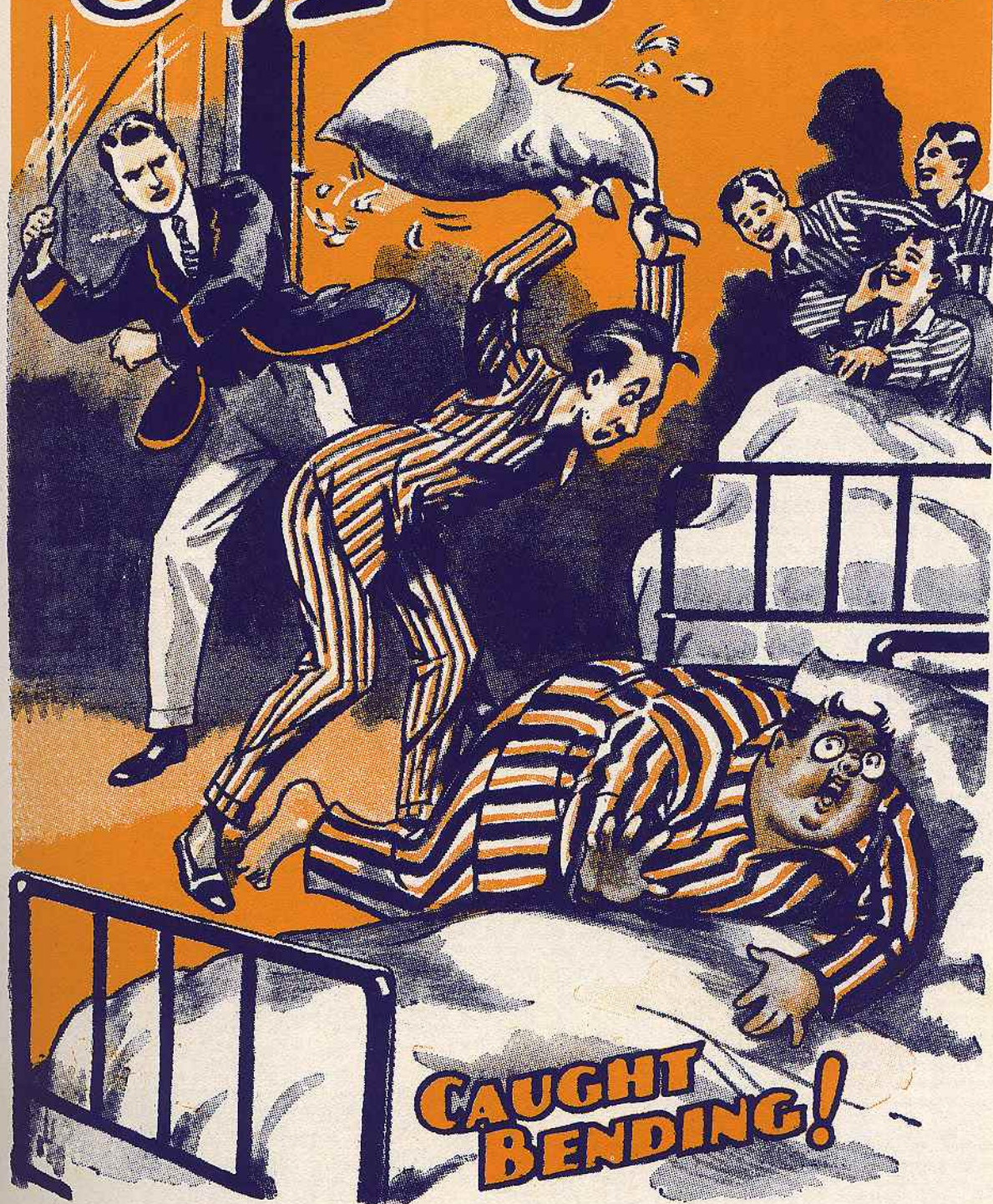
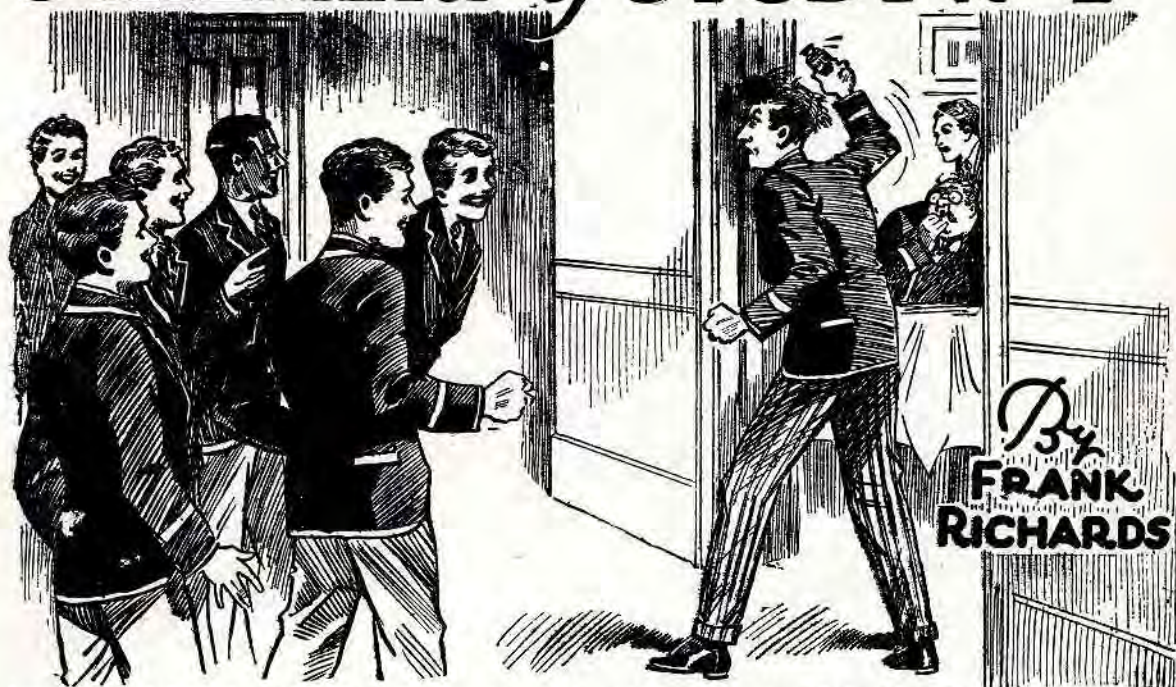


"SCHEMERS OF STUDY No. 7" Sensational Cover-to-Cover Story of HARRY WHARTON
& Co., at Greyfriars, by FRANK RICHARDS.

The Magnet ^{2^d}



SCHEMERS of STUDY No 7



By
**FRANK
RICHARDS**

Amazing and Amusing New Extra-Long Complete School Story of **HARRY WHARTON & CO., the World-Famous Chums of Greyfriars.**

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Like Loder's Cheek!

"**P**ASS on, friend, and all's well!" Peter Todd, of the Greyfriars Remove, made that remark quite affably.

Loder of the Sixth, to whom he made it, did not look affable.

He glared at the cheery Peter. "Full up, Loder!" said Bob Cherry, over Peter's bony shoulder.

That carriage was full up—more than full up! It was the first day of the new term, and the Greyfriars fellows were going back. There was always a crowd at Courtfield Station at such a time—always a rush for the local train for Priardale. Naturally, it was a case of first come, first served—and Gerald Loder, of the Sixth Form, was a late comer.

The Famous Five of the Remove were in that carriage. Vernon-Smith and Redwing were in it. Peter Todd and Tom Dutton were in it. With nine fellows in a carriage intended for six, there was, obviously, no room for another—especially a big Sixth Form man.

On the other hand, Loder of the Sixth was a prefect; and it was rather a dangerous game arguing with a Sixth Form prefect; especially one who happened to be a bully as well, like Loder.

Loder wrenched at the door-handle. "Open that door, you young sweep!" he snapped. It did not open to Loder's wrench, as Peter was holding it inside. "Sorry," said Peter, still affable, "But we're crowded already, Loder. You can see that."

Loder could see it easily enough. The carriage was not only crowded, but

quite crammed. But that made no difference to Loder. He had looked in vain for a seat in other carriages, where there were other Sixth Form men. He was not going to wait for the next train. He was, in fact, going to turn some of those juniors out when he got in. But he had not got in yet, and with Peter's bony, but sinewy hand holding the door, he could not get in.

"Will you open that door?" roared Loder.

"The answer," said Peter, with undiminished affability, "is in the negative."

"Toddy, old man—" said Harry Wharton.

"Chuck it, Toddy!" said Frank Nugent.

"The chuckfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed Toddy!" advised Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Every fellow in the carriage, of course, was on Peter's side. It was like Loder's cheek to barge into a carriage already over-full. But a Sixth Form prefect was liable to do what was right in his own eyes; and had the power of enforcing same with his official asplant. Every junior there would willingly have up-ended Loder on the platform; but Sixth Form prefects were not to be handled by juniors. Even Smithy advised Peter Todd to "chuck" it, and the Bounder was the most reckless fellow in the Remove.

But Peter did not chuck it. He gripped the door-handle hard to prevent Loder from turning it on the outside; and smiled affably at the Sixth-Former through the open window.

"Pass on, friend!" he repeated.

"You young rascal—"

"And all's well—"

Loder breathed fury.

"Get out of that carriage, Todd!" he said, between his teeth. "Do you hear me? Get out at once, or I'll give you six the minute we get to Greyfriars!"

"Toddy, you ass!" murmured Johnny Bull.

Toddy shook his head.

"You've no right to give me orders, Loder!" he said calmly.

"What do you mean, you young fool? Have you forgotten that I am a prefect?" hooted Loder. "By gad! I'll remind you fast enough when we get to the school!"

"At the present moment," said Peter Todd calmly, "you're no more a prefect than I am!"

Loder glared at him in sheer astonishment. The juniors in the carriage stared.

"Mad?" asked Smithy.

"Sane, thanks!" said Peter.

"You jolly well know that Loder's a prefect, you ass!"

"What the dickens do you mean, Toddy?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Exactly what I say!" answered Peter. "Prefects are appointed by the headmaster to carry out certain duties, and perform certain functions in a school, and for this purpose are invested with a portion of the headmaster's authority—"

"Oh crikey!"

"You long-winded ass!"

"Cut it short!"

"This is what comes of being a giddy lawyer!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Toddy could jaw the hind leg off a mule."

"Will you open this door?" roared Loder. "The train will be starting in a minute! I order you, as a prefect!"

Peter Todd was the son of a solicitor. He had—or fancied that he had—an aptitude for the law. There was no

doubt that he had a propensity for argument.

"The authority of a prefect," continued Peter, "begins with the term, and ends with the term. In the holidays a Sixth Form prefect is on exactly the same footing as a fag in the Second Form. May I point out to you, Loder, that we are not at Greyfriars yet, and that your authority as a prefect does not begin till we are? You have at the present moment no more right to give me orders than I have to give you orders."

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the juniors in the carriage.

Peter was right! There was no doubt that he was right. The holidays could not be said to have ended until the Greyfriars fellows joined up at Greyfriars. They were not at Greyfriars yet.

As a reasonable fellow, Loder ought to have admitted the argument, and given up the contest. Unfortunately, he was not a reasonable fellow.

Probably few Greyfriars prefects would have been reasonable to the extent required. Even good-tempered fellows like old Wingate, or Gwynne, would probably have given Toddy "six" for his cheek, regardless of the rights of the matter.

And Loder was far from good-tempered. He was, indeed, the worst-tempered prefect in the Sixth Form at Greyfriars School.

Far from convinced by Toddy's unanswerable legal arguments, he glared at the schoolboy lawyer as if he could have bitten him.

"You cheeky young scoundrel!" gasped Loder. "Will you open that door before the train starts, or not?"

"Not!" said Peter calmly. "When we get to the school, Loder, you can give me orders as a prefect. At the present moment, you are simply a member of the public—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And I don't like members of the public kicking up a shindy at the door of my carriage!" went on Peter. "Pass on!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors.

Loder gasped with wrath. It was clear that he had no use for legal arguments, and did not care two hoots for the rights and wrongs of the matter. What he wanted was a seat in the carriage before the train started.

He wrenched furiously at the door-handle. It remained as firm as a rock. Suddenly releasing it, Loder reached up through the open window. His grasp fastened suddenly, and like a steel vice, on Peter Todd's rather prominent nose.

The smile left Peter's face. He yelled with anguish as that fierce grip on his nose dragged his head through the window.

"Yow-ow-ow!" he shrieked. "Let go my nose! Oh crumbs! Urrgh! Will you led go by dose?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder did not let go. He gripped hard. With both hands, Peter grabbed at the clutching finger and thumb on his suffering nose. Naturally, he had to let go of the door-handle to do so. Loder, with his free hand, turned the handle and opened the carriage door.

Then he released Peter's painful nose. Peter clasped it with both hands, gurgling.

"Oooooogh!"

There was a shriek from the engine. The train was going. Loder plunged in. Bump!

Peter Todd landed on the platform in a yelling heap. Loder glared round at the grinning Removites. Probably he

would have hurled out a few more had there been time. But there was not. A porter rushed up and slammed the door—the train was moving.

Loder sat down in Peter's seat, scowling. Harry Wharton & Co. chuckled. Peter Todd, sitting on the platform, clasped his painful proboscis, gurgled, and guggled, and blinked after the departing train. As a lawyer, he could consider that he had won his case; but as a Remove junior, he had certainly lost his seat in the train. He was still rubbing an aching nose when, half an hour later, he caught the next train.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Whose Cake?

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Dear old Bunter!" grinned Bob Cherry.

Billy Bunter blinked into Study No. 1, in the Remove, through his big spectacles. It was a very affable blink. The fat Owl of the Remove seemed pleased to see his old friends again, after the holidays.

Perhaps his old friends were glad to see Bunter. It did not, perhaps, sound like it when Harry Wharton looked round and said:

"Buzz off, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"How did Bunter know we had doughnuts?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

Peter Todd declares that Study No. 7 is a fighting study. But when he and Tom Dutton go on the warpath they want to make sure first of getting the right victim!

First day of term was a busy day. Fellows had to see the Head, to hand over medical certificates; they had to see their Form-master—generally a little worried and crusty on the first day; they had to bag their studies; they had to unpack. They had lots of things to do. Now, however, Harry Wharton & Co., being at leisure, had gathered in Study No. 1, which belonged to Wharton and Nugent, and were refreshing themselves with doughnuts.

Fellows who had doughnuts could not really be surprised to see Billy Bunter blow in. Bunter's little fat nose had a wonderful scent for a feed.

"I say, you fellows, I never knew you had doughnuts," said the fat Owl, rolling in. "Still, I'll have some! I've got a cake—"

"Eh?"

"What?"

"My esteemed hat!"

Bunter had a bundle under a fat arm. He laid it on the table, in the view of five pairs of astonished eyes. Cramming a doughnut into his capacious mouth first, in order to lose no time, the Owl of the Remove proceeded to unwrap that bundle, disclosing a large, handsome, and aromatic plum cake.

The Famous Five could only stare.

Bunter, it seemed, had not come to the study for doughnuts; he had come to whack out a cake! William George Bunter seemed to have started new manners and customs with the new term.

"Well, my only hat!" said Bob Cherry.

"Have some!" said Bunter hospitably. "It's a ripping cake. I had it from Bunter Court, you know—"

"With a Courtfield shop label on it!" grinned Bob.

"I mean, I fetched it from Courtfield specially to whack out with you fellows!" said Bunter. "Lots to go round! I say, these doughnuts ain't bad! You fellows start on the cake."

The Famous Five were nothing loth. Billy Bunter, when he had any tuck, generally found room for same in his capacious interior. If he was starting new manners and customs, it was a change for the better, and to be encouraged. The chums of the Remove encouraged him. Bob Cherry sliced the cake, and handsome slices were handed round.

Bunter guzzled doughnuts.

"Like it?" he asked. "Don't spare it. I don't want any left."

It was more and more surprising. Still, the juniors took Bunter at his word, and did not spare the cake.

"Keep some for Toddy and Dutton," suggested Nugent.

Peter Todd and Tom Dutton shared Study No. 7 with Billy Bunter.

"Oh, never mind, Toddy," said Bunter, with his mouth full. "Toddy's a suspicious beast—"

"What?"

"I mean, he's an ill-tempered beast. He seems to have hurt his nose on the train, coming, and he's like a bear with a sore head!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were not surprised to hear that Toddy was not in his bonniest mood. They had seen Loder's grip on Toddy's nose in the train, and had no doubt that Peter was feeling as if he had caught it in a door.

There was a tramp of feet in the Remove passage.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "If that's Temple—"

Billy Bunter gave a jump.

"Temple!" he ejaculated. "I—I say, you fellows, if Temple of the Fourth butts in here, turf him out. Don't listen to anything he says—just turf him out on his neck!"

"He won't be after you, fathead!" said Bob. "But I fancy he may be looking for me. I knocked his hat off in the quad, just for the sake of auld lang syne."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He chased after me, and ran into Coker of the Fifth!" said Bob. "I left him arguing with Coker."

The tramp of feet passed the open doorway of Study No. 1. Bob put down his slice of cake and picked up an inkpot.

But it was not Temple & Co. of the Fourth. Russell and Ogilvy, Hazeldene and Monty Newland, and Dick Penfold passed on their way to their studies. Bob grinned, set down the inkpot, and picked up the slice of cake again.

"I say, you fellows!" squeaked Bunter. "Come in and have some cake."

The juniors in the passage stopped and looked in.

"Whose cake?" grinned Russell.

"Oh, really, Russell—"

"Bunter's!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Bunter's standing cake all round. Roll in, you men, and whack it out—there's lots."

Five Removites rolled in.

It was a large cake—a very large cake. But it diminished rapidly under the assault of so numerous a party.

Bunter, having finished the doughnuts, started on cake. At the same time, he urged the other fellows to help themselves.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,492.

Hospitality, it seemed, was boundless. Bunter, undoubtedly, was cultivating new manners and customs.

On the rare occasions when Bunter had more tuck than he could consume at a single sitting, it was his way to leave it till he was hungry again—which was never very long. Now, it was clear, he didn't want any of that cake left. He was really anxious to see it eaten to the last crumb and the last plum.

"You fellows seen Temple of the Fourth?" asked Hazeldene, with a chuckle.

"Sort of!" grinned Bob.

"The dear man's raising Cain. Somebody knocked his hat off in the quad and he dropped a parcel he was carrying. When he went back to look for them he found his hat, but couldn't find the parcel."

"Eh? If he dropped it in the quad it must be there, I suppose," said Harry Wharton.

"Well, it seems that it isn't!" said Hazel. "I say, this is a jolly good cake! Where did you get this cake, Bunter?"

"From Bunter Court, old chap. I mean, I called at Chunkley's, in Court-field, and bought it—"

"Not much difference!" remarked Monty Newland.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dear old Bunter!" said Bob. "He can't help telling whoppers. But it's a jolly good cake—or was!"

That cake was in the past tense now!

"Jolly good!" agreed the grinning Hazel. "Thanks, Bunter—though perhaps I ought to go and thank Temple."

"Oh, really, Hazel—"

"Why Temple?" asked Harry Wharton, staring.

"Well, Temple can't find the parcel he dropped in the quad, and he says there was a cake in it—"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Bunter, you fat villain—"

"I say, you fellows, this isn't Temple's cake; it's quite another cake!" exclaimed Bunter, in alarm. "Don't be suspicious beasts, like Toddy! Toddy made out that it was Temple's cake, just because he saw me pick up the parcel—"

"Wha-a-t?"

"Toddy's suspicious, you know! Being a lawyer's son, of course, he would be! This cake came straight from Bunter Court—I mean, from Chunkley's Stores—"

"You fat burglar!" roared Johnny Bull wrathfully. "You've snaffed Temple's cake and brought it here—"

"Oh, really, Bull! If that's how you thank a fellow for whacking out a splendid cake with you—"

"We might have guessed that one, I think!" said Harry Wharton.

"The mightfulness is terrific!"

"Well, I like that!" said Bunter indignantly. "I whack out a splendid cake with a lot of fellows, and that's how I get thanked. Making out it's not my cake! If Temple says it's his cake, it's pure gammon, and I expect my friends to stand by me, after whacking out the cake. If he comes up here making a fuss, just chuck him out on his neck!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Hazel.

Billy Bunter's boundless hospitality was explained now. With the just owner of that cake in search of it, he did not want any left, by way of evidence against him. And he did want the sharers of the cake to rally round him if Cecil Reginald Temple of the Fourth Form cut up rusty.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,492.

"Rotten, I call it!" went on Bunter warmly. "I haven't seen Temple of the Fourth at all. I don't really know whether he is coming back this term. And he wasn't carrying a parcel when I saw him, either. As for picking it up when he dropped it, I never even thought of such a thing. Besides, he didn't drop it."

"Oh crikey!"

"And if he makes out there was a cake in it, it's gammon! I believe he had school books in that parcel."

"The parcel he wasn't carrying!" gasped Nugent.

"Yes—no—I mean—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fat brigand!"

"You can call a fellow names, after eating his cake!" said Bunter. "You've jolly well had the cake, anyhow! If Temple comes up here—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Hazel. "Suppose Capper comes?"

"Rot! Temple wouldn't tell his beak!"

"It was Capper's cake!" yelled Hazel.

"Wha-a-t?"

"That's what Temple's telling the world at the present moment, down in the quad. That parcel wasn't Temple's—it was Capper's. His beak asked him to carry it into the House and put it in his study, while he jawed with Prout."

Billy Bunter's fat jaw dropped.

"I—I—I say, you fellows, it's all rot!" he gasped. "What would a Form-master want with a cake? It can't be the Fourth Form beak's cake! How could it? Oh crikey! I—I—I say, if— if Capper comes after that cake, don't you fellows mention that I had any of it! Oh lor!"

"Well, you've done it now, you fat villain!" said Bob Cherry. "Goodness knows what Capper wanted a cake for—beaks ain't generally keen on cakes—but if it was Capper's, you've jolly well done it!"

"I haven't!" shrieked the alarmed Owl. "You fellows have! You had most of the cake! Look here, I'm going, and if Capper comes after that cake, don't you mention my name! That's important!"

Bunter rolled to the door of Study No. 1. Evidently he was anxious to get away from the spot where Mr. Capper's cake had been consumed—the scene of the crime, as it were!

Snaffing a Fourth Form fellow's cake was quite a trifle, but snaffing the property of a beak was awfully serious. Beaks had no sense of humour. Beaks wouldn't call it grub-raiding, or snaffing, or snooping. They would call it pilfering. They might call it theft! Really, with a beak, you never could tell! Even Billy Bunter would not have annexed that cake had he known that it was the property of a member of Dr. Locke's staff. Bunter was only anxious now to avoid dire consequences. The juniors could have stood by him in a row with Temple. They couldn't help him in a row with a beak.

He rolled out of the study. The fragments of the cake—and the consequences—were left to Study No. 1.

Bunter intended to depart quickly. As it happened, he departed more quickly than he had intended.

Johnny Bull jumped up, leaped after him, and let out a boot.

Thud!

"Yarooooop!" roared Bunter.

He flew.

There was a bump and a roar in the Remove passage.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Capper's Catch!

"EXTRAORDINARY!" said Mr. Capper.

"I'm awfully sorry, sir," said Temple of the Fourth,

"but—"

Mr. Capper looked at him severely. Temple's sorrow was all very well; no doubt grateful and comforting, in its way. But what Mr. Capper wanted was the parcel he had entrusted to that member of his Form.

"I must have the parcel, Temple!" he pointed out.

"It—it's gone, sir!"

"That," said the master of the Fourth, "is nonsense, Temple! How could it be gone? You say that you dropped it in the quadrangle. Obviously it must be still there. Go and pick it up again, Temple."

"I've looked for it everywhere, sir. I've asked Dabney and Fry to help, and they've looked, too—and it's gone! I've asked a dozen men in and out of the House. Nobody seems to have seen it. It hasn't been brought in by anybody. It—it's just gone!"

"Extraordinary!" repeated Mr. Capper.

Mr. Capper was sitting in his study. He frowned at Temple across his study table. Cecil Reginald Temple, having reported the unfortunate loss of the parcel, was anxious to go. Still, he realised that Capper would naturally feel a little dissatisfied about this.

"It is extraordinary!" said Mr. Capper, making that statement for the third time. "I handed you a parcel to carry into the House for me, Temple, while I was detained with Mr. Prout. I came in, expecting to find it here. I did not find it. Now you tell me it is lost. Probably you were aware, Temple, that that parcel contained a cake—a large cake."

"Yes, sir. I—I thought so."

"If the parcel cannot be found," said Mr. Capper, "it is clear that it has been picked up, and it would appear that some boy has yielded to the temptation of eating the cake."

Temple thought it probable. Really, there was no other way of accounting for the vanishing of the parcel. Moreover, he remembered that he had seen Bunter of the Remove in the office when Bob Cherry knocked his hat off, and he went in infuriated pursuit of Bob, forgetful of his Form-master's parcel. When a cake was missing, and Bunter wasn't, it really was not difficult to guess what might have become of the cake!

But Temple did not tell Mr. Capper all that. He was prepared to kick Billy Bunter all round Greyfriars School and back again, but not to give him away to a beak. So Temple said nothing.

"It is very unfortunate," said Mr. Capper. "I bought that cake in Court-field, Temple, as I came to-day. It was my intention to ask some boys of my Form to tea in my study—you among them, Temple. I shall not be able to carry out that intention if the cake cannot be found."

Cecil Reginald Temple inwardly resolved to put plenty of beef into the kicking he had up his sleeve for Billy Bunter.

"But," resumed Mr. Capper, "this matter cannot rest where it is. The cake must be found—or, at least, traced. Pilfering—"

"Oh, sir!"

"Pilfering cannot be overlooked. Dishonesty cannot be condoned!" said Mr. Capper. "The matter must be investigated. Unfortunate as it is that this

incident should occur on such a busy day, it must be inquired into at once. Explain to me, Temple, why you dropped the parcel in the first place, and why, in the second, you did not immediately pick it up."

"A—a chap knocked my hat off, sir!" stammered Temple. "I—I dropped the parcel when—when I went after him."

"That was extremely thoughtless," said Mr. Capper. "Am I to understand that it was gone when you returned for it?"

"Yes, sir. I've asked everybody." "Who knocked off your hat, Temple?"

"A—a—a Remove chap, sir!" stammered Temple.

Mr. Capper's frown intensified. Temple was red and uncomfortable. He could not refuse to answer his Form-

of books, half-unpacked, on the floor. The Remove master looked busy, and not in the sweetest of tempers. He made a visible effort to repress his impatience as the master of the Upper Fourth looked in.

"Are you busy, Quelch?" asked Mr. Capper.

"As a matter of fact, Capper, I am," answered the master of the Remove.

"Then I am sorry to interrupt you," said Mr. Capper, proceeding to do it, all the same, sorry as he was. "It is a rather serious matter, Quelch." He coughed. "A matter of what I can only describe as petty pilfering, and I regret to say that suspicion falls on boys in your Form."

Mr. Quelch rose from the table. His aspect was not unlike that of a ruffled turkey-cock.

"And the parcel was missing afterwards. You will see for yourself, Quelch, the connection—"

"None whatever."

"A Remove boy causes Temple to drop the cake. The cake is then missing. The connection is perfectly clear!" said Mr. Capper warmly. "Either that Remove boy, or a friend—I may say a confederate—seized upon the cake—"

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Quelch. "I see no reason to suppose anything of the kind. I suggest looking in Fourth Form studies. No doubt some boy of your own Form can tell you what became of the cake."

Mr. Capper flushed.

"I suggest an inquiry in the Remove, Quelch!"

Mr. Quelch sat down again.



As Mr. Capper reached the first study in the Remove passage, a fat figure came shooting out of the doorway. Billy Bunter bumped against the Upper Fourth Form master's legs with a heavy bump, and Mr. Capper staggered across the passage.

"Yoo-hoop!" roared Bunter. "Oh!" gasped Mr. Capper.

master. But he did not want Remove fellows to call him a sneak.

"It—it was only a lark, sir!" he stammered. "He—he just tipped off my hat, sir, for a—a lark. I was shirty at the time, but—but it was only a lark."

"Quite so, Temple," said Mr. Capper, "and I should not think of taking note of so trifling an incident. But it seems to me probable that this incident has a connection with the loss of the parcel. The Remove boy's action caused you to drop it, to leave it lying on the ground, and it disappeared. Some other Remove boy, no doubt—"

Mr. Capper pursed his lips.

"You may go, Temple," he said. "I will inquire into this matter personally. You will take a hundred lines for your carelessness. Now go!"

And Temple went.

Mr. Capper, after a few minutes' reflection, left his study and walked down the passage to Mr. Quelch's study.

Mr. Quelch was busy at a pile of papers on his table. There was a stack

"Nonsense, Capper!" he said decisively.

"Really, Quelch—"

"No such thing could possibly occur in my Form! I am surprised at the suggestion!"

"A cake is missing!"

"A what?" hooted Mr. Quelch.

"A cake—a large cake!" said Mr. Capper. "I may mention that I paid the sum of seven shillings and sixpence for it, Quelch."

Mr. Quelch stared at him. His look was expressive; and Mr. Capper went on hastily:

"It was not for my own consumption, Quelch. It was bought with the intention of asking some boys in my Form to tea in my study. I gave it to Temple, of my Form, to carry into the House. He dropped it."

"Very careless of him," said Mr. Quelch.

"Owing to a Remove boy knocking off his hat—"

"Oh!"

"If you decline to take the matter up, Quelch—"

"I have mentioned that I am busy, Mr. Capper. I have no time to waste on frivolous matters," said Quelch. "Neither am I entitled, as master of the Lower Fourth, to investigate in Upper Fourth studies where, I have not the slightest doubt, the cake may be found."

Mr. Capper made no answer to that. Breathless with indignation, he walked out of Quelch's study.

Quelch declined to take the matter up. Capper was not going to let it drop. He proceeded up the staircase.

He was no more entitled to investigate in the Remove than Quelch was in the Fourth. But as Quelch declined to concern himself in the matter—and indeed described it as a frivolous matter—Capper was assuming that right.

He marched across the landing, and entered the Remove passage.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1492.

He was going to investigate in every study in that passage; and he had no doubt of getting news of the cake. But as it happened his investigation did not need to proceed so far. He had reached the first study in the Remove passage, when a fat figure came shooting out of the doorway of that study—so suddenly that Mr. Capper was taken quite by surprise.

Billy Bunter bumped on the floor, right at Capper's feet, and roared and rolled, and bumped on Capper's legs with a heavy bump. And the Fourth Form master staggered across the passage.

"Yoo-hoop!" roared Bunter.

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Capper.

He recovered himself, reached at Bunter, grasped him by the collar, and hooked him to his feet.

Shake, shake, shake!

"Bunter, how dare you! How——"

"Ow! Leggo, you beast!" howled Bunter. The short-sighted Owl of the Remove did not, for the moment, recognise Capper.

"What?" hooted the Fourth Form master. "What?"

"Oh! Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter, as he realised that it was Capper. "Oh lor! Oh jiminy! I—I say, sir, I never had the cake! Oh crumbs! I—I never touched it, sir! I—I never knew it was your cake! I thought it was Temple's, sir! And I never touched it, either! I never knew it was your cake till Hazel said so in the study, sir! I wouldn't have bagged it if I'd known! And I never touched it! I wasn't in the quad at all when I was there, sir."

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Capper. "Bunter, I shall take you to your Form-master——"

"Oh, really, sir——" gasped Bunter. "Come!" hooted Mr. Capper. "Oh lor!"

There was a chuckle in Study No. 1 as the hapless Owl of the Remove was led away to the stairs. But Bunter did not chuckle as he went. He went with the direst anticipations, which were fully realised when he arrived in his Form-master's study.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Justice is Done!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. smiled.

Peter Todd did not.

That, no doubt, was because Peter could not see his own nose, and the Famous Five could.

It was the following day after class, and the Famous Five were enjoying the September sunshine in the quad, when Peter blew along.

Peter's nose showed up well in the September sunshine.

It displayed signs—very visible signs—of the hefty grip that Loder of the Sixth had laid on it at Courtfield Station the previous day. If it was not like Marian's in the ballad, red and raw, it was, at least, unusually highly coloured, and it felt very painful. It was rather a large nose, and it had given Loder a good grip. After the lapse of twenty-four hours it still glowed from that grip; and Peter had been the recipient of many little jests on the subject. Skinner of the Remove had advised him to wear a candle extinguisher on it. The Bouncer had asked for the loan of it as he had lost his matches. Fellows had shaded their

eyes with their hats, pretending to be dazzled by it. It was all very annoying to Toddy, and it was not surprising that he felt sore—as well as his nose.

"You can grin!" said Peter crossly. "I've got a pain in my nose. That brute Loder nearly pulled it off yesterday!"

"Well, if you cheek a prefect, old chap——" said Bob soothingly.

"Loder's rather a beast," said Harry Wharton. "But, dash it all, Toddy, a Lower Fourth man can't cheek a Sixth Form prefect!"

"Don't be an ass!" snapped Peter. "I pointed out to Loder that he wasn't a prefect till we got to Greyfriars——was he?"

"Perhaps not," said Harry, laughing. "But you can't expect the Sixth to see these fine distinctions. They haven't got the brains of the Remove, you know."

"Well, Loder's not getting away with it," said Peter darkly.

"He couldn't without pulling it right off," said Bob. "Besides, I don't suppose he really wants it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!" hooted Peter. "He's not getting away with this, I tell you! He had no more right to handle me than I had to handle him! He was simply an ordinary member of the public till we got to school; and so was I."

The Famous Five chuckled. The schoolboy lawyer had a clear perception of these fine distinctions. It was clear that Gerald Loder hadn't.

"Now he's here," went on Peter, "he really is a prefect, and a fellow can't punch him——"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob. "No, I wouldn't punch a prefect, Toddy. Too jolly dangerous."

"The dangerousness is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I'd pull his nose fast enough, or punch it," said Toddy. "But if I did, it means a flogging, and very likely the sack. Mustn't lay hands on the Head's dear little prefects. Ain't they the giddy Palladium of the school?" Peter snorted. "But there's such a thing as law and justice. Loder pulled my nose. I'm going to lay it before Wingate, as head prefect."

"How are you going to get it off?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly asses!" roared Peter. "I'm going to lay the matter before the head prefect, which is all a fellow can do. I want you fellows to come with me as witnesses."

"But——" ejaculated Wharton.

"I'm going to the prefects' room—they're there now—and I'm going to put it up to Wingate," said Peter firmly. "If he doesn't call Loder to order, I shall get my own back in my own way. If he gives Loder six, all right."

"I can see him doing it!" gasped Bob.

"Well, come on, and see," grunted Toddy.

And the Famous Five, grinning, followed him into the House. They were rather curious to see what the result would be of an appeal to the head prefect, which any Greyfriars man had a right to make, if it seemed good to him so to do.

Peter Todd, followed by his witnesses, marched along to the door of the prefects' room. That was not an apartment that juniors, as a rule, were keen to enter. Juniors seldom entered it, except to be whopped. Peter, however, knocked at the door, opened it, and marched in as bold as brass.

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After him walked the Famous Five. There were seven Sixth-Formers in the room. Wingate, Gwynne and Sykes were talking football. Loder and Walker, in a corner, were talking in low tones, probably about horses. Carne and Bancroft were playing chess. All of them, however, stared round in surprise at that sudden invasion of the sacred precincts by a mob of juniors.

"What the thump do you fags want?" asked the captain of Greyfriars.

Old Wingate was captain of the school, as well as head prefect—a most tremendous personage, in fact, in every way.

Loder gave Toddy a scowl. But the scowl changed into a grin as he noted the glow of Peter's nose, which had a rich, ripe effect.

"What is it, Wharton?" demanded Wingate.

"It's Toddy!" explained the captain of the Remove. "Toddy wants you to look at his nose."

"His nose?" repeated Wingate blankly. "What—"

"Just look at it!" said Peter. He tapped his nose with a lean forefinger, to draw attention to it. Really, that was not needed, its rich hue had drawn general attention already. "Loder did that, Wingate."

"Oh! Is this a complaint?" asked the head prefect.

"No; it's an appeal!" said Peter. "I want to see you give Loder six, Wingate."

"Wh-a-at?" ejaculated the Greyfriars captain.

Loder jumped, and all the seniors started.

"You cheeky young scoundrel!" roared Loder, starting to his feet. He made a stride towards Peter.

Toddy stood his ground. Wingate interposed hastily.

"Hold on, Loder! A junior has a right to appeal to the head prefect! Let the young ass get on with it!"

Loder breathed hard. But he stepped back, his eyes gleaming at Peter. It was clear enough to the Famous Five that Peter was asking for a lot of trouble in the near future from the bully of the Sixth. But the schoolboy lawyer did not give that a thought. Peter's legal mind was fixed on making out his case.

"Now, cut it short!" added Wingate. "I'm bound to hear you, Toddy, but don't waste my time, and don't be cheeky!"

"I'm laying this matter before you, Wingate, because it's against the rules for me to handle Loder myself!" explained Peter. "Otherwise I'd punch his nose!"

Loder glared, and the other prefects grinned. Exactly how a Lower Fourth junior was going to handle a Sixth Form man, who towered over him, was not quite clear, even if the rules of the school had permitted the same.

"Cut it short, you young ass!" said Wingate.

"Yesterday, at Courtfield Station, Loder ordered me to let him into my carriage!" said Peter. "I refused—"

"You admit that you refused to obey a prefect's order, and you come here to complain?" ejaculated Wingate.

"I pointed out to Loder that he wasn't a prefect in the holidays, and had no authority until the school reassembled for the term. Until then, Loder was simply an ordinary member of the public, and these fellows are witnesses that I pointed it out to him."

"We are!" murmured Bob Cherry. "We is!"

"Hear, hear!" grinned Johnny Bull. "Now I put it to you, Wingate, as a point of law—"

"You young ass!"

"As a point of law, have the school prefects authority over fellows in the holidays, or not?" continued Peter calmly.

"Certainly not!" said Wingate.

"A prefect's authority begins with the term, and ends with the term?" said Peter. "Is that it?"

"That's it."

"Then, as I pointed out to Loder, he was not a prefect, in the sense of exercising authority over juniors, until we got back to Greyfriars?"

Every face but Loder's was grinning now—except, of course, Peter's. The schoolboy lawyer was very serious.

"I think," admitted Wingate, "that you are right, Toddy. Perhaps it's a point hardly worth raising; but, admitting it, what next?"

"Loder, therefore, had no right to give me orders at Courtfield?"

"Perhaps not."

"That, gentlemen, is my case!" said Peter, apparently under the impression that he was addressing a jury. "Loder, while still an ordinary member of the public, assumed authority he did not possess. He made me let him open the carriage door by pulling my nose—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And pitched me out of the train!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now we're back at school he's a prefect again, and I can't punch him!" went on Toddy, heedless of merriment. "I leave it in your hands, Wingate, to administer justice."

"I hope," said Wingate gravely, "that no junior boy at Greyfriars will ever fail to get justice from his head prefect. Justice shall be done!"

"That's all I want!" said Peter.

"It may be more than you want!" remarked Wingate. "Admitting that Loder was a mere member of the public, with no authority, you were within your rights to refuse to obey an order. But I regret to say that I have no jurisdiction in the matter."

"You're head prefect, ain't you?" hooted Peter.

"Yes; but I have no authority over ordinary members of the public in the holidays!" explained Wingate. "What Loder did, as a member of the public, before the term started, does not come under my jurisdiction as head prefect of Greyfriars."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "Got you, Toddy! You can't have it both ways, old bean!"

Peter looked rather taken aback.

"This crime," Wingate continued, with great gravity, "was committed by a member of the British public against another member of the public. Nothing to do with Greyfriars prefects. If you were not under Loder's authority at the time, Toddy, Loder was not under mine. The matter, therefore, was simply a dispute between two members of the public. This court has no jurisdiction."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh!" said Peter.

Like many lawyers older than he, Peter was able to see only one side of a case. But it was clear that Wingate had, as Bob expressed it, "got" him.

"Pulling noses," continued Wingate, "is rather a rotten sort of thing. If any Greyfriars prefect ever pulls your nose, Toddy, I shall certainly deal with the matter as head prefect. But it's no use coming here and telling me what ordinary members of the public may have done in the holidays. You might as well tell me that a coconut-shy man pulled your nose on Hampstead Heath, on Bank Holiday!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The legal aspect of the matter

having been settled," went on Wingate, "the appeal is dismissed. We will now deal with your offences, Toddy."

"Eh? I haven't done anything!" said Peter, in alarm.

"You have spoken of handling Loder and punching him!" said Wingate. "Since the school reassembled, Loder ceased to be an ordinary member of the public, and became a Greyfriars prefect again. No junior boy is allowed to suggest such a thing as handling a prefect, or punching him. For this offence I shall give you six!"

"Oh!" gasped Peter.

"Will you hand me that ash, Loder?"

Loder grinned, and handed it. "Bend over, Toddy, and touch your toes!" said Wingate, swishing the ash-plant.

"I—I say—"

"You needn't say anything—the case is closed, and justice is going to be done, as I think you wanted—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd gazed at Wingate. He blinked at the Famous Five, who were grinning. Then he bent over and touched his toes.

Whack!

"Wow!"

Wingate gave one real whack and a few flicks, threw down the ash, and made a gesture towards the door. Peter Todd walked out, with feelings too deep for words, followed by the Famous Five, who were chuckling.

Loud laughter from the prefects' room followed them. Peter prided himself on his abilities as a lawyer; but there was no doubt that he had been out-lawyered, so to speak. He went down the passage wriggling, and wishing, perhaps, that he had left his legal gifts at home in Bloomsbury.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Easy Come, Easy Go!

"EIGHTEENPENCE each!" said Billy Bunter.

"Eh?"

"Five eightpences make seven-and-six!" said the Owl of the Remove, blinking seriously at Harry Wharton & Co. through his big spectacles. "I don't say that I'm a whale at arithmetic, but I think that's right."

"The rightfulness is terrific!" agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Well, shell out!" said Bunter. He held out a fat hand.

"Shell out!" repeated Harry Wharton.

"Yes; Capper's waiting."

"Capper?" repeated Bob.

"It's the cake!" explained Bunter. "I suppose you remember that old Capper made out that I had his cake the first day of term—"

"You fat villain, you know you had it!" said Frank Nugent.

"Well, I thought it was Temple's!" said Bunter. "Besides, I never had it—you fellows had it! You can't deny that! I stood you that cake out of sheer friendship—"

"You bloated brigand!"

"You can call a fellow names!" said Bunter. "But you can't get out of it—you had the cake, or most of it. That beast, Capper, took me to that other beast, Quelch, and he gave me a fearful whopping—"

"Good!"

"He was in a beastly temper!" said Bunter. "He was annoyed at Capper making complaints about the Remove, and instead of taking it out of Capper, he took it out of me. That's the sort of justice we get here. Well, I've got over

that. I mean, I'm not the man to make a fuss about a whopping—not like some fellows I could name. But the trouble is, that Quelch said I should have to pay for the cake."

"After the feast, the reckoning!" grinned Bob.

"Of course, I disdained to argue about it!" said Bunter. "Quelch told Capper the cake would be paid for, and that was that! Not the sort of thing a chap would haggle about."

"Not with Quelch!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"But I haven't been able to settle," explained Bunter. "I told Capper I was expecting a postal order—"

"Great pip!"

"And he left it till to-day—only," said Bunter sadly. "The postal order, for some reason, hasn't come! I thought it was a cert, you know, as it was from one of my titled relations. But—it hasn't come, and if I don't pay Capper, he will go to Quelch, and make out that I haven't paid for the cake."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at. The cake's got to be paid for!" said Bunter warmly. "You fellows had most of it. Mind, I don't want you to find the money. I stood treat. I'm paying. All I want you fellows to do is to find the money temporarily, till my postal order comes. That's all."

The Famous Five looked at Bunter, then looked at one another.

"You fat fooler!" said Harry. "You ought to be seragged for pinching a cake, and you ought to be spifficated for landing us in it. Still, we had some of the cake, believing it was yours, you frowsy frog. Capper will have to have his seven-and-six. Shell out, you men!"

There was a general groping in pockets.

It was only the third day of term, and cash brought back after the holidays had not yet taken wings unto itself and flown away. The sum of seven-and-sixpence was made up.

Quite a little heap of silver dropped into Bunter's fat palm.

He gave a satisfied grunt. Having had one whopping for snaffing Capper's cake, Bunter did not want another for neglecting to pay for the same, as his Form-master had ordered him to do.

"I say, you fellows, that's all right!" said the fat Owl. "Mind, this is only temporary. As soon as my postal order comes, I shall settle this seven-and-six. And I'll tell you what—the postal order will be for ten bob. Lend me half-a-crown to go on with, and I'll hand you the whole postal order when it comes. What about that?"

"Gentlemen, chaps, and sportsmen!" said Bob Cherry. "This fat frog has diddled us into helping him scoff a pinched cake, and diddled us into shelling out seven-and-six to pay for it. Now, over and above, he wants us to lend him something. Let's!"

"I'm not going to lend him anything!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Well, I am," said Bob. "I believe in lending a chap what he asks for. Turn round, Bunter!"

"Eh?"

"I'm going to lend you what you've asked for!" said Bob. "Turn round!"

"And so say all of us!" grinned Nugent. "Turn round, Bunter!"

"Oh, if you mean a boot—" said Johnny Bull.

"I—I say, you fellows—"

"The esteemed Bunter has asked for the lendfulness of a boot!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The lendfulness will be terrific!"

"Beasts!" gasped Bunter.

He turned—and scudded, with seven—

and-six tightly clutched in a fat hand. There was a rush after Bunter, and five boots smote the tightest trousers at Greyfriars.

"Yoo-hoop!" roared Bunter. He accelerated.

"Come back and have some more!" roared Bob.

"Ow! Beast!"

Bunter did not come back. He vanished.

Harry Wharton & Co. walked on, in the happy belief that the affair of Mr. Capper's cake was now over and done with.

So it might have been, if Billy Bunter had fallen in with the master of the Fourth within the next few minutes.

Bunter had collected that seven-and-six, with the definite intention of satisfying Mr. Capper.

But though the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak.

Had Mr. Capper been in the quad just then, doubtless Bunter would have walked up to him, and the matter would have been over and done with. But Mr. Capper was not to be seen—and Bunter had time for second thoughts, which are not always the best.

On second thoughts, it seemed good to Bunter to head, not for Mr. Capper's study, but for Mrs. Mumble's tuckshop!

He was not going to blow that seven-and-six on tuck. He was going to blow one single, solitary shilling. That would leave six-and-six for Mr. Capper—who, obviously, would not mind waiting another day or two for the other shilling, even if he remembered it at all.

But, alas! for Bunter.

Jam-tarts to the value of one shilling were no more to Billy Bunter than a drop of water to the mighty ocean.

Almost before he knew it, Bunter had guzzled jam-tarts to the value, not of one shilling, but of three! And he was still hungry! The rest was inevitable! When Billy Bunter had tasted jam, he was rather like a tiger that had tasted blood.

When Bunter rolled out of the school shop, refreshments, liquid and solid, were parked inside Bunter to the exact value of seven shillings and sixpence.

Capper would have to wait!

As it happened, the Fourth Form master had come out of the House by that time. Seeing Bunter, he beckoned to him, and called:

"Bunter!"

"Oh lor!" breathed Bunter.

"Bunter!"

Bunter scudded.

"Bunter!" exclaimed Mr. Capper angrily.

Bunter vanished.

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Capper.

Billy Bunter could only hope that his celebrated postal order, long expected, would arrive before Capper spoke to Quelch. Clearly there was a bad time in store for him if it didn't.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Toddy in a Temper!

"W H O'S captain of the Remove?" asked Peter Todd.

Harry Wharton & Co. were at tea in Study No. 1, when Toddy asked that rather surprising question. The Famous Five were discussing coming football matches when Toddy blew in.

They gazed at Toddy.

"I sort of fancied I was, Toddy!" answered Harry. "What are you getting at, fathead?"

"Well, then!" said Toddy. "What are you going to do?"

"If you mean about the football—" "I don't!"

"Well, what the thump do you mean, then, if you mean anything?" asked the captain of the Remove.

"Toddy doesn't mean anything—he's a lawyer!" said Bob Cherry. "It's against all legal tradition for a lawyer to mean anything. Isn't that so, Toddy?"

"About Loder!" said Toddy.

"Loder? Oh, blow Loder!"

"Loder pulled my nose—"

"It's getting well," said Nugent comfortably. "You could hardly light the study fire with it now, Toddy."

"What I want to know," said Peter, "is this! Is Loder going to be allowed to bully the Remove? Pull their noses, and pitch them out of trains—and get away with it? Loder pulled my nose, and I can tell you plainly that I'm not letting him get away with it!"

"But he hasn't," said Harry. "It's still there!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There it is, old chap," said Bob, "as plain as anything. As plain as the rest of your face, in fact—and nothing could be plainer."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The plainfulness is terrific, my esteemed Toddy."

"I'm putting it up to you, Wharton, as captain of the Remove—" roared Toddy.

"No good putting your nose up to me, old chap. I don't want to pull it," said the captain of the Remove. "Put it up to Loder. I dare say he'd like to have another go."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter glared at the hilarious five. The pulling of Peter's nose seemed, to Peter, as owner of the nose, a serious matter.

"Well, you can cackle!" he said wrathfully. "But I'm not standing it, see? I want to know if you're taking it into your hands, Wharton, or leaving it in mine?"

"Well, it's your nose," said Harry. "Take it into your own hands, old chap."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You know what I mean!" roared Peter. "Loder's got to have it!"

"But he's got one of his own—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the Co.

Peter breathed wrath. He was quite well aware that the chums of the Remove did not really misunderstand him to this extent.

"You call yourself captain of the Remove, Wharton. Loder's got to be made to sit up. If you're going to do it, I'll back you up. I can't say fairer than that. Now what about it?"

The captain of the Remove tried to become serious.

"Now, look here, Toddy," he said. "Loder's a beastly bully—we all know that. But he's a prefect; and you know as well as I do that when the Head appoints a man a prefect, juniors have to toe the line. If Loder bullies a man in the Remove, this study will be on his track as fast as anybody. But if a junior checks a prefect, he has to take what comes to him. Loder was throwing his weight about, I know, in barging into our carriage. Wingate or Gwynne wouldn't have done it. But he's a prefect, all the same, and you checked him—"

"He wasn't a prefect then—he was only—"

Wharton held up his hand.

"Wash all that out!" he said. "Legal distinctions are all right for lawyers, but no good at all to straightforward, sensible people."



"Just look at my nose!" said Peter Todd. He tapped his nasal organ with a lean forefinger, to draw attention to it. Really, that was not needed. Its rich hue had drawn general attention already. "Loder did that, Wingate!" "Is this a complaint?" asked the head prefect. "No; it's an appeal!" said Todd. "I want you to give Loder six, Wingate!"

"Why, you silly ass—" gasped Peter.

"I suppose," continued Wharton, "that you've been chewing over legal books in the hols, and it's got into your head. A fellow doesn't come to school to stand up for his rights to the last inch, and the last quarter of an inch. There has to be common sense. I know, of course, that common sense isn't admitted into law courts—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But the fact is, old chap, you're a silly ass!" explained the captain of the Remove. "The actual fact is that you checked a Sixth Form prefect, and he made you sit up. Or, if you want legal exactness of statement, he made you sit down—on the platform. Now forget all about it."

"So that's your idea?" snorted Peter.

"Just that!" assented Wharton.

"Well, as you call yourself captain of the Remove, I thought I'd give you a chance!" said Peter. "If you don't take it up, I'll go ahead! I can manage Loder on my own, I hope."

"Are you going to ask him to have the gloves on in the gym?" grinned Bob.

"I'm going to pull his nose, same as he did mine!"

"Oh crikey!"

"You howling ass!" roared Wharton. "Are you going to ask the Head for the sack?"

"I'm going to pull his nose!" said Peter calmly. "If you fellows join up, it's easy enough. We get him into a dark passage—some of you hold him down—and I pull his nose—"

"And we all go up before the Head, and get our ticket for soup?" asked Nugent.

"We shall keep it dark, of course. It requires strategy," admitted Peter. "But if you haven't the brains for that,

I'll supply the strategy. With my legal mind, you know—"

"That's the cause of the whole trouble," said Bob. "You'd better pack up your legal mind, and post it home."

"Suppose," went on Peter, unheeding, "Loder's bamboozled into the Form-room passage in the dark. Lights put out ready, of course—and we collar him there. He will never know who did it. I pull his nose—"

"Oh, blow his nose!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Leave the planning to me, and it will come off all right—"

"Oh crikey! What would Loder look like after his nose had come off?"

"You silly owl!" shrieked Peter.

"You know I don't mean that his nose would come off. The stunt will come off if you leave the planning to me."

"We'll leave it to you, and the rest as well!" said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"Now, about the football."

"Blow the football!" yelled Peter.

"Well, Soccer's Soccer!" said the captain of the Remove, "and we can't tell St. Jude's that we've scratched because we're too busy with a prefect's nose to play footer. What would they think?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Co.

"I've a jolly good mind," roared the exasperated Peter, "to pull your silly nose, to begin with."

"Don't!" said Harry. "It wouldn't come off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter made a plunge across the teatable and grabbed at the nose of the captain of the Remove.

Evidently Peter was exasperated. Wharton jerked his head back rapidly. Peter, plunging after it, swept crockery and foodstuffs right and left. There was a yell from Bob Cherry as the milk-jug went over his knees, and a fearful roar

from Johnny Bull as the teapot landed down his waistcoat. The contents of that teapot were hot!

"Ow!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Collar that mad ass!"

"Kill him, somebody!"

Five fellows jumped up and concentrated on Peter. Five pairs of hands swept him off his feet.

Peter struggled valiantly. But he was powerless in the hands of the Philistines. A pair of hands grasped each bony arm and leg. Another hand grasped his nose—the nose that had hardly yet recovered from Loder's grip! Thus secured, Peter was carried out of Study No. 1.

"Take him home!" gasped Wharton.

"Yurrooogh! Leggo! I'll—"

Yaroooooop!"

Wriggling wildly, Peter was borne along the Remove passage to his own study. Vernon-Smith stared out of Study No. 4 as they passed.

"What on earth's this game?" ejaculated the Bounder.

"Toddy asked us to take him home!" explained Bob.

"The taskfulness was terrific!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Lend a hand, Smithy!" yelled Wharton.

"Certainly; pleasure!" answered Smithy. He lent a hand, taking a grasp on Peter's mop of hair and pulling.

"We'll get you home all right, Toddy."

"You silly idiot!" shrieked Peter.

"I didn't mean—"

"That's all right—I do!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter was taken home! Bob Cherry kicked open the door of Study No. 7, and there was a startled squeak from Billy Bunter, and a blank stare from Tom Dutton who were there.

"I say, you fellows—"

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"I say, what—"

Bump!

Peter landed on the floor.

"Come back when you want some more, old chap!" said the captain of the Remove. "Always anxious to oblige."

And the grinning juniors crowded out of Study No. 7, leaving Peter gasping and gurgling on the study carpet. Peter did not come back for more! Tea in Study No. 1 finished without any further interruption from the school-boy lawyer.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Last Hope!

"HENRY looks waxy!" murmured Bob Cherry.

Henry—otherwise Henry Samuel Quelch, master of the Remove—came into the Form-room, looking undoubtedly waxy.

He was a minute late for class, which was unusual. Mr. Capper had stopped him in the passage to speak. Billy Bunter, aware of that fact, was not surprised to see "Henry" looking waxy. He quaked.

Another day had come, but Billy Bunter's postal order hadn't. His debt to Mr. Capper was still unsettled. He had no doubt that Capper had now mentioned the matter to Quelch.

Which, of course, was bound to have a fearfully annoying effect on Quelch. Quelch had been annoyed, in the first place, for the loss of that wretched cake to be attributed to his Form. He had been still more annoyed when it was demonstrated that it was, in point of fact, a Removite who had snaffled the cake. He had expressed his annoyance by giving Bunter a record whopping to start the term with—followed up by an order to pay for the purloined cake. Quelch, of course, supposed that that ended it. It was absolutely exasperating to learn that that trivial, annoying matter was not at an end.

"Bunter!" Quelch's voice was not loud, but deep. "Stand out before the class!"

"Oh lor!"

Bunter rolled out dismally.

"Only Bunter!" murmured Skinner to Snoop, in great relief; and Sidney James Snoop nodded, sharing his relief.

Quelch's alarming looks had made them wonder, uneasily, whether he had found out that they had brought cigarettes back to school after the holidays. Fortunately, it was "only Bunter."

It did not seem fortunate to Bunter! He stood before his Form-master, blinking at him through his big spectacles, in dismal apprehension.

"Bunter! On the first day of this term you purloined a—a cake, the property of Mr. Capper—"

"Oh! No, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I mean—"

"I punished you with some severity," barked Mr. Quelch. "I made allowances for your impenetrable stupidity. I did not regard your act as pilfering, though I regret to say that Mr. Capper took that view. I took a more lenient view, Bunter, on the understanding that you would pay for the—the cake immediately!"

"Oh dear! I—I mean, yes, sir!" groaned Bunter.

"I regarded the matter as closed. I now learn from Mr. Capper that you have not paid him the sum of seven-and-sixpence, as ordered by me."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob.

This was news to the Famous Five. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,492.

They, like Mr. Quelch, had supposed that the seven-and-six was paid, and the matter closed.

"Silence in the class!" hooted Mr. Quelch. "Bunter, as it appears that I cannot trust you to act with common honesty, I shall pay this amount myself, and it will be added to the account to be sent to your father."

"Oh, yes, sir! All right, sir!" gasped Bunter. "My—my pip-pip-pater will be pip-pip-pleased, sir!"

Bunter did not quite think that Mr. Bunter would be pleased when he found that "extra" on the term's account. But Bunter, at least, was pleased, for the matter to be settled that way.

"And I shall cane you, Bunter, severely, for having neglected to carry out my order!" said Mr. Quelch, taking his cane from his desk. "You will bend over that chair, Bunter."

"Oh crikey!"

"Do not keep me waiting, Bunter!" hooted the Remove master.

"I—I—I—The—the—the fact is, sir, I—I—I—" Bunter eyed the cane in horrid anticipation. "I—I—I did pay for it, sir—"

"What?"

"Mr. Capper's forgotten, sir!" stammered Bunter. "It's all right, sir! I—I dare say he'll remember later, sir! M-m-may I sit down now, sir?"

"Well, if even Bunter hopes to get by with that—" murmured Squiff.

But Mr. Quelch paused. He was angry—very angry and annoyed. But he was a just man. Moreover, he was really more angry with Capper than with Bunter. If Capper had been forgetful, and annoyed him like this for nothing, Quelch was going to enjoy talking to Capper!

"Mr. Capper forgets lots of things, sir!" said Bunter hopefully. "I've heard Fourth Form chaps say that if they ask him to tell them about his holidays in the Alps, he forgets there's a class on, and they get out of it—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Bunter, it is scarcely possible that Mr. Capper can have forgotten, as he has just mentioned the matter to me."

"Oh, yes, sir! I—I'll see him about it after class, sir, and—and remind him, and—and it will be all right, sir."

Quelch continued to pause.

Bunter's hopes rose higher.

If Quelch left it at that, Bunter was going to raise seven-and-sixpence somehow, after class, and square that little debt. The Famous Five, perhaps, would be disinclined to pay for the cake over again, but Lord Mauleverer might stand seven-and-six, to save a fellow from a whopping. Toddy had some money, too—he still had it, because Bunter had, so far, failed to borrow it. Bunter felt that Toddy could not expend his cash in a better cause than this. At the very worst, he could sell something to Fisher T. Fish, and raise the wind thereby; and as he stood blinking uneasily at Mr. Quelch he wondered how much Fishy would give him for Wharton's big atlas, or Bob Cherry's new football boots!

It was all right—if Quelch left it at that!

But would he? There was a long, long pause, during which Bunter's hopes rose higher and higher.

Quelch seemed to be thinking it out. The fact was that Quelch hoped that Bunter was speaking the truth, and that Capper was in the wrong. He would have given a great deal to catch Mr. Capper bending, so to speak.

"You are sure of this, Bunter?" he asked, at last.

"Oh, yes, sir! Wharton knows, too!" added Bunter.

"Indeed! In that case, I am bound to accept your word that Mr. Capper has made a mistake," said Mr. Quelch, his brow clearing. "You know of this, Wharton?"

"Wharton lent me the money to pay it, sir," interposed Bunter hastily, before the captain of the Remove could speak. "He—he and his friends, sir! They're all witnesses."

"Is that correct, Wharton?"

"It's correct that we lent Bunter the money to pay for the cake, sir!" answered Harry. "We all thought he had done so."

"I—I borrowed it specially, sir, owing to being disappointed about a postal order," said Bunter eagerly. "I told them what it was for, sir. They were surprised at a chap like me borrowing money, sir, because it's a thing I never do."

"Oh crikey!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Silence! Bunter, I am disposed to believe you, and that Mr. Capper has made a mistake!" said the Remove master.

"Oh, yes, sir! C-c-can I sit down, sir?"

"Not yet, Bunter. For the last time, I ask you, definitely, whether you have paid the sum, as directed by me. If you have not, I shall cane you with the greatest severity."

If Bunter had thought of telling the truth—a thing he seldom did—that would have torn it!

"Oh! Yes! Yes, sir! Quite! When—when I speak to Mr. Capper, after class, sir, he—he will remember."

"Very good!" said Mr. Quelch. "Follow me, Bunter!"

"Eh?"

"I shall leave you in charge of the Form, Wharton, for a few minutes, while I step into the Fourth Form room."

"Yes, sir!"

"Follow me, Bunter!"

"Oh lor!"

Mr. Quelch whisked to the door. Billy Bunter stood as if rooted to the floor!

He had got by with it—to a certain extent, but not to the required extent. Had Quelch left the matter where it was, it would have been all right.

But Quelch, convinced now that Capper had forgotten a matter that he certainly ought not to have forgotten, was not going to leave it where it was. He was going to rub it in!

The Remove master looked round impatiently from the doorway.

"Bunter! I told you to follow me!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

"Follow me this instant!"

"Oh crikey!"

Bunter dragged himself after his Form-master. Mr. Quelch, with glinting eyes, marched up the Form-room passage to Mr. Capper's Form-room.

The fat Owl of the Remove crawled after him.

There was a buzz in the Remove-room when they were gone.

"Capper must be an ass!" said Nugent. "Quelch will comb his hair for him. You can see that in his eye."

"Serve him jolly well right, if Bunter's paid him and he's forgotten!" said Bob. "But—has he?"

"Oh, my hat! He said he has!"

"He borrowed the money specially!" said Harry. "I thought—"

"He doesn't seem keen on facing Capper!" chuckled the Bounder.

"Bet you it went on cream-puffs, if you fellows were idiots enough to let him have it!" chorled Bolsover major.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Capper does forget things," said the captain of the Remove doubtfully. "I—I wonder—"

The Removites could only wonder, in doubt! But there was one point on which there was no doubt—not a shadow of a doubt. If Bunter had been pulling Quelch's leg his last state was going to be worse than his first! No man in the Remove doubted that!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Capper's Hair is not Combed!

MR. CAPPER glanced round with an irritated glance as there was a knock at the Fourth Form door, and it opened. There was equal irritation all through the Fourth. Not a man in the Fourth Form Room wanted an interruption during that class.

This did not mean that the Fourth-Formers were unusually and fearfully keen on learning things. It meant that Fry of the Fourth had skilfully switched Mr. Capper on to one of his pleasant and instructive chats to his Form.

The lesson was geography. Easily, therefore, had Fry of the Fourth dragged in the Alps. Capper had spent his summer holidays on those majestic mountains. Already, though the term was only a few days old, the Fourth Form had, by skilful management, cut three or four lessons with Mr. Capper by getting him on the Alps.

Capper, now, was going strong, and his respectful and attentive Form had good reason to hope that he would keep on, for half the lesson, at least. It was well known in the Fourth that when Capper's jaw once began to wag it was not likely to stop in a hurry.

"Jaw" from Capper was not, of course, entertaining in itself, though Mr. Capper fondly believed that it was. But all the Form agreed that it was better than geography.

Already Temple, Dabney & Co. were settling down into easy attitudes. Some of the fellows, farthest from Capper, surreptitiously produced books under their desks—not school books! Others gave a divided attention to Capper and toffee! It was all very happy and comfortable, and nobody wanted Capper to be interrupted.

But he was interrupted. The knock on the door sounded like a pistol-shot; the door flew open. Mr. Quelch marched in, followed by the unhappy Bunter, Dismissing the Alps, and his mountaineering feats thereon, Mr. Capper turned in surprise to the Remove master.

"I am sorry to interrupt you, Capper," said Mr. Quelch grimly; "but in reference to the matter you mentioned in the corridor—"

"Really, Quelch. I am disinclined to deal with such a trifling matter during class," said the Fourth Form master. "Please let it wait till later."

"It is not a matter that can wait, Capper. And I may point out that you spoke to me on the subject during class," said Mr. Quelch. "I was already due in my Form-room when you stopped me to speak."

"Possibly; but—"

"As you considered the matter of sufficient importance to interrupt class, Capper, I presume that you do not blame me for taking the same view."

Mr. Capper breathed hard through his nose.

"Very well; if you insist!" he rapped. "Let the boy lay the money on my desk, if that is what you desire."

"Nothing of the kind, sir," said Mr. Quelch. "What I desire is to draw your attention to a strange—a very strange—act of forgetfulness. I may

say, indeed, I am bound to say, carelessness."

"I fail to understand you, sir."

The Fourth-Formers sat up and took notice. If there was going to be a row between two beaks, they could forgive the interruption. Rows between beaks were, of course, rare, and all the more highly prized on that account.

"I will try, sir, to make my meaning clear," said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice. "This boy Bunter foolishly and thoughtlessly consumed a cake which was your property, and for which I ordered him to reimburse you—the amount being seven shillings and sixpence. Ten minutes ago, sir, you stated to me that Bunter had not done so."

"Perfectly, sir!" assented Mr. Capper.

"Bunter, on the other hand, assures me that he has done so, sir, and that you have forgotten the circumstance," said Mr. Quelch. "I beg you, sir, to recall it to your mind."

"Oh, gum!" murmured Cecil Reginald Temple.

Mr. Capper stared blankly. It was true that he sometimes forgot things. He was not so absent-minded as Wiggins, the master of the Third. Still, he did forget things, as fellows to whom he gave lines had happy reasons to know. But he had not forgotten this. He was quite sure that he hadn't. The mere suggestion was ridiculous!

Mr. Capper flushed.

"I have no recollection of anything of the kind!" he rapped.

"Bunter has not even spoken to me, sir, since the first day of term. He has, in fact, deliberately avoided me, and pretended not to hear when I have called to him."

"I have Bunter's positive statement, sir, and the evidence of a number of boys in my Form, who handed Bunter the money for that very purpose. I beg you, sir, to make an effort to recollect."

"I repeat, Quelch, that Bunter has not even entered my

presence, and that his statement is wholly untrue!" exclaimed Mr. Capper, showing signs of excitement.

Mr. Quelch looked at him. He was smitten by a doubt. He had believed Bunter partly, perhaps, because he

(Continued on next page.)



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wanted to, but largely because of the evidence of the Famous Five. They certainly had lent Bunter the money to pay Capper. And Capper undoubtedly was forgetful. But now—

The Remove master turned to Bunter. That wretched youth blinked at him dismally through his big spectacles. Had Bunter foreseen that he would be taken to Capper—nothing would have induced him to use that line of defence.

But Bunter, who never foresaw anything, had not foreseen that.

"Bunter!" rapped Mr. Quelch. "Oh lor!" groaned Bunter. "I—I mean, yes, sir!"

"Do you still adhere to your statement that you handed the sum of seven shillings and sixpence to Mr. Capper?"

"Oh crikey!"

"Answer me, Bunter!"

"I—I—I—"

"Yes, or no, Bunter?"

"N-n-n-no!" gasped Bunter. "I—I—I mean that—that that I hadn't, sir! That—that was what I—I really meant to say, sir!"

Mr. Quelch's face at that moment was worth, as Temple said afterwards, a guinea a box! Bereft of speech, he gazed at the fat Owl. Mr. Capper smiled faintly. The Fourth, from end to end, grinned.

"Bunter," gasped Mr. Quelch, at last, "You have come here, and now—"

"I—I didn't want to come here!" wailed the unhappy Owl. "I—I never thought you'd bring me here, sir. I—I thought you'd leave it till after class. Oh lor!"

"Upon my word!"

Quelch had come there to comb Capper's hair for him. Obviously there was no hair-combing to be done now. He would have given a term's salary to be on the other side of the Form-room door. His face was crimson. Even Mr. Capper took pity on him at that moment.

"If you are satisfied now, Quelch—" he murmured.

"Oh, yes—quite!" stammered Mr. Quelch. "I am sorry—I regret I—I—I very much regret—I have been deluded—"

Stammering, Quelch retreated from the Fourth Form Room. Never had Henry Samuel Quelch felt so utterly discomfited.

"Follow me, Bunter!" he gasped.

Bunter followed unwillingly. He had been unwilling to follow Quelch to the Fourth Form Room. He was still more unwilling to follow him back to the Remove. But there was no help for it; he had to follow, and he went.

Mr. Capper smiled as he closed his Form-room door. To the relief of the Fourth, he resumed his interrupted discourse on mountaineering in the Alps. The interruption, after all, had done no harm. All was serene in the Fourth.

But not in the Remove.

Mr. Quelch marched back into his own Form-room, with an expression on his face which might have excited the envy of the fabled Gorgon. Bunter almost tottered in after him.

There had been a buzz of voices in the Remove-room. It died away instantly as Quelch's face was seen.

The Remove master picked up his cane again.

"Bunter!"

"Oh jiminy!"

"You have deceived me, Bunter. You have spoken untruthfully. You will take five hundred lines of Virgil, Bunter, and I shall now cane you severely! Bend over that chair!"

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What followed was absolutely harrowing.

There had been whoppings in the Remove-room before, some of them severe. But this one made history.

When Billy Bunter crawled to his place afterwards, he was doubled up like a pocket-knife. He groaned; he moaned; he mumbled. The expression on his fat face might have touched a heart of stone. The fact that he deserved it was no consolation to Bunter. Neither was the fact that he had asked for it—in fact, begged and prayed for it. Like Rachel of old, Billy Bunter mourned, and could not be comforted.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Council of War!

PETER TODD sat at prep in Study No. 7 with a thoughtfully wrinkled brow. He was not wholly concentrated on prep. Other thoughts were in his mind. Still, prep had to be done, and Peter did it, relegating Loder of the Sixth to the back of his mind.

There was silence in Study No. 7, save for an occasional yelp from Billy Bunter. Long hours had elapsed, but Bunter was still feeling the effects of that whopping in the Form-room. Tom Dutton, the third member of the study, was the only one of the three who really worked. Tom was deaf, and did not hear Bunter's yelps, which drew irritated glares from Peter every now and then.

Prep, however, was finished at last. Peter threw down a pen, pitched his books across the study, and rose from the table.

Billy Bunter made a movement to the door.

"Hold on!" said Peter.

"I've got to see Ogilvy," said Bunter.

"I know Ogilvy brought a cargo of tuck back after the hols," said Peter. "But never mind that now. Stay here."

"Well, you want me, old chap—"

"I do!"

Billy Bunter's face brightened—for the first time since Quelch had whopped him that afternoon.

"Right-ho, old fellow!" said Bunter. "I can see Oggy after supper. Where's the grub?"

"You commorant cannibal, there isn't any grub!"

The brightness faded out of Bunter's face.

"You silly ass! What do you want me to stay for, then?" he demanded.

"Look here! I've got to go and see Ogilvy. I'll bet you there's a lot of greedy beasts after him—"

"Then he doesn't want another!" said Toddy.

"Look here! I'm going—"

"You're not!"

Peter gave the fat Owl a push, and he sat down suddenly in the study arm-chair. There was a loud yelp from Bunter. That sudden plump in the armchair brought renewed pangs.

"Ow! Wow! Ow!"

"Sit there!" snapped Peter. "You're wanted!"

"But what—" howled Bunter. If there was no feed on in Study No. 7, Billy Bunter was quite unable to see any reason for lingering there after prep. But there were good reasons for dropping into other studies. Plenty of Remove fellows had not yet exhausted supplies of tuck brought back after the "hols."

"It's a council of war," Peter condescended to explain.

"A—a—a what?" stuttered Bunter.

"This study is on the warpath. You're one of the study! You've got to back up. You're not much good—but such good as you are, you're going to be! See?"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"This study," said Peter firmly, "always hits back! If a man in this study gets a knock, this study hands the knock back, with another tacked on—in fact, a postman's knock. See?"

"Oh!" said Bunter. He nodded thoughtfully. "That's all right as far as it goes, Toddy. But, I say, it's awfully risky going for Quelch."

"Who's going for Quelch, you fat ass?"

"It was Quelch whopped me!" said Bunter, staring. "Didn't you say—"

"You blithering Owl!" said Peter. "Serve you jolly well right, for swindling Capper and telling Quelch lies."

"Why, you beast!" gasped Bunter. "Still, if you're speaking of old Capper, all right! Old Capper got me the licking. He got me two lickings—making out first that I had his cake, and then that I hadn't paid for it. I say, Peter, I'll jolly well help you, all right, if—it's safe, you know! That's rather important."

"You burbling jabberwock!" hissed Peter. "Nobody in this study is going for Capper! Blow Capper!"

"Then what the dickens are you driving at?" asked the bewildered Owl. "Nobody else has done anything to me."

Peter gave him a glare. From Peter's point of view, he was the chief of that study, and the most important fellow in it. Billy Bunter's view seemed to be taken from a different angle.

"You!" said Peter. "What do you matter, you fat idiot? Loder pulled my nose the first day of term—"

"He, he, he!"

"You cackling Owl!" roared Peter.

"Is it funny?"

"Well, it looked funny after Loder had pulled it!" grinned Bunter.

"Didn't you see it in the glass?"

Peter Todd lifted down a cricket stump from the shelf, and laid it on the table.

Billy Bunter ceased to grin. Clearly it was no time for grinning.

Tom Dutton, having put his books away, was waiting for Peter to go down to the Rag with him. Being deaf, Tom had heard nothing of this conversation. Steam had to be put on for Dutton to hear.

"You coming down, Peter?" he asked. "You're not staying here to jaw to Bunter, are you?"

"Stay in the study!"

"Eh? I know!" said Dutton, staring at him. "There's been a lot of rain. But we can't go out after lock-up; so what does it matter if it's muddy?"

"Oh, my hat! Stick in the study!" roared Peter. "I want to talk to you!"

"Eh?"

"Talk to you!" hooted Peter.

Tom Dutton shook his head.

"Jews don't eat pork, Toddy," he answered. "Do you mean Newland? Look here! Newland's a jolly decent chap, and I'm not going to have a hand in it, and I'm surprised at you, Toddy! I'm really surprised! We're friendly with Newland—"

"Who's talking about Newland?" shrieked Peter.

"Eh? You were! Newland's the only Jew at Greyfriars, isn't he? You said something about pork to a Jew, so I suppose you mean Newland! I'm really surprised at you, Toddy! What do you want to insult Newland for, when



Wriggling wildly, Peter Todd was borne along the Remove passage. The door of Study No. 7 was kicked open, and there was a startled squeak from Billy Bunter, and a blank stare from Tom Dutton, who were in the study. "I say, you fellows—" "I say—what—" "Toddy asked us to bring him home," said Wharton, "and we're doing it! Always anxious to oblige!"

he's a decent chap and we're friendly with him?"

"He, he, he!" from Bunter.

Peter Todd breathed hard. There was no doubt that a council of war in Study No. 7 had to be held under difficulties.

"You want an ear trumpet!" howled Peter.

"I don't know about crumpets—but I like muffins!" said Dutton. "But what do you mean? Have you got any muffins or crumpets?"

"He, he, he!"

"Oh, holy smoke!" groaned Peter. "Listen to me, you ass! We're going for Loder!"

"What utter rot!" said Dutton. "In the first place, we can't go out after lock-up. In the second, what the thump do you want soda for?"

"He, he, he!"

"Not soda—Loder!" shrieked Peter. "I've got a scheme for making Loder sit up! See? A scheme—and a jolly good scheme!"

"No need to scream," answered Dutton. "I can hear you when you don't mumble! I'm not really deaf—only a little hard of hearing! Look here! Don't you start screaming at me!"

"He, he, he—Yaroooooh!" yelled Bunter, as Peter interrupted his fat cackle with a lick from the cricket stump. Between Bunter and Dutton, the chief of Study No. 7 seemed to be getting exasperated.

"Look here, Dutton—"

"Well, what about mutton?" asked Tom. "You keep on hopping from one subject to another, Toddy, like a fellow wandering in his mind. First you say it's muddy, as if that matters after lock-up—then you gabble about pork for poor old Newland, which I think is a caddish idea—then muffins and crumpets,

and then soda, and now mutton! Can't you stick to one subject?"

Billy Bunter did not venture to chuckle again. But from the Remove passage outside came a merry roar:

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Other fellows had finished prep, and were in the passage. They could hear Peter, if Dutton couldn't. And they seemed amused by the conversation going on in Study No. 7.

It looked as if Peter's council of war would have to be confined to all the Remove, if Tom Dutton was going to be a member of it.

"Oh, my hat!" groaned Peter.

"Do you mean Bunter?" asked Tom. "I know he's fat. Or are you talking about fat mutton? I can't make any sense out of what you are saying, Peter."

"Shut up!" hissed Peter. "Listen to me! We're after Loder!" he roared. "Loder! Loder of the Sixth! Hear that?"

"I can hear you all right, Toddy—don't yell!" said Dutton peevishly. "I wish you wouldn't keep on making out that I'm deaf and have to be shouted at."

"Ha, ha, ha!" from the passage.

"You're going to back me up!" yelled Peter.

"Oh, don't be an ass! What am I to pack you up in? What do you want to be packed up for, anyhow?"

"Not pack—back!" shrieked Peter.

"Who's back? Are you talking about Hurree Singh now? He jolly well wouldn't like it, Peter! It looks to me as if you're setting out to insult all the fellows in the Form, one after another. First poor old Newland, and now Inky! What next?"

"Shut up!" raved Peter. "Listen to me!" he fairly bawled. "We're going for Loder, and you're going to back me

up. See?"

"Oh, yes, that's all right! I'll back you up! Why couldn't you say so at first, instead of talking about a lot of other things? I'll back you up against Loder, but I'm not having a hand in any rotten jape on Newland—and I don't see having any row with old Inky, either."

The door of Study No. 7 opened, and Bob Cherry's grinning face looked in.

Peter gave him an exasperated glare. "Get out!" he hooted.

"Only looked in to give you a tip!" grinned Bob. "It doesn't matter if you tell all the Remove—but if you're going for Loder, I advise you not to tell Loder! If you go on like this, he will hear you in the Sixth!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the fellows in the passage.

Peter brandished the cricket stump and made a jump for the door—which Bob closed hurriedly. Most of the Remove seemed to be gathered in the passage now, deeply interested in the council of war in Study No. 7.

Peter proceeded. It did not matter if the Removites heard, irritating as it was. There were no sneaks in the Remove. And there really was no danger of the loudest remark reaching as far as the Sixth Form studies.

"Now, I've thought it out, and I've got it all cut and dried," went on Peter. "Wharton and his crowd funk going for Loder, so I'm handling the matter myself." As the Famous Five were among the swarm of juniors listening to the council of war, Peter put in a little for their benefit. "Wharton's a back number, and his pals are no use—a set of duds! We shall get on better without their help!"

There was another burst of laughter (Continued on page 16.)

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SCHEMERS of STUDY No. 7



(Continued from page 13.)

in the passage, in which the Famous Five did not join.

"Wharton's a lakkadaisical ass," went on Peter, "Nugent's a milksop, Cherry's a clumsy clump, Bull's a blundering idiot, and Inky's a cackling cuckoo. We can leave that lot out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" from the passage.

"This study is top study in the Remove, anyhow!" went on Peter.

"Rats!" came through the keyhole.

"The ratfulness is terrific, my esteemed and idiotic Toddy!"

"Shut up, out there!" roared Peter. "Can't you keep quiet, you noisy fags?"

"Oh, do well!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"I jolly well will!" roared Peter.

He grabbed the inkpot from the study table with one hand, and grabbed open the door with the other.

There was a laughing crowd of Removites outside. Among them were the Famous Five—prepared to mop up the Remove passage with the warlike Peter, if he did come out to them! But the uplifted inkpot in Peter's wrathful hand was, so to speak, a horse of another colour! There was a general backward movement at the sight of the inkpot.

"Now—" said Peter.

But he was addressing empty space! His audience crowded away to the stairs. Evidently nobody wanted the contents of the inkpot. Chuckling, the Removites went down to the Rag, and the chief of Study No. 7 was left to carry on his council of war without an audience.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Change in the Programme!

"O lor!" murmured Billy Bunter.

Bunter simply hated it.

He stood at the foot of the staircase. His destination was Gerald Loder's study, in the Sixth. But Billy Bunter was in no haste to reach his destination. He seemed glued where he was.

Had he dared, the fat Owl of the Remove would have scuttled off to the Rag, and thrown up the whole thing.

But there was Toddy, and Toddy's cricket stump to consider. He dared not let Toddy down. On the other hand, he dared not back him up. It was an unhappy dilemma for William George Bunter.

There was no time to lose, but Bunter was losing it.

Toddy's scheme was cut and dried. It was a masterly scheme. Bunter had to admit that it had its points. All Bunter objected to was taking a hand in it.

But to that Bunter objected strongly. In the first place, he did not care two hoots, or one, whether Peter's long nose was pulled or not. Peter's nose was, to Bunter, a trifle light as air.

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Had Peter gone on the warpath against Capper, there would have been some sense in it. Capper had got Bunter two lickings, one after another.—as well as a bill sent home to his father—and bills sent home to Mr. Bunter always led to unpleasantness for William George. Bunter would have been almost prepared to take a little risk in going for Capper. But he had no desire whatever to go for Loder. What did Peter's nose matter? Nothing—to Bunter!

But instead of avenging Bunter's wrongs, that cheeky ass, Peter, was only thinking about his own!

Peter's idea was that Study No. 7 was a fighting study. If Study No. 7 got a knock, it gave back a postman's knock. Tom Dutton was prepared to back him up—he was deaf, but doughty. Bunter was neither! But if a fellow in Study No. 7 failed to back up, there was the cricket stump. Bunter hated taking risks with Loder of the Sixth. Still more he hated the cricket stump.

The scheme was sound. Already Toddy and Tom Dutton were in ambush in the Form-room passage.

In that passage a single light was left burning in the evening, though the Form-rooms, of course, were dark and deserted. That light had been extinguished. The lamp had been removed from the socket, so it was impossible for anybody to turn that light on again.

Any man going along that passage would be in the dark, and could not possibly spot an ambush. Unsuspectingly he would fall into the ambush, without the remotest chance of recognising who ambushed him.

That, of course, was rather an urgent detail; for the consequences of handling a Sixth Form prefect were awfully serious.

All that remained was to get Loder of the Sixth into that dark passage. That was where Bunter came in!

Bunter had to take his part in the sound scheme. But Peter realised that Bunter was no use in the scrapping line. Peter and Tom could handle even a Sixth Form man—taking him by surprise. Bunter's part was to get the Sixth Form man where he was wanted.

As it happened, Bunter was peculiarly fitted to play the part of decoy. Bunter was a ventriloquist. He could imitate voices. Often and often had he played such tricks. Often and often had he been kicked for the same. And the big idea was this; Bunter was to go to Loder's study in the Sixth, open the door, and call into the study, without revealing himself to Loder's eyes. He was to call in the voice of Dr. Locke, the revered headmaster of Greyfriars. He was to tell Loder to follow him at once to the Sixth Form Room, and then skip quickly, before Loder emerged from his study.

It was easy as pie!

Bunter could do it, so to speak, on the back of his neck!

Had he not, on one occasion, imitated Dr. Locke's voice from the Head's own study, and given orders to that very prefect, Loder, and taken him in? He had!

He wished now that he hadn't! He wished that Peter didn't know what a jolly clever ventriloquist he was.

For Bunter hated the idea. Peter said that it was safe as houses, and he and Dutton were taking all the real risk. There was hardly any for Bunter. That was all very well—but Bunter didn't want hardly any. He wanted none.

Suppose some other Sixth Form man spotted him? Suppose Loder came out

of his study too quick? Suppose—suppose all sorts of things? While Peter was talking to him, with the cricket stump in his hand, Bunter had not stated all his objections. But they were strong.

There were beaks about, too! As he stood hesitating and dubious at the foot of the staircase, Mr. Prout and Mr. Capper stood only a few yards away talking. Certainly they gave the fat Removite no attention whatever. But suppose they noticed him heading for the Sixth? Suppose—Bunter's fat mind was full of uneasy suppositions.

And time was going!

Peter and Tom Dutton, in their dark ambush, were waiting—relying on Bunter. They were banking on it. Loder, no doubt, would be surprised when the Head told him to come to the Sixth Form Room in the evening. But he would, of course come. He would have no choice about that. That was a cert. As soon as the fat ventriloquist did his bit, it would all work like a charm.

But the fat ventriloquist had not done his bit yet. With every passing moment, he felt less and less disposed to do his bit. Peter, in resolving that every man in Study No. 7 should back up in this great enterprise, had rather overlooked the ancient proverb, that a horse may be taken to water, but cannot be made to drink. Once out of reach of the cricket-stump, Bunter hesitated—more and more and more!

They were waiting. Bunter, after his stunt at Loder's door, was to cut back as fast as he could, and join them in the Form-room passage. He was no use in handling Loder—Peter magnanimously let him off that. But it was essential to make sure of getting the right man. It was unlikely, but it was possible that somebody else might come along to the Form-rooms. Toddy wanted to bag Loder, but he did not want to bag the wrong man. Bunter, having brought word that Loder was to be expected, was to fade away by back passages, leaving the two fighting-men of Study No. 7 to carry on.

"All very well! But Bunter wanted to fade away now. He did not want to risk it with Loder. Minute followed minute, and still Bunter stood there, irresolute, while the "jaw" of Capper and Prout droned in his fat ears.

"Not Horatian!" Prout was saying. "I will undertake to say, Capper, that the word will not be found in Horace."

"Possibly not!" said Mr. Capper. "But it is to be found in Seneca, Prout."

"I doubt it, Capper—I doubt it!" boomed Prout.

Billy Bunter gave the two beaks an inimical blink through his big spectacles. "Jawing" Latin—as if Latin was anything but a beastly, bothering bore. It was, at all events, to Bunter.

"My dear Prout," said Capper, "the fact is incontestable! You will find it in Seneca's Epistles to Lucilius—the Epistolae Morales!"

"In which, Capper, in which?" demanded Prout.

"In the hundred-and-eighty epistle, Prout. I am sure of the fact, because I have recently been going through the Epistolae, and I came on the word."

"An error, my dear fellow—an error!" boomed Prout. The master of the Fifth never admitted the possibility of error on his own part. "Doubtless you may have found the word—the word 'proximior'—in some Latin writer of the later Empire—but not in Seneca—not in Seneca, Capper."

"If you will step with me to my study, Prout, I will point out the passage," said Mr. Capper. Prout was loud and dogmatic; Capper mild, but obstinate. "The passage in Seneca begins 'Cetera propterea redierunt—'"

"I do not recall that particular passage, Capper, but I doubt—I repeat that I doubt—whether the word 'proximior' will be found in it! An error—an error, Capper! Come, come, none of us should be unwilling to admit an error!"

"Please step to my study, Mr. Prout!" said Capper acidly.

"Certainly, certainly; but I maintain—a writer of the fifth or sixth century, perhaps, but Seneca—my dear Capper—no!"

The two beaks turned in the direction of masters' studies—rather to Billy Bunter's relief. He had worry enough, without beaks jawing Latin in his fat ears.

But Mr. Capper paused.

"Please wait a few moments in my study, Prout! I remember now that I left the volume in the Form-room. I forgot it."

"You are a little forgetful sometimes, my dear Capper!" smiled Prout. "Allow me to suggest that you have forgotten in what author you found the word under discussion."

"In Seneca, Prout! I will fetch the volume at once, from the Form-room, if you will wait a few minutes in my study."

"I will wait a few minutes, with pleasure—but I think, Capper, that I shall have to wait a very long time before you can show me an epistle of Seneca's with the word 'proximior' in it."

"I repeat, Prout—"

"And I repeat, Capper—"

The two beaks were walking towards masters' studies as they talked, and their voices passed out of Bunter's hearing. The fat junior blinked after them, his little, round eyes gleaming behind his big, round spectacles.

Capper was going to the Fourth Form Room!

Capper, in a minute or two, would be walking down the Form-room passage in the dark!

Capper had got Bunter two lickings and a row at home. Those lickings mattered a lot, and Peter's nose did not matter at all.

Toddy and Dutton were waiting for somebody in the dark—and word from Bunter that that somebody was coming.

Bunter had wasted a lot of time already. He wasted no more. Leaving Prout and Capper still in the full tide of "jaw," Billy Bunter rolled off to the Form-room passage. Capper was coming—as soon as he could detach himself from Prout. This was too good to be missed!

Bunter rolled into the dark passage. "I say, you fellows!" he squeaked, blinking round him in the blackness.

"Quiet, you fat ass!" came Peter's whisper, from an invisible Peter. "Is he coming?"

"Coming along now!" gasped Bunter. "Clear off, then—and quiet!"

Bunter rolled on—past the ambush, without even seeing Toddy and Dutton. He grinned as he turned a corner at the end of the passage.

Capper was coming! Capper would get it! Bunter was running absolutely no risk. He was not concerned in Capper's coming! He would have been concerned in Loder's; he was not concerned in Capper's.

His wrongs were going to be avenged—and Loder could wait! Probably, after collaring a beak in the dark and

ragging him, Peter would be fed-up with rags in the dark, and drop the whole thing. Bunter hoped so. Anyhow, Capper was going to get what, in Bunter's opinion, he thoroughly deserved, and nobody could say that Billy Bunter had had anything to do with it.

By devious ways the fat Owl reached the Remove passage and rolled into Study No. 7—safe off the scene, leaving Peter Todd and Tom Dutton to collar the master of the Fourth in the dark, in the fixed belief that he was Loder of the Sixth!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Whose Nose?

PETER TODD listened intently. Footsteps approached.

There was a sound like an annoyed grunt.

Whoever it was that had turned into the Form-room passage had, of course, noticed that the light was off there, and was annoyed thereby.

There was a click.

But it was useless to switch on the light, when the wary Peter had removed the lamp from the socket. There was a click—and nothing more. No light.

Another annoyed grunt.

Then footsteps, coming down the dark passage.

Anybody heading for a Form-room could, of course, find it in the dark, in a familiar passage, trodden daily. Light could be obtained as soon as the Form-room was reached, by switching it on there.

The footsteps came on.

Peter touched Dutton on the arm—and Dutton gave him a poke in the ribs, to indicate that he understood.

The moment was at hand.

Dark as it was, something darker loomed up—a mere black shadow, but enough for the ambushed pair.

They leaped at it.

Silently, swiftly they leaped. That dark figure, suddenly grasped by two pairs of hands, was up-ended in the twinkling of an eye.

Collared, up-ended, that figure hit the floor with its back, uttering a startled howl as it did so.

Peter's hand groped over an unseen face.

Contact was established with a nose. He grabbed the nose.

Tweak!

"Urrrrgh! Oh! Wurrrrgh!" came spluttering.

Peter grasped Dutton's arm and ran. They vanished round the nearest corner.

They disappeared.

They almost dissolved into space.

It was done—it had been done almost in a second. Loder of the Sixth—if it was Loder—had had no time to grasp at an unseen assailant; no time even to yell.

A gasping gurgle—that was all.

He was left sprawling in the dark, with his nose pulled, as Peter's had been pulled at Courtfield Station on the first day of the term.

By back passages the two juniors fled, as if for their lives.

They had to put a safe distance between themselves and the owner of the pulled nose. They had to mingle with the throng of Greyfriars fellows and carefully avoid drawing special attention to themselves. For pulling prefects' noses, though entertaining in itself, was a very dangerous amusement! No "alibi" could be too complete in such a case!

Less than a minute after the nose-pulling, Peter Todd and Tom Dutton strolled into the Rag.

Peter heard, at a distance, the sound of startled voices, exclamations, ejaculations, Prout's boom among them. He grinned. Someone, no doubt, was kicking up a row in the Form-room passage, and drawing general attention. That did not worry Peter.

Loder could draw all Greyfriars there if he liked.

He winked at Dutton, and they walked into the Rag together.

After prep most of the Remove congregated in the Rag. Some of the Fourth were there also.

Many Removites glanced at Peter and Tom as they came in. Owing to the peculiar circumstances under which Peter's council of war had been held, most of the Remove knew that he was on the warpath that evening. And as no member of Study No. 7 had turned up in the Rag, the juniors suspected that Peter was getting on with his scheme, whatever it was.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's the giddy warrior!" called out Bob Cherry. "What's the news from the front, Toddy?"

"Shut up, ass!" breathed Peter.

There were Fourth Form men in the Rag. It was risky enough for all the Remove to know that Peter had been on Loder's trail, considering the dire consequences of pulling a prefect's nose. He did not want to confide it to the Fourth, as well.

The Famous Five gave Peter rather startled looks. They realised that that scheme, whatever it was, had been put into execution.

They gathered round Peter. So did a number of other Removites. They wanted to ask Peter what had happened. They could not ask Dutton without asking all Greyfriars, at the same time.

Tom Dutton, grinning, picked up a book and settled himself down in an armchair. Peter stood in the little crowd of Removites, serene.

"Don't yell!" he said. "No need to tell all the school! I don't mind telling you men."

"But what—" asked Harry Wharton.

"No need to ask what, I think," drawled Peter. "I said I'd pull Loder's nose, for pulling mine. Well, I've pulled it."

"You've pulled a prefect's nose?" gasped Nugent.

"Hard!" said Peter, with a nod.

"Gammon!" said Vernon-Smith. "I can see Loder letting you do it!"

"I didn't call on Loder in his study!" said Peter sarcastically. "I ambushed him in the dark, along by the Form-rooms."

"And he walked there in the dark, just to oblige you?" grinned Smithy. "Tell us some more, Toddy."

"You mean that Loder didn't see you?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Of course he didn't, ass! Think I wanted to ask for a prefect's beating, or a Head's flogging?" snorted Peter.

"But how on earth did you manage to get Loder there, in the dark?" asked Harry Wharton in astonishment.

Peter smiled—the smile of superior wisdom.

"Strategy!" he explained. "This sort of thing is a bit above the weight of Study No. 1; but we can lay schemes in Study No. 7. Bunter pulled Loder's leg with some of his jolly old ventriloquism, and made him believe that the Head wanted him in the Sixth Form Room. The rest, my beloved 'earcys, was pie!"

"And you got him?" gasped Bob.

"Got him, collared him, and whopped him down on his back!" answered Peter calmly. "Everything went according to plan."

"And—and pulled his nose?"

"Jolly nearly pulled it off!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And he never spotted you?" exclaimed Hazeldene.

"How could he in the dark?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I hope you got the right man in the dark," he remarked. "I'd rather see a chap myself before I pulled his nose."

"Safe as houses!" said Peter, cheerfully. "You see, after getting word to Loder, Bunter had to scoot back, and tell me he was coming. Well, he did! Not much room for a mistake there."

"By gum! There's going to be a row—pulling a prefect's proboscis!" said Monty Newland. "Loder will raise Cain."

"Let him!" said Peter. "He can't spot me! I suppose there's about a hundred fellows here who would jump at pulling Loder's nose, if they had a chance. He can sort them over, if he wants the man."

"Looks safe," agreed Bob. "Loder's always whopping some chap. I heard Fry of the Fourth vowing vengeance on him yesterday."

"And I heard Hobson of the Shell this morning," grinned Johnny Bull. "And Coker of the Fifth has been telling the world that he'd as soon punch Loder as look at him."

"All serene, you bet!" grinned Peter. "I'm only one in a crowd. I dare say Loder's forgotten pulling my nose first day of term. I've got a longer memory than he has. You see, it was my nose."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, it looks all right," said the captain of the Remove. "But you're a silly ass, all the same, Toddy. There'll be a fearful row!"

"All the better! I want all Greyfriars to know that Loder has had his nose pulled," said Peter. "You chaps can't handle Loder; I can. I dare say you were right to keep clear. The job was a bit above your weight—"

"You cheeky ass!"

"Well, I've pulled it off," said Peter. "You fellows couldn't have made Loder sorry for himself in two or three terms. I've done it. You can't get out of that. I've brought it off. I've downed Loder. Perhaps you are going to admit now that Study No. 7 is top study in the Remove."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Loder!" exclaimed Bob.

All eyes turned towards the door as it was thrown suddenly open, and Loder of the Sixth stepped in.

The juniors stared at Loder; Peter staring hardest. Remembering the vice-like grip he had laid on that nose in the dark, Peter naturally expected to see traces of it when he saw Loder.

There were no such traces. Loder's nose looked normal. So did Loder himself—as certainly he would not have done had his nose been recently pulled. Peter stared at him—blankly.

"Oh, you're all here!" Loder ran his eye over the crowd in the Rag. "Still, I dare say they've had time to dodge in here."

"Anything happened, Loder?" asked Bob.

"I should say so," answered the prefect. "Haven't you heard the row going on? Somebody's going to be sacked for this. Goodness knows who

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the mad idiots were, or what Capper had done to them—"

"Capper!" gasped Bob.

"Capper!" exclaimed half a dozen Removites.

"Capper!" stuttered Peter Todd.

"Kik-kik-kik-Capper!"

"Capper!" exclaimed two or three Fourth Formers. "What's happened to Capper, Loder?"

"He's been collared in the dark, and pitched over, and his nose pulled," answered Loder. "It seems that he was going to his Form-room for a book or something, and somebody had turned the light out in the passage. Some young villains were laying for him there—some of his own Form. I suppose—nobody else would want to rag Capper. He thinks there were two fellows in it. It's the sack for them, whoever they are. All you Fourth Form kids get along to Hall. The Head's going to question you."

"Oh crumbs!"

All the members of the Fourth Form who were in the Rag left at once in a buzz of excitement. The Removites were left, in a still louder buzz, mingled with laughter.

Peter Todd did not speak.

He couldn't!

The Famous Five looked at one another, grinning. This was the masterly strategy of Study No. 7. But they forbore to rub it in. Peter had enough on his mind without chipping from the Remove. Peter, overwhelmed with dismay, stood with dropping jaw. He hadn't collared Loder. He had collared Capper. He hadn't pulled Loder's nose. He had pulled Capper's. It was a beak's beak on which his reckless grip had been laid. Peter could say nothing. There was, indeed, nothing to be said. He just groaned.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Peter Means Business!

WHO collared Capper? Up and down Greyfriars fellows asked one another that question—fellows in all Forms but the Remove.

In the Remove they knew.

Not a man in the Remove, of course, was going to tell what he knew. Not a whisper; not a syllable. Among themselves they chuckled over it. They chortled over it; they roared over it. They almost wept over it. But they were not telling anybody. If any man in the Remove had been so ill-advised as to sneak, his life would hardly have been worth living at Greyfriars afterwards.

But nobody dreamed of giving Peter away. Even rather mean fellows like Skinner and Snoop and Fishy would never have thought of doing so. The whole Form, as one man, kept the secret.

Outside the Remove nobody knew anything, except, of course, what had happened to Mr. Capper. Capper had been collared in the dark, up-ended, and his nose tweaked by two unknown miscreants. That was all that was known to the school generally.

It was all that was known to Capper. He was in the dark when he was collared and up-ended, and he was still in the dark as to who had done it.

Who could have done it?

Obviously, fellows in Capper's own Form—that stood to reason. Nobody outside the Fourth could want to damage Capper. Why should they?

But the Fourth Form, to the last man, denied it indignantly. Temple,

Dabney & Co. were quite eloquent on the subject.

So far, inquiry had been confined to the Fourth. That Form had been assembled in Hall, within a very short time of the outrage, and questioned by the Head himself. But Dr. Locke could learn nothing from the Fourth, except that every man in that Form, according to his own account, at least, was absolutely innocent of the outrage, and of all knowledge of it.

Capper himself inclined to that view.

No beak liked to admit that any members of his Form could even dream of such a proceeding as pulling his nose.

Moreover, Capper was not a severe beak. He did not exasperate fellows like, for instance, Mr. Hacker, the master of the Shell. Certainly he handed out punishments at times. That was the way of beaks. It was, so to speak, their nature to. But generally in the Fourth Form Room all was calm and bright.

But if it was not Fourth Form work, whose was it? Few fellows in the Fourth, perhaps, had anything against Capper. But in other Forms nobody had. Capper was not even a meddlesome beak like Prout, barging into other beaks' business. He minded his own. Remove men had been known to rag Prout. But no Remove man had ever been known to rag Capper.

Dorm was later than usual that night.

After what Mr. Prout justly described as an unprecedented, unparalleled outrage, there was endless excitement. All the beaks were in a buzz. All the prefects were on the qui vive. It was a quarter to ten before Wingate of the Sixth marched the Remove off to their dormitory.

And when he did the Greyfriars captain gave them a severe frown. The whole Form seemed in a merry state—as if there was something funny in a beak being collared and having his nose tweaked.

Wingate did not know that it was Peter's little error in the dark that excited risibility in the Remove. Fortunately, he did not know anything about that little error.

"Stop that cackling!" said Wingate gruffly, when the Remove were in the dorm. "Somebody's going to be sacked for this; and it's not a laughing matter."

"Isn't it?" murmured the Bounder.

There was, at least, one grave face in the Remove. It was Peter Todd's.

Tom Dutton was still in a contented and satisfied state. Having heard nothing of the excited discussion going on round him, Tom was still in the happy belief that it was Loder who had been collared.

Having seen Loder in the Rag, Dutton was rather surprised that his nose showed no sign of damage. He supposed that Peter could not, after all, have pulled it, or, at any rate, not very hard. But he knew nothing, so far, about the awful mistake that had been made. Dutton's deafness was rather a blessing in disguise now. Certainly it saved his peace of mind.

In spite of Wingate's warning, there was still chuckling in the Remove dormitory. Wingate glared in from the door.

"The next fellow who laughs will get six!" he hooted.

That reduced the Remove to seriousness—till Wingate was gone.

But when lights were out, and the Remove left to themselves, there was a chuckle from bed to bed.

There was also a sound of a fellow

turning out, as soon as Wingate's footsteps had died away down the passage. A match scratched, and Peter Todd lighted a candle-end on his washstand. The glimmering light, so far as it extended, revealed grinning faces looking from beds.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! You up, Toddy?" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Not going for Loder again, are you? I'd give him a rest. You may collar Quelch next shot!"

"Or, the Head!" grinned the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter did not heed. He stepped to Billy Bunter's bed, with a grim brow.

There was a snore from that bed. Bunter either was, or affected to be, fast asleep already. He had kept out of Peter's way till bed-time, after which, of course, he could keep out of it no longer. Matters having gone to Bunter's satisfaction, he was rather anxious to let the whole thing drop. He was not at all anxious to hear anything from Toddy.

But if Bunter was asleep, he woke up suddenly as Peter jerked his bedclothes off.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. He sat up. "Beast! Wharrer matter? Wharrer you mean by waking a fellow up?"

"You fat villain!" said Peter Todd, in measured tones. "It's all your fault! You let me down!"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"You never did that stunt at Loder's study!" hissed Peter. "Loder never came at all— Oh, shut up that cackling!" howled Bunter, as a ripple of laughter came along the dormitory.

"I—I-I did!" gasped Bunter. "I—I—I'm not the chap to let you down, Toddy. Did I ever let a pal down? I ask all the fellows."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The—the fact is," stammered Bunter, "I—I—I did it all right. But—but Loder wasn't there. As for Capper, I never even saw him. He wasn't talking to Prout at all, and he never said anything about going to the Form-room for a book. So—so I never knew he was going there."

"You knew Capper was going down that passage!" shrieked Peter. "You knew it was Capper, and you told me it was Loder!"

"I didn't!" howled Bunter. "I never mentioned Loder's name. You jolly well know I didn't. You asked me if he was coming, and I said 'Yes.' Well, so he was—old Capper's a 'he,' ain't he? Not that I knew Capper was coming, you know! I never heard him tell Prout—"

Peter glared almost speechlessly at his fat ally.

His idea had been that Bunter had bungled it somehow—as really might have been expected from an ally of Bunter's intellectual powers. Now he learned that the fat Owl had acted, so to speak, with malice aforethought. He had not merely funk'd decoying Loder into the trap. He had let Capper walk into it, knowing what would happen to anyone walking down that passage in the dark.

One warning word from Bunter would have saved the situation. And the fat and fatuous Owl had not uttered that warning word.

"Besides, look what Capper did!" went on Bunter warmly. "You make a lot of fuss about Loder pulling your silly nose. Look what Capper did—getting me two lickings, one after another, and a row at home. Serve him jolly well right!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you—you—you—" gurgled

Peter, "You never went near Loder—but you knew that Capper was going down that passage, and you let me think it was Loder—"

"I didn't! I never saw Capper, or heard him tell Prout he had left his silly Seneca in the Form-room. Besides, after he got me two lickings—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd picked up a pillow. Bunter eyed him apprehensively. Up went the pillow in both Peter's hands. Down it came with a terrific swipe—and Bunter rolled out on the other side of the bed, just in time.

Bunter bumped on the floor as the pillow crashed on the bed.

"I say, you fellows," howled Bunter, "keep that beast off! I say, you pitch into me, you beast, and I'll jolly well yell for a prefect. If they find out that you collared Capper, it will be all your fault!"

Peter came round the bed. The expression on his face was really alarming.

Bunter scrambled wildly across the next bed.

"Keep off!" he yelled. "You'll get sacked if they find out that you collared

Capper! I jolly well shan't keep it dark for you! Beast! Gerroff!"

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

"Yaroooh! Help! Rescue!" roared Bunter.

Swipe, swipe!

"Yoo-hooo-hooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Chuck it, Toddy!" gasped Harry Wharton. "You'll have Wingate up here again, or Quelch!"

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

"Ow! Oh crikey! I'll tell Capper!" yelled Billy Bunter. "Mind, I never had anything to do with it! You'll get bunked! Yaroooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

The dormitory door opened, and the light switched on. Wingate of the Sixth, with a knitted brow, strode in.

"What's this row?" he demanded.

"Yaroooh! Keep him off!" yelled Bunter.

Whack, whack!

Wingate had his ashplant in his hand. Peter's pyjamas were a very poor defence. He fairly hopped as Wingate whacked.

(Continued on next page.)

(1)

George Wingate, Captain of the School,
Good-humoured, strong, reliant,
In action, capable and cool,
In leadership, a giant,
I now present with gratitude,
That Greyfriars has a leader
At once so kindly and so shrewd,
Well-liked by every reader.

(2)

I interviewed him, I may say,
In curious circumstances
When I walked out the other day,
Though taking many chances,
For in the neighbourhood just then
There lurked in shady places
A number of unpleasant men
Who came from Wapshot races.



(4)

When not engaged in these delights
They hang about the village
And love to meet on lonely nights
Some passer-by to pillage.
And it was one such profligate
That I encountered glumly
The other evening, rather late;
I gazed upon him dumbly.



(6)

A knobbly stick was in his hand.
Said he: "And aht yer 'orses!"
By which he meant, I understand,
My pecuniary resources.
"Unless you 'and it over now,"
He promised me, "I'll kill you!"
I'll bash this bludgeon on yer brow!"
And another voice said: "Will you?"

(5)

He was not beautiful, I think—
I say it without passion—
His nose was of a deeper pink
Than is the usual fashion.
One eye regrettably was blacked,
The other one was blinking!
Impartially I state the fact
That he—well—he'd been drinking!

(7)

George Wingate suddenly appeared
In all his strength and vigour,
By Jingo! You can bet I cheered
To see his sturdy figure!
The ruffian turned and aimed a blow
At Wingate, with defiance,
Then followed a delightful show
Of boxing skill and science.



(8)

Yes, Wingate massacred that man
With energy and ardour.
The tramp soon tired, but George began
To hit him even harder.
"Leddup, I'm telling yer!" he yelled,
Quite tired of all this fighting.
Then Wingate suddenly beheld
A duckpond most inviting!



(9)

A lovely pond—green, I admit,
With fungus fresh and slimy.
And as the tramp sailed into it
He uttered one word: "Blimey!"
The water closed above his head.
I chuckled in high feather.
"Come on, let's go!" George Wingate
said,
So off we went, together!

GREYFRIARS INTERVIEWS

This week our long-haired poet chooses for his subject a character who really needs no introduction—

GEORGE WINGATE.

of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars.

"Get back to bed, you noisy young rascals!" roared Wingate.

Whack, whack!
"Oh crickey! Ow!" yelled Peter. "Leave off! Wow! I'm getting into bed, ain't I? Oh crumbs! Stop it!"

Peter plunged headlong into bed. Bunter followed his example. Wingate picked up the candle, and frowned at the row of grinning faces.

"Another sound from this dormitory to-night, and I'll come back and whop the whole Form!" he said.

He tramped out, after uttering that dire threat, and the Remove were left to darkness and slumber. But they did not seem to be thinking of slumber at the moment. Spasmodic chuckles ran from bed to bed—mingled with gasping gurgles from Billy Bunter.

But when there was a sound of Peter getting up again, a dozen fellows sat up in bed. A dozen voices addressed Peter all at once. Wingate was a man of his word; and nobody wanted him to revisit the dormitory.

"Stop that, Toddy!"
"Keep quiet, you ass!"
"We'll scrag you!"
"You turn out, and we'll rag you baldheaded!"
"Shut up!"
"Chuck it!"

And Peter decided to let Bunter keep till the morrow.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Temple Takes it Up!

CECIL REGINALD TEMPLE, captain of the Fourth Form, wore a thoughtful look the following day.

All over Greyfriars the question was still being asked—who had collared Capper?

It was a question of peculiar interest to the Fourth Form—Capper's Form. For all Greyfriars—outside the Remove—doubted not, for a moment, that the delinquents were in Capper's Form.

Capper doubted it. At least, he tried hard to doubt it. But the thing was, in the general opinion, clear!

Who but a Fourth Form man could possibly want to rag the Fourth Form beak? Who, in any other Form, cared two hoots about Capper?

Some disgruntled Fourth Formers, or Fourth Formers, had done it. Capper said that two fellows had been in it. He had distinctly felt the grasp of two pairs of hands, when he was up-ended in the dark. He had seen nothing—and the two miscreants had escaped undetected. But he knew that there were two of them—and one of the two had gripped his nose!

That his nose had been gripped was obvious. In the Form-room that day, it glowed with a rich, red glow. It had not only been gripped, but gripped hard—very hard. It shone almost like a beacon. It still had a pain in it—and that pain—naturally, in the circumstances—extended to Capper's temper.

Generally, quite a mild beak, Capper was fearfully shirty that day in Form. Lines fell like leaves in Vallombrosa. Lickings were plentiful. Capper seemed quite to have changed his character. He was as severe as Quelch—as bitter as Hacker!

He clung, or tried to cling, to the idea that the culprits were not in his own Form. But how could he doubt? And the knowledge that they were there, sitting before him, unknown, laughing in their sleeves, was intensely exasperating. They were in the Fourth—of course, they were in the Fourth! But

for the life of him, Capper could not begin to guess which fellows they were! There was an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion in the Form-room that day. Any of more than twenty fellows might have been guilty. Capper carried on that day as if the whole lot were guilty. It was most unpleasant.

Inquiry and investigation, of course, were still going on, hot and strong. Had a prefect's nose been pulled, it would have caused a sensation. But a beak's!

It was unheard-of—practically unthinkable! Prout, who called it unprecedented and unparalleled, really understated the case. It was unimaginable! The sort of thing that might have caused the skies to fall.

All Greyfriars School asked the question—who collared Capper?—but what they really meant was, who in the Fourth Form had collared Capper?

In the Common-room, Capper was the recipient of the deepest sympathy from other masters. But it was rather a barbed sympathy.

Hacker was heard to thank goodness that nothing of that kind could ever happen in the Shell. Wiggins smiled at the bare idea of such an occurrence in the Third. Quelch, who had tact, said nothing—but Capper was certain that he detected a grim smile on the Remove master's face. Prout boomed with sympathy, indignation, and advice to Capper, till Prout was almost in danger of getting his own portly nose pulled.

If they had let it drop in the Common-room, Capper could have borne it better. But they were not likely to let it drop in Common-room.

Coker of the Fifth had declared that the beaks, when they got together in Common-room, cackled like a lot of old hens. Capper had to realise now that there was something in it.

He writhed under the sympathy of the other beaks.

In self-defence, he maintained that the rascals—the ruffians—the miscreants—belonged to some other Form! But the whole body of beaks concurred in pooh-pooling that idea.

Capper would have given much to discover those miscreants in some Form other than the Fourth. He would have been delighted, above all, to discover them in the Fifth—Prout's Form. But he did not seem likely to discover them anywhere.

In these circumstances, it was no wonder that the Fourth went through an awful day.

Capper, once regarded in the Fourth as a harmless ass, now out-Quelched Quelch, and out-Hackered Hacker, so to speak.

The Fourth Form almost perspired when classes were over that day. They breathed deep breaths of relief when they were done with Capper. They hoped Capper would feel better on the morrow. But it did not seem probable—and prospects were dismal.

Hence the thoughtful frown on the brow of Cecil Reginald Temple, captain of the Fourth, when he sat at tea in his study with his friends, Dabney and Fry.

Temple had been caned that day. Involuntarily he had smiled as Capper's nose caught a gleam of sunshine.

He might have been smiling at anything. A man—dash it all!—could smile. But the Fourth Form Room that day was no place for smiling. Capper detected that smile, guessed the cause, and what happened next completely cured Cecil Reginald of any desire to smile.

Sitting at tea in his study, Temple

wriggled a little. Capper, who hardly ever caned a fellow, and only flicked when he did, had laid it on that day.

Dabney and Fry looked morose. Dabney had two hundred lines. Fry had a detention. In point of fact, few in the Fourth had got through that day without getting something.

"It's too jolly thick!" said Temple, breaking a dismal silence. "Life's not worth livin' with Capper in this state."

"I wish I knew who ragged him!" said Fry viciously. "I'd jolly well make the silly idiot sit up!"

"I wish they'd pulled his nose a bit harder!" growled Dabney.

"Well, the fact is, we can't be surprised at Capper bein' shirty!" declared Temple. "He's always been decent to us. We have the easiest time of any Form at Greyfriars. Look how Quelch whops in the Remove; and look how Hacker jaws them in the Shell! It's absolutely rotten for any man to rag old Capper. He was quite harmless before it happened. And now—"

"But who was it?" asked Fry. "We've got to find out!" said Temple determinedly. "They've got to own up and we've got to make them. This can't go on!"

"Oh, rather!" agreed Dabney. "Besides, it was a putrid thing to do!" said Temple. "It's rotten bad form to rag a beak! It's the sort of thing that isn't done at a decent school. I call it a disgrace to the Form."

"I heard Capper say to Prout that he didn't believe they were Fourth Form men at all!" remarked Fry.

"Well, that's rot, of course! Capper jolly well knows it, too; but he has to keep his end up. He hasn't acted to-day as if he thought they were in some other Form."

"Ye gods—no!"

"They're in the Fourth, and they've got to own up!" said Temple firmly. "We're going to spot 'em, and make 'em! See?"

"They won't be in a hurry to be found out!" said Fry doubtfully. "It's a flogging, at the very least. Everybody's saying it will be the sack!"

"The sooner such rotten cads are sacked, the better!" retorted Temple. "We can do without them at Greyfriars."

"Oh, rather!" agreed Dabney. "But who—"

"We've got to find out. Clearly it was some fellows with a grudge against Capper—or some fellow. Capper thinks there were two, but he's an ass, and you never know. He never saw anything. Anyhow, one or two, we're going to spot 'em. Then we'll make their lives a misery till they own up. Now, look here; Capper's bitten nearly every man in the Form to-day, but he was all right yesterday! Who had a grudge against him yesterday?"

"I don't believe anyone had!" declared Fry. "It's a giddy mystery."

"Somebody must have, ass! This rotten rag wasn't done without a reason. If he barged into other Forms like that meddlin' old ass Prout, it might have been a man in another Form. I remember Smithy of the Remove making old Prout hop. But the Remove have nothing against Capper."

"That young ass, Bunter!" said Fry. "Capper landed him in a row with his beak."

"Bunter hasn't the nerve to pull a rabbit's tail, let alone a beak's nose, fathead!"

"Yes, that's so," Fry nodded. "Some other Remove man may have taken it up for Bunter?"



Silently, swiftly, Peter Todd and Tom Dutton leaped. The dark figure, suddenly grasped by two pairs of hands, was up-ended in the twinkling of an eye. Peter's hand groped over an unseen face. Contact was established with a nose. He grabbed the nose. Tweak! "Urrrrrgh!" came spluttering from the dark figure. "Oh! Wurrrrrgh!"

"Would they?" scoffed Temple. "He borrowed money right and left among them to pay Capper for that rotten cake, and then spent it on tuck. I've heard a lot of them tell the fat little beast that he only got what he deserved, and that he ought to have had some more. They're all down on him for it. Catch them risking the sack for Bunter—more likely to kick him after Quelch had done with him."

"Yes, that's so!" agreed Fry. "I heard his own study-mate, Todd, tell him that if Quelch hadn't whopped him, he would have given him the cricket stump!"

"The question is, what Fourth Form man did it?" said Temple decisively. "Now, he must have had a grudge! That means that Capper must have punished him. Who has Capper punished lately?"

"Only you, old chap!"

"Eh?"

"He gave you lines for dropping that cake, you know."

"You silly ass!" said Temple.

"Well, you asked—"

"I didn't ask you to talk rot!" snapped Temple.

"Did he ask you for the lines, Cecil, old chap?" inquired Dabney.

"Yes, he did!" grunted Temple.

"He doesn't usually. I mean, he often forgets, and he often makes a point of forgetting, too. I suppose he was shirty. Still, you—"

"If you're going to talk blether, we may as well drop the subject," said Temple irritably. "For goodness' sake, talk sense. Look here, my idea is this; after tea we hold a meeting in the Rag, and every fellow in the Form goes through it! We shall get the man that way. What about it?"

"Good egg!" said Fry.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

And after tea word went through the Fourth; and, strange to relate, if the culprits really were in that Form, every man in the Fourth thought it a jolly good idea—one of Temple's best, in fact. Not a man in the Fourth missed, or thought of missing, that meeting in the Rag—at which every man in the Form hoped the guilty party, or parties, would be rooted out.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Temple's Amazing Success!

HARRY WHARTON & CO looked round in surprise.

After tea, the Famous Five were in the Rag. A light drizzle was falling out of doors; and the chums of the Remove, looking out of the window, were watching for it to stop. Other Remove men were in the room. Smithy, and Lord Mauleverer, and Peter Todd, and Squiff and Hazel, and two or three more. The Rag was used by the Fourth as well as the Remove; so it was not surprising to see Fourth Formers come in, especially on a rainy day. But it was rather surprising to see the whole Fourth Form march in in a body as if it were lesson-time, and they mistook the Rag for their Form-room.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" called out Bob Cherry. "What's on?"

Temple gave him a glance.

"You Remove fellows had better shift!" he said. "We're holding a meeting here. Go somewhere else."

"Bow-wow!" said Bob cheerily.

"Shift 'em!" suggested Dabney.

"Go ahead!" said Johnny Bull. "We shall want some shifting!"

"The shiftfulness may turn out a boot on the other leg!" grinned Hurrep Jamset Ram Singh.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Lots of room to hold your jolly old meeting, Temple!" he said. "We're not going out in the rain. We'll stand round and cheer, if you like."

"The cheerfulness will be terrific!"

"Look here, we can't carry on with those fags sniggering around!" said Wilkinson of the Fourth. "Let's shift 'em!"

"Wade in!" grinned Nugent.

"Oh, do!" chuckled the Bounder. "It will be somethin' for us to do on a rainy day. You begin on me, Temple!"

"Never mind those fags!" said Temple hastily. "We've got no time for rags and rows now. Now, you men—Take your legs out of the way, Todd!"

"You put 'em out of the way!" grunted Peter.

Toddy was not in the best of tempers.

He was worried.

Giving Bunter the cricket stump—which he had dutifully done that day—had been a satisfaction, but it was not really helpful. The fact remained that Toddy and Dutton had collared a beak, and that the consequences were awful and fearful if they were spotted.

The only consolation was that there seemed little danger of detection. Nobody seemed to be thinking of looking in the Remove for the culprits.

So long as nobody looked in the Remove for them it was all right!

Still, it was a worry—especially as the ragging of Capper was on Toddy's conscience. It was, as Temple had said, a putrid thing to do—if Toddy had only known what he was doing!

In a state of mingled worry, remorse, and uneasiness, Toddy was not disposed to take any swank from Cecil Reginald Temple. Instead, therefore, of removing his long legs, as Temple demanded, out of the way, Toddy stretched them a little farther in the way. A row with the

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Fourth would not have been unwelcome, to drive other matters from his mind.

Temple gave him a glare.

"Will you shift, you bony ass?" he demanded.

"No, I won't!" said Peter independently.

"I'll shift him!" said Scott of the Fourth.

"Hold on!" Temple interposed at once. "No rag now! We've got to get through this! Stand over here!"

The Removites looked on curiously as the proceedings proceeded. All the Fourth Form men were looking very serious.

"But what's the game?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Nothing to do with the Remove!" snapped Temple. "We're going to find out who collared Capper last night—"

"Wha-a-at?" ejaculated Peter.

"He's in this room—" went on Temple.

"Is—is he?" gasped Bob.

"Yes; and we're going to spot him—see?"

Peter Todd's face was a picture for a moment. The other Removites were grinning.

"Look here—" stammered Peter.

"You can shut up!" said Temple. "I've told you it's got nothing to do with the Remove!"

"N-n-nothing to do with the Remove?" repeated Toddy.

"Nothing at all! No bizney of yours! Shut up!"

Peter grinned.

"Oh, all right!" he said. And he shut up.

The Fourth Form stood in a rank, and Temple stood before them, rather like a Form-master about to address his Form.

His Form-fellows listened to him with attention—so did the grinning Removites. So long as Temple hunted in the Fourth for the fellows who had collared Capper, they wished them good hunting!

"Now, you men," said Temple, "you know why you're here! Some fellow in this Form ragged Capper last night. Capper thinks there were two, but he

was jolly flustered at the time, and very likely there was only one. I don't want to think there's two such rotten cads in our Form if I can help it. Anyhow, one or two, they've got to own up!"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney, his usual remark.

"It was a rotten, putrid, dirty trick!" went on Temple. "The brute ought to be sacked! He may be. But if he owns up, very likely he will get off with a flogging. He'd better, for, of course, he will be spotted sooner or later, with all the prefects on the go, and the Head himself. Now, I'm telling that man, whoever he is, to stand out, and own up like a man!"

There was a general stirring in the Fourth as they looked inquiringly at one another.

But nobody stood out.

"Very well!" said Temple, after a long pause. "The man's a rotten funk, and won't own up! I needn't say what I think of him; but such a rotten, sneaking, measly, disgusting worm ought to be boiled in oil! Now, as the rotter won't own up, we've got to spot him!"

"What-ho!" agreed Scott.

"When he's spotted, we're going to make him go to Capper and own up!" said Temple.

"But who?" said Wilkinson. "I don't see—"

"I'm runnin' this, Teddy Wilkinson," said Temple loftily, "and I don't need assistance, thanks! Now, you men, the idea is this—what was done to Capper, was done because of a grudge; there can't be any doubt about that. What else can it have been done for?"

"Oh, rather!"

"Capper must have come down heavy on somebody," went on Temple, "and the man owed him a grudge. That's perfectly plain. Now, Capper hardly ever came down heavy. Even if he gave a man lines, he generally never asked for them to be shown up. There never really was such a good-tempered little ass as old Capper. That makes it all the worse."

There was a murmur of assent.

"We've only been back a few days," went on Temple, "and it will be perfectly easy to pick out the man who owed

Capper a grudge. There can't be many in the Form who've had anything from Capper in the few days of the term we've been back. Now, first of all, who's been caned by Capper since the term started—up to yesterday, I mean?"

There was a general shaking of heads. Undoubtedly Capper was a mild beak. Nobody in his Form had been caned at all—until that day! That day, certainly, Capper had made up for lost time!

"Nobody whopped!" said Temple. "Well, I can't remember any man being whopped. Next detentions? Who's had a detention?"

Again there was a comparing of notes and a shaking of heads. Up to the date of the ragging, nobody in the Fourth had had a detention.

"By gum!" said Bob Cherry, breaking into the solemn proceedings, "if you fellows like, we'll swap Queleh for Capper!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You Remove fags shut up!" snapped Temple. "Now, you men, next we'll take lines! Who's had lines from Capper, and had to do them?"

"You have!" said Wilkinson.

"Don't be a cheeky fool, Teddy Wilkinson. I want to know who's had lines from Capper in this Form. It's absolutely rotten to think that any fellow would rag a beak for giving him lines; but there's nothing else to it—he must have had a grudge against Capper, and there must have been some sort of a cause! You all see that? Now, which man here had lines from Capper—up to yesterday?"

There was no answer.

The Fourth Form men looked at one another—and looked at Temple! And their looks were quite peculiar.

Temple started a little.

He had had lines from Capper, and he had had to do them, owing to that unfortunate affair of losing the cake. Temple, like Caesar's wife, was above suspicion—in his own eyes, at least. But he could not be blind to the extreme peculiarity of the glances cast at him now.

Nobody else in the Fourth had had lines from Capper, so far, that term. That was soon, and easily, ascertained.

Only Temple!

So far, the whole Form had been in full agreement with Temple. It really seemed a sure thing; and Temple had worked it out in quite a masterly way. They had to find a man who had been punished by Capper—then they had a man with a grudge and a motive!

They had found him! And it was Temple himself—and he was the only one! Up to the date of the ragging only Temple had suffered under Mr. Capper. And the Fourth Form were still in full agreement with Temple's theory. Why he had taken all this trouble to bowl himself out, they did not know. But he had done it!

"Well, my only hat!" said Wilkinson, with a deep breath. "Temple, you awful rotter!"

"What?" yelled Temple.

"You putrid tick!" exclaimed Scott. "You all the time—and you calling us to a meeting, and making out it was somebody else. I dare say you never knew you were the only chap who got lines from Capper. Is that it?"

"That's it, of course!" said Wilkinson. "Temple can't have meant to bowl himself out. But he's done it!"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney. "I say, Temple, old chap, this is pretty thick!"

Temple gasped. Never was an amateur detective so utterly dismayed by the successful completion of his case!

BUNTER ALWAYS MAKES A HIT!

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"Well, you'll have to own up now!" said Scott.

"Oh, rather!"

"You silly idiots!" shrieked Temple. "Wharrer you mean? I never did it! I'm trying to find out the man who did it, ain't I?"

"And you've jolly well found him!" shouted Wilkinson. "You!"

"I'll punch your head, Wilkinson!" "I'll jolly well punch yours, Temple, if—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Remove fellows.

That outcome of Temple's investigation took the Removites by storm. They yelled and roared.

The Fourth Form meeting broke up in confusion. Temple, dismayed and exasperated, lost all his usual calm repose of manner. He shouted, he denied, he roared, he raged. He fairly stamped out of the Rag, in the midst of an excited mob of the Fourth, exchanging punches with Wilkinson as he went.

Harry Wharton & Co. were left yelling. Really, it was quite an entertainment for a rainy day.

"All right for you, Toddy!" chortled Bob Cherry. "Safe as houses now, old bean—now Temple's found himself out."

And the Removites roared.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Dutton Gets the News!

"SEEN Toddy?"

Tom Dutton asked that question.

The rain had stopped, and the Famous Five, glad to get out of doors, were in the quad when Dutton came along. They were taking a trot round the quad; but they stopped as Tom hailed them. Tom Dutton was wearing a worried look. He was wearing, of course, other things, also, but his worried look was the most predominant. It leaped to the eye.

The Famous Five were sympathetic. Toddy had set out to demonstrate that Study No. 7 was top study in the Remove—the study that could handle recalcitrant prefects. Even Toddy did not deny that that enterprise had been a glassy frost. Tom Dutton had backed him up loyally. He was in the soup along with Peter, if the facts came to light. Everybody agreed that it was hard cheese on Dutton. Peter had been the leader—and it was only too well known in the Remove where he had led.

"Anything come out?" asked Harry Wharton, noting the deeply worried expression on Tom's face.

Remove men were keeping the secret with sedulous care. It was agreed in the Remove that any man who said a word to a man in another Form should be ragged, seragged, and sent to Coventry. Too many knew already, and if others got hold of it, the end was inevitable.

But, with persistent investigation going on, it was likely enough that discoveries would be made. Temple's detective work certainly was not very dangerous, except to Cecil Reginald himself. But all the prefects were on the prowl—the Head himself had taken the matter in hand. Tom Dutton looked as if he had had bad news.

"Eh?" said Dutton.

"Is anything out?" repeated Wharton, in a louder key.

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Dutton warmly. "Do you call that civil—call-

ing a fellow a lout, when he asks you a civil question."

"Oh, my hat! I never!" gasped the captain of the Remove. "I asked you if anything had come out."

"Oh, don't talk rot! How could I have some stout?" said Dutton peevishly. "I've never touched the stuff! And we shouldn't be allowed to, anyway. Look here! I've heard an awful thing. The fellows are saying that Capper—old Capper, the Fourth Form beak, you know—was ragged last night."

The Famous Five just gazed at Dutton. Apparently he had only just got the news.

"Oh crikey!" said Bob.

Tom looked at them anxiously.

"I say, I want to see Toddy and ask him," he said. "I say, it's jolly serious if it's true. From what Toddy told me at the time, I thought we were laying for Loder. I thought we'd got Loder. Now it seems that all this excitement that's been going on isn't about Loder at all, but Capper. Do you fellows know?"

The chums of the Remove felt for Dutton; but they could not help grinning. For a whole day the school had been in a state of buzzing excitement on account of the collaring of Capper. Evidently Dutton had gone on thinking, all the time, that the fuss was being made about Loder. Now, however, at long last, some possessor of powerful lungs had evidently put him wise.

"Nothing to grin at," said Tom. "I can't make it out. I backed up old Toddy to make Loder squirm, but I never bargained for ragging a beak. Why, a fellow might be sacked for it. Skinner says it was Capper. Was it?"

"Yes," said Harry.

"How can I guess, when it happened in the dark? Can't you say yes or no?" said Dutton irritably.

"Yes!" roared Wharton.

"It was really Capper!" exclaimed Tom.

The captain of the Remove nodded. It came easier.

"Then what the thump did Toddy do it for?" demanded Dutton. "What had Capper done to him?"

"It was a mistake."

"Whose cake?"

"Oh crikey!"

"Do you mean that cake that Bunter snaffled first day of term? Capper got him into a row about that, I know. But Toddy wouldn't have done it because of that. I'm jolly sure he wouldn't!"

"It was a mistake in the dark!" howled Wharton. "Toddy thought it was Loder, but it turned out to be Capper. It was a bungle in the dark."

"Don't tell all Greyfriars, for goodness' sake!" murmured Nugent.

"I wish you'd speak plainly, Wharton, instead of mumbling so," said Tom. "I'm not speaking about the Sark. It's got nothing to do with the river at all, so far as I know. I'm talking about what happened in the Form-room passage last night. Skinner says we got Capper—"

"So you did!"

"Well, naturally we hid, as we were in ambush for Loder. What would you have done? We didn't want him to spot us."

"Oh dear! Anybody got a megaphone?" groaned Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's all very well to cackle!" said Tom indignantly. "But if it was Capper, it's jolly serious. I've noticed him to-day, looking jolly bad-tempered, and wondered what was the matter with

him. He's generally quite mild. His nose looks fearfully red, too."

"It would!" grinned Bob.

"Well, I don't call it good," said Tom; "I call it jolly bad, if that ass Toddy really pulled a beak's nose, thinking it was Loder's. According to what he told me, he had it all fixed for Loder. You remember Loder pulled Toddy's nose the day we came back—you were in the carriage. That's why he did it. But, so far as I know, he had nothing, against Capper. Capper's all right."

Tom shook his head, evidently very worried.

"Toddy must have made a mistake," he said. "He couldn't have done it on purpose. Think it was just a mistake in the dark?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, it looks like it to me," said Tom; "but I don't see how. Bunter gave us the tip all right. I didn't hear what he said—he mumbles so—but Toddy was satisfied, so, of course, I thought it was all right."

"Bunter let you down."

"Oh, no! Brown had nothing to do with it," said Dutton. "So far as I know, Tom Brown knew nothing about it at all."

"Bunter let you down!" shrieked Wharton.

"What utter rot! How could Bunter let me down?"

"Not down—down!" raved Wharton.

"Oh, do talk sense, when a chap's worried!" exclaimed Dutton. "I tell you it had nothing to do with the river at all! And, anyhow, I'm not a chap to be let down; I'm a good swimmer. Precious lot of good Bunter would be, too, if a chap was drowning! He can't swim for toffee!"

"Oh, holy smoke!"

"It may be a joke to you fellows. I think it's jolly serious. Looks to me," said Dutton, "as if Bunter must have let us down somehow."

The Famous Five all nodded vigorously. Dutton had got it at last!

"Just like that fat freak," said Tom.

"That's how I work it out, anyhow. Bunter let us down, and then that ass Toddy made a mistake in the dark. Capper must have been going to the Form-room for something. I can't imagine why he was going there that time of night. The Fourth don't do their prep in the Form-room like the Third. Besides, it was after prep."

"Bunter heard him say he was going for a book."

"We couldn't look, when it was as black as the inside of a hat. Lot of good looking. Of course, I thought it was Loder. And I'm pretty certain that Toddy did, too. I can't imagine why Capper was there, unless he was going to the Form-room for a book or something. That might be it. Think so?"

The Famous Five all nodded again.

"Well, it was jolly unfortunate," said Tom. "Very likely they won't guess it was a mistake, and they'll think we meant it for Capper—a rotten blackguardly thing, if we had. Did you fellows know it was Toddy and me? Skinner seemed to know it was."

"Sort of!" gasped Bob.

"Yes; I suppose you thought of it. The fact is, I believe nearly every chap in the Remove knows," said Dutton. "I hope they'll keep it dark. We never meant it for Capper; but, of course, Capper mightn't believe that. And, even if he did, it mightn't make his nose feel any better. I noticed his nose was fearfully red, and wonderful

if something had happened to it. Have you fellows noticed it?"

"Ha, ha! Yes, rather!"

"Well, I suppose they'll never guess who did it!" said Tom. "They can't have found out so far, or we should be up before the Head! A fellow might be bunked for it."

"Flogged, at least!" said Bob.

"That's where you're wrong," said Dutton. "Capper isn't a beast—if he was, I wouldn't mind! I say, do you know where Toddy is?"

"I think he went up to the study."

"Of course it's muddy, after the rain! Are you going to make out that I'm blind—you seem to like making out that I'm deaf! I didn't ask you whether it was muddy, but where Toddy was."

"In his study!" yelled Bob.

"Oh, study! I thought you said muddy! I wish you wouldn't mumble when you speak to me—I'm a trifle hard of hearing. I've told you so."

"A trifle!" murmured Bob, as Tom Dutton started for the House to look for Toddy. "Some trifle!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Kick him!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Beast! I say, you fellows, there's a row on in the Fourth!" chuckled Billy Bunter. "I say, they're ragging old Temple."

"Ragging Temple!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Yes—he, he, he! They think Temple collared Capper!" chortled the fat Owl.

"He, he, he!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Well, Temple's the man to ask for things!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "If a chap starts in as a detective, and finds himself out, what can he expect?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Famous Five strolled into the House to look in at the Fourth Form quarters—where they found that Billy Bunter had not exaggerated. A "row" was going on in the Fourth—and it was a most tremendous row.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

"Own Up, Temple!"

CECIL REGINALD TEMPLE breathed wrath and rage. He was almost crimson with those emotions.

Nearly all the Form were crowded round the doorway of his study in the Fourth passage. Six or seven of them were in the study. All of them were angry and excited.

Dabney and Fry, his own familiar friends, stood silent—but they gave him no support. They regarded him, like Hamlet's father, more in sorrow than in anger. But everybody else was wrathful. Wilkinson was the wrathiest. Temple, in his lofty way, often sat on Wilkinson. He was not to be sat on now.

"Own up!" roared Wilkinson.

"Go to Capper!" roared Scott.

"You scug!"

"You swab!"

"You awful rotter!"

"You've got the whole Form into a row! Own up, like a man!"

"I never did it!" shrieked Temple. "Don't I keep on telling you that I never did it! I never knew anything about it! As if I'd rag Capper! Haven't I said it was a putrid trick?"

"Haven't you said that the fellow who did it had a grudge against Capper because he'd got lines?" demanded Wilkinson.

"Your own words, Temple, old man!"

said Fry, sadly.

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"Yes—but I thought some other chap must have had 'em!" gasped Temple.

"I wasn't thinking of myself."

"Mean to say you'd have put it on some other chap, if some other chap had happened to have lines!" exclaimed Scott. "I call that thick."

"No, I don't!" raved Temple. "I never did it! Besides, Capper said there were two in it! Are there two of me, you fathead?"

"You said yourself there was only one! You said Capper was an ass for thinking there was more than one! I can see now that you jolly well knew."

"Oh, gad," gasped Temple. "I—I—"

"Are you going to own up?" roared a dozen voices.

"I'd own up like a shot if I did it. I never did. I—I thought it would turn out to be some chap who'd had detentions or lines from Capper! But—but I can see now that that was a mistake—"

"A mistake to get yourself found out, do you mean?"

"No!" raved Temple. "Nothin' of the sort."

"Well, if Temple says he didn't do it," said Fry dubiously, "I—I suppose he didn't, if he says he didn't: but he jolly well took a lot of trouble to make out that he did!"

"Oh, rather!"

"Suppose it had come out," hooted Wilkinson, "that some other fellow had had impots from Capper. What would Temple have said then?"

"He'd have said that that fellow did it," declared Kenney.

"Of course he would!" exclaimed Scott. "That was what we were all after—a fellow who had a grudge against Capper! Well, we've found him."

"Oh, gad!" groaned Cecil Reginald Temple.

From the bottom of his heart, Cecil Reginald wished that he had never set up as an investigator, to discover the collars of Capper.

"It's come out," said Scott, "that nobody but Temple had anything against Capper. He never expected that, of course—but that's what's come out."

"It was Temple all right!"

"Own up, you swab!"

"You've landed the whole Form! Own up!"

"Go to Capper and own up!"

"You silly idiots!" shrieked Temple.

"Think I'd have started an inquiry if I'd been the man that did it? Have a little sense!"

"Oh, that was bluff!" said Scott.

"Pure bluff," agreed Wilkinson.

"You didn't know you were the only man Capper had dropped on till we compared notes. Bluffing all the time."

"I tell you—" howled Temple.

"Are you going to own up, you swab?"

"How can I own up when I never did it?"

"You've proved yourself that you did!"

Harry Wharton & Co. in the passage, grinned at one another. Other fellows had come along to hear the row. Quite a crowd was gathering in the Fourth Form passage. The Remove fellows, of course, knew that Temple was not the man—but to most of the Fourth, it looked clear enough.

On his own theory, if they found a man with a grudge against Capper, they had found the mysterious ragger. Unforeseen by Temple, it turned out that he was the only man in the Fourth with even the slightest cause for a

grudge against Capper, up to the date of the rag. So what were the fellows to think?

"Look here, let's jolly well rag him till he goes to Capper and owns up!" exclaimed Wilkinson.

"Oh, hold on!" exclaimed Fry. "If Temple says he didn't—"

"He's as good as said he did."

"Well, yes, but—"

"I didn't!" shrieked Temple. "I never thought about my own lines. As if I'd rag Capper for a few lines. What utter rot!"

"You were ready to make out that some other fellow had!"

"Oh! Well—yes—but—but—"

"You did it!"

"I didn't!"

"Own up, you rotter!"

Harry Wharton pushed into the crowded doorway.

"Go easy, you men," he said. "You're making a fearful row! You'll have Capper up here at this rate! I've heard that he's not in a good temper to-day."

"Get out, you Remove tick!"

"Barge that Remove cad out!"

"Mind your own bizney!"

Five or six of the Fourth barged Wharton out of the doorway and sent him spinning into the passage. There was a shout from Hobson of the Shell, further along.

"Cave!"

But Hobby's warning was not heard or heeded in the roar of voices in Temple's study. Mr. Capper, with a grim and angry brow, came whisking along the passage. Capper's temper was not good that day. A terrific shindy in his Form that could be heard nearly all over the House, gave it the finishing touch. The Fourth Form master swept on the scene like a thunderbolt.

And as he arrived at the study doorway five or six voices were shouting at Temple all at once:

"Own up, you rotter! Go to Capper and own up that you did it, you swab!"

Mr. Capper gave a convulsive start. He could scarcely fail to understand.

"Goodness gracious!" he gasped. "What—what do I hear? Boys!"

"Oh, crumbs," gasped Fry. "It's Capper!"

There was a sudden silence in the study. Temple turned a crimson face on his Form-master.

The other fellows stood silent, breathless. All eyes were on Mr. Capper. Capper's eyes were fixed on Temple, as if they would bore into him.

"Temple!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

"What is the meaning of this?"

"Oh! N-nothing, sir!"

"I could not help hearing," said Mr. Capper grimly, "what was said. 'I came here to ascertain the cause of this unexampled riot in my Form. What do I find? Temple, it appears to be the belief of your Form-fellows that you were guilty of last night's outrage. For what reason?'"

"They—they're a lot of fools, sir!" gasped Temple.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Capper dryly.

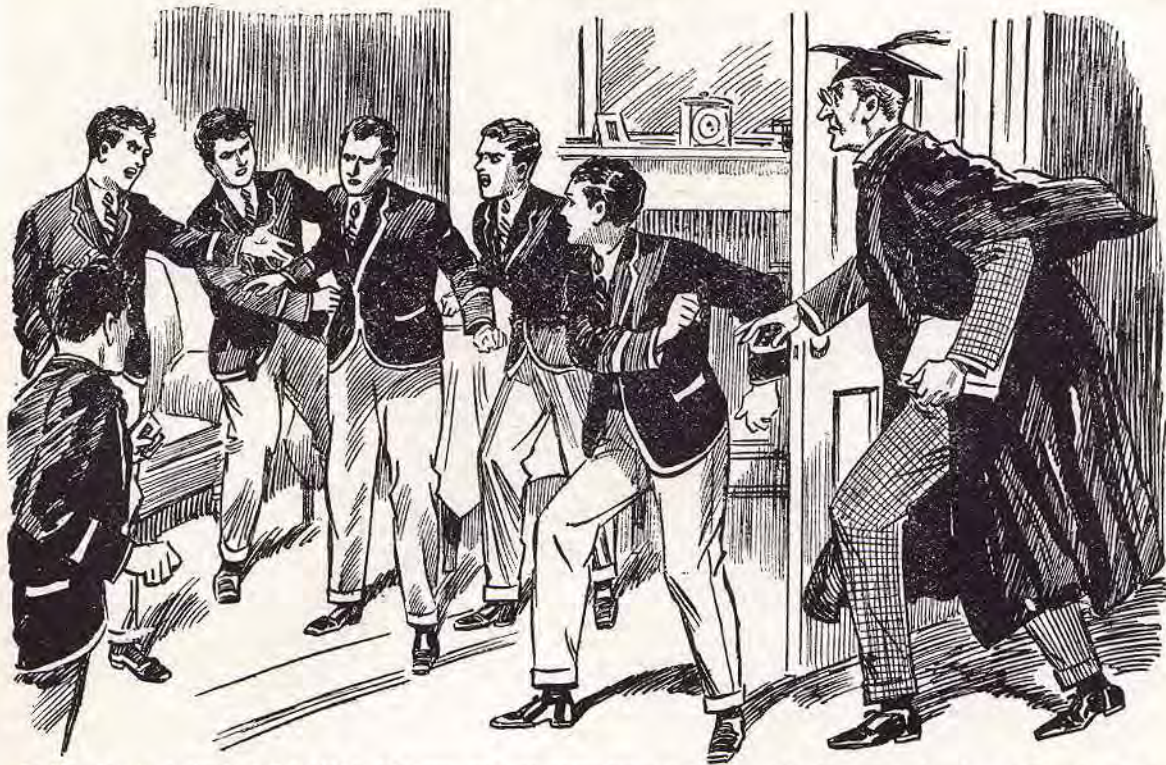
"That appears to me, Temple, scarcely an adequate explanation. I will not question these boys. No boy in my Form shall ever be asked to witness against another. But what I have heard, I have heard. Have you any confession to make, Temple?"

"Oh, gad! I—I mean, no, sir."

"Do you admit—"

"Oh! No! No!"

"Very well," said Mr. Capper grimly. "Investigation will proceed. Boys, let this riot cease at once. I



As Mr. Capper arrived at the study doorway, with an angry brow, a number of voices were shouting at Temple all at once: "Own up, you rotter!" "Go to Capper and own up that you ragged him, you swab!" The Upper Fourth Form master gave a convulsive start. "Goodness gracious!" he gasped. "What—what do I hear? Boys!" There was a sudden silence in the study.

excuse you—I am bound to excuse what I can only regard as just indignation on the part of boys of my Form. But let there be no more of it! Temple, if you decide upon confessing what you may know of the matter, you may come to my study."

"I—I—I never—"

"That will do, Temple!"

Mr. Capper swept away. It was pretty clear that he had made up his mind on the subject.

The crowd dispersed. Wilkinson hooted a last hoot at Temple as he went:

"You'd better own up now! You can see that Capper knows all right!"

"You silly ass! I never—"

"Oh, rats!"

Harry Wharton & Co. walked away to the Remove passage, smiling. It was rather rough on Temple; but there was no doubt that he had asked for it. Still, it was rough luck.

"I say, you fellows—" squeaked a fat voice.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter! It's all Bunter's fault! Let's kick Bunter!"

It was all that the Famous Five could do—and they did it!

to the Head, it seemed that Wingate regarded the matter as doubtful, or, at least, unproved. Still, there was the positive fact that Temple of the Fourth had been "had up" before a prefect! There was the added fact that his own Form-master regarded him with a grim and distrustful eye. There was the fact that nearly every man in the Fourth regarded it as a certainty that Temple had "done it," and that even his own pals, Dabney and Fry, though they stood by him, were obviously distressed and dubious.

"Clear enough!" said Coker of the Fifth in the games-study. "I hear that the Fourth Form kids went right into the matter and found out that Temple had a grudge against his beak—some awful grudge. The young scoundrel ought to be sacked!"

"They've got him, all right!" Hobson of the Shell told his friends. "From what I hear old Capper started the term by giving Temple a frightful licking, and that's why he did it."

"That swanking ass, Temple!" said Tubb of the Third, in the den of the fags. "I'll bet he did it! Look at the roll he puts on!"

"You men heard about Temple?" asked Dicky Nugent, in the Second Form Room, after prep. "It's come out that he owned up that he did it, before a whole crowd in the Rag, and then tried to back out of it afterwards."

Loder of the Sixth, seeing lights out for the Fourth that night, gave Temple a very searching look, in the Fourth Form dorm.

"So it was you, Temple!" he said.

"Nothin' of the kind!" hissed Temple.

"I hear that you admitted it."

"I never did! I—"

"Well, you know what to expect!" said Loder.

"I never—"

"That will do!"

That night, everybody knew that Temple had done it, and in the morning some fellows seemed surprised to see that he was still at Greyfriars.

"You still here, Temple?" called out Hoskins of the Shell, meeting him in the quad in break.

"You howling ass, where should I be?" hissed Temple.

"I mean, aren't you sacked?"

"Idiot!"

"Well, dash it all, a fellow collaring his own beak and pulling his nose!" said Hoskins warmly. "It wouldn't do in the Shell, I can tell you."

"Dummy!"

It was not a happy morning for Temple. Capper, as a just man, could not act without proof; but all the prefects were busy hunting for proofs. In the meantime, Capper gave the captain of his Form the marble eye. The Fourth, naturally, took their cue from their beak. Marble eyes surrounded Temple.

"I say, this is a bit thick, if you ask me!" Bob Cherry remarked when the Greyfriars fellows came out after dinner.

His chums agreed that it was. Temple of the Fourth was "mooching" dismally, scornfully regarded by his Form. Generally lofty, not to say swanky, Temple looked now extremely forlorn. His swank had been badly punctured.

Wilkinson, passing him, snapped:

"Owning up yet, you swab?"

And Temple was too dispirited even to answer.

"That ass Toddy!" said Bob.

"That blithering idiot, Toddy!" said Johnny Bull.

"If they land it on Temple, old Toddy will own up!" said Harry Wharton.

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THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Rough Luck!

"WHO collared Capper?"

"That ass Temple!"

For a whole day there had been no answer to the burning question. But the answer was found now.

Outside the Remove, hardly a fellow doubted.

It was known that evening that Wingate had sent for Temple and questioned him. As Temple was not taken

"But they can't very well! They can't make out that a chap did a thing he didn't do, I suppose."

"Temple's done his best to make it out!" grinned Nugent. "Nearly everybody seems to think, by this time, that he owned up to it, and then backed out."

Temple gave the Famous Five a glare as they came along.

"Do you fellows think I did it?" he snarled.

"We know you didn't, old bean!" said Harry Wharton soothingly. "We know you wouldn't. Look here, Temple, what about an alibi?"

"A what?"

"An alibi! Where were you when it happened the other night? If you weren't on the spot you must have been somewhere else. I remember you weren't in the Rag at the time; but you must have been somewhere. Can't you prove that?"

Temple groaned.

"Wingate's been into that," he said. "As it happens, I was in my study, by myself. You see, Fry and Dab went down, after prep, but I had a box of new neckties to look over—"

"Oh crikey!"

"I was trying them on, you know," said the unhappy dandy of the Fourth. "One after another, you know. I hadn't finished when I heard the row and came down."

"Then—then you might—"

"I might—but I didn't! As if I'd rag old Capper!" groaned Temple. "I've often put in an hour in my study trying on neckties—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, cackle!" said Temple bitterly; and he stalked away.

After class that day there was more news. Temple of the Fourth had been sent for to the Head's study! He was up before the Big Beak!

"That means the chopper!" said Hobson of the Shell.

"And serve him jolly well right!" said Hoskins. "Collaring his own

beak, you know! Pulling his nose! Why, we wouldn't do that to Hacker!"

"Well, from what I hear, Capper jolly nearly skinned him, the first day of the term!" said another Shell fellow.

"Still, there's a limit!" said Hobson. And it was agreed that there was a limit!

A crowd gathered to see Temple come away from the Head's study.

"Sacked?" asked a dozen voices.

"You silly owls!" said Temple.

"Think the Head would sack a man for nothing?"

"Nothing!" exclaimed three or four fellows. "Nothing—to rag your own beak!"

"I never did!"

"Oh, chuck it! What's the good of that?"

Temple snorted, and went out into the quad. Mr. Capper was there, crossing over to the Head's garden, with Quelch. The two beaks were going to take a stroll there. Temple cut across and intercepted them near the Head's gate.

"Mr. Capper—sir!" he exclaimed desperately. "Will you let me speak?"

Capper gave him a look like an icicle.

"I desire to hear nothing from you, Temple!" he said. "Unless, indeed, you have made up your mind to confess frankly—"

"I never did it, sir!" gasped Temple.

"I give you my word, sir, that I was in my study at the time!"

"Was anyone with you there, Temple?" asked Mr. Quelch kindly.

"N-n-n-o, sir!"

"Oh!" said the Remove master. And he said no more.

"But—but I never—"

"That will do, Temple!" said Mr. Capper freezingly. And he walked on with Mr. Quelch.

Temple stared after him dismally, and turned away. Capper, clearly, had made up his mind, and that was that.

"Oh gad!" mumbled Temple.

He walked dismally into the quad. A few minutes later some of the Fourth spotted him. Their looks, as they came towards him, caused Cecil Reginald Temple to beat a hurried retreat into the House.

"Own up, you swab!" shouted Wilkinson.

"Collar him, like he did Capper!" exclaimed Kenney.

There was a rush in pursuit.

Harry Wharton & Co. watched that little scene, with rather worried faces.

Peter Todd watched it, with a still more worried face.

"It's getting a bit too thick, Toddy!" said the captain of the Remove quietly.

Peter made no answer.

His brow was grim. It was rough luck on Temple—rather too rough—and it was borne in on Toddy's mind that it was not good enough. Not a man in the Remove was going to give him away; but now that what he had done was fixed on another fellow, there was only one thing for a decent man to do—and Peter knew that he had to do it.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

All Clear!

PETER TODD tapped his study-mate and pal, Tom Dutton, on the shoulder. Tom looked at him, with a cheery smile.

Peter grinned faintly.

The deaf Removeite, so far, had not heard that suspicion had fixed on Temple! All Tom knew was that no discovery had been made about that unfortunate mistake in the dark, and

that all, therefore, was serene. Tom had a Soccer ball under his arm.

"Oh, here you are, Toddy!" he said.

"I was looking for you! Come and punt this footer about before tea."

"Never mind that," said Peter gloomily. "I've got something to say to you!"

"You don't owe me anything, that I know of!" said Dutton, staring.

"Bunter does, but he's never likely to pay me. What do you mean?"

"I didn't say pay!" hooted Peter.

"Say, not pay!"

"Do you mean a pick-up? I'm on, of course—but where are the other fellows? I'll play, with pleasure."

"Oh dear!" gasped Peter.

"If they're near, I can't see them!" said Dutton, staring round. "What do you mean, Peter? Has Wharton fixed up a pick-up, or not? There's not much time before tea."

"I've got something to say!" roared Peter. "It's about what happened the other night!"

"Oh, all right! What about it?"

Peter paused.

There were plenty of fellows in the quad, and talking to Dutton, was talking to everybody within a considerable distance.

"Come over here, under the trees!" he said.

"Bosh!" said Dutton. "It's cold for the time of year, but it's not going to freeze. What on earth's put that into your head, Peter?"

Peter clutched him by the arm, and walked him off under the trees. Actions were easier than words.

Unfortunately, Wingate and Gwynne of the Sixth were strolling under the Greyfriars elms. What Peter had to say to his deaf chum certainly was not to be heard by prefects.

"Oh crumbs!" said Peter. "Come this way!"

"Eh?"

"Come along."

"What's wrong?"

Peter led him away without replying. They passed the gate of the Head's garden. Peter halted again. It was a quiet spot.

"Now, listen to me, Dutton," he said. "That was yesterday," said Tom.

"Eh? What was yesterday?" howled Peter.

"It was yesterday we had mutton. Do you mean for dinner?"

Peter suppressed his feelings. He looked this way, and that way, like Moses of old; and, like Moses, saw no man nigh. He put on steam.

"They've got a man for collaring Capper!" he bawled in Dutton's ear.

Dutton jumped.

"Oh crikey! Who do they think it was, then?"

"Temple of the Fourth!" roared Peter.

"But he never did it!"

"I know he didn't, but everybody thinks he did! His beak's down on him, and the Fourth are ragging him to make him own up."

"Well, he ought to be shown up, if he did it; but he didn't! Temple never had anything to do with it, Toddy!"

"We can't leave it at that!" said Peter. "We can't have it landed on another fellow!"

"No need to bellow! I can hear all right, if you don't mumble. I say, Peter, if they've put it on Temple, we shall have to own up. It was an awful mistake; but, after all, it was a mistake. We never meant it for Capper!"

(Continued on page 28.)

WHAT WAS BILLY BUNTER LIKE in his early days at Greyfriars? You can read all about him in

"Bunter the Athlete"

By FRANK RICHARDS

which tells how the Owl of the Remove comes out strong—but not in the way he hopes!—when he makes up his mind to become the strong man of the school.

In addition, there's

"The Toff's Enemy"

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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.

"ANY complaints?" as the Orderly Officer asks when "going his rounds" during the men's meal-times.

No! At least, as far as the good old MAGNET is concerned there is not a single complaint in any of my letters this week. And when I tell you that my postbag has been an exceptionally heavy one, you will agree with me that all is going well on the MAGNET front. Our cover-to-cover yarns have undoubtedly pleased everybody, which I fully expected would be the case when I persuaded Mr. Frank Richards to write them. It is, of course, impossible for me to answer the vast number of glowing letters I receive, so I must take advantage of this page to thank all those readers who have sent letters of praise.

Here are extracts from some of the letters to hand this week. John Macdonald, writing from Winchester, is straight to the point. "I am delighted with the excellent full-length school stories in the MAGNET!" he says. "I felt that the serial stories deprived us of three pages that could be devoted to better advantage by lengthening the school story." John concludes his letter by saying that there is only one other improvement, and that is—two issues of the MAGNET each week, or an increase in size and price, which would be justified for what is the best of all weekly papers. Phew! Two issues of the MAGNET each week! Think of your Editor, John! I should need more than one wet towel round my head if I attempted it!

The next letter is from Mrs. Pickard, who has recently "taken over" a new house in Nuneaton. Mrs. Pickard and her daughter, Joan, have been reading the MAGNET for a number of years. The question arose as to what they should name the new house. After puzzling their brains for some time they both gave it up as a bad job. Eventually, however, while perusing the pages of the MAGNET, a happy thought struck Mrs. Pickard. "Why not name the house 'Greyfriars'?" she asked. Joan was delighted. The house now bears the name of 'Greyfriars'! Strange, but perfectly true!

Lorne Henry, from far-away Canada, has sent me some interesting "cuttings," and also a puzzle which he hopes will interest other "Magnetites." Here it is: "Take any printed book, open its pages at random, and select a word within the first ten lines and within the tenth word from the end of the line. Double the number of the page, and multiply the sum by 5. Add 20. Add the number of the line you have selected and add 5. Multiply the sum by 10. Add the number of the word in the line. From this subtract 250. The remainder will indicate in the unit column the number of the word; in the ten's column the number of the line, and the remaining figures the number of the page."

Try this on your chums.

Next comes a request from Tom Parry, of Southend. He wants me to start

A "MAGNET" LEAGUE.

I agree the idea is a good one. But to run such a league would mean that a certain amount of space now devoted to the stories and illustrations would have to be used for league announcements. This would no doubt please a few readers who are interested, but then, again, it would upset a vast number who are not interested. My idea always, as you know, is to please the majority. Therefore, Tom, I am afraid I cannot grant your request.

HAVING dealt with these interesting letters, I feel that I ought to ask if you have got your copy of

"THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL"

yet? This topping five-shilling book looks like selling out very quickly, and no wonder, when you come to consider its contents: Splendid long complete stories of Greyfriars, St. Jim's and Rookwood, shorter tales of school, fun and adventure, articles, poems, guaranteed to delight boys and girls alike. Get your copy to-day—to-morrow may be too late!

By the way, have you made the acquaintance of Nipper & Co., the cheery chums of St. Frank's? If you haven't, I should advise you to get your newsagent to reserve you the October number of the "Schoolboys' Own Library" out on Oct. 1st, in which you will find a thrilling book-length yarn by Edwy Searles Brooks. From now on there will be three issues of this popular library published every month, and one of them will feature a St. Frank's story. Be sure and get a copy—price 4d.

Ge! I've just remembered that I have not yet mentioned a word about next week's MAGNET programme. The piece-de-resistance is Frank Richards' cover-to-cover yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled:

"HIS CONVICT COUSIN!"

Following an announcement on the wireless that Convict 22, otherwise known as James Loder, has escaped from Blackmoor Prison, the chums of Greyfriars are startled to learn that the fugitive is hiding within the vicinity of the school. That Gerald Loder is scared on hearing the news is proved conclusively by the fiery temper he displays. But there's a shock awaiting the bullying Sixth Former when he comes up against William Wibley, for the amateur actor of the Remove can hit back and hit hard! Don't miss this top-notch yarn, chums; it's crowded with thrills and excitement. Of course, it goes without saying that the "Greyfriars Herald" will be bang up to its usual standard.

SEEN this week's "Gem" yet? If you haven't, you should get a copy right away and read the splendid yarn dealing with the early adventures of Harry Wharton & Co. The title alone:

"BUNTER THE ATHLETE!"

is enough to whet your appetite. You will scream with laughter when you read how Billy Bunter sets out to become the "strong man" of Greyfriars by taking up physical culture.

Here's a paragraph that concerns

THE STRANGEST LAKE IN THE WORLD.

It is so strange that iron won't rust in its waters! Furthermore, you can't boil eggs in the water from the lake, and, thirdly, only one variety of fish will live in it. The lake is in South America and is called Lake Titicaca. It is situated on the top of a mountain, 15,000 feet high, and contains two islands. These islands were the seats of an ancient civilisation which has long since passed away, and still hold the ruins of marvellous temples and palaces. One vessel of 1,700 tons—and British built at that!—plies on the waters of the lake. It was built in Hull, sailed to Callao, in Peru, and was then taken to pieces. Indians carried it up the mountains where it was pieced together again and launched for the second time!

If you ever pay a visit to Lake Titicaca, you will be able to enjoy the unusual experience of being able to sail on a British-built vessel 15,000 feet in the clouds!

The old "Wild West" is changing, chums. It's not even "wild and woolly" now. You'll probably find it hard to believe, but the latest idea over there is

TEACHING INDIANS—TO BE INDIANS!

Red Indians have given up their old habits. Since they were allotted their big reservations in the United States, they've grown rich by the sale of some of their lands. They don't live in wigwams and go out hunting nowadays. In fact, they've forgotten all their forefathers ever knew. This came to light recently when a Hollywood producer wanted a big crowd of Indians to make a film of the old days of the Wild West. It was necessary that the Indians should carry out tracking, hunting, making fire with fire-sticks and so on. They just couldn't do it! They'd never had to do it, and they'd become thoroughly civilised. Guess what the producer did. He got a number of Boy Scouts to show the Indians how to do these things which were once as natural to their tribe as eating!

The climax came when one big Indian sought out the producer.

"I'm gonna quit, boss," he said. "I'm tired of playing Indians!"

And that's that!

To wind up this chat, here are some

RAPID-FIRE REPLIES

to readers' queries:

What Does the Name Rogerson Mean? ("Devotee," of Paisley).—Obviously "the son of Roger." But the name Roger was originally given to a harum-scarum individual, as is shown by the expression, "Jolly Roger" as applied to a pirate's flag.

What is Dipsomania? (R. C. S., of Didsbury).—The word means a morbid craving for alcoholic stimulants. It comes from the Greek word dipsodipsa, meaning thirst.

What Premium is Paid by a Sea-going Apprentice? (Arthur Wilson, of Liverpool).—It varies according to the particular company. Some shipping companies take apprentices without any premium whatever. Inquiries should be sent to the company which it is desired to join.

Look out for another pow-wow next week, chums.

YOUR EDITOR.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,492.

SCHEMERS of STUDY No. 7

(Continued from page 26.)

"I know! Capper may take our word for that!" groaned Peter. "I hope he will! He's a decent sort of man, thank goodness! He may believe that we mistook him in the dark for the chap we wanted. If he does, it will only be a fogging, and not the sack."

"Well, I shan't pack—"

"What?"

"I don't see packing, unless we actually get bunked," said Dutton. "That depends on the Head! Of course, the Head would bunk us fast enough, if Capper believes that we did it, knowing it was him! But, look here, Peter! Capper's a decent sort—he will take our word, when we're telling the truth. I've always liked old Capper."

"So have I!" groaned Peter. "I'd have cut off my hand sooner than have touched Capper, if I'd known it was Capper! But how was a fellow to know in the dark?"

"He's not likely to think it a lark—collaring him like that! You grabbed his nose, too—"

"I never knew it was Capper's nose, fathead! I'd rather have grabbed a red-hot poker, if I'd known. I'd have gone to him afterwards, and begged his pardon, only, of course, I couldn't! But we can't have it put on Temple! That's what I want to speak to you about, old chap."

"On my head!" said Dutton.

"Eh? What's on your head?"

"My cap."

"Oh crikey! Look here!" Peter roared into Dutton's ear. "Look here, Dutton! You keep out of this, see? I led you into it, and it's enough for one chap to face the music. So long as they whop somebody, they'll be satisfied. I'm going to own up, but you keep mum."

"Oh, don't be an ass, Toddy! I may be a little deaf, but you jolly well know I'm not dumb!" said Dutton warmly. "What the dickens do you mean?"

"You keep mum!" bawled Peter. "See? Mum! Keep out of it! It was all my fault, and I'm taking what's coming. No need for two to get either bunked or whopped! Leave it to me."

"I hope I'm not such a swob as that," said Tom indignantly. "We did it together, and if you own up, I shall do the same. If they've put it on another chap, we've got no choice. It's frightfully rough luck, but it can't be helped."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" hooted Peter. "It may only be a whopping, if Capper believes that we made a mistake in the dark, but it may be funking."

"Well, I'm not funking. I'm ready to go to Capper now, if you are."

"You keep out of it!" shrieked Peter. "Leave it to me! I tell you it's no good two chaps getting the chopper!"

"Rats!"

"Now look here, you fathead—"

"Well, you look here, you silly ass—" exclaimed Dutton. "I'm taking my share, of course. But I'll tell you this, Toddy—if we pull through this time, and you ever propose another rag on anybody, I'll jolly well punch your head instead of backing you up. I wish I'd done it last time."

"I wish you had—as it turned out!" groaned Peter. "Now, look here, Dutton, I'd rather you stood out—"

"Oh, rats!"

"Well, let's go to Capper, then! Come along!"

"I don't think it's wrong—I think it's right, as I had a hand in it—"

"Come along!" yelled Peter. "Let's go to Capper's study now, and get it over."

"Oh, all right! You needn't yell like that! I can hear you when you don't mumble."

"Come on, fathead!"

Peter, who was leaning on the gate, detached himself therefrom, took Dutton by the arm, and marched him off to the House. They arrived at Mr. Capper's study—and finding that the Fourth Form beak was not in, they waited for him there—and never had minutes seemed so much like hours.

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Upon my word" said Mr. Capper.

The two masters, in the Head's garden, looked at one another.

They were at quite a distance from the gate on the quad. Ordinary conversation at that gate would have passed them unheard. But not conversation with Tom Dutton of the Remove.

"Boys of your Form, Quelch!" said Mr. Capper. He almost smiled. He realised that he would be able to tell Prout, now, that these things did not happen in the Fourth!

"I am sorry, Capper!" said Mr. Quelch. "But—it is clear, that some absurd mistake was made! That is perfectly clear, from what we have heard. No doubt those two foolish boys were playing a prank on some junior, as they supposed—"

"No doubt!" said Mr. Capper. "It did not occur to me that I had been mistaken for someone else, in the dark. Evidently it was so."

"Evidently!" said Mr. Quelch.

"A pair of thoughtless young rascals," said Mr. Capper. "But—I am bound to say—manly boys, Quelch. Not the slightest suspicion has fallen on them. I was practically convinced that Temple was guilty—"

"Obviously, they had not the re-

motest idea, at the time, that it was you, my dear Capper—"

"Obviously!" agreed Mr. Capper. "It was, of course, by the merest chance that I went to my Form-room, late in the evening—I should, I think—at least I hope—have taken Toddy's word that it was a mistake. Now, at all events, there is no doubt of it. I am disposed to view the matter leniently, Quelch."

"I am glad to hear you say so, Capper."

Mr. Capper rubbed his nose. It was still rather red. But he smiled as he walked back to the House. It had not been done intentionally—at all. It was not an unprecedented, unparalleled outrage after all—it was a mistake of some reckless fags in the dark. Which naturally disposed Capper to take a lenient view—and the leniency of his view was a happy surprise to two juniors who were waiting anxiously for him in his study.

Greyfriars was surprised.

It was really a series of surprises.

Toddy and Dutton, of the Remove, had collared Capper—not Temple at all. They had owned up to it.

That was the first surprise. Almost a greater surprise was the news that nobody was going to be sacked or flogged.

Capper had taken Toddy's word, without demur, that it was a mistake in the dark. True, Toddy's word was as good as gold—still. Everybody agreed that it was frightfully decent of Capper.

Capper had not even taken them to the Head! He had simply referred them to their own Form-master. Then came the biggest surprise, Quelch, instead of nearly skinning them, as was naturally to be expected, accepted the story of the mistake in the dark just like Capper—lapped it up like milk, in fact—and did not even give them six—only a severe lecture, a severe warning, and lines!

Temple of the Fourth looked fearfully bucked, after it had all come out. So did Toddy and Dutton. They had never dreamed of getting off so cheaply. It was an unexpectedly happy ending.

"Well, you're in luck, Toddy, old man!" said Bob Cherry. "But what about Loder's nose?"

"Blow Loder's nose!" answered Toddy.

Peter had sagely decided to chuck nose-pulling as an amusement. Loder of the Sixth never knew what a narrow escape his nose had had!

THE END

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"HIS CONVICT COUSIN!"

By FRANK RICHARDS

Next Week's COVER-TO-COVER Story of HARRY WHARTON & CO.

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19-9-36

HOAXING
THE HEAD!

Complete Story by DICKY NUGENT—
King of "Skoolboy Orthers"

"Blow me tight!" It was Doctor Alfred Birchmell, the majestic headmaster of St. Sam's, who uttered that elegant exclamation.

The occasions when the Head's faultless Oxbridge accents were heard pronouncing slang expressions were few and far between.

This was one of them.

He had just spent five minutes in the Fourth Form Room, asking the juniors questions at random on History, Joggraffy and Mathymatticks. It hadn't been a very pleazant five minutes for the Fourth, and the Head hadn't eggssactly enjoyed it, either, judging by the deepening frown on his skollarly dial.

All things considered, he had preserved his calm demeanour very well. But when he asked the question: "What did King John do when he lost the Crown Jewels in the Wash?" things had reached a crisis. Fearless answered: "He refused to pay the laundry bill, sir!" And the Head's patience had given way at last!

"Blow me tight!" he repeated, glaring wolfishly round the Form. "Of all the wooden-headed classes I've ever met, you're the woodenest!"

"Oh, sir!"

"Why, you're the most dunderheaded set of dunces in the skool! The fact is, your thoughts are not on the lesson at all, but on the footer match you're playing with St. Pete's this afternoon! That's it, isn't it?"

The Fourth grinned sheepishly.

"Trew onuff, sir!" admitted Jack Jolly, with a larf. "We're hooping to beat them hollow, too!"

"Hear, hear!"

Doctor Birchmell bit his claw-like nails savagely.

"You'll be lucky to get the chance!"

"Eh?!"

"The ignorance you have displayed this morning has made it very dewbious weather you'll be playing at all this afternoon!" snorted the Head.

"Never in all my natcheral have I heard such answers! Jolly had the cheek to tell me that twice six are ten, when everybody knows that the right answer is eleven! Barrell calmly assured me that the capital of France was Berlin, when it's commoa nollidge

that it's Rome! And now Fearless has crowned the lot by mixing up the Wash with King John's laundry!"

"Please, sir, I thought it was the correct answer!"

"Ratts! The correct answer was: 'He never smiled again.' The same will apply to you boys, by hokey!" added the Head, menacingly, "if you don't soon pull your socks up!"

"Oh, sir!"

"I'll give you one last chance!" wrapped out Doctor Birchmell. "If you fail me this time, the St. Pete's match is off and you'll spend the afternoon in the Form-room!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Stand up, de Vere!"

"Oh, bai jove!" mormered the Honorable Guy de Vere, the aristocrat of the Fourth, as he lounged elegantly to his feet.

"On your answer, de Vere," said the Head, solemnly, "depends my verdict regarding the St. Pete's match being played this afternoon! Know anything about grammar?"

"Yaas, wathah, sir! I'm considahed rathah a dab at it, bai jove!"

"Good!" leered the Head. "Then kindly tell me what is wrong with this sentence: 'We are going to play St. Pete's this afternoon.'"

"Bai jove, that's easy, sir! It should be 'We ARE going to play St. Pete's this aftahnnoon!'"

The Head recoiled as from a blow.

"We ARE?" he shrieked. "You have the dispartinence to stand there and tell me that 'We ARE' is correct?"

"Bai jove! Isn't it, then, sir?"

"Certainly not!" roared Doctor Birchmell.

"The answer is 'We IS going to play St. Pete's this afternoon'! As you have failed to give the right answer, however, that statement no longer applies in any case. The trewth is now 'We IS NOT going to play St. Pete's this afternoon! Mr. Lickham! Kindly see that these iggnerant yung raskals are detained till five o'clock!"

"Yes, sir! Certainly, sir!" gasped Mr. Lickham.

"And see what you can do about hammering some elementary nollidge into their wooden heads!" added the Head, krushingly. Then he turned on his heel and whisked out of the Form-room! He left the Fourth

Guy began to edge away rather hurriedly.

And then, suddenly, he stopped and smiled.

"Half-a-minnit, deah boys! I've thought of a wheeze!"

The juniors pawsed.

"What is it?" asked Loyla.

"You know what a feahful snob the Head is," grinned the swell of St. Sam's. "I eggsspect he'd neahly fall ovah himself if he had a visit this aftahnnoon from my uncle, the Duke of Poshleigh, wouldn't he?"

"He would. But he won't!"

"Bai jove! Perhaps he will, though!"

"You mean you think you can get hold of His Grace?" asked Jack Jolly, with a wissle. "My hat! If only you can, he can ask the Head to cancel that detention—"

"And the Head will do it like a shot and we'll all be able to play! Eggssactly!" finished Frank Fearless. "Do you really think you can mannidge it, de Vere?"

"Wait an' see, deah boy!" grinned the swell of St. Sam's.

Somewhow or other, the Fourth couldn't help being impressed by the konfident note in the voice of the Honorable Guy. They decided to let him off for the time being and see if he succeeded in working the oracle. Everybody knew what a terribul snob Doctor Birchmell was, and it was ten to one in doonutts that if His Grace, the Duke of Poshleigh, interviened and asked him to cancel that detention, he would do it with the greatest of plezzuro.

The only question was, could the Honorable Guy de Vere get His Grace to rise to the occasion? Everybody waited hoapfully to see what the answer would be. They took it for granted that the Duke must be in the naybourhood, as his newfiew seemed so konfident of pulling it off.

There was an air of eggsspectancy in the Fourth

at dinner-time that day. When dinner-time passed and there was still no sign of the Duke, everybody began to look awfully anxious.

But all fears were set at rest at last, when a magnificent Rolls-Rice rolled through the gates and drew up outside the Skool House. For, out of the Rolls-Rice stepped a tall old gentleman whose monocle and top-hat and white mistosh proclaimed him to be a member of the Upper Ten at a glance.

"The Duke!" went round a wisper. "It's the Duke of Poshleigh!"

There was a rush to surround the car—and the first on the seen was Doctor Birchmell himself.

The Head swept off his mortar-board and boughed.

"Welcome, your Grace!" he cried, in cringing, fawning tones. "Your unworthy servant, Alfred Birchmell, prostrates himself before you! Welcome most noble Duke, to our insignificant hovel of a skool! May I have the honour of escorting you round?"

"Very kind of you,!" said the duke. "But, to tell you the truth, what I've come for is to see my newfiew, the Honorable Guy de Vere, play footah!"

At these words, the crowd farly hugged themselves with delite. The Head, on the other hand, started violently and turned as red as a pony.

"F-f-f-ooter, your Grace?" he stammered.

"I—I'm afraid—"

"Haw! Don't tell me he's not playin' footah, aftah all!" barked the Duke of Poshleigh.

Doctor Birchmell's brane worked quickly. He made a grimace at the crowd to warn them not to give the game away. Then a crafty eggsspression came into his face.

"Nunno, of course not, most noble duke!" he said, in his most fawning voice. "The boys are playing St. Pete's this afternoon, and if it is your Grace's wish to watch them, they will be most honnered to have your Grace's most gracious presence distingwishing the occasion. Mum's the word about that detention, boys!" he added, in a

wispered aside to the Fourth.

The Fourth grinned and duly kept mum. They were only too glad to help the Head out of his difficulty, as their own difficulty was being solved in the process!

So the match with St. Pete's was played after all—and a jolly fine game it was, too. St. Sam's had a rare struggle to see the better of their old rivals and it was only in the last minnit of the game that the Honorable Guy de Vere himself scored the winning goal.

What serprized the Head was that he didn't see a sign of the Duke himself amongst the spectators all through the game.

But, after it was over, that little mistery was soon cleared up for him. Going to the pavilion to ask de Vere what had happened to his uncle, he was just in time to see the swell of St. Sam's donning a false white mistosh, and getting into a long pair of trowis, containing stilt.

For a minnit or so, the Head could only stare—parrilised with rage and distonishment. Then he gave a yell.

"Dished! Diddled! Done!" he howled, nashing his teeth with rage. "I thought it was the Duke of Poshleigh—and it was only you all the time! You disguised yourself as the Duke and hired a Rolls-Rice and got me to cancel that detention by false pretences!"

"Bai jove!" eggssclaimed the Honorable Guy, with an air of bland serprize. "Have you only just found that out?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you—"

"Jevver get left, sir?" Doctor Birchmell made a dash.

The hillarious juniors made for the eggst.

And all through the rest of the day, while the Head raged round the skool, looking for vikims, St. Sam's echoed again and again to the larfter of the juniors who had suxceeded so neahly in Hoaxing the Head!

(Look out next week for the first instalment of a fifty-miles-a-minute serial by Dicky Nugent! Note the title—"Under Snarler's Thumb!")

MAKING PUNISHMENT FIT CRIME!

Remove Judge's Remarkable Sentence

The penalties inflicted by the Remove Court usually run on very conventional lines. They fine you sixpence for speeding on a bike to the danger of the public, and a bob when you knock anyone down; while, to take examples from the more important crimes, you can generally reckon they'll give a chap two hours' hard labour for bullying, and a dozen with a cricket stump for sneaking.

So when Skinner and Snoop were charged at the Woodshed Sessions last week, with inhaling narcotic fumes, to wit, cigarette smoke, to the detriment of their health and to the annoyance of pedestrians in the neighbourhood of Study No. 11, they looked quite cheerful about it. Both waved cheerily from the dock to friends at the back of the Court, and Skinner smiled broadly when one of his pals called out:

"Don't worry; they can't fine you more than a bob for it!"

After the interrupter had been ejected by ushers, the learned Judge (Mr. Justice Wharton) read out the charge and asked for their pleas.

Prisoners (together): "Guilty, m'lud!"

Mr. Justice Wharton: "My hat! Aren't you even going to plead mitigating circumstances, or great provocation, or something?"

Skinner: "Not likely. We smoked because we wanted to smoke!"

Mr. Justice Wharton: "Then you both like smoking, eh?"

Prisoners replied with a cheerful affirmative, and got ready to fork out their fines.

But, greatly to their surprise, instead of opening his Fine Book, the Judge called one of the ushers.

"Trot round to Prouty's study, will you, Johnny?" he asked. "If he's out, look in his waste-paper-basket and see if you can find a couple of cigars there. He turned them out yesterday, when he found they'd gone mouldy."

Usher Johnny Bull trotted off. He returned, after a short interval, with two black, torpedo-shaped

horrors, and the Judge then turned to the wide-eyed prisoners.

"Prisoners at the bar! You plead guilty to the foul crime of smoking—and, to make matters worse, you admit that you like smoking!" he said, sternly. "That being so, I intend to make the punishment fit the crime. I sentence you each to smoke one of Mr. Prout's discarded cigars! Officers! Do your duty!"

Officers of the Court immediately seized the prisoners, put the cigars

between their lips, and gave them lights.

The two prisoners commenced puffing away.

And did Skinner and Snoop enjoy it?

Well, they may have done for about a couple of jitties; but, after that—

First they turned white, then yellow, then green! Long before they had reached the half-way mark, they were moaning for mercy; and before they had smoked much more, both collapsed and were carried out of court in a state of coma!

The general opinion is that it will be a long, long time before Skinner and Snoop smoke again!

Mr. Justice Wharton's original line in penalties has achieved the desired result without a shadow of doubt!

WHO'S FOR A STAY-IN STRIKE?

Whoops H. VERNON-SMITH

The worst of a barring-out is that it's so dashed inconvenient. You have to lock yourselves up in a cramped dormitory or gym, or something, and go short of grub, exercise and recreation. All of which is a dashed nuisance!

I've been in more than one barring-out, and I can jolly well speak from experience!

Now, it has occurred to me lately that all the inconvenience usually connected with a school rebellion can be cut out—if the rebels only adopt the simple method of the Stay-in Strike!

At the time of going to press, things are quiet and peaceful enough at Greyfriars. There are no strikes or rebellions and we're not expecting any.

But you never can tell! For all we know, the need for a general uprising may arrive at any moment and it's just as well to be prepared!

So just pause for a moment or two in your giddy round of swot and pleasure, you sportsmen, and consider the advantages of a Stay-in Strike!

If we declare a Stay-in-Strike, we don't have to march off to the clock tower or the Crypt with mattresses and tuck-hampers and say good-bye to civilised life till the battle's over.

We carry on just as usual, except for one thing—and that is that we don't work.

When rising-bell rings, we get up. At breakfast-time we go in and eat. When it's time for morning classes, we troop along to the Form-room and sit down at our desks. And then we reach the only point (apart from prep in the evening, of course) where there's any alteration in the routine.

Instead of sweating away at Latin and history and maths, we just sit back and take it easy! We wlole away the time reading newspapers or chucking ink-pellets at each other; but we don't do a stroke of work.

Naturally, there's bound to be a bit of trouble over this at first. The Quelch-bird is sure to make a protest of some kind—probably with a cane! We shall then, regretfully, have to bring him to heel as gently as possible—say by bumping him and rubbing his face on the floor and then sitting on his chest.

But after the novelty has worn off, the beaks will feel less excited about it, and the situation ought to become a lot easier. Probably in time they'll stay away from their Form-rooms altogether till the trouble is over.

Well, what do you say about it, chaps? Don't you think it's a really great wheeze? I don't mind telling you it makes a big appeal to me, anyway! My idea is that we ought to set up a committee to sift it out thoroughly—so that we'll be ready when the next spot of bother comes along!

WHO'S FOR A STAY-IN STRIKE?

Don't all speak at once; but, if you're interested, drop in and see me one evening, and we'll chat it over!

(Ye gods! If Smithy imagines he's likely to get away with a rebellion on these lines, he's an optimist!—Ed.)

FOR SALE!

Postal-order for £1. Will take sixteen bob for it. Unfortunately, the postal-order hasn't arrived yet; but it will be at Greyfriars this evening. Chance for a real bargain to any fellow who wants to get rich quick. Bring me the sixteen-bob and I will hand over the postal-order when it comes. W. G. Bunter, Study No. 7.



The GREY FRIARS HERALD

