

"THE BOY WITH A BORROWED NAME!" Super School Story by Best Boys' Author, FRANK RICHARDS

The Magnet ^{2^D}



WHO SAYS A CHEERY CHIN-WAG?



COME INTO the OFFICE, BOYS - AND GIRLS!

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. Write to him: Editor of the "Magnet," The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. A stamped, addressed envelope will ensure a reply.

SOME little time ago I gave you some particulars of

CURIOUS STREET NAMES

which are to be found in Paris. One of my Camberwell readers has written to me asking if there are as many curiously named streets in London. Although London is not so prolific in out-of-the-ordinary street names, there are certainly some curious ones still to be found. One of the most interesting is to be found not far from Fleet Street, and is called "Hanging Sword Alley." It was once in the district of Alsatia, which was the haunt of highwaymen, thieves, robbers and pirates, so it is not hard to guess how it came by its name. Near Liverpool Street Station is another curiously named street called "Catherine Wheel Alley." There is an "Anchor and Hope Lane" and a "Bird in Bush Road" in the East End. Other curiously named streets in London include Cock Lane, Creek Wharf, Crucifix Lane, Crutched Friars, Ditch Lane, Dog Yard, Dogkennel Hill, Hanging Wood Lane and Lamb's Passage.

From Wivenhoe comes a reader's inquiry concerning

THE BARBER'S POLE.

Why, he asks, is a barber's pole painted in alternate red and white spiral stripes? Simply because the word "barber" at one time was synonymous with "surgeon." In those days people knew very little about surgery, and believed that the best cure for almost everything was to make a cut and allow the patient to bleed freely. Barbers thus found a new use for their razors in "bleeding" people, and became the surgeons of their day, also using leeches to suck blood from patients. The idea of the red and white spiral stripes on their poles was to suggest a white bandage that had been bloodstained. To-day, the pole still remains as a sign and a relic of the so-called "good old days."

Ever come across the expression

A MUSTER OF PIGEONS?

One of my Belfast readers has, and asks me if I can tell him what it means. It simply means a large number of pigeons, just as we might say "a herd of buffaloes." Some time ago I gave you a short list of rather unusual group names. Here are a few more which I had not space to print at the time.

A bevy of quails, a herd of cranes, a watch of nightingales, a stand of plovers, a brood of grouse, and a building of rooks. Numbers of deer, giraffes, ponies and pigs are all called a herd. Sheep and goats are both called a flock; and others are a drove of cattle, a nest of rabbits, a stud of horses and a troop of monkeys.

JOHN HARKER, of Blackpool, has been reading an historical novel, and got rather puzzled about some of the expressions, especially those respecting money. He sends along

A COIN QUERY,

and asks me to settle it for him. What THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,443.

he wants to know is what were Moidores, Pistoles and Florences? These were coins that were current in this country in former times. They were really foreign coins, but were freely circulated and accepted in this country. A Moidore was worth 27s., a Pistole 17s., and a Florence 18s. Another foreign coin that circulated in this country was the Mark, worth about 13s. Coins made in this country which are no longer current, included the Groat (4d.), Tester (6d.), Noble (8s. 8d.), Angel (10s.), Rial (£1), Laurel (£1), Guinea (21s.), and the Jacobus (25s.).

Do you know which is

THE BIGGEST RAILWAY IN ENGLAND?

Jim Harrigan, of Whitby, asks me which of the "big four" railway companies in this country is the largest. If you count "bigness" as being the longest length of line in operation, the London, Midland and Scottish Railway holds the record. This line covers over 7,700 miles. The next in order is the London and North-Eastern Railway, with 6,300 miles. The Great Western serves over 3,500 miles, and the Southern Railway over 2,100 miles.

There are other railways in this country, but they are mostly very small and only serve out-of-way country districts. They generally consist of a single track, and the gauge is frequently smaller than that of the ordinary main-line railways.

The next question comes from a Bridport reader, who propounds

A FLAG QUESTION.

Recently a notable foreign royalty died, and the flags on official buildings in this country were lowered to half-mast on the day of the funeral, as a mark of respect and mourning. My Bridport reader happened to be visiting London on that day, and went to the Tower. He was very surprised to find that, although all other flags were flying at half-mast, that of the Tower remained, as usual, at the top of the mast. He asks me why such was the case. The reason is that the flag on the Tower of London is only half-masted on the death of a British sovereign—an occasion which has not happened during the life-time of most MAGNET readers.

There are, however, some readers who can remember the Tower flag being half-masted on at least two occasions. They are, of course, my "veteran" readers, who, despite the fact that they are now "old-timers," still read and enjoy the weekly fare which our excellent band of authors continue to provide.

THIS WILL INTEREST YOU!

Topping Free Gifts, just the sort of things you like best, are being given in exchange for coupons from Rowntree's Cocoa. These are some of the marvellous gifts you can choose from: a Bagatelle Board, a Football, a Table-tennis Set, a Watch, a big Box of Paints, and there are lots more besides. Ask mother to get

you Rowntree's Cocoa, it's good for you and tastes fine. Tell her it costs only 5½d. a quarter-pound tin, and every tin contains Three Free Gift Coupons. Send a postcard to Dept. N.C.3, Rowntree & Co., Ltd., The Cocoa Works, York, for the special list of boys' and girls' gifts and a Free Voucher value 3 Coupons.

Now for a selection of

THINGS YOU'D HARDLY BELIEVE,

in response to a number of requests by readers, who find these little paragraphs of interest:

Swallows as "Pigeon-Post"! A swallow was captured in Eritrea, an Italian colony near Abyssinia. A message was tied to the bird's legs after which it was released. The swallow was caught again in Northern Italy—the first known case of a swallow being used to carry a message!

Sawdust Can be Turned Into Food! That is the claim of a German chemist. He has already succeeded in making an edible cattle fodder from sawdust, and is now experimenting to make sawdust suitable for human consumption.

Four-eyed Fish! A New York museum has succeeded in keeping alive some specimens of a four-eyed fish. When this curious fish is on the surface, two eyes keep watch above the water, while the other two see what is going on beneath!

Other Queer Fish. The Mud Skipper spends most of its time on land, but, as it breathes through its tail, it keeps that wet! The X-Ray Fish, from India, looks like a swimming skeleton! Transparent fish have recently been discovered in the Arctic!

Three Thousand Feet Under the Sea! The deepest descent ever made beneath the sea was to a depth of 3,028 feet. This feat was accomplished by two Americans in a steel diving ball. They were only able to remain there for five minutes.

A Man's Brain is Heavier than a Woman's! The average weight of a man's brain is 3 lb. 8 oz. A woman's is 2 lb. 11 oz.

That's all I've got space for this week, chums. In next Saturday's MAGNET there is a real treat in store for you. This mighty bumper number "kicks off" with:

"BUNTER TELLS THE TRUTH!"

By Frank Richards.

You'll simply revel in this yarn. It's first-class, top-notch, and brimful of fun and mystery—the type of story that will leave you thirsting for more. But don't worry, the stories that I have got to follow are equally good!

Next week brings to a close Geo. E. Rochester's popular flying story. Your Editor has been busy this last few weeks, however, with the result that next Saturday week you will have the pleasure of reading the opening chapters of:

"DAN OF THE DOGGER BANK!"

a thrilling story of adventure with the North Sea Fishing Fleet that will make you feel as though you yourself were on board a fishing trawler. Get ready to sign on for this great sea trip next Saturday week, boys. It'll be a great experience, and one that seldom comes your way, so enjoy every moment of it.

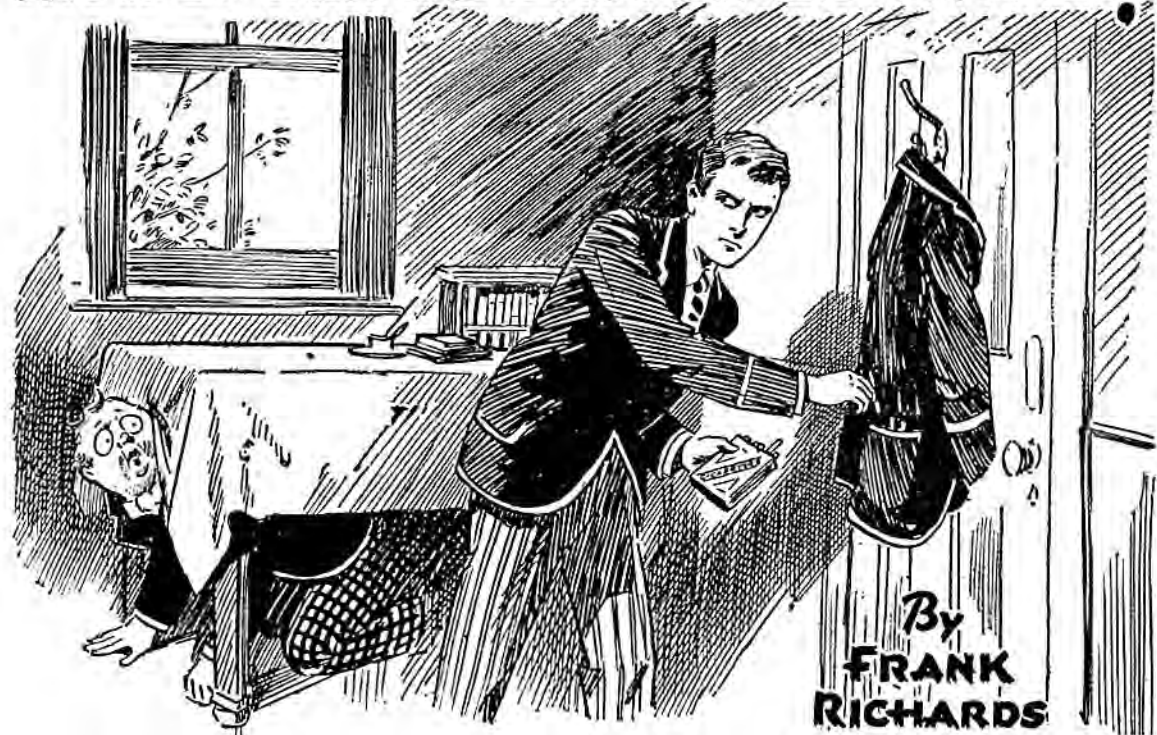
Our shorter features, too, will be bang up to the mark, and you'll be wise if you undo a waistcoat button before you begin to read the special edition of the "Greyfriars Herald." After this, you can turn to another clever poem by the Greyfriars Rhymester and finally my chat will complete an issue which for value cannot be beaten.

So drop "into the office" again next week, chums, and have another yarn with

YOUR EDITOR.

THE MOST POPULAR AUTHOR OF SCHOOL STORIES AT HIS BRIGHTEST AND BEST!

The Boy with a Borrowed Name!



A Sensational Yarn of HARRY WHARTON & CO., the world-renowned chums of GREYFRIARS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bunter the Smuggler!

"SEEN Price?" asked Billy Bunter. To which question Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry replied simultaneously:

"Blow Price!"

Price of the Fifth was not popular with the chums of the Remove at Greyfriars School.

Wharton and Bob Cherry were standing near the House steps, waiting for the other members of the Co. to join them to go in to tea, when Billy Bunter came out, blinking to and fro through his big spectacles.

"Oh, don't be asses, you know!" said the fat Owl of the Remove. "I've got to find the chap! He said he would be in his study, and he isn't! I can't carry his dashed packet about for ever!"

Billy Bunter blinked over the Greyfriars quad, which glimmered in the mild sunshine of an October afternoon. Plenty of fellows were to be seen, but Stephen Price of the Fifth Form did not appear to be among them.

"I say, you fellows—" recommenced Bunter.

"We haven't seen him, and don't want to!" said Bob Cherry. "But if you've got something for him, you fat duffer, why can't you leave it on the table in his study?"

"He, he, he!"

The two juniors stared at Bunter. Why that simple and natural question should cause him to break into a loud chuckle was rather a mystery to them.

"Well, what's the jolly old joke?" demanded Bob.

"He, he, he! I don't think Price would like me to leave the packet lying

about his study!" chuckled Bunter. "Hardly! Hilton or Warren might find it there!"

"What on earth would it matter if they did?" asked Harry Wharton. "Why should Price mind his study-mates seeing it, whatever it is?"

"Well, that new chap Warren is rather particular," said Bunter; "and I've heard that Hilton's getting particular, too, since he's been pally with Warren. Pricey wouldn't like them to spot it."

"What the dickens—"

Why has Jim Warren come to Greyfriars under a borrowed name, taking the place of the real James Warren, who is an outsider? Harry Wharton would like to know the answer to the mystery—and so would Price, the black sheep of the Fifth!

"Or Prout!" said Billy Bunter, with a sage shake of his head. "Suppose Pricey's Form-master happened to drop in! It wouldn't do—what? He, he, he!"

Wharton and Bob Cherry exchanged a glance. There was only one inference to be drawn from Billy Bunter's extraordinary remarks.

"You fat ass!" said Harry. "Have you been getting something for Price against the rules?"

"Oh, no!" answered Bunter at once. "I haven't been down to Friardale since class—"

"I saw you going!" said Bob.

"I mean, I only went for a walk! I never called anywhere, especially at the back door of the Cross Keys—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"I went nowhere near the place," explained Bunter. "As for getting a packet of cigarettes there—of course, I shouldn't do anything of the sort! I shouldn't say anything about it if I did. Price told me not to."

"Well, my hat!" said Bob Cherry.

"But, look here, I want to find the chap!" said Bunter. "I can't keep the packet about me, you know, and I can't leave it lying about Price's study! It's all right, you fellows; it's only a packet of—of toffee!"

"Toffee?" repeated Harry Wharton.

"Yes, that's all! No harm in fetching a packet of toffee for a fellow," said Bunter. "Still, I want to get shut of it. Suppose a prefect found it on me, you know—he might fancy I'd been smoking!"

"Smoking!" gasped Bob. "Smoking toffee?"

"Eh! Oh! Yes! No! I—I mean, I—"

"You mean that you've been smuggling smokes into the school for that measly worm Price of the Fifth?" said Harry Wharton.

"Nothing of the kind!" denied Bunter. "If Price of the Fifth offered me a bob to fetch in his packet of smokes, I should refuse! In fact, I did refuse. Only, you see, I've been disappointed about a postal order, and—"

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Three juniors came across the quad—Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. Billy Bunter turned his eyes and his spectacles on them as they came up.

"I say, you fellows, seen Price?" he asked.

"No, and don't want to!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"What the dickens do you want a Fifth Form man for?" asked Nugent.

"Oh, nothing! Nothing at all!"

"The fat, fozzling frump has got a packet of smokes for Price," said Bob Cherry. "Price tipped him a bob to smuggle them in."

"I haven't!" roared Bunter. "It's a packet of butterscotch—"

"Not toffee?" grinned Bob.

"I mean toffee! Look here, you fellows can jolly well mind your own business, and go and eat coke!" snapped Billy Bunter.

And he rolled away to look round the quad for Price of the Fifth. The Famous Five of the Remove stared after him.

"The fat idiot!" said Nugent.

"The fatfulness of the esteemed idiot is terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Kick him!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"I'd rather kick Price!" said Harry Wharton, frowning. "If that blithering ass is spotted with smokes on him, he will get six from Quelch!"

"Serve him jolly well right!" grunted Johnny.

"Well, yes; but he's a born idiot, and Price is a rotter!" said the captain of the Remove. "Price isn't going to be allowed to tip Remove men to smuggle in his smokes! He's not going to get that packet from Bunter!"

"Hear, hear!" agreed Bob.

Harry Wharton followed in the track of the fat Owl, and the Co. followed Wharton. Billy Bunter stopped to speak to a slim, handsome senior—Jim Warren, the new man in the Fifth Form.

"I say, Warren, seen Price?"

"No!" answered Warren briefly.

"Well, he's in your study, you know," said Bunter. "Sure you don't know where he is?"

"Quite!"

"Well, have you seen Hilton? He may know."

"No!"

"Oh blow!" growled Billy Bunter; and he rolled on, blinking round through his big spectacles.

The Famous Five followed on his track, grinning. They intended to bag that packet of smokes from Bunter for his own good, but they waited till he should reach a less public spot. They did not want to draw attention to the fact that the fat and fatuous Owl had cigarettes on him. The rule on that subject was very strict at Greyfriars, and discovery meant a caning for Bunter.

"I say, Smithy!" yelled Bunter, as he came on Vernon-Smith of the Remove. "I say, seen Price?"

"Yes. I saw him go to Prout's study with Prout," answered the Bounder.

"Oh, bother him, and bother Prout!" grunted the fat Owl. "I can't go to Prout's study after him! What the thump is he sticking in his beak's study for?"

"Looked like a row, from the jolly old expression on Prout's face when I saw them!" grinned the Bounder.

"Price may have been spotted."

"No fear! He's too jolly sharp for that!" said Bunter. "I say—"

Bunter was interrupted.

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry took

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hold of his fat arms, and he blinked round at them in annoyance and surprise.

"I say, you fellows, leggo! What the—"

"Come along!" said Harry.

"But, I say—"

"This way!" grinned Bob.

They walked Billy Bunter away under the old elms, followed by the Co., leaving the Bounder staring after them.

Billy Bunter wriggled.

"I say, you fellows— Look here, what are you up to? Leggo!" he squeaked.

Screened by the trees from the House and the general view, the Famous Five came to a halt.

"Now hand over those smokes!" said Harry Wharton tersely.

"Shan't!"

"Bump him!"

"I say, you fellows, you can't have Price's smokes!" exclaimed Bunter.

"If you want fags you can buy them for yourselves, I suppose. You fellows always make out that you don't smoke."

"You blithering bloater!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Hand them over, you fat ass!" said Harry.

"We're going to make an end of them, you frumpious fozzler! You can tell Price we've done so; and tell him that if he gets a Remove man to smuggle smokes in for him again, we'll come to his study and see him about it!"

"Oh, really, Wharton!"

"Buck up!"

"I haven't got any smokes!" howled Bunter. "It's a packet of toffee—"

"Hand over the toffee, then!" grinned Bob.

"I mean, I haven't got any packet at all! If you fellows fancy there's a packet in my pocket—I mean a packet in my pocket—you're jolly well mistaken! If you can't take a fellow's word, I can only say— Yoooooop!"

Bump!

"Yaroooooh!"

"Handing them over," asked Harry Wharton, "or do you want another bump?"

"Owl! Beast! I haven't—"

Bump!

"Yaroooooh! I mean, Price will be fearfully waxy—he paid half-a-crown for those cigarettes!" gasped Bunter.

"I say—"

"Last time of asking!"

"Owl! Leggo! Here they are, you beast! Owl! A packet of cigarettes came out of Bunter's pocket in the fat Owl's fat hand. "Mind, I shall tell Price that you fellows have got them."

"We'll tell him ourselves!" said Harry Wharton.

"And tell him what we think of him at the same time!" growled Bull.

Harry Wharton opened the packet, took out the cigarettes, and tossed them, scattering, over the school wall, into the road outside.

"Oh lor!" gasped Bunter.

"Now kick him all the way back to the House!" said Bob. "Stand steady, Bunter—we're just going to begin!"

Billy Bunter did not stand steady. The chums of the Remove had no time to begin. Bunter flew through the elms as if he were on the cinder-path, and vanished across the quad.

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Why his Form-master had ordered him to follow him there Price did not know; but he had so many shady secrets to keep that he was always in an uneasy frame of mind lest one should leak out. It was not conducive to peace of mind to be the blackest sheep in the school.

Prout's expression was portentous. His plump brow wore a deep frown. Something, evidently, was up, and Price wondered uneasily what!

Prout's ample form sank into an ample chair; and he fixed his frowning glance on the black sheep of his Form. The Greyfriars senior composed his features and waited for the blow to fall.

"Price!" boomed Prout at last.

"Yes, sir!" murmured Price.

"You are aware of the rule, the very strict rule, in this school, against smoking by the boys in their studies?"

Price was both alarmed and relieved. If his Form-master had spotted him smoking, it was bad; but if he had spotted him out of bounds, perhaps handling a billiards cue at the Three Fishers, it would have been worse. It was not the "sack" for smoking, at all events. It was the sack for some of Price's secret manners and customs.

"This rule you have broken!" resumed Prout.

"Oh, no, sir!" protested Price.

Prout raised a large plump hand.

"In the first week of this term, Price, I actually caught you smoking cigarettes in the Cloisters."

"I explained that at the time, sir!" said Price meekly. "A fellow gave me some cigarettes in the holidays, and I found them in my pocket that day, and just tried one for a lark."

"I accepted that explanation, Price, with doubts," said Mr. Prout. "On another occasion when I visited your study to speak to Warren, I found the room smelling of tobacco."

"It's not my fault if Warren smokes, sir."

"What? What? I believe nothing or the kind!" snapped Mr. Prout. "Warren is a boy of the most excellent conduct. Nevertheless, as the study is occupied by three boys, I would not judge hastily. But now—"

Prout paused portentously.

Price wondered what could have happened now! One thing was certain—he had no smokes about him or in his study! It was for that very reason that he had dispatched Billy Bunter to the village to fetch some. He was glad that he was in that smokeless state!

"Now," went on Mr. Prout, "I fear that there can be no further doubt in the matter. It is not my custom, Price, to take note of words spoken unintentionally in my hearing. But on this occasion I had no choice but to do so. A quarter of an hour ago I was in the games-study. I went there to speak to Blundell, the captain of my Form, and as he had not yet come in, I sat down to wait for him."

Price started.

"The door," continued Prout, "was half open! I heard your voice on the landing outside."

Price breathed hard.

"The words you uttered," said Mr. Prout, "were these, 'Bring the packet to my study, Bunter!'"

Prout paused again. Price did not speak.

"I did not attach any particular importance to the words, Price. I supposed that you had asked that Remove boy to fetch something for you. But a few minutes later, from the window of the games study, I saw Bunter go out of gates."

Price did not speak. He was thinking hard. It was absolutely rotten luck.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Not Nice for Price!

MR. PROUT, master of the Fifth, entered his study with his elephantine tread. Stephen Price, of his Form, followed him in, with an extremely uneasy expression on his sour, sallow face.

He had had no idea that old Prout was in the games-study when he spoke to Bunter; though, really he might have been more on his guard, for Mr. Prout very frequently barged into the Fifth Form quarters. He had a happy delusion that his boys liked to see him there!

Stephen Price wondered how he was going to get out of this. It was clear that that incident in the Cloisters at the beginning of the term had made Prout suspicious of him, and, in fact, Prout, though not an observant gentleman, had always had rather a dubious eye on that member of his Form. "Old Pompous" was on the track now with a vengeance!

"If, as I cannot help suspecting, you smoke in your study, Price, it is a serious matter enough!" boomed Prout. "But if you have been guilty of the base

misunderstood," said Price meekly. "Lots of things are sold in packets, sir, as well as cigarettes."

"No doubt!" said the Fifth Form master. "No doubt!"

Price was quite confident now. He was rather anxious to get out of his Form-master's study. Still, he had ample time to meet the Owl of the Remova on his way back with the smokes and take care that they ran no risk of coming to light—once Prout dismissed him.

Mr. Prout sat silent for some minutes. "Very well, Price," he said at last, "I shall try to trust you. It is far, very far, from my wish to distrust any boy in my Form!"

"Thank you, sir! I assure you—"

"But—" said Mr. Prout.

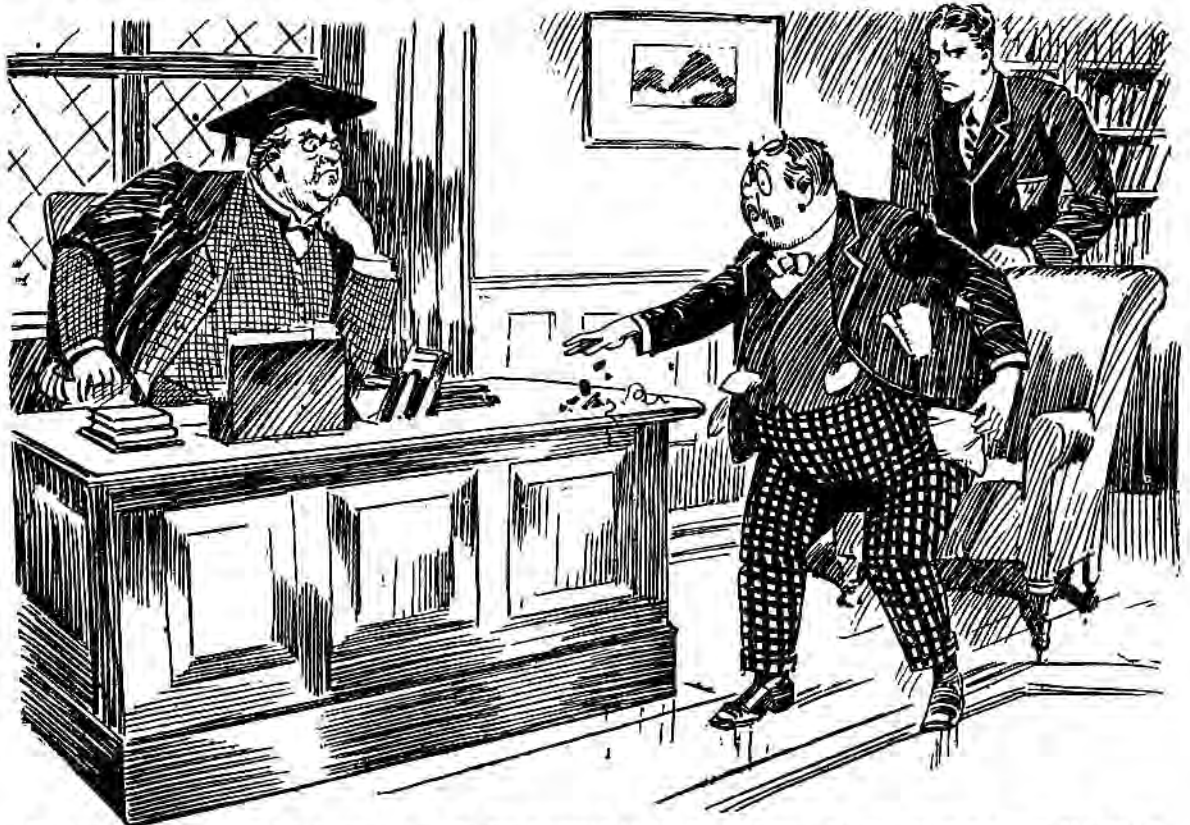
Price's heart sank a little. There was a "but."

there was no chance of getting a word to Bunter. The fat Owl would come rolling in with a packet of cigarettes in his pocket for Price—he would be sent for to Prout's study, and then—

Then the fat would be in the fire; and the untruths that the black sheep had told would make matters worse for him. It was a Head's flogging for this! Price had been amused when Coker of the Fifth was in danger of a Head's flogging a few days ago. But he was not amused now!

Sitting in a state of dismal dismay, he had an eye on Prout's window, which gave a view of the quad. And at last he glimpsed a fat figure rolling in at the gates. Bunter had returned! That fat figure rolled on and passed out of Price's view.

Price stole a glance at Prout.



Price had sent Bunter out for cigarettes, and Mr. Prout wanted to find the evidence. "Turn out your pockets at once!" he boomed. Bunter obeyed, and all sorts of things came to light—toffee, bullseyes, string and a bad halfpenny. But there was nothing that could be smoked—no sign of a cigarette!

action of inducing a boy in a lower Form to smuggle cigarettes into the school for you, it is very much more serious!"

"Oh, no, sir!" said Price, at once.

"Very well!" said Prout. "In speaking to Bunter, you alluded to a packet—a packet of what?"

Price had thought out an answer to that one already.

"A packet of drawing-pins, sir," he said glibly. "Bunter was going down to Priardale, and I thought he might drop in at the stationer's, and get me a packet of drawing-pins while he was there."

"Oh!" said Prout.

He sat back in his chair and regarded Price thoughtfully. He hoped that that statement was true. Prout did not like finding members of his Form out in serious faults.

"I am sorry, sir, that you should have

"But," resumed Prout's booming tones, "in order that the matter may be cleared up beyond the possibility of a doubt, Price, you will remain in my study until Bunter returns—"

"Eh!"

"And I shall then ascertain, by my own observation, the contents of the packet he is bringing in for you."

"Oh!"

"You may sit down, Price!" added Mr. Prout kindly.

Price fell, rather than sat on a chair. His eyes were longingly on the door.

Mr. Prout sat at his table and sorted out papers. He had a number of Latin papers to correct for his Form.

He plunged into Fifth Form Latin, and almost forgot Price.

That hapless youth sat in growing uneasiness and terror. A word to Bunter would have been enough—but

"Scandalous!" ejaculated Prout suddenly.

But he was not speaking to Price. He was gazing at a paper in the sprawling hand of Horace Coker, of his Form.

Coker's essay in the tongue of Cicero did not seem to gratify Prout. He fairly glared at Coker's prose.

"Atrocious!" he added. "That boy Coker—upon my word!"

Prout proceeded to deal with Coker's paper, with heavy pencil-strokes, making it look more like a map than a Latin paper. Evidently he had, for the time, forgotten Price and Bunter—Coker's variety of Latin prose was quite enough to occupy his attention.

Price was glad enough to be forgotten. It postponed the evil hour. Bunter, he supposed, would go to his

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study to hand over the packet. Bunter would not find him there. No doubt the fat junior would look for him. No doubt he was looking for him in these very moments—with the packet of cigarettes in his pocket. If he spotted him from Prout's window, and had a chance to make signs to him, would the fat ass understand?

He kept his eyes on the window, and suddenly he did spot Billy Bunter—walking away at a distance between Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry. They disappeared behind the elms, and Price's last hope disappeared at the same moment—there was no chance of making signs to Bunter.

A few minutes later he spotted the fat junior again—running like a deer. Again he disappeared from view—this time in the direction of the House door.

Price could have groaned. The game was up now!

"Bless my soul!"

It was a sudden exclamation from Mr. Prout. Having come to the end of his pile of papers, and looked at his watch, he found that an hour had passed. It was tea-time in Masters' Common-room.

"Bless my soul!" repeated Prout. "Bunter must have returned long ago. Why did you not remind me, Price?"

Prout touched a bell. Trotter, the House page, appeared in the doorway. Prout instructed him to find Bunter of the Remove and send him to the study at once; which Trotter departed to do. Mr. Prout waited impatiently for the arrival of the Owl of the Remove—and Price waited, wondering diamally what it was going to feel like to bend over and take a flogging from the Head!

THE THIRD CHAPTER

Tea in Study No. 1!

"I SAY you fellows!"

"Scat!"

"I've come here to thank you!" said Billy Bunter, with dignity.

"What?" ejaculated five voices all together.

Harry Wharton & Co. were sitting down to tea in Study No. 1 in the Remove. There were poached eggs and toast on the table in considerable quantities, and there was also a cake—a large cake.

Tea in Study No. 1 that day was rather a handsome meal—due to the fact that Harry Wharton had received an extra "tip" from his uncle, the old colonel, and had nobly expended the same on a spread.

With a spread in the study, no fellow there, of course, was surprised to see Billy Bunter. Bunter had a scent like a bloodhound for a spread. But for all that the famous Co. were surprised to hear that Bunter had come there to thank them. In the first place they did not know for what they were to be thanked; in the second place, Billy Bunter was never known to feel, or express thankfulness for anything.

In the opinion of the Famous Five, Billy Bunter had let down his Form by smuggling in smokes for a senior, and still more by accepting a "tip" of a bob from that senior for his services. In consequence, they were prepared to eject him from the study immediately he put his fat little nose inside. But at his surprising statement they stared at him instead.

"Thank us?" repeated Harry Wharton.

"Yes, old chap!" said Bunter. He edged in at the door, with a wary eye open behind his big spectacles. "I feel that I ought to, you know."

"What is the fat spoofer getting at?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull——"

"Shut the door after you!" suggested Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Scat!"

"I haven't thanked you yet!" said Bunter. "You needn't think I came here because you've got a cake! I don't care much for cake——"

"Oh crikey!"

"Besides, I never knew you had a cake! I never saw Wharton bring it in——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"In fact I'd entirely forgotten it was tea-time," said Bunter. "I just came in to thank you fellows. I hope I'm grateful."

"For what?" demanded Wharton. "For saving me from doing wrong," said Bunter solemnly.

Had not the chums of the Remove been sitting down, they might have fallen down at that statement. They gazed at Bunter blankly.

"I mean it," said Bunter. "It was wrong to smuggle in smokes for a Fifth Form cad! You fellows stopped me. I'm thanking you for it."

"Great Christopher Columbus!" said Bob Cherry.

"Out of sheer good-nature, you know, I did what Price wanted," said Bunter. "You know my good-nature. It's always been my weakness. Fellows take advantage of my kind and generous disposition——"

"Ye gods!" murmured Nugent.

"That's how it was," said the fat Owl. "Sheer good-nature——"

"And Price's bob had nothing to do with it?" asked Harry, laughing.

"Oh, no! I mean, I'd chuck his measly bob back in his face, only—I spent it in Friardale!" explained Bunter. "But, look here, I'll chuck it back at him, all the same, if one of you fellows will lend me a bob——"

"I don't think!"

"Well, that's all!" said Bunter. He edged in a little farther. "I felt bound to thank you fellows for saving me from—doing wrong. It would have been fearfully on my conscience. I've got a conscience, you know—not like some fellows I could name."

"Where do you keep it?" asked Bob Cherry. "Why don't you give it a little exercise sometimes?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I've thanked you," said Bunter, with a longing blink at the cake. "That's what I came here for. Not for tea, you know. Still, if you fellows asked me, I'd stay to tea."

"Not really?" inquired Johnny Bull, with deep sarcasm.

"Yes, really, old chap!"

"Now we're coming down to brass tacks!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"The brass-tackfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's not the tea I'm thinking of," explained Bunter. "It's not much I eat, as you know. But the company of high-minded fellows like you may do me good."

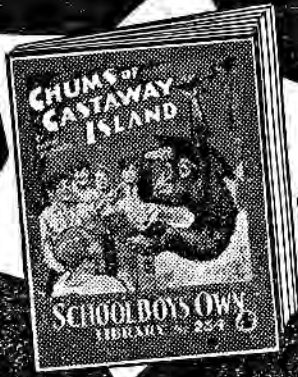
"Oh scissors!"

"I mean it," declared the fat Owl. "I've always admired you fellows. I don't think you're a set of silly nin-compoops, or anything of that sort! My idea is to take you as models, and try to become as good as you are! I'm not pulling your leg, you know, because I want some of that cake!"

STAR

READING FOR THIS MONTH





CHUMS OF CASTAWAY ISLAND
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"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the Famous Five.

Bob Cherry winked at his comrades. "Look here, you men, if Bunter wants to benefit from our improving society and conversation, we ought to give him a chance!" he said.

"You silly ass!" grunted Johnny Bull. "He's only after the cake!"

"Are you after the cake, Bunter?"

"Certainly not. I could eat a slice or two, if you offered it to me."

"That's all right—we're not going to offer you any! Sit down!"

Bunter pulled a chair to the table and sat down. He reached out a fat hand to the dish of poached eggs.

Rap! There was a yell, and the fat hand was suddenly withdrawn as Bob Cherry rapped a podgy wrist with the handle of the breadknife.

"Wow!" yelled Bunter. "You're not here to tea," explained Bob cheerily. "You're here to enjoy the company of high-minded fellows like us. You're not going to have anything to eat! You didn't come here for tea, you know. Just sit there, and listen to our high-minded and improving conversation."

"Oh, really, Cherry—" "Don't talk!" said Bob. "Your conversation isn't either high-minded or improving. We don't want any of it."

"Look here—" "Shut up, Bunter!" The Famous Five, grinning, went on with their tea. Billy Bunter sat and blinked from grinning face to face.

If Bunter's statements were true, he ought to have been satisfied. But he did not seem satisfied somehow.

He looked on with a hungry eye while the poached eggs and toast disappeared. When Wharton cut the big cake Bunter's mouth was watering.

"I say, you fellows—" he began.

"Chuck it, Bunter!"

"But, I say—" "Shut up!"

"Look here," roared Bunter, "are you going to let a fellow have a whack in that cake?"

"Not at all!"

"Just one slice!" urged Bunter.

"Not a crumb!"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter rose from his chair. High-minded conversation and improving society seemed to have palled on him. He rolled to the door.

"Not going?" asked Bob Cherry.

"My dear chap, hang on! Our high-minded society can't have done you much good so far."

"Stick it out!" chuckled Nugent. "Wait till we've finished the cake, at any rate!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beasts! If you think I want any of your measly cake, you're jolly well mistaken!" hooted the indignant fat Owl. "I was only pulling your leg! Yah! You're a lot of rotters, and a lot of cheeky, meddling dummies! And I jolly well hope that Price of the Fifth will jolly well lick you for chucking away his cigarettes! Yah! You're a lot of beasts! And I'd jolly well like to punch your noses all round!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Famous Five.

"Yah!"

Bunter dragged open the door, to roll away in wrath now that he had told the Famous Five what he really thought of them.

"Hold on, old fat man!" gasped Bob.

"Have some cake?"

"Eh?"

Bunter stopped and turned round hopefully. Bob cut off an enormous

chunk of cake and extended it to the fat Owl on the point of the bread knife. Bunter, hardly believing in his good luck, grabbed it in haste.

"That's for telling the truth," explained Bob. "It's the first time you've ever done it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Gobble, gobble, gobble! Billy Bunter did not reply; his fat jaws were too busy for speech. Big as the chunk was, it vanished in record time.

"I say, you fellows—"

Trotter put his head in at the door.

"Master Bunter here? Mr. Prout wants you in his study, sir—and you're to go at once."

"Tell Prout to go and eat cake!" said Bunter. "He ain't my Form-master."

Trotter grinned and departed—not to carry that message to Mr. Prout. Bunter blinked at the remainder of the cake.

"Check of old Prout to send for a Remove man!" he said. "I say, you fellows, that's a good cake; not so good as those I get from Bunter Court, of



**WHO
IS
HE?—**

Jim Warren, heir to an old English title, as all at Greyfriars believe—or a stranger who has stolen Jim Warren's identity—a boy with a borrowed name? No one is more puzzled than Harry Wharton.

course, but pretty good. I'll have some more."

"Better go to see what Prout wants."

"Oh, blow Prout!"

"Prout sometimes asks fellows to tea," remarked Bob Cherry. "I wonder if—"

"Oh!" said Bunter.

"Look here, if he wants a Remove man, I'll go instead!"

"You jolly well won't!" said Bunter warmly. "Prout's sent for me, hasn't he? You jolly well stick here and mind your own business. Bob Cherry!" Bunter rolled out of Study No. 1.

"Hold on, Bunter!"

"Yah!"

Bunter was gone.

The Famous Five, chuckling, finished the cake. What the Fifth Form master wanted Bunter for they did not know, but they did not think it highly probable that it was for tea. But they were quite capable of finishing the cake without further assistance from William George Bunter—and they did.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Innocent Bunter!

"COME in, Bunter!" boomed Prout.

The Owl of the Remove rolled into the Fifth Form master's study with a look of anticipation on his fat face. Prout often had fellows to tea in his study—though generally, of course, of his own Form. Fifth Form men agreed that Prout had his good points; he fed a fellow well, the only drawback being that he would jaw. Still, a fellow had to take the rough with the smooth; that was only reasonable.

Billy Bunter was prepared to let Prout "jaw" till his fat chin ached—or, at least, so long as the food lasted.

But as he blinked round the study, through his big spectacles, he saw no sign of tea. It was unusual for a senior master to ask a junior, but there was no reason why any master should not ask a really charming and fascinating fellow like Billy Bunter.

There was no sign of tea, however. Price of the Fifth was standing in the study, but he was not looking like an honoured guest. Keeping a little back of Prout, so that his Form-master could not see what he was doing, he made signs to Bunter as the fat junior rolled in.

Bunter blinked at him, wondering what he meant. He did not realise that Price was giving him warning looks and signs to be cautious. He thought Price was making faces at him.

"Bunter!" boomed Prout.

"Yes, sir!" said Bunter hopefully. "I haven't had my tea yet, as it happens, sir. The cake in Study No. 1 counted for nothing."

"Your tea!" repeated Prout.

"Yes, sir—I mean no, sir! Thank you very much for asking me here, sir!" said Bunter. "Can I help get it ready, sir?"

Prout gazed at him.

"What are you talking about, Bunter?" he demanded.

"Eh? Tea, sir!"

"I did not send for you to speak about tea, Bunter! Your meals are a matter of no interest to me!" snorted Prout.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "I—I—I thought—" "What do you mean?" snapped Prout testily.

"I—I thought you were asking me to tea, sir."

"You utterly absurd and stupid boy!" boomed Prout.

"That beast Cherry said—"

"Kindly be silent, Bunter! Now, place on my table the packet you have brought from the village for this boy of my Form."

Bunter jumped.

Quite unaware of what Mr. Prout had heard at the door of the games-study, he had not had the remotest idea that the Fifth Form-master knew anything about his trip down to Friardale for smokes.

It had not crossed his fat mind for a moment that that was why Prout had sent for him. Now he stood and blinked at Prout with his little round eyes almost popping through his spectacles.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Oh lor! I didn't, sir—I mean I wasn't! That is, I—I never—"

"You will oblige me, Bunter, by telling the truth!" boomed Prout. "Price states that he asked you to bring in a packet of drawing pins from the village."

"Dud-dud-drawing pip-pip-pins!" stuttered Bunter.

"I hope you made no mistake about

it, Bunter!" said Price, breathing hard. "You remember I asked you to get me a packet of drawing-pins."

"Did—did—did you?" gasped Bunter. "Oh lor!"

"You need not speak, Price!" boomed Prout. "You will leave this matter in my hands."

He glared round at Price—catching him in the very act of giving Bunter an expressive look—a look so very expressive that it seemed almost to twist Price's thin features.

"Price!" boomed Prout. "Are you making signs to that junior?"

"Oh! No, sir!" gasped Price, untwisting his features in a great hurry. "Oh, certainly not, sir!"

"Stand before me, where I can see you!" boomed Prout. "Do not speak to Bunter, or make signs to him. Now, Bunter, tell me the truth."

"Oh lor!" gasped Bunter.

In Study No. 1 in the Remove he had been awarded a big chunk of cake for telling the truth. It did not look as if he would be similarly rewarded in Prout's study. Far from it!

The idea of confessing to a Form-master that he had smuggled smokes into the school made Bunter's fat knees knock together.

True, Prout was not his Form-master, and could not punish him. But it was absolutely certain that he would march him along to Mr. Quelch—and just as certain that Quelch would give him tiddo.

But in that awful moment Billy Bunter had one consolation. The packet of smokes was not on him.

But for the Famous Five, that packet would have been in his pocket—proof of guilt! And at this moment Billy Bunter really did feel thankful that Harry Wharton & Co. had bagged those smokes and thrown them away. Nothing, indeed, could have been more fortunate.

"The truth!" thundered Prout. "You hear me, Bunter?"

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I always tell the truth, sir. I—I can't understand fellows doing anything else, sir! You can ask my beak, sir—I mean my Form-master—"

"Place the packet on the table at once, Bunter!"

"The pi-pip-packet, sir!"

"Immediately!" boomed Prout.

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

Billy Bunter put his hand into his pocket. Price whitened. He had had a faint hope that Bunter, sent for by the Fifth Form master, would jump to the facts, and get rid of the tell-tale smokes before he came. That was expecting rather too much of Bunter, who certainly had not thought of anything of the kind.

"If Bunter says, sir—" began the wretched Price, with white lips.

"Silence, Price!"

"But, sir—"

"The packet will speak for itself!" said Mr. Prout. "Bunter, produce that packet at once!"

Bunter went through pocket after pocket elaborately. He had recovered his fat wits now.

He had no smokes about him, thanks to Harry Wharton & Co. There was no proof that he ever had had any. Bunter was bold as a lion when there was nothing to be afraid of.

"You are wasting my time, Bunter!" boomed Prout.

"I—I think I must have lost it, sir!" said Bunter.

Price breathed again.

"Nonsense!" boomed Prout. "Place it on the table this instant, Bunter!"

"I—I must have dropped it coming back," said Bunter calmly. "I say, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,443.

Price, I'm sorry I've lost your—your drawing-pins!"

Price gazed at him. Whether Bunter had really lost the packet of smokes—which seemed too good to be true—or whether he was lying, Price could not tell. He remained in dismal suspense.

"Bunter! Turn out your pockets!" commanded Mr. Prout. "I do not believe you have lost the packet."

"Oh, really, sir—"

"I believe that you are prevaricating, and that the packet contains cigarettes. I have no doubt of it."

"There's a hole in the lining of my pocket, sir!" said the fat Owl. "The packet must have slipped through it. You see, sir, these little sixpenny packets of—of drawing-pins are very small!"

"Turn out your pockets at once!"

"Oh, very well, sir!"

The Fifth Form master was, in point of fact, exceeding his authority in ordering a Remove boy to turn out his pockets. There was no doubt that Mr. Quelch, the Remove master, would have been annoyed thereby had he known. But Bunter was not disposed to argue the point with an angry beak. Besides, there was nothing of an incriminating nature in his pockets, and Bunter was quite willing to prove how very innocent he was.

He turned out his pockets on the Form-master's table.

All sorts of things came to light—a stump of pencil, sticky with toffee, a penknife with a broken blade, with an ancient bullseye adhering to it, a bit of string and a bad halfpenny. Prout surveyed that collection with a sniff of disgust. But he had to admit that Bunter had turned out nothing that could be smoked.

"Is that all?" demanded Prout.

"That's all, sir!"

"Pull out the lining of your pockets."

Bunter obligingly pulled out the lining.

The lining of each pocket showed traces of bullseyes and toffee, and there were several rents. But there were no cigarettes. Empty pockets, torn and sticky linings—merely that, and nothing more.

"Oh!" said Prout. "Um!"

"I hope, sir," said Bunter, with dignity, "that you are satisfied now! I hope you don't think I would bring smokes into the school! My Form-master would not like to hear that such a thing was suspected, sir."

"You may be silent, Bunter."

"Yes, sir; but I think, sir, that it's rather hard to be treated like this because I was so obliging to a fellow in your Form, sir! I shan't bring in any drawing-pins for a Fifth Form man again."

Prout coughed.

As there was absolutely no evidence of guilt, he had to find both Bunter and Price innocent; yet, at the same time, he did not trust either of them.

"You may go, Bunter!" he said gruffly.

"Oh, very well, sir; but I think it's very hard—"

"I have said that you may go."

"—to be suspected like this—"

"Leave my study, Bunter!"

"—and made to turn out my pockets! I think—"

"Go!" boomed Prout, with such an angry boom, that Bunter, victoriously indignant as he was, jumped out of the study without another word.

Prout turned to the black sheep of his Form. Price was breathing freely now; indeed, he had to hide a grin as his Form-master turned to him. He had no doubt now that Bunter had suspected what was coming, and had put the

packet of smokes in a safe place before turning up in Prout's study.

"Price, this matter is at an end," said Mr. Prout. "I am bound to accept your statements in the—the circumstances! I hope—I trust—that you have told me the truth. You may go."

And Price went, closing Mr. Prout's door after him very carefully before he ventured to grin.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Sauce for the Gander!

JIM WARREN, the new fellow in the Fifth Form at Greyfriars, gave a little start as a howl rang along the passage.

"Yarrah!"

"What the dickens!" exclaimed Warren.

Horace Coker grimaced.

"That sounds like Bunter!" he said. "Whoop!"

Warren was in Coker's study. Coker, who had been down on the new fellow with a tremendous down, had made friends with him. Being friendly with him, Coker was telling him about football.

As Jim Warren was a first-class man at Soccer, and as Coker played a game that might have made the angels weep, it was probable that the new man did not derive much benefit from Horace's disquisitions. But he liked rugged old Coker, if he did not admire his footer, and he listened with an air of cheery interest.

Coker could not help thinking how much more agreeable he was to talk to than Potter and Greene. Potter and Greene had faded out of the study as soon as Coker began to talk Soccer. Warren was still bearing it with manly fortitude when that howl rang along the passage from the study next door—his own study.

He rose to his feet. Possibly he was not sorry for an interruption.

"Don't go!" said Coker. "I was telling you—"

"Yoooop!"

"I think I'd better see what's up," said Warren. "That row's in my study."

"Only Bunter," said Coker. "It's all right. I dare say he's been grub-raiding, and Price or Hilton has snaffled him. I've often whopped the fat little beast for tuck-hunting in my study."

"Yow! Wow! Ow!"

Warren laughed.

"Sounds as if he's getting it hot," he said. "Hilton wouldn't lam a kid like that. I think I'll see what Price is up to! See you later, Coker."

And Warren left Coker's study and went along to Study No. 4. Emphatic howling and yowling could be heard from that apartment as he approached.

"Ow! You beast, Price! Leggo! You whop me again and I'll— Whoop! Ow! Beast! I tell you they got them and chucked them away—wow!"

Warren threw open the door and stepped in.

His face was dark. Price, who was rather a weedy specimen, was a meek man in the Fifth, where every other fellow was stronger and sturdier. But small fags often had cuffs and smacks on the head from Price, who had a vicious temper, and was as much of a bully as he dared to be. Jim Warren was not the fellow to allow that kind of thing in his own study.

A fat figure sprawled helplessly across the study table. Price, pinning Bunter down with his left hand on the



Struggling furiously, Price was held down across the table. "Now, Bunter!" snapped Warren. "Give him six, and if you don't lay them on hard, I'll jolly well boot you!" "He, he, he!" grinned Bunter. Up went the fives bat. Down it came with a terrific whack!

back of the fat Owl's neck, was wielding a fives bat with his right.

The bat came down with a whack as Warren entered, and there was another howl from Bunter.

"Yaroooh! Beast! Stoppit! Leggo! Ow!"

"You young rotter!" said Price, his thin lips snarling. "I gave you a bob to fetch that packet for me, and you're keeping it! I'll jolly well lick you till you shell it out! Now—"

"Stop that, Price!" rapped Jim Warren.

Price stared round at him, the fives bat suspended in the air. His narrow eyes glittered at Warren. He had been the new fellow's bitter enemy since his first week at Greyfriars.

"Mind your own business," he snarled.

"Let that kid go!"

"Ow! I say, Warren, make him leggo!" howled Bunter. "I say—Yaroooh!" The Owl of the Remove gave a tremendous roar as the fives bat came down with a vicious slash on his tight trousers. Price put all the more vim into it, to show Warren that he wasn't taking orders from him.

The next moment Warren strode at him, grasped him by the collar, and wrenched him away from Bunter.

"Hands off!" yelled Price, white with fury.

"Drop that bat!" snapped Warren. "I won't!"

"I'll bang your head on the door till you do."

Price dropped the bat.

Warren gave him a heave and sent him staggering across the study. He caught at the back of the armchair to

steady himself, and stood panting with rage.

Bunter rolled off the table. He stood wriggling and squirming, and gasping for breath. There was no doubt that Price had laid it on hard and heavy.

"Ow! Ow! Ow, wow!" wailed Bunter.

"Stop that row, kid," said Warren. "If you came here pilfering tuck, you asked for it—though you seem to have had rather too much. Cut!"

"Ow! I didn't!" howled Bunter. "That beast makes out that I'm keeping his cigarettes, and—"

"Shut up, you fat rotter!" hissed Price.

"Shan't!" howled Bunter. "You keep him off, Warren! Catch me fetching in smokes for you again, you beast! I wish Prout had spotted you, you cad! I'd go and give you away this very minute, only—only I should get into a row, too! You beast, I told you the fellows bagged me and got hold of the smokes and chucked them away—they'd have been in my pocket in Prout's study if they hadn't, and you'd have been booked! I told you—"

"Will you shut up?"

"No, I won't!" howled Bunter. "I'll jolly well—"

He broke off, and dodged round Warren, as Price made a movement. Jim Warren's face set hard.

"What did you come to this study for, Bunter?" he asked quietly.

"That beast Price brought me here!" howled Bunter. "I thought he was going to stand me something for getting him out of a row with Prout—"

and then he made out that I was keeping his rotten smokes."

"You've been sending Bunter for cigarettes, Price?"

"Find out!" snarled Price.

"I think I've found out!" said Warren. "I remember now Bunter asking me, before tea in the quad, if I'd seen you. So he had smokes for you."

"And old Prout found out somehow," gasped Bunter. "And if I'd still had them on me in his study—"

"That will do!" said Warren. His face grew grimmer. Whether Bunter was pilfering Price's smokes, as Price evidently suspected, or what had happened to them, he did not know. He looked from one to the other. "If you've still got that muck, Bunter, you'd better chuck it away."

"I haven't! I tell you the fellows—"

"Take that fives bat!"

"Eh? What for?"

"Because I tell you!" rapped Warren.

"Oh, all right!" Billy Bunter picked up the bat.

"Now get across the table, Price."

"What!" yelled Price.

"You've been battling Bunter! Now Bunter's going to bat you," said Jim Warren coolly. "Sauce for the gander, you know."

"He, he, he!" from Bunter. His eyes gleamed behind his spectacles.

Price stared at Warren.

"You fool! You rotter! Do you fancy—"

"Exactly! You've battled Bunter for pinching your smokes, or losing them, or whatever he's done! Bunter's going

to bat you for sending him to fetch them! Get to it!"

Price made a rush for the door.

Warren interposed quickly, grasping him with both hands in a sinewy grip that was much too much for the weedy slacker of the Fifth.

"Let go!" screamed Price, struggling furiously, mad with rage. "You rotter—you rotten impostor—you cheating rascal in a false name!"

Warren, without speaking, swung Price across the table. Still struggling frantically, Price was held there.

"Now, Bunter!"

"He, he, he!"

"Six!" said Warren. "And if you don't lay them on hard, I'll jolly well boot you!"

"He, he, he! You leave it to me!" grinned Bunter.

Up went the bat. Down it came with a terrific whack!

Bunter was laying it on hard. Price had given him about a dozen, and the fat Owl, being limited to six, put all his beef into the six!

Whack, whack, whack!

Price struggled madly. But Warren's grasp was like a vice, and he was pinned face down on the table, as Bunter had been.

Whack, whack!

"That will do!" said Warren. "Cut!"

"I say, I'll give him a few more, if you like!" said Bunter. "What about a dozen?"

"Cut!" repeated Warren.

"Well, just one more!" urged Bunter. Warren made a motion with his foot—and Bunter jumped away. Reluctantly, he threw down the fives bat and left the study.

Price, released, rolled off the table.

He stood panting, breathless, almost speechless with rage. His eyes glittered like a snake's at Warren.

"You—you—you—" he stammered. "You bully—you—you—"

"I like that!" Warren laughed. "You were bullying that fat frowster—after getting him to break the rules of the school! You've got some of the same! If you're not satisfied, what about a turn with the gloves on?"

"Wait a bit—just wait!" panted Price. "By gad, I'll show you up—that fool Coker has let you off, but I won't let you off—I'll show you up in your true colours here, you spoofer—impostor—liar!"

Warren shrugged his shoulders, and walked out of the study. Price was left wriggling from his whopping, red with rage and humiliation, with bitter rage and rancour running riot in his breast.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

HARRY WHARTON stared in at the door of Study No. 1. Coming up to his study, a day or two later, for an old footer to punt about, he was surprised to see a Fifth Form man sitting in the armchair, evidently waiting.

It was Price of the Fifth; a most unusual and unexpected visitor in a Remove study. It was not uncommon for Coker of the Fifth to barge in, looking for trouble, but Price was not a trouble-bunter. What the fellow wanted was a mystery to Wharton. It was a half-holiday, and he did not want to waste time on Price.

Price gave him a nod as he appeared in the doorway.

"I came up to speak to you, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,443.

Wharton," he said very civilly. "Got a few minutes to spare?"

That was unusually polite from a Fifth Form senior to a Lower Fourth junior. Wharton hesitated. He did not like Price—in fact, he disliked him very much. But he nodded and came into the study.

"Shut the door," said Price.

"Oh, rot!" said Harry restively.

"If you've got anything to say to me, Price, you can say it for all the Remove to hear, so far as I care."

"It's about Warren."

Wharton started.

"I've nothing to say about Warren!" he said curtly. "If you've come up here to talk about Warren, you'd better hook it, Price."

"You had something to say about Warren a week or two ago," sneered Price. "I happened to be in the Cloisters, and heard you talking to him."

Wharton gave him a look of cool contempt. The strange story of Jim Warren, the new man of the Fifth, had been talked up and down the school, and it was known that Price had set it going. Wharton had guessed already that Price had obtained the information by eavesdropping.

"I'd like to know what sort of a young rotter you call yourself, keeping secrets for a fellow who has come to this school in a false name!" said Price. "I heard you say to him that you'd seen James Warren, the son of Sir Arthur Warren, in the holidays, and that he wasn't the man!"

"You spying cad!" said Harry.

"Warren Croft is near Wharton Lodge, and you know the real James Warren by sight, and as soon as you saw that fellow, you knew that he was not James Warren!" went on Price. "He isn't even like him to look at; I heard you say so. You described James Warren as a big, overbearing, hulking brute—so far as I remember your words. Well, this fellow pretends that he is Warren, son of Sir Arthur, and you know that he isn't!"

Wharton made no answer to that.

"Knowing what you do, it's your duty to go to your headmaster and show the fellow up!" said Price.

Wharton's lip curled.

"You're the sort of fellow to teach a chap his duty!" he said contemptuously. "You'd have been sacked half a dozen times over if the Head knew what sort of a rotter you are!"

"That's neither here nor there," said Price coolly. "I heard you ask Warren to give you his word that there was no wrong done. He gave it, and you took it. Well, are you really fool enough to trust the word of a fellow who is passing under a false name?"

"That's my concern, not yours!"

"It's your duty—"

"Oh, shut up!" said Wharton, in disgust. "A fellow like you talking about duty makes me sick!"

Price's eyes glinted.

"Then you're going to keep that rotter's secret?"

"I'm not going to discuss it with you!" said Harry curtly. "Get out of my study, Price! You're not wanted here!"

"I'm giving you a chance to do the right thing," said Price. "Where would you stand if I went to the Head and told him what I heard?"

"Go and do it, if you like!" answered Harry. "I suppose you're afraid to, or you'd have done it already!"

"You'd be called on to state what you know!"

"I don't suppose the Head would listen to you," said Harry. "But if he

sent for me I should tell him what I believe—that Warren is as straight and decent as any man at Greyfriars."

"Under a false name!" sneered Price.

"If you accuse him, it's for you to prove that he's under a false name!" said Harry Wharton. "All I can say is what I know—that a fellow I saw only once—a bullying brute of a fellow—told me that he was James Warren, and that he's nothing like this chap in looks. My friends believe that I was taken in—that that lout was pulling my leg."

"But you don't?" sneered Price.

"I don't quite know what to believe! But I believe that Warren is straight, whether his name's Warren or not."

Price gave him an evil, vicious look. He knew that Wharton believed that the real James Warren was not at Greyfriars School, though he was puzzled and dubious about the mysterious affair. His own hatred of Warren convinced him that the fellow was an impostor.

And yet he dared not act in the matter. He dared not go to the Head, as Wharton easily guessed.

If it turned out, after all, that Wharton was mistaken, as might very easily be the case—if this Warren really was the son of Sir Arthur Warren, of Warren Croft—what would be his position, after having made so grave an accusation?

He dared not take the risk.

He stood in savage silence, and Wharton, looking at him, gave a scornful laugh.

"No good coming to this study for a catspaw, Price!" he said. "You put up that fathead Coker to get after Warren; but they've made friends now, and now you're looking for another catspaw! You'll have to look farther!"

"You young cad!" snarled Price. "You know the fellow is a spoofer, and I know it; but he might wriggle out of it, with the real James Warren got off the scene somehow, and the old man away in China! But you know as well as I do—"

"I know you're not fit to black Warren's boots!" said Harry. "Don't come to this study again, Price, and get out of it now!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came a roar from the Remove staircase. "You coming with that footer, fathead?"

Bob Cherry came along the passage and looked in. He stared at Price.

"Oh! Didn't know you had a distinguished visitor!" he said.

"That cad has butted in to pump me about Warren," said Harry. "He can't stand a decent chap in his study!"

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"I've heard that Hilton plays footer with Warren now instead of rotting about with Price," he remarked. "Why don't you do the same, Pricey? You're a putrid outsider, but it's never too late to mend!"

Price's eyes glittered.

"You know as much as Wharton about that impostor!" he said. "You know that he's not the fellow he makes himself out to be!"

"Hardly," said Bob. "I believe he's all right, and that Wharton's leg was pulled by some funny merchant. I've told a dozen fellows so."

"Now chuck it, Price!" said Harry. "You can see the door, I suppose?"

"You're a young rascal, backing up another rascal!" snarled Price. "Is Warren paying you to keep it dark?"

Wharton set his lips.

"That's enough!" he said. "Get out of my study! Bob, lend me a hand with that Fifth Form cad!"

"Pleased!" grinned Bob.

Wharton stepped towards the unwelcome visitor. Price, with a sudden flash of savage temper, struck at him, and the junior, getting the blow unexpectedly, staggered back against the study table.

"Oh!" he gasped.
Price was about to follow up the blow with another, when Bob Cherry jumped in. A hefty drive from Bob landed on Price's chest, and he went backwards as if a bullet had bowled him over.

There was a crash as he landed on the floor of Study No. 1.

"Ooohoo!" gasped Price.
Bob, grinning, pounced on him and grabbed his ankles. Price's legs were jerked into the air. Sprawling on his back, he struggled to release them, but Bob had them fast.

"Come along!" said Bob. "Take one of his hoofs, Wharton!"

Harry Wharton, laughing, grasped one of the Fifth Former's ankles, leaving the other to Bob. Pulling Price's legs like the shafts of a cart, they walked out of Study No. 1, and Price trailed after them on his back, yelling with rage.

There was a roar in the Remove passage as half a dozen fellows stared at the procession coming out of the doorway of Study No. 1.

"Oh, my hat! What's that game?" yelled the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows— He, he, he!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"Will you let me go?" shrieked Price.

He was wishing by that time that he had not called in at Study No. 1 in the Remove in search of a catspaw.

"Let you go!" repeated Bob. "My dear man, we'll not only let you go—we're making you go! You're going all right!"

And Price went, trailing down the passage on his back. Frank Nugent had found a piece of card, and hastily written on it the words: "Returned without thanks!" The card was hung down Price's back, and Harry and Bob dragged him across the landing to the Fifth Form passage.

There the cheery Removites left him, dusty and dishevelled, breathless and gasping, and cleared off in a chuckling crowd to punt a footer about in the quad.

Priest picked himself up, and limped up the passage to his study. The door opened as he reached it, and Hilton and Warren came out. They stared at the crimson and dusty Price in amazement.

"Hallo! What's up?" asked Hilton.
Price did not answer. He limped into his study, and slammed the door in the surprised faces of his study-mates.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Startling Meeting!

HARRY WHARTON, sitting on a stile in Friardale Lane, wrinkled his brows in thought. He had left his friends, and strolled out of the school by himself, with a worry on his mind.

He had been angry and annoyed with Price and with what he had said in Study No. 1, knowing quite well that Price was only actuated by envy and malice and hatred of Warren. But some of Price's words lingered in his mind, all the same. He had said that the real Warren had been got off the scene somehow while his father was in China. Price evidently believed that there had been foul play.

Wharton could not believe so, thinking of Warren as he did. And yet—and yet Price had only put into words what had lingered as a dark doubt at the back of his own mind. The new man in the Fifth certainly was not the old baronet's son, and the real James Warren must be somewhere. Where—and why?

His father was in China, and could know nothing of what was going on. But the baronet's younger brother, Captain Warren, was at Warren Croft.

He must have been deceived, somehow. It had been left to him to see James Warren off to school for the new term at Greyfriars. Wharton had observed that there was no love lost between Captain Bernard Warren and his nephew James. But surely he could not have allowed anything to happen to the boy, from careless indifference—hulking, unpleasant brute, as James undoubtedly was.

Wharton had rather liked the captain—a man who had been through the War from start to finish, and had brought home a "game" leg from the Somme—and who was only too plainly hard-up, probably partly dependent on his wealthy elder brother.

He must surely know what had happened to James. Nothing lawless, therefore, could have happened.

And yet—
The captain of the Remove loathed and despised Price, and yet he could not help worrying over what the cad of the Fifth had said. Had he, after all, done right in accepting Warren's word that there had been no wrongdoing?

The sound of footsteps in the lane caused Harry to look up, and he started a little as he saw Warren and Hilton coming along together, walking towards the village.

Hilton of the Fifth did not take notice of the junior sitting on the stile, but Warren gave him a smile and a nod.

Looking at his handsome, pleasant, healthy face, Wharton felt a weight roll from his troubled mind. Whatever might be the explanation of the strange mystery, this fellow had done no wrong. Wharton simply could not believe that he had.

Jim Warren's glance grew keen as he read the junior's face. He dropped behind his companion, and stopped to speak to Wharton.

"About me?" he asked, with a smile.

Harry coloured.

"W-what?" he stammered.
"You're fearfully deep in thought about something," said Jim. "I hope you're not bothering about my affairs again."

Wharton did not answer. Jim Warren had read his thoughts.

"Don't be a young ass!" said Warren quietly. "That day we talked in the Cloisters, I gave you my word that it was all right, and you took it. Let it go at that, and think no more about it."

"Only it turns out that Price was listening then!" muttered Harry. "You know that's how it got out."

"Yes. It seems that it's done no harm." Warren smiled. "Coker took it up, and did a song and dance on the subject; but he's made friends with me now, and he's ready to punch anybody's head for saying what he was saying himself last week. And nobody else took it seriously."

Harry Wharton laughed.
"That's Coker all over," he said. "But—"

"But what?"

"Oh! Nothing! But—"
"Don't you be a young ass!" said Jim Warren. "Chuck the whole thing out of your mind, and—"

He broke off suddenly.
There was a thudding of hoofs on the footpath in the meadow behind the hedge. A horseman was riding across the field towards the stile.

As Harry Wharton was sitting on the stile facing the lane, he, naturally, saw nothing of the horseman coming up behind him. But Jim Warren, standing facing him, was facing the field, and he saw the horseman—and his voice suddenly broke off, and a startled look came over his face. The colour faded out of his cheeks.

Wharton looked at him, amazed.

For an instant Warren stared past the junior on the stile, with a fixed, tense gaze; then he swiftly turned and ran after Hilton, who was already at some distance.

Wharton stared in amazement after the senior, as he disappeared down the winding lane towards Friardale. His voice floated back over the hedges as he rejoined his companion.

"Buck up, Hilton, old bean! This isn't a funeral march, you know."

"What's the hurry?" came Hilton's drawl.

"Oh, come on!"

Warren, for some reason, was evidently in a hurry to be gone. Wharton, in his astonishment, sat staring, unheeding the hoofbeats in the meadow, which were drawing nearer to the stile on which he sat.

Thud, thud, thud! came the hoofs along the path across the meadow, leading to the stile where Wharton sat. As there was no gate, only a stile, it did not occur to Wharton that the rider intended to get out of the field that way. So far as he gave any attention to the rider, he supposed that he was a farmer riding over his land.

(Continued on next page.)



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But he gave him little or no heed, in his wonder at Jim Warren's strange action, and did not look round.

There came a jingle of bridle and stirrups close behind him; a harsh and disagreeable voice shouted:

"Here! Get out of the way, you young fool! Do you want to be knocked off that stile? Get out of the way, confound you!"

Harry Wharton jumped.

He knew that voice.

He spun round on the stile so quickly that he almost fell off it.

His eyes almost bulged from his head as he stared at the rider—a fellow of about sixteen, in riding-clothes mounted on a handsome steed. One glance at the face, with its square jaw, its pug nose, and its small, sharp eyes set close together, was enough.

It was the hulking bully with whom he and Hurree Singh had scrapped on the last day of the holidays at Wharton Lodge—the bully who had ducked him at Warren Croft—in a word, it was James Warren, the son of Sir Arthur, of whom he had been thinking as he sat on the stile.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Tit for Tat!

"JAMES WARREN!"

Harry Wharton gasped the name.

This was the real James—as unlike Jim, in looks, as chalk was unlike cheese. Except for a certain squareness in Jim's chin, there was no resemblance whatsoever between the two. In looks, voice, manners, build, in almost everything, they were utterly unlike. Nobody who had seen one could have supposed that he was the other.

At James' old school, Oakshott, Jim could never have carried on his strange game. It was only because James was booked for a new school, where he had never been seen before, that it had been possible.

"James Warren!" repeated Wharton, like a fellow in a dream.

The horseman, pulling in his mount, stared at him. He was precisely the same bullying, aggressive fellow Wharton had seen in the holidays. His mode of address to a boy he had taken for a stranger, showed that his manners had not improved.

But as he stared at Wharton, recognition dawned in James' unpleasant face.

"Oh!" he ejaculated. "You!"

"Y-you!" stuttered Harry.

"You're the cub I ducked in the lake at my father's place!" said the rider. "What's your name—Wharton, isn't it? So I've run into you again, you cheeky young cub!"

Wharton wondered, for a moment, whether James had spotted Warren of the Fifth talking to him at the stile.

But it did not seem so.

Jim had seen the horseman coming across the field, and had cleared promptly. Wharton knew now that it was the sight of James that had caused Warren of the Fifth to bolt in that sudden and surprising way, and urge Hilton to haste.

Clearly he had recognised the fellow whose name he bore at Greyfriars, and did not want to meet him.

"Can't you speak, you young rotter?" went on James. "You're young Wharton—the nephew of that old fool of a colonel. My father wanted me to meet you in the hols, and I jolly well wouldn't!"

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He rode his horse closer to the stile. "The pater wanted us to meet, because I was going to Greyfriars, and you're a Greyfriars kid," he said. "I suppose you're at school now?"

Wharton nodded.

"Is Greyfriars School anywhere near here?" asked James. "I know it's in Kent, but I don't know just where. If you're at school, it can't be far away."

"It's not far away," said Harry.

The fellow on the horse laughed, showing a set of teeth dark and discoloured by incessant cigarettes. He seemed amused by the discovery that he was in the vicinity of Greyfriars.

It was clear, from what James said, that he was not coming to the school.

"Well, what do you mean by that cackle?" asked Harry Wharton quietly.

"Never mind what I mean; no business of yours," said James rudely. "Fancy happening on the place like this!" He chuckled again. "But I'm glad to see you, young Wharton!"

"Are you?" said Harry.

"Yes; and I'm sorry your rigger friend is not with you. I'd like to give him some of the same."

And James, leaning over towards the stile from his saddle, made a slash at Harry with his riding-whip.

But the blow did not land. Wharton was watching the young rascal warily, prepared for trouble.

He leaped away from the stile into the lane, out of reach of the lashing whip as it came down with a vicious slash.

Meeting with no resistance the whip swept the empty air, and crashed on the stile, and James, losing his balance, pitched almost out of the saddle. He lost his stirrups, and scrambled wildly to keep his seat.

It was a good horse; but not a good rider. The clumsy, hulking fellow dragged on the reins till his horse squealed, and as the animal reared, gave it a savage cut with the whip.

He would have done more wisely to recover his stirrups before lashing the horse. It was an unthinking cruel act that brought its own punishment swiftly.

The startled horse gave a bound, and James went headlong over the tossing tail.

There was a heavy thud as he landed on his back in the grass, his riding-breeches and boots elevated into the air.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Wharton.

The horse dashed away across the field, with dangling stirrups and loose rein.

James, collapsing in the grass, groaned.

Wharton approached the stile.

"Are you hurt?" he called.

James groaned again.

Wharton's face became serious at once. The thick grass had softened the fall; but James had thudded hard. And unpleasant brute as James was, the Greyfriars junior was ready to help him if he was hurt. And that groan sounded like it.

Harry Wharton clambered quickly over the stile, and ran to the fallen bully. The horse had stopped on the farther side of the field.

Wharton reached the hulking figure sprawling in the grass, and bent over it. He was completely taken by surprise when James' left hand shot up, and grabbed his collar.

"Now I've got you, you cub!" panted James.

He leaped to his feet, and the riding-whip in his right hand sang through the air.

Evidently James was not injured, though no doubt that fall had hurt him,

and given a sharper edge to his bad temper.

"You rotten cur!" yelled Wharton, as he realised that the treacherous young rascal had only been tricking him into reach.

Lash! came the whip, and Wharton barely dodged it. His clenched fist came up with all his strength in the blow, catching James on the point of his square chin.

"Urrgh!" spluttered James, as he staggered back from that hefty uppercut.

And Wharton wrenched himself loose at the same moment, and sprang away.

The next instant James was springing after him, crimson with rage, and slashing wildly with the whip.

Harry Wharton leaped and dodged.

He was no match for a fellow so much bigger and heavier than himself. And James had the whip, which he was evidently going to use with utter recklessness.

Wharton made a run at the stile to jump it; but he had no time. He had to turn and cut across the field.

After him charged James, with blazing eyes and slashing whip.

Wharton panted.

It went deeply and sorely against the grain to run from the bully; but the alternative was a beating from the riding-whip, and a savage beating at that. He had to dodge the riding-whip.

But it was not easy to dodge.

Across the field was the gate by which James had ridden in; but it was closed. Near it the horse was dropping its head to graze.

A sudden inspiration flashed into Wharton's mind. The horse lifted its head and shied away as he ran up. But he caught the dangling reins. Harry Wharton was a good rider and used to horses, and fond of them. He was in James' saddle with a single leap.

The next moment he was riding the horse, with James panting behind, yelling with fury.

"Get off my horse!" yelled James.

Harry Wharton laughed. He gathered up the reins, and rode the horse round the field, with James in frantic pursuit.

"Give me my horse!" shrieked James.

"Come and get him!" called back Harry, over his shoulder.

"I'll cut the skin off your back!"

"Go it!"

James chased desperately after him. James was not in good condition, and though the October day was cold, he was soon streaming with perspiration. He stopped at last, gasping and panting, puffing and blowing.

Wharton, laughing, pulled in the horse.

He sat in the saddle; a dozen yards from James, watching him. The advantage was with the Greyfriars junior now, and Wharton was rather enjoying the entertainment.

James, panting, moved on towards him. Wharton sat tight. Closer and closer came James, till he was almost near enough for a spring to seize the horse's head.

Then Wharton gave the reins a shake again, and dashed away across the field. His laugh rang back.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

James put on a desperate spurt for a minute. Then, completely winded, he halted again, puffing and blowing, and dashing the trickling perspiration from his brow.

Wharton looked round at him, laughing.

"Trying again?" he called out. James could only pant and gasp.



As Warren stood talking to Wharton there was a sudden thudding of hoofs in the meadow beyond. Next moment the horseman came into view, and the colour faded out of Warren's cheeks as he recognised the fellow whose name he bore at Greyfriars!

"I'll leave your gee-gee in the next field!" called out Harry. "Sorry I can't stay longer."

"Give him to me!" shrieked James. "You'll have to walk a mile to get him! Good-bye!"

"I—I'll—"

Wharton did not remain to listen to James' catalogue of threats. He cantered away across the meadow, and jumped a hedge into the next field. James, gasping for breath, followed at a walk.

He was far out of sight behind when Wharton dismounted on the farther side of an extensive field, and let the horse run loose. James could have the pleasure of catching him in a fifty-acre field—and the task was likely to keep James occupied for quite a considerable time.

With a smiling face Harry Wharton squeezed through a hedge into Friar-dale Lane, and walked back to Greyfriars.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Mysterious!

BILLY BUNTER side-stepped. His action was swift.

It did not resemble, as usual, the movement of a very aged and fatigued snail. Bunter, on occasion, could be rapid.

This was such an occasion.

Billy Bunter was coming down the Fifth Form passage. Generally fellows entered the study passage from the landing end, passing the games-study at the corner. But Billy Bunter had his own reasons for entering it by the back staircase at the lower end, having, in point of fact, felonious designs on certain comestibles in Horace Coker's study cupboard.

He had not reached Coker's study, but was passing the doorway of Study No. 4, which was wide open, when he sighted a fellow turning the corner from the landing, and coming up the passage from that direction.

It was Price of the Fifth.

A few moments, and Price would have seen him, face to face. But one moment was enough for Bunter. With wonderful presence of mind he side-stepped into the open doorway he was passing.

So swift was Bunter's action that he had vanished from the passage, before Price's eyes had a chance of falling on him. Price hadn't finished turning the corner when Bunter did the vanishing trick.

"Oh crikey!" breathed Bunter.

In the Fifth Form quarters, far from help, Bunter did not want to meet Stephen Price.

It was only too probable that, if he did, the whopping interrupted by Jim Warren a few days ago would be resumed.

Warren was out of gates now, with Hilton; and there would have been no rescue for Bunter this time.

Hence his prompt and masterly retreat from view.

But, though the fat Owl of the Remove had acted with great presence of mind, he realised the next minute that he had rather jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire.

For it was Price's study into which he had side-stepped.

He had had no choice, certainly. It was sheer luck that he had been passing an open doorway at all, when he spotted Price's sharp nose coming round the corner from the landing.

But it was rather unlucky; for there

was little doubt that Price, coming up the passage, was coming to his study.

Caught in that apartment, Bunter would be worse off than ever. It was some days since Price had pitched him across the table and dusted his tight trousers with the fives bat. But Bunter had not forgotten that painful experience. Neither, it was certain, had Price forgotten the whopping Bunter had given him in return, under Warren's eye.

The fat Owl, fortunately, had time to act. He could not leave the study again without walking right under Price's nose. He was cornered—but not yet caught. He dived under the table.

Squatted there, he hoped for the best. It was rather a large table, and Bunter was not in view, unless a fellow stooped to look under. Which a fellow was not likely to do without reason. Bunter could only hope that Price would not drop something, and stoop to pick it up.

A few moments later the black sheep of the Fifth came in.

He shut the door after him; and, rather to Bunter's surprise, turned the key in the lock.

Bunter's podgy heart sank.

If he was discovered now! With the door locked, there was absolutely no chance of making a bolt for it.

Still, the fact that Price locked the door indicated that he was completely unconscious of anyone's presence in the study. That was a reassuring circumstance.

Bunter was not surprised to hear the scratch of a match, and to smell the scent of a cigarette. The locking of the

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The Boy with a Borrowed Name!



(Continued from page 13.)

door preceded a smoke! Bunter had already guessed that one.

He hoped that Price, when he had had his smoke, would clear. If the beast was going to stay there, it was going to be very uncomfortable for Bunter.

Then a sudden terror smote him as he watched the motions of Price's legs. If the beast sprawled in the armchair to smoke his cigarette, he would have a view of the fat figure squatted under the table. And surely he would select the armchair.

But, to Bunter's surprise and relief, he did not. He did not, in fact, sit down at all. Bunter caught his muttering voice:

"Lots of time! The old fool won't be here yet!"

What that meant was a mystery to Bunter.

He could guess that the complimentary expression used by Price referred to his Form-master, Mr. Prout. But if Mr. Prout was coming to the study, it was amazing for Price to be smoking here, leaving an unmistakable scent of tobacco. Certainly, that scent would linger in the room, especially as the window was shut.

But though Price had muttered that there was "lots of time," he did not lose any. With the cigarette in his mouth, puffing out smoke thickly as if he wanted to produce as much as possible in the shortest space of time, Price stepped to a blazer that was hanging on a hook on the door.

He proceeded to fumble with that blazer.

His back was to Bunter; and the fat Owl, extremely curious to know what the dickens Price was up to, ventured to peer out.

He barely repressed a squeal of astonishment.

Price had a packet of cigarettes in his left hand. With his right, he was taking cigarettes from it and dropping them, loose, into the pockets of the blazer.

Having emptied the packet, he turned—and Billy Bunter popped back, like a tortoise into its shell.

Price threw the empty cardboard packet into the grate, where the fire had gone out, and it dropped on the cinders.

Then he unlocked the door and left the study, closing the door after him.

Billy Bunter was left squatting under the table, a fat image of astonishment.

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Bunter.

He did not linger there. Price was gone—and, according to his muttered words, somebody was coming there, probably soon.

Obviously, it was time for Bunter to get moving. And he got moving—quickly.

He crossed to the door and stood there, listening, to make sure that

Price was clear of the spot. A fat grin came over his podgy visage.

Why Price had come to the study, locked the door, smoked a single cigarette, and crammed the rest into the pockets of a blazer, Bunter could not begin to understand. It seemed an absolutely reckless proceeding, if he was really expecting Prout to come there. It did not occur to Bunter's fat brain that it was not Price's own blazer that was hanging on the door!

But it did occur to that fat brain that there were cigarettes to be had for the trouble of bagging them.

Price had whopped him in that study for having bagged cigarettes which, in fact, he had not bagged. Bagging this lot seemed a jolly good way of paying Price out!

While he listened with both fat ears, Bunter groped in the pockets of the blazer, collected all the cigarettes that Price had parked there, and transferred them to his own pockets.

Then he opened the door a few inches and peered out.

Bunter whipped out of Study No. 4. Three seconds later he had whipped into Coker's study and shut the door.

Coker and Potter and Greene had gone out—watched as they went by the fat Owl. No doubt they were teaing out, as they had started before tea-time—one of Coker's lavish spreads at the luncheon in Courtfield, most likely. Coker's study cupboard was at Bunter's mercy—and Bunter was not merciful on such occasions!

Coker's latest hamper from his Aunt Judy was not yet exhausted—and Billy Bunter gloated as he blinked into the study cupboard through his big spectacles. He was soon busy.

And he was so busy that he hardly heard, and certainly did not heed, an elephantine tread that came up the passage from the direction of the stairs. That elephantine tread passed Coker's study, and went on to Warren's—and turned in there. Bunter, unheeding, gobbled!

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Pulling Prout's Leg!

MR. PROUT sniffed.

He snorted.

He frowned portentously.

The moment the Fifth Form master rolled into Study No. 4 he was struck by the scent of tobacco smoke.

That scent was unmistakable.

"Upon my word!" ejaculated Mr. Prout.

He looked round the study, sniffing. His eyes fell on an empty cigarette-packet lying on the dead cinders in the grate. His frown intensified.

For a long minute Prout stood there, staring, sniffing, and frowning. Then he stepped to the door, and looked out into the passage. No one was in sight—hardly any of the Fifth were indoors, for it was a half-holiday, and a fine October afternoon.

Prout glanced up and down the passage impatiently, and as he did so, the door of the games-study at the end opened, and Price of the Fifth came out.

Price had a book in his hand, his finger marking the place. He moved towards the stairs, when Prout's voice boomed:

"Price!"

The black sheep of the Fifth gave a start, as if in surprise, and looked up the passage. Seeing his Form-master, he came hurrying up.

"Yes, sir! Did you call me?" he asked.

Mr. Prout could not help seeing the volume in his hand. It was the book of algebra that was used in the Fifth. As Price was a slacker of the first water, it was rather surprising to see him with a volume of algebra, on a half-holiday. But the fact that he had the book in his hand, marking the place with his finger, looked as if he had been at work on some problem therein.

Prout looked at him very searchingly. Prout was not suspicious, and he was not very observant; but had Price known that he was coming up to the studies, he would have suspected that Price had got this studious aspect up, all ready to meet his eyes.

But Price, of course, could not have known. Apparently he had been in the games-study by himself, mugging up algebra, which was very meritorious of Price, on a half-holiday, when he might have been enjoying his leisure, like other fellows.

Nobody knew that Prout was coming up to the studies.

It was a surprise visit.

In the affair of that mysterious packet—whether of cigarettes or drawing-pins—that Bunter had "lost," Mr. Prout had had to give Price the benefit of the doubt. But he had been far from satisfied.

He had resolved to keep an eye on Price.

Some fellow smoked in Study No. 4 in the Fifth! He knew that, and he believed that it was Stephen Price. But he wanted to know. He had complete faith in Jim Warren; but he was not quite sure about Hilton, and he was very doubtful indeed about Price.

Hence this surprise visit to the study.

He had stopped Blundell, his head boy, as he was going out, to ask him where the three fellows of Study No. 4 were.

Blundell's reply was that Warren had gone out with Hilton, and that he didn't know where Price was.

The captain of the Fifth did not add that he didn't care, either. He only thought that Blundell had no use for a fellow like Price, who never played games, and who smoked and slacked and "rotted" about generally.

Mr. Prout had, of course, no eyes in the top of his head! Had he been thus blessed he might have noticed Price of the Fifth looking over the banisters while he was speaking to Blundell below.

Having only eyes in the usual place, Mr. Prout saw nothing of what was over his majestic head, and remained in blissful ignorance of the fact that Price heard every word he had said to Blundell.

He asked that youth if he was sure that he did not know where Price was and whether he was in his study.

Blundell thought it very probable that Price was in his study, taking advantage of Warren's absence to have a smoke; but he was not likely to tell his Form-master so.

He repeated that he didn't know anything about Price, and got away. And Price vanished from the landing above.

Once or twice, since the incident of the "lost" packet, Prout had dropped into Study No. 4 with a sniffing, suspicious nose.

Price had not the slightest doubt, after what he had said to Blundell, that he was going to drop in again.

Hence Price's mysterious and hurried proceedings, which Bunter had witnessed from under the table in Study No. 4.

Price had been only one minute in that study. But it was a matter of

many minutes for Mr. Prout to transport his weight up long staircases. Price had had lots of time.

Now he faced his Form-master with a perfectly innocent face and algebra in his hand, and Mr. Prout felt a little remorseful.

He had come up to Study No. 4 in the Fifth to catch that study by surprise if the suspected fellow was smoking there.

Instead of which he found him gurgling up algebra.

But for the fact that he had scented smoke in the study Prout would have dropped the matter there and then.

But someone had been smoking in the study. That was a certainty. If it was not Price it was either Hilton or Warren.

Prout had to be just. "You have been in the games-study, Price?" he asked.

"Yes, sir!"

"For how long?"

Price simulated surprise at the question.

"I don't know, sir—about an hour, I think! I've been rather skewed over a problem—Mr. Lascelles isn't very pleased with my algebra, and I've been trying to mug it up. I was going down to ask him if he'd give me a little help when you called me."

"You have not been in your own study, Price?"

"No, sir."

"Someone has been smoking there, Price."

"I—I hope not, sir—"

"It is futile to hope not, Price, when such is the fact!" said Mr. Prout testily. "Step into the study, and you will be able to smell the smoke of cigarettes."

Price stepped into the study and sniffed. Evidently the hope he had expressed was unfounded. Someone certainly had been smoking there.

"I can only say, sir, that it was not I," said Price calmly, "and I should be very much surprised if it were Hilton."

"That amounts to stating that it was Warren!"

"I should not like to say anything of the kind, sir. I am sure you would not wish me to give information against anyone."

"Certainly not!" boomed Prout. "Most certainly not! I should regard such an action with contempt!"

He stared round the study angrily. Price or Hilton or Warren had been smoking there—that was a certainty. Hilton had gone out of gates—Price was in the House, but had been harmlessly and meritoriously occupied at a distance. Prout had come there to make a discovery, if there was one to be made. He had made one—but it got him no "forrarder," so to speak.

Price stood silent and respectful.

There was only one course for Mr. Prout to take, as Price was well aware. He could not leave the matter where it was.

He had to investigate.

In a very angry mood, for he intensely disliked such a task, Mr. Prout made up his mind to the inevitable.

"I shall search this study, Price!" he barked.

"Will you, sir?"

"Certainly I shall! I must ascertain which boy in this study is deliberately deceiving me. The task is repugnant—most repugnant! But I shall do it most thoroughly, and I have no doubt that I shall discover evidence to point out the culprit!"

Price had no doubt of that, either—though he doubted very much whether Mr. Prout would discover evidence to condemn the real culprit!

"Remain here, Price!"

(Continued on next page.)

GREYFRIARS INTERVIEWS

Our long-haired poet is still going great guns.
This week's brilliant verses are written around

WILLIAM GREENE,

Coker's study-mate in the Fifth Form.

(1)

Now William Greene is a nice old bean,
A decent Fifth Form joker;
But he lives, you know, in a state of woe,
His study-mate is Coker!
He pants and burns and longs and yearns
To brain him with a poker!

(2)

A studious sort who's fond of sport
Is Greene, a decent fellow;
He stops his ears each time he hears
Old Coker's fearsome bellow,
And hopes he'll take a Cough-Cure
Cake
To make his voice more mellow.

(3)

Year in, year out old Coker's shout
Is never out of fashion.
Each day, each week you hear him speak
In tones of frightful passion.
Who would not hate a study-mate
Who's like the bull of Bashan?

(4)

When Potter's snorts and Greene's retorts
Have failed to make him quiet,
Greene says: "It's best for interest
To read instead of riot!"
That's common sense at all events,
And Coker can't deny it!

(5)

I took the road to Greene's abode
Last Monday, on my visit;
I tapped his oak, and then he spoke,
"Come in," he said. "Who is it?"
So in I went with great content,
Which soon became exquisite.



(6)

To my delight Greene looked a sight,
A vision of disaster;
His nose was red, his poor old head
Was wrapped in sticking-plaster.
If he had fought a fight, I thought,
He must have met his master.

(7)

"Ha, ha!" I yelled, as I beheld
That vision grim and gruesome;
"I say, old chap, your latest scrap
Has bent and battered you some!
You must pick out some fearful lout
To fight—you sure do choose 'em!"

(8)

"You cackling beast!" he said—at least
He tried to say, but mumbled.
I went quite near, and felt no fear:
The mighty man was humbled!
"Did Coker do all that to you?"
I asked, and "Yes," he rumbled.

(9)

"Gee whizz!" I scoffed. "You must be soft
To let him put you through it!
I want with you an interview!"
He groaned and said: "I knew it!"
I asked him: "Can you tell a man
Just how he came to do it?"

(10)



He answered: "Yes," and I confess
He very soon got busy.
"Now first," he said, "he punched my head
Like this—" It knocked me dizzy!
"Yaroor!" I roared as I was floored.
(Greene's not a sportsman, is he?)



(11)

"And, after that," said Greene, "my hat!
He really sent me splaining.
Like this, old scout!" He knocked me out!
I felt he wanted skinning.
With no remorse he said: "Of course,
That's only the beginning!"

(12)

"He knocked me flat," said Greene, "like that—"
"Yaroor!" My optic copped it.
"And then a blow quite hard—like so—"
My nasal organ stopped it!
"And then a whack—Here, whoa!
Come back!"
What hopes! This child had hopped it!

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

And Price remained, while Mr. Prout, with frowning majestic brow, proceeded to make a careful and meticulous search of the study.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Vanished!

"GOING back?" said Hilton. "Yes—if you don't mind!" Hilton of the Fifth stared at his companion. The two seniors had started out on a long walk, and they were not yet half a mile from the school. Since he had passed Harry Wharton, sitting on the stile by the lane, Jim Warren had hurried on—much faster than Hilton liked; the dandy of the Fifth was a leisurely youth and hated hurry. Now, however, he stopped, and announced that he was going back.

"But I do mind," said Hilton testily. "I've turned down Pricey this afternoon to take this walk with you, and now you're turning me down! What the dickens is the matter with you, Warren? A minute ago you were hurrying."

Warren coloured uncomfortably. His face was dark and troubled. He could not tell Hilton that the sight of the horseman crossing the field to the lane had given him a startling shock. He could not tell him that he was anxious not to meet the fellow whom Harry Wharton knew as James Warren!

He was uneasy lest every moment he should hear the thud of hoofs behind him. James of the square jaw was as likely as not to ride in that direction if he came out into the lane. Jim did not want to meet him—particularly while he was in company with a Greyfriars fellow.

"Look here, what's up?" asked the puzzled Hilton. "I noticed that you stopped to speak to Wharton—has that cheeky fag said anything to bother you? That yarn about you started with Wharton, from what Pricey says."

"Oh, rot!" said Warren uneasily. "The fact is I—I don't feel up to a walk this afternoon—I'd rather cut back."

He did not ask Hilton if he "minded" a second time. He put his hand on a fence beside the lane and vaulted over.

He did not intend to return by way of the lane where he might run into the square jawed fellow. He cut across the meadows on the other side.

Hilton was left alone, staring after him in angry astonishment. Very much offended indeed, the dandy of the Fifth continued his walk on his own.

Warren hardly remembered his existence as he walked rapidly by field paths and woodland tracks back to Greyfriars.

Whatever might be the strange explanation of his presence at Greyfriars in another fellow's name, it was certain that the sudden and unexpected sight of Sir Arthur Warren's son so near the school had given him a painful shock.

Why he was in the neighbourhood at all Jim did not know, but he was certain, at least, that James had no intention of coming to the school.

The easiest way of avoiding a meeting, therefore, was to keep within gates for the rest of the day, and Jim Warren lost no time in getting back.

He did not emerge into the road till he was quite near the school. When he came out into the open from the fields he walked very quickly.

Close to the school gates, he sighted Harry Wharton, going in.

He slowed down, not anxious to meet the junior's eye. He was wondering whether Wharton had recognised the

fellow on the horse—and whether they had exchanged words—little guessing what had happened.

But Wharton, as he went in, glanced round, to see if any of the Co. were at hand, and his eyes fell on Jim coming in.

He started a little, and smiled. He guessed at once that Warren of the Fifth had "chucked" his half-holiday walk with Hilton on account of that startling apparition of the real James. Jim Warren hesitated a moment, and then came over to him.

"You saw?" he muttered.

"Yes!" said Harry, quietly.

"Did he speak to you?"

"Yes!"

"Oh!" muttered Warren.

"The bullying brute hadn't forgotten our row in the hols," said Harry. "He tried to pitch into me with his riding-whip."

Warren compressed his lips.

"He would!" he muttered. "That's the kind of vicious brute he is. I hope you haven't got hurt."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Hardly! I got his horse, and rode away on it. I expect he's hunting for it now, in Farmer Piker's fifty acre field. It will keep him busy for a bit."

Warren stared at him, and then laughed.

"You're all right, then! I—I—I suppose you're wondering—" He broke off, colouring.

"A fellow can't help wondering," said Harry Wharton, quietly. "But I'm minding my own business, Warren."

"You mean—"

"I mean, I was worried about what might have happened to that chap! Price came up to my study early this afternoon, and had something to say—and what he said worried me. But now I've seen that rotter, I know he's come to no harm—though the whole thing puzzles me more than ever."

Warren regarded him thoughtfully.

"I suppose it does!" he said slowly. "And I can't explain—but—if I did—"

"You needn't!" said Harry, at once.

"I've taken your word that it's all square—and now I've seen that brute I know that nothing's happened to him. I shall say nothing, and I shall wash it out of my mind as soon as I can."

"Thanks!" said Warren, quietly.

He gave the junior a nod, and walked on to the House. Slowly he went up to the Fifth Form studies. He wanted to be alone for a bit, to think over the strange happening—what James' presence in the vicinity might mean, and whether it meant anything. Possibly the fellow was only there by chance, and would be gone the next day. Jim fervently hoped so.

But his desire to be alone was not going to be gratified. As he came up the passage to his study, there was a sound of voices from the open doorway.

"Whose desk is this, Price?"

"Mine, sir!"

"Unlock it!"

"Very well, sir!"

Jim Warren looked into the study in surprise. Price was unlocking a desk, Prout standing over him. Jim could guess easily enough that a search was being made for suspicious articles, and after the first moment he was not surprised. All the Fifth knew that Prout had a doubtful eye on Price.

He hesitated to enter the study, as Prout peered into the desk. The examination of the interior was soon made and Prout turned to another desk, a small one, which lay in the window-seat.

"Whose is that, Price?"

"Warren's, sir."

"See if it is locked."

"It's not locked, sir!" said Warren from the doorway. "I never lock it."

Prout whirled round, and blinked at him.

"Oh, you are here, Warren! I understood from Blundell that you had gone out with Hilton—"

"Yes, sir, but I came back," said Warren. "Shall I open that desk, sir?"

"Please do!" said Prout. "You must not suppose, my dear Warren, that you are under suspicion in any way. But I am bound to be just. Someone has been smoking in this study this afternoon—doubtless you can detect the smell of tobacco—"

"Oh, yes."

"My visit here," continued Prout, "is entirely in the nature of a surprise. I dislike very much paying surprise visits to the studies of boys in my Form. I dislike it very much indeed. But one boy in this study is a delinquent, and it is my duty to discover which one. I have no choice but to perform that duty!" Prout was always ponderous.

"Oh, quite, sir!" said Warren, politely.

"As a matter of justice, Warren, I must look into your belongings, as well as those of Price and Hilton. You understand that?"

"Certainly, sir! I've no objection at all."

"I am sure of it, Warren! I am convinced that you have nothing to conceal," said Prout. "Quite! But in fairness to the others, I must include you in my investigation."

"Oh, yes, sir, of course."

Prout looked through Warren's desk. Only such articles as papers and envelopes, pens and pencils and postage stamps, rewarded him.

Hilton also had a desk in the study, very different from Warren's, a very handsome and expensive affair, which occupied a corner. The dandy of the Fifth never troubled to lock it, though he kept gold studs and other valuable articles in it. Prout looked through it, and drew it blank.

So far, he had found nothing. Warren was still standing in the doorway, with the result that the door still stood open, and the blazer hanging on it was out of view.

Price moved over to the door, to shut it. He did not want Prout to miss that blazer!

Warren gave him a look, but, without speaking, he stepped out of the way, and Price closed the door.

Prout, glancing at him, saw the blazer hanging on the hook.

"Whose is that?" asked Prout.

"Mine, sir!" said Warren.

"Oh! Very well!"

Price compressed his thin lips bitterly. Had the blazer been his, he knew perfectly well that Prout would have looked through its pockets.

As it was Warren's, Prout did not seem to think it worth while.

He looked round the study again, with a frown on his ponderous brow. His visit being a surprise one—as he believed, at least—the study ought, naturally, to have been taken by surprise. Any fellow who smoked there, might have been expected to leave some sign of the same among his possessions. And Prout had found nothing. It was very annoying.

"Do you want this, sir?" asked Price, pointing to the blazer on the door. As Prout evidently did not want it, Price was going to make him deal with it, whether he wanted to or not.

"You may hand it to me, Price!" said Prout, rather ungraciously. He was including Warren's possessions in his



Harry Wharton gathered up the reins and rode the horse round the field, with James in frantic pursuit. "Give me my horse!" shrieked James. "Come and get him!" called back Wharton, over his shoulder. James chased desperately after the junior captain of Greyfriars, but being out of condition, he was soon panting and puffing!

search, only as a matter of form; but, as he had said himself, he had to be just.

Price unhooked the blazer from the door, and handed it to Mr. Prout.

Warren gave him a quick look.

He was very keen—very much keener than Mr. Prout. Price had deliberately drawn Prout's attention to the blazer, which Prout would have missed. Jim could see that, and it puzzled him. Price knew perfectly well that there was nothing in his pockets that he would object to his Form-master seeing.

Mr. Prout ran a fat hand through the pockets.

Price watched him, hardly able to conceal his eagerness. Now the smokes were to come to light!

Prout was going to make a discovery at last. And what was he going to think, when he found cigarettes in the pockets of the old blazer, which Jim had left there when he went out?

Certainly he could not suspect that a sly, unscrupulous fellow, knowing that he was coming to the study, had placed the cigarettes there for him to find.

The secret smoker in Study No. 4 was going to be spotted—and it was going to be Jim Warren that was spotted!

Price, watching, could hardly believe his eyes, when Prout's fat hand came out of a pocket empty. He knew that he had placed cigarettes in both pockets. Had the fat old ass missed one lot?

Breathing hard, he watched Prout grope in the other pocket. Again the fat hand came out empty!

Price fairly gasped.

Even an old ass like Prout could not have missed half a dozen cigarettes, in each pocket, if they were there.

But if they were not there, where were they, and what had become of them? Warren could have had nothing to do

with it. He had been out of gates, and had only just got back.

Price, in utter bewilderment, felt as if his head was turning round. It seemed like black magic to him.

He was so amazed, so utterly confounded, by this unexpected failure of his cunning scheme, that he stared almost open-mouthed at Prout.

Warren stared at Price. What was the matter with the fellow he could not guess. But he could see that Price had expected some discovery to be made when the blazer was searched. In his amazement and bewilderment, Price's face completely betrayed him.

"You may put this back, Price," said Mr. Prout, handing him the blazer.

Price took it, still bewildered. As he hung it on the door he slipped his hand into a pocket, to make quite sure that Prout had not overlooked the hidden cigarettes.

But there were no cigarettes there to be overlooked. The pocket was empty. Price could only wonder—dizzy with amazement.

Mr. Prout gave a dissatisfied grunt. His "surprise" visit to Study No. 4 had been a blank. Nothing had been found—except a smell of smoke. The whole thing, in fact, had ended in smoke!

Prout rolled out of the study with his elephantine tread. He was annoyed and disappointed. As his heavy tread died away down the passage, Jim Warren spoke to Price, with a rather perplexed laugh.

"You silly ass! Did you think Prout was going to find anything in my old blazer?"

Price scowled at him with an evil scowl. He was still bewildered, almost unnerved, by the strange occurrence. And he realised, too, that he had rather given himself away to the fellow against whom he had schemed so cunningly.

"You must be an ass, Price!" said Warren. "Prout's welcome to look through my things whenever he jolly well likes! I fancy he's not so welcome to look through yours. If this really was a surprise visit, the biggest surprise is that he never found any cigarettes in your desk. I know you keep them there. Did you find out somehow that he was coming?"

Price did not answer. He went out of the study, slammed the door after him, and stamped away down the passage, angry and savage, and still puzzled and bewildered by the mystery of the vanished cigarettes!

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Amazing!

HARRY WHARTON opened the door of Mr. Quelch's study, in Masters' Passage, without the preliminary tap.

It was after class, the following day. Wharton did not tap at the door, for the simple reason that he knew that his Form-master was not there—Mr. Quelch having walked down to the vicarage after class, for his game of chess with Mr. Lambe, a regular function during term. Wharton had a sheaf of papers in his hand.

The head boy of the Remove had collected papers in the Form-room, and had to take them to his Form-master's study, to leave them in a tidy pile on Quelch's table, for subsequent examination and marking. That was one of the head boy's duties, which Wharton was carrying out before going to join his chums at footer practice.

Having opened the door, he was stepping into the study, when he became

aware that it was not, as he had supposed, unoccupied.

A Fifth Form senior was there, standing at Quelch's telephone, the receiver in his hand.

His back was to the door; but Wharton recognised Price of the Fifth at once. He stared at Price's back—and smiled a little.

Telephones were installed at Greyfriars for the use of the masters, not of the boys. But it was not at all uncommon for a fellow to use a telephone when a master was safely off the scene. Evidently Price of the Fifth knew that Quelch was out, keeping his appointment at the vicarage.

Any Fifth Form man could have used Prout's telephone by asking permission. The fact that, instead of doing so, Price was borrowing Quelch's, showed that he was making a call that he desired to keep strictly private.

Wharton wondered whether even the black sheep of the Fifth had the nerve to ring up one of his bookmaking friends outside the school. Unless it was something of a surreptitious nature, there was no reason why Price should not have asked to use Prout's phone.

As Wharton stepped in, a voice rumbled on the telephone. Price was getting an answer. Wharton heard the sound of the voice, but not the words. He was still staring, with an amused grin, at Price's back, when the Fifth Form fellow spoke into the mouthpiece.

"Is that Warren Croft?"

Wharton jumped.

He understood now.

Price was getting down to brass tacks, so to speak. Sir Arthur Warren's place in Surrey, from which Warren of the Fifth was supposed to have come, was the spot to obtain definite information. That was what Price was after.

Price had not noticed the opening of the door, his attention fixed on the telephone. He had been some time in the study, getting his call through to the place in Surrey. He was so far unaware that the captain of the Remove had stepped in, but he became aware of it suddenly.

Wharton, stepping to Mr. Quelch's table, slammed down the pile of papers with a heavy slam.

Price jumped almost clear of the floor as he heard that bang behind him, and spun round.

"Oh—you!" he gasped.

It was a relief to him to see a junior. He had feared for a second that Mr. Quelch had unexpectedly returned and caught him.

"Little me!" said Harry.

"You startled me, you fool!"

"I meant to!" answered Harry coolly.

Price was about to speak again when a voice rumbled on the phone. He clapped the receiver to his ear again.

Harry Wharton made a step towards him.

But he paused.

Price was seeking information concerning James Warren, from the fountain-head, as it were. Wharton's first thought was to grasp hold of him and jerk him away from the telephone.

But he realised that he had no right to interfere, and that it would be futile if he did. He could have stopped Price now; but he could not have stopped him from walking down to Courtyard and using the public telephone at the post office. Price could phone to Warren Croft if he liked.

The junior stood undecided. Meanwhile, Price was answering the man at the other end—a manservant at Warren Croft, in Surrey.

"Speaking from Greyfriars School! Is Sir Arthur Warren at home?"

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Wharton was near the phone now, and he heard the reply that came:

"No, sir! Sir Arthur is on his way to China. Is it Master James who is speaking?"

Price's eyes glittered over the instrument. They supposed, at Warren Croft, that Master James was at Greyfriars School! That was clear, from the manservant's reply.

He glanced round at Harry mockingly. "Listening-in?" he asked, with a sneer, placing his hand for a moment over the transmitter.

"I am going to hear every word—or else knock you away from that telephone!" answered Harry quietly. "You can take your choice!"

Price chuckled.

"You want to be able to give Warren the tip that he's found out—what?"

"I shall not leave you here alone to spy on him!" answered Harry contemptuously.

"You're welcome to stay—listen all you like!" grinned Price. "You're a young rotter to be backing up that spoofing swindler, and you know it. I suppose you've worked it out that it's all right, somehow, as you like the fellow. Well, now you can hear whether it's all right or not!"

Harry made no reply to that. He closed the study door quietly, and then stepped close to the telephone, to hear what came through. If what he heard meant trouble for Warren of the Fifth, he was going to put him on his guard. Having made up his mind to trust Warren, he was not the fellow for half measures.

Price removed his hand from the transmitter, and put his mouth to it again. The manservant's voice was audible.

"Who is speaking? Please tell me what is wanted."

"I have a message about Warren," said Price. "I suppose someone is in charge during Sir Arthur's absence? Please call him!"

Wharton knew, though Price did not, that Sir Arthur's younger brother, Captain Warren, was at the Croft. It was he who had had to see his nephew James off to his new school, when the baronet left to take up his appointment in China. But if Price had not known already, he learned now.

"I will call Captain Warren, sir," came the reply. "Please hold on!"

Price grinned mockingly at Wharton as he waited.

"Captain Warren?" he said. "That will be a relation, of course."

"Sir Arthur's brother," said Harry quietly.

"Oh! You know him?"

"I've met him once."

"Then it's the nephew of a man you know that's being done by that rotter using his name here! And you've let it go on!" sneered Price.

Wharton made no answer.

Leaning over the phone, he heard clearly the rather deep, and somewhat curt voice that came through to the receiver at Price's ear. He recognised Bernard Warren's voice at once.

"What is it? Who is speaking? Is that Jim?"

"Are you Captain Warren?"

"Yes."

"James Warren's uncle?"

"Eh? What? Yes! Who is speaking?" The voice was sharp. It seemed to Harry that there was a startled note in it.

"Speaking from Greyfriars School," Price did not give his name. If he was, after all, on the track of a mare's nest, and there was nothing in it, he did not want to give himself away.

"It's about Warren—a Fifth Form

fellow here! A fellow who knows your nephew, James, says that this fellow Warren is nothing like him—"

"What?"

"It looks as if there's some sort of a swindle going on. The fellow here who calls himself Warren is nothing at all like James Warren."

"Good gad!"

"May I suggest, sir, that you should come down to the school and see the fellow for yourself? You will find that he is not your nephew, James."

There was no answer on the phone. Perhaps that statement had taken the captain's breath away.

"It's some weeks now since the term started, and nothing has been seen or heard here of the real James Warren!" went on Price. "I'm afraid that something must have happened to him, with this fellow here in his place, using his name. Can you come to the school? Or perhaps you will ring up the headmaster and ask him about it."

Wharton caught his breath.

Possibly the captain, at the other end, might take this for a schoolboy jape. But he could hardly pass it over unnoticed. After such a statement, he was surely bound to get in touch with the headmaster.

What was going to happen to Warren now?

If the captain came, he would see, at the first glance, that Warren of the Fifth was not his nephew, James Warren.

There could be no doubt about that. And if, instead of coming, he spoke to Dr. Locke, it would come to the same thing. Such a matter would have to be investigated, with the aid of someone, the captain or not, who knew Sir Arthur's son by sight! It was inevitable.

Wharton's heart beat fast.

Captain Warren did not seem in a hurry to answer. Price, grinning at Wharton maliciously, waited.

The captain's voice came through at last.

"Is this a schoolboy joke?"

"Not at all," answered Price. "I'll give you a description of the fellow, if you like, and you'll be able to judge whether he is your nephew, James, or not. Rather tall and slim and fair-haired—"

Wharton hardly breathed.

That alone was enough to enlighten Captain Warren. James was rather tall, but he was not slim—he was heavily and thickly built, and he was not fair-haired. But at that point Price was interrupted by the curt voice from the other end.

"Who is speaking?"

"A Greyfriars man."

"Give me your name."

Price paused. But the captain's voice went on:

"I think I can guess it—is it Price?"

The cad of the Fifth started. How did the captain know that? Certainly he had been nowhere near Greyfriars. Wharton was equally surprised. If Captain Warren knew about Price, as evidently he did, he could only have heard of him from Jim Warren!

Warren, then, was in touch with the captain at home—the uncle of the fellow whose name he was using! That discovery made Harry Wharton feel almost dizzy.

"Price!" barked the curt voice over the wires. "Is that it? Jim has mentioned you in his letters home."

Price's jaw dropped.

Warren had written letters home. How could an impostor have written letters home? His handwriting alone would have betrayed him.

Was it a mare's nest, after all? "You young rascal!" went on the captain's sharp, angry voice. "Jim has mentioned you—I know the kind of rat you are! Now you've had the dashed impudence to ring me up and tell me this cock-and-bull story! By gad, if I were near you, I'd lay a riding-whip round you."

Price almost staggered. "You've advised me to get into touch with your headmaster! Well, make a note of this, you meddling mischief-making young rascal—any more of this, and I will certainly get in touch with Dr. Locke and lay a complaint before him. I know all about the trouble you have tried to cause by spreading this story, and if there is any more of it, I shall place the matter before your headmaster. You young rascal!"

There was a whirr on the line as the captain rang sharply off.

Price of the Fifth stood staring stupidly at the telephone, the receiver still in his hand.

He was utterly taken aback; all the wind taken out of his sails.

So far from having given Captain Warren startling information, he found that the captain already knew of what had been said about Warren of the Fifth—and it was only Jim Warren who could have told him! Was that the act of a spoiler and impostor?

Mechanically, he replaced the receiver on the hooks. Wharton could almost have pitied the cad of the Fifth at that moment so utterly was he knocked over by this unexpected and overwhelming defeat.

"Oh!" gasped Price.

He blinked at Wharton.

Then astonishment and dismay in his face gave place to rage. He made a step towards the junior, his hands clenched, and his eyes gleaming.

"You young rotter! How did you come to make such an idiotic mistake? You said the fellow was not James Warren! I heard you tell him so to his face! But—he's written home—he's told his uncle all about the story. Do you think he would do that, or could do it, if he was somebody else? You silly little idiot, you've been taken in, and you've taken me in—and—"

Words failed Price in his rage. He sprang at Wharton.

Wharton grasped Mr. Quelch's inkpot from his table and lifted it. Price jumped back more quickly than he had jumped forward.

"Do you want a scrap in a Form-master's study, you silly ass?" asked Harry. "Get on with it if you like."

Price creaked back his rage.

"I'll make you pay for this!" he muttered thickly, and he opened the door and hurried from the study.

Harry put down the inkpot and followed him, more slowly. He was amazed as Price—but for a different reason. The captain's words over the telephone had convinced Price, for the present at least, that Wharton had been mistaken about Warren.

But they had not convinced Wharton, because he knew that he had not been mistaken. He could hardly fancy that he had been mistaken, when only the day before, in Friardale Lane, he had seen both James Warren and Jim Warren, and had indubitably proof that they were not the same fellow!

He did not intend to let Price know that. But he thought over it as he went slowly away from his Form-master's study. The captain's reply had convinced Price that Jim Warren of Greyfriars was James Warren of Warren Croft—one and the same person.

But it had convinced Wharton of something very different—and that was that the captain was a party to the deception—that he had had a hand in keeping James Warren away from the school and sending another fellow there in his name!

And that discovery was so astounding that it almost made Harry Wharton's head reel as he thought of it.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Doggish!

BUMP!
Yell!
Billy Bunter was leaving Study No. 7 in the Remove—suddenly!

He landed in the Remove passage, and Peter Todd grinned at him from the doorway.

Peter seemed amused. Bunter did not.

"You beast!" roared the fat Owl, as he sat up and jammed his big spectacles straight on his fat little nose. "You cheeky rotter! Think you're going to turf me out of my own study?"

"As Inky would say, the thinkfulness is terrific!" answered Peter cheerily.

"I'm coming into my own study!" roared Bunter.

"Do!" said Peter invitingly. "There's lots more if you want it! I'll kick you out as often as you roll in! I can't say fairer than that!"

"Beast!" howled Bunter.

Peter, grinning, went back into the study. Bunter, picking himself up, bestowed a ferocious blink on the door.

But he did not push it open. It was his own study, as much as Peter's, and he had every right to barge therein. On the other hand, Peter's boot was ready for him if he did. And Bunter

disliked boots applied to his tight trousers. Often as he had experienced it, he had never grown to like it.

He rolled down the Remove passage, and rolled into the Bouncer's study. A junior was standing by the window there. And the short-sighted Owl did not perceive, for the moment, that it was Tom Redwing, the Bouncer's study-mate—Smithy himself not happening to be there.

"I say, have a smoke, old chap?" asked Bunter.

Redwing stared round at him.

"What?" he ejaculated.

"I've got some cigarettes," explained Bunter. "A fellow likes a smoke after tea—what? That beast Toddy kicks up a fuss about a fellow smoking in his own study. I've a jolly good mind to whop him; but—but he's not really worth the trouble."

"And it might be quite a lot of trouble," remarked Redwing, with a grin.

"Eh! Oh! Yes! I say, I've got a lot of cigarettes, old chap!" said Bunter. "Spent a lot of money on them yesterday. They're expensive, you know. I always have the best. Have one?"

"You fat ass!"

"Oh, I thought it was Smithy!" said Bunter, blinking at him. "Well, never mind, I'll smoke here. Smithy does."

"Whether Smithy does or not, you're not going to, you fat fooling frump!" said Redwing curtly. And he took Billy Bunter by the collar and led him back to the door. "Outside!"

"Look here! You beast!" bawled Bunter.

"Cut!"

Redwing slammed the door, and Bunter bounded back, just in time to save his fat little nose.

"Beast!" he yelled through the key-hole, and departed.

It really was rough on a sportive fellow who wanted a smoke. Peter Todd's boot kept him out of Study No. 7. Redwing had cast him forth; but a fellow had to smoke somewhere.

Bunter was not really much given to that petty vice. Nothing would have induced him to spend money on smokes. Bunter's cash always went for tuck.

But he had got these cigarettes for nothing.

Bunter would smoke, if he could get a smoke for nothing. He even tried to fancy that he liked it. It made him feel no end of a dog—a very devil of a fellow.

The previous day he had annexed a dozen cigarettes from the blazer pockets in Price's study. Well supplied with smokes free of charge, Bunter was going to be a devil of a fellow until the supply was exhausted.

But there were difficulties in the way (Continued on next page.)

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of his intended devilish proceedings. Where was a fellow to get a quiet smoke? He did not want the trouble of getting out of the House, and a walk to some secluded spot out of doors. He wanted an armchair and a fire.

Skinner's study was a smoky study. But Skinner & Co. might have bagged the cigarettes—certainly they would have bagged the lion's share. Bunter did not head for Skinner's study.

He looked for an empty study where he could be a devil of a fellow—in fact, perfectly devilish—uninterrupted, and in peace. Blinking into Study No. 1 in the Remove, he found it unoccupied.

He rolled in. Wharton and Nugent were not there, and he hoped they wouldn't come up. With a grunt of relief the fat Owl deposited his podgy person in the armchair, set his feet on the fender, leaned back, and lighted a cigarette—just like Angel of the Fourth, or Price of the Fifth, or Loder of the Sixth. Not, he complacently reflected, like a nincompoop—like Wharton, for instance, who never smoked—but who, on the other hand, played a good game of football.

Billy Bunter did not care for football; and he did care for being a rorty dog, and a devil of a fellow when the sars could be done on the cheap.

He blew out clouds of smoke, and grinned over them. There was not only the joy of smoking—such as it was!—and the satisfaction of being doggyish and devilish; but these cigarettes belonged to Price, the beast who had whopped him. And while the sportive Owl was smoking them, Price was left in a smokeless state, which served the beast right.

Bunter finished a cigarette, and threw the stump into the fender. By that time the atmosphere in Study No. 1 was a little blue and hazy.

Bunter lighted a second cigarette, but rather slowly. He puffed at it, but the puffs were few and far between.

Doggish as he was, Bunter rather had doubts about the possible effects of a second cigarette after the first.

Perhaps it was fortunate for Bunter that the second smoke was interrupted. But the interruption itself was not agreeable.

There was a tramp of feet in the passage, and the Famous Five came up from the staircase. They stared into Study No. 1 at the fat smoker sitting in the armchair.

Bunter gave a start, and blinked round uneasily. He had hoped the beasts wouldn't come up till he had finished. But there were the beasts.

"I—I say, you fellows—" stammered Bunter.

He had no time to say more.

Wharton and Nugent, coughing as they got the smoke, rushed into the study. They seemed in haste to make it clear, unto William George Bunter, that he could not use their study as a tap-room. Without wasting time in words they grabbed the fat junior, and hooked him out of the armchair.

"Ow!" roared Bunter. "I say—Gurrghh!" He gave a horrible gurgle as the lighted cigarette burnt his fat cheek. "Wurrgh!"

Bump! "Yurrgh! Urrgh!"

Bump! "Groooogh! Oooogh! Woogh!"

"Come in, you fellows!" said Harry Wharton to Bob and Johnny and Inky at the doorway. "Gather round! Jump on him—all together!"

"Hear, hear!" grinned Bob.

"The jumpfulness is the proper caper!"

"Go it!" chuckled Johnny Bull.

And the Famous Five gathered in a circle round Billy Bunter, as he sat and gasped and gurgled on the floor.

"Jump!" said Harry Wharton.

But Bunter jumped first. He was on his feet with a bound. With another bound he headed for the door. But the captain of the Remove grabbed him by his fat neck, and he was jerked back.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Cat Out of the Bag!

"L EGGO!" roared Bunter. Harry Wharton released the fat ear, stepped to the door, and shut it. Bunter rubbed the ear, which had rather a pain in it, and glared at him through

his big spectacles with a deadly glare. "Now!" said Harry.

"Beast!"

"Suppose a prefect put his nose into this study," said the captain of the Remove, "or suppose Quelch barged in looking for smokers, as I hear Prout does in the Fifth—what would happen to us?"

"Whoppings for us, because that fat little toad has been smoking his filthy cigarettes here," said Frank Nugent wrathfully.

"Serve you jolly well right!" gasped Bunter. "I hope Quelch catches you, and I hope he lays it on jolly hard! Beasts!"

"He must have pinched those smokes from Smithy," said Johnny Bull. "Even Bunter isn't ass enough to part with money for them. Let's go and kick Smithy for letting Bunter get hold of his muck!"

"They ain't Smithy's smokes, you beast!" gasped Bunter.

"Whose are they, then?" demanded Wharton.

"Mine!" howled Bunter. "I gave ten shillings for that lot of smokes! I can afford it—"

"Where did you pinch them?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"You beast! I haven't pinched them! Haven't I just told you they're mine?"

"Yes. That's how I know they aren't."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you can't take a fellow's word, you needn't speak to me at all," said Bunter. "Lemme get out of this study, you rotters! I've got to take in some lines to Quelch."

"Quelch can wait!"

"I mean, I've got to see the Head!"

"The Head can wait along with Quelch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here! I'm not staying here!" bawled Bunter. "If you don't get away from that door, Wharton, I'll jolly well punch you!"

"Go it!"

"I mean, I jolly well would, only I've no time to waste on you when I've got to see Wingate in his study. Look here! You know a fellow can't keep a prefect waiting."

"That's all right! Wingate can wait along with the Head and Quelch."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Now, look here, Bunter," said the captain of the Remove, "you might have got Nugent and me into a fearful row by making this study reek of smoke. And you'd get six if Quelch spotted you. You've had one lesson about smuggling in smokes for senior men. Now you're going to have another. See? You've been getting in smokes for Price of the Fifth again!"

"I haven't!"

"And pinching them."

"Beast! I wouldn't!" howled Bunter. "Why, the brute pitched into me the other day, making out I'd kept the smokes that you fellows chucked away! If Price asked me to get in smokes for him again I'd punch his nose! At least, I would if I was as big as Price."

"Then where did you get them?"

"Find out!"

"That's what I'm going to do," said the captain of the Remove cheerfully. "Put all you've got on the table."

"Shan't!"

"Hand me that ruler, Franky."

"I mean I don't mind putting them on the table. I'll stand you fellows one each if you like. I've got nearly a dozen."

Billy Bunter promptly turned out the cigarettes from his pocket on the study

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Harry Wharton entered the Form-master's study and saw Price standing at Mr. Quelch's telephone, the receiver in his hand. "Is that Warren Croft?" Price was asking. Wharton jumped. He understood now—Price was trying to learn the secret of Jim Warren, the new Fifth Former!

table. He did not want to establish contact with the ruler.

Wharton glanced at the cigarettes. "That's the same kind that you fetched for Price the other day," he said. "They're Price's smokes! That shows—"

"It doesn't!" yelled Bunter, in alarm. "I tell you I never fetched them. The fact is, Price gave them to me."

"I can see him doing it!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"Well, he did," said Bunter. "He said to me, 'Look here, Bunter, old chap, like some smokes, old thing?' I said, 'All right, Pricey!' And—and he gave them to me."

The Famous Five gazed at Bunter. They did not, of course, expect the fat Owl to tell the truth. They knew him too well!

"Well, if Pricey has been giving a Remove man smokes, we'd better go and talk to him about it," said Bob, with a wink at his comrades.

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific."

"Oh crikey! I—I say, you fellows, don't—don't you get telling Price!" gasped Bunter. "He would be fearfully waxy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I say, he was jolly well beating me like a carpet the other day, when Warren stopped him! Warren mayn't happen in next time. I don't want Price after me for those smokes!" exclaimed the alarmed Owl.

"Not when he gave them to you?" grinned Nugent.

"Oh! I—I mean he—he didn't exactly give them to me!" gasped Bunter. "ot—not exactly! Still, it was his own fault. I shouldn't have dodged into his study yesterday, only I knew he would pitch into me if he spotted me in the Fifth Form passage, and—and—"

"So you pinched them from Price's study?"

"Oh, no! The fact is— The—the fact—" Bunter paused, not quite certain, so far, what the fact was. Even an old hand like Bunter had to have a moment or two to make up a fib.

"Watch him making it up!" said Johnny Bull.

"Beast! The—the fact is, I—I took those smokes away to—to save Price from getting into a row," said Bunter. "He's a beast, of course, and a rotten bully and a toad and a rotter! But—but I'm a forgiving chap. You know my kind and generous nature."

"We do, we do!" said Bob Cherry.

"Sort of coals of fire," explained Bunter. "Good for evil, and all that! Like—like that good chap Georgie, you know, in the prize book. Price had been a beast to me. So—so I saved him from a row with his beak. You know what the poet says about kindest friend and noblest foe."

"That jolly old poet wasn't thinking of a chap like you, old fat man!" said Bob Cherry, with a chuckle.

"Well, that's what I did!" said Bunter. "I can tell you Price would have been lagged for smoking if I hadn't done it! I tell you! I hadn't been out of the study three minutes when old Prout went in—I heard him pass Coker's door—"

"Coker's door! And what were you doing in Coker's study?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob. "I know the answer to that one! Coker was yowling last night about a game pie being gone from his cupboard."

"I never had it!" gasped Bunter.

"Never touched it! I certainly never saw anything of it. Besides, I can tell you fellows it was pretty high. I wished afterwards I'd let it alone—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So you were in Coker's study, bagging Coker's luck, and heard Prout go to Price's study yesterday afternoon," said Harry Wharton. "And that's why

you bagged Price's smokes, was it, you fat fibber?"

"Yes—to save his bacon, you know," said Bunter. "Well, of all the jolly old fabricators, I think Bunter takes the cake!" said Bob, in wonder. "You bagged Price's smokes before you heard Prout coming; you couldn't have done it afterwards!"

"You see, I know he was coming!" said Bunter.

"He mentioned it to you as an old pal?" asked Bob.

"Nunno! I heard Price say so."

"Wha-at?"

"You see, I wasn't going to let Price see me in his study," explained Bunter.

"I dodged in to get away from him, and hid under the table while he was there. He never knew. And he only stayed a minute. He was in a hurry, you see, as he knew Prout was coming! I heard him muttering that he had lots of time before the old fool came! That must have meant Prout—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Can any fellow here make head or tail of this?" asked Wharton.

"The silly ass seems to fancy he's telling the truth—but it can't be true, of course. If Price knew that Prout was coming to his study, he would take jolly good care not to leave any smokes in the room for Prout to spot. Prout's well known to have a sharp eye on him already."

"Well, he did," said Bunter. "I saw him from under the table, putting a lot of cigarettes in his blazer pocket, hanging on the door. He smoked one first, and put the rest in the blazer."

"Oh, bump him!" said Johnny Bull. "What's the good of listening to a string of idiotic whoppers like that? Fancy Price leaving cigarettes in his blazer, hanging up in his study, if he knew Prout was coming."

"Well, he did!" said Bunter. "And I jolly well collared them! Serve the
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brute right for whopping me! See? Tit for tat, you know. I—I—I mean—I—I mean I—I took them away to prevent Prout finding them, to save Price from getting into a row."

"Price must have wanted to get into a row if he did all that!" said Frank Nugent, laughing.

"Well, I thought it was rather queer," said Bunter. "But that's what he did! I got the smokes out of the blazer, and got into Coker's study before Prout came up. I—I don't want Price to know. You can see that I've saved him from a row with Prout, but—I don't want his—his gratitude."

"The esteemed gratitude would probably take the form of a terrific kickfulness on your absurd trousers," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

But Harry Wharton's face was grave. Bunter's strange tale sounded like a string of absurdity. But it seemed to Wharton that he glimpsed something through it.

"How did you know it was Price's blazer on the door in the study, Bunter?" asked Harry quietly.

Bunter blinked at him.

"Eh? I suppose it was! He wouldn't put his cigarettes into another fellow's pockets, would he? Cigarettes cost money."

Wharton compressed his lips.

"I think very likely a fellow like Price would if he knew Prout was coming to the study to look for smokes," he said.

Bunter jumped.

"Oh crikey!" he gasped.

Price's strange actions had puzzled Bunter, but he had not given them much thought—if any. It had never even occurred to him that it was not in his own pockets that Stephen Price had packed those cigarettes.

But now that Wharton pointed it out, even Bunter could see how the land lay.

"Oh lor!" he gasped. "I—I say, you fellows, what an awful beast! I thought it was his own blazer, of course, as he put the smokes in it. I—I wondered why he did it when he knew Prout was coming. I say, it was jolly lucky for somebody that I bagged those smokes!"

"For Warren, I imagine," said Wharton quietly.

"I say, you fellows, Warren's not a bad sort," said Bunter. "He stopped that beast Price whopping me the other day, and held Price while I gave him some of his own medicine."

Wharton knitted his brows.

"Price is going to have his cigarettes back," he said, gathering them up from the table. "And Warren is going to know where Bunter found them! If that cur Price is trying to land him in a row with his beak, Warren's going to be put on his guard."

"What-ho!" said Bob.

"I—I say, you fellows, they're my smokes!" gasped Bunter.

"What?" roared the Famous Five.

"I—I mean, I—I gave five bob for them, you know! Don't you get giving my smokes to Price!" exclaimed the fat Owl anxiously. "When I come to think of it, I—I never got them from Price's study—I mean, if you fellows are going to take them to Price—"

"Kick him!" said Johnny Bull. "Keep on kicking him till he stops telling lies!"

"Long job!" said Bob Cherry. "That means kicking Bunter for the term of his natural life!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But we may as well give him a few—"

"Keep off, you beast!" roared

Bunter. "What I mean is, they're Price's smokes, but—but I don't think he ought to have them. They—they're bad for the health, you know—bad for the wind! I'm rather worried about Price's health—"

"I'll give you something else to worry about!" roared Johnny Bull—and he did, promptly!

"Yaroooo!" roared Bunter, as Johnny's boot landed.

"Give him another!"

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I mean—what I really mean is, I—I—I want Price to have those smokes back, and—and I'll come with you with—pleasure! Leggo my ear, Wharton! I'm not going to dodge up the passage as soon as we get out of this study!"

"You're not!" agreed Wharton, and he helped the fat Owl out by the ear.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Price Paid!

TAP!

"Football jaw" was going on in Study No. 4 in the Fifth.

In the winter term, football was naturally a topic in most studies at Greyfriars; but it was rather new in that particular study.

Over tea Warren and Hilton talked Soccer; and Price said hardly a word, the sour, bitter expression on his sallow face showing how little he liked that topic.

Last term Hilton would have been talking "gee-gees" with him and smoking a cigarette after tea. This term all was changed—and it was Jim Warren who had wrought the change. Price had played on all that was bad in Cedric Hilton—Warren brought out all that was good—and the easy-going dandy of the Fifth was certainly under a much better influence now.

But it was bitter enough to Price, who had lost a wealthy friend who had been very useful to him.

For Hilton personally he did not care a straw—in fact, he despised him for being easily led. But he felt the loss and nursed a deep rancour towards Warren as the cause.

He had hoped, with a vindictive hope, to see Jim Warren disgraced and driven out of the school, as a pretender passing under another fellow's name; but the talk on the telephone with Captain Warren had put "paid" to that.

So savage and bitter did Price feel, that he would not have "tea'd" in the study at all, but for the fact that the wealthy Hilton paid the account at the school shop.

Jim Warren, though he was supposed to be the son of a rich baronet, had a very moderate allowance. But he was very careful to pay his "whack" in the study. Price was not so particular in such matters, and he sponged on Hilton without scruple. The parting of the ways made no difference to that.

"If Wingate does put us up for the St. Jim's match—" Warren was saying, with a very bright face, when the tap came at the door.

In the buzz of talk, the tap passed unheeded.

"We've both got a healthy chance, I think," said Hilton, and his face, too, was bright. "I don't think I'm so jolly bad—and you're a real corker at Soccer. I suppose you played a lot at your last school?"

"Oh, quite a lot!"

"What was your last school, by the way?" asked Price. "You don't seem

to have mentioned its name, so far as I've heard."

Warren glanced at him.

"Still curious about my affairs?" he asked carelessly.

"Keeping it secret?" sneered Price.

"Why?"

And a flash came into his eyes. Why, after all, did this fellow never mention his last school? It was unusual, to say the least, for a senior fellow to leave one school and go to another direct into the Fifth Form. And he never mentioned its name. Had Warren been in some trouble at his last school?

Or was there, after all, something in Wharton's belief, in spite of what Captain Warren had said on the telephone?

Hilton glanced from one to the other. "Oh, don't keep on girdin', Pricey!" he said. "Why can't we be friends in this study?"

Hilton had already forgotten his offence of the previous day, when Warren had left him so abruptly in Friardale Lane. He could hardly understand a fellow nursing grudges as Price did.

The door opened.

Warren, perhaps, was glad of the interruption. The turn Price had given to the talk could not have pleased the fellow who was at Greyfriars in another fellow's name.

Harry Wharton & Co. walked in, with Billy Bunter blinking uneasily in their midst.

Hilton stared at them angrily.

"What the deuce do you fags want, bargin' in?" he snapped.

"We knocked, but you overlooked asking us to come in, so we came!" said Bob Cherry affably. "Don't be alarmed—we haven't come to tea!"

"You cheeky young cads, get out!" snapped Price.

"Rats to you!" said Bob.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

Harry Wharton shut the door when the juniors were all inside. Price scowled, Hilton frowned, and Jim Warren looked amused.

"What is it—a deputation?" he asked. "Cut it short! What the thump does that mean?" he added, in surprise, as Harry Wharton slung a handful of cigarettes on the tea-table.

"They're Price's!" explained the captain of the Remove. "Bunter has smoked one or two, but there's the rest."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"What the dickens do you mean, you cheeky young fool?" asked Price, staring at the cigarettes and then at Wharton.

"I'm going to explain," said Harry. He glanced at the door he had shut. An old blazer was hanging on the hook there. "Is that the same one, Bunter?"

"Yes!" gasped Bunter.

"Have you come here to look at my old blazer?" asked Jim Warren blankly. "It's yours, then?" asked Harry.

"Yes; what about it?"

"Only this—Bunter was under the table in this study yesterday, a few minutes before Prout came up, and he saw Price packing cigarettes into the pockets of that blazer."

"Wha-a-at?" stammered Warren.

Price's face paled. He sat as if turned to stone. He had wondered, and wondered again and again, what had become of the cigarettes he had packed in Warren's pockets for Prout to find. He knew now.

"Bunter heard Price say that the old fool was coming up," went on Wharton.

(Continued on page 28.)



A mystery ship sails from a lonely island off the coast of Scotland. On it are two British schoolboys, Carson and Cribb, prisoners of an enemy organisation bent on crushing the British Empire!

The Singer!

SIR CLAUDE HUNTINGDON, seated in his office in the Admiralty building in Whitehall, looked keenly at his bronzed and stern-featured visitor.

"You're winning, Lawless," he said. "Winning all along the line. Had it not been for your activities, we are convinced that this Baltic power would have declared war on Britain weeks ago. But the sinking of her Baltic fleet and the demoralising of her army at your hands has temporarily crippled her."

Sir Claude was referring to the foreign power which the British Government knew had been secretly preparing to declare war on Britain and her Empire. Rising to his feet, he commenced to pace the floor, hands clasped behind his back.

"Were it not that it would involve the loss of millions of innocent lives," he went on, "Britain would force the issue by declaring war on these foreigners to-morrow. We can smash them, but it would take months of terrible bloodshed, and that is what we want to avoid at all costs. In modern warfare it is the women and children who are going to suffer."

"Yes, I am afraid so," agreed Lawless quietly.

Pausing by the window, Sir Claude stood looking down at the busy traffic in Whitehall.

"Yet sometimes we wonder if it would not be better to declare war," he said. "There is a strange unrest in the air. Things are happening, particularly on the sea. There are ships missing, rumours of mysterious gunfire, flashes seen on the horizon at nights. But none of these foreigners' warships are ever seen in the North Sea or the Atlantic, where these things are reported to take place."

He turned from the window to face Lawless.

"And that brings me to the reason

for my asking you to call," he went on. "A trawler captain has reported seeing, two nights ago, a mysterious cargo vessel riding close inshore without lights off the Isle of Cullin, a barren and uninhabited island off the western coast of Scotland. There may be a quite harmless explanation of it, but we would like the matter investigated. We can't spare you, so what about those two young schoolboy friends of yours who have been assisting you?"

"You mean Carson and Cribb?" exclaimed Lawless. "They'd jump at the job!"

"Well, as I say, there might be nothing in it," said Sir Claude. "On the other hand, you'd better warn them to be prepared for trouble."

It was some twenty minutes later that Captain Lawless stepped out into Whitehall and walked back to the hotel where he was staying with Carson and Cribb, the two schoolboys from Abbotscourt, who were helping him in his fight against the forces of the enemy power.

"You're leaving for Scotland to-night," he informed them. "You'll want very little in the way of kit. There's an uninhabited island to be investigated!"

Briefly he gave them the details which were singularly scanty, consisting entirely of the trawler captain's report that a strange vessel without lights had been seen riding close inshore.

"As Sir Claude says," concluded Lawless, "it may be nothing at all. But in these times every suspicious happening must be investigated, and it is difficult to conceive any commonplace reason why a freighter should anchor on a calm night off an uninhabited island so close to the mainland."

"She might have had engine trouble," suggested Carson.

"That wouldn't explain her riding without lights," pointed out Lawless. "Anyway, I'm taking you two fellows there in the flying submarine. You can

have a look round, and I'll pick you up to-morrow night."

Lawless' flying submarine was lying in the Thames estuary, and, shortly after ten o'clock that same night she hummed across the water to soar up into the darkness.

Swinging on the climb, she headed northwards, devouring space so swiftly that it was just on midnight when the hum of her engines died away and she came gliding down through the darkness to land on the calm and placid sea off the coast of Sutherlandshire.

She did not submerge, but surged silently forward through the water until there loomed ahead the dark bulk of the Isle of Cullin.

The small collapsible dinghy which the submarine carried took Carson and Cribb ashore, and after promising to pick them up the following night, Lawless returned to the submarine, which turned about and headed swiftly and silently away into the night.

"Well, here we are!" said Carson. "What do you propose we do first?"

"Dump our kit somewhere above high water mark and have a stroll along the beach," replied Cribb.

"Right-ho!" agreed Carson, and depositing their water canister and haversacks up the beach, the two schoolboys set off to explore.

They kept by the water's edge, for the night was inky black. They had landed on the lee side of the island, and as they made their way round to the seaward side not a sound broke the deathly hush save the ripple of the wavelets on the beach.

"Well, there doesn't seem to be anything very much doing," said Carson, coming to a sudden halt and staring about him in the darkness. "If you ask me—"

He broke off as faintly through the stillness came the sound of a strident voice raised in song, a voice which commenced with a sort of yelp:

"Ow, we're sinking fore and aft!
We're drifting like a raft,
And there's blood a-swilling crimson
in the scuppers!
We're riddled through and through,
'Cos of the flag we flew,
So drink, mates—sink, mates—and
here's to our uppers!"

In the Darkness!

WHAT the dickens d'you make of that?" demanded Carson, as the song ceased.

"It sounds nautical," commented Cribb. "Where d'you reckon it came from?"

"From that direction!" replied Carson, pointing ahead.

"No, from over there!" corrected Cribb, indicating the black shadow of the beetling cliffs which rose sheer and stark from the stretch of beach. "Hallo, he's started again!"

The elusive, strident voice had embarked on another verse, commencing with the same extraordinary yelp;

"Ow, it was a lovely day
When first we sailed away
With the Jolly Roger breaking from
our main!
And now we're sinking fast
With a blazing stump for mast,
And we'll never more sail homeward
bound again!"

"They seem to have had a rather trying time," observed Cribb, as the voice ceased. "I wish we could locate exactly where the fellow is."

"He's a good distance away," said Carson. "It's this beastly stillness which makes it so difficult to tell just where he is. Come on, let's push on!"

They continued along by the water's edge, speculating upon the identity of the singer and expecting every moment to hear him give tongue again.

But they heard the mysterious voice no more that night, and soon a greying of the eastern sky gave token that dawn was at hand.

Feeling pretty peckish by then, the boys returned to where they had dumped their kit on the leeward side of the island, and, after a bathe, were soon breakfasting off biscuits and fried bacon, washed down by coffee, which they boiled upon the little spirit stove they had brought with them.

Finishing the washing-up, they set off to explore the island in daylight, and to find the strident-voiced singer of the nocturnal hours.

The island proved to be nothing more nor less than high and rugged rock, shaped like the letter L, and about half a mile in length. The foot of the letter protruded out to sea, the base of the cliffs being permanently awash.

"Well, there doesn't seem to be anyone here," said Carson, when he and Cribb had walked along the whole stretch of beach. "Let's try the higher ground!"

Retracing their steps to a spot where the cliffs sloped down to the beach, they scrambled up, and were soon on the highest point of the island.

But not the slightest sign of human habitation met their expectant gaze. There was no hut, no shack, no tent of any sort. Nothing but black and barren rock, void even of moss or any vegetation.

"But the fellow must be somewhere?" said Carson, staring about him in bewilderment.

"Perhaps he was in a boat!" suggested Cribb.

"No, he wasn't," said Carson determinedly. "He was here on the island, somewhere."

"Well, then, perhaps he left in a boat before dawn," said Cribb.

"That might be it," said Carson dubiously. "But we didn't see a boat, and we walked right round by the water's edge."

"It could have called for him," said Cribb. "But even if it did, what could the ass be wanting on a place like this in the middle of the night?"

"If you ask me," said Carson grimly, "there's something dashed fishy about this place. That mysterious cargo vessel and that voice we heard!"

Cribb looked about him. In spite of the morning sun, which was sparkling across the placid sea, the place looked unutterably drear and desolate.

"I've heard of banshees," he volunteered.

"Banshees?" repeated Carson, staring. "Yes, you know, ghosts and things that are supposed to haunt these western isles."

"Don't be an ass!" advised Carson coldly. "That wasn't a ghost we heard. It was a man with a particularly unpleasant voice. Come on, let's have another look round!"

The look round they embarked on was as exhaustive as it could possibly be. There wasn't a single nook or cranny of the island that they didn't explore. And the result was absolutely nil. There wasn't a soul on the island except themselves, nor the slightest sign of anyone having been there.

"Well, it beats me!" said Carson, when afternoon was merging into evening and the sun was sinking, a red ball, behind the distant horizon. "I wonder what Lawless will make of it?"

Captain Lawless, when he arrived that night, didn't know what to make of it.

"There obviously is something happening here," he said, "and we'd better find out what it is. How do you lads feel about it? Will you stay on here for a night or two?"

"You bet we will!" said Carson heartily. "We're going to get to the bottom of this, sir."

"It might, of course, have been some fisherman in a boat, as Cribb says," remarked Lawless. "But I don't think so. It doesn't explain the cargo vessel. Here, you'd better keep this and I'll call back again to-morrow night!"

ANOTHER GREAT SCOOP FOR "MAGNET" READERS!

"DAN of the DOGGER BANK!"

By DAVID GOODWIN.

Thrilling Story of Adventure
with the North Sea
Fishing Fleet

STARTS IN A
FORTNIGHT'S TIME!

He thrust a loaded automatic into Carson's hand, and after satisfying himself that the two schoolboys were all right as far as food was concerned, returned to his flying submarine, and a few minutes later was flying swiftly through the night towards London, where an important meeting of the Sea Lords was still in session at the Admiralty.

Left to themselves, Carson and Cribb commenced a patrol of the beach. There was no moon, the night was inky black, and nothing broke the deathly, brooding stillness save the murmur of the restless sea.

An hour dragged by, and Cribb, with a prodigious yawn, indicated the sand above high-water mark.

"I vote we sit down," he said. "This is the second night we haven't been in bed, and I'm dashed sleepy—"

Abruptly he broke off as near at hand in the darkness sounded the strident voice they had heard the night before, commencing with the same astonishing yelp:

"Ow, the skipper's lying dead.
A ball took off his head.
And the bos'un's lying butchered in
the well.

The decks are red with gore,
And we'll never sail no more
Past the Black Rock with its tolling,
tolling bell!"

The voice was approaching, and as Carson and Cribb stood tense and waiting, the forms of three men loomed up through the darkness.

Two of them appeared to be tall, muscular fellows, but the third, who was walking between his companions, was a little, grotesque creature, with extraordinary long arms, a misshapen back, and a big white face.

At sight of Carson and Cribb, the trio halted abruptly, the two tall fellows each jerking forward a rifle.

"Here they are!" screeched the grotesque creature in the middle. "All ship-shape and dandy and waiting to be took!"

The Laughing Lass!

HE waddled up to Carson and Cribb, his great white face split in a huge grin.

"Hallo!" he yelped. "One of 'em's got a pop-gun! Whadyer think of that now? Mind it don't go off, sonny! Here, you give it to me!"

One of his long arms shot out to grab the gun in Carson's hand. But, side-stepping quickly, Carson thrust the weapon into the creature's paunch.

"Just what's the idea?" he snapped. The misshapen little dwarf did not answer. Instead, with amazing swiftness, his left hand closed on Carson's wrist in vicelike grip, jerking the muzzle of the gun downwards.

The automatic exploded, the bullet burying itself harmlessly in the sand. Simultaneously, the dwarf's other hand seized Carson by the throat, and there was the strength of steel in the long, throttling fingers.

Cribb leapt forward to his pal's assistance, but before he could reach him a smashing blow from one of the other men sent him reeling back.

Desperately Cribb tried to recover himself, but another savage smash to the jaw stretched him flat on the sand. Pouncing on him, the man seized his hands, and, producing a length of rope with a running noose in it, pinioned Cribb's wrists.

Meanwhile, Carson, helpless in the dreadful, choking clutch of the dwarf,



With amazing swiftness the misshapen little dwarf's hand closed on Carson's wrist in a vice-like grip, jerking the muzzle of the gun downwards, so that the bullet buried itself harmlessly in the sand!

was being similarly pinioned by the other man. He writhed and struggled desperately, but the odds were hopeless, and soon he was securely trussed.

"Well, now, who would have thought they'd have give us so much trouble?" yelped the dwarf. "I bet they're Lawless' brats. I bet they are. I've said so all along!"

He addressed the helpless Carson.

"You're the pair of cockerels what run with Lawless, ain't you?" he demanded. "Come on, own up! You are, ain't you?"

"What d'you know about Lawless?" demanded Carson thickly.

The dwarf doubled up with a squeal of delighted laughter.

"What do I know about Lawless?" he screamed. "Ow, come now, ain't that good? I know there's a reward of a hun'erd thousand pounds out for him, dead or alive, and I'm going to get it one of these days!"

He turned to his two companions.

"Get 'em into the boat and take 'em to the cave!" he ordered. "I know they're Lawless' brats. I knew it when I saw 'em walking about the island this morning and this afternoon. They can deny it till they're black in the face, but I won't believe 'em!"

Seizing Carson and Cribb by the scruff of the neck, the two muscular fellows proceeded to propel them along the beach towards where a small dinghy lay drawn up in the darkness.

The dwarf followed, carrying the rifles and Carson's gun, and, when the party had embarked, Carson said:

"What I'd like to know is who you are and where you've come from!"

"I'm Sebastian Coot!" cackled the dwarf. "Bos'un to Captain Zarnal, of the Laughing Lass. As to where I've come from—why, from the water cave at the end of the promontory!"

So that, reflected Carson and Cribb, was how they had failed to locate the whereabouts of these men. There was a

cave, apparently, at the end of the cliffs which protruded into the sea.

"Jevver hear of Captain Zarnal?" demanded the misshapen Sebastian Coot, as the boat was pulled on through the darkness. "He's a naval officer, but, because war ain't been declared yet, he's sailing under the black flag. Ho, he, he! There's a joke for you, if you like! He's sinking and burning and looting, and your Government don't know nothing about it!"

"Are you an Englishman?" demanded Cribb.

"Me? Naw, course I ain't an Englishman! I'm from New Orleans, I am, and I've sailed the seven seas. Here we are lads. Steady!"

The boat had reached the cave at the end of the promontory, and as it surged in, the two schoolboys saw, by the light of a hurricane lamp which Coot lighted, that the sandy floor shelved up out of the water to form the floor of a vast cavern.

In the fear of the cavern, stacked as high as the glistening rocky ceiling, were hundreds of squat, iron cylinders.

"See them!" yelped Sebastian Coot. "The Laughing Lass brought them, and she'll be back to-night with another cargo. That's gas, that is, and you wait till we get it planted in the industrial towns of England. Ho, yes, we ain't waiting to declare war to set that lot loose. It kills quicker'n anything your clever Mister Lawless ever thought of—"

"Listen!" cut in one of the men curtly.

In the silence which followed there came plainly to their ears the rattle of an anchor chain somewhere outside in the darkened waters.

"That'll be Captain Zarnal!" yelped Sebastian. "Come on, lads! We'll report all's well, and hand these brats over. I'm sailing to-night, y'know!"

The boat quitted the cave with Carson and Cribb aboard, and was pulled

towards the dark bulk of a small freighter, lying less than a cable's length away.

"Ahoy, there!" hailed Sebastian Coot guardedly. "Sebastian coming aboard. Lower a ladder!"

A guarded voice replied, a ladder snaked over the rusty hull plates, and Sebastian Coot scrambled aboard as nimbly as a monkey.

A few minutes later four sailors dropped down into the boat, and between them they hoisted Carson and Cribb up on to the deck and marched them down into a well-lighted and well-furnished cabin.

Standing talking to Sebastian Coot was a young man, immaculately clad in the uniform of a merchant service skipper. His features were clean-cut, but swarthy, and the eyes he turned on Carson and Cribb were like chilled steel.

"What were you doing on this island?" he demanded abruptly.

"Investigating the presence of this ship of yours!" answered Carson grimly.

The young man nodded.

"So I imagined," he said. "You are the two boys who have been assisting Lawless in his activities against us?"

"Yes," answered Carson, for it was futile to attempt to evade the question.

"Very good!" said the other. "I am Captain Zarnal, of the Baltic Fleet, which Lawless sank. I am taking you back to the Baltic with me, where you will be shot!"

He turned to Sebastian.

"See to the unloading of the gas cylinders!" he ordered, and when the dwarf had withdrawn, he turned again to the two boys. "I am going to keep you locked in a cabin until we sail," he said. "After that, you may have the run of the ship, for you cannot escape in mid-ocean."

Dawn found the Laughing Lass ploughing her way eastwards towards THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,443.

the Baltic with Cape Wrath well down on the starboard beam.

Carson and Cribb, prisoners aboard, were asleep in their cabin, worn out by the events of the past two nights.

It was a loud banging on their door and the sudden entry of Sebastian Coot which awakened them.

"You're to come on deck!" yelled the bo'sun. "Come on, hurry up! You'll see the sort of naval officer Captain Zarnal is!"

Wonderingly, Carson and Cribb followed the tottering oddity up the ladder to the iron deck. And there they halted, staring. For, lying hove-to quite near to them was a cargo vessel of about fifteen hundred tons and flying the British ensign.

She and themselves were the only craft on that desolate waste of waters, and, chucklingly, Sebastian Coot indicated two heavy twelve-pound guns concealed behind the weather rail of the Laughing Lass.

"We signalled her we were in distress," he giggled. "He, he, he! A boiler explosion, the captain said. There he is on the bridge!"

On the bridge Captain Zarnal was bellowing through a megaphone:

"We'll send you a boat to take a tow-line. We're disabled. Now, men!"

The latter words were shouted to the gun crews crouching by the twelve-pounders behind the weather rail. With a yell, Carson dashed forward, but as he did so the gun ports crashed down, and the guns roared into life.

The high explosive shells took the doomed freighter under the water-line, smashing their dreadful way through her plates. She rolled madly, and again the guns roared.

They tore the very bottom out of her, and she sank in three minutes, carrying every soul aboard to his death.

It was murder most foul!

The engine-room bell rang, and the Laughing Lass commenced to surge on through the water. And as he capered delightedly about the deck there burst from the lips of Sebastian Coot, preceded by his strident yelp:

"Ow, a tall, fine ship!

Till the ensigns dip,

And the black flag breaks on her main.

Then it's turn and run,

Or man every gun,

Or you'll never see your home port again!"

(Carson and Cribb, prisoners in the hands of cutthroats like Zarnal and Sebastian Coot, look like having a very warm passage aboard the Laughing Lass! Be sure you read the final chapters of this thrilling yarn in next Saturday's issue of the MAGNET.)

THE BOY WITH A BORROWED NAME

(Continued from page 24.)

"That's his respectful way of speaking of Prout! He says he heard him come up a few minutes later."

"I jolly well did!" said Bunter. "I was in Coker's study—I mean, I wasn't in Coker's study, nowhere near it, and if Coker makes out that I had that game pie—"

"Shut up, you fat blitherer!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"That fat burglar bagged the smokes because Price whopped him the other day," went on Wharton. "We found him smoking them in my study, and got the whole story out of him. The blithering idiot never tumbled to it that Price was putting the smokes in another fellow's pocket—but, of course, we did."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Well, by gad!" said Hilton.

Jim Warren's face set hard.

His eyes turned on Price—sitting pale and dumb with utter dismay at this exposure. His scheme had failed—but he had never dreamed that it would come home to roost, as it were, in this way.

"If that fat idiot hadn't bagged the smokes Prout would have found them in your blazer, Warrod!" said Harry Wharton. "That's what we've come here to tell you, to put you on your guard against that snake-in-the-grass."

"Thanks!" said Jim quietly.

"And there's another thing," went on Harry, his eyes gleaming scorn at the cad of the Fifth. "If anything of the kind should be fixed on you another time you've only to let us know, and we'll go to Prout and let him know what happened this time! That will put paid to the rotter if he tries the same game again—and he's that sort!"

"Price will be paid!" said Bob Cherry solemnly. "It's a low Price!"

"The lowfulness of the esteemed Price is terrific!"

And the juniors chuckled.

"That's all," said Harry. "Come on, you men—we've done here."

He opened the door again.

"I—I say, you fellows, don't be in a hurry!" exclaimed Billy Bunter. "I say, we've done Warren a jolly good turn, you know, and if he likes to ask us to tea—Yarood! Stop kicking me, you beast! I'm going, ain't I?"

And Bunter went.

The Famous Five followed him from the study, Wharton shutting the door. They left a grim silence behind them in the Fifth Form study.

"Good gad!" said Hilton at last. "Price, you awful worm—that's the jolly old limit!"

Jim Warren rose to his feet.

"Anything to say, Price?" he asked. Price cleared his throat.

"Only that it's a dashed lie!" he muttered thickly. "I—I never did anything of the kind, of course. They've made this up among them!"

"Cut that out!" said Warren. "I knew yesterday that you expected Prout to find something in that blazer—though I didn't know why then! He was going to overlook it, and you fairly made him search it—and your face was like a baffled villain's in a film when he found nothing in it. You had fixed it up all ready for him to find."

"It's a lie!" muttered Price.

"It's the truth," said Jim Warren quietly—"and you know it! Only the accident of that fat little sweep being here prevented you from landing me in a row with Prout! He's after the fellow who smokes in this study—and you fixed it up to make him believe it was I!"

"Too jolly thick, Pricey!" said Hilton, in disgust. "I'd jolly well punch you if I was Warren!"

"Which is exactly what Warren is going to do!" said Jim. "I've let you say what you like about me, Price, but this sort of thing has got to stop—and it's got to stop sharp! Put up your hands, you worm!"

"I won't!" hissed Price. "I'm not going to fight you, you rotter! I—"

"You are!" Warren reached over and gripped Price's thin nose with his finger and thumb. There was a yell from Price as he tweaked it.

"Now, you worm!"

Price fairly bounded at him. With glinting eyes and snarling mouth, he hurled himself at Warren, hitting out furiously.

Jim Warren met him grimly with right and left. One blow from Price got home—and then he was knocked across the study under a rain of blows. There was a crash as he went down in a corner.

"Get up!" snapped Warren.

Price panted, but he did not get up. His eyes gleamed up at Warren like a snake's.

"You rotter!" he breathed. "I'll make you pay yet! I'll show you up—I'll show you in your true colours!"

"Let's get out of this!" said Hilton contemptuously.

Jim Warren nodded, and they left the study together. Price was left alone—alone with his bitter rancour. Was his turn ever coming?

THE END.

(In making an enemy of Stephen Price, Jim Warren has done the worst thing possible for himself! Look out for the next super story in this splendid series: "BUNTER TELLS THE TRUTH!" It's a real corker!)

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PETER TODD Reveals—

STARTLING SECRETS OF GREYFRIARS NIGHT LIFE!

I used to think in my innocence that everything at Greyfriars had closed down by about ten-thirty. Fat lot I knew about it! From what I saw of things the other night, ten-thirty is just about the hour when Greyfriars begins to wake up!

The lad who led me into finding out all this was Harold Skinner. He offered to take me on a conducted tour of the night-life of Greyfriars for ninepence. I told him there wasn't ninepennyworth of night life in or near Greyfriars and Skinner offered money back if I wasn't satisfied with the value. That clinched it. I went!

The school clock was just chiming eleven when we set out. We had our coat collars pulled up and our caps pulled well down. This was Skinner's idea. He said there'd be panic among the night birds if they spotted a couple of Removites snooping around; but if we altered our appearance a little, they'd take us for mere burglars and bother no more about us!

You could have sworn there wasn't a soul awake. In the light of the silvery moon, the school looked like a giddy mortuary! But when we looked into things more closely, it jolly soon came to life.

Believe it or not, chaps, in the short space of half-an-hour I saw the following sights:

Four prefects in Wingate's study having a heated argument on politics.

Three Sixth Formers and a Fifth man playing banker in the Fifth games study.

A Form Trial taking place in the Upper Fourth dormitory.

A theatrical show being presented in the Third dormitory.

Half a dozen masked Shellfish holding a secret society session in the crypt.

That doesn't finish the list of activities I saw in full swing by a long chalk. But it gives you some idea of the sort of thing that goes on behind the scenes at Greyfriars after lights out, doesn't it?

THE AUDIENCE—AND THEY DIDN'T KNOW IT!

By HARRY WHARTON

This little incident is really funny. Hoskins, the Shell piano champ., came to me the other day with a novel suggestion. He had just started a small orchestra in the Shell and his idea was to give a Promenade Concert in the Rag one evening.

"I realise it would be unfair to expect everybody in the Rag to sit still for an hour while we played," he said. "But a Promenade Concert allows the chaps to walk about or play chess and carry on just as usual while the music is going on."

It seemed quite a good wheeze, and I told him I'd do what I could to help him.

The following evening I trotted along to the Rag to tell the chaps all about it. But somehow I couldn't get a word in anywhere. Temple & Co. were holding a debate in one corner. Bolsover and Bulstrode had come to blows over a game of chess in another. Smithy and Redwing were playing an exciting game of table tennis to the accompaniment of cheers from a large crowd of spectators. Another group were arguing hotly over the team I'd selected to play against Bookwood!

I tried for about half an hour to broach the subject of Hoskins' Promenade Concert. But I didn't get it across once. Finally, I made a move for the door.

And then I made a staggering discovery. Hoskins' orchestra had been playing all the evening—and nobody in the Rag had even noticed it!



The GREYFRIARS HERALD

No. 158.

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

October 12th, 1935.



KICK the BALL— NOT the MAN

Advises BOLSOVER MAJOR

I'm sorry to say it, but foul play is on the increase among footer players at Greyfriars. I try to shut my eyes to it, but it's no good. Facts are facts!

There was a lamentable example of it at Removite Compulsory Practice the other day. I won't mention names, but the chap concerned will know who I mean. What happened was this. I'd just tripped up one man and given another a punch on the nose and I was getting away nicely with the ball, when someone ran up to me and actually charged me! I distinctly felt his shoulder brush me, so I know I wasn't mistaken!

Of course, I turned round and gave the chap a fearful blow between the eyes that laid him out for the rest of the afternoon. But that didn't console me for being fouled. The thought of that foul riled me; I can tell you!

Since then, I've seen many more examples of this awful new brutality on the footer field. One chap actually stepped on my toes. He said it was an accident, but I knew better. I knocked him down and jumped on him, to teach him to be more gentle in future.

The worst case cropped up yesterday, when we were playing a scratch game after morning school. A hulking great brute only about a foot shorter than I came barging along and kicked me instead of the ball! It was a terrific kick, too. I could feel it for at least two seconds after!

Just to show him that fair play still counts with some chaps, I swung him round by the ankles and banged his head against one of the goal posts. But my argument is that it shouldn't be necessary to do things like this to stop fellows playing dirty.

I appeal to you to put a stop to it before I have to adopt sterner measures. Kick the ball—not the man! Play fair and be a true sportsman—like me! I'll jolly well slaughter you if you don't!

(VERY) PERSONAL

THIN EARS ARE UNSIGHTLY

But if yours happen to be thin, don't despair. Just drop in and see me in Study No. 11, and I'll give you a couple of thick ears entirely free of charge!—JOHNNY BULL, Thick Ear Expert.

BRUISELESS BOUND-BREAKING

Why risk bumps and bruises, climbing over the school wall, when you can hire our amazing portable travelling cradle for a bob a night? Simple as A B C! Write for particulars—STOTT'S HAULAGE CO., Study No. 11, Removite.

TO INQUIRERS

No, Bolsover is NOT practising yodelling. The sounds you hear inside Study No. 10 are caused by a defective pipe which doesn't take the water through properly.

IS SLEEPY SICKNESS SPREADING?

Well known Greyfriars lecturer would like observers' opinions on this question. At a recent lecture on "Hints on Hunting Grizzles," half his audience appeared to be affected by it!—Write P. P. P., Masters' Common-room, Greyfriars.

EVIDENTLY

Young Dicky Nugent tells us indignantly that he's like a slave.

He evidently finds life in the Second too much "Faag!"

The PRISONER in the Tower!



Another rousing instalment of Dicky Nugent's Great Serial "Dr. Birchmell's Protégé!"

Mr. I. Jollifwell Lickham, the master of the Fourth at St. Sam's, poked his head nervously round the door of the Head's study.

"You sent for me, sir," he murmured.

Dr. Birchmell nodded grimly.

"Quite right, Lickham. Something terrible has happened. The Fourth Form have risen in revolt!"

"Here, draw it mild, sir!" gasped Mr. Lickham. "I can hardly believe—"

"Nevertheless, it's true!" snapped the Head.

"The Fourth have struck with unanimity—and I am struck with amazement!"

Mr. Lickham eyed the Head narrowly.

"Is it anything to do with that nephew of yours, sir?" he asked.

"That is the eggcase they are making, certainly," answered the Head.

"Then in that case, sir, I can't say I'm surprised," said Mr. Lickham, edging cautiously towards the door.

"The way you've made that young hooligan cock of the walk in the Fourth is a fowl shame!"

Dr. Birchmell's paw strayed towards the inkwell.

"So that's the way you look at it, is it?" he remarked unpleasantly.

"Well, Lickham, allow me to say that the boy you call a 'young hooligan' is a lad of blameless character and undeniable genius—a worthy bearer of the honoured name of Birchmell!"

With that, the Head

grabbed the inkwell and threw it at Mr. Lickham with terrific force.

Crash!

The inkwell found a billet—but not the one the Head had intended! Mr. Lickham, with a lightning-like movement, had ducked just in time and, instead of hitting him, the inkwell had hit Burleigh of the Sixth, who was unlucky enough to look in just then.

"Woocooop! Gugg-g-grooooo!" yelled Burleigh, as about half-a-pint of best blue-black streamed down his dial.

"Sorry!" said the Head, smiling feintly at the comical site Burleigh presented. "Wipe it off with Mr. Lickham's gown, will you? That's the way! Now, Burleigh! Have you any news of the rebels?"

"Ow! Yes, sir!" gasped Burleigh, when he had removed some of the ink from his face. "I've run them to earth at last, sir!"

"You mean they're lying down on the ground?" ejaculated the Head, in surprise.

"No, sir," grinned Burleigh. "What I mean is that

they're barring themselves out in the old tower!"

The Head seized a big birch from his desk and jumped to his feet with a ringing war-whoop, and galloped to the old deserted tower of St. Sam's. He little dreamed of the surprise he was going to get there!

About an hour previously, Jack Jolly had led the

rebels of the Fourth into the old tower. None of them expected to find anyone inside.

As Fearless remarked, nobody but the Head's nephew had been near the place for ages—and why Bert Birchmell visited it was a mystery!

But when the rebels started eggsporing, they soon found they were not the inmates of the tower after all. High up in the topmost chamber, they came across a most astonishing site.

Lying on the floor, was a young fellow about their own age, gagged so that he couldn't say a word and bound so that he couldn't move a limb!

"Grate pip!" gasped Frank Fearless. "It's a prisoner!"

Jack Jolly quickly felt of his hands and neck—and cut the prisoner's bonds and ungagged him.

"How long have you been here?" was his first question.

"Quite a long time, old fellow," answered the prisoner in a pezzant, mewalish voice.

"At a ruff guess, I should say a month!"

"A—month?" gasped Jack Jolly in stupefaction.

"Then who are you?"

The prisoner's answer sent

a thrill of amazement through the breathless crowd.

"I AM BERT BIRCHEMELL," he said. "Nephew of the Headmaster of St. Sam's!"

"Bert Birchmell?" cried Jack Jolly. "But that's impossible! Bert Birchmell is in the Skool House and he's a chap with a complexion like pickled pork and crool, furtive eyes, and—"

"Eggscuse me, but you needn't go on," grinned Bert Birchmell the Second. "I know the chap you're describing only too well. He's the chap who has been keeping me prisoner in this tower. His real name is Charlie Cheetham and he's a fugitive from prison!"

"Few!"

"Bai Jove! Then how is it the Head duzzent know he's an impostor?" demanded the Honorable Guy de Vere.

"Because Doctor Birchmell has never met his nephew before," replied the stranger. "Consequently, he duzzent know him from Adam!"

"That's true!" eggsgained Jolly. "I was there when they first met! But—how did he come to take your place, then?"

"I met him in the train," answered the real Bert Birchmell. "I didn't want to come to St. Sam's, and he said it was just what he'd like. So he took on my eye-identity, while I went out into the world in search of fame and fortune!"

"Grate pip!"

"Afterwards," went on the Head's real nephew, "I found out the trewh about him and tried to end the bargain. But he nooked me unconshus and carried me here—and here I've been ever since!"

"My hat!" cried Jack Jolly. "Won't the Head get

a shock when he hears this?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bang! Crash! Wallop! There was a sound of furious kicking and thumping at the door at the bottom of the tower. The juniors looked at each other meaningly.

"The Head!" grinned Jack Jolly. "Let's break the news to him!"

There was a rush to the winders. Far below, the juniors saw the Head, kicking and banging at the door for all he was worth. He stopped to

shake his birch at them when he saw them.

"Open this door and lemme in!" he yelled. "I'll bust it open if you don't!"

"Keep your hair on, sir!" yelled back Jack Jolly.

"We've just made a discovery—about your nephew!"

"Ha! I knew you would in time!" yelled the Head.

"You've discovered that he's a noble, [kind-harted, jennorous lad, eh?"

"Not eggactly! We've discovered that he's an impostor! He's not your nephew

at all, sir, but an escaped convict!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Your real nephew is here, and I fancy he can soon prove his eye-identity," grinned Jack Jolly. "Will you promise me to whop us now, if we open the door?"

"Anything you like!" gasped the Head, who looked quite dazed by the astounding news. "Open the door at once—sooner if you can!"

In less than a minnit the door was open. In less than two minnits the Head had heard the whole story. In less than three minnits he was on his way to the Skool House, with the light of battle in his eyes.

"Hallo, dear uncle!" winced the impostor, as Dr. Birchmell burst into his study. "Any news of the rebels?"

Then he caught site of the Head's sturn features and he jumped to his feet with a yell. He yelled still more as the Head's birch started dusting his bags.

Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack!

A mitey cheer went up from the juniors crowded in the doorway. They had had to put up with some hardships since that sneaking, cowardly booby who had called himself Bert Birchmell had arrived at St. Sam's; but to hear him shrieking with aggerney under the Head's birch seemed to make it worth while now!

Everything in the garden was lovely once more. Eggsept, of course, for the eggposed impostor—and nobody had any regrets over the fate that was in store for that dubble-dyed villan, the Head's Protégé!

THE END.

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!



Asked to play a small part in a film being made near Greyfriars, George Wingate had to pretend to rescue a drowning actor. The actor caught his head on the boat and was stunned! Wingate effected a real rescue, and was warmly congratulated on the "star" part he had played!

Bob Cherry means to "lift" the championship trophy for juniors at the next Public Schools' contest. He keeps up his form by practising every day. He started Shell fellows by taking on their captain, Jamn Hobson, for six rounds. And Bob gave "Hobby" something to think about!

Billy Bunter does not refer to the occasion last vac. when he ate a dozen oysters and then went on a steamer trip. He felt very indeed. Bob Cherry told him the oysters, but Bunter refused to believe it. It "red" "Ashy" to Harry Wharton & Co.!

Monly Newland, the Jewish junior, makes a hobby of folding pieces of paper into weird shapes with remarkable ingenuity. He made a paper model of the Eiffel Tower, but when Skinner maliciously set fire to it, Newland "blazed up"! Skinner found him quite "red hot"!

Mr. Hacker and Mr. Capper are very keen on debating, and they stayed up till three o'clock in the morning arguing. When Mr. Quelch suggested they would be fresher if they got more sleep, Messrs. Hacker and Capper sat up the next night debating whether Mr. Quelch was right!

The ghost of Manueverer Towers is supposed to walk at the mystic hour of midnight whenever there is a full moon, but "Mauly" says he has never seen it. Asked by Bob Cherry if he had ever sat up watching, "Mauly" said he had—but he had fallen asleep. A true "yawn"!