

Chum Up With Harry Wharton & Co., the World-Famous Schoolboys Of Greyfriars, Inside

The Magnet ^{2^D}

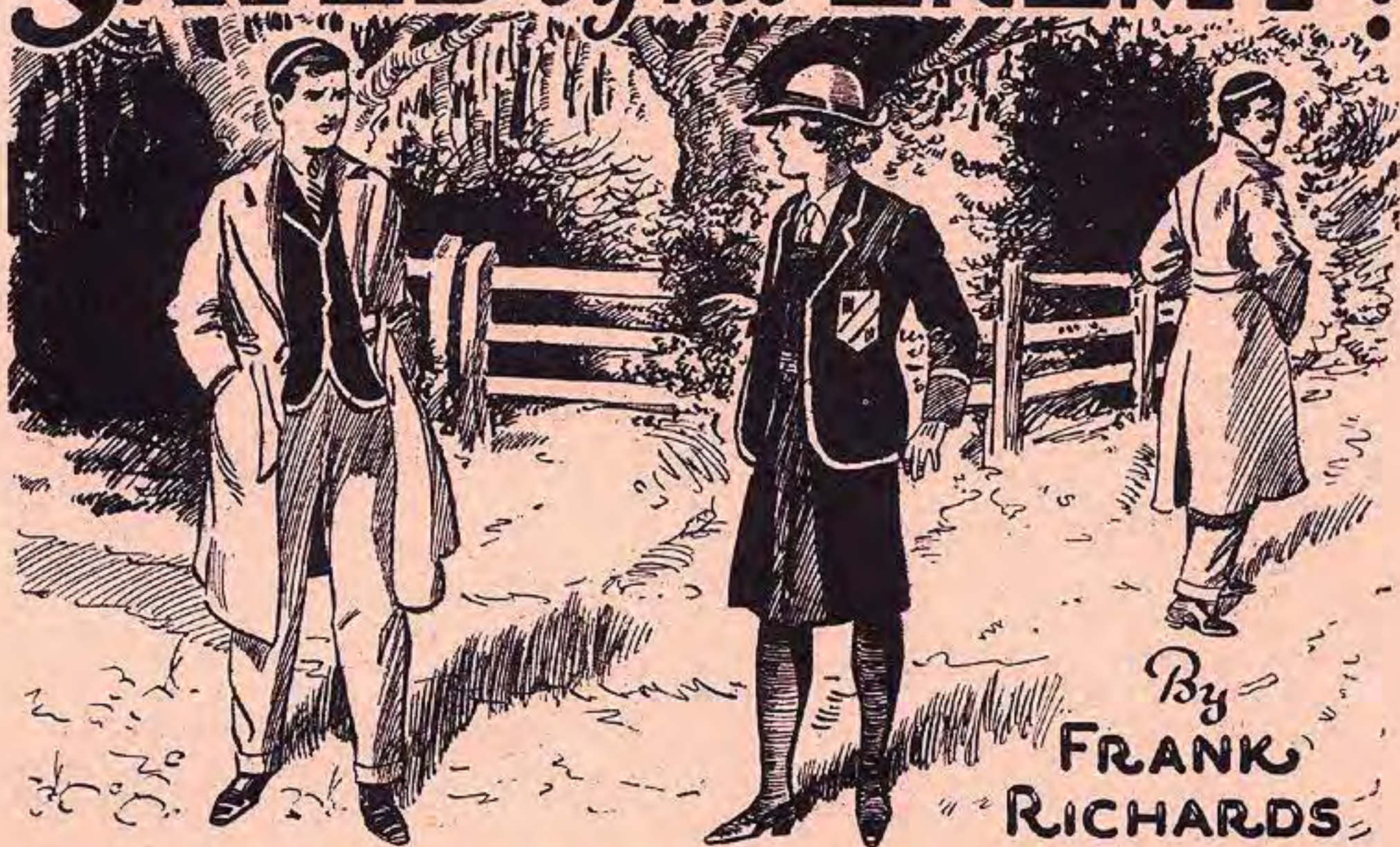
*Billy Bunter's
Own Paper*



**A RACE
TO THE
RESCUE!**

A RASCAL REFORMS! Gilbert Tracy has done Harry Wharton many a bad turn since he has been at Greyfriars. This week, however, the bad lad of the Remove turns over a new leaf and does his one-time enemy a really good turn!

SAVED *by his* ENEMY!



By
**FRANK
RICHARDS**

Hazeldene joined his sister. "Has that cad had the cheek to speak to you, Marjorie?" he asked, referring to the departing Tracy. "We bar him in the Remove!"

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

BILLY BUNTER stopped outside Study No. 1 in the Remove passage at Greyfriars, and blinked up the passage, with a very cautious blink through his spectacles.

Then he blinked down the passage, towards the landing, with an equally cautious blink.

Bunter's manner was very cautious—in fact, stealthy. It was, indeed, so very cautious and so very stealthy that it must infallibly have drawn attention to him had there been any Remove fellows about.

But there was no one about.

Harry Wharton & Co. had just gone downstairs, and Bunter had watched them go. Herbert Vernon-Smith had gone into his study, and the door had closed on him. Peter Todd, from the doorway of No. 7, had given the fat Owl of the Remove a curious glance; but he, too, had turned back into the study, and the door was half-shut. Not an eye was on Bunter. Like Moses of old, he looked this way and that way, and there was no man.

Having assured himself that the coast was clear, Billy Bunter turned the door-handle of Study No. 1.

He stepped in.

There was a Remove fellow in that study—Gilbert Tracy, the new Removite. He was alone there. He was generally alone. Wharton and Nugent, who shared the study, never came there if they could help it, and no other fellow ever came there at all. Now, however, Billy Bunter had come.

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He blinked at Tracy and grinned.

Tracy was standing by the window, looking out into the quad, bright in a gleam of winter sunshine; but that sunny gleam was not reflected in Tracy's face, which wore a black scowl.

He did not turn his head as Bunter rolled in. Several days had passed since he had been "sent to Coventry" by the Remove, and he was not expecting visitors. He continued to stare down into the quad with a black and gloomy brow, and the fat Owl grinned at the back of his head.

"I say, Tracy!" whispered Bunter.

Bunter had to be cautious. He did not want his dulcet tones to be heard outside the study. Any Remove fellow who spoke to the fellow who was in Coventry was liable to be booted. Bunter did not want to be booted, so he whispered.

Gilbert started and turned his head.

He stared at Bunter.

"What do you want, you fat frog?" he inquired.

"I've come here to speak to you, old chap," breathed Bunter.

"Well, don't!"

Billy Bunter blinked at him. This was hardly what he had expected. It was days since any man in the Remove had spoken a word to Tracy. If he spoke to any fellow his words fell on deaf ears. No fellow could possibly have liked such a state of affairs. Billy Bunter had had no doubt that Tracy would be fearfully bucked at a kind word from a good-natured chap. But he did not look bucked. He scowled.

"I say, old chap, you needn't be shirty!" said the fat Owl, still in a cautious whisper. "I can tell you, the

fellows would be down on me if they knew I'd come here to speak to you when you're in Coventry. But the fact is, old fellow, I'm taking pity on you."

"You fat idiot!"

"Oh, really, Tracy——"

"Shut up!"

Gilbert turned back to the window. Solitary as he was, barred by the whole Form, alone in a crowd, he did not seem to find Billy Bunter's company and conversation a relief.

Billy Bunter blinked at the back of his head again. He proceeded to address the back of Tracy's head, as Gilbert did not look round.

"I say, old chap, I mean it! I don't see barring you like this. Of course, you're an awful rotter, always playing some rotten trick and telling lies, and all that. You can't be surprised at the fellows being down on you when you're such an, absolute swab, can you, old chap?"

There was no reply from the back of Gilbert's head.

"Still, there's a limit," went on Bunter. "I'm a good-natured chap, Tracy. I'm jolly well going to speak to you—sometimes! Not when there's anybody about, of course. I can't stay long now. That beast Toddy had an eye on me in the passage. But I say, old fellow, a word or two will cheer you up—what?"

Bunter paused, like Brutus, for a reply. Like Brutus, he did not get one!

"Look here, Tracy," said Bunter warmly, forgetting to whisper, "don't you be an ungrateful beast! There ain't another chap in the Remove will speak to you, or touch you with a barge-pole,

and you jolly well know it! They're jolly well fed-up with your dirty tricks! Look here——"

Gilbert did not "look there." From the study window he saw the Famous Five pass in the quadrangle below, and he scowled at the tops of their heads.

But there was despondency, as well as evil temper, in his black look. Possibly Gilbert had been putting in some reflection in his days in Coventry, and had realised to some extent that he deserved what he was getting.

"I say, old chap, I came here to say something rather special," went on the fat Owl. "I dare say you heard me, mention, Tracy, that I was expecting a postal order."

No answer!

"It hasn't come," added Bunter sorrowfully. "I say, old fellow, if you could lend a fellow half-a-crown till this postal order comes——"

Gilbert turned from the window at last.

Possibly he had wondered why Billy Bunter had come to his study, at the risk of being booted by any Remove fellow who spotted him there. Now he knew!

"I say, old bean," said Bunter hopefully, "one good turn deserves another—what? I don't mind speaking to you—every now and then, you know, when there's nobody about. Of course, I can't let anybody see me speaking to a swab like you—you can't expect it; but on the quiet, you know, just a word every now and then to cheer you up. What? And to tell you the truth, old fellow, I'd be jolly glad if you'd cash that postal order for me. I'll let you have it the minute it comes, of course. It's quite all right, you know; it's from one of my titled relations. And I say—— Yarooooop!"

Tracy crossed the study to the fat Owl.

But it was not, as Bunter hoped, to produce coin of the realm. It was to grab the Owl of the Remove by his collar and twirl him round in the doorway.

Bunter roared in surprise and wrath.

"I say, leggo! Wharrer you at, you cheeky beast? If you kick me, I'll—Whooooooop!"

Billy Bunter had entered that doorway very cautiously, but he left it without any caution at all! He left it bounding, with a boot behind him, roaring at the top of his voice.

"Ow! Oh! Ooooh! Beast! Oh crikey! Yoo-hooop! You beast, kicking a chap just because he—yooop!—took pity on you! Wow! Ow!"

Slam!

The door of Study No. 1 closed on Bunter.

"Beast!" hooted Bunter, through the keyhole. "Yah! Cad! Swab! Catch me speaking to you! I bar you, you beast! Yah! I—ow! Leggo! Who's that?" howled Bunter, as a sudden grasp fell on the back of his fat neck.

"That" was Peter Todd!

"So you're speaking to that swab in Coventry, old fat tulip!" said Peter grimly. "I fancied you were up to something! Now——"

"Ow! Leggo, Toddy, you beast!" howled Bunter. "I wasn't speaking to him. I only said—— Yaroooooh!"

There was what a novelist might call a dull, sickening thud, as Peter's boot established contact with the tightest trousers at Greyfriars School.

Bunter shot away towards the stairs.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Peter. "I'm going to give you another, Bunter! Wait a minute!"

Billy Bunter did not wait a minute. He did not wait a second. An arrow in its flight had nothing on Billy Bunter, as he went down the Remove staircase.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Hard Lines!

"WHARTON!"

"Yes, sir?"

"You have not brought me your lines!"

The Famous Five, at the school gate, came to a halt as Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, addressed his head boy.

Harry Wharton set his lips.

Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, Frank Nugent, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh looked uncomfortable and a little uneasy.

Mr. Quelch's brow was severe.

He was standing at the gateway, speaking to Gosling, the porter, when Harry Wharton & Co. came along, evidently intending to go out.

It was Saturday afternoon, a half-holiday at Greyfriars, and the weather, for November, was good and fine. Five faces had been looking merry and bright, till Mr. Quelch, turning from Gosling, interposed. Then the five faces were overcast—especially Harry Wharton's.

Five hundred lines, an extremely heavy impot, had been hanging over the head of the captain of the Remove during the latter part of the week.

So far, he had not touched it, though it had to be handed in at the end of the week. So far, his friends knew, he had not quite made up his mind whether he was going to touch it at all!

He was Quelch's head boy, and

HARRY WHARTON & CO., of GREYFRIARS, in another exciting school adventure.

generally in his Form-master's good graces. He was far from disposed, as a rule, to set up as a rebel against authority, like the new fellow, Tracy. Nevertheless, he had not touched those lines—which was quite enough to make his friends uneasy, when Quelch inquired after them.

"Have you written your lines, Wharton?"

"No, sir!"

"You are aware that they have to be handed in to-day!"

"You told me so, sir."

"Yet you are going out without having written them!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir!"

Harry Wharton's tone, as he answered, was respectful enough, but there was a note of stubbornness in it that did not please Mr. Quelch—and would not have pleased any Form-master. He frowned, and raised his hand.

"Go back to the House at once, Wharton!" he rapped.

Wharton stood still.

"Go to your study immediately, and write your lines!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Bring them to me by tea-time, Wharton!"

Slowly, Harry Wharton turned, and walked back to the House. Mr. Quelch cast a frowning glance after him. His friends followed him, with glum faces.

"Rotten!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"That washes out our trot!"

"The rottenfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But what cannot be cured, must go longest to the well, as the proverb remarks."

"No need for you fellows to stick in!" said Harry Wharton curtly. "You

can't help me with my lines—if I do them!"

"You're going to do them, old chap!" said Frank Nugent. "No good landing into a row with Quelch!"

Harry Wharton did not answer that. His look indicated that he did not care very much, at the moment at least, if he landed into a row with Quelch!

"Oh, we'll stick in, if you do, old bean!" said Bob Cherry. "We don't mind."

That statement was not, perhaps, strictly accurate! Bob did mind! He happened to be aware that Marjorie Hazeldene, of Cliff House School, was walking to Friardale that afternoon! For reasons best known to himself, Bob was always glad to be in the offing when Marjorie was about. So this was really a big sacrifice on the altar of friendship!

"Rot!" said Harry. "You fellows cut off and leave me to it."

His friends exchanged doubtful glances. They were not keen certainly to "stick" in on a half-holiday, least of all Bob Cherry. But they did not feel quite sure that, if they cut off and left Wharton to it, those lines would be written! And they had to be written!

"Come up to the study, old chap," said Frank. "We'll see you started, anyhow."

Harry Wharton's face set.

"I don't see why I should do those rotten lines," he said. "I'm getting fed up with Quelch handing out punishments for nothing. He gave me 'six,' in the Form-room, two or three weeks ago, over a trick of Tracy's—as he jolly well knew afterwards! Now I've got five hundred lines—Tracy again! I'm fed up!"

"Rough luck, old man," said Bob. "But——"

"Fellow has to toe the line at school!" said Johnny Bull, shaking his head. "Fellow has to take the rough with the smooth!"

"I don't feel like doing those lines!" growled Wharton.

"Do them without feeling like it, then!" suggested Bob.

"Fathead!"

"Come on!" said Frank.

Harry Wharton paused in the doorway of the House. Evidently he was undecided whether to obey that order of his Form-master or not. Really, there was little choice in the matter, for, as Johnny Bull sapiently remarked, a fellow had to toe the line at school—a circumstance that Wharton, in his angry resentment, seemed to have overlooked.

But if he had not decided, his friends decided for him, and they pushed him into the House and gathered round him, and walked him up to the Remove passage.

At the door of Study No. 1 he stopped again.

"Look here——" he began.

Bob Cherry hurled the study door open.

"Trot in!" he said. "It's rough luck, old bean, but it can't be helped! We'll sit round and watch you, if you like."

"You silly ass!"

"Thanks!" said Bob imperturbably. "What I really like about you, Wharton, old bean, is that polished, polite way you have of thanking your pals for looking after you——"

"You blithering chump——"

"Go it! Take it out in slanging your pals, so long as you do the lines!" said Bob cheerfully. "Any fancy names you like—only get on with the lines."

"If the slangfulness is a relief to your absurd feelings, my esteemed chum, you

may get on with the slangfulness to the most terrific extent!" declared Hurree Janset Ram Singh solemnly. "You may call us all the ludicrous names that occur to your debilitated brain."

Harry Wharton's frowning face relaxed into a grin.

"Chuck it, you fatheads!" he said. "I'll do the lines! No need for you to stick in—I'll get going."

"Back to tea, then," said Bob, "and if you're a good boy, we'll bring you in a cake!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You howling ass! Cut off!" said Harry.

And his friends, relieved in their minds, left him, and Harry Wharton went into the study and shut the door with a bang.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Chucked Out!

GILBERT TRACY turned from the study window.

It was half an hour since Billy Bunter's visit, and Tracy was still standing there staring down moodily into the quadrangle, when Wharton entered the study.

Harry glanced at him, as he saw him, his brow clouding. He had not known that Tracy was in the study, and certainly he did not want him there. Still, it was the fellow's own study, and he had a right to be there if he liked—and if he chose to waste a half-holiday frowning indoors. After that glance, Wharton took no notice of him, but sorted out his Virgil and a sheaf of impot paper, and sat down to lines.

But his brows were knitted, and his eyes glinting under them. It was Tracy's fault that he had that heavy imposition to write, that he had to stick in a study all through a keen winter's afternoon, grinding out weary lines, instead of joining his friends out of gates. The sight of Gilbert, just then, had rather the effect on Wharton of a red rag on a bull.

However, he sat down in silence to write. Tracy was in Coventry—by sentence of the Form! No fellow was permitted to speak to him, or to answer him if he spoke, under penalty of "booting." Only Billy Bunter had transgressed that rule, so far—in the vain hope of getting his celebrated postal order cashed as a reward! Wharton, certainly, had no desire to speak to the fellow—though he had a strong desire to punch his head.

Gilbert stood looking at him, in silence, for two or three minutes, as he settled down to work. There was a sneer on his face. He broke the silence at last, perhaps forgetting Coventry.

"Lines for Quelch?" he asked.

Harry Wharton lifted his head from his work for a moment and looked at him. He did not answer, but dropped his eyes to his lines again. Gilbert gave the top of his bent head an evil look.

"Deaf?" he sneered.

Only the scratching of Wharton's busy pen answered him. Even had Tracy not been in Coventry, and even had Wharton not regarded him with the deepest dislike and contempt, he had no

time to waste in talk. Five hundred lines of Latin was a really tremendous task, and Wharton had to go all out to get through by tea-time.

Now that he had, under the persuasion of his chums, finally made up his mind to do those lines for Quelch, he rather wished that he had made an earlier start. But it was too late to wish that, and there was nothing for it but steady grinding.

"Deaf," repeated Gilbert, "or dumb?"

Scratch, scratch, scratch!

"How long do you think you can keep up this rot, Wharton?" asked Gilbert, between his teeth. "The other fellows would chuck it, if you did! I'm getting fed up with it."

Scratch, scratch!

"That the impot Quelch gave you last Wednesday, the day of the Highcliffe match?" asked Gilbert.

Scratch!

"I've heard some talk that you weren't going to do it!" sneered Gilbert. "You seem to have made up your mind to toe the line, after all!"

The colour deepened in Harry Wharton's cheeks. But he did not look up again, or speak. He was well aware that Gilbert was seeking to taunt him into breaking the rule of Coventry; and he was not to be drawn.

But it was not easy to grind out Virgil with a fellow talking to him all the time, and his temper was rising fast.

It was Tracy who was the cause of this, as he was the cause of a good many troubles that had landed on the captain of the Remove that term. Tracy had tricked him into the Form-room on Highcliffe day, and banged the door of the map-cupboard on him and locked it. Quelch had found him there, and insisted on knowing the name of the fellow who had abstracted a key from his study. It was for refusing to give the name that Wharton had this heavy impot. Tracy certainly would have suffered severely for his sins had Wharton given his name. And the fellow would not even leave him in peace to grind through that weary task. It was no wonder that his temper was rising.

"We talk big, but we too the line at the finish, what?" grinned Gilbert.

"Only gas, what?"

Scratch, scratch!

"Why didn't you give my name the other day when Quelch wanted it?"

Scratch!

"Too high and mighty?" asked Gilbert.

Scratch!

"Like me to lend you a hand with the lines?" asked Gilbert, rather unexpectedly. "I will, if you like—it's only fair! I can make my list near enough to yours."

Scratch!

"Will you answer, you rotter?"

Scratch!

Harry Wharton scribbled on industriously. He did not believe for a moment that the offer of help was genuine; and he would not have accepted it, in any case. He only wanted Gilbert to shut up and leave him to his task in peace.

Gilbert stood scowling at him. The door of Study No. 1 opened, and a Remove fellow looked in.

It was Hazeldene.

"Oh, you're here, Wharton!" he said. "I thought I saw you come in. What's that—lines for Quelch?"

"Yes," answered Harry briefly.

Hazel stepped in and glanced over his shoulder. So far, about twenty lines had been written out of five hundred.

Hazel grinned.

"You've left it rather late, haven't you?" he remarked.

"Yes, don't bother; I've got lots to do!"

"You were rather an ass to leave it so late! After all, you had to do the lines! Not much good saying you wouldn't!"

Wharton's face was crimson with vexation. He had not exactly said that he "would not" do those lines. But his disgruntled remarks on the subject had given that impression; and it was extremely annoying and humiliating to be supposed to have "talked big" and then climbed down. He went on scribbling, with a set face.

"Well, chuck it for a minute or two, old bean," said Hazel. "I came here to speak to you."

"Well, don't!" snapped Harry.

"You can spare a minute or two, after letting your impot hang about all the week!" said Hazel sarcastically.

Wharton looked up.

"I can't, and won't!" he answered. "I've got to get this rotten impot done by tea-time! Buzz off!"

"I've said that I want to speak to you!" said Hazel sullenly.

"You can jaw after tea, if you like! Don't jaw now!"

"Look here——"

"Oh, shut up!" roared Wharton, in exasperation. "For goodness' sake leave a fellow in peace!"

Hazel gave him a glare, stamped out of the study, and slammed the door after him. Wharton gave a grunt, and resumed scribbling. Gilbert Tracy burst into a laugh.

"Your manners are improving," he remarked.

Scratch, scratch!

"You generally manage to keep civil to Marjorie Hazeldene's brother," grinned Gilbert.

Scratch!

"Sure you wouldn't like a hand with the lines? You'll have to rush to get them through by tea. Quelch will scalp you if they're not handed in, you know—after all your gas!"

Harry Wharton, breathing hard, laid down his pen and rose to his feet.

Gilbert grinned. He fancied that he had broken through the silence of the captain of the Remove at last.

But Wharton did not speak.

He came round the table and grasped Gilbert Tracy with both hands.

Tracy gave a splutter of surprise and rage as he was whirled round the table towards the door.

"Let go, you fool!" he panted. "What the thump do you think you're up to?"

Wharton did not answer! He was not to be drawn into speech with the fellow who was in Coventry. But what he was up to was clear enough—he was going to stop Gilbert's talk by pitching him out of the study!

"Will you let go?" roared Gilbert.

He resisted savagely as he was swung doorward. But he was no match for the captain of the Remove, and he had to go. He grasped at the table, and it rocked, and then he was wrenched away. Harry Wharton dragged the study door open, and Tracy put up a last struggle in the doorway.

Then he shot out into the passage.

Bump!

There was a chuckle up the passage. Vernon-Smith was looking out of the doorway of Study No. 4. The Bounder



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seemed amused by Tracy's sudden and forcible exit from Study No. 1.

The door of Study No. 1 slammed. Gilbert staggered to his feet in the passage. With a face red with rage, he jumped back at the study door, hurled it open, and rushed in.

There was a sound of a scuffle. Then Tracy reappeared under the Bouncer's amused eyes, flying through the doorway. He crashed and sprawled, and the study door slammed after him again.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Smithy.

Gilbert tottered up. He stood panting and scowling savagely at the laughing Bouncer. He made a step towards the door of Study No. 1—and stopped. And the Bouncer chuckled again, as he turned, and tramped away towards the stairs.

In Study No. 1, Harry Wharton went on grinding at his lines—without further interruptions from the outcast of the Remove.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Two In Peril!

"CAT!" Bessie Bunter, the plump sister of Billy Bunter of the Remove, made that remark. She made it snappishly. Marjorie Hazeldene glanced round at her.

"What——" she began.

"Cat!" repeated Bessie.

"But what——"

"Cat!"

"My dear Bessie——"

"Cat!"

Bessie seemed annoyed.

The two Cliff House girls were following the path on the cliffs from Pegg to Friardale. They were walking slowly. Bessie Bunter, like Billy Bunter, had a lot of weight to carry, and she carried it at a leisurely pace. Moreover, Bessie had a packet of toffee, of which she was disposing as she walked.

Bessie was bestowing most of her attention on the toffee, when something tapped sharply on the brim of her hat and tilted it sideways, which made Bessie jump and annoyed her very much.

"You dropped something on my hat!" said Bessie accusingly, with a devastating blink through the big spectacles that were so like Billy's. "Look at it!"

"But I didn't——" gasped Marjorie.

"Who did, then?" demanded Bessie.

"Cat!"

She set her school hat straight. Marjorie Hazeldene looked round in surprise. A chip of chalk had dropped on Bessie's hat, and tilted it; and as no one else was in sight on the lonely cliff path, Bessie attributed that absurd joke to her companion. Hence her remarks.

"If you think it's funny to knock my hat off, Marjorie Hazeldene——" squeaked Bessie.

"But I did not!" said Marjorie. "Don't be a duffer, Bessie! There must be somebody up on the cliffs!"

"I don't think!" said Bessie scornfully. "I jolly well know—— Oh!" Bessie broke off, as another chunk of chalk dropped and tilted her hat again. This time Miss Elizabeth Bunter could see that Marjorie was not guilty.

She blinked upward.

The path the schoolgirls were following wound along the face of the cliffs. On their right was a drop of forty or fifty feet to the beach, where the wintry sea rolled booming on the shingle. On their left the upper cliff rose almost like a wall to a height of

thirty feet or so. From the summit, grassy slopes stretched inland to Friardale Wood.

"Oh," gasped Bessie, "brute!"

She pointed up with a fat forefinger.

Looking down from the top were two grinning faces.

Bessie knew both those faces—they belonged to Ponsonby and Monson of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe.

Pon and his pal were on a ramble that afternoon, and, as usual, ready for any mischief—especially of a malicious kind. Satan, as the proverb says, was finding work for idle hands to do.

Apparently it seemed funny to Pon to drop chunks of chalk on the hat of Miss Elizabeth Bunter, passing below. And as Bessie glared up, her fat face red with wrath, it seemed funnier than ever to Pon. He chuckled.

"Brutes!" squealed Miss Bunter. "If I could get at you, I'd smack your face! I'll ask my brother Billy to thrash you!"

At which Ponsonby and Monson chortled. They were not cast in heroic mould; but really and truly they did not fear any vengeance that might reach them from William George Bunter.

Marjorie Hazeldene glanced up at the two young rascals with a quiet contempt that made Monson draw back his head. But Ponsonby stared down with cool impudence. He stretched out his hand, to drop another lump of chalk on Miss Bunter's hat.

"Come along, Bessie!" said Marjorie hastily.

Tap!

Bessie Bunter was directly below the Highcliffe fellow on the cliff summit. The lump of chalk dropped like a plummet to the crown of her hat, and gave it a sharp tap, almost a bang.

"Ow!" squeaked Bessie. "Run, Marjorie!"

And Bessie Bunter, in anticipation of another dropping chunk, charged along the path at top speed to escape.

Ponsonby, grinning backed from the edge, and joined Monson, and the two young rascals continued their walk along the cliffs.

Bessie, unaware that there was no more to come, charged on. Marjorie rushed after her in alarm.

"Stop!" she called out breathlessly.

"Bessie, stop!"

The path between the cliff on one side and the drop to the beach on the other was no place for putting on speed.

Bessie, heedless, charged on. Her foot slipped on the chalk, and there was a sudden shriek as Bessie stumbled over.

"Bessie!" panted Marjorie.

Shriek!

Under her horrified eyes Bessie stumbled, and slipped on the edge. She was over the edge in a moment, and for one dreadful second Marjorie dreaded to see her disappear into space. But Bessie's fat hands grabbed at the rough chalk on the edge of the path, and she hung on, screaming.

Marjorie, breathless, reached her in another moment.

"Help!" shrieked Bessie. "Pull me up! Marjorie, oh, help!"

Her hands were slipping on the wet chalk. Marjorie, throwing herself on her knees, grasped the fat hands as they slipped, and held on to them. She braced herself against the strain, striving her hardest to pull the plump schoolgirl up to the path again.

But she strove in vain.

All Bessie's weight was over the edge, and she could not help herself. Marjorie was no weakling, but her

strength was not equal to pulling up the weight. Bessie's elbows rested on the chalk, and Marjorie's strong grasp prevented her from slipping back—but that was the utmost that she could do.

Shriek on shriek pealed from the terrified Bessie. Below, the face of the cliff slanted steeply to the beach; only Marjorie's hold prevented her from rolling down fifty feet to the tide-swept shingle. She shrieked and shrieked, and screamed and screamed.

"Help! Help!" called Marjorie Hazeldene, as loudly as she could. She was holding Bessie back from that terrible fall, but she knew that she could not stand the strain long.

She hoped that her voice and Bessie's wild screams might reach the two young rascals on the cliff-top.

But Ponsonby and Monson had already gone on their way, utterly unconscious of the catastrophe that had been caused by their malicious prank. They were already far out of hearing.

Marjorie's eyes swept along the path, almost in despair. And she gave a cry of joy and relief at the sight of a schoolboy in a Greyfriars cap coming up the path.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Gilbert To The Rescue!

GILBERT TRACY tramped along the path on the cliff, with his hands shoved deep into his pockets, and a black scowl on his face.

Ever since he had come, unwillingly, to Greyfriars School, Gilbert had been discontented and dissatisfied. He had had an easy time—too easy a time—at home at Oakwood Place, in Surrey, and Greyfriars was a very disagreeable change.

He wanted to go, but he was not allowed to go. He could not even get himself sacked, though he would rather have left, even on such terms, than have remained at Greyfriars.

Mr. Quelch had taken charge of him. He had undertaken to keep him at Greyfriars for a whole term, and to endeavour to make something better than an idle, loafing, self-indulgent slacker of him. He had not perhaps had much success, so far, but Quelch was not the man to abandon a task he had undertaken. The more trouble Gilbert gave him—and he gave him plenty—the more grimly determined Quelch seemed to be to see his task through.

If Gilbert had had one consolation, it was Soccer. He was keen on Soccer, and a great man at the game. But evil temper and reckless rascality had been his undoing in that as in other things. Barred from the football, he had nothing left but malicious vengeance—for what that was worth. Now his Form was utterly fed-up with him. He was sent to Coventry, and every fellow in the Remove would have been as glad as Gilbert himself if he could have succeeded in leaving the school.

It was no wonder that his brow was dark, and his face sullen as he tramped over the cliffs. He had never cared for others, or for the opinion of others; but it was a blow to him to be treated as an outcast, to be turned down, and barred, by all the Form to which he belonged.

He had, in fact, thrown away all his chances, and he had nothing left but sulky resentment and brooding discontent. At the same time, it had crossed his mind more than once that he wished that things had been different, as they so easily might have been.

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had he not given way on all occasions to every selfish and malicious impulse.

It was too late now, and he had no prospect ahead of him, but of remaining an avoided outcast during the long weeks of that dreary term. He was thinking dismally over the dismal prospect as he tramped on the cliff path, when Bessie Bunter's wild screams, and Marjorie Hazeldene's calling voice, came to his ears.

He glanced round him with little interest. Somebody, it seemed, was in some trouble, but Gilbert was very slightly interested in anyone's troubles but his own.

But even Gilbert hastened his steps as he saw what was going on on the cliff path ahead of him.

He recognised Marjorie at once. He had seen her several times when she had come over to Greyfriars to see her brother, Hazeldene of the Remove. And as he saw that she was barely holding back the plump schoolgirl from slipping down the steep cliff, he ran quickly up.

"Help!" called Marjorie.

At the sight of a Greyfriars cap, she had hoped that it might be Bob Cherry, or some other of the Famous Five. This fellow was a stranger to her. If she had seen him at all, she had never noticed him. But he ran up quickly enough to her aid.

"Hold on!" he panted, as he came. "For goodness' sake, hold on!"

Tracy at that moment forgot his sulks, forgot his evil temper, forgot that he still had several aches from bumping in the passage outside Study No. 1. For once, at least, he forgot about himself.

Frightened out of her fat wits, Bessie screamed and screamed, clinging to Marjorie's hands like a limpet to a rock. Her weight was dragging her down, and Marjorie had to exert every ounce of her strength to hold her back from the fall. But her strength was failing under the strain. She would not let go; but she was in danger, dire danger, of being dragged over the edge, had not help arrived.

But help had come.

Gilbert Tracy dropped on his knees by her side. He grasped one of Bessie's plump wrists with both hands.

"Take the other!" he breathed.

Scream from Bessie—scream on scream. Her eyes were wildly dilated behind her spectacles, bulging with terror.

As Tracy gripped her left arm, Marjorie placed both hands to her right. The terrible strain was eased. Marjorie panted and panted, but she could stand the strain now.

"Pull!" breathed Gilbert. "We've got to get her up! By gum, she's no feather-weight! Pull!"

Even with the two of them to pull, it was no easy task. It was a terribly difficult task. Bessie, as she was dragged slowly up over the rugged edge of chalk, slipped back again, screaming; and only by bracing themselves, with all their strength, did Marjorie and Tracy avoid being dragged over the edge.

Then a long, strong, and steady pull did it, and Bessie Bunter, gasping, was landed at last on the path, where she sat and screamed.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Gilbert.

He panted for breath. It was a cold November day, and a chill wind blew from the sea, but the perspiration was thick on his forehead.

Marjorie leaned against the rock, on the safe side of the path, white and spent. Bessie, apparently unconscious

that the danger was over, continued to scream.

"It's all right now!" said Tracy.

"Safe as houses now, Miss Bunter!"

Scream!

"Bessie, my dear—" panted

Marjorie.

Scream!

"Bessie—"

Scream!

"Oh dear!" gasped Marjorie.

Scream!

Marjorie, having recovered her breath, bent and grasped Bessie's arm, to help her to her feet.

Tracy stooped and grasped her other arm.

Bessie, still screaming, was hooked to her feet. Except that she was muddy and chalky, she seemed little the worse—but no doubt Bessie considered that, in the circumstances, she was entitled to scream. And she did!

"Come, Bessie!" urged Marjorie. "We shall be off this path in a few minutes—come!"

Scream!

"I'd better see you off the path, in case she takes another tumble!" said Gilbert.

"Thank you! Please do!" said Marjorie.

Bessie, still emitting screams, was walked on between them to the spot where the path turned inland through the cliffs. There at last Miss Elizabeth Bunter ceased to scream.

"All right now!" said Tracy.

"You've hurt my wrist!"

"Eh?"

"Bruised it!" said Bessie accusingly.

"Look at it!"

"Oh!"

"Grabbing my wrist like that!" said Bessie. "Did you think it was made of wood, or iron, or what?"

"Oh, my hat!" said Gilbert, staring at her.

Gilbert's prompt aid had certainly saved Miss Bunter from severe injury, and probably Marjorie as well. Miss Bunter, however, now that she had recovered from her fright, was thinking of her plump wrist, which Tracy had certainly grasped in a grip of iron. Really, he had had to! Still, no doubt it hurt a little.

"Just like a boy!" said Miss Bunter bitterly. "Grabbing at a girl's arm as if it was made of wood!"

"But—but I had to pull you up, you know!" stammered Gilbert. "You didn't want to go down to the beach, did you?"

"Don't be silly!" said Miss Bunter.

"Oh!"

"No need to be so clumsy! I think—"

"Be quiet, Bessie!" exclaimed Marjorie, with a note of very unusual sharpness in her voice. "Do be quiet!"

"Cat!" said Bessie. "Look at my wrists!"

"Be quiet! I don't know how to thank you," said Marjorie. "It was very kind and very brave of you—you might have been pulled over, though Bessie doesn't understand it."

"Grabbing my wrist like that—"

"Be quiet!"

"Grabbing—"

"Do be quiet, Bessie! I don't think I've seen you before, but you belong to Greyfriars?" said Marjorie.

"I'm new this term," said Gilbert. "I know your brother, Miss Hazeldene—at least—"

He coloured, remembering that Marjorie's brother, like the rest of the Remove, was sending him to Coventry. "I mean, I'm in his Form—the Remove. My name's Tracy."

"Tracy!" repeated Marjorie. "Oh!

Hazel has mentioned you to me—you're the wonderful footballer!" She smiled. "Thank you so much for helping us! Now come along, Bessie—"

"Grabbing my arm like that—"

"Do come along!"

"I'm all smothered with mud—"

"Yes, come along! I'm muddy, too—"

"All over mud and chalk!" said Bessie. "Smothered! Look at me!"

"We'd better go back," said Marjorie.

"We'll go by Pegg Lane—not by the cliffs again! Come on!"

"Smothered with mud—"

"Do come!"

"Grabbing my arms like that—"

"Yes, yes; but come on—"

"Grabbing—"

Tracy stood looking after the two schoolgirls as they went, Bessie Bunter rubbing a plump arm, evidently still deeply displeased. He watched them till they were out of sight, and then resumed his tramp along the cliffs.

His face was thoughtful, but much less moody and disgruntled and discontented than before. It was probably the first time that Gilbert Tracy had ever exerted himself for the sake of anyone but himself, and possibly the unusual experience had done him good.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Vengeance!

BANG!

The door of Study No. 1 flew open, and Harry Wharton gave a jump.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared a cheery voice.

Bob Cherry's cheery, ruddy face looked in, and behind him the other members of the Co. Bob had a bundle in his hand. That bundle contained supplies for tea, and Bob slammed it down on the study table.

"Finished?" he asked.

"No!" grunted Wharton. "Shut up, for goodness' sake!"

"Much more?"

"About fifty!"

It was not yet tea-time when the Co. came in. They had been down to Friardale, but Bob had not had the satisfaction of seeing Marjorie there—she did not seem to have walked to the village, after all. So, a walk to Cliff House being cut out, they had come back rather early. But Bob had come back in cheery spirits, after a tramp in keen, wintry air, rather a contrast to Harry Wharton, who was in anything but cheery spirits, after hours in the study, grinding at Latin lines.

A pile of written lines lay on the table before him, and he was still wearily grinding when his friends arrived.

"We've brought in something for tea—"

"Bother tea!"

"I told you I'd bring you a cake, if you were a good boy—"

"You howling ass!"

"But it's a jolly good cake—I got it at Uncle Clegg's, in Friardale—"

"Blow the cake! For goodness' sake let me get through with 'his rot!'"

"Marzipan on top, and no end of plums—"

"Shut up!" roared Wharton.

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"All serene, old top! We'll leave you to finish. Buck up! Come and tell us when you're through—Browney's got his wireless on in the Rag, and we're going to hear the news—"

"Go and hear the news, or go to (Continued on page 8.)

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Jericho!" said Harry. "I jolly well wish I'd never started these rotten lines—I'd better finish them now!"

"Pile in, old chap!" said Frank Nugent. "Fifty more won't take you long!"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Push that fat ass out!" said Harry, as a fat face and a large pair of spectacles glimmered at the door.

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Buzz off!"

"I was only going to offer to unpack that parcel while you're finishing your lines!" said Billy Bunter, with dignity.

"Kick him, somebody!" said Harry.

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter was pushed out—keen as he was on unpacking a parcel which contained a cake with marzipan on top and a lot of plums—and the door of Study No. 1 shut again.

The Co. tramped down to the Rag, and Wharton was left to finish that long and weary task.

He scribbled and scribbled at the last weary lines.

His friends had given him sensible advice that afternoon, and he had acted sensibly in taking it, he knew that quite well. But he was in a far from pleased or satisfied mood.

From his own point of view, that impot had been unjustly given, or was, at the very least, unnecessarily severe. That was exasperating to begin with!

Then his own angry remarks on the subject had given a general impression that he would not do the lines, and the fact that he had, after all, done them gave an opening for sneers to a fellow like Tracy, and for irritating amusement to a fellow like Hazel.

However, that almost endless task was nearly at an end now, and he scribbled on, to get it finished.

The last few lines were running off his pen, when the study door opened and Billy Bunter blinked in.

"I say, old chap——"

"Buzz off!" snapped Wharton, over his shoulder.

"But I say——"

Wharton grabbed a Latin grammar and hurled it.

Bunter dodged just in time, and disappeared.

He scribbled the last line, at long last! Five hundred lay completed on the table before him, the afternoon's dismal labour was over. He was tired and irritated, but he was glad at all events, that he had finished.

The door opened again.

"I say, old fellow——"

Billy Bunter blinked in, very cautiously! His interest in the bundle on the study table was deep and intense, but he kept a wary eye open for a whizzing missile!

But there was no missile this time! The task was done, and Harry Wharton rose from his chair.

Bunter's eyes, and spectacles, fixed on him warily.

"I say, heard the news?" he asked.

"What news, fathead?"

"Awful air-raid——"

"Wha-at?"

"Browney's getting it on his wireless in the Rag! Fearful air-raid——"

"An air-raid!" exclaimed Harry. At that startling news he forgot the stack of lines that lay on the table, and stared at Bunter.

"Fearful!" said Bunter. "I didn't catch where it had happened—but it was awful—fearful—bombs right and left—terrific bombing—smashing everything up—I say, come on, old chap, or you'll miss it——"

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"Oh!"

Harry Wharton hurried out of the study. If that exciting news was coming through on Tom Brown's wireless in the Rag, he wanted to hear it! He cut down the passage to the stairs.

Billy Bunter blinked after him as he went!

As Wharton cut down the Remove staircase, Bunter cut into Study No. 1!

He grinned breathlessly as he reached the bundle on the table. His fat fingers jerked at the string round it.

Whether that thrilling news was coming through on Browney's radio or not, Bunter did not know! Sad to relate, he did not care, either!

Billy Bunter's sole object was to get Wharton out of the study while he dealt with that parcel!

Bombing squadrons—if any—did not interest Bunter so much as a plummy cake with marzipan on top!

Hurriedly, he untied knots!

If that thrilling news was coming through on the radio, it would keep Wharton in the Rag! If it wasn't, at least it would take him some little time to go and return! The unscrupulous fat Owl had time!

He jerked off the string, and unwrapped wrappings. A large and handsome cake was revealed—among other things! The other things, Bunter generously left for their owner—the cake he grabbed!

With the cake under his arm, he rolled out of the study. He blinked quickly down the passage towards the stairs.

A junior appeared on the landing. The short-sighted Owl of the Remove did not see who it was—it could hardly be Wharton coming back yet, but Bunter turned hastily in the other direction, and rolled up the passage with his plunder.

It was, as a matter of fact, Gilbert Tracy, coming in after his walk. He stared at Bunter, as the fat Owl rolled hurriedly away and disappeared into Study No. 7.

He could see that Bunter had been in Study No. 1, and that he had carried something out of that study. But he was not interested in the fat Owl's proceedings. He went in and slammed the door.

Then, as he turned from the door, Gilbert's eyes fell on what lay on the study table.

He did not heed the parcel of tuck, attractive as it was to Billy Bunter! His eyes fixed on the stack of lines, in Wharton's hand.

And his eyes glittered.

Wharton, evidently, had written out that tremendous impot. Something had called him away from the study, and he had left it there, instead of taking it at once to Quelch. He had said—or as good as said—that he would not do it—but he had done it, and there it lay.

Gilbert's eyes turned from it to the fire burning in the study grate!

That stack of lines, which had cost his enemy a weary afternoon's work, lay under his eyes—and that afternoon, Wharton had pitched him neck and crop out of that study, and it was to Wharton, more than to anyone else, that he owed it that he was in Coventry—an outcast in the school. His face was black and bitter—and black and bitter thoughts were in his mind!

For a long moment he stood looking at the stack of impot paper. Then he picked up the sheets, and crammed them, in a heap, in the study fire, and stirred them there till they blazed. He stirred the embers over them, and added more coals from the box!

Then, quietly he left the study, and shut the door after him!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Hunting Bunter!

"WHAT'S the news, Browney?"

"Can't get through!"

"Wha-a-t!" ejaculated

Harry Wharton.

Tom Brown had his portable radio on the corner of the table in the Rag. A number of fellows were gathered round, and the New Zealand junior was twiddling dials and frowning.

"Nothing doing!" he said. "Can't get it!"

"Haven't you got anything——"

"Nothing, so far!"

"That fat villain Bunter——" exclaimed Harry. "What the thump was he pulling my leg for? He told me you were getting war news."

"What the dickens did he tell you that for?" grunted Browney. "I tell you I can't get a sound——"

"Finished those lines, old bean?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Yes! That fat ass Bunter sent me down here, with a silly yarn——" Harry Wharton knitted his brows. "By gum! I'll boot him all over the Remove——"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob. "Did you leave him in the study?"

"I thought he was coming down——"

"Well, he hasn't! More likely poking his fat nose into that bundle I left in the study!" exclaimed Bob.

"Oh!" exclaimed Harry. "I'd forgotten that——"

"Bet you Bunter hadn't!" said Bob. "Come on! We'll catch him at it, and burst him all over the study!"

"The fat rotter!" growled the captain of the Remove, as he left the Rag with his chums. "So that was it? I never thought——"

"You seldom do, old chap! Come on."

"Fathead!"

The Famous Five hurried up the staircase.

As there was no news on the radio, it was evident that William George Bunter had had an object in pulling the leg of the captain of the Remove, and to fellows so well acquainted with Billy Bunter's manners and customs, the object was clear enough. They hurried up to the Remove passage, in the full expectation of finding Billy Bunter going strong, on the contents of that parcel of tuck.

But Study No. 1 was vacant when they entered it. On the table lay the bundle—in an unwrapped state! Bunter was not there—but evidently he had been there; he was gone, likewise the cake!

"By gum!" said Bob Cherry, staring at the bundle. "The fat burglar—he's snaffled the cake——"

"He can't have scoffed it yet!" said Johnny Bull. "After him!"

"You fellows can get after the fat frump," said Wharton. "I'd better take my lines down to Quelch! Why—what—where——"

He stared at the vacant spot on the table, where the stack of lines had laid! That spot was bare!

"What the thump——" he exclaimed in amazement.

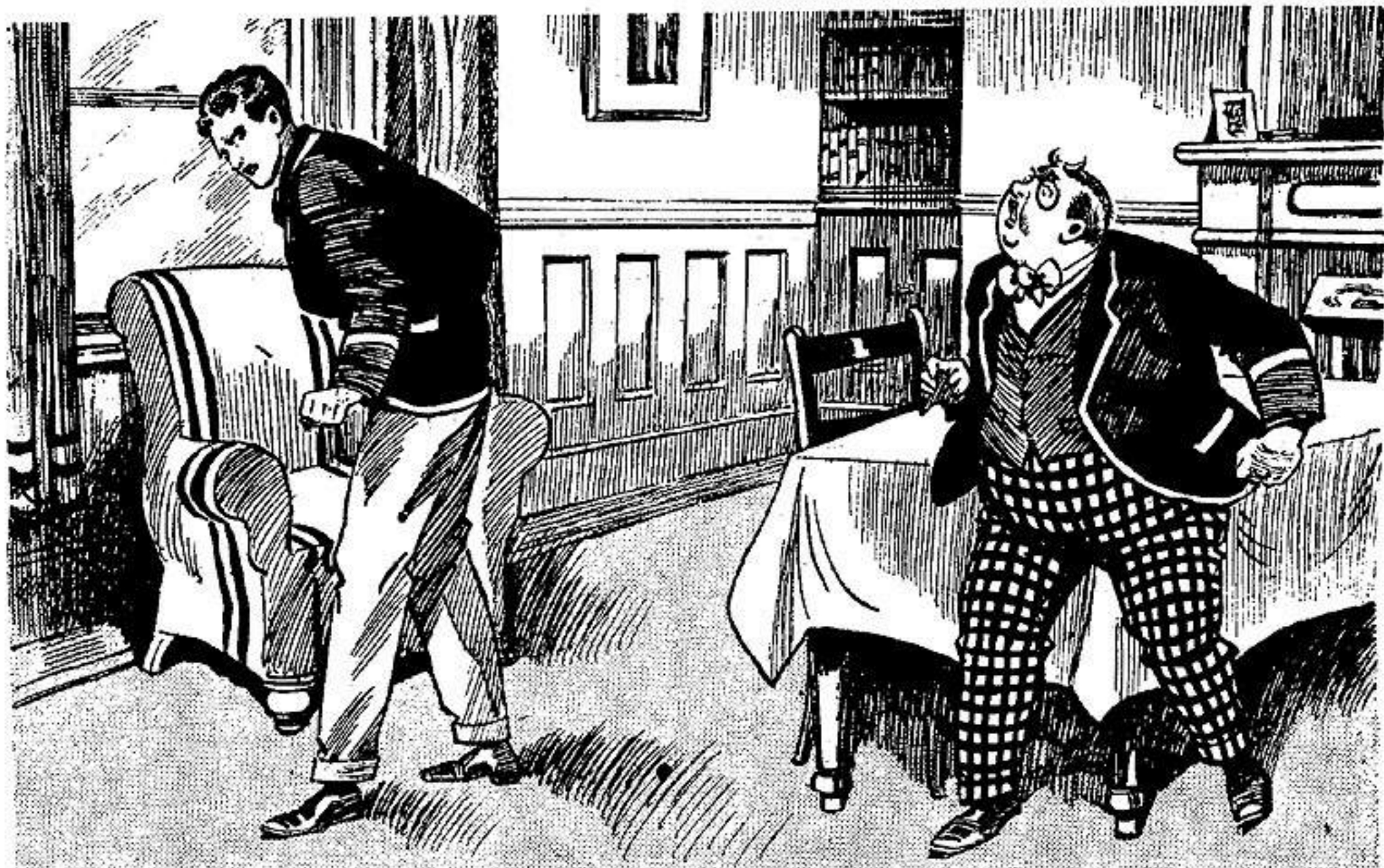
"What's up——"

"My lines!"

"What about your lines?" asked Bob. "They're not here!"

"Did you leave them there?"

"Of course I did, ass! I'd just finished them when that frowsy fat frump barged in and told me that yarn, and I ran down——"



"I can't let anybody see me speaking to a swab like you, Tracy," said Bunter. "Just a word every now and then on the quiet to cheer you up, what? To tell you the truth, old fellow, I'm expecting a postal order, and I'd be glad if you'd cash it for me now."

"The thumping ass! What has he taken the lines for, then; he can't eat an impot!" said Bob blankly. "He wants to scoff the cakes, but what the dickens does he want the lines for? Bunter's idea of a joke, perhaps."

"I'll give him joking with my lines, after I've slogged all the afternoon to get them done!" exclaimed Harry Wharton wrathfully. "By gun, I'll burst the fat foozler!"

He hurried out of the study, his thumbs following him.

A moment later he was wrenching at the door-handle of Study No. 7.

The door was locked inside.

"Bunter!" roared Wharton.

There was a sound from the interior of the study. It was a sound of munching. Evidently Bunter was there, and had the cake—whatever had become of the lines. But that sound of busy jaws ceased as the captain of the Remove shouted outside the door.

"Oh, is—is that you, Harry, old chap?" squeaked a fat voice from within. "I—I say, I—I can't open that door! It—it's got jammed!"

"You've scoffed that cake, you fat villain!" roared Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Let us in, you bloated burglar!"

"I—I can't! I—I'd open the door like a shot if—if I could; but—but it's jammed somehow!" gasped Bunter. "I may be able to get it open presently, old chap, if—if you specially want to see me."

"We specially want to see that cake!" howled Bob.

"What cake, old chap?"

"The one you've pinched from Wharton's study, you frowsy frog!"

"I haven't been in Wharton's study, old chap! This cake is one that I had from Bunter Court this morning. I mean, I haven't got a cake!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Bother the cake!" exclaimed Harry Wharton impatiently. "I want my

lines! Quelch will be expecting them in ten minutes from now. Bunter, you howling idiot, what have you taken my lines away for?"

"What lines?" gasped Bunter. "I haven't taken any lines. Wharrer you mean? What should I want to take your silly lines for? I never took anything but the cake—I mean, I never took anything at all. How could I, when I wasn't in the study?"

"You pernicious porpoise——"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Will you give me those lines?" roared the captain of the Remove. "Can't you understand, you idiot, that I've got to take them down to Quelch? He wants them by tea-time, you burbling blitherer, and it's just on tea-time. Give me that impot at once, you foozling freak! Hand out those lines, you fat frog!"

"I haven't——"

"If you've damaged them, I'll burst you all over the study! What have you taken them for at all?" shrieked Wharton.

"I tell you I haven't——"

"Open this door!"

"I—I can't till I find the key. I—I've dropped the key somewhere——"

"What have you locked the door for, you potty porpoise?"

"I mean, it ain't locked; it's jammed somehow——"

"If you don't let me in I'll burst the lock!" roared Wharton. "I've got to have those lines, you potty owl."

Five fellows thumped on the door and howled bloodcurdling threats through the keyhole. Within the study the sound of munching and gobbling was resumed.

Bunter certainly knew nothing about the missing lines; but he knew all about the missing cake! He was not going to let anybody into that study so long as a fragment of the cake remained. That cake was evidence against him, and Bunter was getting rid of the evidence as fast as he could—as fast, in fact, as

it would travel down his capacious gullet.

Other Remove fellows were coming up to tea now, and an interested and amused crowd gathered round to watch five excited juniors at Bunter's door.

"What's this game?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"What are you trying to burgle my study for?" inquired Peter Todd.

"That fat scoundrel's been raiding my study!" gasped Harry Wharton. "The potty ass has bagged my lines for some idiotic reason——"

"I haven't!" came a squeak from the study, muffled by cake. "I never saw your lines when I was in the study. I mean, I never went into your study. Why should I?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What on earth has Bunter pinched your lines for?" exclaimed the Bounder, in astonishment.

"Goodness knows, unless it's his idea of a joke! It's no joke for me if Quelch has to wait for them!" snapped Wharton.

"So you did the lines, after all?" grinned Skinner. "Didn't I hear something about a haughty bloke who wouldn't?"

Wharton gave him a look. He was in no temper for jeers from Skinner.

"You'd better shut up, Skinner!" he said savagely. "You're asking to have your cheeky nose pulled! Bunter, will you open this door?"

"I—I can't find the key, old chap! I—I think I shall be able to find it when I've finished this cake—I mean, I—I'm looking for it now. I'm looking everywhere——"

"Let me in, Bunter, you ass!" exclaimed Peter Todd. "Think you can lock me out of my study, you fat, footling frump?"

"W-w-wait a minute, Toddy! The door's jammed——"

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THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Not Bunter!

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "I mean, I'm looking for the key—"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 "I—I'll find it in a minute. I—I think it rolled under the table! I—I'm looking for it like anything—"
 "Will you hand out those lines?" howled Wharton.

"I haven't got any lines! Think I'm eating lines?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 "I'm not eating anything. I—I'm looking for that key. I—I—Grooogh! Oooogh! Urrrrrgh!"

There was a wild spluttering from Study No. 7. Some of the cake, disposed of in haste, seemed to have gone down the wrong way.

Gurgle, gurgle! Splutter, splutter!—came from the study, while the fellows in the passage roared with laughter.

Harry Wharton did not join in the laughter, however. The minutes were passing, and it was time to take the lines down to Mr. Quelch. But for Bunter's fatuous prank they would have been taken down already. The captain of the Remove banged angrily at the door.

"Open this door, you fat idiot!" he roared. "I'll burst you all over the study when I lay my hands on you!"

He did not doubt for a moment that Bunter had removed the lines. Bunter had been in the study, and, so far as he knew, no one else had.

And it was exactly one of Bunter's fat-headed tricks. Bunter had been known to hide Quelch's Form papers under the cushion in the seat of his armchair. He had once driven Fisher T. Fish positively frantic by hiding a banknote belonging to that transatlantic youth inside a book in Fishy's study. He had once snooped a watch-chain from Quelch's study, with the amusing idea of hiding it in Quelch's Sunday hat! This sort of thing seemed funny to Bunter, his idea of humour being worthy of his fat intellect!

Wharton had no doubt that Bunter had shifted those lines, and knew exactly where they were. And now that they were due to be handed in, it was possible that at any moment Quelch might come up to inquire after them. If they were not handed in on time it was more than likely that he would conclude that they had not been written—after what had occurred at the school gate that afternoon.

Having ground out that weary impot for the sake of avoiding a row with Quelch, Wharton was naturally exasperated at the idea of the row accruing all the same.

He banged savagely on the door of Study No. 7.

"Hand out those lines, you fat rotter!" he roared.

"I haven't got them, you silly ass!" howled back Bunter.

"Tell me where you've put them, then!"

"I haven't put them anywhere!"

"I left them in my study—"

"I expect they're there, if you did! Go and look for them!"

"I—I—I'll smash him!" gasped Wharton.

Gobble, gobble, gobble!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bang! Thump! Bang! Thump!

"Cave!" called out Squiff along the passage. "Here comes Quelch, old beau!"

And Harry Wharton, angry and excited as he was, ceased to bang on the door of Study No. 7, as Mr. Quelch rustled into the Remove passage. And Billy Bunter, in the study, bolted the last fragment of cake, and gasped for breath after his exertions.

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MR. QUELCH frowned.

He had heard rather a din in the Remove passage as he came up. However, it died away as he appeared, and the Remove master, with a severe glance at the crowd of juniors, stopped at Study No. 1.

Then, as he observed that Harry Wharton was among the crowd in the passage, he called to him.

"Wharton!"

Harry Wharton breathed hard. He did not need telling why Quelch was there.

"Yes, sir?" he answered.

"It is now past the time, Wharton, when your lines should have been handed in to me!" said Mr. Quelch sternly. "I require to know at once whether you have or have not written out your imposition!"

Quelch's face was severe, and it was plain that he was not in a placable mood. He had not, in fact, forgotten that little scene at the school gate—when he had stopped Wharton going out.

Wharton had been going out with his lines unwritten, regardless of the fact that they had to be handed in that day. Quelch had sent him back to the House to write them. He was not at all sure that that order had been obeyed—the lines, at all events, had not been handed in. And if that order had not been obeyed, Quelch was prepared to come down hard and heavy.

He had had plenty of trouble that term with Tracy, who set up as a rebel and mutineer, and almost openly gave his Form-master all the trouble he could. One mutineer in the Form was one too many! If Wharton was following Tracy's example, Quelch was the man to stop him.

Silence fell on the crowd in the Remove passage. It was unusual for Quelch to speak so sharply to his head boy. But Wharton had been in trouble with Quelch more than once that term already. Now it looked as if more trouble was coming.

Wharton's face was red with anger and vexation, and his eyes gleamed as he answered his Form-master.

"I've written the lines."

The answer was rather snapped than spoken, and some of the juniors expected to see the thunder darken in Quelch's brow. But, as a matter of fact, the Form-master's expression became less severe. If Wharton had written the lines there was no rebellious disrespect to deal with, and he could easily excuse a fellow for not having handed them in promptly to time.

"Very well, Wharton!" said Mr. Quelch, with unexpected mildness. "You should have brought them to me more than ten minutes ago, but if they are written, I will say no more about that. You may hand them to me now."

"I—I—" stammered Harry.

"If you have left them in your study, Wharton, you may fetch them at once," said Mr. Quelch, looking at him in surprise. "Please do not waste my time!"

"They're not in my study, sir."

"Well, well, give them to me at once."

"I—I've got to get them, sir!" stammered Harry. "A silly ass—I mean, a fellow has moved them for a silly joke! I've just been asking him for them!"

"Indeed!" Mr. Quelch's face was grim again. "If any boy here has been so foolish as to take away Wharton's

imposition—" His gimlet eye gleamed over the silent crowd.

"It was not one of the fellows here, sir!"

"Then who was it?" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Where is the boy, and where are the lines?"

"I say, you fellows," came a fat squeak from Study No. 7—"I say, I've finished the cake—I mean, I—I've found the key! I say, I'll let you in, if you like, if you ain't going to kick up a row! I say, Toddy, you won't let them kick up a row in this study, will you—making out I had their cake, you know?"

No one answered Bunter. Clearly, the fat junior was not aware that his Form-master had arrived on the scene. Every word in the general silence reached Mr. Quelch's ears.

He came along the passage, the juniors making way for him, and tapped sharply at the door of Study No. 7.

"Go away, you beast!" came from within. "I ain't letting you in unless you make it pax! I never had the cake, and as for the lines—"

"Bunter!"

"Oh crikey!"

Bunter was heard to gasp at the unexpected sound of his Form-master's voice.

"Is this door locked, Bunter?"

"Oh! No! Yes!" stuttered Bunter. "It—it jammed, sir—I mean, I jammed the key—that is, I dropped it, sir, and it rolled under the jam—I mean under the table—"

"Open this door instantly!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

The door opened at once. Billy Bunter might have argued a long time with the Famous Five, but he was not disposed to argue with Henry Samuel Quelch. The door flew open, and Bunter's fat scared face appeared in view.

The "evidence" against Bunter had disappeared—down his fat neck! But there was a sea of crumbs trickling down his fat waistcoat, which was as much evidence as the Famous Five would have wanted—had they wanted any!

But they were not thinking about the cake now. The missing impot was the urgent matter. It was not difficult to see that there was a doubt in Quelch's mind. The sooner that wretched impot was shown up, the better.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!" said Harry, through his closed lips.

"Your lines, if written, must be handed to me at once!"

"I have said that they were written, sir," said Harry Wharton, very distinctly. "I cannot hand them to you till the fellow who took them away gives them back to me."

"If you are alluding to Bunter—"

"I—I never—"

"You state, Wharton, that your lines are written, and have been removed by another boy. I gather, from what I have heard, that you allude to Bunter. Is that the case or not?"

"Yes, sir!" said Harry. "It was a silly trick, and no harm done."

"Never mind that! Bunter, if you have played a foolish practical joke on Wharton—"

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I never! I wouldn't!"

"Have you taken Wharton's lines from his study?"

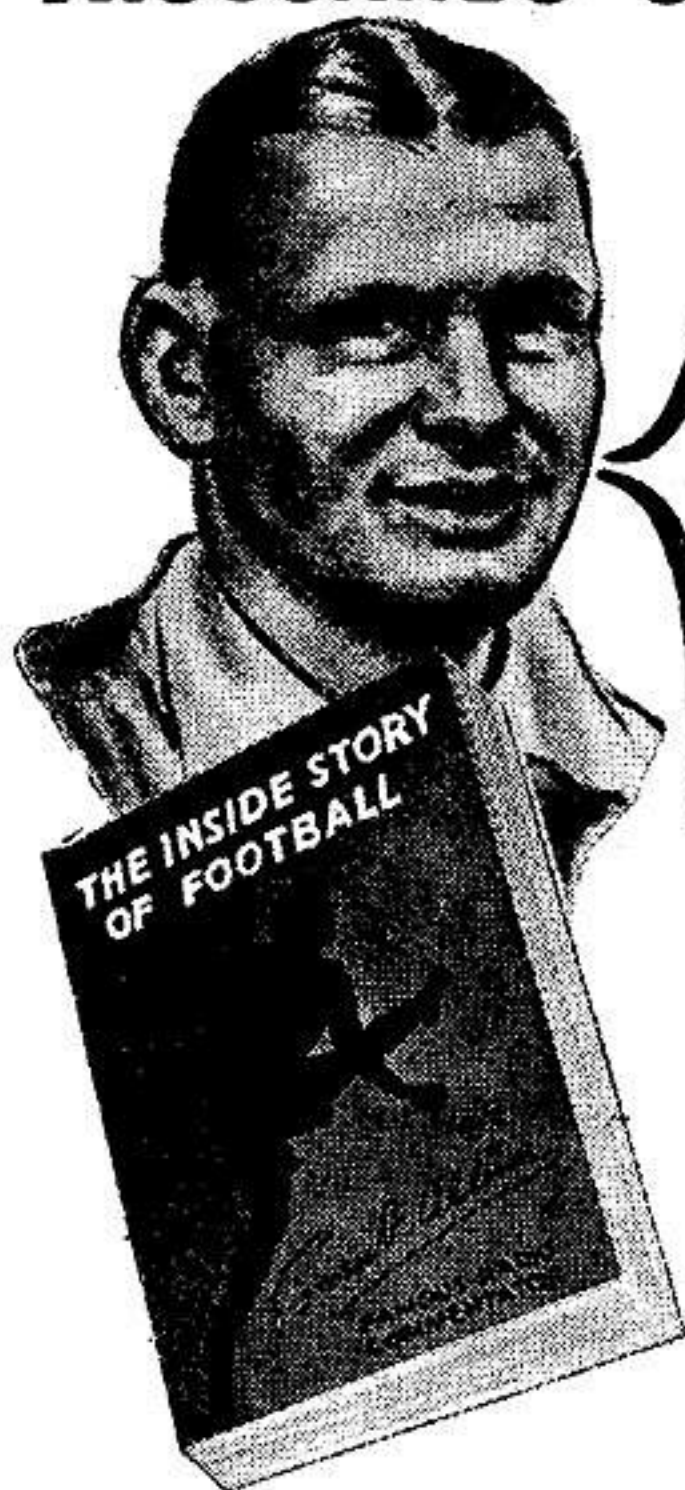
"No, sir!"

"Bunter, you ass—" breathed Bob.

"You need not speak, Cherry!"

(Continued on page 12.)

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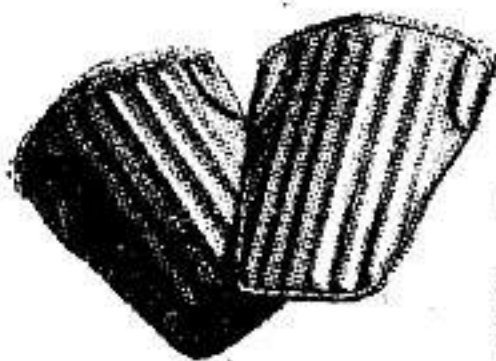
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Bunter, if you have removed the lines, I will excuse you for having played so foolish a trick, if you produce them at once!"

"I—I haven't, sir!" wailed Bunter. "I never saw the lines! Why should I take away a fellow's lines? I never—"

"Will you hand them over, Bunter?" said Harry, in a quiet and bitter voice. "Can't you see that you're making Mr. Quelch fancy that I never wrote them at all?"

"I'd hand them over if I had them, old chap! But I never had the lines, any more than I had the cake!"

Wharton breathed hard. That Bunter had been in the study during his brief absence and taken the cake from the bundle was assured. He could not doubt that he had taken the lines also, but was too terrified by Quelch's frowning brow to admit it. If he persisted in denying it, matters looked like being very awkward for the captain of the Remove!

Quelch's face was growing grimmer and grimmer.

Bunter was the most untruthful fellow in the Remove; indeed, in the wide world. Truth and Bunter had always been strangers. Nevertheless, Mr. Quelch had little doubt that he was telling the truth about those lines—as, indeed, he was!

"Have you been in Wharton's study at all, Bunter?" he asked.

"No, sir!" answered Bunter promptly.

"Wharton! If you had finished your lines, why did you not bring them to me without delay?"

"I was called away from the study, sir! I came back in little more than five minutes, and the lines were gone."

"It wasn't me, sir!" said Billy Bunter. "I—I never touched the lines—never even saw them!"

"Then you were in the study, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir! It's all a mistake about the cake!" groaned Bunter. "If there's a cake gone from that bundle, that Bob left in the study, I know nothing about it, sir—absolutely nothing. I—I think very likely Bob left it in the shop. There was no cake in that bundle when I looked—and—and—and I left it there all right when I went away, sir!"

"You admit that you were in the study during Wharton's absence, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir! I—I was downstairs at the time—I—I mean, I—I was in my study, and—and I couldn't get out because the key had rolled under the jam—I mean, the jam had rolled under the key—I—I mean, the—the door had jammed under the table—" Bunter was getting a little confused.

"It appears," said Mr. Quelch sternly, "that you entered Wharton's study and purloined a cake, Bunter!"

"Oh, no, sir! I never had the cake—I—I haven't tasted cake this term, sir!"

"You are covered with cake crumbs at this moment, Bunter!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Oh lor! I—I mean—"

"Bunter, tell me the truth at this instant! A single word more of prevarication, and I shall report you to the headmaster for a flogging!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Now, tell me at once what you took from Wharton's study."

"I—I—I had the—the cake, sir!" groaned Bunter. "I—I knew the—the fellows wouldn't mind, sir, being pals. And—and, besides, I'm going to stand them another cake when my postal order comes—"

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"Did you remove Wharton's lines or not?"

"No, sir!"

Mr. Quelch gave him a searching look. But it was clear—to his eyes, at least—that that much was true. Bunter was too scared to roll out any more fibs. And most of the fellows in the passage had the same impression. Bunter, after all, while fool enough to play any foolish trick, was not the fellow to land another fellow in a row with a beak. Most of the juniors believed that if he had had the lines he would have produced them when matters had reached this point.

The Remove master turned to Wharton.

"What do you say now, Wharton?" he asked coldly.

"Only what I've said before," answered Harry. "The lines have been taken from my study, and I don't see how they can have been taken by any fellow but Bunter."

"I believe Bunter's statement that he did not take the lines, Wharton."

"You may please yourself about that, of course, sir," said Wharton with icy coolness.

Mr. Quelch's eyes glinted.

"You repeat your assertion that you had written the lines, Wharton, which you say have disappeared from your study?"

"I will repeat it as often as you wish, sir—a dozen times if you like," said Wharton in the same tone.

The Remove master breathed very hard.

"I warn you not to be impertinent, Wharton! If your statement is correct, the lines can be found. You do not, I presume, accuse Bunter of having destroyed them?"

"Of course not! Bunter's only a fool!" said Harry.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Very well," said Mr. Quelch. "The lines, if in existence, can be found. I shall allow you an hour to find them, Wharton. If they are not brought to my study by that time, your imposition is doubled, and you will hand me a thousand lines by next Wednesday."

Harry Wharton's eyes flashed.

His lips opened for angry words; but Frank Nugent caught him by the arm. He choked back his anger and stood silent. Mr. Quelch gave him a grim look and rustled away. And there was a deep breath among the Removes as Quelch's mortar-board disappeared down the staircase.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

All Right For Gilbert!

GILBERT TRACY, sitting at tea in Hall, smiled.

Other Remove fellows had come in to tea, and there was a buzz among them over some exciting topic.

Not one of them spoke a word to Tracy; he was in Coventry and ignored by all Remove fellows; but he heard their talk, and it made him smile.

The fellow who was down on him, who barred him from Remove football, who was the leader in making him an outcast in his Form, was up against it—enjoying life just then probably less than Gilbert.

There was satisfaction in that knowledge to the outcast of Greyfriars.

Squiff, Wibley, Kipps, Tom Brown, Hazeldene, and three or four other fellows were talking, all on the same topic. Wharton, who had as good as said that he would not hand in that

impot, had not handed it in. He made out to Quelch that he had written it, and that Bunter had taken it away for an idiotic practical joke. Quelch did not believe him—and the juniors had strong doubts.

It amused Gilbert.

It had not occurred to him at first that Wharton's suspicions would fall on any other fellow. He had rather expected that the captain of the Remove would think of him first of all—especially as he had, earlier in the term, played a similar trick; though on that occasion Wharton had caught him at it, and no harm had been done, after all.

Certainly he had taken care this time to cover his tracks. No one but Bunter had been in the Remove quarters when Gilbert came in; the whole crowd of Removes had been gathered in the Rag, round Tom Brown's wireless, to hear the news. Gilbert had been hardly more than two minutes in the study, and, leaving it, he had hurried at once down to Hall, to be safely out of sight when the discovery was made.

No one had seen him in the Remove quarters, unless Bunter had noticed him—and he was fairly sure that the short-sighted Owl had not.

If Wharton jumped to the conclusion that his enemy's hand had been at work again, he had not a jot or tittle of proof, and he could think what he liked and say what he liked; the cheery Gilbert did not care a straw.

But, as he learned now, Wharton had not jumped to that conclusion—but to quite another!

Utterly unaware that Tracy had been anywhere near the study—or in the House at all—and aware that Bunter had been in the study, pilfering the cake, the captain of the Remove put his loss down to Bunter.

It was natural enough—indeed, inevitable. What else was Wharton to think, in the circumstances? It was quite amusing to the schemer of the Remove.

He was feeling quite bucked as he left the table and strolled out of Hall. He went along to the Rag, where a crowd of Remove fellows had gathered after tea. A fat squeak was heard as he entered.

"I tell you I never—"

Gilbert grinned as he walked in. No one took any heed of the fellow who was in Coventry; moreover, the general attention was fixed on the captain of the Remove and Billy Bunter.

"You blithering, blethering, blighted bloater!" said Wharton. "Can't you see that you're landing me in a fearful row? You can't help being a fool, but you can help being a rotten rascal!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"For goodness' sake, Bunter, cough up that impot if you've stuck it somewhere!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Boot him till he coughs it up!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Time's nearly up, Bunter!" said Frank Nugent. "Quelch said an hour, and it's just on an hour now. You don't want to land Wharton into a row with Quelch."

"Of course I don't!" wailed Bunter. "If I had the beastly lines I'd hand them over! I never touched them!"

"That's rot!"

"Terrific and preposterous rot, my esteemed fibbing Bunter," said Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh. "For the love of esteemed Mike, cough up those lines!"

"Oh, really, Inky—"

"Blessed if I can make the fat fool out!" said Harry Wharton. "It's like

him to play any fatheaded trick, but not to get a fellow in a row. What are you doing this for, Bunter?"

"I ain't!" wailed Bunter. "I had the cake—I've told you I had the cake. I'm going to stand you another when my postal order comes; I'm expecting it to-morrow morning—"

"Never mind the cake! We'll say nothing more about the cake if you let Wharton have his lines," said Bob.

"So I would if I had them. Think I'd play a rotten trick on a chap?" exclaimed Bunter. "Why should I? Have I ever done anything of the kind? I ask you!"

"Lots of times, you blithering idiot! You had a banknote of Fishy's once, and he nearly had a fit—"

"Well, that was only Fishy, and it was to give him a lesson about being so jolly mean—"

"You hid Quelch's Form papers—"

"Well, that was because the beast caned me for nothing, making out that I was eating toffee in class! I told him I wasn't, and that I hadn't any toffee; and he made me hand over the toffee, and—"

"You blithering Owl, cough up those lines before it's too late!" said Harry Wharton. "Mind, I'm going to boot you if you don't! I'm not going to have Quelch down on me because you haven't as much sense as a bunny rabbit."

"I never—"

Harry Wharton breathed hard.

"You can hand over that impot before you're booted or after!" he said. "I've got to take it to Quelch in five minutes more, or have it doubled. Now, then—"

"I say, you fellows, you keep him off!" howled Bunter. "I say, Toddy, you know I never had the lines, don't you?"

"Blessed if I know what to think!" said Peter Todd. "You're such a fearful fabricator—"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Were there any lines at all?" asked Skinner, with a wink at the Bounder, who grinned.

Harry Wharton turned on Skinner with a gleam in his eyes.

"What do you mean by that, Skinner?" he asked, between his teeth. "I've said that I wrote the lines—every one of them—and that they were taken from my study when Bunter made me come down here for nothing, and—"

"Well, I've heard Bunter tell Quelch that he'd done lines, and that they blew out of the study window!" said Skinner airily. "Nobody seems to have seen your lines, as far as I can make out."

"I say, you fellows, I don't believe Wharton did those lines at all!" squeaked Billy Bunter, taking his cue from Skinner. "He jolly well never did them, and he's making out I snoopied them, just to spoof old Quelch! I say, you fellows, ain't that jolly mean?"

"You fat idiot!" roared Harry Wharton, red with anger. "You know that you shifted the lines from my study."

"I know I didn't! You never did them!" roared back Bunter. "If you did they'd be in your study now. You ain't going to put it on me."

Harry Wharton, with gleaming eyes, made a stride at the fat junior. He had been patient with Bunter—very patient—because he hesitated to use drastic measures with a fat and helpless duffer who had no chance in a scrap. But patience was exhausted now.

Bunter, he was assured, had taken

that impot, for a fatuous practical joke, and was ass enough to keep it up, now that the matter had become serious.

Bunter had to hand it over!

He grasped the fat Owl by the collar. Bunter roared and wriggled.

"I say, you fellows—ow! I say—yow!"

"Tell me where those lines are, you blithering owl!" said Harry. "I'll boot you all round the room if you don't!"

"Yow-ow! Leggo! Rescue!" yelled Bunter.

"Last time of asking—"

"Yarooop! Leggo!"

"Hold on, old chap!" exclaimed Bob Cherry hastily. He caught Wharton by the arm. "You can't be certain—"

"Don't be an ass! You know he had the lines!" snapped Wharton.

"I never—" yelled Bunter.

"Well, I'm blessed if I can make it out," said Bob. "Even Bunter's got sense enough to hand the lines over, if he had them, now. Something else may have happened to them—"

"What else, you fathead?"

"I never—"

Loder of the Sixth put his head into the Rag.

"Wharton there?" he called out.

The captain of the Remove released Bunter's collar; and the fat Owl jumped away at once.

Wharton turned to the prefect.

"I'm here! What's wanted?"

"You are!" exclaimed Loder. "Go to your Form-master's study at once. Quelch wants you."

Wharton drew a deep breath. Time was up, and as he had not appeared with the impot Mr. Quelch had sent for him. In silence, with a grim, set face, he left the Rag and made his way to his Form-master's study.

Gilbert Tracy watched him as he went, with a lurking grin on his face. The juniors were left in a buzz—the Co. puzzled and worried; but it was, at all events, all right for Gilbert! Gilbert was getting his own back, which was a consolation for the cold and chilly shades of Coventry.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

No Surrender!

"A. R.P.!" said Bob Cherry.

"But—"

"Come on!" said Harry Wharton.

"But—" said Frank Nugent.

"Never mind the buts! Let's get going."

It was after class, on Monday.

Class was over early that day, to allow a special hour for A.R.P. drill. But four members of the famous Co. were thinking less of A.R.P. just then than of the scrape their chum was in.

Four members of the Co. were anxious to see their leader begin on that dismal impot, which had to be written over again—doubled! Wednesday was the time limit for the thousand lines to be handed in, and it was clear that such a tremendous task was certain to occupy every leisure hour. Wharton, so far, had not touched it. He had stated quietly that he was not going to.

This time there was no mistake about the matter. The captain of the Remove had made his meaning quite clear. Come what might, he was not going to write those lines! That was fixed, in his mind, and as immutable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Which was more than enough to worry his chums.

"Look here, old man," said Bob. "I know it's tough! But it can't be helped. Quelch has got his back up—"

"He can keep it up!"

"You can get off A.R.P., and put in the hour at the lines!" urged Bob.

"I'm not going to touch the lines."

"My esteemed chum—" urged Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh earnestly.

Harry Wharton looked round at four clouded faces. His friends were advising him for his own good; he was aware of that. But his mind was made up. There was a spot of obstinacy in his nature—and it was fully roused now.

"No good talking, you fellows!" he said quietly. "I've said that I won't do the lines, and that's that! I had a jolly good mind not to do them, in the first place, but I did them! Is it my fault that that fat idiot took them from my study after I'd done them?"

"That's all very well," said Johnny Bull slowly. "But if a fellow doesn't hand in an impot he can say anything—and there's plenty of fellows would spin a yarn like that if they could get by with it."

"If that means that you don't take my word about it, Bull—"

"Don't be an ass. You know I do!" grunted Johnny gruffly. "But it's different with a beak. A beak wants his dashed lines, and it's no good telling him that something's happened to them after they were written."

"If Quelch can't take my word he can do the other thing. If he fancies that I'd tell him lies about it, like Bunter, let him!" said Wharton bitterly. "Bunter may cough up that impot before Wednesday. I can't understand the fat fool keeping it back like this, unless something's happened to it. I shall not write it over again—not a line!"

"It means an awful row!" said Bob.

"I know!"

"I mean, it will be a report to the Head—"

"I know!" repeated Wharton.

"And a flogging in Hall, most likely," urged Bob. "It's not worth it, old chap!"

"If it was the sack, I would say the same. I will not write a single line of that thousand!" said Wharton, quietly and distinctly. "Quelch may do as he pleases—"

"Look here, old chap—"

"Come on, we shall be late for A.R.P."

And Harry Wharton settled the matter by walking out of the House, and his friends followed him slowly.

That evening, after prep in Study No. 1, Frank Nugent made an attempt to raise the matter again. But Wharton went down immediately after prep, and in the Rag he was the cynosure of all eyes.

Hitherto, Gilbert Tracy had had the distinction, such as it was, of being the rebel of the Remove, the fellow who had the "neck" to set up a feud with his Form-master. But Tracy was taking a back seat now. That rather invidious distinction was now Harry Wharton's.

What had become of the missing impot was a mystery. Wharton's own friends took his word, without question, that he had written it. Some of them, indeed, had seen it partly written, whether he had finished it or not.

But there were other fellows who doubted whether he had written it at all, and whether his contention that the fat Owl had "lifted" it was not "spoof" from beginning to end.

Bunter had been in the study when it went—if it had gone. But had it? Bunter was fool enough to play any idiotic trick; but was he fool enough, and rascal enough, to keep up a silly joke to the extent of landing a fellow in

(Continued on page 16.)

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SAVED by his ENEMY!



(Continued from page 13.)

a fearful row? Few fellows believed that he was.

It was known that Mr. Quelch had sent for Bunter to his study and questioned him again on the subject. It was known that he was satisfied that Bunter knew nothing about the lines.

That was good enough for most of the juniors. Obviously, Quelch desired to be just; he had made the closest possible investigation into Wharton's statement that Bunter had taken away that impot.

Moreover, if Bunter had taken that impot, where was it? Even Wharton did not suppose that the fat Owl had destroyed it, though he thought it possible that some accident might have happened to it, in Bunter's hands. Search had been made for it by the Co. in almost every likely and unlikely place. Not a sign of it was to be discovered.

"Stickin' to it, old bean?" asked the Bounder, with a grin, as Harry Wharton came into the Rag. "Defyin' old Quelch and all his jolly old works—what?"

"Exactly!" assented Wharton.

"I wouldn't, if I were you," said Vernon-Smith.

"You're not me, Smithy!"

"Quite—not such a howlin' ass!" agreed Smithy. "If I wanted to rag a beak, old man, I'd choose safer ground!"

Wharton's answer to that was a shrug of the shoulders.

Lord Mauleverer came over to the captain of the Remove with an unusually serious expression on his amiable face.

"Like a word of advice, old tulip?" he murmured.

"Thanks, no!"

"I'll push it across, all the same," said Mauly. "Look here, old man, take a friend's tip, and squeeze out those dashed lines—what!"

"Never!"

Mauly sighed and returned to his armchair. Before dawn there was a warm argument among the Famous Five, but it left the matter where it stood.

Skinner told his friends that the great panjandrum would alter his tune on the morrow. More good-natured fellows than Skinner hoped that he would, anyhow. But on Tuesday not a line of that doubled impot was written. And on Wednesday morning there was keen excitement in the Remove on the subject.

That afternoon was a half-holiday, and there was yet time for the captain of the Remove to give in, and scrape through. After dinner that day the Co. gathered round him to urge him to toe the line. What would be the outcome of open defiance of the Remove master they hardly knew, but the very least was a Head's flogging in Hall! It might, indeed, be the sack! But the captain of the Remove was adamant.

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"Footer this afternoon," he said. "Forgotten that we're playing the Fourth?"

"Never mind that," said Bob Cherry. "We'll beat the Fourth all right while you're doing your lines."

"Don't be an ass, old chap!"

"There's an ass here, and a silly ass," growled Johnny Bull. "But it isn't Bob! For goodness' sake, Wharton—"

"Time we got to the changing-room," said Harry.

Mr. Quelch, looking from his study window that afternoon, had a view of a junior football match in the distance, with Harry Wharton playing in the ranks of the Remove. And Quelch's face set hard.

He had had trouble enough—more than enough—with one rebel in his Form that term, and if Harry Wharton was following in the footsteps of Gilbert Tracy, Harry Wharton was going to be dealt with with the same grim severity as Tracy. Quelch was not the man to have two weights and two measures in dealing with his Form. If he did not receive a thousand lines from Harry Wharton by five o'clock, his once trusted head boy was going to take the consequences—and the consequences were going to be exceedingly drastic.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Down On His Luck!

MARJORIE HAZELDEN E glanced curiously at the Greyfriars junior, lounging by the stile, as she came along the footpath through Friardale Wood.

Marjorie was walking over to Greyfriars to see her brother Hazel, and at sight of a Greyfriars cap by the stile in the lane, she fancied for a moment that it was Hazel come to meet her on the way. But at the second glance she saw that it was the junior who had helped her rescue Bessie Bunter on the cliff path the previous Saturday.

Tracy did not look up, or look round as she came. He did not hear her footsteps on the thick, fallen leaves on the footpath, and did not see her coming.

He was leaning on the stile, one arm resting on it, quite unaware that any eyes were upon him, and his look and his attitude told of deep dejection and despondency. His face was darkly clouded, his eyes on the ground.

Coventry was growing more and more irksome to the outcast of the Remove. At first he had cared little; but that had soon passed. He cared a good deal, after a short time, and as the days passed he cared more and more. And, somewhat to his own surprise, he did not find so much satisfaction as he had expected in getting his own back on the captain of the Remove.

That, at all events, he was doing, more than he could have hoped. His enemy was as good as playing into his hands, for Harry Wharton's defiance of his Form-master's order was certain to have serious consequences for him—it was even possible that he might have to leave Greyfriars. That should have been a sheer satisfaction to the schemer who had so thoroughly succeeded in his schemes; but somehow it seemed to leave a bitter taste in his mouth.

He was dissatisfied with himself, dissatisfied with everybody and everything, and, as a sort of finishing touch, the Remove fellows had been turning out to play football when he went out of gates. He had watched them for a time, from a distance, before he slouched away. He was keen on

Soccer—there was little he would not have given to join up with the footballers. But he was barred from that, as from everything else. And savagely bitter as he felt, he knew at the bottom of his heart that the fault was his own.

He had had chances—plenty of them—and he had thrown them away, one after another. Even Wharton, whom he regarded as his enemy, had welcomed him into the Remove eleven in his first days at Greyfriars. He had been turned out for foul play. Whose fault was that?

Now that it was too late, Gilbert was realising how differently things might have gone.

He was at the school against his will. There was no help for that, but he could have made the best of it, instead of the worst—and he had made the very worst. Nothing remained to him but malicious vengeance on fellows who barred him, and that, somehow, seemed to have lost its savour. At the present moment he was sunk in utter despondency, and Marjorie Hazeldene, as she read the expression on his face, felt a pang. If ever a fellow looked as if he was down and out, Gilbert Tracy did at that moment.

Up to a few days ago, Marjorie had known nothing of him but his name. Her brother had mentioned to her that there was a new fellow in the Form named Tracy, who was a wonderful footballer. That was all. But she knew more now—since what had happened on Saturday afternoon.

Tracy had come to her help. He had shared her danger of being dragged over the cliff in helping Bessie Bunter. She had not forgotten that, and was not likely to forget it. She had a kind and friendly feeling for the fellow who, in his Form at Greyfriars, was regarded as a rank outsider, and barred by the whole Form.

She came on, and had almost reached the stile, when Tracy suddenly saw her.

He straightened up at once, with a flush in his cheeks. He raised his cap, and Marjorie gave him a smile.

"Miss Hazeldene!" he exclaimed. His face brightened. He was glad to see Hazel's sister. Indeed, he would have been glad to see anyone to whom he could have spoken, without receiving a stony stare by way of reply. "I say, I'm glad to see you again!"

"And I am glad to see you," said Marjorie. "I have not forgotten how you helped me on Saturday. But for you, I don't know what might have happened."

"Jolly glad I came along!" said Tracy. "You're going to Greyfriars?"

"Yes; I have a brother there, you know."

"Mind if I walk part of the way?"

"All the way, if you like," answered Marjorie, smiling. "I dare say we shall meet Hazel on the way. He was coming to meet me."

"Oh!" said Tracy. His colour deepened. "In that case, I—I'd better not come."

"Why not?" asked Marjorie. "You're not on bad terms with my brother, are you?"

"Oh, no—not specially! But—but," Gilbert stammered—"but, you see, I—I—" He broke off, in confusion, under Marjorie's clear eyes. "I—I suppose you'll hear all about it if you're going to Greyfriars."

"All about what?"

"Oh, I'm in a row with my Form!" said Gilbert. "Your brother won't speak to me if we meet him. All right, I'll sheer off as soon as we spot him."

He walked up Friardale Lane by Marjorie's side in silence.

Marjorie glanced at him several

times. She was concerned about him. She had not forgotten his look of dismal despondency when she had sighted him at the stile. Now he had told her that he was in a row with his Form.

"I expect your brother will tell you," said Gilbert, breaking his silence. "I've been sent to Coventry, see?"

"But why?" asked Marjorie. "I am sure that you have done nothing to deserve that."

"Oh," said Gilbert, "don't you think so?"

"But you haven't!"

"Well, I—I suppose I have," said Gilbert slowly. "All the fellows think I deserve it, and more. Wharton's a friend of yours, isn't he?"

"Yes," said Marjorie.

"Well, he's done it, chiefly."

"Oh!" said Marjorie, rather blankly. Gilbert gave a rather unpleasant laugh.

"Now you know that, you think I've got what I've asked for," he said, with a sneer. "All right."

"But why?" asked Marjorie. She paused. "I've only seen you once before, but then you acted kindly, and bravely, too. I should have thought you would have plenty of friends in your Form. Is there some misunderstanding?"

"None at all," said Gilbert. "I suppose I did ask for it, really, though I—I never saw it as the other fellows did. You see, Wharton's captain of the Form, and he barred me out of the football."

"But why, when you are so good a player?" asked Marjorie. "I don't understand that."

Gilbert walked on in silence for a minute or two. Somehow or other, he had been satisfied with his own line of conduct. He had never seen himself as others saw him. But justifying it to someone else was a different matter. There was something so kind and friendly in Marjorie's frank face that he would have been glad to justify himself, if he could. She had a good opinion of him—the only person, probably, who had—and he would have liked her to keep it. But—

"I—I—I suppose I did ask for it in—in a way!" he stammered at last. "If you ask your brother, Miss Hazeldene, he will tell you that I'm a fellow not to be touched with a barge-pole."

"Nonsense!" said Marjorie.

"So will your friends—Wharton, and Nugent, and Cherry, and the rest!" said Gilbert moodily. "I've got all their backs up."

"But what have you done?" asked Marjorie, in astonishment.

"Oh, lots of things—rotten things, I dare say! I rather wish I hadn't now, but it's a bit too late to think of that."

"It is never too late to think of doing right, if one has done wrong!" said Marjorie quietly.

Gilbert did not answer that. If he had got as far as regretting that he had done wrong, he had not quite got so far as to feel any special urge for doing right! He did not speak again till a junior in a Greyfriars cap appeared in sight, coming from the direction of the school. Then he halted with a flush in his face.

"There's your brother coming—I won't wait for him to cut me!" said Gilbert. "I'm awfully glad to have met you, Miss Hazeldene—you've done me good."

"But—" said Marjorie, puzzled and distressed.

"Good-bye!" said Gilbert.

He raised his cap and walked away as Hazeldene came up.

Hazel stared after him as he disappeared.

"Has that cad had the cheek to speak to you, Marjorie?" asked Hazel, frowning, as he joined his sister.

"Is he a cad?" asked Marjorie mildly.

"Yes, rather—the absolute limit!" said Hazel. "We bar him in the Remove—he's in Coventry! But, I say, Wharton's in a fearful row—"

"Harry—"

"Yes; right up to the neck! Like to hear about it?"

Marjorie was feeling a kind and friendly interest in the fellow who was so deeply down on his luck. But, at Hazel's words, Tracy was dismissed from her mind. The topic was Harry Wharton and his row with his Form-master, as she walked on to Greyfriars with her brother.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

By Whose Hand?

"HAZEL'S told you?"

"Yes!"

Harry Wharton coloured uncomfortably.

"I wish he hadn't!" he muttered.

Marjorie had watched the finish of the football match. But she was not thinking much of Soccer. She was thinking of Harry Wharton, and the scrape into which his pride and passionate temper had hurried him. Hazel, who seemed rather amused by the state of affairs, had given her a full account, and Marjorie was listening to him when the game ended, and the juniors went to the changing-room. Now she was speaking to the captain of the Remove—in the hope that it was not too late for a gentle and tactful word of advice to be of service.

"Nothing to bother about, Marjorie," said Harry. "It will be all right!"

"Do you mean that you wish me to mind my own business?" asked Marjorie, with a faint smile.

"Of course not!" said Harry hastily.

"But I suppose you think I've been rather a fool—"

"I think you've been rather hasty. Is it too late—"

"Lots too late! I've got to see Quelch at five. No time left if I changed my mind. And—I haven't."

"If you could find those lines, Mr. Quelch would have to believe, then, that they had been written, and that might make it all right."

"Yes; but they can't be found! That fat ass has hidden them somewhere and forgotten where, I suppose, or else something else happened to them, and he dare not say so. He's fool enough for anything."

"You're sure it was Bunter?"

"Oh, yes; there's no doubt about that! You see, I shouldn't have left them in the study at all, only that fat ass came and spoofed me into going down. I wasn't gone six or seven minutes, and he was in the study, pinching a cake. It was just like him to hide the lines for a fatheaded joke—he's done lots of things like that before."

"Yes, but it isn't like him to keep them hidden when you are in trouble with your Form-master about it," said Marjorie.

"No; I suppose he must have lost them, or something—or shoved them where he can't find them again, bother him!"

"If it was someone else—"

"Nobody else is fool enough," said

Harry. "Besides, he was there, and nobody else was. All the fellows were in the Rag—Browney was trying to get news through on his wireless, you know, and there was a rumour of something happening, and they wanted to hear the news. That fat ass told me there was war news, so I cut down. And then I—"

"Bunter is stupid, but he is not ill-natured," said Marjorie. "Are you quite sure that no one else could have taken the lines?"

"Quite! I tell you I was gone only six or seven minutes, and he was there while I was gone."

"But if he stayed only a minute or two in the study—" said Marjorie slowly. "You see what I mean, Harry—if it was, after all, someone else, you have been on the wrong track; and there still might be a chance of finding the lines, if you know who it was."

"Yes; but it was Bunter. I tell you he's played potty tricks like that before, lots of times."

"Has no one else?"

"Not that I know of—nobody else in the Remove is such a fool! Nobody else has ever—" Harry Wharton broke off suddenly with a startled exclamation. "Oh, Tracy!"

"Tracy!" repeated Marjorie, with a start.

"That cur!" said Harry, with a gleam in his eyes. "Weeks ago, I remember, he played a trick like that—not a silly trick like Bunter, but a rotten, malicious trick! He pinched my lines from Quelch's study, only I got after him and got them back before he could do anything with them!"

"Oh!" breathed Marjorie.

"But—but he wasn't on the spot," said Harry. "I know he had gone out that afternoon—so far as I know he hadn't come in."

"If he had, would he be likely to go into your study for anything?"

"Oh, yes! You see, it's his study, too!"

"Oh!" said Marjorie again.

Harry Wharton's brow was knitted. So far, he had not entertained a doubt that it was Billy Bunter who had played a fatuous trick with the missing impot. But there was a new train of thought in his mind now.

He set his lips.

"It's possible!" he muttered. "I know that fool Bunter was in the study, but it was the cake he was after. I know he never stayed long—he bagged the cake and locked himself in his own study while he scoffed it. My study may have been empty for five minutes, for all I know."

He breathed hard.

"If that rat happened to come in just then he would go to the study—I know he never came into the Rag. He might have—and then he would see my lines lying on the table—"

"You think he—he would have—" faltered Marjorie. She could not "square" this idea of Tracy, with her idea of the fellow who had helped her on the cliff path. "Do you really think he is capable—"

Harry Wharton laughed scornfully.

"Oh, yes; that, and worse! I tell you he pinched my lines once, in Quelch's study—I should have got into an awful row then if I hadn't spotted him and got them back. He's been sent to Coventry for playing worse tricks than that! This very trouble started through that cur locking me in the Form-room to keep me away from a football match at Highcliffe. If he had the chance—"

Wharton clenched his hands.

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"But it makes no difference," he went on. "If he happened to come in, just when there was no one in the study, he did it—I'm sure of that now. But nobody saw him—he would take care of that: he's pretty clever at covering up his tracks. And if he had the lines, they're not hidden—they're done for; he would make an end of them."

"Oh!" gasped Marjorie.

"That leaves me worse off than ever," said Harry, with a rueful grin. "If that idiot Bunter hid them, they might turn up at the last moment—but if Tracy had them, they're gone for good, and there's no proof of any kind. That cur has done me before, and he's done me again! I'm not a match for him!"

Hazel came up.

"Here, Marjorie, you'll be late, and I've got to walk through the wood with you! Come on!"

"One moment," said Marjorie. "Harry!" Her voice was earnest. "Whatever happened to the lines, Mr. Quelch never had them, and he has a right—"

"He has no right to doubt my word!" said Wharton stubbornly. "Anyhow, it's too late now, Marjorie."

"It is not too late to go to your Form-master and ask him, respectfully, to give you time to write them, Harry."

Harry Wharton's jaw squared.

"I'm asking him nothing—except to make my word about what I've told him. I'm going to ask him nothing else."

Marjorie sighed, and Hazel grinned.

"Come on, old girl," he said. "You could talk to Wharton for donkeys' ages, and it would make no difference. All his pals have been jawing him for days—but he's got his ears up, and he's keeping them up! Form-masters are very small beer to our great panjandrums!"

Harry Wharton flushed crimson.

"You cheeky ass!" he exclaimed. "I—" He broke off very suddenly. "Good-bye, Marjorie! Don't you bother; it's all right!"

Hazel was still grinning as he walked away with his sister. But Marjorie's face was very grave.

Harry Wharton was left pacing in the quad, with a knitted brow. He had told Marjorie that it was "all right"—but he was only too well aware that it was far from all right! A suspicion was strong in his mind now that it was Tracy, and not Bunter, who had made away with that impot. But he could not be certain; and, anyhow, there was no proof or evidence. In either case, it made little difference; the position was that he had received an order from his Form-master which he was determined not to obey. On that point he was still grimly determined—he would not yield an inch, or the fraction of an inch.

What the outcome would be he could hardly tell; but whatever it was, it was fairly certain that it would not be "all right."

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Is Too Obliging!

"I SAY; you fellows!"

Billy Bunter blinked into Study No. 1 with a very uneasy blink. Bunter had to be wary these days how he approached that study! That beast Wharton still had his back up, to Bunter's great indignation and annoyance.

Not that Bunter cared very much whether Wharton's back was up or down—considered merely as Wharton's

back! But there were more important considerations to be considered.

Bunter was accustomed to dropping into the study every now and then to tea. He did not want to abandon that happy custom. But it was awkward with Wharton's back up.

In Bunter's opinion, it was time—high time—that Wharton got that back down! It was nearly a week since he had tea'd in Study No. 1, so it was high time that he tea'd there again!

The Famous Five were in the study. So Bunter supposed that they had come up early to tea. No doubt Wharton felt that a feed would buck him up for his coming interview with Mr. Quelch! It seemed probable—to Bunter!

"Come in, you fat ass!" said Harry Wharton.

"I say; no larks, you know!" said Bunter suspiciously.

"Ass!"

"Well, if you ain't going to be shirty, all right," said Bunter, and he rolled in. "I must say you're rather an ill-tempered beast, old chap. How Nugent stands your temper I can't imagine. How do you do it, Franky?"

"You blithering owl!"

"Oh, really, Nugent! I say, what have you got for tea?" Bunter blinked round the study without discerning signs of tea.

"We're not having tea yet, fathead! We—"

"Eh? Then what the thump did you ask me to come in for?" demanded Bunter.

"About that impot—" said Harry.

"Oh, chuck it!" howled Bunter. "I'm fed-up with that! If you're going to begin on that again, Wharton, I jolly well shan't stay for tea, so there!" He blinked indignantly at the captain of the Remove. "You may not know it, Wharton, but you're getting to be an awful bore on that subject. The real trouble with you is that you're always thinking about yourself! Why not try to be unselfish, like me?"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"I've told you I never touched your mouldy lines, if there were any lines!" hooted Bunter. "It's pretty thick to doubt a fellow's word, I think. Why, here you are making a fuss because Quelch won't take your word about those putrid lines, and all the time you won't take mine! I hope my word is as good as yours, Harry Wharton, or a little better."

"Oh, slaughter him!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Beast! Give us a rest about that rotten impot, anyhow," said Bunter. "I say, what have you got for tea? If you want a fellow to go down to the shop I'll—"

"I'm beginning to think that it may not have been you who took my lines, Bunter," said Harry.

"After all the fuss you've kicked up!" snorted Bunter. "Yah!"

"You were here, you ass, and I took it for granted that you'd been playing the fool as usual. But listen to me, you dunderhead, and think, if you've got anything to think with! Did you see any fellow about this passage when you came in here for the cake on Saturday?"

"I don't remember—"

"Well, try to remember, idiot!"

"If you're going to call a fellow names—"

"Will you answer me, you fathead?" said Harry Wharton, breathing hard.

"Well, there was nobody about but you," said Bunter. "Everybody else was in the Rag. I never saw anybody else till I came out of the study—"

"Oh! You saw someone else, then?"

exclaimed Harry, and all the Famous Five sat up and took notice, as it were.

"Yes; a chap was coming across the landing," said Bunter. "I turned the other way at once and went to my study; I thought it might be one of you beasts coming up—I mean, one of you old chaps—"

"It was not one of us—we were all in the Rag. Who was it?"

"How should I know?" said Bunter peevishly. "I'm a bit short-sighted—besides, I never looked at him. Might have been any chap."

"Was it Tracy?"

"I shouldn't wonder."

"Oh, you benighted idiot!" said Bob Cherry. "Look here, if it were Tracy, he took those lines, and we might be able to make him own up."

"It was Tracy!" said Harry Wharton. "I've no doubt of it! Look here, Bunter, can't you try to remember?"

"The—the fact is, I—I think it was Tracy!" said Bunter. "Now I come to think of it, it was Tracy all right! Now, what about tea?"

Billy Bunter, as a matter of fact, had not the remotest idea of the identity of the junior he had glimpsed in the distance on that occasion. But Bunter was an obliging fellow. If Wharton wanted it to be Tracy, Bunter was willing to make it Tracy! Bunter was thinking chiefly of tea, and Bunter was prepared to agree to anything to get tea a little nearer.

"Never mind tea—" said Harry.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"If you're sure now that it was Tracy—"

"Oh, quite!" said Bunter. "I—I wonder I didn't think of it at first, old chap! It was Tracy all right! I'll swear to that!"

"I might have guessed it," said Harry Wharton between his teeth. "If that fat ass had only told us at the time that he had seen Tracy near the study—"

"But did he?" grunted Johnny Bull.

"He's just said so!" answered Wharton tartly.

"Um!"

"Look here, Bunter, you're certain?" asked Harry.

"Absolutely certain, old fellow," said Bunter. "It was Tracy—I saw him quite distinctly—"

"You've just said you never looked at him!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Well, why should I look at him?" demanded Bunter. "I was in rather a hurry at the time, and, thinking it might be one of you beasts, of course I hiked off at once. You'd have made a fuss about that cake, as you jolly well know."

"If you thought it might be one of us how can you be sure now that it was Tracy?" roared Johnny Bull.

"Oh! I—I mean—"

"Well, what do you mean, you blitherer?" growled Bob Cherry.

"I—I mean, it was Tracy all right! For goodness' sake, don't start Wharton thinking again that I took that rotten impot!" said Bunter peevishly. "Don't start him off now he's getting good-tempered again."

"Oh, my hat!"

"You—you—you footling freak!" gasped Harry Wharton. "Do you know whether it was Tracy or not?"

"Oh! Yes! Quite! It was that cad! Just the sort of thing he would do—sneaking a fellow's lines! In fact, I saw him."

"You saw him!" gasped Bob.

"Yes! I—I thought I'd keep an eye on him," said Bunter, while the Famous Five stared at him blankly. "I—I thought to myself: 'What's that fellow after? Wharton's lines very likely!' So

"I—I kept an eye on him! It was Tracy! I hope you're satisfied now. I say, what about tea?"

Harry Wharton rose to his feet. Four members of the Co. were grinning. It was clear that Billy Bunter's sole object was to get the captain of the Remove into a good temper with a view to tea! But Harry Wharton was not grinning. His face was quite expressive as he stepped towards the Owl of the Remove—but it did not express amusement!

"Coming down to the shop, old chap?" asked Bunter, misunderstanding. "All right, I'll come with you—I'll carry the things, if you like! I say, you'll feel better with something inside you when you see Quelch. Ho, ho, ho! My advice to you is to have a jolly good spread—a really good one! I'll help you with the shopping, and I'll do the cooking, and, I say— Yarooooooop!"

Bump!

"Oh crumbs!"

Bump!

"Help!"

Bump!

Thrice the fat Owl sat hard on the floor of Study No. 1, in the grasp of the captain of the Remove. He roared frantically as he sat.

"Ow! Beast! Wharrer you up to?" roared Bunter. "I've told you it was Tracy, haven't I? Isn't that what you wanted, you beast? Yaroooo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, leave off kicking me, you beast!" shrieked Bunter. "If you kick me again I'll— Yoo-hoop! You wanted me to say it was Tracy, didn't you? Wow! I don't mind saying it wasn't, if that's what you want! Leggo!"

Bump!

Bunter landed, with a roar, outside Study No. 1, and the door slammed on him. The fat Owl scrambled up, spluttering, and hooted through the keyhole:

"Yah! Beast! I don't believe you ever did the lines at all, and Tracy didn't snoop them any more than I did! I hope you'll get licked! I jolly well hope you'll get hogged! I hope you'll get sacked! Yah!"

After which, Billy Bunter departed in haste.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Right Thing!

GILBERT TRACY quickened his pace.

He had filled in a dismal half-holiday by tramping down to Pegg, walking on the beach, and looking at the boats. Now he was coming back up Pegg Lane, to take the footpath through Friardale Wood back to Greyfriars.

As he came towards the spot where the footpath left the lane, he saw Hazel and his sister in the distance. Hazel turned back through the wood. Marjorie came on down the lane towards Cliff House School, and Tracy, his face brightening, hurried to meet her on the way.

He had wondered whether he might fall in with Marjorie again, and he was more than glad to do so. But as she saw him her face set a little, and he could see that there had been a change since the previous meeting in Friardale Lane.

And his face clouded over. He concluded that she had heard all about him at Greyfriars, and did not want to speak to him again. But she stopped, and he stopped also.

"I'm glad I've met you again," she said, rather unexpectedly. "I wanted to speak to you."

"May I walk with you as far as Cliff House?"

"Please do!" said Marjorie.

She walked on in silence for a minute or two, Gilbert glancing at her grave face sideways, rather furtively.

"I suppose you've heard at Greyfriars about my high crimes and misdemeanours?" he said lightly.

"I don't understand you," said Marjorie abruptly. "The other day you came to my help. I might have gone over the cliff, but for you, and you might have gone over in helping me. I thought you were brave and kind-hearted."

Tracy winced.

"And you don't now?" he asked.

"Did you take Harry's lines from his study on Saturday?"

Gilbert gave a jump.

That unexpected question dumbfounded him. So far as he knew, even Wharton did not suspect him; certainly no other fellow did. It was amazing to hear such a question from Marjorie.

He stared at her.

"Wha-a-t?" he stammered.

"If you did, it was bad and wicked, and I cannot understand you," said Marjorie. "But did you?"

"Does Wharton think so?" asked Gilbert, with a sneer.

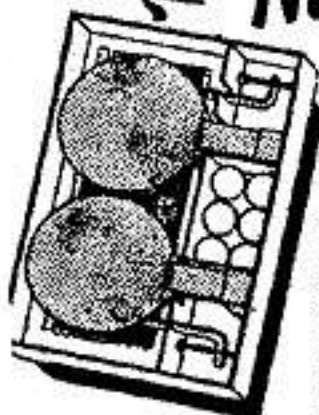
"I thought he was putting it down to Bunter."

"That isn't an answer. If you did—"

(Continued on next page.)



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"Well, if I did?" said Gilbert. "If I did, it was one back at the fellow who barred me from the football, and led the Form into sending me to Coventry. But, of course, you'd take Wharton's side—now you've heard all about it. The cheeky fool has told all the Form that he's going to defy Quelch. He's been down on me all through the term for standing up to Quelch; now he's doing exactly the same, only more so. Let him get on with it."

Marjorie's lip quivered.

"Then it was you?" she asked, in a low voice. "How could you do it?"

"Why shouldn't I hit back?" said Gilbert sullenly.

Marjorie did not answer that. She had come to a halt, and stood looking at Tracy. His eyes sank before hers.

"I—I suppose you think it was pretty rotten?" he asked at last, with a flush in his cheeks.

"Very!" said Marjorie.

"Perhaps it was. I don't care!"

"If you don't care, there is nothing more to say," said Marjorie, very quietly. "But I think you do care—I hope you do, at least. You could still set the matter right if you liked."

"Hardly," said Tracy. "You see, I jammed that impot into the study fire and burned it to ashes. No getting it back."

"Oh!" exclaimed Marjorie.

"Now I've told you," said Gilbert. "Blessed if I know why I've told you, but there it is! I suppose you're fearfully fed-up with me Miss Hazeldene. I'd better clear."

"Wait a moment," said Marjorie. "There is still something you can do, if you are not so bad-hearted as you pretend to be."

"Carry on!" said Tracy sarcastically.

"Harry has to see his Form-master at five o'clock. There is still time for you to get back and see Mr. Quelch first."

"I don't want to see Mr. Quelch, thanks! I see too much of Quelch!"

"And tell him what you did," said Marjorie, unheeding.

Tracy stared.

"Tell Quelch that I burned Wharton's lines?" he exclaimed.

"Yes," said Marjorie steadily. "That is the only thing you can do now, and you ought to do it."

"Oh, my hat! Guess what I should get!" grinned Tracy. "I can see myself making Quelch jump with a confession like that! I've had some pretty tough lickings from Quelch, but that would make him break the record."

"You are not afraid of that."

"Think not?" grinned Gilbert.

"I am quite sure not," said Marjorie. "You risked your life a few days ago, and you are not a coward, whatever you are."

"Oh!" said Gilbert. He laughed. "Blessed if I don't half think I'll do it, Miss Hazeldene, when you put it so nicely. It's rather nice of you to speak to me at all, after what you've heard about me at my school. Don't you think that you ought to cross to the other side of the road, like the jolly old Pharisee, when you meet such a bad character?"

"Won't you do what is right before it is too late?" asked Marjorie earnestly.

"You will be glad afterwards."

"Um!" said Gilbert.

They walked on in silence to the gate of Cliff House. Then Gilbert spoke again.

"Look here, it's awfully decent of you to speak to me at all in the circumstances. If you'd really like me to see that hot-headed ass Wharton through this row—"

He paused.

"It's a go!" he said. "I'll do it!"

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I'll cut straight back to school now, and bump in on Quelch and surprise him! There!"

"I'm sure you'll be glad you did," said Marjorie softly.

"I'm not so sure! Quelch packs a lot of muscle!" grinned Gilbert. "But I don't funk it, at any rate. Leave it to me."

Marjorie's face was brighter as she went in at the gate. But Gilbert's was not bright as he tramped homeward through the wood and by Friardale Lane. His face was very thoughtful, and the nearer he drew to Greyfriars the less he liked the prospect before him. But he had said that he would do the right thing, and to Marjorie Hazeldene, at least, he was going to keep his word.

Billy Bunter was in the gateway when he arrived at the school. Bunter was on the watch for Lord Mauleverer to come in, with a view to tea in Study No. 12, after his painful experience in Study No. 1. He favoured Tracy, as he passed, with a disdainful blink.

"Yah! Wharton jolly well knows now, you swab!" he said. "It was you! Ow! Wow! Wharrer you kicking me for, Smithy, you beast!"

"Speaking to that cad in Coventry!" answered the Bounder cheerily.

"I wasn't speaking to him, you beast! I was only telling him—"

Tracy walked on to the House. He passed several Remove fellows in the quad, all of whom carefully ignored him. His face was dark and sullen as he arrived at the House.

By the doorway the Famous Five stood in talk, and their eyes turned on Tracy as he came up—Wharton's with a fierce gleam in them.

"You cur!" he said, in a low voice.

"Forgotten I'm in Coventry?" drawled Tracy. "Smithy's just booted Bunter for speaking to me. You fellows going to boot Wharton?"

He laughed, and passed on into the House. Harry Wharton clenched his hands as the new junior went in.

"I've got to see Quelch at five," he said. "After that—"

"Better make sure before you pitch into the chap!" said Johnny Bull dryly.

"I'm quite sure."

"So you were about Bunter?" said Johnny calmly.

"Oh, rats!"

"Oh, bother Tracy, and bother Bunter!" said Bob Cherry. "What the thump are you going to say when Quelch asks you for your lines?"

"Only that I haven't done them, and that I'm not going to."

"You're going to say that to Quelch?" asked Johnny.

"Yes!"

"All right! I'll help you pack your box!" said Johnny Bull grimly. "Might as well look out your train home, too!"

Harry Wharton made no reply. Even if the outcome was packing his box, and the train home, he was not giving in—and that was that!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Going Through It!

"COME in!" said Mr. Quelch quietly.

It was not yet near five o'clock. But when a tap came at his study door, the Remove master had no doubt that it was Wharton with his lines.

Which was a relief to him. He had had an impression—a strong impression—that Harry Wharton was meditating resistance and rebellion—rather on the lines of Tracy, the mutineer of the

Form. But if that impression was a mistaken one, it was a great relief to the Remove master.

Quite a kindly expression appeared on his face as he glanced at the opening door.

But it vanished the next moment.

It was not Wharton who entered with his lines. It was Gilbert Tracy who came in.

Quelch was disappointed; neither was he pleased to see that cheeky and troublesome member of his Form. And there was no reason that he knew of why Tracy should come to his study on a half-holiday. His face froze at once, and he looked at Gilbert with grim inquiry.

"What is it, Tracy?" he rapped.

"I've something to tell you, sir!" said Gilbert meekly, but with a faintly sarcastic inflection in his voice.

"Be brief!"

"Oh, certainly, sir! It's about Wharton's lines that disappeared last Saturday."

Mr. Quelch raised his eyebrows.

"You can have nothing to say to me on that subject, Tracy!"

"Only that the lines were taken, sir, just as Wharton told you!" said Gilbert.

"I thought you'd like to know."

"If you are aware of anything of the kind, Tracy, you should have told me before this!" said Mr. Quelch sternly. "I scarcely understand you, Tracy! If you have come here to repeat Wharton's statement that Bunter abstracted his lines, I shall certainly not listen to you, as I am convinced that Bunter did nothing of the kind."

"It was not Bunter, sir!"

Mr. Quelch looked at him with uncompromising grimness. Gilbert was so unscrupulous, that a more trusting man than Mr. Quelch would not have trusted him an inch. Quelch would not have taken Gilbert's word on any subject whatsoever, and he certainly was not prepared to take it on this thorny subject.

"You had better leave my study, Tracy," he said, with a contempt in his voice that brought a faint flush to Gilbert's cheeks. "Even if you should state that you actually saw the lines taken from Wharton's study, I could not trust your word. I regret that I cannot believe a single word you say."

"I think you will believe me this time, sir. It was I who took away the lines!" said Tracy calmly.

Mr. Quelch fairly jumped.

"You!" he ejaculated.

"Yes, sir!"

"Tracy! You have the audacity to come here and tell me—" the Remove master gasped.

"Yes, sir! I found the lines on the study table when I came in that afternoon, and nobody was about, and I shoved them into the study fire."

"Tracy!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"Wharton thought it was Bunter, because Bunter had been in the study. But it was I, sir," went on Gilbert, with icy coolness.

"Then—then the lines actually were written!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"You utterly bad and unscrupulous boy!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "You are aware that, as Wharton's statement regarding Bunter was obviously unfounded, I was driven to the conclusion that the lines never had been written."

"Oh, quite, sir."

"And you—you—you—you—did this!" gasped Mr. Quelch. He rose to his feet, towering in wrath. "And why did you commit this wicked, this treacherous action, Tracy?"

"To pay Wharton out!" answered Gilbert coolly.

"Upon my word!" Quelch almost stuttered.

"I never thought he would fancy it was Banter; I thought he would guess at once that I had done it!" said Gilbert. "Not that I cared."

Mr. Quelch made an almost convulsive grasp at his cane. But he relinquished it for a moment and stared at Tracy.

"You did this for a paltry act of revenge on my head boy, Tracy?"

"Yes, sir."

"You caused me to doubt his word, to treat him with injustice—" Mr. Quelch almost choked. "And why have you come to tell me so now? If you laid this wretched, this miserable, this unscrupulous and cowardly scheme, Tracy, for what reason are you now admitting the truth?"

"I'm owning up, sir."

"You are owning up!" repeated Mr. Quelch. "If that means, Tracy, that you have some remnant of decency in your character, I am glad of it! But it will make no difference to your punishment."

Gilbert's face set doggedly.

"I know that!" he answered.

"But that I do not desire your headmaster to be troubled with you, as you are at this school on my responsibility. I should take you to Dr. Locke, and request him to administer the most severe flogging!" said Mr. Quelch. "I shall deal with you personally, Tracy."

He grasped the cane again.

"Bend over that chair!"

Gilbert drew a deep, deep breath. He was "for it," now, and he knew what it was going to be like; he had been through it often enough, since he had

been at Greyfriars, and had set out to rag Quelch till he was tired of keeping him there! In silence he bent over the chair.

The cane swished and descended.

Gilbert had made up his mind to go through that infliction with shut teeth, without uttering a sound. But at the third swipe that resolution faded away, and he yelled.

He had told Marjorie that Quelch packed a lot of muscle! He had reason to know! But he had never quite realised that Quelch was so muscular as this! That cane seemed fairly to bite!

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

Gilbert roared.

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

Yell, yell, yell!

Mr. Quelch laid down the cane at last. Gilbert rose from his bent attitude, and stood gasping for breath. He had been through it before, but never like this! As he had said to Marjorie, Quelch had broken records this time.

"Now leave my study!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

Gilbert tottered from the study.

Marjorie had told him that he would be glad afterwards if he did the right thing. Possibly that was to come, but at the moment, Gilbert was feeling anything but glad. He wriggled his way down the passage in anguish. Fellows he passed stared at him.

Mr. Quelch was left in his study—in a state of deep and painful and uncomfortable thought.

He had been deceived, deluded, and made a fool of, by the wiles of the young rascal who, on his responsibility, had been placed in his Form, and had been a thorn in his side ever since. And Wharton—

It was very discomfoting to think of his head boy, and his treatment of him, in view of what he now knew! Tracy had paid the penalty of his rascality—but Wharton— It was some time before Mr. Quelch, at length, touched the bell and sent Trotter to tell his head boy to come to his study.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Sticking It Out!

HARRY WHARTON clenched his hands. But he unclenched them again.

They clenched at the sight of Gilbert Tracy—coming up the Remove staircase. But they unclenched as he glanced at Gilbert's face.

That face was almost white. It did not need a second glance to see that Tracy had been through it—hard! He had apparently struck trouble since he had passed the Famous Five in the quad. He looked like it, at all events.

Since his talk with Marjorie that afternoon Wharton had had no doubt on the subject of the missing impot. He wondered, indeed, that he had not thought of Gilbert before. He was convinced now that it was to Tracy, and not to the fatuous fat Owl, that he owed his present scrape. Bunter had seen one fellow about on that occasion; he did not know who it was, but Wharton was sure that he knew. It was Tracy; and Tracy had made away with his lines.

Never had his dislike and loathing for the schemer of the Remove been so deep and intense.

(Continued on next page.)

250 FOOTBALLS FREE!

for Scoring "Goals" with "Footer-Stamps"

HURRY UP! Hurry up! The final whistle for the November "Footer-Stamps" competition goes next week . . . we shall then want to know who has scored most "goals" with "Footer-Stamps" for the month.

Remember, winners are wanted for 250 FREE Footballs, so if you are collecting already (and haven't won a ball so far), keep at it and make big efforts to win one this time. If you're not collecting . . . well, look snappy, because there's just time for you to make a bid. "Footer-Stamps" are appearing every week, and the object is simply to make up as many "goals" as you can with them. The stamps illustrate six different actions on the football field.

The six actions are: KICK-OFF—DRIBBLE—TACKLE—HEADER—SHOT—GOAL, and every complete set of the six actions you collect scores a "goal." (The "goal" stamp by itself does not count as a "goal.")

There are ten stamps below and you will find a complete "goal" among them. Then try to get as many more of these stamps as you can. Ask your friends for them, swap with them if you like, or even collect them together. The more you get, the more "goals" you'll score—and here's good news—

FOOTER-STAMPS making complete "goals" are also in other famous papers like GEM and MODERN BOY—get the stamps from these papers to help swell your score.

The 250 Prize Footballs in the November prize-giving will go to the collectors scoring the most goals for the month. No stamps to be sent in yet—wait until next week. So if you haven't won a football yet—keep at it and see what you can do.

OVERSEAS READERS—you are in this scheme, also, and special prizes in cash are to be awarded for the best scores from readers outside the British Isles. There will be a special closing date for you, of course.

(N.B.—"Footer-Stamps" may also be collected from the following papers: Gem, Modern Boy, Boy's Cinema, Sports Budget, Detective Weekly, Thriller, Wild West Weekly, Champion, and Triumph.) (The Rules of this competition appeared last week and will be repeated later.)

TEN MORE "FOOTER-STAMPS" FOR YOUR PILE!



He was waiting now for Ave to strike. At five o'clock he had to face his Form-master—and defy him. He had not done a line of that thousand—and his mind was almost savagely made up that he never would. Quelch might take him to the Head; he might give him detentions for the rest of the term; it might mean a flogging; it might possibly mean the sack. And he owed the whole thing to that miserable schemer. There was no shadow of proof, but he was certain of it now.

But Tracy, at the moment, was obviously in no state to take what was coming to him. He was almost tottering after that terrific whopping in Quelch's study. Wharton's eyes gleamed at him as he passed, but he made no movement.

Tracy hardly saw the Famous Five there. He went on his way, and went into Study No. 1 and shut the door.

"Looks as if he's had it bad!" said Bob Cherry. "I wonder what it was this time? It's not half an hour since he came in."

Wharton's lip curled contemptuously. "Some rotten trick!" he said.

"By gum! That chap does ask for it!" remarked Vernon-Smith. "Quelch will be wearing out his cane on him at this rate. Getting near five, Wharton!"

"I know." "You're going down to Quelch at five?"

"Why not, if the dear man wants to see me?" said Wharton indifferently.

The Co. exchanged hopeless looks. Smithy grinned. He had been a good deal of a rebel himself, and he had plenty of nerve, but he would not have cared to face Wharton's coming interview with the Remove master.

Wharton, leaning on the banisters of the Remove landing with his hands in his pockets, looked cool and indifferent. If his feelings were otherwise, they did not show in his face. A good many fellows had gathered round as the hour of five drew nearer. Skinner, who had expressed his opinion freely that the "Grand Panjandrum" would climb down before it was too late, had nothing to say now. There was keen excitement among the Remove fellows. Even Billy Hunter had, for the moment, almost forgotten tea!

"You're rather an ass, old chap," murmured Lord Mauleverer.

"Thanks!"

"Quelch will be fearfully wild," said Tom Brown.

"Probably."

"Suppose he takes you to the Head?" asked Hazel.

"Most likely he will."

"Well, what are you going to say to the Big Beak?" inquired several voices.

"I shall ask him to see justice done. Any fellow has a right to ask his head-master that."

"Oh crumbs!"

"If you're going to check the Head—" said Squiff.

"I don't call that cheek."

"Um! I fancy the Head will."

"For goodness' sake don't play the goat, old chap!" mumbled Bob Cherry.

"No good making matters worse. If you're civil to Quelch he may make it a whopping and let it go at that."

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"Am I to go to Quelch and tell him I'm awfully, fearfully sorry because he's had his silly leg pulled by a sneaking, scheming rascal?" he asked sarcastically. "I've no civility of that sort for Quelch. He is to blame; not I—and I shall say so."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Better say good-bye to Wharton."

when he goes down," remarked Skinner. "We may not see him again."

"Shut up, Skinner!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Bunter, you fat ass," said Peter Todd, "if you had that rotten impot, there's still time to cough it up—"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"Bunter never had it," said Harry. "I know that now. It was Tracy; one more of his rotten tricks! That fat fool made me believe that he had it with his idiotic antics—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"How do you know it was Tracy?" asked Vernon-Smith, staring.

"Well, I do know! He's landed me in rows with Quelch before; and now he's got away with it again. Quelch ought to be wise to his rotten trickery by this time; he's seen enough of it. If he chooses to be taken in, that's his look-out!"

"I say, you fellows, the best thing Wharton can do is to pack his bags," said Billy Bunter. "A couple of books and—"

"You fat idiot!"

"If that's what you call grateful, Wharton, when a fellow's trying to help you—"

"Fathead!"

"An atlas is a good thing," said Bunter. "I tried a Latin grammar once, and it slipped down—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But an atlas will do the trick!" declared Bunter. "You shove in an atlas and an extra pair of pants, and—"

"Dry up, ass!"

"Wharton's too high and mighty to pack!" grinned Skinner.

"Or a dictionary," continued Bunter. "What about a Latin dictionary, old chap? I'll lend you Toddy's dick—"

"Idiot!"

"Well, you'll jolly well wish you'd packed when Quelch begins to swipe!" said Bunter. "You'll wish you had an atlas and a dictionary, too, I can jolly well tell you."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes Trotter!" said Bob Cherry.

The school page came up the stairs. It was still only a quarter to five, and Wharton was not due in his Form-master's study till the hour struck. But plainly Trotter came with a message for somebody in the Remove.

"Master Wharton—" said Trotter.

"Here!" said Harry.

"Mr. Quelch wants you in his study, sir."

"Right-ho!"

"I say, Trotter, was Quelch looking waxy?" asked Billy Bunter eagerly. "I say, was he in a fearful temper?"

"I didn't notice, sir." Trotter went down the stairs.

"Bet you he was," said Bunter. "Bet you he's in an awful bait! Look here, Wharton, if you want that dictionary, I—"

"Shut up, Owl!"

"Deast!"

"It's only a quarter to five," said Bob Cherry. "Quelch said five! What the dickens is he starting early for?"

"The dear man's anxious to begin," drawled Wharton. "May as well go; bad form to keep a beak waiting."

He went across to the stairs.

"For goodness' sake, old chap, don't check Quelch!" said Frank Nugent almost beseechingly.

"I'm not going to check him; I'm only going to tell him that I've had enough injustice from him, and that I'm not standing any more."

"Oh!"

Harry Wharton went down the stairs. His last words left his friends dumb with dismay and the rest of the fellows

in a breathless buzz. Skinner was not the only one who thought it likely that Wharton would not be seen again after he disappeared down the staircase.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Unexpected!

"WHARTON!"

"Yes, sir?"

"Come in, my boy!"

Harry Wharton entered his Form-master's study—taken quite aback. He had arrived there with a set and inflexible expression on his face, prepared to carry on with cool, quiet defiance, whatever the consequences might be. He fully expected to see a face set hard and grim, and to hear the sharpest of sharp voices.

Instead of which, Mr. Quelch was looking perplexed and troubled, and his voice was very unexpectedly mild.

Wharton stood before him, in astonishment.

He expected, as a matter of course, that Quelch was going to ask for those thousand lines, and then the band, so to speak, was going to begin to play!

But Quelch, after telling him to come in, did not speak for a few moments. He seemed to find some difficulty in what he had to say. More and more surprised, the captain of the Remove waited.

"I am sorry, Wharton," said Mr. Quelch at last, and there was a tinge of colour in his cheeks. "I regret very much—"

Wharton could only stare at him. What was coming, he had no idea, but he could see that this interview was not going to be what he had expected.

"I have been misled into an unfortunate error," said the Remove master.

"Your own error was the cause."

"Indeed, sir!"

"You stated," said Mr. Quelch, "that your lines had been written on Saturday, Wharton, and that they had been taken from your study by that foolish boy, Bunter. As I ascertained, beyond doubt, that they certainly had not been removed by Bunter, I could only conclude that they never had been written. Your own mistake was the cause of mine."

Wharton was silent.

"The facts are now known to me," went on Mr. Quelch. "The boy who removed the imposition and destroyed it has confessed."

Harry Wharton gave a violent start.

"Tracy," went on Mr. Quelch.

"Tracy!" repeated Harry.

"Tracy came to my study and confessed that he found the lines in your study and was wicked enough, unscrupulous enough, to destroy them!"

"Oh!" gasped Harry.

He had known—he had felt absolutely certain—that it was Tracy. But that Tracy should have confessed to his act was amazing. He could only have done it to land his enemy in trouble. Now he had undone his own work—almost at the last moment! Wharton wondered whether he was hearing aright.

"Tracy has been severely punished for his action!" said Mr. Quelch, his lips setting. Wharton remembered Gilbert's look when he had passed him on the Remove landing. He knew now why Tracy had been through it. "But—" Mr. Quelch paused again.

Wharton did not speak.

"It transpires," said Mr. Quelch, "that your imposition actually was written on Saturday, as you stated."



"What have you locked the study door for, you potty porpoise?" shrieked Wharton. "It ain't locked—it's jammed!" mumbled Bunter. "If you don't let me in," roared Wharton, "I'll burst the lock!" From within the study came the sound of munching and gobbling.

Had I been aware of this, of course, I should not have doubled it. I could not have blamed you for the act of that bad and unscrupulous boy. Unfortunately, I have learned the facts too late—as you have already written the thousand lines."

Wharton stood silent. He had not written a single line of that thousand, and he wondered whether Quelch guessed that he had not.

Quelch was assuming, however, that his order had been obeyed. Wharton was willing to let him assume anything he liked. If he asked the question point-blank, he was going to receive an answer straight to the point. If he did not ask it, well and good!

"I regret very much," said Mr. Quelch, "that I should have inadvertently treated you with injustice, Wharton. Your own mistake with regard to Bunter was certainly the cause, nevertheless, I regret it. You need not, of course, in the present circumstances, bring me the lines."

Wharton said nothing.

He had no lines to bring, and he could not help thinking that Quelch guessed as much. The Remove master, placed in an extremely awkward position, was taking the easiest way out.

"That is all, Wharton! You may go!" added Mr. Quelch.

"Thank you, sir!" said Wharton, with a sarcastic note in his voice that was not lost on Mr. Quelch.

The Remove master, however, said nothing, and Wharton quitted the study.

His step was lighter as he went. The storm had blown over utterly unexpectedly. He had been ready to face the music, but he was undoubtedly glad and relieved that there was no music to face.

But his chief feeling was amazement. Tracy had owned up. Tracy had got him out of this scrape after getting him into it. Why, he could not begin to guess. The fellow was a bad egg—bad all through—yet he had done this!

Wharton smiled as he looked at the crowd of eager faces on the Remove landing when he returned there.

"What!" began a dozen voices all at once. The faces of the Co. lighted up. They could see that, whatever had happened, it was not what they had expected and feared.

"All serene," said Harry lightly.

"I say, ain't it the sack?" asked Billy Bunter.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"No, fathead!"

"But what on earth's happened?" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "You haven't been gone ten minutes. Haven't you seen Quelch?"

"Oh, yes! The dear man didn't want the lines after all!" Wharton's lip curled. "He's found out, it seems, just in time, that I really did that rotten impot last Saturday. So the new one is washed out, and he never asked for it."

"Oh, what luck!" exclaimed Nugent, with a deep breath.

"The luckfulness is terrific!"

"But how—" exclaimed the Bounder.

"How the dickens—" asked Johnny Bull.

Harry Wharton laughed again.

"You'd never guess!" he said.

"Tracy owned up!"

"Tracy did!" yelled Bob.

"Yes. That was how he got the licking. Quelch gave it to him instead of me. I dare say he'd rather give it to the right man, as a matter of choice!" added Wharton sarcastically. "Tracy's had it—and I'm all clear!"

"Then—it was Tracy!" exclaimed Nugent.

"So he seems to have told Quelch!"

"And he—he—he owned up! Mean to say that he went to Quelch and told him that he took those lines?" gasped Bob.

"Quelch said so! Wonders will never cease—what? Fancy that worm doing a decent thing—for the first time in his life, I dare say!"

"Well, this beats the band!" said Bob. "He got you into that row—now he's got you out of it! Thank goodness he has, anyhow!"

"The thankfulness is preposterous!" declared Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "The execrable Tracy cannot be such a terrific worm after all!"

"Blessed if I make the fellow out!" said Johnny Bull. "It was a dirty trick—as rotten a trick as a fellow could play—and now—"

"Anyhow, it's all right now?" asked Nugent.

"Right as rain!" answered Harry. "I fancy Quelch knew I hadn't done those thousand lines—but if he had, he never let on. But—"

"There goes five!" said Bob, as a chime was heard from the clock tower. "You've had a narrow squeak, old man!"

"Oh, quite!"

"The missfulness is as good as the milefulness!" remarked Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh. "The quick in time saves ninepence, as the English proverb remarks!"

"Good old English proverb!" chuckled Bob. "That fellow, Tracy can't be quite such a blighter as he makes out! Thank goodness it's all right, anyhow! Tea in my study, you men—come on!"

And the Famous Five, in a state of
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considerable relief and satisfaction, went along to Study No. 13 to tea—Harry Wharton as relieved and satisfied as his friends, and the more so the more he thought it over.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Gated!

"I SAY, Harry, old chap—"

"Get out, ass!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Buzz off before Quelch comes in, fathead!"

"That's all right. I want to see Quelch, same as you do!" said Billy Bunter. "I'm coming, old chap!"

It was the following day, after class. Harry Wharton had come to his Form-master's study, and, not finding Mr. Quelch there, was waiting for him. And he was not pleased when Billy Bunter rolled into the study. He was, in fact, strongly inclined to boot William George Bunter out of it.

But as Mr. Quelch might come down the passage any moment, he refrained—he did not want the Remove master to behold the fat Owl quitting the study with the assistance of a boot.

"It's all right, old fellow!" said Bunter, blinking at him. "You're going to ask Quelch for leave to go over to Cliff House. I heard you tell Nugent. Well, you'd like me to come, wouldn't you?"

"No!"

"Beast! I mean, didn't Hazel mention me when he said his sister had asked you over there to tea?"

"No!"

"He must have forgotten, then—he's got a rotten memory! Marjorie must have mentioned me!" argued Bunter. "I mean to say, you know she's got rather a crush on me, old chap. Here, you keep off, you beast! Don't you start kicking up a row in a beak's study!"

Bunter backed round Mr. Quelch's table.

"Will you buzz off, you bloated blue-bottle?" asked the captain of the Remove, breathing hard.

"No, I jolly well won't!" retorted Bunter independently. "If you ask Quelch for leave, so can I—see?"

Really, it was impossible to boot a fellow out of a beak's study. Only that

consideration saved Bunter from sudden travel.

Harry Wharton was there to ask for leave out of bounds. On a half-holiday, Cliff House was within bounds; on other days it was not, and leave had to be asked. Wharton had no doubt that leave would be granted: Quelch was generally benignant in little matters; and as class was over early that day, there was ample time to get back by lock-up.

He was going to ask leave for himself and his chums, who were asked to tea at Cliff House by Marjorie & Co., but certainly not for Billy Bunter. Bunter was superfluous; all the more so because of his happy belief that Marjorie had a "crush" on his fat and fatuous self!

"Mean, I call it!" said Bunter warmly. "You know jolly well that it's me that Marjorie would like to see. Think she wants to see you? Or that fathead Cherry? Or that bulldog Bull? Have a little sense!"

"You benighted owl!" said Harry Wharton. "Will you get out before Quelch comes in? He's up the passage—"

"Are you going to ask Quelch for leave for me, too?"

"No!" howled Wharton.

"Then I'll stay and ask him! The fact is, I want to go over and see Bessie!" said Bunter. "I haven't seen Bessie for a long time—and I'm an affectionate brother, I hope! I suppose I can go and see my sister at Cliff House without asking you! And I rather fancy Marjorie will be jolly glad to see me come in!" Bunter smirked. "I've told you she'd got a 'crush'—Keep off, you beast!"

Bunter dodged again.

"Look here, you swab, if you kick up a row in Quelch's study—"

"Get out!"

"You'd better not kick up a shindy here, Wharton, if you want Quelch to give you leave! He jolly well wouldn't, anyhow, if he knew you never did that thousand lines yesterday, and that you told all the fellows that you'd tell him to his face that you wouldn't if he asked for them—"

"Shut up!" gasped Harry Wharton, as he heard a step in the passage.

"Shan't! I can see Quelch giving you leave, if he knew! I fancy he would say—Oh crikey!"

Bunter broke off in dismay at the sight of a tall and angular figure in the doorway.

Harry Wharton crimsoned.

It was only too clear that Quelch had heard what the fat Owl said as he came up to the open doorway. His face, at that moment, had a look on it that the fabled basilisk of ancient times might have envied!

"Bunter!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped the fat Owl. "I—I wasn't saying—I—I mean, I—I never said—Oh lor'!"

"What are you doing here, Bunter?"

"I—I came to—to ask you for leave,

sir, because Marjorie's standing a spread—I mean, because I want to see my sister at Cliff House—"

stammered Bunter. "C-c-can I have leave, sir?"

"No!" said Mr. Quelch grimly.

"You may leave my study, Bunter."

"Oh lor'!"

Billy Bunter faded out of the study. Mr. Quelch turned to Harry Wharton. His glance was rather like cold steel. Probably he had had at least a suspicion of Wharton's intentions the previous day. Now, at all events, he knew. His face was cold, hard, and grim as he looked at his head boy.

"What do you want here, Wharton?" he asked in a voice that seemed to proceed from the iciest depths of a refrigerator.

"I—I came to ask leave to go over to Cliff House, sir!" stammered Harry. Quelch did not look as if it was much use asking now! "May we go—"

"You may not, Wharton!" said Mr. Quelch icily. "I am surprised that you should ask, after what you are aware I have just heard."

Wharton's face set doggedly.

"But, sir—"

"You need say no more, Wharton! Leave my study!"

"But—"

Mr. Quelch raised his hand.

"I have told you to say no more, Wharton! You are refused leave to go out of school bounds. If you utter another word, I shall forbid you to go out of gates at all!"

"It's not my fault, you heard Bunter's silly talk, sir—"

"Silence!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "You are gated for the day, Wharton, and if you do not leave my study this instant, I shall cane you!"

Harry Wharton, with set lips, left the study. Mr. Quelch cast a grim glance after him as he closed the door. He was deeply displeased. The affair of the thousand lines was over and done with, and could not be taken up again. It was, as Mr. Quelch realised very clearly, an unfortunate occurrence. But that was no excuse for rebellious disobedience—which he had suspected before, and knew now, that Wharton had intended.

Quelch was left in his grimmest mood, and Harry Wharton, with passionate anger and resentment in his heart, tramped away down the passage.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER

Asking For It!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! All serene?" asked Bob Cherry cheerily, as the captain of the Remove joined his friends in the quad.

But his cheery face changed as he saw Wharton's look.

"What's up?" asked Nugent.

"Is the upfulness terrific?" inquired Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

The four were waiting for their leader by the doorway of the House—nothing doubting that he would return with leave granted. But they looked anxiously at him now. Gilbert Tracy, who was lounging by the doorway, gave him a curious glance.

The Famous Five gave no heed to Tracy. He was still in Coventry—though since his unexpected action of the day before, some of the fellows had mooted the idea of letting him out.

Wharton did not even notice him there. He joined his chums, with a knitted brow and glinting eyes.

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"Hasn't Quelch given leave?" asked Johnny Bull.

"No!" answered Wharton, through his closed lips.

"That washes it out, then," said Bob. "It's rotten, as we're off class early to-day. But why—"

"The dear man has got his back up again!" said Harry savagely. "Bunter was gabbling in the study, and he heard him say that I'd said I wasn't going to do that rotten impot for him."

"Oh, my hat! That tears it!" said Bob. "Let's go and boot Bunter!"

"Never mind Bunter—"

"Well, let's get out of gates, anyhow, even if we can't go over to Cliff House—"

"I'm gated!"

"Gated? What on earth for?"

"Quelch didn't like my conversation!" said Harry bitterly.

"I suppose that means that you cheeked him?" remarked Johnny Bull, slowly and thoughtfully.

"You can suppose what you like! I know I'm not standing this!" said Harry. "Quelch has a right to refuse us leave out of bounds, if he chooses to make himself unpleasant, but he has no right to gato me for nothing. I'm going."

"My dear chap—"

"I'm going!" said Wharton stubbornly. "I'm going out of gates this very minute, Quelch or no Quelch, and while I'm out, I'm going over to Cliff House. Are you fellows coming?"

"For goodness' sake," said Bob, "don't play the giddy ox again! You had a jolly narrow escape yesterday—you'd have been for it, up before the Head, if Tracy hadn't done the decent thing for once—"

"I'm going!" repeated the captain of the Remove. "If you fellows choose to kowtow to a little tin tyrant, you can please yourselves!"

"Oh, don't be an ass! Hold on!" added Bob, as Wharton made a step to go. "If you go down to the gates, Quelch will spot you from his window, most likely! Do you want a prefect sent after you, to lug you back by the ears?"

Harry Wharton paused.

He was determined not to be gated. Gated or not, he was going! But certainly he did not want a prefect to walk after him and walk him back again. He changed his direction, and walked away towards the Cloisters. Once out of sight of the House windows, it was easy to drop over a wall in a secluded corner, and get out unseen.

"Harry!" called out Nugent.

He walked on unheeding.

The four juniors stood in a dismayed group in the quad. Tracy gave them a sarcastic glance, and strolled away in the direction Harry Wharton had taken.

"If Quelch misses him—" muttered Bob uneasily.

"The missfulness will be a sine qua non!" remarked Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh dismally. "There will be a terrific row!"

"It's that fat ass, Bunter's fault! Let's go and kick Bunter!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he is—just in time! Boot him!"

"Yaroooh! Wharrer you up to?" roared Bunter in surprise and indignation. "I say, you fellows—Yoo-hoop! Look here, you rotters—I mean, dear old chaps— Oh, you swabs— Yarooop!"

Bunter fled for his fat life.

Meanwhile, Harry Wharton had

tramped away into the Cloisters. There he glanced back impatiently at the sound of a running footstep. He supposed that it was one of his friends, following him to reason with him—and he was not in the mood to be reasoned with. To his surprise, it was Tracy!

"Hold on a minute!" said Gilbert.

Wharton stared at him without speaking.

"Keep mum, if you like," said Gilbert, with a grin. "I'll do the talking! Look here, Wharton, don't be a fool! Quelch will miss you, safe as houses—"

"No bizney of yours!" snapped Wharton.

"You'll land in another row—"

"That will suit you!" said Harry bitterly. "You've wangled me into a good many rows with Quelch this term. This trouble is through your rotten trickery—"

"I got you out of a row yesterday!" said Gilbert.

"After getting me into it!"

"Oh, quite! But I'm trying to keep you out of a row this time! What's the good of asking for it like this? Do you think Miss Hazeldene would be pleased to see you at Cliff House if she knew you'd cut without leave?"

"That doesn't concern you."

"Perhaps it does," said Gilbert quietly. "I fancy Marjorie Hazeldene would be a good deal distressed if she knew you'd got into a row going over because she's asked you."

"A lot you would care!" said Wharton scornfully. "What the dickens are you giving me this for? What axe have you got to grind?"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" snapped Gilbert. "Ask for all the trouble you want, you hot-headed fool!"

Harry Wharton went on his way without replying.

Gilbert stood watching him as he clambered up the ivied wall in a secluded corner, dropped on the other side, and disappeared from sight.

He was gone—and Gilbert shrugged his shoulders. Quelch had gated him—and Quelch knew of his intended defiance the day before. It was ten to one—a hundred to one—that the Remove master would take steps to ascertain whether Wharton was still within gates. He was booked—for what he had so narrowly escaped only a day ago!

Gilbert grinned sardonically. More than once he had, as Wharton said, wangled him into rows with Quelch. If that was his game, Wharton was now playing it for him, in his passionate anger and resentment. But Gilbert's sardonic grin faded away. His face was very thoughtful as he walked back to the House.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER! A.R.P.

"THE ass!"

"The fathead!"

"The chump!"

"The terrific duffer!"

Gilbert Tracy grinned as he stopped at the doorway of Study No. 1 in the Remove, and heard those remarks within.

He could guess to whom the four members of the famous Co. were alluding! Not often did they allude to their leader in such terms. But they were worried and troubled, and rather exasperated now.

A light drizzle of rain had started to fall, and most of the fellows had come into the House. By that time, however, Harry Wharton was probably at Cliff House School—out of gates, and out of

bounds, regardless of the fact that he was gated.

His chums could quite understand him getting his back up, in the circumstances. But that did not alter the fact that there was bad trouble ahead if Quelch learned that his order had been deliberately disregarded. And it was practically certain that Quelch would.

"The ass—the silly ass!" said Bob Cherry dismally. "Ten to one Quelch will trot round to look for him! He's got his back up, and—"

"The upfulness of his absurd back is probably terrific!" remarked Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh. "It is all the fault of that execrable rat, Tracy—"

"That won't help Wharton if Quelch spots him!" grunted Johnny Bull. "The howling ass ought not to have gone out, bother him!"

"I wish he'd come in!" said Frank Nugent, with a glance from the window into the dropping rain in the quad.

"Bet you he won't, till close on lock-up!" growled Johnny. "He's asking for trouble, and he won't be happy till he gets it!"

"That rotter Tracy—" muttered Nugent.

"Tracy pulled him through yesterday!" said Bob. "He's a rat—there's no mistake about that; but that was a decent thing. But he's for it this time if Quelch—"

"No 'if' about it!" said Johnny Bull. "Quelch may be after him any minute. He's bound to miss him, and then—"

"Oh, the ass!"

"Oh, the fathead!"

"Oh, the duffer!"

The chorus recommenced. But it broke off as Tracy stepped into the study.

The four juniors looked at him inimically. Tracy, certainly, had nothing to do with Harry Wharton's present reckless escapade. But that escapade was due to the state of affairs brought about by his tortuous trickery and scheming. It was due to him that Wharton was on such disagreeable terms with his Form-master.

"Oh, get out of this!" grunted Johnny Bull. "Look here, you men, let's get out if that rat's coming in here."

"Hold on a minute!" said Tracy.

"Don't speak to us!" growled Johnny.

The idea had been mooted, in the Co., of letting Gilbert out of Coventry. But in their present worried and troubled state, the Co. were not disposed to think of that.

Gilbert laughed sarcastically.

"Quelch will be up here in a few minutes!" he said.

"Oh! How do you know that?" asked Bob, forgetting on the spot that Tracy was in Coventry. "After Wharton, do you mean?"

"Exactly!" Gilbert nodded. "I've been keeping an eye on the old bird! He's just asked Wingate of the Sixth if he's seen Wharton in the House."

"Oh crumbs!"

"He's gone into the Rag now," continued Gilbert. "You can guess why."

"To see whether Wharton's there!" said Nugent. "He will come up to the studies next."

"Just that!" said Tracy.

"Well, the game's up for him!" said Johnny Bull. "He's asked for it, and he's going to get it. This means going up to the Head."

"It does, if Quelch doesn't find him here," said Gilbert.

"How can he find him here, fathead, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,605."

when he's more than a mile away?" growled Johnny Bull. "Talk sense!"

"He might think he was here," said Gilbert. "If he does, that will see Wharton through, won't it?"

"You blithering ass, how could he think that Wharton was here, when he isn't here?" hooted Johnny. "Think he might take one of us for Wharton, you chump?"

"No. But what about me?"

"You?"

"Me!" assented Gilbert.

"Mad?" asked Bob blankly. "How could Quelch take you for Wharton, you ass, when you're nothing like him? Are you trying to be funny?"

"There are five of us here—and you five are always in a bunch together," said Tracy. "If he didn't recognise me, and you called me by Wharton's name, he would take it for granted—"

"If he didn't recognise you!" repeated Bob. "Think Quelch has gone blind, or what?"

Gilbert laughed. He shut the door of the study and crossed to the cupboard, the four juniors staring at him, puzzled and annoyed.

From the cupboard he took a small box, and opened it. That box contained Harry's gas-mask. A.R.P. was a regular institution at Greyfriars, and every fellow had to keep his gas-mask in a box in his study.

"That's Wharton's!" said Frank Nugent. "Don't meddle with that, Tracy!"

Unheeding, Tracy took the gas-mask from the box.

"I can see it's Wharton's, as it's got his name on it," he drawled. "That's why I want it."

To the amazement of the four, he stepped to the inkpot on the table and threw a splash of ink over the eye-piece, partly obscuring it.

"Let that alone, you dummy!" exclaimed Nugent. "You know it's a strict rule not to damage a gas-mask, and—"

"Oh, quite!"

"Is the fellow mad?" asked Bob Cherry, in wonder. "What the thump are you putting Wharton's gas-mask on for, Tracy?"

"We're doing some A.R.P. practice in this study!" drawled Tracy. "I'm Wharton—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"One of you fellows, for a joke, knots the fastening at the back, so that I can't get it off—"

"Eh?"

"So I can't get it off when Quelch comes in—"

"Oh!"

"You'll speak to me as Wharton—"

"Oh crikey!"

"And that will be that!" said Gilbert. "What?"

The four gazed at him. Quietly and coolly, Gilbert adjusted the gas-mask. In figure and build, he was much the same as Wharton, and they were, of course, dressed alike. With the gas-mask on, it would have been difficult to tell which member of the Remove was standing there. On a dim November afternoon, it was not easy to recognise a fellow through the eye-piece, and the splash of ink over the eye-piece made all sure.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry, as Gilbert's plan dawned on him. "You—you—you've thought this out, to pull Wharton through—"

"Why not?" Gilbert's voice came muffled from under the gas-mask, impossible to recognise. "Don't you want to see him through?"

"Yes—but you—"

"Tie it at the back," said Gilbert, in

muffled tones. "If it was only buckled, I could get it off in a tick! The idea is, that one of you fellows knotted it at the back for a joke—see?"

"Oh, my hat!"

Gilbert, evidently had thought it out! Why he had thought it out, and why he was taking the trouble and risk of pulling Quelch's leg, to save Harry Wharton from the consequences of his own recklessness, was a mystery to Harry Wharton's chums! But that mattered little—what mattered was, that it was a chance to see Wharton through—and they jumped at it.

Bob Cherry promptly knotted the fastening at the back of the mask. It was very quickly fixed, so that Gilbert could not have got it off, without a tussle, if he wanted to.

"Just in time!" breathed Nugent, as there was a step in the passage, and the door-handle turned.

But it was a fat face and a big pair of spectacles that looked in at the door.

"I say, you fellows," squeaked Billy Bunter, "old Quelch is coming up—I say, has Tracy been up to something again? Is he after Tracy, do you think?"

Bob winked at his chums.

"You won't get out of that in a hurry, Wharton!" he said. "I've fixed it safe—awfully safe! Ha, ha!"

"What's Wharton got his gas-mask on for?" asked Bunter. "Think there's going to be an air-raid this afternoon, you fathead?"

Gilbert fumbled at the back of his mask. A heavy tread could be heard in the passage, coming from the stairs. Quelch was in the offing.

"You silly ass!" came muffled tones from inside the gas-mask. "You've tied it on—why, you've knotted it! Call that a joke!"

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter. And he squeaked in great amusement to the Remove fellows in the passage. "I say, you fellows, Wharton's got his gas-mask on, and can't get it off! He, he, he!"

Three or four fellows gathered round the doorway and looked in. The junior in the gas-mask fumbled wildly with the knots at the back, and his muffled voice came in a booming roar.

"You silly ass! Call this a joke! I can't get it off—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—he, he, he! Look at Wharton—I say, he can't get his gas-mask off—he, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

Bunter had no doubt that it was Wharton in the gas-mask. Neither had the other fellows, who were looking in and laughing. And neither, it was to be hoped, would Mr. Quelch, as he arrived at the study doorway!

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER

Where Is Wharton?

MR. QUELCH looked grimly into Study No. 1.

The fellows grinning at the doorway made room for him.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from within.

As this was supposed to be a joke on Wharton, it was up to the other four members of the Co. to be laughing! So Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamsel Ram Singh, laughed industriously. In point of fact, they were not feeling much like laughing! Pulling Quelch's leg was a dangerous game—about as safe, as an amusement, as pulling the tail of a tiger in the jungle! If Quelch spotted the little game, the consequences were likely to be extremely painful for all concerned.

"Wharton!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

The five juniors in the study seemed to become suddenly aware of Quelch! They all turned round towards the door—one of them carefully keeping his back to the window, and staring at Mr. Quelch through the ink-splashed eye-piece of a gas-mask!

"Yes, sir!" came a muffled reply from within the mask.

"What are you doing, Wharton?"

"Only practising with my gas-mask, sir."

Mr. Quelch had heard Wharton's name, amid laughter, as he came up. That the five juniors in the study were the Famous Five, all the juniors round the doorway supposed, and Mr. Quelch very naturally supposed the same—especially as the fellow in the gas-mask answered at once to Wharton's name!

The stern frown on Mr. Quelch's brow relaxed.

He had suspected—he had had a very, very strong suspicion—that Wharton had left him in a rebellious mood, and that, in that mood, he had disregarded the order of "gating," and gone out of gates in defiance of that order.

With his intended rebelliousness of the previous day Quelch could not deal. But with actual rebelliousness now, he could, and would, deal with the sternest and most drastic hand.

He had looked for the captain of the Remove downstairs, without finding him. He had come up to the Remove studies—without expecting to find him! Now he had found him—not rebelliously out of gates against orders, but improving the shining hour with a little extra A.R.P. practice—and, incidentally, the victim of a little practical joke on the part of his comrades!

"Cannot you get that gas-mask off, Wharton?"

"No, sir! You see—"

"Only a joke, sir!" ventured Bob Cherry. "I've tied a knot at the back—"

"You should not have done so, Cherry!"

"Oh! No, sir!"

"Neither should there be a splash of ink on the eye-piece," said Mr. Quelch severely. "You should take better care of your gas-mask, Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!" came a muffled answer. "I can clean it, sir, as soon as I get it off—but it's knotted—"

"Gas-masks," said Mr. Quelch, "should be kept with the greatest care. I hope—we all hope—that they may never be needed! But if an emergency should arise, in which they are needed, they should be in perfect order, perfectly adjusted in readiness for use."

"Oh, yes, sir! But—"

"Suppose," said Mr. Quelch sternly, "that an emergency should arise, by unhappy chance, at this very moment—necessitating the use of a gas-mask—while you are playing this foolish joke with it."

As a matter of fact, an emergency had arisen, necessitating the use of a gas-mask—though Mr. Quelch was not aware of it. Quelch, in fact, was the emergency!

Happily, that remained unknown to the Remove master.

"Oh, sir!" murmured Bob.

"You have acted very thoughtlessly, Cherry!"

"Oh, sir!"

"Very thoughtlessly indeed!" said Mr. Quelch. "I shall not punish you, Cherry, but I warn you, and every boy here, very seriously, that nothing of this kind must ever occur again. Gas-masks are provided for serious occasions

(Continued on page 28.)

FALL IN FOR THE FINAL PARADE WITH—

The GREYFRIARS GUIDE



ALL ROUND GREYFRIARS. Cliff House

(1)

Now Cliff House stands upon a cliff
(Astonishment and unbelief!)
To climb its face is pretty stiff,
And one is sure to come to grief.
But there's a path along the edge,
Which is both picturesque and neat,
Though, if you tumble through the
hedge,
You'll fall about three hundred feet.

(2)

The Cliff House girls have always been
Good friends of ours, we must confess;
With Clara and Miss Hazeldene,
And Bessie Bunter—more or less!
They sometimes ask us there to tea
With extra-special home-made cake!
And Bunter goes there, too, and he
Rolls home again with tummy-ache!

(3)

Not long ago there was a feud
Between ourselves and Cliff House
School,
It was relentlessly pursued,
And all relations soon grew cool;
For Ponsonby had engineered
The trouble, in his usual way,
And when at length the air was cleared
We gave him cause to rue the day!



IF WINTER COMES

If winter comes with chilling snow,
We'll greet it with a hearty shout,
For when our ears and noses glow
There's sure to be some ice about.
Then at the riverside we meet,
Though slackers yawn and rotters
scowl,
Our skates are soon upon our feet.
Then loudly sings the staring Owl:
"Yaroooh! Yaroooh!"
He sits with devastating force
Upon the ice, and yells—of course!

For Bunter fancies he can skate
As gracefully as any swan.
To us he seems more like a great
Intoxicated mastodon!
He tramples, slithers, sweeps and
crawls,
With many a fierce heart-rending
howl,
And every time he slips and falls
Then loudly sings the staring Owl:
"Yaroooh! Yaroooh!"
Whenever Bunter sits on Kent
He shakes the giddy firmament!

"I say, you chaps! Oh crikey! Help!"
We cluster round, with cheerful grins,
We jam his cap upon his scalp
And slowly heave him to his pins.
"Now hold me up!" he cries—in vain.
"Leggo, you ass!" comes Johnny's
growl,
Then Bunter somersaults again,
And loudly sings the staring Owl:
"Yaroooh! Yaroooh!"
The ice gives way beneath his weight.
And Bunter meets a watery fate!

So Bunter squelches back to school,
And gurgles: "Ow! Oh lor'! Oh
crumbs!"
It always happens to the fool,
And will again, if winter comes!

THE GREYFRIARS ALPHABET

WUN LUNG,

the Chinese junior of the Remove

W's for WUN LUNG—what you
t'inkee?
Plenty nicee little Chinkee,
Always muchee blight and melly
'Long of handsome old Bob Chelly.
Dless and talk and playee gamee,
Foleign devil, allee samee.
Makee pie of lat and micce,
Plenty tasty, vellee nicee;



Makee stew of fin of sharkee,
'Long of dog who no more barkee.
Little Oriental chappee,
Always smilee, vellee happy,
If some trouble he must havee,
He takes care to say: "No savvy!"
Sometimes he is slain, or nearly,
But he's pletty decent really!

SPECIAL NEW FEATURE

Starts Next Week.

MY OWN PAGE

It's going to be real good, with
loads of laughs, too! Don't miss it!



GREYFRIARS GOOD-BYE

This is the last "Guide" for the time
being. Change is good for everyone,
and the Ed. has decided to give this
page to a different fellow each week,
and let him fill it how he likes. I shall
be taking my turn with the rest, of
course, so I'll be with you again soon.

If you have collected these "Guides,"
you will have a pretty good idea of the
Greyfriars fellows, together with the
features of the school, the routine of
school life, and the geography of the
district. In order to round the thing
off, here are a few items of general in-
formation, not so far introduced.

THE MASTERS.

HEADMASTER.—Herbert Henry
Locke, D.D., M.A.

Dr. Locke is learned, shrewd, and
very popular. He was a Fellow of
Trinity and All Souls, Oxford.

FIFTH FORM.—Paul Pontifex Prout,
M.A.

SHELL.—Horace Hacker, B.A.

UPPER FOURTH FORM.—Algernon
Capper, M.A.

REMOVE FORM.—Henry Samuel
Quelch, M.A.

THIRD FORM.—Herbert Wiggins,
M.A.

SECOND FORM.—Eusebius Twigg,
B.A., B.Sc.

FRENCH & DETENTION MASTER.
—Henri Charpentier.

LAWRENCE LASCELLES.—Maths
and Games Master.

PREFECTS.

Discipline is aided by a certain
number of prefects, who are all seniors
in the Sixth. At present there are
seven—Wingate (Captain and Head
Prefect), Gwynne, Sykes, Faulkner,
Loder, Walker and Carne. Prefects
have the privilege of "whopping"
juniors and giving them lines, but are
not allowed to impose detentions. Every
junior has the right of appeal to Head
Prefect if he is not satisfied with his
treatment, but this right is seldom
exercised, as the prefects are, as a rule,
fairly just. Prefects have the additional
privilege of being excused call-over,
having a key to the prefects' gate, and
studies to themselves. Their duties,
such as seeing juniors to their dorms or
taking charge during prep, are taken in
strict rotation. Prefects are appointed
solely at the discretion of the Head, and
are not elected, as at some schools.

And so for the present—good-bye,
everybody

—and certainly not for unthinking practical jokes."

"I—I'll remember, sir—"

"You will release Wharton at once from that gas-mask, Cherry—"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

Bob fumbled with the knots! He was not likely to get them undone in a hurry, however.

"Wharton?"

"Groogh! Yes, sir!" rumbled from within the gas-mask.

"You will take fifty lines for damaging your gas-mask!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

"Such carelessness is very reprehensible!" said Mr. Quelch. "A splash of ink on the eye-piece, may prevent you from seeing your way, in case of emergency! I can scarcely see you—"

"C-e-can't you, sir?"

"I am surprised at such carelessness in a boy usually so sensible, Wharton! Immediately the mask is removed, you will clean off that ink, taking care not to bend or crack the eye-piece!"

"Oh! Certainly, sir."

"The gas-mask should be kept in a box—"

"Ye-e-es, sir—I—I keep it in a box—"

"Adjusted ready for immediate use," said Mr. Quelch, "in perfect order, and above all, with the eye-piece clear."

"Yes, sir!"

"Lose no time in unfastening those knots, Cherry! You have acted very, very thoughtlessly."

"Oh, sir! Yes, sir!"

"Take care that nothing of the kind ever occurs again, Cherry!"

"Oh, never, sir!"

"Such a practical joke is not only foolish, but absolutely insensate," said Mr. Quelch severely. "Bear that in mind, Cherry!"

"Oh, certainly, sir!" gasped Bob.

And Mr. Quelch rustled away to the stairs—displeased by that insensate practical joke with the gas-mask; but relieved in his mind on the subject of Harry Wharton! He left the juniors in Study No. 1, feeling still more relieved!

that troubled him, serious as they might be. But the actual fact was, that he was not by nature a rebel against authority, like the Bounder; and still less did he want to give his Form-master incessant trouble, like Tracy. He had not—now that he was cool—the remotest desire to follow Gilbert's example of entering into a "feud" with his Form-master.

If Quelch had not missed him, it was all right—he could take care not to land himself in anything of the kind again! But he had little hope of that—and he was feeling inclined to kick himself, as he mingled with the fellows going into the House.

"He, he, he!"

He glanced round at a grinning fat face.

"He, he, he! You've got it off, then!" grinned Billy Bunter.

Wharton stared at him.

"Got what off, you fat ass?" he asked.

"He, he, he! I say, I wouldn't ask Cherry to fix my gas-mask next time if I were you! He, he, he!" chortled Bunter.

Which was so much Greek to Harry Wharton! He went into the House, leaving the fat Owl chortling.

He passed Mr. Quelch as he went in and his heart sank. He had little or, rather, no doubt that the Remove master would call to him, and that the trouble was just going to begin.

To his surprise and relief, Quelch did not heed him.

He went up to the Remove passage, his heart lighter, but wondering. Had not Quelch missed him, after all? He had taken it as almost a certainty; yet to judge by Quelch's manner, his Form-master merely supposed that he had come in from the quad, like other fellows, and never dreamed that he had been out of gates and out of bounds.

There was a sound of cheery voices in Study No. 1 as he arrived there. His friends were at tea there—but, as he looked in, he saw not four fellows, as he expected, but five!

He stared blankly.

Gilbert Tracy was at the table with the four. Apparently he was on friendly terms with the Co.

Wharton could only stare.

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

Harry Wharton came into the study.

"Did Quelch—" he began.

"He got after you!" grinned Bob.

"Didn't you think he would?"

"Well, yes! But—"

"All serene—you've not been missed!" said Nugent.

"Sure of that?" asked Harry.

"Yes, rather!"

"The ratherfulness is terrific."

Wharton drew a deep, deep breath.

"Well, I'm jolly glad of that!" he said. "The fact is, I don't mind owning up that I've been rather a hot-headed ass—"

"Go hon!" murmured Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"Well, it was enough to put a fellow's back up!" said Harry. "But—but I don't want any trouble with Quelch—I'm not in Tracy's line of business. A fellow has to toe the line at school—"

"I told you so!" remarked Johnny Bull.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"You did—and you were talking sense, for once!" he agreed. "Well, I'm jolly glad that there isn't going to be a thumping row! I don't want rows with Quelch—Tracy's welcome to them—"

"Thanks!" said Gilbert sarcastically.

Wharton did not heed him.

"But I'm blessed if I understand why Quelch didn't miss me, if he got after me, as you say," he went on.

"Tracy had a dodge," grinned Bob.

"Tracy?"

"With a gas-mask."

"What?"

The Co. explained together—Gilbert watching Wharton's face the while with a sarcastic grin.

Harry Wharton stood silent for a full minute, looking at him. He spoke at last.

"So you saw me through?"

"Sort of!" agreed Gilbert.

"Why?"

Gilbert grinned.

"Ask me another!" he said.

Wharton was silent again for a moment or two.

"I've seen Marjorie Hazeldene this afternoon," he said slowly. "She's told me what you did one day last week—helping her on the cliff when Bessie Bunter tumbled over! That made me think—" He paused again. "Look here, Tracy, you've done me a lot of rotten bad turns, and now you've done me a jolly good one! I can't say I make you out, but—" He paused again. "Look here, if you like to wash things out, and try making a fresh start, I'm willing."

"Done!" said Gilbert.

It was the end of Coventry—and the end, perhaps, of other things—for the outcast of the Remove.

THE END.

THE TWENTY-SECOND CHAPTER

A Fresh Start!

HARRY WHARTON dropped in over the Cloister wall in the falling dusk.

He was back in time for lock-up; but not in a happy mood. He had had time—ample time—for reflection; and the result of reflection was the uncomfortable realisation that he had made a fool of himself—or, at all events, had allowed his hasty temper to make a fool of him. It was not the first time that he had acted in haste and repented at leisure!

If Quelch had discovered his absence, he—

It was practically certain that Quelch had! And that meant severe trouble to follow—probably going up to the Head.

It was not fear of the consequences

that troubled him, serious as they might be. But the actual fact was, that he was not by nature a rebel against authority, like the Bounder; and still less did he want to give his Form-master incessant trouble, like Tracy. He had not—now that he was cool—the remotest desire to follow Gilbert's example of entering into a "feud" with his Form-master.

If Quelch had not missed him, it was all right—he could take care not to land himself in anything of the kind again! But he had little hope of that—and he was feeling inclined to kick himself, as he mingled with the fellows going into the House.

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"Go hon!" murmured Johnny Bull sarcastically.

Gilbert Tracy has said that he's willing to make a fresh start! Will he keep his word? You'll find the answer in:

"TRACY TAKES THE BLAME!"

By FRANK RICHARDS

the next yarn in this super series. Watch out for it in

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FIFTH FORM MOTOR-CYCLIST RESCUES FOX!

Huntsmen Chase Coker

Coker went for a cross-country trip on his motor-bike last Wednesday. Motor-cyclists are being held in the district shortly and Coker is hoping to achieve fame and glory in them. Coker thought that a little bit of rough-riding across the fields might get him in trim for the occasion.

The great man had no idea of riding into trouble. But running into trouble is Coker's speciality, so you won't feel surprised to hear that the Friardale Hunt turned up just when Coker was warming up to his work.

The first Coker knew about it was when he ran slap-bang into an object he at first took to be a dog. The animal rolled off the front wheel of the motor-bike into a ditch. Coker pulled up and dismounted, to see what he had done. When he looked into the ditch, it was to discover a dazed, but undamaged fox blinking up at him.

Yells and yelps sounded in the distance, accompanied by the thudding of horses' hoofs, as Coker picked up the fox. It dawned on the hero of the Fifth that the merry huntsmen were after the very fox that he had just hit!

So far as is known, Coker has no particular views for or against fox-hunting. In the usual way, it would certainly not have occurred to him to interfere in the hunt.

But on this occasion, having knocked the "puff" out of the fox, he felt that he had placed it at a disadvantage and that it was up to him to do something to put things right.

What he did would not have originated in the average brain. But it did originate in Coker's unusual headpiece.

Yanking the fox out of the ditch, he strapped it securely to the pillion-seat; then he mounted, started up the jigger again, and drove away—with the hounds in full cry after him.



Weekly Sports Shorts

By Our Special Sporting Contributor H. VERNON-SMITH

Should a strong team extend mercy to its weaker brethren?

This question must have occurred to more than one of us on Little Side last Saturday, when we overwhelmed the lowly Abbotsford team by the record score of 8-0.

Really, it seemed hardly fair on our unfortunate visitors. They tried hard. They did their best, and they didn't stop doing their best right up to the final whistle. But their best wasn't good enough!

Should we have eased up a little to give them some encouragement? I think we might have done so, myself; but we just carried on relentlessly.

Poor old Abbotsford! They certainly are in the doldrums this year. They played at home on Wednesday against Redclyffe and lost 3-1, which brings up their lamentable record to six games without a single point.

But they are certainly tryers; and

you can take it from me that they will turn the corner one of these days!

By the way, we must give Wharton a pat on the back for scoring six goals out of our eight. He played a delightful game. If the match had been attended by "spotters" from the professional teams, they would certainly have gone down on their hands and knees in their endeavours to get him to sign up for them!

Notice how Bagshot are climbing up the table? They won two home games this week, beating St. Jude's 2-1 and Rookwood 4-0, and their goal average is a very respectable one. So far, we have not played against them. They are only two points behind us, and it looks as if we shall have to be on our best behaviour when we do meet them.

Rookwood's record must be a disappointment to Jimmy Silver, who was confident, when I met him during the summer vac., that his team would be second to none. Is it possible that the feud between Classics and Moderns, which I hear is especially strong this term, is upsetting Rookwood form? I commend the sug-

The GREYFRIARS HERALD

No. 319. EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON. November 19th, 1938.



"NO MAN NEED STARVE AT GREYFRIARS!"

Prisoner Fed in Court

William George Bunter, a vagrant, was brought up on remand before the Remove Court, charged with purloining provender to the value of 2s. 6d.

Prisoner, a youth of abnormal girth, proved to be too large for the dock and had to be accommodated at a solicitor's table.

Judge Wharton (sternly): You are charged with purloining provender—or, to put it in lay language, pinching provisions—the property of one Peter Todd, from Study No. 7 in the Remove passage, on the umpteenth day of November, nineteen-hundred and thirty-eight. What's the plea? Guilty or not guilty?

Prisoner: Not guilty, your honour! I wouldn't dream for an instant of taking tuck that didn't belong to me. In any case, if Peter Todd says it was worth two-and-sixpence-a-ha'penny, all I can say is, he got a dashed bad bargain! (Laughter in Court.)

At this juncture, Mr. Peter Todd, the prosecutor, rose to remark that Bunter, as usual, was talking out of the back of his neck. What was the good of his pleading not guilty when he had admitted his guilt before a dozen witnesses? Why, he had even offered to pay for the tuck out of his next postal-order!

Judge Wharton: Sounds as if he thought you'd be in need of the money in your declining years! (Laughter.)

After being warned by his honour, Bunter decided to plead guilty under strong provocation. There was a sensation in Court when he added that the provocation was the fact that at the time of the felony he was starving.

Judge Wharton: Starving? Starving at a place like Greyfriars? I can hardly credit it! How long was it since you had had your last meal?

Prisoner: Please, your honour, it was half-an-hour, at least. But even then, it was a mere snack. Not more than a pound of sausages, a dozen rolls, half an apple-pie, and a pound of chocolates! (Ironical cries of "Shame!" and laughter.)

Judge Wharton (sternly): Silence in Court! This is no laughing matter! Here is a man who doesn't get enough to eat. He should! I'll go further and say, that while this Court is sitting, no man need starve at Greyfriars!

Amid a buzz of excitement, his honour then took some money from the Poor Box and sent out the Court usher to buy some jam tarts and ginger-pop at the tuck-shop. On the usher's return, his honour had a whispered conversation with P.C. Bull before passing sentence.

Judge Wharton: Prisoner at the bar! Your plea of "guilty" is accepted. I now sentence you to be fed with jam tarts and ginger-pop. Constable! You will feed the prisoner in the manner prescribed by the law!

Prisoner: Oh, thanks, awfully, your honour! I must say—ow-ow! Who-ooop! Whooooooh! Grooooooh!

The rest of Bunter's remarks were entirely unintelligible, owing to the manner in which the feeding had apparently been prescribed by law. The feeding, it seemed, had to be done by stuffing jam tarts into the prisoner's mouth six at a time and pouring a bottle of ginger-pop on top of them.

Prisoner was later carried out on an ambulance, gasping painfully. The Court arose amid scenes of considerable hilarity and confusion.

Some juniors at Greyfriars say it will be a long time before Bunter purloins provender again. But a far greater number of them think entirely different!

A POW-WOW WITH YOUR EDITOR

A reader who, with rare frankness, dubs himself "Nosey Parker," has written to ask me for a precise definition of what "out of bounds" means at Greyfriars. "Are the Cross Keys and similar resorts the only places that are out of bounds for you fellows?" he inquires.

By no means. "Nosey Parker." Quite a number of other places besides low-class taverns are taboo to us. It is rather difficult, however, to give you

who were sitting in a row on the gate, hurriedly jumped down and opened the gate for him; and Coker roared through on to the broad highway, performed a skid worthy of any speedway star, and then tore away up the road towards Greyfriars in a cloud of dust.

Tubb and his pals hurriedly made themselves scarce when a pack of snarling hounds and a score or so of the nobility and gentry of the Friardale district came galloping through the gateway after Coker. So did everyone else who found himself in the way; in fact, the Friardale Hunt on this occasion could not have cleared the road better had they been mounted on tanks instead of horses!

There was a sensation, when Coker came roaring through the gateway at Greyfriars with a struggling fox tied to his pillion-seat.

There was almost a riot when the Hunt swept in after him with a clatter of hoofs and yells of "Tally-ho!"

Coker made good use of his superior knowledge of Greyfriars topography. He led the hounds a merry chase that landed them eventually in the school stables. Meanwhile, he had dismounted, released the fox and carried it, struggling, through some out-buildings into a field adjoining the playing-fields. And the Friardale Hunt failed completely to pick up the scent again.

As a result of his little adventure, Coker, for the first time in history, is quite a hero with the Greyfriars Lower School.

What the hunting people in the neighbourhood think about him we hardly like to tell you!

AUTHOR, PRODUCER & STAR ACTOR!

Wibley, incidentally, told a "Greyfriars Herald" reporter that the secret of Skinner's success was the order he had given before the show started.

The order was: "Be yourself!"

Smaller parts in the play are taken with distinction by Frank Nugent, Mark Turpin, Buffalo Bill and the hero of "Eric, or Little by Little" and rolled them all into one, you might have something faintly like this amazing Corsican. But how Wibley revels in the part! He makes the bandit almost human!

For a hero of this kind you need a particularly angelic heroine. Miss Marjorie Hazeldene, of Cliff House School, who takes the part, fills the bill admirably in this respect. In colourful peasant-girl costume she looks more charming and good-looking than ever, and her natural sweetness finds full expression in the exceedingly sugary lines Wibley has given her.

We understand that Wibley had some difficulty in finding a suitable man to play the villain. Brown, Bulstrode, and Bolsover each had a go at the part, and in due course received the order of the boot. Finally, Wibley chose Harold Skinner; and a happier choice he could hardly have made. As a loathsome, double-crossing, unscrupulous captain of the militia, Skinner is really superb. Boos, catcalls, and hisses greeted him from all parts of the house whenever he appeared on Tuesday evening.

After many slides, William Wibley's new play, "Beauty and the Bandit," was performed on Tuesday evening.

Readers who are familiar with Wibley's work will hardly need to be told that the audience had a really good time. Whatever the quality of his material, Wibley always manages to "put over" something worth hearing. "Beauty and the Bandit" is no exception to the rule.

To say this, is to imply that the play is a masterpiece. In our opinion, it is nothing of the kind. But nobody can deny that it is entertaining; and who is it considered that Wibley wrote and produced it entirely by himself and took the leading part himself in the bargain, it would be churlish to criticise it too rigorously. Wibley's record-breaking energy, in fact, takes the wind clean out of the critic's sails!

The play, which is concerned with the adventures of a Corsican bandit, is frankly melodramatic and the incidents are sensational and highly coloured. Duels, battles, kidnappings, and hair-raising escapes follow each other in swift succession until you feel quite breathless about it. Nobody can complain of lack of action in this production!

The characters in the piece are drawn with a great deal of subtlety, but at all events, they are. The bandit hero,

Wibley Breaks Records in New Play

played by Wibley, is probably the most heroic hero ever seen on any stage. If you took Robin Hood, Dick Turpin, Buffalo Bill and the hero of "Eric, or Little by Little" and rolled them all into one, you might have something faintly like this amazing Corsican. But how Wibley revels in the part! He makes the bandit almost human!

For a hero of this kind you need a particularly angelic heroine. Miss Marjorie Hazeldene, of Cliff House School, who takes the part, fills the bill admirably in this respect. In colourful peasant-girl costume she looks more charming and good-looking than ever, and her natural sweetness finds full expression in the exceedingly sugary lines Wibley has given her.

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LAST WEEK AT GREYFRIARS

Rumours were prevalent that the Ghost of Greyfriars is once more on the move. The Remove Spook-hunting Society, which proposes to investigate the matter, says that reports have reached them of a pale, paralysing Presence, passing quivering quadrants, quaking queerly. So it sounds as if they will have to mind their p's and q's.

Walker of the Sixth was called to the Head's study after unknowingly transferring to his trousers a mixture of soot and treacle someone had left on a chair in his study. Walker, who was invited to sit down, remained with the Head discussing school work for half-an-hour and left on very friendly terms with the Beak. But we understand, all the same, that his visit left a very unpleasant impression.

Fisher T. Fish intends to start a Christmas Club. The club's slogan will be "Pay what you like—have what you can get!"

A series of thunderous roars sent many scuttling for air-raid shelters under the impression that a war had started. It turned out to be Mr. Prout snoring during his afternoon nap.



CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE

	P.	W.	D.	L.	F.A.	Pts.
1. Greyfriars	6	5	1	0	21	3 11
2. St. Jim's	6	5	0	1	14	4 10
3. Bagshot	6	4	1	1	12	4 9
4. Higheliffe	6	3	1	2	13	7
5. Rylecombe	6	2	2	2	11	12 6
G.S.						
6. St. Jude's	6	2	1	3	8	14 5
7. Rookwood	5	2	0	3	10	11 4
8. Redclyffe	6	1	1	4	6	9 3
9. Claremont	5	0	3	2	6	12 3
10. Abbotsford	6	0	0	6	2	21 0