off his balance.

"I have a very disagreeable task before me, Capper," said Dr. Locke, deciding to come to the point and get the miserable business over as quickly as possible. "You are, of course, aware to what I am referring?"

"I beg your pardon, sir?" replied Mr. Capper, with a puzzled expression.

"I am referring to your behaviour last night."

"My behaviour last night?" repeated Mr. Capper, somewhat stiffly. "I must ask you to be more explicit, Dr. Locke. There is nothing about my behaviour last night to which I am aware anyone could take exception."

A hard gleam came into Dr. Locke's eyes.

"Are you deliberately trying to misunderstand me, Mr. Capper?" he demanded.

"Certainly not, sir. If you will be so good as to tell me plainly what you mean, I can answer you."

"Then I shall be interested to hear what explanation you have to offer—if any—for the state of intoxication you were in last night."

Mr. Capper almost jumped.

The Head watched him curiously, and was convinced that Mr. Capper possessed a marked histrionic ability of which he had never suspected.

The colour receded from the Fourth Form master's face, leaving it a dull ivory colour; but almost immediately the blood surged back until his entire face and neck were the hue of a beet-root.

"Sir! Dr. Locke! Do I understand that you are accusing me of—of having been drunk last night?" he demanded

in an agitated tone, looking the Head full in the eyes.

"Enough of this, if you please, Mr. Capper!" snapped Dr. Locke impatiently. "I trust you will realise how unpleasant this interview is for me. I hoped that you would have some sort of explanation to offer. If you were unwell, and took a stimulant which overpowered you, pray why not say so? Your denial is only making matters worse."

Mr. Capper controlled himself with a visible effort.

"Dr. Locke," he said quietly. "You have been misinformed. Whoever told you that has made a great mistake. I assure you that I was most certainly and emphatically not in the condition of which you accuse me of being last night. As you are aware, I am practically an abstainer. I deny the accusation utterly. And I trust, Dr. Locke, that having heard me you will now withdraw that statement. You have been wrongly informed."

There followed an impressive silence.

"Mr. Capper," said Dr. Locke harshly, "I regret to say that I have not been misinformed. I repeat that you were intoxicated last night, and that I saw you in that state with my own eyes!"

"Good heavens!"

"You may well say that," resumed Dr. Locke grimly. "I witnessed the whole miserable business, from the time you were almost ejected from the Cross Keys to the time when, having failed to induce you to return to the school with me, I left you in a fuddled state sitting by the wayside in Friardale Lane."

"You must have been dreaming, sir," gasped Mr. Capper weakly.

"Nonsense!" retorted Dr. Locke sharply. "Surely I can believe the evidence of my own ears and eyes? The hour at which this happened was shortly after ten o'clock. If you were not in Friardale Lane, then where were you?"

"I—I admit being in Friardale Lane at about that time," stammered Mr. Capper, pale again, "but not in the condition you accuse me of being. I do not recollect seeing you, either."

"Probably not," snapped the Head dryly.

"Unfortunately, I was alone for the best part of the evening," went on Mr. Capper dazedly, "and I did not arrive back at the school until rather late. You see, I—I—"

"Quite so!" grated Dr. Locke. "Unfortunately for you, you cannot prove an alibi. I am therefore compelled to conclude that what I saw was real enough, and that I was not dreaming and walking in my sleep, as you would doubtless like me to believe."

"You are mistaken, sir!" ejaculated Mr. Capper, having recovered himself somewhat. "I—I cannot understand it. You are not the first person to imagine you have seen me in—"

Mr. Capper broke off short. Recollection of the strange conversation he had had with Harry Wharton & Co. some days before came back to him; but he felt that to mention that to the Head at the present moment, instead of helping him, would only serve further to convince Dr. Locke of his guilt—if he needed further conviction.

"Well?" demanded Dr. Locke curiously. "Pray go on, Capper."

"It is of no moment," gasped Mr. Capper, in some confusion. "All I can do is to repeat that there is some terrible mistake. A very terrible mistake indeed. I ask you to believe me when I say—"



Bunter's fat feet skidded on the highly-polished linoleum, and with a wild yell of alarm, he slipped forward, the pie shooting from his hand and taking the unfortunate Aubrey Angel full in the face. "Wow! Yaroooh!" gasped Bunter, as his heavy carcass struck the linoleum with a hard thud. "Ouch! Yooooop!" spluttered Aubrey Angel, his ears, eyes, and hair full of juicy meat, pie-crust, and onions. (See Chapter 6.)

"Tut tut!" interrupted the Head shortly. "Why prolong this unpleasantness, Capper? It will serve no useful purpose. I must warn you, however, that it will be well for you to be more circumspect in future. That is all. You may go!"

And, seating himself at his desk, Dr. Locke made a pretence of examining some papers.

Mr. Capper stood stock still for a moment an angry retort rising to his lips. But he seemed suddenly to think better of it, and clamping his teeth on his lower lip, he turned and abruptly left the room.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Angel Follows the Trail!

"I'LL get him!"

Thus Aubrey Angel. Tea was over, and the slacker of the Fourth was taking a quiet stroll round the Close.

For several days nothing further had been heard of Angel's mysterious threat against Mr. Capper, and most of the Upper Fourth fellows had all but forgotten the incident.

But Aubrey Angel himself had not forgotten.

He was still smarting under a false sense of injustice, and his desire to get even with his Form master was keener than ever.

The worried state Mr. Capper had been in all day following his interview with Dr. Locke Angel wrongly attributed to the fact that he must have heard of some of the rumours that were going about Greyfriars concerning him.

"The time's just about right for me to act now," thought the Upper Fourth fellow, with vengeful glee. "All it needs is for me to catch him on the next trip and show him up. I'd better keep an eye on him for a bit."

And, having arrived at this decision, Angel entered the School House with a thoughtful expression on his face.

About an hour later Mr. Capper strolled across the Close and out through the school gates into Friardale Lane. And not far behind him was Aubrey Angel.

Angel paused outside the gates, as though wondering whether to take a little exercise or not. But exercise was the last thing that was in the dandy of the Fourth's mind at that moment. Despite his apparent abstraction, Angel

was keenly alert, and for not a single instant did he lose sight of the back of his Form master.

All oblivious of the fact that he was being followed, Mr. Capper plodded on. For about an hour he walked steadily, his way taking him up a side lane, over a footpath, across some fields, through the woods, and back towards the school again.

"Hang it!" muttered Angel, as the ancient pile of the old school loomed up before them again. "I wonder if he's got an idea that I suspect him, or whether it's just a bit too early."

Like an avenging shadow the Fourth Former dogged Mr. Capper's footsteps back to the school. Taking up a position behind a buttress, from whence he could command a view of the doorway, Angel waited patiently for the master of the Upper Fourth to emerge again.

An hour passed uneventfully.

But still Angel waited.

If Mr. Capper intended paying a visit to the Cross Keys he was leaving it rather late.

Another half-hour passed by, after which the Fourth Former gave up his vigil with a grunt of disgust.

"I expect it's getting a bit too risky for him while all the fellows are about," Angel told himself. "If he's going on the randan at all to-night I expect he'll sneak down when the chaps are all in bed. He's going the whole hog with Banks & Co. if he's taken to drink, I'll bet."

Still resolved to keep a watch on his Form master, Aubrey Angel went up to bed, but not to sleep.

The hour of eleven boomed slowly from the clock in the old ivy-hung tower, and Aubrey Angel sat up in bed.

"You fellows awake?" he called softly.

No reply.

The Fourth Former gave a grunt of satisfaction, stepped out of bed, and, donning a pair of rubber-soled shoes, crept silently from the dormitory.

"I'll just see whether the rotter's gone out or not," he muttered. "If he has, then I'll just wait about till he comes back, and see what sort of condition he's in."

Angel reached the end of the passage

leading from the Upper Fourth dormitory and crossed the corridor at the end towards the sleeping quarters of the Remove, beyond which lay the masters' wing.

But even as he did so there came the patter of naked feet behind him, and the next moment the fat and unmistakable form of William George Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, burst into view, closely followed by Peter Todd and Tom Dutton.

"Wow! Oooooo! Stop it, you chaps!" panted Bunter, who was grasping a large pie, which he had evidently been caught raiding from the study. "If—if I slip up and b-break my g-glasses you'll have to pay for 'em!"

"Be quiet, you fat chump!" snorted the voice of Peter Todd. "You don't want to wake the blessed school, do you? Gimme back my pie!"

Aubrey Angel pressed himself closely against the wall, hoping that in their excitement the juniors would pass by without detecting him.

On and on came Bunter, until he was within a couple of feet of where Angel was pressed into the shadow of the wall.

Suddenly, however, his fat feet seemed to skid on the highly-polished linoleum, and with a wild yell of alarm he slipped forward, the pie shooting from his hand and taking the unfortunate Angel full in the face.

"Wow! Yarooooh!" gasped Bunter, as his heavy carcass struck the linoleum with a hard thud.

"Ouch! Yooooop!" spluttered Aubrey Angel, his ears, eyes, and hair full of juicy meat, pie-crust, and onions. "You fat idiot! I'm smothered!"

The Upper Fourth fellow tried to struggle to his feet, but as he did so there came a gasp of alarm from behind him, and the next moment, unable to check their speed, Peter Todd and Tom Dutton sprawled head first over him.

Crash!

"Wow! Help! Police!" howled Billy Bunter, frightened almost out of his fat wits. "I've—I've just run into a burglar! Yow!"

"Shurrup!" snorted Dutton. "Do you want to have the blessed beaks down on us?"

"Quick!" gasped out Peter Todd suddenly. "There's someone coming. Grab Bunter and scoot! It's all the fault of the silly ass Bunter ran into. Come on!"

And dragging the shaken and stuttering Owl of the Remove to his feet, the two juniors half-dragged and half-pushed him round the bend in the corridor back towards the Remove dormitory, leaving Aubrey Angel still spluttering and struggling in the remains of the pie and its broken dish.

Click!

Almost the same instant that they vanished the corridor was flooded with yellow light from the electric bulb in the ceiling.

"What is the meaning of this?" demanded a familiar voice, suddenly.

Aubrey Angel found himself staring into the face of Mr. Capper.

"I—I—" began Angel, scooping a fragment of onion from his left eye. "You see, sir—"

"Most certainly I do!" snapped Mr. Capper. "I see that you have not yet left the ways of the Second Form behind you. I should have imagined that as a member of the Upper Fourth you would have been possessed of more dignity than to have left the dormitory in the middle of the night for the purpose of—ah—gorging a—pie!"

Angel turned a deep crimson.

"You're mistaken, sir. I—"

"Indeed!" murmured Mr. Capper, his gaze wandering to a small puddle of gravy which was slowly soaking into the seat of Angel's pyjamas. "Then what are you doing with that—ahem—pie? And why are you out of bed?"

There are times when the brain works at cyclonic speed. Angel's brain worked at that speed now.

The cad of the Fourth realised that if he explained truly how he came to be sitting on the corridor floor amidst the wreckage of a meat-pie, he would still have to account for his absence from the Upper Fourth dormitory.

And Aubrey Angel had no explanation ready.

It suddenly dawned upon the Upper Fourth fellow that his best way out would be to let Mr. Capper continue to think that he had indeed been emulating the exploits of a Second Form fag. Certainly it would not be dignified, but what it lacked in dignity it made up for in safety.

Angel summoned a feeble grin.

"You're quite right, sir," he said at length. "I—I—well, the fact is I didn't eat much dinner, and I missed my tea. Didn't feel up to much. Then later on, after I'd been in bed a while, I came over peckish, and—and came down to get a snack to take back."

"Very well, Angel," replied Mr. Capper. "I accept your explanation. You must realise, however, that your excuse is not sufficiently strong to justify your leaving the dormitory at this time of the night. You will therefore take fifty lines. I will see that the mess you have made is cleared up. You had better get back to your dormitory before you catch cold."

"But, sir—" began Angel.

"That will do. You had better go."

And Aubrey Angel went.

Most fellows would have considered fifty lines a very mild punishment indeed for what had occurred. But not so Angel. The imposition he had received only increased the ill-feeling he already bore towards Mr. Capper, and made him more determined than ever to get even with him.

At the back of his mind Angel felt that in some way Mr. Capper had become suspicious that he was being watched, and had been waiting to trap him.

"Never mind," snorted the junior to himself, as he clambered into bed. "The fun's off for to-night, but I'll get him yet!"

The next two nights passed uneventfully.

The fourth night, however, Angel decided that he would once again pay a visit to the masters' wing.

But hardly had he reached the point where the corridors crossed than he made out a shadowy form somewhere in the gloom before him, proceeding quietly down a passage on the left.

Angel caught his breath with excitement.

The form was too tall to belong to a junior. It was then, either a Sixth-Former or one of the masters.

As the figure moved away Angel stole silently in its wake.

"I'll just wait till he passes the window at the bottom," the junior murmured to himself. "It'll be easy to see who it is then."

But instead of continuing along to where a broad shaft of moonlight poured in through the tall windows at the end of the passage, the figure turned suddenly to the left and vanished from sight.

"Hang it!" exclaimed Angel, breaking into a run. "I wonder if he's got an idea someone's after him?"

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Angel reached the end of the passage down which the figure had disappeared. But not a soul was in sight.

"Where the thump—" began Angel.

There came the soft sound of a door being opened, followed by a chill blast of air which nipped round the junior's pyjama-clad legs.

Angel waited for no more.

"It's him!" he gasped. "And he's sneaking out. I might have guessed it!"

Firmly convinced now that the shadowy form he had seen wandering down the passage was that of Mr. Capper, the master of the Upper Fourth, Angel turned and raced swiftly in his rubber-soled shoes back to his dormitory, where he quickly changed into his outdoor clothing.

"I'll nab him this time," grinned the junior. "My name's not Aubrey Angel if I don't."

Several minutes later Angel left the school buildings via a window at the end of a passage, crossed the Close, clambered up the old elm near the school wall, and dropped silently into the lane the other side.

For several minutes he stood in the shadow of the wall, staring to the right and left. But there was no sign of his quarry.

"It's Capper, right enough!" Angel told himself. "I wonder what his game is? And through having to go back and change, I've given him nearly a quarter of an hour's start."

Angel remained stationary for some moments.

Then, having decided that Mr. Capper's objective was the Cross Keys, where doubtless he would fall in with Banks and his rascally satellites, Angel determined to follow. Crossing the road, he pushed his way through a hedge and set off across the fields, with the intention of reaching Friardale by the short cut.

It had been raining earlier in the evening, and the ground was wet and slippery. But in his excitement Angel seemed not to notice this. On and on he went, his mind filled with the thought of bowling out his Form master, and levelling up the score he had against him.

The half-way point of Angel's journey was marked by the nearest house to Greyfriars, the Grange, where resided Major Thresher. His mind still dwelling on Mr. Capper, Angel passed the back of the house, which was all in darkness.

The footpath was in a more sodden state about here, and some tall pine trees on the right obscured the light of the moon. Angel came to a puddle about a yard and a half long. Unwilling to skirt it by walking round in the grass, he took a short run and leaped.

Even as he struck the ground on the far side, however, a sharp twinge of pain shot through his right ankle, causing him to double up and emit a stifled gasp of pain.

"Hang it!" muttered the junior, the pain giving him a momentary feeling of sickness. "I—I must have sprained my confounded ankle—"

Angel straightened himself up, and tried to walk; but the pain of putting his foot to the ground caused him to flinch and groan aloud.

"It's no use!" he gasped. "Always my rotten luck! I'll have to rest up a bit, and get back to the school. Ow!"

The Upper Fourth fellow limped painfully to a half-rotted log, almost hidden from sight in a tall clump of grass, and sank down. For about twenty minutes he sat with his sock

down and the end of his trousers pulled up, gently massaging his injured ankle, which was already swelling and turning blue.

Angel was about to rise and attempt to walk again, when the stillness of the night was broken by a sharp cry from the back of Major Thresher's house behind him. The cry was followed by a heavy thud and the tinkle of smashing glass.

"What the thump—" gasped Angel in amazement.

Woof, woof, woof!

A chorus of barks broke out from a couple of dogs, intermingled with the shouting and excited voices of servants calling upon someone to stop.

His heart beating violently with excitement, Angel ducked into the shadows, and waited, while every moment the sound of the shouting and barking seemed to come nearer and nearer to him.

"Must be burglars!" gasped Angel.

A crashing as of a body bursting

SOME BOY!

You simply must read about ANGELO LEE, the new boy in the Fourth Form at St. Jim's. He wants the sack from the school and . . .

* * * * *

This week's topping yarn in

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will tell you all about young Angelo. Make his acquaintance without delay!

through bushes and undergrowth close at hand caused the Upper Fourth fellow to rise in alarm. The next instant a figure flashed by, running at breakneck speed from the house whence came the hoarse cries of the servants.

At it did so, Aubrey Angel gave vent to a low whistle of amazement.

In the momentary glimpse he had obtained of the fugitive's face he had recognised the unmistakable features of the master of the Upper Fourth at Greyfriars!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Identified!

"CAPPER!"

Forgetful for the moment of his injured ankle, Angel stood rooted to the spot, staring into the patch of darkness where the fugitive had disappeared.

The Upper Fourth fellow wondered for a moment whether his eyesight was playing him tricks. But there was no doubt about it. He had seen the features of Mr. Capper clearly enough.

What was Mr. Capper doing fleeing from Major Thresher's house with servants in pursuit? This and several other questions flashed through Angel's mind. But before he could answer them there came the shouting of several voices close at hand.

"Which way did he go?"

Aubrey Angel suddenly recalled his own position. He had no desire to be caught out of the school and at the back of Major Thresher's house at such a time of night—especially in view of what was happening. With a gasp of alarm, he went to duck down into the long grass again.

But too late!

There came a wild yell of triumph from the crowd of servants.

"That's him!"

"On him!"

The next moment several figures leaped into the clump of grass where Angel was hiding.

Biff! Thud! Crash!

"Yaroooh! Hold on!" gasped Angel, as a series of heavy blows sent him staggering back. "I'm not the chap you're after! I'm—"

Another blow to the mouth cut short the rest of Angel's sentence, and a second later he found himself gasping and struggling on the ground, with a footman sitting on his chest and another on his legs.

"We've got him!"

"Hold him tight!" came the voice of Major Thresher's butler. And a light beamed out from an electric torch. "We've got 'im all right! Now let's 'ave a look at him!"

"You fools!" hissed the Upper Fourth fellow savagely. "I'm not the man you want. You've made a mistake. I'm Angel of Greyfriars!"

"My 'at! So it is!" ejaculated the butler, as the light from his torch, falling on Angel's battered features, confirmed his statement. "But—but what the 'ump— It ain't the burglar, after all, then!"

"Of course it isn't!" roared Angel. "The man you were after was making for Friardale Lane. If you'd have listened to what I said you might have caught him by now, instead—"

"Good! You've got him, then!" interrupted Major Thresher, suddenly arriving on the scene. "Good for you! Let me have a look at the fellow!"

"I'm—I'm sorry, sir!" gasped the butler, not yet fully recovered from his surprise. "It's one of the young gents from the school—"

"Greyfriars!" ejaculated Major Thresher, peering at the prisoner's face. "By Jove! So it is. I know his face, too. What is your name, boy?"

The two footmen who had been holding Angel down rose and assisted their late prisoner to his feet.

"I'm Angel, sir!" gasped the Upper Fourth fellow, his mind working rapidly to invent some excuse to offer for being absent from the school. "I—I happened to be passing by when I ricked my ankle. I was sitting down massaging it when I heard the alarm raised, and a second later I saw the burglar dash by. These fellows evidently mistook me for the burglar, and before I could explain their mistake to them they charged down on me."

Major Thresher regarded the Upper Fourth fellow curiously.

"The man you saw running in the dark was a burglar who was interrupted whilst he was in the act of robbing my house," he said.

"I guessed that, sir!" replied Angel

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excitedly. "I suppose none of your servants happened to get a glance at the man's face?"

The butler started visibly.

"I—I—" he began.

Angel grinned.

"I thought as much," he said. "Someone you knew, wasn't it?"

"What do you mean, boy?" snapped Major Thresher, scenting that something more unusual than a burglary was in the air.

"Ask your butler," replied Angel. "If he saw the man he can tell you who he was as well as I can."

"Did you see the man's face, Jeeves?" demanded Major Thresher.

"I—well, you see—" began the butler again.

"Yes or no?" snapped the major.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Jeeves.

"And you recognised him?"

Once again the butler hesitated.

"Oh, you needn't worry," said Angel slowly and deliberately. "I saw the man quite distinctly. It was someone I know as well as I know you, sir—someone I know far better, in fact."

"Cease this tomfoolery, and tell me who it was!" snapped Major Thresher angrily.

"Very well; since you order me to," said Angel. "And there's no mistake about it, either. The man was Mr. Capper, of Greyfriars!"

"What!"

Major Thresher snapped out the word, and his mouth tightened.

"You heard what I said, sir."

A momentary silence followed, during which the major regarded the Upper Fourth fellow as though trying to decide whether he had suddenly taken leave of his senses or not.

"How dare you, sir!" grated the major at length. "How dare you, I say, sir! If you consider this an appropriate moment for jesting you are mistaken. For two straws I would thrash you where you stand, sir! I would—Huh!"

"Oh, very well!" retorted Angel, with a shrug of his shoulders. "You asked me, and I told you. I'm not blind, and, in any case, if you don't take my word for it, ask Jeeves. He saw him, too."

Major Thresher choked and half-turned to his butler.

"You will deny that, of course, Jeeves?" he said.

"I—I—" The young gent is right, I'm afraid, sir," muttered Jeeves uncomfortably. "Jenkins saw him, too. If it wasn't Mr. Capper, then it was his werry double, sir. I—I wouldn't 'ave said so, honly Master Angel 'ere seeing 'im, too—"

"Great Scott!" gasped Major Thresher, mopping his brow with his handkerchief. "I—really, this is amazing—extraordinary! You are sure there is no possibility of a mistake?"

"Not at all, sir," said Angel, a note of triumph in his voice. "We cannot all be mistaken. I am prepared to swear, if necessary, that the man I saw was Mr. Capper and no other. He passed within less than a yard of me, and the moonlight was on his face."

"How does it come about that you, a member of the Upper Fourth at Greyfriars, came to be abroad at this time of night, and in this vicinity?" demanded Major Thresher suddenly.

"That's easily explained, sir," returned Angel easily. "I had left my dormitory to go to my study after some medicine when I saw someone creeping about one of the passages. It was Mr. Capper. But he was not behaving in a manner you might have expected of a

master. I saw him leave the school, and thinking, in view of the way he has been behaving lately, that he had some queer game on, I followed him out."

"Indeed?"

"Yes, sir. But I lost sight of him outside the school, and, having reason to believe that he was going to Friardale, I took the quick cut across the fields with the idea of heading him off. I ricked my ankle near here—you can see that for yourself if you look at it—and I was just about to turn and make for the school again, after a rest, when I heard the alarm, and a few minutes later Mr. Capper rushed by. That is why I was not so surprised as I might have been. As I say, I guessed there was some queer game he had in hand, but I certainly did not expect him to turn burglar."

"That will do!" snapped Major Thresher coldly.

"Certainly, sir; but—"

"Silence, boy! It is a most unhappy and puzzling business altogether. And—and despite what you and Jeeves say, I still feel there is some mistake. However, if only for Mr. Capper's sake, I will have the matter investigated by the police."

"Yes, sir," said Angel.

Major Thresher motioned to his servants to return to the house.

"I think you had better return to the school now," he went on, addressing Angel. "I shall, of course, take the first opportunity of communicating to Dr. Locke what has happened in the morning. Good-night to you!"

And Major Thresher turned abruptly and made his way back to the Grange.

It was a good twenty minutes later before Aubrey Angel, not without some difficulty and considerable pain from his injured ankle, managed to reach Greyfriars again.

Once or twice he thought of finding out whether Mr. Capper had yet returned, but the pain of his injured ankle decided him to return straight to his dormitory.

The junior chuckled softly to himself as he clambered in between the sheets again.

The most he had hoped for when he had set out that evening was to discover his Form master in a state of intoxication. That he would recognise in him a burglar fresh from some depredation he had not imagined even in his wildest dreams. And that in all probability Mr. Capper was unaware that he had been recognised only added to the pleasure of Angel's reflections.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Master's Humiliation!

"MR. ALGERNON CAPPER?" The master of the Upper Fourth started.

Breakfast had been over for some little time, and Mr. Capper was standing in the lane outside the school gates. He was awaiting a message from Dr. Locke, who had been called out early to Courtfield.

"Yes, that is my name," replied Mr. Capper. "What do you want with me?"

And Mr. Capper turned and gazed curiously at the two men who had accosted him.

"I am a police-officer," said the taller of the two men, both of whom were attired in blue serge suits and bowler-hats. "My name is Frost, and I am a detective-sergeant from Courtfield."

"Indeed!" replied Mr. Capper. "But I fail to see how that can be of interest to me."

The two men exchanged glances and edged closer to the master. Mr. Capper felt a hand close round his arm, while another was rested on his shoulder.

"Algernon Capper," said the detective-sergeant in an official voice, "I have a warrant for your arrest on a charge of burglary, and I must request you to accompany me to the police-station. It is my duty to inform you that all you say may be taken down and used in evidence against you."

"What!" almost shrieked Mr. Capper, wondering for the moment whether he had heard aright. "Release me at once, sir! How dare you! Release me immediately. Do you hear, sir?"

"This way," said the detective briskly. "We don't want any trouble with you. You'll have to come, whether you like it or not."

"Better come quietly, sir," added the plain-clothes constable. "You're not likely to get hurt then."

Mr. Capper's face turned a deep purple.

"I beg to inform you that you are making a mistake," he said, controlling himself with an effort. "The idea of charging me with being a burglar is absolutely absurd. My name is certainly Capper, but I am not the man you want. I am a master at this college."

"We know that," grinned the detective. "But you've got to come along, all the same. This way."

"Release me, sir!" roared Mr. Capper, almost besides himself with rage. "Release me instantly, or—or I shall assault you. You have no right—Bless my soul! How dare you?"

Mr. Capper broke off short as his arm was suddenly twisted behind him and he felt himself propelled forward.

"Coming quietly?" demanded the detective-sergeant.

Mr. Capper did not answer. Instead, he made a terrific effort to free himself, his face working with rage. But, struggle as he might, he was no match for the two detectives. There came a flash of metal in the morning sun and—

Click!

Mr. Capper felt something cold encircle his wrists, and the next moment he was staring dully at a pair of regulation handcuffs linking his two hands together.

"Bless my soul!" gasped the master faintly. "This—this is outrageous!"

Even as Mr. Capper spoke there came a startled gasp from within the school gates, and a second later Harry Wharton appeared, closely followed by the rest of the Famous Five.

"Mr. Capper! What's the matter, sir?" demanded the captain of the Remove, gazing in amazement first at the master and then at the police-officers.

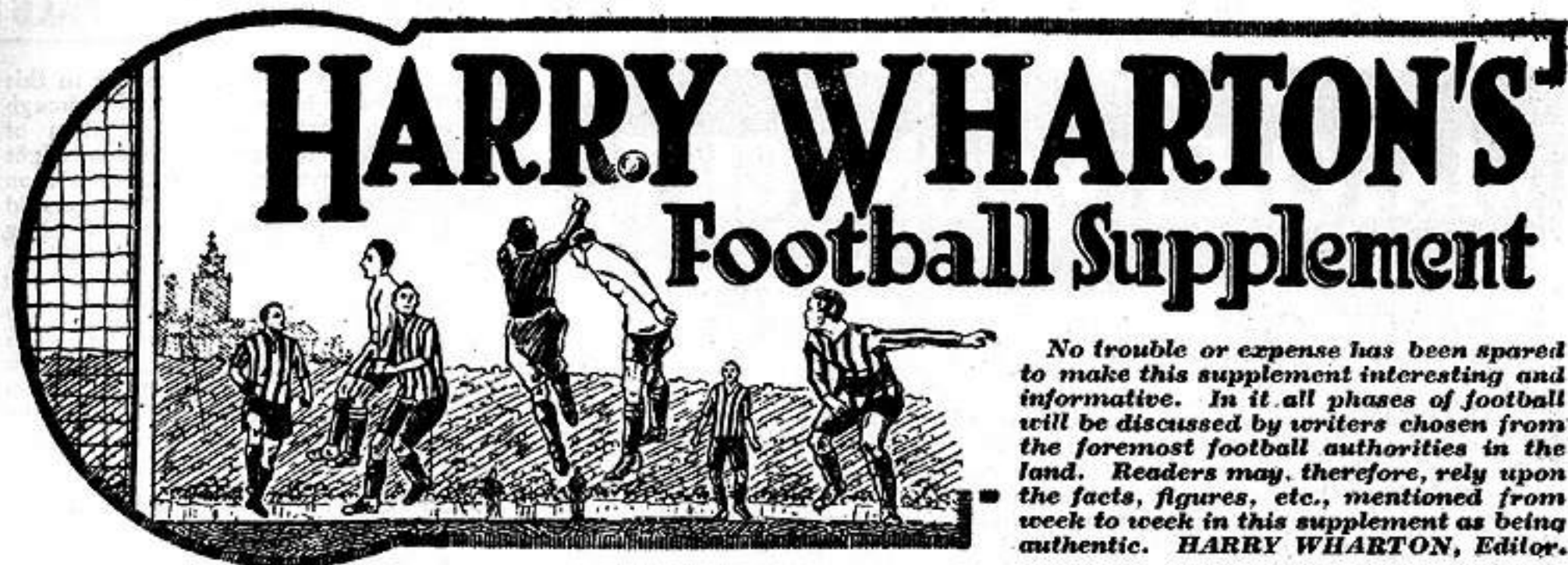
"He's under arrest, that's what's the matter," replied the detective-sergeant briefly. "I've got a warrant for his arrest on a charge of burglary."

"Great Scott!" gasped Wharton feebly.

"You must have made a mistake, officer," protested Johnny Bull. "This is Mr. Capper, the master of the Upper Fourth. Take those things off him

(Continued on page 17.)

ANSWERS
Every Saturday—PRICE 2s



HARRY WHARTON'S

Football Supplement

No trouble or expense has been spared to make this supplement interesting and informative. In it all phases of football will be discussed by writers chosen from the foremost football authorities in the land. Readers may, therefore, rely upon the facts, figures, etc., mentioned from week to week in this supplement as being authentic. **HARRY WHARTON, Editor.**

No. 7. Vol. 3 (New Series).

Week Ending October 16th, 1926.

Do You Know?



THAT in the opening games of this season in the League's First Division, West Ham United turned out a full team of English born players; Sheffield United, ten Englishmen and an Irishman; and West Bromwich Albion, ten English and one Welsh? Everton and Newcastle each included five Scots in their teams, and Leeds United four.

That "Bob" Kelly has a two-seater car to facilitate travel arrangements between Burnley, where he resides, and Sunderland, where he plays?

That the oldest man in the Blackpool team is twenty-six, and the average age is barely twenty-three, and they have the youngest team in the Football League?

That in the early 'eighties the football season proper didn't start until the first Saturday in October?

That the eighty-eight Football League clubs of England had on their books at the start of the present season no less than 2,247 professionals?

That since the War Wallace Clark, the diminutive but clever outside-left of Barrow, has passed through the ranks of Durham City, Middlesbrough, Leeds United, Birmingham, Coventry City, and Boston Town? As he is now only twenty-eight there is plenty of time for him to create a record.

That on the Arsenal's last balance-sheet there was an item of one hundred pounds for players' golf charges, and that it is part of the ordered training of the Arsenal players to do a certain amount of golf every week?

That Preston North End players have been presented with a portable gramophone which they take with them to their away matches?

That just over two years ago Jack Rutherford retired from football to take up the managership of the Stoke club, and that later he returned to play a season for the Arsenal, and is now on the staff of Clapton Orient?

That twice in the course of his football career Andy Ducat broke his leg and once his collar-bone, but he recovered from each of these injuries to play as well as ever?

That Jack Harrow, the Chelsea full-back, has had the misfortune to lose the sight of one eye. It was injured by a blow in the face from the ball last winter, and, despite the most skilful treatment, the sight has gradually failed until the eye is blind?

WHY NOT FOOTER TEST MATCHES?

AND THE BEST OUT OF FIVE GAMES TO DECIDE THE "RUBBER."

IN a few days now the International match part of the football season will be entered upon, the chosen of England meeting the chosen of Ireland by way of setting the ball rolling. Now, for some reason or other, nothing like the interest is shown in these International footer games as one would expect. Perhaps in England we should show more interest in them if we won a little more frequently, for it is a fact that England has not won the International Championship since the season of 1912-13. Seeing, however, that there is such a comparatively small amount of real enthusiasm over the International matches as now arranged, I am going to suggest that they might be tried on a new system. Instead of England and Scotland—the two great rivals—meeting just once a season at Soccer, why not have a series of tests of the kind we have in cricket—the best out of five games to decide the "rubber"?

FOOTBALL LUCK!

A scheme like this might serve to work up the enthusiasm of the people over International matches to a much greater extent than one game between the two countries does. In the first place, one football match, as everybody knows, is seldom a really conclusive test. In your own football you have no doubt known occasions when one week you have been beaten by a side, and the next week you have beaten the same side. There is a lot of luck in football, and the luck may go one way to such an extent in any particular match that the score does not really reflect the merits of the two teams engaged. Over a series of five games the luck would be pretty sure to be evenly divided.

A CHANCE OF SEEING THE BEST MEN!

Moreover, if there were five games between England and Scotland each season instead of only one, a lot more people would get "worked up" over them. The games could be played in different centres, and thus people who otherwise get little opportunity of seeing the best that England and Scotland can produce in the way of footballers would be provided with the opportunity. The scheme of having test matches in cricket instead of merely one match works well. I do wish we could try it in football by way of a change, don't you?

PLAYERS AT THEIR BEST!

It seems to me that by the time we reached the fifth game in any one season the play would also show a distinct sign of improvement—might reach a higher standard than any football we know at the moment. Under the present scheme players who appear in International matches are usually so strange to each other's methods that the football suffers in consequence. If five matches were played between England and Scotland the players who took part in those games would get more of that real understanding which is so necessary to a really high-class exhibition. And the players would also get much keener than they are now.

MATCHES & MOONLIGHT!

STRANGE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH FOOTER MATCHES HAVE BEEN PLAYED.

REFEREEES who are appointed to control football matches are told quite plainly that they must always do their level best to see that the contests are duly got through if it is at all possible, and strange scenes are witnessed from time to time owing to the efforts of the referees to carry out this instruction. One of the most weird football scenes I have ever witnessed was on the Clapton Orient football ground some years back. The Orient were playing Woolwich Arsenal in an important Cup tie. Gradually the fog, which had been fairly thick at the start, became more and more dense, but still the referee carried on. Presently some bright lad in the crowd had an idea. He set a match to a newspaper and held it aloft to give light. Immediately, as if by magic, thousands of spectators copied the idea, until the ground was lit up by flares in every corner of the arena. It was indeed a strange sight to see these hundreds of little fires burning through the fog. I don't suppose they helped the referee much, but the game was duly finished.

THE EXTRA MEN!

There is at least one case on record of a match being played by moonlight—in Paris between an English team and a French team. The ground on which the game had to be played was wanted in the afternoon for some races, and these taking longer than was anticipated it was dark before the football match could be started. Fortunately it was full-moon time, and before the match

had been in progress long it was not the light of the sun but the light of the moon which enabled the game to be carried on. It was finished, too, though whether the story that one side played two extra men during the second half without either the referee or the on-lookers noticing it is true I cannot say.

A POSSIBILITY OF THE FUTURE

It is quite on the cards that the time may come when big football matches will be played at night by artificial



BILLY BLYTH.

TRICKS of the TRADE!

This week: Billy Blyth, of the Arsenal, and the way he plays at left-half.

WHEN the critics sat down to discuss, as they very often did last season, the secrets of the success of the Arsenal, they usually paid full tribute to the genius of Charlie Buchan in the forward line. Now, I am not going to say a word about the genius of Buchan; he was certainly one of the busy bees who helped to make the "Reds" a great side. But there were three other busy bees in the team, too; and they all played at half-back—Baker, Butler, and Blyth, and here, in my view, was the real secret of the Arsenal's rise to the second place in the League table last season. These three men made up what I consider the ideal half-back line in this new game. In the middle there was lengthy Butler to do the headwork, and to do the running backwards and forwards, too, when necessary. On his right there was energetic little Baker, and on his left William Naismith Blyth, popularly known as "Billy."

One wouldn't go so far as to say that Blyth is the greatest wing half ever, but there are very few better, and he is certainly of the type that any young lad might watch closely and learn things

A series of articles, showing how the experts do their job.

which would help him to improve his game.

A BUNDLE OF ENERGY!

First of all, Blyth is an enthusiast. His heart and soul is in his job. You can tell that by the way in which he goes in to tackle, and yet he is always fair. You can also see his earnestness by the way in which he works up among the forwards, holding the ball just long enough to draw the opponents from the fellow to whom he proposes to pass the ball. That is the true art of the wing half-back's play—to make the path to goal easy for the fellows in front. To be able to carry out this part of the job the half-back must be able to dribble a bit, and Blyth certainly can do this. You see, he was by training an inside-left, and when he was a lad in Scotland he learnt the tricks of the wing forward's play.

Perhaps this little bundle of energy—he is only five feet six inches—is not now so fast as he used to be. Anyway, there came a time when he was left out of the Arsenal forward line. Blyth has told me that he then made up his mind that he would get back into the team. He thought of the position in which the club was most likely to want a player

light. Already several attempts in this direction have been made, and although as yet no really effective system of lighting up a football ground at night has been discovered, there is no reason why eventually a perfect system should not be evolved, and then we may refer to footballers as "footlight" artists.

A BATH FOR THE BALL!

A year or two back I saw one of these artificial light matches at Preston on the North End football ground between two ladies' teams—Dick Kerr's and the Rest of England. Powerful acetylene lamps were placed round the touchline. Unfortunately, the light of two powerful searchlights, which were also fixed to shine on the pitch, failed after the game had been in progress a few minutes; but the game went on to the end, and it was always possible to follow the movements of the players fairly well. To aid them the ball was dipped in whitewash every few minutes.

WEIRD EFFECTS!

Years ago I saw a benefit match at Manchester which was also played out of doors with the aid of artificial light, but this came to a quick end because a snow-storm broke over the ground, making it impossible to follow the players or the ball. It was indeed a strange sight to see the falling snow on which the lights shed their beams—a scene from fairyland, almost.

A BATTLE ROYAL!

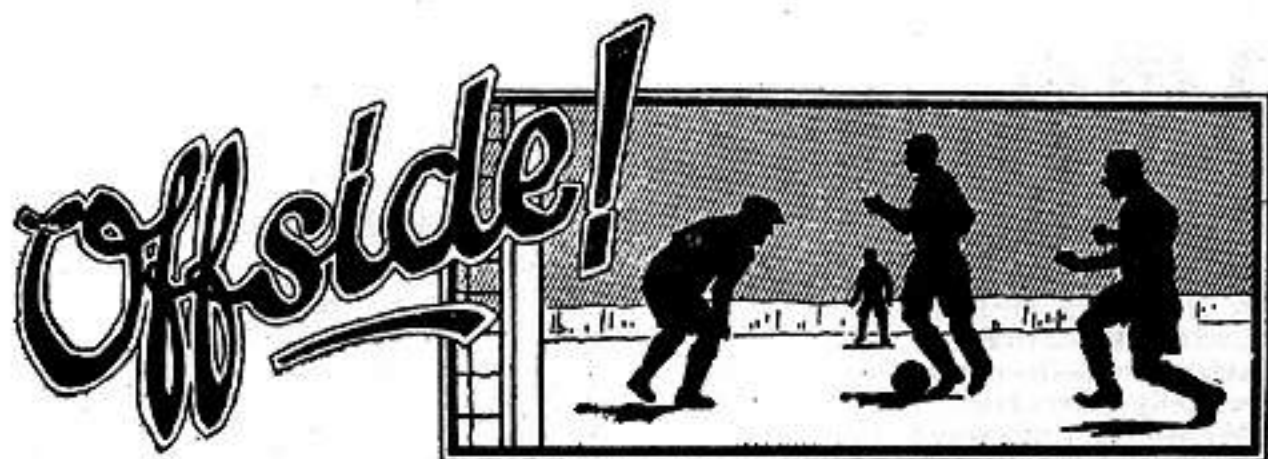
Many years ago extraordinary scenes were witnessed at a Semi-Final in which West Bromwich Albion took part. Snow fell heavily while the match was in progress, and the spectators, getting "fed-up" because they could not see the play, began to amuse themselves by snowballing the players. The goal-keepers had a terrible time, with the snowballs flying round their heads in dozens. In the end the referee had to stop the game, so the watchers got on the field and a pitched snowball battle took the place of the football match.

at an early date. That was left-half, and from that moment Blyth began to perfect himself as a half-back. That is the spirit which tells in football, too, my lads. With the ball at his toe he swerves inwards and outwards like a dancing master, and occasionally, just when everybody is expecting him to pass, he darts straight through and scores a goal. Seven times last season did he find the net in League matches for the Arsenal, which is not bad when you consider his position as a wing half-back.

A CONFIRMED OPTIMIST!

Just to show that he is the sort of fellow who always insists on doing well everything to which he puts his hand, I must tell you about his golf. He has won a competition arranged for all the football players of London. He has set up a new amateur record for one of the courses of his native Scotland, and has entered for the open amateur golf championship.

A ninety minutes' player if ever there was one, Billy is also a confirmed optimist. He is never downhearted, with a cheery reply for every croaker. Once last season I sympathised with him over a bad beating to which the Arsenal had just been subjected. "Oh," he said, with a smile, "it might have been worse. I made two good passes during the game—both to myself."



CAN THE OFFSIDE NUISANCE COME BACK?

Read what S. J. Wadsworth, the clever International full-back of Huddersfield Town has to say on this subject.

VERY funny things continue to happen in the football world, so much so that I think most of the players—and I expect the onlookers as well—don't really know whether they are on their heads or their heels. Tactics are so much "in the air" that we have nothing but contradictions. We at Huddersfield have said to ourselves more than once that we had discovered the best method of attack and defence under the changed conditions brought about by the offside rule alteration. But no sooner had we made up our minds that we know just how we can go ahead winning our matches, than some opponent or other bobs up with a "wheeze" we had not anticipated, and we have had to change our tactics accordingly.

THE TABLES TURNED!

One of the most interesting points connected with this new football, however, centres round the answer to this question: Can the offside nuisance come back under the changed rule? Does it still pay defenders to make the attempt to throw their opponents offside? It is a problem which you lads may find interesting. Since the start of the present season I have heard of several cases in which teams in the big Leagues have tried to work the offside trick, and there were certainly matches last season in which the whistle sounded for offside quite frequently. One of the things which struck me as very funny last season was a report that in the course of a match between the Arsenal and West Ham there were no fewer than nine offside decisions, and that every one of them was against the forwards of West Ham. If you will think back a moment you will remember that in the previous season it was West Ham's defenders, perhaps as much as the defenders of any other club, who by their play raised the cry for the alteration in the offside rule.

WHAT IS THE SECRET?

The real point, however, is quite serious—not funny at all. Can "offside" come back? Will tactics so develop that there will be as many stoppages under the new rule as there were under the old rule? The change was made to cut down the offside stoppages, that is obvious. It will indeed be funny if new tactics are thought out which give us nearly as many stoppages for offside under the new rule as the old. I think it was our old friend McCracken who said, not so long ago, that if he had two or three of the one-time Newcastle players along with him he could work out an offside trick under the new rule which would be as successful as was the old McCracken trick before the rule was altered. So it is apparently the opinion of some people that it is possible for

offside to come back in spite of the change. Let us examine the possibilities.

DEALING WITH THE "POACHER."

This much is obvious, that the same tactics cannot now be employed as were employed under the old rule. If there is any movement forward by the full-backs with a view to throwing the other fellows offside, then the movement must be made by both full-backs. And if both do move up together, one of two things must happen. Either they will compel the so-called poaching forward to come back with them, or the ball when kicked will find the attacker in an offside position. In certain cases I see no reason why both full-backs should not move up together, even to the half-way line, when their own side is attacking, and thus compel the "advance" forwards, who are so prominent a feature of this new game, to retreat behind the half-way line.

WHEN LEAST EXPECTED!

At first such a move might be successful, but I imagine it's only being successful because forwards are up against something new—something they do not expect. For the moment some forwards have got it into their heads that they simply can't be offside. I might add that some referees also seem to be of opinion that offside has gone from the rules altogether. Forwards who are just going as far up the field as they like, and those who are not even thinking about the possibility of being offside, are very likely to be caught in an illegitimate position by an adroit concerted move on the part of both full-backs.

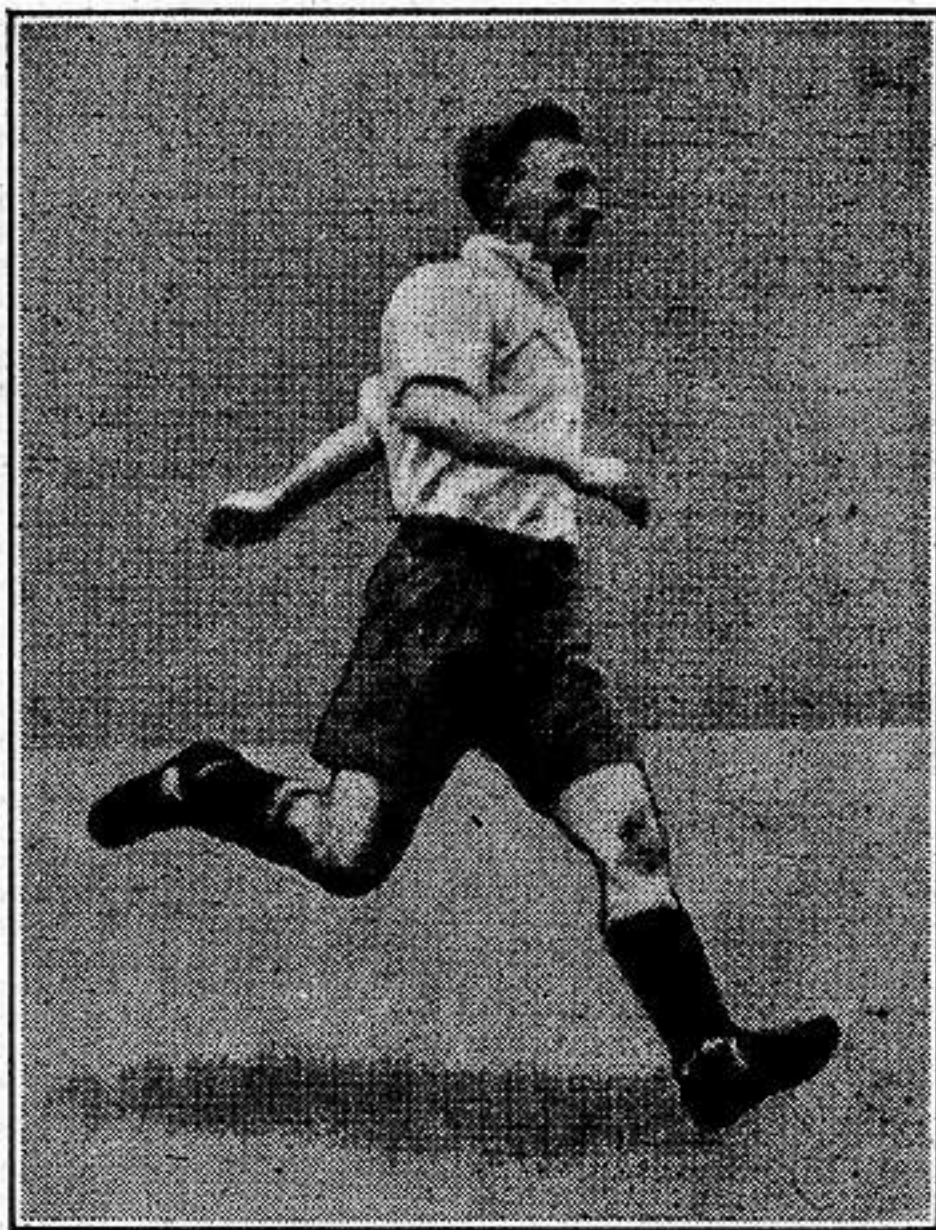
TACTICS WHICH ARE RISKY!

Thinking the matter over carefully, however, I do not believe, in spite of the evidence from here and there that there is a very real danger of offside coming back to the nuisance it often was under the old rule. For one thing, the sudden

move up by both full-backs together is too risky a procedure. When, under the old rule, one full-back moved up, there was always his partner in the rear if by any chance the offside trick did not come off. If, as is necessary for offside purposes under the new rule, both full-backs move up, then if the trick doesn't come off there is no defender at all, save the poor goalkeeper, to stave off the attack. Again, this double move up will demand absolute harmony of thought among all the defenders. It won't be any good, for instance, for the two full-backs to move up if a half-back, thinking there is danger, drops back.

THE LIMPET CENTRE-HALVES!

Nor as yet do I think there is sufficient confidence being shown by centre-halves for them to advance well up the field and leave the opposing centre-forward free to carry out his schemes. Perhaps we shall get over the notion in time, but it certainly seems to me that the one tactical idea which is meeting with universal favour under the new rule is for the centre-half to "hang on" to the opposing centre-forward like a limpet. Everybody seems to be obsessed with the idea in these days that it is down the middle which pays in the attacking line, and so long as this idea persists then it seems likely that centre-half-



A fine action photo of S. J. WADSWORTH.

backs will be unable to resist the temptation to make a special point of watching the centre-forward of the other team. Unless the centre-half-backs change their tactics, then the offside nuisance won't come back, and I think the average onlooker will be relieved to think that this is the truth.

S. J. Wadsworth

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 974.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By
PAUL PRY.

Do You Know How Some of Our Famous Footer Teams Got Their Names?

THE respective merits of football and baseball is a subject with which I have nothing to do here. But when I sat down to think about the names of the big football clubs it did occur to me that the Americans have certainly shown more imagination in the choice of names for their baseball teams than we British have shown in choosing the title for our football clubs. We have nothing in football, by way of example, to compare with "Chicago Red Sox," or the "Broadway Freebooters." Mostly the names of our football clubs are just the ordinary names of the districts in which the club plays. There is nothing romantic or imaginative about Chelsea or Fulham, Huddersfield Town, Liverpool, Birmingham, and the like. Here and there, however, we have names which are out of the ordinary, and a correspondent suggests that it might be interesting to readers as a whole if we told them how these clubs came by their "fancy" names.

THE SPURS!

It is certainly not easy to connect a very ordinary London suburb like Tottenham with the name Hotspur, but it is a good name, nevertheless, because for one thing it supplies the sub-editors with a ready headline when the 'Spurs do something good. You see in big letters at the top of your newspaper column: "Very Hot 'Spurs." The story of how the club came to adopt the name of Hotspur was told me by Mr. Charles

Roberts, the present chairman of directors, who has been on the board practically ever since the club was a club. At the time when it was decided to form a football club in Tottenham, the local lads who were responsible for the idea were very keen on English history. They happened to be studying the doings of Henry Percy, nicknamed Hotspur. This worthy, as my readers who are students of history may know, was a son of the Earl of Northumberland, and the lads who formed the Tottenham club mostly lived round a part of Tottenham known as Northumberland Park. The first meetings of the new club were held at Percy House, and when somebody suggested that they should call themselves Tottenham Hotspur the idea was greeted with loud applause. And Tottenham Hotspur they have been ever since.

CARTOONISTS WHO ARE WRONG!

Another London club has a word in its title which seems obscure—Clapton Orient. The Clapton is easy, because it is the district in which they play, but the Orient is a puzzler. This is how it came about: At the start of the Clapton Orient club the prime-mover was a man very much interested in shipping. His first idea was that the club should be called after one of his ships, the Eagle, but just after the decision had been arrived at, this particular shipping man decided to build a new ship which was to be called the Orient. And so

the name was changed to Clapton Orient. When the cartoonists depict the Orient as a Chinaman they are obviously all wrong.

THE WEDNESDAY SATURDAY TEAM!

Sheffield Wednesday directors have recently been considering the name of the club very seriously. It is really The Wednesday, and not Sheffield Wednesday, but a club with a name Wednesday which plays practically all its big games on a Saturday seems funny. The Wednesday Football Club, however, arose out of a cricket club in Sheffield which was called the Wednesday, because the cricket matches were played on that day by tradespeople who had Wednesday afternoon off. There was no reason to change the title then, and when the club was formed it was never imagined that there would be a day when it would operate in the First Division of the Football League and have gates of thirty or forty thousand.

WHAT REALLY COUNTS!

Some clubs have the word United attached to their name—like Newcastle United—because they came into existence when two clubs were amalgamated. Hence the United. But when there are two clubs in one city, as in Manchester, it seems as though behind the name Manchester United there is another club which is not united. And what a strange thing it is, by the way, that there should be no club called London.

Aston Villa sounds like a team which would play nice football, and the Villa have always played the best type of game. They got their name because the club sprang out of a Wesleyan Sunday-school called Aston Villa. What's in a name, though? It's the football that counts.

This Week's Big Games!

Thrilling Tussles for
the week-end.

By OLD PRO.

IT would be difficult to imagine a more absorbing programme of big matches than that provided for this week-end. Practically every one of the leading games has some special interest, and it is a certainty that as the crowds assemble at certain centres they will talk of thrilling contests between the competitors they are about to see.

For instance, the meeting of Sunderland and Aston Villa recalls what in some respects, at any rate, was the most amazing Cup Final we have ever witnessed. This was in 1913. At that time Sunderland and the Villa were considered

THE BEST TEAMS

in the country, and when they worked their way to the Cup Final a wonderful football exhibition was expected. These expectations were reflected in the biggest attendance ever seen at any football match in England, with the exception of the famous Wembley Final of 1923. At the old Cup Final ground at the Crystal Palace 120,000 people gathered. In the end the Villa won by a goal to nothing, but the game was disappointing as an exhibition of the art of football. Rather was it distinguished as a fight. Very early in the contest some players got at loggerheads. The referee was not considered to have been as strong as he might have

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shown himself, and the upshot of it was that after the contest the Football Association delivered a severe lecture all round, and specially censured the referee and two of the players concerned. Of course, there won't be a single player in the game on Saturday next who took part in that never-to-be-forgotten Final, but many of the spectators will remember it.

The meeting of Tottenham Hotspur and Sheffield United at Tottenham this week-end also recalls

ANOTHER MEMORABLE FINAL

battle for the Cup. This was in 1901, when the 'Spurs were in the Southern League. They startled everybody by getting to the Cup Final, and, as this was the first occasion when a London professional team had appeared in the last round, the crowd was 110,000—the highest ever up to then. The first meeting between these two clubs ended in a draw, but at the replay at Bolton the 'Spurs surprised most folk by winning by three goals to one.

That day of the replayed Cup Final of 1901 is still talked about at Bolton, and is always referred to as "pie day." The explanation of this is an interesting story in itself. Seeing that such a huge crowd had witnessed the first meeting between the clubs, it was expected that there would be a big attendance for the replay. Bolton shopkeepers prepared for this crowd in style. Thousands of

pies were cooked for the expected hungry throng. Alas! the people didn't turn up in anything like the numbers anticipated. There were only just over thirty thousand people at the replay, and these were mostly local people, who went straight home. Thus the pies were never consumed. It is reported that the pies were kept until they went so hard that they were afterwards used to pave the streets of Bolton, but I cannot vouch for the truth of that yarn.

Another game on the card for Saturday—Huddersfield Town v. Cardiff City, recalls a thrilling fight between these two clubs for the First Division championship. Such

A NECK AND NECK FINAL

did these two clubs wage for the first place that it all depended upon the last game. Cardiff had only to win at Birmingham to make certain of the honour, but they didn't win, and Huddersfield got the championship on goal average. The tragedy of that exciting finish was that Cardiff failed to score from a penalty kick in the last game, when a successful shot would have given them the championship. But even in the hour of bitter disappointment the Cardiff people proved themselves real sports, for the first telegram of congratulation received by Huddersfield Town was from the players and officials of the Cardiff City club.

Blackburn Rovers and Burnley is another interesting game of this week-end, as they are the rivals of East Lancashire. In the corresponding game last year the Rovers won a high-scoring match by six goals to three.

(Continued from
page 12.)

before you make bigger fools of yourselves. You'll get in the dickens of a row for this!"

"The row will be of the terrific order," purred Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "You will be firefully kicked from the esteemed Force my unworthy friends."

"That'll be enough," said the detective shortly. "We take entire responsibility for what we're doing. You lads had better clear off back into the school and the prisoner had better come with us before there's further trouble."

By now a crowd of both juniors and seniors had collected and were staring at the handcuffed master and the two detectives in open-mouthed amazement. But as the explanation of what was happening slowly dawned upon them their amazement quickly turned to indignant wrath.

"Look here!" exclaimed George Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, pushing his way through the crowd and addressing the two detectives. "There's been some mistake I tell you. I can vouch for this gentleman. Release him at once."

"That's it!" shouted Temple, who had just arrived in company with Dabney and Fry. "Let him go! You've got the wrong man."

"Mr. Capper's not a giddy crook!"

"Hear, hear! Don't make fools of yourselves," chorused several other voices.

The plain-clothes constable glared.

He did not like the attitude the Greyfriars fellows were adopting.

"Some of you want to come along with us, too, by the look of it," he snapped. "The next one that interferes I'll run in for obstructing the police in the execution of their duty. Get me?"

There came an answering howl of wrath from juniors and seniors alike.

"Come along!" snapped the detective-sergeant, gripping Mr. Capper's arm. "We're not standing for any more nonsense. This way."

Mr. Capper had been standing for the past few minutes like a man in a trance; but now he tried to speak. Words, however, seemed to fail him—all he could do was to gasp helplessly.

"Really," he gasped at length. "I—I—"

A shove forward from the detective cut short his sentence.

But the next moment an angry yell went up from the assembled Greyfriars fellows.

"We're not going to stand this!"

"Rescue!" shouted Temple, his excitement getting the better of him through the indignity that was being offered his Form-master. "Up the Friars! They're not going to touch Capper. Rescue!"

"On the ball!" shouted the crowd. "Down with 'em!"

A threatening move was made towards the two detectives.

"Boys!" exclaimed Mr. Capper, his speech suddenly returning to him. "Boys! I beseech you to control yourselves—"

"They're not going to touch you, sir!" snorted Temple. "If the silly asses like to arrest the wrong man they'll have to put up with the consequences."

"Pray do not interfere," implored Mr. Capper earnestly. "These men are but doing what they consider their duty. There has been a terrible mistake, of course, but it can easily be put right. There is no need to make matters worse than they already are. I beseech you to control yourselves if only for my sake."

The ominous murmurs of the crowd died away somewhat.

"But look here, sir—" began Temple heatedly.

"You will help me far more by telephoning for a taxi-cab, Temple," went on Mr. Capper. "I will accompany these gentlemen to the police-station and get the miserable business cleared up as quickly as possible."

But there was no need to telephone for a taxi.

Almost as the Upper Fourth master spoke the station cab appeared round a bend in the road coming from the direction of Monk's Hill where it had been with a passenger from the early morning train.

The vehicle was hailed by one of the detectives, and prisoner and captors stepped inside, while the crowd of Greyfriars juniors gazed on blankly.

"Perhaps you will oblige me by removing these—these things from my wrists?" muttered Mr. Capper, indicating his handcuffs, as the cab whizzed along the country lanes towards Courtfield police-station.

"By all means," said the detective-sergeant. "All we're concerned about is getting you along to the station. We've got our duty to do and we can't afford to take risks. I thought we was going to have trouble from some of the young gents for a moment. There you are, sir!"

Mr. Capper sat back in the cab and the rest of the journey was covered in silence.

Some twenty minutes later the cab arrived outside the Courtfield police-station, and Mr. Capper was hustled inside to the charge-room before a crowd had time to collect.

"Hallo, who've you got this time, Bert?" inquired the station-sergeant, addressing the detective.

"Chap from the Thresher job," replied Detective Frost. "I half expected he'd have cleared; but we found him at the school all right!"

"Name?" demanded the station-sergeant, turning to Mr. Capper.

"Algernon Capper," replied the master of the Upper Fourth.

"Occupation?"

"Public schoolmaster."

The station-sergeant wrote industriously for some moments.

"Algernon Capper," he droned at length, reading slowly from the charge-sheet before him, "you are charged on suspicion with having been concerned in the robbery at the residence of Major Thresher on and at about—"

"What!" ejaculated Mr. Capper.

"Major Thresher's house, did you say?"

"That's right, sir!"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the Greyfriars master feebly. "This is more extraordinary than ever. Why, Major Thresher is a friend of mine! The mere idea of me robbing him is absurd in itself, and I can tell you that when he hears of what has happened he will have something very serious to say about the matter. Ring him up immediately and—"

"That's all right," grunted the detective, who had made the arrest; "it's largely on information we received from Major Thresher and his servants that you are here. He didn't know we intended to arrest you, of course, but—but—"

"Ring him up, immediately!" exclaimed Mr. Capper again. "This—this buffoonery has gone far enough. Major Thresher would no more think of having me arrested on such a charge than he would have himself arrested."

"We've arrested you on our own," put in Detective Frost. "Major Thresher's servants claim to have recognised you while you were making your get-away and we're not taking any risk of losing you."

"Bless my soul!"

"If you're not the man we want you can explain everything to the magistrate in the morning," put in the station-sergeant briskly. "Have you any statement you wish to make?"

"None!" answered Mr. Capper, through compressed lips. "Only—I warn you; you have not heard the last of this."

"Funny how they all try the same old bluff, ain't it, Bert?" demanded the station-sergeant, grinning at the detective.

"How dare you!" snorted Mr. Capper.

"Well, I've got one or two things to ask you yet," proceeded the station-sergeant, turning to Mr. Capper again. "Ever been in trouble with the police before?"

"Sir!" gasped the unhappy master.

"Yes, or 'No?'"

"Certainly not, confound your impudence!"

"That's all right. Search him, Bert."

Mr. Capper's face turned pale and purple by turns, and he made a motion of protest; but there was no help for it. Swiftly and skilfully the two police officers ran their practised hands over his clothing and deposited the contents of his pockets on the station-sergeant's desk.

"Any objection to having your fingerprints taken?" proceeded the sergeant briskly.

"Certainly!" gasped Mr. Capper angrily. "I most certainly have. I—I am not a—a criminal."

"Well, we can't make you if you don't want to," grinned the detective.

"But I thought you'd kick at that. They usually do. There's nothing in it if you're innocent, though. We're only doing our job and we don't know you—if we did it would make no difference."

"I—I—by all means take my fingerprints then," gasped Mr. Capper, after a fraction of a second's reflection. "If you think—really, this is terrible!"

Mr. Capper's decision to agree to his finger-prints being taken after all, seemed to subdue the police officers somewhat.

"All right, this way then, if you please, sir."

The master of the Upper Fourth was led to a corner of the charge-room, against a small table containing an inked board and several printed finger charts. Under the instruction of Detective Frost, he rolled each of the fingers of his left hand from right to left on the inked board, afterwards repeating the process on one of the ruled charts which contained a square for each finger. The same procedure was followed with his right hand after which the Upper Fourth master signed his name at the bottom of each sheet.

"What next?" demanded Mr. Capper, as he wiped his inky fingers on a piece

of rag offered him by a uniformed constable, who had assisted in the performance.

The station-sergeant and the detective regarded each other thoughtfully for a moment.

"Think it's all right, Bert?" asked the station-sergeant.

The other nodded.

"Chance it," he replied.

"Well, we ought to put you in the cells until you're bailed out, or brought before the magistrate," said the station-sergeant, turning again to Mr. Capper. "But we're willing to let you stay in an ordinary room for a while until we get into communication with your friends, and we know what is happening."

"Thank you," replied Mr. Capper, shuddering at the very thought of the cells. "Perhaps you will telephone Dr. Locke for me, and ask him whether he will come along."

"Certainly, sir!"

Mr. Capper was shown into a small, bare room, with a window high in the wall and barred on the outside, which smelt strongly of soap and disinfectant. It's only furnishing was a plain wooden form without any backrest. Mr. Capper sank wearily down on to the form wondering whether the events of the last three quarters of an hour were not all part of some horrible nightmare.

The door closed behind him, and was locked from the outside.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Anxious Times!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Any news, you chaps?" Bob Cherry asked that question.

Somehow or another the Removites had managed to get through morning lessons. But for the most part, Mr. Quelch's valuable precepts had been wasted on them. Their minds had been full of the startling incident of Mr. Capper's arrest after breakfast, and now lessons were over at length, and Dr. Locke had returned from Courtfield, they were eager to get what fresh information they could.

"Nothing, so far," said Harry Wharton. "At least, nothing important. I heard from Wingate a few minutes ago that a couple of detectives are in with the Head."

"My hat! I should have felt inclined to sling them out if I'd been Dr. Locke," grinned Bob Cherry. "Fancy taking poor old Capper for a burglar! The silly asses!"

"The assfulness of the absurd police is terrific!"

The Famous Five wandered along down the corridor in the direction of the junior Common-room. When they arrived there they found that ink-splashed chamber filled with a crowd of excited juniors all discussing Mr. Capper's arrest, in excited voices.

Exclamations of indignation rose on all sides, and the police were blamed for a very clumsy piece of work.

"I'll tell you phwat it is, bejabbers," snorted Micky Desmond, the lad from the Sorrowful Isle. "It's a howling insult to the school, that's phwat it is intoirly."

"Hear, hear!" said Peter Todd. "And you should have seen Temple, Dabney, and that crowd a little while ago. Temple was behaving like a blessed madman, and talking about getting up a party to go down to

Courtfield and work a rescue stunt from the police-station."

"I guess those Upper Fourth jays are slow," drawled Fisher T. Fish, the hustling junior from the U.S.A. "If it had been old Quelch the cops were trying to drag away on a charge like that, I calculate they'd have had tew get the troops out to help 'em. Yep, sir, every time!"

"Don't be an ass, Fishy," grunted Peter Todd. "That wouldn't have done any good. They won't keep Capper very long. As soon as they realise they've made a mistake, they'll let him go. If it had been old Quelch, he'd have gone along like a shot, and then told the police what he thought of them afterwards."

"I say, you fellows—"

A fat figure burst suddenly into the Common-room, its legs working like piston rods.

It was William George Bunter, the short-sighted Owl of the Remove. It was not often that Bunter ran—unless he was being chased, or was after a feed—and when he did, and really got going, he found it somewhat difficult to stop.

"Look out!" roared Peter Todd suddenly.

But too late!

Unable to check his speed, Billy Bunter cannoned full into Peter and his companions, sending them crashing to the ground in all directions.

Bump! Thud!

"Yaroooh! You silly owl!" roared Peter Todd angrily.

"Owl! Sorry, you chaps," gasped Bunter. "You—you should look where I'm going, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Harry Wharton & Co.

"Good old porpoise!"

"I'll burst you!" hooted Peter Todd, picking himself up from the struggling group of juniors on the ground and singling out Billy Bunter.

"Same here, bejabbers!" snorted Micky Desmond, whose left eye was rapidly assuming a delicate blue tint where Fisher T. Fish's boot heel had accidentally caught him. "Where is the fat spalpeen?"

"Yaroooh! Hold on, you fellows," bleated Bunter, in alarm. "If you b-break my g-glasses, you'll have to pay for 'em. I've got news. It's about old Capper—"

"My hat! Why didn't you say so before then?" demanded Peter Todd, dropping his fists.

"Really, Todd! You see—"

"What's the news about Capper, old clam?" demanded Frank Nugent, gripping Bunter by one of his fat arms and dragging him towards the rest of the Famous Five.

"Ow! Really, Nugent! After the way I've been treated and threatened, after I came running here specially to tell you, I—"

"Out with it!" grunted Johnny Bull, as a crowd of curious Removites gathered around.

"What's the news?"

Billy Bunter blinked rapidly through his big spectacles and smirked.

"I—I happened to be passing the Head's study door, a little while ago," he began, "when my shoelace happened to break, and—"

"Go hon!" murmured Frank Nugent facetiously. "You don't shay sho?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, really, Nugent. And you needn't be funny about it either. As I was bending down to mend it, quite accidentally, of course, I—"

"Cut the cackle and get to the

hosses," snorted Bob Cherry impatiently.

"Owl! Really, Cherry. It's about Angel of the Upper Fourth—"

"But you said Capper, you fat fraud!" hooted Vernon-Smith.

"So it was," explained Bunter hastily. "There were two detectives from Courtfield with the Head. Major Thresher was there, too, and so was Angel. It's old Thresher's house that Capper was supposed to have broken into last night—"

There came a gasp of amazement from the listening Removites.

"My giddy aunt!"

"If this isn't the frozen limit!"

"But where the thump does Angel come in?" demanded Wharton curiously.

"Ow! Don't shake me like that, Bull! My g-glasses will drop off, and then I can't see what I'm telling you—"

"Ha, ha, ha! Get on with it, then!"

"Where does Angel come in?" repeated several voices excitedly.

"Well, it appears that Angel has been a bit suspicious of Capper lately—he told the Head he thought he was drinking and gambling—and he followed him out last night, with the idea of looking after him and getting him to come back."

There came a snort from the Removites. They knew the charitable Aubrey Angel of old, and they could not conceive the cad of the Fourth risking being caught out of school at midnight just for the purpose of looking after a Form master.

"Anyway," resumed Bunter, "Angel lost sight of Capper somewhere in the lane, and went to take a quick cut across the fields to Friardale, hoping to pick up his trail again. Near Major Thresher's house he ricked his ankle, and after he had been sitting in the grass massaging it for some time he heard the alarm raised in the Grange!"

"My only hat!"

"He, he, he! I thought that would make you sit up!" sniggered the Owl of the Remove, feeling that he had made an impression at last. "Well, soon after that the burglar came rushing by. Angel couldn't give chase because of his ankle, but he recognised the man Major Thresher and his servants were after. It was Capper!"

"Rot!" snapped several voices.

"Bosh!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Angel made a mistake!"

"Well, Angel wasn't the only one who recognised him," proceeded Billy Bunter, with a smirk. "Major Thresher's butler, Jeeves, and a couple of footmen saw him, too. And that on top of the fact that Angel followed Capper out of the school makes it look pretty stone ginger," said Bunter. "Angel is going back with the Head and the detectives to the police-station. Jeeves and the footmen are to be sent for, and there's going to be an identification parade."

"Great Scott!"

The juniors regarded each other in amazement for some moments.

"Jiggered if I know what to make of it!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Capper's not a burglar, of course, but—"

"If what Angel says is true, it looks pretty awkward," said Nugent.

"The awkwardness for the esteemed and worthy Capper is terrific!"

"I say, you fellows—" bleated the Owl of the Remove at length.

"Scat!"

"Really, you chaps. I suppose you're going to stand me a little snack for the information I've given you, you know."

"Shall we stand him something?"



Mr. Capper's eyes blazed with indignation, and flecks of foam showed on his bitten lips, as he leaned forward and violently banged the ledge of the dock with his clenched fist. "It's a lie!" he shouted, all self-control leaving him. "It's a wicked lie! And Dr. Locke knows it! I am the victim of a dastardly plot!" (See Chapter 10.)

said Johnny Bull, winking at the Removites.

"What-ho!" agreed Bob Cherry, passing the wink on, so to speak.

"Oh, good!" said Bunter. "I knew you chaps would do the right thing. Yarooop! Wharrer you doing? Yow!"

Biff!

"Yaroooooh!"

Johnny Bull's right leg shot out, and the toe of his boot caught the Owl of the Remove in the seat of his trousers. Bob Cherry's boot was a fraction of a second later. Bunter gave a howl of mingled pain and alarm, and fled helter-skelter from the room, while a yell of laughter went up from the assembly.

The juniors remained discussing the information they had received from Billy Bunter until the dinner-bell sounded. When the meal was over the Famous Five strolled out into the Close.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! More trouble!" sang out Bob Cherry, indicating a crowd which was just gathering near the school gates. "Wonder what the thump it is this time. Perhaps the police have come to arrest Dr. Locke for stealing the school plate."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed his chums.

"My hat! It's that cad Angel!" exclaimed Harry Wharton suddenly. "He's just got back, by the look of it. Come on, you fellows!"

The chums of the Remove broke into a run.

"Where's Capper?" demanded Wharton, pushing his way through the crowd.

"They've let him go, haven't they?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"He's out on bail," drawled Angel. "The Head's standing for him; but he's decided to stay at a hotel in Courtfield until his case comes up at the police-court in the morning. It was too late for it to be taken to-day."

"Well, that's something!" grunted Frank Nugent.

"What about the identification parade?" asked Wharton.

"Oh, we all went in separately!" said Angel. "The police had about a dozen

fellows of Capper's build and appearance and dressed in much the same way lined up in a yard at the back of the station. Of course, I picked Capper out. It was no good pretending I couldn't. I didn't like the job, I can tell you—"

"No?" said Johnny Bull meaningly.

"You needn't be funny about it, Bull!" exclaimed Angel. "It's jolly rotten for me! Jeeves and the two footmen from the Grange picked him out first shot, too. One of them, it now appears, had never seen Capper until the night of the robbery."

"H'm! That makes it look rotten!"

"Rotten's not the word for it!" remarked Mark Linley, the lad from Lancashire, who had just arrived. "I—I suppose they can't all be mistaken if what Angel says is true."

"Of course it's true!" grunted Angel, with a glare. "You don't think I'm framing anything up against Capper, do you? Why should I?"

"I don't know why you should!" snorted Temple, who had just arrived in company with Dabney and Fry. "But you were threatening you'd make old Capper sit up for a lamming he gave you in the Form-room a little while ago, if you remember. I seem to recollect there was something jolly mysterious about the threats you were making."

"And you're a pretty bright specimen, anyway," added Fry, with contempt. "You wouldn't have been out of a night spying on Capper, otherwise!"

"Oh, quite!" said Dabney.

"Look here, you—you rotters—" began Angel furiously.

"Oh, leave the worm alone!" said Temple. "When this rotten business is finished with and Capper gets back, I expect the Head will have something to say to Angel. If he doesn't Angel can take his choice—a licking from me, or a licking from the Form."

"Come on, chaps!" said Wharton, exchanging glances with his chums. "This isn't our affair. I think we'll make a move. Form starts in ten minutes."

"Well, what do you think of it?" demanded Nugent, when the Famous Five were well away from Angel and the crowd.

Harry Wharton shook his head. He was puzzled—more puzzled than he cared to admit.

"I don't know what to make of it, except that dingy rotter Angel is at the bottom of things, somehow or other."

"It beats me!" said Bob Cherry. "After all, we never got to the bottom of what happened that time we saw old Capper in Friardale Lane. And now it appears that Angel saw him, too. The burglary coming on top of it, with Angel, Jeeves, and the two footmen as witnesses—well, I'm dashed if I know what to think!"

"Same here!" agreed Johnny Bull. "But we shall know a bit more when the case comes up at Courtfield Court in the morning."

And the Famous Five left it at that.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Verdict!

"ALGERNON CAPPER!" The voice of the clerk rang sharply through the little Courtfield Police Court.

The reporters at the Press table sharpened their pencils.

Dr. Locke, the venerable old Head of Greyfriars, and Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, who were seated at the solicitors' bench glared at each other, and the former mopped his brow.

A door opened at the side of the court and a figure stepped into the iron-railed dock.

It was Mr. Capper!

The face of the Upper Fourth master was haggard and drawn. Deep circles beneath his eyes denoted a sleepless night.

He inclined his head towards the magistrate and then nodded to Dr. Locke and Mr. Quelch.

The Head of Greyfriars smiled back encouragingly.

He, too, looked tired and worn. Only Mr. Quelch looked his usual alert and composed self.

A momentary silence fell upon the court.

The clerk half rose to his feet; his tone was almost conversational.

"Algernon Capper," he said, looking straight at the master of the Upper Fourth, "you are charged with being concerned in entering the house of Major Thresher, The Grange, near Friardale, on the tenth inst., and stealing a number of bonds and other valuables. Do you plead guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty!" answered Mr. Capper, in a steady voice.

The magistrate glanced casually at the high windows at the back of the court.

The reporters commenced to write rapidly.

"Call the police officers!" said the clerk shortly.

Detective-Sergeant Frost stepped into the witness-box.

His voice rang solemnly through the crowded court as he took the oath, a miniature Bible raised above his head in his hand.

Then he proceeded to describe to the court a visit he had paid to Major Thresher in response to a telephone message early on the morning following the robbery, the result of his investigations there, and of his subsequent arrest of Mr. Capper outside the gates of Greyfriars.

The plain-clothes constable who had accompanied Detective Frost followed. His evidence varied hardly a word from that of his superior.

Jeeves, Major Thresher's butler, and two footmen quickly followed.

They told of how the alarm was raised that a burglar had entered the Grange, and of their chase out beyond the grounds into the field where Aubrey Angel had been sitting in the grass nursing his injured ankle.

Mr. Capper stood like a statue, gazing into space, while their evidence was being given.

"Had you seen the prisoner previous to the night of the robbery?" the clerk asked the second of the footmen.

"No, sir."

"That was absolutely the first time you had seen him—when you caught a glimpse of his face in the moonlight?"

"Yes, sir," answered the footman, without hesitation.

"And when did you see him for the second time?"

"I picked him out from a row of men in the yard of Courtfield Police Station," came the prompt reply.

"Thank you. That will do."

The footman stepped down from the box and took up a position at the rear of the court to hear the remainder of the case.

Dr. Locke was observed to bite his lip, while Mr. Capper paled.

"We will now call the last witness," said the clerk. "Aubrey Angel!"

A low murmur ran round the court as the Upper Fourth junior appeared. Angel looked neither to right or left, but kept his gaze fixed before him.

"You are a member of the Upper Fourth at Greyfriars?" asked the clerk.

"Yes, sir."

"Kindly tell us of your movements on the night of the robbery."

And Angel did, right up to the time he ricked his ankle at the back of Major Thresher's house.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 974.

"What was your real reason for following your Form master from the school?" asked the clerk.

Angel hesitated.

"Answer, boy!"

"Well, sir," began Angel, as though with reluctance. "I—The fact is, I had suspected Mr. Capper of—of drinking and gambling."

"Yes?"

"Must I continue, sir?" asked Angel, hoping, however, that the reply would be in the affirmative.

"You are on oath, boy."

"Well, I thought Mr. Capper was going out for the purpose of drinking and gambling," resumed Angel, "and, fearing lest he should return—or—the worse for drink, I wanted to be on hand to help him in case of trouble. That is all, sir."

"That is a lie!" burst out Mr. Capper suddenly. "As I have already said in my statement to the police officers, I did not leave the school that night. I was in my room the whole of the evening. And certainly I have not been in the habit of drinking. It is a dastardly lie!"

"Control yourself, sir!" snapped the magistrate, speaking for the first time. "If you have any statement to make or evidence to offer you will be given the opportunity of going into the witness-box on your behalf."

"I protest—" began Mr. Capper excitedly.

"All right, sir; go easy!" whispered the gaoler, placing a hand on Mr. Capper's arm. "Plenty of time yet."

The master of the Upper Fourth gasped and subsided.

"If you wish to enter the witness-box you may now do so," said the clerk, as Angel stood down.

Mr. Capper moved from the dock to the witness-stand, and took the oath. His evidence was short and to the point. He denied utterly having left the precincts of the school on the night of the robbery, or of ever having been under the influence of drink.

"Do you wish to ask any of the witnesses any questions?" demanded the clerk, when Mr. Capper had concluded.

Mr. Capper shook his head.

"All I can say is that I am innocent—absolutely innocent!" he said, with feeling, speaking in a low and calmer voice. "I am not casting doubt on the truthfulness of the witnesses, but I contend that they are making a mistake—a very terrible mistake indeed!"

"Do you wish to call any witnesses on your own behalf?" he was asked next.

The master of the Upper Fourth glanced dazedly around the court.

"Dr. Locke, the Head of Greyfriars, and Mr. Quelch will speak on my behalf, I think," he gasped out. "Both of those gentlemen have known me a good many years. They know I am utterly incapable of—of the crime with which I am charged. I call upon Dr. Locke."

Dr. Locke, at a motion from the clerk, stood up.

He told the court of his long association with Mr. Capper, of the excellent character he had always borne, and of his absolute belief in his innocence. The evidence of Mr. Quelch was of the same kind.

The court listened intently.

The silver-haired, venerable old Head of Greyfriars, speaking in a voice shaking with emotion, his eyes almost dimmed with the suspicion of a tear, made a marked impression.

Certainly it did not seem possible that a friend and associate of two such men as Dr. Locke and Mr. Quelch could be

guilty of such a sordid and common crime as burglary.

"I suggest to you that at the time the burglary was committed Mr. Capper was under the influence of drink," said the clerk at length.

"No, sir," retorted Dr. Locke. "That I cannot believe."

"Answer me carefully, and think well before you do so," resumed the clerk. "Have you ever, during the time you have known the prisoner, seen or heard of him being under the influence of drink? Think carefully before you reply."

The Head started.

Like a flash his encounter with Mr. Capper in Friardale Lane some time before came back to him. In the worry and excitement of the burglary charge the recollection had been driven from his mind.

"Well?" demanded the clerk patiently. "What is the answer?"

"I—I—" stammered the Head. "Bless my soul! This is terrible!"

"We are waiting for your answer, Dr. Locke."

The Head of Greyfriars looked appealingly across at Mr. Capper, who had now returned to the dock. Mr. Capper returned his gaze from a white face, in which his eyes burned like coals.

Dr. Locke spoke in a voice a little above a whisper plucking nervously at the lapel of his coat as he did so.

"I—I regret that I cannot answer in the negative," he said.

A solemn hush fell upon the court, and Dr. Locke slumped back into his chair.

The next moment the silence was broken by a hoarse shout from Mr. Capper.

His eyes blazing with indignation, his hair awry and flecks of foam showing on his bitten lips, he leaned forward and violently banged the ledge of the dock with his clenched fist.

"It's a lie!" he shouted, all self-control leaving him. "It's a wicked lie! And Dr. Locke knows it! I denied it at the time when he charged me with it, and I deny it now! I am the victim of a dastardly plot! I am the victim of a heartless conspiracy! I—I—"

Words seemed to fail the unhappy man. An ivory tint came over his face, and he staggered back almost in a faint. The arm of the watchful gaoler caught him and saved him from a fall. The gaoler spoke some soothing words to him and pressed a glass of water to his lips.

Mr. Capper recovered himself with an effort and faced the court again.

"I am sorry, gentlemen," he murmured in a calmer voice. "I can only repeat that all along I have been the victim of some horrible mistake. I—I am innocent!"

The two detectives who had arrested Mr. Capper, and who were now standing at the back of the court, glanced at each other and exchanged winks.

Dr. Locke and Mr. Quelch kept their gaze fixed upon the ground.

There was no doubt about it. The evidence against the master of the Upper Fourth was overwhelming and damning. The kindest thing that could be said about him was that he committed the robbery whilst under the influence of intoxicants.

The magistrate, who hitherto seemed to have taken only a casual interest in the proceedings, raised his head.

"Algernon Capper," he said, glancing at the prisoner over the tops of his spectacles, "after having heard the evidence offered in this court against you, there is no doubt in my mind as to your guilt. Since this is a police-court,



A shaft of pale moonlight came through the window of the landing at the end of the passage and showed up the burglar more distinctly. Wharton raised his hand. "Now!" he shouted. The five juniors rushed forward. "Bump!" "Ow!" "Yaroooooh!" "Go it, Remove!" The five juniors and their quarry came down with a crash to the floor. (See Chapter 11.)

however, it is within my power to offer you the choice of being dealt with by me or electing to be committed for trial before a jury. The maximum sentence I am empowered to inflict upon you is one of six months' imprisonment with hard labour. If, on the other hand, you elect to be committed for trial and are found guilty, it is possible that a sentence of penal servitude may be passed upon you. Which do you prefer?"

"I am not guilty," replied Mr. Capper in a low voice. "I would prefer to be committed for trial."

"Very well," said the magistrate. "You are committed for trial at the Courtfield Sessions, which will be held in a month's time."

"Will you accept bail, sir?" asked Dr. Locke, rising to his feet.

"This is a very serious matter," replied the magistrate. "The prisoner will be kept in custody. Next case."

Mr. Capper looked despairingly round the court.

The faces of Dr. Locke, the magistrate, and the spectators seemed to swim before him.

"Your worship," began Mr. Capper, turning imploringly to the magistrate, "I ask you—"

"Remove the prisoner!" snapped the magistrate.

The master of the Upper Fourth felt the hand of the gaoler laid gently but firmly on his arm.

"This way, sir."

Mr. Capper gave a groan of despair and turned and staggered from the dock. A moment later he had vanished through a door and was being led to a cell beneath the court, there to await the prison-van to convey him to Courtfield Gaol.

Dr. Locke watched the departure of Mr. Capper from the dock like a man in a dream.

"Bless my soul! Poor unfortunate Capper!" he murmured. "This is indeed terrible!"

"There is no more we can do, sir," broke in Mr. Quelch. "Let us go."

The two men walked slowly down the corridors leading from the court, followed by many curious eyes, and stepped into a waiting car.

A quarter of an hour later they were back at Greyfriars.

But the result of the court proceedings had already spread.

Juniors and seniors stood about the Close in little knots discussing the news in low tones.

"Committed for trial!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Poor old Capper! It looks as though he's going under."

"I'm afraid so," said Wharton. "Of course, there's still a slight chance he may get off, but I shouldn't think it's worth much from what the magistrate said."

"It's rotten!"

"The rottenfulness is terrific!"

"Well, we can only wait and hope for the best," said Nugent.

And that was the thought of the rest of Greyfriars.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

What the Light Revealed!

BOOM! The big clock in the tower of Greyfriars tolled out the hour of midnight.

Harry Wharton awoke with a start and sat up in bed. He had not been sleeping well lately, and the slightest noise had disturbed his slumbers.

"Hang it!" he muttered, glancing at the luminous hands of his watch at the side of his bed. "It's no good going on like this! If I don't get some sleep I shall be too washed out for lessons in the morning, and then I shall get old Quelch down on me."

The captain of the Remove clambered from his bed and left the dormitory, with the idea of getting a bottle of aspirin tablets from his study.

But hardly had he advanced a dozen yards down the passage than his quick ears detected a faint footfall in the corridor ahead.

Wharton stood stock still for a moment, listening. Perhaps it was some master or prefect retiring late. At all events, whoever it was Wharton

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 974.

did not feel like being caught and bothered with an explanation of his absence from the dormitory.

A figure moved noiselessly along the corridor running across the top of the passage, and halted. There came the momentary flash as from an electric torch, and the figure moved on again.

The captain of the Remove whistled softly.

Certainly no master or prefect would move about so stealthily, feeling their way with an electric torch, however late the hour. His brain working with excitement, Wharton turned and crept swiftly back to the dormitory.

"Quick! Wake up, Bob!" he whispered, shaking Bob Cherry gently by the shoulder.

"Hi! Wharrermarrer?" demanded Cherry, sitting up in bed with a start.

"Steady, old man!" whispered Wharton. "Wake some of the others as quickly as you can. I might be wrong, but I've got an idea we've got an uninvited visitor in the school."

"My only hat! You don't mean a burglar, do you, Harry?"

"Very likely," said Wharton. "Better get a move on, though."

Within a few moments the two juniors had awakened the remainder of the Famous Five.

"Got your torch, Harry?" asked Frank Nugent, as he proceeded to stuff a tennis-ball into the end of a football stocking.

"I'm all right," said Wharton. "What about the others?"

Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and Wharton each armed themselves with a stout cricket-stump. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the dusky member of the party, preferred, however, to rely in any possible encounter with a midnight marauder on his long, sinuous fingers, with which he could do deadly work if it came to grips.

At a signal from Wharton the Famous Five silently left the dormitory and crept down the passage outside.

Keeping in Indian file, they walked as near the wall as possible so as to be less conspicuous.

"Nothing doing so far," murmured Nugent when they had traversed several passages without any sign of the marauder.

The quarters of the Upper Fourth were visited, and the juniors then made their way to the passages of the Fifth.

Here again they met with nothing exciting.

The chums of the Remove wandered along the passages of the Sixth, and were making their way towards the school library when Harry Wharton, who was leading, suddenly stopped short.

"Hist!"

"What is it, Harry?"

"I thought I heard a shuffle somewhere," said Wharton, peering intently through the gloom ahead of him.

The Removites stood still, listening for some moments.

Hurree Singh, the dusky junior, suddenly left his chums and went on a few yards in advance. He stopped and stood rigid for a second, and then turned to the others behind him and beckoned.

Wharton could see the eyes of his chum glinting with an orange fire in the dark.

They closed up on the Nabob and saw that he was trembling with suppressed excitement.

"The esteemed burglar has been spotfully seen," whispered Inky, after a

pause. "If my worthy chums will quietly follow me we will bagfully catch him together."

The five chums crept slowly up the passage for a few more yards and stopped short.

"My hat!"

"Great Scott!"

Advancing softly in the chums' direction was a man.

"Let the blighter get a bit nearer," whispered Wharton, "and then we'll all spring out."

The burglar was now only a short distance in front of the foremost junior and had not the slightest idea that he had been seen. A cloud rolling away outside let a shaft of pale moonlight through a window of the landing at the end of the passage which showed the man up more distinctly.

Wharton raised his hand.

"Now!" he shouted, and the five juniors rushed forward.

Bump!

"Ow! Yaroooh!"

"Go it, Remove!"

The five juniors and their quarry came down with a crash to the floor. The man, whoever he was, let out a roar of pain, surprise, and anger, at the same time hitting out for all he was worth, but he was no match for the sturdy juniors.

Frank Nugent received a kick in the eye, and Harry Wharton found himself in a powerful grip. Inky who, so far, since the first rush, had been silent, suddenly emitted a snarl, and, springing in like a tiger, caught the marauder round his neck. The man struggled for a few moments and slowly relaxed his hold of Wharton.

"Right-ho, Inky!" grinned Nugent. "We've got the beggar all right. I'll look after his legs. You sit on his napper, Bob!"

The juniors had just succeeded in securing their prisoner when several seniors, accompanied by the Head, who had been disturbed by the noise of the scuffle, appeared at the end of the passage.

"It's all right, sir!" shouted Wharton triumphantly. "We've caught a giddy burglar!"

"My giddy aunt!" gasped Wingate, with a grin despite himself. "It looks like it, too."

The Head sized up the situation in a glance and instructed the juniors to let their prisoner get up.

Bob Cherry obligingly rose from his seat on the man's head, and the prisoner, half dazed, staggered up and blinked at the Head in the yellow light from the electric bulb which Wingate had just switched on.

Then a gasp of amazement went up—for the face of the midnight marauder was unmistakably that of Mr. Algernon Capper!

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

All Clear!

"B LESS my soul!"

Dr. Locke stared at the face of the master of the Upper Fourth as though he were looking at a ghost.

As for Harry Wharton & Co., they were not quite sure whether they were awake or dreaming.

"Capper," said the Head at length, "what are you doing here?"

Mr. Capper stared at the Head, but made no reply.

"I—I thought you were at—at Courtfield," murmured the Head. "How is it I find you here in such circumstances?"

"He—he must have escaped, sir," ventured Nugent.

But if Dr. Locke heard he heeded not. Mr. Capper swayed slightly towards the Head, his breath giving off the unmistakable fumes of alcohol.

"What yoush going to do with me nowsh?" he demanded thickly.

"Good heavens!" murmured the old Head, his kindly face drawn with suffering. "The unfortunate fellow is—is intoxicated!"

"What yoush gonna do with me nowsh?" repeated Mr. Capper, gazing owlishly at the staggered assembly.

"My dear Capper," gasped out the Head. "I do not understand what has come over you. Despite the way things seemed to go against you at the court I felt in my innermost mind that you were at least incapable of—of committing a—burglary. But what am I to think now? Surely no man, however misjudged he might be, could sink so low as to attempt to rob the very school that for years has been his home. This is really the most terrible moment of my life. Why don't you say something, Capper? Can you not see how I suffer? Have you no pity for me—"

"Look here!" blurted Mr. Capper, blinking with bloodshot eyes. "If you're gonna call in th' police why don't yoush do it? Don't stand there pitching me all that Good Georgie sort of stuff. Hic! Get on with the business. I'm fed up with yoush!"

"Good Heavens!"

"Perhaps we'd better try and get him into one of the studies, sir!" whispered Wingate to the Head. "If—if he's escaped from Courtfield we shall have the police along very soon."

The Head gazed about him helplessly.

"I think that perhaps that would be best, Wingate," he said. "It is evidently useless to reason with the unhappy man in his present state. I do not like to do it—but our duty is clear. We must communicate with the police immediately and inform them of what has happened. By his action the unfortunate man has only succeeded in making things a thousand times worse for himself. Telephone at once, Wingate."

"Yes, sir," said the captain of Greyfriars.

"You—you need not mention that we discovered him in the act of robbing the school just yet," added Dr. Locke. "We will at least avoid that if we can."

Wingate departed to the nearest telephone, which was situated in the prefects' room. Meanwhile, Harry Wharton & Co. and the Head between them succeeded in inducing the master of the Upper Fourth to enter an adjacent study.

The noise made by Wharton & Co. when they had first sprung out on Mr. Capper had awakened a number of other people, however, and already an amazed and chattering crowd of juniors and seniors had gathered at the end of the passage, clad only in their pyjamas.

The news that a burglar had been captured, who had turned out to be Mr. Capper, had spread over the rest of the school, which was now thoroughly awake, with lightning-like rapidity.

Amazement seemed to be equally divided between Mr. Capper's attempt to rob the school and his escape from Courtfield Prison.

Never before had such a sensation been experienced in the whole history of the old school.

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The whole business from beginning to end was amazing—incredible!

"There's not much doubt about his guilt now, you fellows," drawled Angel, who was standing with a little crowd of Upper Fourth fellows at the end of the corridor. "Innocent men don't rob the school that's sheltered them, even if they do succeed in escaping from gaol."

But no one vouchsafed Angel any reply.

None of the fellows knew what to think.

Within a few minutes Wingate was observed returning from the telephone in the prefects' room, his face working with excitement.

"It's not Capper at all, you fellows!" he gasped. "I've just been on to the police, and they say Capper's still in the remand wing at Courtfield prison!"

"Not Capper!"

"Great Scott!"

The fellows stared at each other blankly.

It seemed that just lately one sensation was following on the heels of another in a most bewildering manner.

"My giddy aunt!"

"Then if the fellow we've captured isn't Capper, who the thump is he?" demanded Wharton.

Wingate repeated his conversation with the police to the Head. And the astonishment of Dr. Locke was certainly as great as that of the juniors.

"Who are you?" he demanded of the prisoner.

The only reply he received was a scowl.

"Very well; we shall soon find out. Meanwhile, Wingate, I would be glad if you would call Mr. Quelch and some other of the masters, and get the rest of the school back to bed."

"Yes, sir."

But Mr. Quelch was already on his way to the study.

Hardly had he entered it, however, than there came a heavy tread outside, and the next moment Detective-Sergeant Frost and his assistant appeared.

"I have motored over to the school right away on getting your telephone message," he explained. "I fail to understand what's happened, sir. Mr. Capper is still in Courtfield Prison—Great snakes!"

The detective broke off short as his gaze rested on the sullen face of the prisoner.

If he was not Mr. Capper, then his likeness to the master of the Upper Fourth was extraordinary.

"I—I hope there's no mistake in the name?" jerked out the astounded detective. "How did it happen, sir?"

The story of the capture of the burglar was quickly recounted to him.

"All right," he said, when the story was concluded. "I'll take this man, whoever he is, back with me, and see what we can find out. There's something jolly queer about this."

"S'orlight!" grunted the prisoner, who seemed to have recovered somewhat from the effects of the drink. "It's a fair cop, and I might as well own up. My name's not Capper, and it wasn't Capper who did the job at the Grange. I'm the bird you want for that."

"Thank Heaven for that!" murmured the Head fervently.

"Want to make a statement?" asked Detective Frost. "You're a wise man. Let's have the lot of it, and we'll see what can be done to help you. We've got you, in any case, now."

The prisoner nodded understandingly. For the next ten minutes the Head of Greyfriars and the detectives listened

to the prisoner's amazing story, all of which was taken down in shorthand by the plain-clothes constable.

From what he said, it appeared he was a well-known cat-burglar. Quite by accident he had learned, while staying in Friardale, that he bore an amazing resemblance to a master at the school, Mr. Capper, both in speech, appearance, and mannerisms, and had played on the fact to protect himself, going to the extent even of wearing similar clothes as his double.

He related to the Head the incident in Friardale Lane, when he had been half intoxicated, and when the Head, under the impression that he was the Upper Fourth master, had endeavoured to prevail upon him to return to the school, concluding with his midnight visit to Major Thresher's house.

The man's story was listened to in amazed silence.

As for Dr. Locke, the years seemed to drop away from him, and the lines of worry vanished from his face.

By this confession, the cat-burglar had cleared once and for all the name of Algernon Capper, who had suffered so greatly for his unhappy resemblance to a criminal.

When the story was told the two detectives and their prisoner entered the police-car, which had been drawn up in the Close, and drove away to Courtfield.

Little sleep was gained by anyone in Greyfriars that night. In most dormitories candles flickered until the first cold flush of dawn appeared across the sky, while juniors, seniors, and masters and servants discussed the extraordinary affair of the night.

The following day Mr. Capper returned to Greyfriars.

And never had such a triumphant
(Continued on page 28.)

CRACK! A bullet whizzed through the air, passing so close to Tommy Comber's face that he could feel the wind of it! And that's only one of the thrills that falls to the lot of—

The Boy with the Million-Pound Secret!

DAVID GOODWIN'S
MASTERPIECE!

The Rifle Bullet!

CAUTIOUSLY Tommy climbed up the grassy embankment and looked over it. From here he got a view all over the low, flat island, with its grassy pastures and reedy marshes. It looked fine and wild and desolate. There did not seem to be anybody about.

A few hundred yards away, on a grassy mound, stood the little bungalow where he and Nunks had lived, and where Nunks had died. At a good distance from this were the three separate sheds, where the chemicals were stored and the experiments made. Farther away were the ruins of another shed; for in the early days of Comberite it happened that Nunks made a mistake, a very small quantity of the stuff had gone off with a crash and blown the shed to bits, very nearly killing both Nunks and Tommy, who had only just left the powder to dry itself. That was the sort of stuff Comberite was.

Tommy did not immediately set out for the bungalow, anxious as he was to reach it. He lay in the long grass on top of the embankment and watched. The weather had grown rather misty now, as it often did on the marshes. The place seemed quite deserted. But presently he saw the figure of a man move near the corner of the bungalow and disappear again.

"Hallo!" muttered Tommy. "Who's that? How did he get here, and where's his boat?"

He wished he had brought a pair of glasses. He had not been able to make the man out very clearly. It certainly wasn't Dan. It was somebody much older and taller.

"O'Hara?" said Tommy, to himself. But he was not quite sure about it. The man had seemed just about O'Hara's height. And as he did not appear again, Tommy left the embankment and walked boldly along the path towards the bungalow.

After all, he was king of the island, and nobody had any right there except himself and Dan. Tommy was carrying in his fist a stout oak stretcher that he had taken out of the boat. It would be useful in case there was trouble.

Just as he crossed the stile on the fence, half-way to the house, he caught sight of the man again, and Tommy stopped short in his tracks. Though still a couple of hundred yards distant,

this time Tommy recognised him at once.

It was the man whom Baldy had tried to drug in the restaurant the night before. It was John Carfax!

He was the very last person on earth Tommy had expected to see. And, for a moment, he crouched down behind the stile, uncertain what to do.

HOW THE STORY OPENED.

TOMMY COMBER, sentenced to three years detention aboard the reformatory ship *Bellerophon* for being concerned in the murder of his uncle;

JOSEPH COMBER, a clever chemist, inventor of a powerful high explosive named *Comberite*.

CHUFFER FOSS, Tommy's cousin, a ne'er-do-well, whose false evidence did much to prejudice the innocent Tommy's chances of acquittal.

DR. SHANE O'HARA, a skilful surgeon, who shelters the fugitive from the *Bellerophon*, and fakes his features so that Tommy's own pal,

DAN BENNETT, doesn't recognise him until Tommy makes known his identity.

MERTON HAYNES, a friend of O'Hara's.

In return for this service O'Hara has rendered him Tommy—who knows the secret of *Comberite*—is asked to make this valuable explosive for the doctor and his friend, Tommy himself to take a third share in the partnership. Tommy agrees to the proposal. He meets Dan—who, incidentally, thinks O'Hara and his friend a pair of rogues—and asks him to join him in preparing *Comberite* on Curlew Island, which formerly belonged to Joseph Comber. Dan jumps at the chance.

Later, Tommy comes within an ace of being recaptured, but, thanks to Dan, he manages to give his pursuers the slip. Back in London at the digs O'Hara has arranged for him, Tommy discovers that he is being shadowed by a stranger whom he nicknames "Baldy." This man finds Tommy too slippery for him, and is himself shadowed to a restaurant in the West End. Here Baldy meets a John Carfax. During the meal Tommy sees Baldy put something into his companion's wineglass, and at once gives Carfax warning. Then he slips out of the restaurant unnoticed, and makes for his digs, where instructions await him from O'Hara to proceed to Curlew Island without delay. Baldy pops up again. This time Tommy hits out from the shoulder, and makes good his escape. Tommy reaches *Queenborough*, where it had been arranged that he should meet Dan, but his pal doesn't turn up. Tommy therefore buys himself a boat for a small sum, and sets sail for Curlew Island. Reaching it, he springs nimbly ashore.

(Now read on.)

Was this man friend or enemy? Above all, was he a policeman? He certainly hadn't seen Tommy in the restaurant, and he did not know where that warning message had come from. Then how in the world had he found his way down here to Curlew Island, and why? Was he a friend of O'Hara's, and why was he prowling about the house and sheds like a thief?

Carfax had not yet caught sight of Tommy, for he was stooping in the porch of the bungalow, examining the lock as if he were deciding the best way of getting it open with some kind of a tool that was gripped in his hand.

"Here, come off that whoever you are!" said Tommy to himself, and he walked straight across towards the house. Just then Mr. Carfax saw him.

The man wheeled round with extraordinary quickness; at the same moment his hand travelled quickly round to his hip—as if he carried a weapon there. But when he saw how far off Tommy was he seemed to hesitate a moment; then, pulling a case out of his pocket he coolly lit a cigarette, and after taking a rapid glance round, strolled out quite unconcernedly to meet Tommy.

It was Carfax all right enough. Tommy could not mistake that strong, keen face, and those light blue eyes and powerful jaw. He stopped and waited for Tommy, puffing at his cigarette as if he were enjoying it.

"Good-day," he said pleasantly. "Do you belong about here? I wonder if you can tell me who these buildings belong to?"

Tommy halted right in front of him. "Well," he said boldly, "whoever they belong to I'm the tenant of them—or I thought I was till I saw you trying to get in!"

Carfax took off his hat and made Tommy a slight bow, just as if he were a man of his own age.

"I've got to beg your pardon," he said smiling, "you must have wondered what the dickens I was up to. But the fact is, I'm an official of the Thames Conservancy, and it's my job to inspect all new buildings put up on the banks of the river and make sure that the drainage is properly arranged and all that sort of thing. So I've been sent down to have a look at this house and sheds, that's all. I see some alterations have been made here lately."

Tommy looked him in the eye. He

felt perfectly sure that Mr. John Carfax was telling a lie, but that was no fault of Carfax's. It sounded quite a likely story in every way, and Carfax told it with a calmness that would have done credit to a clergyman.

"I see, sir," he said simply. "Well, you're quite welcome to inspect the drains. I reckon there can't be anything wrong with them, because there ain't any!"

"Oh, well, that's all right as long as they don't drain into the river," said Carfax laughing. "But I'm asked to find out exactly what sort of work is going to be done here. We have to make restrictions about wooden buildings you know, because of the danger of their catching fire."

The notion of the Thames Conservancy getting worried over the chance of Tommy being roasted alive, tickled him so much that he nearly burst out laughing in Mr. Carfax's face. But he managed to look solemn.

"Oh, there ain't any chance of that," he said. "I believe the people who'll work here are going to make chemical experiments, and whatever the stuff does I know it can't catch fire, and it wouldn't do any harm in a lonely place like this. I'm just looking after the buildings for them at present."

All the time he was speaking he watched Carfax's face carefully to see if there was the least sign of his recognising or guessing who he was. But there wasn't the least indication of it, and Carfax didn't seem to know him from Adam.

"That's all right then," said Carfax, with a smile, "I needn't trouble you any further, and I'll tell the conservancy you are all right. I'd better have your name."

"Patrick Roche, sir!"

"Thank you! Your employers have hired the place, I think you said? It doesn't belong to them, of course," said Carfax.

"I'm not sure who the island belongs to, sir," said Tommy.

"Well, I can tell you that. It belongs to a boy called Thomas Comber," replied Mr. Carfax, lighting a fresh cigarette, "who ought now to be serving a sentence in the prison ship Bellerophon—only he has escaped."

"What, the boy who used to live here?" said Tommy, though his throat was rather hot and dry. "Haven't they caught him yet?"

Mr. John Carfax shook his head.

"Not yet."

"Is the Thames Conservancy looking for him, too?" asked Tommy.

"No. That is a job for the police," said Mr. Carfax, "but, of course, it is the duty of anybody to arrest a runaway convict if they came across him." He looked at Tommy thoughtfully. "I should know him if I saw him. His portrait has been published. It is pretty clear that he has either hidden or disguised himself. But then, of course, he may have got out of the country. What do you think, yourself?"

Tommy found it difficult to answer; he wondered if a trap was laid for him. But before he could get out a word, a strange thing happened.

Away over from the sea-wall on the main river side, a sharp, distant crack rang out. A bullet sang through the air, passing so close to Tommy's face that he could feel the wind of it, and it crashed into the doorpost of the bungalow behind him with a sounding smack.

Tommy jumped as if the bullet had hit him, and spun round. He saw a tiny whiff of brown smoke drifting away

above the grasses on the embankment, but no sign of a man.

"By gosh!" cried Tommy furiously, "who's that potting at me?"

He dashed off at top speed, making a bee-line for the place where the shot came from. He paid no more attention to Carfax, but sprinted as fast as he could put his feet to the ground, gripping the oak boat-stretcher. Caution was thrown to the winds; the thought of being shot at, in broad daylight, on his own territory of Curlew Island, by some cowardly skulker behind a wall, maddened him.

Tommy's whole instinct when he was attacked, was always to go straight for the attacker. It wasn't a wise thing to do now, for the marksman could have picked him off easily as he ran across the open marsh. He cared nothing for that; he meant to make sure who his enemy was, at any risk. He did not even look round to see if Carfax was following.

Half way across the marsh he came to one of the big ditches that was too wide to leap; he had to scud a long way round by the bridge, and it took him several minutes to reach the spot where the shot came from. When he got there he sprang up on the top of the bank and looked round him over the island and the river.

He could see nobody whatever.

The unseen sniper had vanished. There was nowhere for him to hide, and if he had landed from a boat, Tommy expected to see the boat making off. But there was none. The only craft in sight was a small tug steaming down river some distance out, towing a small dinghy astern. It was possible that that boat had brought the sniper, and then put off again to the tug. Tommy shook his fist at her and shouted. But the tug seemed quite indifferent. She might have been quite innocent. The mystery remained; the shot had come from nowhere, and the shooter had vanished off the face of the island.

It was a rifle bullet, of course; no pistol could have reached so far. It had come within an ace of killing Tommy. Who was the enemy who had dared to fire in broad daylight? Was it Chuffer—or Baldy, or one of O'Hara's men?

"By gum, this is the frozen limit!" said Tommy. "I'll get a couple o' rifles of my own and we'll see who wins this game!"

He looked round for Carfax, who was not in sight. Tommy hurried back to the bungalow, wondering whether Carfax had been a decoy, to hold him in talk while he was shot at. But, somehow, he didn't think that was so. To his surprise he found Carfax sitting on the doorstep, calmly smoking his cigarette. He had not moved all the while.

"See anybody?" he asked, in a matter-of-fact voice.

"No!" cried Tommy.

"Ah," said Mr. Carfax placidly. "I thought you wouldn't. Was there a big motor-launch anywhere about, by chance?"

"No, nothing but a tug with a small boat."

"Tug, eh? Tugs are common on the river, anyway. Very careless of the gentleman with the rifle, eh? He'll be having an accident if he doesn't watch it."

"Gosh," said Tommy furiously, "he'd have had a giddy accident if I'd got hold of him! There was no accident about it—he nearly plugged me through the head, and it was a jolly good shot at

that distance. Another inch or two and I'd have been cold meat."

Mr. Carfax smiled and took a puff at his cigarette.

"He wasn't shooting at you," he said. "He was trying to get me, Patrick."

"You?" gasped Tommy. "What for?"

"Well, we officials of the—er—Thames Conservancy—sometimes make enemies," said Carfax pleasantly. "There are people who object to us poking about the way we do. Do I know exactly who the fellow was, my lad? Well, yes, I've a sort of idea. Don't you worry, he's not after you. All the same, you'd better watch out brightly as long as you're here in this place; it's a fine lonely spot and there's been one murder here already."

"And you'd better look out that fellow doesn't get you, sir!" exclaimed Tommy. "He won't need to be much closer to it than he was that time."

"I'm not worrying," smiled Carfax. "I was through the War. Do you know how much shot and shell it takes to kill one man, Patrick?"

"No, sir."

"About two tons. Some clever fellow worked it out," laughed Carfax. "All that, fired off to every chap that's killed. And the rifle bullet didn't weigh much over an ounce."

"An ounce is enough if it clicks in the right place," said Tommy.

"And that's true enough. Well, as I was saying before we were interrupted, this lad, Tom Comber, is giving the police a lot of trouble, and he'll be for it when they get him. He's what they call a hard case. However, by what I hear, he'll take some catching, and now I'll be getting away as I have business elsewhere. I dare say you'll be glad to see me off the premises."

"How are you going to get away, sir?" asked Tommy.

"I have a boat which I put in a snug place out of sight, up the back of the creek," said Carfax, "so you may as well come and see the last of me."

They walked across the island together, to where Carfax had stowed his craft, a small, fast sailing-boat, in a creek some way above the jetty where Tommy had landed. He helped Carfax to push the boat out, the sail was hoisted and with a cheery wave of his hand, Carfax sailed away towards the open river.

"Au revoir, Patrick!" he called back.

Tommy watched him go, wondering what on earth to make of him. Was he a policeman. If so, Tommy felt it was all up with him. But, somehow, he didn't feel too uneasy. It was so amazing that he had been for an hour with this man, who did not seem even to know that it was Tommy who had warned him the night before about the poisoned wine.

Just then, as Carfax disappeared up river, Tommy caught sight of a motor-boat heading for the creek like a little man-o'-war, bustling along at high speed with a cushion of white foam at her bows. Tommy took one look at her, and ran down towards the jetty with a whoop of joy.

"Dan!" he shouted, waving his arms. "Dan ahoy!"

Comberite Powder!

THE motor-boat buzzed up to the jetty, and Dan sprang out and gripped his pal by the hand.

"Here we are," he cried, "kings of the island!"

"You freckle-nosed old fraud!" exclaimed Tommy. "Where have you been? Did you get my wire?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 974.

"Never got any wire. Southend? I haven't been there since daybreak. Too busy."

"What's happened? Out with it!"

"I'm starving, that's what's happened," said Dan. "Is there any grub? If there isn't, I'll skin you!"

"Lots here," said Tommy, and together they hoisted the packing-case out of his boat and carried it across to the bungalow, where they broke it open and attacked a magnificent ham, and killed a tin of peaches which they mixed with sweet condensed milk. While they were feasting, Dan remarked that Tommy was looking excited, and called for his story, but Tommy insisted on hearing Dan's report first.

"I don't know that there's a lot to tell," said Dan, "but I've found out something about O'Hara & Co., and I've been jolly nearly wiped out."

"The day after you left me I scouted round the island here, and I saw O'Hara and his pal Haynes busy round the bungalow and sheds. I recognised 'em both all right from what you told me. Well, of course, they knew nothing about me, and I kept out of sight, but in the evening they left the place in a big, fast motor-launch."

"I know her," said Tommy. "I've seen her on the river when I was in the Bellerophon."

"I followed her at a distance," said Dan, "because I'd made up my mind to find out where O'Hara hangs out and what he's up to. He gave you his address, didn't he, and said he'd be up in town all the time?"

"Yes. Barnet, just outside London."

"Barnet my uncle!" said Dan. "He and Haynes have got secret headquarters down here, fifteen miles below us, farther towards the sea. They've got a little house on a place called Havengore Island, and they don't want any giddy visitors, either."

"Havengore. Down by Foulness?"

"That's it. They went right past Southend to sea, and when it was dark I saw them turn in over the Maplin Sands, when the tide was up, and disappear. I couldn't keep up with them in my boat, but I knew there was nothing in there where they'd gone except those two or three little islands, and I meant having a look. I got in there very quietly when the moon rose, and I saw their motor-launch tucked away in a creek by Havengore. I landed on the island; there was a little house on the middle of it, and that's where they live. There were wireless aerials on the roof of the house, and I bet they don't use 'em just for listening-in to 2LO, either. They're spies of some sort, or they would not be sticking it out in a place like that."

"What, Germans? That's all washed out."

"No, not Germans. I don't know what they are. But they're hot stuff. One of 'em must have caught sight of my phiz over the bank, for he sang out, and I saw 'em both come running at me like wolves. I wasn't there to fight 'em, so I nipped down into my boat and away to sea like one o'clock. I patted myself on the back at having run 'em to earth and got away with it, so I thought. I'd discovered where we can always find O'Hara & Co. when we want 'em, and I betted that you and I would soon get wise to the rest of their games, before we trust 'em with Comberite Powder. And they hadn't found out who I was, either."

"I got clear of the sands, and there

was a bit of a choppy sea running, when suddenly I heard the beat of a high-powered engine, and by gum, there was their big motor-launch coming out after me like a greyhound after a rabbit."

"They didn't spot me at first, because it was pretty dark, and I altered course and ran for the Thames as fast as I could go, crouching down in the boat. But they went flying round in circles, hunting for me, and presently they saw me, and made a bee-line for me at eighteen knots. I wondered what they meant to do, but I jolly soon knew. I'd made 'em thoroughly suspicious, and they intended to ram and run me down at any risk, to make sure. I was only a kid in a motor-boat, and they could do it easy. They just came down on me like a thunderbolt."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Tommy.

"I hardly know now how it was they didn't get me. I put the helm hard over at the last second, and they just grazed me as they scudded past. The shock knocked me clean out of my boat, and the thundering great bow-wave thrown up by the launch swamped my craft and filled her. I came to the top again some distance away, half-stunned, and only just able to keep myself afloat. The launch had charged ahead out of sight. When she came circling back to see if she'd done the job all right, there was nothing to be seen except my poor old boat lying water-logged and half-sunk, like a bit of wreckage. They buzzed round her twice, but there was nobody in her, and they didn't see me bobbing in the trough of the sea away off, with nothing but my hair showing, and I ducked under while they went by. I got a glimpse of O'Hara's pointed beard against the sky for a second when I came up, and they looked at the swamped boat, and both of them laughed. Then the launch scooted off back towards Havengore, and disappeared for good."

"Gosh, what sweeps!" said Tommy furiously.

"I suppose they are," said Dan. "Still, I'd rather asked for it, hadn't I? It looked as if I was done, but I swam to the motor-boat, which was three-parts full and nearly awash. They must have thought she was sinking fast; it's a wonder the weight of her engine didn't sink her, for the sea kept washing in. But she's got a watertight locker fore and after, and that stopped her going down. I managed to climb in carefully, up to my knees in water, got hold of the old canvas bucket she carries, and after an hour's hard work, and nearly swamping twice, I baled her out, and had her floating like a cork again."

"Well done!" said Tommy.

"Done's the word," replied Dan, "for I was all adrift at sea, an' couldn't do anything with her; the engine and mag were full of water, and she wouldn't go. Lucky for me I wasn't blown out to sea, but the wind was northerly, and after tossing about for half the night, the old boat got driven right across the estuary and on to the beach at Minster, down Sheppey way. I hauled her high and dry, and being dead beat, I curled up in a cave in the cliffs and slept till morning."

"When it was light I got some breakfast in the village, and scribbled off that letter to you and posted it. You got that?"

"Yes," said Tommy, "first post this morning. It didn't say much."

"Hadn't time to say much, and it wasn't safe to write it down, in case

somebody at your lodgings got hold of the letter. I had to wait till I saw you. It took me all day to get the motor-boat in action again; I had to take the whole engine down and clean every bit of it. I got away again this morning, meaning to run right up river to London and fetch you. But I thought I'd better just look in at the island on the way. So here I am, and that's all my story. It's pretty thick, but I wish it was a bit fatter still. I remember your man O'Hara laughed when he swamped my boat an' thought I was at the bottom. He's going to pay me for that laugh!" said Dan.

"And the beast came within an inch of drowning you!" cried Tommy.

"Sure. But, of course, he may have thought I was the police, gettin' on your track and making trouble for him; perhaps he thought he was doing the right thing. But I don't know what to make of it. What's doing here? I never expected to find you on the island—thought you were having a jolly good time in town. Nobody's tried to do you in, have they?"

"Look here!" said Tommy, and pointed to the bullet-hole in the porch of the bungalow. Dan inspected it keenly, and gave a liquid whistle.

"Rifle-bullet!" he said. "What's the game, Tommy—what's happened? Tell us, quick!"

"Sit down," said Tommy, cutting himself another slice of ham, "and listen to my little yarn. It's just as hairy as yours."

While they sat by the packing-case he told Dan everything that had happened, from his arrival in Stroud Street down to the departure of Mr. John Carfax half an hour ago, from the Island. Dan listened eagerly, and at the finish he sat silent and amazed.

"Great Christopher!" he said at last. "It's getting hotter stuff than even I thought it would. No wonder, for there's a million at stake. But who's this ruffian you call Baldy? Is he one of O'Hara's lot?"

"If he is, then O'Hara is twisting me after all!" said Tommy.

"Yes, and I always thought he would. But don't be too sure. Baldy may be someone playing for his own hand. You say he tried to drug Carfax. The next thing is a rifle-bullet, which nearly pipped him."

"And Carfax never turned a hair!" said Tommy admiringly. "He's a cool hand. But it's all guesswork yet. We don't know what it means."

"Question's this—is Carfax up against O'Hara & Co.?"

"Or is he up against me?" retorted Tommy. "Dan, what would you say Carfax is? A policeman? If so, my number's up!"

Dan turned it over in his mind quickly and shook his head.

"D'you know what I think he is? I passed him in his boat, coming out of the creek just now. I think I've seen him before once—around Chatham or Sheerness. From what you've told me I believe he's a Secret Service man."

Tommy's face grew long.

"Secret Service chap!" he said dolefully. "Then it's all U P with little Tommy!"

"Kid," said Dan, "don't shout before you're hurt! A Secret Service man wouldn't be hunting Tommy Comber. That sort don't go catching tiddlers. The Secret Service is under the Government, and it's just what its name says—



The motor-boat came down on Dan's craft like a thunderbolt, just grazing it. The great bow-wave thrown up by the launch swamped the boat and filled it, while Dan himself was knocked clean overboard, half stunned. (See Page 26.)

dead secret. When they go on the war-path they're after big game! And they take their lives in their hands. I know that much. Of course, if he got wise to who you are, he might give you up to the police—maybe he'd have to. D'you reckon he does know?"

"I'm pretty sure he doesn't."

"Anyway, you saved his life, don't forget it. Has he tumbled to that?"

"No, I'll swear he doesn't know that. And I don't want him to if I can help it," said Tommy, pulling the card Carfax had given him out of his pocket.

Dan took it and looked at it, reading the scribbled message.

"You can never tell what a chap of that sort knows," said Dan; "but, anyway, you were right not to go an' see him, or you'd have given yourself away. Tell you what, it'd be all right for me to look him up, though, and find out whether he's friend or-enemy? But not now, for we're busy. I could run up to-morrow."

"Yes, good idea!" said Tommy. "He doesn't know you; you could learn what his game is. He mayn't be Secret Service at all, but on O'Hara's side. And if O'Hara or Carfax or Baldy mean playing any monkey tricks with us down here on Curlew Island—why we'll have a dish of hot soup all ready for 'em."

Dan reached across and gripped him by the knee.

"Tommy, old son," he said, with a grin, "when we've got Comberite Powder we could blow 'em all off the map. Make it!"

"That's what we're here for," said Tommy, springing to his feet. "Come on, let's get to it!"

They cleared up the lunch and stowed it in the porch. Then, stripping off their coats and rolling up their shirt-sleeves, the two chums strode across to

the sheds where the chemicals were stored. In their hands was the great secret which was to give them power over all their enemies.

"How are we going to get in?" asked Dan.

All three of the stout sheds where the work was to be done were locked, barred, and bolted. The windows were closed with iron shutters. Tommy soon showed the way. He went to the foot of a small thorn tree some distance away, where he raised a flap of turf and disclosed a small flat stone. Under this was a cavity in which the keys of the sheds were hidden. Dr. O'Hara had told Tommy of the hiding-place.

The biggest shed was soon opened up, and the boys entered. The place had been very much altered since poor old Uncle Joe's time. A great deal of money had been spent. There were whole sets of electrical apparatus, scores of bottles and cases and kegs, with glass retorts and tubes of all sorts. The place looked like an electrician's and a great chemist's shop combined.

"Well, I will say this for O'Hara, he's done us proud here!" said Tommy. "There's every blessed thing I asked for, and more, too."

Dan agreed as he looked at the numerous jars of chemicals.

"You'll be worth your weight in gold to me on this job, Dan," said Tommy, "for you've had a training in your dad's shop, and you know the game as well as I do; if we strike a snag we can get over it together."

"Well, let's be at it! Where's the secret now?"

"It's here, old son," said Tommy, tapping his forehead, "and nowhere else. Now hold on a shake and I'll write it down for you."

He took an exercise book out of a locker, seated himself on the top of a barrel, and, wetting a pencil in his mouth, began to write. He wrote steadily and without stopping for quite a while, while Dan watched him in astonishment. When the thing was written out it covered two pages. It was a mass of figures and chemical formula and algebra, and looked like a nightmare.

"That's it!" he said, handing it to Dan.

"Great Jupiter!" gasped Dan. "But suppose there's a mistake in it? I know you've got a star memory, but you couldn't keep all this giddy stuff in your head!"

"That's just what I've done, and that's where it's goin' to stay," chuckled Tommy proudly. "That's my speciality, Dan. I'm the Boy Datas, like that chap on the music-hall stage. It's dead easy to me; it's born with me. I can rattle you off a football report that I read the year before last, an' never make a bloomer. I can remember anything. Old Uncle Joe knew it. He made me learn the receipt for Comberite by heart, and he knew that it was as safe as if it was carved on a rock—except that nobody on earth but me would know it. He'd never trust to puttin' it down on paper, a secret like that, which might get stolen. It's in my nut, and if I were killed it would be lost for good and all. Can you understand what I've written down there?"

(If Tommy has made a bloomer it may cost him his life, for monkeying about with an explosive like Comberite is highly dangerous work. See what happens when the formula is put to the test—in next week's thrilling instalment, chums.)

"THE SUSPECTED FORM-MASTER!"

(Continued from page 23.)

return been witnessed before. Nearly all the school was assembled at the gates to meet him. He arrived in an open car, with Dr. Locke seated next to him, and Mr. Quelch in front. But the car was not allowed to proceed under its own power. Juniors and seniors swarmed around it, and with the aid of ropes, which had been obtained in readiness, it was dragged through the open gates into the Close, while cheers and yells of welcome went up from all sides.

Forgetful of his Upper Fourth dignity, Temple had clambered on to

the bonnet of the car. He sat astride, regardless of the heat from the engine, with a megaphone to his mouth.

"Altogether, chaps!" he yelled, making his voice heard above the din with difficulty. "For he's a jolly good fellow—"

The entire school took up the chorus, until their voices could almost have been heard in Friardale Village.

Mr. Capper smiled happily. His time of trial and suffering was over. Several times he tried to convey something of his thoughts and feelings to the Head and Mr. Quelch. But his voice broke, and words would not come.

There was only one fellow in Greyfriars who was not delighted with the turn affairs had taken.

And that was Aubrey Angel.

Certainly, now knowing his Form master to be innocent of the charges that had been preferred against him, the Upper Fourth fellow was glad Mr. Capper's name had been cleared.

But he was thinking of an interview he would have to come with Temple, Dabney & Co.—and he did not relish it.

Indeed, when later his schoolfellows took him to task, they dealt with him in such a way that at last the miserable junior almost envied the convicted man the security from personal violence which his well-merited sentence of three years' penal servitude had secured for him behind prison walls.

THE END.

(Now look out for "The Swot!" the first of a new series of yarns, featuring Bob Cherry. You'll find it in next week's bumper issue, chums.)

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