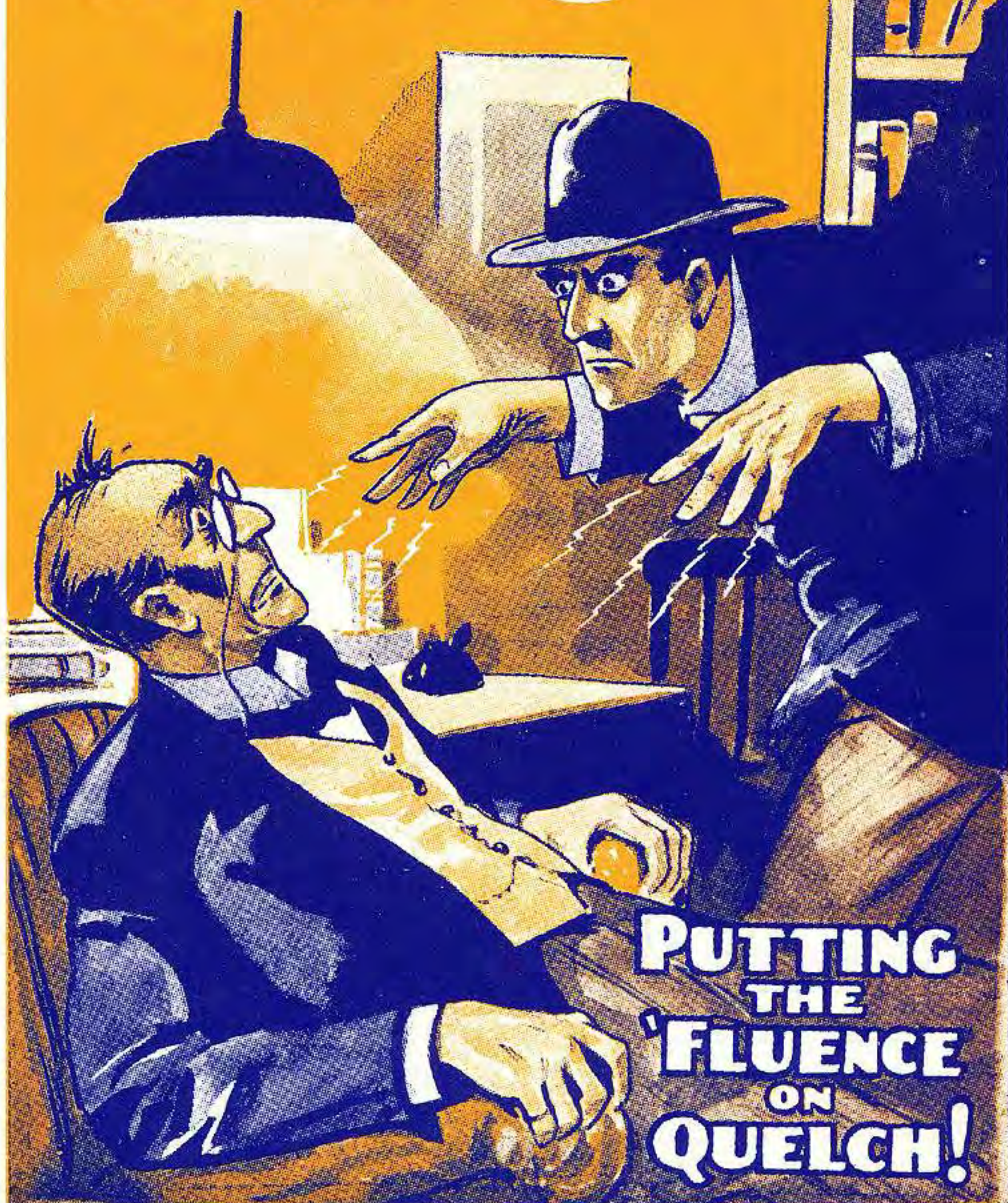


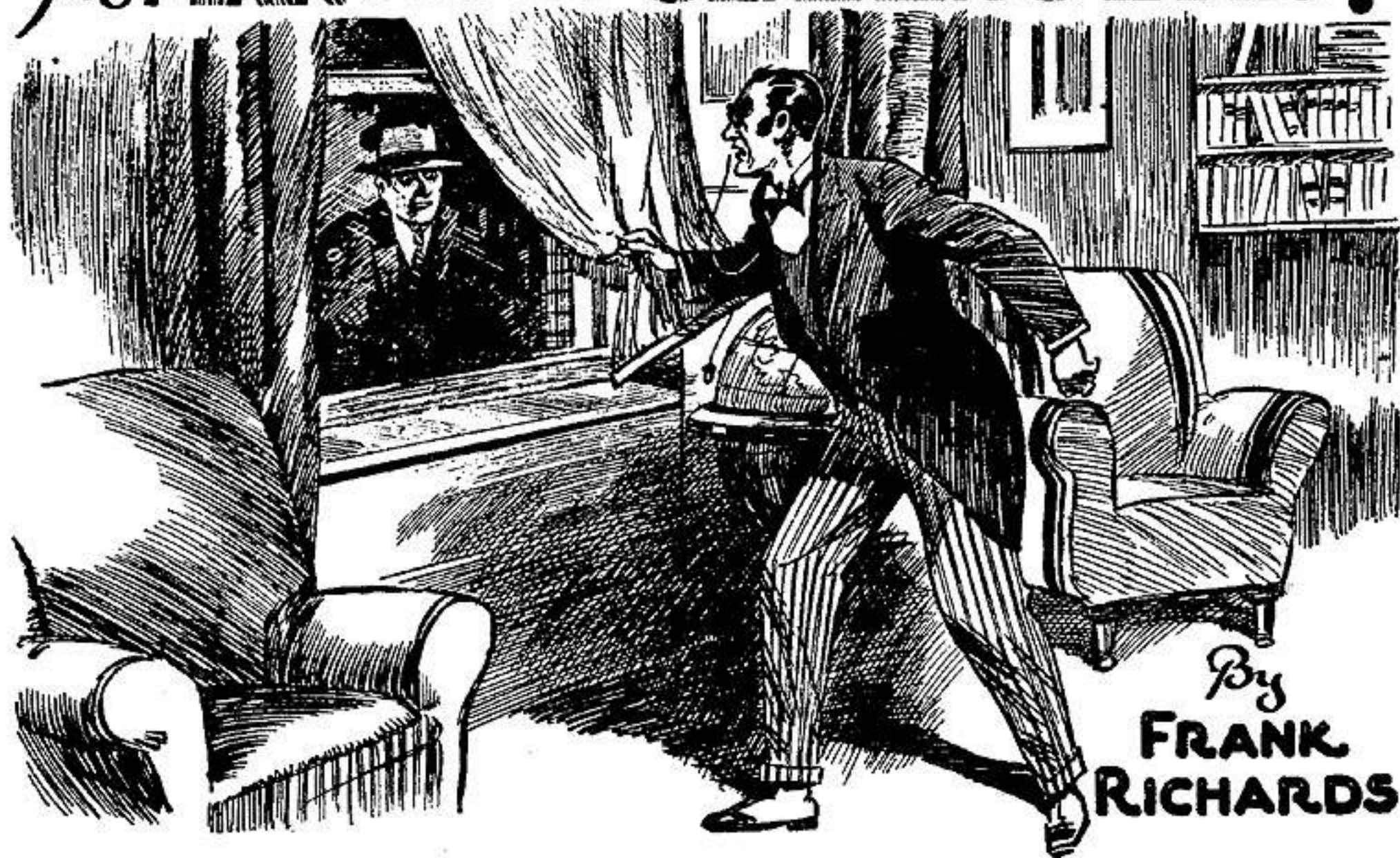
"The Man with the Glaring Eyes!" Thrilling Story of Schoolboy Adventure, featuring **Harry Wharton & Co.**

The Magnet ^{2^D}



**PUTTING
THE
'FLUENCE
ON
QUELCH!**

The MAN with the GLARING EYES!



By
FRANK RICHARDS

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Something Wrong with Quelch!

"HENRY looks shirty!" murmured Bob Cherry. The Remove fellows suppressed a chuckle.

Nobody dared to laugh at that remark.

One glance at Mr. Henry Samuel Quelch, as he came up the corridor, warned all the Greyfriars Remove that it was no time for merriment.

Henry, as Bob Cherry rather irreverently termed his majestic Form-master, was probably unconscious of looking "shirty." But he looked not merely shirty; he looked as grim as a Gorgon—or grimmer.

His face, always severe, was set in a stern, hard frown. His eyes, often compared by the Removites to gimlets, glinted. His lips were set in a tight line. Often and often did the Remove master look stern, and even grim. But now he looked as if he could, Medusa-like, petrify with a glance.

Something, it was clear, was "up" with Quelch—all the clearer because he had kept his Form waiting five minutes at the door of their Form-room. Quelch was never late. The Removites would have been surprised had he arrived half a minute late. Five whole minutes amazed them. The rest of the school had long gone in for third lesson; the Remove still waited.

They did not mind waiting. Hardly a fellow in the Form yearned to get on with Latin prose in the Form-room. Skylarking in the passage was more entertaining. But they were surprised, and wondered what was up. And every sign of skylarking dropped as Quelch was sighted. Silence and deep gravity fell on the Lower Fourth Form of Greyfriars.

Mr. Quelch rustled up.
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Some of the fellows looked—as they felt—uneasy. Harry Wharton wondered whether he had been guilty of some sin of commission or omission as head boy of the Form. Johnny Bull hoped that Quelch was not aware that he had slid down the banisters. Vernon-Smith hoped, still more fervently, that Quelch did not know that he had slipped out in break to speak to a man about a horse. Skinner and Snoop quaked at the thought that cigarettes might have been spotted in their study. Tom Brown wished that the radio in his study had not squealed so emphatically when he tuned in during break. Billy Bunter repented him that he had helped a pie to disappear below stairs. Other fellows had other causes for uneasiness, with Quelch looking like that. Nobody wanted to catch his glinting eye.

There was general relief when the Remove master, in silence, opened the Form-room door for his Form to enter.

The gimlet-eye did not single any fellow out. It was not, it seemed, a Remove man who had caused that terrific expression to corrugate the speaking countenance of Henry Samuel Quelch.

But the juniors were wary as they took their places. With that look on Quelch's face, a fellow could not be too careful. Even Bob Cherry refrained from shuffling his feet. Lord Mauleverer carefully did not yawn. Billy Bunter, with a fat hand on a sticky chunk of toffee in a sticky pocket, withdrew the grubby paw empty. Every junior watched Quelch quite anxiously. He stood at his high desk, and Harry Wharton approached him—not because he wanted to, but because, as head boy, he had to hand out the Latin papers for that lesson.

Mr. Quelch's eyes gleamed at him. "Go to your place, Wharton!" he rapped.

The captain of the Remove looked at

him in sheer astonishment. Mr. Quelch was plainly very angry and deeply disturbed for some mysterious cause, but that was no reason why he should snap at his head boy for doing what his head boy had to do.

"But, sir—" stammered Harry.

"I have told you to go to your place!"

"But—"

"Take a hundred lines, Wharton, and take your place at once!"

Harry Wharton, with flushed cheeks, went quietly to his place.

The Remove fellows looked at him, looked at Quelch, and looked at one another.

Had Quelch forgotten the lesson? It seemed impossible; Quelch never forgot anything. Fellows who had lines, and hoped not to be asked for them, knew only too well what a fearfully good memory Quelch had. Why he had inflicted that sharp snub on his head boy was a mystery.

Skinner winked at Snoop, quite amused.

"One in the eye for his high mightiness!" whispered Skinner.

And Snoop grinned and nodded.

The next moment Skinner wished that he hadn't whispered. He could have sworn that Quelch at the distance could not possibly have heard that low whisper. But that morning Quelch's ears seemed as keen as his gimlet eyes.

"Skinner!" came a snap.

"Oh!" gasped Skinner. "Yes, sir?"

"You are whispering in class!"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"You are untruthful, Skinner. Take three hundred lines!"

Skinner sat, with set lips.

Mr. Quelch glanced over the class. The juniors tried to look as if butter would not melt in their mouths. Even the Bouncer was careful not to look cheeky. In this mood, it was plain that Quelch was not to be trifled with.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bad for Bunter!

Having scanned a lamb-like class, Quelch turned to his desk again. He looked at a heap of papers that lay thereon. The Form, watching him, could see how it was. Quelch—probably for the first time in his career as a schoolmaster—had forgotten the lesson, and the pile of Latin papers reminded him. His eyes glinted round at the Form again.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!" said Harry, very quietly.

"Why have you not given out the papers?"

It was a dumbfounding question, in the circumstances. The head boy of the Remove could only gaze at his Form-master.

The juniors felt as if they were sitting on pins. What the dickens was the matter with Quelch this morning? He had been all right in second school. What could have happened during break to cause this almost terrifying change?

"Do you hear me, Wharton?" rapped Mr. Quelch harshly.

"Yes, sir!" stammered Harry. "I was going——"

"You are head boy of this Form, Wharton! You know your duty! Is it your desire deliberately to waste your Form-master's time?"

"Oh, no, sir! I——"

"Take two hundred lines, and give out the papers at once!"

Harry Wharton's face was crimson as he left his place to obey.

His eyes were glinting now, as well as Quelch's. He had a total of three hundred lines for nothing. Quelch was often severe, but never unjust. Now he seemed to be going in for injustice on a wholesale scale.

In deep silence, Harry Wharton gave out the papers. With a knitted brow, he sat down again.

Frank Nugent gave him a sympathetic glance.

"Something's wrong with Quelch——" he murmured.

"Nugent!"

"Oh! Yes, sir?"

"Take five hundred lines for talking in class!"

"Oh!" gasped Nugent.

Five hundred lines was an overwhelming impot—almost unheard of. Fifty would have been normal—a hundred at the most. Lines were falling in the Remove room like leaves in Vallombrosa.

Pens were dipped into inkwells; the juniors began on the Latin papers.

They wrinkled their youthful brows over those papers. There was likely to be an unusually good harvest in the Remove. Even Billy Bunter strove hard not to fill up his paper with the usual series of mistakes, adorned by smears and blots. Every man in the Remove was deeply anxious for once to show up a good paper. A bad one looked like having awfully unpleasant results.

Mr. Quelch sat at his high desk, his eyes on the class. After a few minutes he leaned his elbow on the desk, his chin in his hand.

His eyes were still on the class, but unseeing. The wrinkle grew deeper in his knitted brow. He was lost in thought—painful and disturbing thought. The juniors, stealing uneasy glances at him, could see quite plainly that he had forgotten them. He was thinking of other matters, and had forgotten that he was in the Form-room at all. It was the climax of surprise.

Plainly something was wrong with Quelch—very wrong indeed.

BILLY BUNTER blinked at his Form-master through his big spectacles cautiously.

For a quarter of an hour Billy Bunter had been working at his Latin paper with unusual concentration. Now he slowed down.

Quelch was taking absolutely no notice of the Remove. Whatever the mysterious matter on his mind, it occupied his whole thoughts. This seemed, to Billy Bunter, a good chance for dealing with the toffee.

There was a chunk of toffee in the fat Owl's pocket, and it was, so to speak, burning there. To leave anything eatable uneaten was a practical impossibility for Bunter.

But he was very cautious. Not for whole mountains of toffee would he have dared to draw Quelch's gimlet-eye on him.

It seemed safe enough, however. Bunter stuck his pen into the inkwell, and left it there. He slipped a fat, grubby paw into a sticky pocket, and drew out the enticing toffee.

The chunk was rather large. Bunter would have preferred to halve it, for internal disposal. But it was hard, and could not be broken without a crack—and he dared not make a sound.

There was nothing for it, therefore, but to take cargo on board in bulk.

What is the secret of Mr. Quelch's strange visitor?

It is Harry Wharton & Co. who eventually solve the mystery of the Man with the Glaring Eyes!

Bunter's mouth, fortunately, was capacious. There was room for the chunk. It would gradually dissolve and disappear on the downward path. After another cautious blink at Quelch, Bunter crammed it in.

It bulged out a fat cheek like a ripe, red apple. Bunter looked rather as if he had a bad attack of tooth-ache! Two or three of the fellows near him grinned. The tension in the Form was relaxing.

The Owl of the Remove took his pen again and bent over his desk. He sucked toffee, and was happy. He resumed Latin—with less concentration than before.

The Form-room was silent, save for the scratching of pens and a faint gurgling sound from Billy Bunter.

Bang!

The sudden sound of a volume, falling from a desk to the floor, startled all the Remove.

It was like Bunter!

He was short-sighted, he was careless, and he was clumsy. His fat elbow knocked his Latin grammar off the desk, and it banged on the floor.

Fellows had dropped books before, many a time and oft. It was not really an uncommon occurrence. But the Remove-room was unusually silent just now—a pin might almost have been heard to drop. The bang of the falling book startled the stillness like a rifle-shot.

Every head was lifted—including Mr. Quelch's.

Recalled to himself and his surroundings by the sudden bang, the Remove master stared at the class.

Pens hastily resumed scribbling—except Bunter's. Bunter, in sheer terror at having attracted attention, stooped and grabbed after the fallen book.

The gimlet-eyes fixed on him.

"Bunter!"

Quelch's voice was not loud, but deep. He had come out of his brown study in no better temper than before.

"Oooogh!" gurgled Bunter.

He sat up, the recaptured volume in his fat hand, his face red—and the bulge in his fat cheek visible to all eyes.

Peter Todd gave him a warning glare.

The chunk was too large for Bunter to attempt to bolt it. He made a rapid and desperate effort to bite it through, for swift disposal.

It was soft enough, by this time, for Bunter's teeth to sink into it deep, and almost meet. They sank into it—and stayed there! He could not draw them out again.

The Gargantuan bite had done it. Bunter, with his teeth stuck together by toffee, perspired with dread.

Mr. Quelch left his desk and stepped towards the class. His eyes were fixed on Bunter. Probably he had noticed the bulge in the fat cheek, which had now disappeared.

"Bunter! Are you eating sweetmeats in class?" came Mr. Quelch's rumble.

No reply.

A fellow whose teeth were glued together could not speak. Billy Bunter made a frantic effort to withdraw his teeth. His fat face became as red as a peony; the perspiration beaded his podgy brow. But the toffee held fast.

"Bunter!"

A faint gurgle was the best Bunter could put up.

"Do you hear me, Bunter?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "How dare you not answer me, Bunter!"

"Oooooogh!" came faint and muffled.

"Upon my word! If you do not answer me this instant, Bunter, I shall cane you!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

Bunter made another wild effort. But there was nothing doing. He was gagged by the toffee.

"Bunter!" almost roared Mr. Quelch.

"Woooooogh!"

"Will you answer me?"

"Oooogh!"

"This is sheer impertinence—indeed, insolence!" Mr. Quelch turned to his desk, picked up the cane there, and turned back to the class. "Stand out before the Form, Bunter."

Still silent, save for a faint agonised mumble, the fat junior tottered out before the Form.

Quelch swished the cane.

"You are eating sweetmeats in class, Bunter! I suspect that you have your mouth full of some comestible at this very moment. Answer me!"

Billy Bunter would gladly have answered. But he couldn't. With all his efforts, he could only emit a gurgle.

"Moooooogggh!"

"Speak!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "What is the matter with you, Bunter? Do you dare to carry impudence to the length of refusing to answer your Form-master?"

"Oooogh!"

The Remove fellows stared at Bunter. Some of them guessed the predicament the hapless Owl was in.

Mr. Quelch did not seem aware of it. The thunder in his brow was terrifying.

"You refuse to answer?" he roared.

"Ug-ug-uggg!"

"How dare you stand before me, Bunter, making those absurd and ridiculous noises?" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Ooog—woogh!"

"Bend over that desk, Bunter." The cane swished in the air. "Bend over that desk at once, you impertinent young rascal!"

The unhappy Owl bent over the desk. Whack!

"Yooo-hooooop!" roared Bunter.

The fat junior's previous efforts had been in vain. But as that hefty whop landed on his tight trousers, it worked the oracle. Bunter's teeth came out of the toffee, and he roared

Whack!

"Yaroooooh!"

A sticky lump of toffee dropped on the Form-room floor. Bunter, with his mouth disengaged at last, made full use of it. He roared, and roared, waking every echo of the Form-room.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Owl! Wow! Yow!" roared Bunter.

"I say—yaroooo! Whoop!"

Whack!

"Oh, jiminy! Yaroooo! Whooh-hooooop!" bellowed Bunter.

Up went the cane again. The Removites watched Quelch, spellbound, while Bunter roared and howled and wriggled.

It looked as if Quelch was going on with it—though the hapless fat Owl had already had six. Quelch, generally a calm and composed, almost icy gentleman, seemed to be in a state of jumping nerves that morning. But he paused—and the cane was lowered, without landing on the suffering Owl again.

"Go to your place, Bunter!" he snapped.

"Yaroooo!"

"Cease that absurd noise at once!"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Do you hear me, Bunter?"

"Wow! Yow!"

"If you wish me to cane you again, Bunter—"

"Oh crikey!"

Bunter fairly bounded. He was back in his place, almost in the twinkling of an eye.

He slumped down on the form. He remained there for the millionth part of a second. Then he bounded up again, with another howl.

Quelch glared at him.

"Bunter! Sit down at once!"

"Owl! Wow! I—I kik-kik-kik-can't!" howled Bunter. "Owl! I've got a pain—wow! I kik-kik-can't sit down! Wow!"

Mr. Quelch stared at him. Then, for the first time in third school, his grim brow relaxed for a moment, and he very nearly smiled. He said no more, but went back to his desk, leaving Billy Bunter to sit or stand, as he preferred.

Bunter preferred to stand!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Smithy Asks for It!

"LOOK!"

It was Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, who spoke, with a sarcastic grin on his face.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked round. The Famous Five were in the quad after third school. It was a bright, sunny spring day, and faces generally at Greyfriars were cheerful. But a good many of the Remove were not looking merry and bright.

Billy Bunter was still wriggling. He was not even listening eagerly for the dinner-bell. For once, Billy Bunter had almost forgotten an approaching meal.

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Harry Wharton had a clouded brow, and Frank Nugent looked glum. Heavy impots hung over them—in Wharton's case, quite undeserved; in Nugent's, out of all proportion to a slight offence. Johnny Bull and Bob Cherry and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, indignant on their chums' account, were frowning.

The Famous Five, strolling in the sunshine near the House, came on the Bounder, and he stopped them.

Smithy was standing there, staring at an open study window. It was the window of Mr. Quelch's study—open to admit sunshine and a balmy breeze.

It was to that window that the Bounder drew the attention of the chums of the Remove.

Looking at it, they saw Mr. Quelch seated by the window.

He was not looking out, but he sat in full view, unconscious or careless that he could be seen by any fellow passing outside.

He had a newspaper in his hands, and was gazing at it hard. Apparently he was reading the paper; but, if so, he seemed to be wholly concentrated on one section, for he did not stir or move the paper. It looked as if he were reading one paragraph over and over again.

His brows were blackly knitted. The blackest, bitterest anger was expressed in his face.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at him curiously. They had wondered what was the matter with Quelch that morning. Now they wondered still more.

"Looks genial, doesn't he?" asked the Bounder.

"The geniality is not terrific, my esteemed Smithy!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"What the dickens is up with him?" asked Johnny Bull. "He's always a bit of a Tartar. But this morning he was the real limit—worse than Hacker!"

"Blessed if I make it out," said Bob Cherry. "He was ill at the beginning of the term, but he's got over that. He was in quite a good temper in second school. And in third school he was like—like—"

"Like a jolly old tiger!" said Smithy.

"The tigerfulness was preposterous!" sighed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But at school a fellow has to take the roughfulness with the smoothfulness, and the grousefulness is not the proper caper."

Harry Wharton gave his dusky chum a look.

"I'm not a fellow to grouse, I hope," he said quietly. "but I'm not going to be ragged for nothing. I've got three hundred lines for nothing, and Nugent has five hundred for next to nothing. Frank can please himself—but I'm not going to do that impot!"

"Hear, hear!" said the Bounder. "I jolly well wouldn't, in your place!"

"Oh, chuck that, Smithy!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "You're a mad ass, and Wharton isn't! Quelch went a bit over the odds this morning, but he's all right as a rule—what's the good of hunting trouble?"

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.

He was always ripe for a row. There had been trouble that term already, and the Bounder had enjoyed it. The prospect of more trouble was far from displeasing to him.

It was seldom that Harry Wharton, the captain of the Form, agreed with the reckless Bounder's views. Now, however, his look showed that he was in whole-hearted agreement. A sense of unfairness and injustice was strong upon him.

He had made up his mind stubbornly that he was not going to stand it. Frank Nugent, feeling equally sore, was not

thinking for a moment of reckless defiance. But Wharton was, and the mischievous Bounder was glad to see it.

"Better too the line!" said Johnny Bull sagely. "It's all in the day's work—and, anyhow, a fellow has to."

"A fellow's not bound to kow-tow to injustice!" said Vernon-Smith. "Wharton's got three hundred lines for nothing. He would be a fool to do them. If it came up before the Head, Quelch would look a pretty ass, punishing a fellow for nothing."

"Oh, rot!" said Bob. "Who wants to make trouble for old Quelch with the Head? He's a jolly good sort when he isn't in one of his tantrums."

"I'm not going to do the lines!" said Harry.

"Then you're an ass, old chap!"

"Thanks!" said the captain of the Remove, shrugging his shoulders.

"I say, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter rolled up with a fat wriggle. His plump face was dolorous. Evidently he was still feeling the effects of the whopping in the Form-room. He blinked dismally at the half-dozen juniors through his big spectacles.

"Feeling it, old fat bean?" asked Bob.

"Owl! Yes! 'Wow!' Bunter groaned. "You know how the beast laid it on! Owl! I say, I shan't be able to sit down for a week! Owl!"

"Hard cheese!" said Johnny Bull.

"Awful" beast, you know!" groaned Bunter. "Making out that a chap wouldn't answer him! How could a chap answer him with toffee sticking his mouth shut—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! Owl! I'd jolly well like to shy something at the window. I jolly well would! Owl!"

"It was rotten, old porpoise!" said Harry Wharton, with unusual sympathy for the fat Owl. "You asked for it, but not to that extent."

"Fellows aren't allowed to chew tuck in class!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Bunter knew what he was asking for."

"I can't sit down!" wailed Bunter. "I say, you fellows, Quelch isn't looking out! Looks to me as if he's gone to sleep! Has he?" The short-sighted Owl blinked at the study window. "I say, suppose one of you fellows got him with a footer? What? You could make out it was an accident—"

"Shut up, you fat ass!" growled Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"We'll all stand round, while you get him with a footer, Bunter?" suggested Johnny Bull sarcastically.

Billy Bunter grunted. That suggestion did not seem to appeal to him.

"The truth is," said Frank Nugent quietly, "that Quelch is upset about something to-day, and—"

"No right to take it out of me, if he is!" said Harry.

"That's true; but all the same—"

"It's something in the newspaper that's rattled his nerves," said the Bounder, his eyes fixed keenly and curiously on the set, dark face at the window. "We've been standing here palavering four or five minutes, and he hasn't given us a squint. There's some paragraph in that paper that's worried the old bean. Has he been speculating in stocks and shares, I wonder—and come out at the wrong end of the market?"

"Rot!" said Johnny Bull.

"Well, you can see that he's glued to that paper—scowling at it as if he'd like to bite it!" grinned Smithy. "I'd like to know—"

"No bizney of ours."

"Isn't it?" said the Bounder coolly. "Might be able to get one back at the

old Gorgon, if a fellow knew. I'm jolly well going to know."

"Hold on, you ass!" breathed Bob, as the Bounder turned to walk towards the study window. "If you rag Quelch now, you'll get it hot and strong! Leave well alone, you fathead!"

Unheeding, Vernon-Smith walked on. The Famous Five watched him rather anxiously; Billy Bunter almost forgetting his twinges as he blinked after him through his spectacles.

In Quelch's present frame of mind, even the reckless Bounder might well have hesitated to bother him. But Smithy walked up to the window quite coolly.

Even when he reached the window and stood hardly more than a yard from Mr. Quelch, the Remove master did not glance at him. His eyes were fixed on a

want? You are interrupting me! What is it?"

The Bounder was there simply to look at that newspaper. But he had his excuse ready.

"Please, sir, may I go to Courtfield on my bike before dinner?" he asked.

"No!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

The Bounder's eyes flashed. He did not want to go to Courtfield on his bike; and, had he wanted to do so, he would have gone without asking leave, though that was the rule. But he did not like being snapped at. Did Quelch think he could bite a fellow's head off because he was upset by something in a dashed newspaper?

He did not answer, but he gave his Form-master a scowling, disrespectful glare. It was not judicious in Quelch's present temper.

"You're standing in with me, Wharton?"

"Yes!" said the captain of the Remove at once. And that was that!

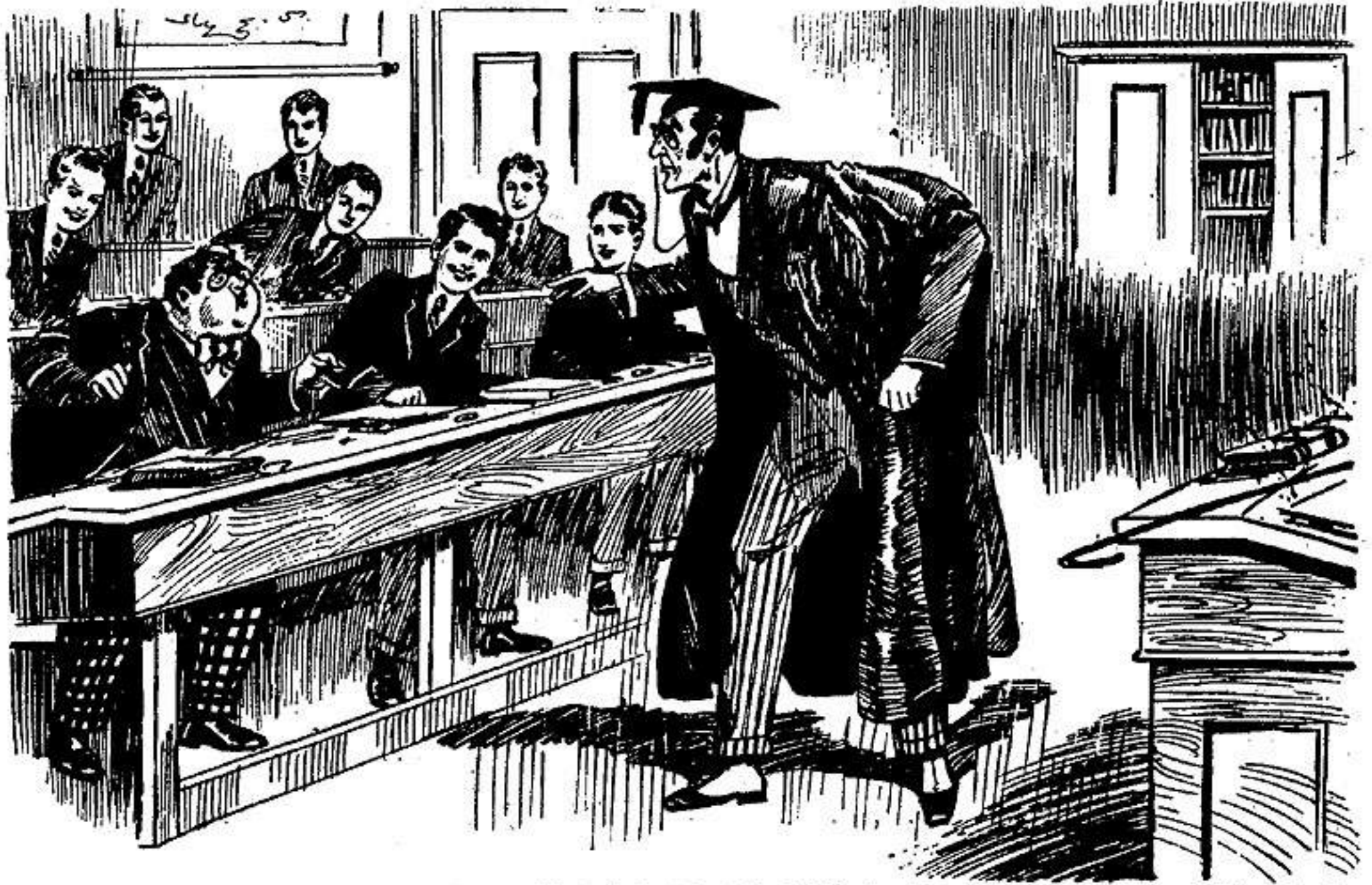
THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Trouble Ahead!

THAT afternoon, the Greyfriars Remove looked forward to class with anything but happy anticipation.

The Juniors hardly understood their Form-master, well as they had supposed that they knew him.

He had always been a severe man; never easy-going like Mr. Capper, the master of the Fourth, or genial, like the



Billy Bunter made a frantic effort to withdraw his teeth, but the toffee held fast. "Do you hear me, Bunter?" thundered Mr. Quelch. "If you do not answer me this instant, I shall cane you!" The fat Removeite made another wild effort, but there was nothing doing. He was gagged by the toffee!

paragraph in the newspaper, as if glued there.

It could hardly be doubted that something in that paragraph had disturbed him that morning, and was the cause of his unusual acerbity. What it could possibly be was a mystery, a mystery which Smithy was determined to penetrate, if he could.

"If you please, sir—" said the Bounder.

At the sound of his voice, Mr. Quelch started violently, recalled to himself. He rose to his feet and looked out of the window at Vernon-Smith.

The newspaper in his hand was in full view as he did so. Smithy's eyes spotted all he wanted to see. It was the current number of the "Daily Telegram," open at the middle, or news, page. That showed that it was not stocks and shares in which the Remove master was interested. It was some ordinary item of news, which was still more surprising.

"What is it, Vernon-Smith?" rapped Mr. Quelch sharply. "What do you

"Vernon-Smith!"

"Well?" growled Smithy; a rejoinder that was still more disrespectful than his look.

"Take five hundred lines!"

"Oh!" gasped the Bounder. "What for?"

"For impertinence! Another word, and I will call you into my study and cane you!"

The Bounder did not utter another word. He backed from the window, and walked back to the group of juniors, with his brow as black as thunder.

The window closed with a slam.

"My hat!" murmured Bob softly. "The old bean's got his rag out, and no mistake!"

"Does he think he can get by with this sort of thing?" said the Bounder, between his teeth. "He's landed me with five hundred lines! I'll be sacked from Greyfriars before I'll write one of them."

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

pompous Prout. But he had always been strictly just—never a man of uncertain, irritable temper like Hacker, the master of the Shell. Now he out-Hackered Hacker, so to speak. The Remove fellows felt rather like a form of Daniels, going into the lion's den.

Something had upset Quelch. It had upset him seriously. That was certain. It was, Smithy believed, something in the newspaper, though that seemed really unaccountable. But did he think, the Bounder asked the other fellows fiercely, that he could take it out of the Remove because something or other had gone wrong with his private affairs?

Most of the Remove looked for two hours of trouble that afternoon. But the Bounder, angry and resentful, was going into class on the warpath. If Quelch fancied he could scare that member of his Form, that member of his Form was ready to show him that he was mistaken. Harry Wharton, head boy as he was, was prepared to stand by

the Bounder. So there was every prospect of a lively time in the Remove-room.

For which reason the Co. were relieved to find that there was a change in the time-table that afternoon.

They were scheduled to have an hour of geography and an hour of history, both with Quelch. Instead of which, they discovered that they were going to have an hour of mathematics with Mr. Lascelles and an hour of French with Monsieur Charpentier. Mr. Quelch was not taking his Form at all again that day.

It was a relief to most of the Remove. Few of them liked maths, though most of them liked Larry Lascelles; but they were glad to be clear of Quelch for the day. Only the Bounder was a little disappointed.

Ready for trouble, in fact, feeling quite keen on it, and with the rather unexpected backing of the captain of the Form, Smithy was not pleased. He would have preferred to get on with it.

He indemnified himself with a rag in the French class, when it came along. Lascelles could not be ragged; but Monsieur Charpentier could, and was; and that hour with the Remove made the French gentleman wonder, not for the first time, whether the life of a French master was worth living.

After class, the Bounder wheeled out his bike. He shot away on the road to Courtfield; and a good many fellows knew why he had gone there. He was expected back by tea-time, with a copy of the "Daily Telegram." Quite a number of fellows were curious to root through that publication, and discover whether there was anything in it to account for Quelch's tantrums, as Smithy believed.

Harry Wharton saw him go, with rather a clouded brow.

He was quite at one with the Bounder in refusing to write lines imposed unjustly. He was as reckless as Smithy of the consequences of that refusal. But what Smithy was doing now looked a great deal like prying, if not spying, to Harry; and he certainly intended to have no hand in it. Smithy's chum, Redwing, took the same view, for he had been heard arguing with the Bounder—in vain, of course, for opposition only made Smithy more obstinate. Smithy had, at least, the whole-hearted approval of Skinner & Co., for what that was worth.

"I hear that you're not doing your lines, Wharton!" said Skinner, coming on the captain of the Remove in the quad, after the Bounder had gone.

"No!" said Harry shortly.

"Mean that?" asked Skinner.

Wharton raised his eyebrows.

"I generally mean what I say!" he answered disdainfully.

Skinner grinned.

"No need to mount the high horse, old bean," he said amicably. "I'm as much up against Quelch as you are; I've got three hundred to do."

Harry Wharton felt a qualm of doubt. Like the ancient prophet, he was angry, and considered that he did well to be angry. But he did not feel backed by the support of a fellow like Skinner. When Harold Skinner agreed with him, it gave him a feeling that he was doing wrong—as, indeed, he was.

"If you stick it out, and Smithy sticks it out, blessed if I don't chance it, too!" said Skinner. "Anyhow, I'll see how you two pull it off. I don't see what Quelch can do."

"He can whop!" said Harry.

"Oh, yes; but a fellow can appeal to the Head!" said Skinner shrewdly.

"Dr. Locke backs up the beaks, of

course—but could he stand for this—giving you three hundred for nothing, and Smithy five hundred for speaking to him—and Nugent five hundred for next to nothing? Looks to me as if it might get Quelch into a row from the Big Chief."

Wharton was uneasily silent.

Quelch had been hasty, unjust. But he had a long record of justice, patience, and even kindness. After all, was it the right thing, even a manly thing, to kick, because of one hasty act?

Skinner gloated at the bare idea of Quelch getting a row from the Big Chief. Wharton most certainly did not want anything of the kind. The keener Skinner was, the more doubtful Wharton grew.

"Stick to it, and I'll back you up!" said Skinner. "Smithy means business—he's got pluck enough for a dozen. Stick it out, and there's a jolly good sporting chance of making the old bean sorry for himself."

Harry Wharton opened his lips—and closed them again.

What he had said, he had said. He could picture the sneer on Skinner's mean face if he changed his mind—and the sneers on other faces. He was not going to figure as an empty braggart, who was afraid to make his own words good. He said nothing—and Skinner walked off in a gleeful mood.

Wharton went slowly towards the House. Frank Nugent was standing at the door with the rest of the Co., and he called to his chum.

"Coming up to the study, old chap?"

"Why?" asked Harry. "We'd fixed it up to trot out before tea."

"Yes; but the lines," said Nugent uneasily.

"I'm not doing any lines."

"Better, old chap!" said Bob quietly.

"The betterfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I've told Smithy I'll stand by him. I can't let him down."

"Blow Smithy!" growled Johnny Bull. "Are you going to dance to Smithy's tune, because he's hungry for trouble, as usual? You jolly well know that you ought to do the lines."

"For nothing?" asked Wharton icily.

"Yes, for nothing!" said Johnny.

"If Quelch makes a mistake for once, who the dickens are you to set up in judgment? Don't you ever make mistakes? Aren't you making a silly mistake this very minute?"

Wharton flushed angrily.

"I'll go on making a silly mistake, then!" he said. "Nugent can please himself! I'm going out!"

"I shan't please myself, Harry!" said Frank Nugent. "I shall stand by you, though I think you're playing the fool. We'll chance it together."

"One fool makes many!" remarked Johnny Bull.

Neither Wharton nor Nugent made any reply to that sapient remark. The captain of the Remove walked away to the gates, and Frank went with him. The Co., after exchanging a look, followed on; and the Famous Five went out of the gates together. They walked down the lane towards Friardale in a rather grim silence.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly. "Look out!"

There was little traffic, as a rule, in Friardale Lane, and what there was generally went at a leisurely pace. The five juniors, sauntering in a row, barred the lane from side to side.

But they ceased to saunter, and jumped as Bob shouted the warning.

From the direction of the village a car came whizzing into sight, so swiftly that it was almost upon them by the time they saw it. It was a dark brown

Daimler, and it came with a rush and a roar; driven with utter recklessness and disregard of anything that might be on the road.

Bob jumped as he shouted, and the other fellows jumped. They had only time to jump clear as the Daimler roared by in a cloud of dust. They had only a second's glimpse of the man crouching over the wheel.

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Nugent breathlessly, as he stumbled on the grassy bank beside the lane. "Of all the rotten road-hogs—"

"Dashed hooligan!" growled Johnny Bull.

The car was gone almost in a flash. As the juniors stared after it there came a honking and a roar again from the direction of the village.

"By gum! Here's another!"

It was a blue Rolls this time—going at the same wild speed as the Daimler. It flashed past the staring juniors and disappeared after the first car.

"Well, my hat!" said Bob Cherry. "Is it a race on the jolly old public highway? They'll get pinched if they keep on to Courtfield at that rate!"

"There was a bobby in the second car!" said Harry.

"Phew! A police car!"

"Looks like it!"

Both cars vanished in a cloud of dust in the direction of Greyfriars School and Courtfield. The juniors stood staring after them for a few minutes, and then, turning by the stile into Friardale Wood, resumed their walk towards Pegg.

The incident, exciting as it was, did not linger in their memory, their thoughts returning to the coming trouble with Quelch—and certainly it was not likely to occur to any of them that the fleeing man in the Daimler had any remote connection with Quelch's acid temper in the Form-room that morning!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

No Clue!

"I SAY, you fellows, let a fellow see!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"Gerrout of the way, you fat frog!"

"Beast!"

There was quite a crowd of Remove fellows in the Rag.

On the long table in that apartment Herbert Vernon-Smith had spread a newspaper open—the copy of the "Daily Telegram" that he had brought back from Courtfield. It was the current number—the same that Mr. Quelch had been regarding so fixedly at his study window that morning, and which, if the Bounder were right, contained some paragraph that had upset the Remove master.

The Bounder, from what he had observed, was certain of that. The other fellows were by no means so certain. Indeed, most of them regarded it as utterly improbable.

For what could there possibly be in a daily newspaper to affect the equanimity of a schoolmaster at Greyfriars?

Had Quelch been scanning the City page it might have been surmised that he had dabbled, not wisely, but too well, in stocks and shares, though gambling in the stock markets was utterly at variance with Mr. Quelch's character. But Smithy, though he had suspected that at first, knew that it was not so. It was something on the news page that had glued Quelch's eyes.

He had given the paper a hasty glance in Courtfield without finding anything of special interest. Now it was spread out in the Rag for everybody to

see, and there was a general crowding round to see it. Hardly a fellow thought that the Bounder was right in his surmise, but they were curious to see whether there was anything in it.

"I say, you fellows, is there a murder?" gasped Billy Bunter. Crowded out by other seekers after knowledge, the fat Owl hovered round eagerly. "I say, if there's a murder—"

"Think Quelch did it if there is?" asked Lord Mauleverer, from his arm-chair. Mauly disdained to give the newspaper a glance.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Well, there's something!" said Bunter. "I saw Quelch squinting at his paper, and I believe Smithy's right. Perhaps his name's in the paper. He's got relations, and they may have done something."

"You fat idiot!" grunted Peter Todd. "Oh, really, Toddy—"

"You shut up, Toddy!" said Skinner, with a gleaming eye. "Bunter's a fool, but he's just said a jolly good thing. It's quite possible."

"Quite!" said Snoop.
"People's relations do these things," argued Bunter. "Look at Loder of the Sixth and what we heard about a relation of his once—"

"It turned out that Loder's relation was O.K., fathead!" said Squiff.

"Yes; but it mightn't have!" remarked Hazeldene. "Everybody's got relations, and they might do anything and get in the papers."

"Exactly!" said the Bounder. That idea, evidently had already occurred to Vernon-Smith's keen and suspicious mind.

"Lots of people have relations they'd like to keep dark!" grinned Bunter. "I dare say Quelch has! Look how he walloped me this morning!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter warmly. "He fairly skinned me, the beast! I dare say he's got awful relations—"

"If Quelch's name is in the paper—"

said Snoop.
"It isn't!" answered the Bounder. "I thought of that, and looked while I was in Courtfield."

"I say, you fellows, relations might have any old name!" squeaked Bunter. "Might be some other name—some weird name like yours, Toddy—"

"Eh?"
"Or some commonplace name like yours, Smithy—"

"What?"
"You see—Yaroooh! Wharrer you kicking me for, you beasts?" yelled Bunter. "Owl! Yow! Wow!"

Bunter did not know why Peter Todd and Smithy kicked him. But he knew that they did—and he retreated, yelling.

Lord Mauleverer rose from his arm-chair. He gazed, with deep disapproval,

at the crowd of fellows gathered round the open newspaper on the table.

"If you men think anythin' of that kind you're not goin' to root through that paper!" he said quietly.

"Aren't we just?" grinned Skinner.
"Jest a few, I guess!" chuckled Fisher T. Fish.

"I mean to say, it's awfully caddish!" explained his lordship. "You can't pry into a man's private concerns."

"Oh, shut up!" grunted Snoop.

"Chuck it, Smithy, old man!" murmured Mauly. "Don't class yourself with fellows like Skinner and Snoop, old bean!"

"You cheeky dummy!" roared Skinner.

The Bounder bit his lip. In point of fact, he was not the fellow to pry, as a rule, or to take a mean advantage of anybody. Mauly's remark rather touched him on the raw.

But he remembered the five hundred lines, the coming conflict with authority on that subject, and its doubtful outcome. Quelch had asked for it! The Bounder, like Pharaoh of old, hardened his heart.

"Mind your own bizney, Mauly, you ass!" he growled.

"Yes, shut up, Mauly!" said Hazel. "Quelch shouldn't be so jolly free with his cane and his tongue if he doesn't want a chap to get back on him."

"There's a limit!" said Mauly. "Some things are not done! That's one of them—what you fellows are doin'."

"Oh, rats! Shut up!"

"Cheese it!"

"Pack it up, bo!" said Fisher T. Fish.

Lord Mauleverer shrugged his shoulders and walked out of the Rag.

Unheeding him, a dozen fellows bent over the newspaper.

There was plenty of news, so far as that went. Two columns were filled with fighting in Spain; but nobody could suppose that Quelch had bothered his head about the proceedings there. There was a column of League of Nations news; but still less could that be supposed to have upset Quelch.

"Here's an air disaster!" said Skinner. "Can't be that!"

"Bag-snatching in Oxford Street!" said Bolsover major. "Can't be a relation of Quelch snatching bags—what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Accident in a coal mine," said Hazeldene. "I suppose Quelch hasn't any relatives down a mine?"

"Hardly!"

"Shipwreck in the Pacific. That wouldn't be it."

"Note to Germany—Mr. Eden's umpteenth note. Not that."

"Further devaluation of the franc. Blow the franc! More gold for America. Bother America! Anything else?"

"Dope smugglers—"
"Hallo! What's this? Hypnotist crook—"

"Any crooks in Quelch's family circle do you fellows think?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let's read it, anyhow," said Skinner. "Man named Darke—professional hypnotist, in Magicland, Limited. Oh, my hat! Hypnotised his own boss, and walked off with the banknotes from his safe—gammion!"

"They stick anything into the papers," said Hazel. "If there isn't any news they make some up!"

"Gammion, of course!" said Skinner. "I've seen hypnotism at shows, and it was all spoof. Advertisement for the show, most likely."

"Hardly," said the Bounder. "That case has been in the papers some time, I believe; the man's wanted by the police. Whether he hypnotised his boss or not, he got away with a lot of money. Anybody know whether Quelch has any relations of that name?"

"Oh, don't be an ass, Smithy!" exclaimed Peter Todd.

"Don't be a cad, you men!" growled Tom Brown.

The Bounder sneered.

"That man, Darke, must have some relations, I suppose," he said, "and they would be jolly upset, I imagine, to see this in the paper. Might have a relative a schoolmaster. Why not?"

"Rubbish!"

"Rot!"

"Well, I can't find anything here to upset anybody—and Quelch was upset by something on this page."

"If it's that, Smithy," said Tom Brown, in a very quiet tone, "it's frightfully rough on a man like Quelch, and it's a jolly good excuse for a man going off at the deep end. If I thought for a minute it was that, I shouldn't feel rusty about Quelch barking and biting this morning."

"I do!" said the Bounder.

"You would!" said the New Zealand junior, in a tone of contempt that brought an angry flush to the Bounder's face.

"But it's rot, I suppose," said Skinner. "Quelch can't have relations giving hypnotic stunts in shows. I fancy his relations are stiff old codgers, in his own line. If there was a case of a Form-master bolting with the head-master's gold watch—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see it!" said the Bounder obstinately. "Something on this page upset Quelch. I shouldn't wonder—"

"Rats!"

"Rot!"

"Rubbish!"

"Chuck it, Smithy!"

(Continued on next page.)

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"I tell you I shouldn't wonder—" repeated the Bounder.

"And I tell you," said Tom Brown, "that if it was so you'd be a cad to nose it out, and a bigger cad to gabble about it. But it's all rot, and you know it. You ought to chuck that newspaper into the fire!"

"Well, I won't."

"Then I will!" exclaimed Tom Brown angrily, and he grabbed the newspaper from the table, crumpled it, and threw it right into the fire before the Bounder could intervene.

"You cheeky cad!" roared Vernon-Smith.

He made a spring at the New Zealand junior, his fists clenched and his eyes blazing.

Redwing caught him by the arm and dragged him back. Redwing had been standing with a clouded brow, silent; now he intervened with vigour.

"Chuck that, Smithy!" he said roughly.

"Let me go, you fool!"

"Chuck it, I tell you!"

Tom Redwing dragged him away by main force. The Bounder looked, for a moment or two, as if he would dash his fist into his chum's face. But he cooled down, and went scowling out of the Rag.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Bump for Bob!

"PUT it on!" said Bob. "All right if we sprint!"

The chums of the Remove trotted.

They had tea'd at the Anchor, in Pegg, and started to walk back. Near Cliff House School they fell in with Marjorie Hazeldene and Clara Trevlyn, and walked as far as the gate of Cliff House with them—which left them barely time to get back to Greyfriars for calling-over. With two or three miles to cover, it was necessary to put on speed.

They trotted down Pegg Lane, to the footpath through Friardale Wood, and turned into the wood. The spring dusk was already falling, and under the trees it was getting thick.

By the footpath, and Friardale Lane after it, the distance was too much for the juniors to cover in the time. But they knew every short cut in the wood, and, by cutting across direct towards Greyfriars, it was possible to save a good mile.

Turning from the footpath, they trotted under the thick trees, following a track which was scarcely marked, but with which they were all well acquainted.

It went winding away through the thickness of the wood, among ancient beeches and oaks, and thickets and brambles, completely covered in and shadowed by the branches overhead.

On the open footpath it was dusky, but on that woodland track it was quite dark. That mattered nothing to the chums of the Remove, however, who knew every foot of it.

Bob Cherry was in the lead, running lightly, and his comrades followed him in single file, the track being too narrow for fellows to run abreast.

They kept up the trot, swinging along cheerily, one after another, hardly visible in the deep gloom to one another's eyes.

At that pace, and by the short cut, they had good time to get in before Gosling shut the gates, and they did not slacken speed. No member of the

famous Co. wanted to be late for calling-over, thus asking for unnecessary trouble with Quelch. There was trouble enough to come, in the matter of the lines, without looking for more.

They expected to find that solitary track clear, it was lonely enough in the daytime, and very seldom trodden at dusk. Had a pedestrian been in the way, however, they would have heard him, if not seen him, but all was silent. It was the unexpected that happened.

Crash!

Bump!

It came suddenly.

Bob Cherry gave a roar of surprise, wrath and pain mingled, and rolled over on the earth. Harry Wharton, who came next, stumbled over him before he could stop, and rolled over Bob.

The other three, fortunately, stopped in time, though they came very near adding themselves to the heap.

"What the thump—" called out Johnny Bull.

"My esteemed chums—" gasped Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Ow!" roared Bob. "Ow! What blithering idiot—Oooogh!"

Harry Wharton staggered to his feet.

Bob sat up, roaring.

"What the dickens—" gasped Harry.

"I ran into something!" gurgled Bob.

"Somebody—"

"No, something. I believe it's a car! Oh crikey!"

Bob scrambled up, red with wrath. He had had a most unpleasant crash into an invisible object on the woodland track, and he was hurt—and he was angry.

"A car!" repeated Harry Wharton blankly. "A car here—impossible!"

"Ow! I've banged my knee, and busted my nose!" gasped Bob. "I tell you it's a car, parked there in the wood. Some mad idiot—wow!"

In utter amazement Harry Wharton moved on, stretching out his hand before him to grope for the obstacle.

At this point the darkness was thicker than ever, the branches interlacing overhead and shutting off every gleam of daylight. He could see nothing, but as he groped, his hand came into contact with something solid, and then he dimly made out the shape of a car. Had it been painted in a light colour it would have glimmered to the view; but it was painted a dark brown, almost black, and could not be seen. What it was doing there was an amazing mystery.

"Well, my only hat!" gasped the captain of the Remove. "It's a car, right enough! What mad ass can have parked a car here?"

"The howling idiot, whoever he is!" growled Bob.

The juniors gathered, staring at the car.

Johnny Bull struck a match. The flickering light glimmered on the dark brown body of the car. Bob Cherry was rubbing his damages; but the other fellows scanned the car curiously.

It blocked the track, brushing against the bushes on either side, leaving no room to pass without going round among the trees. From its position, it had evidently been backed there from Friardale Lane. It was upon the rear of the car that Bob had crashed. Moving on through the bushes by the track, they stopped beside it.

Harry Wharton gave a sudden start.

The match went out as he gazed with startled eyes at the car.

"Strike another match, Johnny!" said the captain of the Remove, in a voice of suppressed excitement. "I believe I've seen this car before."

Another match flamed.

"It's a Daimler, dark brown!" said Harry. "You fellows remember the car that raced past us in Friardale Lane, a couple of hours ago—with another car after it."

"By gum! It's the same car!" said Frank Nugent.

"The samefulness is terrific!"

"What mad idiot stuck it here?" snorted Bob Cherry.

Nobody could answer that question.

The juniors had no doubt that it was the same dark brown Daimler. From the fact that a police constable had been glimpsed in the second car, they had wondered whether the man in the Daimler was some offender chased by the police. The speed at which he had been going was quite sufficient to cause the police to get after him, and take the number of his car. They had been left with the impression that the driver of the Daimler was some reckless road-hog, trying to get away and escape identification, and subsequent prosecution.

It was amazing to find the car parked here on a woodland track that was never used for the smallest vehicle, let alone a motor-car.

The driver must have backed it a good hundred yards, right into the wood. And there it stood, without lights, invisible in the darkness. There was no sign of the motorist. It looked as if the man had parked his car there, and gone.

"Well, this beats it!" said Harry. "It's the same car, all right. They never ran him down."

"Must have dodged them in the lanes, and cut back," said Nugent. "A trick to throw them off the track."

"And bunged the car in here to hide it," grunted Johnny Bull. "Waiting for a chance to get clear, I suppose. No doubt now that that bobby in the second car wanted him."

"Exceeding the speed limit, or perhaps knocked somebody down and drove on," said Harry. "It's plain enough that the car's hidden here. Nobody would park a car here without a jolly strong reason."

"Ow!" said Bob. "Wow! The blighter had no right to stick his silly car here! Ow! He came near running us down in Friardale Lane, and now he's busted my nose and barked my knee! Ow! Look here! We'd better take the number of the car. Inspector Grimes, at Courtfield, might like to know where to look for it, if that road-hog has been doing damage."

"Good egg!" agreed Harry. "We'd better—"

He broke off, in sudden surprise, as there was a sound of a movement inside the car.

As no one was to be seen, when the matches glimmered, the juniors had taken it for granted that the driver had parked the Daimler there, and gone away, for some reason of his own—perhaps to ascertain whether the police car was still about. But that movement showed that the car was occupied; and Johnny Bull, as he heard it, struck another match. The light glimmered on a face looking from the car, and the Greyfriars fellows stared at it blankly.



Johnny Bull struck a match and the light glimmered on a face looking from the car. A pair of large, strangely magnetic eyes, with a deep glitter in their dusky depths, flashed over the startled faces of the Greyfriars juniors. "I'm sorry!" said the man in the car. "I had no idea that anyone would come along this way after dark, or I shouldn't have parked my car here."

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Keep it Dark!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. stood silent, staring at the man in the car. They were close beside it, in the thickets by the track, standing knee-deep in ferns, with clinging brambles round them. Not a sound had come from the car during the minutes they had stood there looking at it, though obviously every word they uttered must have reached the man inside.

Plainly enough he had intended to keep silent, out of sight, till they passed on. And they could guess easily why he was showing himself now. It was Bob Cherry's suggestion to take the number of the car for report to the police at Courtfield that made him show himself. He did not want that to happen.

The face that looked from the car was a rather unusual one. It was very dark in complexion, and handsome in its own way. The eyes were large, dark, and strangely magnetic, with a deep glitter in their dusky depths. Those dark, keen eyes flashed over the startled faces of the Greyfriars juniors. They were handsome eyes, yet there was something repellent in them. Anyhow, they drew attention at once. They were the most prominent feature in the dark handsome face.

The man in the car smiled faintly as he glanced over the juniors' startled faces.

"I'm sorry," he said. "I had no idea that anyone would come along this way after dark, or I shouldn't have parked my car here. I hope you are not hurt much, my boy?"

"I jolly well am!" grunted Bob.

"I am really sorry."

"Oh, all right!" said Bob. "Can't be helped. But what the dickens have you stuck the car in a path like this for?"

"You have already guessed that one," said the man in the Daimler, smiling again. "I'm afraid I rather over-did the speed in a built-up area, and it seems to have annoyed our respected guardians of the law."

The juniors looked at him without replying. They had already come to that conclusion, and the man owned up to it frankly enough.

"I was wrong, of course," went on the man in the car. "My only excuse is that I'd just bought the car, and was trying it out, and rather forgot that I had not bought the high-road, too."

That remark made the juniors smile.

"But there it is," he went on. "The patrol car got after me as, of course, it had a right to do, and I scuttled for it. A silly act, done without thinking. If ever you boys come to drive a car, take my advice, and stop the minute the police call on you. It saves trouble in the long run, beside being the right thing to do."

"Jolly good advice," said Johnny Bull. "If you'd taken it yourself—"

"As I said, I acted without thinking. Like a fool, I've landed myself in trouble. I hope you boys are not going to make it worse for me."

"Oh!" said Harry.

"You see, it's rather serious to scuttle off when called on to stop by a man in uniform. It might have meant endorsing my licence, in the first place, but now it means a fine—perhaps a heavy one. I shan't play the fool like that again, if I get clear this time. See?"

"Oh!" said Wharton again. He

hardly knew what to say, now that the man was making an appeal to the party. "If there's been no accident, I—"

"Nothing of that kind—not so bad as that. Simply a case of reckless driving, which fortunately did nobody any harm," said the man in the Daimler. "From what you've just said, I think you saw me getting away in the lane a few hours ago."

"Yes."

"Well, I got clear among the lanes, and it seemed rather a bright idea to me to double back and leave them to cut on." He smiled again. "So that's what I did, and backed the car into this wood, never dreaming that anybody would come along and bump into it. I'm waiting here till a bit later, then I'm going back to London."

"Not at seventy m.p.h., I hope," said Bob.

The man with the glaring eyes laughed.

"No; I shall drive so carefully that Mr. Belisha would think me a model motorist if he saw me. I've had a scare, to tell you the truth. I'm a busy man. I've four or five appointments to keep in the City to-morrow, and if I have to lose time, being hauled up for this, it means a lot of trouble for me. Might I ask you lads to forget that you saw a car here?"

The chums of the Remove exchanged glances.

The man was so civil that they were quite disarmed—even Bob with a pain in his nose, and another in his knee. After all, it was no business of theirs.

"Well, look here," said Bob Cherry. "I don't see that it concerns us, and we don't want to land a man in a row."

"Oh, it's all right!" said Nugent.

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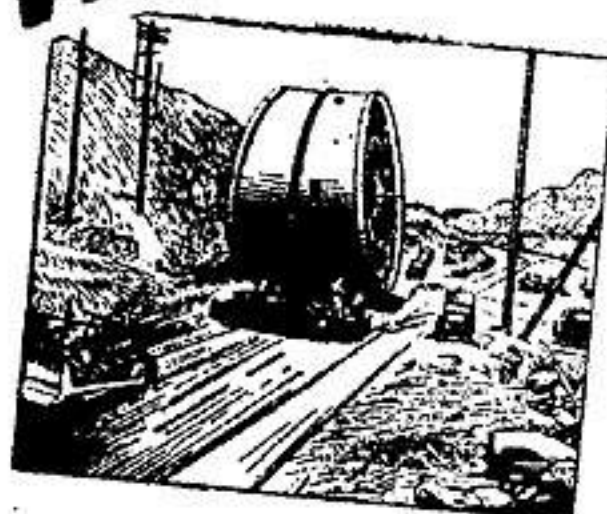
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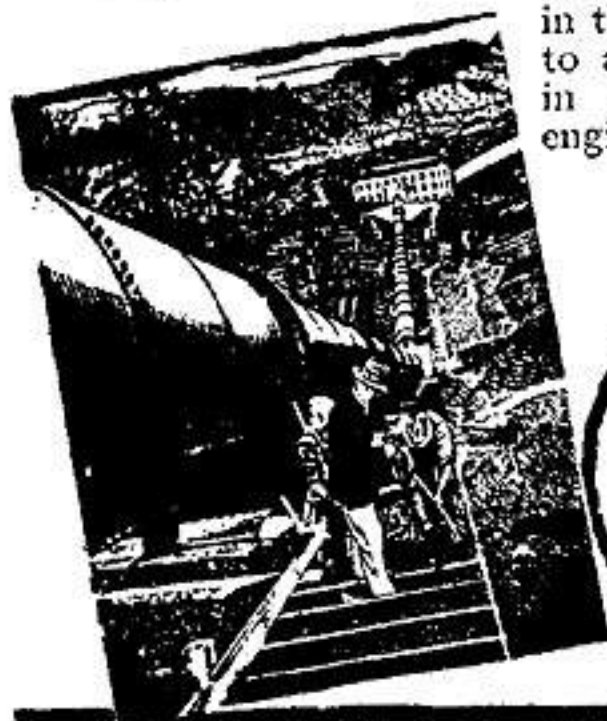


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Given in Part 1

"I mean, this path isn't often used—especially after dusk—but somebody might come along and get a bump like I did," said Bob. "You ought to put your lights on, if you're sticking here."

"I'm afraid they would be seen, as far as the road, through the trees. But you're right," said the man in the car. "It was thoughtless of me— But look here! I'll stand by the car, and keep an ear open for anybody coming. That will be all right."

He pushed open the door of the car, brushing against the brambles, and stepped out.

The juniors moved back.

"That's all right," said Bob. "You see, I've had rather a knock, and I shouldn't like anybody else to bag the same for nothing."

"I'll see that nobody else gets a knock. You can rely on that."

"That's all right, then. Good-night!" said Bob.

"Good-night!"

The juniors went on their way, scrambling through bushes till they were clear of the car, and then following the track again.

Hardly more than five minutes had been lost; but they put on speed, and came out into Friardale Lane not far from the school.

Gosling was standing at the gates, in readiness to close the same, when they arrived. But they still had two or three minutes to spare, and all was well.

Bob Cherry gave the ancient porter of Greyfriars a cheery grin as he came in.

"Another minute or two and you'd have had us, old bean," he remarked sympathetically. "Hard life, ain't it?"

Gosling grunted, and the juniors grinned, and walked in. The bell was not yet ringing for call-over, but fellows in the quad were heading for the House, and the Famous Five went with them.

There was a shade of deep thought on the brow of Hurree Janset Ram Singh. As the other fellows went in, the Indian junior tapped Wharton on the sleeve.

Harry glanced round at him.

"What is it, Inky?" he asked.

"There is to be no talkfulness of the esteemed motorist in the wood?" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"No; we said we'd say nothing." Wharton looked at his dusky chum in surprise. "No harm done, Inky, surely?"

"You think that it was for exceeding the absurd speed limit that the estimable bobby was after him?"

"Eh? He owned up to it," said Harry, puzzled. "What else do you think?"

"I am not terrifically sure that he was telling the truth," confessed the nabob. "But if you think it is all right, the all-rightfulness is preposterous!"

"Oh, it's all right!" said Harry.

The nabob nodded, and they went into the House. But the thoughtful shade still lingered on Hurree Janset Ram Singh's dusky brow as the Greyfriars fellows went in to calling-over.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Sticking to It!

"STICKIN' to it?"

The Bounder asked that question, looking into Study No. 1 in the Remove, on his way to his own study for prep.

Wharton and Nugent were in their study getting their books out.

They looked round at Vernon-Smith. Neither needed to ask to what he alluded. He was referring to the resolve not to write the lines given out by Mr Quelch.

"Yes!" said Wharton briefly.

His chum did not speak.

"What about Nugent?" asked the Bounder.

"I'm standing in!" said Frank curtly. "I think you're a pair of cheeky fools, if you ask me—but I'm standing in."

"No need, if you don't choose!" said Wharton tartly.

"I've not left myself much choice—I haven't touched the lines, and it's prep now," said Frank. "They have to be handed in after prep. We've got to stick it out now, whether we like or not."

"Skinner's goin' to, if we do!" said Smithy. "I suppose this study doesn't want to be outdone by Skinner."

"Hardly!" said Harry, with a curl of the lip.

"Quelch will have to climb down!" said the Bounder confidently. "It's rather a score, getting the whiphand of a beak!"

Wharton made an involuntary movement of distaste. He did not share in the very least the Bounder's keenness to score over the masters.

"If it was only that—" he muttered.

"What else?" grinned the Bounder. "It's the injustice!" growled the captain of the Remove.

The Bounder laughed carelessly. No doubt he was thinking of the injustice, too; but certainly much less than of the chance of getting the whiphand of a beak!

A Form-master represented authority—and for the sake of triumphing over authority, the reckless Bounder would have run many risks, regardless of the rights and wrongs of the matter. And Harry Wharton, realising that, could not help feeling a twinge of doubt and dismay at finding himself in the same boat with the scapegrace of Greyfriars.

But it was too late to retract now—if he wanted to. There was no time left for the lines to be written; moreover, he could not retract without eating his words, which he was doggedly determined never to do. After all, the punishment had been unjust, he told himself angrily.

"Seen Quelch lately?" asked Smithy.

"Not since third school. He doesn't seem to have been about as usual; but we were out of gates till roll-call."

"Nobody seems to have seen him," grinned Smithy. "The old bean's understudyin' the shy violet. I've asked five or six fellows—nobody's seen him. Keeping to his own quarters. You know he landed us on Lascelles and Mossos for the afternoon. He don't feel up to Form work, the dear man!"

"You don't mean he's ill?" exclaimed Harry with a start.

"Ha, ha! He didn't look ill when he was whopping Bunter—uncommonly energetic, I thought!" chuckled the Bounder. "No, it's not that! It's the shock he had—seeing that paragraph in the paper this morning. Goodness knows what it was, unless that crook Darke is some connection of his—I've wondered whether that was possible—"

"Who?" asked Nugent.

"Oh, you weren't in when we got the paper. There's a report of a man dodging the police—man named Darke—"

"You utter idiot!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Are you mad enough to think that could be connected with Quelch in any way?"

"Why not?" said the Bounder coolly.

"Oh, don't be a silly ass!" snapped Nugent.

"Anyhow, there was something on that page of the 'Daily Telegram' that knocked him over!" declared Smithy. "And I can't find anything else there. He can't be upset by the civil war in Spain, or League of Nations chinwag. I suppose, or bag-snatching in London, or an air disaster in Kent I shouldn't wonder—"

Harry Wharton looked steadily at the Bounder.

"You've got your knife into Quelch, and you'd like to believe that rubbish," he said. "But you don't, all the same. Anyhow, I don't want to hear anything about it. Chuck it!"

"Hoity-toity!" grinned the Bounder, and he walked up the Remove passage to his own study, as Wingate of the Sixth appeared on the landing.

Harry Wharton shut the door of Study No. 1, with a rather moody brow. He was as doggedly determined as ever to follow the line he had taken; but he was less and less satisfied with it.

If the Bounder was right, and Quelch had had some shock that morning, that went a long way towards excusing his injustice. A man upset by sudden bad news might be excused for a good deal.

"Look here, Harry," said Frank Nugent quietly, "it's not too late. We can't get the lines done to-night, now, and Quelch will want them before dorm. But if we put it to him civilly, he will leave it over till to-morrow."

"More likely to double the impot. in his present temper!" answered Wharton.

"If he does, we can stand it."

"Oh, quite—only I'm not going to do the lines at all. I'm not stopping you from making your peace with Quelch, if you want to."

"Don't talk rot!" snapped Nugent, much more sharply than it was his wont to speak to his best chum. "Let's drop the subject."

They dropped it and sat down to prep.

Prep in Study No. 1 was very silent and not very cheerful. Frank, in his loyalty to his chum, had been dragged into an act of rebellion, of which he strongly disapproved. Wharton, who had dragged him into it, was not feeling satisfied with what he was doing.

By this time he knew that he would have taken Nugent's advice, but for his declared determination not to do the lines for Quelch. Stubborn pride prevented him from eating his words before all the Remove.

Prep was over at last, and there was a tramp of feet in the passage.

Bob Cherry hurled open the door of Study No. 1 and looked in, with Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Wharton and Nugent joined the rest of the Co., and they went down together.

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter rolled after them, on the Remove staircase. "I say, have you done your lines?"

"No, fathead!"

"Then it wasn't gas?" asked the fat Owl, blinking at Wharton through his big spectacles.

"You fat blitherer!" roared Wharton, while the Co. grinned.

It was possible that other fellows, as well as the fat and fatuous Owl had wondered whether the defiance of Quelch would turn out to be "gas."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Shut up, you bloater, before I kick you!" growled the captain of the Remove.

"I didn't say it was gas, old chap!" protested Bunter. "Fishy thinks it is, but I said to Fishy, 'Wharton's just the pigheaded ass to stick to it, just because he said he would!' My very words, old chap!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Co., greatly entertained by the expression on Harry Wharton's face.

If it struck the Co. as funny, it did not strike the captain of the Remove in the same light. He did not seem to care for being weighed in the balance as either a gasbag or a pigheaded ass!

He lifted a foot—and Billy Bunter promptly bolted across the landing. It was rather unfortunate for Bunter that Coker of the Fifth came out of the Fifth Form passage, on the other side of the landing at the same moment.

Bump!

"Oh!" gasped Bunter as he crashed into Coker.

"Oh!" gasped Coker as he staggered from the shock.

The Famous Fire went on down the stairs. The sound of a loud smack and a louder yell followed as they went. Coker of the Fifth seemed to be annoyed by Bunter's charge, and to be making that fact plain to William George Bunter.

Harry Wharton was frowning when he went into the Rag. Most of the Remove gathered there after prep, as well as some of the Fourth and Shell. Of the former, every fellow was thinking of the impending trouble between the rebels of the Form and their Form-master—and of the latter some had learned what was on.

Hobson of the Shell came over to Wharton.

"I hear you've got a row on with your beak," he remarked.

"Sort of!" admitted Wharton.

"Is it true that you won't do lines for him?"

"Quite!"

"Then you're a cheeky ass!" said Hobson, and he walked away before the captain of the Remove could answer.

Wharton's eyes gleamed after him. He rather liked old Hobby of the Shell, but he was very much inclined at that moment to go after him and bang his head on the wall of the Rag. Possibly, however, there was a dim realisation at the back of his mind that old Hobby was right.

He was not feeling happy. Neither was Nugent—and Skinner had a very uncertain and uneasy look. The Bounder, on the other hand, was in great spirits. He enjoyed the prospect of a row—especially a row into which he had dragged two usually orderly and well-behaved fellows.

A little later, Carne of the Sixth looked into the room. He glanced over the crowd of juniors there, and beckoned to Wharton.

Harry felt his heart beat rather fast. He guessed what was coming.

"Wharton!" called out the prefect.

"Here, Carne!"

"Go to your Form-master's study—you're wanted!"

"Right!"

Carne walked away. All eyes in the Rag were turned on Harry Wharton. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,517.

There was breathless excitement in the Remove now.

"It's the lines, of course!" said Vernon-Smith.

Wharton nodded. He had no doubt of that.

"I'll come with you, if you like."

"I don't! Quelch's sent for me, not you!"

"I say, Wharton, old chap, I've got a 'Holiday Annual'—you can pack in your bags!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shut up, you fat idiot!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Harry Wharton walked to the door, followed by all eyes. With a hard, set expression on his face, he went to his Form-master's study. What he had said, he had said, and he was standing by it; be the consequences what they might.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Unexpected!

HENRY SAMUEL QUELCH, master of the Remove, was seated at his study table, when his head boy entered.

His brows were darkly contracted, and Wharton, at the first glance, had no doubt that the fit of black bad temper was still lasting. His own face set more obstinately. He had been treated with injustice, and he told himself that he was right to resist. If the matter came before the Head, Quelch could justify himself the best he could.

With compressed lips, the captain of the Remove stood before the table, facing his Form-master.

"You sent for me, sir?" he said quietly—very quietly.

"Yes, Wharton."

Mr. Quelch's tone was unexpectedly mild. He drummed on the table with the fingers of one hand, as if uneasy.

Wharton waited. He expected to be asked for his lines, as he had not taken them in, and then the trouble would start. He was ready for it. It was a few moments before his Form-master broke the silence.

"Certain impositions were given out in the Remove this morning, Wharton," he said.

"I know, sir!"

"They are cancelled!" said Mr. Quelch.

Wharton gave a start—almost a jump.

"Cancelled, sir?" he stammered.

"That is so, Wharton." Quelch's voice had still that tone of unexpected mildness. "I should have intimated this earlier, I am aware; but the matter, unfortunately, slipped my memory."

Wharton stood silent.

Now that he looked at Mr. Quelch more attentively, he could see that it was not anger that was indicated by the stern, knitted expression of his brow. He could see that Quelch was a little paler than usual, and the lines on his face deeper. But what struck him most and hardest, was the statement that the lines had slipped Quelch's memory. Never, in the history of the Remove, had Quelch ever been known to forget a fellow's impot. What the dickens was the matter with Quelch?

He did not look ill. It was not that. But he did look, as Wharton could plainly see, as if he had been through stress of some kind. He had, at all events, recovered his usual calmness of temper, and the announcement that the lines were cancelled looked as if he realised that he had "gone over the top."

odds," as Bob had expressed it that morning.

Harry Wharton felt a deep and painful pang of remorse and shame.

"If the lines have already been written," went on Mr. Quelch, after another pause, "they will be taken into consideration on any later occasion when it may be my duty to give out an imposition."

"Oh, sir!" muttered Harry.

"You may tell the others so, Wharton—Vernon-Smith, Nugent, and—and"—had Quelch forgotten again?—"and Skinner," he went on.

"I will do so, sir," said Harry, in a low voice.

"One moment!" went on Mr. Quelch, as he made a movement. A faint colour flushed into the master's face. "I regret very much, Wharton, what passed in the Form-room this morning in regard to yourself. I fear that I acted with what may have seemed to you injustice."

Wharton crimsoned.

He would have been glad to be able to say, "No, sir!" but he could not say that. He could only stand miserably silent. But if ever a fellow felt like kicking himself, Harry Wharton did at that moment.

"Such was very far from being my intention, Wharton, as I am sure you would fully understand," said Mr. Quelch.

Had he understood that? Hardly! He stood without speaking, only wishing that Quelch would have given him a whopping, howsoever severe, instead of giving him this!

"The fact is, Wharton," said Mr. Quelch very quietly, "I had some bad news—a private matter—during break this morning. It was very sudden, and very unexpected, and it disturbed me considerably. I explain this, my boy, so that you may be clear that I was not intentionally unjust—though I feel that I could rely upon your good sense, in any case."

"I'm sorry, sir," stammered Harry.

He was more sorry than he could possibly explain to Mr. Quelch.

What became of his intended defiance now? He could have kicked himself, with pleasure, and the Bouncer with still greater pleasure.

"That is all, Wharton!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir!" Wharton lingered a moment. "I—I—I hope the—the news wasn't very bad, sir! Nobody ill—or—"

Mr. Quelch smiled faintly.

"No, Wharton, not so bad as that. In point of fact, it was not a matter that concerns me personally, but only a very distant relative. But it upset me a—little at the time. You may go, my boy."

Wharton left the study.

He closed the door quietly after him. Very slowly he went down the passage.

Quelch, usually an extremely reserved man, had touched on his private and personal affairs, obviously against the grain, because he felt that some explanation was up to him. The injustice, such as it was, was washed out. And this was the man he had been prepared to defy, and whom the Bouncer was prepared to involve in a "row" with the Head!

Wharton went back to the Rag.

A sea of eyes turned on him as he came in. He was back sooner than the juniors expected.

"Whopped?" asked Skinner anxiously. Skinner was anxious for himself, when his turn came.

Wharton did not answer him.

"I say, you fellows, I offered him my

'Holiday Annual' to pack!" squeaked Billy Bunter. "It's your own fault, Wharton, if you've had it bad!"

"You fat Owl!"

"Oh, really, you ungrateful beast—"

"Was it a licking, or what?" asked Vernon-Smith, puzzled by the expression on the face of the captain of the Remove. "Look here! It was agreed that we were going to appeal to the Head, if Quelch started in with the cane. If you lost your nerve and gave in—"

"Don't be a fool, if you can help it!"

"What?"

"Getting deaf? I said don't be a fool! You can't help being a trouble-hunting rotter, but you can help being a fool, I suppose."

The Bouncer stared at him in astonishment and rage.

"What the dickens?" asked Bob Cherry blankly.

"Did Quelch ask for the lines?" asked Frank Nugent.

"No!"

"What did he want, then?"

"Only to tell me that the lines were cancelled, and could be held over till next time, if any fellow had written them."

"Oh gad!" ejaculated the Bouncer.

"Oh!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Cancelled the lines!" gasped Skinner. "Why?"

"Even you might guess that one, Skinner, old bean!" said Lord Mauleverer gently. "Can't you understand a man doin' what is right, even if it's a nasty pill for him to swallow?"

"Oh rot!" said Skinner.

"So you giddy heroes have been standing up for your jolly old rights, all for nothing!" remarked Peter Todd sarcastically. "What a storm in a teacup!"

Harry Wharton crimsoned.

"Rub it in, Toddy!" he said. "I've acted like a sulky ass, and I don't care who hears me say so! So has Smithy—"

"Speak for yourself!" snapped Smithy.

"Blessed if I make it out!" said Skinner. "I suppose Quelch got wind that there was going to be trouble, and was afraid of it coming before the Head! He hadn't a leg to stand on, if it did!"

Harry Wharton looked at him.

"You think that?" he asked.

"Looks pretty clear to my mind," said Skinner.

"I'm thankful not to have a mind like yours, then!" said Harry Wharton, and he turned his back on Harold Skinner.

"Well, that's my idea," snarled Skinner, "and—"

"You've really got that idea in your head, Skinner?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Yes, I have!" snapped Skinner.

"Well, it's not a nice idea, and the sooner you get rid of it the better!" said Bob. "I'll knock it out for you!"

"What! You silly ass—Leggo!" yelled Skinner, as Bob Cherry suddenly grasped him, twisted him over, and banged his head on the table. "Ow! Yoo-hoop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

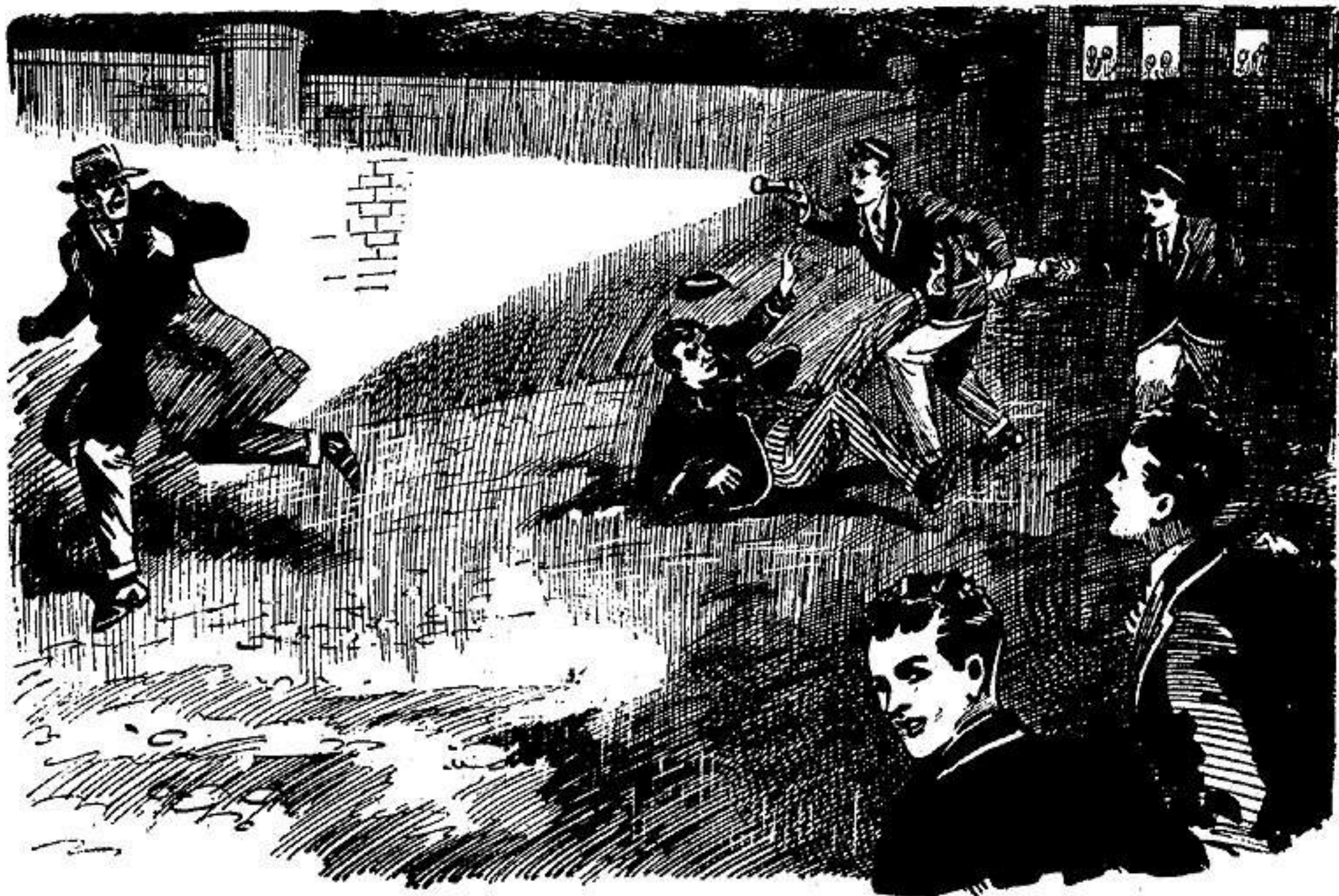
Bang!

"Oh crikey! Leggo!" roared Skinner, struggling frantically.

Bang!

"Yarooooop!"

Skinner wrenched himself away, and dodged round the table, rubbing his head and spluttering rage. And if that idea was still in his head, as doubtless it was, he did not mention it again—he did not want Bob to make any further efforts to knock it out!



"Here!" yelled Vernon-Smith, as he glimpsed a figure in hat and overcoat. "I've got him!" He clutched—and the next moment reeled back from a savage blow that sent him spinning. "Smithy!" Harry Wharton came speeding up, and the light from his flash-lamp picked up a vanishing overcoat.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Man in the Dark!

"OH!" ejaculated Mr. Prout. The Fifth Form master was startled.

Prout, plump and portly, was generally placid. But at that moment he looked anything but placid—he ejaculated and he jumped.

It was very dark in the quad, where Prout was taking his evening walk. Near the House, innumerable lighted windows shone out. But at the Elm Walk, at a distance, all was deep shadow. That was Prout's favourite walk; and he was pacing sedately, when he bumped, in the darkness, into an unseen figure. It was enough to startle any man.

Having ejaculated and jumped, Prout peered in the shadows.

"Who—" he exclaimed.

The faintest of sounds reached him—then silence. He had, for a second, glimpsed a shadow. But it was gone. Then came another sound—a bumping sound. Someone, in the dark, had bumped into a tree.

Prout's eyes gleamed. Someone was there—someone clearly who had no right to be there, as he had backed out of sight so rapidly. Some fellow out of the House after lock-up—probably some young rascal intent on breaking bounds. Prout did not doubt it. And, guided by the sound of the bump on the tree, Prout strode to the spot and grasped.

He saw nothing, but he felt a figure under his grasp. His grasping hand closed on an overcoat.

It was only for a moment, however, that he grasped it. The next, Mr. Prout received a violent push on his portly chest, and went over backwards.

Then there was another bump—a much

heavier one, as the master of the Fifth sat down, depositing his weight on the earth with a tremendous concussion.

"Ooooooh!" gasped Prout.

He sat gasping. He gasped breathlessly, in anger and astonishment.

It was a vigorous push he had received—a push from a very strong arm. It was no Lower boy there, as he had supposed—it was either a man or some big and hefty Sixth Form fellow.

No Sixth Form man could be supposed to want to push Prout over. It was a man—some extraneous person, trespassing within the precincts of the school after dark.

He had pushed Prout over to get away.

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Prout.

He staggered to his feet. He stared round in dim shadows, and saw nothing but dim trunks. The man was gone. He had been lurking under the elms, and Prout had come on him unexpectedly—he was gone now.

Prout, with a knitted brow, hurried back towards the House. It was past nine o'clock, but the spring evening was mild, and many windows were open. Among them was Wingate's, and the captain of Greyfriars could be seen in his study, chatting with Gwynne of the Sixth.

Mr. Prout called in at the window:

"Wingate! Gwynne!"

The two seniors stared round, jumped up, and came to the window. They looked in surprise at Prout's excited face.

"Mr. Prout! Is anything the matter?" asked Wingate.

"Please come out at once!" gasped Mr. Prout. "Someone is in the quadrangle—some person—some tramp, or a pilferer of some kind, I imagine. I have been pushed over—actually pushed over

—by the scoundrel!" Prout spluttered for breath. "The ruffian pushed me over to escape! Please come at once!"

"Oh, my hat! I mean, certainly, sir!"

Wingate dropped lightly from the study window. Gwynne left the study by the door, to call some of the other prefects. With Sykes, Loder, Carne, and two or three more, he hurried out of the door of the House into the dusky quad.

A dozen fellows saw them go. Gwynne had picked up an electric torch, and he flashed on the light as he led the party out.

"What's up?" called out Coker of the Fifth.

"They're after somebody!" said Potter. "Some fellow out of the House after lock-up!"

A crowd of fellows looked out at the big doorway.

"This way!" A voice was heard calling in the gloom—that of Wingate of the Sixth. "Bring that light here!"

"Here!" came Prout's boom. "In this direction I think—"

"Somethin's up!" remarked Temple of the Fourth. "Anybody know what the jolly old row is?"

"They're after somebody!"

The crowd thickened in the doorway. Fellows below the Sixth were not allowed out of the House after lock-up, but they crowded out on the steps, staring and peering in the darkness. From the Rag came a swarm of juniors at the news that something was on.

Gwynne's light flashed in the gloom, moving swiftly. Voices called and answered. Prout's boom dominated them. Wingate had hurried with him at once to Elm Walk, but no one was

Continued on page 16).

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The MAN with the GLARING EYES!

(Continued from page 13.)

discovered there. Half a dozen prefects were searching to and fro.

"This way!" came Prout's boom. "I saw someone—I am sure I saw someone! Here—here he is—Bless by soul, is that you, Loder?"

There was a chuckle among the crowd at the doorway as they heard that.

"Prout's bagged Loder, at any rate!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"He'll bag Wingate next!" remarked Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, is it a burglar?" "Fathead!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo—look!" roared Bob Cherry.

He lifted his hand and pointed. At a distance, there was a dim glimpse of a running figure. It was only a glimpse, but the whole crowd could see that it was not a Greyfriars fellow—the figure was that of a man in hat and overcoat.

"Who the dooce—" exclaimed Coker.

The running figure vanished in a moment. Bob Cherry ran down the steps.

"This way!" he shouted.

Prout loomed up, panting.

"Have you seen him?" he gasped.

"Some tramp—some thief—some pilferer—some lawless ruffian—"

"He cut off round the corner of the library, sir!" gasped Bob.

"This way!" boomed Prout.

He rolled in pursuit. Gwynne's light flashed after him, and the bunch of prefects came running.

"I'm on this!" said Coker, and he ran out.

Potter and Greene followed him, and then there was a general exodus.

A fellow out after lock-up would probably have had the good wishes of most of the other fellows. Certainly they would not have wanted to take a hand in his capture. But Prout's announcement that it was a tramp, thief, or pilferer, altered the matter.

If some extraneous and lawless person had ventured within the walls of Greyfriars School, every fellow was ready to lend a hand in laying him by the heels. Moreover, it was a little welcome excitement.

Harry Wharton & Co. were first out of the Remove, and half the Form followed them, with a swarm of Fourth and Shell; five or six fellows had flash-lamps, spotting the quad with lights.

"This way!" came a shout from Gwynne of the Sixth.

"After him!"

"I saw him cutting off by the studies and—"

"Come on!"

The hunt had swept round by the library; then three or four fellows spotted a running figure fleeing by the lighted windows of Masters' Studies. Most of those windows were open now, and faces were looking out—Mr. Wiggins, Mr. Capper, Mr. Quelch, and

others. The whole crowd came swooping along by the windows.

"What is it?" called out Mr. Quelch.

"What—"

"Some tramp, sir!" called back Wingate. "A sneak-thief of some sort! We're hunting him out!"

"This way!" came a yell from Gwynne. "He's heading for the Cloisters!"

Off swept the rush in another direction. The masters, at their study windows, were left staring.

"Tally-ho!" roared Bob Cherry in great excitement. "Put it on! Oh, my hat!" He staggered as he crashed into somebody in the dark. "Who—"

"You clumsy ass!" came a howl from the Bounder, sprawling

"Oh! You, Smithy—"

"You dangerous maniac!"

"All in the day's work, old bean!" chuckled Bob breathlessly. "Come on!"

The old Cloisters, dim and dark, echoed to trampling feet and calling voices, and glimmered with flashing lights.

The Bounder, winded by Bob's charge, dropped behind, and stood panting for breath. As he stood, a dark figure came running.

It was the hunted man, who had dodged and doubled back, leaving the hunters to charge along the Cloisters. The Bounder glimpsed a figure in hat and overcoat, and knew who it must be, and jumped at it.

"Here!" he yelled. "I've got him!"

He clutched—and the next moment reeled back from a savage blow that sent him spinning. He went down with a gasping yell, and the dim figure ran on. The Bounder heard his desperate panting as he went.

"Smithy!" Harry Wharton came speeding up, a flash-lamp in his hand.

"Smithy, did you see—"

"He knocked me over! That way! Look!"

Wharton's light picked up a vanishing overcoat. He dashed on in pursuit, while the Bounder staggered up.

The man was running hard. For whatever reason he had penetrated into the school, he was thinking now only of escape. But Harry Wharton was close behind, keeping his light on the running figure and shouting, answering shouts coming from the distance.

The running man was not six yards ahead of Wharton, when he made a desperate bound and caught the coping of the wall with his hands.

He barely scrambled out of reach as the captain of the Remove dashed up. Wharton grabbed at him with his free hand and just missed.

His flash-lamp was on the man, and he saw him clearly as he scrambled over the wall: the light shone full on a half-turned face, at which Harry Wharton stared blankly. It was gone in a second more, as the man dropped over the wall and disappeared, but in that fleeting second the amazed junior had recognised the face with its dark, magnetic eyes—the face of the man in the Daimler in Friardale Wood!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.**Up to Quelch!**

"GONE!" said Wingate.

The Greyfriars captain had come panting up in time to see a hat disappear over the wall.

"Have you seen him? Have you caught him?" came Prout's boom. The Fifth Form master came rolling up in a crowd. "Wingate, have you—"

"He got over the wall, sir! He's gone!"

"You are sure, Wingate? Did you see—"

"I saw only his hat, sir! You saw him go, Wharton?"

"Yes!" gasped Harry.

Mr. Prout gave a grunt of disappointment. He had been very keen to bag the unknown and extraneous person who had pushed him over under the elms.

"Some thief—some pilferer!" he gasped. "He should have been given into custody! It is very unfortunate that he has escaped! Why did you not seize him, Wharton, if you saw him?"

"I grabbed at him, sir, but he was too quick—"

"Pooh! Nonsense! You are a stupid boy, Wharton!"

"Thank you, sir!" said the captain of the Remove with respectful sarcasm.

"What—what? Do not be impertinent, Wharton! What are these juniors doing out of the House at all?" yapped Mr. Prout. "Go in at once—at once!"

The man, whoever he was, was gone from Greyfriars; the hunt was over. The prefects lost no time in shepherding the juniors back to the House.

They crowded back to the Rag in a buzz of excitement. The chase in the quad had been quite an exciting interlude—especially for the Bounder, whose nose streamed red from the knock he had received.

A crowd of fellows surrounded Smithy as he dabbed his nose with his handkerchief in the Rag.

But the Famous Five did not join the crowd. Harry Wharton drew his friends aside into a window recess in the passage, rather to their surprise.

"What's on?" asked Bob Cherry.

"I've got something to tell you fellows," answered Harry. "I saw that man's face as he nipped over the wall."

"Then you'll be able to describe him if Prout wants to carry it further," grinned Bob. "Prouty seems fearfully shirty about him."

"I've seen him before," said Harry quietly; "so have you fellows."

"Eh? What? Not somebody we know?" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"That man in the wood!" said Harry.

"That sportsman in the Daimler?" exclaimed Bob blankly.

"Yes!"

"Oh, my hat!"

The Co. stared at Harry Wharton in astonishment. They had taken it for granted, like Prout and the rest, that the stranger within the gates was some pilfering sneak-thief.

"Sure?" asked Nugent doubtfully.

"Quite!" said Harry. "I saw his face—only for a second, but quite clearly—by the flash-lamp. It was the same man."

"Well, that beats me!" said Bob. "That man was jolly well dressed and looked all right. He had a car, too. He can't be a sneak-thief looking out for something to pinch—"

"Hardly!" said Johnny Bull.

"Impossible!" said Nugent. "If it was the same man, what the thump could he have wanted, sneaking in here after dark?"

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"Ask me another," he said. "But it was the man, there's no doubt about that. I believe Inky thought he was telling us lies. Didn't you, Inky?"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh nodded his dusky head.

"The trustfulness of that esteemed Johnny was not terrific," he admitted.

"It occurred into my idiotic

mind that he was pulling out esteemed legs."

"But how—and why?" asked Bob, puzzled. "He admitted that the bobby was after him for breaking speed limits."

"The bobby might have been after him for some other idiotic reason, my esteemed Bob."

"Oh crikey! Some jolly old crook on the run?" grinned Bob. "That sounds rather thick, Inky. He didn't look the part, that I noticed."

"I'd almost forgotten the man," said Harry. "And, whatever he is, I can't imagine any reason why he should butt in here. But, look here, we told him we would say nothing, believing what he said at the time. If he was taking us in, that lets us off. Honest men don't sneak into places after dark and cut off when they're spotted."

"They jolly well don't!" agreed Johnny Bull. "If you haven't made a mistake, old chap—"

"I haven't!" said Wharton curtly.

His friends looked at him doubtfully. Whatever the man in the Daimler was, it was obvious that he was no pilfering sneak-thief. If he was a crook at all, he was in the higher ranks in that peculiar profession.

So there seemed absolutely no explanation of his action in stealing surreptitiously into the precincts of Greyfriars. The Co. could not help thinking that their leader had been deceived by some resemblance in that momentary glimpse of the fleeing man.

Wharton bit his lip impatiently. He, at least, knew that he was not mistaken.

"Well, what do you fellows think?" he asked abruptly. "We said we wouldn't mention the man, believing what he told us. Now I don't believe a word of it. I believe he's a suspicious character of some sort, and up to no good. Ought I to go to Quelch and let him know?"

"If that's what you believe, you certainly ought!" said Johnny Bull at once. "Quelch can decide what to do—if anything. If you believe you can identify that man we were hunting, you're bound to speak out."

"Yes, ratherfully!" said the nabob.

And the other members of the Co. nodded assent to that.

"Only if you're not sure—" said Bob.

"I'm quite sure."

"Then the sooner you put it to a beak the better."

Harry Wharton nodded, and hurried away to Masters' Studies. He tapped at Mr. Quelch's door for the second time that evening, and entered.

The window was closed now, and the blind drawn. Mr. Quelch was sitting in his armchair by the fender, with a newspaper open on his knees. Wharton could not help noticing that it was the "Daily Telegram," open at the news page, and what the Bounder had said came back uncomfortably into his mind.

Mr. Quelch glanced round, with a flash of irritation in his face.

"What—" he began sharply.

He checked himself at once.

Once that day, the trouble on his mind, whatever it was, had caused him to forget himself. But he was not likely to err again in the same way. He paused a moment, and went on in a kind tone.

"What is it, Wharton?"

"Something I think I ought to report to you, sir," answered Harry—"about that man we were hunting in the quad."

"Indeed! You may proceed, my boy!"

The captain of the Remove said what

he had to say succinctly. Mr. Quelch listened, in growing surprise.

"This is very extraordinary, Wharton!" he said, when the junior had finished. "The man you saw in the car may possibly be a bad character, though what he told you sounds plausible enough. But I can imagine no reason why he should enter this school surreptitiously. You are sure it was the same man?"

Like the Co., Quelch evidently doubted that.

"Quite, sir! He was not a common man to look at," explained Wharton. "I should know him again anywhere."

"You mean that there was something distinctive in his looks, by which the police, if necessary, could trace him?"

"Yes, sir! His eyes especially—"

Mr. Quelch started a little.

"His eyes?" he repeated. "Please describe the man to me."

"A man of about thirty, sir, with a dark complexion and very dark eyes—not exactly queer, but unusual in a way—Are you ill, sir?" exclaimed Wharton, breaking off, and making a quick step towards his Form-master in alarm.

A sudden wave of pallor had come over the Remove master's face.

It seemed as if the junior's words had drained the colour from his cheeks. He was staring at Wharton, catching his breath.

"No, no!" Mr. Quelch seemed to recover himself. "Please go on, Wharton! You were saying—"

"That's about all, sir, except that he was well-dressed, and looked like a well-to-do man," said Harry. "But I noticed his eyes especially, and I think the other fellows did."

Mr. Quelch turned his face away from the junior, looking at the fire. He seemed to be musing. Wharton waited for him to speak.

"You did quite right to report this to me, Wharton," said Mr. Quelch at last, and without looking round. "I will—will consider the matter, and you may leave it in my hands."

"Yes, sir."

Harry Wharton left the study. He did not know that, after he was gone, the master of the Greyfriars Remove sat like a man stunned, with a face like chalk. But he knew—he felt—that Henry Quelch was in deep waters.

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THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Face at the Window!

TAP!

Greyfriars School was silent and sleeping.

All Forms, from the Second to the Fifth, had gone to their dormitories. The Sixth Form windows were all dark. Only from one or two masters' windows a light still shone into the dim night.

Of the few lighted windows, Mr. Quelch's was one. It was past the hour of Quelch's usual bed-time, but he was not thinking of bed. He sat in his study, rose, and paced the room; sat down again, rose, and paced again.

His restlessness was surprising in a gentleman of Mr. Quelch's calm and sedate character. Not for a moment did he seem at ease.

He was sitting up late, but he did not want company. Mr. Prout had looked in, full of excited conversation on the subject of the hunt in the quad, but Quelch had been so very dry that Prout had retired with that conversation still bottled up in his portly breast.

Monsieur Charpentier had dropped in to speak on the subject of Remove fellows in a junior French set—a matter he really had to discuss with the Remove master. But Mossoo had dropped out again, frozen off, leaving that discussion to a later date.

Quelch was glad when the hour grew later, and he was safe from colleagues dropping in. He wanted to be alone. Seldom, or never, since he had been a master at Greyfriars School had Quelch been so troubled and disturbed.

Several times, as he paced the study, he stopped at the telephone; twice he stretched out his hand to that instrument. Each time he withdrew it without lifting the receiver, however.

"Impossible!" he said to himself, several times over; but his expression, as he breathed the word, indicated that he was thinking of something that he hoped and trusted was impossible, but dreaded might be possible.

He stopped pacing as a light tap came at his window-pane, and stood transfixed, rooted to the floor, staring at the window.

Tap!

It was a light tap—so light that Quelch might almost have passed it unnoticed at any other time. It could not have been heard in any other study. It came from a cautious hand.

Quelch did not move.

His face paled, as it had paled when Harry Wharton told him of the man with the strange eyes. He gazed at the window, as if he dreaded to see a grisly spectre start through the blind.

Tap!

This time it was a little louder.

The Remove master stirred at last. As if by a painful effort, he dragged himself to the window. His hand was shaking as he drew aside the blind.

Outside the night was dark. Save for a gleam of a star in the sky and shadowy branches of trees, all was dim gloom. Quelch for a moment could see nothing. Then he saw a pale patch at the window, and knew that it was a face pressed to the pane.

He stood, with the blind held by one hand, staring at that face. He caught the glint of strangely gleaming, dark eyes.

The blind fell from his hand, falling back into place, shutting out the night and the face at the window.

Mr. Quelch made a step towards the telephone, but he stopped.

Tap!

A pause, and the Remove master

turned to the window again. He drew aside the blind with one hand, with the other unfastening the catch and lifting the sash.

The man standing outside in the darkness was hardly a yard from him, looking up, a faint smile flickering on his handsome dark face. Had any of the Famous Five been there, they would have recognised the man who had parked his car in Friardale Woods. Quelch evidently knew the man; there was no surprise, but bitter repugnance, in the look he gave him.

"You!" he breathed.

The man with the eyes nodded.

"Go!" Quelch's voice came low and clear. "How dare you come here! Philip Darke, you scoundrel, go!"

"A word—"

"Not a syllable! Go!"

The man did not stir.

"A word! But let me in, Quelch!" he said coolly. "Other windows are lighted; others may hear, or see—"

"Go! Twice I had almost determined to ring up the police station after I had the description of the man who came here this evening. But I thought it must be impossible. I could not believe that even you, rascally adventurer as you are, could have such impudence—such effrontery! Now go, for I am about to call up the police!"

Mr. Quelch turned from the window, stepped to the telephone, and put his hand on the receiver.

There was a swift movement from the man outside. With a cat-like agility, he swung himself in, and the blind dropped behind him. A moment more, and he caught the Remove master's arm.

"Festina lente, old man!" he said lightly. "Make haste slowly—what? Plenty of time to call in the police and tell all Greyfriars School that a relative of yours is a wanted man!"

Slowly the Remove master relinquished the receiver without having lifted it. He turned to face the man with the gleaming eyes.

Philip Darke gave him a nod, turned and shut the window, replacing the blind carefully, to close any possible view from without. Then he crossed to the study door, and turned the key softly in the lock without a sound.

Mr. Quelch watched that action, without word or movement.

The man turned to him, the faint mocking smile still flickering on his face.

"Ten years since we met, Quelch, yet you knew me at a glance!" he remarked lightly.

"You are not easily forgotten. It will be the easiest of tasks for the police to trace you out."

"They have not traced me yet."

Mr. Quelch's hand moved towards the telephone again.

"Why such haste?" smiled Darke. "If I am to be taken, do you prefer me to be taken here, in your school?"

The Remove master shuddered.

"Why are you here? What do you want?" he breathed. "How did you find your way here? You knew that I was a master in this school, but you have never stepped within its gates—"

"Not till this evening!" assented Darke. "I came in the hope of finding my way to you, but someone butted into me, and then—"

"You were the man they were hunting in the quadrangle!"

"Exactly! I got clear!" He grinned. "And while I was on the run, my dear fellow, I passed this very window, and saw you standing there and looking out! That was how I was able to find your study—now."

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"And you had the impudence, the audacity, to come here?" Mr. Quelch's agitation had passed. His face was set and hard, his lips tight; his eyes glinting like points of steel. "Do you dare to dream, for one moment, that you have help, or sympathy, to expect here—from me?"

"Hardly! I know you too well! Yours is not a sympathetic nature, Henry!"

"Towards a thief and a rascal, no!" said Mr. Quelch grimly. "You are a distant relative of mine—but if you were my own brother I would not stand between you and the law you have broken. At this moment, I do not doubt, you have in your possession the plunder of your employer."

"You knew—"

"I saw a report in the newspaper this morning!" said Mr. Quelch bitterly.

"It gave you a shock?" grinned Darke. He could read the signs of it in the Remove master's face.

"A shock?" repeated Mr. Quelch. "More than that! Unscrupulous adventurer I had always known you to be, swindler and trickster—but to learn that a man, even remotely connected with myself, had become a thief—" He broke off with a look of such horror and scorn that it made the man facing him wince, in spite of his nerve and impudence.

"You had always a hard tongue, Henry!" said Darke, shrugging his shoulders. "Leave that telephone alone. I advise you. Even if our connection is remote, the same blood flows in our veins—you will not give up a relative to the law."

"You are here!" said Mr. Quelch. "Gladly I would have avoided anything of the kind—but you are here, and I have my duty, as a law-abiding citizen, to do. I told you to go, when you stood outside that window—it was more than I had a right to do. Now you are here, you do not leave this room a free man. You are a thief, with loot in your pockets—I should be as bad, if I permitted you to escape."

"You mean that?"

"I mean every word!"

"You will face the disgrace—a scandal in the school—your name bandied about with mine—"

"That, and more, rather than fail in my duty. Make no mistake about that, Philip." Mr. Quelch's lip curled scornfully as the man clenched his hands. "Lift a hand, and I will call—there is ample force at hand to secure you, if you offer resistance before the police are here. You have trapped yourself by coming—and what you have done, you have done."

"By gad! You were always a hard nut to crack, Henry! But let me speak before you ring—if you do not change your mind, I am in your hands," said Darke coolly.

"I shall not change my mind," said Mr. Quelch sternly. "But I will hear you."

"Good enough!"

The man dropped into the Form-master's armchair, leaned there in an easy attitude, and lighted a cigarette. He sat facing Mr. Quelch as the Form-master stood by the telephone. His hand still on the receiver, Mr. Quelch looked at him with a cold, hard stare, and waited for him to speak.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

In the Hypnotist's Power!

PHILIP DARKE, hypnotist, adventurer, swindler, and last of all, thief, sat at his ease, the smile still flickering on his handsome face. He did not seem in a

hurry to speak. The Remove master waited, in grim silence; but he spoke at last.

"I am waiting!"

Darke threw his half-smoked cigarette into the fire.

"When I've told you, you may change your mind," he said. "How much do you know—already?"

"What I saw in the newspaper this morning. The name struck me at once, and the description of the rascal as a hypnotist!" said Mr. Quelch bitterly. "I knew then that my relative, after long hovering on the very edge of the law, had taken the plunge at last."

"And that is all?"

"It was stated that you had an engagement in some place of entertainment called Magicland, as a hypnotist," said Mr. Quelch, "and that you exercised that abhorrent influence over your employer, the manager of the company, caused him to unlock his safe, and fled with a large sum in bank-notes—some thousands of pounds, I believe."

"Exactly."

"You make no denial? You do not attempt to deceive me by some lying tale?" said the Remove master contemptuously.

The adventurer shrugged his shoulders.

"Waste my breath, and your time?" he answered. "It is true! I have been on the run for a week, though apparently you heard nothing of it till to-day. But for finding a motor-car that was not lost—he grinned—"I might be in a stone-walled cell at this moment, instead of chatting in a comfortable study with an affectionate relation."

"If that is all you have to say—"

"Be patient! You would prefer me to speak frankly—you were always the soul of truth and rectitude! I am a man with power in his hands—a strange power—which has served me little, so far—but I have always been determined to strike for a big stake, when the opportunity came. That opportunity came—and I grasped it. What does your favourite poet, Shakespeare, say—"

"Enough!"

"There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune!" said Darke. "Isn't that it? Well, the chance came, and I took it. Four thousand pounds—"

"Do not speak of it to me!"

"But—the hunt at my heels!" said Darke. "I hoped to have time to get clear—in which case, my dear second cousin twice removed, you would never have had the pleasure of seeing me again. But I had no such luck. This afternoon a police car was behind me when I drove like a madman within a mile of this spot—"

"And why this spot?" said Mr. Quelch sternly. "Why did your flight lead you in this direction?"

"You can guess that one!" grinned Darke. "A hunted man has no friends—but I had, at least, a relative! You had a narrow escape of never seeing me, however—they almost ran me down. But I eluded them in winding lanes and doubled back—and parked my car in a wood, and lay low. I have no doubt that a dozen police cars are still scouring the roads for a dark brown Daimler—which they will not find. If they knew of our connection, my dear Henry, no doubt you would hear them honking at the gates of Greyfriars. But I have never mentioned your name—any more than, I imagine, you have mentioned mine."

"It was not a connection of which I was likely to boast," said Mr. Quelch acidly.



"I've come to report to you, sir, about that man we were hunting in the quad," said Harry Wharton. "He had a dark complexion and very dark eyes——" A sudden wave of pallor came over Mr. Quelch's face. It seemed as if the junior's words had drained the colour from his cheeks. The Form-master stared at Wharton, catching his breath.

"Quite! I am safe, for the moment, as no one can dream that I have any motive for coming near this school. If you befriend me——"

"Silence!"

Mr. Quelch spoke sharply, but not so sharply as before. As he stood looking at the seated man, the strange magnetic eyes were fixed on his.

As if in spite of himself, the sternness in the Form-master's face relaxed. His hand relinquished the telephone, and rested on the table on which it stood.

"Hear me!" said the man in the armchair quietly, his steadfast eyes still on the Remove master. "If you befriend me, and give me a few days shelter in this school, under another name, I am safe. It would be easy for you to arrange—and suspicion would be impossible. When all is safe, I go—and henceforward, the sea would roll between us—you would be done with me for ever."

Mr. Quelch opened his lips. But he did not speak.

It seemed as if some strange influence was creeping over him, numbing his senses. He moved back, and sat, or rather dropped, into a chair.

Darke rose to his feet.

His strange magnetic eyes were still fixed, unmovingly, on the Form-master's. The gleam in their depths told of coming triumph.

"If you consent, I am safe!" said Darke in a low voice. "Do you consent?"

"No!" breathed Mr. Quelch. "No!"

But he spoke in a strange, uncertain tone. Sitting there, gazing at the man with the strange eyes, he passed his hand slowly over his brow, as if dazed.

Darke's hands were moving now, weaving strange patterns in the air. His glittering, dark eyes never wavered.

The Remove master of Greyfriars sat as if turned to stone.

He did not realise it, but he was under the strange influence of the hypnotist. It had not occurred to him to be on his guard against it, and now it was too late.

Mr. Quelch had, indeed, never believed in that strange power which his relative claimed to exercise. Even the incident reported in the newspaper, in which Darke had exercised that power to rob his employer, had not wholly convinced him. He had, at all events, given that part of the matter little thought. Even now, while he fell under the power of those magnetic eyes, he did not realise what was happening to him. He sat slumped in the chair, his face relaxing more and more, every trace of sternness gone from it. The man before him smiled.

"Henry!" he said in a low voice.

There was a pause, and then Mr. Quelch answered:

"Yes."

"Your old friend, James Watson, is coming to stay with you for a few days. I am James Watson. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"You will arrange for a room to be prepared for your old friend."

"Yes."

"I shall leave you now. I shall ring at the gate for the porter to admit me. It will be understood that I have arrived by a late train at Courtfield, and have had to walk from the station."

"Yes."

"When I am brought to the House, you will admit me, and recognise me at once as your old friend James Watson, whom you have been expecting."

"Yes."

"You will forget Philip Darke! Now stand up!"

Mr. Quelch rose from the chair.

"Who am I?" asked Darke watching him.

"My old friend, James Watson," said Mr. Quelch mechanically.

The hypnotist smiled.

"Wait!" he said. "Fasten the window after me!"

He dropped silently from the window, and Mr. Quelch was left alone. He fastened the window, replaced the blind, and then sat down in the armchair and picked up the newspaper. Anyone glancing into the study would have supposed Mr. Quelch quite normal. He looked normal, and felt normal—unconscious that his will was now the slave of another will.

He remained seated, scanning the newspaper, till there came the sound of a knock at the door of the House.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Skinner Gets Busy!

"I SAY, you fellows—he, he, he!" Billy Bunter seemed amused as he joined the Famous Five in the quad in break.

Harry Wharton & Co. glanced at him. They were walking in the quad, waiting for the bell. And they could see nothing to amuse Billy Bunter.

"He, he, he!" gurgled Bunter. "I say—he, he, he!"

"What's the jolly old joke?" asked Bob Cherry, mystified.

"He, he, he—Skinner—he, he, he!" chortled Bunter. "Look!" He jerked a fat thumb in the direction of the windows of the Remove Form Room.

From the middle window of that Form-room Harold Skinner of the Remove was in the act of dropping. He dropped, landed, and cut off quickly.

The Famous Five stared at him. Skinner, apparently, had entered the Form-room by the window and dropped.

out again, for reasons of his own—but what his reasons might be the chums of the Remove had no idea. Bunter, it seemed, had.

"Some jape in the Form-room?" asked Harry Wharton.

"He, he, he! Yes, rather!" Bunter grinned and gurgled. "I say, you fellows, old Quelch will sit up! He, he, he! Wait till we go in for third school! He, he, he!"

"I shouldn't care to jape Quelch, if his temper's anything like it was yesterday!" remarked Johnny Bull. "Skinner's an ass!"

"But what's the game?" asked Nugent.

"You'll see when we go in!" chortled Bunter. "I heard Skinner telling Snoop! He, he, he! It's on the blackboard!"

"What is, fathoad?"

"He, he, he! You remember what Smithy found out from the newspaper yesterday. He thinks that man Darke, who's wanted by the police, is some connection of Quelch's—"

"He doesn't!" snapped Wharton. "He knows it's all rot!"

"Well, I jolly well think so, whether Smithy does or not—and so does Skinner! Anyhow, if Quelch knows the name, he will get a shock when we go into the Form room!" grinned Bunter. "Skinner's chalked it on the blackboard!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"The rotten cad!" muttered Wharton. The captain of the Remove knitted his brows.

He did not believe that the Bounder, in his malicious search through that copy of the "Daily Telegram," had really made any discovery. It did look, certainly, as if something in that newspaper had startled Mr. Quelch the previous day, and interested him deeply and unpleasantly. But from that, to a theory that Quelch had any connection with a man wanted by the police, was a long step.

At the same time, Wharton had an uncomfortable recollection of Quelch's own words to himself. Mr. Quelch had said that it was something in connection with a distant relative that had disturbed him, and that "something" was bad news—evidently very bad news.

The possibility existed that the Bounder, by chance, had put his finger on the truth. Wharton did not believe so, but he had to admit the possibility.

Skinner could hardly believe that it was true. But he hoped it was. And he was going to know.

If the name of Darke meant anything to Mr. Quelch he could hardly fail to betray the fact when that name suddenly and unexpectedly stared him in the face, chalked on the blackboard in the Form-room.

"I say, you fellows, what a lark!" chortled Bunter. "I say do you think there's anything in it?"

"No, ass!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Well, there's a chance, anyhow," argued Bunter. "And Skinner said to Snoop that it was worth trying on, in case there was anything in it. If there is, Quelch will be sure to go off at the deep end, and give himself away."

"Luckily, there isn't!" said Frank Nugent.

"Well, we shall jolly well see soon!" grinned Bunter. "Quelch gave me six in the Form-room yesterday—"

"Serve you jolly well right!"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter rolled off to tell the other fellows.

Harry Wharton stood in frowning silence for a moment or two, and then

moved off towards the windows of the Form-room. His friends followed him.

"What are you up to?" asked Bob.

"I'm going to cut in and wipe that off the blackboard," said Harry.

"My dear chap, you don't fancy for a minute that there's anything in it?" exclaimed Bob. "Smithy nosed it out, but he jolly well doesn't believe it—and Skinner doesn't, either."

"I know! But—" Wharton coloured. "Of course, it's all rot—utter rot! But I'm going to rub it out, all the same."

He cut across to the Form-room window, which Skinner had left half open. But as he was about to clamber on the sill, there was a ponderous tread on the path under the windows, and Mr. Prout rolled by.

"Wharton!" boomed Prout.

"Oh! Yes, sir!" Wharton's hands dropped from the stone sill.

"What are you doing?" exclaimed Mr. Prout severely. "Does your Form-master allow you to climb in and out of the windows, Wharton?"

"Oh! No, sir!" stammered Wharton.

"I imagine not!" boomed Prout. "I certainly imagine not! Leave this spot at once, Wharton!"

Wharton, with a flushed face, walked back to his friends.

Mr. Prout frowned after him, and walked up and down the path. There was no chance now of getting in at the window.

"Nothing doing, old man!" said Bob Cherry, with a grin. "What does it matter, anyhow?"

"The matterfulness is not terrific, my esteemed chum!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a rather curious look at the captain of the Remove.

"Let's go in," said Harry abruptly.

"The bell's not gone yet."

"Come on, all the same."

"Oh, all right."

The chums of the Remove went in. It was still ten minutes to class, and Mr. Quelch was not to be seen. The Removites had not seen him since breakfast, as first and second lessons that morning had been French with Mossoo, and drawing with Mr. Woose.

The Co. smiled as Wharton turned the handle of the Remove-room door. It was locked, as it usually was between classes.

"No admission!" grinned Bob.

Wharton compressed his lips.

"I'll kick Skinner, anyhow!" he said.

And the Famous Five went out into the quad again to look for Skinner.

They found that youth in the middle of a circle of Remove fellows, some of whom were laughing, and some frowning. Among the latter was Vernon-Smith.

The cancelling of the lines had rather taken the wind out of Smithy's sails, as it were. He could not even pretend to think that there was now any "injustice" to be resented and avenged; and, in point of fact, the Bounder had the grace to be a little ashamed of himself.

He had "nosed" out something that might be to Quelch's discredit in his angry resentment. That resentment was now washed out, but what he had done remained. Not for the first time Herbert Vernon-Smith wished that he had not followed the dictates of his sullen temper. Gladly he would have dropped the matter, but now that the cad of the Remove had got hold of it, it was not to be dropped.

"Look at it," Skinner was saying. "There was nothing else in that paper to account for Quelch's tantrums, and Smithy thinks—"

"I don't!" interjected the Bounder.

"Well, I jolly well do!" said Skinner coolly. "At least, it's jolly possible. And I can jolly well say—Whoop!"

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

That really was not what Skinner had intended to say. He said it involuntarily as a boot landed on his trousers.

With a snarl of rage, Skinner spun round and glared at the captain of the Remove.

"You cheeky rotter!" he bawled.

"You rotten worm!" retorted Wharton. "What have you got to grouse about, you rotter? You're let off your lines?"

"You were grouching enough yesterday!" sneered Snoop. "Have we all got to change our tune when you change yours?"

"When father says turn we all turn!" said Hazel sarcastically.

"Look here, Wharton—" bawled Bolsover major.

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Wharton.

"Quelch lost his temper yesterday, and made up for it afterwards, like the decent man he is. And even if he hadn't it's a dirty trick to start a story like this about the school."

"That's one to your address, Smithy!" said Hazel maliciously.

The Bounder flushed angrily. Fortunately the bell for third school clanged out just then, and the Removites had to head for the Form-room. Skinner gave the captain of the Remove black looks as he went. And all the fellows, whether they approved of Skinner's peculiar jape or not, were very interested to see what its effect would be on Henry Samuel Quelch.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not as per Programme!

MR. QUELCH was at the door of the Remove-room as the juniors came along.

The previous day he had been late for class—some of the fellows fancied they knew why. Now he was as punctual as ever. And the juniors could see—greatly to the relief of most of them—that there was no sign of the previous day's "tantrums."

Mr. Quelch looked his usual rather frosty self as he let the Form in.

In the Form-room every eye turned at once on the blackboard. It had been used in the drawing lesson with Woose, and still stood on its easel, facing the Form. It had been left dusted clean, but Skinner had been at work since then.

Some of the juniors gasped as they saw what was chalked on it in large capital letters. The Bounder gave Skinner an evil look. The action was Skinner's, but the fault was his, and Smithy realised, rather late, that this sort of thing was hitting below the belt. If, by some chance, it were the name of Darke in the newspaper that had upset Mr. Quelch, he was due for another shock now.

"WHO KNOWS PHILIP DARKE?"

That was the sentence that stared the Removites in the face as they took their places.

Mr. Quelch had gone to his own desk and had not seen it yet. Every fellow wondered what the effect would be when he did.

From the blackboard all eyes turned on Quelch.

That there had been something amiss with Quelch the previous day the juniors had had only too much reason to know.

But that there was anything amiss with him this morning no one knew—not even Mr. Quelch himself.

The hypnotic influence in which he did not believe controlled him without his knowledge.

In all matters connected with the man Darke, he was the slave of Darke's dictation. In all other matters he was absolutely normal. Under that strange influence he had been bidden to forget Darke and to remember only James Watson. Unconsciously he had done so.

That he was the object of almost breathless attention from his Form was not likely to escape Mr. Quelch's notice.

He glanced at the Remove, and frowned. Perhaps he suspected some rag. His eyes turned on Bunter. Billy Bunter was watching him with such eager interest that his little round eyes were almost popping through his big, round spectacles.

Frowning, Mr. Quelch stepped towards the class. It dawned on him that there was something on the blackboard.

It had been known for some disrespectful fellow to draw caricatures thereon with the chalk. No doubt suspecting something of that kind, Mr. Quelch picked up his cane as he came towards the Form.

He glanced at the blackboard.

The Removites for a moment almost ceased to breathe. Skinner watched the Remove master like a cat.

If he knew the name of Darke, if the wanted man was in truth some connection or acquaintance, it was scarcely possible that Quelch could fail to betray himself now.

But the watching eyes only saw a puzzled surprise dawn in the face of the Remove master.

He stared at the blackboard, and then looked at the breathless Form.

"What does this mean?" he rapped. "Has some boy here written those words on the blackboard?"

No answer.

But Harry Wharton smiled. Obviously that name conveyed nothing whatever to Mr. Quelch. Even Skinner, unwillingly, had to see that.

"What is this nonsense?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch testily. "What does it mean? Mr. Woose cannot have left these words here. Someone must have entered the Form-room and done this—by the window, I presume, as the door was locked. Why any boy should be so foolish, I cannot imagine."

Dead silence.

Skinner bit his lip with disappointment.

Mr. Quelch looked at the board again. Under the strange influence that governed him without his knowledge he had totally forgotten the name of Philip Darke. He was simply surprised and annoyed.

"I will not allow absurd tricks like this to be played in the Form-room!" he snapped. "I order the boy who has done this to step out."

Skinner was not likely to step out.

"Such a senseless trick as this is beyond my comprehension!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "There is no boy of that name at Greyfriars to my knowledge. Does anyone here know what it means?"

All the Removites knew what it meant, but they were not likely to tell Mr. Quelch. So far from knowing the name, it seemed that he had not even noticed it in the newspaper; it seemed absolutely strange to him.

"Wharton!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir."

"Do you know what this absurdity means?"

"I—I suppose it's meant as—as some—"
(Continued on next page.)

The STately HOMES of GREYFRIARS

DOWN BY THE DEE

By

The Greyfriars Rhymester



(1)

There was a jolly miller once
Who lived upon the River Dee,
He had no wealth or bags of buncie,
But he was blithe as blithe could be!
(We've just been singing these old songs,
And made an awful row, we did!
I played the band parts with the tongs
Upon a metal saucepan lid!)

The whitest man who ever filled
the coveted position of Captain of
Greyfriars is **GEORGE WINGATE**,
who hails from Chester, a picturesque
old city beside the River
Dee.

(2)

George Wingate lives upon the Dee,
And, like Ye Jolly Miller, he's
A hearty fellow, staunch and free,
Who often hands out "six" with ease!
Beneath the spreading chestnut tree
He looks the whole world in the face;
For chestnuts grow beside the Dee,
And there are lots at Wingate's place.

(3)
(I'm mixing up my songs a bit:
We had a sing-song in the Rag
Until my brain—what's left of it—
With buzzing tunes began to sag!
So if they creep into my rhymes
Just treat them with contempt and
scorn!
And mutter, as you do at times,
"I wonder why this swab was born!")

(4)

Breathes there a man with soul so dead
Who does not know old Chester's walls?
Who has not through the city sped
To see its picturesque old halls?
The glorious legions sent by Rome
To Brit., in fifty-five B.C.,
Built Chester city, Wingate's home,
Beside the smiling River Dee.

(5)
He loves the Dee without disguise,
It's always been his special joy;
He drank it—only with his eyes!—
When he was but a tiny boy.
No wonder he can row so well,
And pulls so sturdily his oar;
His home is in a racing shell,
It feels quite odd to step ashore.

(6)

In boats and barges, even rafts,
He's braved the river's angry flood,
And spent his leisure pulling crafts
Through water and off banks of mud.
He stands upon the heaving deck
Whence all but he had fled ashore,
And lights from off the battle wreck—
Oh, there's those beastly songs once
more!

(7)
I'll now describe his house to you,
Although it's not an easy job;
It has a sort of how-d'ye-do
Built just inside the thing-me-bob!
The what-d'ye call-it is the same
As other places I have seen,
Although it has a what's-its-name
Instead of—you-know-what-I-mean?

(8)

All right, all right, no need to grouse.
I can't describe the beastly place!
The house is—well, it's just a house!
(A lot you care, in any case!)
He lives in it, you understand,
And not, like once we did, in caves
When Britain first at heaven's command
Arose from out the azure waves.

(9)
Of all the men who are so smart,
Our Skipper is the very best:
Good-tempered, gruff, but kind of heart,
He stands out far above the rest.
Some talk of Alexander and
Of Hercules—well, so they may!
There isn't one of them could stand
Against old Wingate any day!

Next Week: **GOSLING**, the Keeper of the Keys.

sort of a joke, sir!" stammered the captain of the Remove.

"I fail to see how it can be. Is anyone here acquainted with the name written on the blackboard?" asked Mr. Quelch, glancing over the class.

He was puzzled, mystified, and annoyed, but it was clear that the name of Darke had no more effect on him than Smith or Jones or Robinson might have had.

"It—it's been in the newspapers, sir," stammered Harry.

"In the newspapers!" rapped Mr. Quelch. "You are very well aware, Wharton, that I do not approve of boys in my Form reading the newspapers. But if you have seen the name in a newspaper—"

"I haven't, sir! But I heard—"

"Well, well, if you have heard of such a name what does it imply? Whose name is it?"

"A—a man who—who—who's wanted by the police, sir!" stammered Harry. He had to answer, and that was the only answer to be made.

"Indeed!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "I am sorry to see my boys taking interest in such matters. Do you mean that it is the name of some burglar?"

"Oh, no, sir! A hypnotist—at some show in London—a man who committed a robbery after hypnotising his employer—"

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Quelch. "Absurd! But why should any boy here, presumably in his right senses, chalk that name on the blackboard? Surely it is not possible that anyone here has even the remotest knowledge of, or acquaintance with, a law-breaker?"

There was no answer to that. Mr. Quelch, more and more puzzled and annoyed, scanned the faces of the juniors.

Clearly he suspected that some disagreeable jest had been intended, and could not guess what it meant.

"Can anyone explain this nonsense?" he rapped out angrily.

No reply.

"Very well," said Mr. Quelch, "I can only conclude that the perpetrator of this supposes that the man Darke, whoever he may be, is connected or related to some boy in this Form. In that case, it is intended as a mean and cowardly taunt."

The Remove sat dumb.

"I cannot pass over such a matter," said Mr. Quelch sternly. "Once more, I order the boy who chalked those words to stand forward."

Skinner did not stir.

The Remove master compressed his lips, hard.

"Very well," he said, "I shall make an inquiry into this matter. I trust that I shall discover the offender, and his punishment will be exemplary. Wharton, you may take the duster and wipe the board clean."

Wharton, in silence, dusted the blackboard. Then third lesson proceeded.

Skinner sat and scowled. The outcome of his jape had been to demonstrate that Mr. Quelch knew nothing whatever of the name of Philip Darke, to the satisfaction of all the Remove—which was certainly not what Skinner had hoped or intended. But there it was, and that was that!

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

An Unexpected Meeting.

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Oh, buzz off, Bunter!"

"But, I say, have you seen Quelch's pal?"

"What?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,517.

Harry Wharton & Co. were going down to the gates after dinner, when Billy Bunter joined them, and asked that unexpected question. They stared at the fat Owl, who grinned. Bunter liked to be the fellow with the news.

"Haven't seen him—what?" he asked. "Nobody seems to have seen him. Hardly anybody knows that he's here at all. But I jolly well do!" added Bunter. "Precious little goes on without my knowing, I can jolly well tell you!"

"What keyhole have you been at now?" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—I say, it's rather weird, you know," said Bunter. "The man never came yesterday; nobody saw him last night. He must have come after we'd gone to dorm, and—"

"Who, you fat ass?"

"That man Watson—"

"Never heard the name. Mean to say somebody named Watson is staying here, and we've never heard of him?" snapped the captain of the Remove. "Don't be an ass!"

"I mean just that," grinned Bunter. "You see, I saw Trotter taking up a tray, and wondered who it was for. He took it to the room next to Quelch's. You know, that room that's empty, except when there's a visitor for one of the beaks. Well, I asked Trotter, see, and he told me it was for Mr. Watson."

"A friend of Quelch's?" asked Harry.

"Yes; Trotter said so. The man came late last night, and Trotter was called, after he'd gone to bed, to get the room ready for him. That's jolly unusual, isn't it?"

"Last train at Courtfield, very likely," said Bob. "What about it, fathead?"

"Well, Quelch couldn't have expected him, or he'd have had the room got ready for him before he came. Queer for a visitor to butt in unexpectedly late at night," said Bunter, "and nobody's seen him. Trotter says he's keeping to his room because he's got a cold. When a beak has a friend here, he usually feeds with the other beaks in Common-room, you know. This chap Watson is having his meals taken to his room. I say, you fellows, do you know who he is?"

"Haven't the foggiest," said Harry, "and don't want to! If you're fearfully curious about him, you'd better give him a call."

"Well, I'd like to see what he's like," said Bunter. "But I can't very well butt into his room, can I?"

"You're the man to butt in anywhere, aren't you?"

"Oh, really, Wharton! Look here! What could I say if I knocked at the chap's door?" asked Bunter.

"That's easy enough. Tell him you're a fat, inquisitive little beast, that can't possibly mind his own business. Then he will understand at once why you've butted in."

"You silly ass!" yelled Bunter, while the Co. chortled.

They walked out of gates, leaving Bunter frowning. The Peeping Tom of Greyfriars was evidently inquisitive on the subject of Mr. Quelch's guest. That was not surprising, as Billy Bunter was inquisitive on all subjects. But the Famous Five did not share Bunter's deep interest in other people's affairs.

They sauntered down Friardale Lane in the bright spring sunshine. Harry Wharton's brow was thoughtful. He was thinking of the man in the Daimler—the "man with the glaring eyes."

The keen-witted nabob had doubted,

at the time, the yarn the man had spun when the juniors found the car parked in the wood. Wharton was certain now that the man had spoken falsely. His visit to the school after dark, his surreptitious entry, showed that he had some reason for hanging about the vicinity of Greyfriars.

Having reported the matter to his Form-master, Wharton had done all that he could do. Whether Mr. Quelch had taken any steps or not, he did not know, but he could hardly have passed on the affair to the police, or Inspector Grimes would surely have wanted to see the fellows who had seen the man and the car.

Yet Mr. Quelch was bound to take some action on Wharton's positive statement that he had recognised the intruder who had been hunted in the Greyfriars quad. More than that, Wharton could not help knowing that his description of the man with the glaring eyes had given Mr. Quelch a startling shock. He could hardly doubt that his Form-master knew the man, or something about him. It was all very perplexing.

"Going through the wood?" asked Bob, as Harry Wharton turned from the lane, at the point where it was joined by the track they had followed the previous evening.

"Yes, come on!"

"You don't think that sportsman with the car is still there?" asked Bob, with a grin. "Think he had a night out in the jolly old wood?"

"I don't know. I know he was the man who butted into the school last evening," answered Harry. "I don't know what his reason was, but he must have had one. He was up to something, goodness knows what! We were rather asses to let him spoof us as he did!"

"But did he?" asked Johnny Bull.

"I believe so, at any rate. If the police were after him for a serious reason he mightn't have dared to take the car out of the wood again. Anyhow, let's look."

"No harm in looking," said Johnny, grinning. "But if the car's still there, old chap, I'll eat it, and the man, too, if he's in it!"

"Fathead!"

The juniors walked along the winding track into the wood. There was a sudden, startled exclamation from Bob Cherry.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Look!"

"Going to eat it, Johnny?" asked Harry Wharton, with gentle sarcasm.

"My hat!" said Johnny Bull blankly.

The dark brown Daimler stood blocking the woodland track, exactly where the juniors had seen it at dusk the day before. Four members of the Co. stared at it blankly. But Harry Wharton was not surprised. He had more than half-expected to see it.

They came to a halt, close by the car. Bob Cherry glanced into it; but it was unoccupied.

Certainly nobody had expected to find the man with the glaring eyes there. Evidently he had abandoned the car in its hiding-place in the wood, and gone away on foot.

"Well, this beats it," said Bob. "That man must have been some crook, I suppose. He can't have left his car for nothing. He must have been afraid to take it out on the roads again, after dodging the bobbies once." "Looks like it," admitted Johnny Bull.

"He's cleared off," said Nugent. "Looks as if he was some bad hat, though that doesn't explain why he



"Mr. Darke!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. The man with the glaring eyes spun round at that unexpected name, his eyes starting with alarm. "You!" he gasped. "I think I have seen you before—what?" "You have seen us before, and we have seen you!" said Wharton. "And we have seen Inspector Grimes, who has told us who you are!" The rascal stood panting, his eyes burning.

dropped in at Greyfriars, if you weren't mistaken about recognising him, Harry."

"I wasn't mistaken."

"Well, that's a giddy mystery, then. Here's the car, anyhow. Queer that it hasn't been found by somebody. It's pretty well hidden, but, all the same, I should have thought somebody would have dropped on it before this."

There was a rustle in the thickets.

The juniors glanced round quickly. To their surprise, it was the portly police inspector of Courtfield, Mr. Grimes, who stepped into view. Up to that moment they had not had the faintest idea that anyone else was on the spot.

But they were quick to guess what it meant. The car had been found and reported to the police, and Mr. Grimes was there to investigate. And the fact that he had been concealed in the thickets, looked as if he had hoped to catch the owner of the Daimler returning to it. Obviously, he had been on the watch there. He had caught the Remove fellows instead.

They capped Mr. Grimes respectfully. He gave them a very keen and penetrating look.

"I heard what you young gentlemen were saying," said Mr. Grimes, rather grimly. "Otherwise—"

"Otherwise, you wouldn't have shown up like a jack-in-a-box," suggested Bob, with a cheery grin.

"Precisely!" said Mr. Grimes. "I gather that you have seen this car before, and seen the man who drove it."

"Yes, when we were cutting through the wood at dusk yesterday."

"You can describe him?"

All Mr. Grimes' professional calm could not hide his eagerness as he asked

that question. His eyes gleamed with it.

"Yes, rather," said Bob. "Not likely to forget that Johnny. Man of about thirty, or thirty-two—"

"Dark complexion," said Nugent.

"And rather weird eyes," said Johnny Bull. "Not exactly weird, though—blessed if I know how to describe it—"

"Sort of magnetic," said Bob. "Jolly noticeable, anyhow."

"Good-looking chap, in a way!" said Nugent.

Harry Wharton, without speaking, watched the inspector's face. He could see that that description was what Mr. Grimes expected to hear. The Courtfield inspector nodded, with evident satisfaction.

"You know the man, Mr. Grimes?" asked Harry quietly.

"We have his description at the station," smiled Mr. Grimes. "Now, my boys, if you can think of anything—the most trifling detail—that will help me to lay my hands on that man, it is your duty to do so. I call upon you to do so in the name of the law."

"Then—he is wanted by the police?" asked Harry.

"I should say so," said Mr. Grimes. "He was seen, and chased, in this vicinity, yesterday, and the roads were hunted for him all night. When I received word this morning that a dark-brown Daimler had been found hidden here, I knew that he had abandoned his car, and taken to his heels."

"But you sort of fancied he might chance it, and come back for the car!" grinned Bob.

"Possibly!" said Mr. Grimes. "Now that I have examined the car, I know that it was the one that was chased yesterday—it was already known that the rascal had stolen a car, of which

the description was circulated—and this is the car. I tell you, that if you can give me any help in the matter it is your duty to do so. The man you have described to me is a rogue who has been on the run for a week or more—a man who has robbed his employer of four thousand pounds, after hypnotising him—"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob. "That man in the newspapers!"

"That man in the newspapers!" assented Mr. Grimes, with a nod. "His name is Philip Darke."

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter Surprises Study No. 1!

BILLY BUNTER rose from the armchair in Study No. 1 in the Remove, and blinked reproachfully at the five juniors who came into the room.

"I've been waiting for you fellows!" said Bunter.

"Don't wait any longer!" suggested Bob Cherry.

"I was going to get tea ready for you chaps," said the fat Owl. "Toddy's tearing out, and there's nothing in my study—I mean, I thought you'd like to find your tea ready when you came in after a walk. But I couldn't, as there was nothing in the cupboard—"

"There was a cake!" said Nugent.

"Was there? I—I never saw it—"

"And it's not there now!" added Nugent, looking into the study cupboard.

"I—I dare say you ate it before you went out, old chap, and—and forgot!" said Bunter. "I say, what have you got in that parcel, Bob?"

"If you've scoffed that cake, you fat cormorant—"

"I haven't! I hope I'm not the fellow to scoff a fellow's cake! I don't like plum cake, either!"

"And how did you know it was a plum cake?"

"Oh! I—I mean—"

"Kick him!"

"I—I say, you fellows, no larks, you know," said Bunter, dodging round the study table. "If you're going to make a fuss about that cake, I'll pay for it. I'm expecting a postal order shortly. I say, I've got something to tell you. That's really why I was waiting for you, not because I hadn't had my tea, but—"

Bob Cherry slammed his parcel on the table and proceeded to unpack it.

"Shut up, and cook these sosses!" he said.

Billy Bunter beamed.

"Yes, rather, old chap!"

There was soon a savoury scent of frying sausages in Study No. 1. Billy Bunter was busy and happy.

Four members of the Co. proceeded with other preparations for tea. The chums of the Remove had brought back good appetites from their ramble. But Harry Wharton, standing at the study window, looked out into the quad with a thoughtful pucker in his brow.

The captain of the Remove was sorely troubled in mind.

The interview with Inspector Grimes had given him troubled food for thought. He had, as in duty bound, told the inspector all he knew of the "man with the glaring eyes."

Mr. Grimes had been utterly astonished to hear that the man had penetrated into the precincts of the school the previous evening. Obviously, Quelch had not reported Wharton's statement; the information was quite new to Mr. Grimes.

Harry Wharton was both puzzled and dismayed.

Even to his own chums, he could not say what was in his mind. It troubled him sorely for that reason.

He felt, or rather knew, that Mr. Quelch had recognised his description of the "man with the glaring eyes." Quelch knew the man!

Now he knew that the man with the eyes was Darke, the rascally hypnotist who was wanted by the police.

It followed that Mr. Quelch was acquainted with the man Darke—and it was only too probable that Darke was the "distant relative" to whom he had referred. The Bounder had been right, after all—Skinner, little as he believed it now, had been on the right track.

Wharton could hardly doubt that.

But, in that case, what of the scene in the Form-room that morning? Was Mr. Quelch, a man whom he deeply respected, capable of playing a part, of uttering falsehoods with brazen effrontery?

That was impossible!

Then—what did it all mean?

If Quelch knew the man, he knew him. Yet in the Form-room he had acted as if he had never heard the name before. Such dissimulation was unimaginable in a man like Quelch. What could it all mean?

For it was in Wharton's mind that he knew, now, why the rascal had entered the school the previous evening. Hunted by the police, forced to abandon the stolen car, he must have been in desperate need of a helping hand. Had he come there, hoping to get into touch with Quelch?

It looked like it.

What would he have done, had not Prout barged into him, and caused the

alarm, and the hunt in the quad? Had he, after all was quiet, returned? Was it possible that Mr. Quelch had helped a breaker of the law on his way? It was not possible—and yet—

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Gone to sleep standing up like a horse?" came Bob Cherry's cheery roar. "Tea's ready, old bean!"

"Oh!" Harry Wharton came out of his deep and painful reverie, and turned from the window.

"Still thinking about the sportsman with the eyes?" asked Bob, with a grin. "Bother the man! I say, I wonder if we shall have Grimey rooting about Greyfriars?"

"Why the dickens should he?" asked Nugent.

"Well, if Wharton's right, the man butted in once, so he might butt in again," answered Bob. "Never mind him now—whack out the sosses! Do you want any sosses, Bunter?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Bunter did want sosses!

"I say, you fellows," said the fat Owl, with his mouth full, "I say, I've seen him. I say, these sosses are good!"

"Seen whom, fathead? Lots of him at Greyfriars!"

"That man Watson!" said Bunter. "He's sticking in his room, but I spotted him walking on the balcony."

"Who the dickens is Watson?"

"I told you Quelch had a pal staying here—"

"Oh, so you did! Blessed if I hadn't forgotten," yawned Bob. "Man who blew in, in the middle of the night, what? Did you butt in and tell him you were an inquisitive little beast?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yah! I say, he's rather a queer merchant," said Bunter. "Sticking in his room all day, you know, and only going out on the balcony to sniff the air. I spotted him from the passage window, and had a squint at him. He didn't look to me as if he had a cold."

"Well, he wouldn't stick in his room all day, unless he had to, fathead!" said Bob. "These venerable old sportsmen feel the east wind."

"He ain't old," said Bunter. "Quite a young man! Not much over thirty, anyhow."

"Oh! Not a jolly old schoolmaster like Quelch?"

"No fear! Rather a good-looking sort of chap," said Bunter. "But I didn't like the look in his eyes. Queer sort of eyes, somehow."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! It's raining chaps with queer eyes!" said Bob. "We saw one yesterday."

Harry Wharton gave a sudden start. "What do you mean, Bunter?" he exclaimed.

Bunter blinked at him.

"Eh? I mean what I say," he answered. "I say, pass the sosses, will you? If you fellows don't want any more, I'll finish them."

"You fat ass—"

"Oh, really, Wharton! If you're going to be mean with the sosses—"

"Tell me what you mean, you fat chump!" Wharton's voice was almost husky with excitement, and his friends stared at him, wondering. "What did you notice about the man's eyes? How do you mean, queer?"

"Harry—" gasped Nugent.

He caught what was in Wharton's thoughts, and fairly jumped.

"Let Bunter speak!" said Harry.

"Eh? I don't mean exactly queer," said Bunter. "Sort of weird! No, not exactly that, either! But a sort of unusual look in them—hardly know how to describe it, but if you saw him you'd notice it at once. You'd look at his eyes first of all, if you saw him."

"Large and dark, with a sort of deep glitter in them?" asked Harry. "Dark complexion, too?"

"Eh? You said you hadn't seen him—made out that you didn't know Quelch had him here!" said Bunter, blinking at the captain of the Remove. "Pulling my leg all the time?"

"Then that fits him?"

"Yes, of course! You jolly well know it does. You couldn't describe him like that if you hadn't seen him," said Bunter testily. "What are you getting at?"

"Harry Wharton did not answer that question. He rose from the table, his tea unfinished, and went out of the study. His comrades followed him into the Remove passage with startled, uneasy faces.

Billy Bunter blinked after them in astonishment.

"I say, you fellows, aren't you going to finish your tea?" he squeaked.

The door shut.

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Bunter. "If they ain't going to finish their tea, I know I'm jolly well going to finish mine."

And Bunter did—and, having done so, finished the tea of the other fellows, as well. Why the Famous Five had so suddenly left him to it Bunter did not know—and did not care very much; but it was an opportunity that William George Bunter was not likely to lose.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Safe?

PHILIP DARKE blew out a little cloud of smoke and smiled genially over his cigarette.

He sat in a comfortable room, by an open window, looking on a balcony, in the glimmer of the setting sun.

He was feeling quite at ease.

Voices reached him from a distance—the cheery voices of schoolboys. When he cared to walk out on the balcony he had a view of the quad, of many windows, and of the playing fields—and a glimpse of the sea, away across Friar-dale Wood.

For the present his walks were confined to that balcony, high up over the quad—which was rather irksome, for he was an active man, accustomed to plenty of exercise. But he had a natural disinclination for meeting the public eye.

His description was circulated all over the country. He was well aware that his dark, magnetic eyes were a prominent feature, likely to be observed by any observer. Certainly it was unlikely that any schoolboy at Greyfriars had even heard of him; impossible that any boy there could know anything about descriptions circulated to police stations. But he was cautious, all the same.

His very presence in the House was not generally known. Plenty of the Greyfriars fellows were quite unaware that the Remove master had a guest staying at Greyfriars. Those who knew were not specially interested—with the exception of Bunter, who was interested in everything that did not concern him.

The servants, of course, knew; but it had been explained that "Mr. Watson" had arrived by a late train, failed to get a taxi, walked through the night, and caught a cold—which explained everything and accounted for the fact that he kept his room.

As he smoked his cigarette and looked out at the sunset he was feeling safe and satisfied. He had had a series of

narrow escapes since he had bolted from "Magieland" with four thousand pounds in banknotes belonging to his employer. But he had pulled through and reached a safe haven.

He had hoped—though he had doubted—that his distant relative, Henry Samuel Quelch, might help him, in his need—perhaps for a share of the loot! The swindler judged others by himself, and had little belief in the integrity of character.

But in the case of failure, he had another card up his sleeve—his strange power of hypnotism. And he had played that card successfully.

If there was still danger he believed that it was remote. The abandoned car would be found, of course, parked in the wood; but who was to guess that the man who had left it there had taken refuge in a school?

They were more likely to think that he had headed for the shore, in the hope of getting away in some stolen boat. Anyhow, a school was the very last place they were likely to think of.

He could keep to his room for a week, on the excuse of a cold—seen only by one or two servants, who knew nothing of him, except that he was the guest of a Greyfriars master.

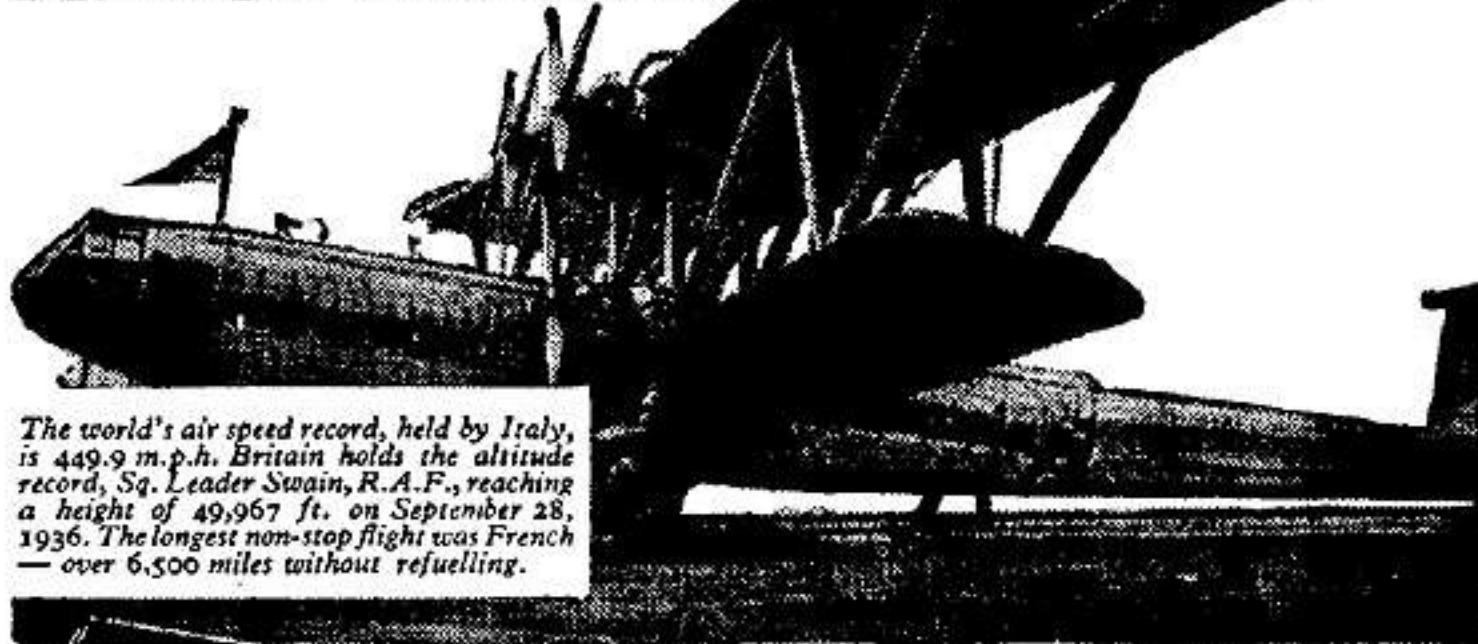
After that the coast would be clear—he could cut and run. It would be possible to hire a motor-boat by telephone, from Greyfriars, and cut across to the French coast! A respite from the hunt was all he needed.

Like most cunning rascals, he laid his plans without allowing for the chances that, in almost every case, upset the plans of cunning rascals.

He had no means of knowing that, so far from being unheard of at Greyfriars, his name was the talk of the Remove.

He did not know that a junior had
(Continued on next page.)

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recognised him as he clambered over the school wall to escape, after the collision with Prout.

He had almost forgotten the meeting with the five boys in Friardale Wood, whom he had deceived with a plausible tale.

He did not know that they belonged to Greyfriars. He had not even thought of them in connection with the school at all.

So far as he knew, they had gone on their way and forgotten him—as he had almost forgotten them.

Somebody had flashed a light on him as he clambered over the wall in making his escape. He had not seen who it was—and never dreamed that it was one of the boys who had seen him in the wood. Such a thought did not cross his mind for a moment. He did not even know that that boy had seen his face as he went.

All—so far as Philip Darke could see—was safe. Yet he was cautious all the time. Irsome as it was to be shut up in his room, he walked on the balcony only at intervals. Watchful as a cat, he had noticed a fat fellow in spectacles blinking at him from a window. But he was not likely to take any alarm from that trivial circumstance.

He smiled over his cigarette. Four thousand pounds in banknotes were sewn up in the lining of his coat. Next week he would be safe in a foreign land with his plunder.

Only, he had to be careful. Quelch had to be kept under his influence while he remained. That was all that was needed. But it was easy. He was expecting Trotter up with his tea now;

and Quelch was coming up to sit with him while he had tea—quite a natural attention from the Remove master to his guest. The hypnotic influence would be renewed before it faded away.

Tap!

Trotter entered, with the tray. Darke unostentatiously kept his back to the House page, continuing to look from the window. The page mattered little, but the less his face was seen the better.

Trotter glanced at him.

"Your tea, sir!"

"Thank you!" said Darke, without turning his head.

Trotter laid tea for two. Then he went out of the room, and Philip Darke rose to his feet, with a smiling face.

Mr. Quelch entered.

"He gave the 'man with the glaring eyes' a friendly nod.

"How do you feel now, Watson?" he asked.

"A little better, thanks!" answered Darke, smiling.

To the Remove master, while the hypnotic spell lasted, he was James Watson, an old friend, confined to his room with a cold. So long as that strange spell lasted, Philip Darke was non-existent to Mr. Quelch.

They sat down, on either side of the table, to tea, at the open window, in the fresh spring sunshine. Mr. Quelch remained half an hour with his "guest," and when he left, Trotter came to clear away—and Darke, sitting at the window, smoked cigarettes, and smiled.

Tap!

"Come in!" called out Darke, carelessly.

He supposed that it was Trotter, coming back for something. He did not turn his head as the door opened and someone stepped into the room.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Face to Face!

"HARRY—" breathed Frank Nugent.

"My dear chap—" said Bob Cherry.

"You can't possibly think—" said Johnny Bull.

"My esteemed Wharton—" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Harry Wharton did not answer them. His face was pale with excitement. He moved away from Study No. 1, and his friends followed him, anxious and startled. They knew what was in his mind, and it seemed to them wildly impossible.

Wharton stopped in the deep window recess on the Remove landing. Most of the fellows were at tea in the studies, and there was no one else about. He had to speak without being overheard.

"It's the man!" he said, in a low voice.

"The man in the Daimler?" muttered Bob.

"Yes!"

"You're mad! Grimey told us that that man was Philip Darke, the thief who's running from the police!"

"I know!"

"You imagine that Quelch—"

"I know now why he sneaked into the school last evening, when Prout butted into him. I know now that he came back later, when the school was asleep. I know that he's the man."

Wharton spoke in low tones of intense conviction. He knew—he knew it in his very bones. It was the "man with the glaring eyes," who was posing as James Watson, a guest of a Greyfriars master.

"You're mad!" repeated Bob. "You think for one moment that Quelch would hide a crook from the police? Don't be an idiot!"

"I can't understand that. I tell you, he's the man. I tell you, that was why he hid the car in the wood—to be near the school. That was why he came—he was watching for a chance to get in touch with Quelch, when Prout barged into him. He had to go—but he came back."

"Wharton!"

"I tell you I know. It's all clear now. He's some relative of Quelch's—as that fool Smithy nosed out. That was what upset poor old Quelch—finding out that a connection of his was a thief, wanted by the police."

"But—"

"I described him to Bunter. He was the man Bunter saw on the balcony—calling himself Watson. How he's done this, I don't know—but he's the man," breathed Harry. "Can't you see how it looks?"

"Whatever it looks like, it's utterly impossible," said Frank Nugent quietly. "Quelch couldn't and wouldn't do it. You must be potty to fancy that he would, for one moment. He doesn't even know the man's name. You saw that for yourself in the Form-room this morning."

Harry Wharton pressed his hand to his forehead. The mystery of it was almost too much for him.

"He does know the man," he said at last. "When I reported to him last

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night, he knew the man from my description—I could see that. And he had read about him in the paper in the morning—Smithy was right, there."

"Rubbish!" said Johnny Bull. "Are you going to believe that Quelch, our Form-master, told us a string of lies in the Form-room?"

"No!" said Harry.

"Then what do you mean?"

Wharton did not answer that.

His brain was almost in a whirl.

The man in "Mr. Watson's" room was Philip Darke; on that point he had no doubt. Yet Mr. Quelch, who had taken in the crook and sheltered him, was incapable of that very act, and incapable of falsehood. The two things were both true, and utterly contradictory.

"Push it out of your head, old chap!" said Bob. "It's impossible, and you can see that it's impossible!"

"I'm going to see the man. You fellows are going to see him, too," said Harry Wharton, between his teeth.

"He's keeping his room."

"We shall go to his room. At least, I shall go. And if I recognise him, face to face, as the man we saw in the car, what then?"

"Impossible!"

"I—I know it's impossible for Quelch to be hand-in-glove with a villain like that. I know. But—he's the man. That man is Philip Darke, the man who hypnotised his employer in London and robbed him—" Harry Wharton broke off suddenly, with a startled cry.

Even as he uttered the words, his own words enlightened him. The man had hypnotised the manager of "Magicaland"—that was how he had effected the robbery. What he had done once, he had done again.

"Oh!" exclaimed Wharton. "That's it!"

"What's it?" asked Johnny Bull testily. "What mad idea have you got into your head now?"

"Can't you see?" Wharton's eyes blazed with excitement. "He hypnotised the man in London, and made him open his safe—"

"I know that!"

"He's played the same foul trick on Quelch!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Can't you see now?" breathed Wharton. "He's got Quelch under his influence by the same vile trickery! If he's the man—and I know he is!—that's the only way of accounting for it!"

"If!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"He's the man. I tell you, I know it. Quelch would hand him straight over to the police, if he knew. Quelch is doing this, without knowing what he is doing."

"If he's doing it at all, that's a cert!" said Bob. "But—"

"You fellows don't think so?"

"No!" said the four together.

Harry Wharton drew a deep breath.

"You'll believe it if we see the man, and he turns out to be the man in the Daimler?"

"Yes. But he won't!"

"We're going to settle that. I'm going straight to his room now, to see him, face to face. Come with me?"

The juniors exchanged dubious glances.

"It means a row, if we go butting in on Quelch's guest!" said Bob.

"I'm going. You fellows please yourselves."

"But—look here—"

"I'm going!"

And Harry Wharton went.

His friends looked after him, in doubt and dismay, as he started for the upper

stairs. Frank Nugent followed him at once.

"Oh, come on!" said Bob. "It means a row, but we've been through rows before. After what Wharton's said, we ought to have a look at the sportsman, if only to convince him that he's made a mistake."

"Let's!" grunted Johnny Bull.

And they followed on.

Harry Wharton headed direct for the upper passage, on which "Mr. Watson's" room opened. If he had doubted before, he was certain now, now that he had laid his finger on the clue.

The only difficulty in the matter was the fact that Mr. Quelch was incapable of acting as he was, if Wharton was right, now acting. But if he, like the man in London, was under the spell of hypnotism, that was explained, and all was clear. He was doing, unconsciously, what all the Famous Five knew that he never would or could have done consciously.

One look at the man, at all events, would settle the matter. If Wharton was mistaken, it meant being called over the coals. But that was a trifle. And he knew that he was not mistaken.

He stopped at the door.

His friends joined him there.

Wharton raised his hand to tap.

"Wait here, when I go in," he said.

"Get a good look at him! One look will be enough."

"Go ahead!" said Bob Cherry resignedly.

Harry Wharton rapped at the door. A voice from within said, "Come in." And at the sound of that voice, all the juniors started. There was a familiar tone in that voice, and they all knew that they had heard it before.

"By gum!" breathed Bob Cherry.

The captain of the Remove opened the door, and stepped into the room. His friends clustered in the doorway.

Wharton fixed his eyes on the man sitting at the window, looking out. The man did not turn his head. He could not see the face. But there was a familiar look in the outlines of the figure.

Wharton stood silent. He waited for the man to look round. Once he did so, in the light of the window, all would be clear. But the man did not look round, and Harry Wharton spoke, at last, in a tense voice:

"Mr. Darke!"

The man moved, then, with a bound. He sprang from the chair, and spun round, at that unexpected name, his eyes starting with alarm.

Clearly, in the light of the window, all the Famous Five saw him—the man they had seen in the Daimler in Friar-dale Wood—the "man with the glaring eyes." There was no doubt now.

He looked at them—like a hunted animal. He knew them at once, as they knew him. His strange eyes blazed and burned, as a ghastly pallor swept over his dark face. But he pulled himself together at once. Alarmed, struck to the very heart with sudden fear, he quickly had himself in hand.

"You!" he said. His voice was a little husky, but calm. "I think I have seen you before—what?"

"You have seen us before, and we have seen you before!" said Harry Wharton. "And we have seen Inspector Grimes, who has told us who you are!"

The rascal stood panting, his eyes burning. Wharton looked full at him with contemptuous scorn.

"Are you thinking of playing hypnotic tricks, as you have done on our Form-master, you scoundrel!" he said. "We're rather too many for

that, I think—and I don't believe you could hypnotise a fellow who was on his guard, either. You scoundrel—you villain!"

Philip Darke stood tense. Hypnotic trickery was no use to him now—and he was known, recognised, hunted down, and his game was up!

This was the safety he had been banking on. They knew him, knew him for what he was, and one call would bring a crowd on the scene—with the police to follow!

From confident safety he passed, in a moment, to direst danger; but he was quick on the uptake. If he had a chance yet, it was in sudden flight, before hands could be laid on him.

For one long moment he stood staring at the juniors in furious rage—then he made the spring of a tiger.

"Bag him!" yelled Bob Cherry—but he spun over, under the rush, before he had fairly uttered the words.

In a second Philip Darke was through the juniors and springing for the stairs.

"After him!" gasped Bob.

"Stop!" Harry Wharton leaped into the doorway and stopped the pursuing rush. "Stop, you fellows!"

"You ass! He's the man—"

"We've got to think of Quelch," said Harry Wharton quietly. "The man can't get away—but think of Quelch, if he's taken here—"

"Oh!" said Bob

Fleeing footsteps died away down the stairs. Philip Darke was gone—taking his chance, such as it was. Harry Wharton knew that it was no chance. In silence they stepped to the window. The man was out of the House already—hatless, running for the gates.

A dozen fellows were staring at him in surprise as he ran, wondering who he was. He reached the gates and darted out with the speed of a deer.

"Gone!" said Bob.

"Grimey told us to ring him up if we saw anything more of the man," said Harry Wharton quietly. "I'm going down to phone now. I'm going to tell Grimes that we've seen him—running hatless! If Grimey doesn't get him—"

"He will get him all right!"

Harry Wharton ran down the stairs.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Brought to Book!

"I SAY, you fellows, it's queer!" "Talking about yourself, as usual, old fat man?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"The queerfulness is terrific," agreed Hurree Janset Ram Singh, with a dusky grin.

"Oh, really, Inky—"

Harry Wharton & Co. were in the quad, waiting for the bell for calling-over. Fellows were coming in at the gates. Mr. Quelch was walking and talking with Mr. Prout, and the chums of the Remove glanced every now and then at their Form-master. But when Bunter rolled up, they transferred their attention to that fat and fatuous youth.

"He's gone!" said Bunter.

"Who?" inquired Harry Wharton, while his comrades grinned.

Bunter was not first with the news this time.

"That man Watson—"

"Who's Watson?" asked Bob innocently.

"Oh, really, Cherry, you've got a rotten memory! That pal of Quelch's

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who came last night. I told you about him—"

"So you did!" agreed Bob. "I sort of remember something about it. Has he gone already?"

"It's fearfully queer!" said Bunter impressively. "I wonder what Quelch will think of it—his guest scotting off like that?"

"Was the scotfulness terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter?"

"Well, from what I hear, some fellows saw a man cutting across the quad," said Bunter. "So far as I can make out, it was Watson. Temple of the Fourth saw him—and Coker—and Hobson—and some other fellows. They wondered who the dickens the man was, you know; but from what I can make out it was Watson. Isn't it queer?"

"Frightfully!" said Bob.

"What I mean is, he was cutting along like anything!" said Bunter.

"Might have had a train to catch!" suggested Nugent.

"Well, he wouldn't hoof it to the station, running like that," said Bunter. "I hardly think that."

"You hardly think at all, old porpoise!"

"Oh, really, Nugent! Besides, some of the fellows say he hadn't got his hat on! I call it jolly queer altogether! But he's gone! Do you think that the man they saw scotting was Watson, you fellows?"

"Hardly!" said Harry Wharton, and his chums chuckled.

They had the best of reasons for not thinking that the man who had scotched was named Watson!

Billy Bunter snorted and rolled away. The Famous Five smiled at one another.

"Mum's the word!" murmured Harry Wharton.

"The mumfulness is terrific!" agreed Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

Exactly how the strange affair would turn out, the chums of the Remove did not know. But they had not the slightest doubt that the fugitive rascal, in his present parlous state, would be captured before he was a few hours older; so that was all right.

Since the discovery of the abandoned car in Friardale Wood, every road and every lane was patrolled and watched for him. Within the walls of Greyfriars, he had been secure—but he was outside those walls now, and it was only a matter of hours—perhaps of minutes.

They hoped fervently that he would be at a distance from the school when he was taken. In that case, it might never transpire that he had been there at all. Rascal as he was, ruthlessly as he had made use of Mr. Quelch, he could hardly be supposed to have any

motive for dragging the Remove master into his disgrace when it could serve no purpose.

Mr. Quelch, walking and talking with Prout, little guessed how kindly those members of his Form were thinking of his welfare.

"Mum" was the word. Nobody knew so far that the Famous Five had intervened in the matter at all, and nobody was going to know. Wharton had done his duty in passing on, by telephone, the information that the man had been seen, running, hatless. It was unnecessary to say more.

Unless he were questioned, no more would be said; and he would not be questioned if the man were caught. And he could hardly fail to be caught.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Smithy!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

Herbert Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing came along from the bike-shed; they had been out for a spin that afternoon.

The Bounder's face was excited.

He called to the Famous Five.

"You fellows heard?"

"Which, and what?" asked Bob.

"That man Darke—"

"Oh, I remember!" said Bob blandly.

"Any news of him?"

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"He's in this neighbourhood."

"Not really?"

"And they're jolly well after him!" said the Bounder. "We've just passed a crowd on Courtfield Common—about a dozen bobbies, and three or four dozen others—hunting him. He's been seen."

"I suppose they'd have his description at the police station," remarked Johnny Bull.

"Bet you they would!" said the Bounder. "Every police station in the country, of course. From what we heard, he was spotted and chased on the Courtfield road, cutting along without his hat—"

"Blew off, perhaps," suggested Bob gravely.

"He's taken to the common, but they're after him like a lot of terriers," grinned the Bounder. "They'll get him all right."

"Good egg!" said Bob. "I hope they do!"

"I fancy he's been hiding about here somewhere," said the Bounder. "In fact—I don't know whether it's occurred to you fellows, but I've got rather a strong suspicion that he may have butted in here."

"Here?" repeated Harry Wharton.

"Well, who was that sportsman we chased in the quad last night?" argued the Bounder. "I shouldn't wonder if it was that very blighter, looking for somewhere to hide, of course."

The Bounder walked on with Redwing. The Famous Five looked at one another and smiled.

The Famous Five were rather anxious for news. But they did not get the news till the following morning. They were down from the Remove dormitory before the rising-bell ceased to clang, and a newspaper was borrowed from Common-room before the beaks arrived in that apartment. Five heads were bent upon it together, and five pairs of eyes read, with considerable satisfaction, the headline:

"PHILIP DARKE ARRESTED."

A brief paragraph stated that Philip Darke, who had been wanted by the police for a week, had been run down on a common near the town of Courtfield, in Kent, and taken back to London. The loot with which he had fled had been recovered—sewn up in the lining of his coat.

"That's that!" said Harry Wharton. "They say here that it's a smart capture by the police. Mind you don't mention to anybody that it was a smart capture by the Greyfriars Remove!"

And the juniors chuckled.

They could not help wondering a little how Mr. Quelch was going to take it. But they were never likely to know the thoughts of the Remove-master on the subject. When the hypnotic influence had faded away, it was quite likely that Mr. Quelch remembered nothing of the part he had unconsciously played. If vague recollections puzzled him, no doubt they were dismissed in time. No more of the matter was heard at Greyfriars, at all events, the Famous Five carefully keeping their own counsel.

Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh, who was great on proverbial wisdom, remarked to his friends that a still tongue was a stalled ox that was better than a bird in the bush, and the Co grinned, and agreed that it was!

THE END

(Now look out for next Saturday's ripping yarn of the Greyfriars chums—**"THE ANANIAS OF THE REMOVE!"** Billy Bunter is the central figure, and stories with "Billy" playing a "fat" part are always extra-special. This one is no exception. Don't miss it!)



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JACK JOLLY ON THE TRACK!

Another Rollicking Instalment of
"THE ST. SAM'S TREZZURE HUNT!"
Dickie Nugent's Latest and Greatest Serial.

SCROWNGER'S WIN!

Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle!
It was the deep, solemn, reverberating tolling of the skool bell, summoning the boys of St. Sam's to another General Assembly.

"Ten to one in do-nutts Lickham's going to announce the third round of the Sir Gouty Greybeard's Trezzure Hunt!" grinned Bouncer, of the Sixth, as he joined the crowd that pored into Big Hall. But there were no takers. Bouncer, as usual, was trying to bet on a dead cert!

When the fellows had all pored into their places and silence reigned over the assembly, Mr. Lickham pitter-pattered on to the platform.

There was a mermer of eggstement as he inserted his thumb in a sealed envelope.

"Boys!" cried Mr. Lickham. "Sir Gouty Greybeard has gone abroad, but he has left all the arrangements for carrying on the trezzure hunt in his absence in the hands of his newly appointed secretary, Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith's orders regarding the third round of the hunt are contained in this here envelope."

"Here, here!"

"I know you are all in a tearing hurry to hear the news, boys," grinned Mr. Lickham. "So I will now tear open the envelope."

"How ripping!"

"Go ahead, sir!"

Mr. Lickham opened the envelope and drew out a grimy sheet of notepaper, which he perused swiftly. Then he gave a preliminary cough and read out the following announcement:

"St. Sam's Trezzure Hunt."

Round Three.

"One mark will be awarded to the boy who finds the visiting card containing my name which I have hidden on the skool premises. — (Signed) GOUTY GREYBEARD, Bart."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Sounds a bit of a teaser, sir, duzzent it?"

"Well, it's fare to everybody, boys, anyhow," remarked the Fourth Form master. "The hunt will begin as soon as I have counted three. I will then adjourn to my study and await the successful competitor. Are you all ready?"

"Ready—I, ready!"

CROSS-COUNTRY RACE WON IN CATHERINE-WHEELS! AMAZING END TO MARATHON!

The most remarkable open cross-country handicap recorded in the sporting annals of Greyfriars was won last Wednesday by Dick Russell of the Remove—in catherine-wheels!

If you doubt it, ask Messrs. Prout and Lascelles, the judges. If you still doubt it, ask any of the hundred odd spectators who were waiting at the gates to watch the finish. And if you have any vague doubts left after that, trot along to Dick Russell's study and see the photograph of it, hanging up over his mantelpiece!

over been seen before—and probably nothing like it will ever be seen again at Greyfriars!

Ponsonby & Co., of Highcliffe, were the cause of this freak finish.

Pon. & Co. were waiting behind a hedge when Russell came sprinting down the footpath leading to the lane, well ahead of all his rivals.

They don't like Russell, and just to show it, they pounced on him, dragged him into the hedge and started tying him up with some electric light flex they found. Luckily, they didn't



have time to finish their foul work. A crowd of chaps happened to look over the gate at the end of the field to see if any of the runners were in sight—and they chipped in and sent Pon. & Co. packing in no time!

In the meantime, however, other runners had appeared, and the winning post at the Greyfriars gates was only a hundred yards up the lane.

The GREYFRIARS HERALD

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EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

March 13th, 1937.



PROTEST—AND PROTECT YOUR PETS!

Says H. VERNON-SMITH

Animal-lovers of Greyfriars! The time has come for you to raise your voices in a howl of protest! For a long time now the Down-with-pets Brigade have been secretly on the offensive, sneaking away your hard-won privileges and trying to make life a burden to your four-legged pals. Now they're coming out into the open.

If you want proof, take the case of Hazel-dene. Hazel recently bought an Irish terrier. He was bringing it into the House on a lead one day last week when Quelchy calmly barred the way. He told him to take it to the kennels! TOLD HIM TO TAKE IT TO THE KENNELS, mind you—and there was absolutely nothing wrong with it, except that it was covered with mud!

If that isn't an act of aggression from the anti-animal section, I'd like to know what is! Many other examples can be given to show the present sinister trend of events.

The Head has put the bar up to the cat that Peter Todd used to have in his study. Mr. Twigg has issued an order forbidding members of his Form to keep mice or guinea-pigs in their desks.

Mr. Wiggins has confiscated a ferret belonging to Dicky Nugent.

The way they defend these brutal acts of tyranny (Phew!—Ed.) is too weak for words. The Head's excuse is that Todd's cat is always fighting Mrs. Kebble's cat.

Mr. Twigg says that the mice and guinea-pigs take the fags' minds off their lessons.

Mr. Wiggins' feeble excuse is that Dicky Nugent's ferret recently killed a couple of Gosling's chickens.

Never hear anything so futile in your lives, chaps? I'll say not! Take it from me, all of you, unless you start protesting now, the days of animal pets at Greyfriars are numbered!

There's no telling where it will end.

They may even ban pet porpoises and jack-asses before they've finished.

AND WHAT WILL BUNTER AND COKER DO THEN, POOR THINGS?

(Don't get too worked up about it, dear readers! We have a faint idea that Smithy is once more indulging in a slight spasm of leg-pulling!—Ed.)

FAREWELL FOOTER! Roars BOB CHERRY

Easter hols. ahead, lads—so it's a case of bidding a fond farewell to footer till next September!

Looking back on the season at Greyfriars, I think that we in the Remove can congratulate ourselves on a jolly successful season. Since the start of the Autumn term, we've played twenty games against outside teams, out of which we won 14 and drew 3, leaving only 3 lost games. Goals for, reached the respectable total of 73; goals against, totalled 23. Altogether a record to be proud of!

Even apart from the results, the season has been a particularly pleasant one. I can't recall a single game being marred by bad feeling or bad sportsmanship of any kind.

I don't intend to single out particular players for special mention for a very good reason. All the chaps have done their best for the team as a whole. You all know, of course, that we've one or two brilliant individual players. (One name occurs to me right away, but modesty forbids me to quote it!) But it's the team spirit that has brought us the success we've achieved and none of the chaps would thank me for calling them any better than others.

Here's hoping the same happy spirit pervades the forthcoming cricket season—with the same happy results!

"Right, then. One—two—three—GO!"

There was the usual wild rush to be first out of the doors. The fellows were getting quite accustomed to these feverish flights in quest of Sir Gouty's trezzures. In a couple of jiffies Big Hall was emptied and the chaps were searching every nook and cranny for the all-important scrap of pasted board which Sir Gouty had left in some unsuspected corner of the skool.

Everybody eggsppected that it would be a long time before anyone unearthed the lucky visiting card.

But that was because they didn't know Scrownger's secret.

When Scrownger came out of Big Hall he sneaked off by himself in the direction of the ancient crypt.

But he didn't actually go as far as that ancient relic. Instead, he stopped as soon as he was out of site of the fellows and dived into his coat pocket—to bring to light a visiting card!

"Aha!" he muttered with a leer. "Here's the thing they're all looking for. I shall say I found it in the crypt. So I did, too! But they wouldn't half be wild if they knew I found it there three days ago—after Birchy had told me where it was!"

Smiling sinnerically, Scrownger retraced his footsteps, breaking into a run as he rejoined the searching crowds.

"No need for you to look any further!" he shouted, as he raced to Mr. Lickham's study. "I'm the giddy winner!"

"Oh, crums!"

"What, already?"

Crowds of disappointed trezzure-hunters followed Scrownger at the double, and there was an enormous mob at his heels by the time he hust into the study where Mr. Lickham was waiting.

Mr. Lickham's eyes almost popped out of their sockets when he saw Sir Gouty's card in Scrownger's hand. He stroked his chin a little suspiciously.

TUBBY TIPS THE WINK!

"I say, you chaps!"

"Buzz off, Tubby!"

Jack Jolly & Co. were having a confab in the tuckshop about the trezzure hunt, and they all pointed to the door when Tubby Barrell rolled in.

"Oh, really, you chaps!" sniffed Tubby. "I was only going to ask you if you could lend me a quid till I win Sir Gouty's fifty!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dashed if I see anything to laff at!" said Tubby. "I stand a jolly site better chance than you chaps, anyway. I've won one round already."

"So have I, old fat bean!" chuckled Jack Jolly.

"And I'm going to win plenty more, too," snorted Tubby, "if only the Head comes back."

Jack Jolly & Co. stared. "What the thump has Doctor Birchmall coming back to do with you winning the trezzure hunt?" asked Frank Fearless.

Tubby Barrell gave the heroes of the Fourth a fat wink.

"Ha, ha! You don't get anything out of me," he said, with a fat snigger. "I'm not going

to tell you chaps anything about lissenning in to the Head and Scrownger. I'm not saying anything about how the Head promised to tell Scrownger what we had to hunt for in advance. But I could say a lot if I liked!"

"Grate pip!"

"Of course, I won the first round of the hunt fairly and squarely," went on Tubby, hastily. "If anyone tells you I heard Doctor Birchmall tell Scrownger we had to get a policeman's helmet, don't believe him."

"If anyone says I nicked the helmet from the police station at Muggleton, he's fibbing!"

"Grate Scott!"

"All the same, I wish the perlice would let the Head off, so he could come back to St. Sam's," said Tubby Barrell, wistfully. "It would make things a lot easier for me. Now, what's o' that quid?"

"Nothing doing—old sport! But you can have some jam tarts at my eggspense, if you like!" grinned Jack Jolly.

"So that's how you won the first round of the hunt, eh?"

"And that's how Scrownger came so near to winning the second—and now he has really won the third!" said Fearless, eggstatedly.

"The Head's in league with Scrownger, you chaps—it's as plain as a pikestaff!"

"But how the dickens can the Head be wangling it still while he's a fugitive from justiss?" asked Merry.

"That's what I'd like to know myself," said Tubby, as he munched away at jam tarts.

"There's a mystery about it somewhere. It made me wonder whether there was something fishy in it this morning when I heard Scrownger ring up Sir Gouty Greybeard's secretary and arrange a meeting with him this afternoon!"

"My hat! I'd like to be present at that meeting!" said Frank Fearless. "If it wasn't that chaps with our skoolboy godo of honner don't go in for caves-

dropping I'd jolly well go along!"

Jack Jolly pondered deeply.

"What about dropping our skoolboy code of honner for once?" he asked. "If what Tubby says is trew—"

"Oh, really, Jolly! I haven't said a blessed thing!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If what Tubby says is trew," said Jolly,

while a shabby bowler hat reposed on his head.

"Who—who are you?" gasped Scrownger. "I'm sure I don't know you. I'm waiting here for a friend of mine—Mr. Smith, secretary to Sir Gouty Greybeard!"

"That's eggstactly who I am!" grinned the man in the blue beard. "I am Mr. Smith, Scrownger—better

won every round so far; but there's no reason now why you shouldn't win the rest. The entire bag of tricks is in Sir Gouty's desk. I'd have brought along a copy this afternoon only I didn't have time to copy it out. I will send it on by post instead."

"Thanks awfully, sir."

"CR-R-REEEEK!"

A long drawn-out creaking sound put a sudden stop to the plotters' confab.

"What was that, sir?" whispered Scrownger. "Is it possibl we're being spied on?"

"Pah! Not likely!" snorted the Head.

"CR-R-REEEEEEK! CRACK! BANG! WALLOP!"

"What the merry dickens—yaroocooooo!" shrieked Doctor Birchmall suddenly.

"Woocoo! Ow-ow-ow!" bellowed Scrownger.

known to the world as Doctor Birchmall, headmaster of St. Sam's and, at present, unforchunitly, a fugitive from justiss."

"My hat! Well, you haven't half changed, sir!" eggclaimed Scrownger. "What on earth has happened to your beard, sir? It's gone a sort of bluey-black."

"Mr. Smith" winked. "I had to disguise myself a bit, Scrownger—so I used the only means available and dipped my whiskers in blue-black ink! The perlice will never reckonise me now. But now to bizziness. Did you win the third round of the trezzure hunt all right?"

"Yes, rather! It was as easy as pie, sir," grinned Scrownger. "I fancy Mr. Lickham was a bit suspishus; he phoned up Sir Gouty's house about it."

"Eggstactly. I spoke to him myself and assured him it was quite in order," chuckled Sir Gouty Greybeard's blue-bearded secretary. "So we've broken our duck, Scrownger! The present score is: Jolly, one; Barrell, one; and you one. With a bit of luck you would have

Yelling feendishly, Doctor Birchmall and Scrownger hit the turf, with Jack Jolly & Co. on top of them. It was lucky for Jolly and his pals that they were there to break their fall—but, of course, it wasn't eggstactly lucky for Scrownger and the Head! That preshus pair of plotters properly took the count. By the time they had recovered sufficiently to sit up and take notiss again, the heroes of the Fourth were far, far away—and neither the Head nor Scrownger had even the phoggieest notion who they were!

(Looks as if things are coming unstuck for Birchy now! But there's life in the old dog yet—as you'll see when you read next week's laughable instalment!)

"In Muggleton Woods, under the big oak, at four o'clock—I mean, there wasn't going to be any meeting!"

"He, ha, ha!"

"This way, you fellows!" said Jolly and, tossing a silver coin on to the counter to pay for Tubby's tarts, he led his loyle followers out of the tuckshop.

LISSENNING IN!

"Good - afternoon, Scrownger!"

Scrownger of the Fourth started violently. He was pacing up and down beneath the big oak-tree in Muggleton Woods when a gentleman who was a compleat stranger to him appeared through the trees and greeted him in this fashion.

The newcomer was a rather comical looking gentleman with a long blue beard and whiskers. His lanky body was encased in a gratecoat.

He was pacing up and down beneath the big oak-tree in Muggleton Woods when a gentleman who was a compleat stranger to him appeared through the trees and greeted him in this fashion.