

"THE 'BAD HAT' OF THE REMOVE!" featuring Harry Wharton & Co.

The Magnet ^{2^d}

Billy Bunter's
Own Paper



**FOR HER
BROTHER'S SAKE!**

A SCHOOL STORY OF VIVID HUMAN INTEREST!

The "BAD HAT" of the REMOVE!

BY
**FRANK
RICHARDS**



New Long Complete School Story of **HARRY WHARTON & CO.,** of Greyfriars.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bob Cherry Obliges!

BOB, old man!" Bob Cherry of the Greyfriars Remove glanced round, rather surprised, as his name was called.

He was passing along the path by the windows of the Form-rooms, and there was no other fellow on that path at the moment.

Then he glanced up.

The window of the Remove Form Room was open. At that window stood Lord Mauleverer, looking out.

"Oh!" said Bob. "You?"

He gave another glance round, as he stopped to speak.

Mauleverer was in detention, after class, and speaking to a fellow in detention was against all the rules. But there was neither master nor prefect in the offing.

"Yaas!" Lord Mauleverer nodded. "Busy?"

"Well, I'm due at the nets," said Bob. "But Wharton's asked me to look for that ass Hazeldene. He hasn't turned up. I suppose you haven't seen him?"

"No!" But if you're busy, I won't bother you!" said Mauly considerably. "Trot on!"

"Oh, rot!" said Bob. "What do you want, fathead? Is that how you're doing your detention task—looking out of window?"

Lord Mauleverer grinned.

"I can't handle it," he explained. "I've had a shot at it, honest Injun. But it's too deep for me. Quelch has rather piled it on this time. I believe he was annoyed by my goin' to sleep in class this afternoon."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

On a hot June afternoon, probably a good many of the Remove had felt a little drowsy, with Mr. Quelch explaining to them, at considerable length, the

beauties of Wordsworth. But only Mauly had nodded off. There was no doubt that Mr. Quelch had been annoyed. He had rewarded Mauly with two hours' detention after class. And it was probable that he had not erred on the side of making the detention task too easy.

"Better have another shot at it, old man!" advised Bob. "If Quelch finds you haven't touched it, it may mean six."

"Can't be helped!" sighed Lord Mauleverer. "I tell you, I've swotted at it for half an hour, on and off, and made the old nut ache! I'm done! Since then I've been lookin' out of the window for a Good Samaritan. If you could possibly keep away from cricket for a few minutes longer—"

"Give it a name!" said Bob.

"Cut up to my study in the Remove, and get me the book you'll find on the table," said Mauly. "It's a 'Holiday Annual.'"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob.

"I've got an hour and a half to put in yet, and I'm bored to tears already," explained Lord Mauleverer. "With that 'Holiday Annual,' I can stick it out till Quelch blows in and lets me run, see?"

"You frightful ass!" said Bob. "If Quelch catches you in detention with a 'Holiday Annual'—"

"He won't! I shall pop it out of sight as soon as I hear his fairy footsteps, an' start wrinkling my brows over that putrid Latin paper! That's all right!"

Bob Cherry hesitated.

He could feel for a fellow in detention on a glorious June day. He had lots of sympathy for poor old Mauly. But, really, it was rather a serious matter to pass a "Holiday Annual" in to a fellow who was supposed to be working hard at a Latin paper.

"Safe as houses," went on Mauleverer. "Quelch said he would come

back at six. It's only just turned half-past four. Don't come round to the door, of course—you might run into a beak in the passage. Just walk by the window, and reach up with it, and I'll be ready to take it. See?"

Bob hesitated—but it is well said that he who hesitates is lost. Bob Cherry was always liable to follow the dictates of his heart, rather than those of his head.

"Right-ho!" he said. "I'll be back in a few ticks."

"Thanks, old bean!"

Bob Cherry cut off, and vanished in at the House doorway.

Lord Mauleverer, with his hands in his pockets, continued to gaze from the Form-room window, with a more cheerful expression on his noble face.

The Latin paper that lay on his desk really was a tough one—what the juniors elegantly described as a "stinker." Mark Linley could have dealt with it, and perhaps Harry Wharton; but it was far beyond Mauly's powers. The fact was, that Mr. Quelch, in his annoyance, had rather let himself go with that Latin paper, and made it more suitable for the Fifth or Sixth than for the Lower Fourth.

Finding it impenetrable, Mauly had cheerfully given up attempting to penetrate it. With another hour and a half before him, it was comforting to think of getting that "Holiday Annual" to keep him company. Mauly was in the middle of an interesting story in that interesting publication, which he was anxious to finish.

He waited cheerfully for the obliging Bob to return with the volume. In the meantime, he watched the quadrangle with a placid eye, and the cricket-ground, visible in the distance. A crowd of the Remove were at cricket practice. On the morrow the Highcliff match was due; and Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove, was putting his men through their paces once more.

"Mauleverer!"

Maully jumped at the sharp bark behind him.

He spun round.

The Form-room door had opened, and Mr. Quelch had entered, with a paper in his hand.

Probably Mr. Quelch had expected to see the detained junior sitting at his desk, swotting over Latin. He frowned portentously, as he beheld him standing at the window, looking out.

"Oh gad!" murmured Maully, dismayed, and rather resentful.

Quelch had said that he would return at six, to release him from detention. His reappearance at half-past four was neither expected nor welcome.

"What are you doing, Mauleverer?" exclaimed the Remove master severely.

"I—I was lookin' out of the window, sir," stammered Maully. He did not add that he had been waiting for a Remove fellow to arrive there with a "Holiday Annual."

He hoped, from the bottom of his heart, that Quelch would be gone before Bob came back with that book.

"You should have been at work on your Latin paper, Mauleverer!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"Yaas, sir! I—I've tried, sir, and I—I couldn't get goin'."

Mr. Quelch gave him a look. But his voice was less acid, as he went on:

"I think, Mauleverer, that the paper may have been a little too difficult for you. I have therefore brought you another paper."

"Oh!" gasped Mauleverer.

It was like Quelch. He had his little failings of temper, which was not surprising in a master who had to handle the Greyfriars Remove. But he was a just man, and a kindhearted one. Evidently, he had reflected, since leaving Maully in detention; and this was the result.

It was just, and it was kind. But it was fearfully unfortunate, as Maully was expecting, every moment, to see Bob Cherry's hand reach up to the open window, to poke the "Holiday Annual" in.

Mr. Quelch took up the untouched task from Maully's desk, and replaced it with the new paper—an easier one.

"Sit down at once!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"Yaas, sir! I—I'll try!"

Mauleverer flopped on the form. He took up his pen, in the hope that Mr. Quelch would leave him as soon as he started work. His unhappy lordship was on tenterhooks. Bob had had time now to get to the Remove studies and back, and any moment he might reappear at the Form-room window. If only Quelch would go—

He was going!

But, even as he turned, an object appeared at the sunny window.

It was a hand, holding a rather bulky volume.

The Form-room window was rather high from the ground, and a fellow had to reach up above his head to pass anything in.

Mr. Quelch's eyes fixed, in astonishment, on that sudden and unexpected apparition at the window. He beheld a "Holiday Annual," a good-sized hand, a wrist, and part of a sleeve. That was all. But it was enough.

And if it was not enough, a voice called in from the open spaces:

"Buck up, Maully! Here's your book, old man! Don't keep me waiting here—I don't want Quelch to come along and spot me!"

Maully gazed in horror. He could have groaned.

Mr. Quelch gazed in amazement, and in wrath. He made a swift stride towards the window. He grabbed the "Holiday Annual" from the up-reaching hand. Then he put his head out.

"Thank you, Cherry!" he said, with grim sarcasm.

"Oh!" gasped Bob. "Oh crikey!"

He gazed up at the face looking down from the window. The face of the fabled gorgon could hardly have startled him more. Mr. Quelch's face at that moment was as grim as a gorgon's. Medusa's petrifying countenance had nothing on Henry Samuel Quelch's at that moment!

"Cherry!"

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped Bob.

"You were bringing this book—this volume of light literature—to a boy in detention!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Oh! I—I— Oh!" stuttered Bob.

"I asked Cherry to get it from my study, sir," cut in Lord Mauleverer hurriedly. "All my fault, sir—"

"Silence, Mauleverer! Cherry, go to my study at once and wait for me!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" mumbled Bob. And he went, not looking happy.

Mr. Quelch turned from the window, and his gorgon-like gaze was fixed on the hapless Maully. The "Holiday Annual" was gripped in his hand.

"Mauleverer, you will proceed with your task. You will take two hundred lines of Virgil in addition. If your paper is not finished when I return at

Peter Hazeldene's folly has led him into many a scrape, but none so bad as the one he finds himself in this week!

six you will be caned. This volume will be confiscated for the term. You may ask me for it on the last day of the term, Mauleverer."

Mr. Quelch whisked from the Form-room.

"Oh gad!" mumbled Lord Mauleverer dolorously.

Maully was not worrying about the lines, or about the loss of that volume, entrancing as it was, but he was deeply worried at having landed Bob in such a scrape.

The Remove master rustled back to his study, where he found Bob Cherry waiting for him. He opened a bookcase, jammed the "Holiday Annual" into a vacant spot on one of the shelves, and closed the glass door on it. Then he picked up a cane from the table.

"Cherry, bend over that chair!"

Bob Cherry was wriggling as he left his Form-master's study a few minutes later. He wriggled rather like an eel. Mr. Quelch took a much more serious view of the matter than Bob had taken. He felt it his duty to impress the seriousness of it on the unthinking Bob. There was no doubt that he succeeded. Bob's face, as he wriggled away down the passage, was serious—very serious—in fact, fearfully serious!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Great Expectations!

"HERE comes Hazel!" said Frank Nugent.

Harry Wharton frowned.

The Famous Five were on the Remove landing. They had come in to tea after an hour at the nets with other members of the Form eleven. The

fact that Hazeldene of the Remove had cut that last spot of practice before the Highcliffe match was extremely annoying to the captain of the Form. Hazel was the least valuable member of the eleven—and the member who should have been most assiduous at practice. But he was also the most unreliable, though he certainly was keen enough to play in a match like the Highcliffe fixture.

Looking down over the banisters at Hazel's face as he came up the stairs, the captain of the Remove noted that he wore an expression of happy satisfaction. When, in the circumstances, he should not have done.

Hazel, in fact, looked immensely bucked. His face was bright, his eyes glistening, and he almost danced up the stairs. Clearly something or other had occurred to buck him tremendously.

"I say, you fellows, Hazel looks jolly chirpy!" remarked Billy Bunter, turning his big spectacles on the happy face below. "I wonder if he's had a remittance? You fellows know whether he had a letter to-day?"

Nobody answered that question. Nobody but Bunter was interested in other fellows' remittances. To Billy Bunter it was a matter of deep and abiding interest.

"He looks bucked, and no mistake!" remarked Vernon-Smith, glancing very curiously at the face on the stairs below. "He doesn't know what you've got in store for him, Wharton. Judgin' by the expression of your majestic countenance he ought to be comin' up in fear and tremblin'!"

"Oh, don't be a silly ass, Smithy!" grunted the captain of the Remove.

The Bounder laughed.

"The cheeky ass!" said Johnny Bull. "What does he mean by cutting the last practice? Does he think he's so jolly good that he doesn't need any?"

"Bother him!" said Bob Cherry. "I shouldn't have bagged that whopping from Quelch if I hadn't been rooting after that silly fathead! And it was no good—he'd gone out on his bike."

"I'd boot him out of the eleven if I were skipper!" said Vernon-Smith. "Catch me letting a man play ducks and drakes with the cricket just because he's Marjorie Hazeldene's brother."

Harry Wharton flushed angrily.

"Shut up, Smithy, old man!" murmured Bob.

"Any other reason for letting Hazel carry on as if he had the Remove eleven in his pocket?" sneered the Bounder.

"Cheese it!" said Nugent.

"The cheesefulness is the proper caper, my esteemed Smithy!" said Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "Speechfulness is silvery, but silence is the bird in the bush that saves a stitch in time, as the English proverb remarks."

That English proverb evoked a chuckle on the Remove landing. Only Harry Wharton's face remained grim.

He had made no answer to the Bounder's jeers, but he had a discomfited feeling that there was a spot of truth in them. It was a fact that Marjorie Hazeldene was coming over from Cliff House School the following afternoon to see the cricket, and it would undoubtedly have been a deep disappointment to her to find her brother dropped from the eleven.

A cricket captain, of course, could not be influenced by considerations of that kind. Wharton had an uneasy feeling that it influenced him just a little.

All eyes turned on Hazeldene as he reached the Remove landing. He glanced at the group of juniors, as if surprised by the general interest displayed in him. At the same time, his

inward satisfaction, from whatever cause, fairly bubbled in his smiling face.

"Backed a winner, old bean?" asked Vernon-Smith, with a laugh.

Hazel started, but he did not answer.

"Look here, Hazel, you cut the practice," said Harry Wharton. "What the dickens do you mean by it?"

"Oh, sorry!" said Hazel. "I had to go out. It's all right, Wharton! I shall be right as rain to-morrow! Top of my form!"

"You hadn't to go out when the practice was fixed and posted in the Rag!" snapped the captain of the Remove.

"Well, no good a man over-doing it and making himself stale, you know," said Hazel. "I want to be fresh to-morrow to play Highcliffe."

Harry Wharton gave him a look. That statement was reasonable enough as far as it went—an over-keen cricketer was quite liable to over-do it and get "stale." But that was a matter for his skipper to decide, and as his skipper had ordered the practice it was for the men in the eleven to play up. Neither, it was perfectly clear, had that been Hazel's reason for cutting.

"You know better than your skipper—what?" growled Johnny Bull. "We all turned up excepting you! Perhaps you don't need so much practice as we do."

Hazel, as a rule, was prompt to take offence, and at most times that remark would have been enough to draw a sulky look to his face.

But at the present moment he was so bubbling with happy satisfaction that it seemed impossible to ruffle him. He laughed.

"Oh, draw it mild, Bull!" he said good-humouredly. "I know I'm at the tip of the tail, and I shouldn't be playing at all if Toddy wasn't crooked. But I'm at the top of my form—such as it is!" he added.

"Smithy says he would boot you out if he were skipper!" sniggered Billy Bunter.

"Lucky for me Smithy isn't, then!" said Hazel, with undiminished good-humour. "Look here, Wharton, I'm sorry—really sorry! I meant to get back for the practice, but I had to wait for somebody! I'll play up like the dickens to-morrow—I'm as keen as mustard."

The soft answer turneth away wrath. Harry Wharton's brow cleared. Hazel had acted with his usual inconsequence; but if he was sorry, he was sorry, and there was an end. There was no doubt that he looked fit enough—fit and cheerful and happy. Wharton, at the bottom of his heart, was glad not to have to rag that particular member of his team.

"Oh, all right!" he said. "It can't be helped now, anyhow. So long as you don't let us down to-morrow—"

"Bank on that!" said Hazel cheerily. "By gum, I'm feeling as if I could play the game of my life, and then some!"

He walked on to his study, whistling.

The Famous Five glanced after him, rather puzzled by his good temper. Generally one word of fault-finding was enough to make Hazel sulky and defiant.

"Tea in my study, you men," said Bob Cherry, and the Famous Five went up the passage to Study No. 13.

Billy Bunter followed them as far as Study No. 2—Hazel's study. He blinked into that apartment. Hazel's studymate, Tom Brown, was not there; he was teasing with Squiff, up the passage. Hazel did not seem to have come in to tea. He was walking about the study with his hands in his pockets and a happy grin on his face. That extraordinary

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flow of high spirits, so far as Bunter could see, could only mean a remittance.

"I say, old chap—" began the fat Owl of the Remove.

Hazel glanced round at him.

"What do you want, fathead?" he asked.

"I've been disappointed about a postal order, old fellow," explained Bunter. "If you could lend a fellow five bob—"

"Stony!" said Hazel laconically.

"Eh?" Bunter blinked at him through his big spectacles. "Haven't you had a remittance?"

"No, ass!"

"What are you looking so jolly bucked about, then, you silly ass?" snapped Bunter.

And, without waiting for an answer, the fat Owl rolled off up the passage to see what was going in Study No. 13.

Hazel laughed.

A minute later another face looked in at the door.

It was that of Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars. There was a curious expression on the Bounder's face as he scanned Hazel.

"Give it a name, old bean!" said Smithy. "What on earth's happened to put you up in the stirrups like this?"

"I don't mind telling you, Smithy," said Hazel. "I shouldn't mention it to Wharton and his crowd, of course. What do you think of a gee-gee at three to one—and thirty pounds to come?"

"Gammon!" said the Bounder incredulously. "I guessed what you'd been at, of course. But it's rot! You can't spot winners! Trying to pull my leg?"

Hazel chuckled.

"You'll see!" he said gleefully. "After the cricket to-morrow, I'm getting over to the Three Fishers to collect thirty quids from Bill Lodgey."

The Bounder whistled.

"Gratters, old scout!" he said. "Blessed if I should ever have believed you'd pull it off! You've got no judgment, no nerve, and no pluck!"

"Thanks!" said Hazel sarcastically. "You make such a jolly good thing out of it, don't you?"

"No," said the Bounder, "I don't! Nobody who backs horses makes anything out of it; the bookies don't live on losses! It's a silly mug's game, and I know that better than you do, as I've been in deeper. If you've spotted a winner, it was a sheer accident, and won't happen twice!"

"Once is enough for me at three to one, with a tenner on!" Hazel chuckled. "Never mind twice!"

"Well, if you've pulled it off, Lodgey will pay," said the Bounder. "Blessed if I can understand him takin' you on to that tune, though, if the horse had an earthly! What horse was it?"

"Dusk of Dawn," answered Hazel.

The Bounder jumped.

"What the dooce do you mean? Dusk of Dawn runs in the two o'clock at Wapshot to-morrow! He hasn't run to-day!"

"I know that. I had to see Lodgey and get my money on this afternoon—last chance," said Hazel. "He's a dead cert—the surest snip ever! He will simply walk home to-morrow!"

The Bounder gazed at him, fairly speechless.

Hazel's exuberant satisfaction had given him the impression that the scapegrace had, by some lucky chance, backed a winner and had money to collect. Now he learned that it was a case of "great expectations." That winner had not run yet! He was not due to run till Wednesday afternoon. Hazel's exuberance was wholly founded on the certainty that he had spotted a

winner at three to one—which yet remained to be proved.

"My hat!" gasped the Bounder at last. "My only summer hat!"

"Chance for you, Smithy," said Hazel. "If you could bag a phone, you could get your money on. I don't mind letting you have the tip."

"Yes, I'll watch it!" gasped Smithy. "I can see myself jumping to put money on a gee at three to one, when Bill Lodgey's willin' to take the odds! Lodgey pays when he loses—but he takes pretty good care not to lose! You—you—you benighted idiot! Ha, ha, ha! You're crowin' to this tune because you fancy you've spotted a three-to-one winner! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Hazel. "I shan't ask you to lend me the tenner if I lose, anyhow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Bounder. "Have you done it on tick? Oh crikey! Ha, ha, ha!" Vernon-Smith almost wept with merriment. "And you fancy—Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, I've had enough of your cheek, Vernon-Smith! Get out of my study!" exclaimed Hazel angrily.

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

He almost tottered away from Hazel's study, and the sportsman of the Remove slammed the door after him.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Mauly's Book-mark!

"O II gad!" ejaculated Lord Mauleverer.

His lordship looked startled. It was the following morning—in break. There was a cheery crowd in the school shop.

Break that morning was the end of classes for the fortunate members of the Remove eleven. When the rest of the Remove went in for third school, the cricketers were going to change and get down to Little Side. For which reason Bunter, and Skinner, and Snoop, and other slackers, would have been glad for once to be cricketers.

Mauly was one of the fellows booked for third school. His lordship could play cricket when he liked, but he did not often like. At a cricket match his lazy lordship preferred a bag of cherries to a bat. He was coming along in the afternoon, to sit under a shady tree and look on. Now, in morning break, he had amiably invited the cricketers to join him in ginger-pop—which, on a hot June day, most of them were willing to do.

Billy Bunter, though not a cricketer, wedged in for a share of the ginger-pop, and added thereto a liberal supply of jam roll, a few doughnuts, and a dozen or so meringues—which the cricketers could hardly venture to do.

Every man present was looking merry and bright. A glorious summer's day, with a good cricket match coming, was more than enough to buck the heroes of the Remove.

Hazeldene had also his own special reasons for happy satisfaction. So had Bob Cherry, who was looking forward to seeing Marjorie Hazeldene, and hoped that his performance with the willow would catch her eyes.

Lord Mauleverer, who was always happy when he saw happy faces about him, was as merry and bright as any fellow—till he ran his hands into his pockets in search of something that was not, apparently, there, and ejaculated "Oh gad!" in tones of great dismay.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the jolly old trouble, Mauly?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Oh gad!" repeated Mauly. "Bother Quelch!"

"What's the matter with Quelch?" asked Harry Wharton, with a smile. "He hasn't given you another detention?"

"Oh, no! He's got my tenner!"

"Eh?"

"What?"

"My esteemed Mauly——"

"What the dickens——"

All the juniors stared at Lord Mauleverer.

Excepting for the Bounder and Monty Newland, Mauly was the only fellow in the Remove who ever possessed a tenner. Mauly sometimes had several of those useful articles.

Having as much money as he wanted, and a little more, Mauly was rather

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Down to a tenner" was the very edge of penury to Mauly.

"But what the dickens do you mean, you ass?" asked Frank Nugent. "How could you think it was in your pocket if Quelch has it? And what the thump is Quelch doing with your tenner?"

His lordship sighed.

"You see, he bagged my 'Holiday Annual' yesterday when Bob shoved it in at the Form-room window for me!" he explained.

"What the dooce has that got to do with it?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"It was in the book," explained Mauleverer. "You see, I was readin' it in my study the other day, and I was interrupted, and I stuck in the tenner

it! I shouldn't like it to be lost. I believe in bein' careful with money."

"You do!" gasped Bob.

"Yaas. Nunky is always tellin' me to be careful with money, and I play up, of course," said Lord Mauleverer innocently. "I'm a careful chap in most things, and specially with money."

"You call it careful to use a ten-pound note as a book-mark?" asked Hazel, grinning.

"Why not?" asked Mauly. "It was the only thing handy at the moment. It couldn't get lost. Safer than in my pocket, really, as I might have dropped it. I did drop a fiver once, and goodness only knows what became of it!"

"You'd better go to Quelch, Mauly, and ask him for it," said Harry Wharton.



Mr. Quelch gazed in astonishment as a "Holiday Annual" suddenly appeared at the open window. Then a voice called in from the open space: "Buck up, Mauly! Here's your book, old man! Don't keep me waiting here—I don't want Quelch to come along and spot me!"

careless with it. He was always Billy Bunter's last resource when that fat youth had been disappointed about a postal order. Mauly had been known to leave banknotes on his study table under the inkstand, and even to use them as book-marks. There had been quite a row in the Remove once when a fiver tumbled out of Mauly's Latin grammar under the astonished and wrathful eyes of Mr. Quelch.

It was against all rules for a junior to have large sums of money. But Mauleverer often forgot rules.

If Mauleverer had stated that he had lost a tenner, or left it in his study, nobody would have been surprised. But his statement that Mr. Quelch had it was rather surprising.

"Blow!" said Mauleverer. "I say, somebody will have to lend me something to square this! I'll settle when I get some money. I thought I had that tenner in my pocket. It's all right. I wrote to my uncle for some money when I got down to that tenner; it's bound to come along soon."

for a book-mark. I was goin' to take it out later, but I forgot."

"Well, you silly ass!" said Hazel-dene. "You jolly well deserve to lose it if you used a ten-pound note as a book-mark!"

"Looks as if I shall get what I deserve, then!" sighed his lordship. "Quelch told me to ask him for that 'Holiday Annual' at the end of the term! That dashed tenner will have to stick in his study till then!"

"Fathead!"

"You blithering chump!" said Bob Cherry. "Mean to say there was a ten-pound note sticking inside that 'Holiday Annual' when I fetched it down from your study yesterday afternoon?"

"Yaas."

"You howling ass!" roared Bob. "Suppose I'd shied it at some fellow? I might have!"

"Oh gad! Yaas, I suppose you might have. That's the sort of fathead you are, old chap," said Mauleverer. "Lucky you didn't, with the tenner in

"No fear!" said his lordship promptly. "I've had jaws from Quelch on that subject before. He wouldn't hand over the tenner. He would only tell me it was too much for a Remove fellow to carry about, and hand me a long jaw. He might get ratty about it bein' used as a book-mark. He was that time in the Form-room."

"Are you going to leave it sticking in that book in Quelch's study till the end of the term?" howled Bob Cherry.

"Can't be helped. Safe there, ain't it?" said Mauleverer. "Quelch doesn't know it's there, and I can tell you I'm not puttin' him wise! Might ask him for the book back in a day or two, when he's got over bein' shirty. His bark's worse than his bite, you know. But just at the moment I'm as stony as Bunter."

"Oh, really, Mauly——"

"Is Newland here? Oh, here you are! Lend me a quid, Newland?"

Monty Newland laughed, and lent Mauly the required quid.

Relieved of his momentary financial
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difficulties, Lord Mauleverer was able to settle the account in the tuckshop, after which he dismissed the matter entirely from his noble mind.

The bell rang for third school, and the crowd of juniors streamed out of the school shop.

Harry Wharton & Co. headed for the changing-room; the rest of the Form for the House.

Billy Bunter plucked at Lord Mauleverer's sleeve as the juniors went in.

"I say, Mauly—"

"Yaas?"

"Quelch took that 'Holiday Annual' to his study—"

"Yaas."

"Where did he put it?"

Lord Mauleverer stared at the fat Owl for a moment, and then chuckled.

"Dunno," he answered. "But may I point out, old fat man, that it's my tenner in that book, not yours?"

"Oh, really, Mauly! If I like to take the risk of getting it to oblige a pal—"

said Bunter warmly.

"You're a fearfully obligin' fellow, ain't you, old fat bean?"

"Yes, old chap. You see—"

"You'd really like to oblige me?"

asked Mauly.

"Yes, rather!"

"Then oblige me by mindin' your own business, old fatty, and leavin' that 'Holiday Annual' alone!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Beast!"

Lord Mauleverer chuckled, and went into the Form-room.

Billy Bunter snorted as he followed him in. Mauly might forget about that tenner, and probably did in a few minutes; but it lingered in Billy Bunter's fat thoughts.

If a devoted pal took the risk of re-

capturing that tenner for Mauly, surely the least that Mauly could do would be to shell out a little loan for that devoted pal to tide him over till he received a postal order he had long been expecting!

In third school that morning, Billy Bunter was thinking much less about the valuable instruction he was receiving from Mr. Quelch than about that tenner parked in the "Holiday Annual" in Quelch's study.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Good Man!

"LAST man in!"

Third school was over, and the Remove came out.

Most of the Form cut down to Little Side at once to see how the cricketers were getting on. There were plenty of keen cricketers in the Remove as well as the eleven selected men who were playing Highcliffe. The Lower Fourth were a numerous Form, and could easily raise a twenty-two.

Peter Todd who would have been playing but for a crooked wrist, headed the rush. Mark Linley and Penfold, Newland and Russell and Morgan, and a dozen other fellows followed. Lord Mauleverer ambled after them with a graceful saunter, at a much more leisurely pace. Still more leisurely was the pace of William George Bunter, heading in the same direction, though it was not keenness on the great game of cricket that drew William George.

"Ninety!" said Toddy, reading the score as he arrived. "Not bad, with a jolly good man left out."

"You flatter me, old bean!" said

Monty Newland gravely over his shoulder.

Peter stared round at him and grinned. The jolly good man Peter had been alluding to had been P. Todd.

"Remove got first knock—what?" said Russell. "Ninety! Not so bad! Hazel done anything? Duck's eggs about?"

"Last man in!" said Bolsover major.

"Well, I wish him luck," said Russell.

"But Wharton was rather an ass to stick him in!"

"I hear that Marjorie Hazeldene is coming over this afternoon to see the game," remarked Bolsover major, with a snort. "That's why."

"Oh, rot!" said Russell.

"I say, you fellows!" Bunter rolled up, breathless. "I say, where's Bob Cherry? I want to speak to him."

"Fathead! He's at the wickets," said Toddy.

"Oh blow!" said Bunter crossly.

Nine men of the Remove were out. Most of them had done fairly well, especially the Bounder, who had knocked up thirty out of the total of ninety. His chum Redwing was in the team, and Reddy had added eight. Harry Wharton had put up twenty. The Highcliffe men, in the field, were all good men, and the Highcliffe bowling was very good, especially the Caterpillar's. Ninety was quite a good score for the innings, and it was not over yet—though most of the fellows did not expect it to last much longer, now that Hazel was in, at the tip of the tail.

Bob Cherry, at the other end, was a mighty smiter, and so far he had put on fifteen, only lacking opportunity to put on a good many more. But several wickets had gone down rather fast since Bob had come in. Given a good man at the other end, Bob was capable of deeds of derring-do, and he did not feel fearfully cheered when Hazel came in—probably taking the view, like most of the fellows, that he would soon be "not out," with few, if any, added to his fifteen.

But Hazel was looking uncommonly fit, and very keen and eager. He was at the top of his form—such as it was, as he had expressed it himself.

The group of batsmen at the pavilion watched him with interest—Harry Wharton with hope, and the Bounder with a rather sardonic grin.

Only the Bounder knew why Hazel was in such high feather, and his feeling was a mingling of compassion and contempt for the silly ass, as he regarded him.

He had little doubt that Hazel's high spirits would evaporate when he received news of the result of the two o'clock that day at Wapshot. Luckily he was not likely to hear till after the game. He was the fellow to crumple up under bad news.

Courtenay, the Highcliffe junior captain, sent Yates on to bowl against Hazel.

Yates was fairly good, and a good many onlookers expected to see Hazel's sticks go. To the general surprise and satisfaction, Hazel knocked the bowling all over the field without even giving a chance of a catch, and added three two's and then a three, that brought Bob to the batting end.

"Good man!" exclaimed Harry Wharton heartily.

"Bravo, Hazel!" shouted Dick Russell heartily.

Russell had rather hoped for that place in the eleven, which, perhaps, had helped him to expect duck's eggs from Hazel. But he was glad to see the batsman putting paid to Highcliffe.

"Hazel's in jolly good form to-day!"

BUNTER OF BUNTER COURT

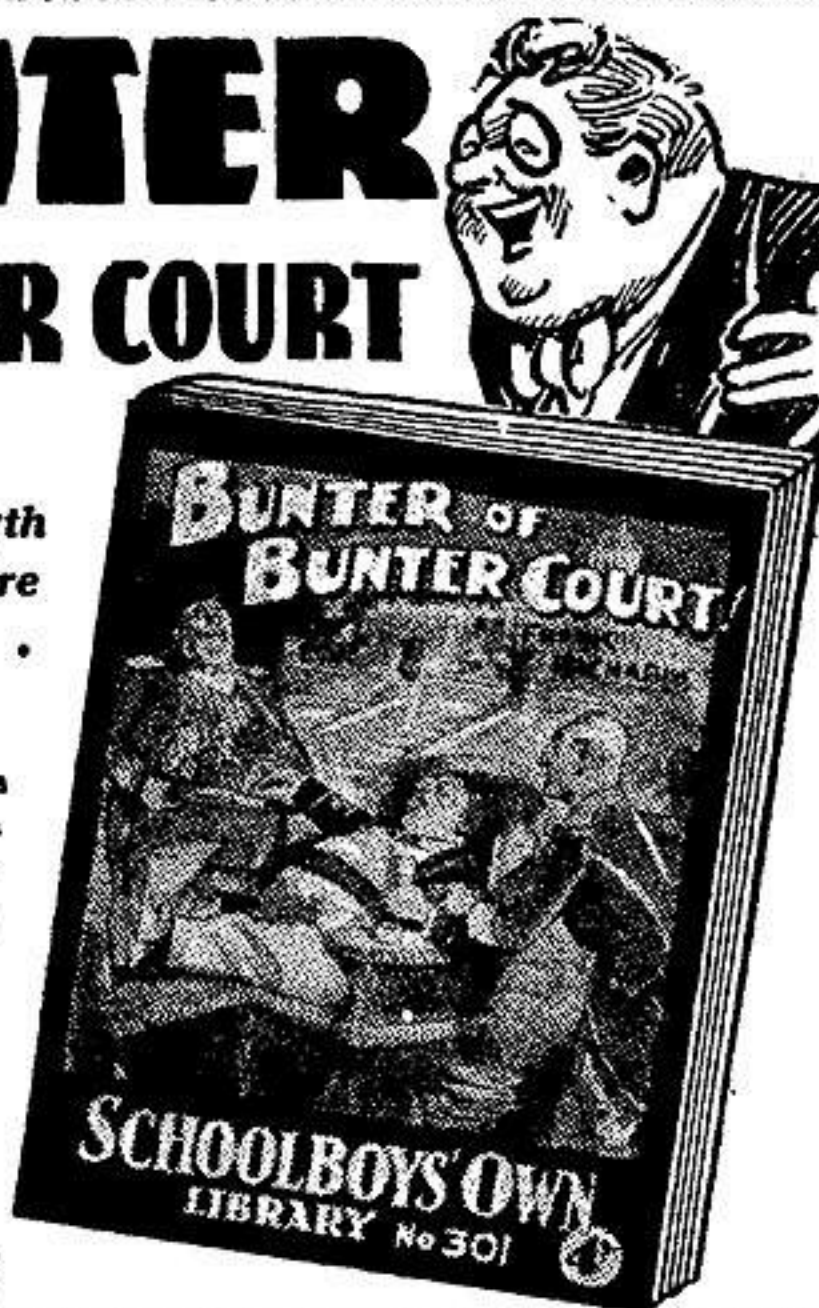
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remarked Frank Nugent. "It wasn't a mistake to put him in, after all."

Harry Wharton laughed. Evidently Nugent had doubted up to then. The fact was that Hazel, for the last few weeks, had been sticking hard to cricket, and the captain of the Remove had felt that he ought to have a show in a match. It was true, at the same time, that he was glad to let Marjorie see her brother playing for the Remove. Hazel had been in a scrape early that term, since when he had turned over a new leaf, and Wharton was glad to see that it remained turned. He would not have felt so satisfied about that had he known what the Bounder knew.

Bob Cherry stopped the bowling for the rest of the over. Then the Caterpillar went on to bowl to Hazel.

Rupert de Courcy was the most dangerous bowler in the Highcliffe side, and few Greyfriars men expected to see Hazel live through that over.

But even the Caterpillar failed to touch his "sticks," and the over gave the batsman eight.

"By gum!" said the Bounder, with a whistle, when the field crossed. "That chap would make a cricketer if he stuck to it."

"He's sticking to it all right!" said Harry Wharton, with a smile.

"The stickfulness is terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Smithy shrugged his shoulders.

"Up one minute, down another!" he said. "All right so long as he's full of beans. I wouldn't play him."

Harry Wharton made no reply to that. He could not help feeling that Smithy was, perhaps, right. Hazel, at his best, was very good, and he was at his best now. But there was no doubt that his quality was very uncertain.

However, at the moment, all was well. Seldom, or never, had Marjorie's brother been seen in such form. His inward satisfaction, whatever the cause, buoyed him up, and gave him that feeling of being master of the game, which was worth much to a batsman.

Over followed over, and Hazel was still going strong—with twenty—twenty-four—twenty-eight—then thirty to his credit. His score equalled the Bounder's now, and so far Smithy's had been the best.

Bob Cherry, rather to his surprise, found himself playing second fiddle to a fellow whom he rather regarded as a "rabbit" at the game. But runs for Greyfriars were runs for Greyfriars, and Bob was cheery and satisfied.

Harry Wharton's face was very bright—especially when Hazel's score topped the Bounder's by two. He knew that a good many fellows in the Remove fancied that Hazel had been picked not wholly on his merits as a cricketer. The Bounder sneered openly on the subject. Skinner had raised a laugh in the Rag by sadly regretting that he hadn't a sister Marjorie, in which case he would have had a chance in the cricket. Hazel's innings against Highcliffe was a convincing answer to that kind of thing.

Smithy could hardly continue to sneer, after Hazel had topped his own score, the highest in the innings. The board was showing quite imposing figures now for a junior match.

Bob Cherry's fear of being "not out" in a few minutes, with Hazel at the other end, proved unfounded—in a not wholly agreeable way. For the Caterpillar, in the field, caught Bob—and it was Hazel who was "not out."

By that time Bob had added eight to his fifteen, and Hazel had put on thirty-six! The score, which had been at 80 when the Remove came out of Form, stood at 134—which every fellow present

agreed that the Highcliffians would find it hard to beat.

Hazel's face was flushed and his eyes bright as he came off. He received quite an ovation at the pavilion.

"Good man!" said Johnny Bull.

"Jolly good, old chap!" said Harry Wharton, and he gave Hazel a smack on the shoulder. "Just what we wanted! I've never seen you so good!"

"Topping, old bean!" said Frank Nugent.

"The topfulness is terrific, my esteemed and ridiculous Hazel!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Best of the bunch!" said Tom Redwing heartily.

"Gratters, old man!" said the Bounder, with his inevitable touch of sarcasm. "Keep that up till we're through." Which indicated the Bounder's opinion that Hazel probably wouldn't keep it up.

The innings was over in time for lunch, which was the school dinner.

As the cricketers went off, in cheery bunches, Billy Bunter wedged in and gave Bob Cherry a jab in the ribs from a fat, grubby thumb.

"I say, Bob—" he exclaimed.

"Don't puncture me, you fat porpoise!" gasped Bob. "What the thump do you want, image?"

"I say, I hear that you went to Quelch's study yesterday, when he bagged that 'Holiday Annual' of Mauly's—"

"Eh—what? Yes! Why? Don't bother!"

"But I say, where did Quelch put it?"

"What the dickens! In his bookcase! Roll off!"

"But he's got two or three! Which one?"

"Oh, bother!"

"Which one, old chap?" gasped Bunter. "I say, Mauly wants to know."

"The one with the glass doors!" answered Bob, as he shook off Billy Bunter, and walked on to the House with the crowd of cricketers.

Half a dozen of the Remove cricketers who had heard Bunter's anxious questions, glanced at him, and some of them grinned.

"You fat ass!" said Hazel. "Quelch will scalp you if he catches you in his study! You'd better leave Mauly's banknote alone."

"Oh, really, Hazel—"

"Somebody had better tip Mauly that Bunter's inquirin' after that 'Holiday Annual'!" grinned the Bounder. "Looks to me as if his tenner won't be there at the end of the term!"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter rolled away. He knew now where to lay his fat hands on that "Holiday Annual." Quelch often went out for a walk on a half-holiday. If he took one of his walks abroad on this particular Wednesday afternoon, Billy Bunter was likely to be too busily occupied to have time to encourage the Remove cricketers with his distinguished presence on Little Side.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Going Strong!

FRANK COURTENAY and the Caterpillar opened the innings for Highcliffe after lunch.

Harry Wharton & Co. took the field; and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh went on to bowl the first over.

Most of the Remove were gathered on Little Side now, school being over for the day. Lord Mauleverer had a deck-chair under a shady tree, and a bag of cherries—from which other fellows

helped themselves more liberally than his easy-going lordship. Mauly looked too lazy to stir—almost too lazy to live; but when two graceful figures appeared in the distance, Mauly detached himself from the deckchair and shot away towards them with great activity.

The Remove cricketers being in the field, were unable to bestow on the fair visitors the polite attentions that they would otherwise have been happy to bestow. But Mauly did the honours with affable grace. He arrived at the pavilion, walking between Marjorie Hazeldene and Clara Trevlyn, and found them seats, and stood by them with a polite attention.

Bob Cherry, in the field, gave a quick glance round, and bestowed a cheery grin on the Cliff House girls.

Marjorie gave him a smile, but her eyes fixed on her brother, and her face was very bright. Hazel looked fit and cheerful, and was evidently enjoying the game. Moreover, it was easy to see that he was on the best of terms with the other cricketers—and that was a relief to Marjorie's mind.

So long as Hazel was keen on cricket and on friendly terms with the Famous Five, he was safe from the dingy scrapes into which he was only too likely to fall—and which came Hazel's way almost as regularly as clockwork. At least, so it seemed to Marjorie, little guessing what was in her brother's mind.

Now that it was past two o'clock, Hazel's thoughts turned, at moments, on that surest of snips, Dusk of Dawn, running in the two o'clock at Wapshot.

But his thoughts turned on that "gee-gee" with cheery, hopeful confidence. He was sure of getting good news that afternoon. The thought of the dazzling sum he was to receive from Bill Lodgey exhilarated Hazel.

"Your brother's done jolly well for the school, Miss Hazeldene!" remarked Lord Mauleverer casually. Mauly liked saying pleasant, agreeable things; and this was a chance not to be lost.

"Really?" asked Marjorie, with the brightest of smiles.

"Thirty-six in the innings!" said Mauleverer. "That's six better than the next best—Smithy made 30."

"Oh, my hat!" said Clara Trevlyn, evidently surprised. Hazel had never impressed Marjorie's chum as a great man at games.

"I believe Wharton's given him a shove up the list!" went on Mauleverer. "He went on last for the first knock, but I hear that he's been promoted."

"I'm so glad!" said Marjorie simply.

"Yaas—Hazel's astonishin' the natives to-day!" said the amiable Mauly. "You'll see him makin' the fur fly when we bat again. I heard Wharton talkin' about openin' the innings with him."

"They're giving him the bowling!" said a voice behind the chairs—that of Peter Todd. "Well, one over won't hurt."

"Present for Highcliffe!" said Bolsover major.

"Shut up, you ass!" said Dick Russell hastily, indicating the Cliff House girls in the chairs. And Bolsover major shut up.

Clara smiled. Marjorie's face was expressionless. Lord Mauleverer turned his head and gave Bolsover a petrifying glare.

Hazel had been given the ball, to take an over against Courtenay. He was a good change bowler on his day, and Wharton was evidently under the impression that this was his day!

He was right, as it proved. Few fellows expected to see Hazel make any impression on the junior captain of Highcliffe. But Hazel seemed bent on

astonishing the natives, as Lord Mauleverer expressed it.

There was a sudden roar:

"How's that?"

"Oh, my hat!" yelled Peter Todd.

"Great pip!" gasped Bolsover major.

Frank Courtenay was looking at a wrecked wicket! There was a roar all over the field.

"Well bowled!"

"Good man!"

"Bravo, Hazel!"

The Highcliffe man was out! He came back to the pavilion, and joined the waiting Highcliffians there.

Smithson went on.

"By gad," said Lord Mauleverer, with a chuckle, "your brother's a prize-packet to-day, Miss Hazeldene! That's the Highcliffe skipper he's turned out."

"Oh, my hat!" said Miss Clara again.

Marjorie smiled.

It was a sheer pleasure to her to see Hazel, so often a moody slacker, distinguishing himself in a big game, and to hear his name ring over the field, coupled with cheers.

Hazel had plenty of attention from the Remove crowd after that.

All the Form, with only three exceptions, were watching the game. Skinner and Snoop and Bunter were not there, and were not missed. Hobson & Co. of the Shell, and Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth had come along to watch, and even Wingate of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, was seen looking on for a time.

The Remove were a junior team; but their cricket was always worth watching. Highcliffe fellows began to arrive in twos and threes during the afternoon, and the crowd thickened.

But the Highcliffe fellows did not find the position very encouraging. It was clear that Highcliffe were not going to draw level in that innings.

It ended at 88, which left a very handsome margin in favour of the Greyfriars team.

The Famous Five made for the chairs where the Cliff House girls sat as soon as the field came off.

Hazel came with them; but after a few minutes, he slipped away from the crowd. Marjorie's glance followed him, and she saw the Bounder join him as he went towards the House.

"My brother seems to have done well to-day, Harry," Marjorie remarked, with a happy smile.

"Topping!" said Harry. "Biggest score in our innings. And I suppose you saw him take Courtenay's wicket. He's going in first for our second knock."

"The topfulness of the esteemed Hazel's cricket on this suspicious occasion is truly terrific," declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Not to say preposterous and ludicrous," added Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Anybody say lemonade?" asked Lord Mauleverer.

Quite a lot of fellows said lemonade.

There was a cheery buzz of conversation at the pavilion before the Greyfriars fellows prepared for their second innings. It was half-past three now, and there was plenty of time to bat before tea. Some of the fellows wondered why Hazel had taken himself off. It would have been more like him to enjoy his triumph, for there was no doubt that he had done the best of the Remove team, so far. But he had disappeared.

Only the Bounder guessed why he was gone; and the Bounder had fol-

lowed him, and overtaken him before he reached the House.

There was a sardonic grin on Smithy's face as he touched Hazel on the arm.

"Wash it out, old man!" he said.

Hazel glanced round at him impatiently.

"What do you want?" he muttered.

"I've no time to waste. Wharton's told me that I open the second innings with him."

"Don't waste any, then," said Smithy. "Look here, Hazel, you're doing remarkably well to-day—better than any fellow expected of you—"

"Is that what's worrying you?" asked Hazel, with a sneer. "You don't like another fellow put ahead of you on the batting list."

"Don't be a fool!" said the Bounder sharply. "You're not a man I should play in a game like this, if I were skipper; but I'm glad to see you doing so well for your side. Don't spoil it. You can wait for your news from Wapshot till after the game."

Hazel coloured.

"What the thump do you mean?" he snapped. "Can't you mind your own bizney, Vernon-Smith?"

"This is my business, and the business of every man in the team," said the Bounder. "Mean to say that you're not going in to pinch a phone, and get the result of the two o'clock at Wapshot?"

"Suppose I am!" snapped Hazel. "What the thump has it got to do with you?"

"Lots! Wharton's fool enough to play you for Greyfriars, because you're Marjorie Hazeldene's brother, and if you let us down—"

"You cheeky fool!" said Hazel, between his teeth. "I've beaten you, so far, at any rate! I made six more than you in our innings, and I sent Courtenay out, which you couldn't have done in a month of Sundays. I made two catches in the field—how many did you make?"

"One," said Vernon-Smith quietly. "I'm not at top-notch to-day. You are. I want to see you keep it up. Don't be a fool, Hazel! Wharton's relying on you! Do you want to let him down? Your sister's watching the game, as pleased as Punch to see you getting the hands. Stick to cricket, and leave everything else till afterwards."

"What difference will it make, you fathead?" snapped Hazel. "I fixed it up with Lodgey to phone him to get the result. I know it in advance, if you come to that; but a fellow wants to be sure. I know Prout's gone out with Capper this afternoon, and I can get his phone. Why the dickens shouldn't I?"

"Oh, you're a born fool!" snarled the Bounder. "If you hear that your horse has won, you'll come back walking on air. Suppose you hear that he's lost?"

Hazel gave him a bitter, evil look. The mere suggestion that his horse had lost was enough to blanch the colour in his cheeks.

"You rotter!" he said, between his teeth. "You cad! You'd like to make me feel rotten, wouldn't you, and muck up my cricket, because I've put you in the shade to-day? You're a pretty thorough rotter, Vernon-Smith! Leave me alone!"

Hazel tramped savagely into the House.

The Bounder stood still, breathing hard.

Hazel's hasty words were quite un-

just. It was true that the Bounder did not like to be outshone—at cricket, or anything else. But he was thinking of the game, and of the result on Hazel if he got bad news from Wapshot. Only too well he knew that the wretched scapegrace could not afford to lose such sums as he had staked. And he knew, too, how little likely it was that Hazel would hear that his horse had won. Vernon-Smith fully expected to see Hazel come back, after that telephone call, crumpled up.

But he had done all that he could. He walked back to the cricket field with a moody brow. He joined the cheery crowd gathered round the chairs of the Cliff House girls, and smiled sarcastically as he heard the name of Hazel again and again. As soon as he could, he drew Harry Wharton aside, and spoke to him in a low voice.

"You're startin' our knock with Hazel?" he asked.

"Yes," answered Harry. "He's in tremendous form, Smithy. If I'd known what to expect, I shouldn't have left him at the end of the tail last time."

"Well, look here, don't be in a hurry," said Smithy. "Watch his face when he comes back, and think again."

The captain of the Remove stared at him.

"What the dickens do you mean, Smithy?" he asked.

"I mean exactly what I say! You don't need tellin', I suppose, that chuckin' away a wicket isn't the best style of startin' an innings?"

"What rot! Hazel's at the top of his form!" Harry Wharton smiled.

"You're still third on the list, Smithy."

"I'll get my pads on early!" snapped the Bounder. "I fancy I shan't have to wait long."

"Rot, old man!" said the captain of the Remove cheerily; and he turned back to the Cliff House group.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Knocked Over!

"HAZEL!"

"Where's Hazel?"

"Seen Hazel?"

The Highcliffe men were in the field. Harry Wharton was ready to go on and open the innings, with Hazeldene at the other end. Hazel had been as keen as mustard when the captain of the Remove told him that he was put up the list. Now, however, he was not to be seen.

He had been seen to clear off to the House after the Highcliffe innings. Now that Greyfriars were ready to take their second knock, he was not to be seen.

Three or four fellows called his name, and looked round for him. Marjorie rose from her chair and looked. Miss Clara murmured "Slacker" under her breath, taking care that Marjorie did not hear. So far as Clara had observed her chum's brother, he seemed a slacker, and a good deal of a waster. And Clara did not suppose that he had changed much.

The captain of the Remove, surprised and a little irritated, waited, and looked round. It was not the Remove way to keep the field waiting. Wharton had always had his foot down on the system of dawdling to and from wickets. But Hazel was not on view.

Five or six fellows cut off to the House, in which direction Hazel had last been seen straying.



Hazeldene's face was flushed as he came off the cricket field. He received quite an ovation at the pavilion. "Good man!" said Johnny Bull. "Jolly good, old man!" said Harry Wharton. "Just what we wanted! I've never seen you so good!"

Vernon-Smith waited, with a sarcastic sneer on his face. Hazel had had time to get to Prout's phone, and get away again. And this delay meant only one thing to the Bounder. The silly ass had had a knock, and gone down under it.

Had he received good news over the phone, he would have come sailing back to the cricket field, merry and bright, walking on air, as Smithy had said. No doubt, in that case, he would have gone on, and done as well in the second innings as in the first.

But a fall from the heights of optimism to the deepest depths of pessimism was certain to work a tremendous change in a fellow like Hazel.

Smithy expected to see him, when he did appear, looking like a deflated gas-bag, and he was angrily contemptuous. Smithy was rather a "bad hat" himself, but he would have scorned the idea of allowing good or bad fortune in his sporting speculations to affect his nerve or his equanimity, and especially his form in a cricket match. But Hazel was made of weaker stuff.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he comes!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

Peter Todd, who had gone to look for Hazel, came back to the field, with the missing batsman in his company.

Hazel did not appear to be coming very willingly.

The Bounder's sneer as he looked at him became more pronounced.

If ever a fellow looked as if he had "taken the knock" Hazel did. Obviously he had received bad news over the phone from Wapshot.

What else he could have expected was rather a mystery to the Bounder. Bill Lodgey was not the man to run many risks of having to pay over such a sum as thirty pounds to his dupe. If Dusk of Dawn had had a chance of getting home, it must have been a very remote

one. But Hazel had banked on it as a certainty—with unbounded confidence. It was a dead cert—the surest of snips—and up to the last moment the wretched punter had not doubted. Now, the Bounder knew, he had learned the worst, instead of the best—and, as Smithy had fully expected would be the case, it had knocked him completely over.

He came back to the cricket field with dragging steps, all the brightness gone from his face, and the colour from his cheeks.

He looked as if he came unwillingly—as if, in the crushing disaster and disappointment that had fallen on him, he cared nothing for the cricket match, and would have been ready to throw it over.

That, however, was scarcely practicable if the wretched fellow had thought of it. He came.

Only Smithy knew the facts, but a good many fellows noticed that there was something amiss with Hazel. Indeed, any fellow who looked at him could hardly fail to see it; it almost leaped to the eye.

Smithy saw the bright look on Marjorie Hazeldene's face change. She had noticed at once the change in her brother. He saw Clara Trevlyn's lip curl, too. Clara had been surprised to see Hazel playing up like a first-class cricketer. She was not surprised to see him with a moody, hangdog look.

"Waiting for you, Hazel, old man!" said Harry Wharton. Remembering what the Bounder had said ten minutes ago, he gave Hazel a curious look. "Anything the matter?" he added.

"What should be the matter?" snapped Hazel. "What do you mean?"

Wharton started and looked at him more sharply.

That answer was quite in the old sulky style he knew so well, and quite different from Hazel's manner that day

so far. For some reason—a mystery to Wharton—Hazel, hitherto fit as a fiddle, cheery, and confident, had suddenly relapsed into peevish nerves and evil, sullen temper.

The captain of the Remove breathed rather hard, but he answered quietly.

"Well, get your pads on, Hazel; we're ready."

"Feeling fit, old man?" asked Bob Cherry, a little concerned by the expression on Hazel's face.

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Hazel. "Why shouldn't I be fit?"

Bob stared.

"Been polishing up your manners?" he asked.

"Shut up!"

Bob did not answer that, as it occurred to him that Marjorie could hear what was said. But for that circumstance, his answer would probably have been very emphatic.

Hazel slouched out to the wicket.

"What's the matter with the chap?" asked Russell. "Why the dickens is Hazel looking like a punctured tyre?"

"Goodness knows!" said Toddy. "I found him in the House, looking as if he were going to be hanged. He said there was nothing the matter."

"Looks as if there is. Touch of the sun, perhaps," said Russell. "Fagged out very likely; Hazel's not the man for a stiff game."

"He looked all right a quarter of an hour ago."

"He doesn't now."

"By gum, he doesn't!"

The Bounder watched Hazel with a bitter sneer. He had told the captain of the Remove that if he were skipper he would never play Hazel in an important fixture. He fancied that Wharton would soon come to the same opinion. What was the use of a man who had flashes of quality, and was

liable to peter out like an expended squib? Smithy knew before it happened what was going to happen to Hazel's wicket.

It was not long in coming.

Harry Wharton took the first over from the Caterpillar; he knocked away the first ball for 3.

That brought Hazel to the batting end, to face Rupert de Courcy.

The Caterpillar, remembering how Hazel had shaped in the first innings, prepared to put all he knew into the bowling. But he need not have taken the trouble. A Second Form fag could have bowled Hazeldene without exerting himself very much. He stood at the wicket like a sack of coke, as several fellows described it, and probably did not even see the ball that uprooted his middle stump.

"How's that?"

"Out!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob Cherry.

"The rotten fool!" breathed the Bounder.

Hazel came off, so obviously caring not a bean for the fact that his wicket had gone down that fellows stared at him, not pleasantly. Only the Bounder knew of the weight that was on the wretched fellow's mind, the utter dismay and misery that made cricket appear to him at the moment mere fooling and trifling.

The Bounder was ready to go in, and he passed Hazel coming out.

"You rotten cur!" he said in a low voice as he passed.

Hazel gave him a scowl and tramped on to the pavilion.

Vernon-Smith went to the vacant wicket.

Hazel came to the pavilion, but turned away at once; and Marjorie called to him. He did not seem to hear her voice. He pitched down his bat, shoved his hands deep into the pockets of his flannels, and tramped away and disappeared.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter Tries It On!

"I SAY, you fellows, seen Quelch?"

Skinner and Snoop grinned.

Billy Bunter that afternoon was keenly interested in the movements of his Form-master.

Most of the Remove knew why, if they had taken the trouble to think about Bunter at all that afternoon.

The fat Owl's designs on that "Holiday Annual" parked in the Remove master's study were pretty well known.

Lord Mauleverer had dismissed the volume, and the extremely valuable book-mark it contained from his noble mind. Quelch might let him have the book back in a few days; otherwise it would remain in Quelch's bookcase till the end of the term. In either case, Mauly's calm equanimity was quite undisturbed. But it was not such a trifling matter to William George Bunter.

If Mauly could afford to regard ten pound notes with superb indifference, William George Bunter couldn't.

Bunter was going to recapture that tenner if he could. Having performed that valuable service for his lordship, he was going to borrow something out of it. Such a service was, Bunter considered, worth at least a loan of ten bob till a fellow's postal order came.

But it was very important to make sure that Quelch was absent when he dropped into his study to root through that "Holiday Annual" for the book-mark.

Twice that afternoon Bunter had

tapped at Quelch's door and looked in. Each time he had hoped to find that Quelch had gone out, as he very often did on a half-holiday. Each time he found Mr. Quelch there; each time, therefore, he had to invent an excuse for having looked in.

Bunter had lines on hand—as he very often had. So his first visit was explained away by a request to leave his lines till the morrow—a request that was refused. On his second visit Mr. Quelch naturally expected to see his lines—but Bunter was not thinking of lines. The only excuse he could think of was to ask Mr. Quelch the time, to set his watch right.

This even Bunter realised was rather thin. He could see that Quelch gave him a very suspicious look, though he kindly told him the time.

A third visit Bunter dared not pay—at least, without his lines as a good excuse. It was quite likely that Quelch by that time suspected that he was entertaining some design on the study—some sort of a rag. So Bunter went up to the Remove to write his lines.

He had a hundred to write. By the time he had written twenty he was fed-up with the lines and took a rest; then Skinner and Snoop came up the passage.

The slackers of the Remove were not interested in what was going on on Little Side. They were coming up to their study for a smoke, but they stopped and grinned as Bunter shot that question at them from the open doorway of Study No. 7.

The fat Owl rose from the table, dropping his pen. Getting his lines done was a last resource. It was half an hour since his second call on Quelch, and very likely the beast had gone out—in which case, the fat Owl could venture to barge into his study unprovided with lines as an excuse.

"Quelch?" repeated Skinner, with a wink at Snoop, unobserved by the fat Owl. "Yes, what about Quelch?"

"Seen him go out?" asked Bunter eagerly.

"Yes!" answered Skinner, with a nod.

"Oh, good! Sure?" asked Bunter.

"Quite! He passed us, going down to the gates," answered Skinner. "What do you want Quelch for, old fat bean?"

"Oh, nothing!" said Bunter. "I'm not going to his study, or anything! I—I only just wanted to know if he was about, that's all."

Gladly leaving his lines unfinished, the fat Owl rolled away down the Remove passage to the stairs.

Skinner gazed after him as he went, and turned to Snoop, as the fat junior disappeared.

"Think Bunter fancied from what I said, that Quelch has gone out this afternoon, Snoopey?" he inquired.

"Sort of!" giggled Snoop.

"I never said so," argued Skinner. "I told him I'd seen Quelch. So I have, lots of times! I told him I'd seen him go out—so I have, umpteen times. I told him Quelch passed us, going down to the gates! So he did—yesterday afternoon."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Snoop.

"Think Bunter fancied I meant this afternoon?" asked Skinner. "I certainly never said so. Still, as he said he wasn't going to his study, no harm done, what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the two young rascals went on their way, chortling.

Billy Bunter, happily unaware that his fat leg had been pulled, and certainly never dreaming that Skinner had been referring to Mr. Quelch's move-

ments on earlier occasions, rolled cheerfully off to Masters' Studies.

Quelch being out—as Bunter supposed—it was all right! The coast was clear! No need to have an excuse ready this time!

He had learned just where that "Holiday Annual" was—in the bookcase with glass doors. To whip into the study, whip to that bookcase, and grab the "Holiday Annual," was the work of a moment. To turn the book-mark out of it would not occupy many moments. To replace the "Holiday Annual," and pop out of the study, another moment or two! Nothing could be simpler or easier—Mr. Quelch being absent!

Billy Bunter lost no time!

And so it came about that Henry Samuel Quelch had quite a startling surprise that afternoon.

Sitting by his study window, with a sheaf of papers on his knee, Mr. Quelch was marking those papers, and at the same time enjoying the sunshine and the balmy breeze from the open spaces.

His study door opened suddenly, without a knock.

Quelch stared round.

He stared petrified.

A fat figure bolted into the study, and without even a blink towards Quelch, shot across to the bookcase.

Too amazed to move, or to speak, for the moment, Mr. Quelch stared at that member of his Form.

Twice already Billy Bunter had barged into his study that afternoon. The second visit had made Quelch suspicious. He suspected that Bunter was trying to ascertain whether he had gone out, with some sort of surreptitious design on his quarters.

Now he had proof of it. Bunter, apparently, fancied he had gone. He would hardly have acted like this, had he known that Quelch was present, sitting with gimlet eyes fixed on him across the study.

Bunter, his back to Quelch, grabbed open the door of the bookcase. He blinked along rows of books, in search of that entrancing publication, the "Holiday Annual." He spotted it.

He grabbed it.

Then Mr. Quelch woke, as it were, from his trance of amazement. He rose from his chair, stepped to the table, and picked up the cane. He stepped towards Billy Bunter, the cane in the air!

Bunter's fat fingers were on the "Holiday Annual." Another moment, and he would have jerked the volume from the shelf.

At that moment, the cane came down across his shoulders with a crack like a pistol-shot!

Whack!

Bunter bounded.

A wild roar woke the echoes of Mr. Quelch's study.

"Yaroooh!"

Bunter's fat fingers relinquished the "Holiday Annual." He revolved on his axis, blinking in startled terror at his Form-master. The ghost of Henry Samuel Quelch could hardly have startled him more.

The gimlet eyes glittered at him. They almost bored into the startled and terrified Owl.

"Bunter!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Oh crikey!"

"You have dared," thundered the Remove master, "you have dared to enter my study, to abstract a volume confiscated—"

"Oh, no!" stuttered Bunter. "I—I didn't, sir—I mean, I wasn't! That is, I—I never did! I—I wouldn't! Oh crikey!"

Mr. Quelch swished the cane.

"Bend over that chair, Bunter!"

"I—I say, sir, I—I never knew you

were here!" groaned Bunter. "I—I mean, I—I never came to—to—to—I mean, I—I wasn't—"

"Bend over at once, Bunter!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Whack, whack, whack, whack, whack!"

The hapless Owl roared.

Mr. Quelch laid it on hard—very hard!

That "Holiday Annual" had been confiscated, for a very serious infraction of the rules. Under his very eyes, a boy of his Form had entered the study to take it away again—setting his Form-master's authority at naught!

Mr. Quelch was bent on impressing upon Billy Bunter's mind that a Form-master's authority was not to be lightly disregarded. Certainly he had not the remotest idea of Bunter's real object. But he had seen him claw Mauleverer's "Holiday Annual" from the bookcase, and that was enough.

The whacks of the cane came down fast, and they came down hard.

"Now, Bunter—" said Mr. Quelch, when he had finished.

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

"If you should dare to repeat this action, Bunter, I shall punish you much more severely."

"Ooooh-oooh-ooop!"

"Go!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

Bunter went.

Mr. Quelch laid down the cane, closed the bookcase door, and resumed his seat at the window, and his sheaf of papers. He dismissed the matter from his mind.

It was not so easy for Billy Bunter to dismiss it. For a long, long time, the fat Owl wriggled and emitted sounds of woe and tribulation. And he quite abandoned his designs on that "Holiday Annual." Not if Mauly had offered him that tenner as a present, would Billy Bunter have ventured anywhere near his Form-master's study—not so long as the effect of that whopping lasted.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Man Missing!

"ALL down for ninety!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Not so bad! Did I hear somebody say tea?"

The Greyfriars innings ended in time for tea. It had not lasted quite so long as expected. Neither had the score been what was hoped for. Only one duck's egg had been netted, it was true: Hazel's. But the other men had, on the whole, done a little less well than in their first innings. Still, they were well ahead of the Highcliffians, and looked forward to a win.

Marjorie and Clara were entertained to tea, and Lord Mauleverer gracefully faded out of the picture, leaving them to other fellows. Bob Cherry was recognised as having a certain prescriptive right to Miss Hazeldene's society—and there was no doubt that Marjorie liked to have honest, clumsy old Bob about. On this occasion, however, though Miss Clara talked nineteen to the dozen, as usual, Marjorie was rather silent—and her smile was forced.

Hazel did not turn up for tea, and the change in him, and his absence, worried Marjorie, as several fellows were able to observe.

Among the observant ones was Lord Mauleverer, who quietly faded away, and put in an active quarter of an hour looking up and down and round about for Hazel, to shepherd him back to the fold.

He did not find him, however.

All that he could ascertain was that Hazel was not in the school, and that

was rather surprising, for he was, of course, wanted in the field when the Highcliff men went on to take their second knock.

Mauly had to give it up, puzzled—and, for once in his placid career, feeling that he would have liked very much to punch a fellow's head.

After tea, when the Remove men were ready to go into the field, Harry Wharton knitted his brows when he learned that Hazel was missing again.

Five minutes were wasted, inquiring after him. It was from Billy Bunter that news was received. Bunter had not, like Hazel, missed the tea; and—having for the present abandoned his designs on Quelch's study—he had rolled along to make himself agreeable to the Cliff House girls. Bunter had no doubt that his fascinating presence was required to make the occasion a real success for the fair visitors; and, like a kind-hearted fellow, he bestowed it on them. Hearing Hazel inquired for, the fat Owl furnished the information that he had gone out on his bike, an hour ago or more.

"Utter rot!" said Harry Wharton sharply. "What the dickens do you mean, you fat duffer?"

Bunter blinked at him.

"Eh? I mean what I say," he answered. "Hazel went out on his bike—I saw him go. I asked him whether he was out already, and he just scowled at me—scowled like a demon."

Harry Wharton compressed his lips.

Something had gone wrong with the new recruit for the Remove eleven, that was clear. He had had to be hunted for to play in the second innings; and now he had cleared off, without waiting to field in the Highcliff innings. That was not the sort of thing that a cricketer could do—and continue to play for the Greyfriars Remove!

Wharton looked round, and went over to the Bounder, who was leaning on the pavilion, with his hands in the pockets of his flannel bags and a sardonic grin on his face. The captain of the Remove spoke in a low voice.

"What does this mean, Smithy? What's wrong with Hazel?"

Smithy shrugged his shoulders.

"I know that you know!" snapped Wharton. "I remember what you said to me. You were right, if that's any satisfaction to you."

"It isn't!" said Smithy quietly. "I want the side to win, and I tried to keep that weak-kneed cur from lettin' us down."

Wharton glanced round hastily. But Marjorie was nowhere near enough to hear what the Bounder said.

"Don't be a fool!" said Vernon-Smith roughly. "Think I'd let her hear what I think of her brother? By gum, though, after she's gone I'll have some-thing to say to the rat!"

"What is it about, Smithy? Where's Hazel, if you know?" asked Harry.

"At the Three Fishers most likely," sneered Smithy. "I've no doubt that Bill Lodgey is back from Wapshot by this time."

Wharton stared at him blankly.

"Are you mad?" he asked. "Do you want me to believe that Hazel would go off pub-haunting in the middle of a cricket match?"

"You asked me!" sneered the Bounder.

"It's impossible."

Smithy shrugged his shoulders again.

"You won't see him here any more," he said. "I fancy Hazel's in pretty deep—a good deal over his depth, in fact! You'd better ask Courtenay to let you field a substitute. The less you draw Miss Hazeldene's attention to her brother's goings-on the better—if you

care anything about what she thinks!" added the Bounder, with a sneer.

Wharton gave him a look, and turned away. That Hazel had cleared off and forgotten that he was wanted in the game seemed impossible; but there it was—he was missing. The captain of the Remove spoke a few words to Courtenay, and the Remove men went into the field, with Russell to field as a substitute for the missing man.

When the Highcliff innings opened, Marjorie's eyes searched the field and noted at once her brother's absence. She made no remark, and Miss Clara, not always tactful, was tactful enough to say nothing.

Lord Mauleverer resumed his role of a squire of dames, but this time he found that he had a rival—in the person of William George Bunter.

Billy Bunter addressed an almost continuous stream of bright and genial conversation to Miss Hazeldene, and was rather puzzled by the fact that Miss Hazeldene seemed to have become completely deaf.

That Marjorie was not deaf, he knew: but if she was not deaf it really seemed that she must be dumb, for she did not address a single syllable to the genial fat Owl in reply.

It was quite perplexing to Bunter, and he could only attribute it to coyness, but he could not help feeling that the coyness was overdone.

Casting about in his fat mind for some subject to interest the silent Cliff House girl, Bunter remembered that she was always interested in the proceedings of that sweep of a brother of hers. So he came to the topic of Hazel.

"Fancy Hazel letting Wharton down like this!" remarked Bunter. "Wharton must be feeling pretty savage—what?"

Marjorie was still deaf and dumb, but a spot of colour glowed in her cheeks.

Lord Mauleverer gave the fat Owl a look.

Heedless of looks, Bunter rattled on.

"I hear that he did well in his first innings! He's rather a rotten cricketer as a rule. Isn't he, Mauly?"

"You've got lines for Quelch, I believe, Bunter!" was his lordship's rejoinder. "Hadn't you better cut off and get them done?"

"No fear!" answered Bunter. "Blow Quelch! The beast whopped me this afternoon because I went to his study. That beast Skinner said he was gone out, and he wasn't, and I got six! Ow! I say, though, fancy Hazel—"

"Did he whop you hard?" asked Mauly.

"Ow! Yes, rather!" Bunter gave a wriggle. He was still feeling that whopping.

"That's good!" said Mauly, with evident satisfaction.

"Why, you beast!" said Bunter. "Look here, don't keep on barging in, Mauly, when I'm talking to Miss Hazeldene. I say, Hazel looked as black as thunder when I saw him wheeling his bike out. I suppose he was sore about his duck's egg! He, he, he! The fact is, he can't play cricket for toffee! Everybody knows that Wharton only shoved him into the team because—Ow, ow, ow! Wow! Leggo my ear. Toddy, you beast! If you don't leggo my ear I'll—Ow, ow! Wow! Yow!"

Peter Todd did not let go Bunter's ear! Holding that fat ear in a grip like a steel vice, Peter led him round the pavilion, where, out of sight of the Cliff House visitors, he kicked him, once, twice, thrice, with great energy. Each kick elicited a loud howl from Bunter. Then Peter let go his ear.

"Now cut!" he said.

"You cheeky beast!" gasped Bunter.

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"If I see you again before calling-over I'm going to kick you!" explained Peter. "Like that!"

"Ow! Beast!"

"And that!"

"Yaroooh!"

Billy Bunter departed.

Miss Hazeldene had no more bright and genial conversation from Billy Bunter. He was not seen again on the cricket field. Toddy's boot was altogether too uncomfortable at close quarters.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Rough Luck!

HURREE JAMSET RAM SINGH'S dusky face wore a grin of cheery relief when Frank Courtenay's wicket went down.

There was a roar round the field:

"How's that?"

"Well bowled, Inky!"

"Good old Jampot!"

Harry Wharton gave his best bowler a grateful look.

The Highcliffe captain was out at last; but there was a smile on his face as he went back to the pavilion, leaving the Caterpillar at the wickets.

The partnership had lasted long. In his first innings Courtenay had gone down to Hazel's bowling, which had undoubtedly been a stroke of uncommon luck for Hazel. In his second knock he seemed immovable. Five men had gone down when the Caterpillar joined him, and then they had gone on together, making hay of the bowling. It almost began to look as if they would see the game out, when the dusky nabob at last sent the Highcliffe skipper home.

Seventy off Courtenay's bat and twenty-five off the Caterpillar's had given that innings a tremendous leg up; the other men having made thirty-five between them. The score stood at 130 for six wickets when Courtenay went back to the pavilion.

Matters did not look so promising now for the home side. The fact was that Hazel's luck and Courtenay's ill-luck in the first knock had made a wonderful difference to the score—and history had not repeated itself. Highcliffe wanted six to tie, seven to win, with four wickets to fall, and the Bounder remarked that if they didn't do it they deserved to be booted off the field.

Still, it was only the Highcliffe "tail" that had to come on now, and cricket was an uncertain game. And the dusky champion bowler of the Remove, after a tiring day, looked almost as fresh as paint. Victory was still, the Greyfriars fellows hoped at least, on the knees of the gods.

Two balls remained of that over after Courtenay went. The end of the over exemplified the uncertainty of the summer game. For Hurree Jamset Ram Singh whipped out a leg stump, and then an off stump—and the score stood at the same figure for eight wickets. And the Greyfriars crowd gave the dusky nabob a tremendous roar for the hat trick.

Then the field crossed over, and the ball was given to Herbert Vernon-Smith to see what he could do against the Caterpillar. Smithy was a good change bowler, though batting was his strong point. He put all he knew into that over. The Caterpillar stopped the first ball dead; he captured two off the second and three off the third.

"One to tie—two to win!" murmured Bob Cherry.

But the game was not over yet. Three had brought the Caterpillar to the

bowler's end, and it was one of the Highcliffe tail who had to face the next ball. And the field almost gasped with relief when the batsman lifted the ball and dropped it, a perfect sitter, into the dusky hand of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Well caught, Inky!"

"Bravo, old Jampot!"

"Hurrah!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh grinned a dusky grin. It was not much of a catch; the Highcliffe man had made him a present of it. But it was what was wanted—badly wanted, and the Greyfriars crowd roared its appreciation. Highcliffe were nine down now—still one to tie, two to win.

"Last man in!"

Yates of the Highcliffe Fourth came on. Every face was keen now. Everybody knew that fate hung on the last two balls of that over. If the bowling came again to the Caterpillar all was over, bar shouting.

The Bounder knew it as well as anyone, and he concentrated on the bowling with all he knew.

Yates was obviously a little nervous. All the field hoped that he would hit out at that ball. But he stopped it dead.

The leather went back to the Bounder for the last shot in the locker. The crowd watched him breathlessly. Miss Clara was on her feet, as keen as any fellow there. Lord Mauleverer gazed with all his eyes, quite forgetting that cricket was rather a bore. Down went the round red ball, and Yates snicked it away, but did not run.

The Bounder gritted his teeth.

Dearly he would have liked to be the man who pulled the game out of the fire at the last tick. Smithy was rather a bad loser.

The Caterpillar, catching the momentary expression on his face, smiled.

Smithy had just failed to save the situation—a bitter disappointment to him. He slouched away savagely to his place in the field as the ball was tossed to Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Get that man, Inky, old black bean!" murmured Bob Cherry.

The nabob made a grimace.

If any man in the Remove eleven could get the Caterpillar, Inky could. But De Courcy was a hard nut to crack.

The Caterpillar, cool as a cucumber, faced the bowling for what everyone knew would be the last over. He stopped the first shot, smiling; and, still smiling, stopped the second. The third he sent travelling, and ran with Yates, once—twice!

Frank Courtenay, at the pavilion, waved his cap. Highcliffe fellows round the field roared.

Herbert Vernon-Smith gave the captain of the Remove a look. His brow was black.

"That cur!" he muttered.

He was thinking of Hazel. It had been a near thing, and Hazel's duck's egg made all the difference.

When every man in the team was wanted to be at the top of his form, Hazel had thrown away a wicket—and for what reason? Not by the chances of cricket—rough luck that could not be helped, and that had to be tolerated with a cheery grin. He had been put off his form by a rotten racing affair—a blackguardly stunt for which he would have been sacked from the school if his headmaster had known of it. The Bounder, at that moment, could have found savage satisfaction in knocking Hazel spinning, right and left.

Harry Wharton & Co., however, were good losers, if the Bounder was not.

They could take what came to them, and smile.

If the captain of the Remove felt sore about Hazel's proceedings, as unquestionably he did, he was not likely to give any sign of the same while Marjorie was there.

The Highcliffe match, which might so easily have been a victory, was a defeat. And that was that! And Harry Wharton, for the present, kept his thoughts on the subject to himself.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Down on His Luck!

HAZELDENE came in just in time for calling-over, and immediately after roll went up to his study.

He had been there only a few minutes when the captain of the Remove came in.

Harry Wharton stopped short in the doorway, looking at Hazel with a startled face.

Hazel had thrown himself into the armchair, and sat there limp. His face had a dazed look. He made no sign as Harry appeared in the doorway, and it was perfectly clear that he had forgotten all about the cricket.

Wharton remained silent for a minute or so. He remembered what the Bounder had said on the cricket field, and he knew that look on Hazel's face—he had seen it there before. He compressed his lips, hard.

"Where have you been, Hazel?" he asked quietly.

"Find out!"

"I think I know! Did you forget that you were playing in a cricket match to-day, or what?"

Hazel gave a slight start. Amazing as it was, it was clear that he had forgotten all about it.

"Yes," he said sullenly.

"I don't quite know what to say to you," said Harry slowly. "Your sister's gone back worried about you—anybody could see that."

"Is that your business?" sneered Hazel.

"Perhaps not. But it's my business, as your cricket captain, to ask you what the dickens you mean by letting the team down as you did."

Hazel laughed. It was a harsh, discordant laugh.

"Cricket! I'm likely to think of cricket—now!"

"A man selected to play for his school is generally supposed to think of it—a little," said Harry. "Half the Remove have been criticising me for putting you into the eleven at all. What am I to say to them now?"

"Tell them you've chucked me out."

"I shall tell them that, of course!" said Harry Wharton grimly. "You're out of the eleven—and I can see now that I was a fool to play you at all. Smithy knew better than I did—and he won't let me forget it in a hurry, either. I trusted you—like a fool!"

"You always were a fool," said Hazel; "and you're a bigger fool now than ever if you fancy I care two straws about what you think, or your rotten cricket matches. Leave me alone!"

Wharton's eyes gleamed.

"You ought to be booted round the quad!" he said.

"I shouldn't wonder. I don't care, anyhow! If it's any satisfaction to you, I shan't be here next week, most likely," said Hazel bitterly. "Think I'm going to worry about cricket, when I may be called up before the Head any day to be sacked? Don't be a fool!"



Mr. Quelch picked up the cane and stepped towards Billy Bunter. The fat Remove was about to jerk the "Holiday Annual" from the bookshelf when the cane came down across his shoulders. Whack! "Yaroooooh!" A wild howl awoke the echoes of Mr. Quelch's study.

The captain of the Remove gave him a long, hard look, and stood silent, rather nonplussed.

Evidently, Hazel was in one of his scrapes again—and a more serious one than heretofore. But it was perplexing.

"I don't quite follow," said Harry, at last. "You started in topping form, and did well for the side—and then conked out suddenly. That couldn't be helped, perhaps; but you could help clearing off and leaving us in the lurch—"

"I couldn't!"

Hazel laughed again—a jarring laugh.

"You mean," said Harry, very quietly, "that you had some news about some rotten blackguardly business outside the school, in the middle of a cricket match? I don't see how you could—"

"Lots of things you don't see!" sneered Hazel. In his misery, the wretched fellow seemed to find some solace in sulky bitterness and defiance. "If you want to know, I called up a man on Prout's phone."

Wharton started.

"That's what you were doing when you were wanted for the innings—"

"That's what I'd done. And the man told me," went on Hazel deliberately, "that Dusk of Dawn had lost in the two o'clock at Wapshot! When Toddy came for me I nearly punched his head! Cricket!" He laughed. "Don't be a fool! If I don't pay Bill Lodgey to-morrow he's coming here for his money. Now you know all about it. Get out, and leave a fellow alone!"

Wharton clenched his hands.

"You cur!" he said. "You measly cur! That's why you cleared off—"

"Yes, that's why. I went to see him—to ask him for time to pay, as that rotten horse had let me down. He's given me till to-morrow. Anything

more you'd like to know?" jeered Hazel.

"You cur!" repeated Wharton. "If you're sacked from the school it will be a good thing for the school! You reptile!"

He left it at that, and walked away, shutting the door after him with a slam.

He went down to the Rag, where most of the Remove were gathered after calling-over, and where the Highcliffe match was the single topic. Hazel's name caught his ear as he went in.

Only the Bounder, and now Wharton, knew why Hazel had "conked out" so disastrously in his second innings, but everybody knew that he had walked off before the finish and left the team in the lurch. The Bounder's sneering voice greeted Wharton as he came in:

"Is Miss Hazeldene's brother staying in the eleven?" he inquired.

That was the way the Bounder put it, and there was a laugh.

Wharton did not answer. If Smithy did not choose to speak of Hazel by his name he could remain unanswered.

"Shut up, Smithy!" muttered Tom Redwing.

"Rot! You know why Hazel was shoved in the team, as well as I do," sneered the Bounder. "The same reason still holds good, I suppose—he's still his sister's brother; so I suppose we shall see him in the team for Rookwood."

"Hazeldene won't play for the Remove again, Vernon-Smith!" said Harry quietly. "Now shut up!"

"Yaas, you talk rather too much, Smithy, old man!" remarked Lord Mauleverer. "I've mentioned that to you before!"

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry. The Bounder scowled—and did not shut up.

The Famous Five left the Rag to-

gether, leaving the angry discussion on the subject of Hazel still going strong.

In the passage the Co. looked inquiringly at Harry.

"You've seen him," said Nugent. "What has the silly ass got to say for himself?"

Wharton's lip curled.

"Nothing! Only he's in a scrape—same as he was early in the term, I suppose. From what he said, he's expecting the sack!"

"The fool!" said Nugent.

"The rotter!" said Johnny Bull.

"The preposterous ass!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Bob's face clouded.

"Marjorie's brother!" he muttered. "The fool! The idiot! The measly worm! I've a jolly good mind to root him out and boot him!"

Probably it was only the fact that the scapegrace was Marjorie's brother that prevented him from ascertaining by experience the weight of the largest foot in the Greyfriars Remove!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Terrible Temptation!

"YOU!" said Vernon-Smith.

Prep was over in the Remove studies when the door of Study No. 4 opened and Hazel stepped in.

The Bounder stared at him with a look of cold scorn and hostility.

Tom Redwing gave him a glance, but did not speak.

Hazel's face was pale, but it coloured under the Bounder's bitter look.

"I—I wanted to speak to you, Vernon-Smith!" he stammered.

"I'd guessed that one!" said the Bounder. "You wanted to speak to me

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a few weeks ago, when you landed yourself in the same way! This study isn't a charity institution!"

Hazel's face flamed.

"Chuck it, Smithy!" muttered Redwing.

Hazel made a backward step, but he did not go. The cold, bitter insult of the Bounder's words and tone might have driven any fellow away. But Hazel had come to the Bounder's study like a drowning man clutching at a straw. If there was no help for him there, there was no help anywhere.

"I—I must speak to you, Smithy!" he muttered huskily. "Don't be a cad! Let a fellow speak!"

"You can run on!" said the Bounder contemptuously. "Don't go, Reddy!"

But Tom Redwing quietly left the study. He would not add to the wretched fellow's miserable humiliation by hearing his appeal to the Bounder—an appeal of which Redwing easily guessed the nature, and which, he knew, would be uttered in vain. Hazel was humbling himself for nothing.

Hazel stood unsteadily, with one hand leaning on the table, as the door closed after Redwing. The misery and despair in his face might have touched even a hard heart, but it did not touch the Bounder's. A fellow who had thrown away a cricket match in which the Bounder was playing had no compassion to expect from Smithy, even if Smithy had been disposed to burden himself with the troubles of a fellow who had no claim on him—which he was not, in the very least. His only feeling for Hazel was bitter scorn and contempt.

"I—I'm in an awful hole, Smithy!" faltered Hazel. "That rotten horse lost, as—as I suppose you guessed it would! I—I was banking on it! I—I was absolutely certain!"

"That's the kind of fool you are!" said the Bounder. "Up in the skies one minute, down at the bottom of the dumps the next! If you can't stand the racket, what do you play the goat for?"

"I—I had the snip from a man who knew—"

"Oh, chuck it!" said the Bounder, in disgust. "Any sharper can pull your leg as easy as falling off a form! Some pal of Bill Lodgey's put you on to landing yourself with a tenner to pay him! If you had the brains of a bunny rabbit, you wouldn't have fallen for it!"

Hazel choked.

"Anyhow, I'm landed! I—I've seen Lodgey, and he's given me till to-morrow. I—I owe him ten pounds!"

"And you've got the cold neck to come here and ask me for it!" The Bounder laughed. "I think that takes the prize for cool cheek!"

"I—I can settle later in the term!" groaned Hazel. "Lodgey won't wait; he says he's coming up to the school for it if I don't pay! That means the sack! He—he knows I paid up last time—a pal of his—a few weeks ago. He—he thinks I can find the money if I like because of that! You lent me the money that time, Smithy. That's partly the reason why he's so hard on

me now. He—he thinks that if I got it once, I can get it again."

"I remember," sneered the Bounder, "but I don't remember that you ever squared!"

Hazel had a flash of spirit.

"You never wanted me to square! You helped me that time, to egg me on in a row with Wharton, and you know you did!"

"Yes," said the Bounder coolly, "I know I did. Well, I don't want you to play my game like that now, and, if I did, I shouldn't pay through the nose for it! Ten quids! My only hat! Think I'm made of banknotes?"

"I know it's a lot," groaned Hazel, "but I'd pay you somehow! It means the sack for me if Lodgey comes here!"

"Think I care!" snarled the Bounder. "You rotten, weak-kneed worm! The sooner you're kicked out of the school the better! You let us down in the Highcliffe match through this putrid foolery! Now you can take what's comin' to you! I wouldn't put up sixpence to save you from the sack!"

Hazel, leaning on the table, stared at him dully.

"Not a sixpence!" said the Bounder deliberately. "Cricket matches may be nothin' to you—why can't you keep out of them, then? One more wicket would have seen us through; we fairly had them beaten if we hadn't had a rotten weakling and deserter in the team! Ten men playin' the game of their lives, and the whole thing chucked away—because you must back your fancy, and haven't grit to stand the racket when the cards go against you! By gad, if I could save you from the sack by liftin' my little finger, I wouldn't lift it! Take what's comin' to you, an' screw up a spot of pluck from somewhere to face the music!"

Hazel listened to him in silence.

Probably he had known that it was futile to appeal to the Bounder. Anyhow, he knew it now. He had no claim on him, unless fellow-blackguardism gave him a claim. In all the Greyfriars Remove, only the Bounder was wealthy enough to meet such a demand—and two other fellows. But the other two—Monty Newland and Lord Mauleverer—were not fellows to whom he could tell a tale of dingy blackguardism.

He did not answer. For a long minute he stood there, staring dully at the Bounder; then, in silence, he turned and left the study. Vernon-Smith's scoffing laugh followed him as he shut the door.

Other fellows were coming out of the studies now prep was over. Some of them glanced at Hazel's pale, harassed face. He did not notice them as he went along slowly to his own study.

Billy Bunter's fat voice was audible in the Remove passage.

Hazel did not notice him or heed him till suddenly the drift of what the fat Owl was saying struck him, and he stopped and listened.

"It was only to oblige Mauly, of course. Mauly wanted me to get that tenner back for him—didn't you, Mauly?"

"No!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

"Would Mauly have seen the tenner if you'd got your fingers on it, Bunter?" inquired Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, you beast, Skinner!" gasped the fat Owl, in breathless indignation. "Think I was going to pinch that tenner?"

"Weren't you?" asked Skinner blandly.

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

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

Billy Bunter glared at Skinner with a glare that nearly cracked his spectacles.

"I was going to get it for Mauly, you beast!" he roared. "Of course, if I got it for Mauly, he would lend a chap ten bob till his postal order came—wouldn't you, Mauly?"

"No!" said Mauly.

"Why, you beast!" gasped Bunter. "Mean to say that you wouldn't lend me ten bob if I got that tenner back for you from Quelch's study?"

"No fear! I'd jolly well kick you!" said Lord Mauleverer. "And I'd jolly well kick you jolly hard!"

"Beast! I jolly well won't get it for you now—so, there!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hazeldene went on to his study, leaving the Remove fellows chortling. He went into Study No. 2 and shut the door.

He wiped a spot of perspiration from his face.

Ten pounds—to save him from utter disaster! And that fool Mauleverer had used a ten-pound note as a book-mark, and it was inside the confiscated book in the Remove master's study. Nobody would even know if it was taken away—not till the end of the term!

Hazel shuddered.

He tried to drive that thought from his mind. But before his mind's eye rose the bullying face of Bill Lodgey. The thought of that face being seen in the Greyfriars quad, of the sharper's voice asking for the Head—chilled the wretched Hazel to the very soul.

At the bottom of his heart, perhaps, he did not believe that Lodgey would carry out that threat. But he dared not run the risk. If the man came, it was the finish for him, at Greyfriars.

He pressed his hand to his brow. He had been through this before, and had resolved, with passionate determination, never to get landed again. But a lesson never lasted long with him. Once the danger was over, he had soon forgotten. As the Bounder scornfully said, he was up in the skies one minute, down in the deeps the next. Like Reuben of old, he was unstable as water.

In his last scrape, Smithy had helped him out—for reasons of his own. Smithy would not help him now. The defeat in the Highcliffe match rankled deeply with the Bounder, and it was due to Hazel's dingy folly. So far from helping him, the Bounder openly rejoiced in his disaster, a just punishment for having let the team down. There was no help—unless he could help himself.

The thought of that banknote, in the book in Quelch's study, haunted him. If that fool, Mauleverer, was so careless with money, he deserved to lose it. And, with a little luck, it might be replaced before it was even missed! And—and—and— A dozen wretched pretences and excuses flitted through his tormented mind, though he knew all the time that if he touched money that did not belong to him, he was a thief, unfit to look any decent fellow in the face.

He drove the thought from his mind at last, somehow.

But when the Remove went to their dormitory that night, there was one who lay sleepless, long after all other eyes were closed—sleepless, turning restlessly, listening to the hours that struck, one after another. And if, in the dead silence of the night, there was one who crept down silently from the sleeping dormitory, no ear in the Remove heard him go, or heard him return.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Who Was It?

"BUNTER!"
 "Oh!" gasped Bunter. "It wasn't me, sir!"

Mr. Quelch's gimlet eyes fixed on the fat Owl grimly.

Every fellow in the Remove had noticed that Quelch was grim that morning. It had been noticed at prayers; then at breakfast. Somebody, it seemed, was "for it"; but it was not until the Form assembled in the Remove-room for first school that Quelch spoke on the subject. Then, as he called to Bunter, the Remove knew who the culprit was.

Bunter had been "up" to something. A pie was missing from the lower regions, perhaps. Such exploits were in Bunter's line. But Quelch's grimness seemed rather too pronounced for that. Anyhow, Bunter was prompt in denial. Of what he was suspected; he did not yet know; but he rushed in with a negative to begin with.

"Stand out before the Form, Bunter!"
 "Oh lor!"

Bunter rolled out.
 Mr. Quelch picked up the cane from his desk.

"I—I say, sir, it—it wasn't me, really, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I never—"

"What was not you, Bunter?" inquired Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, nothing, sir! I—I mean anything!" stammered Bunter.

"I shall not punish you without inquiry, Bunter, although I have no doubt that you were the offender," said Mr. Quelch. "Last night, while the House was asleep, someone entered my study. Was it you?"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

A grin flickered along the faces of the Remove.

Everybody knew of Bunter's exploit of the previous afternoon. Nobody doubted that he had repeated it in the silent watches of the night.

With one exception! Hazel sat as if turned to stone, as he heard his Form-master's words. There was no grin on Hazel's face.

"Last night," resumed Mr. Quelch, "someone entered the study. I think it was you, Bunter."

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I was fast asleep in the dorm, sir, all night. I never opened my eyes once!"

"Whoever entered my study," went on Mr. Quelch, "went to a certain bookcase in the room."

He glanced round over the Form, and the grinning faces became serious.

"Yesterday afternoon," went on Mr. Quelch, "you entered my study, Bunter, and made a surreptitious attempt to take away a volume belonging to Mauleverer, which I had confiscated the previous day. I caned you for that action. Last night that bookcase was opened, and the volume in question moved from its place."

"I—I—I never—"

"I noticed this," continued Mr. Quelch, "as soon as I entered the study this morning, Bunter."

"I—I—I never, sir!" groaned Bunter. "I—I haven't taken that 'Holiday Annual' away, sir! I really never—"

Mr. Quelch gave him a sharp look.

"I did not say that you had taken the 'Holiday Annual' away, Bunter! The volume is still in the bookcase."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"But it has been moved," said Mr. Quelch. "It was not in the same place on the shelf. I conclude that whoever was intending to take it away, was alarmed or disturbed, and did not, after all, take it away. It was undoubtedly

taken from the shelf, and replaced—for it was several places farther along on the shelf."

Again Mr. Quelch was puzzled by an outbreak of grinning on the part of his Form.

The Remove fellows knew—what, of course, Mr. Quelch did not know—that the midnight prowler's interest was not in the book itself, but in a certain unusual book-mark that it contained.

Bunter—if it was Bunter—had had no intention of taking away the confiscated Annual. He had only wanted to lift it down, take out the book-mark, and put it back—and clear off with Mauly's tenner.

That Bunter had done so, few fellows doubted. Bunter's designs on that tenner were very well known in his Form.

"This is not a laughing matter!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Such an act calls for the very severest punishment. Some boy has broken dormitory bounds, and entered a Form-master's study at night. Although he did not carry out his intention, but left the volume there, the offence remains the same. Bunter—"

"I—I—I didn't, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I never woke up once—"

"It was you, Bunter, yesterday afternoon—"

"Oh, yes, sir! But it wasn't me last night, sir!" exclaimed Bunter. "I—I never thought of it, sir. I never woke up once. Perhaps—perhaps you're mistaken, sir!"

"What!" thundered Mr. Quelch. He did not seem pleased by that happy suggestion.

"Well, sir, you mayn't have noticed just where the book was, sir," stammered Bunter, "and—and if it's still there, sir."

"The book is not where I placed it yesterday, Bunter! I placed it on the lower shelf, between a Greek lexicon and a volume of Sempronius. This morning Sempronius is required in class, and I took it from the bookcase. I noticed at once, therefore, that the 'Holiday Annual' was not in the same place. It was three places along the shelf."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"There was nothing else," continued Mr. Quelch, "to indicate that my study had been entered. No other trace was left. But the fact that that volume had been taken down, and replaced, was indisputable."

"I—I—I never—"

All eyes were on Bunter and his Form-master. No fellow in the Form thought of looking at Hazel.

That wretched junior was hardly breathing.

He knew that he had left no sign of his nocturnal visit to his Form-master's study. But in his haste and his terror, he knew, now, that he had not replaced the volume in the exact spot from which he had lifted it.

He had not thought about that—never dreamed of thinking about that. There were two or three vacant spaces on that bookshelf, and he had thrust the volume hastily back, after taking what he had come for. Who could have fancied, for one moment, that any eye would detect that that volume was not in the exact spot where it had been left the day before?

And yet, as he now knew, detection had been inevitable, as Mr. Quelch had left that "Holiday Annual" next to a book required in morning class; and when he took the latter from the shelf, he could not possibly help noticing that the "Holiday Annual" was no longer next to it!

Such a trifle as that! And yet he might have known the lesson taught by universal experience, that there is always some disregarded trifle to betray a guilty action!

Mr. Quelch paused, his gimlet eyes boring into the unhappy Owl of the Remove.

Knowing nothing of the banknote-bookmark, he naturally supposed that the fat Owl's intention, the previous afternoon, had been to take away the confiscated volume. Now, equally naturally, he supposed that Bunter had repeated that performance—doubtless losing his nerve at the last moment, and hurriedly thrusting the volume back into the wrong place.

Anyhow, it was absolutely certain that some fellow had entered his study during the night, taken that "Holiday Annual" from the shelf in the bookcase, and put it back again. And the Remove master took a very serious view of such an action.

Billy Bunter blinked at him with great uneasiness.

The consciousness of innocence might have been a support to Bunter, had his word been worth anything. But, guilty or innocent, Bunter's denials would have been equally prompt and emphatic.

"What have you to say, Bunter?" demanded Mr. Quelch, at last.

"It wasn't me, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I never thought of it! I—I wouldn't have got out of bed for anything in the middle of the night! I—I was fast asleep all the time, sir. I never—"

Mr. Quelch paused again.

He had no doubt. And the grinning faces of his Form revealed to him that the Remove fellows had no doubt, either.

Yet there was no actual proof. Mr. Quelch was a severe man, but he was just—meticulously just. Without a confession or proof he did not feel that he could punish the fat junior, though there was no doubt in his mind.

It was, after all, possible that some other fellow had had the idea of getting Mauleverer's book back for him, or Mauleverer himself.

Mr. Quelch's gimlet eye turned on his lordship.

"Mauleverer!"

"Yaas, sir?"

"Did you leave your dormitory during the night?"

"No, sir!"

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"Some boy in this Form left his dormitory and entered my study during the night," he said. "That boy must be discovered. I can accept your word without question, Mauleverer."

"Thank you, sir!"

"I—I hope you can take my word as much as Mauly's, sir!" stammered Bunter.

"I can do nothing of the kind, Bunter. You are the most untruthful boy in the school."

"Oh, really, sir—"

"I will not, however, punish you without actual proof," said Mr. Quelch. "I shall leave the matter over for the moment. If you are unjustly suspected, Bunter, you have only to thank your own foolish action yesterday, and your reputation for reckless untruthfulness. You may go back to your place."

Mr. Quelch laid down the cane, much to Bunter's relief. He rolled back to his place. The matter was dismissed—for the present—and Sempronius was the order of the day in the Remove-room.

But every fellow in the Form knew THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,533.

that that precious book-mark was no longer in the "Holiday Annual" in Mr. Quelch's study, and, with a single exception, every fellow was quite assured that it was in the present possession of William George Bunter. As nobody, of course, supposed that Bunter meant to "pinch" it, they expected him to hand it over to its owner that morning, and rather wondered why he had not done so already. So there was a surprise in store for the Remove—and for Bunter!

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Shell Out!

"YOU fat chump!"
"Oh, really, Mauly——"
"You blitherin' ass!"
"Look here, you beast——"
"You podgy, piffing, pernicious porpoise——"
"You silly ass!" roared Bunter, blinking at Lord Mauleverer in great indignation. "Wharrer you calling a fellow names for?"

In break, that morning, Lord Mauleverer did not give Billy Bunter his usual wide berth. He bore down on him at once with a frowning brow. Other fellows looked on with grinning faces.

Bunter had denied, in the Form-room, having been the study prowler. That was what was to be expected of Bunter. But he was not expected to deny it now.

That he had gone down in the night and taken the banknote from the book, all the Remove knew—or thought that they knew. He had failed in the afternoon, and succeeded in the night. Now he was expected to produce it.

If he had it, however, Bunter did not seem to be thinking of producing it. He did not even seem to understand why Mauly was angry. He blinked at his lordship indignantly.

"Didn't I tell you to leave that 'Holiday Annual' alone, you fat frump?" snapped Mauleverer. "Why the dooce can't you mind your own bizney—what?"

"If that's the way you thank a fellow for obliging you, Mauly——"

"You piffin' porker! If you'd been spotted it would all have come out, and I should have been landed in a row with Quelch. Can't you ever mind your own business, fathead?"

"Beast!"
"I told you to let it alone, and I told you I'd kick you if you didn't! Now hand it over and turn round."

Bunter blinked at him.

"Eh? Hand what over?" he asked.

"That tenner, you ass!"

"What tenner, you fathead?"

"Don't play the goat, Bunter!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Give me the banknote you took out of the 'Holiday Annual' at once."

"You silly idiot!" yelled Bunter.

"Haven't I told you I never got it? You know Quelch copped me, and whopped me, too!"

"That was yesterday afternoon. I know that. Don't be an ass, Bunter! Give me the banknote."

"How can I give it to you when I've not got it?" exclaimed the bewildered Owl.

"Quelch copped me yesterday afternoon, as you jolly well know."

"He did not cop you last night."

"Last night?" repeated Bunter.

"Think I went down last night, you ass? Catch me going down in the middle of the night after your rotten tenner! After you'd told me you wouldn't lend me ten bob if I got it for you, too! Don't be an ass!"

"The Magnet Library.—No. 1,533."

Lord Mauleverer did not answer that. He stood looking at Billy Bunter, with a very peculiar expression.

A dozen other Remove fellows looked at Bunter, and at one another. Skinner gave an expressive whistle.

Bunter blinked round from face to face through his big spectacles, in angry indignation.

"I say, you fellows, you don't fancy I went down after Mauly's tenner, do you?" he exclaimed.

"We know you did!" said Johnny Bull. "What's the good of talking rot, Bunter? Give Mauly his tenner at once!"

"Oh, really, Bull——"

"What's the game, you fat ass?" asked Peter Todd. "You can't be meaning to pinch it. If it was tuck you'd pinch it fast enough!"

"Oh, really, Toddy——"

"Shell out, fathead!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"You utter idiot!" said Vernon-Smith. "Do you think you'll be allowed to keep it, when everybody knows you've got it?"

"Oh, really, Smithy——"

"Chuck that, Vernon-Smith!" said Lord Mauleverer quietly. "Bunter wouldn't dream of keeping my banknote!"

"He doesn't seem in a tearing hurry to hand it over!" grinned Skinner.

"Beast!"

"You know he's got it, Mauly, don't you?" asked Harry Wharton, with a puzzled look at the schoolboy earl.

"No. I thought so, of course—all the fellows did. But if he's got it he will hand it over."

"Of course I would!" gasped Bunter.

"I was going to get it yesterday for you, old chap! But I never——"

"You mean to say that you've not got it?" exclaimed the captain of the Remove.

"You left it where it was, after going down specially for it?"

"I never went down——"

"You can cut that out!" said Harry sharply. "Quelch knows whether somebody went to his bookcase or not. That's settled."

"It wasn't me——"

"Don't talk rot! It was you or nobody," said Johnny Bull. "If you got scared, and put the book back without taking the banknote out——"

"That's it!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"I never guessed that one. It's all right."

"That isn't it!" howled Bunter. "I tell you fellows that I never went down. I was fast asleep all night."

"Who did, then?" grinned Skinner.

"How should I know? Perhaps you did!" yapped Bunter. "If anybody's bagged Mauly's tenner, more likely you than me."

"Why, you cheeky fat scoundrel!" yelled Skinner, in great wrath.

He made a stride towards the Owl of the Remove.

Lord Mauleverer interposed.

"Chuck it!" he said.

"Do you think I'm going to let him say——" spluttered Skinner.

"Well, you leave me alone if you don't like it yourself!" snorted Bunter.

"I never went down last night. If somebody did, I never saw him. I was fast asleep all the time. I think the fellow who went down ought to own up, among ourselves. Nobody will give him away to Quelch."

"It was you!" roared Peter Todd.

"It wasn't!" yelled Bunter. "Can't you take a pal's word, you beast?"

"Oh, my hat! Hardly!"

"Beast!"

"Now, look here, Bunter," said

Harry Wharton quietly, "have a little sense. If you tell us that you put the book back without taking out the banknote, after all, we can believe that much. But it's no good telling us that you never went after it, because we all know you did."

"I never did!" howled Bunter. "I tell you I never went out of the dorm at all last night! I never woke up once."

"That's rot!" said Bob.

"The rotfulness is terrific."

"Bunter, you ass," urged the captain of the Remove, "for goodness' sake don't be such a fool! Can't you see that if you tell lies about it, it's perfectly clear why! Somebody went down——"

"I never did!"

"You rotten pincher!" growled Bolsover major. "Look here, you men, if he doesn't cough up that banknote, this can't be kept dark."

"You beast!" yelled Bunter. "Oh, you beast! I never went down! If anybody did, it was somebody else. I say, you fellows——"

"Rot!"

"Gammon!"

"Bosh!"

"I—I say, Mauly," gasped Bunter, "you believe me, don't you, old chap? You know I wouldn't pinch your banknote."

"Yaas."

"Good old Mauly!" sneered Skinner.

"Mauly will believe anything! Everybody else knows you've pinched it, Bunter."

"Shut that up, Skinner!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Bunter, old fat bean, you're the biggest idiot ever—and you've got yourself into a bag box, through not bein' able to mind your own business. If you hadn't barged in yesterday afternoon, you wouldn't be suspected of bargin' in last night. See? Come and have a ginger, old bloated bean."

"Well, my hat!" said Bob Cherry, as Bunter—all smiles again—rolled off with his lordship to the tuckshop.

Harry Wharton knitted his brows.

"After all, there's no proof that it was Bunter," he said. "We took it for granted: but——"

The Bounder gave a rather unpleasant laugh.

"If it was anybody else, he went down to pinch that note," he said. "Is that what you think?"

"No, of course not! That's impossible!"

"Oh gad!" breathed Vernon-Smith, with a sudden, startling change in his look. His own words seemed to have put a startling idea into his mind.

Harry Wharton looked at him sharply.

"What have you got in your head now, Smithy?" he asked.

"Oh, nothin'!" drawled the Bounder. And he walked away whistling.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Unexpected!

HAZELDENE went down to the bike-shed immediately after school that day.

But as he was about to wheel his machine out, a figure stepped into the doorway.

Herbert Vernon-Smith held up his hand.

"Hold on!" he said.

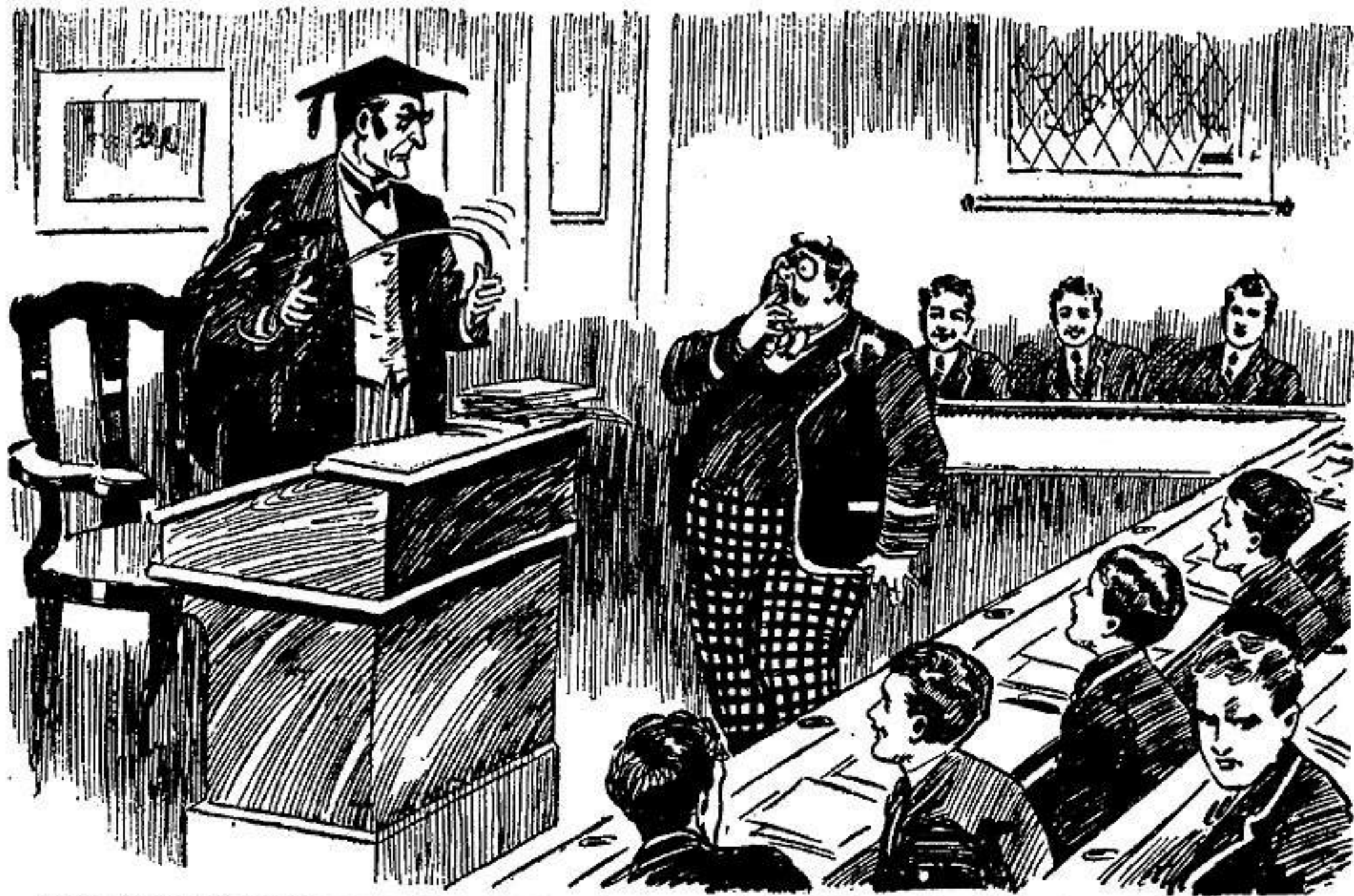
Hazel gave him a fierce look.

"Get out of my way, Vernon-Smith! I want to have nothing to say to you. Get out of that doorway!"

"You can leave that bike alone, Hazeldene," said the Bounder quietly.

"Lots of time to cut down to the Three Fishers and back before lock-up."

"I'm going for a spin——"



"Last night, while the House was asleep, someone entered my study," said Mr. Quelch. "Was it you, Bunter?" "Oh crikey!" A grin flickered on every face in the Remove, with the exception of one. Hazeldene sat as if turned to stone, as the Form-master questioned Bunter.

"I know all about that! Lots of time; and you'd better listen to me," said Vernon-Smith. "You've got to, anyhow, for if you try to shove past, I'll knock you spinning!"

"You rotten bully!"

"Wash that out! You may be glad I stopped you, when you're a bit cooler," said the Bounder contemptuously. "If you're going to be sacked from Greyfriars, better to be sacked for pub-haunting and betting, than for stealing!"

Hazel gave a choked cry.

He let go the bicycle, and it clanged over. Unheeding it, he stood staring at Vernon-Smith, his startled eyes burning from his white face.

"What—what did you say?" he stammered. "What do you mean? You rotter—you cad! What do you mean?"

Smithy glanced round before answering. No one else was at hand at the moment. He spoke in a low voice.

"Some Remove man sneaked down from the dorm last night to take that banknote out of the book in Quelch's study."

Hazel tried to pull himself together. But his look was ghastly.

"It's put down to Bunter, because of the way he played the fool yesterday. Bunter denies it—"

"Wouldn't he?" muttered Hazel.

"That's right—he would." Vernon-Smith nodded. "But—Bunter hasn't got the tenner! Some of the fellows think he has—I don't! He hasn't! And if he lost his nerve, and left it in the book last night, there's no earthly reason why he shouldn't say so. It wasn't left in the book. It was pinched by the man who prowled in Quelch's study last night."

Hazel did not speak.

He could see the suspicion that had come into the Bounder's mind—unavoidable in the circumstances of the case.

But he could see, also, that it was only a suspicion.

"I can't believe that Bunter would pinch that tenner," went on the Bounder in a low voice. "I can't think that any man at Greyfriars would—unless he was in a scrape, half off his head with funk. Do you get me?"

"No!" muttered Hazel.

"I've been keepin' an eye on you, to see if you went out! Now you're goin'. That's why I'm speakin' to you. If you've been fool enough—idiot enough—mad enough—" The Bounder paused a second. "Look here, Hazel, there's still time to put it back—nothing known or said! A bit earlier you could have told Mauly you'd got it for him—meddlin' like that fat ass Bunter! It's too late for that now—after keepin' it all day—if you've got it! But—"

Hazel picked up the bike.

"Will you get out of my way, Herbert Vernon-Smith?" he asked in a low, concentrated tone. "You've come here to give me good advice, have you—you, the fellow that would be sacked like a shot if the Head knew half what the fellows could tell him. Keep your advice till I ask you for it! Get out of my way, or I'll run this bike into you!"

The Bounder looked at him—hard, doubtfully.

There was no proof! There was, indeed, no proof that the banknote had been removed from the book at all. The evidence, what there was of it, was against Bunter. Yet suspicion was strong in his mind. The very sum that Hazel needed so sorely—the very sum he had tried to borrow in Study No. 4—with the threats of Bill Lodgey over his head!

"Do you hear me?" said Hazel, between his teeth. "Keep your distance from me, Vernon-Smith! Leave me alone! And—get aside from that door!"

"I've said my say!" The Bounder stepped aside. "I'm no friend of yours, Hazel—I'd sooner boot you than not, after the rotten way you let us down yesterday. But I've spoken as a friend, all the same. If you've done such a mad thing, think of your sister, at school only a few miles from here—of your mother and father—and take my tip, before it's too late."

The Bounder spoke with very unusual earnestness.

Unheeding, Hazel wheeled the bike past him, without an answer, and without a look. His face was sullen, defiant.

Vernon-Smith stood looking after him as he went out of the gate. He suspected—he could not help suspecting. But he had to leave it at that. With a contemptuous shrug of the shoulders, the Bounder walked away to the House.

Hazeldene mounted his bicycle and rode away—taking the direction of Courtfield. Anyone who noticed him would have supposed that he was riding over to the town. But out of sight of the school, he changed that direction, and followed a bridle-path through the woods, down to the towpath on the Sark. Leaving his machine in the wood, concealed in a mass of hawthorns, he went out on the towpath on foot. There he halted, gazing about him, to make sure that no one belonging to Greyfriars was in sight. Then he walked on quickly towards the gate of the Three Fishers inn.

But he stopped. His heart was beating painfully. He backed under the trees by the towpath again, leaned on an old beech, and remained there for some time, thinking—or trying to think.

All day long he had been in a state of dazed nervousness, anxious to get away and get it over. Now that he was almost at his destination, hesitation set in. He had refused to think—driven thought

from his mind—but those words from the Bounder had made him think, in spite of himself. They had brought home to his mind what he was doing.

And what he was doing made his flesh creep to think of it.

The banknote he had taken from Mauleverer's book was in his pocket. There was still time, as Smithy had said, to put it back where he had found it. What he had done one night he could undo the next night. It was good advice—it came from a fellow who despised him, and whom he disliked bitterly—but it was sound counsel, and he knew it. And was he so safe as he had fancied—when the Bounder suspected him? Once he parted with that banknote it was irrevocable—he was a thief, a thing unclean. He stood with the perspiration breaking out on his forehead, in pitiable fear and wretched indecision.

He stirred at last. His face was white, his eyes burning, as he went—and he went in the direction of the gate on the towpath.

He gave a haggard glance to and fro, and went hurriedly in. A man loafing on the path within, gave him a curious glance. Hazel's face, though he was not aware of it, would have drawn a second glance from anyone.

"Is Bill Lodgey here?" Hazel muttered thickly.

"He's in the billiards-room, sir."

"Will you ask him to come out? I—I've got something for him."

The man nodded, and after another curious stare at the white face, went round the building. Hazel waited, in cover of a clump of bushes that hid him from the towpath. In a few minutes, a red-faced man, with a bowler hat on one side of his head, and a cigar sticking out of the corner of his mouth, came along, and joined the Greyfriars junior.

The expression on Bill Lodgey's face, as he came, was aggressive, bullying. But it changed as he saw Hazel.

"I've got it!" muttered Hazel. "I—I managed it, after all—I—I've got it." He fumbled in his pocket.

Lodgey's eyes remained fixed on his face.

Hazel's hand came out of his pocket, with a banknote for ten pounds crumpled in it.

Lodgey made no movement to take it.

Not for twice and thrice ten pounds would Bill Lodgey have touched that banknote—with that look in the wretched boy's face. Lodgey had had many narrow escapes, in his time, from seeing the inside of a prison cell, and he was by no means anxious to find himself quartered in one.

Hazel held out the banknote.

Mr. Lodgey put his hands behind him. "You young fool!" he said. "You young idiot! Put it back in your pocket!"

Hazel stared at him wildly.

"What do you mean?" His voice was cracked. "What—"

"I mean," said Mr. Lodgey quietly, "that you'd better go straight back to where you found that banknote, and put it back. Think I'm blind, or what? You mad young fool!"

Hazel stood dumb.

"You owe me money," said Lodgey. "A man wants to be paid! Leave it at that! I'll wait! I reckoned you could pay if you liked—you did last time! But—" He gestured to the schoolboy to put the banknote out of sight. "I tell you, you can take your time, but don't try those tricks again! Think I want to see you sent to chokey, and me after you? You mad young fool!"

Hazel dazedly understood. The man realised that he had driven him too

hard; he had read everything in his white, tormented face. He knew, as well as if Hazel had told him, that that banknote did not belong to him—and he was scared. He was not, perhaps, rascal enough to take it; and it was certain that he dared not.

"Put it away, you young fool! Go back to your school, and put it back!" muttered Lodgey. "I tell you, I'll wait! If it's like that, you won't find Bill Lodgey a hard man. Leave it over! Get out of this!"

He turned, with that, and walked away, and disappeared round the building.

Hazel stood rooted.

The man knew! That was an added humiliation, but that mattered little. He had nothing more to fear from the sharper. The man was frightened by what his threats had driven his dupe into—he was more anxious to see the last of Hazel than Hazel was to see the last of him. Slowly Hazel turned and went back to the towpath—his hand clutching the crumpled banknote in his pocket. His heart grew lighter and lighter.

The burden was rolled from his mind. To get back to the school, with the banknote safe; to steal down from the dormitory, that night, and replace it where he had found it, as the Bounder had advised—then to shut the whole thing out of his thoughts! He walked with a light step, back to where he had left his bicycle in the wood.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Too Late!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter rolled into the Rag after prep that evening, and squeaked.

Most of the Remove had come down from the studies. Most of them glanced at the fat Owl as he rolled in, and Skinner called out:

"Cough it up, Bunter!"

Bunter did not heed Skinner. He bestowed his attention on the Famous Five.

"I say, Quelch has gone to the Head!" he announced.

"What about it, fathead?" asked Bob Cherry.

"I mean, he's not in his study now."

"Well, if he's gone to the Head, we could have guessed that one!" remarked Bob. "But what about that?"

"Well, look here, you cut into his study, Bob—safe as houses, now he's gone to the Head—"

"Fathead!"

"Beast! I mean, I say, old fellow—"

"Have you given Mauly his tenner yet?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Yah! I say, you fellows, do listen to a chap!" urged Bunter. "A lot of fellows make out that I bagged that tenner, because Quelch thinks that somebody went down to his study last night—"

"Didn't you?" grinned Nugent.

"No!" roared Bunter. "I didn't! I've told you, a dozen times at least, that I never went down from the dorm at all."

"Which is pretty good evidence that you did!" remarked Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, I never did!" protested Bunter. "I was fast asleep all night! I don't suppose anybody went down, really! You know what an old ass Quelch is! Look here, now it's perfectly safe, one of you cut into Quelch's study and get that banknote out of Mauly's book for him."

"The same banknote can't be pinched twice, can it?" asked Skinner.

"You shut up, you beast! I say, you fellows, Quelch doesn't know that the beastly banknote's there," urged Bunter. "Safe as houses to cut in and bag it, while he's gone to the Head! That will prove to everybody that I never bagged it last night, see! You do it, Bob!"

"I don't think!"

"What about you, Nugent?"

"Nothing about me, old fat man!" answered Frank, laughing.

"I say, Bull, you do it! You've got lots of pluck—give me a Yorkshireman for pluck!" said Bunter. "You'll go, won't you?"

"No, I won't!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Rotten funk! I say, Inky—" Billy Bunter blinked an earnest appeal at the grinning Nabob of Bhanipur. "I say, you're plucky, ain't you, old chap?"

"The pluckfulness of my idiotic self is terrific!" agreed Hurree Jamset Rau Singh.

"You ain't afraid of Quelch catching you there, are you, old fellow?"

"Not in the leastfully!" grinned Inky. "I shall take terrific care that the esteemed Quelch does not catch me there."

"Well, look here, Wharton, it's up to you, as captain of the Remove," said Bunter. "You can't let fellows go on saying that I pinched Mauly's tenner, when it's sticking in that 'Holiday Annual' in Quelch's study all the time."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Sure it's perfectly safe to cut in?" he asked.

"Perfectly, old chap."

"Well, you cut in—"

"Oh, don't be a silly ass!" said Bunter peevishly. "I say, Smithy—will you cut into Quelch's study—"

"Not this evening!" said the Bounder.

"I say, Hazel—"

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Hazel.

Hazel, in an armchair, with a book in his hands, was looking much more cheerful than he had looked all day. Few fellows in the Remove had anything to say to him, at present—they could not forget how he had let the team down in the Highcliffe match, so soon. But he hardly noticed that. The removal of a crushing weight from his mind had restored his spirits—and the Bounder, with a sarcastic eye, had noted that he had rebounded from dismal depths to almost exuberant cheerfulness again.

That was Hazel's way when he got out of a scrape. So it looked as if he was out of his latest scrape. The Bounder had little doubt how he had got out of it!

But his cheerful expression changed as he listened to the fat Owl. He snapped, or rather snarled, at Bunter—and scowled.

With the fixed intention of replacing the purloined banknote that night, Hazel certainly did not want it to be demonstrated that it was already missing from its place.

"You funky, too!" grunted Bunter. "I say, you fellows, who's going? I say, Mauly, old chap, you go, what?"

Lord Mauleverer, from the depths of a comfortable chair, grinned, and shook his head.

"But look here, you fellows," urged Bunter, "rotten cads like Skinner keep on making out that I bagged that tenner—"

"You jolly well know you did, you fat pincher!" growled Skinner.

"Well, look here, Skinner, you go and get it!" suggested Bunter. "You'll find it there all right."

"You blithering ass," said Peter Todd, "it's perfectly certain that some

chap went down to Quelch's study last night. If it wasn't you—"

"It wasn't!" yelled Bunter.

"Then who was it?"

"Nobody, most likely," answered Bunter. "I dare say Quelch was mistaken—look what an old ass he is, always making mistakes. Look how he made out that I had that pie the other day when Mrs. Kebble said it was missing! I told him I never went down the kitchen stairs, and that I only went after a pencil I'd dropped. But he made out—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I say, you fellows, some chap ought to cut in and get Mauly's tenner for him while it's perfectly safe! I'd go myself, only Quelch might come back and cop a fellow—"

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

"I mean, it's absolutely safe—safe as houses! It's pretty thick leaving that tenner sticking there, and fellows making out that I pinched it!" said Bunter warmly.

Harry Wharton nodded, with a thoughtful look.

"The matter ought to be cleared up," he said. "I suppose it was Bunter burgled Quelch's study last night—"

"It wasn't!" yelled Bunter.

"But I don't believe he burgled the tenner," went on Harry. "Mauly ought to get it back somehow and stop the jaw on the subject. It's up to you, Mauly, as the silly ass who used a bank-note for a book-mark."

"Oh! Yaas!"

"Well, look here," said Harry. "Suppose you forget a map, or something, to-morrow morning, and get leave out of Form to fetch it—and cut in after that tenner."

"Oh! Yaas!" yawned Mauly.

"Easy enough for Mauly to forget a map," remarked Bob Cherry, with a grin. "Mauly's a whale at forgetting things. If he forgets to cut in for the tenner, too—"

"If he does we'll boot him and make him try again in the afternoon," said the captain of the Remove.

"Hear, hear!"

"Oh gad! I won't forget, old beans," said Lord Mauleverer hastily. "As a matter of fact, I should be glad to get hold of that tenner—I've rather missed it since I've been stony."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

That was settled, and the Bounder, watching Hazel's face, was puzzled. If Hazel, as he strongly suspected, had already pinched that tenner, and passed it on to other hands, he certainly could not want it to be demonstrated that the banknote was no longer in the book. But he showed no sign of disturbance, and evidently did not care a straw about what he had just heard.

Smithy was far from suspecting what was in Hazel's mind. What was to happen next morning made no difference to the fellow who planned to replace the banknote that night.

Hazel, in bed in the Remove dormitory that night, was still awake when midnight chimed. He crept silently out as the last chime died away.

The previous night he had stolen down from the dormitory like a trembling thief, with shaking nerves and heart aching with fear. This night he went quietly and resolutely, threading dark passages and staircases with a lighter heart—only anxious to get rid of his burden.

Five minutes after leaving the dormitory he stood in Mr. Quelch's study, and a flashlamp, glimmering in his hand, shone on the glass doors of the bookcase.

He whipped open one of the doors and flashed the light on the books within.

Then he caught his breath.

The "Holiday Annual" did not meet his view. Over all the books, one after another, he flashed the light; but Mauly's volume was not there.

He stood panting.

He knew, of course, what had happened. After the occurrence of the

previous night Mr. Quelch must have removed the confiscated volume from that bookcase. Unaware of what it contained, and taking it for granted that the book itself was the object of the night prowler, the Remove master had simply placed it elsewhere—where?

With despair in his heart, the wretched junior flashed the light about

(Continued on next page.)

The STately HOMES of GREYFRIARS

A PLACE OF WOE!

By

The Greyfriars Rhymester



(1)

The Matron's house is not a home of jollity,
It's not a pleasant house at which to be,
It's not a mansion sacred to the quality,
Nor yet a charming cottage by the sea;
But though it gives no reason for hilarity
When we are feeling so extremely well,
When we are ill, it is a house of charity,
We love it better than the best hotel.

(2)

The Sanatorium's quiet and commodious,
The ward is airy, comfortable and warm.
The medicines are all completely odious,
And there's enough to poison half the Form!
And when your head's the size of a gasometer,
When eating is a thing you can't endure,
Then Mrs. Kebble comes with her thermometer,
And kindly says she'll take your temperature.

(4)

She feels your pulse and forehead, lightly
fingering
The mighty muscles of your arms and chest.
"A bad attack," she tells you, "of malingering!
There's very little hope, but get undressed
And I will call the doctor in to operate.
We'll see if that will free you from your pain;
And if it doesn't cure you at the proper rate,
We'll try a dose of Mr. Quelch's cane!"

(6)

The Sanatorium's small and hardly "seeable,"
Remote from all the noise of schoolboy
realms,
Its white stone walls are modern, but agreeable,
And shaded by a row of giant elms.
The Matron's always generous, but sensible,
To fags who sometimes try to pull her leg.
Such conduct's really very reprehensible,
She's quite correct to take them down a peg.

(3)

"Ah, yes," she says, "there's symptoms of
sciatica,
That's rather an uncomfortable sign!
There's just a touch of galloping pneumattica,
With double-cycloid fracture of the spine!
Lumbago seems to be becoming dominant,
In fact, I must admit you're rather ill,
And now the typhoid symptoms are so
prominent
I think perhaps you'd better make your
will."

(5)

Now Mrs. Kebble's skilled in all the sciences
Of nursing and administ'ring First Aid,
And there are lots of surgical appliances
Within her Sanatorium displayed.
So if you bust your parietal cavity
(Whatever that is) on the field of play,
She doesn't think the matter one of gravity,
She takes it out and throws the thing
away!

(7)

Sometimes the illness gets quite epidemical
When influenza symptoms are on view.
Then Mrs. Kebble fills us up with chemical,
Which makes us feel we'd rather have the
flu.
And though maybe at times we're too
importunate,
And patients try her patience to the full,
We all admit we're something more than
fortunate
In having Mrs. Kebble at the school.

Next Week: THE STATION HOUSE.

the study. He could see nothing of the missing book—he doubted, indeed, whether it was still in that study at all, and he dared not linger for a search.

Hazel crept back to the Remove dormitory with a heart like lead.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Up to Mauly!

"If you please, sir—" murmured Lord Mauleverer.
"Well?"
"I've left my map in my study, sir!"

Some of the Remove fellows grinned. Second lesson that Friday morning was geography, and the Form had been told to bring in their maps.

Lord Mauleverer did not state that he had forgotten his map. He hadn't, and Mauly was a stickler for the truth. He stated that he had left it in his study, which, certainly, he had done.

Mr. Quelch frowned.
"You may fetch your map, Mauleverer," he said—"and you will take fifty lines!"

Lord Mauleverer left the Form-room. He was back in five minutes. He brought his map in his hand. And not a fellow in the Form doubted that he had dropped into Mr. Quelch's study on his way—though opinions varied as to the result.

Harry Wharton & Co. had no doubt that he had found the banknote in the book there. Skinner and his friends were quite sure that he hadn't. The Bounder, watching Hazel's face, saw that his eyes were fixed on Mauleverer; but could not read his expression.

Hazel, that morning, seemed to have lost the restored cheerfulness of the previous evening—if anyone had cared to notice it. The Bounder did notice it.

Lord Mauleverer resumed his place in the Remove, his noble countenance giving no sign. But quite a number of fellows were eager for break that morning, to learn from Mauly just what had transpired.

When the Remove were dismissed in break a little crowd surrounded his lordship as he went out into the quad.

"I say, got it?" exclaimed Billy Bunter. "I say, old chap, if you're going to change it I'll come with you. I say, Mrs. Mimble has got in a fresh lot of tarts and cream puffs—"

Harry Wharton smiled.
Bunter's eagerness was a fairly good proof that he, at least, expected that Mauly had recaptured that precious book-mark.

"Shut up, Bunter!" said Vernon-Smith. "What's the verdict, Mauly?"

"You got it?" asked Harry.
Lord Mauleverer shook his head.

"Sorry—no!"
"Oh, you ass!" gasped Bunter. "Didn't you go to Quelch's study after all?"

"Yaas."
"Then why haven't you got it?" demanded Bunter.

"Because it wasn't there," chuckled Skinner. "Did any fellow believe that Mauly would find it there?"

"Yaas, I did!" said Lord Mauleverer calmly. "But I didn't find it in the book because the book wasn't there! Quelch's shifted it!"

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated Bunter.
"Oh, my hat!" said Bob.

Nobody had thought of that—except one pale, harassed junior who was loafing under the elms by himself, with a weight on his mind and his heart. But no one was looking at Hazel, or thinking of him.

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"What rotten luck!" said Harry. "I—I suppose we might have known—Quelch fancied that somebody was after it, and he wouldn't leave it there for the silly ass to get after again, I suppose. You fathead, Bunter—"

"I never—"
"Sure the book wasn't there, Mauly?" asked Squiff. "You know what a silly ass you are, old bean!"

Lord Mauleverer grinned.
"It wasn't in the bookcase, and I couldn't see it in the study at all," he answered. "Quelch has shoved it somewhere—might have handed it over to the Head! It doesn't matter really; I shall get it back at the end of the term, with the tenner in it all right! Forget about it."

Mauly was prepared to dismiss the matter from his mind. But it was not so easily dismissed. Nothing was to be done, however, and the matter had to be left where it was when the Remove went in for third school.

What Quelch had done with that "Holiday Annual" was an interesting question.

Two or three fellows after class that morning found reasons for calling at his study, and while there were able to ascertain that Mauly had not been mistaken—that "Holiday Annual" was no longer in the bookcase.

But it was not till after school that day that the facts were learned—and it was the Bounder who solved the problem.

After tea Herbert Vernon-Smith coolly presented himself in Mr. Quelch's study.

"What is it, Vernon-Smith?" asked the Remove master, looking up from his writing-table.

"I was going to ask you, sir, if I might have Mauleverer's 'Holiday Annual,'" said the Bounder.

"What?" barked Mr. Quelch.

"Mauleverer was goin' to lend it to me, sir, when he had finished," explained Smithy with perfect coolness. "But I hear that he had it in the Form-room in detention last Tuesday, and it was taken away—"

"That is correct, Vernon-Smith. That volume is confiscated until the end of the present term," said Mr. Quelch sternly. "You are perfectly well aware that, in the circumstances, the book cannot be given to you."

Smithy was, of course, perfectly well aware of that. It would not have been much use confiscating a book if the owner could get it back by the easy device of getting some other fellow to ask for it.

But that was not Smithy's object. What he wanted was to learn what had become of the volume. He was, in fact, pulling Mr. Quelch's leg, in search of information.

"I—I suppose not, sir," said the Bounder. "But if I might just look into it, sir, for a minute to get the answer to a puzzle I've been working out—"

That was a reasonable request, which Mr. Quelch was not the man to refuse—if the volume were available.

"I am sorry, Vernon-Smith, but the book is no longer here," said the Remove master. "In view of the surreptitious attempt to take it from my study the night before last, I have placed it in the headmaster's keeping."

He made a gesture of dismissal, and resumed writing.

Vernon-Smith left the study, and did not smile till he had closed the door.

After which, the Remove fellows knew what had become of Mauly's "Holiday Annual." It had been handed over to Dr. Locke, and was no doubt reposing in that majestic gentleman's study.

That, as Bob Cherry remarked, put the lid on.

No junior was likely to venture into that august apartment. In the daytime it was altogether too risky, and at night the Head's study was always locked.

"That tears it!" remarked Bob Cherry, in the Rag. "You won't get your tenner now till the end of the term, Mauly, and serve you jolly well right, you ass!"

"Will he get it then?" grinned Skinner. "I fancy Bunter will have spent it long before the end of the term!"

"Beast!" roared Bunter. "I never took—"

"Oh, shut up, Skinner!" said Harry Wharton. "You jolly well know that Bunter wouldn't—"

"I jolly well know that he did!" said Skinner.

"I guess it's a cinch!" remarked Fisher T. Fish. "He sure went after it that night, and, I'll tell a man, he cinched it!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"It's plain enough!" said Bolsover major. "We all know that he went after it—"

"I never—"

"And we all thought he was going to hand it over to Mauly! He didn't hand it over, and that means that he's got it!"

"I haven't!" wailed Bunter.

"Rats!"

"Rot!"

"Cough it up, you podgy pincher!"

"Beast! I haven't—I never—I wasn't—I didn't—" spluttered the hapless Owl. "Look here, Mauly, it's up to you! You go and ask the Head for your tenner!"

"Wha-a-t?" ejaculated Lord Mauleverer.

"You can tell him you left it in the book by mistake or something; it's easy enough to pull the Head's leg. He's a simple old bird!"

"Do kick him, you fellows!" said Mauleverer. "Kick him hard!"

"Beast! Owl! Beast! Wow!"

Lord Mauleverer rubbed his nose thoughtfully.

"Think it's up to me, you fellows?" he asked. "I should get into a fearful row with Quelch if he heard about that book-mark, after what happened last time. I hate gettin' six! But if you fellows think it's up to me, I'll chance it."

"Better think that out for yourself, old man," said Harry Wharton, with a smile. "You'd get six and a royal jaw, but—"

"Um!" said Lord Mauleverer. "I'll think it over! I really hate the idea of gettin' six from Quelch—loathe it!"

Hazel, who had listened, without a word, to the discussion, crept out of the Rag, choking. The wretched banknote was still in his pocket, and if Mauleverer spoke out, it would be missed from the book at once. And what was going to happen then?

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Hazel's Secret!

BOB CHERRY'S face suddenly brightened, like the sun coming out, and his friends looked at him in surprised inquiry.

On Saturday afternoon the Famous Five were in the quad, discussing what they were going to do with the half-holiday.

Harry Wharton proposed an extended spin on the bikes, and his chums agreed, but that prospect was not sufficient to



Hazeldene was about to wheel his machine out, when Vernon-Smith stepped into his path. "If you're going to be sacked from Greyfriars," he said contemptuously, "better be sacked for pub-haunting and betting, than for stealing!" "You— you rotter!" stammered Hazel, unheeding his bicycle as it clanged over. "What do you mean?"

account for the beam that dawned in Bob's rugged face.

The next moment, however, they knew, and they grinned as they followed Bob's eyes—directed towards the gates.

A graceful figure entered at the gateway, wheeling a bicycle. Marjorie Hazeldene, unaware of the group of juniors in the distance, wheeled it to the porter's lodge, where Gosling met her with a crusty grin, touching his hat, and took charge of the machine.

Johnny Bull bestowed a wink on Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, and the nabob grinned a dusky grin.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob. "That's Hazel's sister! I didn't know she was coming over to-day."

"I fancy she's been a bit worried about Hazel," said Harry. "She jolly well knew that something was wrong on Highcliffe day."

"There's Hazel!" said Nugent.

Hazeldene was going down to the gates to meet Marjorie.

Bob looked a little less bright. Since Highcliffe day the Famous Five had had little or nothing to say to Hazel. So far as they thought about him at all, it was with a disposition to boot him—which made matters a little awkward now.

They all knew that Marjorie had been worried about her wayward brother on Wednesday, and it was not surprising that she had cycled over to see him the next half-holiday. Glad as they always were to see Marjorie, it was awkward now.

"Just as well that we're going out for the afternoon," remarked Frank Nugent. "Let's go for the bikes. We can't talk to Marjorie with her precious brother scowling at us like a demon in a pantomime!"

"Hardly!" agreed Harry. "Anyhow, she's come over to see Hazel—not us."

"Well——" said Bob slowly.

"Come on," said Johnny Bull.

"Well, look here," said Bob, reddening a little, "Hazel was an awful rotter in the cricket, but—we can't keep it up for ever. Anyhow, he's out of the team, and that's that. And——"

"Don't be an ass!" advised Johnny Bull.

"Well, look here, you fellows cut off on the bikes," said Bob. "I'd just as soon knock up a few at the nets. We want to keep in practice for Rookwood."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Any old thing," he said. "I fancy I know just how many you're going to knock up at the nets, you old ass! Come on, you fellows."

Four members of the Co. went to the bike-shed. Bob remained where he was.

Hazel had met Marjorie now, and they were coming in together. That Miss Hazeldene's visit concerned her brother was clear, for she did not see the four going, and did not glance at the one remaining, evidently oblivious of the famous Co.

Hazel did not take her towards the House. They walked together under the old Greyfriars elms.

Bob Cherry's feelings were divided between a desire to greet Marjorie with his cheeriest grin, and a desire to punch her brother's head—quite a disagreeable mixture.

But for Hazel's dingy rascality, all would have been calm and bright. But Bob saw no reason why Hazel being a rotter, should make a lot of difference. He could only feel angry contempt for a fellow who had let down his side in a cricket match, for a rotten reason; still, a fellow could be civil.

The Co. were gone on their bicycles, and were already probably two or three miles away, when Bob, after drifting about aimlessly for a time, sauntered under the elms, where Hazel and his

sister had sat down on one of the old benches.

Hazel gave him a scowl, and Marjorie a rather troubled smile, as he lifted his cap.

"Want anything?" asked Hazel pointedly.

"Oh, no! Nothing special!" stammered Bob. "If you and Miss Hazeldene are thinking of going for a spin——"

"We're not."

"Oh!" said Bob.

"Why not, Hazel?" said Marjorie. "We——"

"You can go, if you like," said Hazel sullenly. "I'm not stopping you."

Marjorie compressed her lips a little; and Bob resisted an almost overpowering desire to bang Hazel's head on the elm behind the bench. He stammered something and walked away.

Marjorie gave her brother a quiet look.

"I hope there's no trouble with your friends here, Hazel," she said.

"They've been down on me ever since the Highcliffe match!" grunted Hazel. "I had something a bit more urgent than cricket to think of."

"But why then did you take a place in the team?" asked Marjorie.

Hazel scowled.

"If you've come over here to jaw me, you might as well have stayed at Cliff House!" he answered sullenly.

Marjorie did not answer that. She was accustomed to keeping her temper with her weak and wayward brother; and she knew, without inquiring, that he was in trouble of some kind. When he was easy in his mind, Hazel could be an affectionate brother; but it was only too clear that he was not easy in his mind now.

"I—I wanted to see you," went on Hazel, after a long silence. "You've

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got a lot of sense—for a girl! You've given me good advice at times, I know."

Marjorie smiled faintly.

"I can see that something's wrong, Hazel," she said quietly. "I could see that on Wednesday. If I can help—"

"I don't see how you can," muttered Hazel.

He was silent again. Hazel, with an almost unbearable burden on his mind, was anxious to unburden himself; and to no one but Marjorie would he have dared to tell his miserable secret. Even to Marjorie he hardly dared. But at the bottom of his heart was a faint hope that she might be able to help him, as so often she had helped him before.

Marjorie waited; but she spoke at last.

"Walk with me to the Head's house—"

"What for?" muttered Hazel irritably.

"Miss Locke gave me a note for him, as I was coming here."

"Oh, rot!" muttered Hazel. "Never mind that now."

Marjorie was silent again.

Miss Locke, the second mistress at Cliff House, was a younger sister of Dr. Locke, the headmaster of Greyfriars.

Hazel dismissed that matter as "rot," but he still seemed unable to make up his mind to speak.

Marjorie waited patiently.

Hazel broke out at last, abruptly.

"I'm landed! I—I don't know what to do. There never was a fellow in such a rotten scrape before. I—I daren't step into the Head's study. If—if he caught me there—" Hazel shivered.

"You have to go to the Head?" asked Marjorie puzzled.

"No—no! You don't understand," he said, with savage irritation.

"Tell me, then!" said Marjorie.

"It—it's something I've got—something that—that ought to be there, and—and I can't go there—" Hazel's cheeks crimsoned.

"I—I don't understand! You don't mean something that belongs to Dr. Locke?"

"No!" Hazel avoided her startled eyes, his cheeks growing redder. He went on: "Something that—that's supposed to be in his study—and—and—and if it's missed—" His face burned. "I'd put it where it belongs like a shot—but—but I—I can't! I don't know what to do!"

"What is it?"

He did not answer that.

"Is it—" Marjorie's voice faltered, with a dread she hardly realised that she was feeling. "Is it—something that I could take—"

"You!"

"I have to see Dr. Locke, to give him Miss Locke's note. I could take it to his study in the School House—instead of going to his house. And—and if I could take what you are speaking of in with me—"

Hazel sat dumb.

Marjorie watched him anxiously. She could see that this was not one of her brother's usual scrapes. So far as she could make out, he had something that had been taken from his headmaster's study—she could not imagine what—and dared not take it back there. Yet his look was not that of a fellow who had only played some thoughtless practical joke.

"What is it?" she repeated. "I remember once hearing that a silly boy took away the Head's birch and hid it. If it is something like that—"

"Oh, don't be a fool!"

Marjorie's lips quivered.

"Then what is it?"

Hazel's lips opened, and closed again.

Again they opened and closed. Finally, he spoke in a husky whisper.

"It's a—a—a banknote!"

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Passing on the Burden!

MARJORIE did not speak. She did not stir. She could not.

She sat dumb and frozen.

At a little distance Herbert Vernon-Smith passed, and raised his straw hat to her in passing. She did not see him. The Greyfriars quad, the old elms, the massive facade of the ancient house, seemed to be whirling round her for some moments. The colour drained from her face.

Hazel, frightened by her look, mumbled wretchedly.

"Don't be a fool, Marjorie! Don't look like that! It's not what you think. You'll make fellows stare, if you look like that."

She found her voice.

"What have you done, Hazel? Tell me what you've done."

He told her—in muttered, broken sentences, with miserable excuses and attempts at exculpation stammered out. It was a relief to him to tell her—but his face was crimson as he told. It was all Mauly's fault, for being careless with a banknote—it was that brute Lodgey's fault for uttering threats he never intended to carry out; it was that cad Smithy's fault for refusing to help a fellow in a hole; it was Quelch's fault for putting that wretched book out of his reach; it was anybody and everybody's fault except Hazel's!

Marjorie listened in stony silence.

In the wretched tale there was one spot of comfort for her—the banknote had not been parted with, and Hazel had intended to put it back. He did not want to be a thief if he could help it.

Silence followed.

"I've got it here!" said Hazel at last. "I'd give anything to get shut of it. I've thought of setting a match to it—"

"Hazel!"

"That silly fool deserves to lose it. But—"

"If it is not returned, it is stolen. Burning it would make no difference to that."

"I know! But—I daren't enter the Head's study! And—and time's short!" he mumbled. "That fat fool Bunter has got himself suspected through meddling like the fool he is, and—and some fellows think Mauly ought to go straight to the Head about it. It means a licking for him for being such a fool—but he's just the fellow to do it, to get another fellow out of a scrape."

Hazel's lips trembled.

"But that wouldn't help, if he only knew!" he muttered. "It would only prove that the banknote isn't in the book—and all the fellows would believe then that Bunter had it the other night—except Smithy! He thinks I had it. I—I can't leave it on Bunter—"

"You cannot."

"It's his own fault, for meddling!" muttered Hazel. Clearly if it came out that the banknote was missing, Bunter had to take his chance, so far as Hazel was concerned. "He needn't have! But—but—then, Smithy knows! At least, he suspects! If I could get the rotten thing put back before that idiot Mauly speaks about it—"

"Where is the book?"

"I've told you—Quelch handed it over to the Head, after he found a fellow had been after it in his study at night. It's in Dr. Locke's study somewhere—sticking in a bookcase, I expect. Might be

just lying on the table, or—or anywhere."

Hazel eyed his sister eagerly.

"It's just luck that you've got a note from Miss Locke," he breathed. "You could take it to the Head's study, as easy as to his house. Only—when he's not there, of course. I mean, having that note would be an excuse for being in his study, if anybody came."

Marjorie did not speak.

"You might spot that book in a minute or two, shove that rotten banknote in it, and—all's clear! See? If—if you'd do it—"

Hazel fumbled in his pocket.

Marjorie shuddered.

All her nerves seemed to shrink from touching that banknote—a stolen note. But to replace it where it belonged—to save her brother from being a thief: to save him from the even worse act of leaving his guilt on other shoulders—

Something crisp and rustling touched her hand as it lay idly on the bench beside her.

She quivered, and her fingers closed on the banknote.

"You've got a pocket in your blazer—shove it out of sight!" whispered Hazel. "I—I say, the Head's window's open—we can soon see whether he's in his study or not—just walk along a bit, and—and—"

Marjorie Hazeldene dragged herself from the bench. It seemed to her that the sunshine of that bright June afternoon had been blotted out. But she pulled herself together.

It had to be done! Her brother had done wrong, and it was in her power to set it right—so far as wrong could be set right.

They walked away from the spot—Hazel's step already lighter.

In passing that banknote to Marjorie he had passed her his burden—and if her heart was heavy as lead, Hazel's was lighter for the relief.

Two or three times they passed, at a distance, the wide-open window of the Head's study. It was ascertained beyond doubt that Dr. Locke was not at the moment in the study.

Bob Cherry, sauntering in the quad at a little distance, glanced towards them several times.

Neither of them noticed him.

Bob was rather regretting by that time that he had not joined his chums on the bike spin. He did not feel disposed to go down to the nets. He strolled about rather aimlessly, with a growing anger in his heart. He remembered what Wharton had said after his interview with Hazel on Highcliffe day, and he had no doubt, from what he saw in Marjorie's face, that the weak-kneed scapegrace of the Remove was landing his scrape on Marjorie, as he had done before more than once. Certainly he had not the remotest idea how the matter really stood, but he could see easily enough the effect of Hazel's conversation on the Cliff House girl.

He clenched his hands in his pockets, longing to dash them in Hazel's face—a proceeding that, though satisfactory in itself, would not have improved matters.

Unaware of Bob's thoughts, and even of his existence at the moment, Hazel whispered to his sister:

"Cut in now. The Head's not there. Even if he should come in you've got Miss Locke's letter to give him. O.K. Most likely he won't; he's sure to be in his house. Cut in!"

He gave another glance at the open window.

"The coast's clear. I—I'll wait in the Rag. Come there afterwards. I say, you're going to do it?"

Marjorie nodded. She could not speak.

They went into the House together, and Bob's eyes followed them.

A minute or two later Bob was staring rather blankly at the Head's study window. Marjorie Hazeldene had entered that study, and why she should have entered Dr. Locke's study when Dr. Locke was not there was a puzzle.

That was, however, no business of Bob's, and he did not share Billy Bunter's interest in matters that did not concern him. He gave her only one surprised glance, and then sauntered on, wondering dismally whether he was going to have a chance of speaking a word to Marjorie before she went.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

A Narrow Escape!

"OH!" breathed Marjorie.

She trembled in every limb. For ten minutes she had been in the headmaster's study. She had glanced over endless arrays of books. That "Holiday Annual" was there somewhere, but to pick out a single volume from so many was not the work of a few minutes. Then suddenly she saw it.

There was a round, small table in the window alcove, and on it lay two or three little piles of volumes. One volume, partly projecting from one of

the little piles, had a coloured cover that she knew. It was not likely that there was more than one "Holiday Annual" in the Head's study, so that must be Mauleverer's book.

She stepped quickly to the little table, taking the banknote from the pocket of her blazer as she did so.

With the banknote in her right hand she was reaching with her left to the "Holiday Annual," when the door-handle turned, and the headmaster entered.

Instinctively the hand with the banknote went behind her to hide it from sight as she faced Dr. Locke.

The Head of Greyfriars started a little, but a benign smile came over his kind old face as he looked at the startled, confused schoolgirl.

He was evidently surprised to see her in his study, but he took it for granted, as a matter of course, that she had some reason for being there.

"Miss Hazeldene, I think," he said graciously.

"Yes!" stammered Marjorie.

"You came here to see me?" asked the Head, a little puzzled.

"Yes, sir. Miss Locke gave me a letter for you," articulated the poor girl, hardly knowing what she said.

"And you waited for me?" said the Head, with a smile. "Thank you, Miss Hazeldene. You were looking at my books? Somewhat heavy reading, I fear, for a Fourth Form girl. Ah, I see

you have found one volume that might interest you—the 'Holiday Annual.' It belongs to one of Mr. Quelch's boys."

He smiled again.

Marjorie had let go the "Holiday Annual" as if it had become suddenly red-hot, but the headmaster noticed that it had been pulled from the heap.

"My dear child, you need not be confused," said Dr. Locke kindly. "There was no harm whatever in looking at my books while you waited for me to come in. Pray give me my sister's letter!"

Marjorie's heart almost died within her.

To take Miss Locke's letter from her blazer pocket, she had to bring her right hand into view, with the banknote in it.

But in that dreadful moment her brain worked quickly.

She was close to the open window, and the sill, from within, was low. Her hand, as she held it behind her, was over the sill.

She swung her hand outward, letting go the banknote. She knew that it would float down into the quad below the window—a rather deep drop—outside.

Recovering it afterwards was another matter, of which she could not think at the moment. Only one thing mattered, then, and that was to get rid of it before Dr. Locke saw it.

(Continued on next page.)



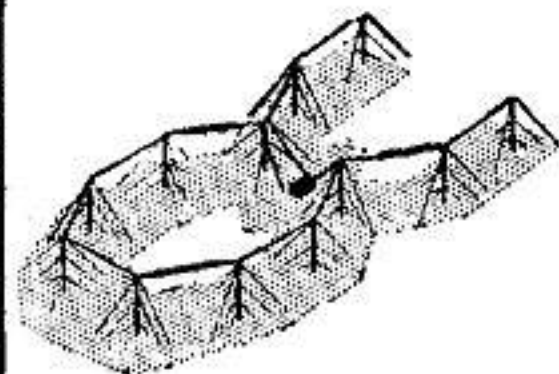
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It was easy enough, so far as that went. It all happened in a second or two, and the banknote was gone, and her empty hand came to her blazer pocket, to take out the letter.

That the schoolgirl was startled and confused, the Head could not help seeing; but that was easily explained by the fact that he had come in suddenly and found her looking at the books.

The kind old Head's only thought was to reassure her. His manner was benevolence itself, as he took the letter from her hand.

"Thank you, Miss Hazeldene," he said. "Perhaps you will wait a few moments while I see whether my sister desires any answer to this note."

"Oh, yes, sir; certainly!" stammered Marjorie. "Miss Locke asked me to take back the answer, sir."

"Very good," said the Head. "Please sit down! And you may look at the 'Holiday Annual' while you wait," he added, with a kind smile.

The "Holiday Annual" had no further interest for Marjorie; but she picked it up and turned the pages dizzily, while the Head opened the letter and perused it.

Then he sat down to write a reply, which occupied him five or six minutes more.

Marjorie sat with the "Holiday Annual" on her knees, turning the pages mechanically, but certainly not seeing a word printed thereon.

Her brain was still in a whirl, though she was calming herself now. She was feverishly anxious to get out of the study and pick up the banknote dropped from the window before other eyes fell on it.

But she could not go till the answer to Miss Locke's letter was written and handed to her. She waited almost in agony.

Minutes seemed hours to her, as the Head wrote, in his scholarly hand and his usual leisurely way.

Dr. Locke had left the study door standing open.

Mr. Prout, the portly master of the Fifth, passed in her view, going down the corridor.

The next moment she heard his fruity voice:

"What are you doing here, Hazeldene? You should not loiter in this corridor, as you know very well."

There was a mumbled reply and retreating footsteps.

Marjorie could guess that her brother had seen the Head coming to the study, and had ventured as near as he dared to see what was happening. She could guess the state of trepidation Hazel was in; but he was gone now.

Dr. Locke rose at last and handed her a letter.

"Pray give that to my sister when you return to Cliff House," he said. "There is no hurry, my dear child, if you have other occupations this afternoon. When you return for calling-over will do quite well."

"Yes, sir!" stammered Marjorie.

"Thank you, Miss Hazeldene! Good-afternoon!"

The stately old Head bowed her out of the study and closed the door.

Marjorie went down the corridor, her heart beating.

She did not need to go as far as the Rag to find Hazel. He was waiting at the end of the passage, having cut back as soon as Mr. Prout was off the scene. His face was white with mingled fear and eagerness.

"You've done it?" he breathed.

She shook her head.

"Oh!" breathed Hazel. "He—he came in too soon. Oh, what rotten luck! I—I saw him coming, and—you've still got it, then?"

In a few words she told him.

Hazel reeled, as if she had struck him a blow. He stared at her, haggard.

"You dropped it—from the window? Oh, why anybody might—" He stammered helplessly.

"Lose no time—"

He nodded, and ran out into the quad. Marjorie waited, standing by a window, her heart beating almost to suffocation.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

A Blow For Bob!

BOB CHERRY wondered whether he was dreaming.

It seemed not only like a dream, but like a particularly hideous nightmare.

He had strolled on, aimlessly, after that glimpse of Marjorie in the Head's study. He had strolled back again, still aimless. After letting his chums ride off without him, it seemed rather rough luck not to have a single word with Marjorie before she went. Moreover, Hazel was more likely than not to let his sister ride back to Cliff House alone, in which case, he had no doubt that Marjorie would welcome his company on a bike. So he had no present occupation but to walk to and fro till they came out of the House.

As he had last seen Marjorie in the Head's study he glanced in that direction as he came by.

He was rather surprised to see that she was still there, after the lapse of a good ten minutes.

She was standing with her back to the open window, quite close to the window, her right hand behind her, over the sill.

The Head's voice reached him through the open window. The Head was saying, in his kindly tones:

"Somewhat heavy reading, I fear, for a Fourth Form girl. Ah! I see that you have found a volume that might interest you—the 'Holiday Annual.' It belongs to one of Mr. Quelch's boys."

Bob grinned as he heard that.

He supposed—as the headmaster supposed—that Marjorie had been waiting for Dr. Locke to come in, and had spotted Mauly's "Holiday Annual" to pass the waiting minutes.

The thought crossed his mind, how Marjorie would jump if she opened that volume and found Lord Mauleverer's remarkable book-mark inside!

What happened next rooted Bob.

The Head was still speaking, and Bob was passing on, when Marjorie's hand unclosed over the sill and something fluttered down.

Bob did not need to look at it twice to know what it was. He knew a banknote when he saw one.

His feet seemed glued to the earth. He stood as if petrified. Marjorie, with her back to the window, could not see him; the Head, farther in the study, did not.

For a long moment Bob stood there, his gaze fixed on the banknote, that had fluttered down and lay within a few yards of him.

Mauly's banknote! He knew that!

If this was not some hideous nightmare, as he almost believed that it was, Marjorie Hazeldene had taken that banknote from the "Holiday Annual," and had had it in her hand when the Head entered, and had thrown it out of the window as the only way to escape detection.

It was mad and impossible—idiotic, on the face of it! But there it was. If she had found the banknote by chance, as she might easily have done if she had opened the book, why had she thrown it from the window? She

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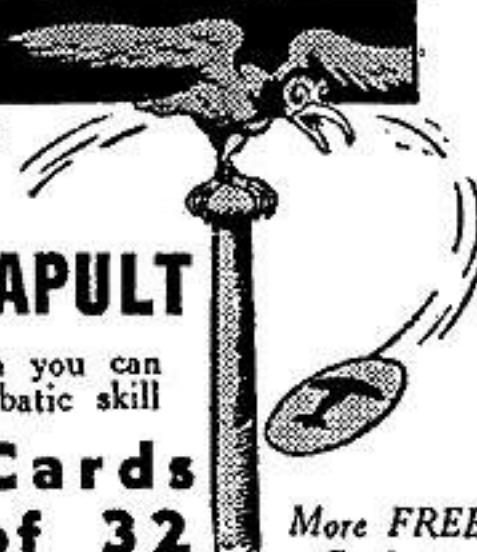


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might have shown it to the Head—she might have left it in the book. But she had deliberately held it behind her and dropped it from the window. This could only be some horrible dream—only, unfortunately, Bob was wide awake, and this had happened right under his eyes.

Hardly knowing what he did, he stepped to the banknote and put his foot on it. He shot a glance round.

Nobody else was near. Fellows were to be seen in the distance, but no one was looking in his direction. Nobody had seen anything—except Bob! That was a relief.

What did it mean?

It couldn't mean what it plainly did mean. It couldn't! But what else? With a mingled feeling of guilt and desperation Bob stooped, picked up the banknote, and shoved it deep in his pocket.

His mind was in a whirl; but one thought was clear—nobody must ever know that that banknote had ever been in Marjorie Hazeldene's hands. That was clear, and fixed in his mind. Nothing else mattered, in comparison with that.

Bob Cherry moved away, with a feeling of weakness in his knees and dizzy bewilderment in his mind. He almost groped his way under the old elms, out of sight of the Head's window. He stopped, and stood leaning on a tree, dizzy, dazed, confounded.

What did it mean? What would any fellow, who had seen what he had seen, have said what it meant? Only one thing, and that was madly impossible.

But he tried to think! Hazel—that cur, that rotter! Already, Bob knew, he had landed some miserable scrape on his sister, as he had so often done before. Money, of course! He had told Wharton that he was going to be sacked; he had been mixed up in some dingy sporting blackguardism, and owed money that he could not pay—that was pretty plain. Marjorie would have given him anything she had; but it was, of course, a sum beyond a schoolgirl's pocket-money. Had she—

Bob almost groaned aloud at that awful thought. Had she found that "book-mark" in Mauly's book, and the thought occurred to her that it would see Hazel through?

Impossible—twice, and thrice, impossible! But what did it mean?

Nobody should ever know, at any rate. There was, and must be, some explanation—Bob clung to that. But if anybody knew—only too well he knew what it would look like!—if anybody knew what he knew!

In the distance he had a sudden glimpse of Hazeldene cutting quickly out of the House.

Hazel disappeared—Bob noted in what direction. Why was Hazel hurrying along to the Head's study window? Bob bit his lip till it almost bled, and moved a little, to get a view of that distant window again. He saw Hazel—bent, scanning the ground, searching under the study window!

For what?

Bob knew only too well.

He stared across at Hazel, from the elms, with doubting, unbelieving eyes. It was impossible, wildly impossible, that Hazel was there to pick up the banknote his sister had dropped from that window. It was impossible, but true.

Marjorie had flung out the banknote. Hazel was searching for it where it had dropped, and, but for the chance that Bob had been passing, he would have found it there. There was no one else anywhere near the window—there was very little wind—the banknote would

have remained where it had fallen, but for Bob Cherry, and Hazel would have found it and picked it up!

Hazel—that cur, that dingy rotter who owed money he could not pay, and was in dread of the sack, according to his own words! What was he going to do with a stolen banknote? The answer to that seemed obvious enough.

But Marjorie—

Bob's usually ruddy face went white. Marjorie—never! She could not have known that the banknote was Mauly's. Perhaps Hazel had lied to her, told her that it was his. Anything was possible rather than—that it looked like!

Bob set his teeth and walked across towards the House.

At his footsteps Hazel straightened up, with a crimson face, and gave him a furtive look from the corner of his eye. If ever fear and guilt were

written in a fellow's face they were written in Hazel's. Bob had always despised him, though he had tried to make the best of him. Now he loathed him.

"Looking for something?" asked Bob grimly, between his shut teeth.

Hazel gave him another furtive look.

"No!" he muttered.

"I thought you were."

"Did you?"

"Yes!"

"If you're particular about knowing, I've dropped my penknife somewhere!" snapped Hazel. "That's all!"

"Like me to help you look for it?" asked Bob, with savage sarcasm.

"No!"

"Oh, I'll help!" said Bob bitterly.

"Mind your own business."

(Continued on next page.)



COME INTO the OFFICE, BOYS - AND GIRLS!

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. Write to him: Editor of the "Magnet," The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

ANY complaints this week? None! Good! Then we'll open up this little pow-wow with an interesting query from Francis Harley, of Wolverhampton. My chum, who appears to be rather worried about his height, wants to know the average height of a boy of fourteen. Sorry, Francis, but there is no such thing as average height for a boy of that age. Some boys shoot up very early in life, while others don't begin to grow until well after school-leaving age. You will find more disparity of height at the age of fourteen than any other age. A great deal has to do with climatic conditions and the country in which one lives. One boy may tower head-and-shoulders above another, and yet they may both be the same height in a few years' time. Don't you worry yourself, chum, it doesn't matter a continental red cent whether you're short or tall, so long as you're healthy. Study your health always, and your growth will look after itself!

Now for a few

RAPID REPLIES IN BRIEF.

Why are Junior Boys at School Called "Fags"? (Johnny Wright, Wolverhampton): The word is said to be derived from "factotum," meaning one who does all sorts of services for another—as a fag does for a senior.

How long Has the MAGNET Been Published? (Fred Watson, Stamford, London). Quite a considerable time—over 29 years, in fact. And it is still going strong!

Back Numbers (D. Mathews, Isle of Wight): The issues you mention have been out of print for some considerable time now. Bunter bursts on an average six waistcoats every year!

A Good Cooling Drink During Hot Weather? (Bert Franklyn, Yarmouth): Strange as it may seem, chum, the answer is a cup of tea. Try it and see. Dutton was deaf when he joined Greyfriars. In spite of this affliction he's always merry and bright and is considered a good "scout" by his schoolfellows.

Sorry to have to close down on the queries, chums, but I must say a word or two about next week's programme. The cover-to-cover story of Harry Wharton & Co. is entitled:

"BOB CHERRY'S BURDEN!"

and it's bang up to Frank Richards' usual high standard. Bob Cherry, one of the Famous Five, is well to the fore (no pun intended!) in this first-class yarn. With his own eyes, he has seen his girl chum, Marjorie Hazeldene, of Cliff House, drop a ten-pound note from Dr. Lock's study window—for her brother, the scapegrace of the Greyfriars Remove, to pick up! Could it be possible that Marjorie was a thief? That was an impossibility! But what—? The note is now in Bob's possession, but how to return it to its owner and at the same time keep the whole miserable affair a dead secret is a puzzle to Bob. For the sake of his schoolgirl chum, Bob not only risks the loss of his friends at Greyfriars, but his good name as well! There's not a dull moment in this yarn, chums, and I can confidently say that you will enjoy every line of it.

The "Greyfriars Herald" as bright and sparkling as ever, together with the Greyfriars Rhymester's contribution, will complete this bumper issue of the MAGNET. Be sure to order your copy early, chums.

YOUR EDITOR.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,533.

Bob Cherry laughed—a laugh that made Hazel start, and stare at him, so strange and jarring did it sound, so unlike Bob's cheery laugh.

He did not speak again. He strode away, leaving Hazel staring, for a long minute, before he resumed his futile search for what was no longer there.

Bob tramped down to the bike-shed, dragged out his machine, and pedalled away. He did not want to see Marjorie now—he could not face her, with the stolen banknote in his pocket—the stolen note that had passed through her hands.

What he was going to do with it, he did not know—somehow or other, he had to get it back to Mauly, without letting Mauly know, or suspect, anything. That did not matter now. He could not think of that—he could hardly think of anything, but a stunned feeling, as if he had received a heavy blow. He drove at his pedals, riding hard and fast, and never even noticing where he went. Miles and miles ran unheeded under the whirring wheels.

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

What's Up?

"CHERRY!"

No answer.

Mr. Quelch was calling the names in Hall.

"I say, you fellows, Cherry ain't in!" whispered Billy Bunter.

Harry Wharton & Co. had already observed that, and wondered where Bob was.

Mr. Quelch repeated the name, with a sharp glance at the Remove, and then marked Bob Cherry absent.

When the Greyfriars fellows went out of Hall, Harry Wharton tapped Hazel-dene on the arm.

"Seen anything of Cherry?" he asked.

Hazel started at the touch and scowled at the captain of the Remove.

"Hang Cherry!" he snapped.

Harry Wharton looked at him. He had hardly spoken to Hazel since that interview in the study on Wednesday, after the Highcliffe match. He did not want to speak to him now, for that matter; but he knew why Bob had not gone out with his chums that afternoon, and he supposed that Hazel must have seen something of him, if Marjorie had.

Hazel's face was pale and harassed. He was in a state of twittering nerves and a bitter, evil temper. The disappearance of the banknote bewildered

and terrified him. He was in a mood to snarl at friend or foe.

Wharton suppressed his anger.

"Bob's out call-over," he said. "Did he ride home with Marjorie?"

"No. Leave me alone."

The captain of the Remove was only too willing to do that.

Hazel slouched away, and went up to his study.

"What the dickens has become of Bob?" asked Nugent, as Harry rejoined his friends. "I noticed that his bike was gone when we put ours in. He can't have stayed so late at Cliff House—"

LIKE A LONG LAUGH?

Then read:

"THE FAMOUS FOUR'S GREAT JAPE!"

By Frank Richards

dealing with the early adventures of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, in the

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"Hazel says he never went home with Marjorie," answered Harry. "He seems to have gone for a spin on his own. I hope there hasn't been a row. Hazel looks as if he's been rowing with somebody—unless it's that rot he mentioned the other day that he's got on his mind. Something's up with him."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Know where Bob is, Bunter?"

"Eh? No. I know he went out in a jolly bad temper," said Bunter. "Scowling like anything! I called to him when he went for his bike, and he never even answered—took no notice at all of a fellow. I always thought Cherry was a good-tempered chap, but he seems to have a temper as rotten as yours, Wharton—"

"You fat ass!"

"Yah! I saw him hanging about in the quad," said Bunter. "I fancy he wanted to speak to Marjorie Hazel-

dene, but Hazel jolly well kept him at arm's length. He, he, he!"

It was nearly time for prep when Bob Cherry came in at last. He looked tired, and rather dusty. His chums were waiting for him, but he gave them only a curt nod, without speaking, as he went to his Form-master's study to report himself.

They waited for him to come away from Mr. Quelch. He was only a few minutes in the Remove master's study and his puzzled friends noticed the deep cloud on his brow as he came away.

"Lines?" asked Harry.

"Eh? Oh, yes."

"What made you so late?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Oh, nothing! I mean, I forgot."

"You've been for a spin?" asked Nugent.

"No—yes. I mean, oh, yes. I went out on my bike!"

The Famous Five went up to the Remove together, four of them extremely puzzled. That something was wrong with Bob was as clear as daylight to his friends, but they could not begin to guess what it was.

"You haven't been rowing with Hazel?" asked Harry.

"That cur? No."

"Well, what's up, then?"

"Nothing. I mean—well, nothing."

"Look here, Bob," said Harry Wharton, coming to a pause on the Remove landing, "you're no hand at secrets; a blind man could see all over your face that something's up. Can't you tell your pals?"

Bob looked at his chums with a knitted brow.

"Nothing's up!" he said. "What should be up? I'm not feeling frightfully bucked just now, that's all. I suppose a fellow isn't expected to be always grinning and grinning, is he?"

With that Bob Cherry tramped up the Remove passage to his study.

He left the Co. exchanging blank looks. Surly ungraciousness, from a fellow like Bob, was simply amazing. It indicated, only too clearly, that something was wrong—seriously wrong. But what?

"What the dickens," said Harry Wharton, with a deep breath, "is the matter with Bob?"

But the Co. had no answer to that question. Something was wrong—that fact leaped to the eye. But they were not likely to guess what.

THE END.

(Mind you read "BOB CHERRY'S BURDEN!" next week's rousing story of Harry Wharton & Co., by Frank Richards. It's a winner all the way!)

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SPEED-BOAT BIRCHEMALL!

By DICKY NUGENT

"What I like about an afternoon on the river," said Jack Jolly, of the St. Sam's Fourth, leaning back lazily in the rowing-boat in which he and his chums were gliding through the waters of the Ripple, "is that it's so nice and quiet and peaceful. You never hear a sound—"

Bang! Crash! Wallop! Clatter! "Hallo! What's that?" gasped Frank Fearless, as the deafening roar of an engine began to awake the echoes.

The chums of the Fourth sat up and took notice. They looked quite alarmed as they saw what was causing the din.

It was a speedboat, and it seemed to be making a B-line towards them at the very dickens of a speed.

"Row for your lives, chaps!" cried Jack Jolly. "We shall be sunk for a cert if this thing hits us!"

Merry and Bright, who were doing the rowing, dipped their oars into the water and pulled with all their mite, while Jack Jolly performed the steering.

They were not a moment too soon! Just as their boat moved off the track of the oncoming speedboat, the speedboat roared past, throwing up on each side of it a wacking grate wave!

The juniors caught a momentary glimpse of a bearded figger sitting at the wheel, grinning broadly, and of another figger in the passenger seat at the back. They reckoned the two figgers at once and gave a yell.

"Doctor Birchermall!"

"Mr. Lickham!"

The next moment Jack Jolly & Co. were gripping the gunwale and trying desprightly to avoid being

pitched into the water as the wave from the speedboat reached them.

Crash! Swooooosh! "Yarooooo!" "Help!"

"Launch a lifeboat, somebody!" For a few seconds it was touch and go; but, luckily for Jack Jolly & Co., their boat just managed to survive the storm without capsizing.

"It's all right, you fellows," said Frank Fearless. "We're still afloat!"

"Very likely we are—but I'm upset!" said Jack Jolly grimly. "It's a bit thick of the Head to dash along at that speed, if you ask me!"

"Here, here!"

"If he keeps it up he'll give ordinary river chaps like us food for thought!" remarked Merry.

"Eggsactly!" nodded Bright. "And he'll probably finish up by providing food for fishes!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look out!" yelled Fearless. "Here he comes again!"

The juniors' larfter died on their lips as they perceived a spout of foam-flecked water racing towards them, marking the trail of Doctor Birchermall's speedboat. There was no doubt about it, the headmaster of St. Sam's was properly going it!

As the boat drew nearer, the juniors could see his grinning dial working spasmodically—farcely exulting in the thrill of going at high speed.

But with Mr. I. Jolliwel Lickham, at the back, it was a different story. The master of the Fourth



The GREYFRIARS HERALD

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EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

July 3rd, 1937.



"KEEP WILD ANIMALS UNDER RESTRAINT OR—"

Judge's Stern Warning

Judge Brown gave a stern warning to animal-owners at the Woodshed Sessions this week, when Potter and Greene, Fifth Form, were summoned to show cause

why a creature for which they accepted responsibility, known as Horace Coker, should not be destroyed. Prosecuting for the Remove Postal Delivery Co., Peter Todd, K.C., said that, after hearing the evidence, he was sure that there would be no doubt left in the judge's mind that Horace Coker was a dangerous animal within the meaning of the Act.

Witnesses would be called to testify that Coker was left to run about the Fifth Form passage without a lead—to the danger and terror of passers-by. Several messengers employed by the Postal Delivery Co. had been attacked.

In one case Coker had lunged himself on a caller and severely mauled him.

On another occasion he had bitten a youngster on the calf. (Cries of "Shame!")

Having called witnesses in support of his contentions, Mr. Todd, in a speech punctuated by frequent cheers from a crowded gallery, asked for the maximum penalty to be

inflicted on defendants for an offence which seriously jeopardised the safety and comfort of the public.

Potter and Greene, who defended themselves, pleaded that although Coker was of somewhat terrifying appearance, he was in reality quite harmless and inoffensive. They had had him as a pet for a long time and they could vouch for his affectionate disposition.

It was quite a mistake to suppose that he had made ferocious attacks on the witnesses who had spoken. The fact was that he had been simply playing with them! (Derisive howls of laughter.)

They begged to be allowed to keep Coker and agreed that he should be kept on a lead or in a dog kennel.

Finding for complainants, Judge Brown said that the nuisance of uncontrolled animals was one which had been growing considerably at Greyfriars, and something would have to be done to check it. He warned animal owners generally that in future he intended to inflict the severest penalties on those who allowed ferocious beasts at large.

He ordered Coker to be painlessly destroyed at once.

Coker was thereupon taken to the Music-room to listen to Hoskins practising scales. He expired immediately.



"Yarooooo! Go away! Lemme alone! Don't hawnt me! Woooo!"

"What the merry dickens!" gasped Mr. Lickham.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Jack Jolly & Co.

The chums of the Fourth simply roared. They saw the comical side of it.

It was their cheery larfter that brought Doctor Birchermall back to his senses. The eggspression of fear slowly went from his face.

"B-b-bless my sole!" he gasped. "It's not your ghost, after all, Lickham! It's really you!"

"Quite right, sir!" grinned Mr. Lickham. "Sorry if I gave you a shock. But it evens things out. You gave me a shock, too, when you sent me whizzing out of your speed-boat into the water."

Doctor Birchermall drew a deep, deep breath of relief.

"Well, Lickham, I must say it's good to see you again! Of course, I didn't think it was your ghost, really. That was only my fun!"

"Oh, crikey!"

"Just a little joak, that was all!" said the Head, with a cough.

"All the same, Lickham—ahem!—I shall never go speeding on the river again."

And he never did!

"Good-afternoon, boys!" he cried. "I hoap I didn't make you feel too nervuss when I passed you?"

"You—you—"

"Some people are a bit scared of speed—but I'm a proper speed feend, myself!" grinned the Head. "There's nothing I like better than the wind rushing past my ears and the spray dashing in my face!"

"Well, of all the hartless old foggys—" gasped Frank Fearless.

But Jack Jolly silenced him with a sudden wink.

"Mum's the word!" he said, under his breath. "He hasn't noticed that Lickham's missing yet! Now's our chance to teach him a lesson that he won't forget in a hurry!"

"Oh crums!"

"By the way, sir!" called out the kaptin of the Fourth.

"Didn't I notiss Mr. Lickham sitting at the back of you preevously?"

The Head chuckled gleefully.

"Yes, rather! I fancy I've given him enuff thrills this afternoon to last him a lifetime!"

"I bet you have, sir!" grinned Jack Jolly. "I suppose he got off again at the skool boathouse?"

"Eh? Certainly not, Jolly!"

"Then, in that case, sir, where is he now?"

"Why, he's still in his seat, of course—ow!" finished up Doctor Birchermall.

The Head had turned round to see Mr. Lickham for himself.

The shock he received when he found Mr. Lickham's seat empty almost knocked him head-first out of the speed-boat!

The Head gazed at that empty seat with eyes that almost bulged out of their sockets.

"He—he's gone!" he said, horsely.

"Go hon!"

"He's gone—gone without leaving a trace!" gasped the Head.

"Where is he?"

"Echo answers 'Where?'"

"Lickham's gone!" howled Doctor Birchermall wildly. "Poor old Lickham!"

"Perhaps this will be a lesson to you, sir, not to be a river-hog any more!" said Jolly severely.

The Head klutched wildly at his beard. He seemed to be in a proper state about it.

"Woe is me!" he cried.

"Lickham will never forgive me for this! His ghost will come back to hawnt me and— Ow! Help! Perlice! Here it comes! It's Lickham's ghost, boys! Help!"

Grately serprized, Jack Jolly & Co. looked in the direction to which Doctor Birchermall was pointing.

An eggstraordinary site met their gaze.

Stalking slowly towards them was a weerd figger, covered from head to foot in long grass!

drowned ratt than a St Sam's Form-master!

"Feel all right, sir!" asked Jack Jolly, anxiously. "If you don't, we'd better try artificial perspiration!"

"Poof! Ow! Nunno, I shall be all right, thank you, Jolly!" gasped Mr. Lickham, puffing and blowing like a grampus. "Oh! Ow! That was a narrow squeak, boys, and no mistake!"

"Well, sir, with all dew respect to you, it was your fault for rusting yourself to the tender mercies of a river-hog like the Head!" remarked Frank Fearless cordidly.

Mr. Lickham shuddered.

"I hadn't the phoggist notion there would be any danger, Fearless. When the Head asked me if I'd like a trip in the moit-boat he'd borrowed for the afternoon, it didn't occur to me for a moment that he would try to send me to a watery grave! Br-r-r!"

"You'd better get your clothes dried, sir, or you'll be eating a dose of the flew!" grin Jack Jolly. "What do you say if we land on the island? We can soon light a fire."

"Thanks, Jolly! It's a rapping wheeze!"

As it happened, they were not far from the island, and in a short space of time they lan and lighted a fire, while Mr. Lickham undressed in the bushes.

One by one, the Four Form-master's dripping garmen came sailing across to Jack Jolly & Co. First came his mortarboard and jacket; then his skit and trowis; and, finally, his underwear.

"Got a towel, boys?" asked Mr. Lickham, as he poked his head out of the bush that screened his anatermy.

"Sorry, sir!" grinne Jack Jolly. "We didn't an sipate anybody taking a dip th afternoon. You can have my pocket handkerchief, if you like!"

"Same here, sir!" corused the rest of the Co.

As four pocket handkerchiefs were better than nothing at all, Mr. Lickham axcepted them and vannedish to dry himself.

So far, Doctor Birchermall had not reappeared; but no sooner had the juniors got the Fourth Form-master's clothes coming merrily by the fire than a effening roar from the river t them that the Head was return!

They all hurried down to the side of the island. They were just in time to see Doctor Birchermall slowing down near the bar.

They quite eggspected him to be looking drawn and aggard with anxiety over lost Mr. Lickham.

But, much to their surprise, he was still grinning cheerfully, as though he hadn't a care in the world!

sat, clutching his mortar-board, his eyes closed to shut out the dizzy site of the scenery flashing past him and an eggspression of sheer terror on his fizz!

Again the speedboat roared past Jack Jolly & Co., and this time they had an even narrower escape than before, for the Head, with a mischevious gleem in his eyes, deliberately steered towards them and only dodged round them at the last instant.

Bang! Crash! Clatter! Clonk!

The speedboat roared deftently by, and the juniors' boat was tossed about like a cockle-shell by the backwash.

And then the Fourth Formers had a big serprize. They suddenly saw Mr. Lickham—not in the speedboat, but in the water!

"Help! Reskew! Save me!"

The Fourth Form-master's yells rang out across the river as the rear of the Head's speedboat died away in the distance.

Jack Jolly & Co. farley gasped!

"Grate pip! He's been pitched out—and the Head duzzent know it!" cried Jack Jolly. "To the reskew, you fellows!"

"Yes, rather!"

The Co. soon got bizzy. They paddled swiftly over to Mr. Lickham, and Jolly and Fearless leaned over the side and yanked him in—looking more like a



WAS "MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM" A NIGHTMARE?

Asks Our Dramatic Critic,

FRANK NUGENT

By special permission, the Remove Dramatic Society presented Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream" in the Head's garden on Wednesday evening.

The play was produced by that experienced showman, William Wibley, and it would be pleasant to be able to say that it went off without a hitch. But the sad truth is that it was enough to give Shakespearean enthusiasts the itch!

The trouble about theatricals at this time of the year is that most of the actors are more keen on getting a line on cricket and swimming than on learning the lines of a play.

In the case of Wibley's production, hardly any of the actors seemed to remember a word of their parts!

Even that would not have been so bad in the case of an indoor production, where the prompter is hidden in the wings. But on

Wednesday evening, the scenery was all natural—and the spectacle of the prompter doing his stuff in full view of the audience seemed very unnatural!

Evidently in producing the piece, Wibley didn't put his foot down. The result was that his company put their foot in it! Most of the talking seemed to be done by the prompter, and the actors only joined in at odd intervals—and usually made a mess of it when they did!

Some of the audience seemed to get plenty of fun out of it, and there was sufficient laughter to have satisfied any troupe of knock-about music-hall comedians. But serious Shakespearians couldn't help feeling that Wingate hit the nail on the head by saying it should have been called "A Midsummer Night's Nightmare!"

Personally, I don't go quite so far as that. I found compensations in the show. The costumes were good and the surroundings were ideal. It was a lovely summer's evening and the Head's garden made a perfect setting for the piece.

After all, you have to start somewhere, and this is the first time we've attempted an open-air play at Greyfriars. The actors all felt they could have kicked themselves for not doing justice to the show, when they saw what could have been made of it in such a favourable environment.

If I'm anything of a prophet, Wibley will produce "A Midsummer Night's Dream" again next year—and make a big success of it!

IS MILITARY TRAINING IN SCHOOLS DESIRABLE?

"Yes!" says HARRY WHARTON

In my opinion, military training is one of the finest things they can give us at school. I'm all in favour of cadet corps being established in every school.

The habit of blind obedience to an order is one that all youngsters should acquire. You have to learn to obey before you can command! Military training teaches that valuable habit in the most convenient form.

I feel in any case that we should all learn the rudiments of military science for the reason that we should all be fitted to help defend our country in an hour of need.

Military training desirable? Most certainly, from my point of view!

"NO!"

SAYS H. VERNON-SMITH.

Forget Wharton's guff, you chaps!

I'm as ready to defend my country as anyone; but I don't see why that should imply that I'm to spend all my spare time tramping about the countryside in evil-smelling

khaki and sloping arms in the quad to the orders of some bullying drill-sergeant!

I cheerfully admit that military training teaches the habit of blind obedience. But the habit of blind obedience happens to be a habit I don't want to acquire! And I don't for one moment agree that it is necessary to acquire it before you can help to defend your country.

I'm all for the development of individual initiative and enterprise. Military training kills it—turns individuals into a flock of sheep! For these reasons, I think it undesirable in schools!

IT CAME IN A FLASH!

During last Thursday's violent storm at Greyfriars, Fisher T. Fish was struck. Fortunately, it was only by a bright idea for a sound-and-lightproof mask, suitable for wear by people who don't like thunderstorms!