

THIS IS THE PAPER FOR SCHOOL STORIES!

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The Magnet 2^d

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MONDAY



THE WARNING!

The Game Kid risks his own skin to warn his "sporting" friends of the Fifth that a prefect is on their track!
(See this week's grand 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.

DETECTIVES!

A HIGHLY interesting letter reaches me from a loyal reader in Bodmin who is extra keen on detective work. He has in mind the notion of taking up this profession. I don't advise it. For one thing, it seems to me that if a fellow can get his living some other way than tracking down the wrongdoers he had better freeze on to that alternative. There is an air of romance attached to detectives and their work, which is naturally of interest to the boy who is eager to do things, but the average boy little realises the long years of study the qualified detective has to pass through before he is fit to take his place among the big wigs in the detective profession. Most of our official detectives started as ordinary policemen and rose by gradual stages to the useful jobs they hold to-day. It wasn't done in a day, not by any manner of means. There are heaps of setbacks to the would-be sleuth, and the honours come only to the expert; the patient, clear-headed, far-seeing fellow with sufficient imagination to explore the bounds of possibility and probability. It is easy to think that a detective's job is a "cushy" one when we read the newspapers which tell us after the event exactly how this or that crime was done, but how many of us would be able to do the job if we had next to nothing to start on, as is the case in so many modern mysteries? The newspaper gives us a sketchy outline of how a certain detective tracked his man. It does not tell of the ceaseless hours of searching, clue sifting, the following of wrong trails, the rebuffs—these things, naturally, are not "newsy." So if my chum holds a good berth now I strongly advise him to stick to that. Detective work is not just the magnifying glass, the revolver, and the handcuffs—not by a long chalk!

A FISHER T. FISH YARN!

"Anxious," of Liverpool, writes and tells me that he is looking forward to another "Fishy" story in the MAGNET. He asks what has happened to our Transatlantic chum. "He's not dropped out of the Remove, has he?" Rest easy, my "Anxious" chum—Fisher Tarleton Fish is very much alive. He's busy thinking out new wheezes, and one of them will form the theme of a special MAGNET yarn that will follow closely atop of the Game Kid series of stories which is now running in your favourite paper. Glad you wrote; it's nice to learn that some of the lesser lights in the Greyfriars Remove are in demand.

Next Monday's Programme:

"LOYAL TO THE LAST!"

By Frank Richards.

The Game Kid is gradually beginning to find out the sort of fellow Cedric Hilton is, but he cannot forget that the sporting member of the Fifth at Greyfriars once showed him a little kindness. There are startling developments in next week's grand story of the chums of Greyfriars. You'll enjoy every word of it, take it from me!

"THE MYSTERY OF FLYING V RANCH!"

And this serial of ours— isn't it a scorcher? Don't you look forward to your MAGNET with additional zest these days? What-ho! Well, next Monday's instalment of this topping Wild West and Detective Adventure yarn is better than ever. Thrills—you'll get all you want in that line next week!

"JACK JOLLY'S BARRING OUT!"

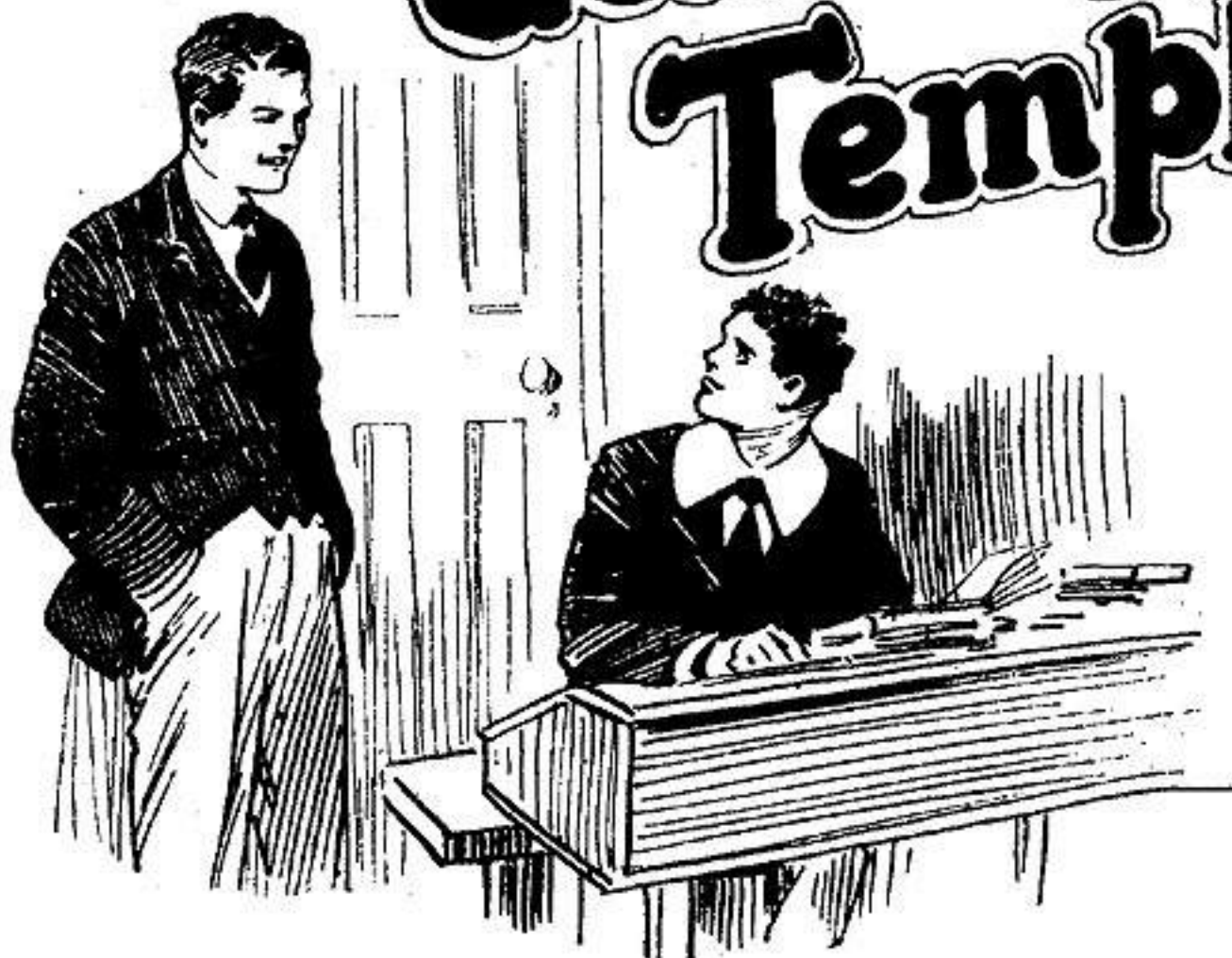
By Dicky Nugent.

Once again young Dicky provides a number of hearty laughs for his thousands of MAGNET admirers. You can afford to miss trains sometimes, for there's usually another one following on close behind, but if you miss this story from Dicky's pen you'll feel cross with yourself when your particular pal tells you how good it was. Cheerio, chums!

YOUR EDITOR.

ASKING FOR IT! Under the influence of Cedric Hilton of the Fifth the Game Kid looks like developing into a "cert" for the sack! But the Kid hardly thinks of himself in his eagerness to serve his elegant friend in the Fifth; hardly thinks either of the promise he has made to his headmaster!

The Game Kid's Temptation!



A Grand New Long Complete Story of the Chums of Greyfriars, dealing with the Game Kid, once of Huggins' Boxing Ring.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Just Like Bob!

"WHAT about Dury?"

"Oh!"

"Um!"

Bob Cherry asked the question, and Johnny Bull said "Oh!" and Frank Nugent "Um!" Harry Wharton looked thoughtful, while Hurree Jamset Ram Singh smiled and nodded his dusky head.

"Why not?" urged Bob.

"Hem!"

"No pal of ours!" said Johnny Bull.

"No; but—"

"Bosh!"

"The boshfulness is not terrific, my esteemed Johnny!" murmured Hurree Singh. "Why not?"

The Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove, were chatting in the old quad before dinner. They were discussing what was to be done with the afternoon, which was a half-holiday. And they had settled that they were going to take their skates up the river, which was frozen hard a mile above Greyfriars.

Bob's good-natured glance lingered, several times, upon a lonely figure lounging by the leafless elms in the distance.

It was Richard Dury, the new fellow in the Remove, who, before he came to Greyfriars, had been known as the "Game Kid" of Huggins' Ring.

Dury's face was a little clouded as he lounged by himself. The Kid was a cheery and sociable fellow, and liked company. But nobody in the Remove was keen on bestowing his company on that somewhat peculiar new fellow.

"I dare say the kid can skate," said Bob. "If he can't we'll teach him. I dare say he's got some skates. If he hasn't we'll lend him some. I hate to see a chap mouching on his own like that."

"Tell him so, and he'll probably tap you on the nose!" grunted Johnny Bull.

Bob Cherry laughed.

"Well, I'm not going to tell him so. It would be a cheek, anyhow. All the same, I think we might take the chap along this afternoon. Why not?"

"The why-notfulness—" began Hurree Singh.

"Is terrific!" grinned Bob. "Exactly!"

"Oh, leave it to Wharton!" said Johnny Bull. "I can't say I like the chap. But don't mind me."

Harry Wharton looked very thoughtful.

"The fact is, Dury's got on the wrong side of the Form," he said. "He thinks we're all soft spoonies because we're not up to the fighting form of Huggins' Ring, and he says so. Fellows can't be expected to like it. But he's all right in his own way. Only, you see, Bob, you can't very well take up a chap one day and drop him the next."

"Well, no. But—"

"And you can't explain to him it's positively for one occasion only!" chuckled Nugent.

"Still—" said Bob.

"Still, I don't think Dury has really had a fair chance here," said Harry. "He has carried on a bit like a hooligan, but we can't deny that he behaved himself all right until some cads chipped him and got his rag out. As for his queer ways, they're his own business, not ours."

"That's so!" agreed Nugent.

"He has a pretty hard time," went on the captain of the Remove. "Mr. Quelch has been down on him like a sack of coke ever since he was flogged for breaking bounds at night. Quelch thinks he's a bad hat."

"He shouldn't have done it," said Johnny Bull.

"Quite so. But we've broken bounds ourselves at times," said Wharton, with a smile.

"Not for the same reason."

"Well, we don't really know what

Dury's reason was, though I suspect that he was sent out on a message by some senior fellow—one of the Fifth or Sixth."

"He shouldn't have gone."

"I know. But—"

Grunt, from Johnny Bull. Johnny had a rather uncompromising nature. Right was very clearly divided from wrong in Johnny's mind; and he had little sympathy to waste upon fellows who missed the dividing line.

"Well, what's the verdict?" asked Bob. "The dinner-bell will be ringing soon, old bean, and we want to ask him before tiffin, if we ask him at all."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"Let's ask him," he said. "It will be rather rotten for him mouching about on a half-holiday on his own. Only, if we take him along we shall have to be civil to him afterwards. We can't play rotten tricks like Angel of the Fourth—speaking to a chap one day and ignoring him the day after."

"Well, we can be civil, I suppose—with an effort, of course," said Bob, with his cheery grin. "The chap's a bit out of his element here, and he's made rather a bad beginning; but he must have some good in him or Skinner and Bunter wouldn't dislike him so much."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The askfulness is the proper caper," said the good-natured nabob of Bhani-pur.

"Come on, then," said Bob.

And, the question being decided, the Famous Five bore down on Richard Dury, of the Remove.

The Game Kid stopped in his walk and looked at them as they came up rather suspiciously.

"Booked for this afternoon, old lad?" asked Bob Cherry.

Dury shook his head.

"No; Mr. Quelch ain't detained me—for once," he said, with a bitter note in his voice.

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"That's good!"

"Blinking old Tartar, ain't he?" said the Kid. "But, of course, you fellows don't think so. He ain't down on you."

"Well, you got Quelch's rag out," said Bob, rather uncomfortably. "It's a bit serious breaking bounds after dark and refusing to explain where you've been. You've made him think badly of you, you know."

"Let him!" grunted the Kid. "Who cares?"

"But never mind Quelch," went on Bob cheerily. "On a half-holiday we're entitled to forget the existence of Form masters and all other unpleasant things, you know."

The Kid grinned.

"We're going on the river to skate," said Bob. "Like to come along?"

Dury stared.

"You don't want me," he said.

"Hem! We'd like you to come."

"I ain't got any skates."

"I've an old pair I can lend you."

"I ain't never used any."

"I'll show you how."

"But I can slide," said the Kid, his clouded expression fading away and a cheery look taking its place. "Look 'ere, you blokes skate and I'll slide—what? I'd like to come."

"It's a go, then!" said Bob. "We mizzle at two. That suit you, old bean?"

"Suit me a treat!"

"Done, then!" said Harry Wharton.

"The donefulness is terrific!"

And as the dinner-bell began to ring just then the Famous Five turned towards the House, and the Kid walked in with them, his rugged face much more cheerful.

"I say, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter met them as they came in. He blinked at Harry Wharton & Co. ostentatiously, taking no notice of Richard Dury. The Gamo Kid was miles beneath Bunter's aristocratic notice.

"I say, you fellows, if you're going skating this afternoon, I'll come," said Bunter.

"Oh, do!" said Bob Cherry. "The pleasure you will confer will be enormous—in fact, terrific."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Jolly good idea!" said Nugent. "If the ice will bear Bunter, it will bear anything. We'll roll him on first."

"Good egg!"

"You'll lend me some skates, Bob," said the fat junior. "I've been looking at your skates in your study, and they seem all right."

"I'll lend you my old skates," said Bob.

"Don't be selfish, old chap," said Bunter.

"Why, you fat duffer—"

"If there's anything I can't stand, it's selfishness," said Bunter. "Don't be selfish. If the old skates are all right, I suppose you can use them. Anybody else coming?"

"Only Dury."

"You're taking that prize-fighter?" exclaimed Bunter.

"Well, you needn't mind a prize-fighter, if he doesn't mind a prize porker," said Bob. "Do you mind a prize porker, Dury?"

Dick Dury chuckled.

"Look here, if that outsider is coming, I'm not!" snorted Bunter. "Mind, I mean it. If you have Dury, you don't have me."

"That settles it," said Bob. "We wouldn't part with Dury now for any

consideration whatever. You've put a premium on him, old fat man."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the juniors went cheerily into the dining-room, Billy Bunter smiling as he followed.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Vials of Wrath!

"DURY!"

"Yes, sir."

"Kindly do not shuffle your feet at table."

"Yes, sir!"

Some of the Remove fellows grinned. Skinner winked at Snoop. The fellows who were nearest to Mr. Quelch kept their faces as expressionless as they could.

Dick Dury's face was flushed. Certainly, he had been shuffling his feet a little; Dury was not accustomed to keeping still, and it irked him. But other fellows shuffled their feet sometimes, without drawing the special attention of the Remove master.

There was no doubt that Mr. Quelch had a "down" on the new fellow, and a very heavy down.

In the first place, he had doubted the Head's wisdom in placing the one-time boxer at Greyfriars at all. He had not been pleased to have the boy pugilist in his Form.

But, from a sense of duty and indeed kindness of heart, Mr. Quelch had done his very best for Dury.

It was troublesome enough to have a fellow in the Form-room who was not equal to the work of the Form, and required special attention. But Mr. Quelch had given Dury special attention, and even extra tuition in his spare time.

He had tried hard not to be prejudiced against the boy on account of his rough manners and his weird variety of the English language. He felt that he had done all that a conscientious Form master could do, and perhaps a little more.

In return, according to Mr. Quelch's view, Dury had been disrespectful and ungrateful. He had broken school bounds after dark, and refused to explain his reason. That was proof, to Mr. Quelch's mind, that he was keeping up undesirable acquaintances outside the school.

It was not to be wondered at, in a boy of his antecedents, but it was extremely out of place at Greyfriars.

That he should be provided for, in return for the great service he had rendered the Head during the vacation, Mr. Quelch fully agreed. But he should be provided for elsewhere.

The Head of Greyfriars, who generally relied upon Mr. Quelch's judgment and very often acted on his advice, had not seen eye to eye with the Remove master on this occasion.

Dury stayed on at the school against his Form master's advice and against his wishes.

The Head had been kind and tactful, but he had been firm. Mr. Quelch had a feeling that he had been snubbed.

For a dignified gentleman like Mr. Quelch to feel snubbed on account of a rugged ragamuffin who ought not to have been in the school at all was very painful and unpleasant.

The Form master's dislike of that peculiar member of his Form became fixed and pronounced.

Certainly, Mr. Quelch would never have been unjust. He would never have found fault with Dury without cause.

But the unfortunate Kid gave him plenty of cause. In the Form-room, he always had the sharpest edge of Mr. Quelch's tongue. Out of the Form-room, he avoided Mr. Quelch as much as he could; which Mr. Quelch, of course, observed and attributed to a bad conscience.

The Kid ceased to shuffle his feet, and sat with crimson cheeks, quite conscious of the lurking smiles on many faces at the Remove table.

Indeed, fellows were glancing over from other tables; Mr. Quelch's voice being, though not loud, extremely penetrating, and his remarks having been heard by others beside the Remove.

Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth grinned at one another. Hobson of the Shell winked at Hoskins of that Form.

"Dury!"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"If you put your fingers in the salt again you will be sent away from the table."

"Oh, yes, sir!" mumbled the wretched Kid.

He knew very well that he ought not to put his fingers in the salt, but he had not learned good table manners in Huggins' Ring. Old habits were strong.

"Disgusting!" murmured Skinner.

"Horrid!" agreed Snoop.

Those remarks were intended to please Mr. Quelch. But the Remove master was rather uncertain in such matters. He glared at Skinner and Snoop.

"Kindly do not pass remarks at table!" he snapped.

"Oh, very well, sir!" mumbled Skinner.

And some of the Removites grinned again. Attempts to "curry favour" with the Remove master were not always successful.

The Kid's rugged face was burning. Two or three Fifth Form fellows were glancing towards him from a distance, and he wondered whether Cedric Hilton of the Fifth had heard what Mr. Quelch had said. Hilton of the Fifth was the only Greyfriars man whom the Kid liked and respected, and he had not shown much judgment in selecting Hilton as the object of his admiration.

Dury was very careful indeed as dinner proceeded. But all of a sudden he gave a jump and a yelp.

Mr. Quelch's gimlet eyes fixed on him at once.

"Dury, if you cannot behave yourself you cannot remain at this table. How dare you, sir!"

"I couldn't 'elp it, sir—"

"Nonsense!"

"Somebody 'acked my shin, sir!" gasped the Kid.

"Do you mean that someone kicked you under the table?" asked Mr. Quelch coldly.

"Yes, sir; 'acked my shin."

"Indeed! And who did so?"

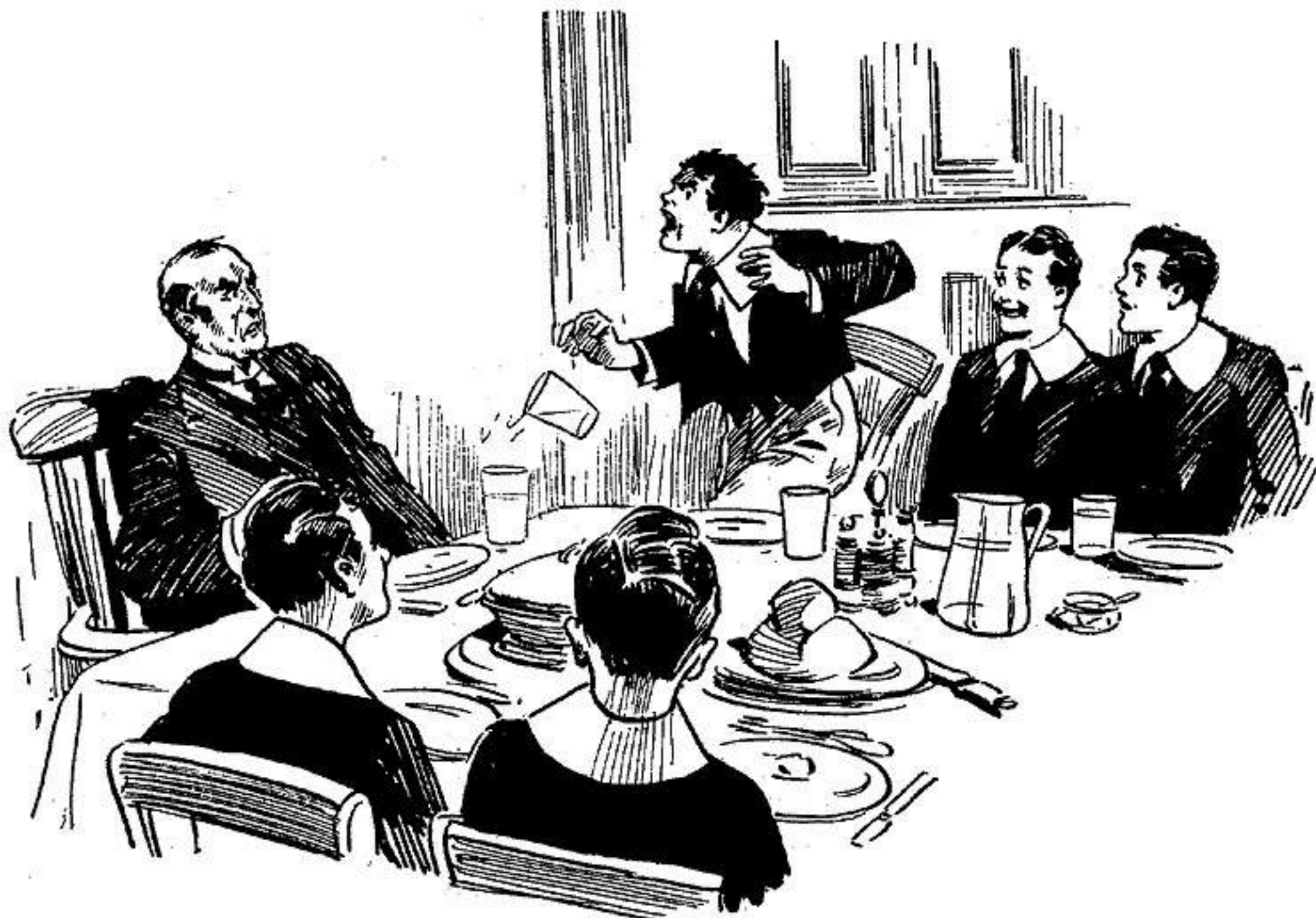
"Some bloke, sir," stammered the Kid. He had a strong suspicion that it was Skinner's boot that had hacked his shin, but he was not sure; and in any case the Kid was no tell-tale.

"I have told you many times, Dury, that I expect you to speak English now that you have been some time at Greyfriars," said the Remove master. "You will take fifty lines for using such an expression as 'bloke.'"

"Yes, sir."

The Kid was glad when dinner was over. Dining under the gimlet eyes of Mr. Quelch almost took away his appetite.

But as the Remove fellows were going out, the Form master called to him:



All of a sudden Dury gave a jump and a yelp. Mr. Quelch's gimlet eyes fixed on him at once. "Dury, if you cannot behave yourself you cannot remain at the table. How dare you, sir?" "I couldn't 'elp it, sir—" "Nonsense!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Somebody 'acked my shln, sir," gasped Dury. (See Chapter 2.)

"Go to my study, Dury, and wait for me there."

"Yes, sir."

"Hard cheese, old bean!" murmured Bob Cherry, as the juniors went out. "But carry on—Quelch's bark is worse than his bite, you know!"

The Kid nodded gloomily, and went to the Form master's study to wait for him. Mr. Quelch came in in a few minutes. The Kid was sitting on the edge of the Form master's writing-table, which most certainly he should not have been doing. A Form master's study at Greyfriars was no place for the free-and-easy manners of Huggins' Ring.

He detached himself from the table immediately Mr. Quelch entered.

"Upon my word!" said the Remove master. "This passes all patience! Have you no manners at all, Dury?"

"Sorry, sir!" mumbled the Kid.

"You will take another fifty lines, Dury!"

"Yes, sir."

"You will write out your lines and bring them to me in an hour's time."

"It's a 'arf-oliday, sir—"

"I do not expect a boy of my Form to argue with me, Dury."

"I—I was going out with some—" The Kid stopped the word "blokes" just in time. "With some fellers, sir—"

"Silence!"

The Kid was silent. He had a deep and bitter sense of injustice, though assuredly Mr. Quelch had no intention of being unjust.

"I have to speak to you, Dury," said Mr. Quelch. "Your former employer—

a Mr. Huggins—is staying in the village of Friardale."

"That ain't my fault, sir."

"I did not say that it was your fault, Dury. Kindly do not interrupt me. It is most unpleasant for this person to be staying so near the school. He has, as you know, called at Greyfriars once—"

"I warned 'im off, sir."

"On that occasion he forced his way in, and threatened me with violence," said Mr. Quelch. "He uttered lawless threats when I turned him away. You are well aware that you are forbidden to hold any communication with this person."

"Suttingly, sir."

"I require to know whether you have met him since the occasion you confessed to the Head?"

"No, sir."

"It is very singular that he should be remaining in an out-of-the-way village like Friardale, unless it is for the purpose of keeping in communication with you, Dury."

"He's on business there, sir. It's the boxing," said the Kid. "The Old 'Un has a 'and in the boxing matches at the Three Fishers, up the river, sir."

Mr. Quelch frowned. He knew all about the unsavoury reputation of that inn up the river, where glove fights sometimes took place—and fights without gloves, according to rumour—amid a general gathering of all the dingy blackguardism of the neighbourhood.

"It is extremely unpleasant and disconcerting," he snapped. "However, so long as you have no communication whatever with this man Huggins, I do not blame you, Dury."

"Thank you, sir," said the Kid, with a note of sarcasm in his voice that was not lost on the Form master. Mr. Quelch's eyes glinted.

"If you are found to have any communication with this man, or any of his associates, Dury, you may expect to be sent away from the school at once," he said. "You may now go and write your lines. Bring them to me when written."

"Yes, sir."

And the Game Kid quitted his Form master's study, glad to escape. He found Harry Wharton & Co. waiting for him at the end of the corridor.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he is!" said Bob. "Come on, old scout!"

The Kid shook his head dismally.

"I've got a 'undred lines," he said. "They've got to be took in as soon as wrote."

"Oh, rotten!"

"You coveys had better like off, and leave me to it," said the Kid, with a sigh.

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged glances. They understood better than Dury did why the Form master was down on him so severely; they could see more justice on Mr. Quelch's side than the Kid could see. But they sympathised, all the same. Any fellow who had Mr. Quelch down on him was naturally an object of sympathy.

"That's all right, Dury," said the captain of the Remove. "You cut off and do your lines, and we'll wait."

"We'll wait for you," agreed Nugent.

"Good!" said Bob. "We can go and punt a footer about till Dury is ready. Come down and fetch us on Little Side when you're finished, Dury."

"Right-ho!" said the Kid brightly.

And Harry Wharton & Co. went out.

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into the frosty air, while the Kid proceeded to the Form-room to write out his imposition.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Sportsmen of the Fifth!

"**R**OT!" said Price of the Fifth hotly.

Cedric Hilton smiled, and blew out a little cloud of smoke from his cigarette. The sportsman of the Fifth was leaning back in the armchair in his study, his elegantly trousered legs stretched out and his hands behind his head. Price, standing before him, looked angry and annoyed.

"That scrubby little waster!" said Price.

"Exactly!"

"Rubbish!"

"Dear man, just listen a minute," said Hilton. "It will be a treat for the poor little beast. I believe the other fags in his Form give him the cold shoulder all round."

"No wonder!" said Price. "An unwashed little ruffian—"

"I believe he washes," drawled Hilton. "Anyhow, he took a flogging the other day, rather than give me away. If he'd told his Form master that I sent him to the Cross Keys with a message to old Cobb, he would have got clear all right—and I should have got it in the neck! He's a game little ruffian."

"Tip him, then; but don't take him up, and don't land him on your friends!" grunted Price.

Hilton laughed.

"He doesn't want tippin'. He's got plenty of cash—money in the bank that he's saved from his boxing days. As for takin' him up—that's all rot. But this afternoon—"

"Is it safe to let a fag know we're going up to the Three Fishers? Have a little sense!"

"That little ruffian would be cut in pieces before he would give a man away. Safe as houses!"

"Look here, I don't want him!" growled Price. "My hat! Chummin' with Lower Fourth fags! My hat!"

"Not exactly that," said Hilton. "It will be an act of kindness to take him up for the afternoon; and he's got too much horse-sense to presume on it—I've seen that already. But there's another thing. He's been a boxer, boxing for his living, before he came here. He can give us tips."

"What?"

"That kid knows more about a man's fightin' form than we shall ever know," said Hilton. "He can tell us whether to put our money on the Pet. I tell you he knows."

"Oh!" said Price.

"Catch on, old bean?"

"That alters the case, of course," said Price, mollified. "Lookin' at it like that, I don't mind."

"I thought you wouldn't," agreed Hilton dryly. "Bein' kind to the kid would naturally get your rag out, but makin' use of him—"

"Oh, don't be an ass! I suppose you're not walking out of gates with the little ruffian?"

"No, you duffer! I'll tell him where to pick us up at a safe distance, of course."

"That's all right, then."

"Try these smokes, old chap, while I go an' dig him up," yawned Hilton, getting out of his armchair. "And remember that his advice about the fight at the Three Fishers may mean a good

many quids to us, and put on your best manners when you meet him."

Price grunted, and sat down in the armchair Hilton had vacated. The dandy of the Fifth lounged out of the study.

Dick Dury was two-thirds of the way through his impot, when the handsome Fifth-Former looked into the Remove room. The Kid glanced up, with a sullen brow, expecting to see Mr. Quelch coming into inquirio after the lines.

His face cleared, and brightened, as he saw Hilton. He jumped up from his desk at once.

Hilton smiled faintly. He knew that he was an object of worship to this queer little beggar, and it amused him a good deal. In his own way, he felt kindly towards the Kid. It was, indeed, an act of good-natured kindness that had first attached "the queer little beggar" to the magnificent dandy of the Fifth Form.

"I've been lookin' for you, Dury," said Hilton.

"Looking for me, sir," said the Kid brightly. "Anything I can do for you, sir?"

"I find that you're detained—"

"Not detained, Master Hilton," said the Kid eagerly. "I've only got some lines to do, and I can get away when I've wrote them out. They're nearly finished, sir!"

"Good," said Hilton. "I believe you're havin' rather a rough time with your Form master, Dury. I—I suppose it's on account of what you did for me, and not givin' me away, what?"

"I don't mind, sir," said the Kid loyally. "I dessay Mr. Quelch would be down on me, anyways. He don't like the likes of me bein' 'ere at all."

"I'm no end obliged to you," said Hilton.

The Kid's rugged face beamed.

"That's all right, sir. Don't you worrit!"

Hilton of the Fifth was very far from worrying about the junior who had suffered so much for his sake. But he nodded and smiled.

"Well, I'm goin' out with a friend this afternoon, Dury," he said; "I thought you might like to come."

The Kid stared at him blankly.

"Me?" he ejaculated.

"Yes, you!"

"Me come out with you, Master Hilton!" gasped the Kid. "You're a-pulling my leg."

"Oh, gad!" said Hilton. "Does that mean you like the idea?"

"Don't I just?" grinned the Kid.

"Done, then," said Hilton. "Finish your lines and get clear, and get out of the school. You'll find us on the towpath above the boat-house."

"What-ho!" said the Kid blissfully.

His rugged face was full of sunshine as Cedric Hilton left the Remove room. Hilton was smiling himself; he was a good-natured fellow, and it was pleasant to him to give pleasure. He did not reflect that the excursion for that afternoon was not exactly one in which a junior schoolboy should have joined, and that a true regard for Drury's interests would have led him to leave the Kid very carefully out of it. Hilton was not much given to reflection.

The Kid, left alone in the Form-room, did not immediately return to his task. Had Mr. Quelch looked in just then, he would have been astonished to see the junior executing a sort of war-dance round the desks.

The Kid's cup of joy was full. He cared nothing for a frowning Form master—nothing for scornful looks or turned-up noses in the Lower Fourth.

Hilton of the Fifth, whose lightest word in a careless moment sufficed to make him happy—Hilton was taking him out for the afternoon; Hilton was willing to spend a half-holiday in company with the fellow who was turned down by his own Form. What did his own Form matter?

The Kid went back to his desk at last, and finished his lines. He collected them carefully to take to his Form master.

And then, all of a sudden, something that he had utterly forgotten came into his memory.

"Them blokes!" ejaculated the Kid, in dismay.

In his delight at Hilton's invitation, he had utterly forgotten Harry Wharton & Co.

The Kid's bright face lengthened.

The Famous Five were waiting for him; waiting for his lines to be done, wasting a portion of their half-holiday on his account. They were expecting him to join them when he was free.

"Oh, lor!" muttered the Kid, in dismay.

The chums of the Remove were punting a footer about on Little Side while they waited for him. But on the tow-path by the river, Hilton of the Fifth would be waiting—and he could not keep Hilton waiting.

As nothing would have induced him to give up the glorious prospect of an excursion with Hilton of the Fifth, it followed that he had to turn the Famous Five down.

The Kid left the Form-room, and repaired to Mr. Quelch's study with his lines. Mr. Quelch signed to him to place them on the writing-table, and to go.

Dury left the study.

He went for his coat and hat; and then paused. He had no time to waste; he could not keep his magnificent friend in the Fifth waiting. But to leave the chums of the Remove wasting their time, expecting him when he would not come, was too "thick" altogether. But Dury did not want to see them, to tell them that he had changed his mind; it was, of course, a dead secret that he was to go out with the Fifth-form sportsman. He could not mention that, and he could give no other explanation; and if they were curious, they might guess something that he did not want them to guess.

Nothing had been said on the subject, but he knew that Hilton expected him to keep the excursion dark. The unwritten laws of the school barred friendship between a Fifth-form man and a Lower-Fourth junior. Besides, if fellows knew, they might guess for whose sake the Kid had broken bounds, and earned a flogging.

Vernon-Smith of the Remove came along, while the Kid was thinking it out. Dury called to him.

"Will you tell Wharton not to wait for me, Smithy?" he said. "I was going skating with those blokes, but I can't go."

The Bouncer smiled.

"More detention?" he asked. "My hat! You go around begging and praying for detentions."

"They're on the football ground," said the Kid. "You'll tell 'em!"

"Oh, all right!"

The Bouncer went away towards Little Side; and as soon as he was gone, Dick Dury hurried away. Once outside the school gates, he broke into a run, and he was flushed and breathless as he came speeding up the tow-path past the boat-house. In the distance, two over-coated figures waited. Price of the

Fifth gave him a rather grim nod as he came up; Hilton a smile.

"Ope I ain't kept you waiting," gasped the Kid.

"You have!" said Price.

"Sorry—I—"

"What rot!" said Hilton. "It's all right, Kid. Come along!"

And the Kid, in the seventh heaven of delight, trotted along brightly by the side of the elegant sportsman of the Fifth.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Another Engagement!

"**T**IME Dury was ready, I should think," remarked Frank Nugent.

Vernon-Smith heard that remark as he came down to the football-ground, and he grinned.

"You fellows waiting for the giddy boxer?" he called out.

"Yes," said Wharton, glancing round.

"No need to wait—he can't come," said the Bounder. "He asked me to tell you two."

"Oh, rotten!" said Bob.

"Is he detained again?" asked Wharton.

"So I gathered."

"Poor beggar!"

"Dear old Quelch's got a prize down on him," grinned the Bounder. "He's rather a jolly old Tartar when he lets himself go, what?"

"It's hard cheese," said Harry.

The Famous Five went back to the House. They went in for their coats and skates; but Wharton decided to give Dury a look-in before starting. He took it for granted that Mr. Quelch had not been satisfied with the Kid's lines, and had given him the impot to write out over again—as somewhat frequently occurred. If it was a question of waiting another half hour or so, the captain of the Remove was prepared to make the sacrifice.

He approached the Remove room rather cautiously; it was, of course, forbidden to speak to any fellow under detention. But his caution was wasted, as it happened; he found the Form-room empty.

Wharton stared at the empty desks in surprise. There was no one in the Form-room, so obviously the Kid was not detained there.

The captain of the Remove rejoined his chums, who were waiting for him at the House steps.

"Well?" asked Bob Cherry.

"He's not there," said Harry. "He doesn't seem to be detained, after all. Smithy didn't say he said so, I remember."

"But he would come if he wasn't kept in?"

"Changed his mind, perhaps," said the captain of the Remove, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"Like his cheek!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Dash it all!" said Bob. "If he didn't want to come, he might have said so before we hung about nearly an hour waiting for him!"

"The mightfulness is terrific!"

"Well, he won't be coming now, anyhow. Let's get off," said Harry.

And the Famous Five started, not in the best of humours.

If Dick Dury was not detained, as they had supposed, certainly he ought to have joined them on the skating excursion. He was not entitled to change his mind in this off-hand way after keeping them waiting so long. It did not matter a straw to the Famous Five whether Dury went on the ice with

them or not, but there was such a thing as good manners.

The chums of the Remove tramped up the towpath. There was thin ice on the river near the boathouse; but it was some distance up, where the Sark was narrower and shallower, that the stream was frozen hard. They tramped on cheerily enough, swinging their skates.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob suddenly.

He pointed ahead along the towpath.

Back from the river the gable windows and old red roof of the Three Fishers Inn showed through the leafless oaks and beeches. There was a gate from the inn garden upon the towpath, and three figures had stopped at that gate.

All three were well known to the Removites.

Two of them were Fifth Form fellows; the third was Richard Dury, of the Remove.

"My hat!" muttered Wharton. "Dury—with Hilton and Price, of the Fifth! So that's why he threw us over!"

"Cheeky cad!" growled Johnny Bull.

Hilton had opened the gate in the fence. At a mile from the school the sportsman of the Fifth doubtless considered himself secure from observation. He went through the gateway, and Price followed him in, and then the Kid. The gate closed after them.

Wharton knitted his brows.

"The young rotter!" he muttered.

Bob Cherry whistled. The Three Fishers was strictly out of bounds for all Greyfriars fellows, seniors and juniors alike. A good deal was known or suspected about the manners and customs of Hilton and Price of the Fifth; the chums of the Remove were not surprised to see them there. But they were surprised to see Dick Dury with the Fifth-Formers.

"That explains," said Nugent, with a grin. "And I fancy we needn't ask who it was sent Dury out of bounds the other night. He's got in with those Fifth Form blackguards!"

"And they're taking him there!" said Harry. "All three of them would be sacked if the Head knew!"

"Pity he doesn't!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"I've a jolly good mind—"

Wharton paused. "That young ass Dury doesn't know any better. Very likely he's been in worse places before he came to Greyfriars. But he ought to be warned—"

"Rot!" said Johnny Bull. "He knows jolly well that he ought not to go there; he knows as well as we do that it's out of bounds! Let him rip!"

"The ripfulness is the proper caper," concurred Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "It is his own esteemed and ludicrous business."

"I suppose we can't interfere," said Harry. "Hilton and Price ought to be jolly well ashamed of themselves; but I suppose it's no use telling them so."

"It's quite likely that they wouldn't be grateful for a sermon from the Lower Fourth!" said Bob Cherry gravely.

And the other fellows grinned.

The juniors tramped on up the towpath. They passed the garden wall of the Three Fishers; but it was high, and there was nothing to be seen of the interior. They could see the roof of the large shed in the grounds, which, according to local gossip, was used for prizefights as well as for the glove contests which were within the limit of the law. Somewhere about the unsavoury place was Dury of the Remove with

the two Fifth-Formers, and it was impossible for the Famous Five to avoid feeling annoyed at the idea that the Kid had turned them down for such an excursion.

They passed on, and came to the reach of the Sark where the ice was thick and strong, glimmering in the winter sunshine. There they put on their skates and glided out over the frozen river.

In a very few minutes then they forgot all about Dury and the sportsmen of the Fifth as they glided swiftly on the smooth ice, their faces ruddy and glowing with healthy exercise.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Out of Bounds!

"**Y**OU'D better cut!"

"Yes, Master Hilton," said the Kid submissively, though he was a little disappointed.

The dusk was falling on the river and the leafless woods. Lights were beginning to gleam in the diamond-paned windows of the Three Fishers.

The Game Kid had enjoyed his afternoon.

The shady and blackguardly company at the Three Fishers did not shock the Kid; he had seen plenty of such company in his days in Huggins' Ring. And any company would have been good enough for him if it was good enough for Cedric Hilton.

The Kid had watched the boxing in the roped ring in the big shed with a critical eye. The Bunbury Pet was at the Three Fishers—a youth of about twenty, with a flattened nose and a couple of missing teeth, in whose performances the Kid had been keenly interested, from a professional point of view. The sight of the roped ring brought back old times to the Kid—like the "smell of the barracks" to the old soldier. His rugged face brightened; his eyes shone, as he watched, and he wondered a little whether he had, after all, done wisely in allowing the Head of Greyfriars to take him away from his old life and make a public-school man of him. His old life had its own attractions, and he felt them strongly just then.

After the boxing was over he strolled in the weedy, unkempt gardens with Hilton and Price, keeping at a respectful distance from his nobby friends while they talked.

It was sheer joy to the Kid to be with the magnificent Hilton and to be treated with careless kindness by him. Stephen Price, certainly, did not think much of the Kid, and showed him little civility, but the Kid was quite indifferent to that. His only thought of Price was that he was a commonplace "bloke," who was lucky to have such a magnificent friend as Cedric Hilton.

The two Fifth-Formers strolled and chatted and smoked cigarettes, with the Kid trailing behind, quite satisfied and content. Hilton turned presently and beckoned to him. The Kid's face fell as the Fifth-Former told him he had better "cut."

"You don't want to be late for calling-over, Kid," said Hilton good-naturedly. "Your Form master is rather down on you already, I believe."

"I'd risk it, sir, if you wanted me."

"But I don't want to get you into trouble," said Hilton, with a smile. "Besides, we're going into the place now for a little game, and that's no good to you."

"Hook it, young 'un!" said Price gruffly.

The Kid gave no heed to Price.

But he knew that his magnificent friend did not want him any longer, and that was enough for the Kid.

"I'll cut, Master Hilton," he said. "It's been ripping, sir, and it was very kind of you to bring me along! But, sir—"

"Well?"

"You haven't too much time to get back for the call-over, sir," said the Kid anxiously, "and that bloke Wingate, sir—he's jolly sharp—"

"That's all right; we've a pass out," said Hilton. "We're in the Fifth, you know. I'll come down to the gate with you."

"Yes, sir."

"Don't call me sir, you young ass—call me Hilton."

"Oh, sir, it would seem like a liberty," said the Kid, abashed.

Hilton laughed.

"Well, come on," he said, and they turned into the path that led to the gate on the river. "By the way, Dury, you had your eye on the Banbury Pet. What do you think of him?"

"Good man, sir," said the Kid. "Jolly good man for half a dozen rounds. I don't think he'd stay any longer."

"Oh!" said Price.

"I'd undertake to hold him for six rounds, and then knock him out in number seven," said the Kid.

"You!" ejaculated Hilton.

The Kid grinned.

"Me, sir. I've 'andled 'arder cases."

"Oh, good gad."

"Young ass!" said Price. "The Banbury Pet would make rings all round a kid of your age."

"Think so?" grinned the Kid.

"I know he would."

"Tain't for me to argue with a friend of Master Hilton," said the Kid. "Let it go at that, Price."

Stephen Price bit his lip. The Kid did not address him as "sir," as he did Hilton.

A very thoughtful look came over Cedric Hilton's face. The Kid's remark had evidently put some new idea into him mind.

"You really think you could handle a man like the Pet?" he asked.

"Course I could, sir," said the Kid, confidently. "He's got more weight, and a longer reach; but if I could stall him off for a few rounds, I could walk all over him. And I could do that. Ask the Old 'Un—he'll tell you."

"By gad!" said Hilton. "After all Huggins has told us a lot about this kid, Pricey—he thinks he would be a coming champion, if he hadn't chucked up the boxing."

"Gas!" said Price.

"I don't think so. Look here, if the Pet pulls it off on Wednesday, a lot of men here will be keen to back him, especially against a lad like Dury. And if—"

"If!" said Price.

"Well, look at it—it might mean a jolly good thing for us; see us right through," said Hilton eagerly. "Look here, Kid, your old governor is at Friardale; he's managing the man who's to meet the Pet on Wednesday."

"If you're laying money, sir, you back the Pet," said Dury. "I know the man the Old 'Un is putting up, and he won't last long enough to knock out the Banbury man."

"That's a tip," said Hilton.

Price nodded. He did not like the Kid, but he was more than willing to

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profit by that curious youth's knowledge of the ring.

"You think the Pet will beat Huggins' man on Wednesday?"

"Yes, sir, if it ain't squared."

"You've kept pretty fit since you left the ring, Dury?"

"Fit as a fiddle, sir."

"How do you like the idea of a fight?"

The Kid started.

"Me, sir! I couldn't, not now I belong to Greyfriars."

"It could be fixed," said Hilton. "It would take place in the afternoon, a half-holiday at the school. Huggins would take you in hand. Nobody here would know you were a Greyfriars fellow; you'd show up as the Game Kid, just as if you'd never left the boxing. You wouldn't mind getting a bit knocked about."

"That's nothing, sir."

"Easy enough to spin a yarn to account for the damages, if any," said Price. "A yarn about a scrap with a bargee, or somethin'."

"Quite easy," said Hilton.

"But, sir—" stammered the Kid.

"Well, what?" asked Hilton impatiently.

"The 'Ead, sir—"

"The Head would know nothing."

"I—I know, sir. But—but he thinks I've given all that up—he's took it for granted, sir—he wouldn't like—"

"The young bruiser is developing a conscience," said Price.

"Oh, rot," said Hilton. "Here we are, cut off now, Dury; I'll speak to you again about this. No hurry, anyway; nothing can be arranged till we see what happens next Wednesday. Good-bye."

Hilton opened the gate, and the Kid went out into the dusk of the towing-path. Hilton and Price turned back to the inn, where they had an engagement in the billiards-room.

Dury stood for a few moments in thought, before he started for the school.

Hilton's suggestion had startled and dismayed him. To say "no" to his magnificent patron was hardly to be thought of by the loyal Kid. But the Head—Certainly, Dr. Locke had exacted no promise, he had simply taken it for granted that, when he became a Greyfriars fellow, Richard Dury would make a clean break with his former life. He trusted him to that extent. A Greyfriars fellow boxing for a "purse"—the Kid could imagine the effect such a thing would have upon the Head, if he knew. He was not to know—but that was deception. And deception was much more foreign to the Kid than it was to the sportsmen of the Fifth.

Hilton ought never to have dreamed of asking such a thing of him; at the bottom of his heart, the Kid knew that well enough. But he would not allow himself to think so. His last thought would have been to set up in judgment upon the generous patron who had taken him up so kindly.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

The Kid started and looked round.

Through the deep dusk, five figures loomed up on the towpath. Harry Wharton & Co. had left the ice, and were starting back to school, and they came on the Kid under the shadowy trees suddenly.

"Dury!" said Nugent.

"Oh! You blokes!" said the Kid.

"Us blokes!" said Bob Cherry gravely. "You'd better get a move on, Dury, you'll be late. We've cut it rather fine. Come on, you chaps."

The Famous Five went down the shadowy path at a trot, and the Kid went with them. He did not know that the juniors were aware that he had been with Hilton at the Three Fishers.

"I—I say," he stammered. "I was sorry I couldn't come—you got my message from that covey Smithy, didn't you?"

"We got it all right," said Wharton rather dryly.

"I—I couldn't come, you know."

"Oh, cut that out," said the captain of the Remove, curtly. "It didn't matter a rap whether you came or not; but you ought not to have gone to that show with those Fifth-Form blackguards. We saw you going in."

"Oh!" said the Kid. "You see—I was—"

"You're heading for the sack," said Wharton. "Those two rotters will get it sooner or later, and you're a fool if you get it along with them. I should have thought you had more sense, if not more decency."

The Kid flushed.

"They ain't rotters," he said. "At least, one of 'em ain't. That Price ain't much class, and he don't do Master Hilton any good, I know that."

"Hilton's the bigger blackguard of the two, for choice," said Johnny Bull.

"He ain't," said the Kid fiercely. "and who are you to talk about Master Hilton, you cheeky young idjit. You ain't fit to black his boots, you ain't."

"Oh, my hat!" said Johnny Bull, in astonishment.

The Kid dropped behind the Famous Five. He did not want to quarrel with the chums of the Remove, but he was determined to hear no word against Hilton of the Fifth.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly. "It's raining Greyfriars' men to-day. Here's old Wingate."

Wingate of the Sixth was coming up the shadowy path with long strides. He signed to the juniors to stop.

"We're not late, Wingate," said Harry.

"Just time to cut in for call-over, if you don't keep us listening to a lecture, old bean," said Bob.

"Where have you been?" asked Wingate curtly.

"Skating on the river."

"No harm in that, what?" grinned Bob. "We passed the Three Fishers on the way, but we didn't drop in for a whisky-and-soda."

And the juniors chuckled.

Wingate smiled.

"Anybody with you?" he asked.

"Only that new kid Dury."

"Have you seen any Greyfriars fellows this way?"

The juniors exchanged glances.

"Any seniors, I mean," said Wingate.

"Only you, old bean," said Bob; "and I'm sure you're not going to break bounds, Wingate. I can trust you."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, cut off, you cheeky young sweeps!" said the captain of Greyfriars.

And Wingate of the Sixth went on his way up the river and vanished into the shadows.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Absent!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. looked at one another.

Dick Dury stood staring after the stalwart figure of the captain of Greyfriars, his face anxious and uneasy.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry suddenly. He pointed ahead along the towpath. Back from the river the old red roof of the Three Fishers Inn showed through the trees. There was a gate from the inn garden upon the towpath; and three figures had stopped at that gate. "My hat!" muttered Wharton. "Dury—with Hilton and Price of the Fifth! So that's why he threw us over!"
(See Chapter 4.)



What was Wingate doing there, at a time when all Greyfriars fellows were going into the school for call-over?

"The jolly old beaks are on somebody's track," said Bob, with a chuckle. "Wingate's on the warpath."

"I can guess who it is, too," said Johnny Bull, with a scornful sniff. "Those blackguards we saw this afternoon."

"Hilton and Price," said Nugent, with a nod.

"Oh," said Harry, "I'd forgotten that! When Wingate asked us, I thought he meant had we seen any seniors just recently—"

"So did I," chuckled Bob; "and it's a couple of hours since we saw that precious pair. But I fancy he's after Hilton, all the same."

"Looks like it."

"The lookfulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The esteemed prefects do not know that common or garden juniors have eyes and ears. But the eyefulness and the earfulness are terrific."

The chums of the Remove chuckled.

Most of the Lower School knew, as a matter of fact, that the Head had been very perturbed lately on account of certain rumours and suspicions that had been afloat, and that the Sixth Form prefects had been directed to exercise unusual vigilance.

Such matters were not within the purview of the Lower School, and juniors were not supposed to know or think anything about them. But they did know and did think a great deal that they were not supposed to know or think.

As a matter of fact, almost every Greyfriars fellow was aware by this time that the prefects were on the warpath, as they described it, and certain reckless individuals had taken warning. Angel of the Fourth was carefully keeping within bounds; Skinner of the Remove had hidden his supply of cigarettes in a remote box-room; Clancy of the Shell had burned the pack of cards that he usually kept in his study. There are black sheep in every flock, and

Greyfriars was not without them; and the black sheep were wisely bowing their heads to the storm, as it were, and waiting for that outburst of suspicion and vigilance to blow over.

It rather entertained the juniors to see the great authorities of the Sixth proceeding on their solemn way in ignorance of the fact that their proceedings were observed and discussed in the Lower School studies.

"Well, I wish Wingate luck," said Johnny Bull. "I wouldn't give a man away; but I hope he will catch those cads at the Three Fishers. The sooner they're bunked from Greyfriars, the better all round."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"That's where he's going, of course," he said. "He's on their trail. No business of ours, luckily. Come on. We shall be late."

And the juniors started again at a run along the shadowy path. They had barely time to get into the school before actual dark.

"Come on, Dury!" called out Bob Cherry, noting that the Kid had dropped behind again. "No time to lose now."

"I know."

"Put it on, then."

And the Famous Five put on speed, taking it for granted that Dury was following on. They came up the path by the boat-house, and arrived at the school gates panting and rather breathless.

Gosling had come down to the gates, and several fellows were going in hurriedly.

"Hold on a minute, Gossy, old duck," said Bob Cherry. "Another chap just behind us."

"Wot I says is this 'ere, horders is horders," said Gosling stolidly. "Them gates are going to be closed, Master Cherry."

"Give Dury a minute, old bean."

"If the 'Ead wanted me to give a

young rip a minute, the 'Ead would give horders according," said Gosling.

"Look here, Dury will be up in a few seconds!" exclaimed Wharton. "He's dropped behind us, that's all."

"Wot I says is this 'ere; them gates 'ave to be closed on time," said the Greyfriars porter. "You get out of the way, young gentlemen."

A running figure came up the shadowy road.

"Here he is," said Nugent.

But it was Squiff of the Remove who came in. He nodded and grinned to the Famous Five.

"Just in time," he remarked. "Thanks for keeping the gate open. You can shut it now, Gossy."

"I'm going to," grunted Gosling.

"Dear old bean, hang on for a minute more," urged Bob Cherry. "Dury is close behind. Boys will be boys, you know. Think of the time when you were a boy yourself, in the reign of Henry the Eighth."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

William Gosling glared. It was true that he was an ancient gentleman, but it was not true that he dated back to the reign of Henry the Eighth. That was an exaggeration.

"Will you get out of the way of that there gate, Master Cherry, or will you not get out of the way of that there gate?" demanded Gosling categorically.

"Did you drop that bob, Gosling?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Eh! Where?"

"If you didn't drop it—"

"I dessay I did," said Gosling. "You point it out, Master Bull." Gosling blinked down at the dusky earth.

Wharton looked back into the road. There was no sign of Dury. Evidently he had fallen far behind the Famous Five in the race to get in. Wharton was rather surprised, for Dury was an active fellow, not only with his hands. But the Famous Five had certainly put on a breathless speed for the last few minutes.

"I can't see any shillin'," said Gosling, blinking anxiously. "Where did you see that shilling, Master Bull?"

"Eh! I didn't see any shilling."

"You didn't?" hooted Gosling.

"No, I asked you if you'd dropped one," said Johnny Bull innocently. "Only asking you a civil question, old tulip."

Gosling breathed wrath. He comprehended that the imaginary shilling was a little dodge to keep the gates open a few moments longer.

"If you don't let a man shut this 'ero gate, I'll report yer!" roared Gosling wrathfully.

And the chums of the Remove cleared out of the way at last.

"Nothing doing," said Wharton. "Dury must have dropped a lot behind; we did rather cover the ground, you know. I thought the kid could sprint a little, too. We'll we've done all we could."

The gates clanged behind the chums of the Remove as they went on to the School House.

They were none too soon to join up for call-over in Big Hall. Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, was taking the roll, and when he called the name of Dury there was no answer. The juniors noticed that Mr. Quelch, who stood with the Fifth Form master, turned his eye on the Lower Fourth with a gleam in it. He had noted at once that the boy he disliked was absent.

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"Dury!" repeated Mr. Prout, in his ponderous voice.

Harry Wharton made a step forward.

The proceedings of Richard Dury that afternoon had not pleased the captain of the Remove. Rather the reverse. But he was unwilling to let the vials of Mr. Quelch's wrath be poured out again on Dury's unlucky head, if he could prevent it.

"If you please, sir, Dury is just coming in," said Wharton.

Mr. Quelch looked at him, and made a sign to be silent. Mr. Prout marked Dury as absent, and went on with the roll.

But when calling-over was finished the Remove master beckoned to Wharton as the fellows filed out.

"Dury is absent, Wharton," he said. "Do I understand that you know where he is, and why he has not come in?"

"Yes, sir," said Harry. "He was coming in with us, and we had to run for it, and Dury dropped behind. He may be in any minute."

"If that is the case the matter is not serious, of course," said the Remove master. "Dury was returning to the school with you, Wharton?"

"Yes, sir; with my friends and me."

"Very good!" said Mr. Quelch. "I am glad to hear that his fault, on the present occasion, is a trivial one."

Wharton followed his friends from the Hall. He was quite aware, from Mr. Quelch's expression, that the Remove master had been suspicious, and he was glad that he had spoken up for the Kid. It occurred to him, rather late, that Mr. Quelch might conclude, from his words, that Dury had spent all his time out of gates in company with the Famous Five, though Wharton had not said so, or meant to say so. However, it was not his business to say more, and he joined his chums and went up to the Remove passage to a rather late tea, in the course of which Richard Dury was quite forgotten.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Game Kid's "Left"!

DICK DURY had not, as the chums of the Remove had supposed, fallen behind in the race home. They had believed so, as a matter of course; and Wharton had told the Remove master so in good faith. But as a matter of fact the Kid had turned back on the dusky tow-path, and while the Famous Five were racing for the school Dury was hurrying back towards the Three Fishers.

Dury knew—better than the Famous Five—that Wingate of the Sixth was "after" Hilton. And he did not share the feeling of the other fellows that the sooner Hilton was "bunked" from Greyfriars the better for all parties. There were few things the Kid would not have faced to prevent such a catastrophe to his patron.

To himself the loyal Kid gave no thought as he turned back. That he would be missed at call-over, that he would have to account for his absence to a rigorous Form master already prejudiced against him and suspicious of him, mattered little to the Kid when the fellow he liked and admired was in danger. Leaving Greyfriars himself would have been a lesser disaster to the Kid than disgrace and ruin for Cedric Hilton. All the more because he was looked down upon by the Lower School, the Kid had centred his affection and admiration upon the handsome, elegant Fifth Form man who had treated him with kindness. For Price of the Fifth

he did not care a straw; Price might have been "bunked" without the Kid giving the matter a thought. But to save Hilton from that ignominious fate the Kid was prepared to run any risk.

He ran hard up the towpath till he sighted the dim figure of Wingate ahead of him. The big Sixth-Former was tramping on at a good rate, but he was still at a considerable distance from the Three Fishers.

That the disreputable inn was his destination hardly admitted of a doubt. It was the last building along the river till Highcliffe was reached; and Wingate could not be going to Highcliffe. He suspected that the Fifth Form sportsmen were at the Three Fishers, and he was going there to see for himself. The Kid had noted the suppressed anger in Wingate's face. The task that had been set him of detecting the blackguard who was disgracing his school was an extremely repugnant one to George Wingate. As head-prefect it was his duty, and he did not shrink from doing his duty; but it was repugnant and unpleasant, and his feelings on the subject were bitter.

Certainly the young rascals at the Three Fishers had no mercy to expect from him if he spotted them flagrantly breaking the laws of the school, frequenting a disreputable place which was not only out of school bounds, but was avoided by all the respectable residents in the neighbourhood. If Cedric Hilton was caught he was done for at Greyfriars, the Kid knew that.

And, with a pass out of gates up to eight o'clock, Hilton was certain to be still there. His fate was sealed unless he was warned in time. That was enough for the Game Kid to know. His own risk mattered nothing. In carelessly and good-humouredly befriending the "queer little beggar," Hilton had unconsciously cast his bread upon the waters, and it was returning after many days.

The junior could not pass Wingate on the towpath unseen. He turned from the path, clambered through a hedge, and ran on across fields and threaded his way through a dusky fir plantation, several times stumbling and falling, and picking himself up again and dashing on. There was not a second to waste, he knew that. Wingate was walking, but he was going at a rapid stride, and losing no time.

The Kid came out on to the tow-path again well ahead of the captain of Greyfriars.

He stopped, breathless, at the gate; but it was fastened inside, and did not open to his touch. He made a jump to it, caught the top, and clambered over. He fell, and picked himself up, and raced across the dark grounds towards the lighted windows of the inn.

The billiards-room of the Three Fishers had french windows on the garden, and the Kid knew that Price and Hilton had been going to play billiards. He came panting up to the window. It was curtained; but the curtains were ill-fitting. An opening gave the Kid a full view of the lighted room within.

Hilton of the Fifth was there, taking a shot. A horsey-looking man, with whom Hilton evidently was playing, stood with his hand resting on a cue. Price was smoking a cigarette and talking to a fat, greasy, billiards-marker.

The Kid's heart throbbed.

If Wingate had been in his place! And he might be standing there in a few minutes! Dury tapped on the glass.

The horsey man, the marker, and Stephen Price all glanced towards the

window as they heard the tap. Cedric Hilton, unmoved, made his shot, and potted the red.

Tap! Tap!

Price crossed hurriedly to the french windows, and opened them. He stared in angry amazement at the Kid.

"You! What have you come back for, you young ragamuffin?"

"Tell Master Hilton—quick!" The Kid's breath came in throbs. "Tell him—there's only just time—Wingate—" he panted.

Price's face paled.

"Wingate! Comin' here?"

"Yes; and only a few minutes behind me," panted the Kid.

"Good gad!"

"He knows—at least, he suspects—"

"That's enough!"

Price hurried back to the billiards-table. Hilton was poising his cue for another shot. Price dashed it away.

"What the thump—" exclaimed Hilton angrily.

Price breathed a word in his fellow-culprit's ear. Hilton started, and then shrugged his shoulders.

"There's a quid on the game," he said.

"What does that matter, you fool?" hissed Price. "Do you want to be sacked? Get a move on!"

"Keep cool!" said Hilton, with a touch of contempt. "We're not fags, to be frightened by a prefect's footsteps, I suppose?"

Price gritted his teeth.

"I'm goin', anyhow. Take your time if you choose."

And Price hardly stayed to jam on his overcoat before he plunged into the darkness of the gardens and disappeared.

Hilton's lip curled; but he put down his cue. He would not appear to share his comrade's terror, but he knew there was no time to waste.

"Play or pay!" said the horsey man, with a grin.

Hilton nodded, and the marker gave him a hand on with his coat. The Kid, from the doorway, watched him almost in agony. He admired the nerve of the sportsman of the Fifth—his coolness, when every second was precious. But he was in terror of hearing Wingate's footsteps. The Greyfriars prefect might enter the inn by the public entrance; but it was quite likely that, if he was thinking of catching the culprits by surprise, he might enter as the Kid had done. And he must know that he was not likely to catch them at all unless he caught them by surprise. It was only too probable that he would swing himself over the gate from the towpath. And if he appeared in time to see Hilton emerge by the lighted french windows—

"Urry up, sir!" breathed the Kid.

Hilton nodded to his late opponent, said a careless good-night to the marker, and joined the Kid outside the windows. In his eagerness Dury seized his sleeve and dragged him out of the light, with a strength that rather surprised the tall Fifth-Former.

"By gad, you've got some muscle, kid!" said Hilton, with a light laugh.

"Urry, sir—urrry!" breathed the Kid. "Wingate will be 'ere in a tick! Oh crickey, he's 'ere already!"

There was a sound in the distance.

"He's hiked over the towpath gate, same as I did," said the Kid. "He must feel pretty certain you're here, sir. For mercy's sake let's get out of sight!"

He dragged the Fifth-Former away, and Hilton yielded to his guidance. His own heart was beating fast now, though he would give no sign of uneasiness. In the leafless garden there was little

in the way of cover; but the darkness was growing thicker every moment. Outside the radius of light from the windows the Kid drew Hilton into the cover of a mass of scrubby evergreens.

"Crouch down, sir!" he breathed.

Hilton hesitated a moment; his pride was strong, though it did not keep him out of shameful scrapes like this. The humiliation of hiding from a prefect like a scared fag of the Second Form was almost too much for him; especially in the presence of a junior. But the Kid's energetic grasp dragged him down into cover.

"You can't risk it, sir," whispered the Kid. "It's the sack—them fellow's said so, and they was right. Your friend's gone already, sir; he didn't mind 'ooking it in a 'urry."

Price had long since vanished, and was undoubtedly by that time out of the precincts of the Three Fishers, and heading at his best speed for Greyfriars.

"It was jolly decent of you to come and give me the tip, Dury!" said Hilton. "You'll get into a row over this."

"As if that mattered, sir?"

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REALM

Out on Wednesday. Price 2d.

Hilton laughed softly.

"Most fags would think that it mattered. But how—"

He broke off, as a rough hand was pressed over his mouth.

"Skuse me, sir!" breathed Dury.

"Quiet—oh, quiet!"

Footsteps were coming up the rough ill-kept path by the clump of evergreens. In the shadows a stalwart figure could be discerned by the two crouching there; and they knew that it was Wingate of the Sixth.

Hilton hardly breathed now. His careless coolness, his insolent pride, deserted him for the moment, as it was borne in upon his mind what it meant if Wingate did not pass him unseen. Disgrace at Greyfriars—stern condemnation by his headmaster—a hurried return home from the school he would never be allowed to enter again. And then his father!

There was a feeling like ice in his heart at the thought of facing Colonel Hilton with the story that he had been expelled from school in disgrace. His father—what would his father say?

The footsteps had stopped.

The Kid suppressed a groan.

Instead of going on towards the lighted windows Wingate of the Sixth had stopped, and was facing towards the clump of bushes. He had heard something—he knew that someone was there.

Hilton saw him stop; saw his alert look as he leaned a little in the direction of the clump, watching, listening.

"The game's up!"

Hilton breathed the words wretchedly. The game was up, and the certainty of it, the horror of it and of what must follow, completely unnerved the sportsman of the Fifth.

Wingate was coming swiftly towards the bushes. To emerge from cover was to court discovery and recognition; to remain was to postpone the inevitable for a few more moments.

Hilton crouched where he was, unnerved at the end of his tether; but the Kid moved. He half-rose, a dangerous glint in his eyes—a glint that had been well-known by the Game Kid's adversaries in the boxing days of old.

Wingate was parting the bushes now, peering as he came; and suddenly, from the darkness, a blow was struck.

The Greyfriars captain did not see who struck, he had no time. He was only conscious of a blow that sent him spinning backwards.

Crash!

Wingate was on his back in the ragged grass. One faint cry came from him as he went down; then there was silence.

The Kid's grasp closed on Hilton's arm.

"Come!" he breathed.

"But—but what—"

"'Ook it!" hissed the Kid.

And Hilton, dazed and bewildered, hardly knowing what had happened, found himself dragged away through the shadows. A couple of minutes later they were on the towpath, with the river gleaming icy close at hand.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Safe!

HILTON dropped his hand on the Kid's shoulder.

His face was white.

"What—what did you do?"

"That's orlright, sir," whispered the Kid. "You 'ook it now—you've got a pass out of gates, and you're all right if you ain't found 'ere."

"But—but Wingate—"

"He never saw you, sir—nor me neither!" The Kid gave a curt chuckle. "He won't see anything for some minutes yet, I lay!"

Hilton felt a thrill of horror.

"You—you struck him?"

"I 'it him," said the Kid. "It was the only way, sir; another tick, and he'd have been fair on to you!"

"But—but—but—" Hilton stammered. "Do you mean to say that he was stunned?"

"That, or very near it, sir," said the Kid. "I give him my left. He won't worrit you for a while, he won't, arter that."

The Fifth-Former pushed the Game Kid away from him.

"You young ruffian!" he breathed.

"You young scoundrel!"

"Oh, sir! I—"

"You—you— Oh, good gad!" groaned Hilton. "What have I let myself in for? Fool! Fool!"

"I did it to save you, sir," said the Kid, a tremble in his voice. "What does Wingate matter, or anybody? I'd 'ave give the 'Ead himself my left, if it was to save you, sir."

"You little fool!"

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The Game Kid drew back, deeply wounded. He was not angry or resentful; but he was wounded to the very core of his heart. He had saved Hilton from the results of his own wicked folly, and this was his reward. Remove fellows had never seen the Game Kid blub; they would hardly have believed that the tough little rascal could blub if he tried. But there were tears on his eyelashes now.

Hilton did not give him another word or look.

He turned away, and hurried along the towpath in the direction of Greyfriars. His first impulse was to re-enter the inn-garden and see whether Wingate was badly hurt—to help him if he could. But selfish considerations followed at once. He could not help Wingate without betraying himself; and that he dared not do. But his feeling towards the young ruffian who had struck the Greyfriars captain senseless was only one of horror and repugnance.

He hurried away, almost overcome with shame and remorse and misery. The Kid followed him in silence.

It was not till they had nearly reached the Greyfriars boathouse that Hilton turned and peered back at the hapless Kid.

"I'm not goin' in yet," he muttered. "You'd better cut in. Keep this dark. I suppose you know it's the sack for you if it comes out."

"I know that, sir," said the Kid heavily. His voice was toneless. "I—I wouldn't 'ave done it, sir, if I'd known you'd rather be spotted, sir. I never knowed that!"

Cedric Hilton started.

The ruffianly action made him sick with horror; yet would he rather have been spotted, as the Kid expressed it? In his heart of hearts, he knew that he would not. The Kid had saved him, and he was glad to be saved.

"I—I suppose you know no better!" he muttered. "I—I suppose you meant well, you queer little ruffian! But—Good gad!"

"That's it, sir," said the Kid, glad to hear a tone of relenting in his patron's voice. "I'm a rough brute, sir, that's what I am, and well I know it. But I'd be tore in pieces for you, sir, if you wanted it!"

"Cut in now!" said Hilton, more calmly. "And not a word—not a syllable! Cut in!"

"You—you ain't wild with me now, sir?" said the Kid humbly.

Hilton peered at the rugged little face, with a bright gleam on the wet eyelashes, in amazement. He was oddly touched.

"No, no!" he muttered. "It—it's all right! You don't understand, that's all. Wingate's the best chap in Greyfriars! I wouldn't have had him hurt for anything. But—"

"But he was arter you, sir," said the Kid.

"You don't understand. But never mind. Get into the school, and say nothing about it."

"And—and you ain't wild any more, sir?"

"No, no! That's all right!"

"I'll cut, sir!"

And the Kid vanished. Hilton moved on, and a shadowy figure came out of the dusk by the boathouse. It was Price. Evidently he had been lurking there, waiting for his comrade.

"That you, old man?"

"Yes."

"You got clear?" whispered Price.

"Yes."

"Thank goodness for that! I thought

you were nailed, as you didn't follow. All serene now, then?"

"Oh, quite!" said Hilton, with bitter sarcasm. "That young ruffian knocked Wingate out before he could spot me!"

"Wha-at?"

"We left him lying senseless!" said Hilton bitterly. "There'll be a frightful row about this!"

Price gasped.

"That nipper knocked out Wingate of the Sixth—the heftiest man at Greyfriars! You're dreamin'!"

"I wish I was!"

"Well, my hat!" said Price, with a deep breath. "That kid is hot stuff! Come on, old man! No good hanging about! We shall have to prove a jolly strong alibi for this!"

"There'll be a frightful row!"

"All the more reason why we should prove a good alibi," said Price coolly.

"We've got passes out till eight to go to the lecture at Courtfield. Lots of time to get in at the lecture yet, and nobody need know that we got in late for it. Put it on, old bean!"

"I'm more inclined to chuck up the whole thing and go back to that den for Wingate!" muttered Hilton.

"Don't be an ass! Wingate's started for home by this time. I suppose Dury didn't quite kill him, did he?"

And Price chuckled.

"You think it's a laughing matter?"

"Not if we get bowled out," said Price coolly. "Otherwise, it has its funny side. Wingate may think twice before butting into the Three Fishers again—the Game Kid's left isn't a joke! Come on!"

And Price hurried his moody companion away.

Meanwhile, Dick Dury had arrived at the school gates. It was useless to enter by climbing the wall, for he knew that he must have been missed at calling-over. He clanged on the bell, and Gosling came down to admit him.

"Which you're to report to Mr. Quelch!" he said.

The Kid nodded, and went on to the House.

What he was to say to Mr. Quelch he did not know. His Form master was certain to take the worst possible view of his being late, and certainly the Kid could not tell him what had happened. But a surprise awaited him in the Remove master's study when he reported himself.

"You are late, Dury!" said Mr. Quelch, rather less acidly than usual. "But Wharton has explained the matter."

"I—I'm sorry, sir!" faltered the Kid, not knowing what to say.

"As you have spent the afternoon in company with boys whom I know that I can trust, Dury, and as Wharton informed me that you were coming home with him and his friends, and were left behind, I shall not take a serious view of your absence from calling-over."

"Oh, sir!" said the Kid blankly.

"You will take fifty lines, Dury, for missing call-over!"

"Yes, sir!" said Dury, hardly able to believe in his good luck.

"But for Wharton's explanation, I should certainly not have been satisfied," said the Remove master. "You have given me only too much reason to distrust you, Dury. If you are seeking to make friends of boys that I can trust, and spending your leisure in their company, I welcome it as a sign of amendment. You may go."

And the Kid went, almost bewildered.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's the giddy wanderer!" said Bob Cherry, as Dury passed the open doorway of

Study No. 1 in the Remove passage.

"So you've got back, Dury?"

Dury glanced into the study.

"Yes; I've got back," he said.

"You were a jolly long time after us," said Harry Wharton.

"Lose your way?" asked Nugent.

"No, not exactly!" stammered the Kid. "I—I did go a longer way round, and that's a fact. I've only got fifty lines. I—I say, it was good of you to put in a word for me, Wharton! There would have been a row if you hadn't."

Wharton smiled.

"Well, I thought I'd tell Quelch how the matter stood," he said. "I could see that he was getting his rag out—and all for nothing, as it happened."

"Nothing?" said the Kid. "Oh, yes!"

He wondered what the captain of the Remove would have thought had he known how the matter actually stood.

"You haven't had your tea?" asked Harry.

"I had a snack at—at—"

"Better not mention that show here!" said Johnny Bull dryly.

"Tell it not in Gath, whisper it not in the streets of Askelon!" said Bob Cherry solemnly.

"Come in here and have another snack!" said Wharton. "We've got rather a spread!"

"Thank you kindly!" said the Kid.

And he came in.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise at the School!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

Billy Bunter was glowing with excitement, almost bursting with news as he rolled into Study No. 1.

"I say, you fellows heard—" he gasped.

The Kid, who was finishing his tea with cake, went on munching cake quietly, his eyes on his plate. He knew what the Owl of the Remove was about to tell; he could guess that news of what had happened to Wingate of the Sixth had reached Greyfriars. It was his cue to affect total ignorance of the matter; but, in spite of himself, a flush came into his cheeks.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the latest, old barrel?" yawned Bob Cherry. "Has your postal-order come?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Has your uncle, the duke, dropped in in the gilt-edged Rolls," asked Bob cheerily, "or has your cousin, the marquis, in the diamond-studded carriage and six?"

"You silly ass!" roared Bunter. "Old Wingate—"

"Anything the matter with Wingate?"

"He's been murdered—"

"What!" yelled the Famous Five, with one voice.

"I mean, not exactly murdered—"

"Not exactly!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"You frabjous owl, what do you mean? Not exactly murdered, you frumpious chump! Only a little bit murdered—about ten per cent! What!"

"He isn't quite dead—"

"Probably the quitefulness is not terrific!" assented Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"But very nearly—" said Bunter.

"You silly chump!"

"What idiotic yarn are you spinning now?" exclaimed Wharton angrily.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"



Wingate of the Sixth had stopped, and was facing the clump of bushes. He had heard something—he knew that someone was there. Hilton and the Game Kid saw him stop, saw his alert look as he leaned a little in their direction, watching, listening. "The game's up!" Hilton breathed the words wretchedly. (See Chapter 7.)

"Has anything happened to Wingate?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"He's just come in," gasped Bunter. "Smashed up—practically lifeless—staggering like anything—"

"But what—"

"Attacked—knocked out—smashed up!" gasped Bunter. "It's true; you silly duffers—I saw him. Both eyes black—black as the ace of spades! Smashed right up!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were all on their feet now, with very serious faces. There was hardly a fellow at Greyfriars who would not have felt concerned to hear of an accident to the popular captain of the school.

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry. "I know he was going up to the Three Fishers when we passed him on the towpath. He's got into a row with some of the hooligans there."

"Or with the fellows he went looking for," said Harry.

"No fear—Hilton or Price couldn't handle Wingate."

"No, that's so."

"Look here, Bunter—"

But Billy Bunter was gone, to spread the startling news along the Remove passage.

"Let's get down," said Nugent. "Bunter's exaggerated, of course. But it's quite likely that Wingate got into a scrap at the Three Fishers, and those ruffians there may have handled him badly."

Dick Dury looked up.

"You fellows don't want to mention about any Greyfriars blokes 'aving been at that show," he said. "You don't know as any was there, for that matter."

"We saw you going in with those two

Fifth Form rotters," said Wharton curtly. "I told you so."

"That was hours ago—"

"That's so," said Bob. "Those Fifth-Form sportsmen couldn't have stayed on so late as this, I should think."

"They weren't at call-over," said Johnny Bull quietly.

"Still, they can't have handled Wingate," said Bob. "That's impossible! It would mean the chopper for them. Besides, they couldn't. Old Wingate could have handled the pair of them."

"Of course, we sha'n't mention their names, Dury," said Wharton, with a curious glance at the Kid. "It's no business of ours to sneak about them. Anyhow they can't have been mixed up in this."

"Not likely," said Nugent.

Dury looked relieved.

"Course they never touched Wingate," he said. "Master Hilton wouldn't, and that feller Price hadn't the pluck anyhow."

"That's about right," assented Wharton.

"Only they'd get into a row if it was known that they was seen goin' into the show—"

"They jolly well would," said Wharton, with a curl of the lip, "and serve them right, too! But I suppose you don't think that we are likely to play spy and informer, Dury."

"No, no, 'course not," said the Kid hastily. "Only you might let some thing slip, if you wasn't careful—"

(Continued on page 17.)

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THE REBBLES OF ST. SAM'S!

(Continued from previous page.)

at that minnit; for the juniors had laid down their pens, and were breathlessly awaiting the promissory signal from Jack Jolly.

Suddenly, the leader of the Fourth sprang to his feet. His eyes flashed fire; his nostrils snorted; he looked like a young ajax defying the lightning.

"Up, the rebbles!"

Jack Jolly's voice rang through the Form-room.

Instantly, the fellows were on their feet. The whole forty of them rose as one man; and forty glances of defiance were hurled at Mr. Savvidge. He was lucky to escape injury.

Jack Jolly marched boldly to the door.

"Fall in and follow me!" he cried.

"Down with tyrants and tyranny! Let us strike such a blow for freedom as will be remembered for all time in the annals of the school!"

"Hurrah!"

"Down with Savvidge!"

"Confound his pollytix!"

"Up, the rebbles!"

In single file, the juniors marched to the door. As they went, they poked out their tungs at Mr. Savvidge, and pressed their thumbs to their noses, spreading out their fingers like fans. This was to show the scorn and contempt they felt for the unspeakable tyrant.

So amazed was Mr. Savvidge that his eyes nearly started out of their socketts. It was unheard of—it was entirely without precedent—for a whole Form to rise in rebellion, and to hurl defiance in the teeth of orthority!

"What the merry dickens—?" gasped Mr. Savvidge, utterly taken aback. "Resoom your seats at once, you young rascals! Come back, all of you! Come back, I say!"

"Ratts!"

"Go and eat coke!"

The rebbles marched on, in a triumphant procession. Mr. Savvidge rushed to the door, hoping to cut off their retreat. But he could not stem that surging current of humanity. He was bowled over without

seremony, and the eggstied juniors marched on, trampling on his prostrate form.

"Ow! Yow! Yaroooo!" roared the unhappy master.

The last of the rebbles wiped their boots on him, and passed on into the corridor, leaving Mr. Savvidge for dead, so to speak.

Never, in all the long hysterical career of St. Sam's, had such a seen been seen. It was revolution! It was a direct challenge to orthority; and orthority, in the person of Mr. Savvidge, lay sprawling on its back in the Form-room.

The trampling of feet died away down the corridor. Jack Jolly led the way to the staircase, and in orderly fashion the rebbles marched up to their dormitory. They were laughing, and singing, and shouting. Their blud was up; their eyes were wild. They had fairly kicked over the traces now—besides kicking over their Form-master—and they snapped their fingers at the possible consequences. After all, as Jack Jolly pointed out, the Head couldn't very well expel forty fellows!

"Quick!" cried the leader of the Fourth, when the rebbles were all inside the dormitory. "Barrycade the door!"

Beds and lockers and washstands were rushed to the door, and piled on top of each other. In the hurry, and scurry, there were one or two casualties. Tubby Barrell got sandwided between two beds, and a cupple of his ribs were stove in. But the juniors had no simperthy to waist on Tubby Barrell. He was always getting in the way, and it served him jolly well right!

"Now," said Jack Jolly, when the door had been barrycaded to his satisfaction, "we've dug ourselves in, and here we stop, until the Head agrees to our terms!"

"What are our terms?" asked Merry.

"That Savvidge be given the push from St. Sam's, forthwith and instanter! He's a broot, a boolly, and a tyrant, and we refuse to recognise his orthority any longer!"

"Here, here!"

Suddenly, there was a furious nocking at the door.

Biff! Thud! Bang! Wallop!

"Open this door at once, you reckless, young rascals!"

It was the voice of the Head!

Some of the juniors turned pail, but Jack Jolly was as cool as a cucumber.

"Run away and pick flowers!" he said calmly.

"What! What!"

"I've no wish to be disrespectful to you, sir," said Jack, "but you're a silly old fool if you think you can force an entry into this dorm! You see, we've barrycaded ourselves in."

"For why?" demanded the Head, almost choking with rage.

Jack Jolly eggspalined the situation in a few sentences.

"We have rebelled against the savvidge tyranny of Savvidge, sir," he said. "Give him a publick flogging, and sack him from St. Sam's, and I'll call off the rebellion. But if you refuse, then here we stop, and neither you, nor anybody else can touch us!"

"We'll see about that!" said the Head grimly. "You, Jolly, are the ring-leader in this outrage, and I will flog you within an inch of your life!"

"First catch your hair!" said Jack Jolly cheerfully.

"You utterly stupid boy! Do you imagine for one minnit that you can stay in your dormitory and keep orthority at bay? How can you hope to eggstist without food and drink?" said the Head.

"We've plenty of both!" said Jack Jolly, with a chuckle. "We've got a cupple of plum cakes, and a bag of doe-nutts, and a bag of jam-tarts, and a jug of water. So we shall be able to hold the fort for weeks, if nessessary!"

The Head hurled himself boddily against the door, but it refused to budge. At last, he tired of this form of amusement, for his sholders were a mess of broozes.

"Very well, my pippins!" said the Head at length. "I go now; but I shall return anonymously, with assistance, and we shall drive you out like ratts from your holes!"

"Ratts!" cried the Fourth-Formers, in chorus.

The Head stamped angrily away down the stares, and the juniors listened to his retreating footmarks, and chuckled.

The Grate-Rebellion was now in full swing. What was going to happen next nobody knew; and nobody cared!

At Tubby Barrell's suggestion, a hansom spread was prepared, and it was enjoyed to the last crumb by the Rebbles of St. Sam's!

THE END.

(Another of these rollicking fine stories next week, chums. Don't miss it!)

Do You Know That?



Interesting Tit-Bits

for the Footer Fan!



IN a recent match in which three of their players were injured, every member of the Tottenham Hotspur team, except the goalkeeper, changed his position in the course of the game.

A budding referee is not allowed to sit for his preliminary examination until he has passed his twenty-first birthday.

Jimmy Torrance, the Wallsall centre-half, has surely a unique record. At one time or another during his football career he has actually been chosen to play in every position on the field.

Troup, the outside-left of Everton, can dislocate his shoulder and put it back almost at will.

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It was on the sixteenth of October, 1871, that thirteen London men resolved that a Challenge Cup be established open to all clubs belonging to the Football Association. This was the beginning of what we now know as the English Cup Competition.

There is one man still appearing in football regularly who has on three occasions been on the winning side in a Cup Final. This is Clem Stephenson, the captain and inside-left of Huddersfield Town. Every time he has appeared in a final tie his team has won.

Middlesbrough were the first club to pay a thousand pounds transfer fee. Alf Common was the player concerned, and the amount was paid by Middlesbrough just over twenty years ago.

The largest attendance at any International football match was 127,307 who paid to see Scotland play England at Hampden Park in 1912.

The draw for the English Cup is not made by placing the names of the clubs into a hat. It is done by means of little green balls which are numbered, placed in a bag, shaken up, and then drawn out one by one.

In the dressing-room of a Lancashire First Division club there was recently placed a notice to the effect that it was the wish of the directors that the players should not attend dances after Wednesday in any week.

William Bell, the young forward of Leicester City, has been very appropriately nicknamed Ding Dong by his pals in the team.

Dimmock, the Tottenham Hotspur outside-left, was born not very far from the ground, and as a boy he took every available opportunity of watching the Spurs team. To get his admission money he sold newspapers.

The Game Kid's Temptation!



(Continued
from
page 13.)

"That's all right!"

Harry Wharton & Co. left the study and hurried downstairs. Richard Dury remained where he was. He had no desire to see Wingate, and to behold the result of that drive of his "left" on the Greyfriars captain's face. He knew what Wingate was probably looking like; and he was sorry enough, so far as that went. Only for Cedric Hilton's sake would he have struck down the captain of the school; but for Hilton's sake, he did not regret what he had done.

The Famous Five found themselves in the midst of an excited crowd of fellows hurrying down. Bunter's startling news had made a sensation in the Remove.

"There he is—"

"Great pip! What a face!" murmured Skinner.

Wingate of the Sixth was standing in the lighted hall. The Head and Mr. Quelch and Mr. Prout were there, and a swarm of Greyfriars fellows. Wingate's return to the school in such a state had startled all Greyfriars. The captain of the school was leaning rather heavily on the arm of Gwynne of the Sixth. His face was pale, save where it was blackened by a large bruise between the eyes. Both eyes were black, and Wingate blinked out of them painfully.

He tried to smile as he met Dr. Locke's horrified gaze.

"My dear Wingate," the Head was exclaiming, "what—what—what has happened?"

"I'm sorry to turn up in such a state, sir," said Wingate. "It's not my fault."

"I am quite sure of that, Wingate. But you are injured—you have been attacked—"

"I was knocked down, sir," said Wingate. "It—it's not serious. I—I shall be all right presently."

"Help Wingate to his room, Gwynne," said the Head. "I will telephone for the doctor at once. You can explain later, Wingate—go in and rest until the doctor comes."

"Yes, sir!"

"This way, old chap!" murmured Gwynne; and he piloted the captain of Greyfriars away to his study.

The crowd broke up, buzzing with excitement.

In every senior study there was excited discussion of the episode. In the Rag, the juniors gathered to discuss it. Billy Bunter had been the first to see Wingate come in; but Bunter did not know what had caused the injury—nobody knew. Only the Famous Five had been aware—at least, they felt sure—that Wingate had gone up to the Three Fishers, and they guessed that he must have fallen foul of some of the ruffianly habitues of the place. They kept their own counsel, however. All sorts of rumours were afloat, and all the fellows were eager for news.

"Must have been a hefty fellow who handled Wingate like that," Vernon-Smith remarked. "Some bargec, perhaps."

"I suppose he hasn't been having trouble with Dury!" grinned Skinner. The Bouncer grinned.

"I don't think even our prize-fighter could handle Wingate," he said.

"I think he could," said Skinner, "and he's ruffian enough, if you come to that. If I were the Head, I should want to know where Dury was at the time."

"What rot!" said Squiff. "If Dury hit Wingate, he would be sacked for it—and Wingate would have said it was Dury, at once."

"Of course he would," said Hazel-dene.

"Well, I suppose he would," admitted Skinner. "All the same—"

"All the same, you'd like to make something out of it, against Dury?" suggested Bob Cherry.

"Well, it's just what that ruffian might do," said Skinner sullenly.

"He might," said Snoop, with interest. "Anybody know where Dury was? I know he cut call-over."

"Has he come in yet?" asked Stott.

"If he hasn't—" said Skinner, with growing eagerness.

"Dury came in long ago, and he had tea in my study!" broke in the captain of the Remove.

"Oh!" said Skinner, rather taken aback.

"And Dury was coming home with us, only he dropped behind, and came in later," said Wharton. "So you can cut it out, Skinner."

Skinner grunted discontentedly. He would have been glad to make capital out of the matter, against the junior he detested; but it seemed that there was nothing doing.

Bob Cherry whistled softly.

"It's just as well for Dury that he was with us, you fellows," he said to the Co. in a low voice. "He's a lawless little beggar; and he could have done it—if Wingate had caught him at the Three Fishers—"

"But we know he had left the place, and was more than half-way home when he dropped behind us," said Wharton.

"Yes, that sees him clear."

"The esteemed and ludicrous Kid had nothing to do with it," said Hurreo Singh. "But if he had not been coming home with us, I should have had an esteemed suspicion."

"Anyhow, Wingate must know who handled him, unless it was some total stranger," said Harry.

"Yes, that settles it!"

The juniors went to their studies rather late for prep. In Study No. 1, as Wharton and Nugent sat down to work, there was a sombre shade of thought on the brow of the captain of the Remove.

Nugent looked at him curiously.

"Nothing in it, Harry," he said.

"You know what I was thinking?"

"I can guess," said Frank, with a smile. "Dury was just behind us half-way home, but he was a long time getting in. He said he had gone rather a long way round—and I don't see why he should have. The way home was straight enough. But it's absurd to suppose that he would have handled Wingate on the towpath. Why should he?"

"Of course!" said Harry. "Only—only—"

"Only what?"

"He heard what we said on the tow path when we met Wingate. It was just after that that we lost him. I—I suppose he couldn't have gone back—"

"Why should he?"

"To warn Hilton," said Wharton quietly. "For some reason or other, he seems devoted to that scamp."

Nugent looked thoughtful.

"But even then— Oh, it's impossible!" he exclaimed. "It's too rotten to think of, Harry! Anyhow, Wingate must know who knocked him out, and if it was Dury he would have said so at once."

"Yes, that settles it," said Harry.

But his brow was still sombre as he sat at his prep. It seemed improbable—almost impossible—that it was the Game Kid who had knocked out the captain of Greyfriars. But, somehow, the lingering thought would not quite leave Wharton's mind.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Mystery!

WINGATE was not seen in the quad or in the Sixth Form room the next day. All the fellows were anxious for news of him, and for news of what had happened to him. But there was little news to be had. Even Billy Bunter was unable to obtain information, though he was prepared to seek it at every key-hole in the School House.

Wingate was not in sanny, but he was lying up in his own quarters, and was under the school doctor's care. He had, as Skinner described it, two lovely black eyes, and he was suffering from shock. Whoever it was that had knocked him out had put terrible force into the blow. It was such a blow as might have been struck by a prize-fighter. It leaked out that Wingate had been seen going up the towpath at dusk; and as it was well known that boxing men frequented the Three Fishers, the fellows were able to put two and two together to that extent. Wingate had fallen foul of some pugilist at that disreputable resort, or near it.

Even Skinner, who was malicious enough, did not venture to suggest that Wingate of the Sixth had gone to the Three Fishers in the character of a sportsman and amateur blackguard, as three or four of the seniors sometimes did—or were suspected to do. But it was easy to guess why he had gone there, in view of the recent activity and vigilance of the Greyfriars prefects.

"He was after some sportsman!" Skinner opined. "Perhaps Loder of the Sixth, or Walker. I know jolly well they've been there at times."

"That's why he went," agreed Bol-sover major. "But a Greyfriars man wouldn't have knocked him out—couldn't, in fact. It was one of the boxing men there, of course."

"It's just the place Dury would go to," remarked Skinner.

"Only it happens that he didn't!"

"No, I suppose he didn't!" said Skinner regretfully.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Any news, Bunter?"

"Nunno!" said Bunter. "The Head's been to see Wingate. That's all. That beast Gwynne kicked me out of the Sixth Form passage. I wasn't anywhere near Wingate's door!"

"I hope he kicked you hard," said Squiff.

"Beast! I say, you fellows, isn't it jolly queer that nothing's being done about it?" said Bunter. "They ought

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ANSWERS
Every Saturday — PRICE 2:

to call in the police, if Wingate was knocked out by a ruffian at the Three Fishers."

"Depends on what he was doing there," said Skinner. "If a fellow butts into a low pub looking for trouble, it's his own funeral."

So far as the Greyfriars fellows knew, nothing official was being done in the matter.

Wingate was unlikely to be able to take his place in the Sixth for a week to come; the matter was serious enough.

But fellows who had expected to see the police-inspector call at the school to see him were disappointed.

Neither was anything learned of the name of Wingate's assailant.

It seemed as if the episode, sensational as it was, was to be allowed to die away into oblivion.

"There's something behind it—something the beaks don't intend to let us know!" was Skinner's opinion.

Which was very unsatisfactory indeed to the more inquisitive spirits. Skinner was deeply annoyed; and it was positively painful to Billy Bunter to know that something was going on of which he could obtain no knowledge.

Harry Wharton said nothing of the dark suspicion that lingered in his mind, though that day he looked at Dury many times curiously and keenly.

Dury did not join in the general discussions on the subject; but that was not specially noticeable, as the Kid had little to say at any time to his Form-fellows.

Even Skinner did not suspect the Game Kid could have cleared up the whole mystery had he chosen. He was not likely to choose to do so.

Probably, the most uneasy fellow at Greyfriars was Hilton of the Fifth.

In the Fifth Form studies the startling episode was discussed at great length, Hilton and Price keeping their own counsel. It occurred to Coker of the Fifth that these two had been out of gates at the time of the happening, and he came along to their study after tea to inquire whether they had happened to see anything of it. Horace Coker was very eloquent and indignant on the subject. Personally, he did not think very much of George Wingate, who never by any chance selected Coker to play football for the first eleven. Still, Wingate was captain of the school to which Coker belonged, and derived importance from that circumstance.

Hilton and Price were finishing tea when Coker butted into their study. Hilton, who was in a troubled and uneasy mood, gave him a stare that was far from welcoming.

"You men have heard about Wingate, of course?" asked Coker.

"We're not deaf!" said Hilton.

"Eh? What? Who said you were deaf?" Horace Coker was not quick on the uptake.

"Fellow would have to be stone deaf not to hear about it, I think," said Hilton.

"Oh! Yes. I see. Well, do you know anything about it?"

"What?"

Hilton's face was quite white as Coker shot that startling question at him. He half rose.

"You silly fathead, what do you mean?" he demanded. "What should I know about it?"

Coker stared at him.

"Keep your wool on!" he said. "You and Price were out of gates at the time; you came in an hour or more afterwards. Nobody seems to know just where and when Wingate landed into

trouble. Looks to me as if he had a scrap with some tramp on the road."

"Very likely, I think," assented Price, closing one eye at Hilton. "I fancy Coker's hit on the truth."

"Well, that's how it looks to me," said Coker complacently. "I've thought it out, you know, and I fancy I can see as far into a millstone as the next fellow. It occurs to me that you fellows, being out of gates, might have seen something of it—or might have seen something of the ruffianly tramp who handled Wingate. See?"

"Oh! I see," assented Hilton.

"But we didn't," said Price. "You see, we had a pass-out from Mr. Prout to go to the lecture at Courtfield. We were sittin' at the lecture, imbibin' knowledge, while Wingate was going around hunting for trouble. Never heard a word of it till we got in."

"You didn't see any dangerous-looking ruffian hanging about as you came back from Courtfield?"

"Nunno."

"No hooligan lurking about, or anything?" asked Coker, disappointed.

"Sorry—no," smiled Price.

And Coker went empty away, so to speak.

"What would he say, if he knew?" muttered Hilton, when the door had closed on Coker. "What would the Head say?"

Price shrugged his shoulders.

"I'd rather not inquire," he said. "We're safe enough, and that's all that matters to me."

"Wingate's pretty badly hurt," said Hilton moodily.

"He shouldn't butt in where he's not wanted," answered Price. "He was after us; and what right has he to suspect us? Like his cheek."

"Oh, gad!" said Hilton.

"He's not the fellow to mention our names to the Head, when he was actin' only on suspicion," said Price shrewdly. "We're safe there. It's clear that he doesn't know who hit him; the Kid was right about that. He can't suspect either of us, because he knows we couldn't have put in such a punch to save our giddy lives. He doesn't know Dury was there. He can only suppose that it was some boxing-man who knocked him out."

Hilton nodded.

"And he can't make a fuss about it," went on Price. "He can't identify the man—can't give a name to him. He was in the grounds of the Three Fishers, and a fellow who goes into that show takes his chance. If the police went there askin' questions, everybody would deny knowin' anythin' about it, and they'd be tellin' the truth, as it happens. The only outcome would be lettin' the general public know that the captain of Greyfriars was knocked out in a fight at a low pub. That isn't the kind of publicity that the Head wants."

Hilton grinned faintly.

"No. We're safe enough," he said. "I'm not worryin' about that. But—it was too thick!"

"It won't hurt us if Wingate's knocked off the scene for a time," said Price coolly. "The other prefects aren't so jolly keen and dutiful. This makes it safe for us to see the fight next Wednesday. Wingate won't be paradin' his black eyes in public."

Hilton did not answer.

"And there's another thing," said Price. "I never quite swallowed your idea that Dury could stand up to the Banbury Pet. But the fellow who can knock Wingate out with one punch could make rings round the Pet. We're on to a good thing, Cedric."

"With the sack to follow, very likely," said Hilton gloomily.

"We shall have to be careful, of course."

"I'm fed-up with the whole thing—sick of it!" growled Hilton. "It's a mug's game—and a rotten game. I came jolly near the sack last night, and was saved by becomin' practically a confederate in an act of beastly ruffianism. I'm sick of it, I tell you, and I'm chuckin' up the whole thing from now on!"

Price smiled. He had heard this sort of thing before from his comrade in rascality, who was more than half his dupe.

"You'll think differently by Wednesday," he said.

And on that point Price knew Hilton better than the sportsman of the Fifth knew himself. On the following Wednesday the two Fifth-Formers were witnesses of the boxing-match at the Three Fishers, while Wingate was still nursing his blackened eyes. By that time Greyfriars had ceased to discuss the affair of Wingate, though there were some fellows in the school who were not likely to forget it.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Putting it Plain!

"WHARTON!"

"Hallo!"

"Know where young Dury is?"

"Yes."

"Tell him I want to speak to him, will you?" said Hilton carelessly.

Harry Wharton looked full in the face of the sportsman of the Fifth, as he answered:

"No, I won't!"

Hilton was passing on, but he stopped abruptly. His handsome face reddened, and his eyes glinted at the captain of the Remove.

It was Wednesday evening, and Hilton of the Fifth had come in with a very cheerful expression on his face. Whatever had been his occupations out of gates that afternoon, they seemed to have had a solacing effect on Cedric Hilton. His volatile mind was already losing, or had lost, the impression made by the disaster to Wingate, and his comrade Price heard no more on the subject of "chuckin' the whole thing."

The Fifth Form man had spoken carelessly enough to Wharton, certainly not expecting so curt an answer from the junior. He flushed with anger as he stared at the Removeite.

"You cheeky young cub!" he said. "What do you mean?"

"I mean what I say," answered Harry. "I won't give Dury of the Remove any message from a blackguard in the Fifth Form!"

"A—a—a what?"

"Blackguard!" said Wharton coolly.

"Why, you—you—" Hilton clenched his hands, but he stared at the junior more in amazement than in anger.

"What do you mean?"

"The less Dury has to do with you the better for him," answered Harry. "Anyhow, if you want messages taken to him, send them by somebody else."

"You young ass! I'm goin' to lend the kid a book," said Hilton. "What the thump do you think I want with him?"

"Perhaps to send him out of bounds, and get him another flogging!" said Wharton.

Hilton started.

"He—he told you—"

"He's never spoken about it, but I've

guessed," said Harry coolly. "And now you've told me, if you come to that."

"Of course I've never done anythin' of the sort!"

"Oh, chuck it!" said the junior contemptuously. "That won't wash. Look here, Hilton, I've been thinking of speaking to you about this before."

"You have, you impudent young scoundrel?" said the Fifth Form man between his teeth.

He came a little nearer to Wharton in the corridor, his hands clenched. The captain of the Remove did not recede an inch. He was not afraid of the Fifth-Former, tall as he was, and of course, much too powerful a fellow for any junior to handle.

"If you've got any decency, you'll leave Dury alone," said Harry steadily. "He lived very roughly before he came here, and it's hard enough for him to pick up Greyfriars ways. Any decent fellow would help him on, or at least let him alone. He's got to forget a lot of what he used to be accustomed to—he's got to keep clear of associations that will do him harm here. You're preventing it, making use of him to fetch and carry. He was flogged for breaking bounds, and I know jolly well he never went out of his own accord. Mr. Quelch has been down on him ever since. You're spoiling his chances here, Hilton. Let him alone, then."

Hilton's better nature might very well have been touched by that appeal. But the bare idea of being talked to, dictated to, by a Lower Fourth junior was too much for his temper. And he was startled and dismayed, too, by the discovery that a junior knew or suspected so much.

His face blazed with anger.

"Have you finished, you young cub?" he asked.

"I've told you what I think about it," said Harry. "If you've got a rag of decency, you'll drop that kid, and give him a chance to make good here."

"And that's all?"

"Yes, that's all."

"And now you've done, take that!" said Hilton, and his open hand smacked savagely at Wharton's head.

But the smack did not reach home. Wharton's hand came up like lightning, and knocked Hilton's aside with such force that the Fifth-Former uttered a cry of pain.

Wharton jumped back a couple of paces, and put up his hands, as the Fifth Form man closed in on him furiously.

The next moment they were fighting.

A fight between a Fifth Form man and a Lower Fourth junior was hopelessly unequal; but Hilton was by no means a first-class fighting-man for the Fifth, while Wharton was second only to Bob Cherry in the Remove. So unequal as the combat was, the captain of the Remove gave an excellent account of himself, and though he was driven back, he gave as much punishment as he received.

At the moment, there were only two of them in the corridor; but Hilton, in his angry passion, had forgotten that there were probably a dozen fellows within hearing.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"A fight!"

"Wharton—"

"And Hilton—"

"Bear a hand here!" roared Bob Cherry. "Rescue, Remove."

And Bob Cherry rushed into the fray at once.

It was time for the big Fifth-Former had driven Wharton back to

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the wall, and Harry was defending himself with difficulty. Hilton seemed to be beside himself with rage, and he was attacking the junior fiercely—all the more enraged by several hefty blows that had landed on him.

Bob Cherry came at Hilton with a rush, and drove his fist into the Fifth-Form man's ribs. Hilton gave a gasp and staggered aside.

"Thanks, Bob, old man!" panted Wharton.

"Roll up, Remove!" roared Bob, as Hilton, scarlet with fury, came rushing at him.

"I say, you fellows, Wharton's fighting a Fifth Form man!" yelled Billy Bunter, in great excitement.

"Pile in!" shouted Johnny Bull.

"This way for the circus!" shouted Vernon-Smith.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Only Wharton had been on the spot when Hilton tackled him. But now the passage seemed alive with Removites. Coker of the Fifth had often told Potter and Greene, wrathfully, that he never could lick one of those young scoundrels without the other young scoundrels buzzing round him like a hornet's nest. Hilton was making the same discovery now. He hardly knew where so many Removites came from all of a sudden; but he knew they were there—collaring him on all sides.

Crash!

Hilton of the Fifth went to the floor, with five or six juniors sprawling over him.

"Rag him!" bawled Squiff.

"Bump him!" bawled Bolsover major.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Down with the Fifth! Give him beans."

"You fags will have the prefects here in a minute," said Cecil Reginald Temple, of the Fourth. "Oh! Ah! Ow-wow!"

Temple of the Fourth found himself sitting on the floor all of a sudden.

Remove men did not like being called fags by the lofty Cecil Reginald.

But Temple was right; Gwynne of the Sixth arrived on the scene with his ashplant in his hand, and a wrathful frown on his brow. There were yells from the Removites as Gwynne laid on the ashplant right and left.

Hilton, sprawling breathlessly on his back, was suddenly released. His assailants were busy dodging the hefty swipes of the prefect's cane.

"Hook it!" gasped Bob Cherry.

And the juniors scattered far and wide, some of them yelling as the ashplant caught them going. Hilton of the Fifth captured the last swipe of the cane as he sprawled breathlessly. Perhaps Gwynne did not notice that it was a Fifth-Former who was sprawling there. On the other hand, perhaps he did!

"Oh!" roared Hilton, scrambling up. "Mind what you're at, you fool!"

"Oh, you!" said Gwynne. "Did you catch a swipe?"

"You silly idiot—"

"Draw it mild, dear man," said Gwynne. "You're talking to a prefect, and Fifth-Form men have been licked before this, and may be again. What the thump are you ragging with a mob of fags for? Don't you know better?"

Hilton gritted his teeth and tramped away without answering. He was in a dusty and dishevelled and breathless state—the heroes of the Remove had not handled him gently. Gwynne of the Sixth grinned, and tucked his ashplant under his arm and walked away. Gwynne's opinion of Hilton was not a high one, and he was not at all sorry that the superb youth's lofty pride had been taken down a peg or two.

"What was the row about, Harry?" asked Bob, when the Removites were in their own passage. "We've never rowed with Hilton before. Is he taking up the jolly old manners and customs of Coker?"

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Harry Wharton explained while he dabbed his nose, which was streaming red. Bob Cherry grinned as he listened. "My hat! No wonder Hilton got his rag out!" he said. "The great pandrums in the senior Forms don't like lectures from the Lower Fourth. But I'm glad you gave it to him straight."

"Yes, rather!" agreed Johnny Bull. "Dury's a little beast, but that's no reason why a senior should take him up and make him worse."

"It won't make much difference, though," remarked Nugent. "A queer kid like Dury may be jolly useful to an outsider like Hilton; especially now he's under suspicion from the prefects."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"Still, Dury belongs to our Form, though he isn't much of a credit to it," he said. "We ought to stop that if we can."

"What about ragging the cad?" said Bob, his eyes glistening. "We've ragged Coker of the Fifth more than once—and Coker is only a blundering ass and never means any real harm. Hilton's a bad hat. What about ragging him and 'shipping' his study?"

"Phew!" said Nugent.

"Yes; if he doesn't drop Dury," said the captain of the Remove. "The kid is heading for the sack all through Hilton. He was harmless enough when he was let alone. If it comes to the sack, you can depend on it that Hilton will keep a safe distance, same as he did when Dury bagged the flogging. It's jolly well going to stop. It's up to us to look after the new fellow who doesn't know his way about, even if we don't like him personally. We don't want an expulsion in the Remove."

"No fear!"

"I shouldn't be sorry if the fellow left," remarked Johnny Bull. "But we don't want an expulsion in the Form—the Fourth would never let us hear the end of it. We'll jolly well stop it—if it goes on. If Hilton's got any sense, he'll take the tip and chuck it; if not, we'll rag him and wreck his study as a warning."

"Hear, hear!"

And so it was agreed by the Famous Five—a decision that would have made the dandy of the Fifth stare if he had known of it; and which certainly would not have elicited any gratitude from the Game Kid.

It was a couple of hours later that the Kid, having received a message by a fag in the Second Form, made his way to Hilton's study in the Fifth. He found Cedric Hilton alone there; Price had gone down. Hilton was spotless and elegant as usual; not a sign remained of the scuffle with the Removites save a mark on his cheek where Harry Wharton's knuckles had landed. And he seemed to have recovered his temper; he was cheery and smiling.

"Come in, Kid!" he said. "Shut the door. I had good luck this afternoon."

"I'm glad to 'ear that, sir," said the Kid.

Hilton smiled.

"I took your tip, and backed the Banbury Pet against Huggins' man," he said. "I've cleared a handful of money. You ought to have somethin'."

The Kid shook his head.

"No fear, sir!"

"Anyhow, I can square the twenty you lent me a week or two ago," said Hilton. "That's why I wanted to see you, Dury. I'm jolly glad to get it cleared."

The Kid crammed the currency notes into his pocket, hardly looking at them. Hilton tossed a book across to him.

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"Put that under your arm when you go—you came here for a book I am lendin' you, you know."

The Kid grinned.

"Yessir!"

He left the study with a thoughtful brow. He was glad that his patron had had good luck; glad that his advice had brought it about. He was glad to see Hilton so cheery and genial. But he was troubled by the way the Fifth-Form sportsman was going; and though he would not criticise Hilton, even in his thoughts, he would have given much to see the dandy of the Fifth throw over his blackguardly amusements, if only for safety's sake. But it was not for the Kid to offer so magnificent a fellow advice, as he humbly realised. And it did not occur to his simple mind, that his own character was likely to suffer from association with the youth he idolised.

"You! What the thump do you want here?" Coker of the Fifth looked out of his study and frowned at the Kid. Coker had not forgotten how that surprising junior had knocked him spinning on one occasion; it was a painful and unpleasant memory to Horace Coker.

The Kid showed the volume he carried.

"Master Hilton was kind enough to lend me this 'ere," he said. "I came to fetch it."

"Well, cut off!" snapped Coker.

And the Kid cut off. It seemed so natural to him to carry out "Master Hilton's" instructions, that it hardly occurred to him that he had told Horace Coker an untruth.

A great many untruths and a great deal of deception would be needed if his association with the sportsman of the Fifth was to continue. Certainly, Harry Wharton & Co. were right in thinking that the sooner it ended, the better; though the Kid himself was not likely to share their view. Bob Cherry, who was chatting on the Remove landing with Peter Todd, noticed Dury coming out of the Fifth Form passage; and Bob mentally decided that the "shipping" of Hilton's study was about due.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

In Doubt!

"DURY!"

Mr. Quelch rapped out the name in the Remove Form-room on Saturday morning. The Kid suppressed a sigh as he answered:

"Yes, sir."

"Will you give me your attention?"

"I'm tryin' to, sir," said the Kid meekly.

"You are aware, Dury, that in any case you give me more trouble than any other boy in the Remove," said Mr. Quelch acidly. "You are unable to share in the general work of the Form, and I am obliged in most matters to give you separate instruction—"

"That ain't my fault, sir," said the Kid. "I try 'ard, sir."

"You need not interrupt me, Dury. When the lesson is one in which you are able to share, in spite of the backward state of your knowledge, the least you can do is to give attention."

"Suttingly, sir."

"But you are not giving attention!" rapped out Mr. Quelch. "I have had to speak to you several times, Dury. Do not let it occur again."

"Very well, sir."

And the Kid strove to fix his thoughts

upon geography; an important matter in the Form master's eyes—not so important in the Kid's. There were other matters on Richard Dury's mind of which his Form master did not dream.

The Kid would have had a difficult time at the school, in the best of circumstances. But probably the worst thing that could have happened to him was what had happened—his being "taken up" by a senior.

His devotion to Hilton of the Fifth was unchanged and unabated; but it was coming into collision with everything else. Already it had led to his disregarding the rules of the school, to his receiving severe punishment, to his earning the distrust and dislike of his Form master, and causing disappointment to the kind old Head who had done so much for him.

But there was worse to come.

Hilton was quite decided in his mind that there should be a match at the Three Fishers, between the Game Kid and the Banbury Pet. Bobby Huggins was keen and eager to take the Kid in hand once more, and put him in the ring; and it was certain that the patrons of the Three Fishers would back the Pet heavily. The whole affair, of course, was to be a dead secret—the deepest of dead secrets.

The scheme appealed a good deal to the Kid. He was by no means unwilling to display his prowess in the roped ring once more; his heart beat faster at the thought of standing up in the ring again with the gloves on, under the eager eyes of a watching crowd. Had the thing been permitted, the Kid would have enjoyed it from start to finish.

But it was not permitted; the Head, if he knew, would be shocked and horrified. And the Kid was grateful to the Head, and hated the thought of deceiving him. Neither did he like the burden of secrecy. Discovery meant expulsion from Greyfriars for all parties concerned; and such a secret was a burden to Dury's mind.

But that was not the worst. He had to seek out Bobby Huggins, his old trainer. The Old 'Un was to take charge of him for the affair when it came off; and the arrangements were proceeding, regardless of the Kid's dissatisfaction. The prospect of "making a book" on a "dead cert" had excited both Hilton and Price; they were already revelling in the thought of "ropin' it in," as Price expressed it. The Kid would beat the Banbury Pet, they were certain of that; and they were going to book big bets at long odds, putting "their shirts" on it, as Price said. It was the chance of a lifetime, according to Price, and they were going the whole giddy unicorn. The Kid's timid objections had not even been listened to.

In good faith Dury had given Mr. Quelch his word that he had now nothing to do with the Old 'Un; that he would never have anything more to do with him.

That promise he was to break, and it troubled him deeply. That was what was on the hapless Kid's mind, in the Form-room, while Mr. Quelch was expecting him to devote his concentrated attention to geography.

That afternoon, according to Hilton's instructions, he was to see the Old 'Un, and fix matters up definitely. And though it was impossible to the loyal Kid to say "No" to Hilton, he had not quite decided that he would do as he was told. To refuse Hilton seemed impossible; to break his promise to Mr. Quelch seemed almost as impossible;

Hilton had driven Harry Wharton back to the wall, and the junior was defending himself with difficulty. Bob Cherry rushed up—at the right moment. He drove his fist into the Fifth-Former's ribs, and Hilton gave a gasp and staggered aside. "Thanks, old man!" panted Wharton. (See Chapter 11.)



and the wretched Kid was striving to think of some middle course where there was no middle course to be found.

It was not surprising that he was in trouble in the Form-room that morning.

"Dury!" came Mr. Quelch's voice again.

The Kid, deep in dismal reflections, did not even hear him this time. He was staring glumly at his desk, deaf to his surroundings.

"Dury!" rumbled the Remove master.

Bob Cherry reached out with his foot and gave the preoccupied Kid a good-natured shove. Dury started.

"Dury! How dare you not answer when I address you!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"I didn't hear you, sir," stammered Dury.

"Are you deaf?"

"N-n-no, sir."

"Then why did you not hear me?"

"I—I was thinking, sir—I—"

"This is beyond all patience, Dury. You seem to be determined to give me all the trouble you can. Hold out your hand."

Swish!

"If you are guilty of one more fault during class, Dury, I shall detain you for the whole afternoon!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, sir!" gasped Dury, with such dismay in his face that all the Remove noted it as well as the Form master.

"Bear that in mind, Dury."

"Yes, sir."

Dury made a great effort to give Mr. Quelch his attention after that. To be detained for the afternoon meant that he would be unable to carry out Cedric Hilton's instructions if he decided to do so. He could not afford to risk that.

Mr. Quelch did not fail to note his dismay at the suggestion of detention, or the effect that it had had upon him. Distrusting the boy as he did, it was natural for the Form master to suspect that Dury had some very particular engagement for that half-holiday, and that it was an engagement that he would not care to explain.

He had no further fault to find with

Dick Dury that morning; but his eyes glinted suspiciously at the Kid's rugged face a good many times before the class was dismissed.

Dismissal came at last, much to the Kid's relief. He breathed more freely when he was once out of the Form-room, and away from the gimlet-eyes and snapping voice of the Remove master.

After dinner, when he went out into the quad, Bob Cherry tapped him on the shoulder.

"Give it a miss, old lad!" said Bob, with a grin.

"What do you mean?" grunted the Kid.

"If you've got any stunt on this afternoon, give it a miss," said Bob seriously. "Quelch is suspicious; I could see it in his eye. If you play the goat to-day you'll be nailed. Don't be a young ass, Dury. 'Ware beaks."

And Bob walked away to rejoin his chums, having given the Kid that good-natured warning.

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The Kid frowned after him gloomily. He knew that Bob meant him well, but it was not possible to profit by the warning, unless he made up his mind to break with his friend in the Fifth. And that he could not resolve upon.

A little later he went away towards the gates. A pair of very keen eyes, from Mr. Quelch's study window, followed him. Harry Wharton called to the Kid before he reached the gates.

"Dury! Coming down to see the footer?"

"No."

"We're playing the Shell this afternoon," said Harry. "It will be a game worth watching, Dury. You haven't done badly in games practice, and you'd make a good footballer if you were keen."

Dury shook his head.

He was still undecided whether he would interview the Old 'Un or not, and certainly he would have preferred to go down to Little Side and watch the Remove footballers at Soccer. But he shook his head, and went out at the gates.

At his study window Mr. Quelch stood with a contracted brow. He had seen Bob and Harry Wharton speak to the Kid in turn, and Dury had left them, and gone out of gates by himself. Mr. Quelch thought for a few minutes, his face hardening and his eyes glinting. Then he went for his coat and hat. If Richard Dury was seeking disreputable associates that afternoon, after his promise to avoid them, Mr. Quelch intended to know—and then even the Head must see reason, he considered, and send the boy away from Greyfriars.

Dury, as he tramped across the fields, had forgotten Mr. Quelch. If he was to see the Old 'Un, he had to visit the Cross Keys; and it troubled him, and he continued to hesitate, undecided, unable to decide. But at the same time, as if his subconscious self had already made up its mind, he was drawing nearer and nearer to the place, as he strolled almost aimlessly about the field-paths, with his hands in his pockets and a deep wrinkle in his brow.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Coals of Fire!

"OLD covey! You!"

Mr. Huggins grinned.

The Old 'Un came quite unexpectedly on Mr. Quelch.

He had not seen the Remove master since the occasion when he had visited Greyfriars and Mr. Quelch had ordered him off. But the Old 'Un had not forgotten. He had threatened Mr. Quelch then, and the Form master had treated his threat with cool contempt. But in such matters Mr. Bobby Huggins was a man of his word, especially when he had, to use his own phrase, "pushed one back." Two or three whiskies induced, in Bobby Huggins, the state of mind in which he was prepared to knock off a policeman's helmet, at the risk of retiring from the public view for a month afterwards. In this frame of mind, he came suddenly on the "old covey" who had ordered him out of Greyfriars, having declined his invitation to "step outside."

The stout old boxer grinned, and planted his bulky form directly in Mr. Quelch's path.

"Fancy meeting you!" he said.

The Remove master eyed him contemptuously.

"Stand aside!" he snapped.

"Not 'arf!" said Mr. Huggins, his

single eye glittering. "There was a crowd of blokes around you when I come up to the school. Now we're man to man, my covey, and it's a different story. I was hustled out, I was—shoved and pushed. Don't you turn up your nose at me, old covey! I ain't a bloke to be scared of you like one of your boys, I ain't!"

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

The meeting was a very unfortunate one. The old pugilist simply did not understand that a gentleman in Mr. Quelch's position could not "step outside," as he termed it, and engage in a scuffle. Moreover, though his imprudent support of the drink traffic had ended Bobby Huggins' career as a boxer, he was much too hefty still for Mr. Quelch to deal with personally. Twenty years earlier Mr. Quelch could have handled him.

And the man—the ruffian, as Mr. Quelch considered him—evidently meant trouble. He threw his hat into the grass, spat on his hands, and squared up to the dignified Form master.

Mr. Quelch backed away a pace or two.

Certainly, if the old "pug" man-handled him, he would be pursued by all the rigours of the law, and sent to prison for assault and battery. But that would not cure a black eye or a squashed nose, or replace a missing tooth. Mr. Quelch grasped his umbrella hard. To run for it was impossible—it was far too undignified. But to be knocked out by this old bruiser that was the alternative. In the quiet lane, there was no help in sight. Mr. Quelch backed away farther, and the old boxer followed him up.

"Stand back, you scoundrel!" said the Greyfriars master, between his teeth.

Mr. Huggins came on with a rush.

Crash!

The umbrella crashed on the boxer's bullet head, with such force that it broke into two pieces; and Bobby Huggins staggered under the blow.

The next moment he gave a roar of rage, and rushed on the Form master.

In the fistical line Mr. Quelch was not in the same street with Bobby Huggins. But he defended himself as well as he could, falling back step after step under a rain of angry blows.

His face was set and bitter. All this was due to Richard Dury—the wretched boy who should have been sent away from Greyfriars. But for Dury, this old ruffian would never have called at Greyfriars at all; would never have met Mr. Quelch. Indeed, but for Dury's suspicious conduct, Mr. Quelch would not have been taking a walk abroad that afternoon at all; he would have been enjoying a leisure hour with Euripides in his study.

There was a sudden crash in the hedge by the lane, and an active figure came

leaping out into the road behind Mr. Quelch.

It was the Game Kid.

"Help!" panted Mr. Quelch, who heard him without seeing him. He only knew that someone had leaped into the road from the field.

"Leave 'im to me, sir!"

Dury came up with a rush.

He passed Mr. Quelch, and engaged the Old 'Un at close quarters, taking him off the Form master's hands in a moment.

"The Kid!" gasped Bobby Huggins. "Oh, crimes!"

He went staggering back under the Game Kid's swift attack.

The Kid had been still undecided whether he would meet Mr. Huggins or not that afternoon. Now he had met him under very unexpected circumstances.

"You boozy old rogue," said the Kid savagely. "Can't you keep your 'ands off your betters? Take that!"

"By gum! I'll smash you!" roared Mr. Huggins.

"Come on and do it!" jeered the Kid.

And Bobby Huggins did his best.

Mr. Quelch staggered against a tree, panting for breath, dazed and bewildered. Like a man in a dream, he watched Dury of the Remove standing up coolly to a powerful man more than twice his size.

It seemed inevitable that the school-boy must be rushed down and overwhelmed. But to the Form master's bewildered amazement, the Kid showed no sign of being overwhelmed. He stood up coolly to the old pugilist, a grin on his rugged face.

"Bless my soul!" murmured Mr. Quelch.

For several minutes, there was hard fighting; for Bobby Huggins was in a furious rage, and he did his very best. And he was still a hefty man, and had not lost his old skill with his knuckles.

Several of his fierce blows came home—blows that would have knocked out any other Greyfriars man; but which hardly seemed to trouble the Game Kid at all. It was like a dream, or rather a nightmare, to Mr. Quelch, as he watched breathlessly.

The Old 'Un was on the alert. Bobby Huggins was looking out for his "left"—he knew the Kid's left of old. But Dury's chance came at last, and the Old 'Un staggered back under a blow that almost jolted his head from his shoulders, and went with a crash into the middle of the road.

The Kid laughed breathlessly.

"You asked for it, Old 'Un!" he said.

Bobby Huggins only groaned.

The Kid turned his back on him, and came towards Mr. Quelch.

"It's all right now, sir," he said.

"Take care, my boy," gasped the Remove master. "That ruffian—he may attack you again—"

The Kid chuckled.

"He won't, sir," he said cheerfully.

"I've give him my left. He won't be able to crawl 'ome just yet, sir."

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch faintly.

There was another groan from Bobby Huggins, and he sat up in the road. The Kid did not heed him.

"Safe enough now, sir," he said. "I 'ope he ain't 'urt you, sir! He's been drinking, sir, or he would never 'ave touched you. The Old 'Un ain't reely a bad sort, sir."

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch again.

He passed his hand over his brow. He was not hurt; the Kid had come up

(Continued on page 28.)

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"H O, so it's Caister, hey?" says another fellow, mighty polite like. "Guess yuh ain't shapin' fer lightin' out th' country, Caister!" Waal, Caister come back wi' a mighty slick cuss an' thet feller ses to his crowd "Grab him!" So they grabs Caister. "Yuh got jest twelve hours ter quit, Caister," he ses, "an' yuh haven't quit, so yore shore gonna quit fer good!" Waal, reckon they keeps us covered, us hedn't a chance. They pegs Caister down on th' turf like a blamed hide stretched out ter dry. Say, did Caister squirm? Nossir, he cusses thet feller fer a low-down skunk. "Aw shet yore trap, Caister," drawls th' leader. "Yore shore gonna holler in two minutes!" Waal, they backs us away, leavin' Caister pegged down on th' ground. "Stampedo them blamed steers!" shouts th' leader. Gosh, us could most hev fallen off'n our cayuses when us heard thet, but they'd gotten our guns by thet time. Us couldn't do nuthin'. Waal, they milled them steers, then headed 'em at full lick right over Caister. Gosh, it was awful! When th' cattle had passed they picked up what war left o' Caister an' th' leader ses: "Thar, take thet to yore blamed sheriff an' tell him I've gotta worse packet comin' ter him!" So us cleared wi' Caister, and thar he is!"

He broke off with a shudder. Ferrers Locke's eyes had never left the man's face during the whole of the recital.

"And what did this gang do after that?" he asked quietly.

"Lit out like blazes inter th' dark!" growled the man.

The detective nodded, and, with an almost imperceptible jerk of his head, he beckoned to Cal and Jake to follow him. Leading the way back into the living-room, he closed the door and faced the ranchers.

"Well?" he said calmly.

"Tain't no use lightin' out after them skunks!" growled Cal. "Be most miles away by now!"

"Not the slightest use," agreed Ferrers Locke.

He crossed to a desk, and, unlocking a drawer, produced a bulky envelope.

"Caister gave me this the day I was appointed sheriff," he said. "The seal had to be broken only when he was dead. He asked me to open it in the presence of yourselves and Hank Herman. I will act for Hank."

He slit open the envelope and pulled

out a mass of folded papers. He scanned them, then looked up and said:

"These are the title deeds of Caister's ranch. There is, with them, an accompanying letter. I will read it to you, as it is addressed to you and Hank."

"Dear pards," he read,— "When you read this here letter I will have crossed the great divide. Pards, for some time past I've been reckoning that us is up against a mighty big force in that skunk, the Wolf. I guess I'm tough, and if I goes west, then I gives little for the chance of any other feller what is up against the Wolf, like me and you. Well, you and me has seen some ups and downs in the cattle country, but none like this. Take the advice of your dead pard and quit. You is sure up against death, and you can't beat that. I'm giving you the Caister Ranch to divide amongst the three of you, but I'm making one condition. For your own sakes, pards, sell out and ranch where this blamed Wolf don't run. The whole country knows what's going on around here, and prices aren't none too good. But there's a guy, representing a dingbaster of a syndicate way back in New York who's offered me a fair price. Karl K. Knuller is his name, and he's square."

"I knows that guy!" cut in Jake. "He offered me a price fer my ranch."

"Yep, that's so!" nodded Cal. "He's buyin' heavy in Texas, folks say."

"Pards," went on Ferrers Locke, continuing with the letter, "you are not young fellers now. I've always stood for the law, and maybe I've set off my mouth a mighty lot about this skunk what's driving us to despair. Well, he's got me, else you wouldn't be reading this letter. Sell out, for your own sakes, pards, and take my ranch, as well. If you won't, then sell my ranch to Knuller and let the money be used in bounding down this blamed Wolf. That's all, pards. Us has ridden the ranges a lot together, and never had no bad word between us. Mighty good luck to you."

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THE OPENING CHAPTERS.
FERRERS LOCKE, the famous Baker Street detective, and his clever young assistant, JACK DRAKE, take up quarters in Texas to investigate the mysterious raids made upon the cattle ranches in the neighbourhood of Wolf Point. A card bearing a wolf's head with red fangs, left at the scene of each outrage, is the only clue they have to work on. They have hardly been at Wolf Point five minutes, however, before an attempt is made on Locke's life.

MAT DUKE, the sheriff, saves the situation, but in so doing is himself fatally shot by a person unknown. At the instigation of SILAS CAISTER and two other wealthy ranchers, Locke is asked to fill the role of sheriff at Wolf Point. This he does under the assumed name of HENDERSON. Before very long, however, he arrests KILLER KLAUSTER for attempting to shoot one of the Flying V hands at the Silver Dollar Saloon, a gambling den run by MONTY EARL. Fearing certain information might leak out, Earl visits the gaol with a proposition to nut before the new sheriff. The meeting is interrupted, however, by the sudden appearance of the Wolf, who shoots Earl and disappears. Locke is accused of the murder, and in consequence is attacked by an armed posse of men led by

PANZALES, Earl's secretary and manager. The new sheriff's life is in jeopardy, when a party of masked riders, in the service of the Wolf, scatter the gunmen and take Locke and Panzales prisoners. Taken to a secret cave in the "draw," Panzales is thrust into a wolves' lair and torn to pieces by the ferocious beasts. Ferrers Locke, however, manages to escape, and he rejoins his friends at the Flying V Ranch. Shortly after this four hands of the Caister Ranch ride up to the Flying V bearing a mangled corpse between them which they declare is Caister.

"We were attacked by a dozen masked fellers," explains one of the hands, "and ordered to put up our hands, an' us did!" (Now read on.)

all, and, my last word—take the advice of your old pard, **SILAS CAISTER.**"

Cal and Jake sat silent as the detective came to the end of the letter.

"Pore Silas!" muttered Cal, after a few moments. "Reckon he's said sense!"

"Yep," replied Jake slowly, "he's gotten his, at last, and I'm mighty weary of all this rustlin' and murderin'. Sometimes I reckon it ain't worth while goin' on!"

"Sheriff," he said hoarsely, jumping to his feet, "as man to man, is it worth it? Shall us hang on or shall us take Caister's advice?"

"Hang on," replied Ferrers Locke steadily. "I told Caister I would corral the Wolf within a week. I must work in my own way. But I give you my word that I will not break my promise to Caister. Were I to move other than cautiously at this stage, then it would ruin everything."

There came a knock at the door, and in answer to the detective's "Come in!" Spud entered.

"There's a feller ridden over from th' Caister Ranch!" he drawled. "He's askin' fer Hank. I telled him Hank wasn't to home."

"What is his name?"

"Knüller."

The sheriff smiled, a trifle grimly.

"Show him in, Spud!" he said, and as the foreman retreated Jake Peters said huskily:

"Gosh, now, ain't that jest fate? An' us jest readin' 'bout him in pore Silas' letter!"

The Caister Ranch Foreman!

SPUD reappeared with a stranger at his heels, and, after ushering the latter into the room, withdrew, closing the door behind him.

The newcomer was a tall, lithe, clean-shaven man. His hair was jet black, and plastered flat on his head. A pair of horn-rimmed spectacles surmounted a large and prominent, high-bridged nose. He was dressed in a well-cut lounge suit, and white spats were strapped on his patent-leather shoes.

Locke noted the level eyes behind the spectacles and the thin-lipped mouth, the severity of which was not minimised by a small moustache.

"Good evening, gentlemen!" said the stranger. "I hope I don't intrude! My name is Karl K. Knüller. My card!"

He handed Ferrers Locke his card, and, with a perfunctory glance at the piece of pasteboard, Locke slipped it into his pocket.

"Well, Mr. Knüller," he said, "and what is your business?"

"I came to put a proposition in front of Mr. Herman, but it seems he is not here. I have just been to see Mr. Caister, of the Caister ranch, but I was informed that he was headed this way!"

"Caister is dead!" said the detective sharply.

"Dead?" echoed Knüller, in amazement. "Say, I don't get you?"

"The Wolf has killed him!"

Knüller sank into a chair, and, clasping his hands together between his knees, leaned forward.

"That hombre again!" he said slowly. "What in blazes does the Wolf Point sheriff think he's at? A school marm's picnic?"

"Not exactly!" replied Ferrers Locke. "I am the Wolf Point sheriff!"

Knüller flushed.

"I'm real sorry, sheriff!" he said

quickly. "Guess what you said kind of upset me!"

"Why?"

"Well, because I was expecting to clinch a piece of business with Caister!"

"The sale of his ranch!"

"Yes. Look here, sheriff! These two gentlemen have met me before. I represent a powerful New York syndicate. We aren't standing for this Wolf ten minutes if we become interested in this part of the cattle country. We want steers for the beef supply of a good part of the world, and we want to raise them steers ourselves. I'm open to buy the Flying V, the Caister ranch, the Bar 8, and the Double R. If I can buy them, then we'll spend a million dollars, if necessary, on cleaning up this Wolf!"

"H'm! Well, I think you'll find that neither Mr. Jefferson nor Mr. Peters are going to sell!"

"Is that so?" inquired Knüller, swinging round in his chair towards the ranchers.

"Yep! Reckon us hangs on a bit!" drawled Jake.

"Frankly, I'm disappointed!" said Knüller. "I could offer you a better price than anyone else in the country!"

"Yep, an' git a blamed bullet through yore back 'fore yuh'd bin hyar ten minutes!" drawled Cal.

"I tell you we'd spend a million dollars in clearing out this scoundrel!"

"There's nothing doing!" cut in the investigator coldly. "These gentlemen are not selling!"

"I'm sorry—very sorry!" replied Knüller, rising to his feet. "I can take it that that is quite definite?"

"Quite definite!"

"Well, I'll be hiking along! I've got a buggy from the Caister ranch. How far is it from here to Wolf Point?"

"Blamed good hump, mister!" drawled Cal.

"I'll be very pleased to put you up if you care to stay overnight!" remarked the investigator.

Knüller hesitated.

"I will, thanks!" he replied. "I'll just tell them to unharness the buggy team, if you'll excuse me!"

He left the room, and Ferrers Locke turned to Jake and Cal.

"We'll turn in now," he said. "We can discuss nothing with that fellow about the place. You had both better share the same room to-night, and one of you keep awake with a gun ready to hand!"

"Meanin'?" snapped Jake.

"Meaning that the hunt is up! The Wolf's on the prowl, as you know. There's more unlikely things than that he'll be here before morning!"

"An' if he comes he'll come wi' his blamed pack!"

"Perhaps; but a wolf sometimes runs on a lone trail!" replied the investigator quietly. "Anyway, be prepared for trouble!"

Someone clumped heavily along the passageway. The next moment the door was thrown open, and there stood, glowering on the threshold, the grim figure of Alf, the Caister foreman.

For a moment he stood, his surly unshaven face thrust forward and his little, red-rimmed eyes glaring at Locke. His hands were curled claw-like above the butts of two heavy calibre guns which jutted from their holsters.

"What do you want?" snapped Ferrers Locke.

"Yuh, yuh yaller livered Britisher!"

The investigator stiffened, but replied steadily.

"Cut that kind of talk out! What do you want?"

"Cut nuthin'!" snarled Alf. "Why ain't yuh hittin' th' trail fer th' skunks thet killed Caister?"

"I'll give you a minute to get out of this room!" replied Ferrers Locke icily.

"Git this, Britisher!" was the snarled response. "I'm aimin' ter call yore bluff! Caister made a mistake when he made yuh sheriff, so did these fellows hyar! Yore yaller, an' I'm gonna prove it! I likes no man, an' few likes me, but, by heck, I'm aimin' ter say thet I thought a mighty lot of Caister. And now he's dead, an' 'stead of lightin' out after th' skunks what did it yore chin-waggin' hyar! Aw, shucks, yuh've kidded them Panzales toughs, but yuh cain't kid me! Slick Henderson they calls yuh! I'm talkin' straight! A sheriff what cain't do better'n jest talk when a man's bin killed like what Caister was, ain't no blamed use in th' cattle country! I'm gonna drill yuh!"

"Alf!" snapped Jake warningly.

"Shet up, Peters!" gritted the foreman harshly. "Keep yore long nose outa this! I'm gonna show yuh an' Cal Jefferson jest what a blamed dawg yur've gotten fer sheriff!"

He wheeled and advanced shufflingly towards Ferrers Locke. There was a cold light of fury in his eyes.

"I never liked yuh!" he said jorkily. "Never from th' fust day I see'd yuh! Reckon us don't want Britishers hyar. Yore yaller!"

The detective was watching him steadily. He saw the hands hovering nervously over the guns. The man was in deadly earnest.

"I'm gonna kill yuh, Slick Henderson!"

"Why?"

"I've said it!"

"You are a liar!" said Ferrers Locke calmly. "Shall I tell you why you are going to kill me?"

Alf halted. His evil eyes glared at Locke. A tense stillness settled on the room.

"I'll be real glad ter hear yuh say so!" replied the foreman harshly.

The detective stared at him for a moment in silence. When he spoke his voice was cold.

"You are going to kill me because you have been sent here to kill me!"

The foreman's hands twitched spasmodically.

"Go on!" he grated.

"You say that you are going to kill me because of Caister's death! That is a lie! I repeat you have been sent here, and the man that sent you here is—"

He got no further. The foreman's hands streaked for his guns.

But Ferrers Locke was on the alert. He had been tensed like a spring. Jake and Cal threw themselves full length to the floor. At the same instant there came the vicious bark of guns in action.

Bang, bang, bang!

The acrid smell of burning powder filled the room, and, scarce knowing what to expect, Jake and Cal peered through the swirling smoke.

Jack Takes His Orders!

BY the great horned toad, what's happened?" came the startled voice of Knüller from the doorway.

He peered forward at where the detective stood, grimly erect, then blinked foolishly behind his glasses at the still form of Alf, which was lying sprawled grotesquely on the floor.

"Feller drawed a gun on sheriff," explained Jake, rising to his feet. "That's th' feller."

He jerked a thumb in the direction of Alf. There was a world of simple explanation in the gesture.

Ferrers Locke dropped on his knees



"I repeat," said Ferrers Locke, "that the man who sent you to kill me is——" He got no further, for Alf's hands streaked for his guns. But the detective was quicker on the draw, however. Crack—crack! Jake and Cal throw themselves full length on the floor as there sounded the vicious bark of two guns in action. (See page 24.)

beside the foreman and raised the man's head. Alf's little eyes flickered open, and he painfully focused his gaze upon the sheriff.

"Yuh beat me," he whispered. "Yuh beat me ter th' draw."

"Yes, I reckon so," assented the investigator.

He tore open the man's shirt and wiped away the blood which was oozing from a wound in the right shoulder.

"Yuh ain't killed him, sheriff?" drawled Cal, shuffling forward to get a better view.

"No; I aimed for his shoulder, but I've got him a bit low."

Jake appeared with some hot water and bandages, and within a few minutes Alf's wound was dressed.

"What yuh aimin' to do wi' th' coyote, sheriff?" he inquired.

"We'll keep him here as a prisoner," snapped Ferrers Locke, "a close prisoner. He'll appear before the ranchers' court when we are ready."

"Yep! The murdering devil!" snapped Knuller. "If he is a sample of a Texas ranch foreman, then I'm beginning to be glad that you gentlemen won't sell out. The Wolf we might deal with, but if every blessed foreman is going to draw a gun whenever he thinks he's got a grouch, then I'm telling the world that Texas isn't healthy. Nossir, it sure is not!"

He favoured Alf with a long, cold stare, which the foreman returned steadily.

"Reckon I won't avail myself of your hospitality, gentlemen," went on Knuller. "Seems you've got your hands mighty full. I'll pull out for Wolf Point right now."

"As you wish," nodded Ferrers Locke.

"You'll hear from me again," remarked Knuller, proffering his hand. "I'm not quite giving up hope of getting these ranches. Yes, you'll hear from me again."

He withdrew, and Jake and Cal accompanied him as far as the buggy.

The detective took Jack by the arm, and moved towards the curtained window out of earshot of the wounded foreman.

"Notice anything just now, Jack?" he asked in a low voice.

"Yes; when Knuller said that we'd hear from him again, it seemed to me that, although he was obviously speaking to us, he meant his remarks for Alf."

"Why do you think that?"

"Because he was glaring at Alf while he was talking, and I'll swear I saw his eyelids flicker as though it were a sort of signal."

"You are quite right—he did mean his remarks for Alf. Listen! I'm going into Wolf Point in disguise. If I do not return here in three days, then, with Jake and Cal, collect as big a posse as you can, and ride for the draw where the wolves were kept. I have sketched out the location of it on

this piece of paper. Somehow or other I will get a message to you at that point. I may be waiting for you myself."

"And if we find neither you nor a message, sir?"

"Then hang on for twelve hours. If there is no word from me, or sign of me by that time, I will be dead. In that case open this envelope, and act according to the instructions inside."

"Is that all you can tell me, sir?"

Ferrers Locke was silent for a few moments. Then he laid his hand on Jack's shoulder, and said earnestly:

"Yes, Jack, it is. The end is in sight, and you will soon know the truth. You will understand then why I can say nothing at the moment. I must go. Explain to Jake and Cal, and see to it that this fellow Alf is kept securely a prisoner. Good-bye!"

He held out his hand, and Jack took it. Then, with an effort to keep the tremor out of his voice, Jack said:

"Good-bye, sir, and jolly good luck!"

The Gunman I

FERRERS LOCKE was an expert in the art of disguise, and not even his closest friend would have recognised him in the down-at-heel, vicious-looking gunman that pushed open the swing doors of the Punchers' Rest, in Wolf Point, and slouched to a table.

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His face was dirty, and across it ran a long, disfiguring scar. The lids of his eyes drooped, and from under them he squinted to left and right, as though ever on the alert. A filthy cotton handkerchief was tied loosely round his neck. A torn and tattered cotton shirt, greasy buckskin trousers, and uncleaned, split boots completed his apparel, save for a dingy stetson hat pulled well over his eyes, and two loaded gun holsters swinging low to his knees.

As he pushed back his hat and spread his arms akimbo on the table at which he had seated himself, his dirty, unruly hair flopped forward over his eyes.

He pushed it back growlingly, and called sharply to the untidy, unshaved waiter.

"Hoy! Yuh reckon I'm a-settin' hyar fer me health?"

"What you want?" demanded the waiter scowlingly.

"Flapjacks, hot! An' don't blame well look at me like thet, yuh pore fish of a dish slinger!"

The waiter backed away, and lowering Locke glared round the room. At an adjacent table sat Knuller, and as his eyes rested on him for a moment, Locke saw that the man was watching him with interest.

The detective scowled, and allowed his gaze to pass on. He took in the score or more of men who were seated at the different tables, then fell to grumbling audibly to himself.

The waiter returned with the plate of flapjacks, and as he dumped them in front of Ferrers Locke the latter snarled:

"Say, what's this cussed burg comin' to, hey? Tell me thet! Jest tell me if this is Wolf Point or Fifth Avenoo, Noo York!"

"What you mean? 'Course it's Wolf Point!"

"Waal, what's thet thar blamed, dressed-up monkey doin' hyar? Jest tell me thet! Looks like a drummer hikin' spees fer ol' timers!"

He indicated Knuller with a jerk of his head. Before the waiter could reply he continued savagely:

"Blame me, they telled me way back in Arizona thet Wolf Point hed gotten th' law. Shucks, I laffed! Seems I laffed too mighty quick. Folks say

Wolf Point's gotten a noo sheriff. A cussed Britisher!"

"Yep, thasso!"

"His name, bo?"

"Slick Henderson."

"How come? Slick, hey? Mighty fine handle thet fer a sheriff! Folks giv' him it, or did th' onery cuss tack it on hisself?"

"Folks give it him, mister. Reckon he beat a mighty slick feller to the draw!"

"Yuh don't say? He's cute, then, hey? Say, this hyar feller he beat, his name, chum!"

"Killer Klauster!"

The investigator had been talking and men were watching him curiously. But now he leapt to his feet and crashed his fist down on the table.

"What yuh say, yuh greasy dawg?" he screamed. "What yuh say?"

The waiter backed nervously away. "Killer Klauster," he repeated. "Ask them fellers!"

He indicated the room at large with a wave of his hand.

"Is thet right, skunks," shouted Ferrers Locke, "that this hyar gosh blamed Britisher gotten Killer Klauster?"

"Yep," growled one or two voices, whilst a murmur of anger came from the others.

"An' warn't thar a man wi' grit enuff among th' lot of yuh to give this blamed sheriff a packet fer hisself?"

An angry growl was the only response, and Ferrers Locke slumped heavily into his chair.

"I ain't sayin' I war any partic'lar pal o' Klauster," he snarled, "but, by heck, thet feller cud shore feather a gun! An' yuh let him be gotten by a cussed, high falutin', tenderfoot of a Britisher! Aw, shucks, I reckon I'm ridin' out hyar soon's I can. Yuh makes me laff, yuh pore simps!"

A man stepped forward—a tall, wiry-looking fellow, whom the detective recognised as one of the loungers who had been present at his first encounter with the gunman, Bud.

"Say, yuh shore talk a mighty lot, stranger!" he drawled ominously.

"Yep, reckon yuh all is used ter talk! I'm wise ter yuh. 'Let's lynch sheriff!' yuh ses. 'He's gotten Killer Klauster, th' blamed skunk. Kim on, let's lynch him!' Yep, reckon thet's what yuh all

ses, an', blame my snakes, it jest stops at thet!"

The fellow flushed angrily, and his hand twitched towards his gun. The next moment he found himself staring into the barrel of Ferrers Locke's weapon.

"Jest fergit any sich fancy notions, chum," purred the latter. "I ride in hyar lookin' ter find a crowd of real he-men. Say, I'm laffin'! Fer reckon I finds a nice, flutterin', tea-party set o' school-marms, all lookin' fine an' dandy wi' guns in their belts. Reckon when I strike it lucky I'll shore freight along a outfit o' popguns. Blame my hide, I reckon it's all yore fit for!"

"Mebbe yuh reckon yuh cud talk ter Sheriff Henderson wi' a gun?" gritted the other.

"Shore!" drawled the detective. "Now shut off, I'm gonna eat!"

The man rejoined his companions, and Ferrers Locke fell to with gusto. He kept his gun on the table beside his plate. Then he grinned inwardly, for the form of Knuller looked up in front of him.

"May I join you?" inquired Knuller.

"Naw, I don't want no tailor's dummy grubbin' 'long wi' me!" growled Locke.

The Great Bluff.

TEN minutes later, having wolfishly eaten his fill, Ferrers Locke rose to his feet and slipped his gun back into its holster. Slouching to the door, he paused a moment and faced the men in the room.

"I'm a plumb disappointed man!" he drawled. "I've sed my say an' yuh all knows jest what I thinks of yuh! I come hyar lookin' fer excitement. Seems thar ain't none. Yore a dandy set o' tea-drinkin' school marms, an' if any feller asks who sed so tell him thet 'Two Gun Ted sed so!'"

He put one hand behind him and groped for the door-handle.

"Reckon I'm a stranger round these hyar parts, an' I'm mighty glad," he continued. "I ain't turnin' my back on yuh, fer I've met yore kind afore. Long as I faces yuh yore guns stays set jest right whar they are. If I turns yuh plugs me in th' back an' thinks 'Gee, ain't us het!' Any feller not likin' what I'm sayin' kin up an' say so. I'll be real tickled ter back my remarks wi' a gun!"

He thrust forward his head and peered at the sullen-looking crowd. There was something dominant about his evil-looking figure. The eyes, which squinted here and there, were cold and hard. But Ferrers Locke was playing a part, and playing it to the utmost. He knew that he was risking death with every taunting word he flung at the men.

"Waal, I reckon us is all agreed, hey? I'll say goo'-night! A-a-h!"

His hands whipped for his guns. One man, shielding his actions behind a companion, had drawn a gun. Two reports rang out simultaneously. The glass window in the door behind the detective shattered, but the man who had fired the shot stood gaping in incredulous dismay. Ferrers Locke's bullet had torn his gun from his hand, almost breaking his wrist with the jar.

"I've gotten yuh all covered," purred the detective, his two guns wavering backwards and forwards. "Any other guy figger on a try out? Nope? Waal, yore shore wise, fer I shoots ter kill nex' time!"

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He kicked open the door with his foot, paused a moment on the threshold, grinning, then vanished into the night.

Once outside, Ferrers Locke shoved his guns into their holsters and took a long, deep breath of the clean night air. "Phew!" he muttered. "If that hasn't impressed Knuller, then nothing will!"

He set off, slouching slowly up the street, keeping a wary lookout on either side and behind him. Then suddenly he stiffened, for the next moment he had merged with the shadows of an alley way. Someone was following him. As the man came abreast of him the detective noticed that he was peering to right and left.

"Lost anything, mister?" he drawled softly.

"Oh!" came the voice of Knuller. "There you are! I'm looking for you."

"Gee!" drawled Ferrers Locke. "If it ain't th' blamed tailor's dummy!"

"Cut that out!" snapped Knuller. "It gets you nowhere with me."

"Jest think of that, now!" drawled the detective. "Yore a mighty smart Alex, ain't yuh?"

"I want to talk to you."

"Yuh shore seems as though yuh've taken a real faicy notion ter me, mister! Fust yuh aims on grubbin' wi' me, an' then yuh ups an' ses yuh wanna talk wi' me. Waal, spill it!"

"I can put you right in the way of making some money."

"Aw, is thasso?"

"Yes; will you walk up the street with me?"

"Naw, I'd be 'shamed ter be seen wi' yuh!"

Knuller's flush was hidden by the darkness.

"If you are going to act like a stupid fool I'll leave you!"

"Say," Locke's voice was icy. "nix on that kinda talk, mister! Clear off, yuh dressed-up pup!"

Knuller hesitated. When he spoke again his voice was more conciliatory.

"Say, listen to me! I can put you on to a good thing, and you'll clear up a cool ten thousand dollars."

"What yuh gittin' at?" snarled Ferrers Locke, suspicion in his voice.

"I mean it!"

"Then yuh ain't jest a blamed city dandy! Seems like yore a automobile crook. What's th' game, hey? Bin holdin' up some pore weevil of a bank manager an' can't git th' loot outa th' district?"

"No, we cannot talk here! Will you come with me where we can talk?"

"I'm shore int'rested," admitted Ferrers Locke. "But git this! I drills yuh, mister, fust time I figgers yore sprucin' me!"

"I'm not sprucing yon," replied Knuller. "I'll give you my word on that!"

"That's real good of yuh," drawled the detective sarcastically. "Kin on, then?"

Together they made their way up the street towards the only hotel which Wolf Point boasted. Pushing open the door, Knuller strode towards the rickety staircase, with Ferrers Locke at his heels. He nodded to the hotel proprietor, and, after a curious glance at the detective, the proprietor returned the nod affably enough.

Knuller led the way along a badly lit corridor, and, thrusting open the door of a room, stood aside to let Ferrers Locke enter.

"After yuh, mister!" growled the latter.

Knuller entered the room and closed

the door when Ferrers Locke had slouched across the threshold.

The room was sparsely furnished with a broken-down bed, two rickety chairs, and a dilapidated washstand. Ferrers Locke slumped down on a chair and, leaning back, placed his feet on the dirty bedclothes.

"That's my bed!" snapped Knuller.

"Shore!" agreed Ferrers Locke. "I figgered it war. That's why I've putten my feet on her! Yuh an' me's pards, hey?"

"You're a mighty cool customer!" replied Knuller.

"Yuh've sed it, bo!"

"Scared of no man?"

"Yore plumb hettin' th' bullseye ev'ry time!"

"Ever done any rustling?"

Ferrers Locke swung his legs from the bed and jumped to his feet.

"Now, come clean!" he snarled.

"What yuh gitten at, hey?"

"I asked you a question!"

"An' I'm not aimin' ter answer it!"

Knuller shoved his hands in his pockets and swung up and down the room. Then, drawing the other chair up near to the one in which Ferrers Locke had resented himself, he said:

"Say, listen! I'm asking no questions about who you are, or what you've done. All I want to know is, are you game to earn ten thousand dollars?"

"How?"

"By using your gun!"

"Yuh sed sumthin' 'bout rustlin'!"

"Never mind that just now. I heard what you said to-night about a certain fellow. I also saw you feather a gun. Will you feather your gun on that fellow for ten thousand dollars?"

"Fer ten tho'sand dollahs I'll figger ter feather a gun on any guy! Who's this feller yuh're meanin'?"

"Slick Henderson!"

Ferrers Locke nodded slowly.

"Yore askin' me ter plug th' sheriff, hey?" he drawled. "Say, how yuh stan' s'pose I tell him yore fancy idea, hey?"

"He'd ask you to prove it, and you couldn't!"

Again the detective nodded.

"That's c'rect. Waal, why yuh want him drilled?"

"Never mind that! Will you do it? I watched you to-night, and I reckon you're the man for me!"

Ferrers Locke sat silent a moment, his brows furrowed into a scowl. Then, leaning forward, he tapped Knuller on the knee.

"Git this," he said. "Way back in Arizona I heered of a feller called th' Wolf. A real go getter! Waal, I ain't no law-abidin' cuss, nohow, so I ses that this hyar Wolf guy might be kinda short-handed. I'd be real tickled ter death ter hitch up wi' him, so I hikes along hyar! Git me?"

Knuller laughed softly.

"You haven't answered my question!" he remarked.

"Naw! I reckon I'm aimin' ter find th' Wolf, an' offer my gun an' sarvices! I'm not aimin' ter git mixed up in no other bisness, nohow!"

Again Knuller laughed softly.

"They say, in this part of the cattle country, that the Wolf is hot against the sheriff. If you kill Slick Henderson, then you'll be doing the Wolf and myself a favour!"

"Aw, is thasso? Waal, if th' Wolf tells me that then I mebbe's think about it. I ain't killin' no sheriffs for yuh!"

"Not for ten thousand dollars?"

"Not for twenty thro'sand dollahs! Fust I'd wanta know jest why yuh want him plugged!"

"Well, if you must know, it's because he's standing between me and a business deal!"

"Meanin'?"

"I want to buy some ranches around here. He's persuading the ranchers not to sell!"

Ferrers Locke nodded, then hoisted himself to his feet.

"Nossir, I'm not standin' in, nohow!" he drawled, sauntering towards the door.

"Say, listen!" snapped Knuller, as Ferrers Locke's hand closed on the handle. "Where you hanging out?"

"Right hyar, if I kin get fixed up!"

"Right! Then I'll ask you in the morning if you've changed your mind!"

"Save yore breath," drawled the detective. "ter fight yore own blamed battles!"

With that he slammed the door shut behind him.

The Shadowy Form!

FERRERS LOCKE slouched down the rickety staircase and scowled at the hotel proprietor, who was hovering near the foot of it.

"Gotta room hyar?" he demanded truculently.

"Sure, mister!"

"Waal, I wan' it! I'll be back later!"

He pushed open the front door and ambled away down the street. When out of the glare of the illuminated hotel sign, he crossed the street and doubled on his tracks.

A convenient doorway afforded him cover and a vantage-point from which he could watch the hotel entrance without being seen.

An hour dragged by, then the detective grinned mirthlessly as he saw Knuller leave the hotel and come striding down the street. He shrank back into the shadow of the doorway, but Knuller passed without a glance. Keeping well in the shadows Ferrers Locke followed him.

Knuller disappeared into the yard of Smithers' livery stable. Five minutes later he reappeared, riding a big, raw-boned chestnut.

Letting him get clear of the premises the detective darted into the stable. He had left his horse there when he had ridden in that night from the Flying V.

"My hoss!" he snapped to the stable hand. "Say, that hombre jest ridden out, did he ask any questions?"

"What about?" growled the other.

"'Bout if any hombre like me had gotten a hoss located hyar?"

"Naw. He jest asked fer his hoss, paid up, an' lit out," replied the other, gazing at Ferrers Locke vacantly.

The detective had been backing his own horse out of its stall whilst he was speaking. Jumping into the saddle, he threw the fellow some money, and rode out of the yard.

He clip-clopped up the street, but struck off down an alleyway in order to make a detour and avoid the lighted street opposite the hotel. Reaching the outskirts of the town, he reined in his horse and listened intently.

From somewhere out in the night came the faint pounding of hoofs. Noting the direction, Ferrers Locke set off in pursuit. Within a few minutes he could distinguish the shadowy form of a horseman in front.

(Ferrers Locke is determined to find out what Knuller's game is! Look out for some startling developments in next week's instalment of this magnificent detective serial.)

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"THE GAME KID'S TEMPTATION!"

(Continued from page 22.)

in time. But he was very shaken and breathless.

"Thank you very much, Dury," he said quietly.

"Not at all, sir."

"Please walk with me as far as the school," said Mr. Quelch.

"Sittingly, sir?"

Bobby Huggins, heedless of both of them, sat in the road, nursing his aching head in his hands, rocking himself and groaning. Mr. Quelch gave him a glance, and almost found it in his heart to compassionate the ruffian; the Old 'Un had paid dearly for his outbreak.

"You 'op it, Old 'Un," said the Kid. "You mind your manners arter this, when you meet your betters. And you get out of this 'ere village, too—I'm fed up with your hanging about. You hear me? I'll look round for you to-morrow, and if I find you in Friar-dale, you'd better give an order for a bed in the 'ospital—you'll need it."

And with that, the Kid walked away with Mr. Quelch in the direction of Greyfriars.

They walked to the school in silence. It was not till they were in the old quad, that Mr. Quelch spoke. His expression, as he looked at the Kid, was very different from what Dury had been, accustomed to see.

"My dear boy," said Mr. Quelch

kindly. "I fear that I have done you an injustice."

"Oh, sir?" said Dury.

"You have saved me from ruffianly ill-usage," said Mr. Quelch.

"You won't see the old 'un any more, sir," said the Kid eagerly. "He won't want any more arter what he's had."

Mr. Quelch smiled faintly.

"I think that very probable," he

said. "My opinion of you has changed very much, Dury. I may tell you that I suspected you of leaving the school this afternoon, with the intention of meeting that man, in spite of the Head's orders, and of your promise to me." The Kid coloured. "Instead of that, you came to my help and saved me from his brutality," went on the Remove master. "I am deeply obliged to you, Dury; and I realise that I have, unintentionally, done you injustice. I hope we shall be better friends, my boy. From this day I shall trust you."

And Mr. Quelch shook hands with Dury, and went into the House.

The Kid stood silent, looking after him.

If the Form master had known all! But he did not know all; and the Kid had another chance to make good.

He caught sight of Hilton of the Fifth at his study window—he saw the Fifth-Former make a sign to him. The Kid's face set, and he walked away, as if he had seen nothing. He went down to Little Side, where the Removes were playing the Shell. It was half-time; and Bob Cherry ceased sucking a lemon to call out to the Kid as he came up.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here you are after all."

The Kid nodded and grinned.

"Ere I am," he answered.

And there he remained, watching the football match to a finish.

THE END.

(Now look out for next week's magnificent story of Harry Wharton & Co. entitled, "LOYAL TO THE LAST!" in which the GAME KID plays a prominent part.)

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An Amusing Story of St. Sam's, introducing Jack Jolly & Co.

Jack Jolly plumped into his topic at once.

"This is a protest meeting, you chaps," he said, "against that awful beast, Savidge, who has taken Mr. Lickham's place as master of the Fourth. He has only been at St. Sam's a couple of days, yet in that short time he has made havoc of the Fourth. He is a stormy petrel, as a motorist would say. Almost as soon as he set foot in the place, he gave Merry and Bright and me a fearful licking, just because he happened to hear us say that he was an ugly-faced old tyrant!"

"Shame!"

"Down with Savidge!"

"Down with the old tyrant, and all his works!"

Fierce and angry protests came in muffled tones from beneath the beds.

"And you all know what happened in class this morning," went on Jack Jolly. "Savidge behaved like a beastly barbarian! He doled out lines and lickings to all and sundry, and he was fairly on the warpath. Then he tried to punish me unfairly, and I wouldn't stand for it. I called upon you fellows to back me up, and we went for Savidge, baldheaded, and bowed him over like a skittle!"

"Yes, rather!"

The Fourth-Formers chuckled gaily at the recollection.

"Then the Head came on the scene!"

"Get on with the washin', dear boy!" drawled the Honorable Guy de Vere.

"Pile in!" said Bright.

"And don't be too long-winded, Jolly," said Tubby Barrell. "It's beastly cold under the bed; and there are all sorts of creepy-crawly things on the floor. Personally, I don't see why we shouldn't hold the meeting in our beds!"

"It's a secret meeting, you fat idler!" said Jack Jolly. "Strictly speaking, we ought to hold it down in the crypt. But under our beds is the next best thing."

"On the ball!" said Merry, in muffled tones.

"Pile in!" said Bright.

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Savidge's tyranny, or stand up to it? Personally, I think we ought to put our foot down with a firm hand!"

"Here, here!"

"We have groaned too long beneath the heel of the tyrant," went on Jack Jolly, waxing eloquent, "and now it's time the positions were reversed, and the tyrant was made to tremble!"

"Yes, rather!"

"I don't quite see what we can do, dear boy," drawled the Honorable Guy de Vere. "Savidge is a master, an we are merely his pupils, bai jove! How can we bring him to his knees, and make him tremble?"

Quick as a pistol shot came Jack Jolly's answer.

"By rising in rebellion! By holding the biggest barring-out that ever was, and hunting defiance at authority!"

"Grate Scott!"

"It has been done before, and it can be done again," said Jack Jolly. "Years ago, when my father, General Jolly, was a boy at St. Sam's, he was the leader of a big rebellion. He believed that the fellows in the Fourth ought to have certain privileges, such as six half-holidays a week, breakfast in bed, late passes until midnight, and so fourth. He stuck out for those privileges, and after a stern fight with authority, the rebels won the day. There's no reason why we shouldn't follow in father's footsteps. Those in favor of a foot!"

Jack Jolly struck a match, and was gratified to see

he said prezzantly. "When old Savidge starts his tantrums in the Form-room, I'll jump to my feet and shout: 'Up, the rebels!' Then we'll march out of the Form-room, shouting defiance at the tyrant, and we'll come up here and baw-cade ourselves in."

"Hurrah!"

"What about the grub?" inquired Tubby Barrell, who hadn't a sole that rose above eating and drinking. "We shall need to lay in supplies, you know."

"Of course!" said Jack Jolly. "I hadn't forgotten that. A wise general never forgets anything. Now, we shall want any fancy foods—just the bear necessities of life, such as jam-tarts, doonuts, and tins of toffy."

"And a big plum-cake!" chimed in Tubby Barrell. "In fact, we'd better get in two plum-cakes, in case the barring-out lasts more than a month."



As the juniors marched to the door they poked their thumbs to their noses, spreading out their fingers like fans.

a bare foot sticking out from beneath every bed. The Fourth were with him, heart and sole; there was no queschnun about that. But Jack Jolly meant to make sure.

"If there is any mean-souled, white-livered funk here, who is afraid to face the consequences of the rebellion, and who wants to stand out, let him speak up now, or for ever hold his piece!"

A deafening silence was the only response.

"We're all in this, Jolly!" roared a score of voices.

"Good!"

"When does the barring-out begin?" asked Merry.

"And where are we going to hold it?" asked Bright.

Jack Jolly reflected for a minute.

"To-morrow morning, in this dorm,"

head when he saw them. Mr. Savidge turned upon him fiercely.

"What is the meaning of this, Talboy?" he demanded.

"Oh, crums! I—I could have sworn that there was nobody here, when I came in to see lights out, sir!"

"Pah! It seems to me, Talboy, that your eyes must have deceived you. Are you subject to Lacy Nations?"

"I—I've never

heard of the lady, sir!"

"It isn't a lady, it's a delusion," eggs plained Mr. Savidge. "You will take a hundred lines, Talboy, for bringing me on a fool's errand."

Talboy blinked at the Form-master in amazement.

"You—you can't give me an impot, sir!" he said, agast. "I'm a prefect!"

"Take two hundred lines, for agawing the loss!" snapped Mr. Savidge.

And he strode angrily from the dormitory, Talboy following like a fellow in a dream.

When the door had closed behind them, the innocent young cherubs of the Fourth, set up in their beds, and larked loud and long at having hoodwinked Talboy of the Sixth, and got him into trouble. For Talboy wasn't poplar with the short boys!



Grately alarmed, the prefect rushed away in search of Mr. Savidge.

That gentleman was in his study, enjoying a quiet smoke, after the duties of the day. Though not a cannibal, Mr. Savidge had a churchevarden in his mouth!

"Sir!" said Talboy breathlessly. "The entire Fourth Form has disappeared! I went into the dormitory to see lights out, and all the beds are disoccupied."

"Bless my sole!" ejaculated Mr. Savidge.

And he tossed the churchwarden on to the mantelpiece, and dashed away to investigate.

When Mr. Savidge reached the Fourth Form dormitory, with Talboy hard at his heels, he found all the juniors in their beds, looking as innocent as cherubs, and snoring silently.

Talboy's eyes fairly goggled out of his



"Bothor the beastly bell!" grunted Jack Jolly. "Never mind, you fellows! It's the last time you shall be worried by it!"

There was a stampede for the Form-room, and the fellows scrambled into their places.

Mr. Savidge sat at the master's desk, visnully chewing the ends of his mistook. He was very annoyed to find that nobody was late. His hand was itching to wield the cane.

First lesson began, and Mr. Savidge waited for a chance to pounce upon Jack Jolly. Jack had been the apple of Mr. Lickham's eye; but the new Form-master hated him like poison.

"Jolly!" thundered Mr. Savidge, at length. "You were talking in class! Be silent, sir!" he added, as Jack Jolly attempted to speak.

The angry Form master snatched up a cane.

"Answer my queschnun at once!" he roared. "Silence!"

The unfortunite Jack Jolly was caught both ways. If he spoke up in his defenses, he would be disobeying the command to be silent. If he was silent, he could not answer the Form-master's queschnun!

"For the last time, Jolly," said Mr. Savidge, "what were you saying to Bright? Silence, retched boy! How dare you attempt to bawdy words with me?"

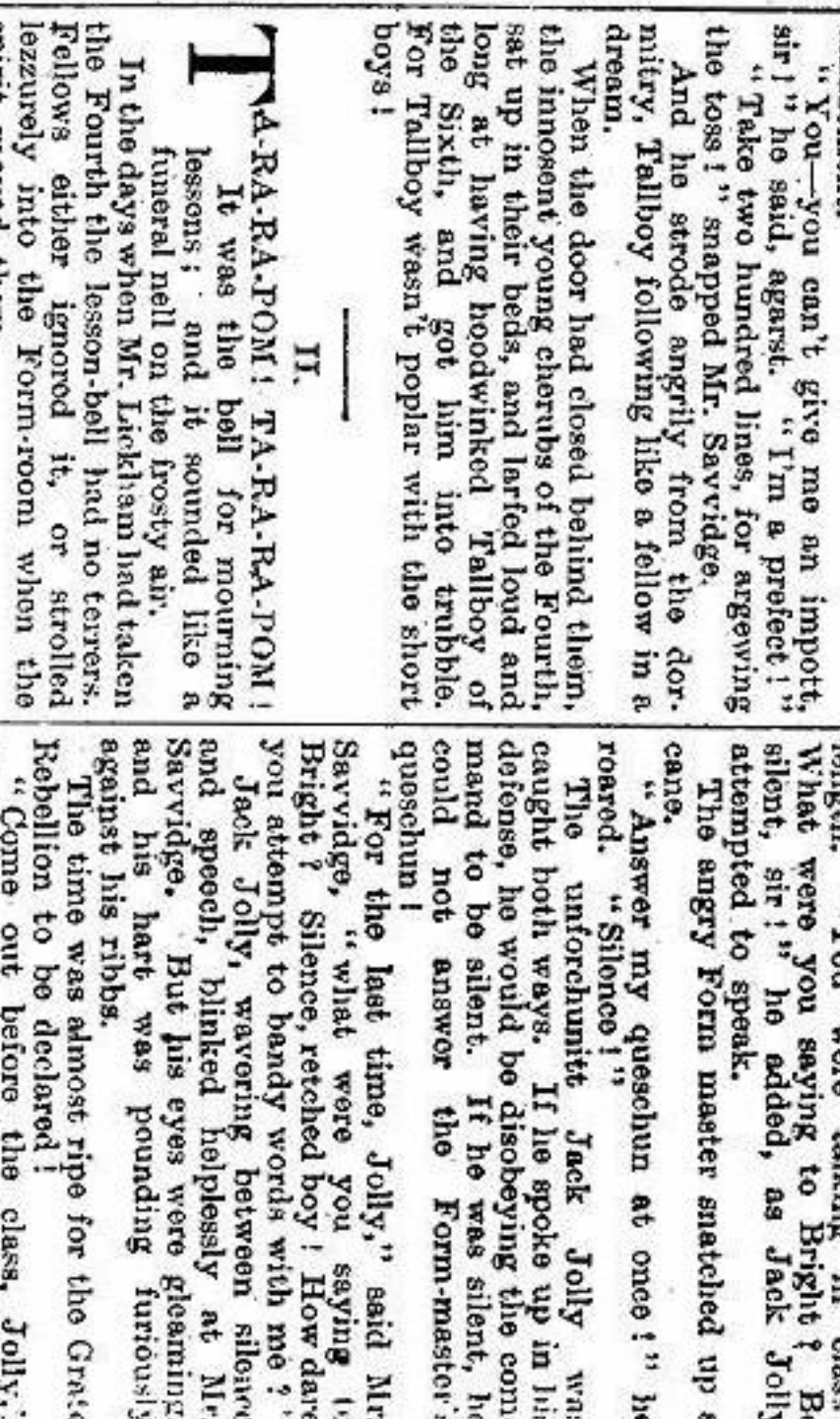
Jack Jolly, wavering between silence and speech, blinked helplessly at Mr. Savidge. But his eyes were gleaming, and his heart was pounding furiously against his ribs.

The time was almost ripe for the Grate Rebellion to be declared!

"Come out before the class, Jolly," thundered Mr. Savidge, "and I'll cut your jacket into ribbons for this dishpennence!"

Jack Jolly did not budge.

"Do you here me?" hissed Mr. Savidge, his face working convulsively. It was the only thing that was working



Flashing his electric torch in the dormitory Talboy was surprized to find that all the beds were full of emptiness.

(Continued overleaf.)