

THE BEST SCHOOL YARN OF THE WEEK—*Inside*



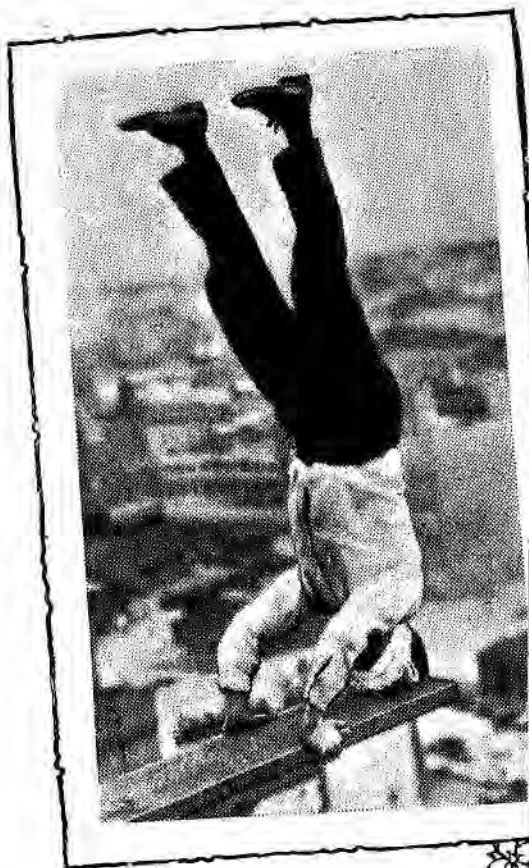
ON THE CARPET FOR SCRAPPING!

(A striking incident from this week's grand school yarn of Greyfriars.)

News Pars and Pictures.

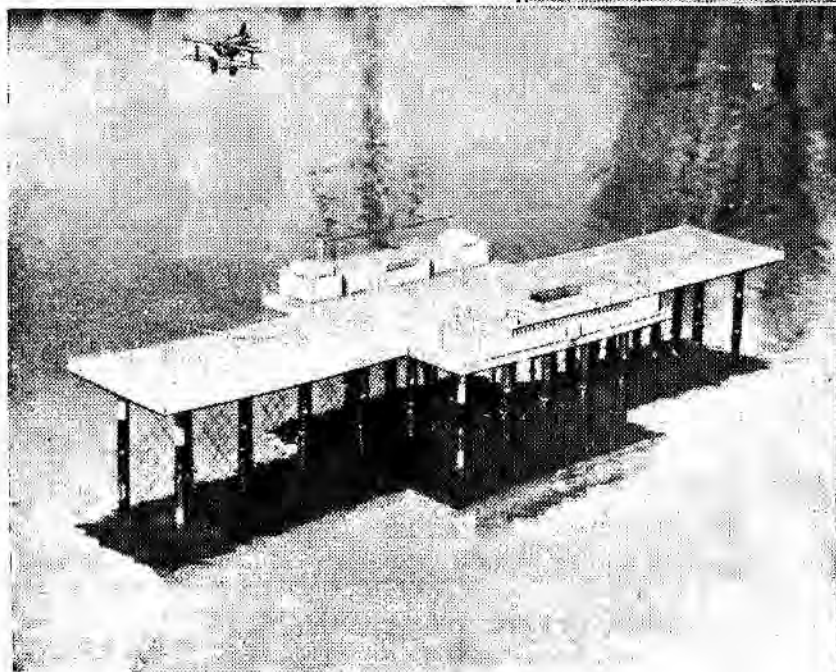
NERVE!

Sig Smith, known throughout America as "Daredevil," thinks nothing of doing stunts that would terrify most of us. The camera's caught him working up an appetite for breakfast at the end of a plank three hundred feet above a San Francisco street. What's more, as you can see, Sig is blindfolded. If any of you chaps contemplate doing stunts of this kind, take another squint at the picture, visualise the height of the buildings shown in the background, think of the drop and—think again!



PLAYED, SIR!

Nowadays even members of the canine tribe, it would seem, like their game of cricket. This dog may not be a coming Hobbs, but there's little doubt that he's already a smart fielder. How about "signing" him on?



SPEED!

Flying from London to New York in two days, and a regular service at that, is likely to be brought within the bounds of possibility if Mr. E. R. Armstrong's plan of a series of floating 'dromes across the Atlantic proves a success. The first of these sea-dromes, complete with hotel, hangars, houses, and repair shops, which will be 1,200 feet in length, 400 feet wide, and 70 feet above the level of the sea, is now under construction. Photo shows a model of the 'drome, with a model plane about to make a landing.

ORIENTAL CUNNING! *There's big money waiting for Da Costa, the new boy in the Remove, if he can manage to ruin Harry Wharton and get him "sacked" from Greyfriars. But with all his Eastern cunning and rascality, Da Costa doesn't find his task as simple as he imagined!*

The Schemer of the Remove!



A Magnificent New Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., the Chums of Greyfriars, and Da Costa, the boy from the East.

by

FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Lost, Stolen, or Strayed!

BUNTER!" "Eh?" "Will you scout up to my study——"

"No!" "And fetch——" "Rats!"

There was no hesitation about that reply from William George Bunter of the Greyfriars Remove. He made his meaning quite clear.

Lord Mauleverer sighed.

It was a warm afternoon. Most of the fellows called it hot. Some of them called it beastly hot. Even Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, whose dusky complexion had ripened under tropic suns, admitted that it was warm.

Lord Mauleverer was leaning gracefully on the old shady tree in front of the school shop at Greyfriars. He had been leaning there quite a long time, since class. Perhaps he liked the shade. Perhaps he was too lazy to move. At all events, there he was. Billy Bunter was blinking in at the tuckshop window through his big spectacles. Bunter would willingly have rolled into the tuckshop and given orders for the best that Mrs. Mimble could supply in large quantities. But Billy Bunter was in his usual impecunious state; a postal-order, long expected, had failed to arrive. Bunter loafed outside the tuckshop like a fat Peri at the gate of Paradise.

From the direction of the cricket ground came five cheery juniors, looking decidedly warm, but very merry and bright. The summer heat did not keep Harry Wharton & Co. from cricket practice. They were getting into great form to beat the Rookwooders when the Rookwood match came off. Now they were heading for the school shop for light refreshment in the shape of ginger-beer. Bob Cherry had suggested ginger-pop, and it had been passed

unanimously. It was a case of five souls with but a single thought; a quintette of hearts that beat as one.

Lord Mauleverer, as he sighted the Famous Five in the offing, made a movement to detach himself from the tree, but did not quite detach himself. A disinclination to exertion distinguished his lordship.

Bunter blinked at him indignantly. His lordship was lazy, no doubt, but so was Bunter. Indeed, Bunter could give points even to Mauly in that line. Lord Mauleverer had a mild dislike for exertion; Bunter hated it.

"Of all the cheek!" said Bunter warmly.

"Dear man!" murmured Lord Mauleverer gently.

"Catch me fetching things from your study!" hooted Bunter. "If you want anything from your study, you can jolly well fetch it yourself. See?"

"Yaas."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" The summer heat had not reduced the power and volume of Bob Cherry's voice. "What price a ginger-pop, Mauly?"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Look here——"

"Just what I was thinkin' of when I saw you men comin'," murmured Lord Mauleverer. "I was goin' to ask you to join me in a stone ginger."

"Happy thought!" said Johnny Bull, with a grin. "You have jolly good ideas sometimes, Mauly."

"Yaas. But——"

"Never mind the buts; come on," said Frank Nugent.

"But——"

"The butfulness is superfluous, my esteemed Mauly," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Get a move on."

"But I've left my tin in my study," explained Lord Mauleverer. "I was askin' Bunter to run up and fetch it, but he didn't seem to jump at the idea. Bunter's growin' lazy."

Billy Bunter started.

"You didn't say——" he began.

"Perhaps 'one of you fellows might like a walk up to the study?" suggested his lordship. "Healthy exercise, you know, walkin' up and down stairs—and you men are whales on exercise. Thingummy sana in what's-his-name sano, you know. Nothin' like exercise."

"Do you mean mens sana in corpore sano, fathcad?" asked Harry Wharton, laughing.

"I shouldn't wonder," assented Mauleverer. "Healthy mind in a healthy carcass, or somethin' of the sort, what? You'll find a liver under the inkstand."

"I say, Mauly——"

"Don't, old fat man," said Mauleverer gently. "I hate pointin' it out. Bunter, but you talk too much."

"Oh, really, Mauly! I'll cut up to the study with pleasure," said Bunter. "You know I'm always willing to oblige a pal."

"And are you willin' to oblige me, too?" asked Mauly. Apparently his lordship did not realise that he was a pal of Bunter's.

"Oh, don't be an ass, you know!" said Bunter, as the Famous Five chuckled. "Where's that liver?"

"Under the inkstand on the study table."

"You cheerful ass!" said Bob Cherry. "Is that how you take care of your fivers?"

"Yaas. I'm always careful with money," answered Lord Mauleverer. "I once had a banknote blow away. I put the inkstand on this one."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Wait for me!" said Bunter. "I'll be back in two ticks." And the Owl of the Remove cut off to the House—forgetful of the heat and of the weight he had to carry—more than willing to oblige Lord Mauleverer now that he knew

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what it was that was to be fetched from Study No. 12.

Bob Cherry linked an arm in Mauly's and hooked him away from the tree.

"Come on, slacker!"

The cheery crowd of juniors walked into the tuckshop.

"My treat!" said Lord Mauleverer gently.

"Any old thing!" said Bob.

And the chums of the Remove proceeded to dispose of ginger-pop, which was grateful and comforting after cricket practice on a hot day.

Mrs. Mimble bestowed upon Lord Mauleverer a genial smile which she never wasted on Billy Bunter. Five or six more fellows joined the little crowd, and the ginger-pop flowed freely. There was a merry buzz of talk in the shop, which was interrupted by the return of William George Bunter.

"You ass!" was Bunter's first remark, addressed to Lord Mauleverer.

"Thank you, dear boy! Where is it?"

"That's what I want to know!" grunted Bunter. "I've been up to your study; but there isn't any fiver under the inkstand, you chump! Pulling my leg, I suppose?"

"Dear man, I remember leavin' it there," said Lord Mauleverer. "It's there all serene. Perhaps you want a new outfit in specs, dear man."

"You silly chump!" hooted Bunter. "I tell you it isn't there. Nothing of the sort. You've put it in your pocket and forgotten it."

"Well, I've done such things," admitted Lord Mauleverer. "But I really don't think so in this case. Go and look again, old fat man."

"Rats!" hooted Bunter.

"Look here, Mauly, old man, you ought to be more careful with bank-notes," said Harry Wharton seriously. "It may get lost at this rate."

"Accordin' to Bunter, it's lost already," sighed his lordship. "Frightful worry losin' a fiver! I shall have to write to my uncle for another. I hate writin' letters."

"Ginger-pop for me," said Bunter, "and a cake. And some jam-tarts. And some meringues!"

Bunter evidently felt entitled to a reward for his journey to the Remove passage, fruitless as it had been.

Lord Mauleverer smiled.

"Mrs. Mimble, ma'am," he said politely.

"Yes, my lord?"

"Will it bother you too much to chalk up this little account to me, madam?" asked his lordship.

"Not at all," said Mrs. Mimble.

"Then it's all right! Pile in, Bunter, old fat bean! I hope you will make it a spread, you fellows. It will save you the trouble of teain' in the study."

And the fellows cheerfully made it a spread—especially William George Bunter. William George was not likely to miss a chance like that. To the fiver, which he had left under his inkstand, and which was apparently no longer there, his lordship appeared to give no further thought. Lord Mauleverer was the only fellow in the Greyfriars Remove to whom fivers were trifles light as air. After the spread in the school shop, he walked back to the House with the Famous Five; and as they reached the Remove passage Harry Wharton tapped Mauly on the arm.

"Haden't you better look for that fiver, Mauly?"

"Yaas."

And Lord Mauleverer ambled on placidly to his study. There he settled

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himself in a comfortable attitude on the sofa, with a cushion behind his head, and rested peacefully, gazing out at the sunset on the quadrangle. Looking at the sunset doubtless appealed to him as more restful than looking for the fiver.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Hazel in a Hole!

HARRY WHARTON and Frank Nugent came together into Study No. 1 in the Remove.

An olive-skinned junior who sat there looked up as they entered, but did not speak. Wharton glanced at him.

Arthur da Costa had his books at one end of the study table for prep. Nugent began to sort odd books; but the captain of the Remove stood looking at Da Costa.

When the Eurasian had first come to Greyfriars Harry Wharton had been friendly enough to him. The fellow had been put into his study—he was a stranger from a far land, and he had shown a wonderful aptitude for cricket, which was a passport to Wharton's good opinion. But any friendliness between the two had soon come to an end; for more than a week now they had hardly spoken, and Da Costa was on the same distant terms with Wharton's friends. The captain of the Remove had wanted to make the best of him; but one example of treachery and duplicity had been enough, and he had dropped the Eurasian like a hot potato.

But Wharton had been thinking since then. Friendship or cordiality with the fellow was impossible; but civility was possible. And as Da Costa was a valuable member of the Remove eleven, it was hardly practicable to avoid contact with him altogether. Wharton and Nugent had discussed the matter, and agreed that it was a rotten state of affairs not to be on speaking terms with a fellow in their own study. The boy from the East was not their sort, and they could not be friends with him; but a civil word cost nothing, and made matters more comfortable generally. And though Da Costa had agreed to change out of the study, he had not yet done so; and Wharton had given up his intention of insisting upon it.

"You weren't at games practice this afternoon, Da Costa," said the captain of the Remove, by way of breaking the ice.

Arthur Da Costa looked up again. "No!" he said. "You did not want me, I suppose?"

"Well, you want to keep in form, if you're going to play in the team that goes over to Rookwood," said Harry.

The Eurasian eyed him.

"Am I to play at Rookwood?" he asked.

"Don't you want to?"

"Yess! But you are captain of cricket, and you do not like me, and I thought you would leave me out."

"Whether I like you or not has nothing to do with cricket," answered Harry. "You're a good man—as good a man as any fellow in the Remove, and you'll play unless you want to stand out."

"I shall play, then," said Da Costa, and his olive face brightened.

In the tortuous and treacherous nature of the strange lad from the East there was at least one good quality; he was a keen cricketer, and he played a splendid game.

"That's settled, then," said Harry.

And the three juniors went down to prep, in a rather less chilly atmosphere than was customary in Study No. 1.

Prep was still going on, when there was a tap at the door, and Hazeldene of the Remove looked in.

"You fellows finished?" he asked.

"No fear," said Nugent. "Yards of it yet. You haven't got through, either, Hazel."

"I'm giving it a rest," said Hazel. "Fed up with it."

Harry Wharton looked up from his work. Hazel was loafing restlessly in the doorway, and he coloured as he caught Wharton's glance. There was evidently something on Hazel's mind which he had come to Study No. 1 to utter; and he was rather unreasonably irritated at finding the juniors there still hard at work.

"Cough it up, old bean, if it's anything important," said Harry good-humouredly. "We can slack off for a minute or two, anyhow."

"Oh, it's nothing!" said Hazel.

"Then we'll get on. Why not stick to prep yourself, old chap? Quelch was rather waxy with you this morning—you've been taking it rather easy lately, haven't you?"

"Hang prep!" said Hazel.

"Only you can't hang Quelch," said the captain of the Remove, with a smile. "What's the good of asking for trouble in the Form-room?"

"I came here to speak to you," said Hazeldene sulkily.

"Well, go ahead!"

"Oh, it doesn't matter!"

And Hazel left the doorway, and loafed rather aimlessly along the Remove passage. Nugent's eyes met Wharton's, and he smiled, and the captain of the Remove frowned. Hazel had something to say that he did not want Wharton's study-mates to hear. That was plain enough, and the chums of Study No. 1 did not need telling that the scapegrace of the Form was in some sort of trouble again.

Hazel and his incessant troubles and scrapes would probably not have worried the captain of the Remove very much, but for the circumstance that he was the brother of Marjorie Hazeldene of Cliff House School. Hazel's troubles were generally in connection with money. He had as much as most Remove fellows, and more than some; but he never had enough. An unthrifty fellow like Hazel was never likely to have enough, even if he became a millionaire. It was one of his habits always to spend a little more than he could afford—and sometimes a good deal more. When his folly came home to roost, as it were, it was Hazel's way to worry his friends with his troubles; and, as a last resource, to land them on Marjorie's shoulders, as Wharton was very well aware. Hence the frown on the brow of the captain of the Remove.

Half an hour later the door opened again, and Hazel looked in once more. He seemed more restless than ever.

"Still sticking to it?" he asked sarcastically.

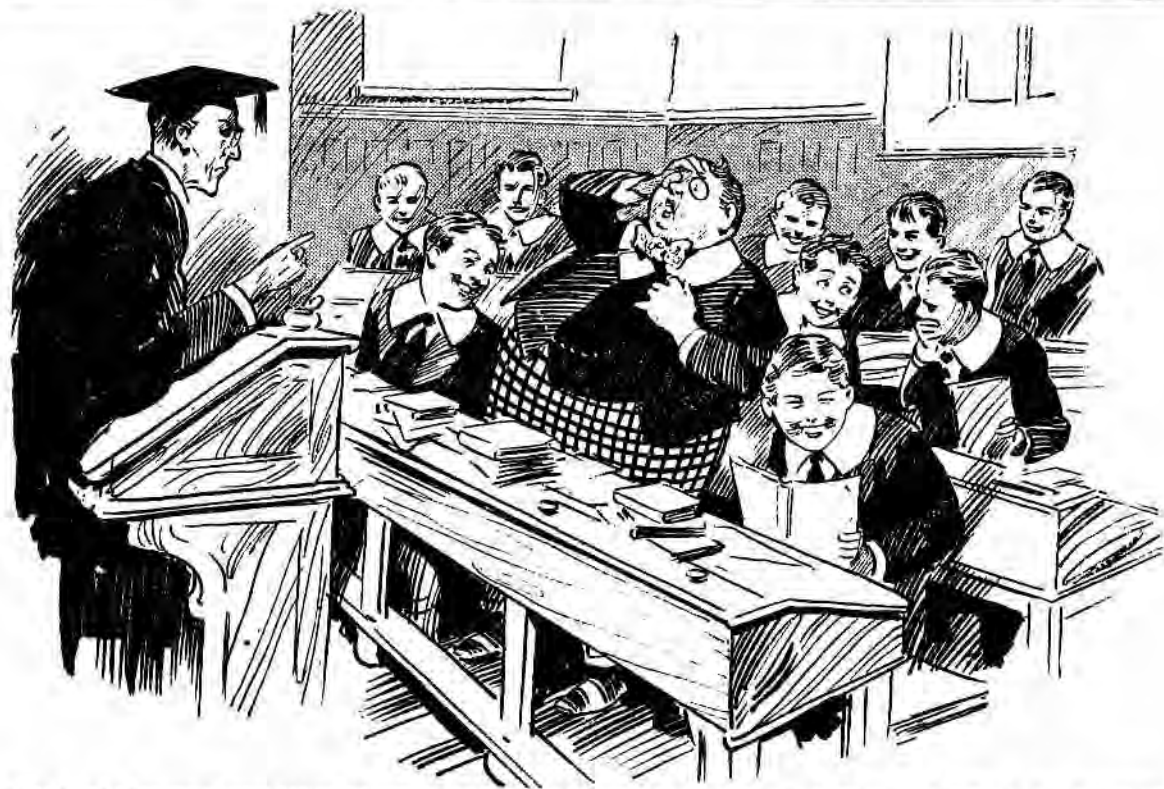
"Not much choice about that, (H) we've finished," said Nugent.

"Mind if I stay here?"

"Stay, if you like, of course."

Hazel sat in the armchair. He watched the juniors with growing irritation. The matter on Hazel's mind, at the present moment, was far more important than prep, in Hazel's opinion, at least. He fumbled in his pocket, and took out a cigarette; then, as if remembering where he was, he scowled and threw it into the empty fire grate.

Frank Nugent pushed back his books



The door had scarcely closed behind Da Costa when Billy Bunter jumped up. "Please, sir," he gasped, "I'm feeling faint!" "What?" said Mr. Quelch. "Awfully faint, sir," said Bunter eagerly. "If—if I might walk in the open air——" Da Costa had got away with it, and the Owl of the Remove did not see why he should not get away with it, too. (See Chapter 6.)

at last. He rose from the table, with a faint grin on his face.

"You men coming down to the Rag?" he asked.

"I'll follow you down, old chap," answered Wharton. And Nugent smiled and left the study.

Da Costa had finished his work; but he did not leave the study. Hazel looked at him very expressively, but the Eurasian did not seem to notice it. Wharton glanced at him, too. It was so obvious that Hazel desired to speak in private to the captain of the Remove, that Da Costa might certainly have stepped out of the study as Nugent had done. But he showed no intention of doing so.

Hazel rose to his feet at last. "Can't talk here," he said abruptly. "Will you come along to my study, Wharton?"

"Yes, if you like."

The two juniors left Study No. 1 together, Hazel giving the Eurasian a look of dislike as he went. They entered Study No. 2, which Hazel shared with Tom Brown, the New Zealand junior; but it was empty now. Brown had finished his work and gone down. Hazel shut the door with a slam.

"The half-caste blighter wanted to hear what I had to say to you," he growled.

The same thought had occurred to Wharton. At the same time, he was irritated by Hazel having something to say to him that other fellows might not hear. Hazel and his dismal little secrets and troublesome confidences rather got on the nerves of the captain of the Remove.

"Well, what is it?" asked Harry restively. "If it's about the cricket, I don't see why you couldn't speak before Da Costa."

"It's not about the cricket. I know you don't mean to give me a chance for the Rookwood match, anyhow."

"You don't mean to give yourself a chance," said Wharton sharply. "You haven't been near Little Side for practice—"

"Oh, give us a rest!" said Hazel. "I didn't ask you here for a sermon. Keep that for those who want to hear it."

Wharton compressed his lips. This irritable sulkiness was a sign he knew well. Hazel was in money troubles again, and looking for a fellow upon whose shoulders he could land them. Hazel was a sensitive fellow. He would ask what he had no shadow of a right to ask, and be deeply hurt by a refusal, or even by hesitation to comply. His sensitive pride made him hate asking favours, but did not prevent him from doing so. So when he had a favour to ask, he generally began by irritable sulky rudeness, if he was dealing with a fellow likely to stand it. Had he been asking a favour of the Bouncer, his manner would have been fawning.

"I'm in a hole!" said Hazel abruptly.

Wharton could hardly help smiling, annoyed as he was. Hazel made that statement as if the circumstances were entirely new and surprising—as if the hole he was in was a very novel experience. Wharton had heard him make the statement at least a dozen times before. But to Hazel every hole he fell into was a new crisis—a new and undeserved blow from persecuting Fate—something more serious and pressing than anything that had ever happened before.

"Well?" said Harry.

"Can you lend me a hand? I mean, will you?" said Hazel. "I know I've no right to ask favours of you," he

added resentfully, as if Wharton was to blame for that, somehow.

"What sort of a hole is it this time?" asked Wharton patiently.

"I don't see that you need put it like that," said Hazel sullenly. "One might suppose from your tone that I'm a fellow like Bunter, sponging up and down the Remove."

Wharton could not help thinking that had one supposed so one would not have been very far wrong. But he did not say so.

"I've got into a scrape," went on Hazel. "You needn't preach at me, in your usual style—that's not what I want. I know I've done wrong, and, if you want to know, I'm sorry for it—not that you've got any right to take me to task, that I know of. Anyhow, what's done is done, and I shall get into a fearful scrape if I can't settle!"

"You don't mean an account at the tuckshop?"

Hazel laughed scoffingly.

"No, I don't! I mean something quite different. I don't see any necessity for going into details. If you'll lend me the money, I can settle up in a week or two. If you won't, you can say so."

"It depends on the amount, to some extent," said Harry quietly. "How much do you want?"

"Five pounds!"

"Oh, my hat! Of course, I can't do anything of the kind," said Harry. "Where the thump am I to get five pounds from?"

"Colonel Wharton has sent you jolly good tips before now. Your people have money. You're often in funds," said Hazel. "Five pounds isn't such a jolly lot of money. Manoeuvre can afford to leave fivers about his study," he added, with a sneer.

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"It's his own money," said Wharton. "But never mind Mauly. I can't do what you want, Hazel; it's impossible. Half-a-crown is my limit."

"Oh, don't be an ass! If you won't lend a fellow a hand, say so in plain English, and don't beat about the bush."

"I've said so."

"You haven't anything to lend a friend," sneered Hazel; "not even when he's up to his neck in trouble? You've got plenty of money to spend on picnics. I saw the cargo you were taking out to Popper's Island the other day. You could ask me to a picnic, but you can't help me when I'm in a fearful hole."

"You didn't come to the picnic," said Harry. "I suppose you were busy getting into this scrape."

"No business of yours, if you're not going to help me out of the scrape," snapped Hazel. "You can throw in a sermon along with the fiver, if you like; but I'm not taking one without the other."

"At the present moment," said Harry, "I've exactly half-a-crown to call my own. Nothing doing."

"Your friends would lend you money. They'd trust you, if they won't trust me," said Hazel, with a sneer.

Wharton's eyes gleamed.

"Are you asking me to go begging of my friends to give you the money because you've been dabbling in some filthy betting with some blackguard who ought to be in prison?" exclaimed the captain of the Remove. "I think that's about the limit, Hazel. I can't do it."

"You mean you won't."

"Yes, I mean I won't, if you prefer it that way!" snapped Wharton. "Better say no more about it. I don't want to row with you."

And with that the captain of the Remove quitted Study No. 2, and shut the door after him rather hard.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Sat Upon!

LORD MAULEVERER wore a slightly worried look.

He did not look very worried. His lordship never looked "very" anything.

But he was slightly worried.

A most unusual state of affairs obtained in Study No. 12 in the Remove—a study that was generally flowing with milk and honey, as it were. Lord Mauleverer was stony.

Mauly had had exactly one five-pound note left that day. Most Remove fellows, in possession of a five-pound note, would have considered themselves in great funds. The day on which they received the fiver would have been a day worthy to be marked with a white stone. But Mauly was in the happy position of having as much cash as he wanted; and when he found himself down to a fiver he had made a mental note to write to his guardian for a supply. Writing letters, however, was a form of exertion, and exertion in any form did not recommend itself to Mauleverer. So that letter remained unwritten.

Therefore, it came to pass that the mysterious vanishing of Lord Mauleverer's fiver left him, like the seed in the parable, in a stony place.

Lord Mauleverer was standing in his study, staring at the inkstand on the table. It was a heavy inkstand, and no banknote could possibly have blown away from underneath it. Really, the disappearance of that banknote was very mysterious. Mauly distinctly remembered putting it there. He had a rotten memory as he said himself, but he remembered that. He had been looking through his financial supply, and had placed the banknote there while he went through his note-case for currency notes, without finding any. He

had left it there simply because he forgot to pick it up again. He had remembered it about an hour later, when he was at the tuckshop, and the desire for ginger-pop had reminded him that he had nothing in his pockets.

Jimmy Vivian, his study-mate, had been at cricket practice with other Remove fellows. He was not in the study when the note was placed there under the inkstand, and he did not come back to the study till after Mauly. So he was unable to shed any light on the mystery, only offering the suggestion that Mauly had put it in some pocket or other, and forgotten all about it—quite a plausible suggestion.

But Mauleverer was assured that he had left that fiver under the inkstand. He remembered that he had forgotten it, and so left it there!

Hence the worried wrinkle in his lordship's noble brow. The loss of the note did not worry him; neither did it worry him to have an account running up at the school shop. But it was evidently necessary now to get that letter written to his guardian at Mauleverer Towers, and Mauly loathed writing letters. He would much rather have found the missing banknote, had it been discoverable.

Jimmy Vivian had looked round the study without finding it. Mauly had not looked round the study; he was more than willing to take Vivian's word for it that he had looked everywhere. But he had looked under the inkstand—and a second time he had looked under the inkstand. Now he was regarding the inkstand with a perplexed stare.

How had that banknote shifted itself out from under that heavy inkstand and vanished? Certainly, any fellow in the Remove could have dropped into the study and taken the banknote, had he happened to notice it there. But it did not even cross Lord Mauleverer's mind that any fellow in the Remove had done so. Thoughts of that kind did not come easily to Lord Mauleverer; indeed, they did not come at all. He was quite prepared to give the thing up as an insoluble mystery; but he was not in the least prepared to suspect any Greyfriars man of "pinching" a banknote.

There was a tap at Mauleverer's door, and Arthur da Costa came in.

Lord Mauleverer gave him an amiable nod.

As a matter of fact, he did not like Da Costa. He admired the way the fellow played cricket, and he considered that a fellow who played such a splendid game of cricket must be some sort of a good sort in his way. Still, he did not like him, from some deep instinct of distrust. But Mauly was always civil, whether he liked a fellow or not; and indeed he hardly realised consciously that he disliked Da Costa.

Certainly, he had never asked the Eurasian into his study, and he wondered why Da Costa had come there now.

"I hear that you have lost a bank-note, Mauleverer," said Da Costa.

"Yaas."

"Some of the fellows have been talking about it in the Rag," the Eurasian explained. "I thought I would come and offer to help you look for it."

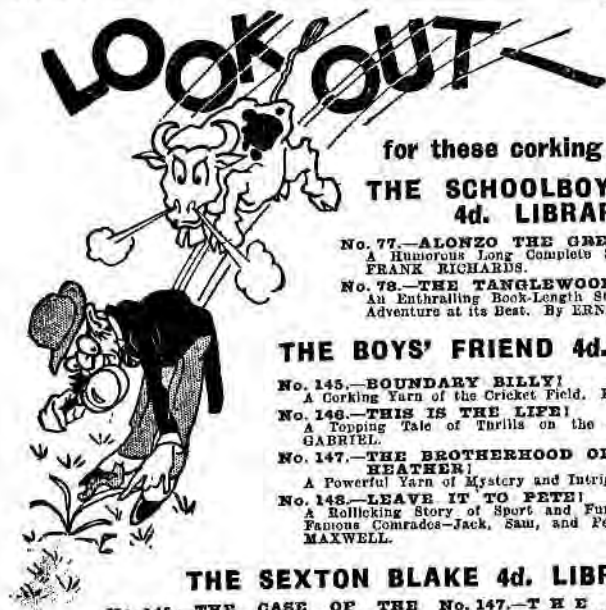
"Thanks very much, dear man! But it's all right."

"You have found it, then?"

"Not exactly," admitted Lord Mauleverer. "But it's all right, all the same."

Da Costa smiled.

"But it should be found," he said. "It will be very disagreeable if it is not found."



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"Oh, that's all right! I'm goin' to write to my uncle," said Lord Mauleverer. "Awful kind of you to look in; but it's all right."

"I mean, it will be disagreeable for other fellows," the Eurasian had to explain.

Mauleverer stared at him.

"I don't see that," he answered. "It's rather a bother to me personally, but I don't see that it need worry anybody else."

"I mean, that when money is missing, there is likely to be a suspicion that it has been stolen."

"Rubbish!"

"You do not think so?"

"Rot! Of course not!"

Lord Mauleverer, for once in his life, spoke sharply. He was inwardly wondering what sort of an outsider was this, who suggested that a theft might have taken place in the Remove passage at Greyfriars.

"Other fellows may think so," persisted Da Costa.

Lord Mauleverer looked the boy from the East steadily in the eyes.

"Any fellow who thought anythin' of the kind would be a miserable sort of worm, in my opinion," he answered deliberately. "Fellows don't suspect one another of stealing at Greyfriars, Da Costa."

Da Costa flushed crimson.

"Ah! You are speaking of the matter of Mr. Quelch's watch being found in Wharton's desk!" he exclaimed. "You mean—"

"Well, I didn't mean to mention it, but perhaps it was in my mind," said Lord Mauleverer. "Bunter hid the watch there for a fatheaded practical joke, and you found it, and thought Wharton had pinched it. I'm not goin' to tell you what I think of that; but let me tell you one thing. Don't spill any of your rotten suspicions in this study! I won't have it!"

His lordship was speaking with a very unusual emphasis, and his eyes gleamed. Lord Mauleverer's anger was not easily roused; but the bare idea of the suspicious Eurasian starting a story that his banknote had been stolen, roused his deepest ire.

"You say you came here to offer to help look for it," he went on. "Well, Vivian has looked for it, and he thinks I must have put it in some other pocket and forgotten it. Very likely I did. Anyhow, what's become of that banknote is my bizney, Da Costa, not yours. And I tell you plainly that I won't have you suggestin' that it may have been pinched!"

"But if it is not found—"

"That's my bizney!"

"But surely you will report your loss to your Form master, if you do not find the note?" exclaimed the Eurasian.

"I shall please myself about that."

Da Costa flushed again. Lord Mauleverer hated snubbing any fellow. He did not snub even Bunter. But the Eurasian irritated him deeply with his suspicious suggestion of a theft in the study, and excited his contempt at the same time.

Da Costa looked at him, and then quitted the study quietly, with his soft tread that was so like that of a cat.

"Good gad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. "What sort of a blighter have they pushed into Greyfriars now? Good gad! That fellow seems to suspect chaps of stealing as naturally as he breathes! I wonder Wharton doesn't kick him out of his study! I'm dashed if I don't wish I'd kicked him out of this!"

Da Costa's visit seemed to have left an unpleasant flavour in Lord Mauleverer's mouth.

But that there was anything more in the matter than the suspicion of a base nature, Lord Mauleverer did not suspect. The contempt he was feeling for Arthur da Costa would have deepened into scorn and horror, could he have read the thoughts in the half-caste's tortuous mind.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The End of His Tether!

"HAZELDENE!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Your construe this morning would disgrace a boy in the Second Form."

Grunt from Hazeldene.

"You have not prepared this lesson, Hazeldene."

Another grunt.

Mr. Quelch fixed his eyes on Hazel, and there was a glint in them. For several days now Hazel had been conspicuously careless and neglectful in class. And Mr. Quelch was not the master to be subjected to that mode of treatment.

Hazel, no doubt, had other matters on his mind. But the Remove master most certainly would not have been placated, had he known what those other matters were.

"I have already given you impositions, Hazeldene. This has made no difference to you. I shall now cane you!"

Hazel set his lips.

Perhaps he had not expected that. Perhaps, in the stress of those other matters on his mind, he had not thought about Mr. Quelch and his views at all. To the rest of the Remove it seemed that Hazel had been asking for it. Indeed, as Skinner said, begging and praying for it for days, and that it was not at all surprising that he had got it at last.

"Stand out before the class, Hazeldene!"

The sullen junior loafed out.

Mr. Quelch picked up the cane from his desk. Hazel's manner of sullen, sulky indifference did not please him. If Hazel did not regard the work of the Form as of any importance, it was time that the importance of it was impressed upon him, in Mr. Quelch's opinion.

The Remove master pointed to a chair near his desk with his cane.

"Bend over that chair, Hazeldene!"

Swish! Swish! Swish!

Hazel's face was white as he rose after the infliction.

He frequently provoked, by sheer cheeky recklessness, punishment that he had not the hardihood to endure when it came to him. Having asked for that caning, and, indeed, left his Form master no other resource than to cane him, Hazel was quite knocked out by the infliction, and went back to his Form quivering, and white-faced.

Harry Wharton's glance rested on him for some moments. He knew what was on the wretched fellow's mind, though fortunately Mr. Quelch did not even dream of it. Hazel's confidence of the evening before had enlightened Wharton. He could not help feeling compassion, which was mingled with contempt. Vernon-Smith was glancing at Hazel also, with an ironical grin. The contempt he felt was untinged by compassion.

A scapegrace like the Bounder, with iron hardihood to endure whatever might fall upon him, was very different from a weak, reckless, irresolute scapegrace of Hazel's calibre. When trouble came to the Bounder, as it

often did, he set his teeth to it. When trouble came to Hazel, he crumpled up under it hopelessly. The wretched fellow was in his most crumpled state now, and Wharton wondered whether the matter was more serious than he had supposed at first.

More than once Hazel had been within measurable distance of the "sack." And Wharton did not like to think what Marjorie's feelings would be if her brother were expelled from Greyfriars. He knew that the girl had feared it more than once.

When the Remove were dismissed after second lesson, Hazel went at once to the letter-rack, where letters for the juniors were placed to be taken in morning break. He glanced over the letters, obviously in the hope of seeing one for himself—the remote possibility of a remittance from some indulgent relative being all the hope that was left him. But there was no letter for Hazeldene, and he shoved his hands deep in his pockets, and tramped away with a sullen face.

"What's up with Hazel?" asked Bob Cherry, staring after him. "Hallo! Hallo! Hallo! What's the row, Hazel, old bean?"

Hazel did not turn his head, or reply.

"He was licked in the Form, you know," remarked Peter Todd.

"Well, fellows have been licked before, without scowling like demons in a pantomime," said Bob. "Anything for little me there?"

"It's true I had a letter from my uncle," said Harry.

"Anything likely to be in it?" asked Nugent, with a grin. There was rather a shortage of cash among the Famous Five at present. The picnic on Popper's Island had exhausted both cash and credit for a time.

"You never know," said Harry laughing. "My uncle mentioned in his last letter that he might be coming down to the school this term, and that he would let me know in his next. I expected the letter to-day."

"Nothing here," said Bob.

"One for you, Da Costa," called out Peter Todd.

"Yess? Thank you," said the Eurasian.

Da Costa's letter was addressed to him in a rather legal-looking hand, and had a London post-mark. Any fellow who had been interested in it, would have guessed that it was from the solicitor, Mr. Gedge, who had brought Da Costa to Greyfriars. Nobody, as a matter of fact, was interested, and Da Costa slipped the letter into his pocket unheeded.

"You have no letter from your uncle, Wharton?" he remarked, his dark eyes resting on the captain of the Remove.

"No!"

Wharton's answer was abrupt; but remembering that he had decided to be on civil speaking terms with his unwelcome study-mate, he added more amicably:

"Not this time—I daresay it will come along to-morrow. Nothing for any of you fellows?"

"The nothingfulness is terrific," sighed Harree Janset Ram Singh. "We are forgetfully overlooked. To be out of sight is to be out of one's mind, as the English proverb says."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The fact is, we could do with a remittance from somebody," remarked Johnny Bull. "I'll tell you what, you men—next chap who gets a tip from home whacks it out all round, what?"

"Hear, hear!" said Bob.

"Done!" said Nugent.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,062.

"The whackfulness shall be terrific," agreed the nabob of Bhanipur.

Harry Wharton laughed. "I fancy that means that Johnny is expecting a tip from his Auntie Bull," he remarked.

"Well, you never know," said Bull. "But it's fair all round. Is it a go?" "Certainly, if you like."

"Done then."

But there was nothing to be whacked out that morning, at all events, and the Famous Five walked out cheerfully into the sunny quad. The financial resources of the Co. were at a very low ebb; but their high spirits did not diminish with the diminution of cash. If a remittance came, they were ready to whack it out and enjoy it while it lasted; if a remittance did not come, they were equally prepared to face a stony period with cheery fortitude. Stony periods were not at all uncommon in the Lower Fourth.

But Harry Wharton's cheery face clouded a little at the sight of Hazeldene sitting on a bench under the old elms, by himself, staring moodily before him. Skinner and Snoop had walked past Hazel, and winked at one another as they passed. The Bounder had given him a stare and a mocking grin. Hazel was a fellow who had frequent ups and downs: when the "ups" were the order of the day, he would be boisterously cheerful; when the "downs" came along, he was correspondingly despondent. Whether up or down, a fellow was expected at Greyfriars to keep a stiff upper lip, and not to display his feelings to be read by every casual glance. But all the Remove always knew if there was anything amiss with Hazel: it was his way to wear his heart on his sleeve.

The captain of the Remove left his cheery comrades, and joined Hazel under the shady trees. The junior gave him a sullen look. In Hazel's good-looking face—almost too good-looking—there was a resemblance to Marjorie that had often disarmed Wharton.

"Buck up, old chap," said Wharton.

"Oh, cheese it."

"You're looking as if you expect the crack of doom before the third lesson," said Harry. "You don't want Quelch to notice it, and ask what's up, do you?"

Hazel laughed bitterly. "I don't care much! I'm in a hole, and there's no getting out of it. I shall be shown up here if I don't square Joe Spratt to-morrow."

"Who on earth is Joe Spratt?"

"Oh, a man," said Hazel. "Just a man! Only he happens to be a man I owe five pounds to. He happens to have put it on a horse for me at Wapshot races, on tick, and he happens to want his money. Can't blame him—I should want it in his place, I suppose. I can't settle, and I dare say he'll be looking in here to see me later on."

"Here!" exclaimed Wharton, aghast. "I shouldn't wonder."

"My hat! You've asked for it this time, and no mistake," exclaimed the captain of the Remove in dismay. "If some racing tout comes here asking for you you'll get the chopper, right away."

"I know that."

"And you risk that, for the sake of playing the giddy goat!" exclaimed Wharton. "Of all the fools—"

"Are you going to lend me five pounds?"

"I've told you I can't."

"Then shut up and mind your own business," said Hazel savagely. "If I'm going to be sacked, I'll have it without any sermons from you, Harry Wharton."

Wharton breathed hard.

"The man must be a scoundrel, to dabble in betting with a schoolboy," he said.

"Am I to swindle him because he's a scoundrel?" sneered Hazel.

"I didn't say that! But if you've made a bet without money to meet it if you lost—" Wharton paused.

"Well, that's exactly what I did. I thought the brute was going to win, or I'd never have backed him. It was a dead cert—I got it from Ponsouby at Highcliffe, and he knows a lot about horses. But the beast was beaten—never even placed," said Hazel, biting his lip. "I dare say it was all squared in the stable—I believe races often are: and the outside public haven't any chance against wangling like that."

"A good reason for letting such things alone."

"Think I don't know that?" jeered Hazel. "Easy enough to say I told you so. It doesn't help much, though."

Harry Wharton walked away, and left him scowling. Hazel was deep down in the depths now: he was not only in a hole, but in one of the deepest holes he had ever stumbled into. But there was nothing that the captain of the Remove could do—he could have no more raised five pounds than he could have raised five hundred. He walked away with a clouded brow and left Hazel to it.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Gedge Hears Good News!

ARTHUR DA COSTA walked down to the school gates after dinner that day, and strolled out with an air of casual carelessness. At a little distance from Greyfriars, that careless air left him, and he walked sharply like a fellow in haste to reach a fixed destination. From his pocket he drew, presently, a letter, at which he glanced as he walked, a sardonic smile playing over his handsome olive-skinned face.

The letter was from Mr. Gedge, of Chancery Lane: and anyone who had seen that letter by chance—a Form-master, for instance, or some prying fellow, like Bunter—would have seen nothing whatever in it out of the ordinary. It ran:

"Dear Arthur,
I am indeed pleased to hear that you are progressing so well at your new school. I shall duly inform your guardian in India.

Yours sincerely,

J. Gedge."

That that letter was in code was not likely to occur to anyone who should happen to see it. Mr. Gedge, the worthy legal representative of Captain Marker, was fox-like in caution: and he was never likely to put pen to paper in a way that would involve himself in any possible trouble. He had his own code of communication with the boy from the East, who was at Greyfriars to carry out Captain Marker's mysterious plot. The word "progress," or any variation of that word, in a letter from Mr. Gedge, was understood to imply that he had come down to the neighbourhood of the school to see his hopeful protégé.

The word "India" connoted two o'clock. Had Mr. Gedge desired to see his protégé at three o'clock, his sentence would have run "I shall duly inform your guardian at Lucknow." Four o'clock would have been implied by "I shall duly inform your guardian in your native country." Such a code would have worried the memory, probably, of any other Greyfriars

fellow, for Da Costa did not take the risk of writing it down. But the retentive memory of the Oriental made nothing of it. Da Costa never needed to reflect for a moment before ascertaining the precise meaning of Mr. Gedge's peculiar communications.

The place of meeting never needed to be specified. It was understood that Mr. Gedge would be sauntering on the towpath, between the school and Friardale, at a certain distance from Greyfriars.

It was in that direction that Da Costa was hurrying now, cutting across the fields to save time.

Mr. Gedge had seen Da Costa a good many times since the Eurasian had been at Greyfriars. Had he visited the school every time—as he might have done, if so disposed—certainly such frequent visits would have excited remark. And it was Mr. Gedge's object to excite no remark at all. It was said of old that he who has a secret to hide should not only hide it, but hide the fact that he has it to hide. Mr. Gedge acted upon that cautious maxim. Certainly no one at Greyfriars had any reason to suspect that Captain Marker's solicitor took any unusual interest in the junior whom Captain Marker had sent from India.

The man in the silk hat and the black frock-coat was pacing up and down the towpath when Da Costa arrived at the appointed place. He did not speak to the junior on the open path by the river, however. There were two or three boats on the water, and an occasional pedestrian on the towpath. Mr. Gedge carried caution almost to the point of fastidiousness. Having sighted the Eurasian coming, the solicitor moved off the path into the trees that bordered it, and Da Costa followed him there. Under the shady trees of Friardale Wood, screened from general observation, the two met at last.

Then Mr. Gedge fixed his sharp, fainty eyes on the Eurasian, and rasped:

"Well?"

"Little, so far," answered Da Costa.

"You have nothing to report?"

"Little, as I have said."

"I shall not hurry you," said Mr. Gedge. "I am well aware that the business in hand requires time and care. But I hope you are not wasting time, Arthur. Something will be expected by Captain Marker before the end of the present term."

Da Costa's lip curled.

"Or he will not pay my fees for next term?" he sneered.

"Possibly not," said Mr. Gedge.

"Possibly not. But I hope it will not come to that, for your sake, Arthur. If you disappoint your kind friend in India you will lose a brilliant career."

"I shall not disappoint him," said the half-caste coolly. "I am taking care of that. Had Wharton remained my friend I should have kept to my resolve, and refused to harm him, as I told you. He has made himself my enemy, and he must take the consequences."

Mr. Gedge eyed the Eurasian dubiously.

Once, at least, the strange lad from the East, had shown very plain signs of kicking over the traces and bringing to nothing the scheme that had been concocted between Captain Marker and the lawyer. There was good in the boy of mixed blood—good that Mr. Gedge had never suspected. But the worthy gentleman from Chancery Lane was satisfied if evil had the upper hand in the half-caste's strangely-mixed character. Mr. Gedge was a tolerant man. The boy could have his scruples if he liked, so long as they did not interfere with business.



Wharton was about to read the letter when a fat form came charging along. Bob Cherry caught the Owl of the Remove by the collar just in time to prevent a collision. "Ow!" gasped Bunter. (See Chapter 8.)

"Be brief," said Mr. Gedge at length. "I have a train to catch, and it is not judicious to prolong the interview here. What have you done, so far?"

"A bank-note has disappeared from a study in the Remove."

"And you—"

"It has disappeared," said Da Costa, "that is enough. Never mind how, Mr. Gedge. But it will be found."

"Where?" breathed Mr. Gedge.

"In a letter."

"A letter?"

"Received by Harry Wharton in the course of post."

"From whom?"

"His uncle, Colonel Wharton."

Mr. Gedge stared at the Eurasian.

"You cannot contrive such a thing, Arthur," he said.

"I think I can, Mr. Gedge," said Da Costa coolly. "What do you suppose the fellow will do when he finds a five-pound note in his uncle's letter?"

"Spend it, I presume, in the usual extravagant way of a schoolboy," said Mr. Gedge.

"He will naturally suppose that his uncle has sent it to him as a tip, as I think they call it at school, if he finds it in the Colonel's letter, as you describe."

"Yes," lisped Da Costa, "he cannot think anything else. He will spend it—indeed, I have heard him make a compact to share out with some friends any remittance received by any of them. That makes it certain that he will change the banknote."

"Quite!" said Mr. Gedge.

"After it is changed it will be gone beyond recovery," said the Eurasian.

"Then the missing note will be inquired

for—and it will be found that Wharton has changed it."

Mr. Gedge eyed him.

"If it is your own banknote, Arthur, drop the whole thing. You must not be mixed up in any accusation against Wharton."

"I am not a child," said Da Costa contemptuously. "Do you think I do not know that? The note belongs to a boy named Lord Mauleverer, a friend of Wharton's."

"That is better," agreed Mr. Gedge.

"I shall, of course, not be seen in the matter at all. When Wharton is called to account he will tell a story of having received the banknote in a letter from his uncle. Colonel Wharton will be referred to, and he can only say that he sent no banknote in the letter. What will the school think of Wharton's explanation?"

Mr. Gedge gave a rusty laugh.

"They will think it the lamest and silliest explanation that a thief could possibly give," he answered.

"And then—a thief would not be allowed to stay at Greyfriars," said the half-caste. "Captain Marker may be prepared to hand over his reward."

"If you are sure you can do as you say—"

"I am sure."

"Very good!" said Mr. Gedge, in his rasping voice. "I shall wait for news with keen interest, Arthur. If you have anything to communicate in a hurry you may always telephone—not from the school, of course! I need not caution you to take care what you say on the telephone."

A few more words, and the gentleman

from Chancery Lane walked back to the towpath and disappeared.

Da Costa did not return to the towpath. He followed a track through the woods that led him to Friardale Lane, and by that leafy lane he walked back to the school.

His olive face was darkly thoughtful as he went.

Whether he felt remorse for what he was doing he could hardly have said himself. He was at Greyfriars to bring about the expulsion of Harry Wharton, to serve some unknown and mysterious purpose of the plotter in India. That purpose he was carrying out. Yet once he had resolved to throw up the whole thing, at the cost of losing all that had been promised him in reward. Had Wharton remained his friend he might have kept to that resolve. It was the duplicity and treachery of his own nature that had caused Wharton to bar him. But his resentment was deep and bitter, all the same.

Wharton had resumed civility, though not cordiality, but Da Costa could not forget how the captain of the Remove had collared him and turned him out of Study No. 1, with words of scorn and contempt that rankled as bitterly as ever in his breast after the lapse of many days. When he thought of that—and he thought of it often—he hated Wharton; but there were other times when the good that was in him revolted at what he was doing, and he longed passionately to cast aside treachery and dissimulation and become like the fellows about him in the Remove.

When he reached the school he went up

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,062.

to his study. Harry Wharton was there, working at an exercise at the table. He gave Da Costa a nod, but he rose from his chair with the exercise unfinished and left the study. Da Costa's eyes burned after him as he went. The captain of the Remove would not remain in the study with him, if he could help it.

It was a trivial incident; but it was more than enough to make the fellow from the East implacable.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Laying the Snare!

THE morning was warm. The windows of the Remove Form-room were wide open, to let in such air as there was. But the Form-room was very warm.

Billy Bunter perspired and grunted. Billy Bunter did not like a heat wave—it made him realise the extent of his circumference, and the unusual weight he had to carry. The fellows would have given a good deal for a wind from the north to blow in at the windows. Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh wore an almost beatific smile. This genial warmth, as he considered the blazing heat, reminded him of his happy native land. It recalled the broiling sun that baked the palace of Bhanipur. Arthur da Costa, who came from Lucknow, might have been expected to like the heat, or at least tolerate it better than the other Remove fellows. Oddly enough, Da Costa seemed to be feeling it more than Billy Bunter.

In second lesson, Mr. Quelch's eye turned sharply on the Eurasian as he swayed over his desk.

"Da Costa!"

The Eurasian straightened up at once.

"I am sorry, sir! I feel a little faint," he said. "I—I do not think I am very well this morning, sir!"

Mr. Quelch was kindness itself at once. There were fellows in his Form who would have made any excuse for slacking in class; but Da Costa was not one of them. He was one of the hardest workers in the Remove, and Mr. Quelch rather esteemed him on that account. A Form master who had the task of driving knowledge into obtuse or unwilling heads, found a good deal of relief in dealing with a fellow who absorbed instruction like a sponge absorbing water, and seemed keen on pursuing knowledge for its own sake. Arthur da Costa most assuredly was not pulling his Form master's leg for the sake of cutting a class; Mr. Quelch knew that; and it naturally did not occur to him that the junior might have any other motive.

"If I might walk in the open air for a few minutes, sir—" said Da Costa apologetically.

"You may certainly do so, Da Costa," said Mr. Quelch. "You may remain in the open air till you feel recovered, my boy."

"Thank you, sir."

Da Costa left the Form-room. The door had scarcely closed behind him, when William George Bunter jumped up in a great hurry.

"Please, sir—" he gasped.

"You may sit down, Bunter."

"I'm feeling faint, sir—"

"What?"

"Awfully faint, sir," said Bunter eagerly. "If—I might walk in the open air for a few minutes, sir—"

There was a suppressed chuckle in the Remove. Arthur da Costa had got

away with it, so to speak, and William George Bunter did not see why he should not get away with it likewise. But Mr. Quelch, so far from sympathising with the Owl of the Remove, gave him a glare.

"May I—I go out into the quad, sir?" gasped Bunter. "I—I—I'm feeling frightfully faint, sir—horribly—"

"You may not, Bunter."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"You may sit down immediately."

Bunter collapsed on his form.

"And you may write out fifty lines of the Æneid, and bring them to me at tea-time," added Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, lor'!"

William George Bunter wished, from the bottom of his fat heart, that he had not spoken. He realised dimly that he might have known that old Quelch was too downy a bird to be caught twice with the same chaff.

If any other fellow in the Remove had thought of feeling faint, and for that reason getting out of second lesson, he gave up the idea now. Second lesson proceeded without any more attacks of faintness in the Remove room.

Meanwhile, Arthur da Costa had gone down the Form-room passage. The big door of the House stood wide open, but Da Costa did not head in that direction—his need for fresh air did not seem to be pressing, now that he was outside the Remove room. He moved along slowly, his watchful eyes about him. All the other fellows were in Form-rooms or class-rooms; the House seemed deserted. Trotter, the page, appeared for a moment in the distance, and then vanished below stairs. Monsieur Charpentier, who was not taking a class just then, came in sight, and went out into the quad and vanished.

There was no eye on Da Costa when he stopped at the rack where the letters were placed for the juniors, to be taken in morning break—due in about a quarter of an hour. The Eurasian's keen eyes flashed over the letters, and in a second or little more, one of them disappeared into his pocket.

A minute later, Da Costa was in his study in the Remove passage.

There was no danger of interruption there, at that hour; but the Eurasian turned the key in the lock. What he was about to do, if discovered, meant his instant expulsion from the school, if the consequences were not still more serious.

But he was quite cool and collected.

He lighted the little spirit stove that stood in the study fender, used by the juniors for making tea when the weather was too warm for a study fire.

Very soon steam was issuing from the spout of the kettle.

The old trick of opening an envelope, without leaving a trace to catch a casual eye, by means of the steam kettle, served the schemer's turn now.

The letter in his hand was addressed to Harry Wharton. It was addressed in the handwriting of his uncle, Colonel Wharton; and was, of course, the letter that the captain of the Remove had been expecting.

Carefully the Eurasian steamed and opened the flap of the envelope.

A minute later it was stuck down again, but now the envelope contained something that Colonel Wharton had never enclosed in the letter.

Da Costa left the study.

With a careless and negligent air, but with eyes watchful as a cat's, he made his way to the letter-rack.

When Da Costa went out into the quadrangle, Harry Wharton's letter was in the rack with the rest, waiting for

the captain of the Remove to take it in morning break.

Arthur da Costa strolled to and fro in the quad, under the shade of the elms, taking care to walk within view of the Remove room windows, in case Mr. Quelch should happen to glance out.

His design had succeeded—he had known that it would succeed. A fellow like Wharton had no chance in dealing with him—not the shadow of a chance. He would have done better to seek the Eurasian's friendship, Da Costa bitterly reflected; that was the only thing that could have saved him. Every word of scorn he had uttered was to be paid for—dearly!

Da Costa did not linger long in the quad. He returned to the Remove room before second lesson reached its end.

Mr. Quelch gave him a glance as he came in.

"You feel recovered, Da Costa?"

"Yes, sir; thank you."

"Very good; you may go to your place."

That he had not been slacking, the Eurasian soon proved, by his deep and careful attention to the remainder of the lesson. When the Form were dismissed for break, Mr. Quelch glanced after the lithe, graceful figure of the Eurasian as Da Costa went out with the others. The new junior was a hard worker—he was well-behaved, quiet, inoffensive; he seemed to desire to please his Form master, and to live on amicable terms with his Form. He was the kind of pupil who made Mr. Quelch's task an easier one. Mr. Quelch approved of him. He had a feeling that he ought to have liked him—he was rather inclined to take himself to task for not liking Arthur da Costa.

But he did not like him!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Plain English!

"I HOPE you found the banknote, Mauleverer."

Lord Mauleverer set his lips.

Mr. Quelch, coming away from the Remove room, was passing without hearing when Arthur da Costa made that inquiry.

Had the fellow deliberately planned to make the affair of the banknote known to the Remove master, he could not have acted otherwise.

Mauly did not suspect that that was Da Costa's object. Mauly never suspected anything. But he was intensely irritated by what seemed to him crass tactlessness, as well as an uncalled-for interest in his personal affairs. Friends might inquire about the banknote; but Da Costa was not a friend of his; he hardly knew the fellow.

Mr. Quelch, rustling along to his study, paused, and fixed his gimlet-eyes on the two juniors.

Mauleverer did not answer the Eurasian. He was feeling more inclined to punch his head than to answer him.

"You will not suppose that the banknote has been stolen," said Da Costa. "But it will be very strange if it is not found."

"Shut up!" hissed Mauleverer.

"But why—"

"Can't you see Quelch?" breathed Mauleverer.

"I did not notice—"

"Oh, you silly ass!" groaned Mauleverer, as Mr. Quelch changed his course and bore down on them.

"Mauleverer!" rapped out Mr. Quelch.

"Yaas, sir."

"I heard Da Costa's remark. Have you lost a banknote?"

"I—I've mislaid one, sir," said Mauleverer.

"That is all?"

"That is all, sir."

"From what Da Costa said, I gathered that there has been a suggestion that it may have been purloined," said the Remove master sternly.

"Nothin' of the sort, sir," said Lord Mauleverer. "Da Costa is the only fellow at Greyfriars who is likely to think of such a rotten idea, sir. Nobody else would fancy so for a moment."

Da Costa coloured.

"I did not mean—" he began.

"Da Costa," said Mr. Quelch, "you should not have made such a suggestion. I am afraid that your mind turns very easily to miserable suspicions. I have not forgotten your utterly unfounded accusation against a Remove boy, in the matter of my watch that was hidden for a foolish practical joke by a foolish junior. You must endeavour to cure yourself, Da Costa, of this proneness to base suspicions."

Lord Mauleverer smiled faintly. The Eurasian almost writhed under that sharp reprimand; but for once Mauly did not sympathise with a fellow who was getting the acid edge of Quelch's tongue. Da Costa deserved all that he was getting, and more, in Mauly's opinion.

"You hear me, Da Costa?" rapped out Mr. Quelch.

"Yess, sir!" muttered the Eurasian.

"Bear what I say in mind," Mr. Quelch turned to Mauleverer. "Nevertheless, Mauleverer, the banknote, if missing, must be found. You will see that it is found at once, and you will report to me when you have found it. You understand?"

"Yaas, sir."

Mr. Quelch rustled on.

"I am sorry, Mauleverer—" began Da Costa.

"Come out into the quad," said Lord Mauleverer quietly. "I want to talk to you a bit, Da Costa."

"Yess."

Lord Mauleverer walked out with the Eurasian. It was not a friendly walk together. His lordship's face was set and almost grim.

He did not speak till they were under the elms. Then he stopped, fixed his eyes on Da Costa's olive face, and spoke.

"You miserable worm!" he commenced.

"What?"

"You low-down sort of reptile!" said Lord Mauleverer.

Da Costa stared at him. In the weeks he had been at Greyfriars he had never seen Lord Mauleverer in a temper; never heard him use an angry word. It was popularly supposed in the Remove that Mauly hadn't a temper at all; being blessed with the patience of Job instead of a temper. He stood Billy Bunter without turning a hair; he only smiled when Bob Cherry thumped him on the back; he remained imperturbably placid when Mr. Quelch raged at him in class; even a caning had never been known to disturb his equanimity. Calling any fellow unpleasant names was utterly unknown to his lordship. Now he seemed to have changed his manners and customs all of a sudden for the benefit of the new fellow in the Remove.

"You worm!" went on Mauleverer,

his eyes gleaming at Da Costa's surprised face. "You nasty worm! You unpleasant toad! What sort of a beastly bouncer do you call yourself, what?"

"Look here—"

"Oh, cheesse it!" said Mauleverer.

"Listen to me! I'm not a fellow for talkin' much; but I'm goin' to talk to you, and in plain English, by Jove! You've got me into a row with Quelch. I don't suppose you meant to, of course, but you've done it. I shall never hear the end of that banknote now till the wretched thing's found. All because you had to get the nasty idea

thinkin' beastly things, you can help shovin' them out for all Greyfriars to hear! You've got to help that, or, by Jove, I'll take the trouble to give you such a thrashin' that you'll be sorry you were such a sneakin' cad and beast!"

"I—I—"

"Mind that!" said Lord Mauleverer savagely. "I won't have it, and you've got to stop it! I'm not a fightin' chap, but if you don't want a fight on your hands, stop it! See? Next time you drop a word on this subject, look out for trouble!"

"Do you think I fear you?" exclaimed Da Costa fiercely. "I fear no one!"

BUNTER DIDN'T BELIEVE IT!



BUNTER.

—when he first saw Fatty Fowkes! He's the genial fat goalie of the Blue Crusaders—the famous First Division team. He turns the scale at sixteen stone, and you couldn't wish for a better chum. In a scrap, between the posts, or when there's a bit of grub going, he's a corker! His great pals are Ben Gillingham, the good-hearted back with the bowlegs, and Tich Harborough, the midget schoolboy winger, who runs down the touch-line like lightning. You'll like



FOWKES.

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into your no-class mind that it had been pinched, and you couldn't mind your own bizney! A fellow like you ought never to have come to Greyfriars."

"You dare to insult me—" began Da Costa.

"You can't be insulted," said Mauleverer. "A fellow who jumps at the chance of suspectin' chaps of stealin' is beneath insult! You couldn't be insulted any more than a polecat could!"

Da Costa's olive face was white with rage.

"You've got that rotten idea in your rotten mind," went on Lord Mauleverer. "I dare say you can't help it; you're built that way. But if you can't help

"All the better; you'll put up a good scrap, and give me a chance of knockin' you into a cocked hat when I begin on you!" said Mauleverer. "I mean what I say; I'll try my hardest, anyhow, to give you the thrashin' of your life if you spout out any more of your nasty sneakin' rot on this subject! Now keep your distance from me; you make me feel ill!"

Lord Mauleverer turned his back on the Eurasian and walked away, with that, even his back, as he went, indicating the scorn and loathing he was feeling for the fellow.

Da Costa stood motionless.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,062.

Every word had stung him deeply. His face was quite white as he stood there staring after Lord Mauleverer.

"Ho, he, he!"

Da Costa spun round as he heard that fat exclamation. A fat face and a pair of big spectacles looked at him. Billy Bunter grinned with enjoyment. Even Bunter, who heard everything, had never heard Lord Mauleverer slang a fellow before. Bunter was quite enjoying the novel experience; and Bunter, of course, was going to retail it up and down the Remove.

"He, he, he!" chorled Bunter. "Old Mauly was pitching it hot and strong, what? Never seen old Mauly in such a bate! He, he, he!"

Da Costa made a stride towards him, his hands clenched, and his eyes flashing.

Bunter jumped away in alarm.

"Here, you keep off!" he yelled.

"You fat rascal!"

"Yaroooh!"

William George Bunter dodged the infuriated Eurasian, and ran for his fat life.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Corn in Egypt!

HARRY WHARTON picked a letter from the rack, dropped it into his pocket, and went out of the House with his chums. Four members of the Co. had looked for letters without finding any. Their affectionate relatives really seemed to have forgotten them; being, no doubt, quite unaware of the financial crisis in the history of the Famous Five. Unless Wharton's letter turned up trumps, the cheery Co. were doomed to another day of stoniness.

"Rotten!" said Johnny Bull. "I really thought that auntie would have weighed in by this time."

"If there's anything in my letter, we whack it out all round," said the captain of the Remove. "But I'm afraid it's only a letter—just to tell me when my uncle is coming along."

"You never can tell!" grinned Bob Cherry. "It may have occurred to the jolly old colonel that fellows at school sometimes run out of cash—standing picnics and things."

"We'll soon see," answered Harry.

Under the shade of the elms the captain of the Remove slit open the envelope and took out the folded letter from within it.

"Yaroooh!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the matter with Bunter? Look out!"

A fat form came charging along, and Bob Cherry caught the Owl of the Remove by the collar just in time to prevent a collision. He did not quite stop Bunter. The fat junior's momentum and weight were both considerable; and as Bob's grasp fastened on his collar he spun right round Bob Cherry before he came to a halt.

"Ow!" he gasped, as he spun.

"Wow!"

"Here we go round the mulberry bush!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yow-ow! Leggo!" spluttered Bunter. "Keep him off! Keep off that savage nigger! Yaroooh!"

Da Costa, who was following the Owl of the Remove with an enraged face and clenched fists, stopped. Bob Cherry's sturdy figure interposed between him and the Owl of the Remove. Bunter leaned against an elm and gasped for breath.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the

row?" asked Bob good-humouredly. "You're not scrapping with Bunter surely, Da Costa? Mind what you're at; one punch might burst him all over the quad!"

"Oh, really, Cherry?"

"The fat rascal!" snapped Da Costa savagely.

"Yah!" roared Bunter, feeling safe behind Bob Cherry. "Cad! Rotter! Outsider! I'll jolly well tell these fellows all that Mauly said! Yah!"

"What's the row, you fat duffer?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Mauly's been slanging him," grinned Bunter breathlessly. "He's trying to make out that Mauly's banknote has been stolen, and Mauly says he will thrash him if he says so any more. Serve him right, too!"

"Hear, hear!" said Bob. "More power to Mauly's jolly old elbow!"

Wharton glanced at the angry Eurasian.

"Have you been saying that Mauly's banknote was pinched, Da Costa?" he asked quietly. "Can't you ever learn to be decent?"

Da Costa's eyes flashed at him.

"I did not say it had been stolen; I suggested it to Mauleverer, because the banknote is missing—"

"You had no right to suggest anything of the kind. It's a low-down, rotten idea to come into any fellow's head!" snapped the captain of the Remove. "If you think such things, keep them to yourself."

"I shall do as I please!"

"You won't!" said Wharton. "You'll get a thumping good ragging if you begin spreading a rotten story of stealing in the Remove. You ought to be jolly well ashamed of yourself."

"I say, you fellows, rag him now!" suggested Billy Bunter. "Give him a jolly good bumping!"

"He's hardly fit to touch, I think," said Wharton contemptuously, and he turned his back on the Eurasian.

"You shall be sorry for that, Wharton!" said Da Costa, between his teeth.

"Oh, rats!"

"Buzz off!" said Bob Cherry. "You aren't nice company, Da Costa. Why the dickens can't you try to be decent, like any other chap?"

Da Costa gave the Famous Five a black look and swung away. His face and his heart were full of bitterness as he went.

Taking no further heed of the Eurasian, Wharton unfolded his letter, and uttered an ejaculation as a crisp banknote rustled in his fingers.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Any good news?"

"Look!"

Harry Wharton held up a five-pound note.

"Hurrah!"

"Three cheers for the jolly old colonel!"

"Bravo!"

"The cheerfulness is terrific."

"Well, my hat!" said Harry Wharton. "Uncle must be a thought-reader; he's weighed in with this just at the right moment. Blessed if I quite catch on, though! He never sends me fivers; I thought there might be a pound note, perhaps; but a fiver—" Wharton whistled.

"Something special," said Bob. "I dare say he explains in the letter. If that fiver is sent for any special purpose, of course, we call off that little arrangement about whacking it out. That was only meant for a common or garden tip."

Harry Wharton nodded and looked at the letter. It was brief, like most of

the communications he received from his military relative.

"Dear Harry,—I find that I shall not have time to come down to the school so soon as I hoped. But I shall look in before the end of the term, and will let you know later.

"Your affectionate uncle,
"JAMES WHARTON."

The captain of the Remove read that letter aloud for the benefit of his comrades.

"Is that all?" asked Bob.

"That's all."

"He doesn't mention the fiver, then?"

"Not a syllable."

"Must have shoved it in at the last moment, as a sort of consolation prize for not coming down to see you," grinned Bob.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I suppose so! He may have been in a hurry; it's quite unlike him to put in an enclosure without referring to it. And I simply can't understand his sending a fiver in an unregistered letter. A pound note, perhaps—but a fiver! It's jolly odd, really!"

"Still, the fiver's the thing," said Bob. "If it was a last-minute thought, I must say that the jolly old colonel has happy thoughts at the last minute."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, here it is, and it's a tip," said Harry. "That's plain enough. It's a tip; and we share it out all round; as agreed."

"Oh, draw that mild!" said Johnny Bull. "When I suggested whacking out the first tip that came along I was thinking of a quid or so."

"Rot! It comes to the same thing!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Buzz off, Bunter!"

"I say, let's go and change that fiver while the tuckshop's open," said Billy Bunter eagerly. "No time like the present, you know. I say, you fellows, I'll come with you."

"We owe something at the tuckshop on account of that picnic on Popper's Island that was such a giddy frost!" said Wharton. "We'll square that, and whack out the change. And a ginger-pop all round wouldn't come amiss, what?"

"Good egg!"

The chums of the Remove started for the school shop, which was open in morning break. Billy Bunter rolled along with them. This was a scene in which William George Bunter was bound to be "on."

But Harry Wharton paused suddenly at the sight of a junior sitting on a bench under the elms with a miserable, harassed face. It was Hazeldene of the Remove.

He took no heed of the cheery group of juniors. But Wharton's eyes rested on him, and he stopped.

There was a banknote for five pounds in his hand; and that was the exact sum that Hazel required to pull him out of his latest "hole."

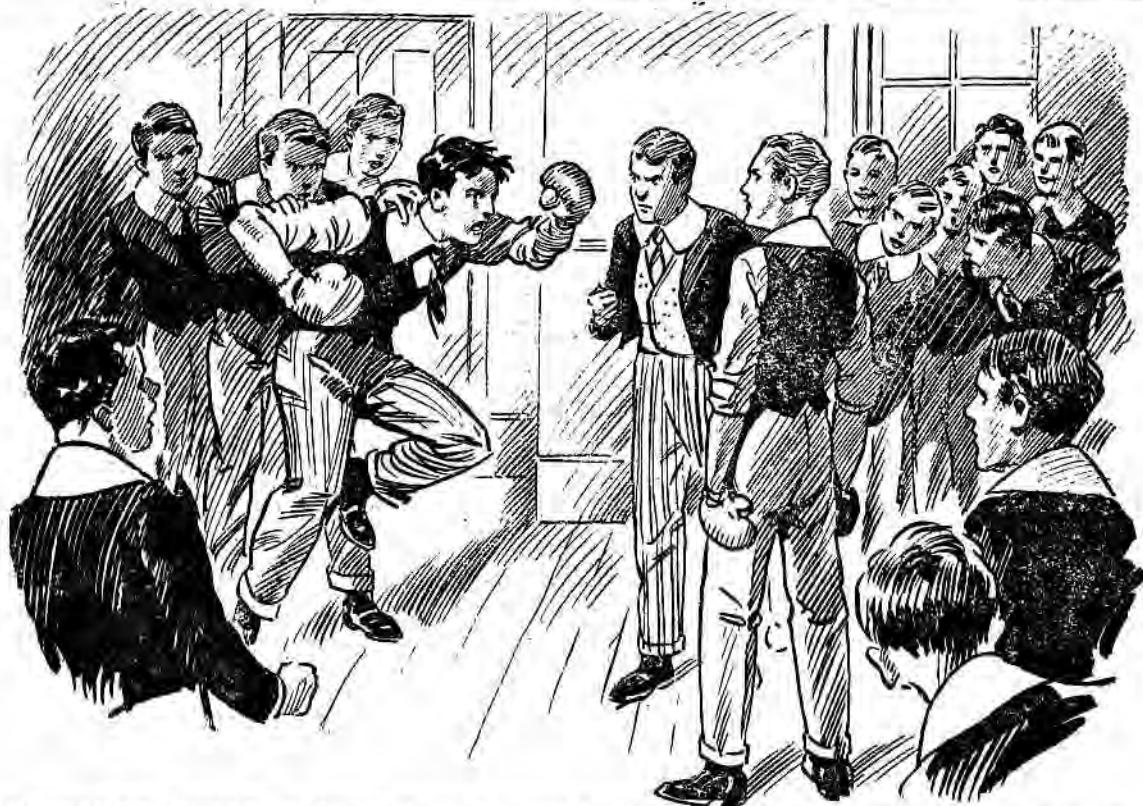
"Come on, Harry, old fellow!" exclaimed Billy Bunter.

But Wharton had halted.

There was a struggle in his breast. The fiver had come utterly unexpectedly—it was like corn in Egypt after the lean years. And it belonged equally to all the members of the Co., under the compact that had been made. But the harassed misery in Hazel's face touched the captain of the Remove. He hesitated.

"Let's leave changing the fiver till after third lesson, you men," said the captain of the Remove abruptly.

"What about ginger-pop?" asked



"Time!" called Vernon-Smith. Lord Mauleverer dropped his hands at once, but Da Costa, as if deaf to the Bounder's voice, followed him up, hitting out fiercely. "Time!" roared the Bounder. Wharton caught the Eurasian by the shoulder, and jerked him back from his adversary. (See Chapter 11.)

Bob. "There's plenty of time before the bell goes."

"I've a reason, if you fellows don't mind."

"Oh, all right!"

"I say, you fellows—" exclaimed Billy Bunter, in alarm. A vision of jam-tarts and ginger-pop faded from William George Bunter like a mirage of the desert.

But William George Bunter was not heeded. Puzzled as they were by his sudden change of mind, Wharton's chums acquiesced at once; and the Famous Five walked away towards the House, instead of the tuckshop. And Billy Bunter—with that vision of a spread gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream—blinked after them, his very spectacles glittering with wrath, and ejaculated:

"Beasts!"

"hole" he was in; and there was only one way of doing so. If Hazel was right in supposing that the man Spratt would come to the school to dun him for the money, Hazel was in the most serious of his innumerable scrapes. Such an exposure of his dingy black-guardism could scarcely lead to anything but expulsion. That he had asked for it, and that he deserved it if he got it, might be true; but Wharton did not want to see Marjorie's brother sacked from the school. He was aware, too, that Hazel was more foolish than vicious; and that it was probably under the influence of Pon & Co. of Highcliffe when he had made a fool of himself.

There were many pros and cons to be considered before a decision could be arrived at; and as the siver had to be regarded as the common property of the Co., Wharton had to consult his comrades. At the back of his mind was the thought that if Hazel did not succeed in "sticking" his friends at Greyfriars for what he wanted, he would worry Marjorie about it, as Wharton knew he had done before in similar difficulties. Wharton hated the idea of Marjorie Hazeldene's bright face being clouded by her brother's dingy troubles.

After the Remove were dismissed Wharton left the House with his chums, and they walked over to the Cloisters—a quiet and secluded spot where they could talk without danger of being overheard or specially observed. The Co. were in a rather astonished frame of mind, wondering what was up. In the shady old Cloisters Wharton proceeded to explain.

"This is a matter that has got to be settled unanimously or not at all," he said. "That siver belongs to the whole Co. That's settled. I dare say you men have noticed that Hazel's down on his luck."

"The whole Form has," grunted Johnny Bull. "All Greyfriars, for that matter, I dare say. Hazel doesn't make a secret of it when he's down on his luck."

"The secretiveness is not terrific," agreed Haree Janset Ram Singh.

"What about Hazel?" asked Bob.

"He's in debt," said Harry. "He owes a man five pounds, and—and—"

"And you're thinking of footing the bill?" snorted Johnny Bull. "I believe I've mentioned before that you're an ass, so I needn't say so again."

"Hear, hear!" said Bob.

"The fact is, he's really up against it," said Wharton. "He thinks, at least, that if he doesn't square, the man will come here to dun him. That means a show-up and the boot."

"Serve him jolly well right!" said Johnny Bull. "It doesn't mean that, unless he's been up to something shady."

"Well, I'm afraid he has."

"Not a thing for us to get mixed up in."

"I know! But"—Wharton paused and coloured—"I'm sorry for Hazel—he's more a silly fool than anything else; but it would be the chopper for him if a racing tout from Wapshot came here after him."

"Great pip! I should say so!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Is it so bad as that?"

"He thinks so, at least. The fact is, he owes the money. He seems to have laid a bet without anything to meet it if he lost."

"That's swindling," said Johnny Bull.

"Well, it's jolly like it; but Hazel doesn't seem to see it. Anyhow, there's some excuse for the man wanting his money, though he must be a scoundrel to dabble in betting with a schoolboy."

(Continued on page 16.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,062.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Nem. Con.!

HARRY WHARTON had a very thoughtful look in third lesson that morning.

If Mr. Quelch noticed it and supposed that the junior was bestowing unusual thought on the lesson, Mr. Quelch was in error.

Wharton was thinking of Hazel's scrape, and of the five-pound note that had come so unexpectedly in the letter from his uncle.

Fivers were rare enough with the chums of the Remove, and Wharton had a naturally strong objection to parting with that siver for nothing. He had a still stronger objection to letting it go to settle a gambling debt. All the same, he was thinking of rescuing the scrapegrace of the Remove from the



(Continued from page 13.)

Look here, to put it plain, I'm thinking less of Hazel than of Marjorie. She would be frightfully cut up if Hazel got the boot here. We don't want that. If we see the silly chump clear this time, she will never hear of it."

"This time!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"And what about next time?"

"Well, you know Hazel," Wharton smiled faintly. "A fright like this will last him a jolly long time. He looks now as if he were going to be hanged. He won't back geogees again in a hurry."

"My esteemed chums," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "let the excellent and preposterous fiver go, and save that ludicrous chump from getting it where the chicken got the ridiculous chopper."

"I agree, of course," said Nugent; and Bob Cherry nodded assent. Johnny Bull was slower to speak.

"So far as Hazel is concerned," said Johnny grimly, "I'd say, let the shady rotter get what he's asked for. If he can't keep clear of blackguardism, let him take the consequences."

"But the beauteous and absurd Marjorie—" murmured Hurree Singh.

"That's it," said Johnny Bull. "We've let him stick us before for that reason, and I suppose we're going to let him stick us again. Give him the fiver, and give him a kick from me along with it."

"If you all agree—" said Harry.

"Passed unanimously," said Bob Cherry. "Let the jolly old fiver rip! I'd rather give him a thundering good hiding, but—"

"A hiding won't meet the case," said Wharton, with a smile. "After all, the fiver came unexpectedly; it was a sort of windfall. Hazel may square up, of course—he said he could settle in a week or two."

"Yes, I know how Hazel settles," growled Johnny Bull. "You lend him cash on the Kathleen Mavourneen system—it may be for years, and it may be for ever! Still, keep him to it; there's no reason why he shouldn't square like any other fellow that I can see."

"It's settled, then?" asked the captain of the Remove.

"Yes!" said four voices together.

"Then I'll look for Hazel at once; the sooner the better," said Harry; and the juniors walked back to the quad, where the captain of the Remove proceeded to look for Hazeldene.

He found that hapless sportsman mouching about aimlessly under the library windows.

Hazel gave him a look of dislike and bitterness as he came up.

"More sermons?" he sneered. "You can keep them!"

"No!" said Harry quietly.

"Better not!" said Hazel. "I'm not in a temper for preaching. I can tell you, and if you give me any more of it you'll have a scrap on your hands. You've refused to help me out of a hole. I was a fool to ask you, I know that; but I've

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,062.

got other resources—you won't have the pleasure of seeing me dunned by a racing tout here, Harry Wharton, and taken up to the Head to be sacked. I dare say you'd like it; but you'll be disappointed."

Wharton looked at him.

Hazel's angry bitterness hardly stirred his resentment. The fellow was almost in hysterics with anxiety and fear.

"I've got a last chance, at least," snarled Hazeldene. "I'm going out after dinner, and I may be able to raise the tin. You won't see me sacked from the school yet awhile."

"Cliff House, I suppose?" Wharton could not help saying.

Hazel gave him a fierce look.

"No business of yours, is it? I know you'd be jolly glad to see me sacked. My sister will help me if she can. She's worth the whole crew of you."

"Likely enough," said Harry. "Worth the lot of us, and a lot more. But I came to look for you—"

"You could have saved yourself the trouble. When I want sermons I can get them from the Head. Mind your own business."

"Will you let a fellow speak?" exclaimed Harry Wharton impatiently. "You asked me to lend you five pounds, but—"

"And you refused! Go and eat coke!"

"I've got the fiver—"

"What?"

"It belongs to all of us," said Harry, "and we have all agreed to let you have it to see you through. Settle it up when you can. Here."

Hazel stared blankly, his eyes almost bulging from his head as Harry Wharton slipped the five-pound note into his hand.

"A—a fiver!" he stuttered.

"Yes. That will see you clear?"

"Oh!" gasped Hazel. "Yes, that's all right! Oh!" He leaned weakly on the old stone wall of the library under the stained-glass windows. "I—I say, I'm sorry for—for what I said. This is jolly decent of you fellows. I say, I'll settle this as soon as I can, honour bright. I—I'm really no end obliged. I say, this is ripping of you."

The relief was almost too much for Hazeldene. Ten years seemed to have been taken off him. Wharton gave him a nod, and left him, the five-pound note crumpled in his hand.

After dinner that day Hazeldene of the Remove disappeared. He was gone out of gates some little time; but his footsteps had not led him, after all, to Cliff House. When he came back he seemed to be walking on air. Hazel was out of his latest "hole," and the relief made a new man of him.

Harry Wharton spoke a word to him as the Remove went into class.

"All serene?"

"Right as rain," said Hazel. "Thanks no end! Right as rain! Thank goodness I'm clear of that! I shan't forget this, Wharton, old chap."

Wharton smiled as he went into the Form-room. Hazel had said that he would not forget it, but Wharton did not expect the matter to linger in his mind beyond the following day. But that mattered little enough. Marjorie's brother was out of the hole, and so long as he kept from stumbling into another the captain of the Remove was satisfied.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Maully on the Warpath!

LORD MAULEVERER came into the Rag, a day or two later, with an unusually serious expression on his noble visage.

He glanced round the room, and crossed over to where Harry Wharton

& Co. were chatting, after tea, by the big window on the quad.

"You fellows busy?" he inquired.

"Busy wagging our chins, old bean," answered Bob Cherry. "What's the row? Wherefore that portentous solemnity?"

"I'm lookin' for a second."

"Eh?"

"Fight!" explained his lordship.

"You?" yelled the Famous Five with one voice.

"Yaas."

"Great Scott!"

The chums of the Remove stared at his lordship. That Maully was a good man with his hands they knew. Nobody in the Remove had forgotten his fight with the Bounder, on a certain celebrated occasion, when Smithy, much to his astonishment, had been licked by the noble slacker. But Maully was the most peaceable fellow imaginable; scrapping was not in his line at all. The announcement that he was booked for a fight was simply amazing.

"Pulling our leg?" demanded Wharton.

"Not at all."

"You're really going to scrap?" exclaimed Nugent.

"Yaas."

"Who's the happy victim?"

"That low beast Da Costa."

"Oh!"

The juniors understood now.

The banknote that had been missing from Lord Mauleverer's study had not yet been found. Mr. Quelch had asked him rather sharply about it, and Maully had only been able to reply that he was still hoping to find it. Mr. Quelch had warned him rather emphatically that he had better lose no more time in finding it, adding that if it was not found Maully would be caned. Carelessness with money was not approved of by the Remove master. This was a worry to Maully, who was now in possession of a new supply of cash, and would willingly have dismissed the lost fiver from his mind.

But this was not what had set the noble youth on the war-path. In spite of the warning he had given him, the Eurasian had not ceased to make what Maully described as putrid insinuations on the subject. But for Arthur da Costa, Mauleverer would have forgotten the missing banknote, and the other fellows would have forgotten it also. But with one fellow hinting that a theft had taken place in the Remove studies, it was impossible to forget the matter.

With their attention drawn specially to it, the juniors could not help thinking how odd it was, to say the least, that that fiver had vanished.

Lord Mauleverer had searched for it, with the assistance of other fellows. All the pockets of his many garments had been turned inside out. His study had been rooted through—every drawer and receptacle in his study turned upside down. If only to stop Da Costa's beastly tongue, as he expressed it, Maully was anxious to find that fiver. But the fiver was not to be found; and, as the topic was not allowed to die, more than one fellow began to wonder whether, after all, the Eurasian was right, and it had been "pinched."

Hence the present warlike state of his usually placid lordship. For once in his amiable career, Lord Mauleverer was on the war-path.

"That miserable outsider can't let the thing alone," Mauleverer explained. "I warned him that if he didn't drop it I'd thrash him. He hasn't dropped it. So I'm going to thrash him. See?"

"The seefulness is terrific, my esteemed Maully," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The thrashfulness is the

proper caper in the ridiculous circumstances."

Lord Mauleverer grinned. "Who's goin' to be my second?" he asked.

"I'll be your second with pleasure, old man," said the captain of the Remove at once.

"I'll be your third, old bean!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Thanks!" said Mauleverer. "If you're my second, Wharton, it's up to you to sort out that cad, wherever he is, and bring him up to the scratch. I'll take a rest in this armchair while you're doin' it. I'm rather tired."

"I say, you fellows, here comes the nigger!" squeaked Billy Bunter, who had been lending a fat ear to the conversation.

Arthur da Costa came into the Rag. He had come in from cricket practice, and was looking a little flushed and very cheerful. Squiff and Peter Todd came in with him.

"I say, Wharton, Da Costa's in great form," called out Squiff. "He will be a surprise-package for Rookwood."

Da Costa gave the captain of the Remove a rather curious glance. He was inwardly wondering whether Wharton would be still at Greyfriars when the date of the Rookwood cricket match came round. The tortuous plot of the fellow from the East was coming to a head now.

Wharton was crossing the Rag towards the Eurasian. He was feeling a little uncomfortable. As a cricketer, he could not help approving of the Eurasian, and as the fellow's study-mate he wanted to keep on terms of bare civility with him, at least. But he was Lord Mauleverer's second now, and that was the business in hand.

"You're wanted, Da Costa," he said. "Yess," said the Eurasian. "What is it?"

"Challenge from Mauleverer."

"Oh!"

"Pick out a chap to be your second, will you?"

"But I do not want to fight Lord Mauleverer," said Da Costa. "I have no quarrel with him."

"That won't wash now. You've been talking about Mauly's banknote being pinched, and that's done it. You know very well that you ought never to have suggested anything of the kind," said the captain of the Remove sharply.

"But I do not know that," answered Da Costa coolly. "I think that the matter ought to be cleared up."

"There's nothing to clear up."

"That is not my opinion."

"Well, I won't argue about that," said Wharton, with a curl of the lip. "Mauly thinks you're a miserable worm to suggest anything of the kind, and I fancy most of the Remove agree with him. I know I do. Are you going to pick out a second?"

Da Costa glanced round.

There were no offers. Not a man in the Remove cared to back up the Eurasian in such a matter.

"I do not need a second," said Da Costa, after a pause. "I know that I shall get fair play in the Remove. I am ready."

"Now?" asked Harry.

"Yess."

"And here?"

"Yess."

"All serene."

Wharton went back to his principal. "Wake up, Mauly," he said, with a grin. "Your man's ready for you. He doesn't seem very keen on it, if you'd like to call it off."

"I'd like to no end," said Lord Mauleverer. "Thrashin' the beast will

be a lot of trouble. But I'm goin' to thrash him."

"Cut up to the study for the gloves, Franky."

"Right-ho!"

By the time Nugent returned with the boxing-gloves the news had spread that there was a fight on in the Rag. Nearly all the Remove gathered there, as well as some of the Fourth and Third and Shell. The fact that Lord Mauleverer was one of the combatants added to the general interest. Skinner averred that Mauly would want an hour's rest between rounds, and the Bounder doubted whether he would keep awake long enough to finish the fight. There were a good many grinning faces in the ring that formed in the Rag.

The door was carefully closed. On occasions such as this masters and prefects were not wanted on the scene.

Lord Mauleverer removed his well-fitting jacket, sighed, and donned the gloves. His lordship had the tired look that was habitual to him, and Da Costa's face was rather contemptuous as he faced him. Mauly did not look a dangerous adversary. But the fellows who had seen him stand up to the Bounder opined that there was a surprise in store for the Eurasian.

That surprise was not long in coming. Herbert Vernon-Smith, watch in hand, called time. The first round started, and from the start Lord Mauleverer dropped his laziness like a cloak. And in less than a minute there was a heavy bump on the floor of the Rag, and Arthur da Costa sprawled there, and blinked up in rage and astonishment at the cool face of the slacker of the Remove.

"Man down!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

The Bounder, with a grin, began to count. But before he had reached three the half-caste was on his feet again and springing at Lord Mauleverer like a tiger. And from that moment the fight was fast and furious.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Fight in the Rag!

"TIME!" Vernon-Smith called "Time!" at the end of the first round. Lord Mauleverer dropped his hands at once; but Da Costa, as if deaf to the Bounder's voice, followed him up, hitting out fiercely.

"Time!" roared the Bounder.

Harry Wharton caught Da Costa by the shoulder and jerked him back from his adversary.

The Eurasian turned on him like a wildcat.

"You—let—let—go!" he panted.

"You fool! Stand back!" snapped Wharton. "Haven't you ever heard of such a thing as fair play?"

"I—I forgot!" stammered Da Costa.

"Don't forget again, then!"

"Blessed wildcat!" said Skinner.

"Believe me, he's going to bite Mauly in the next round!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton drew Mauleverer to a chair for his minute's rest.

"How do you feel, old chap?" he asked.

"Tired!"

"But game?" asked Harry, with a smile.

"Oh, yaast! Frightful bore, but I'm goin' to lick him!"

"Time!"

The second round began, and it was an exciting round. Mauleverer was cool and calm, and he displayed a knowledge of the noble art of self-defence that made some of the spectators open their eyes. Da Costa did not seem much of a boxer from a scientific point of view, but he was lithe, active, alert, and apparently indifferent to punishment. There was no doubt that the Eurasian had pluck. It was anybody's fight so far, as Bob Cherry remarked; and though all the spectators without exception hoped to see Mauleverer the victor, they did not feel at all sure that he would beat the fellow from the East.

Third and fourth round followed, and the outcome was still doubtful.

By that time, in spite of the gloves, both the combatants were showing very plain signs of damage.

Lord Mauleverer took it philosophically; the Eurasian with the stoical indifference to pain that belonged to the East.

When the fifth round began Harry Wharton looked a little anxious.

Fighting was not allowed by the powers that were, but a judiciously blind eye was generally turned by those in authority to a scrap with the gloves on. But there was a limit.

Fellows who looked as if they had been in a prizefight were certain to be called to account, and both Mauleverer and Da Costa were beginning to look rather like that.

Both of them had had enough, so far as that went, but neither had the slightest intention of giving in while he could stand. Lord Mauleverer had set himself a task, and he was going to carry out that task if he could. The Eurasian was burning with passionate rage, and savagely determined on a fight to a finish.

Round after round followed, and in the seventh both the adversaries were in a very groggy state.

Lord Mauleverer came promptly up to time for the ninth round, the Eurasian a little more slowly. But he came readily enough.

By that time, however, it was clear that Arthur da Costa was "for it."

Crash!

The Eurasian went down on his back and stayed there. Lord Mauleverer stood panting hard, waiting for him to rise.

The Bounder counted.

Da Costa made an effort to rise, and fell back again when the Bounder had reached seven.

(Continued on next page.)



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"Eight—nine—"

There was a breathless hush in the Rag. Da Costa made a strenuous effort to get on his feet to avoid being counted out. But his strength was spent, his head swimming, and he sank back again helplessly.

"Out!"

Vernon-Smith put his watch away. The fight was over; Arthur da Costa had been counted out. Twenty or thirty might as well have been counted; the olive-skinned junior still lay panting on the floor, unable to rise.

Wharton gave Lord Mauleverer a hand to a chair. His lordship, game as he was, was almost as spent as the Eurasian.

"Oh gad!" murmured Mauleverer, as he sat down and peeled off the gloves with Wharton's assistance. "Oh gad! I've licked him—what?"

"Yes, rather, old chap!" said Harry. "Feel rather bad?"

"Frightful! What does my nose look like?"

"Hem!"

"Squashed strawberry!" said Skinner. "And my eye?" murmured his lordship.

"Blackberry!" said Skinner.

"Oh, cheese it, Skinner!" said Wharton. "Come along with me and bathe your face, Mauly, old man! We'll get rid of some of the damage."

"Yaas."

Lord Mauleverer left the Rag with his second. Da Costa was still lying on the floor; but Bob Cherry went to him and picked him up. The Eurasian leaned on Bob's sturdy shoulder, breathing in painful gasps. He was recovering a little from the knock-out.

"I can go on!" he panted. "I will go on! Where is Mauleverer? Why has he gone?"

"Fathead, it's over!"

"It is not!" exclaimed the Eurasian passionately. "I am not beaten! I will beat him! I—"

"You're counted out, you ass!" said Bob. "And as for going on, you couldn't stand up to a fag in the Second now! You're licked, Da Costa! Take it calmly. Fellows have been licked before, you know."

The Eurasian panted with rage and exhaustion.

"I could go on! I—"

"Oh, rats! Come and bathe your chivvy! There'll be a row about this!" said Bob. "Fellows ain't allowed to have their faces decorated in this style! The fight went on too long, anyhow."

Bob Cherry led the Eurasian from the Rag. The crowd there were left in excited discussion of the fight—and of what was likely to follow. That the state the two juniors were in would catch Mr. Quelch's eye as soon as that gimlet eye fell on them was certain.

"Whoppings for two!" was Skinner's prediction.

Both the juniors kept out of the public eye as much as they could for a time. But they had to turn up at call-over, and at call-over Mr. Quelch's keen eye detected two faces in the ranks of his Form that looked in a very unusual and extraordinary state.

After call-over Mauleverer and Da Costa were sent for to go to their Form master's study.

When they presented themselves there Mr. Quelch eyed both of them grimly and disapprovingly.

"You have been fighting?" he said.

"Yes, sir!" answered Da Costa.

Lord Mauleverer made no reply, only waiting as cheerfully as possible for the chopper to come down.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,062.

"You are both in an utterly disgraceful state!" said the Remove master. "This passes all bounds! For what reason have you two juniors fought in so savage a way?"

"It is not the custom here for a fellow to refuse a challenge, sir!" said Da Costa.

"Did you challenge Da Costa to a fight, Mauleverer?"

"Yaas, sir!" answered his lordship immediately.

"Am I to understand that you forced a quarrel upon another junior?"

Lord Mauleverer reflected before he answered.

"Yaas, sir! That is the case!"

"I do not understand this, Mauleverer! This is the first time I have known you to be concerned in such an affair! I require to know the reason for which you forced this upon Da Costa!"

"I can't stand him, sir!" said Mauleverer. "I don't like him! I thought a thrashin' might do him good!"

"Mauleverer!"

"Yaas, sir! You asked me," said Mauly. "I really never meant to damage him so much, sir. But he stood up to it, and so long as he stood up to it he had to have it, sir!"

"Silence! Da Costa, probably you can explain this! What was the cause of this quarrel, which seems to have been a very savage one?"

"There was no cause, sir," answered Da Costa. "Mauleverer was angry because his banknote has been stolen—that is all."

"What?"

"That's not true, sir," said Lord Mauleverer quietly. "As Da Costa has mentioned it, I suppose I'd better say that I warned him to stop his beastly suggestions that somebody had stolen my banknote, and licked him because he wouldn't chuck it!"

"I understand!" said Mr. Quelch.

There was a short silence.

"Both of you will be detained on Saturday afternoon," said the Remove master, at last.

"Very well, sir," said Mauleverer.

"You may go, Mauleverer."

"Yaas, sir."

His lordship left the study.

"Now, Da Costa," said Mr. Quelch, "it appears that you have been suggesting that a theft has taken place in the Remove. How dare you make any such absurd and disgraceful suggestion?"

"A banknote has been stolen from Mauleverer's study, sir," answered the Eurasian calmly. "I think the matter should be cleared up, lest suspicion fall upon fellows who have nothing to do with it. All the Form knows that the banknote has been stolen, though Mauleverer will not admit it."

Mr. Quelch looked long and hard at him.

"I cannot believe anything of the kind," he said. "I am afraid that the suggestion proceeds from a suspicious mind, Da Costa, of which you have given proof before this. I fear that you are an evil-minded boy. Have you any grounds whatever for such a suspicion, apart from the fact that Mauleverer has lost a banknote?"

"He has not lost it, sir. It was taken from his study. All the Form knows that."

"I was not aware of that, if it is the case. I shall inquire into the matter. You may go!"

Arthur da Costa left his Form master's study. His bruised, discoloured face wore a mocking smile as he went down the passage. Even the fight in the Rag had been turned to account by the cunning schemer. It

was impossible now for an inquiry into the matter of the missing banknote to be avoided. And that banknote, received by the captain of the Remove in his uncle's letter, had been disposed of by him—unknowingly. The number of that banknote would be ascertained. It would be infallibly traced—and it would be traced to Harry Wharton! Captain Marker's emissary at Greyfriars saw success within his grasp at last.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Inquiry!

"I SAY, you fellows, there's something on!"

Billy Bunter was not alone in that opinion.

All the Remove, in fact, guessed or felt that something was on.

Mr. Quelch's face, never very inspiring to the view early in the morning, had been uncommonly grim at the breakfast-table. Mr. Quelch always breakfasted with his Form—not in his study like some of the other masters. That may have been a distinction for the Lower Fourth, but it was not always a pleasure. On the present occasion Mr. Quelch had presided at the table with the aspect of a gargoyle, as Skinner described it—not, of course, in the hearing of his Form master. Mr. Quelch probably knew that his aspect was stern; but he doubtless had no idea whatever that his facial expression even remotely resembled that of a gargoyle.

The Remove fellows went into their Form-room with a feeling that there was thunder in the air.

Some of them felt uneasy, some of them looked it. They knew that something was going to happen before class began, and they wondered what it was. Hazeldene was quite pale. Having, with the assistance of the Famous Five, emerged from his latest "hole," Hazel had bucked up wonderfully, and was fast forgetting both the hole and the way he had been rescued from it.

But the "something" that was on alarmed him, and he dreaded to discover that his Form master had learned something of his sporting speculations. Skinner was rather worried, too. Nobody knew, Skinner hoped, who had tied a coal-scuttle to the tail of Mrs. Kebble's cat; but the house-dame had made a fuss about it, and Skinner did not want the delinquent to come to light. Billy Bunter was perturbed. He could not help wondering whether Quelch was looking so grim because he had heard that a certain cake was missing from a Fifth Form study. Bunter was prepared to deny all knowledge of that cake. But he knew, from sorrowful experience, that Quelch did not always take a fellow's word—Bunter's word, at all events.

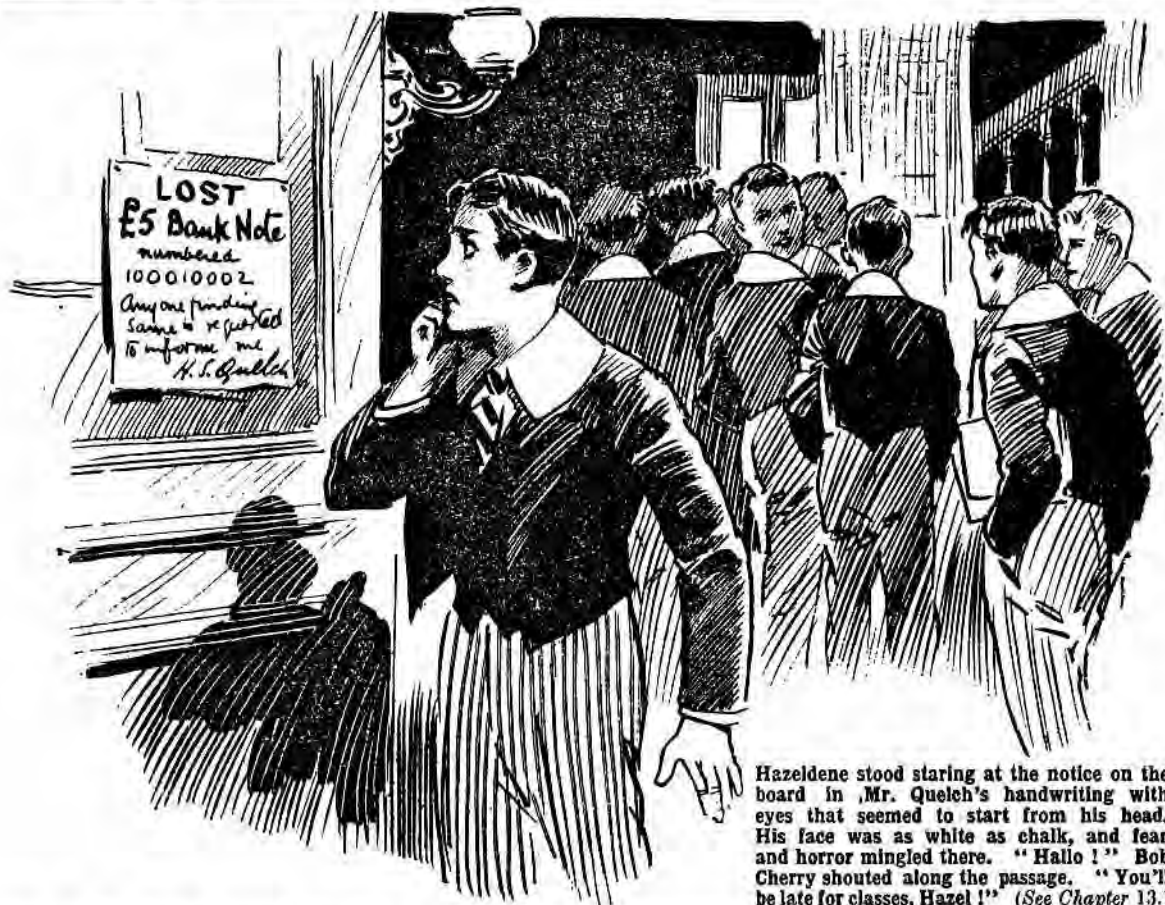
If that beast, Coker, had made a fuss about a measly cake, it would be just like Quelch to fancy that Bunter had taken it. It was extraordinary the way suspicion fell on Bunter in such cases.

The Famous Five were feeling quite equable, however. They had not kicked over the traces, so far as they knew, since the picnic on Popper's Island, and that was over and done with. Harry Wharton, least of all, considered that he had any reason for uneasiness.

But something serious was obviously "on." Mr. Quelch came into the Form-room looking more like a gargoyle than ever.

"Mauleverer!"

All the Form knew what was on as



Hazeldene stood staring at the notice on the board in Mr. Quelch's handwriting with eyes that seemed to start from his head. His face was as white as chalk, and fear and horror mingled there. "Hallo!" Bob Cherry shouted along the passage. "You'll be late for classes, Hazel!" (See Chapter 13.)

soon as Mr. Quelch rapped out that name. It was the missing banknote that had gathered thunder on their Form master's majestic brow.

"Yaas, sir!"

"You have not informed me that your banknote has been found."

"No, sir."

"Has it been found yet?"

"Hem! Not yet, sir."

For a second Da Costa's eyes gleamed at the captain of the Remove; then his olive face was impassive again.

"This matter cannot be allowed to rest," said Mr. Quelch. "Had you lost the banknote, Mauleverer, I should have caned you for your carelessness, and the matter would have dropped. But I require to know in what circumstances you missed the banknote. I understand that you did not actually lose it. Kindly give me the details immediately."

There was no help for it now.

"I left it in my study, sir."

"About the room, do you mean?"

"On the table, sir, under the inkstand. I laid it there, and forgot it."

"Do you mean to say that it disappeared from your study, where you left it under an inkstand on the table?"

"Yaas, sir."

"In that case, Mauleverer, it could not have been lost. It must have been intentionally removed from the place where you left it."

"I think not, sir," answered Mauleverer.

"What! How else do you account for the banknote being missing?"

"I can't account for it, sir. It's rather a mystery."

"Then for what reason do you declare that it was not taken from your study?"

"Because nobody would have taken it, sir."

"Good old Mauly!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Silence! Mauleverer, the banknote must have been taken from your study. That is obvious. You should have acquainted me with this before. The matter is most serious."

Lord Mauleverer did not reply to that. As a matter of fact his lazy lordship was beginning to realise that the matter was rather more serious than he had supposed.

"You left your study, leaving the banknote under an inkstand?"

"Yaas, sir."

"When did you miss it?"

"I asked a fellow to fetch it for me, sir, and he came back and told me it wasn't there."

"Then he was the person to discover that it was missing. Who was it?"

"Bunter, sir."

"Very good! Bunter?"

"Ow!"

"What? What is the matter, Bunter?"

"I didn't, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"What? You did not what?"

"I didn't pinch that banknote, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Tain't fair to put it on me! I never saw it, sir! Besides, I wouldn't!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Bunter, you stupid boy, you are not accused of having taken the banknote. Do not be absurd!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "All right, sir!"

"You went to the study to fetch the note for Mauleverer?"

"Yes, sir. Mauly asked me, and as he was too lazy—"

"Never mind that. You did not find the banknote?"

"No, sir; but it was all right."

"What—what do you mean? How was it all right?"

"Mrs. Mimble let Mauleverer have the spread on tick, sir."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Removites. They really could not help it. Mr. Quelch stared blankly at the cheerful Owl.

"You utterly obtuse boy! Silence! This is not a laughing matter! You returned to Mauleverer and told him that the banknote was not there, Bunter?"

"Yes, sir."

"You are sure it was not there at that time, Bunter?"

"Oh, yes, sir! I was afraid there wouldn't be a spread if Mauly didn't get the banknote, sir, so I knew it was important, and I made jolly sure! You see, sir—"

"That will do, Bunter. Mauleverer!"

"Yaas, sir!" groaned his lordship.

"You have made an efficient search for the banknote, I presume?"

"Oh, yaas, sir! Lots of fellows have helped me," said Lord Mauleverer.

"Every dashed thing—I mean, everything has been turned inside out, sir, and all my pockets gone through, and— and everything, sir! Can't find it."

"The banknote must have been taken from your study, Mauleverer. That is beyond doubt, unless you are mistaken in believing that you left it there." Mr. Quelch paused. "This is a most disagreeable matter. It must be cleared up immediately. Do you know the number of the note?"

"No, sir."

"From whom did you receive it?"

"The Magnet Library.—No. 1,062.

"My guardian, sir."
 "Very well. Sir Reginald Brooke will undoubtedly be aware of the number, and I shall ascertain it from him. The matter will stand over for the present. In the meantime, all boys of this Form will be confined to bounds within gates."
 "Oh!" gasped the Remove.
 "We shall now commence."
 And the Remove commenced.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Dark Suspicions I

"BUNTER'S done it at last!"
 That was Skinner's idea of a joke. It drew a laugh from some of the fellows in morning break, and a roar of wrath from William George Bunter.
 "Why, you beast—"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Shell out, Bunter!" chuckled Snoop.
 "You rotter!" yelled Wharton. "I say, you fellows, the banknote wasn't there, just as I told Quelch, I—I—"
 "—"

Billy Bunter fairly spluttered with wrath and indignation.
 "That's a rotten sort of joke, Skinner," said Harry Wharton quietly.
 "Oh, is it?" said Skinner, always ready to set up in opposition to the captain of the Form. "Who knows whether there isn't something in it? We all know Bunter!"
 "You beast!" roared Bunter.
 "And Bunter was the last to see it alive!" argued Skinner.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Yes, rather!" grinned Snoop. "I wonder we never thought of that before. Where's that banknote, Bunter?"
 "Beast!"
 "Shell out!" said Skinner. "You can scowl as much as you like, Wharton; but I call on Bunter to shell out."

"I say, you fellows, make that beast shut up!" howled Billy Bunter. "Fellows will be saying I pinched the banknote."
 "Didn't you?" asked Skinner cheerily.
 "No!" roared Bunter.
 "Did you, Skinner?" asked Wharton, turning Skinner's guns on himself, as it were, by that direct question.
 Harold Skinner jumped nearly clear of the quad. Like many humorists, Skinner had no appreciation for humour directed against himself. And his own brand of humour had rather a bitter flavour, of which Skinner was now getting the benefit.
 "I?" he yelled. "Why, what do you mean, you cheeky rotter?"
 "You say we all know Bunter," answered the captain of the Remove coolly. "Well, if you come to that, we all know you! Bunter would scoff any man's tuck, but he wouldn't touch any man's money, and you know it as well as I do!"
 "And would I?" yelled Skinner furiously.

"I hope not; but if you suggest that Bunter should shell out, what's the matter with suggesting that you should shell out?" said Wharton. "Shell out, Skinner!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 Skinner looked rather like a demon in a pantomime for a moment or two. The laugh having turned against him, the humour of the matter was now wholly lost on Harold Skinner.
 "I was only joking about Bunter, of course," he said at last. "I don't think the fat idiot had it."

"I say, you fellows, I think very likely Skinner had it!" said Bunter. "He may have lost it, backing horses, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Shut up, you fat chump!" hooted Skinner.

"Shan't! I think very likely you had it—Yaroooh! Keep him off!" roared Bunter.

Bob Cherry collared Skinner as he was jumping at Bunter, and hooked him back with a powerful grip.

"Hands off, old bean!" he said cheerily. "If you don't like these jolly old suggestions, you shouldn't start the ball rolling!"

"Whoever is saucy to the goose must be saucy to the esteemed gander!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Skinner scowled and swung away. He realised by this time that it was not a jesting matter. Billy Bunter blinked round anxiously at the group of juniors in the quadrangle.

"I say, you fellows, you don't think it was me?" he asked.

"Of course not, you fat ass!" said Wharton.

"I say, Mauly—"

"Yaas."

"You don't think it was me, do you?"

"Yaas."

"What?" yelled Bunter.

"Eh! I mean, no!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There goes Quelch!" murmured Bob Cherry, as the angular figure of the Remove master crossed the quad, in the direction of the tuckshop. "He's going to ask Mrs. Mumble who's been changing banknotes this week."

"He's got the number by this time," remarked Peter Todd. "He's been on the telephone to Mauly's jolly old guardian. I suppose if any fellow bagged the banknote, he would have to change it at the shop—he wouldn't like to ask a master to change it for him, in the circumstances."

"Ha, ha! Not likely!"

"Might change it out of gates, more likely," said Vernon-Smith.

"Not so jolly easy. Fivers ain't like currency notes—people ask you to sign them on the back when you change them in a shop. Nobody but a born idiot would sign his name on the back of a stolen note. I suppose."

"That's so," admitted the Bounder. "I suppose the school shop is the only place where a Greyfriars man could change a note without questions asked. And whoever pinched it took it far granted that Mauly would let the matter drop—as he wanted to. It's not through Mauly that this happy inquiry is going on."

"No fear!" said Mauleverer.

"We owe that to Da Costa," said Bob Cherry, with a far from amicable glance at the Eurasian, who was lounging near at hand, watching Mr. Quelch in the distance. "Da Costa seems to have made it his business to stir up the trouble. I've a jolly good mind to give him another eye to match the one Mauly's given him!"

Da Costa glanced round coolly.

"I thought the matter ought to be cleared up," said Harry Wharton, "if only to prove that nobody in the Remove pinched that note. Though I must say it's a giddy mystery what's become of it!"

"I say, you fellows, do you think Smithy had it?" asked Billy Bunter.

"What?" shrieked the Bounder.

"What I mean is, Smithy could get rid of it, as he knows a lot of shady characters outside the school," explained Bunter. "One of his sporting friends would take it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "Here, keep off!" howled Bunter. "What are you getting your rag out for, Smithy? What's the matter? Yaroooh!"

Apparently Bunter did not realise that there was anything in his cheery suggestion to offend the Bounder. But he realised that the Bounder was offended. The crash with which Smithy's boot landed on his tight trousers left him in no doubt as to that.

Bunter roared and fled.

"My hat!" said Nugent. "I hope that blessed banknote will be found. At this rate we shall all begin suspecting one another of pinching it."

"It's rotten!" groaned Lord Mauleverer. "If that cad Da Costa had held his tongue and minded his own business nothin' would have been said about it at all. It's all his fault from beginnin' to end."

Da Costa shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, if a fellow had it, he ought to be shown up," said Vernon-Smith. "It will have to come out now, anyhow—the thing can't rest where it is. The fellow had better get ready for the sack."

Wharton looked quickly at the Bounder.

"You don't think it was a Remove man, Smithy?" he exclaimed.

Vernon-Smith did not answer.

"Smithy!" exclaimed Bob Cherry indignantly. "You silly ass, are you off your rocker? You think there's a thief in the Form?"

"If I think so, I'm not saying so," answered the Bounder; and he walked away. The juniors stared after him.

"Smithy's got something in his noddle," said Peter Todd.

"He had better keep it there!" growled Bob Cherry. "We've had enough talk of suspecting this fellow and that. Smithy's an ass!"

But Harry Wharton, a little later, made it a point to speak to the Bounder. He ran Smithy down in the quad by himself.

"Look here, Smithy," said the captain of the Remove. "Were you only gassing, or have you something serious in your mind?"

"Something serious."

"You think—"

"I fancy I know." The Bounder made a gesture towards a junior who was strolling in the quad with his hands in his pockets, whistling cheerily. It was Hazeldene of the Remove. Hazel was looking as if he had not a care in the world.

Wharton followed Vernon-Smith's gesture with his eyes, and then stared at the Bounder, almost stupefied.

"Hazel!" he breathed.

"Isn't it clear?" grunted the Bounder. "Not a word about it, of course—I wouldn't give him away. Look at him! You know what he was like a few days ago—mouthing about looking as if he were going to be hanged. He's dropped his trouble all of a sudden."

"But—"

"The day before that banknote was pinched Hazel was trying to stick me for a loan of five quids, to settle some debt to a Wapshot racing man," said the Bounder. "He looks as if he's settled it now."

"And that makes you think—"

"It does."

"Well, you're a silly ass, then," said Harry indignantly, "and I'm glad I spoke to you about it. Hazel has settled his debt. I never knew he'd asked you for a loan, though, I suppose, I might have guessed it. But he asked me, too, and I lent him the money."

"Oh!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith, utterly taken aback.

"Satisfied now?" asked Wharton, with a touch of scorn.

"Yes, so far as Hazel's concerned!" The Boulder's eyes dwelt on Harry Wharton very strangely. "If you say you were fool enough to give Hazel five pounds to pay a racing debt, I believe you, of course. I can't help being surprised to hear that you had five pounds to chuck away. All the Remove knows that you and your friends are hard up this week, and that you owe Mrs. Mimble something on that picnic affair."

Wharton looked at him. A blaze came into his eyes that made the Boulder back away a pace.

"Smithy! Do you dare to hint—" Wharton choked.

"Don't be a fool!" said the Boulder. "I know you'd cut off your hand rather than do such a thing."

"Then what do you mean?"

"I mean," said the Boulder quietly, "that you'd better not tell other fellows what you've told me, or they will want to know where you got a five from all of a sudden at this particular time."

"You fool!" said Wharton. "You idiot! I got it from my uncle in a letter, and all the Remove can know, for anything I care. You can shout it out all over Greyfriars if you like."

The Boulder shrugged his shoulders. "I shan't do that," he answered, "and if you take my tip, you won't, either."

"Oh, go and eat cake!"

Wharton walked away with a flushed and angry face, the Boulder's glance following him very curiously. The bell rang for third lesson, and as the Remove went in Billy Bunter squeaked out the news that there was a fresh notice on the board in Quelch's list. As that notice evidently referred to the matter that was now a burning topic in the Remove there was a rush of the juniors to read it.

"LOST! £5 banknote numbered 100010002. Anyone finding same is requested to inform me."

"H. S. QUELCH."

"He's got the number!" said Peter Todd. "Got it on the phone, as I thought. No doubt about the note now if it turns up."

The juniors went on to the Form-room. One of them remained behind, staring at the notice in Mr. Quelch's handwriting, with eyes that seemed to start from his head. It was Hazeldene. His face was white as chalk, and fear and horror mingled there. He scanned that notice as if he could scarcely believe what his eyes read.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry shouted along the passage. "You'll be late, Hazel."

Hazel started and turned away from the notice board. He almost staggered as he made his way to the Remove room. The number of the stolen banknote—100010002—danced before Hazel's eyes as if in figures of flame. The number of the note posted on the board by Mr. Quelch was the number of the note he had received from Harry Wharton, and paid to Joe Spratt of Wapshot! Hazel sat through third lesson that morning in a maze of horror.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Accused!

"YOU mad fool!"

Hazel dragged Harry Wharton away after class, the captain of the Remove following him in sheer astonishment. A dozen fellows looked at Hazel, but he was blind to their wondering stare. Out of hearing of the others he stopped and panted out the words, his face white, his eyes

ORIENTAL CUNNING!

Three attempts has Da Costa made to get Harry Wharton ruined and disgraced and each attempt, although running perilously near to success, has ended in failure. That would be enough for most people, but Da Costa, the Eurasian, is different from most people; these failures only make him more determined to accomplish his rascally purpose. You'll read about his fourth attempt next week, boys, in

"HARRY WHARTON'S ENEMY!"

—a story that will hold your interest from first to last. And don't forget, too, the opening chapters of our grand new detective story featuring Ferrers Locke.

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burning. Wharton could only gaze at him in wonder.

"You mad fool!" Hazel's voice was a shrill whisper. "Why did you do it? I never knew—you can't pretend that I knew! You can't!"

"Have you gone off your rocker, Hazel? If not, what the blump are you talking about?" demanded Wharton.

"That banknote!" hissed Hazel. "Don't pretend you don't understand—this isn't a time for fooling. Why did you do it?"

"Why did I do what, you ask? What have I done?"

"The banknote!" hissed Hazel.

"The one I lent you, do you mean?"

"Yes—the one you stole from Mauleverer."

Wharton almost gasped.

"Are you mad?" he asked.

"Will you chuck up pretending not to understand?" snarled Hazel. "You know that the banknote you lent me was Mauleverer's."

"Don't be a fool!"

"You're not going to deny it?"

"I think you've gone out of your senses," said Wharton contemptuously. "What can possibly have put such an idea into your head? If I were a thief do you think I should steal banknotes to give them away? Have a little sense!"

"I—I can't understand that! You must have been mad to do it! But it was Mauleverer's note."

"Oh, chuck it!" snapped Wharton.

"I tell you it was Mauleverer's banknote. Notes have different numbers; the same number means the same note. Quelch has put the number on the board."

"You noticed the number of the note I gave you?" asked Harry, hardly knowing what to make of Hazel's wild excitement, and his wilder accusation.

"Yes—yes, I tell you! I took the number. I don't have my pockets full of banknotes like that fool Mauleverer. I might have lost it—or it might have been pinched, like Mauly's note—the same note as it turns out. Of course I

took the number. I took it and wrote it down. It was the same number that Quelch's put on the board!"

"That's impossible."

"I tell you it is so!" almost shrieked Hazel. "I've got the number written down in my pocket-book!"

"You made a mistake, then," said Harry coldly. "Don't be a fool! I hardly know why I don't knock you spinning for what you've said."

"Where did you get that banknote, then?"

"From my uncle."

"Colonel Wharton!" gasped Hazel. He was so astounded that his jaw dropped, and he stared at Wharton like a fellow in a dream.

"Yes; it came in the letter I had the other day."

Hazel passed his hand over his moist forehead.

"I never made a mistake about the number," he said. "I wrote it down—I've got it written down in my pocket-book now. They may have made a mistake printing the notes at the bank—"

"Rot!"

"I tell you the number's the same." "And I tell you it can't be. Pull yourself together, you weak-kneed fool," said Wharton scornfully. "You'll have all Greyfriars staring at you at this rate. Do you want them all to know about your racing foolery?"

"The number's the same," said Hazel. "That's a cert! But if you got the banknote from your uncle, I can't understand. Look here, Wharton—show me your uncle's letter—I tell you, I'm scared out of my wits at this—if you've made me get rid of a stolen note—he choked.

"You wretchedly cowardly fool!" Wharton spoke between his teeth. "It would be no use showing you my uncle's letter—as it happens, he does not mention enclosing the banknote."

"Your uncle sent you a five pound note in a letter, without mentioning that he was enclosing it?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,062.

"Yes."

"A registered letter?"

"No."

Hazel laughed savagely.

"You expect me to believe that? Do you expect anybody to believe such a silly rotten lie?"

"A what?" roared Wharton.

"Lie!" panted Hazel, "a rotten, silly lie—the silliest lie I've ever heard. As if any man in his senses would put a five pound note in an unregistered letter, and never even mention that he was enclosing it. Are you making out that your uncle is a doddering old fool?"

"You'd better mind what you say, Hazel. I know it was unusual—it surprised me at the time. But there it was—the banknote was in the letter."

"With the same number as the note that was pinched from Mauly's study!" jeered Hazel savagely. "What's the good of telling me such stuff?"

Wharton clenched his hands.

"I was a fool to help you out," he said. "A fool for my pains! I ought to have let you get sacked, as you deserved for your rotten blackguardism."

"Better that, than passing a stolen note," hissed Hazel. "The sack is better than going to prison. But look here, if it all comes out, I shan't take it on myself. I never knew it was Mauleverer's banknote—you can't say that I did!"

Wharton breathed hard.

"I tell you, you rotter, that it was not Mauleverer's note," he said, as calmly as he could. "You made a mistake about the number. Can't you see that you must have?"

"I've got it written down."

"Rubbish! Do you think for one moment that I should steal a fiver to help a cur like you out of a hole?" said Wharton. "If I were a thief, I shouldn't steal for a reason like that. Is there any sense in it?"

"No—I can't understand it! My brain seems to be turning round," groaned Hazel. "I can't grasp it! But it was Mauleverer's banknote—the number's the same."

"Then you're accusing me of stealing Mauleverer's money, to give it to you?" exclaimed Wharton, almost as amused as angry.

Hazel panted. Put like that, it seemed ridiculous enough, on the face of it. Yet he knew that the number of the stolen note was the number of the note Wharton had handed to him.

"I can't catch on to it," he muttered. "Didn't you look at the number of the note yourself?"

"I never thought of it. I was going to change it at the tuck-shop as soon as I got it from the letter—only—" Wharton's lips curled. "Only I was fool enough to let you have it instead. You have always been an ungrateful rotter, Hazel—but this is the limit!"

"It was the same note!" said Hazel doggedly.

"I tell you it was not."

"And I tell you it was—and I tell you that you'll have to stand the racket if it comes out—you shan't make out that I was the thief, because I passed the note on," said Hazel passionately. "I tell you—"

"Hold your tongue!" Wharton's voice was low and concentrated. "I've stood all I mean to stand. Keep away from me, you cur—keep your distance! You make me sick!"

Wharton turned his back on Hazel and walked away. That Hazel had made a mistake in the number of the note, he took for granted. There was

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,052.

no other possible explanation, to his mind; and Hazel had been in such a frightened and nervy state, that such a mistake was not surprising.

But Hazel knew that he had made no mistake. He knew that Harry Wharton had given him the banknote that was missing from Lord Mauleverer's study. And there was only one conclusion that Hazel could draw.

"A thief—Wharton a thief!" he muttered, with ashen lips, "and he got me to pass the note—why, why? He must have meant to do me a good turn, I suppose—but—but he must have been mad to do such a thing! But he did it—he did it! It was the same banknote!"

"Feelin' merry and bright, old bean?" drawled the Bounder's voice at his elbow.

Hazel spun round, with a gasp.

"Rowin' with Wharton, what?" smiled the Bounder.

"Mind your own business!" snarled Hazel.

He stalked away, the Bounder grinning after him. Herbert Vernon-Smith had witnessed the altercation, from a little distance, with a keenly interested eye; and perhaps he was not far from guessing what it had been about. He had seen Hazel's scared eyes glued on the notice on the board, and he had noted his dazed look since that notice had been put up. His own talk with the captain of the Remove was fresh in the Bounder's mind.

A cynical smile was on the Bounder's hard face.

"The immaculate Wharton!" he murmured. "The spotless character of the Remove! The jolly old example to the Form! My only hat! I'd never have believed it, if it wasn't as clear as daylight! Good gad!"

And the Bounder whistled.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Nabob's Warning!

ARTHUR DA COSTA paced restlessly to and fro in No. 1 study.

There was a wrinkle of torment thought on his brow, a dark cloud on his face.

Another day had passed, and another; and there was no fresh light on the mystery of the missing banknote.

The Eurasian could not understand it.

His keen intellect examined the problem from every aspect, and he could not elucidate it.

Wharton had received the stolen banknote, he knew that. On that point there was no possible doubt. Wharton had been in debt at the tuck-shop; moreover, he had made a compact with his chums to "whack out" the next remittance received by any of them; and the banknote had been the next remittance. That made it absolutely certain that Wharton, in possession of that unexpected tip, as he supposed, from his uncle, would change the banknote at once. Da Costa had not doubted that for a moment—there seemed no possible doubt about that. He had counted on an absolute certainty upon Harry Wharton taking the banknote to the school shop to pay it over the counter to Mrs. Mimble—as indeed the captain of the Remove had very nearly done.

Had he done so, the result was inevitable.

Da Costa knew that Mr. Quelch had inquired at the school shop, and had taken it for granted that the banknote

was in Mrs. Mimble's till, or at least had been through her hands and could be recovered. The number of the note was an infallible identification.

According to all that was probable, therefore, Mr. Quelch ought to have received indubitable proof that Wharton was the thief.

Mrs. Mimble would have stated at once the name of the fellow from whom she had received the note. The number on it would have proved that it was Mauleverer's note. Wharton, called to account, could only say that he had received it in a letter from his uncle.

Not only would that seem impossible on the face of it, but Colonel Wharton, as soon as he was referred to, could not possibly bear out the statement. He could only say that he never had enclosed any banknote in the letter.

Wharton's explanation would sound like a clumsy falsehood—a story he had told his friends to account for the possession of the banknote in the first place.

In the whole dastardly scheme the emissary of Captain Marker could not see a flaw.

It should have worked inevitably to its appointed end.

Only—it had not done so.

Mr. Quelch, instead of returning from his interview with Mrs. Mimble armed with proofs that the captain of the Remove was a thief, had taken no steps whatever, excepting to place the notice on the board.

It was inexplicable.

Of Hazel and his troubles Da Costa knew nothing, and cared nothing. That Wharton had given the banknote away for nothing did not even occur to his mind—indeed, he would not have believed it had it been told him.

What, then, could have happened?

Why had not Wharton changed the banknote? He owed an account at the school shop. And he was very careful in such matters. He was seldom in debt, and when he was he always settled the debt at the earliest possible moment. Yet in this instance he had not done so.

Was he keeping the note in hand? If so, why? He could not desire to change it outside the school; he had no motive for that. Had he even the remotest suspicion that the banknote did not belong to him, he would never have dreamed of keeping it at all. Da Costa knew that well enough.

But Da Costa, in Wharton's study, was able to observe the captain of the Remove. He knew that Wharton was hard up now. Tea in the study was very spare these days. Once or twice Wharton and Nugent had "tea'd" in Hall; two or three times all the Famous Five had tea'd along the passage with various friends. It was quite a joke in the Remove about the Five being "stony." It was obvious that they were short of money, Wharton as much as the rest. Yet if Wharton had not changed the banknote he must have five pounds in his pocket all the time!

Da Costa tried to penetrate the mystery, but he could not. He had to confess himself beaten on all sides.

Something had gone wrong with his plot. What it was he could not imagine, but he had failed. As he had failed before, so he had failed again, and his task remained yet to be done.

Of what Hazel believed and the Bounder suspected Da Costa knew nothing. They were not likely to utter their thoughts on the subject. In the minds of his two Form-fellows Wharton had sunk very low. But he did not realise it himself, and Da Costa knew nothing of it.



Mr. Quelch was in his grimmest mood, determined that the affair of the missing banknote should be settled for good and all. Every study in the Remove passage was rooted over by Trotter under the Form-master's gimlet eye, and every fellow in the Remove was made to turn his pockets out. (See Chapter 15.)

Da Costa ceased his restless pacing as he heard a footstep outside the study. He sat down at the table and opened a book, and as the door opened he did not look up, apparently deep in Latin. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh came into the study.

The nabob of Bhanipur closed the door behind him and stood looking at the Eurasian with a very curious expression on his dusky face.

Da Costa looked up at last.

"What do you want? Wharton and Nugent are down at the cricket."

"Quitefully so!" assented Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "That is whyfully I have come to this esteemed study. I have to make a few remarkable observations to your honourable self."

"What do you mean?"

"The ludicrous banknote belonging to the esteemed fatheaded Mauly has not been found," said the nabob. "There is going to be an official search of the Remove passage. The ridiculous Quelch is very much in earnest about this execrable matter."

Da Costa's eyes gleamed for a moment. "A search of the studies?" he asked.

"Precisefully."

"And of the fellows themselves?"

"Every esteemed fellow, I understand, will be required to turn out his ridiculous pockets in the honoured presence of Quelch."

Da Costa bent his head to hide the glitter of triumph in his eyes.

It was success, after all! The banknote must still be in Wharton's possession. Where else could it be? If it was

found upon him the Eurasian's scheme had succeeded.

"Beforefully the excellent search takes place," went on Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, in a low and very distinct voice, "I have a few remarkable words to say. It is you, Da Costa, who have caused all this terrific fuss about the banknote. You are the cause of this esteemed search being made."

"I think the matter ought to be cleared up, certainly," said Da Costa, without meeting the nabob's eyes. Deep in his heart was a fear of the penetrating glance of the Indian junior.

"Quitefully so!" agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Perhapsfully you have forgotten, my esteemed Da Costa, that on the day you came to Greyfriars the respectable, spyful Bunter heard some talk between you and the honoured Mr. Gedge in a railway train."

Da Costa started.

"I remember the fat fool told some silly story," he answered. "I have quite forgotten it."

"I will refreshfully stir your esteemed memory. It was a story of a plot, in which you were concernfully moved to disgrace my esteemed pal, Wharton, and get him turned out of the school."

Da Costa felt a chill of ice at his heart. Always he had feared the nabob, the only fellow at Greyfriars whose penetration he dreaded.

But he contrived to answer calmly.

"Bunter told you that childish nonsense in my presence. You did not believe anything of the kind?"

"It is true that the esteemed Bunter

is a terrible fabricator," assented Hurree Singh, "but the watchfulness has seemed to me the proper caper since then, my esteemed Da Costa. I am from India, and I know the Eurasian better than fellows here. You were very keen on the affair of the esteemed Quelch's watch. I strongly suspect that you stranded the excellent Wharton on Popper's Island to land him in trouble for breaking bounds. I have observefully noticed that you, and you alone, have kept up this business of the missing banknote. It has occurfully come into my head that the banknote may be found."

"Well?" said Da Costa huskily.

"That it may be found in Wharton's desk, or in Wharton's pockets," said the nabob grimly.

"Oh!"

"In which case, my esteemed Da Costa, the matter will not end at that esteemed point. The excellent jawful Bunter will be called upon to tell his preposterous story to Mr. Quelch; and the inquiry into the banknote will go deeper than you may have supposefully reckoned on."

Da Costa sat like stone.

"That is all," said the nabob amiably. "A nod is as good as a wink to a pitcher that goes longest to the well, as the English proverb says. If that banknote is found in Wharton's possession, my esteemed reptile, the inquiry will not end—it will begin!"

With that, Hurree Jamset Ram Singh

(Continued on page 28.)

SIR AUBREY'S TRUMP CARD! Just when Tiny Scannan reckons that he's worth thirty thousand quidlets his partner, Sir Aubrey Ailen, does the dirty on him and Tiny turns out to be worth—what?

THE MAN OF IRON!

BY WALTER EDWARDS.

On the Stroke!

"**N**OW to find our man!" said Hefty Hebble, peering round into the blackness.

No sooner did he utter the words than a low moan came from a luddled heap upon the extreme edge of the wharf. A moment later and Terry Carson was upon his knees, removing a thick wedge of oily waste from Tiny's mouth.

"Where are the scoundrels?" shouted the Man of Iron, thrusting the youngster aside and scrambling to his feet. "Where the blazes are the—"

"They've gone!" cut in Terry sharply. "And we can't afford to waste any more time on the rotters!"

Tiny Scannan started violently as he recognised the clear young voice, and his little eyes were almost goggling as he caught the youngster roughly by the shoulder and peered down into his upturned face.

"You!" he gasped huskily. "Young Carson!"

"Sure!" nodded the youngster. "And that's old Hefty Hebble over there!"

"But—but—" stammered the Man of Iron, his cheeks burning in the darkness.

"All that can wait," interrupted Terry, "for we haven't a moment to spare if we're going to get to the Olympus by half-past nine! That is, if you're fit enough to fight—"

"If I'm fit enough to fight!" echoed Tiny Scannan, with an ugly laugh. "I'm fit enough to do slaughter, and the man I'm after is that skunk Pal Jordan! This is a put-up job, a downright dirty attempt to—"

"You can tell us all about it later," cut in Terry Carson, hustling the big fellow along the wharf. "There's a taxi waiting for us up the street," he added, glancing at the luminous dial of his wrist-watch, "and it looks to me as though we've got scarcely half an hour in which to get from here to the Olympus. That means that we've got to get a move on."

"And you can bet your sweet life that we will," declared the Man of Iron, striding away towards the main road. "We're going to get to the Olympus by half-past nine, even if I have to strangle the driver and take the wheel myself!"

The stream of private cars and taxis that moved sluggishly along Regent Street reached from the ornate facade of the Olympus Boxing Hall to Piccadilly Circus, and everything pointed to the fact that the Jordan-Scannan contest was going to attract a record crowd, after all.

There could be no doubt that the amazing scene at the West London ground had done much to bring about this last-minute rush for seats, so Sir Aubrey Ailen had every reason for rubbing his podgy hands and congratulating himself upon the success of his cute publicity stunt.

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Standing in the blazing vestibule of the Olympus, he looked as satisfied as the cat that got the canary; and he would have been scarcely human had he not felt jubilant at that moment. After all, a matter of hours would find him enriched to the tune of fifty thousand pounds, and, in addition to this fortune, he would net the greater part of the evening's takings. The latter would be a small sum in comparison, but every penny gained meant a great deal to the money-grabbing baronet.

He was to make a fortune by one deft stroke! Easy money! Everything was cut and dried; nothing could go wrong.

It was a fashionable throng that passed through the main doors of the Olympus, and the newly-created baronet was cringing in his servility whenever he greeted anybody who had the slightest claim to fame or notoriety.

The programme started on the stroke of eight, two light-weights, who looked ill-nourished and half-grown, slipping through the ropes and making for their respective corners.

No time was wasted, for even the most interested fight fan was only mildly interested in the preliminary bouts; but there were a few people in the gallery who seemed to know Nat Palmer, of St. Luke's, and Young Isaacs, of Mile End.

"Seconds out!"

T-ri-annnnng!

The boxers skipped across the canvas and touched gloves; then came a quick exchange of blows.

Slap! Slap, slap, slap!

Neither youngster was a genius, but both lads had a crude knowledge of the game, and the fact that they fought hard right from the bell went greatly in their favour. Neither lad thought much about defence; attack was the order of the day. Standing almost toe to toe, with their narrow shoulders swaying from side to side, they exchanged punches with a speed and vigour which suggested that the bout would not go the whole distance; and, sure enough, the end of the third round found Young Isaacs curled up comfortably on the canvas—
asleep.

He had run into a right hook that possessed undeniable soporific qualities.

The next bout, an affair between two middle-weights, was not half so interesting as its predecessor, for both warriors were prepared to do anything other than fight, and it was not until they were cautioned by the referee that matters livened up somewhat. But even then the contest was a poor affair, and at the end of ten interminable rounds, when the M.C. announced a draw, there was little or no enthusiasm.

It was not twelve minutes past nine, and a stir ran through the place when the special "Daily Pictorial" lights burst into life and flooded the ring with a mellow blue radiance.

A dozen men in white sweaters darted about the ringside like so many ants, making everything spick and span for the big fight, and all eyes were glued to

the curtains at the end of the narrow lane that led from the dressing-rooms to the roped square.

It was a tedious, tiring wait, but the curtains were thrust aside at last, and the famous Pal Jordan, the Pittsburg Dentist, stepped forward and strode down the sloping aisle. Abe Maulstein was with his principal, and following on Abe's heels were half a dozen seconds.

The whole house rose to the Dentist, and Pal was grinning cheerfully as he raised his hand and acknowledged the whole-hearted greeting.

Climbing into the ring, he strolled round the ropes and exchanged a few words with his friends in the ringside seats; and he made it perfectly obvious that he was not worrying about the forthcoming battle with Tiny Scannan.

Five minutes passed, and the impatient crowd was still waiting for the Man of Iron to appear. But at last the curtains were swept aside—to admit Sir Aubrey Ailen. But this was not the Sir Aubrey Ailen who had beamed upon his distinguished patrons as they passed through the vestibule. This was a Sir Aubrey, who staggered, rather than walked, as he made for the ringside.

"Allo!" yelled a raucous voice from the gallery. "Ain't you feeling well, old man?"

Ailen was not feeling well. He was a man on the verge of collapse.

"Say, old-timer, where's Scannan?" grinned Pal Jordan, strolling across the canvas and looking down into the baronet's staring eyes.

"I don't know," gasped Sir Aubrey, running a thick finger round the inside of his collar. "It is terrible—terrible! It is a tragedy! I telephoned to his hotel, and the manager said he left over an hour ago. But he hasn't turned up. I don't understand. What can have happened? It is twenty past nine!"

The Pittsburg Dentist and his manager exchanged grins.

"Hear that, old-timer?" drawled the pugilist. "Scannan's lost his way! Ain't it a pity? You're sure the big stiff ain't got cold feet, Sir Aubrey?"

"Sure? Of course I'm sure!" cried the baronet. "He was quite well when I left him at seven o'clock, so something serious must have delayed him. But he'll turn up, Maulstein. I swear that he'll be here at any moment now. You must give me an extra half an hour!"

"Not on your life, Ailen!" returned Abe Maulstein. "The conditions are laid down in the articles, and if your man ain't in the ring on the stroke of nine-thirty I shall claim your fifty thousand!"

"But, man alive—"

The baronet's throaty voice rose to a wail.

"If Scannan ain't inside these ropes in three minutes," put in Maulstein, "I claim your cheque, and the fight's off!"

Something very like an agonised groan broke from the baronet as he glared round the hall. He was on the verge of tears; his whole body was shaking pitifully.

And then in a flash his whole manner changed, and he was a figure of maniacal fury as he rushed at Abe Maulstein and gripped him by the throat.

"You've been an' got at Scannan, you scoundrel!" he shouted, his grip tightening upon the American's thick throat. "I knew it—I guessed it! I—"

"Not so fast, old-timer!" drawled Pal Jordan, with a broad grin. And the brutal manner in which he took Sir Aubrey by the ears and wrenched him round brought a squeal of agony from the baronet. "Guess we ain't young enough to be caught with cheap bluff, bo!" he added.

"Bluff?" shouted Sir Aubrey, a wild light in his eyes. "There's no question of bluff. I guessed that you'd try to get at Scannan, and if he doesn't turn up I shall know I've been double-crossed. It's a scandal—a low swindle!" he shouted, addressing the house. "And I won't part with a penny until this business has been looked into. I've been double-crossed—tricked—"

"Aw, shucks!" broke in Pal Jordan, with a wave of his hand. "There ain't no question of double-crossing, Ailen, and you know it. Tiny Scannan, the big stiff, has contracted an attack o' cold feet. He's so yaller that he's scared to take the beating up that's waitin' for him right now. Anyway, I ain't goin' to hang about here all night waitin' for a big stiff who ain't got the inside of a two-dollar wrist-watch! Guess we'll claim that fifty thousand, Abe," he said, turning to the manager.

"Another minute, my dear boy!" drawled Maulstein, his deep-set eyes upon his gold stop-watch.

"Look here, you fellers, I—" began Sir Aubrey, his distorted features grey and moist in the glare of the powerful arc lamps.

"Fifty seconds!" drawled Abe.

"But listen—"

"Forty five!"

"I've been double-crossed, gentlemen!" shouted Ailen, appealing to the packed house. "These dirty Americans have—"

"Forty seconds to go!"

"I—"

"There he is!"

"That's Scannan!"

"That's Tiny!"

Victory—and Its Reward!

A DEAFENING shout broke from hundreds of throats as the curtain was wrenched from its hooks and Tiny Scannan reeled drunkenly down the gangway towards the ringside. Few people would have recognised the newcomer had it not been for his size, for the unlovely features were deathly pale, streaked with blood, and distorted into a mask of hate. Tiny's hair was dishevelled, his clothes were ripped to ribbons, and the clenched fist he waved above his head was lacerated, and covered with dried blood.

He looked a terrible figure, a fearful apparition, and Sir Aubrey recoiled as he stared up at his principal.

Scannan had eyes for nobody but Pal Jordan as he gripped the top rope and vaulted clean into the ring.

"We'll get it over at once, you cur!" he breathed, glaring at the American's flabby features. "I'm going to smash you!"

The threatening words came plainly to the ears of Sir Aubrey Ailen, but it was obvious that the baronet was still stunned by the startling turn of events.

"But—but what about fighting kit?" he began.

"I don't want fighting kit!" shouted Tiny, tearing off his coat and waistcoat and tugging at his collar. "I'll fight as I am!"

Captain Herriott, the referee, rose from his chair.

"I'm afraid we can't allow that—" he began.

Tiny Scannan swung round with all the fury of a madman.

"We fight at once!" he shouted, pointing a shaking finger at Pal Jordan.

"We don't waste a minute! D'you see that skunk? D'you see him? He tried to kidnap me! Hear that, all of you?"

Tiny Scannan ran his eyes round the packed hall.

"I came out of my hotel and hailed the first taxi I saw," he continued; "a taxi that was crawling past the door. And that taxi was a trap! Hear that? We'd scarcely gone a hundred yards when I began to choke; the car was full of gas—poison gas! And the gas was coming through the speaking-tube! Got that? I tried to open the windows, but I found they wouldn't move! I was losing consciousness; my senses were reeling; I went to sleep! The skunks had doped me!"

"When I came round I was still in the taxi, and the taxi was crawling along the banks of a canal in the East End! I caught a glimpse of water, and understood; and a second later I was

on my feet, hitting out with both hands! And there wasn't a square inch of glass left by the time I'd finished with those windows! Then the doors opened, and a bunch of dock rats swarmed over me and dragged me out of the cab, but I tell you that I put up some fight before the skunks pulled me down and battered me dizzy!"

"And I was one against about a dozen toughs, remember! They gagged me after that, and they were about to tie a weight on my feet and dump me into the canal when Terry Carson and Hefty Hebble turned up and saved me! These are the boys I'm talking about!" cried Scannan, swinging round and pointing a shaking finger at the footballers who were standing by the ringside. "Do you hear that, all of you?" he demanded, glaring defiance. "These two boys saved my life; they saved me—the Man of Iron—the feller who has always treated 'em rough! But all that can wait, as I've got somethin' else on hand at the moment!"

He bared his teeth as he glared into Pal Jordan's frightened eyes.

"It was clever, that dirty, low-down trick to keep me out of the way, but I'm here—here—here!" His powerful voice rose to a howl as he thrust out a mighty hand, caught Pal Jordan by the throat, and sent the fellow reeling back into his corner. "Come on, you skunk! We're going to fight!"

(Continued on page 26.)

RETURN OF FERRERS LOCKE, 'TEC!

The LORD of LOST ISLAND



Lost—with all hands!

That's a report which is being circulated all too frequently in shipping circles: liners, thoroughly seaworthy, simply disappear from mortal ken. No trace is left; no wreckage—no survivors!

What mysterious force is at work?

Is it modern piracy?

Is it—

But that's Ferrers Locke's job. The famous Baker Street detective—you all know him, likewise his clever boy assistant, Jack Drake—tackles that job with rare determination and resource. His adventures make thrilling reading in the wonderful detective yarn—

"THE LORD OF LOST ISLAND!"

which starts in NEXT WEEK'S BUMPER ISSUE.

Don't miss the opening chapters, boys!

It was quickly obvious that all sympathy was with Tiny Scannan, for a roar of anger and indignation came from all parts of the hall.

Captain Herriott looked to Sir Aubrey for instructions, and the baronet nodded his sleek head.

"Carry on," he said.

Pal Jordan and his manager were too scared to make the slightest protest, for the crowd was in an ugly mood; and Pal, furthermore, knew that the poison gas must have taken some effect. Also, Tiny Scannan was trembling with white-hot rage, and the Dentist knew that an angry man will often defeat himself.

Two minutes were wasted upon preliminaries, and then came the bell.

Stripped to the waist, Tiny Scannan looked savage and primitive as he left his corner, and the mighty blow he aimed at Jordan's head would undoubtedly have finished the fight had it found its mark. But Jordan drew back, and the next moment he planted a vicious body-blow that threatened to splinter the giant's ribs. Tiny, however, did not feel it, and what happened after that was not pleasant to behold.

Tight-lipped, and white-faced, Scannan waded into the Dentist and used both hands with a ferocity that brought a gasp from the wide-eyed fans; and less than a minute found Jordan reeling like a drunken man, his body a mass of purple blotches, his face cut and bleeding. How he managed to remain on his feet was a miracle.

Terry Carson's boyish face was white as he gripped Hefty Hebble by the arm.

"It will be murder," he whispered hoarsely, as Scannan's mighty fist smashed through his opponent's guard and landed with sickening force against the thick throat. And then, as blow followed blow and the American was knocked all over the ring: "It can't last long, thank goodness!"

Certainly nothing human could have survived Scannan's merciless onslaught, and the American was breathless, bruised, and broken as he grinned stupidly and pawed at the air. He was an object for pity, but there was no pity in the heart of the Man of Iron.

Wild shouts broke from all parts of the hall.

"Finish him off, Scannan!"

"Sky the towel, someone!"

"No; make the dirty hound take his gruel!"

"Fight, you yellow cur!"

Dazed, limp, and reeling, with scarcely strength enough to stand upon his feet, the American tottered backwards before a straight-arm punch to the mouth and clutched desperately at the ropes. Then, waiting until Scannan was almost on top of him, he rallied his last vestige of strength and lashed out with his foot, and the Man of Iron snarled like a beast of prey as he dodged nimbly and avoided the treacherous kick.

"Would you, you skunk!" he shouted, swaying from side to side and glowering at his opponent through narrowed lids. "Watch out!"

Leaping through the air like a panther, Scannan swung a terrific punch which caught the American flush beneath the chin and lifted him clean off the canvas. An ear-splitting yell went up from the spectators as the lean-limbed body slithered over the top rope and crashed the floorboards with a force which seemed to shake the whole building.

Jordan was "out" in every sense of the word.

Tiny Scannan looked anything but amiable as he turned his bullet head and glared up at the moon-faced clock over the mantelpiece.

"The lop-eared dago said he'd be here on the stroke of twelve!" he growled. "Yet it's gone ten minutes past, and still there's no sign of him!"

Terry Carson and Hefty Hebble, who were sitting in Allen's private office with the Man of Iron, exchanged glances.

"Sir Aubrey makes it a rule never to be on time," remarked Hefty. "He thinks punctuality is a sign of weakness and inferiority—believes in keeping the other man waiting!"

The Man of Iron gave a deep-throated grunt and glowered at his watch.

"I make it a rule never to be kept waiting," he declared, "and I give you my word that the man who keeps me waiting is asking for trouble—especially when the appointment has something to do with a little matter of sixty thousand pounds." He added,

"Sixty thousand!" echoed Terry Carson, with a shrill whistle. "That's the fifty-thousand-pound purse—"

"Sure," cut in the Man of Iron; "and another ten thousand that we made over the scrap—gate-money, and so on. And I'm sitting here waiting for thirty of that sixty thousand! I left Allen at midnight on Saturday, and he made a hard and fast appointment to meet me here at twelve o'clock to-day. He said he'd be busy at the bank all the morning. I—"

He paused as a knock came at the door. "Come in!" he shouted.

The door opened to admit a pale, neatly-dressed young man, who had "clerk" stamped all over him.

"Mr. Scannan?" he asked, a tremor in his thin voice.

"Sure," nodded Tony. "What d'you want?"

"I'm from the bank, sir," answered the clerk, "and I've an important packet for you." He produced a bulky manuscript envelope as he spoke and handed it to Scannan. "It's from Sir Aubrey Ailen, sir!"

Tiny snatched at the envelope and glared at it with suspicion in his closest little eyes.

"Where's Sir Aubrey now?" he demanded.

"I don't know, sir!"

"Haven't you seen him this morning?" asked Tiny, bringing his bushy brows together. "Hasn't he been to the bank?"

"No, sir," returned the clerk, becoming acutely nervous under the close cross-examination. "But I imagine he saw Mr. Crabwell, the manager, some time yesterday."

"Yesterday was Sunday," said Scannan, with something very like a snarl. "You don't do business on Sunday, do you?"

"It has been known, sir," answered the clerk, "especially in the matter of important business."

The Man of Iron nodded.

"Beat it!" he said tersely.

And the clerk, breathing a sigh of relief, hastily obeyed the brusque command.

Ripping open the flap of the envelope, Scannan extracted a sheaf of official-looking documents and a letter, and a black scowl dawned upon his broad countenance as he read the letter.

The document, which was dated Monday, read as follows:

"My very dear Tiny,—By the time you get this letter I shall be out of the country, having booked my passage in a boat, which shall be nameless, for a foreign port, the name of which I shall not disclose. I have in my possession the sum of sixty thousand pounds, and it is with this sum that I intend to travel the world and have a right royal time. You see, my dear Tiny, I am fed-up with England, so I am going to shake its dust from my feet for ever. In going off with the sixty thousand pounds, which I drew out of the bank early yesterday morning. By the way, I am conscious of the fact that I am not adhering to the terms of our agreement; but, in order to get right with my conscience, I am going to make very handsome retribution. Enclosed you will find documents dealing with Storeydeno Villa F.C., and in one of these documents you will see that I have made you a present of the club—lock, stock, and barrel. The club is now your own personal property, my dear Tiny; you are its sole owner.

"You have made no secret of the ungenerous suspicions you have always harboured with regard to my straightforwardness and probity, so it should come as no great surprise to you to learn that you have been cleverly dished by yours truly.

"AUBREY ARTHUR AILEN."

"Anything wrong, Tiny?" asked Hefty Hebble, as the Man of Iron sat back in his chair and gazed reflectively at his matted, leg-o'-mutton fist.

"Nothin'," returned Scannan, with a grim smile; then, lifting a finger for silence, he read the letter aloud.

"My only Aunt Agatha!" ejaculated Terry Carson, when the husky voice trailed away, and Tiny lifted his stony-eyed countenance. "The treacherous, double-dealing rotter! What are you going to do about it, old man?"

"What can I do about it?" asked the Man of Iron, with a hopeless shrug. "I certainly ain't going to chase this slippery little beast all round the world, so about the best thing I can do is to accept his present and take over control of the old Villa. And I tell you, boys," he ran on, his ugly features expanding in a wide grin, "that I ain't at all sorry that things have panned out like this, 'cause I tell you straight that never in all my wanderings have I met such white men as the lads who play for the club! Ailen's arrangements are going to suit me down to the ground, and if I knew his address I guess I'd write and tell him so! We're going to be a real happy family, boys, with Mr. Tiny Scannan as chairman, Mr. Hefty Hebble as vice-chairman—"

"Me!" growled Hefty, flushing to the roots of his tousled head.

"Sure," nodded the Man of Iron. Then: "And Mr. Terry Carson as player-manager!"

"But—" began Terry, his eyes bright, his cheeks glowing.

"No arguments!" roared the Man of Iron, jumping up and towering over the other two. "I'm boss here, y'know, and my word is law, and when I order you two swabs to shake hands with me you've got to shake, and lively! Shake!"

And Hefty Hebble and Terry Carson gripped hands, and both wished Tiny Scannan, the Storeydeno goalkeeper, and now chairman of the club, every success in his new venture.

THE END.



NON-STOP TO SCOTLAND!

The "Flying Scotsman" is one of the most famous expresses in the world, and just now it is winning fresh laurels by doing the 392 miles from London to Edinburgh without a stop. Here we see it passing over the Border Bridge at Berwick-on-Tweed, on the last lap of its "run" to the Scottish capital.



A TOTEM TALE!

Totem carving is fast becoming a lost art, for nowadays the Indian devotes his talents to more modern pursuits. However, at Tulalip, Washington, on the Indian Reservation there, William Shelton—or Chief Wah-Cah-Dub, leader of the Snoqualmie Tribe, to give him his native name—is reviving the art. In the photo he is telling the story of the totem to his little granddaughter, Marjorie Coy.

"THE SCHEMER OF THE REMOVE!"

(Continued from page 23.)

left the study and closed the door after him.

Da Costa did not move.

Terror chained him to his seat.

The note would be found on Wharton; the note must be found on Wharton! How could it fail to be found on him?

And then—

His hands trembled.

Then he would be accused of the treachery of which he had been guilty!

The one fellow who came from his own country, the one fellow at Greyfriars who was able to read him like an open book, the fellow whose careless, smiling face had hidden unsleeping vigilance, had told him what to expect if the banknote was found in Wharton's possession! What would come of such an accusation—backed up by Bunter's fantastic story? Da Costa hardly knew. But he feared—he feared in the very marrow of his bones!

Mr. Quelch presided over the search in the Remove passage. Mr. Quelch was in his grimmest mood, determined that the affair of the banknote should be settled for good and all. The search was rigid enough. Every study was rooted over by Trotter under Mr. Quelch's gimlet-eye. Every fellow in the Remove turned his pockets out. Lord Mauleverer's face was the picture of dismal dole. He realised that all this was the result of his carelessness. Some of the fellows took it all as more or less of a joke. Others were deeply annoyed and irritated. All of them had to go through it. Nobody, certainly, was feeling any uneasiness—with the exception of Arthur da Costa.

The ordeal was sheer torture to him.

Wharton was bound to produce the banknote; he would produce it in all innocence. It would be identified! Wharton would be accused! Then would come the counter-accusation of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh; and to what that might lead, Da Costa did not know, but he feared in the very depths of his heart.

And when, at the end of that rigorous search, the banknote was not found, Da Costa breathed deeply with relief. Somehow—he could not imagine how—the banknote was no longer in Wharton's possession; he could not account for it, but he felt the dark eyes of the nabob on him, and his relief was immense.

After the search was over, the master of the Remove addressed his Form in the Remove passage.

NEXT WEEK'S RIPPING YARN OF
GREYFRIARS is entitled:

"HARRY WHARTON'S ENEMY!"

IF YOU MISS IT, CHUMS, YOU'LL
MISS THE TREAT OF THE WEEK!

"The matter is now conclusively settled," said Mr. Quelch. "It is obvious that the banknote was lost by Mauleverer, and that he was mistaken in thinking that he left it under the inkstand on his table. Mauleverer!"

"Yaas, sir."

"This is not the first time you have lost money. You are very careless, Mauleverer."

"Yaas, sir; I'm sorry."

"You should be more careful, Mauleverer! You have caused an immense amount of unnecessary trouble. It is clear that your memory played you

false, and that you did not leave the banknote in your study as you supposed. I presume that you realise that now."

Mauleverer did not realise it in the least. But he was only too anxious for the matter to come to an end.

"If you think so, sir, the matter's settled," he answered.

"Very good! The loss of the banknote, Mauleverer, is a proper punishment for your carelessness. Probably you lost it out of gates, in which case it may never be found. You deserve this."

"Yaas, sir."

"And in order to impress upon you the necessity of care in such matters, Mauleverer, I shall cane you."

"Oh!"

"Severely!" added Mr. Quelch.

"Um!"

"Follow me to my study, Mauleverer!"

Lord Mauleverer followed Mr. Quelch to his study. When he emerged, his hapless lordship's look was a clear indication that the Remove master had not spared the rod. And, by way of comfort, all the Remove told Mauleverer that he deserved it.

The affair of the banknote was at an end. Few fellows doubted that Mr. Quelch was right, and that Mauly had lost the fiver. Lord Mauleverer's own opinion was unchanged; but he did not state it. Two fellows in the Remove did not agree with Mr. Quelch—Hazel, whose fixed belief was unchanged; and the Bounder, whose suspicions were as keen as ever. As for Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, that dusky junior was perplexed and dubious. But there was one point upon which he was not doubtful, and that was that his vigilance should never sleep.

THE END.

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A VOW OF VENGEANCE!



Dr. Birchmell's shivering in his shoes. That for? If he, he once sucked a chap from St. Sam's, and now that chap's returned to square accounts. Anyone want to change places with Dr. B.?

R. ALF BIRCHEMELL, B.Sc.,—which means "Bearded Skool-master" or "Barfaced Scoundrel," whenever you like.

Heed his laughing from time to time. Heed flicked over the pages with his hands, till he came to a paragraph which gave him pause.

It was an entry in Dr. Birchmell's own shabby hand, and he gazed at it as it blossomed.

WILLIAM BODGER.—Entered St. Sam's February 30th, 1899. Son of a famous prizefighter. Started his skool career by knocking out six prefects. Severely reprimanded, and cautioned in his future conduct. Soudly birched, in the same year, for smoking in his study. The headlocks he was caught smoking were confiscated. In 1900, the young sweep organised a Grate Rebellion, and on being called over the coals by a master, he hit him on the head with a hammer. For this desecrated offence, Bodger was put in the pillory, and branded with hot iron. When he came out of the smoky after this punishment, he was expelled from St. Sam's in deep disgrace and a house-cab, September 31st, 1900. His name is heavily struck off the Skool Register.

Little did Dr. Birchmell dream, when he last put his pen through the illustrious name of Bill Bodger, years and years before, that he would ever see eyes on that young rhapsode again. He had sneaked Bill Bodger from St. Sam's, and that was the end of him. Never again would he darken the doors of Dr. Birchmell's Academy for the Sons of Jeantleness.

So the Head thought, anyway. But now, like a peck from the past, like a ghost from the tomb, Bill Bodger had suddenly turned up again at St. Sam's. He had come down with other self-buried old boys, for the annual reunion.

Bodger was now a man of middle age, of staid settler and gigantic girth. He had followed in his father's footsteps, and become a prizefighter, and the muscles of his bony arms were strong as iron anvils. (Sketchesport).

No wonder Dr. Birchmell was shivering and quaking, as he perused that entry in the Skool Register.

How soon would the blow fall? And what form would Bill Bodger's revenge take? Cold shivers chased themselves down the Head's spine as he asked himself those questions.

Berry footmarks sounded in the corridor. And Dr. Birchmell, at the sound of that ghostly tread, felt his blood turn to ice. Quaking with comprehension, he sprang to his feet.

The door of the Head's study was thrown open without ceremony, and Bill Bodger burst in, like a cyclone, tornado, typhoon and hurricane rolled into one.

Dr. Birchmell threw his dignity to the four winds, and dodged round the table. "It's all right, Birchmell!" growled Bill Bodger. "Don't get the wind up. I haven't called for my revenge. That can wait. As soon as the time's ripe, I shall strike—"

"Oh, I'll make you too the day that you sealed me from St. Sam's!"

"Oh, dear!"

The Head came slowly round from the far side of the table.

"I wish you wouldn't have mauls, Mr. Bodger. Why couldn't you have feelings of rather and revenge? Why not let bygones be bygones? Let us fall on each others' necks, and swear eternal friendship!"

"Not likely!" snorted Bill Bodger. "I'm very particular who I clump up with. Now, listen to me, Birchmell!"

Twenty-eight years ago, as the crowd flies, you sneaked me from St. Sam's—"

"Come me impune, lassie!" Dr. Birchmell member teaching me that Latin tag? No one hurts me with impunity! You birched me black and blue when I was your pupil—"

"Forget it!" said the Head hastily. "Wash it out! Let us be brothers, my dear Bodger!"

"You put me in the pillory," went on Bill Bodger, unheeding. "In those days, before the law stepped in and put a stop to your foolish crookery, you used to have a pillory erected in the quad. You put me in it, and branded me with hot iron."

"Seariously, Mr. Bodger, I'm frightfully sorry! It was a burning shame. It has never ceased to brand my conscience—"

"Rot! You ain't never 'ad a chance, you ain't. You'd put me in the pillory again, if you 'ad all a chance. But it's Bill Bodger who 'olds the whip!"

"Then we shall meet again! An' if you 'appen to be batin' when I 'appen to be bowlin'—beware!"

Dr. Birchmell had visions of being brained by a cricket-ball, and when his vizier had gone he rang the bell for blinding the page.

Ask Burleigh of the Sixth to totter along," he said.

Burleigh appeared in a few minutes. "I've had news for you, Burleigh," said the Head. "I shan't be able to play this afternoon."

"Oh, good!" said the captain of St. Sam's, beaming all over his face. "The Skool will have a chance of winning, after all!"

"Eh?" demanded the Head, sharply. "Ahem! What I mean is, sir, this is a crushing blow! I don't know what we shall do without you. Why can't you play sir?"

"Cold feet!" explained the Head. "My peddle eggermenties are frozen stiff, and I can't massage them back to life."

"Hoosy—I mean, what rotten luck, sir. But p'raps you'll turn out as umpire? Then you'll be able to get your feet warm, dodging the ball!"

"All serene," said the Head. "Rely on me, Burleigh."

And he chuckled to think how easily he had frustrated the stunner desires of Bill Bodger.

II.

W HOS skipper of the Old Boys' team—you or me?"

Bill Bodger popped the question to Colonel Fiey in the cricket pavilion. He had the Colonel's head in chancery, and was punching it for all he was worth.

"Biff! Thud! Biff! Thud!"

"Yaroooo!" yelled the Colonel, who was not accustomed to having his head used as a punching-bag. "Chuckit!"

"Stoppit!"

"Answer my question, then!"

growled Bill Bodger, pounding away as if he was needing dough. "Who's skipper?"

"Who's side?"

"Yooooo!" roared the Colonel. "Ah! That's what I wanted to know," said Bill Bodger, releasing

his unfortunat victim. "Now we can get on with the game."

And he tossed for choice of innings with Burleigh of the Sixth.

"It's either heads or tails!" said Bill Bodger, as the coin fell.

"You're right!" said Burleigh, with a rue face. "I suppose you'll have first?"

"No! you can have first now!"

Burleigh and Tailboy, the juniors of the Sixth, went out to open the innings for St. Sam's.

The umpires had already strolled on to the turf; and Dr. Birchmell was seated on a camp-stool, watching his hour.

Bill Bodger, being captain of the Old Boys, promptly put himself on to bat.

Williz!

The ball flew from Bill Bodger's hand, and Burleigh of the Sixth ducked wildly. But he was too late! The ball caught him a fearful crack on the cranium, and he howled with anguish.

"Yaroooo!" cried Dr. Birchmell, egg-stiffly. "A very foul fowl!"

Bill Bodger spun round, with a gleam in his eye.

"Did you speak, Birchmell!" he demanded with menace.

"Nunno! Not at all!" said the Head hastily.

The game went on; but it went on without Burleigh, who had had, until that crack on the head had nearly brained him, and he looked quite dazed as he staggered off the pitch. He had taken "first knock" with a vengeance; but he wasn't staying for more!

Dr. Birchmell thanked his lucky stars that he had cried off from the game; for in the ordinary way he was in first for St. Sam's; and Burleigh's unhappy fate would have been his—only more so. For Burleigh had a thick head of hair, which softened the force of the blow; whereas the Head's bald pate would have cracked like an egg-shell!

The St. Sam's innings was a procession. Bounder followed Burleigh, and he was knocked out by the first ball he received. Tenderly they laid poor Bounder on a stretcher, and carried him off to the sanary. And Swotter, who followed on, shared a similar fate.

"Three down for no runs!" chorused Bill Bodger. "That's a jolly good start! I'm in deadly form, an' no mistake!"

"Over!" said Dr. Birchmell, rising to his feet.

"Eh?" But the match has only just started!

"You've had six bawls," explained the Head, patiently. "There are six bawls to an over, and when the over's over another bowler takes over. Is that clear?"

Evidently it was not clear to Bill Bodger, for he promptly put himself on to bowl at the other end; and in the fury of Colonel Fiey Sparkes, whose rightful turn it was to bowl.

But the Colonel, though he raved and stormed, and rumped and remumped, was discreet enough not to make a fuss about it. He didn't want his head used as a punching ball again!

Bill Bodger went on with his deadly work, and the batsmen fell like skittles before his hurrying attack.

It began to look as if the hole St. Sam's team would be skittled out without scoring a single run. But the two last men in—Wickett and Sloggett, of the Sixth—had a brainy idea. They rubbed off to the skool museum, and put on suits of armor, which had been worn by ancient knights. In this formidable guise, and with their visors closed, they were able to resist the deadly bowling of Bodger.

The spectacle of two armor-clad figures, battling at the wicket, sent the onlookers into hysterics.

Wickett and Sloggett managed to score

sixty runs, before Sloggett was run out, three tripping over his spurs.

"All out for sixty!" chuckled Bill Bodger.

"Why, I shall beat 'em off my own bat!"

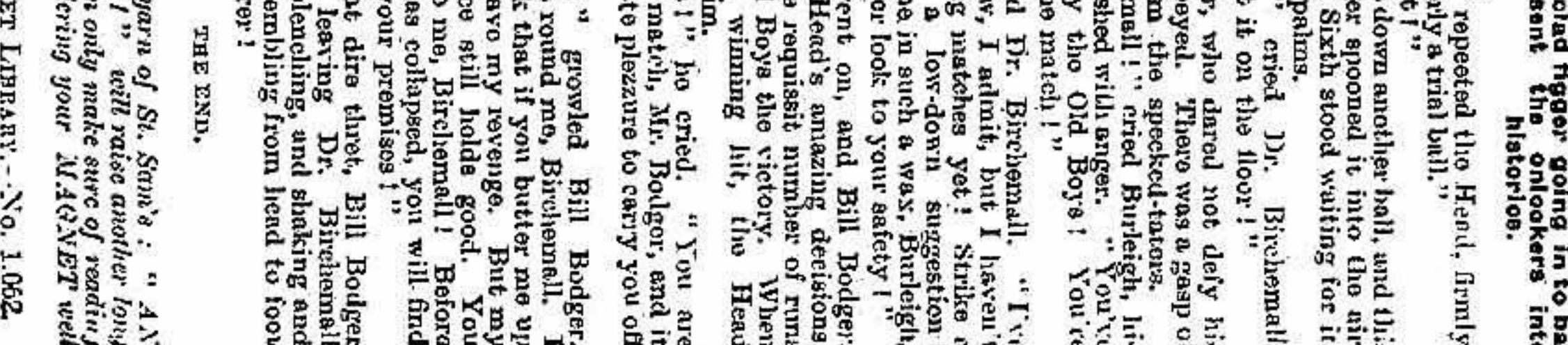
Bill Bodger opened the Old Boys' innings with Colonel Fiey Sparkes. He made a mity

sweep at the first ball he reserved, and missed it by yards, and his middle stump was whipped out of the ground.

"Ha, ha!" chorused Burleigh of the Sixth. "How's that, um—"

"Not out!" said Dr. Birchmell.

"W. w. sent the onlookers into what?"



The spectacle of an armor-clad figure going in to bat sent the onlookers into hysterics.

"Not out!" repeated the Head, firmly. "That was merely a trial ball."

"Oh, my hat!"

Burleigh sent down another ball, and this time Bill Bodger spooned it into the air. Bounder of the Sixth stood waiting for it, with upturned palms.

"Drop it!" cried Dr. Birchmell, sleepily. "Put it on the floor!"

And Bounder, who dared not defy his Headmaster, obeyed. There was a gasp of amazement from the spectators.

"Dr. Birchmell!" cried Burleigh, his hansom face flushed with anger. "You've been bribed by the Old Boys! You're trying to sell the match!"

"Rot!" said Dr. Birchmell. "I've sunk pretty low, I admit, but I haven't come to selling matches yet! Strike a light! What a low-down suggestion! You've made me in such a was, Burleigh, that you'd better look to your safety!"

The game went on, and Bill Bodger, aided by the Head's amazing decisions, soon hit off the requisit number of runs to give the Old Boys the victory. When he made the winning hit, the Head rushed up to him.

"Congratulations!" he cried. "You are the hero of the match, Mr. Bodger, and it will give me great pleasure to carry you off the field!"

"And off!" growled Bill Bodger. "You can't get round me, Birchmell. I s'pose you think that if you butter me up enough, I shall waive my revenge. But my vow of vengeance still holds good. You shall not escape me, Birchmell! Before another week has collapsed, you will find Nemesis on your premises!"

And with that dire threat, Bill Bodger strode away, leaving Dr. Birchmell blanching and blanching, and shivering and quaking, and trembling from head to foot with morble terror!

THE END.

(Next week's yarn of St. Sam's: "AN I FOR AN I" will raise another jolly laugh. You can only make sure of reading it, advance, by ordering your MAGNET well in advance.)

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