

**BUMPER NEW STORIES—FREE REAL PHOTO!
IN THIS ISSUE!**

No. 775. Vol. XXII. Week ending Dec. 16th, 1932.

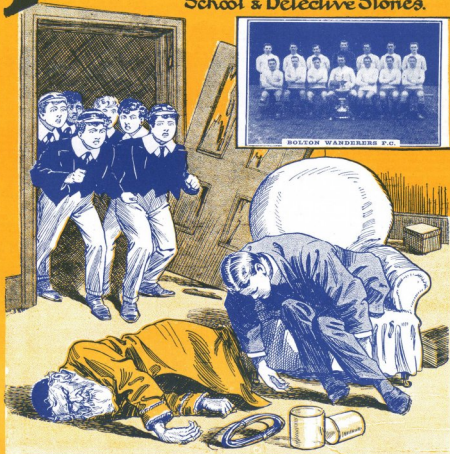
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School & Detective Stories.



BOLTON WANDERERS F.C.



THE GREYFRIARS CHUMS ANSWER THE CALL FROM THE AIR!

(A dramatic episode from the grand long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. inside.)

Published by Howard Baker Press Ltd, 27a Arterberry Road, Wimbledon, London, S. W. 20.



A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS PROGRAMME OF NEW SCHOOL & DETECTIVE TALES! FREE REAL PHOTOS!



OUR GRAND CHRISTMAS NUMBER NEXT WEEK!

I HAVE very much pleasure in informing all my reader-chums that I have been able to secure a capital budget of stories for our grand Christmas number, which will be on sale next Monday morning.

Mr. Frank Richards has come forward with one of the finest stories he has ever written. He has called it

"THE GHOST OF MAULVEVER TOWERS!"

and I can assure you all that it is a really GREAT story.

The Famous Five go to Maulvever Towers with Lord Maulvever, and there they meet one Brian Maulvever, who had once been a rotter, but who recently turned over a new leaf—so he says. However, Bob Cherry soon finds out that Brian Maulvever is not quite the nice fellow he thinks himself to be, and the juniors keep a wary eye on the gentleman.

However, that part of the holiday is not the exciting part, by any means. In Maulvever Towers there is a suit of armour which had been worn by Mauly's ancestor, Sir Falke Maulvever. It is believed that when the armour, or part of it, falls to the ground, there will be a death in the family. The juniors are horrified to find the gauntlet of the suit fall to the ground when they are talking with Mauly; and, despite his pluck, Mauly is not a little alarmed.

Then follows a most amazing series of thrilling incidents and adventures, and it is some time before the Greyfriars juniors can really settle down and enjoy their Christmas holidays.

This story, I want to emphasise, is one of the finest stories I have ever read. So pleased was I when I read it that I immediately wrote to Mr. Frank Richards and offered him my heartiest congratulations. His reply, by the way, was typical of him, for it read: "Appreciate thanks, old knut! Tell the boys there are better years to come. I'm bang in form!"—FRANK RICHARDS.

So there we are, chippies!

"THE TERROR AT THE GRANGE!"

is the title of our next story of Ferrers Locke, the amazingly clever detective.

Great distress is caused in a certain household by the appearance of a mysterious face in all manner of places. No one can seem to get away from it, and, in sheer terror, they appeal to Ferrers Locke to help them.

Ferrers Locke takes up the case, and has to go through a very hot time before he can play on record the story of his adventures, in which, of course, Jack Drake, his wonderful assistant, takes part.

Perhaps the detective's own words, written at the end of his record, best describe the yarn:

"Christmas Day. Terror at the Grange, accurately recorded. Final observation. One of the most intricate and thrilling cases I ever undertook to solve. I was up against it from the start, and I have to thank Drake, my boy, a very great deal that I am able to recall yet another successful effort.—F. L."

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS NUMBER OF THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD."

Harry Wharton sent us a special number for our next issue, and I must say the Famous Five and editorial staff of that excellent little paper of theirs have come up to the scratch with some really excellent stories and articles. Dicky Nugent was prevailed upon, with very little difficulty, to write a story—and it is some story! He has called it "THE BOY WHO LOST HIS TRANE!" and this time Dicky fairly shines!

There are many other humorous and interesting stories and articles, and I do so hope that not one of you will miss our next week's bumper number, for the supplement alone is worth every bit of the twopenny charged for the MAORRY LIBRARY in its entirety!

THAT CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

It is at this season of the year that boys and girls are being asked: "What would you like for a Christmas present?"

There are many answers to this very interesting question, and doubtless many of the answers want some finding, after all the uncles and aunts and cousins have put the question.

I want to help you out in this ticklish business. You want something which will last, not a trumpery toy which will break or disappear, or lose its interest in a few days. You want something that you can take up and look at again and again, and yet be interested.

I have endeavoured to find this "something" for you, and, judging by the letters I have received, I have succeeded. I refer to the "HOLIDAY ANNUAL."

This volume contains something over three hundred and sixty pages, and is filled with splendid stories of all your favourite characters, adventure and sporting stories, articles, tricks, puzzles, games, verses, plates, coloured and photographic; in fact, everything the heart of the real British boy and girl wishes for in the way of literature.

For several years now the "HOLIDAY ANNUAL" has been acknowledged to be the finest of all Christmas volumes,

and this year's issue is the finest of the lot.

So, if you have not already secured a copy of the "HOLIDAY ANNUAL," don't be shy in saying what you want when the question is asked you, "What would you like for a Christmas present?"

You cannot be disappointed. It is impossible, with such a REMARKABLE VOLUME in your hands.

COMING SHORTLY.

This week sees the last of our FIRST series of Free Real Photos. There are more Photos coming shortly, and I advise all my many readers to keep a sharp look-out for the appearance of the SECOND SERIES of Free Real Photos. Watch this page for further news!

Correspondence.

"Merry and Bright" (Maidstone).—Sorry you think I am deficient of a sense of humour. I'm not; I have a joke on a page as much as anybody. Perhaps my sense of humour doesn't reveal itself very much in my writings; but it isn't everybody who can be a Tom Brown or a Bob Cherry.

"A. J. B. (Wansworth).—"I think you ought to publish a Special Ghost Number, Harry."—So I will—when winter comes.

R. H. P. (Pimstead).—"I've got a grasshopper, a mouth organ, and a holy and arrow for sale."—Sorry, old man, but this is not the "Bazaar, Exchange, and Mart!"

Mabel (Manchester).—"How do you get on when you're riding on Coker's motor-bike?"—We don't. We get off! Next, please!

W. J. P. (Liverpool).—"Is Mr. Proug really such a shocking bad marksman?"—Well, we shouldn't cure to back him against Robin Hood!

"Tubby" (Bath).—"I love Billy Hunter like a brother."—Then I suggest you send him a postal order as a token of your regard!

Ethel H. (Harrgate).—"What has become of Archie Howell?"—He's still alive and kicking, and will possibly come into the limelight later on.

Jimmy R. (Repton).—"Your stories fairly make me shrick. I take your paper every week."—I'm very grateful, Jimmy R. What a discerning chap you are!

A. W. M. (Mansfield).—"Does Dick Penfold write for pleasure or for profit?"—For both!

"Old Reader" (Birmingham).—"There used to be a fellow at Greyfriars called Carberry—an awful pounder. I believe."—Let the dead past bury its dead!

"Muriel" (Brighton).—"I have a warm place in my heart for you, Harry."—The result of the heat wave, I take it? C. Wm. Denby, 37, Highfield Avenue, Grimsby, Lincs, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere.

F. Willer Proad, 321, Broadway, & Vancouver, B.C., Canada, wishes to correspond with readers, ages 17-19, in all parts of the British Empire, regarding stamp collecting and news items of interest.

P. Rose, 662, High Road, Tottenham, N. 17, wishes to correspond with Scouts anywhere. All letters answered.

Your Editor.

Drop a line, at any rate, to your old pal, the Editor!

AN IDEAL
CHRISTMAS
PRESENT:—
THE
"HOLIDAY
ANNUAL!"
NOW ON SALE.

No. 775. Vol. XXII.

Week ending Dec. 16th, 1922.

The Magnet

28
Library PAGES

NEXT WEEK'S
ISSUE WILL BE
A
SPECIAL
CHRISTMAS
NUMBER!



WIRELESS AT GREYFRIARS! A most amazing series of adventures follows the appearance of a wireless receiving set at Greyfriars. Strange calls for help are heard over the wireless waves. Who is calling? What is happening? You will enjoy reading this grand long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Mysterious Todd!

"SALMON and cucumber!" Bob Cherry uttered that remark as he emerged from the School House in company with his four chums, Wharton, Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Inky—who, with himself, made up that formidable combination known as the Famous Five.

"Salmon and cucumber," he repeated, pausing on the steps and smacking his lips in thoughtful anticipation of that succulent dish.

"Or even sardines," observed Johnny Bull.

"Yes, even sardines."

"Or rock cakes," put in Wharton.

"Or watercress—if only twopenny-worth," murmured Nugent sadly.

"Even the dishonourable brown bread and butterfulness would be better than the kick in the eye!" purred Hurren Jamset Ram Singh, the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur, in his quaint version of the King's English.

The chums of the Remove regarded each other pathetically for a moment.

"Let's try again," suggested Bob Cherry, diving his hand into his trouser-pocket. Four hands entered the trouser-pockets of their respective owners; but when they were withdrawn again there followed the heartrending but not uncommon spectacle of five juniors staring disconsolately at their

empty palms. It was the third time this poignant little scene had been enacted that evening, and according to theory the third time should have been lucky. But in this case the third time was as unlucky as the first.

"Not a bean!" growled Wharton.

"And it's already well past tea-time!" put in Frank Nugent.

As Nugent had said, it was already well past tea-time, and the exchequer of the Famous Five was as devoid of cash as a cucumber is of sunbeams.

The chums were hungry—very hungry indeed; and since they had missed tea in Hall, unless they could raise some cash from somewhere, they would have to remain so. And hunger was a thing they disliked quite as much as did Billy Bunter himself. But there seemed to be no help for it.

"Well, what are we going to do about it?" began Bob gloomily. "I propose we—"
The brawly Removeite broke off short, and stared at the form of Perry Bolsover, who had just emerged from the School House.

"Just the chap I've been looking for," he exclaimed delightedly.

"Good; I've been looking for you fellows, too. It's about tea—"

"Splendid," chorused the Famous Five as one man—or one boy. We'll join you at once."

"Heat, heat."

"The pleasantness is terrific!"

Bolsover stared.

"I'll buy it," he rejoined, looking puzzled.

"Right-oh, then, we'll all have it together in our study."

"Three cheers for the founder of the feast!"

"Hurrah!"
And before Bolsover could realize what was happening he found himself surrounded by his five excited Form-fellows, who seemed to be doing their level best to knock holes in his back.

"You silly asses!" he roared, breaking away from their demonstrations of affection. "I ain't going to stand a jewel! I've missed tea in Hall, and I'm broke. I wanted to borrow a bob—"

"Broke!" hooted Bob Cherry. "Do you mean to say the feed's off? Do you mean to say you didn't intend to invite us to tea? Do you mean to say—"

The fighting man of the Remove gasped for breath. "Oh, my only aunt," he concluded weakly, "Bolsover broke, too!"

Bolsover stared hard at the brawly Removeite for a moment, and then, as the truth dawned upon him, he burst into a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Funny, ain't it?" snorted Johnny Bull. "When you said you'd buy it, we thought you meant tea, you silly ass. What's the good of you coming to borrow a bob off us? You might have known we were broke—"

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"There's only one thing for it," cut in Wharton. "We'd better join forces and see what we can do. Come on, you fellows."

"Half a moment, though!" exclaimed Bolsover excitedly. "I'd forgotten—absolutely slipped my memory altogether." He lowered his voice almost to a whisper. "What about Todd?"

"Todd," repeated Wharton, jizzled. "Well, what about him?"

"He's his birthday, you jabberwocks; he's sure to be in funds to-day—"

Bob Cherry whistled.

"By jove," he said. "Good for you, Percy. I remember now Todd had a registered letter just after dinner from an uncle or somebody—the same uncle he shares with the noble Alonso, most likely. Good old Uncle Ben; he's turned up trumps at last. This way, my merry men."

And led by the fighting man of the moment, the remainder of the Famous Five, with Bolsover bringing up the rear, made a bee-line for the study occupied by the one and only Peter Todd. When they arrived there they found a number of other Removites, their memories jogged no doubt by the news that Peter had received a registered letter, anxious to wish him many happy returns of the day.

Undeterred by the crowd, Wharton & Co. pushed their way into the study and proceeded to pat the recipient of the belated birthday honours on the back, with more vigour than discretion.

"Wow—stop it!" roared the unfortunate junior, making a futile effort to elude their demonstrations of affection. "You're breaking my back, you lunatics! Wow—grow!"

"Many happy returns, Toddy, old marrow!"

"May you never grow less handsome!"

"You howling maniacs!" howled Peter Todd, breaking loose at last and retreating round the study table. "There's no need to call a fellow, is there?"

"It's all right, old scuzz," rejoined Wharton grinning. "We've toddled along to the merry old birthday feed."

"Feed" echoed Todd. "There's not going to be any feed. Who's been pulling your leg, Wharton?"

"But didn't you get a registered letter to-day?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"You've got the tin all right, I suppose."

"I've got fifty quid—" began Todd.

"Good! Then come and stand tuck." "But I'm keeping the fifty quid," concluded Peter, rubbing his damaged shoulder. "The feed's off; in fact, it was never on. I'm not standing any feed and never intended to do so. You've backed a loser, my pippins."

"But aren't you going to buy any ginger-pop?" demanded a dozen voices at once. "Do you mean to say you are going to stick to the whole fifty quid without pushing the boat out?"

Todd nodded.

"That is," he began, "not at the moment. You see—that I mean to say is, there's no feed coming off, as I said before. There wouldn't be enough to stand everyone I wanted to a feed—not a good feed, at least—so I've got another idea. I'm going to blow the tin in a way that we can all share equally. I'm going to—"

But what Todd was going to do did not seem to interest the Removites. A feed was all that would have done that, and since that was off, they had no

further use for him. Fifty pounds was a lot of money to be in the possession of a junior—so was five pounds, for that matter—and that a Removite, Peter Todd in particular, should have that sum of money and refuse to "push the boat out," as Bob Cherry termed it, seemed almost inconceivable. The juniors were disappointed.

"What I'm going to do—" began Peter again. But he was cut short by a voice from the back of the crowd.

"Shyluck!"

Peter flushed.

"It's not that, you fellows," he said quietly. "When I say I'm going to spend it in a way we all can share, I mean it. I don't think anyone can honestly accuse me of being mean—"

"It's all right, old man!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "I admit it's a bit of a shock to discover there's no ginger-pop flying around, but I suppose you know your own business best. What's the scheme you are thinking of for the expenditure of the merry old donbombs, then?"

Peter hesitated before replying.

"I'm afraid I can't tell you that just at the moment," he replied. "But it'll take every penny of the fifty quid—if not a bit more."

ARE YOU LISTENING IN?

If you have a wireless receiving set you will want to get the best results from it now that Broadcast Wireless has commenced.

"POPULAR WIRELESS" will show you how to get the maximum results from your apparatus. If you haven't a set, "Popular Wireless" will tell you what to get and how to get it. It is on sale every Friday, price 3d., and is packed with reliable information and hints for Wireless enthusiasts.

"Can't you give us a hint!" put in Bob Cherry curiously.

"No; it would spoil the surprise of the whole thing if I did."

"I say, you fellows—"

The voice of William George Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, made itself heard from the back of the crowd which, with the tidings of Todd's wealth, had by now gathered outside his study door.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Really, Wharton, I should have thought you would have had better manners than to have interrupted a fellow when he's talking. I was going to make a ripping suggestion for getting a jolly good feed—"

Wharton, who had been about to push his way through the crowd and sling the fat Removite down the passage, missed Bunter's mention of a feed but reminded him that he was still hungry—a thing he had momentarily forgotten in the excitement of congratulating Peter Todd on the anniversary of his entry into the world.

"What's the suggestion, tubby?" he asked at length.

The Owl of the Remove pushed his way into the study, and blinked at the captain of the Remove through his big spectacles.

"Really, Wharton, you might give a

chance. How can I talk when you are howling at me?"

Wharton glared.

"What's the suggestion, tubby?" he repeated.

Billy Bunter blinked uncertainly, and looked in the direction of Peter Todd.

"Todd's got fifty quid, ain't he?" he asked.

"Well!"

"And he won't shell out," went on Bunter, warming to his subject. "Well, my idea is that you chaps should bump him while I collar the loot—Oh!"

Bunter did not mean to make that remark; indeed, he would not have done so without mature consideration, and with some object in view; but it was forced from him before he had time to think about it, by the application of one of Bob Cherry's big boots to a tender part of his anatomy.

"You fat duffer!" roared the burly Removite, regaining his balance preparatory to taking another kick. "You howling parrot! You—you—"

Bunter fled.

There was something about Bob's conversation that did not seem to appeal to him. His fat brain grasped the idea that his ripping suggestion was not going to meet with the popularity he had anticipated. Indeed, if he needed any confirmation of this, it was amply supplied by the series of howls and cat-calls which greeted him as he pushed his way through the crowd into the Remove passage.

"You burbling bandit!"

"Bump him!"

But William George Bunter had no desire to be bumped; his one and all-absorbing ambition at that particular moment was to place as great a distance between himself and the angry juniors in and around Todd's study as possible. He fled down the passage, grunting and wailing like an avowed porpoise, swaying from side to side like an oil-tanker in distress.

"Now we've got rid of that fat high-wayman," grinned Bob Cherry, carefully dusting the toe of his boot with a pocket-handkerchief, "we'll settle down to business again. What about this birthday feed, Toddy?"

"The feed's off, as I said before," replied Peter uncomforably. "You can believe me or not, just as you like; but as I have already said, I'm reserving the brass for something else—"

"And you're not going to tell us what that something else is!"

"Nunno! I'm sorry to disappoint you fellows, and all that, but for the time being it must remain a secret."

"All right," said Bob, making no pretence of signifying his belief. "If you find the corpses of five fellows in Study No. 1 to-morrow, you'll know we have all starved to death—and our blood will be on your head!" And, turning on his heel, the burly Removite left the study, followed by the remainder of the Famous Five.

The other juniors, having come to the conclusion that further waiting for a share of the fifty pounds was useless, wisely followed their lead.

"I wonder what the thump the beggar has got up his sleeve?" murmured Frank Nugent, as the chums made their way to their own study. "It must be something big to cost fifty quid."

"I don't wonder! It's terrific!"

The news of Todd's decision to keep the money instead of honoring the ancient custom of standing a feed to the Form generally, soon spread to the

An extra-long thrilling Christmas tale of the Chums of Greyfriars next week!

remainder of the Removites, and great was the speculation as to what his intentions were.

But no one seemed to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion, and with the passing of a few days the matter was almost forgotten.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Haunted Study!

SNORE!

The vibrating snore of William George Bunter echoed across the Removite dormitory. A hoarse whizzed across from the direction of the bed occupied by Johnny Ball, landed with a thud on the recumbent form of the sleeping Owl, and then dropped to the floor with a bang.

Crash!

Bunter turned in his bed and muttered something inaudible. He was dreaming, and the subject of his dream was an enormous pea, the summit of which could only be reached with the aid of a ladder. At that moment it would have taken more than a boot to have aroused him from his slumbers, but the turn he had made, occasioned by the impact of the boot, had the desired effect of causing his booming snore to cease.

Ten minutes later the dormitory was plunged into silence, and every junior was fast asleep.

Boon!

Elven o'clock tolled slowly from the school clock in the old ivy-hung tower. By now the whole school, with the exception perhaps of a few Sixth Form prefects and a few masters, were in bed.

The great corridors and passages were as quiet as the grave. The swooshing of the wind through the old elms in the Close outside, and the rustle of the ivy on the walls, was magnified tenfold by the brooding silence which pervaded the ancient building, and even the occasional rustle of a rat behind the oak wainscoting in the study echoed eerily up the passages, the sound faintly reaching the nearest dormitory.

Then from the silence of the night came a strident crash.

Poin-ti-om-pom, pom-pom!

The sound came booming and echoing up the passages, with what seemed a deafening roar.

Bang! Crash! Bang!

Ta-ta-ra-r-a-bomp!

In the fraction of a second the entire Removite, even including Billy Bunter, were wide awake.

"What the thump—"

"What on earth—"

Bang! Crash! Bang!

Harry Wharton jumped out of bed in great alarm, and switched on the lights. He searched hurriedly round the dormitory as though in search of some practical joker. But he noted that the entire Form were in their allotted beds, and the expressions of amazement on their faces was sufficient to assure him that they were as surprised at the extraordinary sounds emanating from without as he was himself. The Removites listened for a repetition of the noise, but for a few moments there was silence.

"That's extraordinary, you chaps!" exclaimed Wharton, looking puzzled. "I shouldn't think anyone is as enough to start larking about at this hour of the night. It must be well past eleven by now."

The Removites, who were too puzzled to make a reply, remained listening.

Rub-a-dub-dub! Rub-a-dub-dub!

This time, more distinct than before, the mysterious sounds echoed up the dormitory passage. Wharton's face took on a grim expression, and, reaching out for a towel, proceeded to tie the end into a hard knot.

"Come on, you chaps," he said. "If there's any practical joker at work he's going to get a rough time."

A number of Removites, headed by Bob Cherry, jumped out of bed and proceeded to arm themselves with various implements of assault. Frank Nugent stuffed a hard tennis ball which he found in his locker into the end of an old football stocking, while Bob Cherry armed himself with a large-sized sponge dipped in cold water. A few seconds later, to the accompaniment of the weird sounds, bangs, and crashes which still continued to come from along the passage, the juniors moved across the dorm and stepped outside into the dark.

"Easy does it," whispered Vernon Smith. "If we don't make a noise, we'll catch this funny merchant bending."

"Hi-ti-tiddy-hi-ti-y!"

This time the bangs and crashes gave place to a raucous voice singing on a top note, and at the end of the passage the Removites observed a figure stealing by the window, thrown into silhouette by the moonlight.

"That's the merchant!" breathed Frank Nugent, gripping his weapon ready for action. "Let him have it!"

And with a roar the Removites dashed at the moving figure and proceeded to lam into it for all they were worth.

"Biff! Wallop! Thud!"

"Wow! Yerooooogh!"

The Removites waded in with a vengeance, probably doing more damage to each other in the dark than they did the object of their attack.

Within a few seconds the midnight wanderer found himself on the floor, beneath a crowd of struggling and shouting Removites.

"Hold the chump down, you chaps!" shouted Bob Cherry, in a stentorian voice. "I'll teach him to spoil our beauty sleep. Clear away from his napper while I give the bogger a shampoo."

In response to Bob's request, the victim's head was exposed, only to be deluged a moment later by a stream of icy-cold water wrung from the big sponge the fighting man of the Removite had brought with him from the dormitory.

Swoosh!

"Grass-oh-oh-yow!"

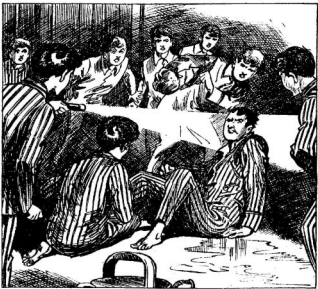
"I'll teach you to run a one-man jazz band in the middle of the night!" roared the redoubtable Bob, as he soaked the water up from the floor, preparatory to administering another shampoo. "I'll teach you—"

"Stop it at once, you young asses!" came in a choking voice from the Removite's unfortunate victim. "Stop it at once, I tell you!"

There was something in that voice which seemed vaguely familiar to Wharton, but as yet he could not be at all sure.

"Hold hard a moment, chaps!" he shouted. "Let's see who the giddy joker is!"

With a slightly uneasy feeling the



"Hold hard a moment!" shouted Wharton. "Let's see who the giddy joker is!" With a slightly uneasy feeling the crowd of juniors moved back, and a beam of light from an electric torch cut through the darkness. There followed a gasp of amazement. "Wingale!" (See Chapter 2.)

A tale that will grip you from start to finish—a tale of Christmas adventure—next week!

crowd of juniors moved back, and a beam of light from an electric torch belonging to Tom Redwing cut through the darkness and picked out the face of the form on the floor. There followed a sharp gasp of amazement.

"Wingate!"

"My hat!"

Brown and Bulstrode, who had thoughtfully sooted themselves on Wingate's chest, quickly vacated their seats and passed.

"Why the thump didn't you say who you were before!" growled Bulstrode, rubbing his eye where the knee of the school captain had caught him.

"The yawfulness is terrific!"

Wingate snorted savagely and struggled to his feet. His pyjamas,

doing out of bed? Why weren't you all in the dorm?"

"You see, Wingate," began Wharton uncertainly, "we—that is to say, I—was—that is—"

"What were you juniors doing out of bed?" demanded Wingate, misunderstanding the cause of Wharton's confusion.

"We were looking for the duffer who was kicking up that shindy a moment before you came along," explained Johnny Bull. "We thought you were him; and that's why we walloped you. Sorry we caught the wrong chap."

"Chap kicking up a shindy!" repeated Wingate, slightly puzzled.

"Why, I thought it was you young lads? That's why I was coming up the pass—"

The Owl of the Remove, who, until the fray in the passage was over, had kept very much in the background, his motto being "Safety first," blinked at the school captain with an expression of what he thought was injured innocence, but which in reality was one of fear and apprehension.

"Really, Wingate, I—I—"

"Have you moon practising any more of your contrivance stunts, Bunter?" demanded the Sixth-Former, with an expression that boded ill—very ill indeed—for the Removeite if he had. "Come on, answer me!"

Bunter failed to supply any answer to the prefect's question, for the simple reason that before he had time to do so the answer supplied itself in the form of

FOOTBALLERS IN THE LIMELIGHT!

BOLTON WANDERERS F.C.

All About the Famous BOLTON WANDERERS Football Team, which forms the Subject of Our Grand Free Real Photo.



WHEN football on organized lines as we know it to-day was first started forty-four years ago, Bolton Wanderers were one of the twelve first members of the League. In those days they played at a ground which was known as Pike's Lane, but now the "Trotters" have moved to a much more imposing-looking enclosure at Burnden Park. Right through the years since that long-ago start, the Wanderers have always been doing things to uphold the county of Lancashire as the real home of the sport, and also they have been popular right down the line. One would not go so far as to suggest that the Wanderers have ever had what might be called a really great team. For instance, in all their history they have never won either the Championship of the First Division or the English Cup. Indeed, so far as the League is concerned, even second place has eluded their grasp, but they came third on the list in the 1910-11 season, and attained to a similar height in 1920-21, when their record of fifty-two points for the campaign was considerably more than they had ever previously earned in the top class. About their exploits in the Cup a good story is told. People who had not followed the fortunes of the "Trotters" through years past, would make a habit of writing to the local

newspaper asking if the Wanderers had ever won the Cup. On one occasion the editor of this paper, evidently a little bit upset at the constant repetition of the same question, published the following reply: "No, the Wanderers have never won the Cup, and they never will." One would hesitate to go quite so far as that in regard to the Bolton team, but it is a fact that up to now the statement of the editor of the local paper has been fulfilled. Twice have the Wanderers got to the final tie. On the first occasion—in 1904—they were beaten by four goals to none by Notts County, and the second time—in 1904—they were beaten by the last great round by Manchester City. Incidentally, this particular game caused probably more controversy than has ever arisen over one game. The Wanderers lost by a goal to nothing, but practically every person on the field save the referee was of opinion that Meredith, who scored the goal, was offside when he received the ball. But the referee's decision stood, and the "Trotters" supporters have come to the conclusion that the team will never win a trophy. They have won other honours, of course, and are the present holders of the Lancashire Cup, which appears on the team photograph given with this copy of "Magnificent."

Naturally, the Wanderers have had

some wonderful players in their forty-four years of League football, and foremost among the elants of other days should be mentioned goalkeeper J. W. Rensler and keeper. In Sutcliffe's time the Wanderers had the world's best defence, for Sommerville and Di. Jones were backs beyond compare in their day. Later, centre-forward Alf. Birchard—a local player—made a name for himself. At the present time the club has some famous internationalists on the books. Vizard has played many times for Wales, while Joe Smith has represented England, and is also joint holder of the record for number of goals scored by an individual player during one season. Frank Roberts, who played for some time at centre-forward, was recently transferred to Manchester City, while David Jack, the inside-right, is a son of the Plymouth Argyle manager, who also played for the Wanderers in his day. Jennings is a Welsh international half-back, and Seddon, a centre-half, will probably play for England one day, while goalkeeper Fynn, who came from Exeter, cost more money as transfer-fee than has ever been paid for any other footballer. A side difficult to beat, and playing the game always.

which were in a terrible state through having absorbed a considerable quantity of water from Bob Cherry's sponge, clung in loving fashion round his legs. One of his eyes was slowly but surely changing colour, while to complete his discomfort little rivulets of water were trickling down his spine from his wet hair. There was no doubting that Wingate was annoyed—indeed, it would not be exaggerating to say he was cross-very cross, at that.

"Why didn't I say who I was?" he snorted. "How the thump could I when you silly young idiot came piling on top of me before I knew what was happening? I'm a good mind to wallop the lot of you—anyway, what were you all

Wingate stopped short, for the same voice that a moment before the onslaught had attracted the juniors' attention boomed out again.

"When father gave the lugger the sack 't-wat-bang, bang, bang—"

"My hat!"

"That's the chap!"

"He's in one of the Remove studies, top!"

"Can't be," rejoined Wharton, with a puzzled frown. "Everybody belonging to our Form was in bed when the dim first started. I know for a fact, because I looked to see who was missing."

"I think I know who the practical joker is," put in Wingate suddenly.

"Where's Bunter?"

another outburst from the direction of the Remove passage.

"When Uncle Joe was dying, he lifted up his head, and then he pulled me down to him, and this is what he said—"

The Removeites gasped. It was obvious now that the strange noises were not caused by the Owl of the Remove, whose expression showed plainly enough that he was quite as mystified by the phenomenon as were the remainder of the juniors. The assembly, shivering in their nightclothes, remained in an attitude of listening, while the mysterious singer continued his interesting if not melodious warbling.

"This is what he said—"Ping-a-pong ping—ping-a-pong ping—"

The world's favourite schoolboys pop up again next week!

"Come on, you fellows!" exclaimed Wingate. "It's no good wasting time standing here. Let's get along and see which study it is."

Despite his wet garments, the school captain led the way down the passage, followed by the Removites. When the party arrived in the Remove passage, they were surprised to see a crowd of Form Foremen, Mr. Prout, and Mr. Quelch, assembled round the door of one of the studies, attracted, doubtless, by the noise.

Mr. Quelch was hammering on the door, which was locked, with his fists, demanding that it should be opened at once; but the only reply he received was an outburst of song, punctuated by the roll of a drum. On the approach of the Removites and Wingate, he turned, with an angry gloom in his gimlet eyes.

"Where is Todd?" he demanded.

Peter Todd stepped forward wonderingly, for the study in question was his own.

"What is the meaning of this outrage, Todd?" stormed the irate Form master. "Who have you looked in that study? Why have you—"

"I don't understand, sir," interrupted Todd, flushing. "I haven't shut anybody in the study, and I'm quite sure it was empty when I locked it."

"Rubbish!" interposed Mr. Quelch. "Do you mean to tell me, boy, that whoever the ruffians in that apartment are crawled in through the keyhole, or flew in at the window?"

"Nunno, sir!"

"Explain yourself at once, then."

"I don't understand it at all, sir," protested the unfortunate Peter, surveying the angry Form master with some apprehension. "It's a complete mystery to me."

At this point the singing ceased, and the voice of a woman made itself heard through the study door.

"My hat! There's a girl in there!"

"Two of them, by Jove! Listen! They are singing a duet."

This time, sweet and low, came the voices of two girls, harmoniously blended in rendering a number from one of the London revues. The Removites listened in amusement. Never in all the history of the old school had such a thing been known to happen before. For a moment Mr. Quelch looked as though he was about to go into a fit. His face purpled, and he literally trembled with rage.

"A more outrageous thing I have never encountered in all my experience as a Form master!" he stormed. "The boy who is responsible for the admission of those—of those—er—er—females—yes, that is the word, females—shall be flogged and expelled immediately I find out who he is!"

Mr. Quelch probably would have said more, given the chance, but the voices from within the study cut him short.

"Do not trust him, gentle maiden—"

"This was more than the assembly could stand. They roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Mr. Quelch banged frantically on the study door, wisely ignoring the outburst of merriment from the juniors. But the voices from within continued their song unperturbed. Indeed, for all the notice they took, Mr. Quelch might have been a hundred miles away.

"Boy," grated the Form master, turning to the bewildered Peter Todd, "where is the key of this study? How dare you lock these—er—ruffians in!"



Mr. Quelch advanced towards Bunter's bed. The cane rose, and descended with a resounding thwack on the form of the fat junior beneath the bedclothes. "Wow, stopp!" shrieked the owl. "I'm not coming out! The blessed dorm's haunted! Ow!" (See Chapter 4.)

How dare you do such a thing? Where is the key! Give it to me at once!"

"I—I haven't got the key, sir," stammered Todd. "It's in my trousers-pocket in the dormitory. I'll go and get it at once, sir."

And, without waiting for more, Peter Todd fled up the Remove passage in the direction of the dormitory. He returned a few moments later, breathless and puzzled, and handed the key to Mr. Quelch.

Mr. Quelch took the key and turned to the juniors.

"As soon as I unfasten the door," he commanded, "you Loys rush inside and secure these ruffians. You, Wingate, telephone for the police!"

"Yes, sir," said Wingate, vaguely wondering whether he was standing on his head or his feet. But he made no movement to obey, however, being far too interested in the immediate events. Not so the Removites. They responded right royally to the Form master's request, and held themselves in readiness to burst into the study immediately the door was opened.

Meanwhile, the voices within proceeded with song and patter.

"Are you going to open the door?" responded Mr. Quelch, forgetting for the moment that since he now had the key in his possession it was up to him to do so.

"I'm always blowing bubbles," came from within, as though in reply.

Mr. Quelch gritted his teeth, and inserted the key in the lock. It was not usual for juniors to lock their study doors at night, and consequently, through lack of use, it was some little time before

the Form master could get the key in the right position. At last he succeeded, however, and the door swung open.

"Buck up, Remove!" shouted Harry Wharton, leading the rush into the study. "On the ball!"

The Removites surged into the study, but even as they did so an exclamation of amazement escaped them.

The study was in absolute darkness! "The rotters are hiding!" exclaimed Frank Nugent. "Switch the lights on, somebody!"

Ogilvy, who was standing near the door, clicked the switch down, and the next moment the study was flooded with light.

But still there was no sign of the singers whose voices a moment before the whole assembly had distinctly heard.

"This beats the whole giddy orchestra!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "The place is empty!"

Bob was right. Not only was the study empty, but there were no signs that it had been recently occupied. Everything was in order, and the window was closed, and fastened.

Mr. Quelch pushed his way out into the apartment and stared at the walls as though expecting them to open out and reveal the party of men and women, whom a moment before he had been prepared to swear were within the study.

"This is positively amazing!" he gasped, rubbing his eyes.

"Uncanny, you mean, my dear Quelch," put in Mr. Prout, who hitherto had said very little. "Perhaps the ruffians are hiding in the cupboard. They may have closed the door on themselves to put us off the scent. Pray see that

Christmas fun and breathless thrill in next week's stunning Greyfriars tale!

the boys remain here for a few minutes. I will fetch my Winchester repeater and take a shot at it. We will soon find out whether there is anyone in hiding there."

"Don't be absurd!" snapped the Remove Form master. "How do you think a man and two women are going to hide in a place like that?"

"Well, where else are they?" demanded the master of the Fifth. "When I was in the Rockies in 13—"

What happened when the redoubtable Mr. Proust was in the Rockies was never told—at least, not at that moment, although it had been told many times before, and probably would be told many times again. But just now no one seemed interested.

Mr. Quelch strode over to the study cupboard and swung the door open. But all that met his gaze was a half-devoured veal-and-ham pie, some hard-boiled eggs, while on the top shelf was a tin horn which the Form master thought belonged to a gramophone and a collection of old books. Otherwise the cupboard was empty.

"This is positively amazing!" he repeated. "There is no one here!"

And with that Mr. Quelch slammed the cupboard door and peered under the table. Not that he expected to find three grown persons hiding there, but because he did not for the minute know what else to do.

Finally he turned to the Removites with an expression that beset his for someone.

"You may return to your dormitories at once, boys," he snapped. "We will inquire into this in the morning."

"Very good, sir!"

And, somewhat reluctantly, the juniors filed out of the study, feeling more puzzled than they had been for many a long day.

"This beats the band!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, when the party were once again in the Remove dormitory. "What the thump does it all mean? I heard those voices as distinctly as pie—"

"So did I!" put in Johnny Bull. "I can't understand it at all," said Peter Todd. "I know when I looked the done there was no one inside, and I looked it properly, because I've got something valuable in there; so no one could possibly have got in afterwards without the key, and that was in my trousers-pocket—"

"If they got in with another key they couldn't have got out while we were all outside," cut in the practical Vernon-Smith. "It's a giddy mystery, and that's all there is to it."

The juniors tumbled into bed and Wharton extinguished the lights; but for some time afterwards the extraordinary and mysterious affair was discussed in undertones. But discuss it as they might, the Removites could find no solution to the inexplicable affair, and at last they dropped off to sleep, until roused some hours later by the clanging of the rising bell.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Mystery!

MR. HORACE QUELCH, M.A., master of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, entered the hall for breakfast in no very good temper. The mysterious events in Peter Todd's study the previous night had perturbed him more than he cared to admit. He was puzzled and annoyed. He had

a vague suspicion in the back of his mind that he, in common with Mr. Proust of the Fifth, had been the victim of some practical joker. But how the person with the misplaced sense of humour had succeeded in obtaining his effects, was a mystery the Form master could find no solution to.

At first Mr. Quelch had been inclined to attribute the strange sounds which had emanated from the study to a gramophone. But on more mature consideration he had come to the conclusion that if such an instrument had been employed, someone would have had to be inside the study to work it. And since it had been discovered that the study was empty, such a possibility was beyond consideration. Then again, there was a quality about the voices he had heard which he was positive could not be produced by any known make of gramophone.

It was all very puzzling and annoying. That the Removites had been as puzzled over the affair as he was himself was obvious to the Form master, and he rightly concluded that to question them on the affair would be useless. He therefore decided not to refer to the affair, but to make a private inspection of the study at the first opportunity, in the hope of obtaining a clue of some sort.

This was all the comfort the Form master could derive from his meditations as, with a gleam in his gimlet-like eyes which portended trouble for the unwary, he cut the shell from the top of his morning egg.

The Removites, although they were puzzling for a solution to the affair

RESULT OF "MANCHESTER UNITED" COMPETITION.

In this competition one competitor sent in a correct solution of the picture. The first prize of £5 has therefore been awarded to:

E. NELSON,
29, Ley Street,
Ilford, Essex.

The second prize of £2 10s. has been divided between the following two competitors, whose solutions contained one error each:

R. Coverer, 41, Nuggett Street, Oldham.
Charles H. Morton, 2, Brunton Terrace,
Howarth Street, Sunderland.

The ten prizes of 5s. each have been awarded to the following ten competitors, whose solutions contained two errors each:

J. Allison, 2, Forth Street, Chopwell, Co. Durham; Tomasy Loynd, 17, Clementina Terrace, Carlisle; Arthur Shaw, 61, Pontypridd Road, Forth, Glam. William Scott, 428, Parliamentary Road, Glasgow; John Dyer, 55, Rutland Road, South Hackney, E. 9; Stanley C. Davies, 27, Manor Road, Lisard, Cheshire; Robert Carpenter, 2, Strickland Street, Ewlewick, Newcastle-on-Tyne; Teddy Ogden, 41, Nuggett Street, Oldham; S. Ogden, 41, Nuggett Street, Oldham; Frances H. Morton, 2, Brunton Terrace, Sunderland.

SOLUTION.

Manchester United Football Club started, like numerous other first-class clubs, in a small way. It was originated in connection with the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, and was for a long time known as Newton Heath. The name of William Meredith will always be associated with this celebrated football team.

themselves, did not fail to read the danger signals as depicted in Mr. Quelch's orbs, and like the diplomats that for the most part they were, were careful to preserve a discreet silence, or at least to conduct their conversation in undertones—save Harold Skinner, otherwise known as the cad of the Remove. As Skinner's mind went over the previous night's affair he chuckled to himself.

"Do not trust him, gentle maiden." The cad of the Remove uttered that remark to himself, as he thought, but it was overheard by his boon companion, Snoop, who was seated on his right. Snoop, whose gaze had been resting on the features of his Form master, sniggered.

"Ho, ho, he!" The gimlet-like eyes of Mr. Quelch transferred their gaze from the egg to Snoop.

"What is the joke, Snoop?" he demanded sharply.

Skinner's henchman trembled. There was something about the expression of the Form master's face that did not appeal to him. He frantically tried to think of something for reply. But under the intent and penetrating gaze of the Form master his brain refused to work. He gazed fascinated at Mr. Quelch, in much the same way that a fat rabbit is supposed to stare at a starved snake.

"N-nothing, sir!" he stammered.

"Don't tell untruths, boy!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "I repeat, what is the joke?"

"Only a remark Skinner happened to pass, sir," faltered the unfortunate Snoop.

"And what was the remark which afforded you so much merriment? It appears to be too good to keep to yourself. Tell me what Skinner said."

"Wow!"

"What? You laughed because Skinner said that?"

"Nunno, sir!" groaned the unlucky Snoop, rubbing his left shin with his right foot where Skinner had hacked him as a signal to keep silent. "I happened to get a twinge of—cramp just then, sir."

The Removites grinned. "Quelch's got 'em this morning and no error," whispered Harry Wharton in an undertone. "We'll see some fireworks in a minute."

"Rather!"

"For the third time," thundered Mr. Quelch. "What did Skinner say?"

Snoop stammered for a moment and finally capitulated.

"Ho—he said—"

"Well?"

"Do not trust him, gentle maiden."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Removites roared; but their merriment was short lived. Mr. Quelch's complexion assumed a deep purple, and he raved at the quaking Snoop in a manner which made that youth's hair almost stand on end.

Mr. Quelch said not a word, but rose from his seat and gripped Skinner by the collar and led him away. Skinner never mentioned what followed, but his actions spoke louder than words. The remainder of the day proved very trying for the Removites, earnings and impositions being awarded with generosity unequalled. That the Form master was still thinking of the affair in Todd's study was obvious—and what was more obvious was that the more he thought of it the more annoyed he became. The juniors sighed with relief when the bell went for dismissal, and

The Greyfriars

Chums in some strange adventures next week!

dispersed to their studies to discuss the shortcoming of their Form master and the affair which had given rise to his ill-temper.

In the Common-room that evening the affair in Todd's study was the chief topic of conversation. Micky Deamond, the lad from the Sorrowful Isle, advanced the opinion that the study was haunted by "banishes"; while William George Bunter considered the noises to be due to restless spirits of past members of the study, who had died at some time or another through starvation brought about by the inadequacy of the meals supplied by the school authorities.

But of all the theories and opinions advanced none seemed to fill the bill; and when Wingate announced that it was time for bed, the juniors were no nearer a solution to the strange affair than they were when they began.

For some time after lights-out the juniors lay awake talking, until, lulled by the moaning of the wind in the Glose without, they one by one dropped off to sleep. But hardly had the last junior got comfortably settled than a low moan sounded in the dormitory.

Bob Cherry, who was a light sleeper, turned over in bed and awoke. He was not quite certain what had roused him, so for a while he lay still, on the watch for any Removite who might be astir.

Moan!

This time, louder than before, the noise boomed across the dorm, causing a number of other juniors to start up.

"What was that?"

"Sounded like a groan of some sort."

"The groanfulness is terrific."

There was silence for a moment, and as the watery light of the moon, temporarily obscured by a passing bank of cloud, illuminated the dormitory, it revealed a dozen or more juniors, their faces somewhat strained, in an intent attitude of listening.

"Maanooooooooooooo!"

This time, eerie and long drawn out, came a deep moan-like sound, starting on a low note, and swelling higher almost to a shriek.

The juniors shivered. There was something uncanny about the sound; it contained some quality they could not quite define.

The hour of eleven tolled slowly from the school clock—the same hour at which the noises in Peter Todd's study had first been heard. The last strokes died away, followed by a tense silence in which every junior strained in an attitude of listening.

A gust of wind, stronger than its predecessor, whined round the chimney-tops and then trailed off into silence.

Moan!

Once again the same low, mournful sound, a sound as of some departed spirit in anguish.

"I—I can't stand t-this, you chaps," stuttered Snoop between chattering teeth. "I believe the blessed place is haunted."

"Eubhish!"

"Funk!"

But although the juniors made light of their Form-fellow's fears, there were some among them who were genuinely frightened, while even the boldest spirits were not a little alarmed. They recalled stories told of the ancient school when it had been a monastery, of monks foully done to death by the soldiery, and whose spirits even now were said to haunt the scenes of their former existence.

True, for the most part the juniors did not believe in ghosts—at least, during

the daytimes they professed not to; but here in the dark dormitory getting on for midnight some of them were inclined to change their views.

Even the Famous Five, normal and healthy lads that they were, stared at each other with faces which showed just a trifle pale by the phosphorescent light of the moon, stealing through the long windows of the dormitory.

"This is uncanny, chaps," exclaimed Harry Wharton almost in a whisper.

"The unmannfulness is of the esteemed and terrific order, my worthy chum," purred the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur, his eyes gleaming with an orange-like fire in the dark. "The ghostfulness is rot, but—but in my own esteemed country—"

"Chuck it, old scout," breathed Bob Cherry. "You give anybody the creeps, Inky; this is not India, and things don't happen here like they do there—"

"Whoooooocoooo!"

This time, in a crescendo-like shriek which chilled the blood of every junior, almost deafening in its intensity, came another of the mysterious sounds, echoing weirdly through the bareness of the great dorm. Then followed a series of minor groans, fainter and fainter, and once again a nerve-racking stillness.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry, more by way of keeping his spirits up than anything else. "Let's have the giddy lights on and see what happens then."

"Switch the glim on, somebody!" Inky, who was nearest the switch, sprung from his bed and padded across the floor. There came the click of the

switch and the dormitory was flooded with the glaring light of some two dozen electric globes.

"That'll put the merry old ghost out of business," chuckled Johnny Bull. "Pity we didn't think of it before."

But in the role of prophet Johnny Bull proved a hopeless failure, for even as he finished speaking came another loud and eerie wail.

"Hawawawawawaw!"

Harry Wharton jumped out of bed with a determined frown on his handsome face.

"Come on, you fellows," he ordered. "It's no good sitting shivering in bed—let's punt around and see whether we can't get to the bottom of this business."

"Hear, hear!"

A number of Removites followed the junior captain's example and commenced a tour of inspection of the dormitory; but many of them, including Billy Bunter, believing discretion to be the better part of valour, snuggled lower into beds and pulled the clothes around them.

Wharton and his companions peered beneath the beds and behind the wash-stands, but search as they might they could discover nothing to account for the weird noises that had disturbed their slumber.

Then, as though in mockery of the juniors' efforts to discover their source, came a regular series of shrieks, groans, and whistles, followed by a long, low, fitful whining.

"If this doesn't take the giddy bun of Barnstaple, I'll eat my only Sunday topper!" ejaculated Frank Nugent.



Harry Wharton came crashing down into the fireplace with a box-like apparatus clutched between his two hands. "Bless my soul!" Mr. Queich, who was standing near the open grate, jumped back in alarm, just avoiding a cloud of soot that came billowing out. (See Chapter 5.)

Christmas is coming—and so is our special Yuletide number!



With a wild howl Billy Bunter dashed from the fireplace full tilt into Mr. Quelch. "Oooohh!" yelled Bunter, clutching at the Remove master's gown. "It's after me!" (See Chapter 4.)

"Why, if this continues we shall have half the school toddling along soon to see who we are slaughtering—"

"Cave!"
In response to the whispered warning of Tom Brown, the New Zealand junior, who was among Wharton's party of investigators, the juniors stiffened and listened.

"There's someone coming!"
"Not a moment too soon. As the last junior had pulled the clothes over his lower limbs the handle of the dormitory door turned, and the angry face of Mr. Quelch, the Remove Form master, followed by Wingate and the Head, appeared round the portal.

"What is the meaning of this disturbance, boys?" thundered the Form master, his gimlet eyes searching the faces of the juniors. "This is the second time this week I have been annoyed by the antics of some practical joker. I am now going to get to the bottom of the affair."

Wharton & Co. congratulated themselves that they had managed to scramble into bed before the entrance of their irate Form master. For they presumed, and rightly, too, that had they been caught out of bed, they would have felt the weight of the switch Mr. Quelch carried in his hand, before any questions were asked and irrespective of whether they were the cause of the second of the extraordinary disturbances.

Having, apparently, gained no information from his study of the juniors' faces, the Form master transferred his gaze to the captain of the Remove.

"What is the meaning of this disturbance, Wharton?" he repeated.

"I—I don't know, sir," faltered Harry, returning Mr. Quelch's gaze. "We were awakened at about eleven o'clock by a noise which sounded like someone groaning. Then there came a lot of shrieks and wails, and I thought someone must have been pulling our legs—or—that is to say, playing a joke on us, sir."

"Well?"

Gaining courage from the fact that in spite of his anger the Form master was listening to him, Wharton proceeded. He described how he, with others, had scatched under the beds and behind the washstands, thinking perhaps they might find something to explain the weird noises. And there was something in the frank manner in which the captain of the Remove told his story that convinced both the Form master and Dr. Locke, the Head, that he was telling the truth. Not that they had any reason to believe that Wharton ever told anything but the truth, for on numerous occasions both gentlemen had had illustrations of the straightforward character of the junior.

When Wharton concluded his story, the Form master puckered his brow in puzzled thought.

"Very extraordinary," he murmured. "Very extraordinary indeed."

"I quite agree with you, my dear Quelch," put in the venerable old Head of Greyfriars. "Those happenings are, as you say, extraordinary—extraordinary in the extreme."

Mr. Quelch had, of course, acquainted Dr. Locke of the mysterious affair of Toddy's study the previous night; and although both gentlemen had given the matter serious thought, neither of them

had succeeded in arriving at any explanation for it.

Their meditations, following Wharton's statement, were suddenly interrupted by another of the unearthly shrieks which had disturbed their discussion on modern ethics in the Head's study, and which had brought them to the Remove dormitory.

"Whoooooer!"
Mr. Quelch almost jumped with astonishment.

"I'll get to the bottom of this extraordinary affair before I leave this dormitory," he said. And the juniors knew, by the expression on his face, he meant every word he said.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bunter is Alarmed!

EVEN as Mr. Quelch stopped speaking, there came another groan and another shriek. That it was not engineered by any of the boys was quite apparent, inasmuch as every boy was in his allotted bed in full view of the Form master and the Head.

Indeed, the juniors' expressions alone would have convinced the Form master that they were as mystified over the whole affair as was he himself—had he needed any further convincing.

"What the tump does it all mean?" whispered Bob Cherry. "First all that funny business in Toddy's study the other night, and now some more funny business here. I wonder whether we are going to get another song and dance?"

Mr. Quelch motioned Cherry to silence, and remained in an attitude of listening. He was trying, if possible, to trace the source of the sounds.

"Whoooooer!"
"Bless my soul!" murmured the Head. "Did you hear that, my dear Quelch?"

The Head's question was superfluous. Mr. Quelch could not have avoided hearing it even if he had been half-dead—which he was not. For that matter there was little doubt that the noise could be heard so far away as the quarters of the lordly Sixth.

Mr. Quelch gazed round the dormitory for a moment, his brow knit in thought. Having mentally decided that the weird noises were not originated by any of the juniors, the Form master's anger had subsided somewhat. Nevertheless, the juniors decided that the wisest course they could follow would be to emulate the exploits of the celebrated rabbit in the fable, and lie low.

"The noise appeared to me to come from the other end of the dormitory, sir," insisted the Form master at length, addressing the Head. "I think, therefore, we had better begin our investigations there."

"Quite so, quite so," agreed Dr. Locke. "I, too, fancied the noise came from the other end, although for that matter it seemed to come from the walls as well."

Mr. Quelch gathered the skirt of his gown in his hand and strode across the dormitory to the wall on the far side. The wall at this part was composed of wooden panelling from the floor to the ceiling, and, as he knew, was part of the old original building, and had not been interfered with by the builders, as many other parts of the school had been from time to time.

Mr. Quelch paused before the woodwork, and tapped. The woodwork gave

Frank Richards, your favourite author, pens another ripper for next week!

back a hollow sound, and for the first time that evening it occurred to the Form master that there might be some long-forgotten secret passage behind the wall.

It was just possible that some misguided boy had stumbled on such a passage, by some strange chance, and was using his knowledge to jape the school. If this were the case, it might explain the incident of Todd's study, and so clear up the mystery which surrounded it.

Mr. Quelch motioned the watching juniors to silence, and applied his ear to the wall.

He listened intently for some moments, hoping to hear the rustle of some hidden person. But there was only a deep silence.

"Perhaps if some practical joker is hidden behind the wall he may be waiting for the lights to be extinguished before beginning his pranks again," thought the Remove master. "It might be better, therefore, if I put them out."

And with the intention of putting his thoughts into action, Mr. Quelch turned from his inspection of the wall towards the light switch. But even as he did so, there came another of the mysterious noises.

"Yaaaaaah!"

"Bless my soul!"

The Form master and the Head exchanged puzzled glances.

"I don't think these extraordinary sounds are coming from the wall after all, my dear Quelch," exclaimed the Head. "That, at least, seemed to come from another part altogether—"

"Whooooo!"

Another shriek, followed by a low, fearful sobbing, cut short the Head's observations, and at the same time caused a cold, apprehensive shiver to travel down the spine of more than one Removeite.

"But ghastly, ain't it?" observed Bob Cherry in a low voice. "I wonder what the bump is!"

"The wonderfulness is terrific!"

"I—I say, you fellows," stammered Billy Bunter, his eyes behind his big spectacles blinking with fear. "I think the blessed place is haunted! We ought to be allowed to sleep in the studies for the rest of the night—"

"Don't be absurd, Bunter!" interjected Mr. Quelch, who had overheard the Owl's remark. "There is nothing to be alarmed at. I expect when we do discover what is responsible for these noises, it will prove to be something very simple."

"But what about the old monk who hanged himself?" began the Owl of the Remove in a quaking voice. "He might have come to life again and—"

What the monk might have done had he come to life again, as Bunter seemed to think, was never told, for at that moment there came from the far end of the dormitory, this time with remarkable force, another loud and prolonged shriek.

"Whooooo!"

The eyes of William George Bunter positively goggled behind his big spectacles, and, with a wild whoop, he hid beneath the bedclothes and endeavoured to form himself into a ball. He was far too fat to succeed in this, however, and nearly choked in the effort.

"I—I say, you fellows," came his muffled voice from beneath the bedclothes, "I'm not here, you know. It wasn't me, really. It's all a mistake. Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fat fink!"

"Wow! Take him away! I've gone, I tell you!"

"Come out of it, fatty. There's nothing to be frightened about!"

But the Owl of the Remove was not so easily reassured. He was convinced that the dormitory was haunted. Nothing would shake his belief, and he was determined to stay where he was.

"Bunter," snarled Mr. Quelch angrily, "uncover your head at once! Don't be a foolish youth! Do you hear me?"

"Nunno, sir. I can't hear a bit. I'm not here!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my only sainted aunt!"

"For the last time!" stormed Mr. Quelch. "Will you uncover your head, boy?"

"Nunno!" came Bunter's voice, in muffled reply. "It wasn't me—"

The master of the Remove took a tighter grip of the switch he carried, and advanced towards the Owl's bed. The switch rose high in the air, and descended with a resounding thwack on the form of the fat junior beneath the bedclothes.

"Wow! Yerrough!"

"Oh, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch frowned at the hilarious Removeites, and raised the switch aloft again.

"Thwack, thwack, thwack!"

"Wow! Stoppit! Dragimoff!"

shrieked the unhappy Owl, struggling among the bedclothes. "I'm not coming out! I'm going to stay here, I am! The blessed dorm's haunted, I tell you! Wow!"

"Thwack, thwack, thwack!"

The switch rose and fell with a monotonous regularity for a few seconds, accompanied by heartrending shrieks from the squirming junior. Mr. Quelch panted for breath, but continued valiantly.

"All right," groaned Bunter at length.

"I'm coming out! Wow!"

"Be quick, then!"

"He's coming to the surface for a breather," grinned Bulstrode, as a rise at one point of the bedclothes indicated that the Owl was squirming into a sitting position.

"I'm waiting for you to uncover your head, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, standing by in readiness with the switch should his orders not be obeyed, after all.

Bunter uncovered his head, as requested, and stared at the irate Form master.

"Is it all O.K., sir?" he asked, in a quavering voice. "Is it all—"

Moan.

Bunter paled.

"There it is again, sir!" he stammered.

"Rubbish, boy!"

Moan.

"This time, louder than before, the weird noise boomed across the dormitory.

Various Stages in the Lives of Greyfriars Celebrities. No. 6.—PERCY BOLSOVER (of the Remove).



Read the blazing Yule-log fire with a copy of the MAGNET! You can't beat that!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 773.

It was more than William George Bunter could stand. It was more than he intended to stand. With a squeal like a tribe of pigs in mortal agony, he jumped from his bed, and before the astonished Form master could stop him, bounded across the dorm.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors roared. For a moment the mystery surrounding the origin of the weird sounds was completely forgotten.

Even the gallant Snoop joined in the merriment, although only a few moments before he had been in a state of funk rivaling that of the present object of his mirth.

Bunter took up a trembling position near the fireplace, one eye on the form of the Remove master, and the other on the dormitory door. There was no doubting the fact that he was genuinely frightened, and there was no doubting the fact that a lot of his fright had been brought on by himself. In fact, he was assailed by two distinct forms of fear, so to speak—fear of the Form master, and fear of the unknown. But Bunter could not make up his mind which was the worst of the two. At any rate, he decided, it was highly improbable that a ghost, or anything of a like nature, would be armed with a switch. Mr. Quelch had a switch, so Bunter made up his mind to keep out of his way and chance anything else.

The fat junior had just arrived at this very logical conclusion when he felt a breath of cold air come down the chimney and curl round his fat legs. At the same moment there came another of the long-drawn-out moans. Only this time it appeared to the fat junior to come from right behind him, from the direction of the chimney. This, coupled with the rush of cold air round his legs, caused him quickly to change his opinion as to whether he preferred being in the vicinity of the Form master or not; and, with a wild howl, he dashed from the fireplace full tilt in the direction of Mr. Quelch.

"Ow! It's after me!" he shrieked.

"Bunter!"

If Bunter heard he gave no sign, but continued his wild rush from the fireplace, and, with a gasp, collided with the angry Form master.

"Bump!"

"Oooooop!"

"Bless my soul!"

Mr. Quelch's somewhat spare frame was not designed to withstand the impact of a junior of Bunter's weight. It was unreasonable to expect it to. Mr. Quelch's frame did not stand it. It collapsed, and master and pupil came to the ground with a loud bump.

"Bunter, clutching wildly at the Remove master's gown.

"Ugh!" grunted Mr. Quelch, accidentally prodding Bunter with his forefinger.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Removites, unable to control their mirth.

"Bless my soul!" murmured Dr. Locke, in amazement.

The two struggled on the floor, the Form master vainly trying to free himself from the embrace of the terrified Removee. The Head, Wingate, and the juniors stood gazing spellbound at the extraordinary spectacle, too fascinated to lend any assistance. Another moan came from the chimney, increasing the fat Removee's terror tenfold, and at the same time decreasing whatever chance Mr. Quelch had previously had of effecting his own release.

"Stop it, you foolish boy!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

Bunter's reply was a shriek.

"Calm yourself, Bunter!" snapped the Form master.

"Oh, it ain't me!" yelled the frightened Removee. "Really it ain't! I'm not here, you know! The blessed place is haunted! I told you it was! Let me go!"

Mr. Quelch might just as well have addressed a brick wall for all the notice Bunter took. The junior had worked himself up into a state of panic, and there seemed no knowing what turn his terror would take next.

Bunter had distinctly heard that dreadful moan come from the fireplace, in front of which he had been standing.

The Annual for YOU

IS THE

HOLIDAY ANNUAL!

More than that, he had felt the icy air blown down the chimney-shaft around his fat legs. And nothing would convince him that the cause of the whole affair was attributable to anything other than the supernatural. His one and all-absorbing ambition was therefore to get away and hide himself—under the bed-clothes, or anywhere else where he could not be seen. He had an idea that if he succeeded in doing this, that he would be perfectly safe.

At last the Removites recovered from the semi-stupified state Bunter's antics had induced in them, and came into action.

"Rescue, Remove!"

"Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A PLENDID
VOLUME OF

Stories, Pictures,
and Coloured Plates!

Led by the Famous Five, a party of juniors surrounded the struggling forms on the floor and endeavoured to separate them. Hurrah! James Ram Singh received one of Bunter's fat toes in his eye, which caused him to describe Bunter as an esteemed and dishonourable elephant; but, in spite of this slight setback, he came on again, and at last succeeded in getting one lean brown hand round the Owl's left ankle, and the other round his left wrist.

The dusky junior was possessed of a strength far greater than his lean frame suggested, and after a few moments unaided tugging he wrenched the Owl clear of the panting Form master.

"Good old Inky!"

Bunter scrambled to his feet, his left wrist still in the grip of the nabob. The fat junior hardly realised what was happening, and began to shout and struggle. Nothing daunted, Inky retained his grip and put his dusky face as near as he was able to that of his terrified Form fellow.

"My esteemed chum has gone off his dishonourable rockerfulness!" he purred.

"There is nothing to warrant the esteemed funkfulness."

There was something about the quality of the Hindoo junior's voice, and something about his intent gaze, that caused the fat junior to cease his terrified struggles and collect his scattered wits.

Inky led his Form-fellow to his bed and seated himself by his side, keeping up a running fire of conversation the whole time, until Bunter regained his composure.

Meanwhile, aided by the Famous Five and the Head, Mr. Quelch struggled to his feet and proceeded to examine his injuries, which for the most part consisted of scratches and bruises.

"Bless my soul," he gasped at length. "I have never in all my life met a more foolish boy." However, I will speak to him further in the morning."

The Form master thanked the juniors for coming to his assistance, and, taking no further notice of the now pacified William George Bunter, strode over to the fireplace to continue his investigations.

The Form master, in common with William George Bunter and the remainder of the Removites, had distinctly heard from whence had come that last weird noise. It had come from the vicinity of the fireplace, and Mr. Quelch felt that the sooner that part of the dormitory was subjected to a close examination, the sooner would the mystery surrounding the extraordinary disturbance be solved.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

What Wharton Found!

QUELCH'S tumbled to something!

"Hear, hear!"

"I wonder what it is."

The Removites stared at their Form master thoughtfully. They saw him bend down and run his forefinger along the surface of the glazed tiles in front of the dormitory fireplace.

"Bless my soul," he murmured, more to himself than anyone else. "I believe I am right, after all!"

"What's the game?" Bob Cherry demanded of the captain of the Removite in an undertone.

"Dunno!"

"He's found a clue!"

"Looks like it."

"Didn't know our little Quelch was a blessed Skylark Bones!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch gazed intently at his forefinger for a moment, and then carefully wiped it on a pocket handkerchief.

"Bless my soul!" he repeated. "Soot, and someone has taken the trouble to wipe it away, as they thought. Extraordinary!"

The master turned to the Famous Five.

"I think we shall find the key to the mystery up the chimney," he said. "One of you boys kindly take a glance up and tell me whether you can see anything."

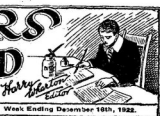
(Continued on page . . .)

ANSWERS

EVERY MONDAY, PRICE 2!

There's going to be a great rush for next week's special number! Order your copy now!

The GREY FRIARS' HERALD



Supplement No. 103.

Week Ending December 10th, 1922.

EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

My Dear Readers.—One of the first letters I opened when I returned from the Congo contained a suggestion from Frank Turmon, of Newport, Mo., that I should publish a special "Letter" number. As Frank T. quoted the word "letter," I am taking it for granted that what he wants is a number which contains nothing else but correspondence.

I admit it was a bit of a poser, but my staff and I have tackled the job, and here you are! I hope you will like it.

When one or two of the features were submitted, I thought publication would bring trouble upon the heads of the writers. So Bob Cherry polished up his boxing-gloves, and the rest of the staff has been undergoing a strenuous series of exercises, prepared to deal with anybody who takes exception to the contributions—not to say contributors—to this special "letter" number.

Of course, a lot of tosh was submitted. Coker of the Fifth, for instance, sent me a letter which purported to show the real uses of a motor-bike. Seeing that Coker only has his bike out of the workshop for about ten minutes a year, a fat lot he knows about the best way to use a motor-bike! However, he has filled a column for us.

Loder of the Sixth sent me an appealing letter for publication, the import of which was that present-day headmasters are downy birds with no sense of humour. Why shouldn't a fellow—especially a perfect—break bonnis if he wants to? says Loder. It's his own fault if he loses his beauty sleep.

Exactly! But I think the publication of that letter might lead me towards the Head's study, and I certainly should lose a deal of my beauty sleep that night, and it wouldn't be entirely my own fault! Thank you, but I think I have collected as good a batch of "copy" for this number as I could possibly hone for.

Finally, let me tell you I have some extra special numbers under consideration. Watch out for them.

Yours ever sincerely,

HARRY WHARTON.

**DON'T MISS OUR
TOPPING CHRISTMAS
ISSUE NEXT WEEK**

Grand Christmas Number next week—full of fun and excitement!

Supplement [1]

THE ART OF LETTER WRITING!

By Horace Coker
(of the Fifth Form.)

My dear Readers,—Harry Wharton suggested I should address a letter to you on the subject of letter-writing. I have much pleasure in so doing.

In the first place, it is essential that the spelling should be correct. There are some fellows who always spell badly, and those are the fellows who always wait at the bottom of the ladder of success whilst others climb it.

Think how awful it would be if a director of a company couldn't spell correctly! His letters would be laughed at, and all his pals would only be his pals because he had got plenty of money.

Take Potter and Green, for instance. They don't spell at all well, but I hope to teach them how to spell in a spell-not bad, that!

Well, if your spelling is all right, you want to study the question of righting. I can't understand half the righting done by the fellows here. It's nothing but crowsal, Wharton, who is a cheery fag in the Remove, and of whom you might have heard, rights wrong. He ought to be more roend, like Billy Bunter.

Study your righting, then, and practise until you can make all your letters roend, and then you'll be all right, for every word you right will hit the reader in the eyes and make the meaning plain.

Having studied your righting and spelling, the next thing is the grammar. This is wear a lot of fellows fail. "Was" and "were" is wear a lot of wrong. Never say or right "They was." It sounds bad and looks worse. A proper soon always begins with a capital, so proper nouns are easy to find in any sentence you like to parse. An adjective is something strong, and should never be tolerated. Of course, such adjectives as "Rot!" "Piffle!" are alright, and don't matter. You can use them in the dining-room but not in the drawing-room.

I hope to see readers letters much better spotted and better ritten after they have read these lines.

Remember—spelling, riting, and grammar! Yours always willing to help,

H. COKER.

OPEN LETTERS!

Anybody who wants to be "chopped," may reply to these letters.—Ed.

Dear Loder,—You're a beast! Instead of showing your wonderful joy at my safe return from the Kongo, you deliberately ordered me to fag for you the moment I put my nose in your passage.

Oh, wouldn't I have given half my throne to have had you out there—out there where lives, to me, were as cheap as Winkles at Brighton! If we ever go to the Kongo again, your rotter, I'll make old Corkran take you there, too. Then you'll see what a wonderful power I have over the hungry caramels—I mean cannibals.

Old Npong, or Mpora, or any other of the tribe, would give anything for your H-bone. And if I had my way, they'd have it. In any case, you'll be glad to no that there wasn't a savvidge half so ugly as you in hole of the Kongo!

BUNTER, P. of K.

(When questioned, Billy stated that P. of K. means Pal of Koko—the powerful god of the cannibals we left behind us!)

Dear Inky,—I understand that the Editor of this rotten rag is going to protect all writers in this issue. Will you therefore explain to the Remove how it was that the cannibals in the Congo did not claim you as a long-lost brother?

Was it because they did not consider you class enough for them?

Yours faithfully,

HAROLD SKINNER.

Dear Billy,—It has given me great pleasure to learn from Harry Wharton & Co. that, although you trembled at the giddy knees once or twice, you undoubtedly showed great courage in many a tight corner whilst you were on the Congo. You do me credit!

Many nights have I tossed about in my bed, wondering if the sores and pains in my arms, obtained through wallping you with a five-bat, were worth the small amount of improvement you showed. Apparently you have been hiding your light under a bushel, and you may not be quite such a fat ass as you appear to be.

I put myself on the back, and if the supply of five-bats lasts out, I may make quite a decent fellow of you yet!

Yours much pleased,

PETER TODD.

Owing to the shortage of space, many other letters have been held over.

ANCESTORS!

By
PETER TODD.

The First
Lord Maulverer.

Like flies round a beastly jam-pot they were in those days. Unfortunately, he was being a lippy sort round the Johnny ocker when the old man came round.

"Lord Maulverer—er!" shrieked the old man, catching the spying eye that meant, flying up—his waistcoat. Then he collapsed and died. So Lord Maulverer, stricken with a terrible remorse, added the "er" to his name, and thus we get the name Maulverer.

That's the—what the dickens is that word—data, old grape. Hope it will be of use to you.

By the way, Lord Maulverer the first never married again. He lived a peaceful life—which is what his descendant never has a chance of doing—and slept the greater part of his days.

Begad, I'm tired, so please excuse me if I don't add my signature. It's wasted my arm ache, writing this.

Study No. 7.
Remove Passage.

Maully, you fathead—I put forward your notes regarding your earliest ancestor and I put my foot right in it. In fact, I had the greatest difficulty in persuading Wharton that the story was your own—that it was in your writing, and therefore indisputable. I got checked out of the editorial office on my neck, and the fact that Billy Bunter was spying out what was happening in the "Herald" so as to copy it for his rotten "Weekly," didn't add to my comfort. If I knocked him down and he rolled on me!

I'm coming round to see you very soon. I'm getting my muscles up, and am polishing up the giddy firecrackers for your benefit! I'll teach you to get me checked out of Wharton's moody office! I'll teach you to try and stop an honest, hard-working junior from earning a few pieces of murg, to go on his bread and butter—no, that's a little wrong, but you know what I mean! Brrrrr! I'll give you Monty the Mauler! I'll be Peter the Power! Bewarrrrrrrr!

Yours sorefully rotten,

P. TODD.

Here.
Toddie,—Don't be an ass, you know! It's all in the merry old book. I'm sending it for your own perusal. Don't lose it, there's a topper.

MAULV.

Study No. 7.
Remove Passage.

Dear Maully,—Wharton has taken the book and has read it. He is publishing your letter in his special "Letter" number. I hope the readers take it all in.

Yours more gently,

PETER.

A TOPPING CHRISTMAS

PRESENT

THE

"HOLIDAY ANNUAL!"



Study No. 7.
Remove Passage.

Dear Maully,—I am frantically busy this week, and I have been told by the Editor to secure from you information concerning your earliest known ancestor.

I know it will take me at least a couple of hours to wake you up sufficiently, and I really cannot spare the time. He is a sport, and sent along the drings. I would offer you half the fees, but I know that you are already possessed of a jolly slight more splash than you'll ever want.

Black up, and tollie, and send the nutty particulars along.

Yours elderlyly,

PETER TODD.

My Dear Toddie,—Begad, old bean, you do know a fellow?

Did I not know that you will come along for the beastly stuff if I don't answer your letter, right away, I'd chance it and have a nap. But having a nap, with a Todd on the warpath is out of the question. You'd only create merry dickens and so upset my poor nerves that I should not be able to sleep for at least a couple of hours—so here goes.

Fortunately, I have in my possession rather a lot of data—if you don't know what that means, look it up in the dic. I had to—concerning my worthy ancestors. The first Maulverer of whom I have trace was known as Monty the Mauler. He got that name because he was always ready to maul people about, don't you know.

The story goes on thus; slightly altered here and there.

Monty the Mauler was really a terror. The enemies of the country had a really fearful time at his hands. It was nothing to him to maul a few dozen traitors before breakfast—and before they went before the beaks, which made them look all the worse, and they got it in the neck.

(So proficient at mauling was Monty the Mauler that the king sent for him, and said: "Monty, old knut, you're an end of a lad!")

Q: Monty—

"Sire, mauling in the morning is really appalling. I pithiee give me a chance to maul in the Mall day and night. I will rid thee of all thy traitors."

"Old fruit, you have my full pethio to do just as you like," said the old man gravely. "If I hear appalling squalling in the Mall I shall know you're out mauling. You're for ever mauling—in fact, good sir, I will make you Lord Maulverer."

The Mall, it should be explained, was the haunt of traitors, spies, embezzlers, and others of the Bunter breed.

So Lord Maulverer, who was rather a slim, handsome young man, went into the Mall every day, gacing it to and fro until he saw traitors coming. Then, without a word, Lord Maulverer would start on his job—and traitors, etc, were flung in a dozen directions.

You'll like next week's special supplement! There are some fine Christmas thrills in it!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 775.

LETTERS THAT
ARE NOT
ANSWERED!

By Bob Cherry.



G. Hulstrode, Esq.
Remove Form.

Dear Hulstrode,—I have just heard that you brutally snuffed me in the Third this morning and raised a severe swelling on the kid's ear-box. Will you be so kind as to step into the gym after tea on this morning, when I shall be glad to let you off me. Yours pugnaciously,

ROBERT CHERRY.

Dear Wharton,—I guess you are a slick guy, and know which side to butter your bread, sir. I herewith make you a business-like proposition, and I know that a fellow with a brain-box like yours, sir, is not going to lose time, er, in thinking too much about it.

I want a place in the Form Eleven, sir, and I'm willing to pay you the sum of five dollars—in real money, mark you—for a position on the field in the next Form match.

Calculating upon your immediate hustle,—I am, sir, yours briskly,

FISHER TABLET FISH.

My dear old Wharton,—I shall be awfully glad if you would come and have some tea with me in my study this afternoon! I insist that you come alone, for I do not like too many fags in my study at the same time.

I have completely forgotten that you poured a bottle of red ink over my head this morning.—Yours cordially,

GERALD LODER.

Dear Billy,—Will you lend me five bob?—Your loving brother,

SAMMY.

Esteemed rottenold Skinner,—I have heartfully learned that you remarked upon the fact that Congo cannibals are of the duck-fal countenance similar to my own. May I pointedly show you that the Congo cannibals are black, but I am deeply brown? If you would accept the esteemed and cordial invitation to a lesson in the ridiculous colourfulness, I should be happy to make you resemble more closely the cannibals to which you have referentially spoken. Two whites couldn't make a black blackf, but a brown can make a white blackf!—Hopefully,

HURREE AMSET RAM SINGH.

Dear Mr. Quech,—Will you consider writing a serial for "Billy Bunter's Weekly" ? I am enclosing a plot for you to work up, and perhaps you could extend it to make it exciting, as I have only allowed for seven murders, two scenes in the torture-chamber, the orphan's dying father, four motor crashes, a railway smash, an arypiano on a sinking ship, a steam-roller running over the hero's crushed feet, four executions, poison in the family milk-can, two dead corpses, and a few kennel stonings and sword-thrills.—Yours in anticipation,

WILLIAM G. BUNTER.

[Supplement II.]



To The postmaster, Courtfield.

1.12.22

Dear Sir,—I think it's a crying shame that letters should be delivered at Greyfriars with a surcharge because there is no stamp on the envelope. A letter arrived for me to-day, and I was commanded—not asked—commanded to pay threepence for it. Naturally, I refused, and I am now writing to say just what I think about you and everything to do with the post office.

Yours disgustedly,

WILLIAM G. BUNTER.

1.12.22

W. G. Bunter, Esq.

Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter of even date, and am passing it on to my assistant for deciphering and explanation.

Your obedient servant,

JOSHUA JENKS,
Postmaster.

To the Postmaster, Courtfield.

2.12.22

Dear Sir,—I never heard of such cheek in my life. Anybody could read my letter. That is the worst of putting uneducated people in responsible positions. Fancy, you can't read a letter so beautifully written as mine was! If I wasn't a gentleman I should tell you to go back to school.

Yours,

WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER.

2.12.22

W. G. Bunter, Esq.

Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter of even date, and am passing it on to my assistant for deciphering and explanation.

Your obedient servant,

JOSHUA JENKS,
Postmaster.

4.12.22

To the Postmaster, Courtfield.

Dear Sir,—Your ignorance is amazing! I sent you a letter with a complaint, and you sent me an answer that you were deciphering it. Now you send me a summary letter in reply to a career hastagashun I sent you. Why don't you wake up and get something moving in your mouldy old department? If I don't get any satisfaction from you I am going to defame one of my titled uncles who is a relative, who will make you sit up and take notice.

Yours angrily,

W. G. BUNTER.

4.12.22

W. G. Bunter, Esq.

Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter of even date, and am passing it on to my assistant for deciphering and explanation.

Your obedient servant,

JOSHUA JENKS,
Postmaster.

To The Postmaster, Courtfield.

5.12.22.

Sir,—I deeply resent the third potty letter you have sent in reply to my complaint. You are making me the laughing stock of the Remove, and I am not going to stand it much longer. I have already put your letter in the hands of the Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald," who threatens to publish the hole of the correspondents. He treats the matter as a joke; but I am not joking. I assure you. I wash my hands of the hole affair, and want my letter back lost sweet.

W. G. BUNTER.

5.12.22.

W. G. Bunter, Esq.

Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter of even date, and am passing it on to my assistant for deciphering and explanation.

Your obedient servant,

JOSHUA JENKS,
Postmaster.

6.12.22.

To the Postmaster, Courtfield.

Joshua Jenks,—Will you let me have my letter back? Of course I am not going to pay any more for it. My titled relatives and uncles and father and aunts always put the stamp on. They're too good people to try and dodge it like some people I know. I expect one of your postmen punched the stamp when he collected it from the letter-box. Send the letter, and I will gladly let the matter drop. But it must not occur again, or I shall write and be nasty to you, you awful lot of beasts.

W. G. BUNTER.

6.12.22.

W. G. Bunter, Esq.

Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter of even date, and am passing it on to my assistant for deciphering and explanation.

Your obedient servant,

JOSHUA JENKS,
Postmaster.

To the Postmaster, Courtfield.

Jenks,—I have sold all the correspondences to the Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald" for four-pence halfpenny, and he is going to show you up to the world. No wonder the poor correspondents can't find money to pay their taxes! No wonder the poor man can't send his children to the seaside for a holiday—his wasters in the post office cost so much to keep up that the taxes keep up, too. I wash my hands of the hole affair.

Ever disgustedly,

WILLIAM G. BUNTER.

8.12.22.

W. G. Bunter, Esq.

Dear Sir,—With reference to your letter of the last, I am now informed that you raised a complaint concerning a letter delivered to you and for which a surcharge of three-halfpence was demanded. You may not

be aware of the fact that if there is no stamp upon an envelope, double the postage has to be paid before delivery is made. In this case, a stamp was undoubtedly put on the envelope, but was not with sufficient care to ensure it remaining there. The mark of the gum is plain, but the stamp, in some manner unaccountable to me, has obviously become unstuck and lost. Therefore the surcharge, for the Post Office do not accept responsibility for a stamp improperly affixed.

However, in view of your refusal to take the letter, I have been obliged to open it to obtain the name and address of the sender. The letter, together with three postal-orders value ten pence each, has been returned to Aunt Jemima, 41, Caric Street, London, S.W. An official explanation will acquaint the lady with the reason of your refusal to accept the letter and its contents.

Might I ask you to request your relatives to use the official Registered Post envelopes when sending such a large sum of money to you?

Your obedient servant,

JOSHUA JENKS,
Postmaster.

P.S.—Note attached for personal and private perusal.

NOTE.

You are an extremely rude young rascal, Master Bunter. My assistant has now deciphered your scrawling writing in all letters of recent date, and I am inclined to take the matter before your beaumont. Why don't you learn to spell? It would have saved me quite a lot of trouble, and you would have obtained the gratuity sent you by your Aunt Jemima. Do you realise you are grossly impudent in stamps, writing your denunciations of Post Office methods, when threepence would have brought you three pounds?—J. J.

9.12.22.

To the Postmaster, Courtfield.

Dear Mr. Postmaster Joshua Jenks, Esq.—Of course I was only joking. I wouldn't think of calling you a beast, though I think you are one. Will you send me any undischarged postal-orders for me the three postal-orders for one pound each? You can keep the letter and then I shall have to pay the surcharge at all; but if you like to acknowledge the postal-orders for me I should be obliged, as my Aunt Jemima might send some more one day. Forget that I think you are a beast—think only of the fact that I haven't told you you are a beast.

Yours lovingly,

WILLIAM.

P.S.—A sprudal messenger with the p-o's would be received with open arms.

W. G. Bunter, Esq.

Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter of even date, and have passed it—
[The Editor regrets that the rest of this final letter has not been handed over for publication with the first part of this correspondence, although a huge sum was paid for exclusive use of same.]

Readers in every part of the globe say the "Herald's" the best!

THE CALL FROM THE AIR!

(Continued from page 12.)

"Yes, sir!" replied the captain of the Remove without hesitation. "But I shall require a light of some sort."

"I'll lend you my electric torch, Wharton," said Tom Redwing, fumbling under his pillow. "Here it is. Don't break it, for goodness' sake!"

"Thanks, old man," Wharton moved forward towards the grate.

The fireplace of the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars was a big, old-fashioned affair with a very wide chimney, up either side of which ran a series of iron rungs let into the brickwork. These in the past had been used by sweeps' boys when it was the custom to make them ascend for the purpose of cleaning. Since then, however, more humane and scientific methods had prevailed, and the rungs in consequence had not been used for a considerable time, save on some rare occasion when a practical joker had been at work.

Apparently Mr. Queech thought some practical joker had been at work now, although who it could possibly be he did not know. The last of the mysterious walls had come from the chimney, beyond all doubt, and the only thing to account for it which suggested itself to the Form master was that someone must be hidden up there. The discovery that someone had been to the trouble to remove traces of soot from the tilework in front of the grate rather confirmed this suspicion.

As Harry Wharton bent down in front of the grate he grinned to himself. If there should indeed be any misguided junior, or any japing Fifth-Former of the Coker type up the chimney, it would go very hard with him, the captain of the Remove told himself.

"Oh the hall, Harry!" "Mind the blessed ghost doesn't fall on you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Wharton poked his head up the chimney.

"Going to lay your blessed ghost this time, Peter," said Frank Nugent, addressing Todd, who was seated on the edge of his bed. "No more haunted studies."

"I reckon Wharton's wasting his time messing about up that chimney," replied Peter Todd.

"What makes you think that, Peter?" asked Frank curiously.

"Oh, nothing!" Frank regarded his Form-fellow in puzzlement for a moment, and then turned his attention to Wharton again.

With his right hand Wharton switched on the current of Tom Redwing's electric torch, and directed its white beam up the chimney shaft. Dr. Locke, who had been a silent spectator of the last few minutes' happenings, gazed at the junior's back with interest. Most of the juniors who had not already left their beds did so now, and, clad only in their pyjamas, stood at a discreet distance behind the Head and anxiously awaited events.

For some moments Wharton peered intently up the chimney shaft, but no crouching human form clinging to the iron rungs of the brickwork met his expectant gaze.

"Well, Wharton, can you see

anything?" asked Mr. Queech somewhat impatiently.

The junior withdrew his head from the fireplace and blinked at the Form master. "Can't see anything yet, sir," he said.

"I'll have to get inside, I think. I shall have to go!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" While he had been talking, the captain of the Remove had turned his face, bringing it into the line of vision of the remainder of the Removites. A blob of soot had fallen on his face near his eye, which he had rubbed almost unconsciously until he had smeared it all round the vicinity of the optic in question. The result was somewhat startling.

"The black-eyed Kafir!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

But the juniors' merriment was short-lived. Mr. Queech was not in a humorous mood just then, and he failed to see anything funny in Wharton's appearance.

He frowned at the grinning Removites, and they promptly relapsed into silence.

"You may proceed with your examination, Wharton," he said.

"Yes, sir!"

Wharton carefully clambered into the fireplace, so that he was at length able to stand upright in the chimney.

"Hallo!" he shouted. "Anyone there?"

No reply. "Anyone there?" Silence.

Wharton continued to peer above him. He could see a small patch of pale light above him, which he knew was the sky at the top of the chimney. But there was no sign whatever of a figure clinging to any of the iron rungs. Wharton was beginning to think that Mr. Queech had backed a loser by assuming that anyone was hiding in the chimney, when he observed a recess about a couple of rungs above him, where the brickwork bent round over the mantelpiece of the door.

If there was, after all, anyone in hiding in the chimney, then the recess was the only place where they could possibly be. Wharton determined to leave no stone unturned to satisfy himself on this point, and, to further his search, clambered a couple of rungs up the chimney until his head was level with the recess.

He directed the light of the torch beyond the brickwork.



MURDER

£500

REWARD

Buy a copy of the "Detective Magazine" TO-DAY and start to pick up the clues which may lead you to solve the mystery of Emil Loober's death. Cash awards totalling £500 are offered in connection with this enthralling competition, full particulars of which you will find in this grand new fortnightly fiction magazine TO-DAY. Ask for—

DETECTIVE

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NOW ON SALE.

"Anyone there!"

No answer.

Wharton leaned over the edge of the recess, and his gaze fell on a curious box arrangement, surrounded by coils of wire, from which protruded a metal horn.

"My hat! So that's the little game, is it?" he muttered to himself. "It's a wonder I didn't think of it before. A blessed gramophone!"

The junior leaned a little farther into the recess, and took the boxlike apparatus between his two hands. It was not very heavy, and he had little difficulty in dragging it to the edge of the recess, where he proceeded to examine it by the light of the electric torch.

There was something about the appearance of the apparatus that seemed familiar to the junior, but for the moment he did not seem to remember where he had seen anything like it before.

He gazed curiously at the metal horn, and even as he did so there came a loud drawn-out moan, dying away into a series of faint sobs.

The mysterious noise, coming so unexpectedly, gave the captain of the Remove a momentary shock, which caused him to lose his equilibrium, and a second later, with a wild howl, he came crashing down into the fireplace.

"Yeerooogh!"

Mr. Queech, who was standing near the open grate, jumped back in great alarm, just avoiding a cloud of soot that came billowing out.

"Bless my soul!" he murmured.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors. The head and shoulders of Wharton appeared from the fireplace, the boxlike apparatus still clutched between his two hands.

"Gug-gug-gug—" he spluttered, emerging from the fireplace into the dormitory.

"Bless my soul!" repeated Mr. Queech.

"Goodness gracious!" gasped Dr. Locke.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wharton certainly presented an extraordinary spectacle. His head and shoulders were smothered with soot, save for a patch under his left eye, where he had rubbed some of it away. His sleeping-jacket and pyjamas were in a shocking state, and it was a moot point whether they would be of any further service. The juniors' merriment, if a little ill-timed, was therefore excusable.

But the captain of the Remove took no heed of the laughter his appearance caused. He had set out to discover the cause of the extraordinary disturbance, and he had succeeded. He therefore felt very pleased with himself, and, despite the grimy state he was in, a broad grin was spread across his face.

He placed his burden on the floor before the astonished Form master.

"Here's the little ghost, sir," he said, "tucked away in the recess, as I thought."

"Bless my soul!"

"What the thump is it?"

Masters and boys crowded round the contraption on the floor and gazed at it in amazement.

"What on earth—" began Mr. Queech, but before he could finish he was cut short by a yell from behind.

"Hi, you silly asses, don't touch it; you'll break it!"

The whole assembly swung round in amazement, and stared at the speaker, who was not other than Peter Todd, obviously in a state of great excitement.

The Greyfriars Chums are up to some fine Christmas stunts! You watch them!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Peter's Little Secret!

"TODDY—"

"What's the game?"

Peter Todd, red of face, stood blinking uncertainly, first at Mr. Quelch and then at Harry Wharton.

"I—I—I—," he began.

"Bless my soul, Todd!" gasped Mr. Quelch at last. "What is the meaning of this?"

"You see, sir," began Peter Todd awkwardly, "what I mean is—er—"

"Do you know anything about this arrangement here, boy?" snapped Mr. Quelch, pointing to the gramophone-like arrangement on the floor.

"Nunno—I mean yes, sir," gasped Peter Todd confusedly.

"Do you mean to say it's your property?"

Peter coughed.

"Mr. Quelch—I'm afraid it is, sir."

"Mr. Quelch stared at the Removite in amazement.

"Pray explain yourself, Todd," he said quietly.

"It's this w-way, sir," stammered the hapless Peter. "It sort of belongs to me, as you know—"

"Precisely?"

"And I put it up the chimney, sir."

"Are you in the habit of secreting your property in the dormitory chimney, Todd?" demanded Mr. Quelch in an icy tone.

"Yesser!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I mean, nunno, sir," amended Peter in embarrassment.

"Then why did you do so on this occasion?"

"You see, sir, I didn't want the other fellows to know I'd got it. It's a secret, you see, sir."

"I see."

Mr. Quelch turned to Harry Wharton.

"This is the instrument—er—responsible for the—er—noise, I suppose?" he said.

The captain of the Remove blinked at the Removite master through his coating of soot and shifted uncomfortably. It was apparent to the junior that things were not quite all they seemed, and he had no desire to get Peter into trouble if the junior had not deliberately set out to cause the commotion that had dragged them all from their beds. The glistening eyes of the master were on the junior captain's face, waiting for a reply, and it seemed to Wharton that there was no way of evading the question.

"Yes, sir," he replied at length.

Mr. Quelch nodded.

The Head and the remainder of the Remove, who had already gathered that much for themselves, looked on with puzzled frowns. It was obvious to them all that here was something that would need a lot of explaining. That Todd had not secreted the instrument, whatever it was, up the chimney for the purpose of japing them was apparent. Then, too, as he had said, his object in placing his property in such a curious place had been for the purpose of keeping his possession of it a secret. It had occurred to them that Todd's behaviour had been a little peculiar recently. First there had been his extraordinary conduct with regard to the cheque he had received from his uncle for his birthday, and then, later, the fact that on the night the Form had been disturbed by the noise in his study, he had locked the door of that apartment—a very unusual thing for a junior to do.

What did it all mean? What was the mystery? Why had Todd gone to such trouble to keep his possession of the instrument a secret from the other juniors? These were the questions masters and boys alike were asking themselves. But, think as they might, they could find no suitable answer to the riddles.

Mr. Quelch continued to gaze at the junior for a few minutes, and then turned his attention to the instrument on the floor again.

"Perhaps you would be kind enough to inform us what this—er—contrivance is, Todd?" he said at length.

"Yes, sir—certainly, sir," replied Peter, only too glad of the opportunity.

"It's a—wireless set, sir."

"A wireless set, did you say, boy?"

"Yes, sir. I bought it with a cheque I received from my uncle on my birthday. I was keeping it a secret from the rest of the chaps until I properly understood it; then, I was going to spring it on them as a surprise."

There was a gasp from the Removites. They were, as Bob Cherry would have put it, beginning to see daylight. The purchase of the wireless set explained the destination of Peter's cheque. The juniors were beginning to understand now what he had meant when he had said that he was going to spend his money on something they could all have a share in. They crowded nearer to the set and gazed at it with added interest.

While most of them had seen a wireless set at some time or another, they had never before had a chance of examining one at close quarters, and the working of one was to most of them as great a mystery as it was to Peter Todd himself.

"Well, I'm blessed!"

"The deep wonder!"

The juniors' exclamation of amazement was cut short by the Remove master, who had recovered from the surprise occasioned by Peter's somewhat startling information.

"That will do, Todd," he said quietly.

"I will go further into this matter in the morning. You, Wharton, had better get yourself cleaned up and return to bed."

Mr. Quelch glanced at his watch and uttered an exclamation of astonishment.

"Bless my soul!" he murmured. "It is past twelve o'clock! Come on, my boys—to bed, at last!"

"But what about my wireless set, sir?" asked Peter Todd anxiously. "May I—"

"You may do nothing, boy!" snapped the Remove Form master angrily. "Any explanation you may have to make, I will listen to in the morning. Meanwhile, I will take charge of the wireless set myself. I shall expect you to present yourself in my study immediately after breakfast. That is all at present."

And turning on his heel, Mr. Quelch left the dormitory, carrying the precious wireless set under his right arm. Wingate and the Head, who had been silent spectators of the happenings of the past few minutes, followed closely behind, leaving the juniors discussing the events of the evening in excited voices.

As soon as they had gone Peter Todd was bombarded with a volley of questions, but to none of them did he vouchsafe any reply. And realising that they were no more likely to get any information out of Todd than they would out of a block of brick wall, the Removites were compelled to contain their curiosity, and one by one they dropped off to sleep until the first clang of the rising bell in the morning.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Todd Explains!

BREAKFAST the following morning seemed a very uninteresting meal to Peter Todd. At the first opportunity he left the table and prepared for his interview with his Form master.

The interview did not take very long, and when Peter finally emerged from Mr. Quelch's study he was greeted by a chorus of yells from a number of Removites who had congregated at the end of the passage.

"Licked!"

"Slapped!"

"Poor old Marconi!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter surveyed the Removites and grinned.

"Wrong, all of you," he replied cheerfully. "I haven't been licked, and I'm going to be allowed to keep the wireless set—at least, for a while. The Head's going to think over that part of the business, Quelch says, and see how we behave."

The Removites gasped.

"Do you mean to say you got off scot-free after japing us all-like that?" asked Skinner, with a sneer. "If it's true, then it's a jolly shame!"

"Shut up, Skinner!" roared Bolsover.

"Give the chap a chance to explain."

"What happened, Todd?"

"Well, it's like this, you chaps. When my uncle sent me that cheque he suggested I should spend it on something that my good, kind schoolfellows could have a share of. There wasn't enough to stand a good feed all the way round, especially with fellows like Dunster in the Form—"

"Really, Todd, I hope you don't accuse me of being greedy—"

"Shut up, tubby!"

The Owl of the Remove relaxed into silence, and Peter Todd continued.

"As I was saying, there wasn't enough to stand a good feed all the way round, so I thought if I bought a wireless set we could all get a bit of fun out of it—"

"Hear, hear!"

"But what about that do in your study?"

"And what about that dust-up last night?"

"I'm coming to that," said Peter cheerfully. "I bought the blessed set, one of the very latest types—you know, the sort you can use without having to put up an aerial. But the point was, to get used to fixing the blessed thing up—wave lengths and all that sort of thing. I didn't want you fellows to see it until I was able to work it properly, so I hid it in my study cupboard on the top shelf—"

"I saw the horn of the blessed thing the night Quelch opened the door of your cupboard to look for the mysterious singer who cracked Bob Cherry," but I thought the horn belonged to a gramophone—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, what caused all that thumping noise? Was it—"

"If you silly asses will shut up and give me a chance," exclaimed Peter, "I'll tell you what happened. I hid the thing in the cupboard, but forgot to switch it off or whatever it is you're supposed to do with it, and the blessed thing picked up a special concert, or something—"

"At that time of night?"

"Quelch says it must have been the special late concert broadcasted by the Midnight Vagabonds—that new show given after the theatres on the roof of the Blitz Hotel, in Piccadilly."

"My giddy aunt!"

"That explains that singing and shouting, then?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"The male."

"And those female voices singing a duet?"

"Right every time."

"Well, I'm blessed!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Took us all in properly!"

"It took me in as well!" grinned Peter Todd. "Even while all the blessed din was on, I never had a suspicion. I didn't think such a thing could happen. Why, all the blessed afternoon I'd been trying to fix it up so that it would receive, and at last I gave it up as a bad job. But the fact was, I'd succeeded and didn't know it—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But what about hiding the thing up the dorm chimney?" demanded Skinner, with sneer. "I suppose you didn't know then how you had fixed it up?"

"No, I didn't—and if you don't like to believe me, Skinner, then you needn't. But at the same time, if you don't keep a civil tongue in your wooden head, then you'll get a thick ear!"

The end of the Remove did a sneering grin, but was wise enough to realise that Todd was quite prepared to carry out his threat. He therefore very wisely remained silent.

"What about the stunt in the dorm, anyhow?" put in Hazeldene. "How did that happen?"

"Like the affair in the study," explained Peter. "I thought the set might be found in the study—especially if any of you Sherlock Holmes people got to work trying to lay the ghost—so I hid it up the chimney of the dorm for the sake of a better hiding place. The only point was, when I hid it it was tuned up exactly as it was when it was in my study cupboard."

"But we didn't get a concert the second time. How do you explain all that blessed moaning and groaning?"

"Easy. As I say, when I hid the blessed thing up the dorm chimney, I was in ignorance of the fact that it had caused all that commotion in the study. I was as puzzled about that as were the rest of you. Anyhow, there was no concert on last night, but since the set was tuned up to receive, it picked up what I believe are called atmospherics—in other words, because I didn't quite know what I had done to the set, it started to kick up all that row through something in the air."

There was no doubting the fact that Todd was, as he said, somewhat ignorant as to how a receiving set should be operated. To those juniors who knew anything about wireless at all, that much was apparent by his faulty explanation of what atmospherics were. However, they knew what he meant, and the cause of the extraordinary disturbance of the previous night was now as plain as daylight to them—all save Billy Bunter. Bunter still clung to the original idea that the noise was occasioned by the presence of the restless spirit of some long dead monk. But Bunter and his ideas did not seem to interest the juniors much at that moment—they were too interested in listening to Todd and in asking questions about his wireless set.

"But what about Quelch?" asked

Bob Cherry, somewhat puzzled. "What did he say when you explained to him? Didn't he want to know why you didn't say before what was up the chimney?"

"He certainly did," replied Peter, with a grin. "In fact, when I first went into his study, I thought he was going to bite my head off, or give me the sack at the very least. But when I told him all about it, he laughed like thump!"

"Well, I'm jiggered!"

"And he didn't lam you?"

"No, not a bit of it. He was too interested, and said—"

"But where is the set now?"

"Old Quelch's a sport!"

"Hear, hear!"

"But where is the set now?" repeated Frank Nugent. "Isn't he going to let you have it back?"

Peter Todd nodded.

"He's going to show it to the Head first," he explained, "and he has promised to let me keep it on the understanding that there is no japing about with it. In fact, Quelch seems to know quite a lot about wireless, and he's going to show me the proper way to work it."

"Good for Quelch!"

"Hear, hear!"

"So that's that," observed Bob Cherry when Todd concluded. "It wasn't a blessed ghost after all, and Todd wasn't even pulling our legs. A real wireless set in the Remove! That's put one over that cheeky six Coker, anyhow. He wanted to get one, but he hadn't got enough tin."

"That's all right, you chaps," interrupted Harry Wharton. "But from what Todd says, this wireless set is partly Remove property. I propose therefore, we give three cheers for the

founder of the feat—or, at least, the founder of the set—"

"Hear, hear!"

"Good old Toddy!"

"Hurrah!"

And before he quite realised what was happening, Todd found himself being thumped and patted on the back by practically the entire Remove—or, at least, as many of the Removites as could get near enough to do so.

And when the junior finally received his wireless set back from the Remove Form master that evening he found that not only was his study the most popular one in the Remove passage, but that the entire Remove, even including Harold Skinner and Billy Bunter, had joined the great world-wide array of wireless telephone enthusiasts. Indeed, for that matter, wireless remained the one and all-absorbing topic for the remainder of the week, even football being temporarily relegated to a place of secondary importance in the minds of the juniors. Todd's wireless set was a novelty; but, like all novelties, the period of nine days' wonder passed, and the band of wireless enthusiasts had thinned down to some dozen juniors, in which was included the Famous Five.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Call from the Air!

"THAT'S curious!"

"Heard it again!"

"Yes. You have a go."

Six juniors were gathered round the table in Study No. 1 of the Remove passage. They were the



"We might give a shout first," said Harry Wharton. "We may even get in without breaking the door down. All together now!" And the Removites sent up a loud yell. "Hi, hi!" But no reply came down. (See Chapter 9.)

Real fine tales next week, chaps! Tell your pals to look out!

Famous Five and Peter Todd. Tea was over, the table cleared of crockery, and in the centre of it stood Peter Todd's wireless set, tuned up and working, as Bob Cherry said, "all according to schedule."

"The receivers of the instrument were clasped to Peter's head, and the junior sat listening intently."

"That's curious," he repeated. "That's the third time this week I've heard that call. I wonder what the thump it means!"

"Let's have a go, Toddy!" Todd removed the ear-pieces from his head and handed them to Harry Wharton. The captain of the Remove placed them in position and listened. His face remained expressionless for a moment, and then a puzzled look came over it.

"What is it, Harry, old man?" inquired Frank Nugent.

"The same call that Peter heard the other night," replied the leader of the Famous Five, looking up. "Hallo! Here we are again! Don't interrupt, you chaps!"

The remainder of the Famous Five and Todd regarded the listening junior with anxious faces. They had set out to amuse themselves by trying to pick up any stray calls or messages that happened to be passing through the air, and they had succeeded in a manner they had not anticipated.

Several times during the week, when they had been amusing themselves in this

way they had heard a voice from out of the air. It had been very faint and very indistinct. Nevertheless, the juniors had been able to hear the message the unknown caller was trying to give, and it had puzzled them. They had been inclined to pay no attention to it, first of all; but the fact that it was repeated several nights in succession had caused them to wonder.

They anxiously watched Wharton, and waited for him to speak. At length the junior captain looked up, and removed the ear-pieces from his head.

"Hear it, Harry!" Wharton nodded. "It was very faint this time," he said, "but I could just make it out. Someone is in trouble."

"What was the message?" interrupted Cherry impatiently.

"Come to the old Tower by Monkville. Waste no time, or you may be too late. For Heaven's sake, help me!"

"My hat!" "Great Scott!" "Do you think it's genuine?"

Wharton looked serious. "I don't suppose any fellow would be mad enough to send a message like that out for the mere fun of the thing," he said slowly. "But, in any case, it's jolly curious, to say the least of it. I don't know what to make of it at all."

"The puzzlement is terrific, my worthy chums."

"Listen again, and see whether you

can still hear anything," suggested Nugent.

Wharton did as requested, but it was at least ten minutes before any sound came again. Then, very faintly, a voice, apparently belonging to a man, made itself heard.

"Help! The old tower near Monkville. Help! For Heaven's sake, help!"

The voice trailed away again, as though its owner was extremely tired. Wharton turned to his watching chums.

"I got it again," he said. "What do you think we ought to do, you fellows?"

The six juniors looked puzzled. Who could possibly send out such a message? And why should such an uncommon method as wireless be chosen for any request for help? Why not the telephone? Why not—

But the juniors were unable to find an answer to all the questions which came to their minds. It was very puzzling, to say the least of it. While the Famous Five were discussing whether they should do anything in the matter, Peter Todd lifted the receivers and placed them to his head again. Almost immediately he gave an exclamation of astonishment, and pressed them still closer. This time he could hear the voice a little more distinctly. It was the same repeated cry for help. But even as Peter listened there came faintly a shout and a groan, followed by silence.

"My giddy aunt!" gasped the Remover, turning to the Famous Five. "Something jolly serious is happening

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Solve the Simple Picture-puzzle, and send in your solution!

FIRST PRIZE £5. SECOND PRIZE £2 10s. 0d.
Ten Prizes of Five Shillings each.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

Here is a splendid Footer competition which I am sure will interest you. On this page you will find a history of Burnley Football Club, in picture-puzzle form. What you are invited to do, is to solve this picture, and when you have done so, write your solution on a sheet of paper. Then sign the coupon which appears below, pin it to your solution, and post it to "Burnley" Competition, MAGNET Office, Gough House, Gough Square, E.C.4, so as to reach that address not later than THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21st, 1922.

The FIRST PRIZE of £5 will be awarded to the reader who submits a solution which is exactly the same as, or nearest to, the solution now in the possession of the Editor. In the event of a tie the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. The Editor reserves the right to add together and divide the value of all, or any, of the prizes, but the full amount will be awarded. It is a distinct condition of entry that the decision of the Editor must be accepted as final. Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

This competition is run in conjunction with the "Genus," "Popular," and "Boys' Friend," and readers of those journals are invited to compete.

I enter "Burnley" Competition, and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final.

Name

Address

M

somewhere, you fellows. I heard a shout and a crash, and then silence. I wonder what the thump it all means? What are we going to do about it? Are we going along to see whether we can find this tower near Monkville, or not?"

"May be a wild goose chase," said Harry Wharton. "But, all the same, I vote we inquire into it. What do you say, you chaps?"

"Hear, hear!"

"The inquisitiveness is terrific!"

"Right ho, then! Let's gather a few of the other chaps together, in case of accidents, and get along. Monkville is only a couple of miles from here."

And so saying, the captain of the Ramore opened the study door, and strode down the passage, with the remainder of the Famous Five at his heels. He made for the junior Common-room, where he found Vernon-Smith, Tom Brown, and Mark Linley discussing the forthcoming match with Highfield.

As Wharton entered, however, they ceased their conversation and looked up inquiringly. It was obvious that the junior was labouring under some great excitement, and they were anxious to know the cause of it.

Wharton explained in a few words what had happened in his study, and invited them to join his investigation party. At first Vernon-Smith was of the impression that Wharton was either the victim of a practical joke, or that he had been mistaken in the meaning of the call. But the earnestness of the Famous Five soon convinced him on this point; and the exclamations of astonishment having died away, the juniors unanimously agreed that the matter ought to be looked into, and at once agreed to join the party. Five minutes later, headed by Bob Cherry, the little party moved across the Clove towards the school.

Even now, they thought, they might be on a fool's errand; but they would soon see.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Old Tower!

IT was half an hour's stiff walk from Greyfrays to Monkville, and when the little party of Removites arrived there dusk was already beginning to fall, and the wind was freshening up for a gale. The juniors buttoned their coats tightly about them and continued on. Most of them had been to Monkville before, and knew the village quite well; but, for all that, they had not the remotest idea where the old tower was to be found.

"We'll ask the next chap we see where the blessed place is," said Frank Nugent. "It's no good wandering aimlessly about in the dark. Hallo! Here comes the oldest inhabitant! Hold on a minute while I cross-examine him."

Nugent advanced to an ancient who had just appeared round a bend in the road, questioned him for a few seconds, and returned to the party.

"It's in the middle of some fields about eight minutes' walk from here," he announced. "and we get to it by taking the next footpath on the left, that we come to. The old chap didn't like talking about the place. He said it was haunted, and that we had better keep away from it. But I'm blessed if I've ever heard of an empty house, barn, or any other sort of building in this part of the globe that isn't haunted, according to the natives. Come on, ye giddy cripplies, this way!"

Nugent took the lead, and led the party through several meadows until the ground dipped down and the footpath led through a hedge. Here the Removites halted.

Before them, looming up mysteriously out of the dark, it seemed, was the old tower, the object of their search.

"Doesn't look very cheerful!" exclaimed Tom Brown, surveying the pile of masonry without approval. "Seems

to be more like a deserted lighthouse than anything else."

"Hear, hear!"

The juniors held a short consultation, after which it was decided that they should approach the tower from different angles in order to avoid attracting the attention of anyone who might be inside and on guard. They accordingly spread themselves out and advanced on the tower like so many Redkins opening an attack on a white settlement.

Wharton was one of the first of the party to arrive, and he halted before a door, apparently the only entrance to the place, and waited for the remainder of the party.

"Well, here's the door right enough," said Harry, in a subdued voice; "but the blessed thing is locked! The point is, how are we going to get it open without kicking up a fearful shindy?"

The chums looked thoughtful. It was obvious that the only way they could gain admittance was by breaking the door down, and this they wanted to avoid, if possible, on account of the noise it would make. But puzzle their brains as they might, they could think of no alternative way, and at last it was decided to throw caution to the winds, make a bold attack, and chance what happened.

"The door will want a good bit of bashing before it will give way," commented Vernon-Smith thoughtfully.

"What we want is— Ah, the very thing!" The junior broke off short and indicated the trunk of a small tree that had recently been felled by the woodmen. "The very thing," he said; "the merry old battering-ram all ready for action."

"What ho!"

"Good egg!"

The juniors advanced to the tree-trunk and dragged it to the door.

"Since we are going to kick up a dust, after all," said Harry Wharton, "we



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might as well give a shout first. We may get in without breaking the door down even yet."

"Good wheeze!"
"Altogether, then!"

And with a roar beside which that of the celebrated bull of Bashan would have sounded but a feeble whisper the Removites sent up a yell.

"Hi, hi!"

The only reply they received, however, was the hoot of an owl hidden somewhere in the branches of a neighbouring tree.

"No good. We'll have to bash the blessed door, after all."

"The bashfulness is of the catcomed order!"

"On the ball, then!"

The Removites lifted the heavy trunk between them, and began to slowly swing it backwards and forwards.

"One, two, three—"

Crash!

"And again!"

Crash!

The heavy door groaned beneath the terrific impact, but it was hung on stout steel hinges, and still held to. It was obvious, however, that it could not withstand the juniors' terrific onslaught much longer, and the juniors retreated with the improvised battering-ram for another charge.

"Altogether!"

Crash!

The door went down like matchwood before a steam-hammer, and without unnecessary waste of time the juniors scrambled over the debris into the body of the tower. The apartment they found themselves in was pitch dark, and possessed a musty odour, which reminded them in some vague way of the old crypt beneath the ruined abbey at Greyfriars. Wharton struck a match, and by its feeble, flickering yellow light,

the juniors made out a spiral staircase in the corner of the room which led in an upward direction. The staircase was made of wrought iron, and on the steps of it was a thick layer of dust, in which several human footprints were nearly visible, indicating that someone had used them at a more or less recent period.

Wharton peered at these marks and regarded his chums significantly.

"There may be something in this business after all, you fellows," he said. "Someone has been here lately, but what reason I'm blessed if I can guess."

"Better have a look upstairs," suggested Tom Brown, the New Zealand junior, shivering. "It's blessed cold to-night, and the sooner we get back to Greyfriars the better I shall like it."

"Right-ho, we'll go up. Don't make any more noise than you can help."

"Half a tick—there might be a scrap!" said Bob Cherry practically. "I can fight better without a coat! Here goes!"

The other juniors took the hint, and all of them removed their coats. Then Wharton led the way upstairs, and the remainder of the party followed in single file. They passed through three rooms on their way up, similar in appearance to the one in which they had found themselves when they had entered the tower. There was nothing about the appearance of these rooms to suggest that anything of an unusual nature was being conducted in the old tower, and once again it occurred to the Removites that they might be victims of some absurd practical joke.

But after the third room had been passed, the iron staircase came to an end on a small landing, at the far end of which was a door, beneath which showed a chink of yellow light. Wharton paused at the top of the landing and waited for his companions to join him.

"There must be someone there, after all," he whispered, "else why the light?"

"Let's knock at the door!"

"It's curious that if anyone is in that room we didn't hear about it when we let off that yell and smashed the door down," interrupted Vernon-Smith thoughtfully. "I believe that, after all, we have struck something out of the ordinary."

"Lear, hear!"

"Knock at the door, Smithy."

The Boulder strode silently across the small landing and did as requested. The juniors listened intently for a reply, but the silence of the old tower remained unbroken.

"Try again!"

Vernon-Smith did so, and a second afterwards the juniors heard a faint groan.

"My hat!"

"Hear that?"

"Anyone there?" shouted Bob Cherry.

Moan!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Another door wants bashing!" shouted Bob. "Lend a hand, you chaps."

The juniors placed their shoulders to the door and charged. But this door, unlike that at the bottom of the tower, burst open at their first attempt, and they almost tumbled over one another into the room beyond. They recovered themselves in an instant, however, and blinked at the extraordinary spectacle that met their gaze in open-mouthed astonishment.

On the floor in one corner of the room lay an old man attired in a dressing-gown and a skull cap, while near by, in an armchair, a young man sat huddled up with his head hanging forward over his chest. In various other parts of the room were a number of glass jars, coils of wire, and the mahogany boxes. But of these things the juniors took little heed at the moment, their whole attention being centred on the two men they had discovered, both of whom seemed to be in the last stages of consciousness.

"My hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "This is the blessed limit!"

"The limitfulness is terrific!" added the Nabob of Bhanipour.

The juniors were too stupified to act for a moment; they could only stare. Had there been a light going on when they had burst into the room, they would have known what to have done; but as it was, as Bob Cherry afterwards put it, they were "stunned."

The young man in the armchair lifted his head and stared at the Removites as though they had been creatures from another world. It was obvious to them that he was ill, and was unable to talk very much. But with a movement of his hand, he indicated that he wanted them to come closer. They did as requested, and were thus enabled to hear the one word he whispered:

"Water!"

Frank Nugent pulled from his pocket a Thermos flask of coffee he had brought with him against the return journey, and, unscrewing the cap, poured a measure of the liquid into it, which he offered to the man in the chair. The man drank it at a gulp, and seemed somewhat revived. He pointed to his companion, whom by now Vernon-Smith had dragged to a bench, whereupon Nugent poured out another measure, which was also drunk at a gulp without a word being uttered.

"If this isn't the giddy limit," gasped Tom Brown, "then I'll eat my only Sunday topper!"

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"These chaps must be starving, or pretty near it," said the practical Vernon-Smith. "Anyone got any sandwiches?"

Two of the juniors produced some biscuits from their jacket-pockets, and these the Bounder broke into small pieces and mixed with some more of Vernon's cocoa.

When the younger of the two men had parlayed of this improvised meal, he was sufficiently revived to be able to sit up in his chair; but his companion, on the other hand, continued to stare vacantly before him, quite oblivious of the presence of the juniors.

The young man was quick to observe the curious glances the Removites bestowed on the old man, and he smiled slightly, at the same time beckoning the juniors to come nearer.

"You are Greyfriars boys, I believe?" he said in a weak voice.

The juniors nodded.

"Well, I am afraid I'm hardly in a fit condition tonight to give you the explanation that you are entitled to, but I can tell you this—if I had come twenty-four hours later I am afraid you would have been too late—"

"Why, what the thump—"

"How did, or, rather, what made you come here?" continued the young man, ignoring the interruption. "How did you know where to find us?"

"We received a call—a jolly curious call, through my wireless set," explained Peter Todd. "Something about come to the old tower near Monksville. We thought at first that someone was pulling our legs, but then I remembered having picked up a similar call several nights in succession. I told these chaps here, and we listened again. We heard a thump and a crash, and then we decided that something was wrong, and decided to come along and find out what it was. I'm jolly glad we did, too!"

The young man nodded.

"We were on the last lap," he explained. "My friend here went—"

The speech trailed off, and the young man turned pale. It was obvious that in his state the effort of talking was too much for him.

"Better get them back to the school, I think," said Harry Wharton. "They appear to be in a bad way. We can't leave them here all night, and it's doubtful whether we can get them in anywhere in the village. We had better see whether we can hire the village cab, if it's not too late. It won't take long to get to the school then. What do you say, you chaps?"

The juniors nodded assent.

The captain of the Reserve explained to the young man what they intended to do, but he was too weak to make any reply beyond nodding.

Godling had already locked the gates when they arrived, and on Wharton's instructions, communicated the arrival of the party to the Reserve Form master, who sent him to arrange with the house-keeper for accommodation for the two strangers.

After the two guests had been thus disposed of, the juniors despatched to Mr. Quetch their adventures, beginning from the mysterious call Todd had received through his wireless set up to their discovery of the two men in the old tower at Monksville.

Mr. Quetch listened attentively, but made no comment. It was clear, however, that he was deeply interested in the juniors' story. When they had con-

cluded he dismissed them to the dormitory, having promised to go into the matter more fully in the morning.

The story of the arrival of the Famous Five and their chums with the two strangers had spread round the school, and when they entered the dormitory they were bombarded with a volley of questions, to all of which they vouchsafed no reply.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Mystery Solved!

THE following morning Wharton and Todd were summoned to the

Head's study, where they found already assembled, besides Dr. Locke himself, Mr. Quetch, their Form master, and the young man they had rescued from the tower the previous night. He smiled and rose as the juniors entered, and held out his hand. The juniors took it with obvious embarrassment, wondering what on earth was coming next.

"I owe you ladies a greater debt than you know," he said, dropping into his chair again, "and I wish to thank both you and your friends from the bottom of my heart."

Wharton coughed.

"However, with the permission of your headmaster, I would like to explain to all of you what happened," went on the young man. "But I think you had better begin the story first and tell what led up to your coming to the tower."

The juniors repeated the story they had already told their Form master. The young man nodded from time to time, but made no comment until they had finished.

"My story is very simple," he said. "As I have already explained to Dr. Locke some time past, I have been very interested in wireless telephony—indeed, I may say, without boasting, that both my friend, Professor Jardine, whom you saw last night, and myself, may be numbered among the pioneers of wireless in this country.

"We had been working on a new type of transmitter which we were hoping to place on the market shortly, and for the purposes of carrying out further experiments on this work, we had been using the top room in the old tower at Monksville, which belongs to a friend of mine.

"Unfortunately, however, the stress of work proved too much for the professor, and I suggested to him that we should return home for a few days for a rest. He was indignant at the suggestion, and would, to say a long story short, work on. Then, suddenly, without the slightest warning, under the greatest strain we were both imposing on ourselves he had a sudden mental breakdown. This breakdown took a serious form. He became possessed with the idea that I was going to desert him in the work, and in order to keep me at it he locked the door of the room of the tower in which we were working, and before I could prevent him, flung the key out of the window."

The young man paused and wiped the perspiration from his brow.

"Needless to say," he continued, "it was impossible to escape from the window of the tower, and it was equally impossible to break down the door of the room unaided.

"I tried to attract the attention of passers-by to the tower, but, as you know, it stands out in the fields, and very few people came near us. Those who did

either did not observe my signals, or did not choose to do so. Meantime, the professor became rather violent, and I had some trouble to prevent him doing me some injury. There was not a bit of food in the place beyond some sandwiches, and these, with what little liquid refreshment we had, I made last a couple of days.

"I could see no prospect of getting away from that tower, since it was not connected by telephone, and I thought we would be left there to starve unless someone visited the place by a remote chance. The idea of a great idea struck me, and I made alterations to the wireless set we were working on, and sent out the messages you received."

"But why did no one else receive them?" interrupted Peter Todd curiously. "I would have thought—"

"For a very good reason, my boy. For the very simple reason that I was drawing the current for the transmitter from some batteries we had in the tower. They were not intended for the purpose I was putting them to, however, and the waves sent out were in consequence very weak and of a very limited radius. They reached you at Greyfriars because you were not very far away, but there are very few receiving stations, private or otherwise, that I know of in the vicinity, and had you not happened to have a set at the school, then—"

The young man shrugged his shoulders.

Wharton and Todd gasped with amazement at the conclusion of this strange story.

"My hat!"

"Great Scott!"

"It was a very lucky thing we happened to have a set," said Peter Todd.

"Very fortunate for me," agreed the young man. "As regards the professor, through the kindness of Dr. Locke, I have been able to get into communication with his medical man, who is already in attendance on him. I think that is about all there is to tell, and once again I would like to express my appreciation of what you have done."

Wharton shifted uncomfortably, while Peter Todd tugged at his collar.

"I have already heard from Dr. Locke of the—ah—doubts he entertained as regards your suitability to possess a receiving set, and I am glad to say I have convinced him, that he need entertain those doubts no longer. Indeed, he has consented to permit you to accept a receiving set—a really good set—it is my intention to present to you."

"Oh, good!"

"I say, thank you very much, sir!"

The young man waved the juniors' thanks aside, and Dr. Locke having intimated that the interview was closed, they left the room and dashed to the Common-room, to communicate the glorious news to their chums.

Their story was received with amazement and doubt at first, but when the juniors fully realised the good fortune that had befallen them, they could hardly contain themselves for joy. Peter Todd found himself the hero of the hour, and the others of the rescue party were lionised until they were tired of the whole affair. It was a great day for the juniors, and when the Form feed which followed that evening a toast was drunk in foaming ginger-pep to the fellows who answered "The Call from the Air!"

THE END.

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**THE FIRST CHAPTER,
The Tragedy of the
Curio Shop!**

"TWELVE o'clock." Ferrers Locke restored his watch to his pocket and halted.

He and his young assistant, Jack Drake, had just returned from Baker Street Tube station. They had spent most of the morning with a friend of Locke's, a Bengalee called Cauder Lal, who was staying at the Waldorf Hotel.

Both Locke and Drake had come away from the hotel the possessor of a valuable little souvenir. Locke's took the form of a small golden representation of the Hindu god, Ganesha. Drake's was an image of the sacred white peacock, beautifully carved in ivory.

"These valuable gifts, presented by Lal, were in token of the Indian's appreciation of services rendered by Locke and Drake."

As Ferrers Locke halted outside the Tube station his hand caressed the little box in which reposed the gift he had received.

"I think, Drake," he murmured, "we might walk home via Loftus Road. We have time before lunch. And I rather fancy my old friend, Andrea Ollson, would like to see these examples of Indian workmanship with which we've been presented."

"Good idea, sir," the two stopped off together. Instead of taking the direct route to their quarters in Baker Street, they turned down a side road. The first turning on their left brought them into the little frequented thoroughfare known as Loftus Road.

"You know, my boy," said Locke, as they strode along, "I've known Ollson almost more years than I care to remember."

"You never miss an opportunity of dropping in on the old fellow, I notice, sir," remarked Drake. "But he struck me on the early occasion I met him as though he were a bit old-fashioned."

"And so he is, my boy. I don't think Andrea Ollson ever rode in a Tube train. It almost broke his heart when the old horse enthusiasts in London were done away with. He's always had a profound distrust of

Jack Drake smiled.

"Perhaps that is merely wisdom on his part, sir," he said. "However, he can't do a very great business in this out-of-the-way spot, I should think."

"On the contrary, I think his business connections are excellent. He has a number of clients among very wealthy collectors, I know. But I was thinking more of his habits. A more generous man never lived."

"He gave a good deal to a School for Tropical Medicine, I believe," said Drake.

"Yes; Andrea Ollson's hobby is medicine and anatomy, I think. But he's spent a good deal on his protégé, Stephen Ferrell, one way and another."

"Stephen Ferrell?" repeated Drake. "That's his assistant in the curio business, isn't it?"

"Yes; but Ferrell is more like a son of the old man than his assistant."

The premises were small and dingy. The exterior, with its small window, gave but little inkling of the valuable antiques and curios within. Behind the window images of various kinds in brass, ivory, and ebony wrought by Indian, Chinese, and African craftsmen, were cheek by jowl with ancient Babylonian coins, old English pottery, and age-worn Italian paintings.

The detective and Drake stepped into the shop. The interior, untidy and ill-lighted, was in keeping with the exterior of the place. The shop, though, had greater depth than seemed likely for so narrow a building.

To the right was an old desk. Beside it were some glass cases in which reposed small objects of art. These acted in lieu of a counter.

Japanese Nambur armour, war spears and shields surrounded by tufts of human hair from the Solomon Islands, grotesque idols from the East Indies, and totem-poles from Alaska, littered the shop.

Locke rapped on the desk with his walking-stick.

There was no response.

He knocked again, louder this time. Still receiving no response, he turned to Drake.

"Give that imitation of a cane, my boy," he said—"or, rather, of a tinhead canaries rolled into one. That ought to fetch him."

Locke smiled. Then, pursing his lips, he sent a shrill, exultant piping reverberating through the curio shop.

But even Drake's piercing whistle failed to bring the old curio-dealer into view.

By this time the eyes of the two visitors had become more accustomed to the dim light. Gazing through the shop Locke became aware of the form of a huge Javanese idol which grined from the back portion of the premises.

Often during his former visits to the old curio-dealer he had seen this hell-gauche grotesque, purple-coloured idol. Andrea Ollson had had it for years for the simple reason that he had never been able to find a purchaser for it. Always there was the self-same ugly grin on the face of the image, though on this occasion it seemed to Locke as if the grin was just a trifle more evil and sinister.

Taking a step or two farther into the shop, Ferrers Locke halted, and again rapped loudly with his stick. Hardly had he done so than he sprang to attention. Every fibre of his being was a-quake. His eyes had fallen, and were large with horror. For there at the base of the purple idol was the motionless figure of a man!

Locke's inaction was but momentary. With a cry, he dashed forward and dropped on his knees beside the still form.

Hearing the cry, Jack Drake, whose view of the base of the image had been obstructed by a huge vase of Matsume ware, rushed through the shop.

He arrived by Locke as the detective grasped the inert figure and turned it over.

"Andrea Ollson!"

The name left Locke's lips in an awed whisper, for he who had survived so many gruesome mysteries was shocked beyond measure at finding his old friend in these sinister circumstances.

And certainly the old curio-dealer presented a pathetic spectacle. Despite the gloom which shrouded this back portion of the shop, his face revealed almost a marble whiteness. His eyes were set and staring. A few bubbles of froth rested at the corners of his lips.

"He—he's dead, sir!"

Locke felt the old man's pulse. Then he took a small hand-mirror from his pocket and held it to Ollson's lips. A thin film of moisture settled on the glass.

"Kiss me, sir," he said to his boy. "Go with all speed for a doctor!"

Drake dashed from the shop.

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Once outside the place, he glanced swiftly up and down the road. His eyes lighted on a brass plate outside a house on the other side of the thoroughfare.

Running to the house, he read with satisfaction the name on the plate—"Dr. Graham Stead, M.D."

"It would have it, the doctor was at home. Bearing a small black bag, he hastily accompanied Drake back to the curio-shop."

"They found that Locke had propped the old curio-shop against the wall with a big pile, and was reading what first-aid he could. He had lighted a gas-jet, and by the aid of this the doctor made an examination of the patient."

"Kneeling, he met Locke's inquiring gaze with a shake of his head."

"He is beyond human aid," said the medico quietly.

"Ferris Olsson drew a deep breath, and turned to Drake."

"Help us to lift him into the room at the back of the shop, my boy," he said quickly. "Then go upstairs and see whether anyone is on the premises."

"The three carried the body of the old cricketer into the back room, and reverently laid it on a couch. That done, Jack Drake mounted the flight of stairs which led to the living-rooms and bed-rooms of the place."

"No one was on the first floor, but as he went up the stairs he heard the second landing he heard footsteps."

"Hallo! Who's that?" called a voice.

"Is that Mr. Stephen Ferrell?" called Jack Drake.

A head appeared over the banisters.

"Yes, that's me! Who are you?"

"In a few words, Drake told the protoge of the late Mr. Olsson what had occurred. At first, Stephen Ferrell, a slim, dark man of about twenty-six years, stood clutching the banisters as though rooted to the spot. Then, coming to life, he dashed down the stairs, brushing Drake roughly aside. Arriving in the little back-room where Locke and the doctor were standing by the couch, he threw himself against the body of Andrea Olsson."

"Dad!" he cried, in agonised tones.

"Dad! Speak to me!"

"For moments he hesitated, and the doctor made a sign to Jack Drake. The boy raised Stephen Ferrell, and led him, sobbing and shaking convulsively, to a chair."

"The doctor put his mouth close to the detective's ear."

"I think, sir," he said, "that the police should be notified at once. In my opinion there will have to be an inquest on the deceased."

"You suspect poison?"

"To be frank, I do."

"And, I too."

"Ferris Locke made a gesture towards the left wrist of the dead man."

"Perhaps," the doctor, he whispered, "you noticed as I did the bluish tint of the flesh about the left wrist? Imbedded in the flesh is a small black thorn."

"The doctor raised his eyebrows."

"I did not notice that," he admitted.

"But there's certainly a suggestion that death was caused by a particularly rapid and potent poison. The body must not be kept again until the police have been communicated with."



THE SECOND CHAPTER, The Coroner's Inquest!

It was shortly following the first chapter that the events narrated in the previous chapter. In a dingy hall in the Marylebone district of London, an inquest was being held on the body of Andrea Olsson, aged sixty-three, a naturalised British subject, whose occupation had been a curio-dealer in Loftus Road.

A number of witnesses had been called. Among these were Ferris Locke, Jack Drake, Dr. Graham Stead, Stephen Ferrell, a Mr. Harley, a forensic pathologist, who was an expert in Oriental poisons, and Inspector Fyercroft, of Scotland Yard.

Owing to the sinister circumstances in which the discovery in the curio-shop had been made, it had been necessary to call in the police. For three days Fyercroft and

his men had been amassing evidence of the habits, financial position, and so forth, of the dead man. In his evidence in court, the inspector gave his opinion of the affair in no uncertain manner.

"A case of suicide," said Fyercroft.

Moreover, there seemed to be no little ground for the opinion.

The evidence of the Harley Street poison expert tended to confirm it. He testified to having been called in by the police to see the body of the late curio-dealer. He had extracted a small thorn from the left wrist of the dead man. This thorn had been dipped in a paste made from the sap of the yew-tree, a species of plant which flourishes in Borneo.

The expert went on to explain that this type of poison was used by the Kanyahs of Borneo for putting on the points of the darts used with the blow-pipe. Mr. Andrea Olsson, who had visited Borneo on a number of occasions, was well aware of the properties of this deadly poison. It was easy for the deceased to have taken a thorn from a rose-bush which grew outside his back window, dipped it in the poison, and jabbed it in his wrist.

The suggestion of suicide was startlingly confirmed in the evidence given by Stephen Ferrell.

Pale, and dressed in deep mourning for the old man who had befriended him, he presented a pathetic spectacle as he took his place at the witness-stand.

The coroner began his questioning in a quiet, sympathetic voice.

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"Your name is Stephen Ferrell?"

"Yes, sir—Stephen Gould Ferrell."

"When did you first meet Mr. Olsson?"

"About two and a half years ago. It was in Sarawak."

"He took you into his employ?"

"Well, not exactly. That is, he didn't engage me as an assistant in his business at water. It happened that he had known my father. It was on my behalf that he offered me a position of ill-health in Borneo, and he offered me a passage to England."

After arriving in London he invited me to stay with him.

"That the late Mr. Olsson was a man of kindly disposition?"

"Exceedingly so, sir," replied Stephen Ferrell. "He was—was like a father to me."

He bent his head forward and roughly brushed the back of his hand across his eyes.

The coroner paused for a few seconds until the witness had got over his emotion.

"And now, Mr. Ferrell, he said, "as far as you can discover, Mr. Olsson died suddenly. He gave liberally to charities. Did you ever hear him mention a will?"

"Never, sir. The matter was never discussed between us. I don't think he ever made one."

"Had he any wealth apart from the value of the stocks in his curio shop?"

"He had no other wealth as far as I knowed. He gave liberally to charities."

The coroner glanced at a paper which he held in his hand. Peering over his spectacles at the witness again, he opened up a fresh line of examination.

"Now, please, think carefully about this question, Mr. Ferrell," he said. "Had Mr. Olsson any private or business worry on his mind just before he died?"

Stephen Ferrell hung his head.

"Yes, sir; he—he had seemed worried of late."

Inspector Fyercroft, sitting near Ferris Locke and Jack Drake, nodded his head significantly.

"What was his worry due to?" the coroner resumed.

"I can't say, sir. And he seemed depressed by the gloom of the English winter. Oft-times he regretted that his business would not permit him to reside always in the East Indies."

"Did he ever mention the subject of suicide to you, Mr. Ferrell?"

"Er—no, sir. That is he—he sometimes spoke of it, strictly by way of instance, he occasionally became morbid and made pessimistic remarks about 'never seeing the sunshine again.' Once he told me that he expected to die. He was found dead in his dusty curio-shop."

From the table in front of him the coroner took up a small metal box. He explained that the box, which contained a darkish coloured paste, had been found in the desk of the deceased. The paste, as has been proved by analysis, was a poisonous substance made from the sap of the yew-tree of Borneo.

The box was passed to Stephen Ferrell at the coroner's request.

"Now, Mr. Ferrell, have you ever seen this box before?"

"Yes, sir. The paste is a deadly poison. Mr. Olsson brought it from Borneo with him. He took a delight in showing the box and its contents to certain of his clients, together with some darts and a blow-pipe."

A small thorn with a dull crimson point was next shown to the witness, who shrank back in horror. "This was the thorn taken from the wrist of the dead man. It was as black as if he had ever seen it before, but replied that he had not."

As the coroner concluded his examination, Ferris Locke rose.

"May I, sir, as an old friend of the deceased, be permitted to put a few questions to the last witness?"

"Certainly," said Locke.

Kneeling to his feet, the detective faced Stephen Ferrell.

"Would it be correct to say that your benevolent father was an enthusiastic student of anatomy?"

Ferrell appeared surprised.

"Why, yes, I should say he was."

"If you were a man who could have pointed out, without hesitation, where the principal veins and arteries of the body are situated?"

"He could have done, I've no doubt."

"Did the witness score a puzzled look, so did the countenance of others in the court."

"When did you last see Mr. Olsson alive?"

"About half an hour before that last day—Drake called to me to notify me of the tragedy."

"Slightly speaking, then, you saw Mr. Olsson about half an hour before he died. Where was that?"

"Down in the shop. He had a customer—Mr. Bream, an antiquary, with him. I got him coming to see, and went upstairs to—"

"Quite so," murmured Locke. "But will you please tell me, in your own opinion, Mr. Olsson, in his normal senses on the last occasion, was he sane and alive?"

"Why, yes, he—he seemed all right."

"Of course, if you had said 'no' you wouldn't think it strange if it were suggested that Andrea Olsson had killed himself by jabbing a poisoned thorn into his wrist? The wound, as we've seen by the doctor's analysis, was fully half an inch from any important vein."

"I—I don't quite understand," stammered Stephen Ferrell.

"I suggest to you," said Ferris Locke, "that it must be regarded as strange that a man like Mr. Olsson, who had a thorough knowledge of anatomy, should have run the risk of suicide as to give himself a more lingering death than was necessary. By pressing the thorn into a vein, he would have assured himself a speedier and less painful end."

Stephen Ferrell drew himself up.

"I see your point, Mr. Locke. I suppose it is a little strange, but, sir, my old friend was out of his mind at the time."

The detective paused until the clerk who was taking down the evidence had finished writing.

"There is one other question I wish to

Next week's big thriller—"The Terror at the Grange!"—rousing detective yarn!

ask," he said. "Are you aware whether Mr. Olsson had any enemies?"

"That I don't know, sir. I shouldn't have thought so."

Ferrers Locke thanked the coroner for his courtesy, and resumed his seat. It was evident that Locke's point about the late Mr. Olsson's anatomical knowledge had made an impression in the court. And in the absence of any direct evidence bearing on the tragedy, an open verdict was recorded.

As Locke and Drake were leaving the place, Inspector Pycroft came up with them. It was clear that he was not at all pleased with the turn that things had taken.

"You know, Locke," he said, in an annoyed tone, "this business is most unfortunate. A simple case—an old man tired of life—turned into an unsolved mystery! The newspapers will ask 'Was Andrea Olsson murdered?' Scotland Yard will be put in the pillory because a murderer is forthcoming. And what's the good of explaining to 'em that you can't catch a hare if there isn't a hare to be caught?"

Ferrers Locke smiled, and patted the inspector on the shoulder.

"Come, Pycroft," he said—"come along to Baker Street and have some lunch with us. I'll propose to you some very excellent jugged hare!"



THE THIRD CHAPTER.
An Unsuspected Visit!

IT took but a couple of moments for the Yard man to regain his usual good-humour. Very cordially he accepted Locke's invitation.

As Inspector Pycroft said afterwards, the jugged hare, cooked by Sing-Sing, Locke's Chinese servant, was worth acquaintance-ship!

After the meal the inspector, with a six-inch cigar stuck at an angle in his mouth, started to chat with his host and Drake. It was while they were conversing—talking "shop"—that the front door bell sounded. An interval elapsed, and Sing-Sing entered, bearing a visiting-card.

"Stephen Ferrer!" said Locke. "Show him into the consulting-room."

Leaving the inspector to be entertained by Jack Drake, Ferrers Locke went to his consulting-room. A few moments later Stephen Ferrer was shown in, looking highly and worried.

"You will pardon my taking a few minutes of your valuable time, Mr. Locke? I—I came—"

"He seemed, Mr. Ferrer, I can well spare the time this afternoon."

Stephen Ferrer accepted a cigarette, and seemed more at his ease.

"I called, Mr. Locke," he said, "because I was impressed by the questions you put to me this morning. You—don't think that Mr. Olsson committed suicide?"

"Casually, I don't."

"And I suppose, Mr. Locke, as you know Mr. Olsson well, you will endeavour to elucidate the mystery of his death?"

"That is my intention."

Stephen Ferrer breathed deeply.

"I thought that was the situation," he said. "Well, I think that I may be of some slight assistance to you after all."

The detective nodded his approval.

"Needless to say, Mr. Locke, I am as anxious as you are to have this matter cleared up—indeed, Mr. Olsson was the victim of fool play. There exists one man at least who had a deep grievance against my old friend and benefactor. He was an outcast, and coveted a very genuine medalion unearthed at Nineveh, which Mr. Olsson possessed. But, for some reason, Mr. Olsson had a small private collection of antiquities himself, steadfastly refused to part with that particular medalion. Once, I remember, after pressing Mr. Olsson to sell, the object mysteriously lost his temper. The strange part of it is that I cannot trace the medalion now among the things in the shop. I had a look after the inquest to-day."

"The most interesting incident," Ferrers Locke, "and what is the name of the antiquary who was so persistently thwarted?"

—Oscar Bream.

The eyes of Ferrers Locke narrowed to two slits.

"Bream?" he muttered, as though to himself. "Bream! That was the name of the man you mentioned in the coroner's court—the man who was in the shop shortly before Mr. Olsson was found at death's door."

"The same."

Rising from his chair, Locke looked his visitor full in the face.

Inspector Pycroft, of the Yard, is here, Mr. Ferrer," he said. "Have you any objection to my repeating that statement to him?"

"I—I have no objection whatever."

When Inspector Pycroft and Jack Drake, in response to Locke's summons, entered the consulting-room, Stephen Ferrer had regained his composure. He repeated his statement to the Scotland Yard man, and readily answered a number of questions which Pycroft put to him.

"I suppose," said Pycroft finally, "after you had left Mr. Olsson and Oscar Bream together in the shop you heard nothing from your room?"

The brows of the visitor contracted as though in deep thought.

Suddenly his face lighted.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed. "I remember. Shortly after reaching my room I heard a faint cry, as though of someone in pain. I was hardly conscious of it at the time; but now it comes back to me."

Inspector Pycroft looked at Locke significantly.

"This is a matter which must be followed up," he said. "Does Oscar Bream live in town, do you know, Mr. Ferrer?"

"Yes; he lives in West Kensington."

Reaching for the telephone-directory, Ferrers Locke rapidly turned over the pages. Then, taking the receiver from the telephone, he gave a number. There was a pause, then—

"Is that Kensington three five double-four double nine?" he inquired. "Is Mr. Oscar Bream at home?"

A pause ensued. Then Locke hung up the receiver, and turned from the telephone.

"Gentlemen," he said, "Mr. Oscar Bream has left his Kensington address, and the servants know nothing of his whereabouts."



THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
On the Track—The Mystery of the Purple Idol—Captives!

DURING the course of the following days Jack Drake learnt little more about the curio-shop mystery than the papers published, and this was not much. For these two days he was engaged on another case concerning a forged cheque for a client who visited Baker Street.

On the evening after he had finished his work on this minor case he was sitting in his room in Baker Street when Locke entered. The detective had been out all day, and he looked a trifle tired and drawn.

"Well, sir, what luck?"

Locke smiled at the boy's question, and sank into a chair.

"The man Oscar Bream is found!" he announced. "As a matter of fact, although I did not tell you, I discovered yesterday that he was staying at a hotel in Liverpool."

"Not yet under arrest, sir?"

"He is under arrest, though he may be at any moment. Inspector Pycroft himself has gone to the north, and Bream is being watched closely. But, by the way, my boy, I have another little job for you."

"Good, sir."

"To-morrow morning," said Locke, "I want you to put on a suit of rough clothes, and be at a place called Duke's Crescent, Kentish Town, not later than nine o'clock. You will watch the house which is named Elmer. You can't miss it. There's a news which runs along one side of it, and an outbuilding at the back. Make yourself as inconspicuous as



With staring eyes Drake leaned over the roof a little farther. He lost his balance and fell on the roof. The rotten tiles gave way, and with a cry he crashed through into the shed close to the two men. "A spy!" cried Cannings, springing to his feet. (See Chapter 4.)

Have you met Jack Drake? He's here again next week! Watch out for him!

possible, and when this man comes out show me him until he returns home again."

Ferrers Locke drew a small photograph from his pocket and showed it to Drake.

The picture was of a man of about thirty years of age, with a broad face, high cheekbones, and a heavy, cloven chin.

"That," said the detective, tapping the picture, "is a man called Frederick Canning, who is my private man, and the reason for thinking he is going to attend the auction sale-to-morrow of the property of the late Mr. Olsson. After he has returned home you must contact him back from the house."

Punctually at nine o'clock on the following morning Jack Drake arrived in Duke's Crescent, Kentish Town. The house, Elmer, was the most imposing residence in the street.

For fully an hour and a half Drake lounged about the corners of the crescent, and then Frederick Canning emerged from the house. The boy recognised him at once from the photo he had seen.

That Canning was going to attend the auction sale to be held in the curio-shop was soon evident. He took the Tube to Baker Street Station, and then walked to Loftus Road. Jack Drake kept him in sight the whole time.

Entering the shop, Canning dropped into one of the few chairs which had been provided. Drake remained near the doorway.

Gradually, more and more folk gathered in the shop until the late afternoon. Stephen Ferrell was present, though he kept in the background, a pathetic figure in his suit of deep mourning.

The keen-faced auctioneer began the business of the day, and a number of coins and small curios found a ready sale.

With a tinge of interest Jack Drake saw the auctioneer walk to the large, purple-coloured idol, and tap it lightly with his hammer.

"Come, gentlemen," he said, "will someone give a bid for this unique Japanese incense?"

Apparently by his surprise, the bidding was started, though at a small sum. Gradually it rose. Soon two men only were competing for the idol—Frederick Canning gave a lead, person with a blue chin and tortoise-shell spectacles, who spoke with an American accent. But finally Canning secured the ugly incense for the sum of nine pounds.

Directly Canning's name had been taken by the auctioneer's assistant he left the curio-shop, and returned direct to Kentish Town. In accordance with his instructions, Jack Drake followed him, and at the entrance of the house called Elmer. Then the boy returned to Baker Street, where he reported to Ferrers Locke.

"Thanks, my boy!" said Locke, with a smile. "I thought he might visit other places beside the auction. As a matter of

fact, I was well aware that he visited the shop in Loftus Street. You see, I was there myself."

"You were there, sir!" exclaimed Drake, in astonishment.

"I was with the guy with the tortoise-shell spectacles and the American accent. Afterwards, from the auctioneer's clerk, I discovered that this man Canning has arranged to have the idol removed at five o'clock this afternoon by the Brennan Haulage Company, Mr. Ted Brennan is a friend of mine, and I have arranged for you to enter his employ."

"To help take the idol away, sir?"

"Smart!" murmured Locke. "That's exactly the ideal! This afternoon you will disguise yourself as a typical vanboy, and join a motor-bery which will be waiting for you in Brennan's yard. Here is the address. It is not far from here. By going with the motor-bery you will find out where the idol is taken. Then I want you to keep your eyes on this fellow Canning again."

Late that afternoon Jack Drake presented himself at the yard of Messrs. Brennan, haulage contractors. He was wearing his oldest clothes. His face was begrimed with dirt, and a blue scarf was about his neck. They were expecting him, and he took his seat on a lorry, the driver of which was a common, dull-speaking Cockney.

Proceeding to the curio-shop in Loftus Road, Drake found that Frederick Canning was waiting there. With him was a man called Olsson, a tall, thin, middle-aged man of fifty—a self-individual, with a lined face and a fringe of beard.

All assisted in getting the idol out of the shop and on to the lorry.

When the image had been placed in the van and covered with a tarpaulin, Canning and the bearded man climbed into the vehicle.

It was not an hour's time they arrived at the place, and Canning asked the driver to take the lorry up the mews by the side of the residence.

After the lorry had been backed out of the mews, Drake slipped off the back of it. He watched for a moment as the vehicle lumbered slowly along Duke's Crescent, and then he stole back to the outbuilding.

The door was shut, but a gleam of light shone through a crack in the boards of which the shed was built. Drake put his eye to the crevice but could see nothing. He walked round it, but there was no other crack in the sides through which he could obtain a clear view of the interior.

Walking quietly back into the mews, he gazed up at the roof. A broad beam of light shone through, and looking ladder which was lying near the building, he placed it gently against a wall.

Very gingerly Jack Drake mounted the ladder, and, leaning forward, peered through the broken roof.

An astounding sight met his eyes. A cavity showed in the base of the idol. On the ground level it lay a drawer. And Canning and Olsson, kneeling beside the drawer, were running their hands through a pile of banknotes which it contained.

With staring eyes Drake leaned over the roof a little further to obtain a clearer view. In doing so, he lost his balance and fell over to the roof. The rotten wooden slats gave way, and with a cry he crashed through into the shed, close to the two men.

Good, a 497!

Canning turned to his feet. The bearded man hurried himself downwards at Drake. But the boy, twisting sharply over, avoided him.

Next moment Drake had gained his feet. He felt shaken and bruised, but luckily not otherwise hurt. The man called Canning thrust his hand into his jacket pocket. Jack Drake lashed out with his right and sent the fellow reeling from a striking swing to the chin.

Then there was a terrific crash at the door of the shed. Drake glanced round and saw the driver of the lorry rushing into the place. In the hands of the newcomer were a couple of grim-looking Colt revolvers. Feeling not unlike a trapped rat, the boy started to make dash for liberty, when the lorry driver spoke:

"Hands up, you scoundrel!" And the voice was the voice of Ferrers Locke!

The bearded man and the bearded friend went above their heads in almost ludicrous haste.

"And now, Drake, my boy," said the detective, "bring me your facial growth of our friend, the Beaver!"

Greatly wondering, Drake snatched off the beard of Canning's companion.

"My dear boy, that is the beard!"

"Some other," said Locke. "The murderer of my old friend, Andrew Olsson!"

While Canning stood white-faced and shakin', the other man broke down completely.

"I am confessing, I am confessing—

"That will be for the jury to decide, Mr. Ferrell," said Locke solemnly. "But for two things you might never have been caught. Firstly, my suspicion was aroused by the fact that the deadly thorn had not penetrated a vein on Mr. Olsson's wrist. In other words, I suspected that it was a case of ordinary arsenic poisoning, and not the coroner to believe. Secondly, you gave yourself away in your eagerness to throw suspicion on another. When you found I did not believe in the suicide theory, you attempted to cast suspicion on Mr. Brennan. But you went a trifle too far. You told us that you heard a cry from the shop when you were in your room."

Stephen Ferrell sank on to his knees. But Ferrers Locke continued remorselessly.

"As a fact, I knew you could have heard no human cry from your room on the second floor," he said. "When we were in the curio-shop before the body was discovered, my assistant, who is dead, and that anyone could have called. Yet you did not hear that. No while Inspector Pycroft of the Yard watched Oscar Brennan, I watched you. I saw you enter my concern's shop, and your previous friend, Canning, in a coffee-shop in the Edgware Road. You told him that you knew that Olsson had a considerable amount of wealth, and that he kept it in the purple idol. And you sought his assistance in getting the idol to this place."

"I'll admit it," interposed Canning, dully. "Just I know nothing of the murder—that I'll swear."

"I don't think you did," replied Locke. "This man, with his scars, and that fellow the man who had befriended him, alone is responsible for that. He will meet his just due at the hands of the law. Drake, take the white idol from your right-hand pocket and summon the police!"

THE END.

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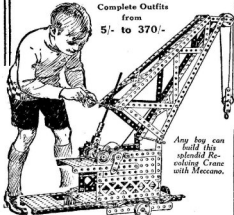
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