

THIS WEEK:—

"BOLSOVER'S BROTHER!"

POWERFUL LONG COMPLETE STORY OF
GREYFRIARS SCHOOL.

**"KIDNAPPED BY
PIRATES!"**

A "THRILLER,"
By NUGENT MINOR.

"THE CURSE OF LHASA!"

AMAZING MYSTERY YARN, FEATURING
FERRERS LOCKE—DETECTIVE.

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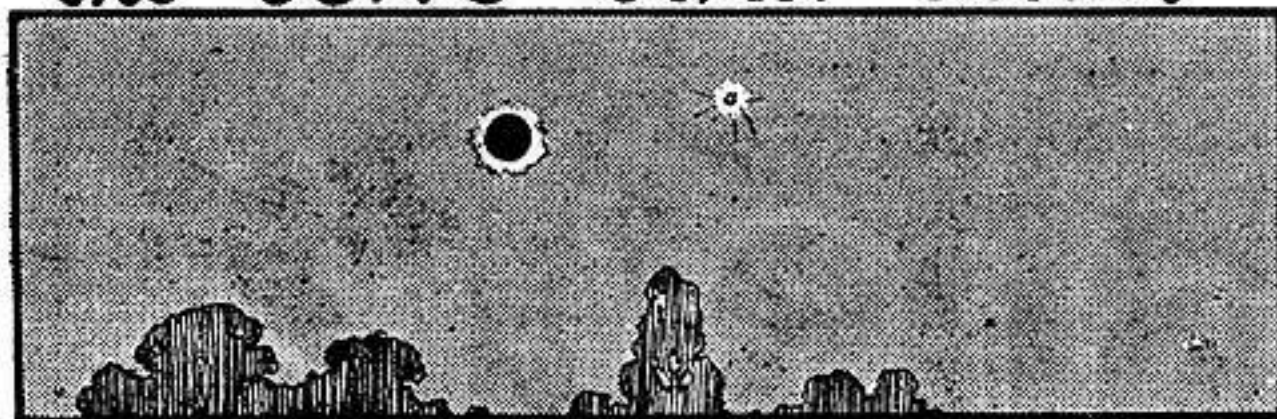
EVERY MONDAY.



BROTHERLY LOVE!

Bolsover major is not exactly a generous chap, but he's always prepared to give his young brother . . . a good hiding! (See the grand school story of the Chums of Greyfriars entitled: "Bolsover's Brother!" inside.)

The SUN'S "STAR TURN!"



An interesting article on the subject of the sun's total eclipse which, we are told, will take place on Wednesday, June 29th.

THERE'S no entertainment tax to pay, nor any fee for admittance. And though we cannot all get a first-class view, there's nothing—bar blindness—to stop any one of us having a jolly good stare at something the like of which has not been seen in Britain for 200 years. And that's Wednesday's grand eclipse of the sun!

Whoever misses that tremendously wonderful and awesome sight will have good cause to regret it. It will not be a case of "Oh, I'll have a squint next time!" There won't be a next time; so far as you are concerned. I know there won't for your Editor! For the next total eclipse of the sun in this country is timed for 1999.

On Wednesday morning, approximately 6.25, for no longer than twenty-five seconds—this "star turn" is due to commence soon after sunrise—the moon will get into the way and blot out the sunlight. For the lucky folk who happen to be within a certain area of country, extending across England from North of Wales to Hartlepool, a track about thirty miles wide, the face of the sun will be hidden completely—and around the black circle that a moment before was the glowing sun will be seen something which for sheer and absolute impressiveness has never, in the whole history of the world, been surpassed.

Look After Your Eyes.

A fire-storm is always raging over the sun's face, but we never see it until a total eclipse. The light that comes from the sun hides the darting flames. But when that light is "put out" temporarily, as it will be by the moon on Wednesday, then the tempests of incredibly hot gases leaping out in all directions from the edge of the sun will be seen in all their awful glory.

Be warned in time, though. If you dare to look at the sun an instant before or after the eclipse with bare eyes you may be blinded for a while and your eyesight injured "for keeps." Whilst the total eclipse is on we shall be safe enough without the tinted or smoked glass to look through. The danger comes just as the eclipse commences, and again as the sun becomes visible after the moon has completed its flit across Old Sol's shiny face.

All of you who are not somewhere within that thirty-mile wide belt of country where the eclipse will be total must use a smoked or tinted screen to look through, from first to last of the show.

The favoured ones within that belt will have most of the fun. As the sunlight is blotted out the air will become chilly; the stars will peep out again; birds will be cheated into thinking that bed-time has come again; and then for three awesome seconds it will be pitch-black night. And the sun got up only two and a half hours before!

What Will the Scientists Discover?

It is during those three seconds that the astronomers who for many months have been making careful preparations for the eclipse—many of them will have come to England from observatories at the outermost ends of the earth, specially for those three seconds—must take their photographs and use their spectroscopes "like mad."

Well, what's all this fuss and bother? Why get hot over those three seconds? Because the astronomers hope to make all sorts of important discoveries about the composition of the sun during the most favourable three seconds they will have in Britain until 1999.

Their spectroscopes are cunning instru-

ments which "muck about" with rays of light in such a way that the men who peer through the 'scopes are able to find out what the light is made of. Those fountains of hot gas which we who are in the area of total eclipse will be able to see on Wednesday spraying out from the sun still hold plenty of secrets, but we are pretty safe in saying that at least one or two will be wrenched away this time.

During previous eclipses all sorts of exciting things have been discovered. Some years ago, for example, the astronomers found a new gas in the sun's fiery furnace. They christened it helium. Nothing like it was known on earth—until it was suddenly discovered here twenty-seven years later! During the Great War that new gas was used for inflating airships, for it doesn't burn and it is lighter than air.

Get Up Early.

The 1919 eclipse proved that light really does bend, as the great and mystifying Einstein had persisted in declaring it did. But of even greater interest to us, perhaps, is the fact that some of the hot gas fountains that we shall see in action out there in the vasty spaces are incredibly long. One has been measured on a previous occasion. It was a third of a million miles long, and shot out from the sun at the speed of three thousand miles a minute!

There's "some" warmth, too, about those things. At its skin the sun registers a temperature of about 6,000 degrees Centigrade. Imagine the warmth a bit farther in!

We get a rather better idea of that brisk heat by imagining what would happen to a tidy-sized iceberg dropped on the sun. If the ice were sixty-four feet thick the sun would melt it completely away in sixty seconds.

So, you see, a speck in the sky that can play pranks like that is well worth spying on for a few seconds on the twenty-ninth, even though it does mean turning out rather earlier perhaps than we are accustomed to leave our comfy beds! And suppose the weather is too rotten for that sightseeing? Well, we shall be unlucky. But the astronomers are taking precautions that they shall be well in the running, whatever happens.

A select little bunch of scientists from the Royal Observatory will be lucky in having at their disposal a specially-fitted-out aeroplane, in which they will be able to soar up above any interfering clouds and there take photographs like billy-o for a few wildly exciting seconds!

TO AND FROM YOUR EDITOR.

THE CREAM OF THE JOKE!

IN ONE hand he clutched a starting-pistol, in the OTHER hand a stop-watch, and in the OTHER hand the inevitable birch-rod.

This extract from the MAGNET appeared recently in a certain weekly journal, under the heading of "Printers' Pie," and was apparently taken seriously, as the reader who drew attention to it received a reward of half-a-crown. The cream of the joke will only be appreciated by MAGNET readers, who will not fail to recognise the original THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,011.

style of our famous Second Form fag author, whose weekly "shockers" have attained immense popularity.

The extract was taken from Dicky Nugent's story, "By Fare Means or Fowl!"—rather a wonder the title didn't earn half-a-crown—and originally read as follows: "In one hand he clutched a starting-pistle, in the other hand a stop-watch, and in the other hand the inevitable birch-rod." Three hands, you will note. A joke, in fact! If the bright chap who was responsible for the republication of that paragraph was looking for something really funny why didn't he reprint the entire story? Still, I will thank him for his editorial correction, for when he came to reprint this "howler" he kindly altered the spelling and showed us that "pistle" should be spelt "pistol." So he knows how to spell, even if he is lacking in sense of humour!

Next Monday's Programme!

"THE BOUNDER'S GOOD TURN."

By Frank Richards.

Don't miss this story of Herbert Vernon-Smith and the chums of Greyfriars, whatever you do, chums. It's first class!

"THE CURSE OF LHASA."

And look out, too, for another exciting instalment of this brilliant serial.

"DR. BIRCHEMALL TURNS PIRATE."

is the title of the next Nugent shocker. You'll enjoy it.

YOUR EDITOR.

MAJOR AND MINOR! It's reckoned to be the duty of an elder brother to look after his minor, but Bolsover major can't be bothered—at least, he's not bothered until his young brother is in danger of being expelled from Greyfriars. Then Bolsover major wakes up to realities with a start!



A Dramatic New Long Complete Story of the Chums of Greyfriars.
By **FRANK RICHARDS.**

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Major and Minor!

"SEEN my brother?"

Bolsover minor, of the Third Form, asked that question.

He was looking in at the open door of Study No. 1, in the Remove passage at Greyfriars.

There was a cheery party in that study.

Harry Wharton & Co. were entertaining visitors: two fellows from Highcliffe School, with whom they were on chummy terms. Courtenay and De Courcy, of the Highcliffe Fourth, were the guests of honour; and the Famous Five of the Remove were all there to entertain them.

Bolsover minor's face, as he looked into the study, was in striking contrast to the cheery faces within.

He was looking worried and troubled, as if most of the cares of the universe had settled all at once on his youthful shoulders. Generally Bolsover minor looked as chubby and contented as any fellow in the Third Form at Greyfriars. Something, evidently, had happened to disturb the even tenor of his way.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" called out Bob Cherry. "Wherefore that worried look, young 'un?"

Bolsover minor grinned faintly.

"I'm looking for my brother," he answered. "He ain't in his study. Seen him?"

"Anybody seen Bolsover major?" asked Bob, glancing round.

"Not since class," said Frank Nugent.

"The seefulness of the esteemed and ludicrous Bolsover has not been terrific," said Hurree Jamsot Ram Singh gravely.

"Might be in Smithy's study," said Harry Wharton. "He's rather chummy with Smithy."

"Thanks!" said the fag, and he turned away.

In Study No. 1 tea and cricket were being discussed together. Courtenay, of Highcliffe, and all the Famous Five were deeply interested in that topic; and De Courcy—otherwise the Caterpillar—was looking as interested as he could, nobly concealing the fact that he was woefully bored. With such a topic going, the chums of the Remove naturally forgot Bolsover minor's existence as soon as he had departed from the doorway. They were, however, to be reminded of it soon.

The fag proceeded along the Remove passage to Study No. 4, the study which belonged to Herbert Vernon-Smith and Skinner. He tapped rather timidly at the door.

His brother, Bolsover major of the Remove, was attached to the fag, in his own way. At home, in the holidays, Percy Bolsover was quite a good "big brother." At Greyfriars it was rather different. Bolsover, like many "majors," did not like being bothered by a young brother in a lower Form. He openly jeered at Nugent of the Remove for concerning himself about his young brother in the Second.

Certainly Bolsover never seemed to concern himself much about his young brother in the Third. He made it quite plain that he did not like the fag coming up to him in the quad or the passages and claiming him, as it were. He never asked his minor to his study, and it never seemed to occur to him to help him with his lessons. The fact that the fag was devotedly attached to him did not affect the bully of the Remove much; he rather looked on that as "soppy."

It was very unusual for Hubert Bolsover to come up to the Remove

quarters to seek his burly brother. It was no wonder that his tap at the Bounder's door was hesitating and timid.

It was not heard in the study, and the fag hesitated long before he tapped again.

But he made up his mind at last, and tapped.

"Come in, fathead!" called out Vernon-Smith's voice.

Bolsover minor opened the door.

Vernon-Smith, Skinner, and Bolsover major were seated round the study table, at tea. There was a box of cigarettes on the table, and the Bounder was smoking.

The three Remove fellows stared at Bolsover minor.

"What the thump does that fag want here?" asked Skinner. "I suppose you're not asking the Third to tea, Smithy?"

"Not that I know of," answered the Bounder.

"If you've told him to come, Bolsover—"

"Don't be a silly ass, Skinner!" growled Bolsover major. "Of course I haven't! What the thump do you want?"

He glared at Bolsover minor.

The fag faltered in the doorway.

"I—I wanted to speak to you, Percy."

"Rubbish!"

"But—"

"Rot! Clear off!"

"Don't you know that fags ain't allowed to butt into Remove studies, you young duffer?" snapped Skinner. "If I had a minor here, Bolsover, I'd teach him his place!"

"I've told him to cut, haven't I?" growled Bolsover major. "What are you waiting for, you young idiot?"

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"I—I want to—to speak to you," faltered Hubert.

"Well, the want's all on your side! Get out of it!"

Probably Bolsover major, overbearing as he was, would not have been quite so rough and rude but for the sneers of Skinner. He was not going to let Skinner think him soft.

The fag's face twitched, and he looked perilously near tears.

"My hat! He's going to blub!" ejaculated Skinner.

"I'll give him something to blub for, if he blubs here!" said Bolsover major. "I've told him to get out! Shut the door after you, you young ass!"

The fag caught his breath.

"But—but I must tell you, Percy," he gasped. "I'm in trouble. I wouldn't come to you otherwise. I—I—I've just seen Mr. Wiggins—"

"Bother Mr. Wiggins!"

"Oh, give the kid a chance!" said Vernon-Smith, with one of those touches of good nature which redeemed his generally hard and sardonic character. "A fag can't bother his Form master. Shut up, Skinner, and let the kid speak. Get it off your chest, young 'un!"

Bolsover major grunted angrily, but he nodded to his minor, as a sign that he could speak.

"I—I'd rather speak to you alone, Percy, if—if you'd come to your study," faltered the fag.

"What utter rot! If you've got anything to say, say it, and clear!"

"I—I want you to lend me some money—"

"Oh, that's it, is it?" growled Bolsover major. "Might have expected that. How much?"

"Two pounds."

"What?" roared Bolsover. "Do you mean two shillings?"

"T-t-two pounds!" gasped the fag.

"Well, of all the neck!" exclaimed Bolsover major, greatly incensed. "You butt in when I'm having tea with a fellow, and you've got the nerve to ask me for a month's allowance in a lump! Blessed if I ever heard anything like it!"

"I—I—I'm in debt!" muttered the wretched fag. "It wasn't really my fault. I'll pay it off, of course. I—I—I—"

Bolsover major jumped up.

"You're in debt, are you, you young rascal? You've run up a debt of two pounds, have you? I'll jolly well give you a lesson about getting into debt! Give me that cricket-stump, Skinner!"

"Certainly!" grinned Skinner. "Here you are!"

"I—I say, Percy—" gasped the fag.

"You needn't say anything! I'm going to give you a jolly good licking!" said the bully of the Remove. "I'll teach you to get into debt! Now, then!"

"I—I say—oh—ow—oh!" roared Bolsover minor, as his brother grasped him by the collar with his left hand and handled the cricket-stump with his right.

Whack, whack, whack!

Possibly Bolsover major of the Remove considered that he was doing his painful duty as an elder brother, and giving a reckless young scamp a much-needed lesson. Certainly he laid the stump on hard.

Whack, whack, whack!

And the wild yells of Bolsover minor of the Third rang from one end of the Remove passage to the other.

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THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Sauce for the Gander!

HARRY WHARTON frowned.

His frown was reflected on the faces of his four chums in Study No. 1.

The two guests, Courtenay and the Caterpillar, looked elaborately unconscious of the terrific din that was echoing along the passage.

The whacking of a stump, the yells of the fag, and the angry voice of Bolsover major, could all be heard quite clearly in Study No. 1, and they made a very unwelcome interruption to the pleasant tea-party there.

Fellows who were entertaining visitors naturally did not like such a terrific disturbance only a few yards from their door.

"That bully Bolsover!" growled Bob Cherry. "Sounds as if he's pitching into his minor."

Harry Wharton rose to his feet, looking grim.

More than once the captain of the Remove had had to intervene, to keep the bully of the Form within limits. It looked as if his intervention was needed again.

It was extremely discomfiting for this scene to occur while the visitors from Highcliffe School were present. Bolsover major cared nothing for such considerations; but the Famous Five cared a good deal.

"You fellows will excuse us for a few minutes?" said Harry.

"Certainly!" said Courtenay, with a smile.

"Don't mench, dear man," said the Caterpillar.

"Come on, your phaps!"

"What-ho!" said Johnny Bull emphatically.

And the Famous Five left the study and hurried up the passage towards the scene of action. A good many Remove fellows were already gathering there. Left in Study No. 1, the Caterpillar gave his chum a droll look.

"We seem to have dropped in at a rather excitin' time, old bean," he murmured. "Shall we go and lend a hand?"

Courtenay shook his head.

"I think not," he said. "It's a bit uncomfortable for those chaps, and they won't want us butting in."

"Would it be bad form to stroll to the door and look on at the fun?" asked De Courcy.

"Better sit tight."

"Quite right, old bean," assented the Caterpillar. "Much better sit tight an' take no heed of what doesn't concern us. But if those chaps are goin' to handle that hefty blighter Bolsover, it would be interestin' to watch. So I'll tell you what we'll do. You sit tight, with the unbendin' dignity of a Roman senator interviewin' jolly old Brennus and the Gauls, and I'll stroll to the door and see the fun, what?"

Courtenay laughed, and the Caterpillar ambled gracefully to the doorway, and stood there, leaning on the doorpost, and looking along the passage. He was quite right in supposing that the view would be an interesting one. It was both interesting and exciting.

Harry Wharton & Co. arrived at Study No. 4, and found Bolsover major laying on the stump with a heavy hand. Skinner, in the study, was laughing; Vernon-Smith looking on with a sneer. Neither of them seemed to think of interfering. But the Famous Five interfered promptly.

They did not waste time in words. They grasped Bolsover major, and

wrenched him away from his minor, and landed him on his back in the Remove passage with a terrific concussion.

The roar that came from Bolsover major awoke every echo in the Remove studies.

Hubert Bolsover staggered against the door of Study No. 4, gasping for breath. Bolsover major sprawled in the passage, roaring.

"Now, you beastly bully—" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Bump him!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Stump him!" said Nugent.

"The stumptfulness is the proper caper," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "What is saucy for the goose is saucy for the gander."

Bolsover major sat up, spluttering.

"You cheeky cads!" he roared.

"You rotten bully!" snapped Wharton.

"Can't you mind your own business?" bawled Bolsover major. "I'm licking that young fool for his own good."

"Then you're overdoing your good works," grinned Bob Cherry. "Fags need a lot of licking; but there's a limit."

"Mind your own business—"

"This is our business," said Harry Wharton. "You're going to have the stump, you hooligan. You need it more than your minor, I'm quite certain."

"I'll smash you—I'll—"

"Shut up! Hand me that stump, Bolsover minor." The stump had dropped in the study when the bully of the Remove was whirled out into the passage in the grasp of five pairs of hands.

"I—I say," stammered the fag, "let my brother alone."

"What?"

"It's all right," gasped Bolsover minor. "I—I don't mind! I—I made him waxy. I don't want you fellows to interfere."

"You young ass!" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Let him alone!"

Bolsover minor kicked the stump across the study, and came out into the passage. From the doorway of Study No. 1 the Caterpillar watched him with a curious gaze. A fag who had been soundly thrashed, and who objected to the bully being thrashed in his turn, was something rather new in Rupert de Courcy's experience. He was quite interested.

Hubert Bolsover bent to give his brother a hand up. Bolsover major pushed him roughly aside, and staggered to his feet.

"Collar him!" rapped out Wharton.

"You bet!"

"Hands off!" roared the bully of the Remove.

"Let him alone, I tell you!" exclaimed Hubert. "I don't want you fellows to chip in!"

"It isn't a matter of what you want, but of what your major is going to get," explained Bob Cherry.

"Look here—"

"Stand aside!"

And as Bolsover minor did not stand aside, Bob lifted him out of the way, and the Famous Five closed in on the bully of the Remove.

Bolsover major, red with rage, put up his hands, and resisted desperately. But he went down with a crash in the grasp of the Removites, and he was pinned to the floor this time, face down. Harry Wharton went into the study for the stump, and came out grasping it in his hand.

"Six!" said Bob Cherry.



"Collar him!" rapped out Harry Wharton, as Bolsover major staggered to his feet. "You bet!" "It's all right!" gasped Bolsover minor. "I—I don't mind! I made him waxy. I don't want you fellows to chip in." "It isn't a matter of what you want, but what your major is going to get," explained Bob Cherry. "Stand aside!" (See Chapter 2).

"Let me go, you rotters!" roared Bolsover major, struggling wildly.

"After you've got what's coming, not before," said the captain of the Remove. "You've been stumped before for bullying, Bolsover, and you'll be stumped again till you chuck it!"

"Lay it on, old bean!" grinned Bob Cherry.

Bolsover major, held in four strong pairs of hands, resisted in vain. The stump came down with a terrific swipe, and he yelled.

Rupert de Courcy glanced back into Study No. 1.

"Come and take a squint, Courtenay," he said. "This is worth watchin'. You really shouldn't miss it."

Courtenay shook his head, with a smile, and the Caterpillar turned his attention again to the scene in the passage. Half the Remove were on the spot now, looking on with interest. Bolsover major squirmed and roared and yelled in the grasp of the Co.

"Leggo! Yaroooh! Back up, Smithy! Lend a hand, Skinner! You rotters, stand by a fellow!"

Skinner seemed deaf. But the Boulder, from his study doorway, looked on and laughed.

"You're gettin' exactly what you want," he answered coolly. "You're a bully, Bolsover, and you're gettin' what you asked for. I hope it will do you good."

"You rotter! Yaroooh!" roared Bolsover major, as the stump came swiping down again.

"Stop!" Bolsover minor shoved in between the captain of the Remove and

the sprawling bully. "Stop! It was all my fault—it was, really!"

"Rot! Get aside!"

"But it was my fault!" panted the fag. "I'll tell you—"

"Rats! You're in the way. Shift!"

"I tell you it was my fault! I—I've got into debt, and Percy was waxy with me!" stammered Bolsover minor.

"I—I owe two pounds, and I asked Percy for the money. I've got myself into trouble, and it was my fault. Percy's warned me a lot of times about getting into debt. I—I don't mind his licking me. Let him alone!"

"You needn't tell these cads about it, you young fool!" roared Bolsover major. "'Tain't their business!"

"Quite so," said Harry Wharton. "No business of ours—and I dare say a licking would do you good, young Bolsover, for getting into debt. But there's a limit; and Bolsover's gone over the limit. Bullying isn't allowed in the Remove. Get aside!"

"I won't!" shouted Bolsover minor. "You're not going to touch my brother!"

"Your brother touched you pretty hard," grinned Bob Cherry.

"That's not your business!"

"Oh, my hat! Somebody pick that microbe up and chuck it away!" said Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd of the Remove took Bolsover minor by the collar and jerked him aside, struggling and kicking.

Then the stump came into play again. Four more hefty strokes descended upon Bolsover major, and at every

swipe he roared and howled. Then Wharton tossed the stump back into Smithy's study.

"That will do," he said. "Turn that fag out of the passage, Toddy!"

"Right-ho!"

Peter Todd jerked the fag towards the stairs and started him down. Bolsover minor went unwillingly; but Peter was not to be argued with. The fag departed.

Bolsover major struggled to his feet. His face was crimson with rage, and he was wriggling with anguish. Six from a cricket-stump in a heavy hand came near to a Head's flogging, for severity.

The bully of the Remove glared at the Famous Five. Obviously, he was tempted to rush on them, hitting out right and left. But he had had enough, and he did not want any more. With a black scowl, he tramped away to his own study, and tramped in and slammed the door.

"Gentlemen, chaps, and fellows, the circus is over," said Bob Cherry; and the Famous Five went back to Study No. 1.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. Up Against It!

RUPERT DE COURCY strolled out of the House with his hands in his pockets and lounged away under the elms. In Study No. 1, "cricket jaw" was going strong, and the Caterpillar had remarked that he would take a turn in the quad and

Speak to some fellows he knew. There were times when the Caterpillar played games with great energy, and there were other times—more frequent—when the mere mention of cricket made him yawn portentously.

As a visitor at Greyfriars, he could not very well yawn in Study No. 1, so he left his chum to the all-absorbing topic with his hosts, and took a little walk after tea. He strolled under the leafy elms, with a cheery, careless face, thinking of nothing in particular, till his careless glance fell upon a fag seated on one of the old oak benches in a rather secluded spot. He recognised Bolsover minor, and looked at him with some interest. The fag's look showed that he was still feeling the effects of the licking from his major; and the shadow on his troubled little face hinted that other matters weighed still more upon his mind.

The Caterpillar remembered what he had heard in the Remove passage, and guessed that the Third-Former was pondering over that debt of two pounds which had caused the outbreak of Bolsover major's wrath. The Caterpillar smiled whimsically. The dandy of the Highcliffe Fourth had never been short of money, and found it a little difficult to visualise the position of a fellow who was in pressing want of those useful articles, currency notes. Quite readily the Caterpillar would have "tipped" Bolsover minor the two pound notes he needed, only such things were not done. He leaned on the trunk of an old elm, and regarded Bolsover minor from a little distance with lazy curiosity.

Two fags of the Third Form came through the elms and bore down on Bolsover minor. They were Tubb and Paget.

"Here he is!" exclaimed Tubb. "We've been looking for you, young Bolsover!"

"Why didn't you come back to the Form-room?" demanded Paget.

Bolsover minor looked up and flushed.

"You've been licked!" exclaimed Tubb of the Third.

"I—I—I—"

"Didn't your major shell out?" asked Paget.

Bolsover minor shook his head.

"Well, I knew he wouldn't," said Tubb. "Fat lot of good asking that beastly bully anything!"

"You needn't call my major names!" snapped Bolsover minor. "He's helped me lots of times, and jawed me a lot of times, too, for being careless with money. He was waxy when I told him I was in debt."

"Always waxy about something, isn't he?" jeered Tubb. "Never saw such a rotter, if you ask me!"

"Well, I don't ask you!" grunted Bolsover minor.

"Look here, young Bolsover—"

"Well, you look here, young Tubb—"

"Order!" said Percival Spencer Paget pacifically. "No good raggin'. The question is, what's goin' to be done? You owe two quids at the tuck-shop, Hubert."

Bolsover minor nodded.

"How much have you got?"

"Twopence!"

"Well, it's not much good askin' Mrs. Mimble to take twopence on account," grinned Paget. "She's a good sort, in her way; but there's a limit. I've got ninepence; but that's not much use. What have you got, Tubb?"

"A French penny!" grunted Tubb of the Third.

"Oh, my sainted aunt! We're all on the jolly old rocks!" said Paget. "You shouldn't have run up that bill, young Bolsover."

"Think I don't know that?"

"Well, why the thump did you do it, then?"

"Well, I was going to get a tip from

my uncle when he came," said Hubert. "He always stands me a quid. And then my allowance was coming. But I spent my allowance on something else, you see; and my uncle never came after all—he got influenza and couldn't come."

"Just like an old josser to get the flu, when he was wanted specially to come," said Paget. "He might have left it till after he'd been. Inconsiderate, I call it!"

"Bolsover major ought to have played up," growled Tubb. "He's got lots of tin. If I had a major here I should expect him to play up. Did he lick you for asking him, Bolsover mi?"

"Not for asking him. He was waxy at my being in debt. And that cad Skinner was there, too; Percy's always worse when he's with Skinner. I—I mean, he's not so nice."

"Well, he's never nice, if you come to that," said Tubb. "A more thorough rotter, in fact—"

"You shut up, Tubb!"

"What?" roared Tubb.

"Yes, shut up, old bean," urged Paget. "Don't run a fellow's brother down. I never tell Hubert what I think of his major. Look here, the giddy question is this—what's goin' to be done? Mrs. Mimble has spoken to old Wiggins, and Wiggins has got his wig off about it."

"Mr. Wiggins was cross," said Bolsover minor. "He's told me to pay Mrs. Mimble at once. Of course, a Form master would say that. He's annoyed at Mrs. Mimble speaking to him about it. But how am I to pay her at once when I've got only twopence?"

"That's a giddy conundrum," said Paget. "She's got to be paid. Of course, you're a thoughtless young ass, Bolsover mi. Come to think of it, your major wasn't far wrong in wallop- ing you. Did it hurt?"

"Oh, no, not much!" said Bolsover minor bravely. "Percy was waxy; but, of course, he wouldn't hurt me."

"Look here," said Tubb. "I don't see what's to be done about the money. We can't raise it. But we can get a lot of the Third together and lay Bolsover major out. He's not going to bully the Third!"

"Fathead!" said Bolsover minor.

"Look here—" roared Tubb.

"Cheese it!"

"Well, go and eat coke, then, and be blowed to you, and your major, too!" exclaimed Tubb of the Third, greatly incensed; and he stalked away through the elms and disappeared.

Percival Spencer Paget grinned.

"Look here, it's no good worrying. Bolsover mi," he said. "If the bill ain't paid, Mr. Wiggins will send it to your father. Your pater will have to pay it. He will jaw you, of course; but a fellow's pater always does jaw him about somethin' or other—see?"

"The pater might think Percy was to blame," said Bolsover minor dubiously. "He thinks Percy doesn't look after me like an elder brother. Of course, I don't want looking after, and Percy does look after me, too. He jawed Percy last hols because I had a bad report from my Form master. I'm not going to get Percy into a row with the pater."

"Oh, bless Percy!" said Paget, with a yawn. "Hem! I mean what are you jolly well goin' to do, then?"

"I don't know. I've got to pay the bill somehow," said Bolsover minor. "I can't let it go to my pater. I've got to raise the tin. It means a licking, too, if Mrs. Mimble speaks to Mr. Wiggins again about it."

"Well, look here," said Paget, "it's

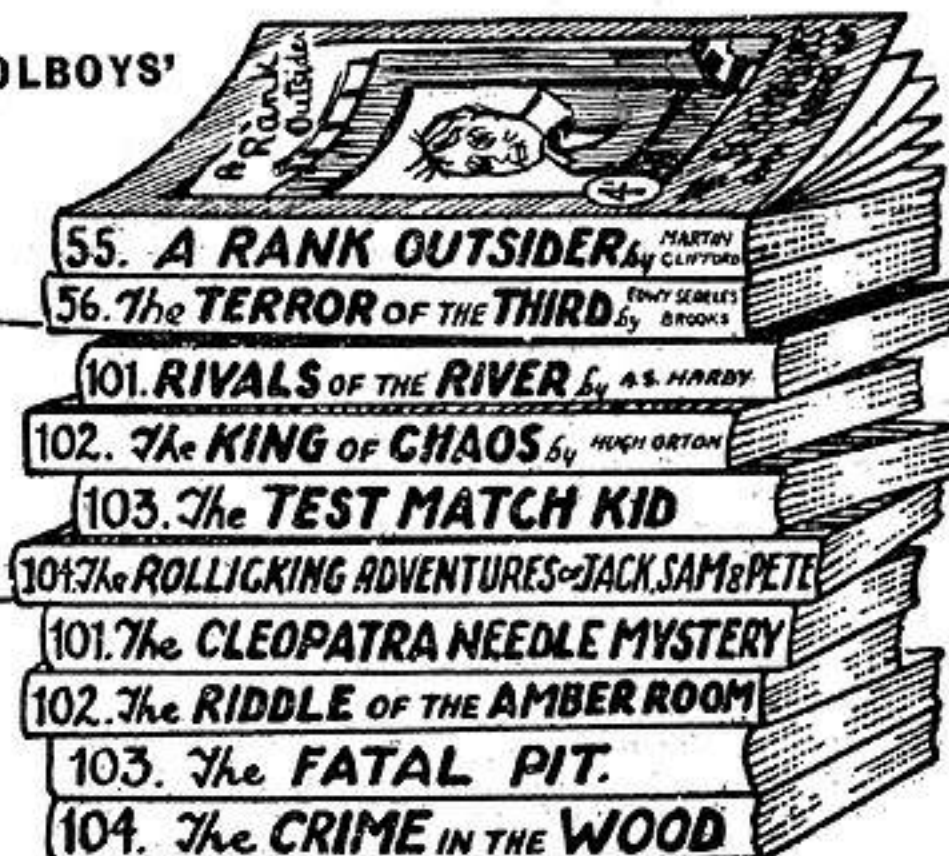
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no good worrying. Care killed the cat. Perhaps somethin' will turn up. Come along, and let's go and find old Tubb."

Bolsover minor shook his head.

"I've got to think it out," he said.

Paget nobly suppressed another yawn.

"Well, best of luck, old bean!" he said, and he strolled away to the House.

Hubert Bolsover sat where he was, giving an occasional wriggle as he felt a twinge, the result of his recent licking. His youthful face was dark and gloomy. He was "up against" it, and there did not seem a way out of his trouble.

He did not even observe the Highcliffe fellow leaning on the elm at a little distance. The talk of the Third Form fags had reached the Caterpillar's ears and rather entertained him. But his glance, as it dwelt on Bolsover minor's rugged, troubled little face, was very kindly. Obviously, Hubert was deeply attached to his big brother in the Remove; and the Caterpillar, from what he had seen of Bolsover major, could not even begin to guess what there was about him to inspire attachment in a younger brother. But he liked the fag for it.

He strolled away at last, leaving the fag still sitting on the bench under the elms, the picture of gloomy reverie. The Caterpillar's face, too, was thoughtful as he sauntered along. It was no business of his; the worries and troubles of a Greyfriars fag did not concern the dandy of Highcliffe. But the good-natured, whimsical Caterpillar was feeling mildly concerned, all the same.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Friend in Need!

BILLY BUNTER smiled.

Bunter had been frowning as he rolled out of the House into the sunny quad.

He was feeling injured.

There had been a spread in Study No. 1, and two distinguished guests to the spread. From Billy Bunter's point of view, the spread was not complete without a third distinguished guest—his plump and podgy self. Feeling that the party was not complete without him, Bunter had generously resolved to join it and make it a success. But his appearance in the doorway of Study No. 1 had been greeted by a whizzing loaf, followed up by an apple, both of which landed on Bunter and induced him to retire from the scene. Bunter had tea'd discontentedly in Hall.

He rolled out of the House frowning, but his frown was replaced by a smile immediately as he spotted the elegant Caterpillar in the quad.

Bunter rolled over towards De Courcy at once.

He bestowed his most ingratiating smile on the dandy of Highcliffe.

"Hallo, old bean!" he said affably.

The Caterpillar glanced at him.

His expression was perplexed.

"Have I seen you before?" he asked.

"Oh, really, De Courcy—"

"You seem to know my name," remarked the Caterpillar gravely.

Bunter blinked at him through his big spectacles.

"You remember me, old chap," he said. "Why, we've met lots of times. I'm Bunter."

"Dear me!" said the Caterpillar. "I seem to recall you now. You're the Fat Boy I saw at the circus."

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Jolly glad to see you!" said the Caterpillar. "So sorry I can't stop for a little chat! Good-bye!"

And the Caterpillar walked to the House. Cricket jaw in Study No. 1 was

a bore, but Billy Bunter was a greater bore. Of the two, cricket jaw in Study No. 1 was infinitely preferable.

But the Owl of the Remove was not to be eluded so easily as all that. He rolled after De Courcy and rejoined him at once.

"I say, old chap—"

"Oh dear!"

"I was coming to tea in the study, you know," said Bunter. "But I can't stand Bob Cherry's manners. I had to give it a miss. But I'm jolly glad to see you, old fellow! I've been thinking of giving you a look-in at Highcliffe, what?"

"How nice!" murmured the Caterpillar.

"Oh, I'll come with pleasure!" said Bunter. "I've got a lot of engagements for the half-holidays, but I'll turn somebody down to give you a call."

"Oh, don't!" implored the Caterpillar. "I'm afraid your many friends would miss you."

"Let 'em!" said Bunter recklessly. "They can't expect to take up all my time. I'm not going to neglect a pal. Which way are you going, De Courcy?"

"That depends," said the Caterpillar seriously. "Whichever way you're not goin', old bean."

"He, he, he!" Bunter decided to take that remark as a joke. "I say, shall we have a stroll round?"

The Caterpillar paused. Apparently some new idea had entered his mind, for he assumed a genial expression and no longer betrayed a desire to elude Bunter.

"Not a bad idea, old scout!" he said. "Is it allowed for a visitor to stroll round the Form-rooms on a half-holiday?"

"Oh, yes!" said Bunter. "Nothing in the Form-rooms to interest a fellow, though. What about dropping in at the school shop? Mrs. Mimble had a fresh lot of tarts in to-day—"

"I'm rather curious to see the quarters of the fags," said the Caterpillar. "Where do the Third Form congregate?"

"This way!" said Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove would have preferred to steer the Caterpillar in the direction of the school shop and Mrs. Mimble's fresh supply of jam-tarts. But he was determined to keep in De Courcy's company, anyhow. Envious fellows were to see him strolling on familiar terms with a fellow who had more titled connections than he could count on his fingers.

"Are the fags at home now?" asked the Caterpillar, as he sauntered down the deserted Form-room passage with Bunter.

"Not likely! Some of the scrubby little beasts tea in the Form-room in their mucky way," said Bunter. "But that's over now. I don't suppose we shall see any of them. Cheeky little rotters, you know. One of them—young Tubb—is the worst of the lot. He's checked me."

"Awful nerve!" said the Caterpillar gravely.

"Well, I thrashed him," said Bunter. "One has to keep these fags in order, you know. If any of the fellows tell you that I locked myself in my study when young Tubb was after me, don't you believe a word of it. The fact is that I thrashed him. Here we are."

Bunter conducted his elegant companion into the Third Form-room.

It was quite deserted.

There was a lingering aroma of burnt herrings round the fireplace, showing that some of the Third had had their tea there. Feasts in the Third Form-room were fearful and wonderful. But

it was long past tea-time now, and the Form-room was deserted. What interest a fag Form-room could possibly possess for the dandy of Highcliffe was a mystery to Bunter, but the Caterpillar seemed interested. He strolled into the room and sat down on one of the ink-splotted desks.

"You've got a minor in the Third, what?" he asked.

"In the Second," answered Bunter. "Bolsover's got a minor in the Third."

"Bolsover—that big fellow I saw stumped in the Remove passage? What's his minor like?"

"Not much like him," said Bunter. "Quiet kid—never does any harm."

"What are all those lockers used for?"

"Eh? The Third keep their books and things in them."

"All kept locked, I suppose?"

"No fear! I don't suppose any of the locks would work, even if the fags hadn't lost the keys."

The Caterpillar laughed.

"The Third do their prep here, I suppose?" he said.

"Yes, with Mr. Wiggins. Remove do their prep in the studies, of course," said Bunter. "Fags have to do prep in the Form-rooms, with a Form master present. I suppose it's the same at Highcliffe."

"Just the same," agreed the Caterpillar.

Bunter blinked at him.

He was quite mystified by the Caterpillar's interest in the manners and customs of the Third Form of Greyfriars.

"When is prep for the Third?" asked De Courcy.

"Seven, I think. I don't know much about the fags," said Bunter loftily. "What about strolling over to the—"

"And when seven strikes, I suppose the inky horde pours in and sorts books out of the lockers, and all that?"

"Yes. Come on—"

"What sort of stuff do they prepare?" asked the Caterpillar.

"Blessed if I know. I dare say they're doing Cæsar," said Bunter. "I had to do the Gallic War when I was in the Third. What does it matter?"

"I'm makin' a study of fags," said the Caterpillar, with great seriousness. "It's rather interestin' to compare the habits of these animals in different schools. Let's have a look at their books."

"What rot!"

"Eh?"

"I—I mean, anything you like, old fellow," said Bunter hastily. "You can look in any of the lockers."

"I suppose the Third wouldn't mind?"

"Why should they?"

"Quite so. Do the lockers have their names on?"

"Some of them do. Here's Paget's and—"

"Never heard of Paget."

"Here's Tubb's—"

"The fellow you thrashed!" smiled the Caterpillar.

"Exactly. Here's Bolsover minor's and—"

"That will do; it doesn't matter which, of course."

Bunter opened Bolsover minor's locker. It was kept much more neatly than most of the lockers in the Third. The Caterpillar strolled to it and gazed idly at the contents.

"There's jolly old Cæsar," he remarked. "Bolsover minor will want that for prep, I suppose."

"I suppose so."

The Caterpillar glanced round suddenly towards the window.

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"Is that an aeroplane?" he ejaculated.

"Eh! I didn't hear anything—"

"Take a look from the window, old chap, and tell me; I'm awfully interested in flyin' stunts."

Billy Bunter rolled to the window.

As soon as his back was turned, the Caterpillar bent over Bolsover minor's locker, and picked up the rather dog-eared copy of "Julius Cæsar." The little cardboard-covered volume was in his hands for only a few seconds; there was a grin on his face as he replaced it. Bunter was staring out of the window through his big spectacles.

"Nothing there," he said.

"Not an aeroplane flyin' over the school?"

"No; nothing."

"Dear me," said the Caterpillar, with a yawn. "Thanks so much for showin' me round, Bunter. No end interestin'. Must be gettin' along, though."

Bunter rolled after him to the door of the Form-room.

"The tuckshop doesn't close for some time yet," he remarked, as they walked down the passage.

"Doesn't it?" said the Caterpillar. "Then I won't detain you, Bunter. Ta-ta! My kind hosts will be wonderin' what has become of me."

And the Caterpillar swiftly mounted the staircase, leaving Billy Bunter blinking after him. Apparently the dandy of Highcliffe had tired all of a sudden of the Owl's fascinating company. He strolled into Study No. 1 in the Remove, where discussion was still going strong.

Courtenay glanced at him with a smile.

"What have you been doing all this time?" he asked.

"Met a fellow named Punter, or Stunter, or somethin' of the sort, and had a very pleasant stroll," said the Caterpillar. "Entertainin' fellow, isn't he?"

"You're the first to notice it, if you mean Bunter," said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"The entertainfulness of the esteemed Bunter is not generally considered terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Courtenay glanced at the study clock and rose to his feet. It was time for the distinguished visitors to return to Highcliffe.

Harry Wharton & Co. walked down to the gates with them. They passed Bolsover major in the quad, and the bully of the Remove bestowed a savage scowl upon the whole party. The Caterpillar's careless face was slightly thoughtful as he walked away to Highcliffe with his friend. Courtenay glanced at him several times.

"What are you thinking of, Rupert?" he asked at last.

The Caterpillar smiled.

"Thinkin' of that johnny in the poem, who did good by stealth and blushed to find it fame," he answered.

"What?"

"I've been understudyin' that johnny," said the Caterpillar gravely. "Doin' good by stealth is quite amusin', but it would be horrid awkward to find it fame. Luckily, that's impossible."

"What on earth do you mean, if you mean anything?" asked the puzzled Courtenay.

"Do I ever mean anythin', old bean?" yawned the Caterpillar. "Let's talk about cricket! When are you playin' Greyfriars again—and why?"

"Fathead!"

The Caterpillar laughed, and made no further allusion to the subject of his

meditations. But he smiled several times as he wondered what Bolsover minor, of the Greyfriars Third, would think when he found the two pound notes he needed so badly inside the "Gallic War" that evening.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Called Over the Coals!

"WHARTON!"

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Quelch called to the captain of the Remove, as he came back into House after seeing the Highcliffe fellows off.

"Do you know where Bolsover major is, Wharton?" asked the Remove master.

"I saw him in the quad a few minutes ago, sir."

"Mr. Wiggins desires to speak to him," said the master of the Remove. "Perhaps you will tell him to go at once to Mr. Wiggins' study."

There was no "perhaps" about it, as a matter of fact; that was Mr. Quelch's polite way of putting it. A Form master's request was a command.

"Certainly, sir," said Harry.

And he went back into the quadrangle again.

Bolsover major was stalking by himself, still in a state of great dudgeon over the handling he had received in the Remove passage. He scowled blackly at Harry Wharton as the latter came up to him.

"You're wanted, Bolsover."

"Go and eat coke!"

"I don't want you," said Harry, with a laugh. "It's Mr. Wiggins, of the Third."

"Blow Mr. Wiggins!"

"Mr. Quelch says you're to go to his study at once."

"Blow Mr. Quelch!"

Wharton smiled and walked away. He had delivered his Form master's message, and that was all that concerned him. Bolsover major could obey it or not, as he chose.

As a matter of fact, he chose to obey it. "Blowing" Mr. Quelch was a relief to the feelings, so far as words went; but in actual fact Mr. Quelch was not to be blown. If Mr. Quelch said that a member of his Form was to go to Mr. Wiggins' study, it behoved that member of his Form to do so, lest worse should befall him. And Bolsover major went.

He knocked at the Third Form master's door and opened it as unceremoniously as he dared.

Mr. Wiggins was seated at his study table.

He did not look up immediately as the Removite entered. He seemed to be busy.

Mr. Wiggins, of the Third, was rather a comic figure in the eyes of the Lower School. His Form rather liked him, because he was patient and good-tempered, though rather too painstaking to please them. They compared him very favourably with Mr. Quelch, for instance. The cane was seldom used in the Third Form room, though it was needed there oftener than in any other Form-room, probably.

Lines were given out oftener than lickings; but the Third did not mind lines, because Mr. Wiggins hardly ever remembered to ask for them. He was an absentminded gentleman; it was on record that he had actually forgotten classes, and left his Form for an hour to themselves before he remembered their existence. Fags related that he had received letters at Greyfriars, which he had absentmindedly addressed to himself, instead of to the intended recipients. It

was said that, having consented to umpire in a Third Form cricket match, he had turned up in Norfolk, with a whistle, with a vague impression in his mind that football was still going on.

He wore elastic-sided boots, which were a perennial joy to his Form. There never was a chance of being caught unawares by Mr. Wiggins—he creaked as he walked, and his elastic-sided boots heralded his approach from afar. The Third made fun of him, but they liked him, with all his oddities. He wore glasses of the pince-nez variety, which justified their name in Mr. Wiggins' case, for they pinched his nose cruelly, and reddened it. Also, they were generally a little aslant, and Mr. Wiggins was incessantly setting them straight, though they hardly ever remained so for more than a few minutes.

Bolsover major had nothing but contempt for the good-natured, good-tempered little gentleman. He was neither good-tempered nor good-natured himself, and did not value those qualities in others. Bolsover major was big enough, and burly enough, to knock Mr. Wiggins across a study, if the spirit moved him to do so. And it was hard for Bolsover to be respectful to a man who could not have handled him.

"You wanted to see me, sir!" grunted Bolsover, as Mr. Wiggins did not turn from the table.

"One moment," said Mr. Wiggins, without turning his head.

Bolsover grunted again.

There was a registered envelope on the table, and two currency notes for a pound each. Apparently, Mr. Wiggins was about to dispatch that sum by registered post, and Bolsover's arrival had interrupted him. Bolsover's lips curled as he looked on. It was said in the Lower School that Mr. Wiggins contributed to the support of some aged relative, though Mr. Wiggins had not the slightest idea that anything of the kind was said. He was quite unaware that any of his private affairs were known and commented upon.

It added to the Remove bully's scorn, if possible, to think that Mr. Wiggins had some poverty-stricken relative, to whom a couple of pound notes were an object. Mr. Wiggins had addressed the registered envelope, and was now addressing another letter. Bolsover major waited impatiently, and gave another grunt. He would not have ventured to interrupt any other Form master at Greyfriars; but he ventured to interrupt Mr. Wiggins.

"I thought you wanted to see me, sir."

"Quite so," said Mr. Wiggins. "One moment."

"I've got to get to my prep, sir," said Bolsover surlily.

There was plenty of time yet before prep; but it was safe to say so to Mr. Wiggins. If Mr. Wiggins had ever observed the time of Remove prep, he had forgotten it again. He hurriedly completed his letter, rose from the table, and turned round.

"Dear me! I must not delay you if your preparation is due, Bolsover," he said, peering at the burly Removite over his glasses. "I sent for you to speak to you about your brother."

Bolsover major set his lips.

"I have received a complaint from Mrs. Mimble, at the school shop, that Bolsover minor owes her an account which has remained unpaid for some time," said Mrs. Wiggins. "I forget the precise amount—but it is more than a boy in the Third Form should have incurred."

"Well?" grunted Bolsover major.

"I have told your brother that the



"Is that an aeroplane?" asked De Courcy. "Take a look from the window, old chap, and tell me—I'm awfully interested in flyin' stunts!" Billy Bunter rolled to the window. As soon as his back was turned the Caterpillar bent over Bolsover minor's locker and picked up the rather dog-eared copy of Julius Cæsar. The volume was in his hands for only a few seconds, and when he replaced it there was a grin on his face. (See Chapter 4.)

sum must be paid immediately, and no doubt the matter is now settled," said Mr. Wiggins, "but I am quite concerned about Bolsover minor. That is why I am speaking to you. As his elder brother, I think you should use your influence with the boy, and make some endeavour to correct his carelessness in money matters. A few words from an affectionate relative would probably do more good than a long homily from a Form master."

Grunt, from Bolsover major.

"I trust," said Mr. Wiggins, rather severely, "that you take some interest in your young brother at this school."

"The Remove don't have anything to do with the 'Third'."

"Quite so. But—"

"It doesn't do a fag any good to be always hanging round his elder brother in another Form," growled Bolsover.

"That is certainly true," assented Mr. Wiggins. "I should not approve of anything of the kind. Nevertheless, a boy in a higher Form should take some little occasional interest in a young brother in a low Form. I think your parents would expect it of you, Bolsover."

Another grunt.

"I thought I would speak to you on the subject," said Mr. Wiggins mildly. "I am sure that if you neglected your

duty, it is due only to thoughtlessness, natural in a boy of your years. That is all, Bolsover. You may go."

Bolsover major went without a word, but with a scowling face. He was conscious that he had neglected his young brother at school, and that made the Third Form master's words all the more unpalatable. If he had ventured to speak out, he would have said that he had his own affairs to think of, and did not intend to be bothered by a snivelling fag. But he could not venture to say that even to the mild Mr. Wiggins, so he left the Third Form master's study in silence.

Trotter, the page, came along as Bolsover major departed, and tapped at the study door.

"Dear me! What is it, Trotter?" asked the Third Form master.

"Mr. Prout would like to speak to you, sir, if you would step into his study for a few minutes, sir."

"Very well, Trotter."

Mr. Wiggins sighed. He was a mild little gentleman; and in the presence of Mr. Prout, the portly and ponderous master of the Fifth, he felt like a straw in a hurricane. But he was the most obliging of little gentlemen, and he left his study at once to proceed to Mr. Prout's.

Meanwhile, Bolsover major tramped away to the stairs to go to his own quarters. On the way he passed the Third, who were going to their Form-room for evening prep. His brother was with the other fags; and he gave Bolsover major a wistful glance. The bully of the Remove answered it with a black scowl, and stopped.

"Look here, young 'un!" he growled.

"Yes, Percy," said Bolsover minor timidly.

"Old Wiggins has been jawing me about you getting into debt at the tuck-shop."

"I—I—I'm sorry!" faltered the fag.

"Oh, cut that out! Get it paid, whatever it is, and don't let me hear any more of it!" growled Bolsover major. "If you think I like being chin-wagged by your dashed Form master, you're mistaken."

"But, I say—"

"That's enough."

Bolsover major tramped away sullenly. "Nice chap!" murmured Paget, of the Third.

"Rotter!" grunted Tubb.

Bolsover minor went into the Form room with a clouded brow. Bolsover major tramped up to the Remove, and meeting Billy Bunter on the landing, kicked him—to Bunter's indignation.

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Finding solace in it, Bolsover major kicked him again, and then tramped on to his study, feeling a little better.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Bolsover Minor's Luck!

THERE was a buzz of voices and a tramping of feet in the Third Form room. The Third had assembled there for prep, but Mr. Wiggins had not yet arrived—no doubt being detained by the majestic conversation of Mr. Prout, of the Fifth. Or he might have forgotten prep and gone out for a walk—there never was any telling, with the absentminded Mr. Wiggins. The fags did not remain idle while they waited for their Form master. A game of leapfrog was soon in progress in the Form-room, Tubb of the Third and Paget and Wingate minor taking the lead. But Bolsover minor, who was generally to the fore in such things, did not join in it. He was in a state of distress that deprived leapfrog, even in forbidden precincts, of all its joys.

Mr. Wiggins had taken it for granted that, when he told Bolsover minor to settle Mrs. Mimble's account at once, it would be settled. But that was impossible in the fag's present financial state, and his appeal to his brother had earned him only a thrashing. Yet if Mrs. Mimble was not paid, on the following day she was certain to speak to Mr. Wiggins again, and that meant serious trouble. A caning the fag would not have minded very much; but a caning would not settle the matter. Probably, Mr. Wiggins would send the tuckshop bill to Mr. Bolsover, which meant trouble from home, possibly for Percy as well as Hubert. And Percy was already angry and exasperated.

Bolsover minor sorted his books out of his locker and took them to his desk in a dispirited state. So far as he could see there was no possibility of raising the sum he owed Mrs. Mimble without the matter being referred to his parents. Percy might have helped him—no doubt would have helped him if the fag had approached him at a more favourable time, when Percy happened to be in a good temper, and a brotherly mood, as sometimes—though rarely—happened. No doubt the fag had counted upon his

major seeing him through if the worst came to the worst. Now Percy had failed him utterly, and whichever way Hubert looked he could only see trouble on the horizon.

With a glum and gloomy face he sat down on the form and opened his *Cæsar*. The next moment he jumped.

In ancient days miracles had happened, as Bolsover minor knew; but he had never expected a miracle to happen in the Third Form-room at Greyfriars. But if this was not a miracle it was something remarkably like it.

For inside his "*Gallie War*" reposed two pound notes.

He stared at them with a mesmerised gaze.

It was difficult to believe the evidence of his eyes. He wanted exactly the sum of two pounds to relieve his mind of a pressing worry; he had no hope whatever of raising the sum of two pounds, and here, in his *Cæsar*, was the precious sum he wanted.

He blinked at the two notes, and picked them up, and felt them with his fingers, as if to ascertain that they were real, and not a beatific vision that might fade away from his sight.

"Oh, scissors!" gasped Bolsover minor.

Two pound notes—real notes! But how had they got into his school book? That was a baffling mystery.

Obviously, they could not have placed themselves there. That was impossible. They had been placed in his *Cæsar* by human hands. Whose?

Somebody who knew what he was up against was tipping him two pounds to get him out of his trouble.

That much was clear and certain. Whoever had placed the two pound notes in his *Cæsar* meant them for him. There could not be a doubt about that.

But who was the good Samaritan?

Whoever it was wished to keep his good-natured action dark. But who was it?

Most of the Third Form knew of Bolsover minor's trouble by this time, and many of them would have helped him if they could. But pound notes were not numerous in the Third. Besides, any Third Form man would have handed the money to Bolsover as a loan, had he possessed it. Paget or Tubb would have done so. It was not a Third Form man who had stolen unknown into the Form-room and placed the required sum in Bolsover minor's *Cæsar*.

A good many of the Remove knew, owing to the scene in the Remove passage that afternoon. Possibly some good-natured fellow—Bob Cherry, perhaps, only he never had any notes to spare—possibly Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, who had lots. Bolsover minor coloured uncomfortably. He was overjoyed to find himself in possession of the sum he needed, but, at the same time, he could not take a gift of money from a fellow. But the unknown donor had evidently kept his identity a secret for that very reason, so that the fag could not return him the notes, and need not feel embarrassed about accepting them.

And then suddenly what seemed the right explanation flashed into Bolsover minor's perplexed mind.

"Percy!" he ejaculated.

He grinned with delight. It seemed certain, now that he thought of it. Old Percy's bark was always worse than his bite; he really was fond of his young brother, though fellows would hardly believe it. Percy had licked him and jawed him for getting into debt, and had taken this way of getting him out of it. That was how it stood. Hubert

was quite satisfied that the money had come from Percy. Indeed, it was very difficult to imagine from whom else it could possibly have come.

He jumped up, with the two notes crumpled in his hand. There was just time to catch Mrs. Mimble before the school shop closed. Mr. Wiggins was not yet in the Form-room. He was late, as often happened. Bolsover minor scudded to the door.

"Hallo, where are you going, young Bolsover?" bawled Tubb. "Wiggy will be here any minute."

Bolsover minor did not heed. He scudded away, anxious to escape before his Form master arrived on the scene.

He was only just in time, for Mr. Wiggins arrived two or three minutes after he had gone.

Mr. Wiggins came into his Form-room almost at a run, with his face flushed and his gown whisking behind him. Mr. Prout had kept him talking, and the Third Form master had realised that he was very late as soon as he got away from Mr. Prout. So he came bustling hurriedly into the Third Form-room. The leapfrog stopped at once, and the Third took their places. Mr. Wiggins, with the mildness which made his Form regard him with both liking and contempt, affected to be unaware of the terrific din that had been going on up to the moment of his arrival. He did not even notice that one member of his Form was absent. It was said in the Third that a fellow could always cut prep if he liked, the odds being about ten to one that Mr. Wiggins would not notice he wasn't there.

Mr. Wiggins remained unaware of Bolsover minor's absence until about ten minutes later, when the fag came in.

Bolsover minor hoped that Mr. Wiggins hadn't come in yet; but he found prep going on in the Form-room, and Mr. Wiggins blinked at him in surprise over his glasses.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Wiggins. "You are late, Bolsover minor—very late! This will never do, Bolsover minor!"

"Sorry, sir—"

"I am afraid I must punish you, Bolsover minor," said Mr. Wiggins. "You must write out a page of *Cæsar*."

"Very well, sir."

Bolsover minor winked at Tubb as he went to his place, and George Tubb grinned. It was ten to one, or twenty to one, that Mr. Wiggins would never remember to ask Bolsover minor for that page of *Cæsar*.

Hubert's face was very bright during prep. Mrs. Mimble had been paid; that troublesome account was settled. That was extremely satisfactory in itself; and more satisfactory than even that was the thought that Percy had, after all, come to his aid. Bolsover minor made great resolves never to get into debt any more, resolves which would be kept until the next time. The lesson was not likely to last the happy-go-lucky fag very long.

After prep Mr. Wiggins left the Form-room. The fags were allowed to use the Form-room as a common-room till bedtime. They preferred it to the Rag, where they were overshadowed by Remove and Fourth Form fellows. Tubb and Paget both inquired at once, when Mr. Wiggins was gone, why their chum was looking so bucked.

"It's all serene," said Bolsover minor.

"I've paid that bill."

"Where on earth did you get the tin all of a sudden?" asked Tubb, in astonishment.

Bolsover minor grinned.

"My brother—"

"Mean to say he played up, after all?"

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"Just that," said Tubb. "He can't be such a beast as he looks."

"Look here, Tubb—" "Jolly glad, anyhow," said Paget. "I wondered what on earth you scudded out of the Form-room for. Well, I'm glad it's over. Mind you don't get landed like that again, kid."

"I'm going to be careful about that," said Bolsover minor. "Might have got into a row at home, you know, if Percy hadn't stumped up."

"But, look here, I don't see it," said Paget, puzzled. "If you say your major gave you the tin, of course, he did. But when did he give it to you? He only jawed you when he met us coming to the Form-room. I suppose you're not pulling our leg, somehow?"

"He put it in my Caesar," said Bolsover minor. "I found it there when I opened the book."

"Great pip! What did he do that for? Why couldn't he hand it to you when you asked him?"

"Well, he was waxy then. I suppose he meant it as a surprise for me. It was a surprise, too, when I saw it, I can tell you. I couldn't make out who had put two pound notes in my Caesar till I thought of Percy."

"Come on, you fellows!" called out Wingate minor. "We're going to finish our game now Wiggy's cleared."

And leap-frog recommenced, Bolsover minor joining in it now—a much more important matter than prep, in the opinion of the Greyfriars Third.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Missing Money!

"BLESS my soul!" said Mr. Wiggins.

Mr. Wiggins adjusted his slanting glasses—which immediately slanted again—and blinked at his study table.

Until he returned to his study after prep in the Third, Mr. Wiggins had totally forgotten the correspondence he had left unfinished there.

He had been interrupted by Mr. Prout's message; and, after leaving Mr. Prout, he had hurried to his Form-room late. But when he came back to his study he remembered the two pound notes which he had intended to dispatch by registered post.

Until that moment he had forgotten all about them.

Now that he remembered them he looked for them at once.

They were not to be seen.

On his table lay the registered envelope, in which he had intended to place them. But it was empty. Beside it lay a letter Mr. Wiggins had written to a tourist agency in London, making inquiries concerning a certain excursion in which Mr. Wiggins intended to join in the summer vacation. That letter he had sealed before leaving his study, intending to drop it in the post that evening. The registered letter, of course, had to wait till the morrow.

"Bless my soul!" repeated Mr. Wiggins.

Mr. Wiggins was not a careless man, but he was an extremely absent-minded one.

He knew that it was quite possible that he had placed the currency-notes in his desk, or in his pocket, and forgotten doing so, just as he had forgotten his intention of catching the post with the letter to Snook's Tours.

However, there was still time for that; fortunately, the collection had not yet been taken at the school letter-box.

Leaving the quest of the currency-notes till later, Mr. Wiggins picked up the letter to Snook's Tours, and flurried out of the House with it in his hand. He dropped it into the school letter-box only five minutes before the postman came along with his bag to collect. Then he flurried back to his study.

"Now, where, in the name of goodness gracious, did I put those pound notes?" murmured Mr. Wiggins.

He searched through all his pockets. They were not there. He made a meticulous search of his desk. They were not there.

He looked on the table again, lifting all the untidy books and papers. He looked under the table, he looked under the armchair.

He looked here, there, and everywhere.

He grew more and more flurried and flustered as he searched and scanned. But the pound notes were not to be found.

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As the window was closed it was unlikely that they had been blown off the table. But that seemed the only explanation, and as they were not in sight Mr. Wiggins concluded that they must have blown under the settee, the only spot he had not searched so far.

Searching under the settee was not easy, for it was too heavy an article of furniture for Mr. Wiggins to move unaided. The only way was to dive under it, which was unpleasant.

However, there seemed nothing else to be done, so Mr. Wiggins laid himself down on the floor, and poked his head under the settee, which was so near the floor underneath that there was only just room for his head to be inserted.

It was just then that Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, tapped at his door and opened it.

That evening there was a meeting of the masters in Masters' Common-room, but Mr. Wiggins, of course, had forgotten all about it. Mr. Quelch had kindly come along to remind him.

The Remove master glanced into the study, and for a moment or two supposed that it was empty.

Then his glance became fixed upon a pair of trousers and a pair of boots projecting from under the settee.

"Dear me!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch. To say that Mr. Quelch was astonished would be to put it mildly.

Mr. Wiggins had many odd ways; but it was extraordinary for even Mr. Wiggins to be sprawling on the floor of his study, with half of him—the upper half—hidden under the settee.

It was dusty under the settee, and Mr. Wiggins, though he found no pound notes, found a good deal of dust. He coughed and grunted.

Mr. Quelch gazed at a pair of wriggling legs for several moments, in astonished silence.

"Mr. Wiggins!" he said, at last.

"Grooooooh!"

"My dear sir!"

"Ooooooh!"

"Mr. Wiggins!" almost shouted Mr. Quelch.

Then the Third Form master became aware that there was someone in the study. He raised his head, forgetful of the fact that the settee was over it.

Crack!

"Oooooooooop!" hooted Mr. Wiggins.

"Bless my soul!" murmured Mr. Quelch, wondering whether his colleague was out of his mind. "My dear Wiggins—"

"Ow, ow!"

The legs on the study carpet wriggled, and Mr. Wiggins, squirming backward, emerged from under the settee.

The whole of him came into view at last, and he turned a dusty and crimson face up at the startled and amazed Remove master.

Then he gained his feet, coughing, and rubbing the back of his head.

"Oh dear!" he gasped.

His crimson face grew redder, if possible, as he met the astonished eyes of the Remove master.

"I—You see—Hem!" he stuttered.

"Is—is anything the matter, my dear sir?" asked Mr. Quelch.

Mr. Wiggins was overwhelmed with confusion. He did more ridiculous things in three hours than any other Greyfriars master did in three terms. But he was sensitive to ridicule, all the same. He realised that he had been discovered in a ridiculous and extraordinary position.

"I—I was looking—" he gasped. "I have searched everywhere else, but they are not under the settee, either."

"They?" repeated Mr. Quelch.

Mr. Wiggins wiped his perspiring and dusty brow with his handkerchief.

"It is extraordinary!" he said. "I was delayed by speaking to Mr. Prout, and was late in my Form-room. That is how it happened. Pray excuse me, Mr. Quelch!"

"I looked in to remind you of the session of the masters," remarked Mr. Quelch.

"Oh! Quite so! I had forgotten! They are not, after all, under the settee."

"The masters are not under the settee?" asked Mr. Quelch dazedly.

"No, no! I mean some currency notes!"

Mr. Quelch began to comprehend.

"You have lost some currency notes?"

"Yes; or, rather, no," said Mr. Wiggins. "They cannot actually be lost. I left them on my study table."

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when I was called away by Mr. Prout's message. They are not there now."

"That is very strange."

"I have searched the whole room. I concluded that they must have blown off the table, and was—was searching under the settee. But they are not there. Is it not extraordinary?"

"Very," said Mr. Quelch. "Certainly they could not have blown off the table, as the window is closed."

"But where are they?" asked Mr. Wiggins helplessly.

"You are sure you left them on the table?"

"Absolutely. I was about to place them in this registered envelope when Trotter brought Mr. Prout's message."

Mr. Quelch did not remark upon the carelessness of leaving money lying on a study table. He was well aware of the absent-mindedness of his colleague.

"But possibly you placed them in your desk," he said.

"I have searched the desk."

"In your pockets—"

"I have searched my pockets."

Mr. Quelch knitted his brows.

"Then you are certain that they were left on the table during your absence?"

"Quite."

"This is a serious matter, Mr. Wiggins!"

"Indeed it is, Mr. Quelch! I really cannot afford to lose two pounds!" said the Third Form master.

"That is a minor consideration."

"Eh?"

"If the notes were left on your study table, and were not there when you returned, they have been removed."

"But no one came to my study," said Mr. Wiggins. "Besides, why should anyone remove them? And where could he have placed them? I have searched the whole room most carefully."

"If the matter is as you state, Mr. Wiggins, the currency notes have been taken away by some person."

Mr. Wiggins jumped.

"Impossible!" he exclaimed.

"How impossible?"

"That would be theft."

"Precisely."

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr. Wiggins, staring in utter dismay at the Remove master's frowning face. For the first time, that explanation of the mystery came into Mr. Wiggins' simple, unassuming mind.

"The matter is one that must be cleared up," said Mr. Quelch. "I advise you, sir, to make absolutely certain that the currency notes are no longer in this room. If that proves to be the case, it is indubitable that they must have been taken away. But"—the Remove master hesitated for a moment—"you are, if you will excuse my saying so, a little absentminded on occasion, Mr. Wiggins. I suggest making absolutely sure of the matter before you extend your inquiries beyond this room."

"But—but who—who— Oh dear!" gasped Mr. Wiggins.

"Did anyone come to the study while you had the money on the table, to your knowledge, and see it?"

"Trotter brought a message from Mr. Prout. But he did not enter the study—he could scarcely have seen what was on the table."

"Anyone else?"

"Only a boy of your Form."

"Oh!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch. "I remember you asked that Bolsover major might be sent to your study."

"Yes, exactly. Bolsover major had to wait some minutes, while I was completing a letter. Certainly, he must have

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seen the currency notes. But it is impossible to suspect—"

"Quite so," Mr. Quelch was not likely to suspect a member of his own Form of a disgraceful action, if he could help it. "Nevertheless, I was a little surprised, Mr. Wiggins, when you requested me to send a boy belonging to my Form to your study. May I inquire, now, why you wished to see Bolsover major?"

"In connection with his minor in my Form," explained Mr. Wiggins. "Bolsover minor has run up an account he cannot pay at the school shop, and Mrs. Mumble complained to me. I considered it judicious to suggest to his elder brother that he should take some heed of Bolsover minor's proceedings. An elder brother's advice—"

"Quite so. Very judicious," agreed Mr. Quelch. "From what you say, there is a boy in your Form in debt."

"Yes, Bolsover minor."

"A large sum?"

"Large for a Third Form boy," said Mr. Wiggins. "Two pounds." He broke off, with a gasp. "Precisely the sum that is missing. Dear me!"

Mr. Quelch's eyes glinted.

"The—the boy is quite a good boy—quite!" stammered Mr. Wiggins. "It is impossible to suspect him of—of theft. Yet it is an odd coincidence that he was absent from the Form-room at preparation. I was late, but Bolsover minor came in ten minutes later. Bless my soul."

Mr. Wiggins was utterly dismayed at the turn the matter was taking.

"I suggest making absolutely certain that the money really is missing," said Mr. Quelch. "With regard to Bolsover minor, if he has been so foolish and wicked as to yield to such a temptation, doubtless it was for the purpose of liquidating the debt you speak of, about which Mrs. Mumble had complained. It would be easy to inquire of Mrs. Mumble whether she has been paid, and, if so, Bolsover minor will be able to account for the possession of the money, if innocently come by. I must go to Masters' room now."

"Pray make my excuses to my colleagues, Mr. Quelch—I am really too disturbed for attending the meeting," gasped Mr. Wiggins.

"Certainly, sir."

And Mr. Quelch left the study, leaving the Third Form master in a state of dismay and distress.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Something Like a Search!

CRASH!

Bump!

"Has anybody seen a moving job?" sang Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Quite a little crowd of fellows gathered in Masters' passage.

It was not a "moving job," but it seemed something very like it that was going on in a study there.

Gosling, the porter, and Trotter, the page, were at work in Mr. Wiggins' room. Mr. Wiggins was there to help—and he helped chiefly by getting in the way, knocking things over, and uttering startled ejaculations as his furniture rocked and bumped.

The Session of the Masters was going

on in Masters' room, but Mr. Wiggins was not attending that important function. All the rest of the staff were there; which was perhaps fortunate, for had they been in their studies, the terrific din from Mr. Wiggins' room would have disturbed them seriously.

Billy Bunter—who spotted everything that went on, and a little more—had brought the news to the Rag that Mr. Wiggins' study was being up-ended, and a lot of fellows had strolled along to see what was up. They were interested and puzzled.

It was not the time of year for spring-cleaning; and even spring-cleaning would not have worked such havoc as Gosling and Trotter were revelling in.

The Greyfriars fellows wondered what it was all about.

Mr. Wiggins had taken the Remove master's sage advice; he was making absolutely certain that the currency notes were missing, before any further step was taken in the matter.

Gosling and Trotter had been called in to make the search.

The study was being thoroughly searched for the two pound notes; and no doubt the notes would have been unearthed, had they been there.

Neither Gosling nor Trotter enjoyed this extra task, added to labours which they considered already more than sufficient. They did not handle Mr. Wiggins' goods and chattels gently. They had to search the study, as instructed; and they lost no time about it. Certainly, had it been Mr. Quelch or Mr. Hacker or Mr. Prout, they would not have ventured to proceed in quite so wild and whirling a style. But everybody treated poor Mr. Wiggins as if he did not matter.

Chairs fell over—books dropped right and left—the big settee, dragged away by the combined efforts of the porter and the page, crashed down in the doorway like a thunderclap.

"Dear me!" gasped Mr. Wiggins.

"Some removal!" remarked Vernon-Smith, with a grin. "Mind you don't go through to the floor below, Gosling!"

Grunt from Gosling.

"What on earth's the trouble?" asked Johnny Bull, in wonder.

"Wiggy's lost something, I expect," said Frank Nugent. "He's always losing something. He'll lose his head next."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Wiggins, indeed, looked like losing his head, as his possessions were whirled right and left.

"Can we help, sir?" called out Wibley, of the Remove.

Mr. Wiggins blinked at Wibley, across the settee that blocked up the study doorway.

"Thank you, my boy. Would you like this boy to aid you, Gosling?"

"Which I would not, sir," grunted William Gosling, most emphatically. "And work enough without a pack of boys making it 'arder."

"Come, come, Gosling, I am sure the lad meant the offer kindly," remonstrated Mr. Wiggins.

Snort from Gosling.

"We'd help with pleasure, sir," said Bob Cherry.

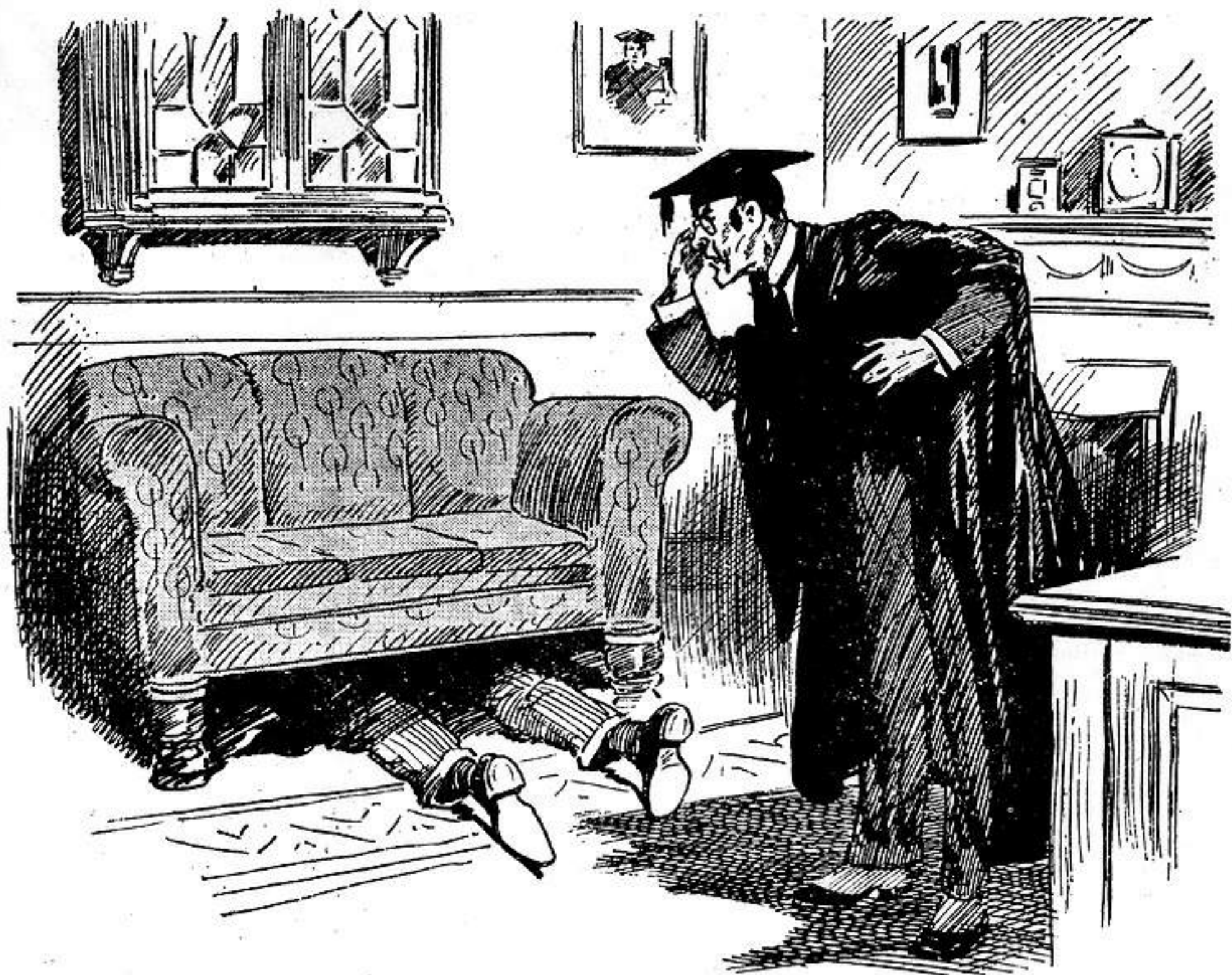
"Youthful eyes are very keen, Gosling," said Mr. Wiggins. "Possibly the boys might see what we are looking for. You have not found the currency notes yet."

"I'd 'ave found them if they was 'ere, sir," said Gosling surlily. "They ain't in the blooming room."

"Kindly search further, Gosling. The matter must be cleared up beyond a doubt."

"Huh!"

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Mr. Quelch glanced into the study, and for a moment or two supposed that it was empty. Then his glance became fixed upon a pair of trousers and a pair of boots projecting from under the settee. "Dear me!" he ejaculated, gazing at the pair of wriggling legs. "It's Mr. Wiggins!" (See Chapter 7.)

The search of the study went on. Thicker grew the crowd in the passage outside. Third and Fourth fellows were there as well as Remove, and some of the Second. Coker & Co., of the Fifth, strolled along to see what the uproar was about. At last came Wingate, of the Sixth, with a frown on his brow. The Sixth Form passage was near Masters' quarters, and the din did not conduce to easy work in the Sixth Form studies.

"What on earth's this row?" exclaimed Wingate sharply. "What are you fags doing here? I suppose even you young ruffians are not ragging a master's study?"

"Not guilty, my lord," grinned Bob Cherry.

"Well, what—"

Wingate stopped at the blocked doorway, and stared into the study. Mr. Wiggins gave him a flustered look.

"It is quite all right, Wingate! Two pound notes have been lost here, or abstracted from the study, and Gosling and Trotter are kindly searching the room for them."

Gosling and Trotter were not looking very kind.

"Oh!" said Wingate.

Some of the fellows looked at one another rather queerly. The words "abstracted from the study" had a very unpleasant ring.

"Silly ass!" Bolsover major murmured. "More likely he's put them

somewhere and forgotten where. You know Wiggins."

"If they're in the room at all, they'll turn up," grinned Bob. "They're making a complete job of it."

Wingate of the Sixth went back to his study. He would have commanded Trotter and Gosling to make less noise, but that, in Mr. Wiggins' presence, would have been derogatory to the dignity of the Form master. Little Mr. Wiggins ought to have given the command himself; but he lacked the gift of authority. Even the boot-boy failed in respect to poor Mr. Wiggins. But the captain of Greyfriars did not want to make a Form master look a bigger ass than he looked already.

Gosling stopped at last, and mopped his heated brow. Trotter took a rest on the corner of the settee.

"They ain't 'ere, sir," said Gosling surlily. "I said so afore, and now I says it again. Wot I say is this 'ere. It ain't no use looking any longer, Mr. Wiggins."

"Dear me, dear me!" said Mr. Wiggins.

"Mrs. Kebble will be wanting me, sir," said Trotter.

"Dear me, dear me!"

Mr. Wiggins blinked disconsolately round the untidy room.

He was very, very anxious for the currency notes to be found. If they were not found, he was driven to the conclusion that they had been taken.

That was a horrid thought to Mr. Wiggins. The bare idea of a theft having taken place made him shudder.

"You have not looked behind the bookcase," he said at last.

Gosling snorted.

"Now, 'ow could them notes get behind the bookcase, sir?" he demanded. "I ask you that, sir."

"I am anxious to leave no stone unturned, Gosling," said Mr. Wiggins mildly. "I trust you are not fatigued?"

"Do you, sir?" said Gosling satirically. "If you mean tired, sir, I'm that tired I can 'ardly stand hup."

"Same 'ere!" concurred Trotter.

"Get down to it," advised Bob Cherry from the passage. "Don't slack, you know. Put your beef into it."

"I should be much obliged if you would move the bookcase, Gosling, and ascertain—"

"Oh, orlright!" said Gosling resignedly. "I s'pose you wouldn't like me to rip up the floor-boards, sir?"

"Really, really, Gosling—"

"Lend a 'and, Trotter!"

"Oh, my word!" groaned Trotter.

The bookcase was gripped and whirled. Mr. Wiggins trembled for the glass doors, and for his books. But the mild little gentleman did not venture to remonstrate. The bookcase rocked and almost toppled. It righted again.

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(Continued from page 13.)

with a crash on the floor, and six or seven books shot out.

"Oh dear, oh dear!" said Mr. Wiggins.

"Go it, Gossy!" chuckled Bob.

"Kindly be silent," said Mr. Wiggins. "I think you boys had—had better disperse. Really I think so."

The boys did not disperse. A sharp order was required to make the juniors clear off and miss the fun, and it was not in Mr. Wiggins to give a sharp order.

No currency notes came to light behind the bookcase. A considerable amount of dust was dislodged, and a cobweb was discovered, and a long-legged spider was seen beating a hurried and alarmed retreat for safer quarters. But that was all.

"P'raps you're satisfied now, sir?" said Gosling sarcastically.

"Yes, thank you, Gosling," said Mr. Wiggins, in his flustered way.

"Kindly replace the bookcase."

"Lend a 'and agin, Trotter."

"Oh crikey!"

Bump, bump! Crash!

"What is all this noise?" It was the sharp voice of Mr. Quelch, returning from the masters' session, now over. "Bless my soul, Mr. Wiggins! What—what—what—"

The crammed juniors in the passage made respectful way for Mr. Quelch. He was not a master of Mr. Wiggins' calibre.

The Remove master stared in.

"Gosling! Trotter! Make less noise!"

"Certainly, sir!" said Gosling. And Trotter quaked too much to be able to answer at all.

The bookcase was replaced almost without a further sound. The big settee was lifted back with scarcely a noise. Mr. Quelch's grim face in the doorway was more than enough for Trotter and Gosling. Not for worlds would they have ventured to draw a biting reprimand from his acid tongue.

Quietly, swiftly, the furniture in the study was replaced. The effect of Mr. Quelch's arrival was really almost magical.

Then Gosling and Trotter departed, and William Gosling did not venture to grunt till he was outside the House, far from the Remove master's hearing.

"Well, Mr. Wiggins?" asked Mr. Quelch.

Mr. Wiggins almost wrung his hands.

"Nothing has been found, sir!"

"The currency notes—"

"They are still missing!"

"A very unfortunate matter, sir," said Mr. Quelch.

"Very, very distressing," said Mr. Wiggins. "I am driven to the conclusion that the notes were taken from my study. There is no other way of accounting for their disappearance."

Mr. Quelch's eyes gleamed at the crowd in the passage.

"You boys had better disperse."

The juniors vanished on the spot. Mr. Wiggins made the same remark unheeded. Nobody ventured to pass Mr. Quelch's remarks unheeded. In a few seconds the passage was empty.

The crowd streamed back to the Rag, in excited discussion as they went. All Greyfriars knew now that two pound notes had been taken from Mr. Wiggins' study, and it was an extremely exciting topic. If there was a thief in the school, the affair was certain to thrill Greyfriars from end to end. It was bedtime now for the Third, and Walker of the Sixth had shepherded the Third off to their dormitory. Paget and Tubb looked at Bolsover minor very queerly several times. But whatever thoughts were in their minds, they did not utter them, and the Third turned in.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Condemned by His Brother!

"ROT!" That was Harry Wharton's opinion.

"The rotfulness is terrific," concurred the Nabob of Bhanipur.

It was the following morning, and the chums of the Remove had come down early. They were in the quad before the rising-bell had ceased to ring.

They were discussing the affair of the previous evening, and they were anxious for news on the subject.

The matter did not immediately concern the Remove, who had nothing to do with the Third or the Third Form master. But it concerned all Greyfriars to know that the presence of a thief was suspected in the school.

"It's rot!" repeated Wharton. "We all know what an absent-minded beggar old Wiggins is. The confounded notes will turn up somewhere."

"Anyhow, it's between him and his own Form," remarked Nugent.

"Well, I don't know that," said the Captain of the Remove. "If money has been taken, they might look anywhere for the thief."

"Only the Third ever go to Mr. Wiggins' study," said Johnny Bull.

"As a rule, yes," said Harry. "But a Remove man went there yesterday evening—Bolsover major. I know, because I had to take him the message from Quelch that Mr. Wiggins wanted to see him. Bolsover's a rotten bully, but we know he's straight as a die. But he's as likely to get talked about as any fellow in the Third if they make out there has been a theft. That will be rotten for the Remove!"

"What on earth did Wiggy want to see a Remove man for?" asked Nugent, in surprise.

"Goodness knows: unless it was about his minor. Young Bolsover's been in trouble with his Form master, I believe, owing to running up a bill at the school shop. That was what his major was walloping him for yesterday when we chipped in, you remember."

"I remember. There might be talk about young Bolsover, the fellows knowing that he was up against it for money."

"And we know that kid's straight," said Harry. "It's rotten! I believe it's only Wiggy's carelessness all the time."

"But the currency notes must be somewhere," said Johnny Bull. "It's been made clear that they're not in Wiggy's study, and I suppose Wiggy knows whether he's got them in his pockets."

"Well, yes. But—" Wharton knitted his brows. "There isn't any

thief at Greyfriars—it's all bunkum. Some idiotic mistake of Wiggy's."

Bolsover major came out of the House with a deep frown on his brow, and looked round. He also was an early riser.

"Third down yet?" he called out to the Famous Five.

"Haven't seen any of them," answered Bob Cherry.

Bolsover major nodded, and tramped past the chums of the Remove with a moody and troubled brow.

The chums of the Remove glanced after him, and then looked at one another.

"Surely he can't suspect—" muttered Bob.

"Looks as if he's got something on his mind," said Harry. "But he must be a fool if he thinks that his young brother would touch Wiggy's currency notes. I jolly well know the kid wouldn't!"

"He might have helped the kid out of his scrape yesterday, instead of pitching into him," said Nugent. "I dare say he's got that on his mind now."

A little later a crowd of the Third came out. The Famous Five observed Bolsover major seek his young brother at once. Obviously, the bully of the Remove was feeling uneasy; it was extremely unusual for him to seek out his brother in the Third. Generally, he was annoyed if Bolsover minor even spoke to him in the quad.

Hubert did not look pleased as his big brother came up. Bolsover's expression was far from reassuring.

"I want to speak to you, kid!" grunted the Remove fellow.

"Yes, Percy," said Hubert timidly.

"Come along. I don't want to shout it out to all the Third!" said the Removeite harshly.

The fag followed him to the Elm Walk wonderingly. Bolsover major stopped under the elms, and looked, or, rather, glared, at his young brother.

"You know your Form master says that some pound notes were bagged from his study last evening?" he grunted.

"Yes," said Hubert.

"Well, I suppose it's all right," said Bolsover major. "You're not fool or rascal enough to touch a man's money, I suppose?"

The fag started back.

"Percy! What do you mean? Do you think—" he exclaimed shrilly.

"Haven't I just said that I don't?" growled his brother. "Somebody's taken the money, and I suppose it was a Third Form fag. It came into my mind that you might, owing money as you do—"

He broke off shamefacedly.

"You've no right to think such a thing, even for a minute!" panted the fag. "It's a shame! It's rotten of you, Percy!"

Bolsover major stared at him. This was the first time Hubert had ever spoken to him in anger. But the fag was angry now—angry and indignant.

"Well, I'm sorry," muttered the Removeite ungraciously. "I knew you were in a fix for money, or I shouldn't have thought of it for a second. It's all right. Look here, the sooner you pay Mrs. Mimble the better! I shall have to help you somehow."

Hubert stared at him, his indignation fading away in his utter amazement.

"But Mrs. Mimble's paid!" he gasped.

"She's paid?" exclaimed the Removeite.

"Yes; last evening."

"Who on earth paid her, then?"

"I did."

"You paid Mrs. Mimble two pounds?" exclaimed Bolsover major.

"Yes."

"And where did you get the money?" demanded his brother, his brow growing black again.

"You gave it to me."

"What the thump do you mean? I never gave you anything."

"Then who did?" gasped the fag, in bewilderment. "I—I thought it was you, Percy, when I found the two pound notes."

"You found two pound notes?"

"Yes, inside my Caesar, when I went in to prep."

Bolsover major gazed at him as if he could scarcely believe his ears.

"You mean to say that you found two pound notes in a book?"

"Yes. I thought you had put them there for me."

"I did nothing of the sort. If I'd been going to give you two pounds I should have given it to you."

"Well, I don't know who did, then," said Bolsover minor. "Somebody did, because the notes were there."

"Good heavens!" muttered his brother. "You mad little fool!"

"Do you think I ought not to have used the notes?" asked the fag. "I knew they were meant for me when I found them inside my Caesar. I thought you had put them there for me. I don't see why anybody else should."

"Chuck it, you young rotter!" hissed Bolsover major. "You awful little rascal! Do you think anybody's going to believe such a yarn as that? If you're going to tell lies about it, make up something a bit better than that!"

"It's not lies. It's the truth!"

"Don't tell me any such rot! Think Mr. Wiggins will believe it, if you tell him—or the Head, either?" snarled Bolsover major. "Good heavens! It's bound to come out now that you did it!"

"That I did what?" gasped the fag.

"Can't you see, you young fool? Wiggins is bound to remember your being in debt—he will ask Mrs. Mimble if you've paid her. When she tells him you have, he will know that it was you took the money from his study!"

"But I didn't—"

"Hold your lying tongue!" roared Bolsover major furiously. "Do you think I'm going to believe that some fellow put two pound notes in your Caesar?"

"Some fellow did—"

"Stop it, I tell you! You'll be sacked for this—and a precious disgrace it will be for me!" exclaimed Bolsover major savagely. "How am I to hold up my head at Greyfriars again, when my brother's been sacked for stealing? It's ruin for me here!"

"I tell you—"

"Shut up! Leave me alone!"

Bolsover major tramped away, his brow black as night. Hubert stood looking after him, with a colourless face. It was not Percy, after all, who had put the currency notes in his Caesar. The mysterious benefactor was still unknown. But that mystery was nothing to him now; what he was thinking of was his brother's belief that he had taken the notes from Mr. Wiggins' study.

He stood rooted to the ground, his face white, his eyes dilated. There had been a theft; and his brother believed that he was the thief. The very sky seemed darkened to the unhappy fag.

Paget and Tubb of the Third came up and joined him, both of them with very uneasy expressions. Strange thoughts

had been in their minds since the discovery of the theft of Mr. Wiggins' currency notes.

"What's the row, Hubert?" asked Paget. "Your major been ragging you?"

Bolsover minor panted.

"He—he thinks I took those notes from Mr. Wiggins' study, to pay Mrs. Mimble with!" he articulated.

Paget and Tubb exchanged a quick glance.

"It turns out that it wasn't Percy who put them in my Caesar. He says he didn't. I can't guess who it was. He thinks I never found any notes in my Caesar at all, but took them from Mr. Wiggins' study," said the fag brokenly. "And—and he's my brother! What will the other fellows think?"

Then Bolsover minor saw the expression on the startled faces of his chums. He caught his breath.

"You—!" he stammered. "You fellows, too—you think—you don't believe me. You—you think—" His voice died away.

"We—we don't," said Paget haltingly. "But—but if a fellow put currency notes in your Caesar, Hubert, you've got to find out who he was, and get him to say so. It sounds awfully steep!"

"Too jolly steep!" said Tubb. "You must have been off your head to do such a thing, young Bolsover."

"You—you think—"

"What's a fellow to think?" demanded Tubb angrily.

Bolsover minor did not answer that question. He turned and moved away, with pale face and drooping head, looking utterly stricken. His chums did not follow him.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Brothers!

"BOLSOVER minor!"

"That kid?"

"Rubbish!"

It was after morning class that the news spread.

There was general incredulity.

Some of the Remove fellows made it a point to speak to Bolsover major, and assure him that they didn't believe a word of what was said about his young brother.

The expression on Percy Bolsover's face, however, as he heard them was rather startling.

"My hat! He believes it himself!" said Squiff to some of the Remove fellows. "That's rotten! Might stick to his own flesh and blood."

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific," said Harroo Jamset Ram Singh. "The esteemed Bolsover is letting his worthy

and ridiculous brother down. I am surprised and terrifically disgusted."

Bolsover major's face, at dinner, was black and gloomy. That he believed the worst seemed fairly clear.

But by that time most of the fellows knew more of the details of the matter, and had begun to doubt.

It was known that Bolsover minor had unexpectedly paid the account at the

school shop, which had troubled him so much; that he had paid it in pound notes about the time that the money must have been taken from Mr. Wiggins' study; and that he gave an absolutely incredible account of how he had come by the cash.

According to his statement, he had found two pound notes inside his Caesar, and had supposed that his brother had placed them there for him. He knew now that his brother had not done so, but supposed that some other fellow had done it.

"Somebody might have!" Bob Cherry remarked, as the chums of the Remove walked in the quad after dinner. "But—but if any fellow did, he would come forward and say so now. Mauly, for instance, is just the chap to chuck away his money, helping a lame dog over a stile. But, of course, he would come forward now if that was the case."

"The fellow will come forward, if Bolsover minor's tale is true," said Harry Wharton. "But—"

"It's too steep," said Nugent, shaking his head.

"Well, it sounds awfully steep," said the captain of the Remove. "Anyhow, if it's true, the fellow who gave him the money will own up to it, as a matter of course."

Bolsover major tramped out into the quad, with a black brow. Many curious glances were cast towards him.

The bully of the Remove had not the slightest doubt on the subject. But he was not thinking so much now of the disgrace that must fall upon himself if his brother was expelled from Greyfriars for theft. Rather late in the day, Bolsover was thinking of his brother.

It was remorse that was gnawing at his heart now.

With all his rough and bullying ways, Bolsover was really attached to his brother. It was as much as anything else a false sense of shame, and fears of the sneering of such fellows as Skinner, that kept him from taking much notice of the fag at school. He dreaded the imputation of "softness" more than anything else.

But the shock of this discovery had made him look at the matter rather differently.

Hubert was his brother, and had a natural right to his counsel and help in the school; yet for a whole term he had hardly spoken to the fag half a dozen times. And when Hubert, in deep trouble, had come to him for help, how had he received him? Instead of listening to him, instead of helping and advising him, he had rebuffed him savagely and thrashed him. Certainly the fag had been to blame for getting into such a scrape. But it was not for his older brother to look on him simply as a

(Continued overleaf.)



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nuisance and drive him away, to get out of the scrape as best he could.

Bolsover realised that—now!

The wretched fag had come to him for help, and he had bullied him in his usual style. And now this had happened.

There was no excuse for a thief. But Bolsover major knew that the blame lay largely upon him. Hubert was a decent lad. If he had done this, he must have been very nearly out of his senses—beside himself with the worry of it. In a state of terrified hysteria, he had done it; that was the only explanation. That he had done it seemed clear enough. The story of the finding of two pound notes in his *Cæsar* was incredible. Bolsover did not believe that for a moment, or think of believing it.

He could not account for having had the money, except by a story that even the most unsuspicious fellows regarded as a cock-and-bull story.

Bolsover major tramped in the quad, downcast and utterly miserable.

If he had stood by his brother when the lad needed help and advice—

It was too late to think of that; and the fact that it was too late was a torment to his mind.

In afternoon class that day, Bolsover major sat in his place in the Remove, sunk in black and bitter thought.

Mr. Quelch glanced at him once or twice, but did not address him.

He understood Bolsover's state of mind, and compassionated him. The bully of the Remove sat there through the lesson, but did not take part in it. Mr. Quelch could be considerate.

After class, the bully of the Remove found his brother waiting for him in the corridor.

Hubert came timidly up to him, his face pale and harassed.

Rather to his surprise, Percy Bolsover did not greet him with a savage scowl. He only looked overwhelmed with wretchedness.

"Percy!" muttered the fag.

"Well?"

"I—I'm to go before the Head tomorrow morning," muttered Bolsover minor. "Mr. Wiggins doesn't believe what I've told him—about my finding the pound notes in my *Cæsar*."

"Of course he doesn't."

"But—but he's giving me time for the—the fellow to come forward, if it's true," said the fag. "If the fellow owns up about it, it's all right. I—I hope he will. If not, I go before the Head in the morning, and—and—"

"It's the sack."

Bolsover minor shivered.

"Yes. It's all my fault for getting into debt, like a fool," he muttered. "But I never touched Mr. Wiggins' money, Percy."

Bolsover major made a gesture.

"It's my fault," he muttered. "I ought to have helped you. I was a brute and a rotter! But—but you must have been mad to do it, kid."

"I didn't, Percy," said the fag earnestly. "I never went to Mr. Wiggins' study at all. You know what an ass he is; he's lost his money somewhere."

"Where did you get the money you paid Mrs. Mumble then?"

"I found it in my *Cæsar*, as I've told you—"

"Don't tell me that yarn again, Hubert."

"I swear it's true, Percy. I found two pound notes in my *Cæsar*, and thought you had put them there. Some

fellow did it, to get me out of my scrape—some fellow who knew about it. All the school has heard of it now, and the chap is bound to come forward."

Bolsover major stared at his brother. The fag's manner was so earnest that he was impressed in spite of himself.

"It won't be the sack," went on the fag. "I tell you the fellow who gave me that money must be a decent sort. He's got nothing to fear by speaking out, and he's bound to speak out. I'm sure he will. Why shouldn't he?"

"If it's true—yes."

"It's true, Percy, word of honour," said Hubert earnestly.

"Well, I—I—I'll try to believe you, kid," said his brother, with an effort. "It's jolly steep; but I'll try to swallow it. If it's true, the fellow who put the money there will say so. But why hasn't he said so already?"

"I—I don't know."

"Every fellow in the school knows, now?"

"Ye-es."

"Then why—"

"I—I can't make it out. But the fellow must be friendly, or he wouldn't have done it. He's bound to speak out now it's so serious. I'm certain that it will be all right."

"Well, I—I hope so," muttered Bolsover major. "I'll try to believe you, Hubert. But if the fellow doesn't speak out—"

"He will."

"If he doesn't, it's the sack."

"It won't come to that," said the fag. "Why should a fellow let me be sacked for nothing, when he's only got to speak out, and own up to having done a kind and generous thing? I'm not afraid of that. I'm only feeling rotten because—because it looks as if I've been telling lies—until the fellow speaks out. I'm not afraid of the sack. Percy, you can't believe that I'm a thief."

"I think you must have been off your head when you did it—and it's all my fault for not standing by you," groaned Bolsover major. "What am I to say to father, when you go home?"

"It won't come to that, I know. I've told the truth."

"I—I'll try to believe you, Hubert."

Bolsover major walked out into the quad, his mind deeply troubled. A little later Skinner, of the Remove, joined him.

Bolsover gave him a dark look.

"Rather rotten about your minor," said Skinner, "but I don't see letting it knock you out like this, Bolsover."

"Don't you?" grunted Bolsover.

"Well, no. After all, you never had anything to do with him," argued Skinner. "Fellows can't put it up against you. You never coddled your minor like that milkop Nugent, for instance."

"No, I never did," said Bolsover major bitterly.

"If you'll take a tip from me, you won't be seen with the young rotter," advised Skinner. "The less you have to do with him, the better, in the circumstances. Give him the clean go-by."

Bolsover major looked at him. His neglect of his brother was his own fault; but Skinner's influence had had a great deal to do with it. From a worldly point of view, Skinner's present advice was good. But Bolsover major, in the grip of remorse, was not in need of worldly advice. He did not answer Skinner in words, but he suddenly gripped him by the collar, and banged his head against the trunk of an elm.

There was a wild roar from Skinner.

"Ow, ow! Leggo!"

Bang, bang!

"You rotten bully! Oh!" howled Skinner.

With a swing of his powerful arm, Bolsover major sent the cad of the Remove sprawling.

"Any more advice to give?" he asked savagely.

"Ow, ow!"

Bolsover major tramped away, leaving Skinner sitting on the ground, rubbing his damaged head, and scowling like a demon. He did not receive any more advice from Harold Skinner.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

His Brother's Keeper!

AFTER breakfast the following morning, Mr. Wiggins called to Bolsover minor, as the juniors left their tables.

"Bolsover minor! You will go to the Head's study."

"Yes, sir!"

Many glances followed Bolsover minor as he left the dining-hall. He went with a pale face and drooping head.

Harry Wharton & Co. gave him pitying looks. Certainly they could make no excuse for what he had done, or was supposed to have done. But he was down and out; and somehow, conclusive as the matter looked, the chums of the Remove could not feel quite convinced that he had been guilty of so base an action.

Bolsover minor went wearily to the Head's corridor. Much to the surprise of other fellows, he had been confident the day before. But his confidence failed him now. For the unknown fellow who had placed the pound notes in his *Cæsar*, had not spoken out. It did not occur to Hubert, or to any other fellow, naturally, that it was not a Greyfriars man at all who had done him that good turn. Nobody thought of the recent visit of the two Highcliffe fellows in connection with the matter; it was not likely to occur to anyone that the Caterpillar had had a hand in the affair. And De Courcy, at Highcliffe, of course, knew nothing of what was going on at Greyfriars.

Why the unknown had not spoken out was an impenetrable mystery to Hubert.

It was no mystery to anyone else. The other fellows simply did not believe his story of the finding of the two pound notes. Of his two pals in the Third, Paget made an effort to believe it, without much success; Tabby openly scoffed.

Bolsover major followed his brother to Head's corridor. He stopped him at the corner.

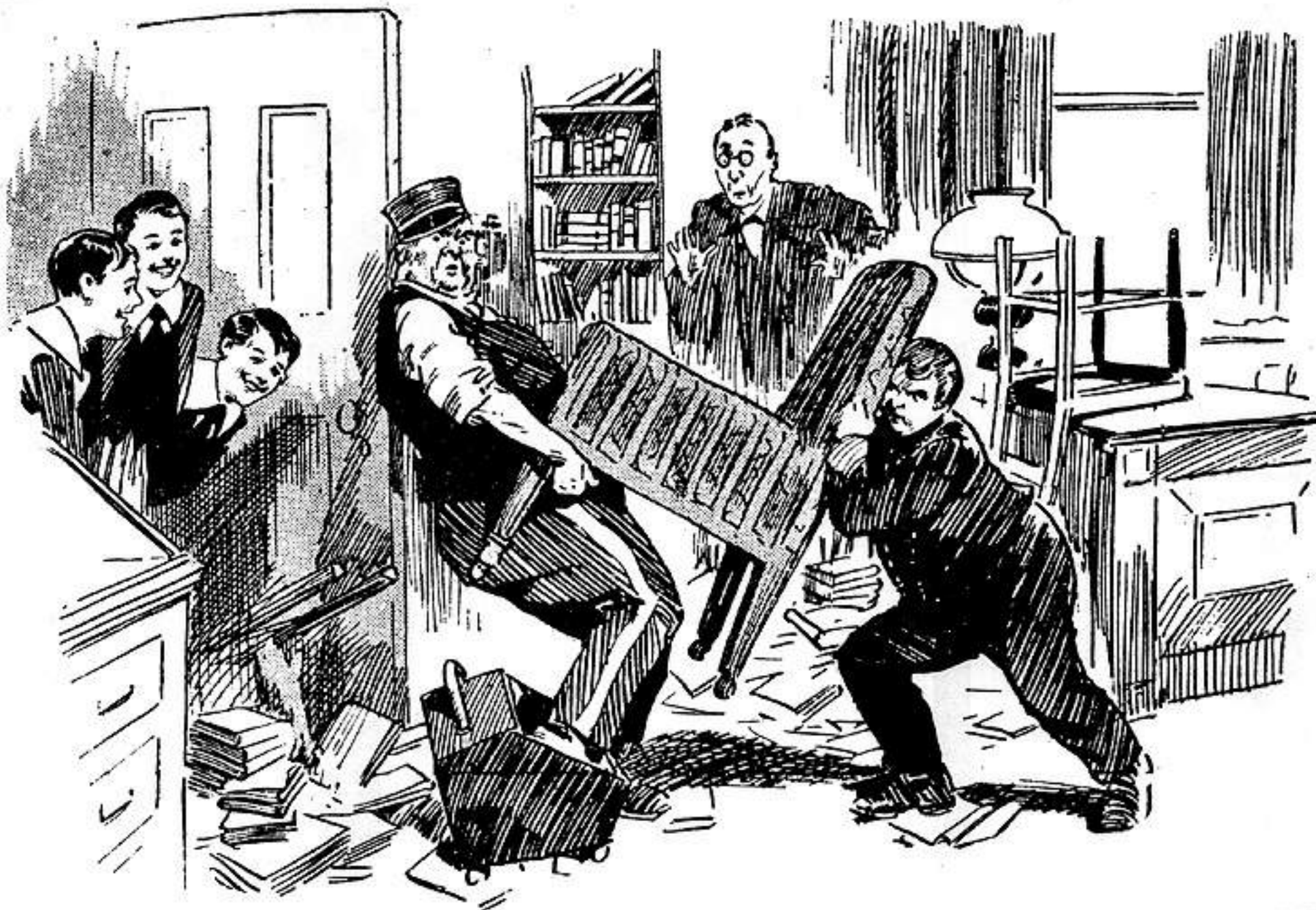
"Tell Dr. Locke the truth, Hubert," he said, in a low voice. "He may go easy with you—you being such a kid. But stick to the truth."

"I'm going to."

Mr. Wiggins came along, and conducted Bolsover minor to the Head's study. Mr. Wiggins was more flurried and flustered than ever.

The occurrence was a heavy blow to him. He reproached himself bitterly for having left money on his study table, thus placing temptation in the way of a boy of weak character. And oddly enough, in all Greyfriars, Mr. Wiggins was the one who most strongly doubted the fag's guilt. Gladly he would have passed the whole matter over in silence; but that was not in his power. Missing money was too serious a matter to be passed over, and the search for the missing pound notes had spread the news of the affair all through the school.

Dr. Locke's face was very grave and serious. The matter had been reported



Neither Gosling nor Trotter handled Mr. Wiggins' goods and chattels gently. Chairs fell over—books dropped right and left—and the settee crashed down in the doorway like a thunderclap. Mr. Wiggins, indeed, looked like losing his head, as his possessions were hurled right and left. "Can we help, sir?" asked Wibley of the Remove. (See Chapter 8.)

to him, and he had consented to allow time for Bolsover minor's extraordinary story to be put to the test. It had been put to the test now; and nothing had come of it. There was now only one opinion that the headmaster could form.

"Bolsover minor!" he said, in a deep voice.

The fag stood before him, his eyes on the floor, his cheeks white. He looked utterly crushed.

"This painful matter must now be settled," said the Head. "Have you anything to say, Bolsover minor?"

"I never touched Mr. Wiggins' money, sir," faltered the fag.

"I doubt very much, sir—" said Mr. Wiggins.

The Head made a gesture.

"We must deal with facts, Mr. Wiggins. You have not found the money that was missing from your study?"

"No. But—"

"Adequate search has been made, I presume?"

"Certainly."

"At the time that certain pound notes were missing from your study, this boy came into possession of a similar sum. He cannot account for the money coming into his possession."

"I've told you, sir—" muttered Bolsover minor.

"You adhere to your story that some unknown friend, knowing that you were in difficulties, placed two pound notes in your Caesar?"

"Yes, sir."

"Has the person come forward to admit having done so?"

"No, sir."

"Why should he not, if your statement is true?"

"I—I don't know, sir."

"Have you anything further to say?"

"Only that I never touched Mr. Wiggins' money, sir."

"I cannot, of course, believe you, Bolsover minor. The matter is quite clear," said the Head. "On account of your youth, I shall spare you the disgrace of an expulsion. Your father will be requested to come here and take you away quietly. You must leave Greyfriars."

"I—I never—"

"Silence! You will not attend classes this morning, Bolsover minor. You will pack your box and hold yourself in readiness to leave the school. That is all. You may go."

"But, sir, I—"

"Leave my study, Bolsover minor."

Blindly the unhappy fag turned to the door and limped out of the room. He went blindly down the corridor, his eyes heavy with unshed tears.

At the corner a hand dropped on his shoulder. His brother peered into his haggard little face.

"What's the verdict?" muttered Bolsover major.

"I'm expelled!"

"Oh!"

Hubert leaned against the wall. The tears, long restrained, ran down his colourless cheeks now.

"I never did it, Percy—I never did! What will mother say when I go home? Can't you help me, Percy—can't you help me?"

"How can I help you?" muttered Bolsover major. "If I'd helped you before—" He groaned. "It's too late now!"

"I never did it!" sobbed the fag. "I swear I never did! If the money was

taken, somebody else did it. I never did!"

Bolsover major stared at him. Somehow, belief forced itself into his doubting mind now. At the end of his tether, sacked from the school in disgrace, the fag still held to his story, incredible as it was.

"I—I believe you, Hubert," muttered Bolsover at last. "I do believe you, kid. Oh, it's all my fault—all my fault! If I'd helped you when you asked me—"

"It isn't your fault, Percy!" said the fag, loyal even in his bitter misery. "You're not to blame. But I never did it!" He gave a gasping cry. "I can't be turned out of the school, Percy! I can't go home like this! Can't you help me somehow?"

Percy Bolsover drew a deep, quivering breath.

The fag, little more than a child after all, utterly crushed by the blow that had fallen upon him, called to his brother for help in the depths of his misery and despair—the brother who could have helped him, had he chosen, while there was yet time.

Was there yet time?

"Hubert"—Bolsover's voice was hoarse—"you swear that you never did it—you swear that you're not a thief?"

"Word of honour, I never did it!"

"That's enough, then." Bolsover major's face was white as chalk now, but it was set in resolve. "You shan't go, kid. They'll say at home that I ought to have kept you out of this—that I ought to have looked after you at school—and it's true. But—but I can get you out of this, and I'm going

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to do it. Pull yourself together, kid—I'm seeing you through!"

The fag, with a brightening face, looked at him in wonder.

"But how, Percy?"

"Never mind how," said Bolsover major roughly. "Leave it to me—I know how. I tell you I'm seeing you through, and you're safe. Cut off now!"

Bolsover minor obediently cut off, his face bright. His faith in his brother was complete. How Percy was to save him, he could not even begin to guess, but Percy had said that he would save him, and that was enough.

For some moments Bolsover major stood very still. There was a struggle in his breast. But he moved at last and went along to the Head's study, tapped at the door, and opened it.

Dr. Locke glanced at him.

"Bolsover major! What—"

"I—I came to speak to you, sir," said Bolsover major steadily. "Now—now it's turned out like this, sir, I—I feel bound to own up!"

"What do you mean?"

"It was I, sir!"

"What? What was you, Bolsover?"

"I—I had to go to Mr. Wiggins' study on Wednesday evening, sir," said Bolsover major, in the same steady, dull voice. "I saw the currency notes on his table. I—I came back afterwards and took them!"

"What!"

"You?" exclaimed Mr. Wiggins.

"I—I wasn't going to say anything," said Bolsover major. "I—I thought nobody would know. But now it's been put on my brother, I—I can't keep it up. I—I did it, sir!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Dr. Locke, aghast.

He stared blankly at the bully of the Remove.

"You—you confess to the theft, Bolsover?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Bless my soul! You—you unmitigated young rascal!" exclaimed the Head. "You have allowed me to come within an ace of expelling an innocent lad—your own brother—from Greyfriars, and at the very last moment you make this confession! Doubtless you would have remained silent even now had the boy been any but your own brother!"

"Yes, sir."

"You admit that?" thundered the Head.

"Yes, sir."

"Oh dear, oh dear!" murmured Mr. Wiggins.

Dr. Locke rose to his feet.

"Bolsover major, I am glad to see that there is some remnant of decent feeling left in you—that you are not capable of allowing your own brother to suffer for what you have done. But if you hope, sir, that your confession will cause me to deal leniently with you, you are mistaken. You are expelled from this school!"

Bolsover major breathed hard.

"You will be expelled in public, before classes!" said the Head. "You will be sent home in charge of a prefect. At the earliest possible moment Greyfriars shall be relieved of the contamination of your presence. Mr. Wiggins, please find Bolsover minor at once, and tell him that he is cleared—that he will remain—that I, his headmaster, regret having condemned him in error. As for this wretched boy, he will be locked in the punishment-room until the school has assembled to witness his expulsion!"

He dropped his hand on Bolsover major's shoulder.

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"Come!"

Five minutes later the key of the punishment-room turned on Percy Bolsover.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Down and Out!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter's little round eyes almost bulged through his spectacles with excitement.

"I say!" he gasped. "I say, you fellows! Who'd have thought it?"

"Who'd have thought what, fathead?" grunted Bob Cherry.

"Bolsover major—sacked!" gasped Bunter.

"Do you mean Bolsover minor, ass?"

"No!" gasped Bunter. "Bolsover major! It was that rotter all the time! He's sacked!"

The group of juniors in the quadrangle stared at Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove liked to be the bearer of startling news. But seldom had he carried news so startling as this.

"Bolsover major—sacked!" exclaimed Peter Todd. "Why the thump should he be sacked, you howling ass?"

"He did it!"

"He did what?" roared half a dozen voices.

"Pinched Wiggy's currency notes!" spluttered Bunter. "He kept it dark till the last minute—never owned up till it was certain that young Bolsover was going to be bunked. Then he let out!"

"Gammon!"

"The gammonfulness is terrific!"

"Honest Injun!" yelled Bunter. "I just heard Wiggy tell Mr. Quelch—and you should have seen Quelch's face! Knocked all of a heap! I say, you fellows, there's going to be an expulsion in Big Hall—there's an order for all the school to turn up there before class! Bolsover major's locked up in punny now—fact! He's got it coming!"

"Well, my hat!" exclaimed Harry Wharton blankly. "I—I can't believe it! More likely Bolsover major than his young brother, perhaps; but—"

"There's Wingate—let's ask him!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

Wingate of the Sixth came out of the House. There was a rush of the excited Removites to speak to him.

"Wingate! Is it true—about Bolsover major?"

"Is he sacked?"

"Is Bolsover major expelled?"

Wingate nodded.

"Yes."

"Oh, Great Scott! But why—what—what—"

"Get into Hall, all of you," said the captain of Greyfriars. "The school is assembled to witness an expulsion. It takes place at nine o'clock."

"But—but that kid in the Third?" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "What about Bolsover minor?"

"Nothing about him," answered Wingate. "He's all right. His brother owned up that he robbed Mr. Wiggins. The young scoundrel seems to have left it to the latest possible moment, hoping, I suppose, that his brother would get clear without it. Then he went to the Head and owned up."

"Oh, my hat!"

Wingate of the Sixth passed on, leaving the Remove fellows staring at one another.

"Well, this takes the bun!" said Bob Cherry. "I wouldn't care to touch a thief with a barge-pole, but the fellow must have some rag of decency in him. He could have kept it dark; nobody suspected him."

"And let his brother get the chopper for him?" grunted Johnny Bull. "A fellow could hardly do that."

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"It beats me!" he said. "I know Bolsover major went to Mr. Wiggins' study that evening, but—but I'd never have dreamed—only I had a feeling all along that young Bolsover never had done it."

"Same here," said Bob.

"The samefulness is terrific."

"I can't catch on to it," said Peter Todd. "Bolsover major has plenty of tin; he couldn't have wanted Wiggy's pound notes very badly. May have been playing the goat again; he used to get mixed up in Smithy's betting stunts. May be that."

"I say, you fellows, I suspected it all along," announced Billy Bunter. "You remember I told you I didn't think it was young Bolsover, Toddy."

"I remember you told me you were certain it was young Bolsover," grunted Peter Todd.

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Thank goodness it's come out, anyhow!" said Harry Wharton. "Bolsover must be a frightful outsider; but it was decent to own up in time. They had settled that it was his kid brother."

The news spread through Greyfriars like wildfire.

Many and various were the opinions expressed on Percy Bolsover of the Remove. That he was an absolute outsider and rotter was certain if he had stolen money from a study; but the fact that he had had decency enough not to let his brother suffer in his place showed that he was not bad all through, at all events. That was a redeeming circumstance; but all the fellows agreed that the sooner he was gone from Greyfriars the better. And the Head was losing no time about it; when classes commenced that morning in the Greyfriars Form-rooms Bolsover major would be gone.

The Removites, as they crowded into Big Hall, had a glimpse of their Form master's face. It was dark and bitter in expression. Mr. Quelch was most decidedly not pleased to find that the culprit, after all, was a member of his own Form.

In the Third the news was received with breathless surprise and a great deal of rejoicing. Paget and Tubb hurried in search of Bolsover minor to tell him how jolly glad they were.

They found Hubert Bolsover looking white and stunned.

To the unhappy fag the whole thing seemed like some evil dream. His brother's confession came like a thunder-clap to him.

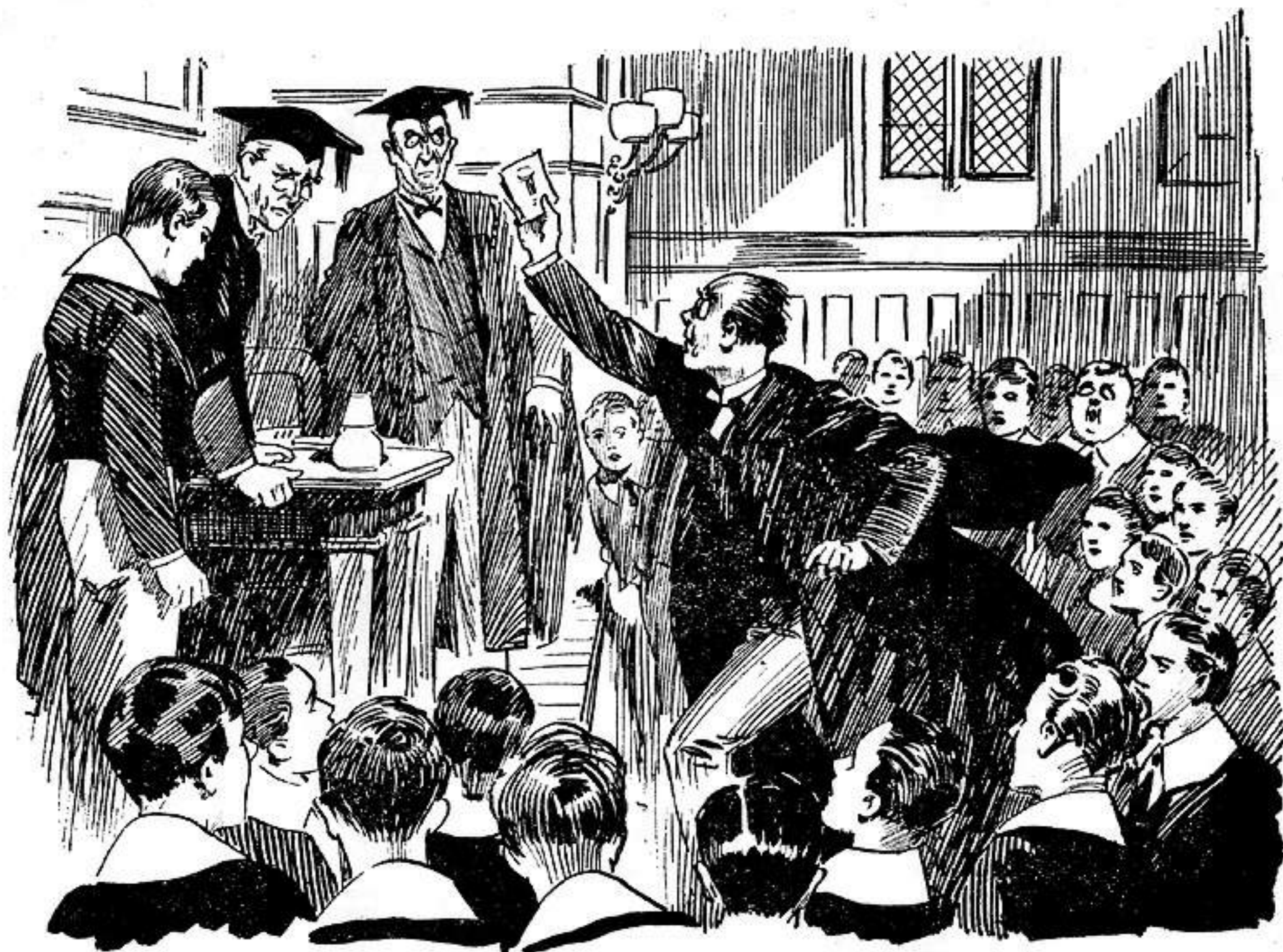
Percy had said that he would save him. The fag had not guessed—had not dreamed of guessing—that this was the way. Percy, on his own confession, was a thief; the brother he had looked up to and admired was a thing that no decent fellow would care to touch. In a corner of the deserted Form-room Hubert Bolsover sat, with tears of utter misery and shame streaming down his cheeks.

"Blubbing!" said Tubb, when they found him at last. "Buck up, old scout! You're all right! You've heard?"

Bolsover minor nodded.

"I'll say I'm sorry," said Tubb magnificently. "I didn't believe your yarn of those pound notes in your Caesar. You'll admit it was jolly steep, what?"

The fag groaned in bitterness of spirit. He did not care much now for himself, or for what his friends in the Third



There was an excited buzz of voices, and amazed eyes followed Mr. Wiggins' wild flight up the Hall to the dais where the Head stood, with Bolsover major downcast before him. "Mr. Wiggins!" gasped the Head. "What does this mean? What—" "Dr. Locke, I—I—" Mr. Wiggins spluttered breathlessly. "I have found them—the—the currency notes—the—the money— Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" (See Chapter 13.)

believed or disbelieved. He was thinking of his brother, locked in the punishment-room, waiting to be expelled from the school.

"You're all serene now," went on Tubb. "It's all right! Pull yourself together, old chap. The Third don't blub!"

"He's thinkin' about his major, fat-head," said Paget in a low voice.

George Tubb snorted.

"Blow his major! The rotter—a beastly bully, and now, as it turns out, a thief! Rotter all through!"

"Shut up, you ass; he's the kid's brother!"

Another angry snort from Tubb. But the stricken look on Bolsover minor's face silenced him.

"Come along, kid," said Paget softly. "We've got to get into Hall. Head's order. Look here, speak to Mr. Wiggins, and he may get you off, if you'd rather give it a miss."

Bolsover minor shook his head.

"I don't care!" he said faintly. "I don't care for anything now! I shall ask my father to take me away from Greyfriars after this—"

"Come along, kid!"

Paget slipped his arm through Bolsover minor's and led him away to Hall. Tubb of the Third followed, grunting.

The school was assembled—all the fellows in their places, all the Sixth Form prefects, all the masters with one exception. Mr. Wiggins was not there. Some of the fellows noticed that the master of the Third was not present, and wondered that even the absent-minded

Mr. Wiggins could forget a function so serious as this.

There was a restless buzz of voices in Hall, a stirring of feet. The prefects called loudly for silence as the upper door opened and the Head entered.

With Dr. Locke came Bolsover major. All eyes were fixed on the bully of the Remove.

Bolsover looked at no one. His face was white and his eyes sought the floor. The usually swaggering, overbearing fellow was strangely subdued. He looked down and out; but there was little compassion in the glances that were cast towards him. A self-confessed thief was not wanted at Greyfriars.

The Head's face was grave and stern.

Bolsover major stood silent with downcast eyes while the Head's voice, not loud but deep, sounded through the packed Hall. Bolsover's manner was composed, hard, almost sullen. He started a little as the Head spoke of him as a thief on his own confession, as a fellow who stood before his school-fellows clothed with shame as with a garment. The crimson crept into his pale cheeks, and he raised his eyes for a moment and glanced towards the silent ranks of the Remove. Then his glance fell again, and he relapsed into his manner of indifferent hardihood. The Head's voice rose a little as he addressed the condemned junior directly.

"You, Percy Bolsover, are expelled from Greyfriars, you—"

The Head broke off, as there came a sudden interruption. The big oak door at the lower end of the Hall was flung

open, and the silence was broken by a buzz of surprise as every fellow in Hall craned his head round to stare.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not an Expulsion!

"GOODNESS gracious!" murmured Mr. Wiggins.

Mr. Wiggins was in his study.

It was probable that Mr. Wiggins was the most miserable person in all Greyfriars that morning, apart from the condemned Removite and his unhappy brother in the Third. The kind-hearted little gentleman blamed himself severely for the carelessness which had been at least partly the cause of this disgrace falling upon the school.

Mr. Wiggins had gone to his study after leaving the Head, in a very perturbed frame of mind. He was glad enough that Bolsover minor had been cleared, but the thought of any fellow being expelled was painful to him. He remembered how he had had the currency notes lying on his table when Bolsover major had come to his study that fatal evening; how he had carelessly left them there when he went to Mr. Prout; and he reproached himself as partly the cause of a wretched boy's downfall.

He moved restlessly about his study. On his table lay his morning's letters, which Mr. Wiggins generally opened at

breakfast, but which he had not heeded on this particular morning, with so much trouble and concern on his mind.

But he sat down to open them at last, rather to distract his mind from painful thoughts than from any interest in his correspondence.

One of the letters bore on the outside the style and title of Messrs. Snook's Tourist Agency. It was a reply to the letter Mr. Wiggins had written on Wednesday, inquiring concerning a certain excursion in which he intended to take part in the summer vacation.

He slit the envelope carelessly enough, little interested now in any idea of an excursion to the Bernese Oberland.

To his surprise, two pound notes dropped from the letter as he unfolded it.

He blinked at them, and ejaculated: "Goodness gracious!"

He had written a simple inquiry to Messrs. Snook, and there was no imaginable reason why they should send him pound notes.

He adjusted his glasses and blinked at the letter. It was a typewritten letter, and it ran:

"Dear sir,—We are in receipt of your very kind inquiry concerning the summer excursion to the Bernese Oberland, and are sending you full information under separate cover.

"We return you herewith two pound notes which were enclosed with your inquiry, doubtless in error.

"Your acknowledgment of their safe receipt will oblige.

"Yours faithfully,

"SNOOK & SON."

Mr. Wiggins put his slanting glasses straight once more, and read that amazing letter through a second time.

Mr. Wiggins was not quick on the uptake. But the comprehension of what had happened forced itself into his bewildered mind at last.

The missing pound notes were in his hand!

He remembered how he had hastily finished and sealed up that letter, with Bolsover major waiting in the study. He had had those two pound notes lying ready to place in the registered envelope.

Obviously, he had absent-mindedly placed them in the letter to Messrs. Snook & Son, along with his inquiry concerning the summer excursion. It was not a novel occurrence for Mr. Wiggins to place the wrong letter in the wrong envelope. It was not unknown for him to address a letter to the wrong person. If he had an enclosure to put in a letter he was almost as likely as not to put it in the wrong letter. And this, obviously, was what he had done on this occasion.

"Goodness gracious!" said Mr. Wiggins faintly.

He blinked feebly at the pound notes.

They were the same, that was clear. He could not identify them by their numbers, because he never took the numbers of notes. But obviously, the two pound notes he had unknowingly despatched to Messrs. Snook & Son were the two pound notes he had had on his table when he sealed up the letter. They had not been stolen at all. Mr. Wiggins recalled how he had flurried down to the school letter-box with the letter to Snook & Son just in time to catch the post, little dreaming that he had enclosed two pound notes inside it. He himself had sent the notes away by post, and had then returned to his study to search for them!

"Oh, dear, dear, dear!" murmured Mr. Wiggins.

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He blinked through one lens and over the other of his slanting glasses at the pound notes. There they were—not stolen at all! And Bolsover major was to be expelled from Greyfriars that morning on his own confession of having stolen them!

Mr. Wiggins gasped at the thought.

Bolsover major couldn't have stolen the notes, since they had been in Messrs. Snook's office at the time, and were now safe in Mr. Wiggins' own hand! Why had the foolish boy pretended that he had taken them? To save his brother, who was condemned for having taken the notes that had not been taken at all. Bolsover minor's strange story of having found two pound notes in his Caesar was true. It had been taken as proved when his brother confessed to the theft from Mr. Wiggins' study. Obviously, it was true, now that Mr. Wiggins' notes had turned up again. But Bolsover major—

Mr. Wiggins staggered to his feet.

He was well aware that his absent-mindedness was a standing joke in the school. Certainly he did not want to furnish more material for laughter and jeers. But it was not a time to think of that. He flurried out of his study with the recovered notes clutched in his hand, only anxious to appraise the Head of the truth before it was too late. He burst, gasping, into Dr. Locke's study.

"My dear sir—"

The Head was not there. Mr. Wiggins blinked round him helplessly, and then remembered that the Head was due in Hall. The expulsion was taking place in these very moments. Without stopping to take breath Mr. Wiggins rushed out of the study and headed for Big Hall.

Through deserted passages he ran, his gown whisking behind him. He heard the deep voice of the Head within as he reached the old oak doors. Without a pause he shoved the big door open. Breathlessly he rushed into the crowded Hall, with whisking gown.

There was an excited buzz of voices at once, and amazed eyes followed Mr. Wiggins' wild flight up the Hall to the dais where the Head stood, with Bolsover major downcast before him.

"Silence!" rapped out Mr. Quelch.

"Silence!" shouted the prefects.

"What the merry thump—" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Silence!"

Silence was restored at last. To all ears came the Head's severe inquiry.

"Mr. Wiggins! Sir! What does this mean? What—"

"Dr. Locke, I—I—" Mr. Wiggins spluttered breathlessly. "I have found them—the—the currency notes. The—the money— Oh, dear! Oh, dear!"

"What?"

Mr. Wiggins held up the two pound notes.

Dr. Locke gazed at them.

"You—you see—the letter—my letter—mistake. They sent them back—only just opened the letter! All a mistake! No theft—"

Mr. Wiggins was growing incoherent.

"Calm yourself, Mr. Wiggins." The Head's voice was icy. "Am I to understand that those notes are the notes that were supposed to be missing from your study on Wednesday evening?"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Mr. Wiggins.

"Am I to understand that no theft has taken place at all?"

"Precisely, sir."

There was a buzz in the crowded Hall again, and with difficulty the masters and prefects restored silence.

Bolsover major had raised his head. His face was flushed with new hope.

"This is certain, Mr. Wiggins?" demanded the Head.

"Quite certain, sir. These are the notes."

"Very well."

Dr. Locke turned to Bolsover major again.

"Bolsover!"

"Yes, sir," muttered the junior.

"You confessed to having taken two pound notes from Mr. Wiggins' study. No notes were taken, as it now transpires. You deceived me. Your confession was a false one. What did you mean by it?"

Even as he spoke, however, an understanding of what the junior's confession meant came to the Head's mind.

"You were going to send my brother away, sir," muttered Bolsover. "He was innocent. I believed that he was innocent."

"Upon my word! And you—"

"He's my brother, sir," said Bolsover major doggedly. "I wasn't going to see him sacked. It was up to me to pull him through."

"Bless my soul," said the Head blankly.

There was a deep silence in Hall. The Remove fellows stared at one another.

The Head's voice was gentle when he spoke again.

"Nothing can justify a falsehood, Bolsover major. But—but you deliberately took this upon yourself, and faced expulsion from the school, because you believed your brother to be innocent, as is indeed quite clear now."

"Yes, sir."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head again.

There was silence. It was broken by a shout from the ranks of the Remove.

"Bravo, Bolsover!"

"Silence!" shouted Mr. Prout.

"Silly ass!" said Skinner. "Of all the thumping idiots, Bolsover takes the cake! Who'd have thought it of him?"

"Good old Bolsover!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Silence!"

"Bolsover!" The Head was speaking again. "You will not, of course, be expelled. Your deception of me I can pardon, and I will even say that I am pleased to find you capable of so great an act of devotion." He turned to the buzzing School. "Dismiss!"

"Hurrah!"

The Head was gone from Hall by the upper door. Bolsover major stood dazedly, hardly believing that at the last moment the clouds had rolled by. There was a rush of juniors up the hall, in spite of masters and prefects. Bolsover minor was the first to reach his brother.

"Percy!" he gasped. "Percy! You—you— Oh, Percy!" The lag's voice choked.

Bolsover major grinned at him faintly. "I told you I'd pull you through, kid."

"Oh, Percy!"

With a rush the Remove fellows surrounded Bolsover major. For the first time since he had been at Greyfriars Bolsover major had an ovation from his Form. Nobody in the Remove had suspected the truth; nobody had dreamed that the bully of the Form was capable of what he had done. But now that they knew, they were willing and eager to make amends. Skinner stood out of the excited crowd, with a sneer on his face; but every other fellow joined in crowding round Bolsover, even Snoop and Stott.

"Shoulder high!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Hurrah!"

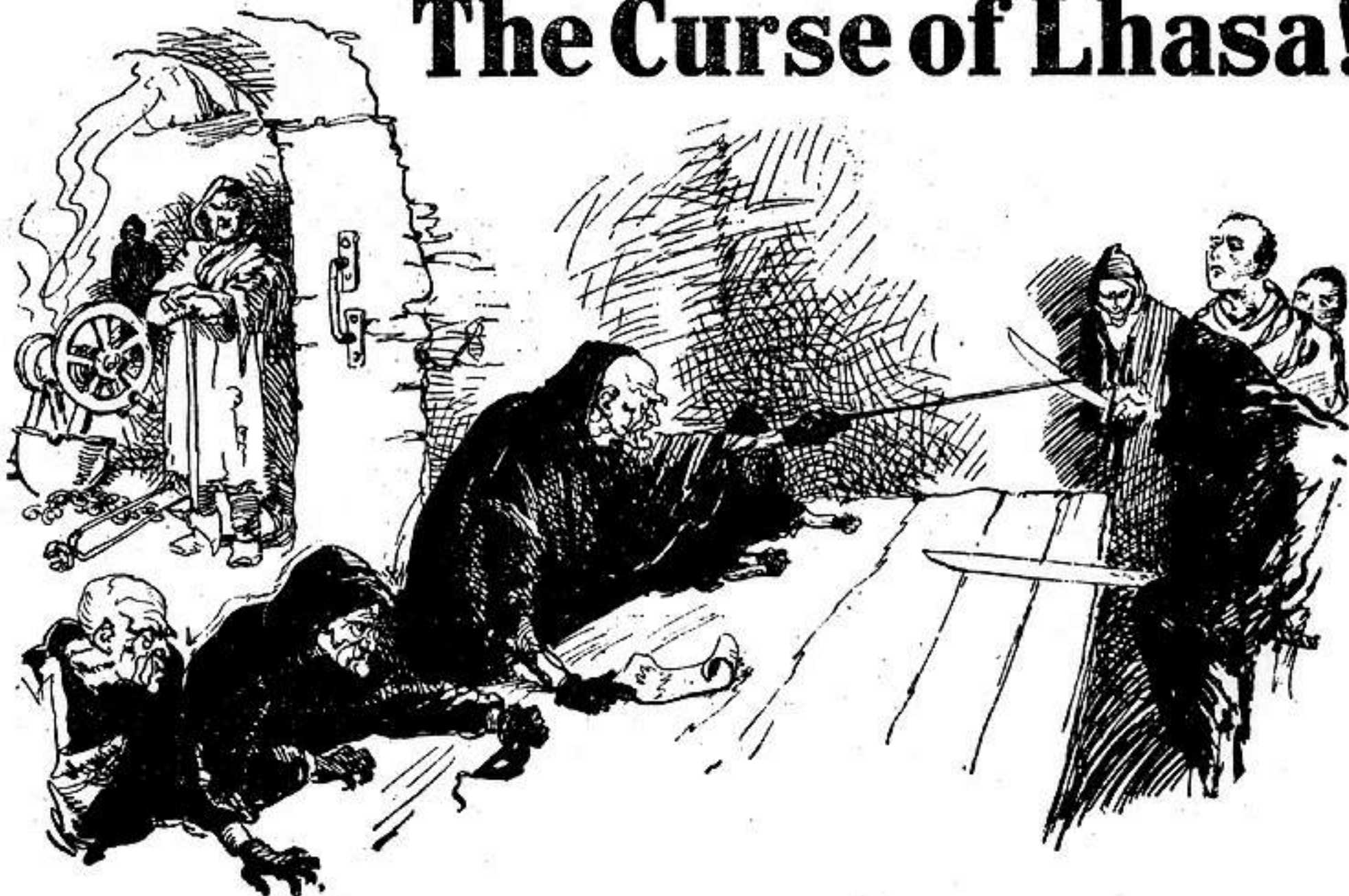
"Oh, chuck it!" said Bolsover major.

"Up he goes!"

(Continued on page 27.)

THE COUNCIL OF FIVE! It is said of those who cross the threshold of the monastery in which the dreaded Council of Five reside that they never return. Yet Ferrers Locke and his assistant don't give up hope, not even when the Council of Five sentence them to tortures fiendish and indescribable!

The Curse of Lhasa!



A Vivid, Pulsating Story of Mystery and Intrigue in the little known country of Tibet, featuring Ferrers Locke, detective, and Jack Drake, his boy assistant.

To the Karo La!

SLOWLY, horribly, one arm of the Buddha uncurled and stretched outwards till it pointed straight at Ferrers Locke and Drake. The grovelling priests watched, fascinated. Motionless, through the leaping curtain of fire stretched the arm, and the ugly head showed leeringly beyond the flames.

"Behold!" thundered a sonorous voice. "Behold the torch of war, ye unbelievers!"

"A sign!" shrieked one of the monks. "'Tis the voice of Buddha!"

With one accord they launched themselves to their feet, no longer doubters, but wild fanatics.

Ferrers Locke and Jack were borne to the ground by sheer weight of numbers. Then dimly to their ears came the voice:

"Deliver them to Kang Pu beyond Gyantso Plain!"

The flames died down. Ferrers Locke and Jack struggled desperately, but the odds were hopeless. They were overpowered, and, as they were jerked to their feet, held by a score of hands, Kala Dului appeared from some doorway in the shadows, carrying in his hand a flaming torch.

The press of monks opened to allow Kala Dului to approach. He thrust his bloodless face towards that of Ferrers Locke, and his eyes surveyed the detective gloatingly.

"What say you now, you dog?" he demanded harshly, and with clenched fist he struck the detective full in the mouth.

"Your trickery has served you well!" replied Ferrers Locke grimly. "But that blow shall be repaid, you sorcerer!"

"Repaid?" Kala Dului shook with silent laughter. "Repaid by whom, you dog? Not by you, for even now Kang

Pu awaits you, and short shrift shall you receive from the Council of Death!"

He paused, his hawklike eyes fixed on the detective's face, searching for some sign of fear.

"Dost know the Council of Death, who know so much?" he went on. "Dost know of the lords of life and death who hold Tibet in the hollow of their hands, and who bow before the lightest word of Kang Pu? Dost know the Five, you dog? The Five who have ruled in the secret monasteries of Lhasa throughout the countless ages, whom death has passed by, and on whom the hand of time has dwelt but lightly?"

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

Prompted by the murderous activities of the all-powerful

KANG PU, the self-styled Chosen of Buddha and fanatic who, to satisfy his own monstrous ambitions, would set the whole world ablaze with war.

FERRERS LOCKE, the famous Baker Street detective, accompanied by his plucky young assistant,

JACK DRAKE, leaves England for Tibet, determined to discover the fate of an expedition led by

MAJOR BEVERLEY, which is believed to have fallen into Kang Pu's clutches. At the outset of their journey Locke and Drake come up against

KALA DULUI, a priest and one of the zealous agents of Kang Pu. But they manage to give him the slip. Then, led by a

TOMO, an outcast, the twain arrive eventually at the Seven Monasteries. In one of these Locke and Drake find Kala Dului exhorting a number of the priests of Buddha to prepare for war. Locke exposes the trickery Kala Dului has employed, but the cunning priest does not admit defeat. Suddenly from the huge idol of Buddha there proceeds a curtain of flame which almost hides the idol from view. Thinking the flames a special sign from Buddha, the superstitious priests prostrate themselves, whilst Locke and Drake look on aghast.

(Now read on.)

"You but wag that long tongue of yours to no purpose, Kala Dului!" replied Ferrers Locke. "What care I for your Council of Death?"

Kala Dului raised his hand as though to strike. Then he lowered it slowly, his face malevolent.

"Wait"—he spoke in almost a whisper, and more than one monk shivered—"wait till you stand in the chamber before the council! Wait till your eyes dwell upon the Five. Then shall we see if you care, you dog! When their sightless eyes are fixed upon you and their toothless gums pronounce your sentence—when the black wand is raised and the mark of death is placed against your name, will you not care? Cursed are you who would probe behind the veil which shrouds holy Lhasa! But never shall those eyes of yours see beyond the sacred river of Kyi Chu."

He wheeled on the monks and rapped out an order. Ferrers Locke and Jack were hustled out of the temple to an open courtyard where were grouped mules, ponies, and men clad in suits of light mail. Some of these latter held torches, and by the light of these Ferrers Locke and Jack were bound to the saddles of two mules, their hands tied behind their backs and their feet lashed together beneath the brutes' bellies.

The animals were wheeled into line. Kala Dului, muffled in a huge blanket, took his place at the head of the cavalcade after a wait of nearly an hour in the bitter cold. Two men, armed with large double-edged swords, rode on each side of the detective. Behind him came Jack, similarly guarded. Kala Dului gave a command, and the cavalcade started forward into the night.

They wound their way along the mountainside. They did not take the

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downward road leading to the plateau, but emerged, after some two hours of rough going, on to a passably good road which led downwards between high, precipitous cliffs.

The rocky, barren ground began to give way in the grey light of the early morning to stunted shrubs and weak, yellow grass in sparse patches. This, in turn, yielded to arable land, and they began to pass through clumps of poplar and willow trees. Signs of human habitation became more abundant as they reached the lower levels of Gyantse Plain.

Jack noted that the plain lay at the intersection of four great valleys which ran into each other almost at right angles. The temperature grew appreciably warmer as the cavalcade passed through the Naini Valley and wound into the town of Gyantse. Town indeed. For had not a civilisation existed here in the very heart of Asia when primitive man roamed the forests of Europe? The buildings were of stone, the streets narrow and filthy. Wondering men, women, and children gathered to see the line of ponies pass, and pariah dogs—great, gaunt, hungry-looking brutes—snapped at the animals' heels.

But none dare question. For did not a stern-faced, black-robed one ride in front? A man of much power to be at the head of such a cavalcade! Arrogance in the very eyes of him which looked ever ahead and glanced neither to right nor left. Some great Lama, he, riding to holy Lhasa on business which was no affair of miserable peasants.

They rode past the walls of Palkhor Choide, one of the most famous monasteries in Tibet. On the face of the walls, in bas-relief, were traced Buddhist symbols of the sun and crescent moon. From the terraces monks with shaven heads looked down, silent and impassive. Then on, through the outskirts of Gyantse, and ahead lay the road to Lhasa. Lhasa, the hidden, the mysterious—the city in which no stranger might set foot and live!

Camp was made that night at the dilapidated and long-disused fort of Nagartse Jong, which lay about twenty miles beyond Gyantse. Ferrers Locke and Jack were pulled from their mules and their feet retied. They were not allowed to converse, and lay huddled on the ground between their guards.

Jack's thoughts went back to Major Beverley and his small party of white men who, months before, had passed along that way. Where were they now? Dead, or rotting out their lives in some dungeon of Salai Monastery. And as he thought of the shadow of Kang Pu which had stalked by the side of that small party from the day they crossed the frontier, it became forced in on Jack how hopeless was the quest of Ferrers Locke.

A thousand eyes, a thousand guardians had Tibet. How could two strangers ever hope to force a passage through to Lhasa? To reach the Seven Monasteries near Gyantse had been no small feat, but the end had been inevitable. Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake had been in many tight corners and often death had loomed very close. But never had their plight been more hopeless than this. For even should they escape they would be hunted down by the black-robed priests, the agents of Kang Pu. They had not a friend nor a soul they could trust in that land. They thought of the Tomo, and wondered if the outcast was aware of their capture, or if, indeed, he had known more than he said.

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They fell asleep at last, despite the cold, but sleep came only fitfully and in snatches. They were up and moving with the dawn. The road began to incline upwards and pass between fields of barley and mustard. Through many scattered villages they rode, and gradually the country became again more bleak and barren. Only once did Kala Dului speak to the prisoners, and that was when a halt was called at the village of Gubchi. Wheeling his mule, he rode back down the line, reining in as he reached Ferrers Locke.

"Well, dog, art weary with much riding?" he demanded. "You will be wearier yet, I vow, by the time we reach the Karo la!"

Without waiting for an answer, he jerked his mount forward. Ferrers Locke was, at least, grateful for the information. He had been wondering as to their destination. So it was the Karo Pass for which they were making. And somewhere beyond the Karo Pass, hidden amongst the rolling hills, lay the Salai Monastery and Lhasa. Lhasa, upon which Kala Dului had vowed the eyes of Ferrers Locke and Jack would never rest.

Pushing onwards from Gubchi the road led upwards and upwards into a wild and desolate region. Far ahead lay snow-capped ranges as though Nature herself had flung up ramparts to guard Lhasa from the world. The few scattered buildings which they passed were streaked with diagonal stripes of red, blue, and white, symbols of the Ning-ma sect of Buddhists who inhabited that region.

For three days they travelled, and on the evening of the third day made camp on the snow-covered range of Noijin Kang Sang, under the shadow of the Karo la. Wrapped in his blanket, huge and grotesque in the multitudinous folds of clothings which he wore, Kala Dului stalked to where Ferrers Locke lay between his guards. He stood looking down on the detective in silence, then his lips twisted into his mirthless smile, and he flung out a pointing arm.

"Your hour draws near, you violator of the holy shrines of Buddha!" he said. "Merciful darkness hides from your eyes what lies up yonder beyond the Karo la. But in the chamber the council are already gathered and await your coming! The Five have long known of our approach, as we have toiled upwards from the plain. But through the darkness shines the signal light which carries word to the peoples of Tibet that the Council of Death are gathered in the chamber beyond the Karo la!"

The guards shivered, but it was not with the cold. Their mumbling lips voiced prayers and incantations. And far up in the darkness there glowed ruddily a blood-red flame.

"All night it will burn," went on Kala Dului, "and shall die with the coming of the day! And in the chamber waiting—waiting—waiting—sit the Council of Death!"

He turned on his heel and stalked away. More than once during the long night Ferrers Locke awoke to see the beacon light burning redly. Then with the dawning it died down, and the voice of Kala Dului gave the order to saddle.

It was noon when they reached the pass, and as they topped its summit Kala Dului reined in his mule. Ahead of them, hidden by a spur in the hills, stood a large, square, bleak building of stone. It reared itself from the very rock, its walls blackened by the winds and storms of countless ages. The eternal wind had prevented any snow

from clinging, and it stood a grim and sinister sentinel of the Karo la.

At a word from Kala Dului the cavalcade moved forward, winding its way towards the silent, fortress-like building. There was no sign or vestige of life. In spite of himself, Jack could not repress a shudder. Inside those walls was—what?

Right up to the huge, weather-beaten door of blackened timber rode Kala Dului, and as he approached, the door swung open.

"Turn in your saddles, you dogs!" cried Kala Dului. "Turn in your saddles, you cursed of Lhasa, and feast your eyes on the grey skies and the silent snows! Never shall you see them again, you dogs, for once you cross the threshold of that door you shall never return!"

Before the Council!

FERRERS LOCKE and Jack were pulled from their saddles, and, with their guards on either side of them, they were marched through the doorway. Kala Dului stalked in front. They crossed the threshold into a large, bare passage, stone-floored and very wide. The walls were painted with strange and hideous devices, and devil-masks hung in profusion.

A horrible, squat, leering dwarf shuffled forward from a recess, where he had been standing so still that Jack had at first taken him for some idol. He exchanged a few low words with Kala Dului, eyeing Ferrers Locke and Jack the while through blood-hot eyes deep-set in his large and indescribably evil face.

Suddenly he clapped his hands sharply, and there appeared a hooded monk, at whose girdle swung a bunch of heavy keys. A word from the dwarf and the monk beckoned to the guards. They hustled the detective and Jack forward in the wake of the monk. The latter led the way along the passage and down a flight of narrow, winding stairs. Pausing at a door, he fumbled with a key, then threw it open. Ferrers Locke and Jack were gagged, and pushed roughly inside; the door slammed shut behind them, and they were left in inky, impenetrable darkness.

Gropingly they investigated their prison, their shoulders pressed against the walls. It appeared to be little more than nine feet square, and void of any table, chair, or boards on which to lie. Sitting on the stone floor, with their backs against the wall, they waited for what might befall. Their bonds had been tied too tightly and too well to show any signs of loosening, and their gags had been fitted by expert fingers.

An hour or more dragged slowly past. Then came the sound of footsteps descending the winding stairs. A key grated in the lock and the door swung open. Standing on the threshold were six monks, hooded, and with inscrutable faces. One, carrying a lantern in his black-gloved hand, stepped forward.

"The council awaits!" he said harshly.

Ferrers Locke and Jack were seized and jerked to their feet. Then began a journey up flights of stairs, guarding which stood hooded monks with drawn swords—and along endless corridors. The leader at length halted in front of a door, in front of which stood a monk with bowed head, his hands resting on a long, two-edged sword.

The leader knocked once. Jack and Ferrers Locke exchanged glances, and



The grovelling priests watched fascinated, as through the leaping curtain of fire one arm of the Buddha stretched out slowly and horribly till it pointed straight at Ferrers Locke and Drake. "Behold!" thundered a sonorous voice. "Behold the torch of war, ye unbelievers!" (See Page 23.)

the boy knew that a crisis was at hand. There was a moment of silence, following the knock, then a voice, from the other side of the door, called in deep, harsh tones:

"Enter!"

At the same moment the door swung open. Ferrers Locke and Jack were propelled forward into a room, and the door swung shut behind them.

At a long table placed in the centre of the large, stone-walled and stone-floored room, sat five men clad in black robes. Their faces were masked, and their black-gloved hands were folded on the table in front of them. They sat in a line, facing the doorway. In front of the centre man lay a scroll and a black wand.

Jack and Ferrers Locke were marched to within a foot of the table, their guards grouping themselves behind them. At a gesture from the black-clad figure occupying the centre chair, the gags of Ferrers Locke and Jack were removed. It was obvious that he was leader, spokesman, judge—whatever one cared to call it.

"Some time ago," he said harshly, "you crossed the frontier into this forbidden land of Tibet. You grievously assaulted the Abbot of Patong; nor would you give account of the why and wherefore of your mission. Again, at the sacred shrine of Buddha, in the

ruined temple of the Seven Monasteries, you committed sacrilege the like of which might well have brought you instant death from the hand of outraged Buddha. But the great god stayed his hand that you might be delivered to us, his servants, who will learn from you the mission which has brought you across our frontiers!"

"Do you not know that mission?" replied Ferrers Locke. "Did I, then, not speak plainly enough in the ruined temple of the Seven Monasteries?"

The black-robed figure leant forward across the table.

"You spoke words which shall bring you death by torments undreamt and unknown outside the walls of this edifice of the Karo-la!" he snarled. "You said you were one who had journeyed far, lead the people of Tibet from the path of war!"

He launched himself to his feet, and crashed a black-gloved fist to the table.

"Who are you, you dog?" he screamed. "Who are you, who dare defy Kang Pu, the chosen of Buddha?"

"What matter who I am, you puppet of Kang Pu!" snapped the detective. "You can save your breath, for no questions of yours will I answer!"

The black-gloved fingers curled and uncurled, and the eyes behind the mask glared evilly. Then the man slumped back into his chair.

"Unless that obstinate tongue of yours will talk," he said, his voice shaking with passion, "then it will be torn out by the very roots. Death has already marked you as his own, but you do not know yet the dallies he can make before eventually his cold hand brings you merciful relief!"

He paused, then resumed harshly:

"Do I but raise this wand which lies before me, then you will be flung into the pit of torment, where the torturers already wait your coming. From that you will emerge, a poor, broken thing, blind and maimed, crying aloud to Buddha for the death which is so long in coming!"

"Then raise your wand and cease this mockery!" cried Ferrers Locke. "I—"

The words died on his lips. A slab in the wall behind the judge was swinging slowly backwards, as though on a pivot. Framed in the opening stood a man clad in long robes of vivid red. Behind him, dimly seen through the gloom, stood other shadowy figures, their arms folded across their chests. Then, slowly, by some invisible means of illumination, the gloom lessened and Ferrers Locke and Jack found themselves gazing into a chamber fitted with an awe-inspiring array of implements of torture—racks, thumbscrews, braziers, irons, pincers,

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and an assortment of fantastically fashioned instruments were all in their appointed places.

"Behold the chamber of torment, you dogs!" snarled the judge, jumping to his feet. "You who would defy Kang Pu, the chosen one of Buddha!"

"A pretty sight, I vow!" replied Ferrers Locke, albeit his eyes were hard. "A worthy ante-room to this murder-chamber in which you sit, you carrion crows!"

"You have heard the insolent tongue of the dog!" screamed the judge, turning to the motionless figures that sat by him. "Let us waste no further time! Unmask, that sentence may be pronounced!"

The Sentence!

JACK scarcely knew what to expect as the black-gloved hands of the five fumbled at the fastenings of their masks. The words of Kala Dului flashed back to him: "The Five who have ruled in the secret monasteries of Lhasa throughout the countless ages, whom death has passed by—"

Then he caught his breath in horror as the masks were slowly removed and the faces beneath them came into view. No men, were these, on whose shoulders sat those grinning caricatures of faces. Faces? Skulls, more like, with wrinkled, yellow skin drawn loosely over the bones and jaws. Eyes sunken deep in their sockets, toothless gums, from which the bloodless lips were drawn back in a perpetual, fiendish grin. A thought came to him, and he grasped it eagerly. Trickery—that was it! It must be! No men could be so old and yet live.

"Look now on the faces of the Five!" The harsh voice of the judge cut in on Jack's thoughts, and he marvelled at the strength of the voice of one whose vocal chords must surely have long since ceased to function. "Behold the features of the Council of Death, the features of those whom death passes by! Old as the monasteries of Tibet are we who guard the portals of Lhasa. Look now on the lords of life and death, you who have sought death inside our frontiers!"

He turned to the hideous, shrivelled things that sat on each side of him.

"You have heard the words of Kang Pu, my brothers, and the words of this violator of Buddha? Kang Pu desires the sentence of death—death by a thousand tortures! Are we agreed?"

The four skull-like heads nodded solemnly in unison. The judge lowered his hand to the wand, and his fingers closed on it. Lifting it, he pointed with it towards Ferrers Locke, and then towards Jack.

"The sentence of this Council is," he said slowly, "that thou shalt die in the torment chamber. Death will not come swiftly, but will creep on thee till nothing lives except the brain. Limb by limb, bone by bone shalt thou be broken, but merciful oblivion will not come to you to cheat us of one moment of your agony!"

He resumed his seat. The Five slowly adjusted their masks. Then, with the wand, he made a gesture. Ferrers Locke and Jack were seized by their guards and hurried into the torture chamber, which lay beyond the wall.

Put to the Torture!

AS they crossed the threshold of the chamber, Ferrers Locke and Jack were seized by the red-robed and hooded torturers. Helpless in their bonds, the detective and the boy were stretched out on racks and pinioned by their ankles and wrists.

Then into the torture chamber stalked Kala Dului, triumph in his very gait. He crossed to where Ferrers Locke lay and stood looking down on him with glittering eyes.

"So this is the end, you dog?" he said harshly. "I come to delight my eyes with your writhings, and to lend my ears to the cracking of your bones!"

Ferrers Locke stared up into the cold, cruel eyes of the priest of Patong.

"An excellent sport, Kala Dului," he replied, "and one well fitted to bring pleasure to your soul, you rat!"

"Curb that tongue of yours," snarled the priest, and he kicked savagely with a sandalled foot at the prostrate form of the detective. "Curb it, I say, else use it to whine repentance to the great Buddha, whose holy shrines you have so desecrated!"

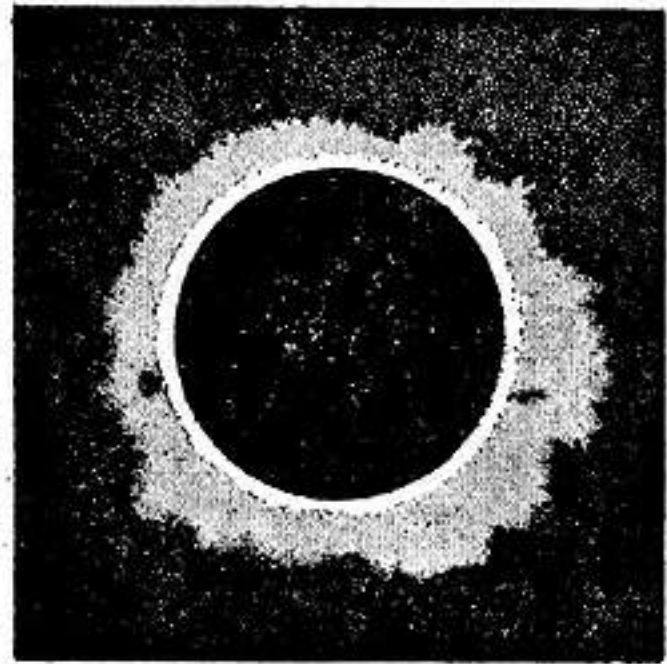
He turned and rapped out an order. Two red-robed torturers sprang to the handles of the rack rollers. The ropes around the detective's ankles and wrists became taut, and agonising pains began to shoot through his legs and arms.

Slowly the torturers increased the pressure, and it seemed to Ferrers Locke as though his limbs must be torn from his body. He closed his eyes, and beads of perspiration broke out on his brow.

Jack, awaiting his turn on the next rack, turned away his head with a shudder. Every moment he expected to hear a faint crack, which would tell of the dislocation of some joint or the snapping of some tendon.

The detective was lying rigid on the rack, his face deathly white, his limbs stretched to their utmost, the rope around his wrists cutting into the flesh. Surely no muscles could stand such a

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strain! And, with his face thrust forward, Kala Dului stood gloating over the prostrate and tortured man. To Jack, in that moment, he looked more than ever like some indescribably evil bird of prey. The boy felt physically sick. Then a gust of passion swept over him, and he writhed helplessly in his bonds.

"You fiend!" he shouted. "You—"

He bit off his words quickly. He had regained his self control. But Kala Dului might not have heard for all the notice he took. Not once did he raise his eyes from the tortured frame of Ferrers Locke. Then suddenly his hand shot up and the torturers released their pressure on the handles of the rollers.

"We must bring all our skill to bear on the English dog!" said the priest. "It were ill to work too fast: It is necessary to govern our hate with discretion, so that we be not cheated of one moment of his agony. Minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day and month by month will his mutilation and maiming be prolonged!"

He stalked to a brazier, and returned with a red-hot iron in his hand.

"O, accursed one of Lhasa," he purred, leaning over the detective, "you who have defied the great Buddha, see now this iron which will brand on your forehead the symbol of Avalokitesvara, the many-handed Buddha! Move not your head, lest my hand shall slip and the iron pierce your eye! That would be ill work, for your eyes will be removed by a more painful process, which will, I vow, bring a scream of agony from your lips!"

Slowly he lowered the branding-iron till the red-hot end was within an inch of the detective's forehead.

Jack watched in fascinated horror, and Ferrers Locke could feel the heat scorching his skin. But, with lips compressed, the detective waited in silence.

"The iron cools," purred Kala Dului, "so I shall strike, lest there be not heat enough to brand thee to the bone!"

His thin lips were twisted into his mirthless smile. Purposely he seemed to refrain from pressing the iron home, enjoying every moment of what he knew must be agonising suspense to Jack and Ferrers Locke.

Then came an interruption. A black-robed monk hastily entered the chamber and approached the priest of Patong.

"O, Kala Dului," he mumbled, "a messenger from holy Lhasa desires an audience with ye!"

Kala Dului straightened himself up with a jerk. He wheeled angrily on the monk.

"Now get you gone!" he snarled. "He and his business can wait!"

"His business is of certain urgency, O Kala Dului," replied the monk doggedly. "And he rides at once to Palkhor Choide!"

Kala Dului stood for a moment as though in thought. Then he threw the branding-iron to the floor and made as though to quit the chamber. On the threshold he halted, and turned to the red-robed torturers.

"Preserve these dogs for me," he said harshly. "Return them to their cell, and we will deal with them later in the day. They know now some little of what is in store for them!"

(Will Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake escape from the clutches of Kang Pu, or will their names be added to the list of his victims who have mysteriously "disappeared"? Look out for next week's grand instalment, chums!)

"BOLSOVER'S BROTHER!"

(Continued from page 22.)

Up went the burly Bolsover on the shoulders of Harry Wharton & Co. Mr. Quelch's severe face was smiling; Wingate of the Sixth grinned. For once, there was wild confusion within the sacred precincts of Big Hall, and no voice was raised in reprimand.

High on the shoulders of his Form-fellows, surrounded by a cheering crowd, Bolsover major was carried out of Hall. For the first time—probably for the last—he was the hero of the Remove, and all the Form delighted to do him honour.

"Who'd have thought it!"

That was the general comment at

Greyfriars when the excitement was over. It was admitted on all sides that nobody would have thought it.

"Nobody's as black as he is painted," said Bob Cherry. "There's a lot of good in Bolsover—good in everybody. I shouldn't be surprised next to find some good in Bunter."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And I don't envy Wiggy when the Head talks to him!" added Bob.

Poor Mr. Wiggins, after a talk with the Head, was seen leaving Dr. Locke's study looking quite pale and worn. In his Form that day he was more absent-minded and confused than ever.

The whole affair had turned out to be, as Bob put it, much ado about nothing, serious as it had looked at one time. But it had had the effect of making the Remove think a great deal better of Bolsover major; though during

the subsequent days the bully of the Remove proceeded to lose the good opinion of the Form about as fast as he could.

And for quite a long time there was discussion in the studies as to the identity, still unknown, of the mysterious individual who had placed the two sorely needed pound notes in Bolsover minor's Cæsar. But the identity of that mysterious individual was never discovered, not even by Bolsover's brother.

THE END.

(There will be another magnificent yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. in next week's MAGNET, entitled: "THE BOUNDER'S GOOD TURN!" To make sure of reading this ripping tale, Magnetics are advised to order their copy WELL IN ADVANCE!)

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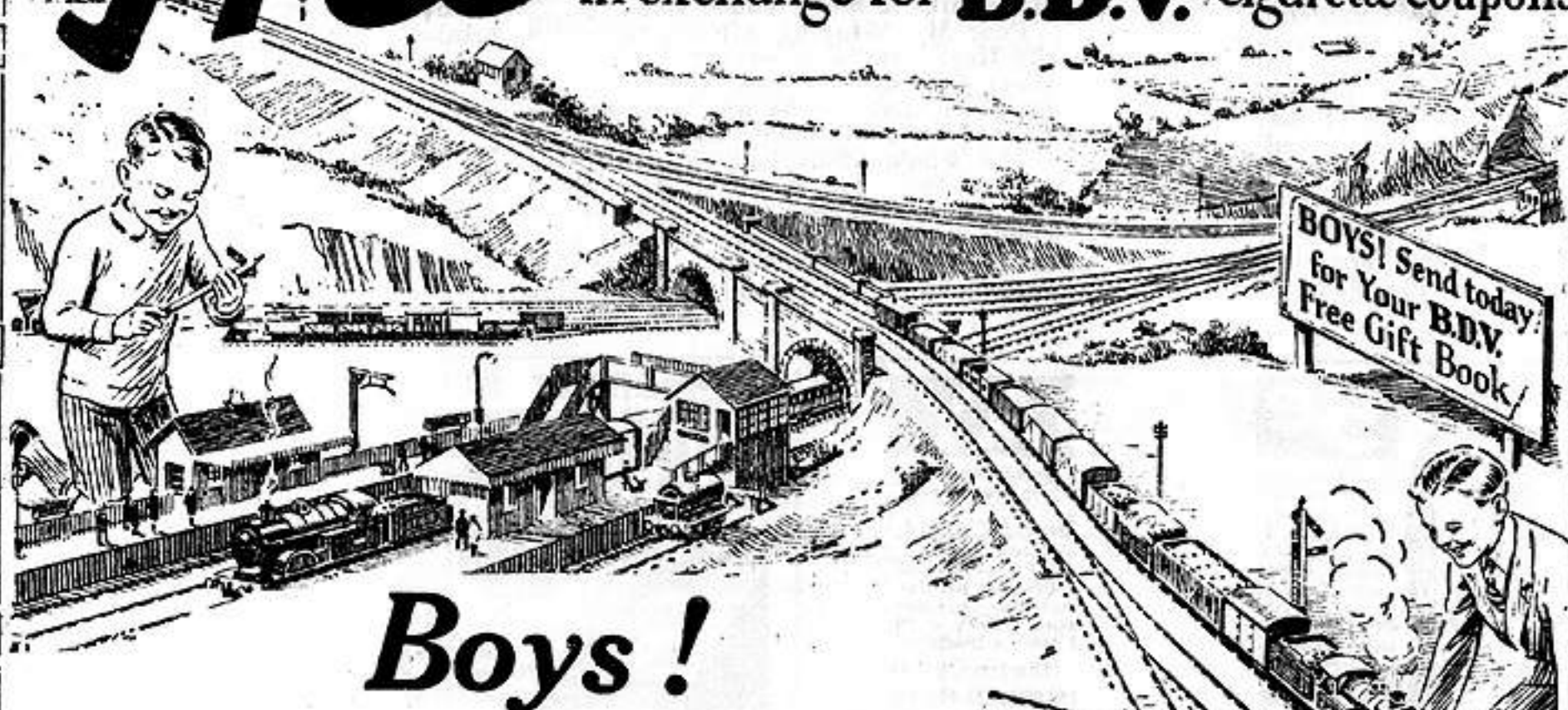
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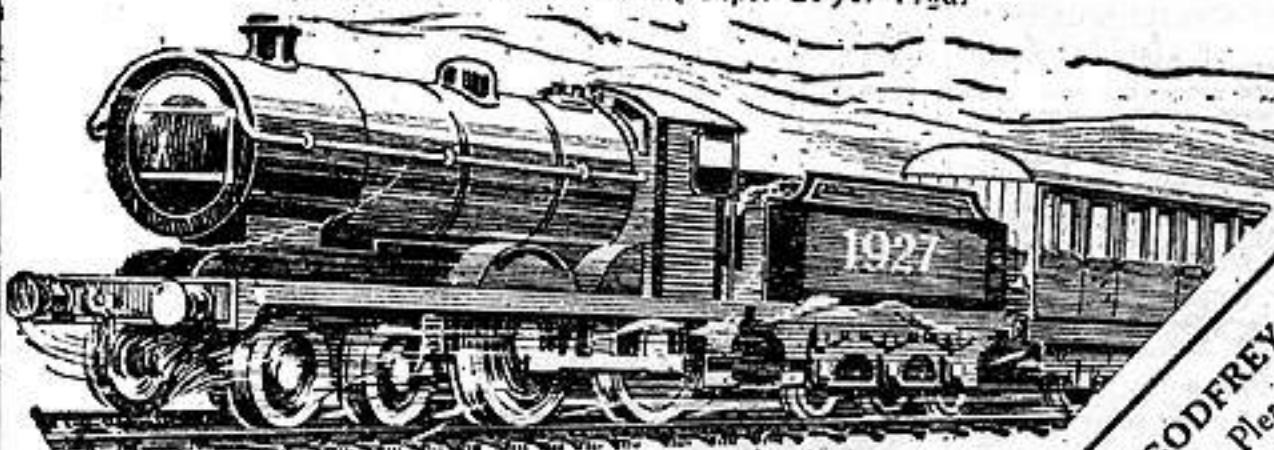
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"I found a dead beetle in mine!"

cried Jack Jolly.

"We want fish for breakfast!" shouted a score of voices.

"Then you can jolly well wait!" said the Head. "I have already interviewed the fishermen on the beach, to ask the price of their herrings. They are ten shillings a gross; which is what I call gross prophetic-earring! I refuse to squander the school funds—"

"You can take it from me, sir," said Burleigh, "that unless the fellows are served with a fish breakfast within the next hour there will be a riot!"

"Yes, rather!" came an angry cry from the crowd.

The Head, who was an awful covered at heart, trembled violently at the prospect of a riot, in which even his sacred person would not be safe from assault.

"Calm yourselves, my dear boys!" he stammered nervously. "I cannot promise you fish for breakfast, but I will see that you have some for dinner. I will catch it myself!"

"You'll catch it from us if you don't!" growled Tailboy of the Sixth.

The Head hurried out of the dining market. He collected his fishing-rod from his tent, and when Jack Jolly & Co. came upon him, a few minutes later, he was grubbing on his hands and knees, digging for earth-worms. There, when found, the Head transferred to a tin can.

"May we come fishing with you, sir?" inquired Jack Jolly.

"Certainly!" said the Head. "I shall need some help. Carry my fishing-rod, Jolly. Being those worms along. Fearless!"

And the little party, consisting of the Head, Jack Jolly, and Merry and Bright, followed his egg-sample, and some of the fragments flew perilously close to the Head's face.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" muttered the Head. "I always thought that lobster pots floated on the surface, and that the lobsters came along and crawled into them. But the beestly things have sunk!"

"Of course, sir!" said Merry. "They are waited with stones. They are meant to sink."

"Then why didn't you tell me so before?" snarled the Head, beginning to lose his wool.

"Because I thought you knew all about deep-sea fishing, sir. I would not presume to teach my grandmother—or, rather, my grandfather—to such eggs."

With a sort of annoyance, the Head picked up his fishing-rod. He bated the hook with a fat, juicy worm, and bade the juniors stop rowing. Then he cast his line, and waited patiently for a bite.

"What do you hope to catch, sir?" inquired Jack Jolly, winking at his chums.

"Oh, anything from a wail to a white-bait!" said the Head. "I don't mind what it is. I shan't carp if it's a carp; and I shan't think it out of place if it's a place. Even the humble dab is not to be despised."

As a matter of fact, the Head caught nothing—except a chill from his wet garments. He waited half an hour, but there was no sign of a bite. Finally, he turned to the juniors.

"We must row farther out to sea, my boys. There's not much fish within the three-mile limit; but in mid-Channel there's shoals and shoals of them."

Jack Jolly & Co. were a bit dubious about going out any farther. They wondered how they were going to get back to shore. The strong currents would be against them; and in that part of the Channel the currents were as plentiful as blackberries.

However, the Head's word was law on the briny ocean, just as much as in his study at St. Sam's. So the juniors bent their backs to the oars, and their gallant little craft breasted the bounding billows.

The shore was out of sight now. And the little party from the St. Sam's camp found themselves all alone—alone on the wide, wide sea!

The Head, dangling a fat worm between thumb and forefinger, was about to try his luck again, when suddenly a fierce storm got up, and the sun retired. The lightning roared, and the rain fell in a vivid flash of thunder it up the scene. The angry billows rose mountain-high; and the little fishing-boat was buffed and bashed and buffeted this way and that, like a frail eggshell, until its capsize seemed inevitable.

"HAIL, smiling morn!" the Doctor Birchmally, the Headmaster of St. Sam's, united the fastenings of his tent and poked out his head and surveyed the St. Sam's Camp, which was still rapped in slumber.

The smiling morn refused to hail at the Head's behest. It remained sunny. The sunlight danced on the white rows of tents, and the Head felt like dancing, too.

It was only his first morning in camp; but the bracing air of Winklesca, with its pungent aroma of stale seaweed, had already got into the Head's blood, making him feel as frisky as a two-year-old. The old butter burst into song:

"I passed by your window
When the morning was red,
The dew on the rose-buds,
The lark overhead,
And then I sang softly,
That no one might hear—"

"Good-morning, dear Lickham! Nice morning, old dear!"

The Head broke off in his warblings, to greet the master of the Fourth, who came crawling out of the next tent.

Unlike the Head, Mr. Lickham was looking far from happy. He was clad in shirt and trousers only; his hair was rumpled and untidy; and lots of stiff bristles stood out on his cheeks. At St. Sam's, Mr. Lickham was a very spruce and dapper little gentleman. Now he looked like a tramp.

"Good-morning, sir!" he said moodily. "I knew you were awake."

"How so, my dear Lickham?"

"I looked towards your tent and caught sight of your peninsula."

"My—my peninsula?" gasped the Head, in perplexity.

"Yes—a long neck stretching out to sea," explained Mr. Lickham.

"The Head glared.

"Are you trying to be funny, Lickham?" he demanded.

"Certainly not, sir. I feel far from funny at the moment. This might be Robinson Crusoe's island, for all the signs of civilization one can see."

"Where can I get a shave?"

"Ask me another!" said the Head.

"I simply must get this face-fungus removed," said Mr. Lickham, passing his hand over his stubbly cheek. "I've brought my shaving-oufit to camp with me, but there is no hot water."

"Really, Lickham, you cannot expect hot water to be laid on at a seaside camp! You will find plenty of cold water in the pond a couple of fields away."

Mr. Lickham hesitated for a moment; then he turned on his heel, and strode away to find the pond. He didn't relish the idea of performing his ablutions in a pond, but it seemed the only way.

"Don't be late for breakfast!" the Head called after him. "It's at seven, in the dining market."

By this time the Camp was astir. All was hustle and bustle, and the place was humming like a hive.

Jack Jolly & Co., the heroes of the Fourth, were among the first to turn out. Joined by Frank Fearless, they took their towels and bathing-costumes, and sprinted down to the sea for an early morning dip. On their way they witnessed the novel spectacle of their Form master kneeling at the edge of a pond and ducking his head beneath its slimy surface.

The juniors stood watching for some minutes, and it seemed to them that the more Mr. Lickham washed the dirtier he became. By the time he had finished he looked more like a mudcrab than a Form master.

Jack Jolly & Co. passed on, chuckling; but not before Frank Fearless had taken a snapshot of Mr. Lickham coming up for the last time, so to speak.

The dip in the sea was glorious; but the juniors didn't venture out too far, in case they got their feet wet. Besides, it was rumored that there were sharks at Winklesca—real sharks, as distinct from seasick landladies, and fishermen who phrophet-carred.

Although the bath in the briny didn't wet their feet, it wetted their appetites, and they were as hungry as hunters when they sprinted back to camp. As they sped along they conjured up visions of a bewitching breakfast, consisting of porridge, fried sossidges, eggs-and-bacon, hot rolls and coffee, and other kinds of fish.

Alas for the juniors' dreams! No tasty and tempting breakfast awaited them. When they filed into the dining market they found the Head in the act of distributing ship's biscuits. A hard reality, indeed! The juniors couldn't get their teeth into the beestly things.

There were growls and scowls on every side. One fellow was heard asking in a loud voice for a hammer and iron chisel!

The Head beamed upon the assembled boys.

"Any complaints?" he asked pleasantly. There was a roar.

"Complaints? We should jolly well think so!"

"Call this a breakfast, sir?"

"It isn't fit for pigs!"

"Not even for you, sir!"

The Head frowned.

"Silence, you young sweeps! How dare you make such an uproar in the presence of your Headmaster? Your complaints are absurd and unreasonable. What's the matter with good, honest ship's biscuits? It was good enough for Rally and Drake, and other gallant seadogs of the past; so I'm sure it's good enough for you!"

"We're not dogs, sir," said Burleigh on the Sixth. "and we refuse to be fed on this sixth tack. I've already broken a couple of teeth over it."

And Burleigh flung away the remains of his biscuit in disgust. Lots of fellows followed his egg-sample, and some of the fragments flew perilously close to the Head's face.

"Hi! Check it!" shouted the Head. And the fellows proceeded to "check it" with great vigor. "Stop pelting me, you young scamps! This is a wicked and warlike waste of good food. Ship's biscuits are full of vitamins—"

So terrifying was the prospect that Doctor Birchmally, snatched off his mortar-board, and started to bail out the water as fast as he could go.

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