

"THE BOY WHO WOULDN'T BE TAMED!" . . . GREAT GREYFRIARS SCHOOL YARN

The Magnet^{2D}

*Billy Bunter's
Own Paper*



**ONE FOR
HIS NOB!**

SHOOT HARD FOR ONE OF THESE PRIZES!

500 FREE FOOTBALLS



FIVE Hundred Grand Footballs are waiting to be won by "Footer-Stamps" collectors in our October Contest! Are you trying for one? Remember you simply have to collect the "Footer-Stamps" we're printing every week—they consist of pictures of six different actions on the football field, and, as in previous months, the object of this great competition stamp-game is to score as many "goals" as possible, and by the end of October for this month's prizes.

TO SCORE A "GOAL" you must collect a complete set of six stamps (they're numbered 1 to 6), made up of the following: **KICK-OFF—DRIBBLE—TACKLE—HEADER—SHOT—GOAL.** (Note that the "Goal" stamp by itself does NOT count as a "goal," you must get a set of the stamps 1 to 6 each time.)

The more stamps you collect the more "goals" you can score, and this week we give another ten stamps to add to your collection. Cut them out—there's one complete "goal" among them, while the others may fit in with odd stamps you've saved already or have had left over from the previous month's competitions, or again you may be able to exchange them usefully with your pals. The great idea is to go on accumulating all the "goals" you possibly can!

If you want to score some other quick "goals," remember that "Footer-Stamps" are also appearing in other famous papers such as "GEM" and "MODERN BOY" each week. There are more "goals" waiting in those papers this very week!

The 500 Footballs in the October competition are going to be awarded to the readers scoring the highest number of "goals" with "Footer-Stamps" for the month. So don't send any stamps yet, wait until we tell you how and where at the end of the month.

RULES: 500 Footballs will be awarded in the October contest to the readers declaring and sending in the largest number of "goals" scored with "Footer-Stamps." The Editor may extend or amend the prize list in case of too many ties and no reader may win more than one prize in "Footer-Stamps."

Each "goal" must consist of a set of "Footer-Stamps" Nos. 1 to 6 inclusive—all claims for prizes to be made on the proper coupon (to be given later). No allowance made for any coupon or stamps mutilated or lost in the post or otherwise. No correspondence! No one connected with this paper may enter, and the Editor's decision will be final and legally binding throughout.

(N.B.—"Footer-Stamps" may also be collected from the following papers: "GEM," "MODERN BOY," "BOY'S CINEMA," "DETECTIVE WEEKLY," "TRIUMPH," "WILD WEST WEEKLY," "THRILLER," "SPORTS BUDGET," and "CHAMPION.")

OVERSEAS READERS: You pals who are far away—you're in this great scheme also, and special awards will be given for the best scores from overseas readers. There will be a special closing date for you as well, of course!

TEN MORE
"FOOTER-STAMPS"
FOR YOU!



Gilbert Tracy is sent to Greyfriars to make good. But the new boy doesn't like Greyfriars. . . and the powers that be might just as well try to tame a wild beast as—

The Boy Who Wouldn't Be Tamed!

By **FRANK RICHARDS**



After writing out the insulting message, Tracy pinned the sheet of paper on Monsieur Charpentier's desk to catch the eye of the French master when he entered his study.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Nice Boy!

"GILBERT!"
"Rats!"
"My dear boy—"
"Can it!"

"Come down at once, you young rascal!"
"Shan't!"

That peculiar dialogue fell on the ears of Harry Wharton and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, and they came to a halt and looked round.

It was the last day of the holidays.

The Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove had recently returned from their holiday trip to the South Seas. Hurree Singh was staying at Wharton Lodge with his chum till they joined up at Greyfriars for the new term. At the present moment they were taking a stroll in the park in the sunny autumn afternoon, and it was from the direction of the wall on the Wimford road that the voices unexpectedly reached their ears.

Looking round, they discerned a figure seated on the top of the park wall.

It was that of a boy of about their own age, sitting there, with his legs dangling on either side of the wall. He had a cigarette between finger and thumb, which he had, apparently, removed from his mouth to speak to the man in the road outside.

The boy was looking down at the man outside, and did not see the two Greyfriars juniors staring up at him from the path under the trees within.

The wall was rather high, and he was out of reach of the man in the road. The boy was grinning down at the man

with a derisive grin on a rather sallow and not very attractive face.

"I'm not coming down!" he went on. "You're wasting your breath, my dear avuncular relative."

"If I could reach you, Gilbert—"

"You can't, old bean!"

"Come down at once! Your school-master is waiting at this very moment to see you."

"I know that! Tell the old fool to hook it!"

Harry Wharton and Hurree Singh looked at the cheery Gilbert on the wall, and then looked at one another. Their looks were expressive.

They could not see the man in the road on the other side of the park wall.

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GREYFRIARS.**

Who he was they had no idea, except that it appeared from what Gilbert said that he had the privilege of being Gilbert's uncle. But both of them felt very strongly inclined to tip the cheery Gilbert off the wall into his clutches.

"Gilbert, will you have a little sense?" came the elderly voice from the road. "Mr. Quelch has come down specially to see you—"

At which Wharton and Hurree Singh gave a simultaneous jump.

Mr. Quelch was their Form-master in the Remove at Greyfriars. They wondered whether it was the same. Quelch was not a common name.

"Well, he won't see me!" answered the youth on the wall. "You can give him a message from me if you like."

"What do you mean? What message?"

"Tell him to go and eat coke!" said Gilbert.

"You impudent young rascal!" came an angry roar.

"Rats!"

"Nice boy!" murmured Harry Wharton.

"The nicefulness is truly terrific," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Gilbert, you must come in with me!" went on the voice from the road. "How dare you elude me like this! Mr. Quelch has taken a great deal of trouble, coming down to Surrey the day before term at his school—"

"I don't want to see him,"

"You must!"

"Rats!"

"He is going to take you back with him—"

"He jolly well isn't!"

"Everything has been settled—"

"Bosh!"

"You must try to please Mr. Quelch—"

"I'll watch it!"

"But for his influence with the head-master, you could not go to Greyfriars School this term—"

"Blow Quelch! Blow Greyfriars! Fed-up with the lot!" said Gilbert. "Chuck it, Uncle Giles! Do chuck it!"

Harry Wharton and Hurree Singh exchanged still more expressive glances. The matter was now beyond doubt. It was their Quelch who was spoken of; and this cheeky, derisive, disrespectful young rascal, with the cigarette in his fingers and the sneering grin on his

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face, was going to be a new boy at Greyfriars next term. And, from the fact that it was Mr. Quelch who was dealing with him, it looked as if he would be coming into their own Form—the Remove—which was not a pleasing prospect.

"Gilbert, my boy, do come down!" There was a pleading note in the voice outside the wall. "Mr. Quelch has to catch his train—"

"The sooner he catches it the better!" "You have to catch the same train, Gilbert."

"Bow-wow!"

"If I could reach you, Gilbert, I would lay my stick about you! You must come back to Oakwood Place at once. Come down this instant!"

"Shan't!"

Harry Wharton set his lips. From the mention of Oakwood Place, he guessed who the old gentleman was—Sir Giles Oakwood, a neighbour and acquaintance of his uncle, Colonel Wharton. He was powerfully tempted to step up to the wall and push the disrespectful young rascal off.

Still, it was not exactly his business to intervene in a family dispute, and he made a sign to Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, and they walked on together.

The boy on the wall had not looked round and he had not noticed them yet. The somewhat high-pitched and querulous voice of old Sir Giles came clearly to the ears of the Greyfriars juniors as they moved on.

"Gilbert, I warn you that I am losing patience! If you will not obey your uncle—"

"You've got it!" chirruped Gilbert. "If you do not go with Mr. Quelch, I—"

"Not likely!"

"Then I shall place the matter in other hands! I shall ask Colonel Wharton to deal with you. You will find him very different to deal with."

"Fat lot I care for the old ass!" answered Gilbert.

Harry Wharton stopped again, a gleam in his eyes. He had never wanted to punch a fellow's head so much as he wanted to punch Gilbert's, but he did not feel called upon to interfere. But it was his own uncle of whom the happy Gilbert was now speaking. He stopped and turned round.

"I tell you, Gilbert, I shall ask Colonel Wharton—" went on the high-pitched voice from the road.

"Rats! I'll tell the old fool fast enough to mind his own business!"

That did it! Harry Wharton stepped quickly towards the wall; and Gilbert, becoming aware of his existence, glanced down. He stared at the flushed face of the captain of the Greyfriars Remove.

"You cheeky cad—" exclaimed Harry.

"Hallo! Who the dickens are you?" asked Gilbert coolly.

"It's my uncle you're speaking of!" snapped Harry.

"Is it? You young Wharton?" drawled Gilbert. "I've heard of you. I don't think much of you now I see you. What's biting you?"

Harry Wharton breathed hard.

"It's no business of mine how you talk to your uncle," he said. "But if you speak of mine, you'll speak of him respectfully."

"Rats to you!" said Gilbert. "I shall speak of the old ass exactly how I choose. Mind your own business and cheer off!"

He drew his leg to the top of the wall as Wharton made a grab at it, and

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then grinned down at the angry Greyfriars junior.

The man in the road could not reach him from outside, neither could Harry Wharton from inside. But Wharton was rather more active than old Sir Giles; he made a jump and caught the top of the wall with his hands.

Bang!

"Oh!" gasped Harry.

Gilbert's fist came down on the top of his head as he caught hold, before he could pull himself up. It was a hefty bang, and it dislodged Wharton. He went tumbling back and rolled on the earth.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Gilbert. "Try again!"

Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh ran up and gave Wharton a hand.

Harry scrambled to his feet, his eyes blazing.

"Try again!" jeered Gilbert.

Wharton did not answer. He moved farther along the wall and jumped again, out of Gilbert's reach. Gilbert, dropping his cigarette, scrambled along the wall, with the evident intention of delivering another bang.

But Wharton was too quick for him. He was astride the wall before the young rascal could reach him, and as Gilbert grabbed, he grabbed back.

They wrenched at one another, but the Greyfriars junior's grasp was a good deal the stronger of the two. It was Gilbert who slid off the wall, slipping down into the road.

He landed there, with a bump and a yell.

The old gentleman standing in the road was peering up through gold-rimmed pince-nez.

As Gilbert sat and yelled, the old gentleman pounced on him. He had him by the collar in a moment.

"Now come with me, Gilbert!" he exclaimed.

"Leggo!" howled Gilbert.

"Come with me at once!" rapped Sir Giles.

Gilbert, panting and scowling, was led away by the collar.

Harry Wharton dropped back on the inner side of the wall. He rubbed his head. There was rather an ache in it from the hefty bang he had received.

"That's a new kid for Greyfriars, Inky!" he said, breathing hard. "By gum, if he carries on like that in the Remove he will have a high old time!"

"The highfulness of the old time will be terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "The bootfulness of the esteemed Gilbert will probably be preposterous!"

And the two juniors resumed their walk in the park, discussing the coming term at Greyfriars, and far from pleased at the prospect of finding Master Gilbert in their Form when they arrived there.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Lesson In Manners!

"WHAT—"

"My esteemed hat!"

Harry Wharton and Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh uttered those ejaculations simultaneously as they came into Harry's "den" at Wharton Lodge.

It was a couple of hours later when they returned from their walk, and by that time they had forgotten Gilbert.

They were reminded of him as they came into Wharton's den.

The first thing that struck them was a strong scent of cigarette-smoke. Then they saw Gilbert.

He was sitting in an armchair, with his legs stretched over another chair,

sprawling, with a cigarette in his mouth and a number of burnt stumps lying on the floor round him, one of them burning a hole in a rug, unheeded by the happy youth in the armchair.

The two juniors stared at him blankly. They had supposed, from what they had heard in the park, that they would see old Sir Giles' nephew at the school when they arrived there. But they certainly had not expected to see him at Wharton Lodge in possession of Harry's quarters, and making himself at home in that extremely free-and-easy way.

He glanced round at them, and favoured them with a sneering grin.

"Oh, you!" he said.

Harry Wharton stepped into the room, with glinting eyes.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded.

"Smoking!" answered Gilbert cheerily.

"The smokefulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, eyeing the peculiar youth very curiously.

"Well, stop it!" said Harry.

"Shan't!"

Harry Wharton stood before Gilbert with his fists clenched. His desire was strong to haul him headlong out of the armchair and punch the cheeky grin off his face. But he restrained that desire. He realised that there must be some reason for the fellow's presence there; he could hardly have walked into the house of his own accord. He remembered, too, the words of the old gentleman in the road a couple of hours ago.

"Did my uncle bring you here?" he asked.

"Guessed it in one!" agreed Gilbert, blowing out a little cloud of smoke. "I'm not here because I like the place, and you can bank on that! You see, my old fool of an uncle has handed me over to your old fool of an uncle—see?"

"I've warned you to speak of my uncle respectfully!" said Harry.

"I'll please myself about that!" yawned Gilbert. "The old ass shouldn't barge into what doesn't concern him!"

Wharton breathed hard.

"If my uncle brought you here I suppose I must make the best of it," he said. "But you're not going to turn my quarters into a tap-room! Stop it!"

"You don't like the smoke?" asked Gilbert.

"No!"

"Clear off, then! Fancy I want your company!"

Harry Wharton stood looking at him in silence. Gilbert proceeded to light a new cigarette from the old one. He pitched the old one across the room at the fender. It dropped on the rug, and smouldered there. Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh quietly put his foot on it.

"From what your uncle was saying, you're booked for Greyfriars!" said Harry Wharton at last.

"Yes, rotten luck!"

"Do you think that this sort of thing will go down at school?" asked Harry.

"If Quelch catches you smoking, he will give you six."

"Six what?"

"Whops—on the bags!"

"Is that the sort of old blighter he is?" asked Gilbert. "He looked it!"

"Oh, you've seen Quelch, then?"

"Distant view of the old bean," said Gilbert. "Distance lends enchantment to the view, you know! I dodged the old fossil all right!"

"You dodged Quelch!" exclaimed Harry.

"Why not?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I think you'll find out a lot of

reasons why not when you get to Greyfriars!" he said. "Quelch isn't the man to be cheeked by a junior schoolboy!"

"The old blighter!" said Gilbert. "But for him, I shouldn't be going to Greyfriars at all! The meddling old ass! He couldn't mind his own business! What the dooce does he want me at his rotten school for?"

"He can't want you there!" answered Harry. "How could anybody want you anywhere?"

Gilbert stared at him through the haze of cigarette-smoke.

"Well, he shouldn't have barged in!" he said. "I'll make him sorry for it, too, somehow! Cheeky old ass of a schoolmaster! He's made old Giles think that Greyfriars is the place for me!"

"Well, so it is, in a way," said Harry. "You'll get a good deal of the cheek knocked out of you at Greyfriars! But I can't understand Quelch bothering his head about you at all!"

"Oh, he's an old pal of nunky's!" sneered Gilbert. "They were at school together about a hundred years ago, I suppose! He's taken it on himself to save nunky the trouble of handling me. Well, he won't enjoy having me in his Form at Greyfriars, I can jolly well tell him!"

"The enjoyfulness will probably not be terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Gilbert stared at the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"You at Greyfriars!" he asked.

"Quitefully so!" assented the nabob.

"My hat! Is that the kind of English they teach there?" asked Gilbert. "Do they let niggers in?"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh's dusky cheeks flushed, but he made no reply to that impolite question.

"You unmannerly cub!" said Harry Wharton, with a deep breath. "Keep a civil tongue in your cheeky head! And throw that cigarette away, and stop smoking here! I won't stand it!"

"If you don't like it, lump it!" suggested Gilbert. "Your old ass of an uncle walked me here against my will. Go and persuade him to mind his own business, if you don't like my company! Fancy I like yours?"

"Will you stop smoking here?"

"No, I won't!"

"Then I'll stop you!" said Harry.

He grasped the sprawling youth in the armchair and jerked him out of it bodily. A cigarette-case, which was open on Gilbert's knees, fell to the floor, scattering cigarettes. The cigarette in Gilbert's mouth dropped down his neck, and there was a fearful yell. The lighted end seemed to be hot!

Gilbert bounded up, fished out the cigarette, and fairly hurled himself at Harry Wharton. Two punches came home on Wharton's face, and then a hefty drive on Gilbert's chest lifted him off his feet and laid him on his back on the carpet.

Bump!

"Ooooh!" gasped Gilbert.

The next moment Harry Wharton had him by the collar with one hand. With the other he gathered up scattered cigarettes and crammed them down the back of Gilbert's neck.

Gilbert struggled and yelled and howled. His collar came loose, his tie streamed out; he struggled and yelled and kicked. But he was held in a grip of iron, and the cigarettes, to the very last one, were crammed down his back. The cigarette-case followed them.

Then Harry Wharton released him and rose, panting, leaving Gilbert wriggling and spluttering on the floor.

"That's a tip, you cheeky cad!" he

gasped. "You'll learn manners in the Remove at Greyfriars, and that's the first lesson. Come on, Inky! I've had enough of that rotter, if you have."

"The enoughfulness is terrific." The two juniors went out, leaving Gilbert still wriggling and spluttering. He sat up, gasping and breathless.

Wharton and Hurree Singh went down the stairs, leaving Gilbert busy for quite a long time, extracting his supply of smokes from the back of his neck!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Up To Harry Wharton!

"HAVE you seen Tracy?"

"Tracy?" repeated Harry.

"Gilbert Tracy," said

Colonel Wharton.

"Oh! Is his name Tracy?"

"You've seen him?"

"Yes," said Harry.

Colonel Wharton stood before the fireplace in the library at Wharton Lodge, with his hands driven deep into his pockets, and a thoughtful and rather troubled frown on his grizzled brow.

He seemed to have something to say to his nephew which he found a little difficult in uttering.

Harry stood waiting. His uncle had called him into the library to speak to him, and he had wondered whether it was about the fellow he had found smoking in his room, and whom he had left sorting cigarettes out of his back. Apparently it was.

"What do you think of him, Harry?"

asked the old colonel, at length.

Harry Wharton smiled faintly.

"You want me to answer plainly?"

he asked.

"Eh? Yes, of course!"

"Well, I think he's a rank outsider, and every sort of a worm!" said Harry.

Colonel Wharton stared at him for a moment or two in silence, tugging at his grizzled moustache.

"That's what you think, is it?" he

grunted, at last.

"You asked me, uncle."

"Oh, yes, yes! I'm going to ask you something else, Harry. I'm going to ask you a favour."

"No need to ask," said Harry, smiling. "You know you've only got to mention it, whatever it is, uncle."

"I'm not so sure. I want you to make friends, if you can, with Gilbert Tracy," said Colonel Wharton.

"Oh!"

"Sit down, my boy; I'll explain," said the old military gentleman, and Harry sat down in silence. "You seem to have got a bad impression of Gilbert. Probably he is what you describe. He has given old Sir Giles endless trouble since he came on his hands. He has fallen among bad associates and picked up bad ways. He seems to be a disrespectful young rascal; but I feel sure that there is a spot of good in him somewhere."

Harry made no rejoinder to that.

"He is the son of a man who went through the War with me, Harry. His father is knocked out, an old wound breaking out again. That is why his uncle at Oakwood Place took charge of him. But he seems to be rather too much for Sir Giles Oakwood to handle."

"I've no doubt about that!" said Harry, remembering the scene by the park wall that afternoon.

"Mr. Quelch, your Form-master at school, came to the rescue," went on Colonel Wharton. "You will hardly believe that, after he had come down specially to-day to take the boy away

with him, the young rascal dodged him, and he had to go without him."

"Is he still willing to take him?" asked Harry.

"Yes, for the sake of his uncle and father. He will be in your Form at Greyfriars, and will go to school with you and Hurree Singh to-morrow."

"Oh!"

"My old friend Sir Giles asked me to arrange this, and I have done so," said Colonel Wharton. "I trust you to play up, Harry."

"We'll take him along, of course," said Harry. "But—"

"He is unwilling to go to school—any school," went on the old colonel. "He has had tutors so far, but"—he grunted—"well, it has been settled that he goes to school—your school, Harry. His father was at Greyfriars in my time there. But several schools have been tried for him, and he has contrived in one way or another to be sent home again. Greyfriars is his last chance, as a matter of fact, and would not be possible, but for the kindness of Mr. Quelch. He is taking a certain amount of responsibility in the matter. Now, you are head boy in your Form, and captain of the Remove, and you might be able to do the boy a lot of good if you liked."

"Oh!"

"His father lies a helpless invalid, and is anxious about the boy. His uncle is very much attached to him, but cannot manage him. I am concerned about him as the son of an old comrade in the War. Do you think you could make an effort, my boy, and make the best of him, stand by him at school, and see him through till he can settle down?"

Harry Wharton breathed rather hard.

There were few things he would not have done to please his uncle, who had been a father to him since he had been left an orphan in infancy; but the old colonel could hardly have asked anything more repugnant than this. Still, there was only one answer he could make, and he made it sincerely enough.

"I'll do my best, uncle! I dare say he will shake down at Greyfriars. Fellows get knocked into shape at school. I'll help him all I can."

"That's all I ask, Harry," said the old colonel, evidently relieved. "If he makes good at Greyfriars it will be the making of him. You can help him a great deal if you keep your temper and keep patient."

"I'll try."

"He has, at least, one good quality, Harry, which I think should appeal to you."

"What is that?" asked Harry. His own impression was that good qualities were conspicuously lacking in Master Gilbert Tracy.

"He is keen on football, and, I am told, very good at the game."

"Oh!" said Harry, in surprise. "I shouldn't have thought so. Well, if he's good at games, that's something. I shouldn't have thought he had the wind for Soccer."

"Eh, why not?" asked the old colonel, staring at him.

Harry Wharton coloured. He was thinking of the cigarettes, but he did not want to mention that to his uncle.

"Oh, well, I've only seen him for a few minutes!" he stammered. "I dare say he will improve on acquaintance. I'll make friends with him if I can, uncle."

"It's up to you, Harry!"

"Right-ho!" said Harry. "It won't be my fault if we don't pull together somehow. I was going to punt a ball

about with Inky before tea. I'll ask him to join up."

"Do!" said Colonel Wharton, with a smile, and Harry left the library.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was waiting for him in the hall with an old footer under his arm. His dark eyes turned curiously on his chum's thoughtful face as Harry joined him.

"What is the upfulness?" he asked.

Harry Wharton laughed rather ruefully.

"Think you could make friends with that worm we left upstairs, Inky?" he asked.

"It would not be terrifically easy. I would rather punch his execrable head," answered the nabob.

"Well, my uncle wants me to make friends with him, and I'm going to try, so back me up, old man."

The Nabob of Bhanipur made a grimace.

"The tryfulness will be preposterous if esteemed nunky wishes it," he answered. "Here he comes!"

Gilbert Tracy came down the stairs. He scowled over the banisters at the two juniors in the hall. His expression was far from inviting; but Harry Wharton was going to do his best.

"Come and join us punt this ball about, Tracy?" he asked. "I hear that you're a good man at Soccer."

Gilbert Tracy stared at him.

"You've got jolly civil all of a sudden!" he remarked.

"Well, why not?" asked Wharton amicably. "We're going to be in the same Form at Greyfriars, and we're going to school together to-morrow."

"Are we?" said Gilbert.

"Yes. Hasn't my uncle told you?"

"Oh, yes, he's told me so!" agreed Gilbert. "That's not the only rot he's talked, either."

"Well, rot or not, that's that!" said Harry, with determined good-humour. "Will you join us in punting the ball?"

"No, I won't!"

Really there was nothing to be said in reply to that by a fellow ever so determined to be as amicable as possible. So Harry Wharton made no reply, but went out of the house with his dusky chum, Gilbert Tracy lounging after them, with his hands in his pockets and a scowl on his face.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Goal!

BANG!

Crash!

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Harry Wharton.

He was taken quite by surprise.

For some time the two chums had been punting the old footer, in a keen autumn wind, and had forgotten, once more, the existence of Gilbert Tracy. Once more they were reminded of him.

Colonel Wharton had come out to the french windows of the library, and was standing there, looking out.

He frowned a little at the sight of two fellows punting the ball, and a third loafing idly about with his hands in his pockets.

But at that moment, Gilbert suddenly rushed into the punt-about. He took the ball from Wharton's toe, and landed it half-way to the library windows. He was after it like a shot, and kicked again—and the football, whizzing straight as a die for the open window, caught the old military gentleman there fairly on the nose, and bowled him backwards like a skittle.

Colonel Wharton disappeared from THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,599.

the french window, and a bump and a roar were heard from within.

"Oh!" gasped Harry.

"My esteemed hat!" gasped Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Gilbert stood grinning. The other two gazed almost in horror at the window where the colonel had been standing.

"You clumsy ass!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Clumsy?" grinned Gilbert. "Bet you couldn't have done it."

Harry Wharton fairly jumped.

He had taken it for granted that it was an accident. It was, in fact, an extremely difficult shot to bring off, at the distance, if Gilbert had done it intentionally. And he had seemed to take no trouble about it.

"You—you—you worm!" gasped Harry. "Do you mean to say that you did that on purpose?"

"What do you think?" grinned Gilbert.

Wharton compressed his lips.

"If I believed you, I'd knock you spinning!" he exclaimed savagely. "But I don't—you couldn't do it."

"Try again, if you like!" drawled Gilbert Tracy. "If you can get the old donkey to stand up as a target again?"

Colonel Wharton reappeared at the window. He kicked out the football, which rolled on the lawn. His brows were knitted, and he was rubbing his nose.

"Don't kick that football so near the house, please!" he called out. "I don't like accidents of that kind."

The old colonel was taking it for granted that it was an accident. But he was evidently far from pleased. The crash of the footer on his nose had been rather painful; and the bump on the floor could not have been agreeable.

"Sorry!" called out Gilbert. "Quite an accident, sir!" Which was rather startling, after what he had just said to Harry Wharton.

"Simple old duck, ain't he?" grinned Gilbert. "He really fancies that it was an accident!"

"So it was!" snapped Harry.

"Think so?"

"Yes, I do!"

"Well, look!"

The ball had rolled close by Gilbert. He stepped to it, and kicked. That he had brought off that difficult shot the first time, and that he could bring it off again, neither of the juniors believed for a moment. But they were soon undeceived.

Colonel Wharton, standing at the french window, rubbing his chin, certainly did not expect the ball to come back again. But it came—like a bullet!

Bang!

"Oh! Oh gad!"

Bump!

The ball dropped in the doorway. Colonel Wharton went backwards. Gilbert chuckled.

"How's that?" he asked coolly.

"You—you—you—" gasped Harry Wharton. He had to believe it now; and he had to believe, too, that this fellow was something like a wizard with a Soccer ball. Harry Wharton was a good man at the game, but he did not think that he could have brought off a shot like that twice in succession.

But his face was fairly flaming with anger. Twice his uncle had been knocked over, under his eyes, by that impudent young rascal. He clenched his hands, stepping towards Gilbert Tracy.

"You cheeky cad!" he exclaimed.

"You—"

The colonel reappeared in the window.

He strode out of the house, his eyes glinting under knitted brows.

Harry unclenched his hands. The cheeky grin faded from Tracy's face. With all his impudence, he was afraid of the old military gentleman; indeed, that was probably the only reason he was remaining at Wharton Lodge at all. Certainly his own uncle's orders would not have kept him there.

"Was that another accident?" demanded Colonel Wharton. He seemed to have doubts on the subject now.

"Oh, quite!" answered Gilbert. "I think my foot slipped! I was going to kick the ball away from the house, as you told me! I'm not much of a shot with a footer."

The old colonel looked at him, long and hard. Harry Wharton and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh said nothing. How any fellow could lie, in this barefaced way, was a puzzle to both of them. But the cheeky Gilbert never turned a hair.

"Well," said Colonel Wharton at last, "don't have any more accidents like that! Take the ball to a distance from the house, Harry."

"I'll take it, sir!" said Gilbert. He ran to the ball, which lay on the terrace under the library window.

Colonel Wharton watched him, with a grim brow. He hardly believed that the same accident had happened twice over, but he had to give the young rascal the benefit of the doubt, such as it was.

Not for a moment did it occur to him, or to the two juniors, that Gilbert Tracy was thinking of playing that remarkable trick over again, for a third time. It was a surprise to all three, when the ball whizzed from Tracy's foot and shot fairly in the colonel's face.

There was skill in it, there was no doubt about that; really it was wonderful skill. There are fellows who seem to be born, as it were, in shooting-boots, and Gilbert Tracy was one of them.

Plop!

The football tapped on the colonel's nose and dropped at his feet.

The old military gentleman tottered. "Good gad!" he gasped.

"Oh dear!" exclaimed Gilbert.

"Quite an accident, sir. I'm fearfully clumsy with a Soccer ball!"

Colonel Wharton was not likely to believe that statement. With a gasp of wrath, he made a rush at Gilbert Tracy.

But Gilbert was out of his reach now, and he kept out of his reach. He shot away into the shrubberies.

"Stop!" roared the colonel.

Gilbert vanished.

Colonel Wharton came to a halt. He gasped for breath, and rubbed his nose. His face was crimson.

"Good gad!" he said. "Good gad! I—I—I—"

He checked himself, and tramped back into the library.

Harry Wharton and the nabob looked at one another. Wharton could not help wondering whether his uncle was still keen to see him make friends with that remarkable youth!

"The cheeky worm!" breathed Harry.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh grinned. "The cheekfulness is terrific!" he agreed. "But the kickfulness of the esteemed Soccer ball is preposterously good. The execrable swab can do what he likes with a Soccer ball."

Colonel Wharton had gone back into the house, and he did not appear at the window again. The two juniors punted the ball away. Gilbert had disappeared and he stayed disappeared.

Wharton wondered whether he was keeping out of sight to give the old



As Wharton and Cherry released his arms, Tracy spun round, shoved them to right and left, and cut across the platform. But the watchful eye of Hurree Singh was on him. The nabob put out a foot just in time, and the new boy went over it!

colonel time to cool down, or whether he had cleared off from Wharton Lodge altogether.

He did not come in to tea. After tea, the old colonel was seen to sort out a riding-whip. Apparently he was going to take it with him, if he had to look for Gilbert. And it was probably Gilbert's knowledge of the fact that the old military gentleman was not a man to be trifled with, that caused him to turn up for supper.

Colonel Wharton gave him a look, when he came in—an expressive look. But he left it at that.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Off To School!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry.

There was a crowd of Greyfriars fellows at Lantham Junction.

Various trains were disgorging their passengers at that station, where Greyfriars fellows were to take the Court-field train. Bob Cherry waved his hat, and roared, at the sight of Harry Wharton's face looking from an incoming train. He rushed up and whipped open the carriage door as it stopped.

"Hallo, Wharton! Hallo, Inky, old black bean! Here we are again!" roared Bob. "Johnny and Frank are on the platform. Come on—Smithy's keeping a carriage for us! Buck up!" Wharton and Hurree Singh stepped down.

Harry turned back to another fellow in the carriage.

"Come on, Tracy!" he said. "Any hurry?" drawled Gilbert Tracy. "Yes; come on!"

"I'm not keeping you, if you're in a hurry!"

Bob Cherry looked from one to the other.

"Friend of yours, Wharton?" he asked.

"New kid for the Remove," answered Harry. "He's coming to the school with us. Jump out, Tracy!"

Tracy did not jump out. He settled himself back comfortably in a corner seat. Bob stared at him in astonishment. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh grinned, a dusky grin.

Colonel Wharton had seen the three into the train at Wimford, and Gilbert, willy-nilly, had had to start for Greyfriars School. Twice on the journey as far as Lantham, he had risen to leave the carriage—and Harry Wharton had jerked him back into his seat. Now that the time had come to leave it, he seemed to be determined on staying. It appeared to be the cheery Gilbert's idea that, though he had started for school, he was not going to arrive there, if he could help it.

Harry Wharton would have been glad enough if he hadn't. But as Gilbert had been put in his charge for safe conveyance to Greyfriars, he had no choice about the matter. He had to land him there; after which, the less he saw of him the better he was going to like it.

"Come on, Tracy!" he said impatiently. "We have to bag seats in the train for Courtfield."

"No time to lose, kid," said Bob Cherry good-naturedly. "There's always a rush for the first train."

"I'm staying here, thanks!" answered Tracy. "I don't know where this train goes on to, but wherever it is, it will do for me."

Bob fairly blinked at him. "Eh? Aren't you for Greyfriars?" he asked.

"Not if I can help it!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Get out, Tracy!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, his face flushing with vexation. "Don't make a scene here!"

"Who's making a scene?" inquired Tracy. "Nobody but you, so far as I can see. Why not cut off and catch that train?"

"Get out, I tell you!"

"Rats!"

"Well, the chap's his own master, I suppose," said Bob. "Come on, you fellows!"

"I've got to see him to the school!" grunted Wharton.

"Oh! Better get out, Tracy, if that's your name," said Bob. "This train goes on to a siding from here."

"Oh!" said Tracy.

Certainly he did not want to be shunted on to a siding. He got out of the carriage.

Johnny Bull and Frank Nugent came barging up through the crowd. But Harry Wharton had little leisure to greet his friends. Gilbert Tracy was walking off, and Wharton caught him by the arm and pulled him back.

"Keep with me!" he muttered.

"I don't like your company, thanks!" answered Tracy.

"And I don't like yours; but you're keeping with me till we get to the school!" snapped Wharton. "Do you want me to walk you along the platform by your collar? You're asking for it."

Johnny Bull and Frank Nugent stared.

"Who's that bargee?" asked Johnny. "New kid," answered Bob. "Somebody seems to have landed him on Wharton, this side up with care."

"Are you coming, Tracy?"

"No!"

"Will you take his other arm, Bob?" asked Harry. "I've promised my uncle

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to see the cheeky fool as far as Greyfriars."

"I'll take his car, if you like," answered Bob. "Come on, Tracy—what's the good of playing the goat? Don't you want to go to school?"

"No, I don't!"

"Well, that's really hardly a matter of choice, is it?" grinned Bob. "You're not thinking of walking off into the wide world all on your own, are you?"

"Yes," answered Tracy coolly. "Exactly that!"

"Oh crumbs! Then it's lucky for you you've got somebody to see you safely landed!"

"Let go my arm, you fool!"

"Come on, Bob!" said Harry Wharton. "Keep hold of the cheeky ass!"

"What-ho!" said Bob.

Tracy walked between Wharton and Bob Cherry, both of them taking an arm. Johnny Bull and Frank Nugent followed, in astonishment. They had seen a good many "new kids" in their time, but never one like this before! Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had a grin on his dusky face, but a wary eye on Tracy. Gilbert was going quietly, as there was no help for it; but the nabob did not think that he would get into the Courtfield train without giving trouble. He was prepared to give his chum aid in this difficult task, till Gilbert was landed at Greyfriars. After that, it would be up to Quelch, and Quelch was more than welcome to the task.

"This way, you men!" shouted Vernon-Smith, from a carriage in the Courtfield train. He was holding the door against all comers—much to the indignation of Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth, who had spotted that carriage, and wanted to get in.

The Famous Five cheerfully barged Temple & Co. out of the way, and Smithy opened the door. Only Redwing was in the carriage with him, so far. Johnny Bull and Nugent stepped in, and Gilbert Tracy made a movement as if to step in after them, and Wharton and Bob released his arms.

In an instant Gilbert spun round, shoved them to right and left, and cut across the platform.

In another instant he would have been gone; but the watchful eye of the nabob was on him. Hurree Singh put out a foot just in time, and Gilbert went headlong over it.

Bump!

He landed on his hands and knees on the platform.

"Bag him!" gasped Wharton.

"Got him!" grinned Bob.

Tracy was collared again, before he could scramble to his feet. The two juniors grasped him, and swung him round towards the carriage door.

Herbert Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing stared blankly.

"What on earth's this game?" exclaimed the Bouncer.

"What the dickens—" exclaimed Redwing.

"Chuck him in!" said Bob.

Gilbert Tracy fairly hurtled into the carriage. He sprawled among the juniors there, spluttering.

Wharton and Bob and Hurree Singh followed him in. Wharton shut the door.

"What's the game—kidnappin'?" asked Smithy.

"New kid—naughty kid doesn't want to come to school!" grinned Bob.

"Oh, my hat!"

Tracy struggled up. His face was red with rage. All the fellows in the carriage were staring at him.

"You cheeky rotters!" he roared.

"Let me get out of this!"

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"Mad?" asked Smithy.

"You can have a seat, Tracy!" said Harry Wharton. "Here you are!"

"I don't want it!"

"Stand if you like."

"I'm getting out!" roared Tracy.

"Not this side of Courtfield."

"You cheeky, meddling fool—"

"Oh, shut up!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "That's enough from you! Shut up!"

Doors banged along the train. The engine shrieked. The train moved on out of Lantham Junction; and that remarkable new boy was booked for Courtfield at least! And when the train stopped at Courtfield, all the Famous Five gathered round him, to walk him to the local train for Friardale. It was not the cheeky Gilbert's intention to arrive at Greyfriars School, if he could help it—but it looked as if he would not be able to help it.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Gone!

"DON'T barge!" rapped Coker of the Fifth.

"Shut up, Coker!"

There was rather a scrum for the school bus at Friardale. The Famous Five, as they pushed for the bus, did not exactly mean to barge Horace Coker. But Horace was in the way, and he was barged.

The Famous Five had Gilbert in tow.

Three members of the famous Co. were quite astonished by the state of affairs. Still, they knew that the new boy had been landed on Wharton, for safe transport to the school; and they were ready to back up their leader in getting him there. What sort of a fellow this was, who was trying to escape on his way to school, was rather a mystery to them; but they were going, at all events, to see that he did not escape. It was rough luck on Wharton to have such a mad ass planted on him; and it was up to his chums to help him through. So the whole five gathered round Gilbert, as they charged for the bus; and but for Horace Coker, of the Fifth Form, he would have been safely landed inside.

But Coker of the Fifth did not like being barged by juniors.

Coker, on the step of the bus, was looking for his friends, Potter and Greene. It looked to Coker as if they were missing the bus. He was not aware that they were missing it because he was on it! They had had Coker's company on the train, so it was quite a pleasant relief to miss it on the bus.

"Don't barge!" repeated Coker. "And don't be cheeky, Cherry! I can see that you've come back this term as cheeky as ever!"

"And you've come back as fatheaded as ever, Horace, old bean!" said Bob cheerily. "Gerrout of the way!"

"I said don't barge!"

However, as Coker was in the way, and had no intention of getting out of it, it was necessary to barge. So the Famous Five barged, and Horace Coker was upended into the bus amid a forest of legs.

But he was up in a twinkling, and charging.

"Hold on!"

"Look out!"

"Now, then, stop that row!" came a shout from Wingate of the Sixth.

But even the voice of a prefect, captain of the school, was unheeded by Coker of the Fifth, in his just wrath.

He had been barged over, amid innumerable legs. His hat had rolled off, and Skinner of the Remove had promptly stamped on it. Two or three fellows had stamped on Coker. Coker fairly hurled himself at the Remove fellows.

There was quite a mix-up! Holding on to Gilbert Tracy, with Horace Coker charging them like a wild elephant, was impracticable. Gilbert had to be let go.

The Famous Five grasped Coker, and dealt with him faithfully. Horace Coker, in less than a minute, was left for dead, as it were, in the dust. Then Harry Wharton, looking round hurriedly for Gilbert, had a moment's glimpse of a distant figure, vanishing round a corner far up the High Street.

"Oh, that rotter!" gasped Harry.

He made a rush in pursuit. But he stopped again. Gilbert had turned a corner and vanished. Hunting him through the highways and byways was evidently not a practical proposition. Gilbert was gone!

Harry Wharton had got him as far as Friardale—hardly more than a mile from Greyfriars! But that was the limit! Now he had lost him!

He rejoined his friends, his lips compressed.

"That worm gone?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Yes!"

"Is he potty?" asked Frank Nugent. "He will have to go to school if he's sent to school! What on earth's the matter with him?"

Harry Wharton breathed hard.

"I promised my uncle to see him safe to Greyfriars! Nunky never expected this sort of thing, of course! Well, he's gone."

"The gonefulness is terrific."

"Look here!" It was a roar from Coker of the Fifth, emerging gasping from the dust. "I'll jolly well—"

"It's all that fathead's fault!" exclaimed Harry. "Bump him!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Why, you—you—you— I—I—I—"

spluttered Coker, as he was collared. "Why, I—I—I'll— Yar-ooop!"

Bump, bump, bump!

Leaving Coker for dead once more, the Famous Five crowded into the bus. It rolled off to the school, crowded; Horace Coker sitting up, dizzily, and blinking after it as it went.

Harry Wharton's face was clouded as the bus rolled on to the school. He had done his best; he could hardly blame himself for Gilbert's escape. But it was very awkward, all the same. His uncle expected him to see Gilbert safe to Greyfriars; Mr. Quelch expected the new junior to arrive there with him; and both of them, probably, would blame him if Gilbert came to any harm. What the fellow's intentions were, he could not guess. Possibly he had not formed any definite plans, but was only obstinately determined that he would not be sent to school. The idea of the fellow wandering about the country on his own was rather startling.

It was possible that, later in the day, he would turn up at the school, realising that there was nothing else to be done. Wharton, at all events, had to leave it at that; there was nothing more than he could do. But he was feeling worried and uncomfortable when the bus arrived at Greyfriars—though his chief feeling was a desire to punch Master Gilbert's head, and to punch it hard!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Wharton Is Wanted!

"I SAY, you fellows!" Billy Bunter put a grinning fat face into Study No. 1 in the Remove, and blinked through his big spectacles at the fellows therein.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were in their old quarters, unpacking various possessions, when the fat Owl of the Remove blew in.

They had seen their Form-master, but Mr. Quelch, rather to Wharton's relief, had not mentioned Tracy. First day of term was a busy day for a school-master; and no doubt Quelch had plenty of matters to occupy his mind. A good many fellows, who came from long distances, did not attend the early roll-call.

Still, that was now some time ago, and most of the Remove had arrived, and reported the fact. As soon as it dawned on Quelch that Tracy was not in the school he was certain to inquire after him, probably not in the best of tempers.

Exactly what he was to say to Quelch, when he was questioned, Wharton did not know. He did not want to say that the fellow had deliberately dodged away, to avoid coming to school; for, little as he liked Tracy, he did not want to land him in a terrific row on the first day of the term. So how he was to put it to Quelch was rather a puzzle.

"I say, you fellows, Quelch—" began Bunter. Then, as his eyes and spectacles wandered to a packet that Frank Nugent was unpacking on the table, he dropped the subject of Quelch, and went on: "I say, what are you unpacking, Franky?"

"A cake!" answered Nugent. "Oh, good! I'll have some, if you like!" said Bunter. "I haven't unpacked yet! I've brought back no end of stuff from Bunter Court—I'll ask you fellows, when I unpack it! Whack it out, old chap!"

"You can have the whole cake, if you like!" answered Nugent.

Billy Bunter beamed. "Mean that?" he gasped.

"Yes, rather! You need it more than I do!"

"Shove it over, old chap!"

Billy Bunter extended a fat paw, to grab the cake, when Frank Nugent shoved it over.

But he did not grab it! He gave a snort of disgust instead.

"Beast!" he hooted.

It was a cake of soap!

"It will do you good, old fat man!" said Nugent.

"Yah!"

"Don't you want your pals to see you again, now you've come back to school?"

"Eh? They can see me all right, can't they?"

"Not unless you wash!"

"Yah!" repeated Bunter. "Silly ass! Yah! I say, you fellows, Quelch—what are you unpacking, Wharton?"

"Cakes!" answered Harry, laughing.

"Not cakes of soap?" asked Bunter suspiciously.

"Oh, no, nothing of the kind!"

"Got a lot?"

"A dozen—only small ones."

"Well, dash it all, old fellow, you might let a pal have one!" said Bunter. "Or two, if they're small ones. What?"

"You can have the lot, if you'll eat them."

"Eh? Think I want to drink them?" asked Bunter. "Of course I'll eat them. Hand 'em over, old chap!"

"Here you are!"

tended were cakes of water-colour belonging to a paint-box.

"You—you—you funny idiot!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pulling a fellow's leg! Cackle!" hooted Bunter. "You won't be cackling when Quelch is done with you, judging by his looks! I say, you fellows, Quelch is in a bait! He's always rather a beast on the first day of term; but he's simply raging now—grinding his teeth!"

"Fathead!"

"Well, you should see him," said Bunter. "I say, you fellows, have you heard of a new kid this term—Bracey—No, Tracy?"

"Tracy!" exclaimed Harry, "has he turned up?"

"I fancy not!"

"He, he, he! Quelch is going up and down yowling for him."

"You silly ass!" exclaimed Frank Nugent.

"Well, he's asking fellows right and left, anyhow!" said Bunter. "I heard him ask Smithy, and Smithy said he'd seen the chap on the train from Lantham. He said he thought he'd got in! But he jolly well hasn't, or Quelch wouldn't be yowling up and down after him like a cat on the tiles, you know. He asked me if I'd seen him, and just snorted when I said I hadn't—as if a fellow is expected to keep on the look-out for new kids."

"Bother the fellow!" muttered Harry Wharton, with a worried brow. "I suppose he never came along, after all."

"Not your fault!" said Frank.

"Well, no, but my—"

"I say, do you know the chap, Wharton?" asked Bunter.

"Yes, blow him!"

"Oh, I dare say that's why Quelch wants to see you, then!" remarked Bunter. "I thought he was just sending for you because he wanted to take it out of some chap, being in a bait. But if you know Bracey—"

"Does Quelch want to see me, you fat chump?" exclaimed Harry, staring at the Owl of the Remove.

"Eh? Yes! He sent me up to tell you! I wouldn't keep him waiting if I were you, in the temper he's in—"

chuckled Bunter.

"You blithering idiot!" roared Wharton. "Why didn't you tell me so at once?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

Harry Wharton crossed the study to the door and hurried out. It was very probable that Mr. Quelch was in a mood of annoyance, and in that mood, Wharton naturally did not want to keep him waiting, especially as he had to tell him that the expected new boy had vanished into space.

"I say, Wharton—" squeaked Bunter, as he went.

"Oh, don't bother!" snapped Harry, over his shoulder, as he headed for the Remove landing and the stairs.

Bunter rolled after him.

"I say," he yelled, "it's important! I say—"

(Continued on next page.)

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Harry Wharton came to an impatient halt. He supposed that it was something more from Quelch, that Bunter had to tell him.

"Buck up!" he rapped.

Bunter came up, gasping for breath.

"I—I say, wait a tick," he spluttered. "Rushing off when a fellow's speaking to you—ooogh! I'm out of breath!"

"What have you got to say, you fat chump?" roared Wharton.

"Look here, if you think it's civil to begin calling a fellow names on the first day of term—"

"Will you tell me what Quelch said?" howled Wharton.

"Eh? I've told you!" answered Bunter, blinking at him through his big spectacles in surprise. "He wants to see you in his study at once, he said."

"Is that all?" yelled the captain of the Remove.

"Eh? Yes, that's all," said Bunter. "But I was going to say, I came away in rather a hurry to-day, and left my money at home—"

"What?" shrieked Harry Wharton. Quelch, already annoyed, must have been waiting at least ten minutes for his head boy by that time, and it was for this, that the fatuous Owl had stopped him on the Remove landing!

"All my money—change, currency notes, banknotes, everything!" said Bunter. "I've got here practically stony! But I'm expecting a postal order to-morrow! Can you lend me a—yaroooooop!"

Wharton had no time to lose. But he spared a moment to take William George Bunter by his fat shoulders, and sit him down on the Remove landing with a heavy bump!

Bunter sat and roared.

"Why, you beast—yaroop!—wharrer

you up to—wow! I say—yarooch!" I'll jolly well—yarooooop!"

Harry Wharton ran down the stairs, Billy Bunter tottered to his feet and blinked at him as he went, over the banisters, his little, round eyes, and his big, round spectacles glittering with wrath.

"Beast!" he roared. "Rotter! Swab!"

Coker of the Fifth, coming up the stairs, glanced round at Bunter. He stared at him. He glared at him.

"Rotten beast!" roared Bunter, unheeding Coker, and addressing the vanishing top of Harry Wharton's head, far below. "Cheeky cad! I've a jolly good mind to punch your nose! Beast! Cad! Rotter!"

"By gum!" said Coker.

Why Bunter was calling him these names, Coker did not know. As a matter of fact, Bunter wasn't, but Coker did not know that. As he was the only fellow on the staircase at the moment, and as Bunter was yelling over the banisters right at him, Coker took it for granted that he was the person addressed.

Coker was not to be so addressed with impunity! Not Coker! He came up to the landing with a rush!

"Beast, eh?" said Coker. He smacked at the fattest head in the Remove.

"Cad, eh?" Smack! "Swab, eh?" Smack! "Rotter, eh?" Smack!

"Owl! Keep off, you silly idiot!" yelled the surprised Owl. "Wharrer you smacking my head for, Coker, you mad ass? I say—yoo-hoop!"

Smack!

Coker did not explain what he was smacking Billy Bunter's head for. He supposed that Bunter knew! Bunter did not know, but he did not stay to

inquire further! He bolted up the Remove passage—roaring!

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Puzzle—Find Gilbert!

MR. QUELCH was in his study with a Form list in his hand and a frown upon his brow, when Harry Wharton arrived there.

He gave his head boy rather a grim glance.

"Mr. Quelch was not, perhaps, in a 'bait,' and he certainly was not grinding his teeth as Billy Bunter had stated. But he was clearly in a state of annoyance. First day of term was a busy day, and Quelch had enough to bother him, without unnecessary bothers and worries being added.

"You sent for me, sir?" said Harry meekly.

Mr. Quelch glanced at the clock on his mantelpiece.

"I sent for you more than a quarter of an hour ago, Wharton!" he answered. "I told Bunter to tell you to come at once. I am surprised that you should waste your Form-master's time like this, Wharton."

"I came at once, sir—"

"My time is of value, Wharton, though you do not appear to realise the fact," said Mr. Quelch. "However, now you are here, where is Tracy?"

"I—I don't know."

"You do not know!" repeated Mr. Quelch.

"No, sir! You see—"

"I do not see, Wharton! I fail to understand this! I was informed by Sir Giles Oakwood that Tracy would reach Greyfriars with you to-day, as I—I missed seeing him yesterday at his home. I understood that your guardian, Colonel Wharton, had answered for this arrangement being carried out."

"Yes, sir! But—"

"I cannot believe that Colonel Wharton failed to see the boy off, after having undertaken to do so—"

"Oh, no, sir! We started together from Wimford, in Surrey! But—"

"Then Tracy did travel with you?"

"Yes, sir, as far as Friarale."

"Why did he not come on to the school with you, in that case?" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Did your uncle not request you to keep him company as far as the school?"

"Oh, yes, sir! But—"

"But you did not do so?"

"I—I missed him in Friarale!" stammered Harry. "There was a crowd outside the station, and rather a rush for the school bus, and—and—"

"You lost sight of Tracy?"

"Yes, sir!"

"You should not have done so, Wharton!"

"I really couldn't help it, sir, in the circumstances—"

"Nonsense! Have you seen him since?"

"No, sir!"

"I have made inquiries, and he does not appear to have reached the school at all!" said Mr. Quelch. "You are to blame for this, Wharton!"

Harry Wharton made no reply to that. He did not feel that he was to blame. Still, as he did not mention that Tracy had deliberately dodged and fled, that was the only view that Mr. Quelch could take.

"I think," said Mr. Quelch, "that you should have been more careful, Wharton. You might, in the circumstances, have taken a little trouble in this matter. You are my head boy, and I have a right to expect some little

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thought and circumspection from you. Even on the first day of the term, I do not expect my head boy to act with utter carelessness and thoughtlessness."

Harry Wharton took that in silence. "I am placed in a most awkward position, owing to your remissness," went on Mr. Quelch. "The boy may be lost—he may not reach the school."

"He has a tongue in his head, sir!" suggested Harry.

"What—what?"

"Anyone will tell him the way to the school, if he asks."

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips hard. In point of fact, he was not in much uneasiness about Master Gilbert being lost, but he doubted whether that cheery youth was going to turn up at the school at all, unless an eye was kept on him till he was safely within the gates. Obviously Tracy was quite capable of inquiring his way to the school, if he wanted to reach the same! Quelch doubted whether he did!

"You will not improve matters by impertinence, Wharton!" he snapped. "I have a very difficult boy to deal with, and for certain reasons I am taking a very unusual amount of trouble on his account. I have a right to expect help, not hindrance, from the head boy of the Remove!"

Harry Wharton was silent. "As the matter stands, you have lost a new boy who was entrusted to your care," said Mr. Quelch. "As you lost him so near to the school as Friardale, he cannot be very far away. I shall give you leave out of the gates, Wharton, till calling-over in Hall to look for him."

"Oh!"

"I trust," said Mr. Quelch severely, "that you will be able to find him, and thus repair your fault! You may go at once, Wharton!"

Harry Wharton left his Form-master's study in silence, with deep feelings.

First day of term was not to be spent, as usual, in getting his quarters to rights, greeting old friends, exchanging news with fellows he had not seen since last term, mingling with the mob in Hall. It was to be spent hunting up and down and round about for a cheeky young rascal who did not want to be found, with hardly a ghost of a chance of success. Looking round the countryside for Gilbert Tracy was a good deal like looking for a needle in a haystack.

The fact was that Mr. Quelch was in a difficult position.

He had taken on an unusual and extremely difficult task in taking responsibility for that remarkable youth, Gilbert Tracy. Once at the school, he had no doubt of dealing efficiently and successfully with him. He had no doubt that, in a very short time, Gilbert would learn that he could not carry on at Greyfriars as he had carried on at Oakwood Place. Mr. Quelch was prepared to wear out his whole stock of cares on Gilbert, if necessary, to drive that into his cheeky head.

But the trouble was that Gilbert was not at the school. Efficient Form-master as he was, he could not deal with a fellow who was not present. If Gilbert did not turn up, Mr. Quelch really did not know what he could do at all. In sending Wharton in search of him, he was, in point of fact, catching at straws. But, really, he did not see anything else to be done.

Harry Wharton's face was frowning as he went down the passage, quite contrasting with a ruddy, cheery face that met him at the corner.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Anything up, old bean?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Quelch in a tantrum!" answered Harry.

"I thought he looked a bit shirty when I saw him. What's the row?"

"That worm Tracy!" said Harry savagely. "I've been jawed for letting the cheeky cad get away! I've got to go out and hunt for him. I don't know whether Quelch expected me to bring him to school handcuffed to my wrist, like a detective with a prisoner."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"I'll come and help," he said.

"No good," answered Harry. "There isn't the remotest chance of finding him if he doesn't want to be found. And I know he doesn't. May have gone back home by this time, for all I know."

"If he plays the goat like that they won't let him come to Greyfriars at all," said Bob.

"That's what he wants!" grunted the captain of the Remove. "I jolly well wish he could have his way, too! Tell the other fellows I'm gone out of gates; no need for us both to play hide-and-seek with that cad!"

Harry Wharton took his cap and went out of the House. He had hardly the remotest expectation of hearing anything about Tracy or seeing anything of him; but he had his orders from Mr. Quelch, and he had not forgotten his promise to Colonel Wharton. So he walked down to the village to do all he could, aware that it was most likely to amount to precisely nothing!

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Out Of Bounds!

"DON'T be a fool, Smithy!"

"Bow-wow!"

"Well, don't be a rotter!" grunted Redwing.

The Bounder laughed.

"Rotters, like poets, are born, not made, old bean!" he answered. "How's a chap to help it?"

Tom Redwing gave an angry grunt, and Herbert Vernon-Smith, laughing, walked away and left him in the quad.

There had been a call-over at tea, and there would be no more till final calling-over in Hall. Between the two "rolls" there was ample time for a fellow to disappear from the Greyfriars community unnoticed, especially on the first day of term, when everybody was busy about his own business.

Gates were closed now, and no fellow was allowed out of gates without leave.

Vernon-Smith was certainly not likely to ask leave to pay a visit to the Cross Keys at Friardale. But, having answered his name at tea-time, he was not likely to be missed—unless he was spotted getting out or getting in. And Smithy was very careful not to be spotted.

He dropped from the old Cloister wall in a secluded spot, and followed field-paths to the village. The scapegrace of Greyfriars was bent on renewing his acquaintance with Mr. Lodgey at that salubrious resort, the Cross Keys, and it was like the reckless Bounder to do so on the very first day of the new term. The fact that a fellow might be expelled for visiting such a place did not deter the Bounder, but it made him very cautious. It was growing dusky, but it was quite light enough for a fellow to be seen and recognised, and, reckless as he was, Smithy did not want to be taken before his headmaster on the first day of term.

He did not emerge from the fields till he was quite near his destination. Then he came out by a gap in the hedge into Friardale Lane, looked this way and that way, like Moses of old, and

darted into the little lane that ran by the side of the public-house.

That gave him admission to the garden behind the Cross Keys, where the "bad hat" of the Remove knew his way only too well into the place by way of the steps in the veranda at the back of the building.

In that veranda, a man with a red and beery face sat, smoking a cigar, and talking to some other person whom Vernon-Smith could not see.

The beery man was Bill Lodgey, and as he saw Vernon-Smith below he waved his cigar to him, in friendly greeting, with an inviting gesture, leaving a circle of blue smoke in the air.

The Bounder stepped up. Then he saw the fellow to whom Bill Lodgey had been speaking—and stared blankly at Gilbert Tracy.

Tracy stared at him.

He recognised Vernon-Smith at once as the fellow who had been keeping the carriage for Harry Wharton & Co. at Lantham that day. He favoured the Bounder with a scowl. He supposed that Vernon-Smith was a friend of Wharton's—and no friend of Wharton's was likely to find favour in his eyes.

"My hat!" ejaculated Vernon-Smith, in astonishment. "You here, Tracy! My only summer hat!"

"You seem to be here!" sneered Gilbert. "Any business of yours whether I'm here or not?"

"Quelch has been hunting for you all over the school, and asking nearly every man at Greyfriars if he's seen you."

"Let him hunt!"

"Well, you're starting well, for a new kid!" said the Bounder. "How long do you expect to stay at Greyfriars at this rate?"

"I don't expect to stay there at all!" answered Gilbert coolly. "But it's no business of yours that I can see!"

Mr. Lodgey looked from one to the other. Smithy was an old acquaintance of his, but he had seen Tracy for the first time that day.

"Friend of yours, sir?" he asked.

"No fear! A new kid for my school, that's all," answered Vernon-Smith. "I saw him on the train to-day. Where did you pick him up, Lodgey?"

"Met the young gentleman 'ere, sir," answered Mr. Lodgey. "Aving his tea 'ere, in the garden, when I spoke a civil word."

The Bounder laughed. He had no doubt that Bill Lodgey had been ready with a civil word for a well-dressed fellow who looked as if he had money about him.

They had been quite deep in conversation when the Bounder arrived, and it was evident that Tracy was in congenial surroundings.

"Sit down, sir!" said Mr. Lodgey, pushing a box of cigarettes towards the Bounder.

But Smithy did not sit down, and he did not accept a smoke. He was no more pleased to see Tracy there than Tracy was to see him.

It is said that a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind, and that birds of a feather flock together. But the discovery that the new fellow had the same blackguardly tastes as himself did not make the Bounder feel "wondrous kind" by any means. He had come there to talk "gee-gees" with the racing man, but he gave that idea up at once on finding Tracy there. A fellow who started at school in this way was pretty certain, in the Bounder's opinion, to land into bad trouble, and land into it quick, and Smithy had no desire to be mixed up in it.

"Only looked in in passing," he said.

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"I'm going on." He turned to the steps. Then, with an impulse of compassion for a reckless young ass who was heading for trouble, he glanced back. "Won't you come with me, Tracy?"

Gilbert stared at him.

"No," he answered curtly, "I won't!"

"You'd better," said Smithy. "If you're looked for and found here—"

"No biznez of yours!"

Vernon-Smith's eyes gleamed.

"I'd punch your cheeky head," he said, "but you look like getting enough without any from me. Go and eat coke!"

He went down the steps, and Gilbert, after a contemptuous stare at him, resumed his cigarette and his conversation with Bill Lodgey on the entrancing subject of "gee-gees."

Vernon-Smith left the garden and went up the path beside the inn to Friardale Lane.

As he emerged into the lane there was a sudden exclamation:

"Vernon-Smith!"

"Oh!" gasped the Bounder.

"Copped"—on the first day of term; that was his first thought. But the next moment he recognised Harry Wharton.

"Oh!" he gasped. "You—you fool! You made me jump!" Then, staring at the captain of the Remove, he burst into a laugh. "Oh, my hat! You, too! Good little Georgie, who loved his kind teachers, breaking out like this! Our bright and shimm' model in the Remove kickin' over the traces! Ha, ha, ha!"

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Collared!

HARRY WHARTON stared at the Bounder.

The captain of the Remove had walked round Friardale, looking for the missing new junior, and making an inquiry here and there. He did not expect to pick up any news of Gilbert, and he did not pick up any.

He was coming back up the lane when he spotted the Bounder, and stopped to speak to him.

As Smithy was emerging from the path beside the Cross Keys, he did not need telling where the scapegrace had been; but that was not his business. He had his own opinion of the Bounder's dingy ways; but he was not at Greyfriars to bring up other Remove fellows in the way they should go. He stepped towards Vernon-Smith to ask him if he had seen anything of the new fellow. The Bounder's jeering words and sarcastic laugh merely astonished him.

"You!" went on Smithy, grinning. "Wharton, old bean, you've been keeping bad company in the hols."

"What do you mean, you silly ass?" snapped Harry.

"Plain enough!" grinned Smithy. "Pub-haunting on the first day of term. Ha, ha, ha! All very well for me—the bad lad of the Form—but you—ha, ha! Quelch would jump if he saw you here."

"You howling ass!" roared Harry Wharton. "Why shouldn't I be here? Do you fancy I was going into that putrid den you've just come out of, you dummy?"

"Weren't you?" grinned Smithy.

"You cheeky fool!"

The Bounder laughed again.

"What's the good of gammonin'?" he said banteringly. "You came back to-day with that new cub, Tracy. New pal of yours, what? I run into you going in as I come out. Think I don't

know that you were going in to join him there? What do you take me for?"

Harry Wharton jumped.

"You've seen Tracy—in that den?" he exclaimed.

"You didn't know?" jeered the Bounder. "You weren't going in to join him? You haven't been painting the town red with him in the hols?"

"You utter idiot!" said Harry. "I was with Mauly in the hols, and I never saw Tracy in my life before yesterday."

"Then it hasn't taken you long to pick up his sportive manners and customs!" grinned Smithy.

Harry Wharton clenched his hands. He was very much inclined to plant his knuckles in Vernon-Smith's grinning face.

Still, there was some excuse for the Bounder's misapprehension. Tracy had been in Wharton's company, coming to school that day, and Smithy had just seen him with Bill Lodgey, and as he came away met Wharton face to face at the side entrance of the Cross Keys. Certainly it looked to Smithy as if the captain of the Remove was going in to join Tracy there.

"You fool!" snapped Harry. "I'm looking for Tracy!"

"I know!" grinned Smithy.

"Quelch sent me out to find him!" roared Wharton.

"Good old Quelch! Bet that he didn't know where you were going to join up with him!" chuckled Smithy.

"Oh, stop talking rot, you silly ass!" snapped Wharton. "Look here, is it straight—is Tracy in that den?"

"You didn't know?" chuckled Smithy.

"Not till you told me, you dummy!"

The Bounder laughed, shrugged his shoulders, and walked up the lane towards the school, leaving Wharton with a dark and knitted brow.

The captain of the Remove stood there in angry indecision. Vernon-Smith's mistake was intensely annoying to him; but he had, at all events, learned from the Bounder where Gilbert was to be found. But what he was to do now was a problem.

Quelch had despatched him to look for Tracy, find him, and bring him in. Quelch certainly had not supposed that the new junior would be run to earth in a "pub." He could hardly expect his head boy to root the fellow out of the Cross Keys—a place strictly out of bounds for Greyfriars fellows. The captain of the Remove could not enter those forbidden precincts without breaking a very serious rule of the school.

On the other hand, he could not return to Greyfriars and report that he could not find Tracy, when he had, in fact, found him. Neither could he return and report that Tracy was pub-haunting—at all events, he was very unwilling to do anything of the kind. He would gladly have booted Gilbert all over the county of Kent, but giving him away for a Head's flogging was another matter.

For several minutes after the Bounder had gone Harry Wharton stood there, undecided what he should do.

But he decided at last. He could not tell Quelch that he hadn't found Gilbert, and he could not tell Quelch that Gilbert was in a "pub." The only alternative was to hook Gilbert out, and that meant breaking bounds in a particularly disreputable quarter.

As there seemed to be no help for it, he made up his mind to it; but his temper was in a boiling state as he went down the dusky path from which the Bounder had emerged, and entered the weedy garden on which the veranda looked.

A light had been turned on in a room behind the veranda, and it revealed Mr. Lodgey and Gilbert Tracy, sitting and smoking.

Harry Wharton ran up the steps.

Both Lodgey and Tracy glanced round, thinking that it was Vernon-Smith coming back. They stared at Harry Wharton.

Of the beery racing man Wharton took no notice whatever. He was there for Tracy, and he gave Tracy his attention. And as he had no time to waste, he did not waste any.

He strode straight at Gilbert, grabbed him by the collar, and hooked him off his chair.

There was an angry yell from Gilbert. Wharton did not heed either his yelling or his struggling. With an iron grip on his collar he dragged him headlong down the steps into the garden. He had had to enter those forbidden precincts, but he was not staying there a second longer than he could help, and he was not going to waste time in words.

Gilbert went headlong down the steps, bumping and bundling and yelling.

Mr. Lodgey pumped to his feet, staring.

"My eye!" he ejaculated.

"Leave go, will you?" yelled Gilbert. "You rotter, leave go! Lodgey, lend me a hand! Help me!"

Harry Wharton did not wait for Mr. Lodgey to make up his mind on that point. He whirled the yelling Gilbert along by the collar, out of the garden, into the side path by the inn.

Gilbert, struggling, clung to the gate.

"Come on!" said Wharton, between his teeth.

"Let go, you rotter!" howled Gilbert.

With a powerful wrench the captain of the Remove tore him loose. As Tracy still resisted he dragged him like a sack up the path to the lane. Then he propelled him along Friardale Lane in the direction of Greyfriars.

He was glad enough to get away from the Cross Keys. He did not stop till he was a good fifty yards from that establishment. Then he stopped, but he did not let go Gilbert's collar.

Tracy was hanging a dead weight on him. His resistance was not of much use in the sturdy grasp of the captain of the Remove. But clearly Wharton could not drag him a mile by the collar.

"Walk!" snapped Harry.

"I won't!" yelled Gilbert. "Not a step!"

"Quelch has sent me out to find you."

"Hang Quelch!"

"I've got to take you in."

"Hang you!"

"Do you want Quelch to know you were in a pub?"

"I don't care a rap!"

"Well, you can tell him if you like—I can't. I'm taking you to the school. I'm going to hold you all the way, and you're going to walk! And I'm going to boot you if you don't!"

"You meddling rotter!"

"Will you come on?"

"No!" yelled Gilbert.

"Last time of asking!"

"I won't come!"

Harry Wharton said no more. His boot came into play, and it came hard.

Wild yells from Gilbert woke the echoes of the fields. But he decided to walk! Really, there was no help for it!

He walked!

Harry Wharton's hand was still on his collar when they reached the school gates. He was taking no chances of the elusive Gilbert dodging away in the dusk. With his left hand, he rang the



Wharton followed Tracy up, and his open palm smote the new junior's face. "Now, you cur——" he panted. "Wharton!" It was a formidable voice, almost like a roar, from Mr. Quelch's window, as the Remove master stared out.

bell; and Gosling, staring, opened the gate.

The old porter of Greyfriars fairly blinked at the sight of Gilbert scowling and snarling, with another junior's hand on his collar.

Wharton marched his prisoner in, and Gosling, still blinking, shut the gate. He marched him across the quad. But as they approached the doorway of the House, he dropped his hand from Gilbert's collar.

"Get in!" he said. "If you want me to walk you in to Quelch by the collar, I'll do it—please yourself!"

Gilbert walked in, and Wharton followed him.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" The Co. were waiting for Wharton at the door. "You've got him?"

"Yes; I've got to take him to Quelch, and then, thank goodness, I shall be done with him," answered Harry. "This way, Tracy."

Tracy, with compressed lips and a bitter face, went with him.

Wharton knocked at the door of Mr. Quelch's study, and opened it. He pushed the new junior in.

"Tracy, sir!" he said.

And, without waiting for an answer, he drew the door shut, leaving Gilbert with his Form-master, and walked away—glad to have done with that peculiar new member of the Greyfriars Remove.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

In Study No. 1.

HENRY SAMUEL QUELCH rose to his feet, his eyes fixed on Gilbert's sullen face.

It was a great relief to him to see the boy there. He had had little hope that Wharton would find him; and the capture of the elusive Gilbert

had extricated Mr. Quelch from a very awkward position. Though whether Mr. Quelch would have approved of all his head boy's proceedings in effecting capture, was another question. Gilbert, at all events, was there!

Mr. Quelch eyed him for some moments in silence. The sullen, savage, rebellious expression on Gilbert's face was not agreeable to the view. Perhaps Quelch doubted his wisdom in having taken responsibility for the boy at all. But Henry Samuel Quelch was not the man to look back when once he had set his hand to the plough. He had made himself responsible for Gilbert, and he was going to see the matter through.

"You may sit down, Tracy!" he said, quite mildly.

Gilbert slumped into a chair.

"Now, my boy, I have very little time to give you!" said Mr. Quelch. "Listen to me with attention! You are a troublesome boy, Tracy; a trouble to your father, who is an invalid and unable to deal with you; an intolerable burden to your uncle, who consulted me, his old friend, and to whom I made the offer of doing what I could for you. You must try to do better here, Tracy, than you have done at home."

Grunt, from Gilbert!

"Of what happened yesterday, I shall say nothing," resumed Mr. Quelch. "It was my intention to bring you personally to the school; but you eluded me, and I had to leave Oakwood Place without you. I shall let that pass, as you were not then a Greyfriars boy."

Grunt!

"Neither," went on Mr. Quelch, "shall I punish you for having arrived so late to-day. I desire to make every possible allowance for your early training, or want of training. You will make an entirely fresh start here, Tracy."

Grunt!

"You will be a member of my Form here," said Mr. Quelch. "I understand, Tracy, that you have been sent to school previously, and have made yourself so troublesome that the headmaster has been glad to send you home."

A faint grin dawned on Gilbert's sullen face for a moment.

"That," said Mr. Quelch quietly, "will not be allowed here, Tracy! I have discussed the matter with Dr. Locke, and he has given me an entirely free hand. You will not be allowed to add to your father's troubles, which are heavy enough, or to burden a kind and indulgent uncle. You will be a Greyfriars boy, and you will not in any circumstances be sent away from Greyfriars."

Gilbert's grin was replaced by a scowl.

"I shall hope," said Mr. Quelch sternly, "that you will realise that this is a great chance for you, and will make the best of it. I shall give you all the assistance in my power. If you persist in requiring punishment, punishment will be drastic. But I shall hope that you will come to a better frame of mind."

Grunt!

"To-morrow, when I am more at leisure, I will talk with you further," said Mr. Quelch. "I have no time now. You will be placed in Wharton's study—you are acquainted with Wharton, and—"

"That end!" said Gilbert.

"What?"

"That cad who brought me in!"

"You must not use such expressions when speaking to your Form-master, Tracy. Wharton was sent out specially to find you. You should not have left him on your way to school, as you know very well."

(Continued on page 16.)

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FIT AS A FIDDLE!

Last Laughable Instalment of :
"THE SLACKER OF ST. SAM'S!"
 By Our "Yung Oriher" . . . **DICKY NUGENT**

"Here he is!"
 "Wake up, Yawning-ton!"

"Buck up, Yawny, old bean! Your grate-grate-grandfather's here!"
 Yawnington, the slacker of St. Sam's, sat up on his luxurious couch. He yawned wearily at the site of the eager Fourth-Formers who were crowding round him.

"Can't I have another forty winks, dear men?" he sighed. "I've only just started my afternoon snooze."

"Sorry, old chap—but there's no time for four winks, let alone forty!" said Jack Jolly briskly. "Head's orders are for you to go to the jimmynasium at once. Take hold of him, you fellows!"

"Good wheeze!"
 "Ow-ow! Leggo my hair! Yow-ow! My ears! Look here, you fellows—"

Yawnington protested wildly; but Jack Jolly & Co. seized him by his ears, his arms, and his hair, and yanked him out of the study; and after that they ran him downstairs at express speed.

The fellows they passed on the way stared in surprize, as they saw the slacker's speedy progress.

"Doing it for a wager, you fellows?" called out Loyle of the Fourth.

"Not exactly!" grinned Jolly. "Yawny's

wanted in the jim for his fizzical fitness test—that's all!"

"My hat! I'm coming too, then!"

"We wouldn't miss this for worlds!" chuckled Stedfast. "This way, you fellows!"

There was a rush, as the news spread that Yawnington's testing-time had arrived. Nobody wanted to miss seeing the slacker of the Fourth put through his paces in the jim before the critical eyes of his grate-grate-grandfather, Sir Frederick Funguss.

By the time Yawny reached the jim, he had attracted quite a long procession of excited spectators behind him.

They found that the principals in the piece had already arrived. Sir Frederick Funguss and his fizzical culture expert, Major Mussel, were chewing the fat with Doctor Birchmall, while Mr. Lickham and Mr. Justiss stood a short distance away in case their services were wanted.

Sir Frederick and the major were looking as solemn as boiled owls; but the Fourth Form fellows were seprized to see the Head grinning.

Had they known what a braney wheeze the old raskal had thought of to hoodwink Sir Frederick, they would have understood his cheerfulness. But nobody knew a thing about the Head's plot with the



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exception of Tubby Barrell. Tubby, who had not told a sole of the strange secret he had picked up while concealed in the Head's study, had a pekuliar gleem in his eyes, as he rolled into the jim with the rest.

"Hah! Here's the yung jackanapes, bai

be an easy matter," he grinned. "I propose, gentlemen, to put him to a test that will convince you at once that he has far surpassed the standard you set for him. Yawnington is going to lift the weighted bar that lies at your feet."

Sir Frederick and the major simply blinked



Jove!" cried Sir Frederick Funguss, in his refined voice, as Yawnington arrived in the jim with a rush. "It will go hard with you unless you prove to Majah Mussel's satisfaction that you are a perfect spessimen of fizzical fitness!"

Doctor Birchmall stepped forward.

"Fortunately that will

when they saw the massive weight.

"Impossible!" barked Sir Frederick. "The yung raskal could nevah lift it!"

"I beg to differ! I hoap to see Yawnington lift up this weight as if it were a meer feather!" Then the Head stopped suddenly and pointed to one of the winders, as though he had seen

something extraordinary.

"Look!" he cried.

Everybody looked up.

Now this was just what the Head wanted. As soon as they looked away from the weighted bar, he rolled it under a first-aid cabinet nearby.

MASTERLY MA GO-GETTER E GUY GUE

Guess what, buddies? Yep, you got it!

Now that Wharton's hit Greyfriars again, he allows he wants back his Editor's job! I knew it would happen that way! And yet I hoped it wouldn't.

"Maybe," I figured to myself, "Wharton will have lost some of his ritzy ways in the course of his travels. Maybe when I talk turkey, that galoot will see sense. Maybe he'll allow he's got nothing on me when it comes to editing the 'Greyfriars Herald.' Maybe he'll be honest enough to hand over the job to the guy that's earned the right to it!"

But not a chance! All he said was "Thanks for holding the fort, Fishy. I'll take over right away!"

"Sez you!" I flted back. "And what if I figure you won't? What if I fall for the clamorous demands of my fans and stay right here in the editorial chair?"

The guy just snickered. "In that case, Fishy," he said, "I'm afraid I shall be under the painful necessity of throwing you out on your neck!"

Believe me, bozox, I got my mad up to hear that ungrateful galoot stand there and yawp at me that way!

"Why, you slabsided jay, I'll spiffiate you! I guess I'll make potato-scrappings of you!" I hollered.

And I nearly did it, too. Only one thing held me back, I reckon—the fear that once I started on him, I might not know when to stop!

Besides, there was no need to do it. I was one

SCHOOLBOY ACTOR TO TAKE LEAD IN OWN PLAY . . . NO FEAR OF FLOP!

Dear Pater,—The new term is getting into its stride now, and the school is a giddy hive of industry. You will be pleased to know that I am dutifully doing what you ordered and lapping up Latin and maths like a cat lapping up milk. But I might mention that I find it very difficult to do this and at the same time do justice to my theatrical work.

As nobody in the Remove, apart from myself, has the first idea about acting, it's a pretty hard task to get a production into going order. And I am very keen this term to put on a play that

will not disgrace the family name!

The play I wrote during the vac—"Beauty and the Bandit"—seemed to me at one time, the ideal piece for schoolboy actors; but now that I am getting down to the task of selecting a cast, I'm not so sure about it. The leading part is in safe hands—I'm playing it myself—but for the life of me I don't seem able to find anybody capable of filling any of the other roles!

I've tried out Bolsover, Bulstrode, and Brown—the three B's—in the part of the villainous spy; but although they can

all look frightfully villainous, they can't seem to get anywhere near to that smooth, silky, sinister voice that I want my villain to have. I honestly believe, pater, that I could go right through the alphabet at Greyfriars without finding a chap who could do it as I want it done!

For the heroine, I am hoping to get one of the Cliff House girls, and, girls being more naturally suited to the stage than fellows, I shouldn't have so much difficulty here. But I'm going to have trouble galore before I've finished dishing out the small parts—I can see that!

What makes me laugh—or rather, would make me laugh, if it were not so dashed serious!—is that, although the benighted nitwits of this Form can't act for toffee, they all expect me to

give them leading parts. It's the hardest thing in the world to get the silly fatheads to accept minor roles—notwithstanding the fact that the only part I could entrust the best of them with would be the part of a deaf mute!

By the way, pater, that "cod" circus I produced during the vac at Smithy's place proved a big hit, and I'm getting many requests to do it all over again at Greyfriars. Funny that I can get away with a half-baked idea like that—yet when I give them Shakespeare, it's a flop from the start!

I'll write again soon and let you know how things are going. Meanwhile, pater, here's hoping you're getting all the encores!

Affectionately yours,
 WILLIAM WIBLEY.



By H. Vernon-Smith,
OUR LIVE-WIRE REPORTER

Once upon a time, the Upper Fourth at Greyfriars played a game of football with the Remove and beat them.

"Oh, but that's a fairy tale!" I can hear you protest.

Well, not altogether a fairy-tale, old pals. I am assured by chaps who have studied the school history that it did actually happen once. I believe it was during the reign of James the First!

It didn't happen, however, on Saturday last, when the ancient rivals met once again on Little Side. But it came very near. Our lads had to fight hard to gain a victory by the odd goal in three. In extenuation, I should mention that only four men out of the eleven were regular first-team players, while Temple, on the other hand, fielded his strongest side.

There was plenty of enthusiasm about the play, but not much science. Anyway, we won—so perhaps I had better not be too critical!

The match of the week at Greyfriars was played on Big Side last Wednesday, when the First Eleven entertained St. Jude's. This was a fine game to watch, and although the home supporters were disappointed at the result—a win for St. Jude's by 3-2—they had the satisfaction of seeing a really pretty display of football. Both sides played a sparkling game, and if St. Jude's had most of the luck, nobody will begrudge them their victory, which they just about deserved.

St. Jude's must be pretty strong all round this year, for their junior team won 4-3 against Rookwood on the same day.

Leaving footer for a moment, let us offer congratulations to Dr. Locke on winning the Masters' Golf Tournament at the Courtfield Golf Club. He went round in 72, which is considered a pretty good aggregate.

The week's sporting sensation comes from the gym, where Bunter minor at last succeeded in jumping over the vaulting-horse. Unfortunately, he overturned it in doing so and broke two of its legs; but it's good to know that he landed on the right side of it.

MANOEUVRE OF EDITOR GETS FISSING!

up on Wharton already, though he didn't know it. I'll tell the world a guy has to get up early in the morning to catch Fisher T. Fish!

The day before he returned, you see, I had shifted the entire trappings of the editorial office to a secret dump—MSS., drawings, correspondence, diary and the whole bag of tricks. Just in case he got up rough!

I told him; and was he mad? I'll say! The look that guy gave me would have paralysed anyone less tough than F. T. F. He made a rush at me. I beat it. I didn't want to get mixed up in a scrap with Wharton. I guess I might have hurt him too much!

So now you know the way things stand regarding the editorship of the "Greyfriars Herald" at the time of going to press. Your old pal Fisher, in his well-known big-time way, has stepped in and snatched the whole caboodle. The "Greyfriars Herald" goes out to the world this week from a secret editorial office, some place in Greyfriars! And ex-Editor Wharton is that sore he looks like he'll bust any minute!

Will this masterly manoeuvre mine meet with the success it deserves? Will the passing of time enable Wharton to realise that his best move is to step out of it and look a present about it? Mark this time next week these momentous questions will be answered. Meanwhile, there's one guy who's sitting pretty and his name is

FISHER T. FISH.

The bogus weighted bar was in reality nothing more than a bar of wood with a toy balloon at each end!

"Sorry, gentlemen!" said the Head, blandly, as his victims looked back at him again. "I thought it was an aeroplane; but I was mistaken. Now, Yawning-ton!"

Yawny got down to it. A gasp of sheer amazement went up as he lifted the bar high above his head.

Then the gasp changed to a howl of laughter. For, at the crucial moment, Tubby Barrell leaned forward and jabbed a pin into one of the rounded ends, and there was a loud explosion as the balloon burst.

Bang! "Ha, ha, ha!" "It's a fake! Ho, ho, ho!"

The fellows simply shrieked. Sir Frederick blinked.

"Bai Jove!" he gasped. "Birchmell, you uttah boundah!" But the Head was too wild to heed Sir Frederick. With a whoop of rage he flew at Tubby Barrell.

What happened next was very comical. Tubby Barrell and Yawnington, both thinking the Head was after them, ran for their lives and raced up the ladder leading to the horizontal bar just under the ceiling. Yawnington was the first to get to the top. He swung himself on to the bar.

The next moment, an amazing thing happened. Tubby, in scrambling on to the bar, lost his balance and fell! Another instant and he would have hurtled to the floor.

But in that instant Yawny acted! Like lightning, he swung down from the bar by his legs and grabbed Tubby. A moment later he

was lifting the fat junior up and depositing him safely back on the ladder!

Deffening cheers rent the air, as the crowd breathed freely once more.

"Good old Yawny!" "Splendid, bai gad!" cried Sir Frederick.

Sir Frederick was delighted. When Yawny came down, he shook his hand warmly.

"There's no need for a test now, bai Jove!" he said. "You're a spiffin' athlete, an' I'm proud of you, bai gad!"

"Why Doctah Birchmell should have troubled to fake that weight, I really don't know. However, we will say no more about that, now!"

"Oh, thank you, Sir Frederick!" gasped the Head.

And he spent the rest of the day blowing his own trumpet—because Yawny had turned out to be as fit as a fiddle!

STILT-WALKING STUNTS TO STOP!

Headmaster Puts Foot Down When Boys Put Foot Up.

Skinner started the stilt-walking idea at Greyfriars by bringing back with him from his holidays a posh pair of metal stilts that a doting aunt had given him.

No sooner had he taken one walk down the Remove passage on them than half the Form decided to go in for stilt-walking.

There was a rush for the woodshed. Planes, saws and choppers were begged, borrowed or pinched, and amateur carpenters set to work by the score.

By the third day of the new term, stilt-walkers were to be seen in several parts of the school.

At first, they were not too much of a nuisance. Novices preferred the modest backwaters of the school to the busier parts for practising purposes.

When they began to get into their stride, of course, it was a different matter. Piled in their new accom-

plishment soon took them into the mainstreans of Greyfriars traffic. They bobbed up in the Rag, the gym, the footer pavilion, the tuckshop and even in Hall. Stilt-walking quickly assumed the dimensions of a craze!

The masters first became aware of it when holding their weekly meeting in the library. The library windows are too high to permit passers-by of normal height to be seen in the ordinary way; but at last week's master's meeting, the startled beaks saw through the windows quite a procession of fellows who seemed to have grown a yard or so since dinner-time!

None of them seemed to know quite what to do about it when they learned the cause. There was nothing essentially wrong about chaps walking on stilts. So, for the time being,

the beaks just raised their eyebrows and remained silent.

Then the inventive genius of some of the brighter spirits in the Remove started asserting itself and elaborating the stilt-walking stunt. Skinner held competitions to see who could stilt-walk fastest up and down the stairs. Dick Rake created a brand-new form of footer—on stilts, of course. Bolsover major experi-

being demolished by house-breakers.

The climax had to come in the end, and it was a real rip-snorter when it did come. A game of stilt-footer in the Rag brought up Quelch and Wingate and North all in a bunch; and they had the bad luck to meet Trevor and Stott, who were having a stilt-race down the stairs. Trevor and Stott panicked, wobbled, and crashed, and there was the dickens of a mix-up. But there was far too much din going on in the Rag for the crash to be heard there, and when the beak and the prefects entered shortly afterwards, stilt-footer was in full swing.

Just to crown it, the Head himself followed Quelch in before the game had stopped. Strong men blanched and byones knocked at the knees, as his voice boomed out "FOYS!" Did we go red? Well, it was a pretty ghastly moment, believe us!

So stilt-walking is off now for keeps. The Head has put his foot down—and the next man that puts his foot up on a stilt is very much for it.

Pity that it should happen just when we were beginning to enjoy it. Someone will have to introduce something else now to take its place.



mented with stilt-wrestling. And it was not long before the School House began to sound as if it was in the process of



(Continued from page 15.)

"Hang him!" said Gilbert. Mr. Quelch jumped. "What?" he ejaculated. "What did you say?"

"I said hang him!" The Remove master looked at Gilbert long and hard. Then he picked up a cane from his table.

"I am reluctant to cane you, Tracy, on your first day here," he said. "I have, indeed, overlooked a great deal in order to avoid doing so. But as you leave me no choice in the matter, I shall cane you. Stand up!"

Gilbert lounged to his feet. "Now bend over that chair!" Gilbert did not stir.

"Do you hear me, Tracy?" asked Mr. Quelch, in a low but very distinct voice.

Gilbert gave him a look. What he read in Mr. Quelch's face was enough for him. Without a word, he bent over the chair.

Swipe! Yell!

Mr. Quelch laid down the cane again. If ever a fellow had asked for "six," Gilbert had; but the Remove master let it go at that.

"Now follow me, Tracy!" he said. Gilbert wriggled as he followed his Form-master from the study. He had had only one swipe; but Quelch had laid it on scientifically; and it was enough for Gilbert. He wriggled scowling after his Form-master.

He passed a good many fellows, who stared at him curiously, some of them grinning. Now "kids" were not expected to go about scowling like demons in a pantomime. But in that matter, as in others, Gilbert was a law unto himself. He scowled his way after Mr. Quelch to the Remove passage and into that passage to the door of Study No. 1, which stood wide open.

A fat voice was audible from that study.

"I say, you fellows, old Quelch was fearfully shirty! He jolly nearly bit Prout's head off, when old Prout—"

"Shut up, you ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, as Mr. Quelch appeared in the study doorway, with Gilbert scowling at his heels.

"Eh? He did really," said Bunter. "Old Prout was jawing, and old Quelch was—"

"Bunter!" "Oh, crikey!" gasped Billy Bunter, spinning round like a fat humming-top, at his Form-master's voice.

"Take a hundred lines, Bunter!"

"Oh, lor!"

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!"

Wharton and Nugent were in the study, and they looked at Gilbert with expressive looks. They could guess, only too easily, why the Remove master had brought him there.

"You are acquainted with Tracy, Wharton? I understand that Colonel Wharton has requested you to give this boy what help you can in his first days at Greyfriars."

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"Out! Yes, sir!" "Tracy will be in your study this term, Wharton."

"Oh! Yes, sir!" "Tracy, this is your study. You will remain here till the bell rings, and come down with Wharton for calling-over in Hall."

Grant! "Do you hear me, Tracy?" asked Mr. Quelch, in that low, distinct tone that was a warning of danger.

"Yes!" grunted Tracy.

"Yes, what?" asked Mr. Quelch grimly.

"Yes, sir!" breathed Tracy.

"Very good!" Mr. Quelch left the study.

Tracy cast a scowl after him, and then favoured his study-mates with another and a blacker one. "Cheeky old fool!" he remarked.

"Oh crikey!" said Bunter, blinking at the new junior through his big spectacles.

"Is that Quelch you're speaking of, Tracy?" asked Frank Nugent.

Wharton said nothing.

"Yes; meddling old idiot!"

"You'd better not let him hear you say so!" said Frank dryly.

"I don't care if he does!"

"He, he, he!" from Bunter. "You'd jolly well care if he gave you six! He, he, he!"

Gilbert gave the fat Owl a black look. Then he scowled round the room.

"Is this hole what they call a study here?" he asked.

"Yes, it's what we call a study here, Tracy!" said Nugent quietly.

"It's about a quarter the size of my room at home!" said Gilbert. "Is this dingy old rubbish what you call furniture?"

"Yes, that's what we call it!"

"And that old fool thinks I'm going to stick here!" said Gilbert. "Well, he'll find out his mistake."

"He, he, he!"

"Does that cackling fat fool belong to the study, too?"

"No; Bunter's in Study No. 7."

"Then what is he doing here?"

"At the present moment," said Nugent, "he is cackling at a cheeky, ill-tempered, ill-mannered outsider."

"He, he, he!"

"Well, I'll stop his cackling!" said Gilbert.

He made a step towards Billy Bunter, who promptly dodged behind the captain of the Remove.

"Stop that, Tracy!" said Harry Wharton curtly.

"I'll please myself."

"You won't! If you lay a finger on that fat ass, I'll boot you round the study," answered Harry Wharton coolly.

"You'd better get it into your head, Tracy, that this isn't Oakwood Place, and that you can't throw your weight about here!"

"Well, I shan't be here long, that's one comfort!" snarled Gilbert. "If that old fool fancies he can keep me here for a term he has another guess coming! They've tried this game with me before, but I put paid to it. I shall be gone under a week."

"I hope you're right!" said Harry.

"Hear, hear!" grinned Nugent.

"He, he, he! I say, you fellows, what a cheeky cad! He, he, he!"

Billy Bunter expressed that opinion from safe cover, behind the captain of the Remove.

Gilbert scowled at the fat Owl, and slumped into a chair. There, he took out a cigarette-case and selected a smoke.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent watched that proceeding in silence.

But a few minutes later the bell was ringing, and the juniors left the study to go down to Hall.

Tracy remained in his chair, smoking. Harry Wharton turned back, at the door.

"It's call-over, Tracy!" he said.

"What about it?"

"You have to come down to Hall."

"Rats!"

Wharton breathed hard, and went down the passage to the stairs. But Frank Nugent turned back.

"Look here, Tracy, don't play the goat!" he said. "You've got Quelch's back up already, and he will take the skin off you, if you bother him any further. Be a sensible chap. You're not at home now, you know."

"Worse luck!" said Gilbert.

"Well, come on."

"Shan't!"

Frank left it at that, and followed his chum.

A minute later, Gilbert threw away the stump of his cigarette, and followed. He had learned already that Henry Samuel Quelch was not a man to be trifled with; a single swipe had impressed that on him. Gilbert was on time, in Hall, and answered to his name with the rest of the Remove.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

One For Loder!

IN break, the following morning, Harry Wharton had a rather thoughtful expression on his face.

Instead of joining his friends, he looked round for the new junior.

He did not want Tracy's company; very much indeed he did not want it. But he had to remember his promise to his uncle, and to keep it, so far as Tracy made it possible. Making friends with the fellow did not seem practical politics; but he could, at least, give him a word or two, and any friendly aid that a new fellow might be in want of.

Mr. Quelch had had something to say to his head boy, after dismissing the Form for break, so Wharton was out a few minutes after the Remove. He did not see Tracy when he glanced round the quadrangle.

"Seen the new chap, Bunter?" he called out.

Bunter blinked round.

"Yes! I say, he's a frightful cad, old chap!" he said.

"Tell me a new one!" said Harry, laughing.

"But he is, really, you know," said the fat Owl. "He kicked me! I just went up to speak to him, in a friendly way—I wasn't going to borrow anything of him, you know—as if I'd borrow of a new kid—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I'd hardly opened my mouth, when he kicked me! I'd have knocked him spinning, only—only—well, I don't believe in being rough on a new kid!" said Bunter magnanimously. "I say, you go and kick him, old chap! He's over by the Sixth Form studies. I'll carry that book for you, if you like, if you're going to kick him."

Wharton had his Latin grammar under his arm, which he had brought away from the Form-room to take up to his study.

"I'm not going to kick him, fathead! I—I want to speak to him. But you can take this book in for me—leave it in my study."

"Yah!" was Bunter's reply, and he fled off.

If Wharton was not going to kick Tracy, he could jolly well carry his book himself, and be blowed to him, was Bunter's view.

Harry Wharton walked away to the Sixth Form studies, where he found Gilbert Tracy, loafing by the chains of the Sixth Form green.

Loder of the Sixth could be seen in his study, the window being open, and he glanced out, as Wharton came along, and frowned.

Loder, apparently, remembered troubles of last term, and he gave the captain of the Remove a grim look as if warning him to mind his p's and q's this term, and turned his head away.

Wharton did not, as a matter of fact, notice him at all. He was looking at Tracy as he came up.

Gilbert greeted him with a scowl. "Want anything?" he asked.

"No!"

"Take it and go!" suggested Gilbert.

"My dear chap," said Harry, as amicably as he could, "my uncle's asked me to keep an eye on you here for a bit—"

"Old ass!" said Gilbert. "I'm glad I got him with that footer the other day!" And he laughed.

"Never mind that," said Harry quietly. "Look here, Tracy; what's the use of being a disgruntled ass? You're at school now, and you won't find Greyfriars a bad place, if you make the best of it—"

"Rotten hole!" said Gilbert.

"If I can do anything—"

"You can't, except keep your distance."

"Well, I shan't be sorry to do that," said Harry, "and I'll do it now. Still, as you're a new kid, I'll give you a tip! Better walk on."

"Why?"

"Juniors aren't supposed to loiter about here. This is senior ground. A chap can walk by, but he's not expected to hang about. If a prefect spots you, you'll be ordered off."

"What rot!"

"Well, you'd better not tell the prefect that! There's Loder at his window—and he's rather a bully; better not catch his eye."

With that, Harry turned to walk away; feeling that he had had about enough of Gilbert for one break. But the new junior stopped him.

"Oh, that's Loder, is it?" he asked, glancing at the window. "I've heard him mentioned already—a bit fond of handing out the ash, isn't he?"

"More than a bit, if he has an excuse."

"You had rows with him last term," went on Gilbert.

"Oh, you've heard that, have you?"

"Yes, I've heard that; I've heard a lot of things. What's the book you've got under your arm?"

"Eh? My Latin book," answered Harry, surprised by the sudden change of subject.

"Mind if I look at it?"

"It's exactly the same as your own," said Harry, more and more surprised, but rather relieved that Gilbert's manner was a little less disgruntled and aggressive. If the fellow was going to be civil, it made the task his uncle had imposed on him a good deal easier.

"I know that, but I've taken mine to my study. Will you let me look at it, or not?" grunted Gilbert.

"Certainly, if you like!"

Wharton handed the Latin grammar to Tracy. The new junior opened it, and glanced at the title page, where the owner's name was written.

"You've got your name in it!" he remarked.

"We have to write our names in our books," answered Harry.

"Yes, I know, but I wanted to make sure."

Wharton could only stare at him. Certainly he had not the remotest suspicion of what was in Gilbert's cheery mind.

The new junior glanced round at Loder's window. Gerald Loder, with his head turned away, was reading a newspaper—quite possibly looking out the odds of his favourite gee-gee in a racing paper. Anyhow, his face was turned from the quad. Gilbert's arm went up, the Latin grammar in his hand, and he whizzed it suddenly at the open window.

The instant it had left his hand he was running like a deer along by the wall and vanishing.

Crash!

Harry Wharton stood as if transfixed. With bulging eyes he saw the whizzing volume crash on the side of Gerald Loder's head, almost knocking him off his chair. The book dropped in the study, and Loder very nearly dropped. The startled yell that came from Gerald Loder rang far and wide.

Loder bounded up.

His face was crimson with rage. He grabbed at the book and jumped to the window, staring out.

Gilbert had already turned the corner by the Sixth Form lobby. Loder's eyes fixed on Harry Wharton.

"Did you throw this book at me?" he roared.

"No!" gasped Harry.

"You cheeky young rascal! I know you did!"

"I did not—"

"We'll see!" Loder opened the book and looked at the name inside. "Why, you lying little worm, here's your name in it—it's your book!"

"Yes, but—"

"Come into the House, and come to my study at once!" roared Loder.

He turned from the window to sort out his ashpunt. Harry Wharton, with feelings too deep for words, walked away to the doorway of the House.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Rough Luck!

L ODER of the Sixth had his ashpunt in hand when Wharton arrived at his study.

He swished it as the junior stepped in.

Loder was not a good-tempered fellow. Even a good-tempered fellow might have been angry at what had happened. He had had rather a hard knock on the side of the head, and an ache lingered there. And a cheeky junior had "buzzed" a book at a Sixth Form prefect—an almost unheard-of outrage.

He had not the slightest doubt that Wharton had done it. It was, Loder considered, in keeping with his cheek last term. It was Wharton's book, and Wharton had been standing there; he had not noticed Tracy at all, and Tracy had disappeared before he looked out of the study window. It was Wharton, and Wharton was going to learn quite early in the term that he could not buzz books at a prefect's head—especially Loder's!

"Bend over and touch your toes!" rapped Loder. "By gum, if this is the way you're beginning the term, Wharton, I'll make you understand that it won't do!"

"Will you let me explain?" said Harry. "I never threw the book in at your window, Loder."

"That will do! Bend over!"

"I had handed the book to another fellow, and he threw it, and then cut off before you looked out."

Loder stared at him.

"You don't fancy you'll get away with that?" he asked derisively.

"It's the truth!" said Harry.

"That's enough! Bend over!"

"I've told you that I never threw the book," said Harry quietly. "I'm not going to be caned for nothing, Loder. If you don't believe me, I will go to my Form-master."

"If it's the truth, who was the fellow?" sneered Loder.

"Tracy!"

"Who's Tracy? I've never heard of a Tracy here!"

"A new fellow in the Remove."

"Is there a new kid in the Remove? I've not heard of him! You lying young rascal, are you trying to make out that a new kid has started at the school by chucking books at prefects?" exclaimed Loder.

Harry Wharton breathed hard. It sounded improbable enough. Loder had seen nothing of Gilbert; and the idea of the average sheepish and shy new kid chucking books at a prefect's head was absurd. Loder did not believe a word of it, and really Wharton could hardly expect him to do so. It was the truth, but it did not sound like it.

Loder pointed to a chair with the cane, at the same time stepping between the junior and the door.

"I've told you to bend over!" he said.

"And I've told you that I will not be caned for nothing, and that I shall appeal to my Form-master!" retorted Harry.

Loder smiled grimly.

"I believe you're rather in your Form-master's good books—his trusted head boy, and all that!" he said. "You might get away with a yarn like this with Quelch—I don't know. I know I'm not giving you the chance. If you can gammon Quelch, you can't gammon me! Bend over that chair!"

Wharton set his lips.

"I've a right to appeal to my Form-master!" he said.

"Will you bend over that chair?"

"No," said Harry, between his teeth, "I won't!"

"Then I'll help you!"

Loder made a stride at the junior and grasped him by the collar with his left hand.

Harry Wharton clenched his fists. His temper was boiling, but he had to remember prudence. The consequences of "punching a prefect" were too dire. Fellows were sacked for that kind of thing. He restrained his keen desire to plant a clenched fist full in the face of the bully of the Sixth.

Swipe!

With his left Loder twisted him over the chair; with his right he swiped with the ash.

Swipe, swipe!

Harry Wharton choked down his rage and bore it as quietly as he could. Indeed, he did not, for once, blame Loder very much; it was Gilbert who was to blame. Loder was within his rights, acting as a prefect, as he had not the slightest doubt that the Remove had flung a book at his head—indeed, in the circumstances, he could hardly have any doubt. No doubt he was glad of a pretext for handling the

ash on the junior with whom he had had a great deal of trouble last term, but that was all.

Swipe, swipe!

Loder was laying it on as if he was beating a carpet.

Swipe!

Even Loder stopped at "six"—six being the limit by an unwritten law seldom or never disregarded. An official six might consist of six whops, or a lesser number, but never more.

He released the junior's collar, and Wharton staggered up from the chair. Six was quite enough, considering the force with which Loder had laid them on.

Wharton stood panting for breath, his face red with rage.

"Now you can cut," said Loder, laying down the ash. "Take your book with you—and I advise you not to chuck it at a prefect's head again! You could be sent up to the Head for it, as you know as well as I do! Get out!"

Harry Wharton took his Latin book and got out.

Loder sat down and took up his paper again, rubbing his head as he looked over the odds on Nobbled Nick and the Welsher.

Harry Wharton went down the Sixth Form passage in a white heat. He was through with Loder, and now he wanted to see Gilbert—and he wanted to see him badly. He ran into the quad.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry gave him quite a startled look. "What the thump—"

"Seen that cad Tracy?" Wharton almost choked.

"Yes, loafing under Quelch's window. What—"

Wharton did not answer. He cut along at a run for the path under the windows of Masters' Studies. In his enraged and exasperated frame of mind it did not occur to him that the astute Gilbert had any particular reason for loafing in that particular spot.

Tracy was only a few yards from his Form-master's window, which was open in the fine autumn morning. Mr. Quelch was in his study, busy with Form papers. But Wharton was not thinking of Quelch.

He came up to Tracy with a breathless rush.

"You rotten cur!" he panted.

Gilbert eyed him with a cheery grin.

"Anything the matter?" he drawled.

"You cur! You've got me six from that bully Loder—" Wharton choked.

"Did Loder give you six for chucking your book at his head?" asked Gilbert coolly. "Well, it was rather asking for it, wasn't it?"

Snack!

Wharton did not answer Gilbert in words; he answered with a smack from his open palm which rang across Gilbert's face like a pistol shot.

"Wharton, old man—" gasped Bob Cherry. Bob had followed his chum, wondering what on earth was up. "Look out—Quelch—"

Gilbert, yelling, staggered back. He contrived to stagger against Mr. Quelch's window-sill. But the Remove-master's attention was already drawn to the scene by that tremendous smack which had rung through his study.

Wharton, oblivious of Form-master, followed the new junior up, with clenched fists and flashing eyes.

"Now, you cur!" he panted.

"Wharton!" It was a formidable voice, almost a roar, from Quelch's window as the Remove-master stared out. "Wharton!"

"Oh!" gasped Harry. He dropped his hands, his face scarlet.

"What does this mean, Wharton? How dare you rush up to a boy—a new boy, too—and strike him? How dare you, I say!"

Mr. Quelch did not and could not, like Gilbert. He did like, and he trusted his head boy. But his anger was all directed at Wharton. His gimlet eyes fairly glittered at the captain of the Remove.

Wharton stammered helplessly. He could not tell Quelch of the trick Tracy had played on him. Indeed, it would have been little use if he had, for he could see that the unscrupulous young rascal was quite prepared to deny it. He realised, rather too late, that he should have chosen a more suitable time and place for calling Gilbert to account.

"I am astonished at this! I am quite shocked!" said Mr. Quelch sternly. "I hardly understand you, Wharton. Your temper will be your undoing if you do not learn to control it. I have never seen anything so outrageous. Wharton, you will take five hundred lines. Now go into the House, and remain there till third school."

Gilbert, rubbing a smacked face, grinned as the captain of the Remove turned away in silence. Wharton said no word; but Gilbert could guess what he was feeling like, and he seemed to derive great satisfaction from that knowledge. Harry Wharton had marched him into the school by his collar the previous day, and Gilbert considered it probable that he was sorry for it by this time.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Over!

"**L**E journal de soir—you have ze paper of ze evening, sair?" asked Monsieur Charpentier.

"In my study," answered Mr. Quelch. "I will get it."

"Da tout," said Monsieur Charpentier. "Pas du tout. Zat you disturb yourself not. I go vis myself."

And Monsieur Charpentier, the French master of Greyfriars, went with himself, as he expressed it.

After roll-call that evening, Mr. Quelch was standing at the corner of Masters' Passage, in conversation with Prout, master of the Fifth, when Mossoo blew along.

Prout had been talking for a steady ten minutes. And the Remove-master would have been glad to oblige Mossoo by getting the paper from his study, or to oblige anybody else by getting anything from anywhere, for the sake of stemming the flowing tide of Prout's conversation.

However, Monsieur Charpentier was much too polite to allow him to do anything of the kind. He whisked away to Quelch's study to fetch the paper. Mossoo was anxious to see the latest news of Czechoslovakia.

But Monsieur Charpentier forgot all about Czechoslovakia when he entered Mr. Quelch's study for the "journal de soir."

He opened the study door, switched on the light, and stepped across to the study table, where the evening paper lay. The next moment there was a bump, a crash, and a fearful yell.

Quelch and Prout, in the passage, fairly jumped. Hacker, the master of the Shell, put his head out at his door, and stared.

From Quelch's study came yell on yell.

Monsieur Charpentier, stepping across to the table, naturally had his eyes on the table, and the newspaper that lay thereon, and did not think of looking down at the floor.

It was quite natural, but it was rather unfortunate, for there was a cord stretched across the study a few inches from the floor, fastened at the ends to two heavy articles of furniture keeping it taut.

Mossoo walked into that cord, tripped, and nose-dived.

It was an unexpected happening—utterly unexpected. Mossoo was taken entirely by surprise. He was startled almost out of his Gallic wits. His nose tapped on the floor—hard! Mossoo felt as if it had been driven into his head like a nail.

It was no wonder that Henri Adolphe Charpentier yelled. He yelled, and yelled, and yelled.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Prout. "What—"

"What—" hooted Mr. Hacker.

"Some accident!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

The three masters converged on Quelch's doorway.

From within came the high-pitched voice of Monsieur Charpentier on its top note.

"Mon Dieu! Ooooooh! Mon nez—mon pauvre nez! C'est tout casse! Oooooooh!"

Three pairs of eyes gazed into the study at a dapper form, sprawling.

"Monsieur—" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"My dear sir—" boomed Prout.

"Oooh! I fell viz myself!" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier, struggling dizzily up to a sitting posture. "I catch me ze foot; I fall; I crash; I bump; I bang me ze nose on ze floor. I demand vat is it zat make me to fall viz myself, and bump and bang!"

He clutched out a handkerchief, and dabbed it to his nose. It was spotted with red at once. He sat gasping, spluttering, and dabbing.

Mr. Quelch's eyes fixed on the taut cord. The expression that came over his face was terrifying.

Monsieur Charpentier had tripped over that cord. But it had not, of course, been intended for Mossoo. No one could have known that he would be going to the study for an evening paper. It had been obviously intended for Quelch. Mossoo's keenness for news had saved him from a very unpleasant tumble.

"Regardez!" gasped Monsieur Charpentier. "Regardez, donc! I smash me ze nose. Zere is one very grand pain! Regardez!"

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"A trick!" boomed Prout. "Do you see that cord, Quelch? A trick—a practical joke—a dastardly trick—"

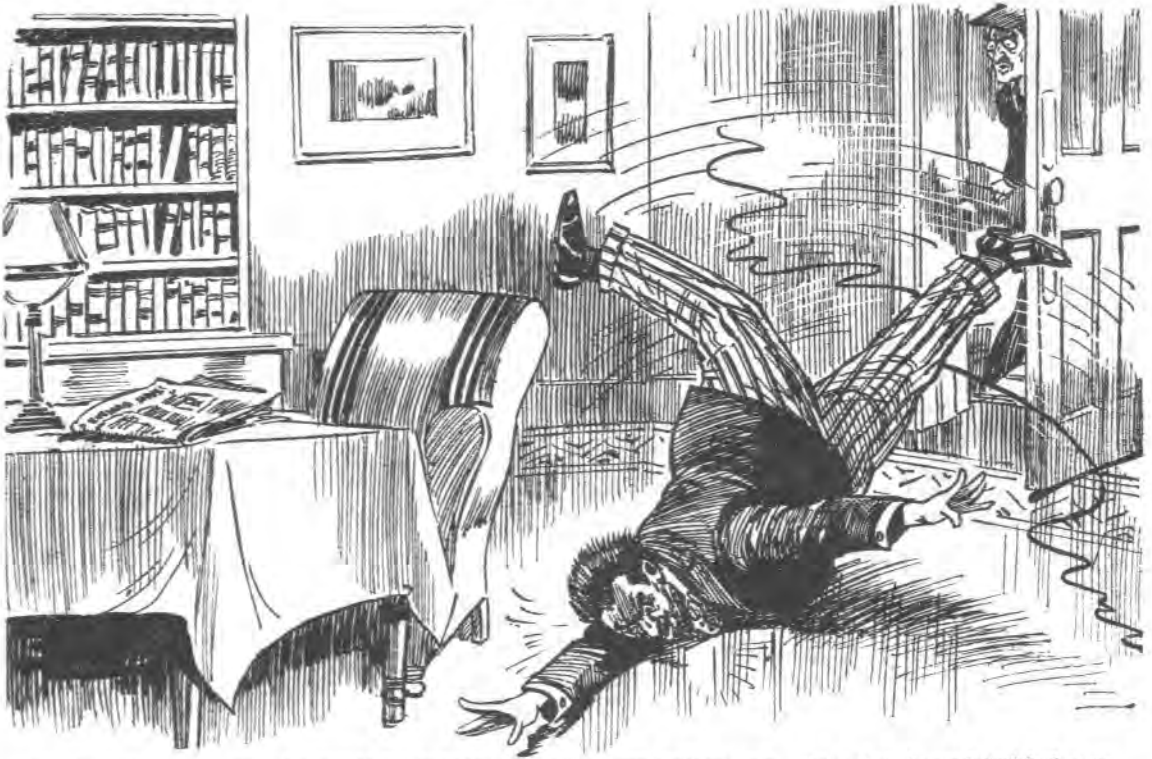
Mr. Hacker shrugged his shoulders. He made no remark, but he expressed by that shrug the fact that he was surprised at nothing in the Remove.

Monsieur Charpentier staggered to his feet. He had not observed the cord, so far. But he observed it now that Prout pointed it out.

"Mon Dieu!" he gasped. "A trick—a choke! Monsieur Quelch, is it zat you are mat?"

"Wha-at?" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Etes vous fou?" squeaked the excited French master. "Is it zat you have gone mad? You play such a trick on me!"



Monsieur Charpentier stepped across to the table to pick up the paper that lay there. Not seeing the cord stretched across the study, a few inches from the floor, he tripped over it and nose-dived. "Mon Dieu! Oooooooch!" he gasped, as his nose tapped on the floor—hard.

"I" stuttered Mr. Quelch.
 "You make me to fall viz one bump, to strike my nose on ze floor viz one bang!" shrieked Mossoo. "It is too much! Look at ze nose! He is smash! He tap vat you call, in English, ze claret. You make one choke viz me, hein?"
 "Sir!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "Can you suppose—can you suppose for one moment—Upon my word—"
 "My dear sir!" boomed Prout. "Mr. Quelch is incapable—quite incapable—"
 "I smash me ze nose! Regardez done le nez! On me dit! You say to me ze paper he is in ze study. I come viz myself, and zere is one cord. If you zink zat zat is one choke, Mcester Quelch, I do not zink zat zat is one choke!" roared Monsieur Charpentier.
 "Some boy—some Remove boy!" gasped Prout. "This must have been intended for you, Quelch."
 "Regardez done le nez!" howled Monsieur Charpentier. "Is it zen one choke to break me ze nose on ze floor?"
 "How can you imagine, sir, that I knew anything of this?" booted Mr. Quelch. "Some young rascal has played a trick here. Calm yourself, sir."
 "I calm myself not!" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier. "Regardez mon nez, zat is all smash—"
 "I assure you," gasped Mr. Quelch—"I assure you—Mr. Hacker, I fail to see anything to laugh at in this unfortunate occurrence, and in this absurd misapprehension—"
 "Really, I did not mean to laugh!" gasped Mr. Hacker. "But really—Ha, ha!" The master of the Shell retreated up the passage, gurgling. Mossoo's wild idea that the serious and sedate master of the Remove had

played a schoolboy trick on him, struck Hacker as funny. Even the majestic Prout was grinning.
 "Monsieur Charpentier!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.
 "Assez, sar! On en a assez! Look at ze nose—regardez le nez. Zo trick like one garçon—Bah!"
 Monsieur Charpentier flew out of the study, spluttering. He forgot all about Czecho-Slovakia. He rushed away to bathe his nose—which needed it.
 Mr. Quelch stood breathing deep and hard. Seldom had he been so intensely annoyed and exasperated.
 Mossoo, no doubt, would realise, on reflection, that Quelch had not, and couldn't have had, anything to do with that trick in the study. Still, his absurd misapprehension was extremely annoying. More annoying still, was the fact that that trap had been laid for Quelch in his own study—and that but for Mossoo, he would certainly have fallen into it—tapping his nose where Mossoo's Gallic beak had tapped!
 The Remove master bent, and detached the taut cord.
 Prout watched him—to his further irritation and annoyance. A Remove boy had done this, of course—and no Form-master liked another. Form-master to see that boys in his Form played such disrespectful pranks.
 Quelch knew only too well that Prout would roll along to Common-room to relate to all the beaks there how "poor Quelch" was treated by boys in his Form!
 "Scandalous!" said Prout. "Shocking!" Prout was full of sympathy—perhaps aware that sympathy, in the circumstances, irritated Quelch intensely. "A reckless outrage—a rascally act—I recommend, my dear Quelch,

immediate investigation and the most condign punishment—"
 Without replying, Mr. Quelch stepped out of the study.
 Prout revolved after him.
 "No doubt your boys are a little out of hand at the beginning of the term, my dear Quelch," he remarked. "A somewhat unruly Form."
 Mr. Quelch walked down the passage.
 "My dear Quelch—"
 Quelch accelerated.
 Prout cut off! It was useless to waste his sympathy on the back of a departing head! Prout rolled off to Common-room, with an interesting item of news for the beaks there. And Mr. Quelch made his way to the Remove passage, where his Form were at prep, with an expression on his face that the fabled Gorgon of ancient times might have envied.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not As Per Programme!

"PREP, you ass! Don't bother!" Harry Wharton called out as there was a tap at the door of Study No. 1 in the Remove, and it opened.
 Wharton and Nugent were busy at prep. Gilbert Tracy who should have been busy at prep also, was busy in quite another way.
 He was sitting in the study armchair smoking a cigarette.
 Smoking in the studies was, of course, a serious infraction of the rules. It was not only that, but it was distinctly disagreeable for the other occupants of the study.
 But Wharton and Nugent gave Gilbert his head, as it were. Harry Wharton was carefully avoiding trouble with him, and Nugent played up.
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Rather to Gilbert's surprise, and undoubtedly to his relief, the captain of the Remove had made no further allusion to the affair of the morning.

He had had "six" from Loder, and a tremendous impot from Quelch, both due to Gilbert's monkey-like trickery. It had cost him an effort to let the matter drop, but he was mindful of his promise to his uncle—he had made that promise, and it was up to him to keep it, so far as it could possibly be kept. So, after reflecting on the subject, he carefully ignored Gilbert, and that cheery youth sat and smoked, while the other two juniors were at prep, unregarded.

As the door opened, Wharton supposed that it was some Remove fellow coming in; hence the remark.

But the next moment he jumped up in confusion as his Form-master dawned on him in the doorway.

"Oh," he gasped, "I—I didn't know—oh!"

Mr. Quelch stepped in. It was extremely unusual for the Remove master to interrupt prep, and Wharton and Nugent stood looking at him in surprise.

Gilbert did not rise to his feet. He sat where he was, and did not even take the cigarette from his mouth.

Mr. Quelch was about to address Wharton, when his eyes fixed on Gilbert. He seemed rather unable to believe those eyes, keen as they were. A junior who sat and smoked in a beak's presence was rather a novelty.

"Tracy!" he almost roared.

"Hallo!" said Tracy.

"What? What did you say?"

"I said hallo!" answered Gilbert.

Wharton and Nugent stood dumb.

Tracy had made no secret of the fact that he wanted to be sent away from Greyfriars, as he had been sent away from previous schools at which he had been placed. He had said that he would be gone under the week. Evidently, that was his object now. A fellow who sat and smoked under his Form-master's eyes, and drawled "hallo" when addressed by that Form-master, was not likely to be allowed to stay long at school.

That was Gilbert's game, but where he found the nerve to play it, was rather a mystery. He had not impressed Wharton as a fellow who was keen on taking risks.

"Tracy! Stand up!" said Mr. Quelch.

It was quite plain from Tracy's look that he was considering disobeying that command. But Henry Samuel Quelch was not an easy man to disobey. In spite of himself, as it were, he rose to his feet.

"Throw that cigarette into the fire, Tracy!"

Another pause—and then the half-smoked cigarette went into the fire.

"Turn out your pockets on the table!"

Again a pause—and then the pockets were turned out. A cardboard box of cigarettes came to light.

"Throw that into the fire!" said Mr. Quelch.

The box of cigarettes dropped in the grate.

Gilbert stood with a sullen scowl on his face. The juniors could see, and doubtless Quelch could see, that he had fully intended to carry on with defiance and disrespect, but that his nerve had failed him.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!"

"You are head boy of my Form! This boy is new here! You should not have allowed him to smoke in this

study! You are perfectly aware of that."

Harry Wharton compressed his lips. He had had to resist a strong temptation to collar Tracy and cram his smokes down his back, as he had done at Wharton Lodge. He had refrained for one reason, and one reason only; it's promise to his uncle to avoid trouble with that rank outsider. Now he was called over the coals for that exercise of self-restraint.

An angry reply trembled on his lips, but he repressed it, and stood silent.

Mr. Quelch gave him a grim frown, and turned to Tracy again.

"Why are you not doing your preparation, Tracy?" he demanded.

"Have you done no work at all?"

"No!" grunted Gilbert.

"Why not?"

"I don't choose to!" That reply hinted that Gilbert was screwing up his nerve again.

"You—do—not—choose—to!" repeated Mr. Quelch, articulating every word separately and distinctly.

"No, I don't!"

Mr. Quelch stood looking at that remarkable new boy, for a long moment. Then he spoke again, very quietly.

"I have come here to inquire into a disrespectful trick that has been played in my study! Have you been in my study since calling-over, Tracy?"

No reply.

"A cord was tied across the room," went on Mr. Quelch. "Monsieur Charpentier fell over it, but it was undoubtedly intended for me. Was this done by you, Tracy?"

Wharton and Nugent exchanged a look. This was news to them, but they had no doubt that Quelch had come to the right study.

"Answer me, Tracy!"

Gilbert's face was sullen and sulky. He did not speak, and his manner was a peculiar mixture of insolence and trepidation.

Mr. Quelch had a cane under his arm. He slipped it down into his hand.

"I command you to answer me, Tracy!" he said quietly. "Did you, or did you not, fasten the cord across my study floor?"

"Yes, I did!" grunted Gilbert. "And I'll jolly well do the same again, too! If you don't want me here, I'm ready to go!"

"I thought so!" said Mr. Quelch. "In the case of any other boy, Tracy, I should certainly take such a young rascal to Dr. Locke, to be immediately sent away from the school."

Gilbert's eyes gleamed.

"But in your case," continued Mr. Quelch, "I shall, as I have already warned you, do nothing of the kind."

"I don't want to stay here!" muttered Gilbert.

"That is quite immaterial!" said Mr. Quelch. "Your wishes in the matter will not be consulted, Tracy!"

You will be severely punished, but you will not be sent away from Greyfriars, as I have already explained to you. I have undertaken to keep you here for at least one term, and I shall do so; and it is not my intention to trouble the headmaster with you. I shall, in all cases, deal with you personally."

Mr. Quelch pointed to a chair with the cane.

"Bend over that chair, Tracy!"

Gilbert breathed hard, and did not move.

"Bend over!" thundered Mr. Quelch in a voice that made Gilbert jump.

He advanced towards the new junior, and Gilbert bent over the chair, just in time to avoid an outstretched hand.

What followed was painful. It was

painful to Wharton and Nugent to see it; possibly it was painful to Mr. Quelch; but it was undoubtedly most painful of all to Gilbert.

Never had such a whopping been administered in the Remove. Mr. Quelch did not limit himself to the customary "six." He laid on a dozen strokes, and every one of them was a terrific swipe.

Gilbert's yells rang the length of the Remove passage, and startled all the fellows at prep in the studies. But not till the twelfth stroke had fallen did Mr. Quelch cease.

By the time the infliction was over Gilbert was a mere limp rag, howling and yelling and almost gibbering.

Mr. Quelch tucked the cane under his arm again.

"The matter is now closed, Tracy," he said. "I hope that this will be a warning to you to amend your conduct!"

He quitted the study.

Gilbert tottered to the armchair, and collapsed there, wriggling and mumbering.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent looked at him. They could not help compassionating a fellow who had been through such a terrific whopping, emphatically as he had asked for it.

But there was nothing to be said, and they sat down to prep again.

There was no prep for Gilbert that evening; neither was there any more smoking. Gilbert's time was spent in wriggling and moaning, and he was still wriggling when the Remove went to their dormitory that night. And it had probably dawned upon him that if he wanted to be sent away from Greyfriars, he would have to find some other method than ragging Quelch; it had been made painfully clear to him that Quelch was not a safe man to rag!

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

"GILBERT speaking!" Tracy was standing at Mr. Quelch's telephone in the Remove master's study.

It was Saturday afternoon, a half-holiday, and most of the Remove fellows were thinking of Soccer.

A pick-up game was going on on Little Side, from which the captain of the Form was unavoidably absent. Harry Wharton was in his study, finishing that tremendous imposition of five hundred lines which had been hanging over his head for days, and was now nearing completion.

Tracy was keen on football—the only redeeming point in his character that Harry Wharton had been able to see. But he was not thinking of football that afternoon.

Mr. Quelch had gone out in company with Mr. Capper, and after he was safe off the scene Gilbert had dropped into his study to ring up Oakwood Place, in Surrey.

The high-pitched voice of old Sir Giles came in answer. Gilbert had had to wait some time for his uncle to come to the telephone, but the old baronet was there at last.

"Gilbert!" repeated the wheezy voice at the other end. "Oh! Gilbert! I hope you are settling down at Greyfriars, my boy! I hope—"

"Can I come home?"

"What—what?"

"I'm sick of this! I can get out this afternoon, if I like! Look here, nunka, will you let me come home?"

There was a pause before the old gentleman at Oakwood Place answered.

"Impossible!" he said, at length. "I am sorry if you are not happy at Greyfriars, Gilbert—"

"I loathe the place!" snarled Gilbert. "But why?"

"Oh, rot! I'm fed-up to the back teeth! Will you let me come home, if I catch a tram this afternoon?"

Another pause. It was perhaps surprising that old Giles had remained a kind, affectionate, and indulgent uncle after his experience with Gilbert at Oakwood Place. But he had, and he evidently found it difficult to refuse the request of his nephew.

"It is impossible, Gilbert! Surely you must understand that! Mr. Quelch only consented to take charge of you on the distinct understanding that he was not to be interfered with in any way. I gave him my word to that effect. You cannot leave the school unless Mr. Quelch should decide to send you home!"

"Hang Quelch!"

"My dear Gilbert, that is not respectful—"

"Look here, I'm coming home!"

"You must do nothing of the kind, Gilbert! I could not countenance anything of the kind! After Mr. Quelch's kindness—"

"I tell you I loathe the brute!" howled Gilbert.

"Mr. Quelch is a dutiful and kind-hearted man—"

"Oh, rats!"

"If that is all you have to say, Gilbert—"

"Look here, I'm coming home—"

"If you do, Gilbert, you will be taken back to school! I leave this matter entirely in Mr. Quelch's hands. I have promised to do so. You will simply be asking for severe punishment!"

"I tell you I'm coming!"

"Be sensible, Gilbert! Mr. Quelch will certainly take you back, and the result will be very disagreeable to you—"

"You can tell him to mind his own business!"

"I have given him my word, Gilbert."

"Oh, rot!"

"You disrespectful young rascal—"

The telephone rocked as Gilbert Tracy slammed back the receiver. He stood scowling at the instrument.

His uncle had failed him! It was due, of course, to Quelch's influence—old Sir Giles had about as much will of his own as a lump of putty! Quelch had somehow infused a spot of his own firmness of character into him. Probably the old gentleman, unable to deal with the boy himself, and realising that he was not doing his duty in letting him go from bad to worse, had been glad to land his problem on stronger shoulders.

Anyhow, there it was; whether at Oakwood Place or at Greyfriars School, it was Quelch who pulled the strings. It was useless to dodge away and cut off home if he was to be taken back to school to undergo another such whopping as that in Study No. 1, which he still cringed to think of.

Tracy gritted his teeth.

He was fixed at Greyfriars—unless Quelch got fed-up with him and sent him home! And his attempt at feeding-up Quelch had been a ghastly failure. Quelch was not going to get fed-up; he was going to whop the young rascal whenever he tried it on!

Gilbert scowled round the study.

Gladly he would have ragged that study, upset everything right and left, and left the room in a state of wreckage to greet Quelch's eyes when he came in. He would have done so, without hesita-

tion, had the result been a visit to the Head and the train home!

But he knew that that would not be the result. Any other fellow might have been turfed out for it, but not Gilbert. The result for Gilbert would only be another tremendous whopping! He had had enough of that.

He was standing there, in savage reflection, when footsteps came up the passage to the door.

Gilbert gave an uneasy start.

He had been in the study some time—much longer than he had intended. If Quelch had come in—

His heart thumped uncomfortably. If Quelch found him there he would take it for granted that he was there for another "rag," and then—

Almost without thinking, he backed behind the long curtains at the window, out of sight when the door opened. A moment later there was a tap at the door.

It was not Quelch; Quelch would not tap at his own door. Gilbert concluded that it was another beak who had looked in to speak to Quelch, not knowing that he was out. The door opened, and someone stepped in.

He peered cautiously from behind the curtain. A black scowl settled on his face at the sight of Harry Wharton.

The captain of the Remove did not glance towards the window. He had no suspicion that anyone was there. He crossed to the study table and laid a sheaf of impot paper there. It was the five hundred lines for Quelch, finished at last after a long grind in Study No. 1 in the Remove.

Having laid the impot on the table, Wharton left the study at once, closing the door after him.

Gilbert, scowling, stepped out from (Continued on next page.)

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behind the curtain. He scowled at the door that had shut after the captain of the Remove, and scowled at the stack of lines that Wharton had left on his Form-master's table.

Five hundred lines from the *Aeneid* lay there, with the name of "H. Wharton" written on the top of the first sheet.

Heavy as that impot was, the captain of the Remove had finished it at last, and here it was, left for Mr. Quelch to find, but lying, as it happened, at the mercy of the young rascal who disliked Mr. Quelch's head boy almost as much as he disliked Mr. Quelch.

Gilbert Tracy breathed quickly as he stood looking at the sheaf of Latin lines. A sneering, sardonic grin came over his face; and his eyes glistened.

That lengthy impot had cost the captain of the Remove a good many hours of weary labour. The malicious young rascal would gladly have given him the trouble of re-writing it—as certainly he would have to do if Quelch did not find it in his study.

He hesitated, but it was only for a few moments. It seemed safe enough, for who could guess that he had had a hand in the matter? He gathered up the stack of lines, crammed them carefully out of sight under his jacket, and stepped away from the table.

There had been nothing doing, so far as his uncle at Oakwood Place was concerned. But his visit to the study had not, after all, been fruitless, and there was a sour grin on Gilbert's face as he crossed to the study door.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

An Unexpected Discovery!

"I SAY, old chap—"

"Can't stop!"

"Stop a minute! I say, what is he up to?" asked Billy Bunter eagerly.

Harry Wharton, as he turned the corner coming away from Masters' Passage, almost ran into the fat Owl of the Remove.

Bunter's fat paw clutched at his sleeve.

Harry Wharton was anxious to get to the changing-room to join his chums in a spot of football before tea, after that weary grind in his study at Latin lines. But he stopped.

"What's who up to, fathead?" he asked. "What do you mean? Cut it short!"

"I mean Tracy. What is he doing in Quelch's study?" asked Bunter eagerly. "Is he fixing up a cord again for the old bean to fall over? Froggy got it last time. He, he, he!"

Harry Wharton stared at the fat Owl. As he had just come away from Quelch's study, and had seen no one therein, he was astonished.

"Tracy's not in Quelch's study, fathead!" he said. "I've just been there—nobody's there."

"Look here, you can tell me," argued Bunter. "I'm not going to give the chap away. He's there all right—I know that. I saw him watching Quelch like a cat when he went out with Capper. He, he, he! Then he cut into Quelch's study."

"If he did, he's gone again."

"He jolly well hasn't, because I've been here ever since waiting for him to pass, and he hasn't passed," declared Bunter. "He couldn't get out at the window; everybody in the quad would see him. He's there all right."

"Rot! He isn't!" answered Harry. "You silly ass, why can't you tell

me?" demanded Bunter. "You must have seen him when you went in with your lines!"

"He wasn't there, ass!"

"Yah!" retorted Bunter. "I jolly well know he is! I don't see why you can't tell me what he's up to."

Harry Wharton stared at him. He had seen no one in the Remove master's study, and had not supposed for a moment that anyone was there. But Wharton realised that a fellow in forbidden precincts might very likely dodge out of sight at the sound of a footsteps.

He compressed his lips.

After that tremendous whipping in Study No. 1 it seemed to him unlikely that even Gilbert would think of ragging Quelch again. But if he was at it, it was up to any fellow who wished him well to stop him if he could. He could hardly escape detection. Quelch would know at once who had ragged him, if there was a rag, and the result would be serious and painful.

The captain of the Remove stood in doubt.

He told himself that it was no business of his. He wanted to keep clear of the fellow, and have nothing to do with him. But he could not forget the promise he had made to his uncle. A fellow had to keep a promise, howsoever disagreeable, and it was up to him.

He wanted to cut off and join his friends at football, and he did not want to have anything to do or say to Gilbert Tracy. But he made up his mind to do what he did not want to do.

"Look here, you ass, are you sure?" he asked.

But without waiting for Bunter to answer, he turned and walked back up the passage. It was easy enough to look into Quelch's study again and ascertain whether Gilbert was there. If he was, it was very doubtful whether he would listen to words of friendly advice; but it was up to Wharton to do what he could.

That Tracy was in the study was soon proved; for, before he reached the door, it opened a few inches, and Tracy's face peered out.

He was about to leave the study, and he was looking out to see whether the coast was clear before he did so.

He gave a violent start at the sight of Harry Wharton coming back.

Wharton started, too.

Obviously Gilbert had been in the study when he went in to place his lines there, for here he was.

Wharton hurried on towards him.

"You ass!" he said, in a low voice. "Cut off quick! Hacker's in his study, and if he saw you here—"

Gilbert gave him a bitter look. He had had to take the chance of a "beak" being in the passage; but he had never dreamed of Wharton coming back. He could not imagine what had brought him back there.

He did not speak. With a scowling brow he passed him and went down the passage, passing a grinning fat Owl at the corner.

Harry Wharton stood at Quelch's door—again in doubt. Tracy had been in that study, and he did not doubt that it had been to play some trick similar to the one for which he had been so severely punished. He was gone now, and Wharton was tempted to follow and dismiss the matter from his mind.

But he paused.

He had promised—against the grain, it was true; but he had promised to see the fellow through so far as he could. If he had played some mad trick in Quelch's study the consequences were certain, as well as severe, and it might be possible to undo what he had done.

He stepped into the study and closed the door.

A searching glance round the room revealed no sign of a "rag." There was no cord stretched for Quelch to fall over when he came in—the books and papers on the table did not seem to have been disturbed—nothing was amiss, so far as Wharton could see—till, as he glanced more closely at the table. Then he gave a jump as he saw that his stack of lines was no longer where he had placed it.

He stared blankly.

He had laid those lines on the writing-table to meet Quelch's eyes when he came in. That Saturday afternoon was the latest period of grace. If the lines were not handed in that day they would be doubled, and the prospect of a thousand lines to write was rather staggering. It was for that reason that Wharton had slugged at the impot that afternoon instead of joining his friends on the football field.

And the lines were gone!

Tracy had been in the study. Tracy was gone, and the lines were gone! The young rascal had taken them away with him, to land the fellow he disliked in a row with Quelch.

Wharton set his teeth.

There was no doubt about what had happened, because it was the only thing that could have happened.

His eyes gleamed with anger. Whatever else Tracy had done in that study, he had done this! And had not Wharton, mindful of his promise, intervened to do him a good turn if he could, he would not have discovered it. But he had discovered it now!

The young rascal had taken his lines—evidently to destroy them in some safe spot.

Harry Wharton ran across the study to the door, and fairly flew into the passage. Heedless of the fact that juniors were expected to walk with circumspection in those sacred precincts, he raced down the passage to the corner.

Tracy was out of sight; but a fat figure was there, and a pair of spectacles turned on Wharton with eager inquiry.

"I say, what—" began Bunter.

"Tracy passed you?" panted Harry.

"Yes, a minute ago. What—"

"Where did he go?"

"He went up to the studies. But what—"

But there was no answer for the inquisitive Owl. Harry Wharton ran on like the wind, leaving the fat junior blinking.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Mysterious To Mauly!

LORD MAULEVERER grinned.

He did not stir.

So far from stirring, the sound of his study door opening was a warning to Mauly to keep as still as a mouse.

His lazy lordship, who was popularly supposed in the Remove to be almost too lazy to breathe, was taking a rest in an armchair in his study.

That armchair had a high back, and the high back was turned towards the door. Reposing elegantly in that deep and comfortable chair, Mauly was quite invisible to any fellow who opened the study door and looked in. Which was what Mauly wanted.

The happy slacker of the Remove was enjoying a happy slack. There had been several callers at Study No. 12; but they had been, so to speak, turned empty away!

Bob Cherry had looked in to haul off



"For goodness' sake, calm yourself!" shrieked Mr. Quelch, dodging round one side of the table, as the excited Frenchman came rushing round the other. "Monsieur Charpentier—calm yourself—control your temper—" "In Heaven's name, what is the matter?" gasped Prout, looking in at the door.

his lordship to footer practice—and departed not knowing that he was there. Billy Bunter had blinked in to borrow half-a-crown on account of a postal-order he was expecting; but neither Bunter's eyes nor his big spectacles had penetrated the high, solid back of the armchair, and he retired baffled. Fisher T. Fish had looked in, with an article he had bought from a Fourth Form man for two shillings, and hoped to sell to Mauly for ten. But Fishy had guessed, reckoned, and calculated that the goob was elsewhere, as he saw nothing of him. Two or three other fellows had looked in, but, getting the same impression, had passed on; and Mauly was still happily undisturbed. Now the study door opened again—quickly, and without a knock! And Lord Mauleverer grinned, and remained doggo.

Very likely it was Bunter on the prowl again, or, worse still, some strenuous ass who wanted to drag Mauly off to the footer. Whoever it was, Lord Mauleverer did not want to see him; and he did not see him.

But this visitor, whoever he was, did not glance into the study, and pass on, as the former ones had done.

He stepped in.

Had he stepped past the armchair, and glanced at it, he must have seen his lazy lordship there. Mauly dreaded, for a moment, that that was what was going to happen. In his mind's eye he saw some exuberant fellow like Bob Cherry dragging him out of his happy repose.

But it was not so bad as that.

The newcomer did not approach the armchair. He stepped towards the window, under which was a box-seat, dignified by the name of an ottoman. On that box-seat was a large cushion which covered its whole extent, the width of a wide window.

Mauly, in astonishment, heard a sound which indicated that that cushion had been lifted. Then it dropped again.

Then the footsteps recrossed to the door, which had been left open; passed out of the study, and the door was quickly shut.

Lord Mauleverer sat astonished.

He was interested, chiefly, in remaining undiscovered in that armchair till tea-time, when he had to exert himself to the extent of having his tea! But he could not help being a little interested, too, in the extraordinary incident that had just occurred.

Who had entered his study he did not know. But why any fellow should enter a fellow's study, lift a cushion and put it back again, and then clear, was a deep mystery—unless there was a lunatic at large in Greyfriars School.

Mauly exerted himself to the extent of lifting a lazy head and glancing towards the window-seat.

It presented its usual aspect to the eye. The long, wide cushion lay on the box-seat, looking quite undisturbed. A suspicion crossed Mauly's mind that Skinner might have dropped in to place a drawing-pin there, business-end upward. Skinner of the Remove was given to unpleasant tricks like that! But there was no sign of a drawing-pin, or anything else.

But further reflection caused another grin to dawn on Mauly's face.

He remembered Billy Bunter, and the manners and customs of that attractive youth.

If the grub-raider of the Remove had been spotted walking off with a tin of toffees, or a packet of chocolate, he might have been in want of a hiding-place for the same, till the hue-and-cry was over. Such things had happened—more than once!

And Mauly chuckled at the idea of

the fat Owl hiding his plunder in that study, almost under his eyes, not knowing that he was there!

If that was the explanation of the strange incident, Bunter was not going to recover his plunder. That plunder was going back to its owner!

Mauly had little doubt that he had spotted the solution of the mystery.

The lifting and replacing of the cushion meant that something had been hidden under it. That was it!

And Lord Mauleverer detached himself from the armchair and stepped to the window-seat to see what it was that had been parked under the cushion.

Grinning, he lifted the cushion, fully expecting to behold a tin of toffee, a box of chocolates, or a packet of butter-scotch, or something of the kind.

But what he saw made him jump.

It was no comestible that was hidden there—nothing in Billy Bunter's line at all! It was a stack of impot paper, covered with Latin lines.

Lord Mauleverer gazed at it, dumb-founded.

The ghost of a Latin imposition could hardly have startled his lordship more.

"Good gad!" murmured Mauly.

It was a hefty imposition—more than a dozen sheets, fastened at the corner. Mauly knew the hand in which it was written—Harry Wharton's. It was, in fact, Wharton's five hundred lines for Quelch—evidently snaffled by some person unknown, and parked out of sight under the big cushion on the box-seat in Study No. 12! But for the fact, unknown to the snaffler, that Mauly was in the study, it would have remained undiscovered and unsuspected there—for that big, heavy cushion on the box-seat was not often shifted.

His lordship gazed at that stack of lines. He gazed in mute amazement.

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And, as he stood gazing and wondering what the dickens it could mean, the sound of voices reached him from the Remove passage.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Gilbert Gets Wet!

GILBERT TRACY breathed rather quickly, as Harry Wharton came, at a run, across the landing at the end of the Remove passage.

But he was quite cool.

Why Wharton had returned to Quelch's study, after leaving his lines there, he did not know; but he had no doubt that Harry would miss the lines at once from where he had placed them.

Gilbert had lost no time. He had cut up to the Remove with the lines hidden under his jacket. There was no time to destroy them—he expected to hear the captain of the Remove on his track any minute. He could not venture to hide them in his own study, which was also Wharton's. But to hide them in another study—at present unoccupied—was easy! They could remain there till he had leisure to deal with them—later, when the coast was clear.

He knew—or, at least, he thought he knew—one study that was empty, for he had seen two or three fellows look into No. 12 that afternoon and turn away. So there was—or, at least, should have been—no doubt that the occupants of the study were out!

Gilbert had lost no time—and he soon saw that he had had none to lose; for, as he moved away from Mauly's study, he sighted Harry Wharton in the distance, on the Remove landing, breathless from running up the stairs.

Wharton ran into the passage, and

glanced into Study No. 1. Finding it empty, he glanced up the passage and saw Gilbert. Then he came up the passage, breathless, his eyes flashing.

"You cur!" he panted.

Gilbert raised his eyebrows.

He had got rid of the lines. They were hidden in a safe place. Whatever Wharton chose to suspect, he had no proof that Gilbert knew anything about the lines.

"Hallo, what's biting you?" asked Gilbert.

"Where are my lines?"

"Your what?"

"My lines, you rat!" panted Wharton. "You took them away from Quelch's study. What have you done with them?"

"Dreaming?" asked Gilbert pleasantly.

"Will you hand over those lines?" roared Wharton. "Do you think I don't know that you snaffled them from Quelch's study, you cur?"

Gilbert laughed.

"Is it any use telling you that I don't know, any more than I care, anything about your lines?" he asked.

"None at all! You were in Quelch's study—"

"Fellows have dropped into a beak's study to borrow the telephone before now, I believe! Are you going to tell Quelch?" sneered Gilbert.

"You were there when I brought my lines in—"

"If you took your lines there, aren't they there now?"

"No!"

Gilbert laughed again.

"Then I fancy you'll have some trouble in making Quelch believe that you took them there at all! Too thin, old man."

"What do you mean, you cad?"

"I heard Bunter tell Quelch the other day that he had done his lines, but they blew out of his study window!" said Gilbert. "Quelch did not swallow it! Are you taking a leaf out of Bunter's book?"

Harry Wharton clenched his hands.

"You saw the lines there, and took them away!" he said. "You must have had them about you, when I came back and found you leaving. Where are they now?"

"Like to look through my pockets!" asked Gilbert banteringly.

"What have you done with them?"

"Nothing, old bean! Never even seen them, let alone touched them! Are you making up this yarn for Quelch, or what?"

"You know I left the lines there—"

"I don't!" contradicted Gilbert, "and if you want me to put it plain, I don't believe you did. If you put them there, they're there now!"

"They are not there now, and you must have taken them!"

Gilbert shrugged his shoulders.

"Tell Quelch that, and see what luck you have!" he drawled. "The dear man has a down on me, and I dare say you're banking on it; but even Quelch will want something in the way of proof."

Harry Wharton stood looking at him. He had taken it for granted, without a shadow of doubt, that Gilbert had "snaffled" that impot. But there was, certainly, no actual proof. There seemed to be no doubt in the matter; yet it was hard to believe that the fellow was looking him in the face and uttering a series of barefaced falsehoods.

"Do you say that you did not touch the lines?" he asked.

"I'm ready to say so to Quelch, if you like!" answered Gilbert. "If you're going to keep up this game, we'll go to him together when he comes in. My dear chap, think again! You can't expect to get by with this."

"My lines are gone—"

"Pile it on!"

"You lying cad!" roared Wharton, his temper breaking out. "You took my lines from Quelch's study, and you know you did, and you've hidden them somewhere—"

"Go it!"

The door of Study No. 12 opened, and Lord Mauleverer looked out, with a faint smile on his face.

"Lines missin', what?" he asked gently.

Gilbert spun round as if electrified. He stared blankly at Mauly, in his study doorway, his eyes bulging from his head. Obviously that study had not been, as he supposed, unoccupied, when he crept in to hide the lines under the cushion on the box-seat.

"Oh!" gasped Gilbert.

He was taken utterly aback.

Lord Mauleverer smiled. He knew now who the fellow was who had crept into his study a few minutes ago.

"My lines are missing, Mauly!" said Harry Wharton. "Somebody's taken them from Quelch's study—"

"Anythin' like this lot?" asked Lord Mauleverer. He held up a sheaf of impot paper, covered with Latin lines.

Harry Wharton jumped.

"That's it! What the dickens—"

"Man came tricklin' in a few minutes ago, and parked them under a cushion in my study!" drawled Mauleverer. "I fancy he never saw me sittin' in the armchair. Did you, Tracy?"

Gilbert gritted his teeth.

"So you were in the study, you fool!" he snarled. "I never saw you."

"Yaas!" smiled Lord Mauleverer.

Harry Wharton turned to Tracy

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again, his hands clenched, and his eyes gleaming.

"Now, you cur, are you denying that you took my lines from Quelch's study?" he said, between his teeth.

Gilbert gritted his teeth, and was silent. It was not much use denying it further. The captain of the Remove came towards him, with gleaming eyes, and Gilbert backed away.

"Hands off, you rotter!" he snarled. "It was only a joke, anyhow—"

"Was it?" said Wharton savagely. "If it was, it's a joke you won't play on a fellow again in a hurry. You're going to have a lesson about playing foul tricks to land a fellow in a row."

The next moment Gilbert was struggling in his grasp.

Struggling and panting, Tracy was whirled along the passage, to the tap at the end. He yelled as his head was twisted under the tap, and the tap turned on.

There was a rush of water, and Gilbert writhed and wriggled under it. He struggled and kicked frantically.

But there was no help for him. Lord Mauleverer, with the imput in his hand, looked on grinning. Wharton's face was set and savage. He had had a narrow escape of a "row" with Quelch, and a thousand lines. Gilbert Tracy was going to have a lesson—and he had it!

He was held under the tap in a grip of iron. He yelled, and kicked, and struggled, and raved. But he was held, and the water swished and streamed and swamped. Three or four Remove fellows came along to stare. Gilbert's frantic howls woke the echoes of all the studies.

Wharton did not heed them. Not till the wretched trickster was almost half-drowned, did he turn off the tap and fling Gilbert away, sprawling on the floor, drenched and dripping, gasping and spluttering and howling.

"Take that as a tip, you cur!" he said.

"Urrrgh!" gurgled Gilbert. "Oooogh! Urrrgh!"

"Thanks, old man!" said Harry, as he took the imput from Lord Mauleverer. "Lucky you saw that cad at his game, old chap."

Lord Mauleverer chuckled.

"I never saw him," he explained. "I can't see through the back of an arm-chair, any more than Tracy can. I fancy Tracy took it for granted that I'd seen him, or he wouldn't have owned up, what?"

Harry Wharton stared at him for a moment, and then laughed.

Gilbert was left gasping and spluttering, as Wharton went down the stairs, the imput in his hand, to be taken back to Quelch's study.

Gilbert was not likely to meddle with it again! Gilbert was tottering away to the Remove dormitory for a towel and a change, and he was likely to be busy for some time—even if he was feeling disposed for further trickery, which he probably was not.

bench under the old elms, in a quiet spot.

In that quiet spot Quelch went over Latin prose, marking them, and enjoying the fresh air at the same time.

So it was rather annoying to hear voices on the other side of the big trunk, against which the bench backed.

Really, juniors might have found some other spot to chatter after class. It was annoying.

Still, Quelch was a reasonable man. Juniors had a right to talk, in the quad, if they liked, and evidently they did not know that he was there. So the Remove master possessed his soul in patience, and hoped that they would pass on, leaving him in peace and quiet.

But they did not! Billy Bunter's fat squeak caused the fellows whom he addressed to come to a halt, at a little distance from the big elm.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came Bob Cherry's cheery roar. "What's the latest, old fat man? Hold on, you fellows, and listen to the latest keyhole news!"

Mr. Quelch smiled faintly as he heard that.

"Oh, really, Cherry—" squeaked Bunter.

"Cough it up!" said Bob. "First of all, whose keyhole did you stop at, by pure accident?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast! I say, you fellows— He, he, he! Tracy's at it again!" chuckled Bunter. "I say, he's the chap to ask for it, ain't he?"

"Job for you, Wharton—you're looking after that swab!" said Johnny Bull. "I'd rather boot him myself!"

"Bother him!" said Harry. "What is the disgruntled ass up to now, I wonder?"

"He's after old Quelch again!" chuckled Bunter, little dreaming that the ears of "old Quelch" caught every word on the other side of the elm not ten feet away. "Ragging his books in the Form-room—he, he, he!"

"Rot!" said Nugent.

"I saw him!" chorled Bunter. "I wondered what he was sneaking back to the Form-room for. I say, Quelch left his Virgil on his desk in the Form-room, and Tracy's tearing it up."

Mr. Quelch's face set like iron when he heard that.

"Oh, rot!" said Harry. "Tracy wouldn't be such a fool. Quelch will jump to it at once that he did it. He knew who tied that cord in his study last week."

"Well, he was tearing a page out of it, anyhow," said Bunter. "I tell you, I saw him! He put the page in his pocket."

"He tore a page out of one of Quelch's books, and put it in his pocket!" repeated Harry Wharton.

"Yes, he jolly well did!"

"What utter rot! A minute ago you said he was tearing it up."

"Well, I meant—"

"Yes, I know what you meant, you fat ass! You meant to pull our leg!"

"I tell you I saw him, through the crack of the door!" hooted Bunter.

"He jolly nearly copped me when he came out! I hooked it just in time. I didn't want a row with the cad. He might have made out that I was watching him or something—you know what a cad he is!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Of course, I thought he was going to tear up the lot when he started," said Bunter. "But he just tore out one page, and put it in his pocket. I say, you fellows, what do you think he's up to? Not much of a rag, tearing out

one page! Quelch may not miss it at all, you know!"

"Perhaps the bit we're doing in Form to-morrow," said Bob Cherry. "That would make Quelch bark if it was missing."

"The barkfulness would be terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Rain Singh.

"Oh, that's it, of course!" said Bunter. "He, he, he! I say, you fellows, I shall watch old Quelch's face when we're on con in the morning! He, he, he! I say, it's rather a lark on old Quelch, ain't it?"

"When Tracy's been here a little longer he will learn not to lark with Quelch!" said Bob. "I'd as soon lark with a jolly old tiger in the jungle! Keep your silly head shut about it, you fat ass!"

"Of course, I'm not going to give the fellow away," said Bunter. "I've not mentioned it to anybody, except Toddy and Smithy and Kipps and Wibley and Mauly and Micky Desmond and you fellows—"

"Is that all?" gasped Bob.

"Yes, that's all, old chap. I'm not a fellow to tattle, I hope."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But, I say, you fellows, it will be rather a lark to watch old Quelch's face in the morning—what? He, he, he! But, I say, there's something else I was going to mention to you fellows. I told you I was expecting a postal order, didn't I?"

"Help!"

"Oh, don't be an ass, you know! I say, it hasn't come— I say, don't walk away while a fellow's talking to you!" roared Bunter.

But the Famous Five did walk away quite quickly, and the fat Owl of the Remove was heard to grunt as he rolled after them.

Mr. Quelch sat quite still.

None of the juniors had had the remotest idea that he was there, on the other side of the elm. He had heard this entirely by accident, and in such matters Mr. Quelch was very particular. He could not, and he would not, take official note of anything that reached his ears not intended for them.

But his lips were set in a tight line as he resumed marking Latin papers.

It was some time later that he gathered up his papers and walked back to the House.

He did not go to his study, but to the Remove Form-room.

He was not going to take official note of what Tracy had done, as he had learned of it in such a way, but he was going to ascertain exactly what it was that the young rascal had done, and set the matter right. The Remove were dealing that term with a certain section of the *Æneid*, and if a necessary page was missing when Quelch came to take his Form it would be very annoying—for Mr. Quelch did not share in the very least Billy Bunter's opinion that it would be rather a lark.

The *Æneid* lay on his desk where he had left it. He picked it up and examined it.

His brows knitted as he turned page after page. Not a verse of that great poem was missing. The section destined for "con" in the morning was intact. Then he discovered that a page actually was missing—but that it was the title-page.

It had been removed carefully, leaving no sign of a tear; and, but for the fact that he was examining the book, he would hardly have been likely to miss it, as he was not likely to open Virgil at the title-page.

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THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

At It Again!

"I SAY, you fellows— He, he, he!"

Mr. Quelch made a movement of annoyance.

It was a mild, warm afternoon for October.

Mr. Quelch had taken a sheet of Latin papers, which he had to correct for his Form, and seated himself on a

He blinked at the volume.

Evidently it was the title-page that Bunter had seen Tracy tearing from the book; but why Tracy had done it was a mystery. Such a trivial trick could hardly be called a "rag." It damaged the book to some extent, but the loss of the title-page was no great loss. Really it did not matter very much whether the title-page was there or not, for any practical purposes.

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch.

He was quite puzzled as he laid the volume down again. The matter was hardly worth notice, even if it had come to his knowledge officially. Mr. Quelch dismissed it from his mind as he left the Form-room—though he was to be reminded of it later in quite a startling way.

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

The Deep End!

MONSIEUR CHARPENTIER jumped.

He stared.

He frowned—with a terrific frown that was worthy of the Lord High Executioner!

He stared at a paper that was pinned on his table with a drawing-pin. It caught his eye as he entered his study.

"Ciel!" gasped Mossoo.

Wrath gathered on his Gallic brow; which was not surprising, considering what was traced on the paper in large capital letters.

"ALLEZ VOUS EN, PETIT COCHON!"

Mossoo trembled with rage.

Such a message as "Get out, little pig!" might have annoyed any master; and Mossoo was a very sensitive little gentleman. Mossoo was small and nervy and excitable, and, perhaps for those reasons, had a very touchy sense of his own dignity; and at the present time he was particularly sensitive. His nose was still a little painful from his tumble in Mr. Quelch's study, and his dignity was also in a painful state on that account. He had had, of course, to accept Mr. Quelch's assurance that that trick had been played by a Remove junior, who had been severely punished for the same; but the incident lingered disagreeably in his touchy mind.

"Allez vous en, petit cochon!" stared him in the face from his own table in his own study! His sallow face was crimson, his little pointed beard bristled with wrath.

Who had left this insulting message for him?

As he had not been in his study for the last two or three hours it might have been anybody. But Mossoo was going to find out if he could. He detached the drawing-pins and picked up the sheet of paper.

It looked like a leaf torn out of some school book; blank on one side where the message had been written, but Mossoo could see that there was printing on the other side. Quite possibly that would afford a clue to the owner—and Mossoo was prepared, if necessary, to demand a scrutiny of every school book at Greyfriars to discover the one from which that page was missing.

But as he turned the sheet and glanced at the printed side Mossoo jumped almost clear of the floor.

It was the title-page of a volume of Virgil's *Æneid*. At the top of the page

was written the owner's name in a well-known clear hand.

"H. S. Quelch."

"Le miserable!" gasped Monsieur Charpentier.

He breathed rage.

That trick with the tied cord in the study—he had taken Quelch's word about that. And now—this!

Quelch!

A Form-master—a middle-aged Form-master—playing schoolboy tricks with a cord, and then inscribing an insulting message to a colleague! It was incredible; but to Mossoo, in a state of outraged dignity and wrath, it was only too clear.

That page had been torn out of Quelch's book and left in Mossoo's study with an insulting message written on it. What could be clearer—at least, to an excitable and touchy little gentleman who was only too liable to go off at the deep end?

"Le scelerat!" gasped Mossoo. "Le miserable! Cochon, petit cochon—moi! Moi, Henri Charpentier, petit cochon! Allons!"

He crumpled the offending page in his hand and rushed from the study.

He knew now! Quelch had done this—Quelch had insulted him! Mossoo was not a man to be insulted! Not Mossoo!

He did the passage in a whirl. He reached Quelch's study door and hurled it open. He flew in like an excited turkey-cock.

Mr. Quelch, at his writing-table, started to his feet.

"Monsieur Charpentier!" he exclaimed in amazement.

"Cochon!" roared Mossoo.

"Wha-a-at?"

"Peeg!"

"What?" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Grand cochon!" yelled Monsieur Charpentier, almost dancing round the astounded Remove master's study in his rage and excitement. "Peeg! Big pig! If I, Henri Charpentier, am little pig, you are big pig! Cochon! Cochon! Cochon!"

Mr. Quelch gazed at him, dumb-founded.

Mossoo was often excitable. Mr. Quelch had little patience with foreign excitability; he had no use whatever for gesticulations. But this was far beyond Mossoo's usual limit. He seemed absolutely frantic. He danced with rage; he waved both hands—he almost waved his legs as well—and he yelled; he shrieked.

"Miserable! Miserable! Miserable!"

"Goodness gracious!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "What—what—whatever is the matter, Monsieur Charpentier? Are you ill?" Quelch nearly said "mad," but he made it "ill" just in time.

"Cochon! Miserable! Scelerat! Coquin!" roared Froggy.

"For goodness' sake, what—"

"Suis-je cochon?" yelled Monsieur Charpentier. "Je vous demande! Suis-je cochon? Is it zat one calls me leetle peeg? I ask!"

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Quelch. He thought he understood. "Some Remove boy—Has some boy dared—"

"C'est vous!" yelled Monsieur Charpentier. "Vous, vous-meme! Vous osez—you dare! You zink zat I tolerate zis, you mauvais Quelch! Non! Non! Jamais! I hit you viz one fist on ze nose!"

Mr. Quelch backed just in time, and the enraged Frenchman reached across the table. He bounded up, his chair flying backwards.

"Are you mad?" he shrieked.

"Mat? Non, non! It is you zat is mat to zink zat I vill sit for zis! Mossoo probably meant 'stand.' 'I sit for it not! Jamais! Vous m'insultez! Mais oui! I strike you with one fist!'"

"For goodness' sake, calm yourself!" shrieked Mr. Quelch, dodging round one side of the table as the excited Frenchman came rushing round the other. "Monsieur Charpentier, calm yourself! Control your temper—"

"Mais jamais! Suis-je petit cochon!" roared Monsieur Charpentier.

"Scelerat! Miserable! Lache! I hit you sur le nez—on ze nose—viz one fist! I hit you vere hard on ze nose—"

"Keep off!" raved Mr. Quelch.

He circled the study table, with the French master in frantic pursuit. Mr. Quelch could have picked up the little man and tossed him out of the study, but he was naturally reluctant to adopt such measures. He hopped round the table, and Mossoo hopped after him. Thrice they had circled it, when Mr. Prout's astounded face looked in at the door.

"In Heaven's name, what is the matter?" gasped Prout. "You can be heard in all the studies! Mr. Quelch! Monsieur Charpentier! What—what is—"

"Hold him! Hold him, Prout!" stuttered Mr. Quelch. "He has, I fear, gone mad! Hold him! I will help you!"

"Miserable!"

"Monsieur Charpentier—" gurgled Prout.

"Scelerat!"

"I beg you—"

"Cochon!"

Prout strode in. It was clearly a time for vigorous measures. Prout placed his portly bulk between Monsieur Charpentier and Mr. Quelch and pushed the excited Frenchman back. A push from Prout, with sixteen stone behind it, was too much for Mossoo. He staggered and sat down. And Mr. Quelch, in quite a dizzy state, leaned on the table and gasped for breath.

THE TWENTY-SECOND CHAPTER.

Brought To Book!

ISAY, you fellows," gasped Billy Bunter, "just listen!"

The fellows did not need Bunter to tell them. An amazed and startled crowd was gathering at the corner of Masters' Passage. Prout had said that Mossoo could be heard in all the studies, but he could, in point of fact, be heard almost all over the House. Fellows of all Forms gathered from near and far.

"Listen to him!" breathed Bob Cherry.

It was a howl from Quelch's study!

"Laissez-moi passer, vous Prout! I hit him viz ze fist—"

"Sir, be calm—calm!"

"Non-jamais!"

"Mad as a hatter!" said Temple of the Fourth, in wonder. "Gone right off his rocker!"

"I say, you fellows, he's going to punch Quelch! He, he, he!"

"What on earth can be up?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"The upfulness appears to be jer-

(Continued on page 28.)

JOIN THE MERRY THROG FOR ANOTHER RAMBLE WITH—

The GREYFRIARS GUIDE

ALL ROUND GREYFRIARS. The Courtfield Bunshop

(1)
The Bunshop dates from Good Queen
Bess,
Who came (the story runs)
With courtiers in bejewelled dress
To try the famous buns.
She dropped inside her royal "tun"
Six dozen buns or more,
Till courtiers feared she might succumb
In anguish on the floor!

(2)
Then to ye manager, said she:
"Beshrew us, these are good!
Thou scurvy knave, we're pleased with
thee
And thy delicious food!
Now make us out thy bill for it,
And do it right away,
And we will graciously permit
Sir Francis Drake to pay!"
(Slight groan from Sir F. D.)

AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

The Field of Fate



Upon the football field he went,
A Conqueror great and glorious,
His name was Coker, and he meant
That day to be victorious!
Behind him trailed the Fifth Form crew
In fear and dire ingratitude,
For well, too well, his team-mates knew
What happened to the fatheads who
Experienced Coker's attitude!

A greater onslaught ne'er was seen
When Coker started business,
He practically demolished Greene
And left him dumb with dizziness.
The Conqueror charged with vim and
thrust,

His blows were indefensible;
Fitzgerald landed on his crust,
And then George Blundell bit the dust
And lay inert, insensible!

Knee-deep in Fifth Form gore he
fought,

By writhing forms surrounded, then,
When Potter went out flat, he thought
The Trump of Doom had sounded
then!

With screams of pain, the referee
Fell on the field of agony!
Meanwhile, the Shell had piled on
three!

But did the Conqueror care? Not he!
His own side didn't hag any!

The dreadful revelry went on,
The tale of woe and injury;
And nearly all the Fifth had gone,
The rest were feeling gingery!
The school was getting badly scared,
The matter was of urgency!
Inside the Sanny, sheets were aired,
And beds were hastily prepared
To cope with the emergency—

Well, maybe I exaggerate
What happened on the Field of Fate;
'Twas pretty grim, at any rate!

(3)
The quaint old Tudor shop is still
A place of great renown;
Its buns and coffee—and its bill—
Are features of the town.
And Bunter loves its ginger-pop,
Its ices and its buns;
It should be called the Buntershop!
(Don't laugh at feeble puns!)

PUZZLE PAR

When a fag went to the doctor
with a pain in his pantry, the doc
gave him this prescription:
300, 0, 500—50, 1, 5, F.R.—0, 1, 50.
Can you decipher it?

Answer at foot of column 3.

THE GREYFRIARS ALPHABET

SIR JAMES VIVIAN, BART., Of The Remove

V is for VIVIAN, young Sir James,
Who didn't always have these names.
For years he lived in Carker's Rents,
Unknown except to local gents
Who hurgled everywhere they could
To gain an honest livelihood!
And Jimmy lived on meagre crumbs
In this, the slummiest of the slums.
Till Manly's guardian came one day



And took the ragged youth away.
And then, to Jimmy's great regret,
He found he was a baronet!
However, he's grown out of that,
And now he gets his aitches pat,
Though when he thinks of it at times,
Sir Jimmy Vivian murmurs:
"Crimes!"



A WEEKLY BUDGET OF FACT AND FUN

By
THE GREYFRIARS
RHYMESTER

DREADFUL DRAMA

With the football season, Amateur
Dramatics also spring to life. At
Christmas we are presenting "The
Merchant of Venice," and rehearsals
have already started. Wibley (of course)
is cast as SHYLOCK, Nugent is
PORTIA, and I have been practically
eliminated as LORENZO, in order that
Wib may spread himself.

I doubt whether Shakespeare would
recognise the play as it goes at re-
hearsals. As thuswise:

PORTIA: The quality of mercy is not
strain'd. It drippeth as—

SHYLOCK (howling): Droppeth, thou
chump—I mean, you chump!

PORTIA: Sorry! It droppeth as
the gentle rain from heaven. It is the
green-eyed monster, which doth mock
the meat it feeds on—

SHYLOCK (exploding): What the—
the—the—

PORTIA (hurriedly): Sorry! I was
getting mixed up with Othello, which
we did last term.

SHYLOCK: Here, Bassanio, you go
on. Give your address to the Court.

BASSANIO (Johnny Bull): Most
potent, grave, and reverend signiors;
my very noble and approved good
masters—

SHYLOCK (foaming at the mouth):
That's "Othello," you dummy!

BASSANIO (when the dust has died
down): Most worthy gentleman, I and
my friend have by your wisdom been
this day acquainted—

SHYLOCK (violently): Acquitted,
you crass idiot! Here, out of the way!
I'll give my speech to the Duke. (He
strikes an attitude.) Please sit, your
Grace, on to the state affairs—I here do
give thee with all my heart—

GENERAL DELIGHTED CHORUS:
That's "Othello," ass!

SHYLOCK (startling): Well, you
keep disturbing a fellow—
(Exit SHYLOCK sheepishly, amid
loud laughter.)

ANSWER to PUZZLE

By putting the figures in Roman
numerals we get COD—LIVER—OIL.

ribe!" remarked Hurree Jamsel Ram Singh.

"Mais je vous dis, I hit him viz one fist!" came Mossoo's yell. "Is it zat I am small cochon! Vat? Je vous demande, vous Prout!"

"He's going it, ain't he?" grinned Gilbert Tracy.

Harry Wharton glanced at Tracy. "Have you had a finger in this?" he asked.

"Eh? What's put that into your head?" asked Gilbert cheerfully.

"Well, you had last time when Froggy took a tumble—"

"Hallo, hallo, ha!lo! There he goes again!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Suis-je petit cochon!" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier. "Zat Quelch—he call me one small pig—"

"The man must be out of his senses!" gasped the Remove master. "What can have put such an idea into his head? Monsieur Charpentier, listen—pray listen! I assure you that I have never—never—never uttered such an expression!"

"You do not utter him, miserable; you write him on one note and place in my study!" howled Monsieur Charpentier. "Vous Prout! You look at zat! You look—voyez done—voyez! Zen you say vat you zink!"

Monsieur Charpentier held the paper under his portly nose, and he stared blankly at the message written thereon.

"Good heavens!" gasped Prout.

"Can you imagine that Mr. Quelch—"

"Are you insane, sir?" roared Quelch.

"How can you imagine for one single instant that I—I—"

"Mais c'est vrai!" howled Monsieur Charpentier. "Voyez done—is not zat ze name of Quelch?"

He turned over the sheet. The title-page of Virgil's *Æneid* was revealed, with the name "H. S. Quelch" written thereon.

"I did not write that!" roared Mr. Quelch. "You are utterly and inconceivably stupid to imagine for one moment that I could have done so."

"Zat paper—"

"Your name is on that page, Quelch. It is a title-page from one of your books!" boomed Prout. "Then how—"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Harry Wharton, as he heard that from the passage. He began to guess how the matter lay, remembering what the Owl of the Remove had related that afternoon in the quad.

"Cannot you understand?" shrieked Mr. Quelch. "A boy—a young rascal—an unscrupulous young scoundrel—has purloined that page from one of my books, in order to insult Monsieur Charpentier, and cause this absurd disturbance."

"Oh!" gasped Prout. "Some wretched trickster—"

"How could it be anything else?" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"Mais, je crois—"

"Your name was on that page, Quelch. Really, what was Monsieur Charpentier to think—"

"Nonsense!" roared Quelch.

"Really, Quelch—"

"I repeat—nonsense! Monsieur Charpentier has acted like a foolish and unthinking blockhead, and, if you can find any excuse for him, Mr. Prout, I am bound to say—"

"You have said enough, Quelch!" interrupted Mr. Prout, with great dignity. "I will retire from this scene."

Prout, greatly offended, rolled out. But Prout's presence in the study was no longer needed. Monsieur Charpentier was calming down.

"You say zat you did not write him!" he ejaculated. "You did not stick him on ze table in my study?"

"I tell you it is a page torn from one of my books, and the young rascal who has played this trick shall repent it!"

Mr. Quelch stepped to the door. He stared, or rather glared, at the breathless crowd at the corner.

"Wingate!" he snapped.

"Yes, sir!"

"Please find Tracy of my Form, and bring him here at once!"

"Tracy! Tracy is here, sir! Come with me, Tracy!"

Tracy's grinning face lost its grin. He was looking serious, and rather apprehensive as he followed the prefect to Mr. Quelch's study. There was an excited squeak from Billy Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, how did Quelch know it was Tracy? I say, have you fellows been talking?"

"You must have, you fat ass!" said Bob. "Quelch jolly well knows, anyhow! My hat! I don't envy Tracy now."

"Serve him right!" grunted Johnny Bull.

Tracy stepped unwillingly into his Form-master's study.

Mr. Quelch eyed him a good deal like a basilisk. His cane was in his hand now.

"Monsieur Charpentier, kindly show Tracy that paper. Tracy, do you deny that you wrote that insulting message on a leaf taken from the book I left on my desk in the Form-room, and placed it in the French master's study?"

Tracy breathed hard.

"I've never seen it before, sir," he answered sullenly. "I don't see why I should be picked on."

"Then I will explain," said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice. "You were seen to tear a leaf from my

volume of Virgil this afternoon, Tracy. And that is the leaf."

"Oh!" gasped Gilbert.

"The matter came to my knowledge by chance, and I intended, therefore, to take no note of it. But now that I have discovered the use to which you have put the leaf torn from my book, Tracy, I shall deal with you. First of all, you will beg Monsieur Charpentier's pardon for the insult to him. At once!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"I—I—I beg your pardon, sir!" gasped Gilbert. "I—I—"

"C'estait vous!" snapped Monsieur Charpentier. "Je comprends, maintenant. Mon cher Quelch, I regret zat I zink zat—"

"You need express no regrets, sir," Monsieur Charpentier, with a crimson face, whisked out of the study.

Mr. Quelch looked at Gilbert Tracy with an almost deadly glint in his eye.

"Now, Tracy, bend over that chair!" he said. "You have had one severe lesson, Tracy, but apparently it has not had the expected effect in checking your malice and insolence. I shall now give you a more severe one. Bend over that chair!"

The crowd in the passage dispersed. Nobody wanted to hear the whopping of the cane, and the yelling of the culprit. Both continued for quite a long time. It was a dismal and dolorous Gilbert that limped away from Quelch's study when it was over.

Harry Wharton looked into Study No. 1 in the Remove about an hour later.

"Feeling better?" asked Harry, as sympathetically as he could.

"Fat lot you care!" snarled Gilbert.

"Well, for goodness' sake, leave Quelch alone!" said Harry. "Have a little sense, Tracy, and leave Quelch alone!"

"Leave him alone!" repeated Gilbert, with a glitter in his eyes. "You'll see! It's Quelch that's keeping me here—all Quelch! I've got to stick here, so long as Quelch is a master here. But if he goes—"

Harry Wharton stared at him.

"Quelch isn't likely to go to please you," he said.

"He may not be able to help it," said Gilbert, between his teeth. "He's got me, unless I get him. You'll see!"

Harry Wharton made no reply to that. He turned away, and left Gilbert to himself, and soon forgot his wild words. But he was destined to be reminded of them.

THE END.

("The Rat of the Remove!" is the title of the second yarn in this great new series. Be sure you read it next Saturday, chums!")

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