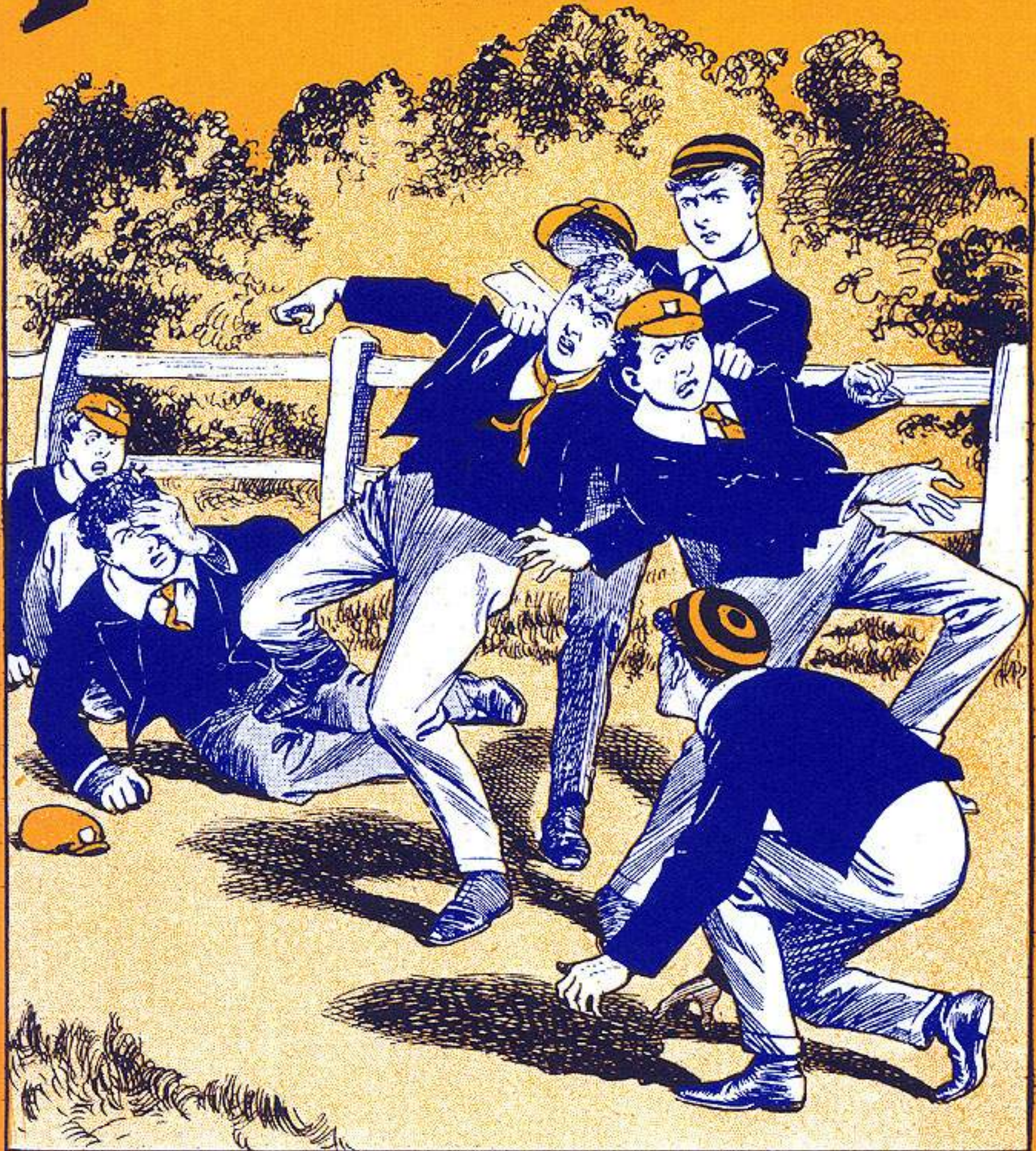


GRAND SCHOOL AND DETECTIVE STORIES AND SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT!

No. 781. Vol. XXIII.

Week ending January 27th, 1923.

The Magnet 2^d Library of School & Detective Stories.



THE UNPOPULAR NEW BOY PROVES HIS METTLE!

(By his prompt and drastic action, Jim Lee rescues Harry Wharton from the ragers.)



NEXT Monday's splendid story of Greyfriars deals further with the amazing peculiarities of Jim Lee, the new boy who has left the whole school cold, so to speak. Yet again, however, does Jim Lee prove that he is not wanting in pluck—pluck, too, of a very high standard.

With such popular characters as Bob Cherry and Billy Bunter occupying prominent positions on the stage, the success of

"JUST LIKE BUNTER!"

is assured. Mr. Frank Richards seems to go one better every time. Certain it is this latest product of his pen will live long in the memories of those of our readers who have made a point of following the adventures of Jim Lee attendant upon his admittance to Greyfriars.

The new boy's path has been anything but a rosy one, yet his code of honour forbids him to take advantage of the many instances where the hand of friendship would lead him to considerable material gain. The struggle between right and wrong—the constant warfare waging in Jim Lee's heart—strikes a very human note. Every man in the street has his good points as well as his bad, and the same applies to the school-boy.

"JUST LIKE BUNTER!"

takes us into the depths of drama and then on to the lighter side of life. But the means of transit, so to speak, from these two extremes is so skilfully woven as to satisfy the most exacting of critics.

"THE COUGAR BLUFF HOLD-UP!"

Since the MAGNET made a feature of the present thrilling series of Ferrers Locke tales, the old paper has reaped in a lot more popularity, though it might not have been thought there was room! Next week we have another of these carefully thought out, finely wrought yarns—not a mere go-as-you-please mystery story, but a narrative like tempered steel. There is fibre and ingeniously built up drama in the yarn, which shows the hold-up of a train, and the amazing aftermath. Ferrers Locke plays a big part, as usual, but the scoop he pulls off, thanks to coolness and a lightning quickness of perception as to what course to pursue, has nothing magical or miraculous about it. It is just the fruit of the masterly readiness and intuitiveness which we always link with the name of the renowned Mr. Locke. The coming tale will be remembered for many a day.

BEATING THE BAND!

And now for another big attraction next Monday. You may say that Harry Wharton is asking for comparisons—odorous or otherwise—when he plainly and unaffectedly calls his coming Supplement of the "Greyfriars Herald" a "Comic Number." For the "G.H." is always busy with humour. When in want of a laugh—and everybody does need something to laugh at—go to the "Greyfriars Herald." Bunter must read

his own contributions and laugh over them—hence his generous allowance of adipose. The porpoise cannot trace his plumpness to the food he lives on, for he always says he gets next to nothing.

Still, that is neither here nor there. It strikes me extremely forcibly (as the man said to the edge of the door he cannoned against in the dark) that the Editor of the "Herald" is looking for trouble in this attempting to pile Pelion on Ossa—otherwise, having a special Comic Number of a notably witty periodical. I ventured to point out this palpable truth to him. I even went so far as to suggest it was an arguable proposition. This was a mistake. You don't argue with an editor. The editor is the man who knows, so please don't forget it. If you prove the contrary to an editor he is quite likely to get as "ratty" as the notorious Housemaster with the sinful temper at St. Jim's. So a Comic Number of the "Greyfriars Herald" it will be in next Monday's MAGNET, and I hope it will outshine all its forerunners. I should not be surprised if it did. Just picture the scene on press day in the Supplement office—all the staff wiping tears of merriment from their optics, and the p.d. (printer's devil) doing a graceful step to the composing-room as he dwelt on the last new joke. Anyhow, brave as the enterprise is, even a thought hazardous, the result promises tremendously well.

THE GREYFRIARS PARLIAMENT!

This assembly is prospering nicely, and since the return of the Famous Five and Bunter from the wars—i.e. the Congo—there has been an extra briskness, a radiant sparkle, and an audacity about the debates which make you think insensibly of a well filled pepper-pot out on the rampage. It does not signify that the Owl of Greyfriars continually declines to adhere to the rules of debate. Peter Todd will sit on him some day. There is a pardonable indignation when some outsider suggests the closing of tuckshops and so on. The Greyfriars Parliament is doing grand work. Liveliness must be looked for on occasion when a number of fellows all keen as mustard get together and chat over controversial subjects.

THE BIRMINGHAM TEAM.

You will find a splendid photo of the Birmingham Football Team in the MAGNET next Monday. Good as our photographs have been, this new specimen certainly wins first place for excellence of production and clearness. There never was a better opportunity than that afforded now of getting together a really valuable collection of first-class sporting photos. Don't miss next week's fine picture.

OUR COMPETITION.

The Special One Week Competition is going as strong as ever. We have never had a more popular test than this, and I think next week's problem in a picture is the finest yet.

CORRESPONDENCE EXCHANGE!

(Open to Readers of the "Companion" Papers)

Miss Irene Knight, 39, Eastfield Road, East Southsea, Portsmouth, Hants, wishes to correspond with readers, ages 15-17, and to exchange picture postcards.

E. Goodwin, 104, Chester Street, Hulme, Manchester, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere but more especially those living near Salisbury Plain.

F. G. Painting, 61, Reynolds Buildings, Millbank, Westminster, S.W.1, wishes to hear from readers in Wales and Lancs and Yorks.

Will amateur editors send particulars of their magazines, with list of advertisement charges, to F. N. Hassall, 20, Pitt Street, East, Glodwick, Oldham, Lancs.

H. D. Langstaff, 59, Palmerston Street, Moss Side, Manchester, wishes to correspond with foreign and Colonial readers interested in stamp collecting. All communications answered.

Tom E. Cushing, 12, South Quay, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere, ages 15-16 All letters answered.

F. Wilber Prowd, 521, Broadway S., Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere, British Dominions preferred; ages 17-19. All letters answered. Collectors of stamps specially asked.

Miss N. Brule, 12, Tottenham Street, Tottenham Court Road, London, W.1, wishes to correspond with readers overseas, ages 14-16. All letters answered.

Vance Terril Cormie, 20, Helen Street, Arbroath, E. Scotland, wishes to correspond with readers between the ages of 17-20.

W. L. Hayward, Cycle Works, Southampton, wishes to correspond with readers, ages 15-17.

John E. Doyle, 106, Phillipsburgh Avenue, Fairview, Dublin, Ireland, wishes to contribute articles on photography to amateur magazines. Please send copy. All letters answered.

Colin Fensham, P.O. Box 89, Galahad, Alberta, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers.

M. S. Royston, Sunnyside, Paddington, Warrington, wishes to hear from editors of amateur magazines with a view to contributing and exchange. All letters answered.

Roy Phillips, 100, Springdale Street, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers interested in stamps, and willing to exchange.

Warwick Bock, 15, Russell Street, Linwood, Christchurch, New Zealand, wishes to hear from readers willing to join the Empire Correspondence Club.

Tom Smith, 10, Lime Street, Hulme, Manchester, wishes to correspond with soldier and sailor readers of the "Magnet," ages 23-25.

W. E. Harland, 11, Lancefield Street, Queen's Park, Paddington, W.10, would be glad to hear from any readers, ages 15-20, who would join the Queen's Park Cycling Club.

Holdford and Taylor, amateur editors, wish to hear from readers willing to contribute to the "Golden Gleam." Address, 69, Rutland Street, Holmes, Rotherham, Yorks.

T. Rice, c/o G.P.O., Hobart, Tasmania, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere.

Paul Steen, 104, Walton Road, Liverpool, wishes to hear from readers interested in clubs.

E. G. Ensor, Blaisdon Rectory, Loughope S.O., Glos., wishes to correspond with readers who collect railway postcards, and who also read the "Popular."

David John Lacey, 251, Barking Road, East Ham, E. 6, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere who are interested in a correspondence club. All letters answered.

Your Editor.

Your Editor is your best friend! He always likes to hear from his pals!



Jim Lee's peculiarly reticent attitude towards his school-mates forms yet another link in the chain of mystery with which he is enshrouded in the powerful story by your popular author,
FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Man Short!

"**C**OME on, Hazel!"
"Can't!"
"What?"
"Detained!"

Harry Wharton stopped. It was a half-holiday at Greyfriars—a clear, cold winter's afternoon. Wharton was on his way to the junior football ground, when he called to Hazeldene of the Remove, and received an answer in the negative.

Wharton frowned.

The football match that afternoon was not an important fixture—it was only a Form match with the Upper Fourth. Still, it was a football match; and the captain of the Remove did not like being let down at the last moment by his goalkeeper.

"Detained?" he repeated.

Hazel nodded.

"Well, my hat!" exclaimed Wharton. "If you're detained this afternoon, Hazel, you might have told me so a little earlier. Squiff would have kept goal like a shot; and he's gone out now."

"Sorry!" said Hazel. "You see, Quelchy jumped on me suddenly after dinner about my lines. I'd forgotten them."

Wharton grunted. A fellow who was booked for a football match ought to have been a little more careful in keeping his afternoon free. But it was no use arguing on the subject, especially with so airy a youth as Hazel. So Wharton did not waste his breath in argument.

"You can pick up another fellow on the ground," said Hazel. "Anyone's good enough to play the Fourth."

"That's why I put you in!" grunted the captain of the Remove; and he walked on before Hazel could make any rejoinder to that Parthian shot.

Hazel shrugged his shoulders and went to the School House, to the Remove Form-room. Lines overdue had been doubled, and still not done; and now detention had dropped suddenly on the slacker.

Harry Wharton arrived on Little Side, where he found Bob Cherry, Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurreo Janset Ram Singh, his chums. They were all ready. The rest of the team were there—Linley, and Tom Brown, and Penfold, and Peter

Todd, and Ogilvy. Only the goalkeeper was missing.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Waiting for you!" called out Bob Cherry.

"Wingate stopped me to speak," said Harry. "We're in time, though. The Fourth are not all here yet."

"Where's your giddy goalie?"

Wharton made a grimace.

"He's got detention. Any other fellow will do—Hazel isn't worth his weight in gold, in goal. Where the dickens are the fellows?"

The captain of the Remove glanced round the field.

Even for a Form match, generally some of the Remove turned up to look on. But not a single Remove fellow was to be seen on the field now—only the fat figure of Billy Bunter hovered in the offing. And Billy Bunter was not to be considered when a footballer was wanted.

"The Sark's frozen!" explained Johnny Bull. "All the fellows have gone out on their skates."

"Bother!" said Harry.

"They can't all have gone," remarked Bob. "We'll pick up somebody. I know Smithy's gone, and Squiff—"

"I told them they wouldn't be needed," said Harry. "We don't want our strongest team to play the Fourth. But it's rather rotten if we can't pick up a fellow to keep goal."

"Oh, we'll find somebody!" said Bob Cherry cheerily.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter!" exclaimed Bob. "What about cramming him in goal? He could just squeeze between the posts."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Wouldn't be fair on the Fourth," said Nugent, shaking his head. "Must give them room to get the ball past the goalie."

The fat junior sniffed.

"I say, Wharton, short of a man?"

"Yes," growled the captain of the Remove.

"I'll play!"

"Fathead!"

"I'm not going to keep goal, though," said Bunter. "I'm best at centre-forward. You can go into goal, Wharton."

"Ass!"

"Well, I play in the front line, or I

don't play at all!" said the Owl of the Remove in a tone of finality.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"You fat duffer, you don't play at all! Go and play marbles with a fag of the Second—that's your game! Ogilvy, where's Russell?"

"Gone to Lantham," answered Ogilvy.

"What the thump does he want to go to Lantham for?" grunted the football skipper. "Where's Dutton, Toddy?"

"Gone to the pictures at Courtfield," grinned Peter Todd.

"The silly ass! Pictures!" snorted Wharton.

Cecil Reginald Temple, the captain of the Fourth, sauntered up elegantly. All his men were on the field now, and Temple of the Fourth was ready to begin.

"Waitin' for you fellows!" he remarked.

"Just a minute," said Harry. "One of my men is detained, and I've got to pick up another silly owl."

Temple grinned.

"Oh, we'll wait!" he said. "You fags never are on time." And Cecil Reginald Temple strolled back to his men.

"Cheeky ass!" growled Wharton. "We should have had to wait for them if Hazel hadn't played this silly trick. Dash it all, isn't there a single Remove chap within gates?"

"Only Bunter!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"I decline to play!" said Bunter loftily. "Unless I'm put in at centre-forward, I decline definitely."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, kill him, somebody!" exclaimed Wharton. "Where's Bolsover major? He can keep goal, after a fashion."

"Gone skating."

"Where's Redwing?"

"Gone up to Hawkscliff for the afternoon," said Nugent.

"Oh, my hat! Every other match there's a dozen silly asses hanging on looking for a chance to butt in!" exclaimed Wharton, greatly exasperated.

"It never rains but it pours," said Bob.

"There's that new chap—" suggested Ogilvy.

"Lee—" said Bob.

"Isn't Lee gone out—skating, or gone

to Hawkscliff, or gone to the pictures?" he asked sarcastically.

"I left him in the study," said Ogilvy, laughing. "Shall I go and tell him he's wanted?"

"Do! Any port in a storm."

And Robert Donald Ogilvy cut off towards the School House, to tell Jim Lee, the new boy in the Greyfriars Remove, that he was wanted to play football. The footballers waited impatiently for his return. Lee of the Remove had been only a week or two at Greyfriars; and the Remove fellows had noticed that he had only turned up to football practice on the occasions when practice was compulsory, and when slackers and shirkers were rounded up by the prefects. Apparently Lee was not keen on the game, though he was a sturdy, active fellow who might have been supposed to be very keen on the great winter sport.

But keen or not, he was wanted now, and it was, of course, a great honour for a new fellow to be included in the Form team. So there was a general stare of astonishment when Ogilvy came back from the House alone.

"Has he gone out, after all?" growled Wharton.

"No!" answered Ogilvy.

"Then why hasn't he come?"

"He doesn't care to."

"What?"

"Doesn't care to play!" said Ogilvy, with a shrug of the shoulders. "That's what he said."

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"My only hat! A new kid—offered a place in the Form eleven—and he doesn't care to play! I'll talk to him."

And the captain of the Remove started for the School House with rapid strides, and an expression on his face that looked like trouble to come for the new fellow who didn't care to play.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Drastic Measures!

JIM LEE was in his study, No. 3 in the Remove.

He was standing at the study window, which gave a partial view of Little Side, and he could see some of the footballers, small in the distance.

There was a shadowed, wistful expression on the handsome face of the new junior. Anyone looking at him just then would have supposed that he was quite keen to join the other fellows on the football-ground.

Lee did not look at all like a fellow who would have chosen to spend a bright, sharp afternoon hugging a fire indoors.

He turned from the window, as there were heavy and rapid footsteps in the Remove passage.

The cloud on his face deepened as Harry Wharton appeared in the doorway. Wharton's cheeks were flushed, and there was a glint in his eyes. Wharton was a good-tempered fellow as a rule; but he was feeling very sore and exasperated just now.

"Oh, you're here!" he exclaimed gruffly.

Lee nodded.

"You can play footer, I suppose?" said Wharton.

"Yes, a little."

"I've seen you at practice. You can play all right," went on the captain of the Remove. "I've noticed that you dodge practice whenever you can, Lee; but you can play. You're wanted to-day."

"I'm sorry——"

"Cut that out!" said Wharton curtly. "We're a man short, or I shouldn't dream of giving a new kid a place in the team. Don't flatter yourself—you're only going to be a makeshift. Nobody has any idea that we're bagging a budding International in roping you in."

Lee coloured.

"Well, are you coming?"

"No."

"You're not ill, I suppose?"

"No."

"You look fit enough. Why don't you want to play?" demanded Wharton, his anger giving way a little to astonishment. "You don't look a weedy slacker like Skinner or Snoop—you can't want to squat over a fire warming your fingers instead of playing football!"

"N-n-no!"

"Then what do you mean?" exclaimed Wharton warmly. "Do you simply want to make yourself unpleasant, because you happen to be wanted for once?"

Lee's colour deepened.

"No, not at all! I'm sorry! But—but——" He broke off, his face clouded.

Wharton looked at him very curiously. He had observed that the new boy had never shown any desire to enter into the usual pursuits of his Form-fellows. He had not joined the debating society or the dramatic club; he never joined in a punt-about in the quad, or in the games in the passage. He was only on the barest speaking terms even with his study-mates, Ogilvy and Russell. He did not seem to want a special chum, like most schoolboys. He seemed, in fact, to want to keep to himself, and keep all other fellows at arm's-length—which was odd enough in anyone, and still more odd in the case of a healthy-looking fellow like Lee, who did not appear in any way "cranky."

But a fellow was entitled to do as he wished, even if he liked to be an unsociable and standoffish ass. It was no business of Wharton's; and he did not bother his head about it. But it was his business to call on any Remove fellow who was wanted to fill a vacant place in the Form team. Even Skinner would have played if he had been on the spot to be asked—and this fellow was obviously worth two or three of Skinner in the game.

Jim Lee turned away to the window as if the interview had ended. But it was not ended yet.

"Look here," said Wharton, "you're rather a queer customer in some ways, Lee. You seem to want to live like a sort of hermit at school. That's your own bizney; but this is a special occasion. Even if you're setting up to be a crank, you must draw the line somewhere."

Lee did not answer.

"Every fellow's out of gates that I could call on," said Harry as patiently as he could. "You can bet that I shouldn't ask you twice, otherwise. You're new here, and perhaps you haven't picked up our ways yet. You ought to understand that a fellow who leaves the Form in the lurch when he's wanted is likely to be jolly unpopular."

"I don't want to be popular."

"Fellows generally like it," said Harry. "But if you want to be unpopular, you're going the right way to work."

"I suppose so."

"You're not afraid of getting hurt, are you?" asked Wharton, with contemptuous amusement. "This isn't a tough match—only the Fourth. You might get a knock or two if we were playing Highcliffe, or Rookwood, or St.

Jim's. But the Fourth play like turtles-doves."

Lee laughed.

"It's not that."

"Then what is it?"

No answer.

A powerful voice boomed up the Remove staircase.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Are you coming, Wharton? Temple says he'll lend you a man if you can't get going otherwise."

"Tell Temple I'd rather play a man short!" growled Wharton. "No room for fozzler in the Remove team."

Bob Cherry chuckled, and came tramping along to the study. His cheery face looked in at the doorway.

"What's the giddy delay for?" he asked. "My hat! You're not changed yet, Lee. Get a move on, there's a good chap!"

"I'm not playing."

"Hasn't Wharton told you we're a man short, and you're wanted?" demanded Bob in surprise.

"Ye-e-es!"

"Then what the thump do you mean by saying that you're not playing?"

"I mean what I say."

"So do I!" said Bob. "And I say you're playing. Where are your footer-rags?"

"In the dorm."

"Then come along to the dorm and jump into them."

Lee shook his head.

"Oh, leave him alone, Bob!" said Wharton. "We'll play a man short—we don't want a slacking shirker in the team, if you come to that."

Lee was crimson. The captain of the Remove did not measure his words; indeed, he was feeling powerfully inclined to take Lee by the scruff of his neck and resort to actions instead of words.

Bob Cherry shook his head.

"Lee can play," he said. "You can shove Toddy in goal, and put Lee in as half. He can play half. Come on, Lee."

"I'm not coming."

"You are!" said Bob grimly.

Bob Cherry's sunny temper was seldom known to fail him. But it failed him now.

He strode across the study to the new boy, with a very grim expression on his face. Lee backed away.

"Come on!"

"Look here!" Lee showed some signs of anger now. "I'm not coming! I refuse to play! That's plain English!"

"Quite!" agreed Bob. "I'll try to make my meaning equally clear, old scout!"

Bob made it absolutely clear. He grasped Lee by the collar, and swung him towards the study doorway.

There was a breathless exclamation from the new junior.

"Let go! Let go, you fool!"

"This way!" said Bob, unheeding.

Lee reeled into the Remove passage in Bob's powerful grip. He was a sturdy fellow, but he was no match for Bob Cherry. Harry Wharton looked on, half laughing.

"Better come, Lee!" he remarked.

"I won't!" shouted Lee.

"You will!" said Bob. "Lend a hand, Harry!"

"Let me go!" shouted Lee.

"Rats!"

Lee struggled desperately as Bob propelled him towards the upper staircase. He clutched the banisters, and held on. Wharton laid a grasp on him, and detached his hold.

"Up he goes!" grinned Bob.

And up Lee went, up the dormitory staircase, gasping and resisting. He

First past the post every time—Harry Wharton & Co.!

entered the dormitory, flying, and landed with a bump on the floor.

"Now sort out your rags and change!" gasped Bob.

He was a little breathless after his exertions.

"I will not!"

"Then we'll change you!"

Lee panted for breath. He had no chance against the two angry Removites; and he decided to change—instead of being changed forcibly. In a few minutes he was in his football rig.

"That's better!" said Bob. "Come on!"

"I tell you—"

"Take his other arm, Harry!"

Between the two juniors, Jim Lee was marched out of the dormitory and down the stairs. With his arms linked in theirs, resistance was impossible. He was walked out of the School House into the quad, and along to the playing-fields. And in a breathless and excited state he arrived on Little Side.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Deserter!

CECIL REGINALD TEMPLE yawned portentously. The Fourth Form eleven had had to wait—and Cecil Reginald was making the most of it. In quite audible tones he told his comrades that it was a rotten bore hanging about waiting for slacking fags who did not know whether they wanted to play or not. But for the arrival of Harry Wharton at last, it was probable that the Form match would have been preceded by a Form scrap!

"Oh, here they are!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "They've come! For goodness' sake let's get going!"

"We're ready!" said Bob.

"Sure you're ready at last?" asked Temple with deep sarcasm. "We'll wait another hour or two if you like!"

"Oh, rather!" grinned Dabney of the Fourth.

"Ready!" growled Wharton.

"Found a man at last!" said Cecil Reginald satirically. "Looks a promising recruit, I must say! What's he sulkin' for?"

"Oh, rats!"

"Beautiful manners these fags have, haven't they?" remarked Temple to his followers.

"Oh, rather!" chuckled Dabney.

Wharton, with a frowning brow, tossed for ends. He was annoyed by the delay, and annoyed by the gibes of the Fourth. It was all the new fellow's fault, and Wharton's feelings towards the new fellow were not pleasant.

"You go into goal, Toddy!" Harry said, when the teams were lining up. "Lee's taking your place. Must have a good man in goal!"

"Right-ho!" said Peter.

"There's your place, Lee!"

"I've said—" began Lee.

"That's enough! Take your place!" snapped Wharton.

Wharton's temper had been sorely tried, and he was prepared to knock the new junior flying if he began to argue on the football-ground.

Lee did not speak again, but quietly took his place in the half-back line. The ball was kicked-off, and play started.

The Fourth-Formers had been deriving a good deal of entertainment from Wharton's difficulties in making up a team. But as soon as play began, the smiles left the faces of Temple & Co. They were not up to Remove form at the great game, and they had plenty of occupation to keep them serious.

The Remove forwards came down on the Fourth goal like wolves on the fold, so to speak; and Temple & Co. were very busy defending for some time. The attack looked like getting through, when there came a sudden and quite unexpected diversion.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! He's off!" shouted Bob Cherry.

Wharton glanced round.

An active figure was sprinting off the football-field in the direction of the School House.

It was the new half-back!

Wharton could scarcely believe his eyes. Jim Lee had waited only till the Remove footballers had become hotly engaged with the enemy and had no eyes for him. Then he had coolly sprinted off the field, deserting his place, and was in full flight.

True, the measures by which Lee had been brought into the team had been a little rough-and-ready. But it had never crossed the Remove captain's mind that anything like this could occur.

"He—he—he's gone!" babbled Bob Cherry.

Wharton set his lips.

There was no opportunity to deal with the deserter then. The game was going on, and Wharton's attention was needed for his duties. There was no one to stop the fugitive; and in a few moments he vanished from sight.

Cecil Reginald Temple grinned with great enjoyment.

The Removites could beat him at footer, but nothing of this kind ever occurred in Cecil Reginald's team! It had never occurred in a Remove team before, for that matter.

"The rotten cad!" breathed Wharton.

Then he dismissed Lee from his mind. He had to play out the match a man short—but a man short could hardly be a greater handicap than a recruit like Lee.

Temple's hopes rose. With eleven against ten men, he began to envisage a victory over the Lower Fourth.

But Cecil Reginald's hopes were brief.

Ten Removites played up uncommonly well; all the harder because of Cecil Reginald's gibes, and their determination not to let the skipper of the Fourth have the satisfaction of a win. Peter Todd, in goal, stopped every shot that came his way. But Wilkinson, in the Fourth Form goal, was not so fortunate.

Wharton put the ball in, and Penfold followed it up with another before the interval. Potter of the Fifth, the referee, addressed a word or two to Temple & Co. at half-time.

"Play up, you kids!" said Potter. "You don't keep yourselves fit! You're nearly all winded! Play up, and for goodness' sake put some beef into it!"

At which the Removites grinned, and the Fourth-Formers looked daggers at the referee.

In the second half Temple & Co. made a very big effort. They came near scoring once, but Peter Todd fisted the leather out, and Johnny Bull cleared to midfield.

After that the Fourth had no chance. Dick Penfold bagged a third goal for the Remove, and that was the last of the score.

The Removites retired from the field when the whistle went, winners by three goals to nil; and Cecil Reginald Temple and his merry men had a deflated look as they walked off. Even Cecil



THE DESERTER! "Hallo, hallo, hallo! He's off!" shouted Bob Cherry. Wharton glanced round anxiously. An active figure was sprinting off the footer field, in the direction of the School House. It was the new half-back, Jim Lee! "The rotten cad!" exclaimed Wharton angrily. (See Chapter 3.)

Look out for next Monday's grand supplement!

Reginald's own swank showed a visible diminution.

"Well, we've licked them!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"The lickfulness was terrific!" agreed Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "We did not need the esteemed services of the ludicrous Lee."

"All the same, he's jolly well going to be ragged for leaving us in the lurch!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Yes, rather!"

Harry Wharton nodded, his brows knitted.

"What the cad wants is a Form ragging," he said. "After this, we'll let him keep clear of footer, the slacking rotter! I wouldn't put him in the team again at any price. But he's got to learn that he can't treat the Form like this."

"You bet!"

Had the match been lost, the feelings of the Remove footballers towards Jim Lee would have been little short of Hunnish. The match, fortunately, had been won. That placated the footballers somewhat. But all the team felt a keen resentment towards the fellow who had deserted the side while play was actually going on. Such a proceeding was utterly unheard-of; and it was not likely to be heard of a second time—after Lee had been dealt with by the indignant Removites.

"Seen Lee?" asked Wharton, as he came in with his comrades, and found Billy Bunter loafing in the School House doorway.

Bunter grinned.

"He, he, he! Yes, rather!"

"Well, where is he?"

"Gone out of gates!" chuckled Bunter.

Wharton uttered an angry exclamation.

"Gone out! My hat!"

"He knew you would be after him!" grinned Bunter. "He's dodging you fellows, you know. Cut off soon after he got back from the ground. He, he, he!"

"He'll have to come in at lock-up," said Nugent.

Johnny Bull gave an angry snort.

"We're not going to wait till lock-up. The cad's going to be ragged for leaving us in the lurch. Which way did he go, Bunter?"

"I don't suppose he told Bunter where he was going!" remarked Ogilvy. "Let him wait!"

"Rats! He's going to be ragged."

"I say, you fellows, I know where he's gone!" grinned the Owl. "He asked me the way to the Friar's Spinney."

"What on earth is he going to the Friar's Spinney for?"

"Blessed if I know! I told him the way, and then he wouldn't even listen when I asked him to cash a postal-order for me—"

"Come on!" said Johnny Bull.

Johnny started for the gates at once. Apparently he did not intend to let the sun go down upon his wrath. He wanted to deal with the deserter at once. Wharton would have preferred to let the matter stand over till after lock-up; but he followed Johnny, with Nugent and Bob Cherry and Hurree Singh, Ogilvy, and Peter Todd close at his heels. There was vengeance on the track of the deserter.

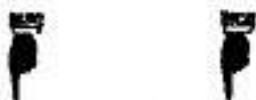
THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Secret Meeting!

JIM LEE tramped down Friardale Lane, with his hands in his overcoat pockets, and his eyes on the ground. His handsome face was more deeply clouded than ever, though probably it was not the exasperated Removites and possible punishment that he was thinking of. Deeper troubles than that filled the mind of the strange new boy at Greyfriars.

There was snow in the lane, and deeper drifts banked against the hedges. But no snow had fallen that day; the air was clear, the sky sunny. It was a bright and cheering afternoon, but Lee of the Remove did not feel its cheering influence.

DON'T MISS IT!
Grand Free Real
PHOTO



He stopped at the corner, where Redclyffe Lane turned from the Friardale Road, and looked about him uncertainly.

In the days since he had been at Greyfriars School, Lee had gone out but little, and he was far from knowing the lie of the land, so far. Sometimes he had taken long rambles—always by himself—but on such occasions he had generally followed the road to the cliffs. The landmarks that were well known to the Greyfriars fellows were still strange to Lee, and he had never even heard of the Friar's Spinney before that morning. Hence his inquiry of Bunter as to its locality.

Now he was a little at loss as he stood at the corner of the lane. A cyclist was coming along from the direction of Friardale, and Lee made a movement to step out into the road and speak to him;

GIVEN AWAY WITH
THE
"MAGNET"
NEXT MONDAY.

but he recognised Micky Desmond of the Remove, and stepped back. For some strange reason best known to himself, he did not care to ask even the slightest service of a Greyfriars fellow.

Micky Desmond glanced at him in passing, but did not nod. Lee had shown so strong a desire to keep to himself that the other fellows, for the most part, met him more than half-way, and left him alone.

The Removite disappeared up the road on his bicycle.

Bunter's directions had been rather vague. Lee stood nonplussed for some minutes, and then he caught sight of a labourer working in the fields. He

called through a gap in the hedge to the man.

"Which way to the Friar's Spinney?" The man looked up.

"Just up the lane, sir—ten minutes' walk."

"Thank you!"

Lee strode along Redclyffe Lane, keeping his eyes about him now. After a walk of ten minutes he stopped by a low paling, with several gaps in it, that bordered a plantation. Standing by the palings, he drew a letter from his pocket and glanced at it.

It was a brief letter, in the hand of his cousin and guardian, Ulick Driver. It had reached Lee by the morning's post that day, and ran as follows:

"Dear Jim,—Three o'clock on Wednesday at the Friar's Spinney, under the big oak.—U. D."

That was all.

Any Greyfriars fellow who had seen that letter, and known that the initials stood for Ulick Driver, would have wondered why Lee's relative could not come up to the school to see him. An appointment outside the gates, a mile from Greyfriars, was rather extraordinary. At all events, any Remove fellow would have thought so.

It was three o'clock now, but there was no sign of anyone about the lonely spot. At a short distance from the palings a big oak-tree soared above the smaller growth in the spinney, and Lee could guess that that was the place of appointment. Ulick Driver, once a Greyfriars fellow, knew the countryside well, and no doubt he considered that his ward had learned the way about by this time.

Lee clambered over a rough bank through the palings, and entered the spinney. He stopped under the big oak, where the snow lay drifted.

There he waited.

It was cold standing still, and a sharp wind blew in from the sea. Jim Lee did not seem to notice it.

For half an hour he hardly stirred.

Then he made a slight movement as the twigs rustled and crackled at the approach of a man from the farther side of the spinney.

A man of about forty, with strongly marked features and very keen, sharp eyes, came up to the big oak and joined the junior there.

He held out his hand, with a smile, to the Removite.

Lee shook hands with him mechanically.

"Well, Jim?"

"I'm here," said Lee.

"You got my letter in plenty of time, of course?"

"Yes."

Ulick Driver gave the boy a sharp look, and compressed his thin lips a little. Jim Lee gazed at him steadily.

"I suppose you know why I asked you to meet me outside the school, Jim?"

"No."

"You have only been at Greyfriars three weeks yet. I shall have to see you fairly often, and it would attract a good deal of attention if I came to the school every time. You see that?"

"I suppose so," said Lee dully.

"Better to keep our meetings quite dark, in the circumstances. I've kept you waiting, I'm afraid."

"It doesn't matter."

"The train was late at Lantham. How are you getting on at the school, Jim?"

"As well as I can expect."

"You've made friends there?"

"No."

Driver raised his eyebrows.

"No! Why not?"

There are characters in real life like Jim Lee!

"Well, I haven't," said Lee. "The fellows are civil, that's all."

"Do you mean that you are keeping them off?"

No reply.

"You made a crowd of pals at the preparatory school. You could do just the same at Greyfriars if you chose."

Lee was silent.

A very unpleasant look came over Driver's face, and a glint into his keen, narrow eyes. He dropped his hand on the boy's shoulder.

"Listen to me, Jim!" he said in a quiet, tense voice. "I suspected something of this. I thought I might have to speak plainly to you, and we can speak here without fear of listeners. You know why you're at Greyfriars?"

"I know."

"You're to make friends there. I've given you a list of the fellows you are specially to get intimate with—Lord Mauleverer, Harry Wharton, Vernon-Smith, and some others. You can do it if you like. You know that. Easy enough to pull a silly schoolboy's leg. Lord Mauleverer sometimes goes home for a week-end in the term."

"I believe so."

"Sometimes he takes a friend with him."

"Very likely."

"Next time he goes, Jim, you're to be that friend."

Lee did not speak.

"You can manage it. You must manage it! If it's a question of spending money, you need not stint yourself. I gave you ten pounds. How much have you spent already?"

"Nothing!"

"Nothing?" exclaimed Ulick Driver savagely.

"I—I don't want to spend money that came that—that way!" muttered Lee.

"I—I can't!"

A blaze came into Ulick Driver's eyes.

"Money that came that way!" he repeated. "What have you lived on, all your days, but money that came in the same way!"

"I never knew," faltered Lee. "You never told me—until the time came when you arranged for me to go to Greyfriars! I—I thought I should have died when you told me you were a—a—a—"

"A crook!" said Driver savagely.

"A thief!" groaned Lee. "And I a thief's relation and ward, living on his thievery. I wish you'd killed me instead!"

Ulick Driver did not answer immediately. He took out his cigar-case, selected a weed and lighted it, and smoked for some minutes in silence. Then he paced to and fro in the powdery snow, while Lee, leaning on the gnarled trunk of the great oak, stared straight before him with white misery in his face.



DISCONCERTING! "There he is!" yelled Harry Wharton, catching sight of their quarry. "Collar him!" There was a rush of feet as the Remove juniors, bent on reprisals, hove into view. The next moment consternation reigned, for there, talking to the new boy, was his guardian, Ulick Driver. "H-how do you do, Mr. Driver?" stammered Wharton. (See Chapter 5.)

Leo looked at him steadily, without a sign of fear.

"I can't do it!" he said. "I can't! I know I'm in your hands, Ulick. When I thought you were a kind relation taking charge of an orphan, you had this in your mind all the time; and you've got me under your thumb. But I can't do it! I can't!"

Driver muttered an oath.

"Let me go away from Greyfriars!" muttered the schoolboy. "I'm not asking anything from you. I'd never have touched your money if I'd known how you came by it. You know that. What I've had can't be helped now. I was a kid, and I never knew. I'm not to blame for that. But I don't want anything more; I only want you to let me alone. I'll work for my bread. I'll tramp the roads and beg rather than be a thief! Only let me alone!"

"After wasting money and trouble on you for fifteen years?" sneered Driver.

"Is it likely?"

"I never asked you. I was a child—"

"What's good enough for me is good enough for you!" said Ulick Driver.

"You young fool, there's no risk!"

"I'm not thinking of the risk."

"If you play the game well, you will be rich by the time you leave school. Can't you see what a chance it is? If you are asked home by Lord Mauleverer, for instance—"

"Then I can help you to rob him, while I'm a guest under his roof," said Lee with a shudder.

"It may mean a haul of five or ten thousand. More, perhaps. Have you spoken to Lord Mauleverer yet?"

"I—I've spoken to him—only a word or two."

"You'll do more than that; you'll get his friendship. You'll become his best pal," said Driver threateningly. "And Wharton—the head boy of the Remove; you see, I've made some inquiries. How do you get on with Harry Wharton?"

Lee smiled faintly as he remembered the scene in the study.

"I had a row with him to-day!" he answered.

"A row, you young fool! Why?"

"He wanted me to play footer; they were a man short."

"Well?"

"I refused."

"You refused! You young fool—"

"I had to come here," muttered Lee, "and—and—" He broke off.

"That was not your reason. If you'd kept me waiting, I shouldn't have minded, for a good reason, and you know it. You've put yourself on bad terms with Wharton intentionally!" muttered Driver in a low, savage voice.

Jim Lee did not answer that. It was the truth.

"From what I've heard, Wharton is rather an uppish fellow," said Driver.

"You don't like him personally?"

"I haven't noticed that he's uppish. I like him very much. He was kind to me the day I came to Greyfriars, only I—I—"

"You sheered him off?"

"Yes."

"When you might have made a friend of him?"

"I'd like him for a friend," muttered Lee miserably, "more than any other

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Under a Rascal's Thumb!

ULICK DRIVER came to a halt at last.

He stopped before the unhappy junior, and fixed his eyes upon him, with a threatening glitter in them.

"I half expected this!" he said at last. "You've obeyed my original orders because you had no choice. But instead of carrying out my other instructions, you've set yourself against them since you've been at school. You young cub, if you raise your heel against me, I will break you like a reed!" He clenched his hands hard, his eyes blazing.

Next Monday—Ferrers Locke's thrilling tussle with a hold-up gang! Who wins?

fellow at Greyfriars, I think, except, perhaps, Bob Cherry. But I can't do it!"

"You must!" said Driver grimly. "I anticipated something of this. I've kept you under my eye. Join in the game, and take the splendid chance I'm giving you, or take the consequences. You know that the police would be very glad to find the boy who changed counterfeit notes in London—"

Lee shivered.

"I didn't know—you know I didn't!" he panted. "You used me for your own rotten game—you know it!"

"Good—if you can prove that!" said Driver icily. "I fancy you could not. I fixed up that little affair to use against you if you jibbed. Five years in a reformatory, and a name branded for life if you disobey orders. And the police will call for you at Greyfriars."

"Not that!" muttered Lee huskily.

"Just that!"

Driver threw away the stump of his cigar. The winter dusk was falling on the silent spinney.

"Come, Jim!" Ulick Driver spoke in a gentler tone. "Don't be a fool! You're in for it the same as I am; what's the good of kicking? Do you think there was not a time when I thought the same as you do now! But it was knocked out of me. The world is a hard master. I had chances once, and at your age I never dreamed I should come to this; but I came. It was settled for me before I left Oxford. It's only for a few years. This scheme will see us both through and make us rich. I've planned it for years. You know I shall stand by you. I've been your friend all your life, when you had no other. Do you want to desert me when the plan is ripe?"

"I don't want to desert you, Ulick. I know you've been good to me—in your way. But—"

"Thought of this nonsense, then!" said Driver. "The game's going on, and you're helping. If there's delay in carrying out the plan, we shall begin with Greyfriars. There are good pickings there. There have been some changes since my time, and you've got to keep me posted. You've located the Head's safe, to begin with?"

"No."

"No?" repeated Driver savagely.

"By gad—"

He broke off suddenly. There was a trampling of footsteps in the snow under the dusky trees, and a voice shouted:

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There he is!"

"Collar him!"

"Nail the cad!"

There was a rush, and Harry Wharton & Co. came up breathlessly. They stopped suddenly as they saw that Jim Lee was not alone.

Driver stared at them blankly. The arrival of a crowd of Greyfriars fellows at that secret meeting was the last thing the plotter desired.

"Oh!" ejaculated Wharton. "You—Mr. Driver—" He recognised the man who had brought Lee to the school a week or two before.

"My hat!" murmured Nugent. "We've put our jolly old foot in it this time!"

"The footfulness is terrific!"

"How do you do, Mr. Driver?" gasped Wharton, raising his cap. "We—we—we just came along to—to—to—"

"To see Lee!" gasped Johnny Bull.

The ragging was off—very much off. The most truculent Removite would not have thought of ragging the deserter in the presence of his guardian.

Ulick Driver choked back his rage

and exasperation. He did not want the juniors to guess how dismaying that unexpected encounter was to him.

"Some friends of yours, Jim?" he said with a smile, a smile that cost him an effort.

"Just so!" said Wharton. "We—we—we've been looking for Lee, you know."

"Just looking for him!" said Frank Nugent. "Had—had—had a nice walk, Lee, old chap?"

Lee did not answer.

"We heard you'd come to the spinney, so we—we strolled along to walk home with you, Lee," remarked Ogilvy.

"Sorry we've interrupted!" said Peter Todd.

"Not at all," said Driver, smiling. He glanced at his watch. "By Jove, it's high time I started for my train! I've been chatting to Jim about my old days at Greyfriars, and I'm afraid I forgot that time was passing. Get back to school with your friends, Jim. Good-bye!"

He shook hands with Lee.

"Good-night, sir!" said Wharton.

"Good-night, my boys! Glad to have seen you."

The juniors capped Mr. Driver respectfully, and Ulick, raising his hat in response, walked away through the thickets. And, with mingled feelings, Harry Wharton & Co. watched him disappear.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Throwing Down the Gauntlet!

BOB CHERRY drew a deep breath. "Well, we got into it that time, with both feet!" he remarked. "I was just going to collar this young rotter when I spotted the old gent."

"Lucky we stopped in time!" chuckled Nugent. "It would have been rather a surprise for Mr. Driver."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The surprisefulness would have been—"

"Terrific!" chortled Bob Cherry.

"Well, he's gone now," said Johnny Bull. Mr. Driver's footfalls had died away in the distance. "Now we can deal with this cad."

"Yes, rather!"

The Greyfriars juniors surrounded Jim, who still stood under the big oak without stirring. He wondered what the juniors thought of finding Ulick Driver there—whether they thought anything of it? If Driver had attempted some clumsy explanation, certainly they would have noticed how odd it was. But the crook had been too cunning for that.

"Hold on a minute!" said Harry Wharton, a new thought coming into his mind. "If Lee was coming here to meet his guardian, he had a reason for not wanting to play in the match. I don't see why he couldn't have said so, but—"

"Was that it, Lee?" asked Frank Nugent, with a rather curious glance at Lee's face, white in the gathering dusk.

Lee cleared his throat.

"No," he answered.

"Then why did you desert us on the football-ground?" demanded Johnny Bull wrathfully.

"I didn't choose to play."

"Cheeky cad!" exclaimed Peter Todd.

"Don't you know it's an honour to play for the Remove?"

"A terrific honour, my esteemed father-headed Lee!" said Hurree Singh. "Too much honour for a ludicrous new boy."

Lee smiled faintly.

"Well, you deserted us," said Johnny Bull. "Now you're going through it, Lee! It's a ragging. Catch on?"

"The ragfulness will be great."

"Hold on!" murmured Wharton. The captain of the Remove was perplexed. Lee's attitude puzzled him, and he realised that there was something behind it, something too strange for him to understand. Even in the dusk he could see the trouble in Lee's face. There was a look in the strange school-boy's eyes that reminded Wharton of an animal in pain, and it touched his heart curiously.

"Hold on be blowed!" roared Johnny Bull. "Didn't he dodge off the field and leave us a man short?"

"Yes; but—"

"Bless your 'buts'! Bother your 'buts'! He's going through it!"

"Hold on!" said Peter Todd. "After all, if the poor kid's timid, and was afraid of getting hurt—"

"Rotten funk!" snorted Johnny.

"It wasn't that!" exclaimed Lee, his pale face flushing.

"Oh, it wasn't!" said Johnny Bull.

"No, it was just sheer cheek—neck, in fact! You wanted a ragging—and you're going to get it! My belief is that you're a rotten funk!"

"Well, if a chap's a funk, he can't help it, perhaps," said Harry Wharton mildly. "Chap wouldn't be a funk because he enjoyed it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm not a funk, Wharton!" said Lee, with a peculiar glint in his eyes. "I'll prove that fast enough."

He drew a deep, hard breath.

"You've come here to rag me. You can go ahead if you like! Or make it a fight! I'll fight any one of you with pleasure."

"Oh, the giddy bantam's beginning to crow!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Dash it all, let him alone. We beat the Fourth, anyhow; and after all, it was a bit high-handed to drag a slacker down to the footer. I was waxy, or I wouldn't have done it. I thought he had a grain of sense in his silly head. My mistake."

"He's a queer fish, and no mistake," said Wharton. "Blessed if I understand the chap. But I'm against a ragging."

Johnny Bull snorted.

"I'm not!" he said. "He deserted the side on the football field. If he's not going to be ragged, he's going to have a fight on his hands—and I'm the man."

"You're not the man," said Lee. "I'm going to fight Wharton."

"Little me?" exclaimed Harry.

"Yes, you—unless you're afraid!" added Lee with a curl of the lip.

Wharton coloured.

"You'll get your scrap fast enough if you ask for it!" he said angrily. "Possibly more than you want."

"You'd better make it Johnny, Lee," grinned Bob Cherry. "Wharton's a rather tougher proposition."

"Rot!" said Johnny Bull.

"I know it," said Lee, "and I mean what I say. I'll fight Wharton—or nobody. And as soon as he likes."

"To-morrow after lessons, in the Cloisters!" said Wharton briefly.

"Done!"

"Time we got back, or Gosling will lock us out!" said Bob; and the juniors

Will the strange new boy, Jim Lee, adhere to his code of honour?

trooped out of the spinney into the dusky lane.

They walked back to Greyfriars, Jim Lee following at a distance behind. The juniors did not want his company—not that Lee would have joined them if they had wanted it.

The interview with Ulick Driver had not changed the unhappy boy's intentions. Little did Harry Wharton dream how gladly Lee would have given him the hand of fellowship. He was annoyed and angry with the fellow whom he looked upon as queer and unreasonable; and he was rather keen to give him a licking on the morrow. Jim Lee was looking forward to it for far different reasons, for that fight was to make any friendship between him and Harry Wharton impossible.

Gosling had come down to close the gates when Harry Wharton & Co. arrived at the school. They crowded in, and Bob Cherry gave the crusty old gentleman a playful dig in the ribs.

"Another minute, and you could have reported the lot, Gossy!" he said. "Hard lines, old pal!"

"You be hoff, Master Cherry!" grunted Gosling.

"Come on, Bob!" called back Wharton. The other fellows were already crossing to the School House.

"After you in a minute," answered Bob. "I say, Gossy—"

"You get out of the way of that there gate, Master Cherry!" grunted Gosling. "My orders is to close this 'ere gate at dark, and well you know it."

"But it isn't quite dark yet, Gossy."

"Jest on!"

"Not with that brilliant sunset," said Bob.

Gosling blinked round. The winter darkness was closing in, and Gosling could not see any signs of a brilliant sunset.

"Look here, Master Cherry—"

"Oh, my mistake!" said Bob blandly. "It's your nose, Gosling."

"Wot?" roared Gosling.

"Only your nose, old scout. Just for a minute I thought it was a particularly ruddy sunset!"

"You be hoff!" reiterated Gosling.

"Wot I says is this 'ere, all boys like you, Master Cherry, ought to be drowned at birth. Will you get hout of the way of that there gate, or will you not get hout of the way of that there gate?"

Jim Lee, who had been a little distance behind the juniors, came in. Gosling playfulness, Lee would have been locked out, and reported, which was always a solace to Gosling, and had a cheering eyed him sourly. But for Bob Cherry's effect on him. Lee went on towards the School House.

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Well, good-night, Gosling!" he said. "Go easy on the bottle, old top—and use chalk for your nose."

Bob Cherry scudded across the quad after his chums. He overtook Jim Lee on the steps of the School House and gave him a grin.

"Just saved your bacon," he remarked.

"Eh, how?"

"Pulled old Gossy's leg to give you time to dodge in!" explained Bob.

"Catch on?"

Lee laughed.

"Much obliged," he said.

"Not at all—" Bob paused a moment. "I say, Lee, I'm sorry I handled you this afternoon, as you've taken it amiss. It's only our little way in the Remove, you know—we're rather rough and ready. Never dreamed for a moment that you really wouldn't like to

play footer. Every chap to his taste, I suppose—you can give the footer-ground as wide a berth as you like after this, and I won't whisper the word football in your hearing."

And without waiting for a reply, Bob Cherry went up the staircase three steps at a time. Jim Lee followed more slowly.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

What Happened at Lantham!

ROBERT DONALD OGILVY and his chum Dick Russell came into Study No. 3 in the Remove passage. They found their study-mate Lee already there, beginning his preparation.

Lee bent over his books, and did not look up as the two Removites came in.

He seemed unaware of their entrance, in fact; though that could hardly have been the case, for Ogilvy and Russell made noise enough. Neither of them was a very quiet youth.

They looked at Lee, and exchanged a grimace.

Neither of the juniors knew what to make of their study-mate. Lee answered when he was spoken to, but never volunteered a remark. When he answered, it was with civility; he did not seem to want to be disagreeable. But he very obviously avoided anything like intimacy.

In the Remove at Greyfriars the manners and customs were not very polished. They were, as Bob said, a rough-and-ready Form, and did not go in for "frills."

But it was quite unusual for a fellow to ignore his study-mates in this way; and Russell and Ogilvy sometimes found it annoying.

They did not want Lee's friendship, for that matter; but the fellow was in their study, and might have been a bit more civil. That was how they looked at it.

Russell, in sitting down to his prep, gave the table a jolt, not quite by accident, and a blot spurted from Lee's pen. The two juniors exchanged a grin, as the ink blotted on the sheet Lee was at work upon.

But the new boy took no heed.

His work was generally very neatly done, and he was not at all slovenly. Even an exercise intended for his own eyes only, was usually very neat and orderly. But the blot on his paper did not make him look up or speak.

"Where's my pen?" asked Russell.

"Blessed if I know," answered Ogilvy.

"Seen my pen, Lee?"

"No."

Lee had to speak at last; he did it with one syllable, and did not lift his eyes from the page before him.

"Not using it, are you?" asked Russell with a wink at Ogilvy. The two juniors were indulging in a gentle "rag," forcing the reserved new fellow to talk whether he liked it or not.

"No!"

"Now, that looks jolly like my pen," grinned Russell. "Think you're not making a mistake, Lee?"

"No."

"Let's have a look at it."

Lee raised his head at that and passed



SQUELCH! Bolsover kneaded an extra-large snowball and took careful aim at Jim Lee. The missile flew the fraction of a second too late. Crash! It landed—on the chin of Mr. Quelch, who had just stepped out for a breath of the sharp morning air; and the unfortunate master of the Remove staggered backwards under the impact. "Oh crumbs!" murmured Bob Cherry. "You've done it now, Bolsover!" (See Chapter 8.)

Another ripping yarn of the Greyfriars Chums next week!

the pen to Russell. That cheery youth examined it solemnly.

"No, it isn't mine," he said. "The question is—where's mine? Like to help me look for it, Lee?"

"I'm busy."

"Call that pally?" inquired Russell.

"No."

"You're a cheerful sort of funeral mate to be stuck in a fellow's study, aren't you?" asked Russell, beginning to feel annoyed.

No answer to that.

"Do you ever talk in words of more than one syllable, Lee?" inquired Ogilvy.

"Give me my pen, Russell!"

"Catch!"

Dick Russell tossed the pen to Lee, but Lee had no chance of catching it. It dropped on his Virgil—a section of which the juniors were "preparing" that evening for the morning's Latin lesson. As there was ink in the nib a couple of blots dropped on the open page of P. Vergilius Maro.

Lee compressed his lips.

He picked up the pen without a word and resumed his work. His ears were burning a little now.

He knew that his study-mates were ragging him, and in his heart he did not blame them. Cheery, rather thoughtless fellows, they were puzzled and annoyed by his hermit-like attitude—which he had no intention of changing.

"Guess whom I saw at Lantham to-day," said Dick Russell, after opening his dog-eared Virgil, and bestowing a deep yawn upon that great poet. Russell did not seem in a mood to explore the beauties of Publius Vergilius.

"Ass to go to Lantham!" said Ogilvy. "You could have played for the Form if you'd been on the spot."

"How the merry thump could I guess that?" said Russell. "If that chump Hazel had told me he was going to be detained I'd have put in for it fast enough. But guess whom I saw?"

"Give it up!"

"Somebody Lee knows!" grinned Russell.

Jim started.

"Lee?" said Ogilvy with a grin. "Does Lee know anybody?"

"He knows the chap I saw at Wayland," said Russell. "Guess whom it was, Lee?"

"Can't!" muttered Lee.

"It was your giddy guardian—the gent who brought you to school the week before last," said Russell. "What was his name, now? Diver, or something?"

"Driver!" muttered Lee.

"That's it—Driver!"

"Oh, you saw him at Lantham, did you?" said Ogilvy. "Well, I saw him nearer home. He came here to see Lee, and we jolly nearly collared Lee under his old nose, in the spinney. I suppose he came by the train to Lantham Junction."

Lee's hands trembled a little. The surreptitious visit of Ulick Driver had not been very secret, after all. Even if the chance encounter had not taken place in the spinney, he had already been seen at Lantham. But Russell's manner indicated that there was something more than a chance sight of Lee's guardian that he had to relate, and the new junior listened with painful intensity for his next words. What had happened at Lantham? Lee's eyes were on Virgil, but he was not reading a line.

"No end of a fuss, you know," said Russell. "I'd gone into the station to ask about the time of a train back to Friardale. The express had come in, and there was a row, with a bobby and all."

"Lee's guardian been drinking?" asked Ogilvy humorously.

"Ha, ha! No, he wasn't in the row; I happened to see him among the passengers from the express while the row was going on. Old Sir Hilton Popper was in the train, and he was raising Cain at the station—said his pocket had been picked, and his pocket-book taken. He was fairly raving; stationmaster trying to soothe him, and bobby taking notes, and people standing round and grinning. Kept me a quarter of an hour, looking on."

Lee felt a cold shiver run through him.

"Did he find his giddy pocket-book?" yawned Ogilvy.

"Not when I left. He was sure it had been stolen; and it had a hundred pounds in notes in it, he said. I dare say he dropped it somewhere—he's a thumping old ass!"

"Yes, rather!"

"But his face was a picture—worth a guinea a box!" grinned Russell. "Fairly shouting! Heigho! I suppose I've got to tackle this."

And Russell devoted his attention to Virgil.

Lee sat with his eyes on his book, apparently in deep study, without seeing a word.

He understood now why Ulick Driver had been late for his appointment in the spinney. The crook had devoted his time that afternoon to Sir Hilton Popper—one of the governors of Greyfriars, a local magnate of great wealth.

Lee's study-mates would have been astonished had they known that Jim Lee could have told them what had become of Sir Hilton's pocket-book.

The hapless schoolboy sat as if frozen, his heart like lead in his breast. At the time when Ulick Driver had met him in the spinney the stolen pocket-book must have been in the crook's possession.

Jim Lee rose from the table and moved to the door. He wanted to be alone then. A miserable fear gnawed at his heart that his study-mates might read something in his face.

"Hallo! Finished already?" asked Ogilvy, looking up.

"Yes—no!" stammered Lee.

"Well, that's lucid, I must say!"

Lee opened the door without a rejoinder and left the study. Russell's and Ogilvy's eyes met, and they smiled.

"He's booked to fight Wharton to-morrow," said Ogilvy. "Weighing on his little mind a little, I fancy."

"No wonder!"

"Well, he asked for it; Wharton wasn't at all keen. Bitten off more than he can chew, you bet!"

"Who's his second?" asked Russell.

"Nobody, I fancy!"

"Well, as he's in our study——" said Russell thoughtfully.

"Rot! He left us in the lurch over the football to-day. Let him go and eat coke!"

"He's a queer fish!" said Russell.

Ogilvy gave a grunt.

"Too jolly queer for Greyfriars, I think. I hope Wharton will give him a jolly good licking to-morrow. Not much doubt about that, though. I say, where's that rotten Latin, Dick?"

Prep went on in Study No. 3—Lee's unfinished, for once. His study-mates dismissed him from their minds, little dreaming of the tragic misery that ached in the hapless boy's heart. At the end of the Remove passage Lee had stopped at the window, looking out into the quad, and the snow glimmered faintly through the darkness.

"What shall I do? What can I do?"

The hopeless questions were the burden

of his thoughts, but there was no answer to be found to them. The unhappy boy felt himself in the toils, from which there was no escape.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Quelch Catches It!

JIM LEE received a good many curious glances in the Remove dormitory that night.

He was the object of a rather peculiar interest on the part of his Form-fellows.

His exploit on the football-field was known to all the Remove now, and it was condemned by the whole Form. Even Skinner and Snoop and Stott, slackers of the first water, professed to be disgusted. Even Billy Bunter was shocked and loftily condemnatory.

Lee's reserved ways had already been very considerably remarked on in the Lower Fourth; such ways were not liked or understood. The feeling towards him generally was one of indifference, slightly tinged with dislike. But the feeling was growing more active now—there was more than a tincture of dislike for the fellow who had left the Form football team in the lurch in the most flagrant manner.

The fact that he was to fight Wharton added to the interest taken in him now.

That he was not, at all events, a funk, had to be admitted. He had already had an encounter with Bolsover major, the bully of the Remove; and Bolsover had come off second best. Now Lee was booked to fight Wharton—the heftiest fighting-man in the Remove, with the solitary exception of Bob Cherry. And he had asked for it.

Lee did not seem to see the looks cast upon him.

He never seemed to meet fellows' eyes, if he could help it—a fact that had also been remarked upon.

He turned in without a word to anyone, and did not join in the buzz of talk that ran from bed to bed after Wingate of the Sixth had put out the light.

But he did not sleep.

Long after the rest of the Remove were deep in healthy slumber, Jim Lee lay awake, with unresting eyes, staring into the darkness.

He was not thinking about the coming fight with Wharton, as Russell and Ogilvy had supposed. That did not trouble him. He was thinking of what Russell had related about the affair at Lantham.

Not for an instant did he doubt what had really happened. He had known—of course he had known—that Ulick Driver was a crook; that he lived by crooked ways; the world was his oyster, which he opened by any unscrupulous method that came to hand. Yet it came as a new shock to him to find the man out in actual theft.

The incident brought home to his mind more clearly than ever before his own situation.

It added to his determination, that he never would be made use of at Greyfriars, as the plotting rascal intended to make use of him.

Resistance was impossible, for he was utterly under the thumb of the crook; but impossible or not, he was determined that he would never yield. In the midst of his perplexities, it was clearer than ever in his mind, that whatever the penalty he never would become a thief.

He slept at last.

He was in deep sleep when the rising-bell rang out over Greyfriars in the

Two full pages of sketches and jokes in our comic supplement!

winter morning. He did not even hear the bell; he lay still, with eyes closed, fast in slumber.

Bob Cherry, after kindly jerking the bedclothes off Bunter, glanced at the new boy.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Another giddy slacker wants to be woke up!" he exclaimed.

And Bob, with scant mercy for slackers, grasped Lee's bedclothes, and jerked them off in a tangled heap to the floor.

Lee awakened then, and started up confusedly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What—what—!" stammered Lee.

"Time to turn out!" explained Bob Cherry. "Rising-bell's stopped."

"Oh, thanks!"

"Not at all," grinned Bob. "Always ready to do a slacker a good turn. You haven't thanked me like Lee, Bunter."

"Beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jim Lee turned out quickly enough. He went down with the troop of cheery Removites, out into the quad, where snow still lay banked against walls and trees. Some of the Removites began snowballing, as an appetiser for breakfast; Lee walked away by himself. Whereupon Bolsover major hurled a snowball after him, knocking his cap off.

Lee clutched his cap, and stared round. "Have another?" roared Bolsover major.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Three or four of the merry juniors joined in with snowballs, and Lee retreated under a shower of them. As he declined to join in the game, Bolsover major and Skinner and two or three more mischievous fellows followed him up, pelting him from a distance.

Lee walked back to the School House, still followed by the snowballers, with snowballs cracking round him and on him.

"Let the chap alone, you fellows!" called out Harry Wharton.

"Rats!" snorted Bolsover major. "Why can't he play up like any other fellow?"

And Bolsover kneaded an extra-big snowball, and took aim, to catch Lee on the back of the head as he went in at the big doorway.

Lee stepped in quickly, and the missile flew a second or two too late. But every bullet has its billet; and Bolsover major's snowball found a billet—an unexpected and horrifying one. For just then Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, stepped forth to take a breath or two of the keen morning air before breakfast.

Crash!

In the course of his career as a Form master, Mr. Quelch had met with many surprises. But certainly he had never, in all his scholastic career, been so surprised as now.

The big snowball, hurled with all the force of Bolsover major's powerful arm, smashed on Mr. Quelch's chin.

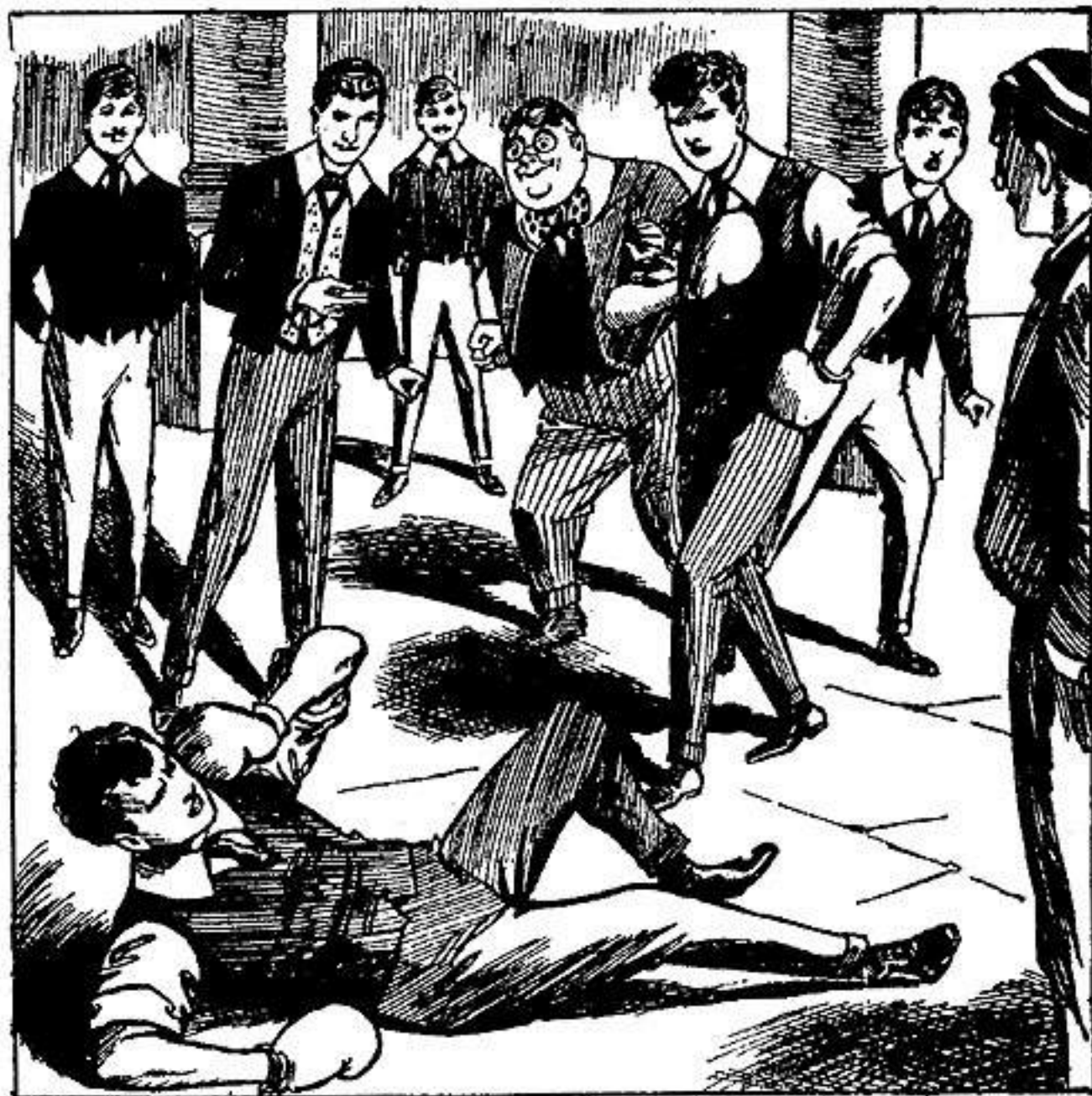
"Oh gad!" gasped Bolsover faintly, as soon as he saw what he had done.

Mr. Quelch went backwards into the house as if a bullet had struck him. There was a heavy bump as he sat down.

"Oh crumbs!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "You've done it now."

"The donefulness is terrific."

The Remove fellows watched the doorway, as if fascinated, for the reappearance of Mr. Quelch. Bolsover major



FLOORED! Fighting desperately, Lee thrust through his opponent's guard, and the upper-cut which had had such a disastrous effect upon Bolsover major a couple of weeks ago came into play with startling suddenness. Crash! There was a gasp from the Removites as Harry Wharton was bowled clean over, eventually landing on his back! (See Chapter 9.)

stood rooted to the ground. Mr. Quelch was not long in reappearing.

He came out of the doorway with a scarlet face, almost stuttering with wrath and indignation.

"Who—who—who threw that snowball?" he spluttered.

"It—it—it—" babbled Bolsover.

"Was it you, Bolsover?"

"It—it—it was an accident—"

"Did you throw that snowball, Bolsover?"

"Yes, sir," gasped Bolsover major.

"But—"

"Follow me to my study!"

"I—I—I—"

"Follow me!" thundered Mr. Quelch; and the bully of the Remove quaked and followed.

There was a sound of a swishing cane in the Remove master's study a few moments later, and Bolsover major emerged, squeezing his hands under his arms, and apparently trying to fold himself up like a pocket-knife. There was anguish in his face. Mr. Quelch had put his beef into the castigation.

"You—you—" stuttered Bolsover major, as he came on Jim Lee in the hall. "You—you worm—it was your fault—you—you—I'll smash you—I'll spifficate you—I'll—"

"Bolsover!"

Mr. Quelch had followed the burly Removite out.

"Oh dear; yes, sir!" groaned Bolsover major.

"You are threatening Lee?"

"Oh, no, sir! I—I—I—"

"I heard you! You have bullying

propensities, Bolsover, which must be restrained. Take two hundred lines."

"Oh, yes, sir!"

Bolsover major limped away, with feelings towards the new junior that were absolutely Hunnish.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Fight!

AFTER lessons that day, Remove fellows might have been seen strolling towards the Cloisters in twos and threes. Nearly every fellow in the Remove had made up his mind to see the "scrap," which it was agreed would be worth seeing. Wharton's quality in the scrapping line was well known; and Lee was a sturdy fellow, and in his early encounter with Bolsover major he had used a very effective upper-cut in which the fistical members of the Remove were interested. Dick Russell, who was "some" boxer himself, was quite interested; and he thought again of offering his services to Lee as a second. But Lee's manner was not inviting, and he did not. But he walked down to the Cloisters with Ogilvy to be a spectator.

At the end of the old Cloisters was a very secluded spot, where there was little likelihood of interruption. Harry Wharton was early on the ground, with his friends—Bob Cherry bringing the necessary requisites in a bag. Most of the Remove fellows were there before Jim Lee put in an appearance.

Lee walked rather slowly towards the rendezvous, alone. It was an impression of the Removites that Lee liked to be

The comic number of the "Herald" will send you into fits!

alone—a very mistaken impression. The unfortunate junior had all a healthy fellow's liking for the company of fellows of his own age. For reasons of which the juniors never dreamed he chose to be a kind of schoolboy hermit.

A rather elegant junior joined him as he approached the Cloisters; and he glanced round and recognised Lord Mauleverer.

Mauleverer gave him a kind nod.

"Just off to the Front, what?" he said.

Lee could not help smiling.

"I'm going to meet Wharton," he said.

"Got a second?"

"No."

"Fellows generally have a second."

"Do they?"

"Yaas."

Lee walked on a little more quickly. Lord Mauleverer, the laziest fellow at Greyfriars, who was never known to quicken his pace unless he saw Bunter coming, accelerated a little, and kept by Lee's side.

"Like me to play up?" he inquired.

"As my second?"

"Yaas."

Lee would have liked it, certainly. His face softened a good deal. He had seen a good deal of Lord Mauleverer, who made a prominent figure in the Remove, though he had had nothing to do so far with his lordship. He liked the lazy, good-natured schoolboy earl; and he knew that Mauly, though agreeable to all, seldom or never went out of his way to be specially agreeable to anybody.

His lordship was making an effort now, moved by his own kind heart.

It came bitterly into Lee's mind that here was the fellow with whom Driver had ordered him to make friends, if he could—making a friendly advance on his own account.

At that thought Lee's face hardened.

Gladly enough he would have accepted Lord Mauleverer's kind overture, gladly he would have answered—cordially, gratefully. But the shadow of Ulick Driver lurked over him.

"Thanks, no!" he said.

"No?" asked Mauleverer.

"No!"

"You're goin' to fight without a second?"

"Yes."

"Ain't you rather a queer fish, Lee?"

"Possibly."

"Of course, I can understand a chap keepin' chaps at arm's-length," said Mauleverer, chatting as they walked on towards the Cloisters. "Saves a chap from bein' bored. I'm always bein' bored. But there's a limit, you know. Ever thought of that?"

No answer.

"No bizney of mine, of course," said Lord Mauleverer cheerily. "But—as rather an old hand, you know—I thought of givin' a tip. You're goin' the wrong way to work. You're fightin' Wharton for nothin', and you're gettin' the fellows' rag out generally. Bad bizney, dear boy. I've got an impression that you're a decent sort of chap."

"Thanks."

"Not at all! Take a tip from an old hand—and don't play the goat," said Lord Mauleverer. "If you were some cranky ass, I could understand it. But you're not that. Don't do it."

Having delivered that homily, Lord Mauleverer slackened pace again, and allowed Lee to walk on by himself.

Lee smiled faintly as he went on, leaving his lazy lordship behind. It must have cost the lazy Mauly an effort to take the trouble of giving him that "tip," and Lee was grateful for the kindness. He wondered what Mauly would have thought if the real reasons for the new junior's conduct had dawned upon his noble mind.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he is!"

"Jolly late in coming up to the scratch!" growled Bolsover major. "Case of cold feet, if you ask me!"

"He, he, he!" from Billy Bunter.

"I'm ready, Wharton!" said Jim Lee quietly.

"Same here," said the captain of the Remove. "Give him the gloves, Bob."

"Here you are, Lee."

Lee threw off his jacket and donned the boxing-gloves. Now that he was on the spot, there was no lack of celerity in his movements.

"Who's keeping time?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Smithy! Trot out your ticker, Smithy."

Vernon-Smith took out his handsome gold watch.

"Now, then, ready! Shake hands."

"Never mind that!" said Lee.

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"Time!"

"Go it, ye cripples!" said Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton began the attack with a rather grim expression on his face.

Lee's refusal to shake hands before the fight annoyed him. Excepting for the incident of the Form match, Wharton had been kind and considerate towards the new junior whenever he had chanced to come into contact with him. He could not account for what seemed like a bitter enmity founded upon nothing, or next to nothing. Naturally, it had an exasperating effect on him, and lent additional energy to his attack.

Lee was driven back, and he went round the ring, followed up by the captain of the Remove, shuffling and giving ground. The juniors began to exchange grinning glances.

"All over bar shouting, what?" murmured Bob Cherry.

"I say, you fellows, he's funking!" said Billy Bunter.

"Is this a fight or a walking-match?" inquired Harold Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob suddenly.

Wharton had closed in on the new junior with right and left. Lee caught two successive drives, that brought the red into his face. The next moment he was through Wharton's guard, and the upper-cut which had had such a disastrous effect on Bolsover major a couple of weeks ago came into play with startling suddenness.

Crash!

There was a gasp from the Removites as Harry Wharton went clean over and landed on his back.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Fight to a Finish!

"**T**IME!"
Bob Cherry picked Wharton up, and helped him to his corner. Nugent made a knee for him.

The captain of the Remove was panting.

A dark mark, growing darker, showed on his chin, and Wharton had a feeling that every tooth in his head had been loosened, and there was an ache in his jaw that was like a severe tooth ache.

He blinked rather uncertainly at his second.

"You landed it then, old chap, and no mistake," said Bob. "Hurt, what?"

"Ow! A little."

"You mustn't let that happen again."

"Wow! Not if I can help it!" mumbled Wharton. "Is my chin still there? It feels as if it isn't."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Look out for his left," he said. "He's a good man with his left. But you'll beat him all right."

Wharton's eyes glinted.

"I'll beat him!" he said grimly.

"Time!" rapped out the Bouncer.

The captain of the Remove stepped up briskly enough, though he had far from recovered. He played Lee a great deal more carefully in the second round. Another crashing upper-cut like that would knock him out of the fight, and he knew it.

Put Lee had no chance of getting in another like it. Wharton was a first-class boxer, and he knew now what to look out for. Lee was very good; but it was fairly clear that Wharton was the better boxer of the two—certainly he had had more practice in the rough-and-tumble life of the Greyfriars Remove.

The second round had more manoeuvring than fighting in it. But in the third, Lee weighed in again with his upper-cut with the left; and Wharton avoided it, and countered with a straight drive that Lee had no time to stop.

It was Lee's turn to go down, and he hit the floor with a crash.

"Man down!" grinned Skinner.

"Oh, gad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. "that was a knock! I should want to be counted out after that, dear boys!"

"I guess it was some sockdolager!" said Fisher T. Fish.

The Bouncer was counting. He had reached seven when Lee scrambled to his feet.

The new junior looked shaky when he was on his feet again, and Wharton could easily have knocked him spinning again. But he did not. He stepped back, giving his opponent time to recover.

Lee came on rather groggily.

The round ended with some light sparring, and Bob Cherry noted with mingled feelings that his chief was sparing the enemy. At the call of time Wharton went back to Nugent's knee, and Bob fanned his heated face with a towel.

"You've got to win this, you know," he remarked. "Chivalry is all very well; but if you let a new chap lick one of the Co., I'll jolly well punch you myself, Harry."

"All serene," said Wharton. "He's got lots of pluck, and a nice handy punch with his left, but I can beat him."

Lee had retreated to his corner, but
(Continued on page 17.)

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2^d

Yet again does Jim Lee prove his mettle! Look out for next Monday!



FIRST IN THE FIELD!

By MICKY DESMOND.

"THE finest footballer in the Form," said Peter Todd, with emphasis, "is Mark Linley!"

There was a chorus of dissent. Such a hubbub of voices arose in the junior Common-room that you would imagine it was Babel let loose.

"Bob Cherry's our best player!"

"Rats! Wharton's the 'star' turn!"

"What price Tom Brown?"

"Where does Johnny Bull come in?"

"I say, you fellows, you ought to realise by now that the best footballer in the Remove is me!"

This last remark came from Billy Bunter, and it was received with howls of derision.

"I still hold to my opinion that Linley's our best man," said Peter Todd stubbornly. "There's something sound and reliable about his play. He never plays a brilliant game one week and a dud game the next. You can always count on him to put up a rattling good show."

"So you can with Cherry!"

"And Wharton!"

"And Nugent!"

"And Smithy!"

And so it went on, each fellow backing his own opinion, until it really began to look as if a free fight would ensue.

The din was at its height when Wingate of the Sixth came striding into the Common-room.

"What's all the commotion about?" he demanded.

"We're just having a friendly discussion, Wingate," said Wharton, with a grin.

"Sounds more like a competition to see who can make the most row!" grunted the captain of Greyfriars. "What is the discussion about, by the way?"

"It's the old vexed question as to who is the best footballer in the Form."

"And have you come to a decision?"

"No fear! We're all at loggerheads."

"Then I'll tell you how you can settle the matter," said Wingate. "You are playing St. Jim's on Saturday, I believe?"

"That's so," said Wharton.

"Very well. I suggest that a committee be appointed to watch the match very closely, and to study the individual play of every fellow in your team. The committee will then give its verdict, which must be accepted as final."

"A jolly good idea!" said Bob Cherry. "The committee could award points to the players. One point to be awarded for every brilliant piece of play, and one point to be deducted for every blunder."

There was a chorus of approval. The Removites were quite content to let a committee of fair-minded sportsmen decide this vexed question as to which was the best player in their ranks.

"We'll have a committee of four," said Wingate. "Mr. Lascelles, Mr. Bunter, Gwynne, and myself. Of course, we shall only be able to decide who is the best player on his showing in this particular match. You are not to regard that fellow as the permanent football champion of the



Instantly the one-time Bouncer was surrounded by a surging, cheering throng. Nobody felt inclined to quarrel with the decision of the committee, for Smithy had indeed played the game of his life. "Hurrah! Good old Smithy!"

Remove. But he will, at any rate, be the temporary champion. Is that clear?"

"Yes, rather!"

"It's bed-time now," said Wingate. "Cut off, all of you. And you can leave this matter in my hands."

Next day the captain of Greyfriars interviewed Mr. Lascelles, Mr. Wally Bunter, and his pal Gwynne. And the committee was duly formed.

There was tremendous excitement in the Remove during the days that followed.

Every fellow in the team had a chance of becoming temporary champion. It didn't matter whether he happened to be a back or a half-back or a forward. It would not necessarily be the fellow who scored all the goals who would gain the points. It would be the fellow who put up the best game, quite irrespective of his position on the field.

When Saturday afternoon came the excitement knew no bounds.

St. Jim's brought over their strongest team. And their strongest team was very good indeed!

Tom Merry & Co. knew nothing of the contest that had been arranged to decide who was the Remove's champion. And they had the shock of their lives when the game started. The "Friars" played with a dash

and determination that almost swept their opponents off their feet.

"Play up, Greyfriars!"

"On the ball!"

The crowd cheered wildly as Hurree Singh raced away on the wing. The dusky nabob sprinted with the speed of a hare. There was no stopping him. Man after man tried to check him, only to fall in their tracks while Inky went speeding past them.

He had almost reached the corner-flag, when he stopped the ball dead. Then he sent across a perfect centre.

Harry Wharton fastened on to the leather, and drove it past Fatty Wynn at express speed.

"Goal!"

The Friars had scored in the first minute. And the committee of four were entering favourable marks in their notebooks against the names of Hurree Singh and Harry Wharton.

Play continued at a fast and furious pace. Seldom had the Remove been seen to such advantage. Every man Jack of them seemed to be playing the game of his life. The backs—Johnny Bull and Tom Brown—stood well up the field, almost on the half-way line, and their tackling and kicking were superb.

The halves worked like niggers. Peter Todd was cool and resourceful; Bob Cherry

The finest attraction of all—the MAGNET!

was lively and full of dash; Mark Linley was bang on top of his form. There was not a pin to choose between them.

As for the forwards, they gave the St. Jim's defenders no peace. They were a bustling, bustling quintette, hungering and thirsting for goals. They had already scored one, but, as Frank Nugent pointed out, they were not greedy, but they liked a lot!

It was well for St. Jim's that they had a fine pair of backs in Figgins and Kerr, and a goalie in a thousand in the person of Fatty Wynn.

But even the "Saints" defence, magnificent though it was, broke down at last under the persistent pressure.

Wharton scored again from close range. He could hardly help himself, for Vernon-Smith placed the ball at his very toes.

Five minutes later Frank Nugent added to the score.

St. Jim's were three goals down already, and they felt as if they were up against a human cyclone. Never, in their numerous meetings with the Friars, had they been so completely outplayed.

Only on two occasions in the first half did Tom Merry's forwards break away.

On one of these occasions Tom Merry scored with a lightning drive which gave Bulstrode no chance.

On the other occasion, Talbot sent in a shot which would have beaten nine goalies out of ten. But Bulstrode, leaping high in the air, brought off a sensational save which earned him salvos of applause.

But, for the most part, the Friars were attacking. And just before the whistle sounded for half-time, Bob Cherry drove the ball through a crowd of players into the net.

"Four to one against us!" panted Tom Merry, as the teams came off for the interval. "I can't think what's come over these Friars! I thought we should hold our own at least. But we shall have to work miracles if we can hope to save the game."

Fatty Wynn was looking quite glazed.

"I hardly know whether I'm on my head or my heels!" he exclaimed. "Beaten four times in one half! It—it's appalling!"

"Appalling" is the only word for it, dear boy!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"We must try an' put a better complexion on things in the second half."

But the second half proved just as disastrous as the first, so far as St. Jim's were concerned.

The Friars were in irresistible form, and they added three more goals to their tally.

The scorers were Dick Penfold, Frank Nugent, and Vernon-Smith.

Practically every fellow in the team played his best game of the season. But, in spite of this, there were certain blemishes which did not escape the watchful eyes of the committee of judges.

On one occasion Peter Todd miskicked. On another, Tom Brown handled the ball. Once Wharton took a shot at goal when he would have been wiser to have passed to Penfold, who was in a better position. Even Mark Linley was at fault when he ballooned the ball instead of keeping it low.

Incredible though it may seem, St. Jim's were beaten by seven goals to one. It was far and away their biggest defeat of the season. It was the sort of thing that happened only once in a decade.

When the game was over the judges were surrounded by a throng of eager fellows.

"Who is the merry champion?"

"Name, please!"

"Don't keep us in suspense!"

The committee had already arrived at their decision.

"You all played magnificently," said Mr. Lascelles. "But only one boy played an absolutely flawless game, free from blemish of any sort. That boy is Vernon-Smith!"

Instantly the one-time Bouncer was surrounded by an enthusiastic, surging, cheering throng.

Nobody felt inclined to quarrel with the decision of the committee.

Smithy had indeed played a masterly game, perfect in every detail.

"Hurrah!"

"Good old Smithy!"

"Champion of the Remove, by Jove!"

Vernon-Smith laughed breathlessly.

"Only a temporary champion!" he said.

"But a champion, for all that!" said Harry Wharton heartily.

And thus the vexed question as to who was the Remove's best footballer was settled—for the nonce, at all events.

THE END.

OVERHEARD IN THE FORM-ROOM!

By **BOB CHERRY**
(of the Remove Form).

MR. QUELCH: "Skinner, give me the name of the poet who wrote 'The Song of the Shirt.'"

SKINNER: "Robin Hood, sir."

MR. QUELCH: "Nonsense, Skinner! He was not a poet; he was an outlaw. You evidently mean Thomas Hood."

SKINNER: "Yes, that's it, sir—the chap who suffered such a lot when he ran the hundred yards."

MR. QUELCH: "Boy, what on earth are you talking about? Do you suggest that Thomas Hood was a runner, and that he was in pain when he ran?"

SKINNER: "Yes, sir. Because in 'The Song of the Shirt' he says, 'Stitch! Stitch! Stitch!'"

And then Skinner wondered why Mr. Quelch picked up his cane.

MR. PROUT: "Coker, take a hundred lines!"

COKER: "Where to, sir?"

MR. PROUT: "To my study. And bring an extra hundred with them for impertinence!"

Collapse of Coker.

MR. TWIGG: "Nugent minor, what were the last words of King Charles the First?"

DICKY NUGENT: "I shall have a slight headache in a minute!"

And then the chopper came down!

EDITORIAL!



By **HARRY WHARTON.**

THERE always has been, and there always will be, a tremendous interest taken in the Greyfriars gallery of sporting champions.

Readers are continually plying me with such questions as, "Who is the champion boxer of the Remove Form?" "Who is the champion footballer?" "Who is the best all-round athlete?" and so forth.

This issue of the GREYFRIARS HERALD,

which will make a strong appeal to all lovers of school and sport, will give the answers to many of these questions.

But let me say at once that there are no fixed and permanent champions of anything. A fellow who happens to be the champion footballer of his Form this season may have to take a back seat a year hence, in favour of somebody else. Honours and trophies are continually changing hands. And this is as it should be. If a fellow could always count upon being the champion of some particular branch of sport, there would be no competition, no keenness, no excitement. That fellow would remain securely perched on his pedestal, and nothing would shift him.

Take boxing, for example. At one time, the Remove's champion boxer was Dick Russell. Dick went up to Aldershot on one never-to-be-forgotten occasion, and won the Public Schools' Light-weight Championship. But Russell was not destined to remain champion for ever and a day. He lost ground a little, and Bob Cherry overhauled him and became champion of the Remove in his stead. And no doubt Bob, in turn, will have to forfeit the championship to another.

It is this constant whirl of changing fortunes which makes sport so interesting.

Supposing Liverpool were to win the English Cup in 1923, and again in 1924, and yet again in 1925, until they came to be looked upon as "dead certs." for the event, then football would be

shorn of much of its interest. Similarly, if Yorkshire were to win the Cricket Championship each year with monotonous regularity, the competition would become a cut-and-dried affair. We should all know in advance what was going to happen, and county cricket would cease to be thrilling and exciting.

So when you peruse this issue of the "Herald," and find that certain fellows are mentioned as champions of various forms of sport, you must take this to mean that they are champions at the present moment. Within a week, a month, or a year, they will probably have to yield their proud positions to others.

I will now leave you to enjoy what I consciously believe to be one of the best numbers we have had.

And now for a final word. I do hope that all my chums are going to collect our Editor's magnificent real photos of famous football teams, the first of which will be given away with next Monday's issue of the MAGNET LIBRARY.

This is really an excellent chance for my Birmingham chums to prove their loyalty to the good old MAGNET LIBRARY, for it is their team which forms the subject of the first gift. So I ask you all to spread the news amongst your friends—especially when you go to school. If the boys only know that the MAGNET LIBRARY is going to give them a REAL photo of their football heroes, they'll order their copies of the MAGNET LIBRARY now.

HARRY WHARTON.

Another fine batch of funny stories and articles next week!



My "Winning" Ways!

A Vision of the Future.

By BILLY BUNTER.

IT was a pink-letter day in the annals of Greyfriars sport.

The Remove sports were about to take place, to decide who was the champion athlete in the Form.

Some fellows said, "Wharton will win." Others said, "Trussed Bob Cherry to pull it off." Others plumped for Smithy and Toddy and Mark Linley. But not a sole in that grate crowd had a good word to say for me. Ha, ha! They little dreamt that I was a dark horse!

Mr. Lascelles was in charge of the proceedings.

"The first race," he said, "will be the hundred yards."

Twenty of us lined up for the grim struggle.

Pip-pop! went the pistol. And off we flashed like twenty streaks of greeced lightning.

I was determined to lower all previous records, and I completed the distance in five seconds. I didn't have an auto-wheel attached to me to help me along, either.

"Bunter wins!" cried Mr. Lascelles, as the tape went fluttering down.

For a moment there was a stony silence. It was the silence of dum stoopefaction.

Then there was a chorus of angry cries.

"That was a flook!"

"Bunter started before the pistol went!"

"It isn't fair!"

Mr. Lascelles wrapped out a sharp command for silence. Then he lined us up for the next event.

This was the quarter-mile. Harry Wharton took the lead, and he kept it until he was two inches from the tape. Then up I centered with a mighty rush, and beat him by the width of an eyebrow.

There was grate konsternation at this.

"Bunter has won two events off the reel!" exclaimed Nugent. "It can't be reel!"

But it was reel enough, although the fellows took some time to cotton on to it.

The next event was the mile race. Mark Linley made a big effort to win this, but just as he was about to brest the tape, I charged into him and sent him sprawling.

Then I went on and won.

I was in wonderful form that day. Mr. Lascelles said it was no use going on with the sports, because I was bound to win every event. But he decided to carry on, just as a matter of form.

The high jump came next, and I cleared twenty feet without difficulty. The next best effort to this was two and a half feet by Frank Nugent.

"Bunter wins again!" said Mr. Lascelles. "This is getting monotonous."

I then won the long jump with a leap of fifty yards. I sailed like a bird over the heads of the fellows, and they watched my flight with admiration and oar.

When it came to throwing the cricket-ball, I caused a sensation by hurling the ball with such force that it alighted in the village street, over a mile away. This may seem an exaggeration, but I assure you that I never allow my fancy to run riot.

The Marrison race was a farce. I won it with five miles to spare. Nobody else had a look in.

Harry Wharton & Co. clenched their teeth and nashed their hands in despair.

"Bunter is simply sweeping the board!" gasped Wharton. "He's won every single event up to now."

"But he won't win the boxing," said Bob Cherry. "We all know how hopeless Bunter is with the gloves."

The Jimnasium was crowded when the boxing koutests began.

I found myself drawn against Micky Desmond in the first heat. And I smashed him to a pulp.

I was then paired off with Peter Todd. It greeved and pained me beyond mezzure to have to disfigger a study-mate; but it was no use being sentimental on such an occasion. I nocked Peter round and round the ring until he howled for mercy and threw up the sponge.

In the semi-final I was matched with Dick Russell. I simply toyed with him in the first round, like a cat toys with a mouse. In the second round I stopped fooling, and let him have it hot. (At the time of writing, Russell is in the sanney, with his face smothered in bandages.)

I had to meet Bob Cherry in the final. Before it began, Bob went down on his



Mark Linley made a big effort to win the mile event, but just as he was about to brest the tape I charged into him and sent him sprawling. Then I went on and won.

bended neeze, and implored me not to hit him too hard.

"I saw how you polished off the other fellows," he said, "and I don't want to have a simmler fate. Just give me a gentle tap on the torrid, or on the chest, and I'll go down for the count."

"Coward!" I said scornfully. "Stand up and take your greel like a man!"

Mr. Lascelles called "Time!" and I went for Bob Cherry like a human hurrycane.

The first time I hit him I missed him, but the second time I gave him a blow on the knee which nearly put it out of joint.

"Fowl, there!" cried Wharton. "Bunter hit below the belt!"

Fortunately, the referee did not witness the incident. And the fight went on.

Biff! Bump! Thud! Crash! Whack! Plonk!

Those sounds boomed through the Jim like thunder.

Bob Cherry was getting it in the neck. And he couldn't say that was below the belt!

RUTHLESS RHYMES!

By TOM BROWN.

A greedy young fellow named Skinner
Ate twenty-two tarts for his dinner,
Then he went to compete
In a weight-lifting feat,
And now he's perceptibly thinner!

A nobleman known as Mauleverer
At running grew clever and cleverer,
Attacked by the "stitch,"
He fell in a ditch,
And that was the last of Mauleverer!

A conjurer, Oliver Kipps,
Once balanced two chaps on his hips,
Then, with a wild yell,
Lost his balance and fell,
And there was a total eclipse!

A playful young fellow named Hillary
With pea-shooters formed an artillery,
He fired at his fellows;
With hoots and with bellows
They put the poor chap in the pillory!

I sing of the sorrows of Rake,
Who decided to play "Put and Take."
He lost all his cash,
And then with a splash
He hurled himself into the lake!

A nimble young fellow named Trevor
At skating was brilliant and clever,
He collapsed in a trice,
Through a hole in the ice
So it's good-bye to Trevor for ever!

That worthy young fellow, Delarcy,
Has purchased a priceless canary,
It sang "Annie Laurie,"
Then chirruped, "So sorry!
You asked me to sing 'Tipperary!'"

No football jersey had Wharton,
So he went to the village and bought
'em,
But on the way back,
He fell down a crack,
And lay there until we had sought 'em!

A quiet sort of fellow is Russell,
Who is seldom seen to bustle,
But when Fishy did shout:
"Wake up, you great lout!"
Dick proved he's got plenty of muscle!

To cut a long story short, I gave Bob Cherry a rare peppering. And Mr. Lascelles told me afterwards that I was worth my salt. I was keen as mustard on nocking out the so-called champion of the Remove, and I did it. Bob Cherry's face was as sour as vinegar when he came round.

"You can take that licking, with my condiments!" I said. "You've been asking for it a long time, and now you've got it!"

Mr. Lascelles then declared the sports meeting at an end.

"Bunter has won every single event," he announced, "and we must all acknowledge him to be the champion athlete of the Remove. He will receive the silver cup in dew corse."

That cup now adorns my study mantel-piece, dear readers.

"And underneath is written
In letters all of gold,
How Billy Bunter won the sports
Of which you've now been told."

THE END.

Tell your friends about Frank Richards—finest boys' author living!

WHO WILL BE CHAMPION?

By H. VERNON-SMITH.

THE Great Sports' Meeting to decide who is champion of the Remove will shortly take place.

The silver cup, presented by the Governors of Greyfriars, at present stands proudly on the mantelpiece in Bob Cherry's study. Bob is the holder for one year.

Will he have to hand over the trophy to somebody else? This is a question which will be answered at the conclusion of the next great athletic meeting.

Personally, I consider that Bob Cherry, brilliant athlete though he is, will have all his work cut out. Last year he had to fight tooth-and-nail in order to defeat Archie Howell, who ran him very close at the finish. I do not think Howell will be a thorn in Bob Cherry's side this year. He has fallen away somewhat, and is not nearly so brilliant as he was.

But there are other fellows who will cause Bob Cherry a deal of anxiety.

Harry Wharton is always a dangerous rival. Then we have Mark Linley, Peter Todd, Tom Brown, Frank Nugent, and Johnny Bull, all of whom will be well in the running.

Will Bob be beaten? I fancy he will.

My favourite for the great event is Mark Linley. I have been watching the progress of the Lancashire lad very closely. He has improved by leaps and bounds, and will take a lot of beating.

On the running-track, Linley is a fellow to be feared. He may not win the hundred yards, which is nearly always a wild scramble, but he will go very close in the quarter-mile and the mile, and the Marathon race is practically a "dead cert." for him. He is without question the finest long-distance runner in the Form.

What will happen in the boxing contests? There are lots of fellows who are simply bursting to lower Bob Cherry's colours. Harry Wharton and Dick Russell have the best chance of doing this. Both will fight gamely, we may be certain. And we must not forget such good boxers as Peter Todd, Johnny Bull, and Tom Redwing.

In the cycling race, I don't think Bob Cherry will get a look-in. Our best racing cyclist is Tom Brown. Brown gets up before rising-bell every morning, and goes for a practice spin. And the fellow who hopes to beat him will have to shift "some," as Fisher T. Fish would say.

There will be no swimming contest—our winter climate won't allow of this—but I hear that there is going to be a special football event. At present, I am supposed to be the football champion of the Form, but I realise that I shall have to fight hard to retain my place.

The Remove sports will be keen, clean, and closely contested. These points are certain. But nobody can say with certainty who will prove to be the champion athlete.

I will stick to my selection: Mark Linley. I may be wrong, of course; but you can bet your bottom dollar that the Lancashire lad will be in at the death.

CHAMPION OF THE REMOVE!

By W. G. BUNTER.

The hero of the running track
Is Bunter, W. G.

I run a mile in splendid style,
And none can equal me.
Wharton, Toddy, and everybody
Are hopeless, you'll agree.

I am a boxer brave and bold,
I knock opponents out
With mighty blows to jaw and nose,
And make them sadly shout:
"We wish we'd missed old Bunter's fist,
It puts us all to rout!"

I swim the Channel every year,
To keep myself in trim;
And every night I have a fight
With Cherry in the gym.
You must admit that Hackenschmidt
Is not so strong of limb!

I am an oarsman of renown,
Some day I'll be a "Blue."
Upon the Sark I oft embark
In a flat, squat canoe.
With never a splash, I make it flash—
A brilliant thing to do!

I shine in every sphere of sport,
From cricket down to chess;
I'm real hot-stuff at Blind Man's Buff,
As you will doubtless guess.
Result's the same in every game—
"Billy Bunter reaps success!"

So when they ask you in the Close,
Or Common-room, or dorm,
"Who is the best and worthiest
Young sportsman in the Form?"
Mind you say me, or there will be
A sudden, violent storm!

CANDID COMMUNICATIONS! By the Head.

To GERALD LODER, Sixth Form.
Dear Loder,—It has come to my knowledge that you have not been conducting yourself in a manner which befits a prefect of this school.

You have doubtless imagined that I am ignorant of your backslidings, but I can assure you that I have been keeping my eyes open.

I am far from satisfied with your behaviour, and I hereby warn you that unless there is a prompt improvement I shall deprive you of your prefecture. I expect my prefects to set a good example to the boys under their jurisdiction. You will do well to bear this warning in mind—Yours,

HERBERT H. LOCKE,
Headmaster.

To WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER, Remove Form.

Dear Bunter,—A report has reached me recently of a midnight raid on the school kitchen.

Cake-crumbs have been found in your bed; and, although this is not sufficient evidence on which to convict you of the offence, I warn you to be very careful in future.

I am aware that you are a dense and stupid boy, with no clear conception of right and wrong; but if I find that you have been paying nocturnal visits to the school kitchen, I shall not spare you—Yours grimly,

HERBERT H. LOCKE,
Headmaster.

THE BEST OF THE BUNCH!

By DICKY NUGENT.

I FEEL very proud of myself this weak, dear readers.

After a thrilling, grooling game, which will ever be remembered in the annals of Greyfriars sport, I won the Loodo Championship of the Second Form.

I have always been hot stuff at loodo. Even before I could toddle I used to be seen crawling on the floor of the nursery, rattling a dice-box and moving the coloured disks across the loodo-board.

I can well remember my pater saying, "Dicky will play loodo for England one of these days! Look! He's just thrown six sixes in succession!"

There were four of us in the final for the Second Form Championship. Gatty was yellow, Myers was blue, Sammy Bunter was green (and a jolly sight greener by the time the game was over!), and I was red.

We kicked off before a big crowd in the fags' Common-room. My major, Frank, acted as referee.

Gatty won the toss, and he was the first to throw the dice. He threw a six, and then he threw another, and then another. We soon grew sick of seeing sixes.

Then Gatty only got a two, but he had started three of his yellow disks on their jerney round the board, and the rest of us began to look quite alarmed.

It was now Myers' turn to throw. He got a six, and Sammy Bunter had a simmler eggspereience. But I couldn't get going for a long time. I kept chucking twos and threes, which were no use to me. And my three opponents were half-way round the board before I at last made a start.

But when I did get going you couldn't see me for dust!

"Franky," I said, turning to my major, "I shall win this game hands down!"

"Never count your chickens until you've taken the tops off the eggs," was the reply.

Then Gatty raced away with his yellow disks until he got three of them safely home. And the game seemed as good as one.

"You'd better bough your head to defeat, Dicky," said Frank.

"Rats!" I retorted.
I seized the dice-box, and I gave it a jolly good shaking-up.

Out came a six! Then out came a second six! Then a third six! Then a fourth six! Then a fifth six! And then a sixth six!

"Hear, steady on!" said Myers in alarm. "Where do we come in?"

"You don't," I said with a chuckle. "You stay out!"

I kept on throwing sixes, without a brake, and my opponents regarded me with stony stares. And I never stopped throwing those sixes, dear readers, until all my disks were safely home. I thus beat Gatty on the post, and can now claim the proud privilege of being loodo champion of my Form.

But am I going to rest on my lorrels? No jolly fear! I am now going to have a shot at the Snakes and Ladders Championship!

"All the fun of the fair!" Read the jolly old "Herald" every week!

THE SCHOOLBOY HERMIT!

(Continued from page 12.)

there was no knee for him, and he stood rather unsteadily, breathing hard. He was caught by the arm and drawn to a knee to rest.

"Sit down, old bean!" said Lord Mauleverer affably.

"Thanks!" gasped Lee.

He needed the rest, and he was glad of his lordship's knee. In the kindness of his heart Mauly was utterly neglecting the crease in his beautiful trousers.

"Time!"

Lee came up to the scratch again promptly enough. But he knew by this time that he was fighting a losing battle, as Wharton knew also.

He cared little.

He intended to fight to the finish, but he had no keen desire to be the victor. The fight itself was against all his inclinations; it was only a part of the policy he had marked out for himself as the surest way of defeating the aims of Ulick Driver.

He stood up well to his punishment during the next three rounds, and gave back a good deal of what he received. But the fight was going against him, and when time was called for the seventh round he walked up very unsteadily from Mauleverer's knee.

Wharton came on more slowly.

"This has gone far enough, Lee!" said the captain of the Remove abruptly.

"I'm willing to call it off, if you are."

"No!" said Lee.

"You want to go on?"

"Yes."

"Call it off, you ass!" said Tom Brown.

"Just as you like," said Wharton.

"Come on, then!"

Lee came on fast enough, attacking hotly. But "paid" was put to his attack very quickly, and Wharton sailed in with vigour. The new junior was driven back under a shower of blows.

The call of time came again to save him from being knocked out. But he was staggering when he reached Lord Mauleverer's friendly knee.

"Chuck it now, old bean!" murmured Mauly.

Lee shook his head.

"Time!" called out the Bouncer, looking very doubtfully at the groggy junior gasping on Mauleverer's knee.

Jim Lee staggered up and came on.

"Plenty of pluck, anyhow!" murmured Bolsover major. "He's a fool, but he's got grit."

Crash!

Lee went down helplessly. Vernon-Smith began to count. Twice Lee made an effort to rise—and went back again, breathless and spent. Smith counted ten; but he might have counted twenty or thirty.

"Out!"

The Bouncer slipped the watch back into his pocket. Lee sat up dazedly, but still he could not rise.

Wharton threw off the gloves. Lord Mauleverer helped Jim Lee to his feet, and the new junior leaned on him heavily. Wharton, after a moment or two of hesitation, came over to him.

"I'm sorry for this, Lee," said the captain of the Remove. "I was willing to chuck it sooner, you know. I hope you're not feeling too bad."

Lee panted, but did not speak.

"You've put up a good fight," said Harry. "There was little enough to

fight about. I'm willing to shake hands over it, if you are."

"No!" said Lee, almost inaudibly.

Wharton coloured.

"Suit yourself!" he said coldly. Then he paused. "Look here, Lee, what have you got up against me? If I've done anything, I'm blessed if I know what it is! I was ratty about the football yesterday; but that isn't a reason for you to feel bitter like this, that I can see. What's the trouble, then?"

Lee did not answer. He drew himself from Lord Mauleverer's supporting arm and began to put on his jacket. Wharton looked at him curiously, in wonder.

"You heard what Wharton said, old bean!" murmured Lord Mauleverer as he helped Lee on with his jacket.

Lee did not seem to hear Mauly. He made a movement to go without answering.

"Lee!" rapped out Wharton. "Can't you speak? You seem to have something up against me, and I don't know what it is. Can't you give it a name?"

Without a word in reply Lee turned his back on the captain of the Remove and walked off. Wharton's face was crimson, and he made an angry movement after the new junior, but stopped again.

"Sulky cad!" said Skinner.

There was a murmur of condemnation from the Remove fellows. Lee, as he went, caught the expression on Lord Mauleverer's face—an expression of surprise mingled with contempt. He was not likely to receive any more overtures of friendship from Mauly.

He did not heed.

In silence, and alone, he walked out of the Cloisters, and he left the Remove crowd in a buzz behind him. Every fellow seemed to have something to say on the subject of Jim Lee—and everything that was said was scornful. If Ulick Driver had been on the spot just then he would have had small hope for the success of his scheme in sending Jim Lee to Greyfriars.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Order of the Boot!

O GILVY and Russell came into their study at the hour of prep. They found Jim Lee there—not at work. After that slogging match in the Cloisters, Lee was not fit for work. His head was aching, and he was feeling

run down and dispirited—the natural reaction after the fight that had gone on too long. But to his study-mates his clouded face was only one more sign of what they considered his sulky temper. And the two cheery juniors of Study No. 3 were "fed up" with Lee's sulks, especially after the scene in the Cloisters.

Lee, as usual, did not look up or speak as his study-mates came in. He was sitting in the armchair by a low fire, and he did not move.

There was none of the usual chipping that Russell and Ogilvy bestowed on their unsociable study-mate. Their feeling towards him was one of dislike and scorn, and they did not conceal it.

"So you're here!" said Russell.

No reply.

"Still sulking—what?" said Russell.

"Well, I'm not going to talk to you much, Lee. I've got something to say—Ogilvy the same. We're fed up with you in this study."

"Right up to the chin!" concurred Ogilvy.

"We made you welcome enough when Quelchy planted you on us," continued Russell, addressing the top of Lee's head, which was still bent. "We didn't want a strange dog in the kennel, but we stood it; and you can't say we weren't civil."

"Too jolly civil!" said Ogilvy.

"You'd be a disgrace to any study," resumed Russell. "You give the Form the go-by in a football match, and you sulk and scowl after you've got a fair licking in a fair fight. You've got your knife into Wharton—a thoroughly decent chap—and you won't even say what he's done—if he's done anything, which I don't believe. Just sneaking malice, I suppose."

"Just that!" said Ogilvy, whose part in this scene seemed to be to play chorus to his indignant chum.

"And the long and the short of it is that we don't want you in the study, Jim Lee!" said Russell bluntly.

"We want you to clear!" said Ogilvy.

No answer.

"And sharp!" went on Russell.

Jim Lee looked up at that. His face was pale, save where the marks of the fight showed on it. A good deal of damage had been done, in spite of the gloves.

"You want me to go," repeated Jim Lee dully.

"We've said so."

"But—this is my study! I suppose I must have a study."

"Change into another study, then."

Lee smiled, a faint, bitter smile.

"Do you know any fellow who would like me to change into his study?" he asked.

"No fear! Not likely."

"Well then—"

"Bunter might stand you, if you stood him tuck—but then, Toddy wouldn't," said Russell thoughtfully. "Skinner—but there's three in his study already. No—I don't suppose any fellow would have you if he could help it. But we can't stand you here."

"Where am I to go, then?"

"Anywhere you like, so long as you get out of this study."

Lee rose slowly to his feet.

"And if I don't go?" he said.

"You'll be put!" said Russell.

"Hard!" added Ogilvy decisively.

Lee looked at them. If he had said then that it was his study, and that he would hit out if any attempt was made to expel him from it, his study-mates would have softened towards him. Indeed, the proceedings of Messrs. Russell



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and Ogilvy were rather high-handed, and certainly would not have been upheld by the Form master, had the matter come to a tussle.

But Jim Lee did not seem to be thinking of resistance to the autocratic decree. "You'd rather I went, then?" he muttered.

"Yes, rather!"

"Very well."

Lee moved towards the rather untidy shelf where most of his little belongings were packed. Russell and Ogilvy exchanged a glance.

"You're going, then?" asked Russell, as Lee began to gather up his school-books.

"Yes."

"Good riddance!" said Ogilvy.

Lee did not answer that. He stacked his books under his arm, and moved towards the door. Dick Russell's heart smote him a little. He was a kind-hearted fellow, and it occurred to him that perhaps he was a little hard on this "queer fish."

"I say, Lee, where are you going to do your prep?" he asked.

"In the Form-room."

"Not going to ask to be taken into another study?"

"No."

"Well, you wouldn't be taken in, that's a cert. All the fellows are fed up with you. But—I say, there's no fire in the Form-room."

"I know that."

"It's jolly cold there."

"That's all right."

"Dash it all," said Russell uneasily.

"I—I say—" He hesitated. He wanted very much to clear the unpopular new fellow out of Study No. 3, but his kind heart smote him.

"It's all right," said Lee. "I don't want to stay in this study."

"Oh, you don't want to!" exclaimed Russell, rather nettled.

"Not in the least."

"Then buzz off, and a good riddance to you!" said Russell warmly.

"I'm going."

And Lee went. He came back a couple of times for more books, and other articles, to be stowed in his locker in the Form-room. Russell and Ogilvy eyed him when he came and went, without speaking. He was gone for good at last, and the door closed on him.

"I say, I'm glad he's gone!" said Ogilvy, rather doubtfully. "Queer his taking it so quietly, though."

"Anybody would think he was a funk. But he isn't that."

"Anything but that!" said Ogilvy, with a grin. "I'm blessed if I understand him. I'm glad he's gone, though."

"Same here!" said Russell.

Both the juniors felt a little remorseful, however. But that feeling naturally vanished when they tackled their prep. Latin verse claimed all their attention, if they were to get through in the morning without a "row" with "Quelchy." So the very existence of Jim Lee of the Remove faded from their consciousness—for the time.

It was about an hour later that Harry Wharton, coming into the Form-room for a book he wanted, found the light on there and a junior sitting by himself at a desk, at work. The captain of the Remove stared at Jim Lee.

He picked the grammar he wanted out of his desk, eyeing the solitary junior the while. He was doubtful whether to speak to him: but kindness of heart outweighed annoying recollections, and he spoke.

"I say, Lee, don't you find it a bit parky here?" he asked.

"It's nothing."

"You're doing your prep here?"

"Yes."

"Most fellows prefer their studies?" said the puzzled captain of the Remove.

"I prefer the Form-room."

"Well, my hat!"

Wharton went to the door. But he turned back. Something of the facts of the matter had dawned upon his mind. He came up to Lee's desk.

"Look here, Lee, have you been turned out of your study?"

"Yes."

"It's all rot," said Wharton. "Russell and Ogilvy are both good chaps—if they've been ratty, they've got over it by this. You can go back."

"I don't care to."

"I'll speak to them, if you like."

"Don't."

"But are you staying out of your study for good?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Yes."

"It's a bit unusual, you know," said Harry. "Quelchy will want to know

a glance after him, a strange wistful glance; a glance that would have perplexed Wharton had he seen it. Then his eyes dropped to his work again.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Seal of Silence!

"GREYFRIARS cad!"

Jim Lee heard the words, and started a little.

It was a half-holiday at Greyfriars, a week after the Form match. What the Remove were doing that afternoon Jim Lee did not know—he was as cut off from the life of his Form as if he had not been at Greyfriars at all. After dinner, he had gone out of gates with a book under his arm, and a walk on the cliffs by the sea had brought the colour into his cheeks.

Now he was seated on a fence on the Pegg road, with his book on his knees, reading. He did not want to get back to Greyfriars till tea-time, for tea in Hall. His exclusion from school life hurt him deeply, though it was of his own seeking.

What he thought, what he felt, never showed in his face, which was always calm and composed. But since the evening when he had been turned out of his study, Jim Lee's life had veritably been that of a hermit.

He spoke to nobody, and nobody spoke to him. It was as if a fellow had passed a sentence of "Coventry" upon himself.

Once or twice, Lee had noticed that Mr. Quelch, his Form master, had given him very keen and searching glances. The Remove master had not failed to note the fact that something was "up." But as yet Mr. Quelch had not spoken to the new junior on the subject; though Lee felt that that was coming.

Harry Wharton, since that evening in the Form-room, had taken no notice of the new junior's existence.

That he disliked Lee was obvious, but his dislike did not take any active form. He simply ignored the fellow.

Lee's policy, deliberately to baffle Ulick Driver's schemes, by acting in direct opposition to his instructions, was certainly a success. It came hard on him—harder than he had supposed it would come. Once or twice the thought had come into his mind—the desperate thought—of giving his confidence to Harry Wharton—of telling him how matters stood, so that the fellow whom he liked and respected would not regard him as a surly, thankless "rotter."

But the thought was always dismissed as soon as it came. To confide to Wharton—what? That he was the cousin and ward of a professional "crook," that he was sent to school by a man who, with the fairest chances in life, had gone utterly to the bad, and who planned to commit further rascalities by the aid of the boy he had sent to Greyfriars. He could picture the horror, the incredulity in Wharton's face. He smiled at the thought of making such a confidence—a bitter, miserable smile.

It was better that Wharton and the rest should dislike him, even despise him. Better that than making friends with them—eventually to betray their friendship.

For Lee, resolute as he was not to yield to Ulick's orders, knew how utterly he was in the crook's power—and he feared, he dreaded, that when it came to the test he might weaken and surrender. It was better not to have it in

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the reason, when he gets to hear of it. If there's anything I can do—"

Lee looked at him steadily.

"There's one thing you can do!" he said.

"Well, what?"

"Mind your own business."

A flush came into Wharton's face, and his eyes fairly glinted. He clenched both hands and made a movement towards Lee.

Lee did not move. He did not seem to care whether an angry fist crashed into his face or not.

But Wharton dropped his hands again very quickly.

"Very well!" he said, his voice trembling with anger and contempt. "That will do, Lee. Do you know what I think of you? I think you're a cad—the very last thing in cads—a rotter through and through. You're not fit for any decent fellow to speak to."

And with that, Harry Wharton walked out of the Form-room. Lee cast

Does Ulick Driver achieve his nefarious purpose?

his power to do as the crook desired. And if the crash came, it was better to have made no friend who would feel his disgrace. For that Ulick, exasperated by the failure of his scheme, would turn upon him, sooner or later, was only too likely. And then—then, if he left Greyfriars in shame, it was better to disappear without leaving a regret behind him—without having to face horror and scorn in the eyes of a friend.

It was better, wiser; it was the only thing he could do. But it was hard—almost unendurably hard.

The book on Jim's knees was "Anabasis." He was filling in his time with the study of Greek; his leisure hours were too ample to be endured without the aid of work of some kind. He had a natural aptitude for study, and he had a faint hope that somehow he might win through and become independent of his guardian, Redwing and Mark Linley of the Remove were at Greyfriars on scholarships, paying no fees; and a vague idea was at the back of Jim's mind that he might, with luck, do something of the same sort. If only Ulick Driver would let him alone—

"Greyfriars cad!"

The sudden shout on the road made him look up. For a moment he thought that the epithet was addressed to himself. But where he sat on the fence he was screened from the lane by a bunch of willows. Through the leafless branches he caught sight of four elegant-looking fellows who were sauntering along the lane. One of them he had seen before—Cecil Ponsonby of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe. The other three were Gadsby, Monson, and Drury, though Lee did not know them.

It was Ponsonby who had called out, but he was not looking towards the junior on the fence behind the willows. From the other direction in the lane a well-known figure was advancing—Harry Wharton, the captain of the Greyfriars Remove.

Wharton was coming back from Cliff House, after a visit to Marjorie & Co. there. His chums had gone in a party to the "pictures" at Courtfield that afternoon, and Wharton had left them to it, not caring for the thrills of the film. It was rather unfortunate for him, as it happened, for he walked right into the four Highcliffians—and Ponsonby & Co. were truculent fellows to meet when the odds were on their side.

Harry glanced at the Highcliffe four, but did not stop. He came right on, evidently not alarmed by the hostile looks of Ponsonby and his nutty comrades.

The four Highcliffians closed up in a grinning row and stopped him.

"Greyfriars cad!" repeated Ponsonby.

"Greyfriars cad!" echoed his comrades.

"Let me pass!" snapped Wharton.

"The Greyfriars cad's in a hurry!" chuckled Ponsonby. "Are we letting him pass, you fellows?"

"Are we?" grinned Gadsby.

"I don't think!" chuckled Drury.

Wharton did not waste any more words on his old enemies. He shoved on, and Drury went staggering out of his way.

"Collar the cad!" shouted Ponsonby.

The Highcliffians closed round Wharton at once.

"Down him!" yelled Gadsby.

Wharton's hands were up, and he backed quickly to the side of the road. The odds were overwhelming, but his face showed no sign of fear—only a contempt that stung Ponsonby & Co. and

added to their determination not to lose this opportunity of ragging their old foe.

The captain of the Remove hit out vigorously as the Highcliffe juniors rushed him down. Ponsonby rolled in the road, yelling. Gadsby staggered back. But Pon was upon his feet again in a twinkling, rushing on; and three pairs of hands grasped Wharton.

He struggled savagely, but Gadsby piled in again, and four pairs of hands were too much for the captain of the Remove.

He went down in the road with a crash, the Highcliffians sprawling over him.

"Rag the cad!" panted Ponsonby.

None of the juniors had seen Jim Lee so far, sitting silent on the fence behind the willows, his book on his knee.

Lee did not move.

But when Wharton crashed down under the attack, and Pon's knee was planted on his chest, pinning him down, Lee moved at last. He could not sit idly and see a Greyfriars fellow ragged by the enemy. And the ragging evidently was going to be a severe one.

Lee dropped from the fence.

"Rescue!" yelled Wharton, in the faint hope that some Greyfriars fellow might be within hearing.

Rescue was nearer than he dreamed. Lee came out into the road with a spring. The next moment Cecil Ponsonby spun aside from Wharton under a drive that landed on his ear.

With a surprised howl Ponsonby rolled over.

"Look out!" gasped Gadsby. "Greyfriars cads! Look out!"

The Highcliffians jumped away from

Wharton, prepared to take to their heels promptly if the enemy had turned up in force. Lee quickly gave the captain of the Remove a hand up.

"Only one of the rotters!" panted Ponsonby. "Go for them!"

"Give 'em socks!" shouted Drury.

The four rushed on. Wharton was on his feet now, and Lee and the captain of the Remove stood shoulder to shoulder. There was little time for words. The rush of the Highcliffians came quickly.

"Back up!" gasped Wharton.

He was hitting out the next moment. But he went down under the rush, his foot slipping, and Drury and Monson threw themselves upon him. Lee faced Ponsonby and Gadsby, his hands up, and his eyes gleaming over them.

They were upon him, hitting out savagely. Then Cecil Ponsonby had a sudden experience of the upper-cut which Bolsover major and Wharton had already sampled at Greyfriars. Exactly what happened Ponsonby never knew; he felt as if a horse had kicked him under his jaw, and he went spinning, to crash into the road, and lie there gasping. Gadsby, in alarm, jumped back, and Lee followed him up, and a drive straight from the shoulder laid Gadsby across his knocked-out leader.

Wharton, on the ground, was struggling under a rain of blows from Drury and Monson. Lee swung back at them as soon as his own adversaries were disposed of. In a twinkling he gripped Drury and Monson by their collars, and



A PASSIONATE APPEAL! Lee bit his lip till the blood almost came. He had been on the very verge of telling all, but the startled look on Wharton's face had stopped him in time. "Lee—" began Wharton. "Let me alone!" muttered the new boy almost wildly. "I've nothing to tell you—don't ask me questions! Let me alone." (See Chapter 12.)

School, sport, and adventure in the next issue of the **MAGNET**!

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there was a loud crouch, and a louder roar, as their heads collided.

The next moment they were rolling in the road.

Wharton scrambled up breathlessly.

"Come on!" he panted.

"Our win, I think!" chuckled Lee, his face flushed and bright, his eyes dancing. He did not look at that moment much like the "hermit" of the Remove.

Ponsonby scrambled dizzily to his feet, and made a plunge through the hedge into the adjoining field. Pon, apparently, had had enough. He landed in the field on all fours, picked himself up, and ran for it; and Gadsby, following him fast, was helped through the hedge by a drive of Harry Wharton's boot.

"Yaroo!" howled Gadsby as he landed. And he fled breathlessly after his leader.

Monson and Drury were already in full flight down the road. Lee, laughing, grasped snow from the hedge, and hurled snowballs after them till they were out of range.

"Good man!" gasped Wharton. He came back towards Lee. "I should have had a bit of a ragging but for you. I—"

He broke off a little awkwardly. Lee was the very last fellow in the world he would have desired to come to his rescue.

The colour flushed into his face.

"All serene," said Lee. "I couldn't sit by and see them rag you. I'm glad I was here."

He spoke cheerily, cordially, from his heart. For the moment, in the excitement of the fray with the High-cliffians, he had forgotten. But recollection came, and the brightness died out of his face.

"It's nothing!" he said abruptly; and he turned away from Wharton, to seek for the book he had dropped under the willows.

Wharton, breathing hard after his exertions, watched him in silence. He was well aware that Lee had saved him from a savage ragging, and he would have been willing, at that moment, to forget past offences, and start afresh, as it were. Was Lee willing?

"Going back to the school?" he asked, as Lee came out of the willows with the "Anabasis" in his hand. "It's tea-time."

"Yes."

"Then we'll go together," said Harry cheerily.

Lee stopped.

"I'm not coming yet," he said curtly. "You'll miss tea in Hall, then."

Lee did not answer that. What the Greyfriars fellows called his sulkiness had dropped on him again like a cloak.

"Look here, Lee," said Harry Wharton quietly, "you've done me a good turn. I'd have done as much for you, certainly; still, it was decent of you to pile in as you did, after—" He checked himself. "Look here, what's wrong with you?"

"Nothing."

"Nobody in the Remove seems to understand you," said Harry. "But I can't help thinking you're a decent fellow, in your way. Why don't you want to make friends? Why do you set out to make fellows dislike you? Is there any sense in it?"

"You don't understand!" muttered Lee.

His face worked strangely; his lonely heart ached for friendship, for the cheery comradeship of the Remove fellows.

"Blessed if I do," said Harry frankly. "But if you'd explain, probably I should understand," he added with a smile.

"Suppose I told you—"

It was on Lee's lips now—the secret he had kept; the secret that was a black shadow on his life. He longed to speak; he yearned for one friendly word of counsel in his darkness and perplexity.

"Suppose you told me what?"

"Why I came to Greyfriars," muttered Lee huskily; "why I was sent there; why Ulick Driver—why that scoundrel—"

He broke off sharply as he saw the amazement in Wharton's face.

"Your guardian?" said Harry. "What—"

Lee bit his lip till the blood almost came. He had been on the very verge of telling all; the startled amazement

in Wharton's face had stopped him in time. He stepped back.

"Lee—" began Wharton.

"Let me alone!" muttered Lee almost wildly. "I've nothing to tell you. Don't ask me questions. Let me alone!"

"But—" stammered the astonished captain of the Remove.

Lee did not heed him. He turned his back on Wharton and walked away, not towards Greyfriars. His self-control was almost gone; his black secret was not safe in his keeping.

Already he had repented of his rashness in broaching the subject; he had said far too much. Harry Wharton, although not the kind of fellow to pry into other people's affairs, was fully capable of putting two and two together. Only time would show whether Jim Lee had opened out his heart too much.

As the new boy strode away, biting his lips in vexation at the want of self-control he had displayed, his heart yearned to bridge the gulf that lay between him and his school-mates. They were all good fellows, of that he was convinced; and his life at Greyfriars—under totally different circumstances—would have been a particularly happy one. But the ominous shadow of Ulick Driver ever fitted across his mental vision—the crook who held him in the hollow of his hand—and he knew that such a life was not for him.

He had his battle to fight, and he would emerge without a stain on his honour in spite of the threats of Ulick Driver. With that comforting reflection Jim Lee quickened his pace.

Harry Wharton looked after him for a full minute. Then, slowly and thoughtfully, he resumed his way to Greyfriars, his thoughts dwelling, in puzzled perplexity, on the strange words of the schoolboy hermit.

THE END.

(Next week's long complete story of Greyfriars delves further into the hermit-like existence of Jim Lee. In "Just Like Bunter" Mr. Frank Richards takes us over hitherto unexplored depths of human character. Don't miss this magnificent yarn!)

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Who are the boys who make the noise? Harry Wharton & Co. 1



The Roof-Garden Mystery!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

A further exploit of the world-famed investigator, FERRERS LOCKE, and his assistant, JACK DRAKE.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Orime at the Manitou!

"MY giddy aunt! How many more of 'em?"

Thus Jack Drake, as the fortieth reporter burst into the suite of rooms the boy shared with Ferrers Locke at the Vermont Hotel, in Fifty-fifth Street, New York.

"Evenin', evenin'!" said the reporter briskly. "I represent the 'Manhattan Eye-Opener'—sure the finest little rag in this city! My editor would like your opinion, Mr. Locke, on the Amurrican detective service."

Ferrers Locke crumpled up the newspaper he had been reading and gave a laugh.

"So it's the detective service this time!" he said. "Since my assistant and I landed from the Blue Star boat this morning, we've been interviewed and photographed about five hundred times."

The reporter slipped a stick of pepsin gum into his mouth and wrote something in his notebook.

"Wal, I guess that's the penalty of fame, Mr. Locke!" he retorted with a chuckle. "An interview goes into print anyway, whether you talk or not."

Locke's lips set into a firmer line. He took a step towards the man.

"Get out of it!" he said brusquely.

The reporter hesitated; then, as Locke made another step forward, took a hasty departure.

"Well, we soon got rid of him, anyway," said the detective with a smile. "I expect he'll give us a rotten write-up in the 'Manhattan Eye-Opener.' Still, that won't matter. I think, my boy, we had better go out to dinner to-night."

"Those are my sentiments, too, sir," said Drake. "Let's go before any more of these chaps come to interview us."

The two put on their hats and overcoats and stepped out on to the landing of the twenty-fifth floor of the hotel. They were just in time to see the elevator stop and a burly individual emerge.

Ferrers Locke shrunk back with a groan.

"Egad, here's another of them!"

The newcomer advanced with outstretched hand.

"Mr. Locke, I'm right pleased to meet you again! Don't you know me?"

A puzzled frown wrinkled the detective's brow. But his face cleared as recollection came to him.

"By Jove, I think I do! You're Mr. Fiske!"

"You've sure hit it first time, Mr. Locke," said the man, gripping the detective's hand. "I'm Samuel B. Fiske, of the Fiske Private Inquiry Agency. You once did me a pretty good turn in little old London."

Next this affable individual gave Drake a handclasp.

"Well, thank goodness you're not a reporter, sir!" said the boy.

Samuel B. Fiske gave vent to a rumbling laugh.

"Ah, you've been having the experience of all distinguished visitors to our great city!" he said. "But I want to do you a good turn. Come out and dine with me. I'll see that the reporters don't worry you for a few hours at least."

"By Jove!" cried Ferrers Locke. "You're a friend indeed, Fiske! Take us where you like, just so long as we don't see the face of another newspaper reporter or photographer."

Fiske touched the bell for the elevator, and after a few moments the three were whisked down to the ground-floor. A taxi was secured, and the American inquiry-agent ordered the driver to proceed to the Bluebird Grille, a bright little restaurant just off Broadway.

Here Fiske, who was well-known to the waiters, secured a table in a little alcove on a balcony overlooking the majority of the diners. The dinner service was excellent, and as the private inquiry-agent had said, there were no reporters to cause annoyance.

Not until the coffee was served was anything in the nature of real "shop" mentioned. Then Fiske said:

"Say, Locke, I guess you haven't butted up against a crook called Denver Galer during any of your investigations?"

"Denver Galer!" repeated the detective. "I've only heard him mentioned once, in connection with a diamond robbery which took place in Hatton Garden before we left England."

"Ah!" said Fiske. "But now it's pretty clear that Denver Galer has found his way back to the States. Yesterday a safe was cracked down in Wall Street, and the whole job bore the Galer touch."

"But why are you so interested in this crook?" asked Ferrers Locke, taking the cigar which Fiske offered him. "I thought the work of your agency was of a rather different type than that of hunting dangerous crooks like this fellow."

Samuel B. Fiske leaned across the table.

"The fact is, Locke," he said in confidential tone, "the Wall Street Company, who suffered by this latest safe-cracking job, don't trust the integrity and ability of the New York police as they should do. So the managing director sent for me to-day and asked me to conduct a few private investigations. He's chiefly afraid, I think, that Galer might squeal about some of the private papers which were taken among other things. These papers he wants back from Galer at all costs. Dead or alive the Wall Street Company wants me to get Den Galer. And, believe me, they might as well have told me to look for a dollar I lost yesterday on Broadway."

"That's cheerful!" was Locke's comment.

The American inquiry-agent finished his coffee and leaned back with an air of resignation.

"Oh, gosh, let's talk of something else!" he said. "I'm sorry to have begun talking 'shop' to you fellows. It was on my mind. Give me a hard kick if I drag in business again, Locke! Now, what do you say to a visit to a theatre?"

"Ripping!" was Drake's prompt response. The two men laughed at the youngster's enthusiasm.

So Fiske paid the bill, and the three went on to a popular musical comedy. After the show, Ferrers Locke suggested returning to the hotel, but the American laughed boisterously.

"Gee-whiz, the night's young yet!" he cried. "We Amurricans don't go to bed at eleven o'clock. The fun's only just beginning. Come along to the Manitou Roof-Garden."

Despite Locke's protests, their genial host hailed a taxi and told the driver to go to the Manitou Restaurant. There the three alighted and went up in an elevator to the roof-garden. Fiske, who was thoroughly conversant with the place, ushered Locke and Drake to a table and ordered lobster and a "soft" drink, not unlike cider in taste.

Certainly the Manitou Roof-Garden was a very gay kind of resort. The tables were thronged with flashily-dressed people of the Bohemian type. There was a stage on which a number of dancing girls were disporting themselves to the jazz music of an orchestra concealed behind red curtains suspended on a brass rail.

While Locke and Drake discussed their lobster supper and watched the dancing on the stage, Fiske allowed his eyes to rove over the glass-covered roof-garden. In an interval between the items on the stage, he began to point out various notabilities to his guests.

"D'you see that flash old lady over there?" he muttered. "Yes, the one in the gold-and-green wrap and the purple feathers in her hat. That's Mrs. K. Pumperfelter junior. It's reckoned her husband lost a cool million dollars over that meat packer's strike in Chicago last year. And see that old guy sitting next to that pretty girl?"

"The beaver with the black, curly whiskers?" said Drake.

Samuel B. Fiske nodded.

"That's Levistein," he whispered. "He's got pots of money, but he's never made a cent honestly in his life, I believe. He's artful as a fox and as wily as a serpent. The police have never properly nobbled him yet. They'll get him in time, though."

A comedian appeared with a full chorus behind him and began to sing a rollicking song, "Take Me Back to Oklahoma!" Soon half the folk at the supper-tables were joining in the refrain.

Even Locke and Drake began to hum the

What happens to Jim Lee, the "hermit"?

catchy air of the ditty, while Fiske beat time with a fork-handle on the table.

Then suddenly above the sound of the jazz instruments and the singing rose an agonised human shriek. It cut through the song like a knife. The singing ceased. Everywhere about the roof-garden people were springing to their feet.

Fiske and his party spun round in the direction from which the cry had emanated. They saw the black-bearded "fence," Levistein, give a convulsive leap forward and come crashing head downwards over his supper-table, sending glasses, cutlery, and eatables flying to the floor.

With exclamations of concern a number of waiters and customers of the place hurried to his assistance. Then, clear above all

YOU SIMPLY MUST READ



others, rose the voice of Levistein's pretty companion.

"The fiends—the fiends! They've murdered him!"

And she threw herself on to the motionless body of the man spreadeagled across the table, sobbing and laughing hysterically.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Clue in the Curtains!

QUICKLY recovering from the first shock of amazement at this unexpected occurrence, Ferrers Locke, Jack Drake, and Samuel B. Fiske hastened across to the girl.

The great English detective helped to roll Levistein back into his seat. A trickle of crimson showed on the man's white shirt-front.

But the briefest examination was necessary for Locke to discover the truth.

He turned to the manager of the roof-garden.

"The man is dead," he said solemnly. "He has been shot through the heart!"

The manager went as white as any of the spotless table-cloths set on the tables.

"Shot!" he ejaculated. "Impossible! There was no sound of a report!"

"Nevertheless, he was shot with a revolver or pistol of some kind," affirmed Ferrers Locke. "Possibly a silencer was used on the firearm. See! The bullet passed clean through his body. It's embedded in the back of this chair."

Meantime, Fiske, supporting the girl, was endeavouring to extract some information from her. But she was wildly hysterical and her answers came in disjointed sentences.

"Speak, woman!" said the inquiry-agent brusquely. "Do you know who did this deed?"

The girl made a rambling reference to Galer.

"Den Galer—here?" gasped Samuel B. Fiske, looking about him. "Did you see him?"

"No!" This was followed by another burst of sobbing.

"What makes you say he did it?" said Fiske.

The girl sank into a chair and covered her face with her hands. Leaning over and repeating his question, the man strained to catch her reply. It came in the form of a statement that Denver Galer had been to visit Levistein to ask for a loan of money. This Levistein had refused. Galer had sworn to "do for him."

"Where was Galer when you last heard of him?" next asked the American.

"With Thatcher and Guthrie." And the girl broke down completely.

At that moment two burly American patrolmen entered the roof-garden and dispersed the throng round the murdered man.

One of them noticed Fiske. "Clear out of it!" he ordered brusquely. "We don't want no private inquiry-agents hanging around here!"

"Thought I might be of some help, Robertson," said Fiske. "The girl—"

"Get out of it, I say!" snapped the patrolman.

The inquiry-agent joined Ferrers Locke

and Drake, who had moved to the outskirts of the throng of curiosity-mongers.

"That dunderheaded patrolman Robertson has got his knife into me," he told Ferrers Locke. "By gosh, though, I think I've got to windward of him this time. Had he been polite I should have given him some information that I picked up. He won't find out for a while now. The girl has fainted."

But Ferrers Locke was not listening. He was trying to visualise the position in which Levistein had been sitting when the fatal shot had been fired.

It was clear that no one had seen a revolver produced, or, if they had, would give no information concerning the affair. But struck with a sudden idea, Ferrers Locke began to walk along beside the red curtains suspended from the brass rail before the orchestra enclosure. Suddenly he gave a little cry. Fiske and Drake hurried to his side. The great English detective was pointing to a small burnt patch between two of the curtains.

"In my opinion," he whispered, "the shot was fired through this aperture between the curtains."

He beckoned to the conductor of the orchestra, who was standing on a chair regarding the scene about Levistein's table.

In a few words he put the fellow wise to his identity. Immediately the conductor's manner became deferential.

"Tell me," whispered Ferrers Locke—"are all your men present?"

The conductor looked about him.

"I can't quite tell," he said. "I'll round them up if you like."

Some of the players of the orchestra were grouped together, discussing the sensational occurrence. But at the conductor's command they speedily resumed their places.

"Where's Skaife?" called out the conductor.

No one knew.

Ferrers Locke tapped the conductor on the shoulder.

"What's the name of the absent man?" he asked.

"Pete Skaife—a second violinist," replied the conductor. "I only engaged him yesterday. I expect he has taken the opportunity of slipping away for a drink."

Thanking the conductor, the great English detective turned to Samuel B. Fiske.

"Note the position of the chair occupied

"BY SHEER BLUFF!"

By

WALTER EDWARDS.

A great Football Yarn featuring Rollo Dayton, Hercules Samson, and the master-criminal, the Duke. Tell all your pals about these splendid characters who appear in the

BOYS' FRIEND

EVERY MONDAY.

by the missing violinist. It is almost immediately behind the slit between the curtains through which the shot was fired. During the playing of that last jazz dance tune, it would have been quite possible for that man to have produced and fired a revolver fitted with a silencer without the action being apparent.

"Great smoke!" ejaculated Fiske. "I wonder if it could be that this man Skaife was none other than Denver Galer himself? Ask the conductor whether this violinist was left-handed, Locke."

Ferrers Locke put the question to the orchestra leader and received a rather surprised "Yes" in response.

"Would you oblige me by describing the fellow?" then said the detective.

The conductor willingly did so. Skaife, it appeared, was a man with dark, wavy hair and a short moustache and beard, rather of the Italian type.

When Locke informed Fiske of these answers to his questions the American inquiry-agent showed marked signs of excitement.

"Gee whiz!" he said. "I'd bet all Wall Street to an orange that Pete Skaife and Denver Galer are one and the same person. I've never known Galer with a moustache and beard, but doubtless he was disguised. I've heard tell, however, that the crackman was of a somewhat musical bent. So

IN THIS WEEK'S "BOYS' FRIEND"



it is quite possible that he might have got a job in this orchestra."

Looking over his shoulder, he saw the girl who had been Levistein's companion. She showed signs of returning to consciousness. The patrolman Robertson was kneeling at her side holding a glass. The other patrolman and one or two waiters had placed the body of the murdered "fence" on the floor. The doctor had joined them, and was talking vigorously.

Ferrers Locke tapped Fiske on the arm.

"If you want to test your theory about Galer," he said, "you had better get a move on. It would put a big feather in your cap if you could get hold of the man before the police get on his track. I'll ask the conductor to show us the exit from the roof-garden used by the members of his orchestra."

The detective did so, and the conductor, highly flattered at finding himself of use to the great Ferrers Locke, pointed to a door on the other side of the red curtains. Again thanking the man for his courtesy, Locke led the way through the curtains to this door. It opened on to a short flight of steps. He, Jack Drake, and Fiske descended these to find themselves in a small ante-room, in which were a number of hats, overcoats, and instrument-cases.

Leaving this room, the three emerged on to a landing, which was bordered on the opposite side with an elevator-shaft. Locke pressed the button and the lift automatically came up and stopped opposite them. In this they descended to the ground-floor. Here they found an exit from the building which led into a side-street.

A charwoman was cleaning the floor of this side-entrance to the Manitou Roof-Garden Restaurant.

"Has anyone passed out of here within the last few minutes, my good woman?" asked Ferrers Locke.

The charlady looked up with a rueful smile.

"Shucks!" she said. "I guess no sooner do I get cleanin' up the place than half Noo York comes a-tramplin' through. Only five minutes since some fresh Eye-talian johnny went out, an' 'e says to me—"

"Never mind what he said, mother," said Locke impatiently. "What did this Italian look like?"

In a rambling sort of way the woman described the fellow. But before she had half-finished Locke tossed her a dollar, and demanded which way the man had gone after leaving the building. The woman pointed to the left, and Locke hurried Fiske and Drake out into the street.

But their quarry had the advantage of a good start, and further inquiries failed to get them on his trail.

Beneath an elevated railway arch, Samuel B. Fiske called his companions to a halt.

"Say, you fellows," he said, "you've sure had some exciting evening. I guess you'd like to be hittin' the hay."

"The whatter, sir?" said Drake.

"Hittin' the hay," repeated the American. "In other words, going home to roost. You're tired, I reckon."

"Not I," averred Locke.

"Nor I," declared Drake. "I'd like to see this thing through."

Billy Bunter eats and drinks and sleeps! His dreams are more than comio!

Samuel B. Fiske smiled broadly.

"You're good fellows," he said, "and I'm going to ask you to do me a favour. The little gel who was with Levistein on the roof-garden reckons that Galer fired that shot to-night. She also gave me to understand that Galer has been living with two crooks called Thatcher and Guthrie."

"Who are they?" asked Ferrers Locke.

"Cracksmen—like Galer himself. But Three-fingered Thatcher and Red Guthrie have been steering clear of trouble of late. If they have cracked any cribs they must have altered their methods, 'cause they've not come under police suspicion. Now I know where to get a hold of these two guys."

"You know where they live?"

"I sure do! It's in a mean street down in the Bowery. We'll go right to my home address; it's only a few minutes' walk from here. There we shall have to don disguises. Our lives would not be worth a second's purchase if some of those Bowery boys guessed we were 'tecs. Are you heeled?"

Ferrers Locke tapped his hip-pocket, and Drake imitated the action. Neither ever went about without a revolver ready for instant use.

With a satisfied grin, Samuel B. Fiske led the way to his home. There he, Locke, and Drake made a swift transformation in their appearance. All donned old clothes of a pronounced American cut. Fiske completed his disguise with a sandy wig and the judicious use of a little "nose putty" and some grease-paint. With grease-paint, too, Ferrers Locke gave his upper lip and chin an unshaven appearance. With the same material he added an artistic scar to the left side of his mouth, and completed his disguise with a very life-like wart on the nose by means of a small spot.

"Say," said Fiske with a chuckle, "you sure look a regular dago! Both you and Locke had better talk with a slightly foreign accent, I think. I've got myself up to represent Jan Hansen, a crook who I know is at present hidden away in Chicago. You, Locke, had better take the name of Joe Sturm. Drake can be Tony Pagani."

All ready, the three drew on slouch hats, and Fiske led the way out of the building by means of an iron fire ladder at the back.

"And now," said he, "to catch the cracksmen!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The End of Red Guthrie!

IT was past midnight as Ferrers Locke, Jack Drake, and Samuel B. Fiske slunk hurriedly through the more or less deserted streets of New York towards the Bowery district. Once or twice a burly patrolman regarded them suspiciously, but no one hindered their progress.

Arriving in the notorious Bowery district, Fiske began furtively glancing into various all-night eating-houses, and those shops which dealt in hot cakes and maple syrup.

"You see," he explained to his companions. "I know the habits of the birds we're after. With luck we might come across Thatcher and Guthrie in one of these joints."

And certainly Luck, with a capital "L," favoured the American inquiry-agent in his search. For, peering into one of these hot cake establishments, he discerned Red Guthrie perched upon a high stool.

"Just you wait here, boys," exclaimed Fiske grandly, "while I tackle him inside."

Through the steam-dimmed window of the hot cakes emporium, Locke and Drake saw Fiske enter the place and address himself to the crook. After a brief conversation, they saw Guthrie throw a few coins on a high wooden counter at which he had been sitting, then the crook followed Fiske out of the eating-house.

"Here Guthrie," said Fiske. "Lemme introduce you to two pards I met down Chicago way—Joe Sturm and Tony Pagani."

"Right pleased to meet you," growled Red Guthrie. "Any pard o' Jan Hansen's is a pard o' mine. I've never had the pleasure o' shaking Jan's hand before, but I'm right glad to have met him. Like all the boys in this byer district I sure admired the way he let daylight through those two cops down in Buffalo last fall. He was the hero of the hour, believe me."

Apparently Red Guthrie, who, despite the prohibition laws, had been partaking of stronger fare than hot cakes and maple

syrup, felt highly favoured at having been accosted by so notorious a personage as "Jan Hansen." He invited all three back to his lodgings for a little "refreshment."

Only once on the way did he desire to tarry. This was at the scene of a free fight between the supporters of an Irishman and a negro, Guthrie desiring to assist the cause of the son of Erin. With difficulty Fiske persuaded him to forgo this pleasure and the whole party entered a cheap lodging-house in a dingy thoroughfare called Ellis Street.

Red Guthrie led the way up three flights of rickety stairs. From one room in the house on the second floor came the sound of rattling dice and quarrelling voices, despite the fact that it was now nearing one o'clock in the morning.

On the dark landing of the third floor, Ferrers Locke struck a match while Guthrie fumbled for the handle of a door. Then, with startling suddenness, the door was thrown open from the inside, and an unkempt individual, fully dressed and wearing an overcoat, peered out. At the sight of the party of four, he drew back with an angry growl.

"It's all right, pard," said Guthrie. "I've only brought three of the boys along to have a wet; that is, if you ain't finished all the firewater."

"Come in!" growled Thatcher ungraciously.

As the fellow stood aside for them to enter, Locke and Drake noticed that he only had three fingers on his left hand. His forefinger and thumb he had lost in a shooting affray in a saloon out West during his youth.

The apartment which the crooks shared was a bed-sitting room, ill-lighted with an oil lamp. Obviously, Thatcher had intended to turn in, and he was none too pleased at Guthrie introducing friends at that unearthly hour. Growling some remark, he seated himself on the bed and relapsed into a sullen silence.

Guthrie, under the benign influence of strong beverage taken previously, proved himself a hospitable host. He set out three chairs for the visitors and brought a large black bottle from under a loose board in the floor. Then, having poured a little of the fluid into some mugs and glasses, he seated himself on the bed beside Three-fingered Thatcher. None seeing Guthrie at that moment would have guessed that he was one of the most desperate and treacherous crooks in New York.

For a few moments Fiske, in his guise of Jan Hansen, talked entertainingly of Chicago. He was certainly a consummate actor. Yet neither Ferrers Locke nor Jack Drake felt particularly happy.

Once Locke turned sharply round thinking he heard steps on the landing outside the room. But all was silence from that quarter.

The detective was sitting in a chair between the door and the bed on which the crooks were sitting together. Fiske was at one end of a small table, and Drake at the other end.

But Samuel B. Fiske, while a good inquiry-agent, was not brilliantly gifted with subtlety. Pluck he had in plenty. He wanted to find out from Guthrie or Thatcher all he could about Denver Galer. His method revealed itself like the burst of a thunderbolt.

Chatting carelessly, he waited until both Guthrie and Thatcher had their glasses to their mouths. Then, with startling swiftness, he whipped a couple of automatic pistols from his coat pockets.

"Get your hands up!" he hissed.

The glasses dropped from the hands of the two crooks and fell to the floor. Their hands crept aloft, while their mouths dropped. Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake, after their first moment of surprise, felt rather like the audience at a tense, melodramatic play, wondering what was going to happen next.

As Red Guthrie and Three-fingered Thatcher looked into the grim muzzles of the automatics, a string of abuse began to roll from the tongue of the former. But Fiske quickly broke in upon his remarks.

"Cut that out!" he said sternly. "I want a little information from you. Hand me out any phoney goods and it'll be the worse for you. Have you seen Den Galer of late?"

Guthrie glared fiercely.

"That's my funeral, you low-down nark!" he retorted. "Find out!"

"I mean to," said Fiske.

He entwined his feet about the legs of his chair and drew it closer to the crook's. His pistols remained pointed steadily at the breasts of the men.

"Now, have you seen Galer lately?" The red-haired crook tried to meet the inquiry-agent's steady gaze, but his eyes faltered.

"Mebbe I have, an' mebbe I haven't."

"I can see you have, Guthrie," sneered Fiske. "Where did you see him last?"

But Three-fingered Thatcher butted in. "Don't you tell the rattlesnake nothin', Red," he advised.

"Keep your mouth closed till you're spoken to!" snapped Fiske, waving his right-hand automatic threateningly. "Now, Guthrie, where did you see Galer last?"

Guthrie growled something unintelligible beneath his breath. But Fiske repeated the question with deadly persistency. For their own sakes, Locke and Drake remained silent. They knew that now things had gone as far as they had it would be bad policy to interfere with their American friend.

Yet both felt a bit disgusted with this method of extracting information. It was nothing less than an exaggerated form of the Third Degree, as it is called in the States. And the Third Degree, as practised "across the pond," consists of getting information by persistent questioning and playing upon the mind and nerves of the victim.

After a few minutes Fiske got Guthrie to admit that he had seen Galer in that very building on the previous day.

"Did you hear Den mention he intended paying a visit to the Manitou Roof-Garden?" Guthrie gave a surly nod.

"Den wanted to 'get' old man Levistein, eh?"

Another nod from the crook.

Fiske smiled with satisfaction at the success of his Third Degree method.

"And now," he said, "where d'you reckon Den's to be found, eh?"

A sudden obstinacy possessed Red Guthrie.

"Where's Den Galer to be found?"

The inquiry-agent repeated the question thrice without eliciting any response.

"I'll give you ten seconds to answer me, Red," he said in a low, even tone after the third time. "If you don't reply before I count ten I'll drill you with a bullet from this gun. Now, where's Galer to be found? One—two—three—four—five—"

Fiske paused slightly in the hope that his bluff would work. But Guthrie kept his lips tight together in a sullen sneer.

Both Locke and Drake felt a trifle apprehensive as the inquiry-agent began to tell off the seconds again.

"Six—seven—eight—nine—"

And then came a deafening report, and Red Guthrie, the crook, fell from the bed with a bullet through his heart!

As Guthrie slipped down on the floor between the bed and the table, Three-fingered Thatcher rose shakily to his feet. His hands, still above his head, trembled violently. His mouth worked spasmodically, but no words came.

Samuel B. Fiske appeared dumbfounded. Jack Drake was almost equally so at the startling turn events had taken. But Ferrers Locke, with a sharp cry, leaped from his chair, flung open the door, and dashed out of the room.

It was Thatcher who first found his voice after several seconds. With blazing eyes he regarded Fiske.

"You foul murderer," he hissed—"shooting a man in cold blood!"

Fiske, deadly pale, shook his head helplessly. Plainly, he was thoroughly unstrung at the tragic occurrence.

"I didn't do it—I didn't do it!" he moaned. "I—I never fired!"

"You lie!" said Thatcher with a snarl. "You threatened to kill him if he didn't reply to you! Perhaps you're satisfied now."

Drake was about to intervene when heavy footsteps sounded on the stairs. Then into the room dashed Robertson and three other patrolmen.

The police had gained some information from the companion of the murdered "fence," Levistein. They had come to raid these premises in the hope of catching Galer or some of the crook's friends.

But before any one of the patrolmen could speak, Three-fingered Thatcher pointed an accusing finger at Fiske and told his version of the killing of Red Guthrie.

The unfortunate inquiry-agent allowed his

Ferrers Locke's masterpiece has yet to come! Wait for it, there!

automatics to be taken from him, and the handcuffs to be put on his wrists. Robertson emptied the chambers of the pistol.

"Five cartridges in one and four in the other," he muttered.

"But look at the guns!" cried Fiske in a frenzy of fear. "Anyone can see that neither of them has been fired!"

"Oh, so it's you, is it, Fiske?" said the patrolman, showing his teeth in an unpleasant smile. "You'll go to the electric chair for this."

Meantime, the other policemen handcuffed Drake and Thatcher. Only then did one of them look to Guthrie.

"It's all a mistake!" cried the boy. "Fiske never fired the shot which killed Guthrie. I'll swear! It came from the direction of the door."

The patrolmen laughed openly.

"You can tell that yarn in court, kid," they scoffed.

Seeing the folly of saying anything further at that juncture, Drake held his peace. He said nothing about Ferrers Locke having been present. But the detective's complete disappearance from the scene so suddenly worried him not a little.

Robertson gripped Fiske by the arm and bundled him unceremoniously from the room. The patrolman had a long-standing feud with the private inquiry-agent. Now he plainly gloated over Fiske's discomfiture.

"A fine story for the yellow journals tomorrow morning, Fiske," he whispered in his ear. "Already I can picture it in big type on the front pages: 'Red Guthrie Murdered in Cold Blood by Samuel B. Fiske, the Well-known Private Inquiry-Agent!'"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Ruse on the Island!

IT was excusable, perhaps, that in the tense situation which had arisen, Three-fingered Thatcher had gained the idea that Fiske had been the assassin of Guthrie. But Ferrers Locke had obtained no such impression.

As has been stated, he was sitting between the door of the room and the bed on which were the two crooks. His back was to the door. But he knew instantly that the report had come from behind him, and that the bullet had passed within an inch of his own body before striking Guthrie.

Immediately Ferrers Locke had jumped up and rushed to the door. He saw at once that it was very slightly ajar. The shot must have been fired through the narrow crack. But by whom? That was the question the detective intended to solve.

Gaining the landing he heard slithering footsteps above him. The man, whoever he was, had glided upstairs. Locke dashed after him.

The stern chase continued to the top of the house. The detective caught a glimpse of a dark form leap upward and shin through a skylight. Ferrers Locke made a rush to drag the man back, but the fellow squirmed round and faced him. Locke's hand dropped into his hip pocket as the other produced a revolver. But in bringing his gun to bear, the man in the skylight tore his hand against a protruding nail in the woodwork. The pain wrung a muttered exclamation from his lips. The revolver slipped, and, before he could recover it, the weapon dropped down by the detective's feet.

"Surrender, or I fire!"

Locke pointed his own revolver upwards to the skylight. But the other immediately threw himself backwards down the roof outside. Then Locke heard the sound of feet slithering along the slates.

Dropping both his own and his quarry's revolver into his pockets, Locke speedily followed through the skylight after the fellow out on to the roof.

The moon, shining above a bank of dark clouds, illuminated the scene. A slightly sloping roof lay ahead of the detective, surmounted by tall, ungainly chimneys. A flat, concrete ledge bordered the roof to the left. And, spanning a narrow street between the building he was on and another a short distance away, were a number of parallel lines of telephone-wires.

Directly the detective's gaze lighted on these, he gave a gulp of sheer amazement. For, working his way along the wires high above the narrow street, was the man he was hunting!

"Egad, the fellow will kill himself!"

With that thought in his mind, Locke slid rapidly down to the concrete ledge and made his way close to the spot where the wires were fastened.

The moon struck full on the face of the man on the telephone-wires. He was dark and clean-shaven. But more by his general appearance and agility, Locke knew him to be the notorious crook, Denver Galer, for he fulfilled the description Fiske had given of him.

Locke drew his revolver and covered the man.

"Return, or I'll shoot!" he cried.

But Denver Galer continued on his way.

It was not in Ferrers Locke to shoot even a crook in cold blood. He had, indeed, a sneaking admiration for the pluck of the fellow. With a gesture of annoyance that his bluff had not succeeded, the detective replaced the revolver in his pocket.

He looked at the wires. Yet he hesitated momentarily to follow Galer across that slender, swaying bridge. Then, summoning every ounce of his resolution, he clambered on the wires and began working his way across, high above the street.

He saw Galer safely lower himself from the wires until he reached a window-sill on the opposite building. Slowly and cautiously,

clung desperately on with both hands, and continued to work his way back, nearer and nearer to the building whence he had come.

And then almost as he reached the concrete ledge, the wire he held snapped, and, with a sickening feeling in his throat, Ferrers Locke felt himself go hurtling downwards.

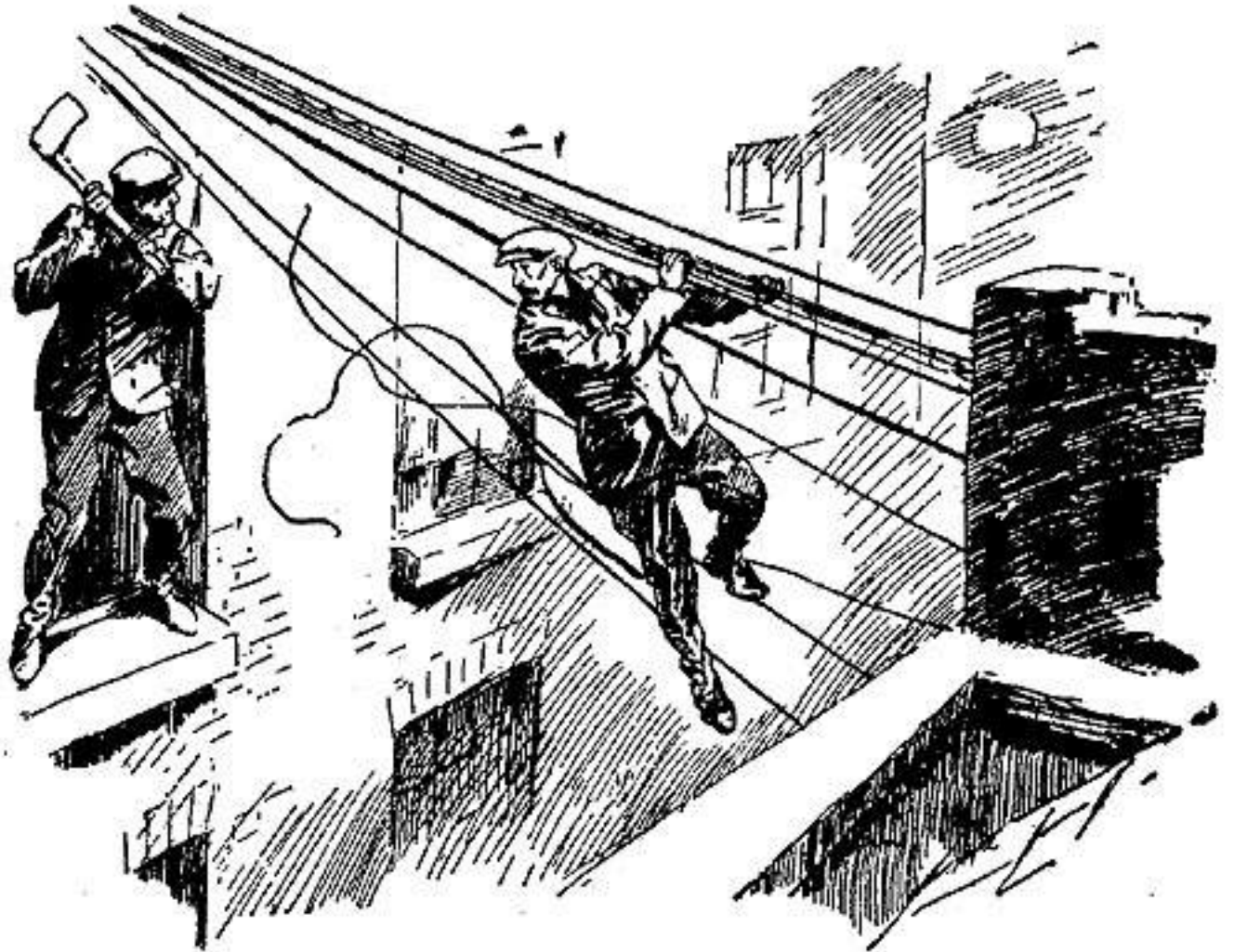
His hands flinging wildly out, luckily came in contact with a waterpipe which was affixed vertically to the wall of the building, and the detective clung to it for dear life.

Very gingerly he worked his way upward a little until he could get his fingers on to the concrete parapet which bordered the roof. To gain the roof itself was then an easy task.

Ferrers Locke gazed back across the intervening space to the other building. Denver Galer had vanished from the window. Only two of the telephone-wires remained in position. From the street far down below came the busy hum of voices.

"Phew!" muttered Locke. "That was a close shave!"

Making his way back to the skylight from which he had emerged originally, he entered the lodging-house again. Not until he got down to the first floor, after finding that his companions had gone, did he meet anyone. Then he came upon a number of



AT BAY! The crook struck again and again at the wildly-sagging wires, his axe cleaving its way through the lower strands upon which Ferrers Locke was treading. Desperately the detective commenced to retrace his steps. (See Chapter 4.)

the crook worked the window open. Then, with a derisive wave of his hand, he disappeared inside the building.

As quickly as was possible with safety, Locke worked his way across the wires. Far below him he could discern the darkened street, with a light gleaming here and there.

Then his blood seemed to freeze in his veins as Denver Galer's head appeared at the window again.

At first Locke thought the crook held a gun in his hand. But a second glance revealed the terrifying fact that he held in his fist a long axe of the type used by American backwoodsmen.

Locke condemned himself as a fool for ever having ventured thus between earth and sky on such a dangerous errand. Swiftly he worked himself back along the wires. One slip he knew meant instant death in the street far below him. And then he shook dizzily as Denver Galer struck a first blow at the wires with the heavy axe.

With hissing gasps the crook struck blow after blow; first one wire and then another snapping under his powerful strokes. The one on which Locke's feet rested suddenly gave from under him. The detective almost went hurtling down to his doom. But he

inmates of the place in various stages of dress. The body of Red Guthrie had been taken to the ground floor. Outside the house he found a number of policemen, and Jack Drake, Fiske, and Thatcher, who were under arrest and waiting for a police conveyance.

Thatcher's rat-like eyes lighted on him at once.

"Say, there's the other guy who was with us when Red was killed!" he exclaimed. "He was in it!"

Three or four of the police gathered round Locke. Their intention was obvious.

In a few words the detective stated how Galer had fired the shot which has accounted for the red-haired crook.

"He went into that building," he concluded, pointing across the road. "If you're quick, you'll get him!"

But the police made no immediate move to get on Galer's track. Instead, one of the uniformed men—obviously a superior officer—made a swift dive at the detective's wrists with a pair of handcuffs. He was determined, apparently, to have Locke in safe keeping before he undertook any further task.

It was not, though, part of Locke's plan to spend a night in an American gaol, if he

Billy Bunter and Jim Lee—an interesting pair! Follow them closely!

could help it. Quick as the police-officer was, Ferrers Locke was even quicker. Putting his head down, he butted through between the officer and one of the patrolmen. Then, barging his way through the throng of onlookers who had gathered, he dashed off down the street.

It was fortunate for Locke that those inhabitants of the Bowery who had come into the street at that unearthly hour owing to the rumpus, had no love for the police. More than one man deliberately obstructed the pursuing policemen, thinking that Locke was one of their own class.

The whole district now seemed to be aroused. Numbers of the night birds of the Bowery were coming out of doors. Barging round a corner, Locke bumped into a stout, bearded man of foreign type coming from a doorway.

"The police!" gasped Locke. "They're after me!"

"Come mit me!"

The man pushed Locke through the doorway and shut the door. He led the detective out at the back of the premises, through several dirty backyards, and into another building. In a small, untidy room he lighted a lamp. His next words revealed the character of the man.

"Haf you got any money, hein?"

Locke nodded.

"You want fresh disguise, so you can make your get-away, mein friend?"

"I reckon that's so," returned Locke with a nasal accent.

It cost Locke a hundred dollars, but in a very few minutes the Teuton had completely transformed the sleuth's appearance by means of different clothes, an unkempt wig, and some facial make-up.

"You are the second one I haf to do this for thi' mornin'," said the old rogue with a smile, as he surveyed his handiwork. "I gif him a run, too."

A sudden thought struck the detective, and he made a chance shot.

"For Den Galer, eh?" he said. "He's my pard. The narks want him, too."

The old foreigner nodded.

"Dot is so. But he come to me by a different way, ain't it? What haf you boys done, hein?"

"Never mind about that now," said Locke hastily. "Where was Den makin' for? I've gotter git to him, an' slick, too. If I don't get in touch with him first, the narks will hays him for a cinch!"

The urgency of Locke's manner impressed the old man, who was a friend of all crooks and the enemy of everyone who wore uniform.

"Der intention of Den vas to beat it for der Canadian side, where he haf more friends," he said. "He vill jumps der freight train outside of West Side Station."

Locke thanked the old rogue, pressed another ten dollars into his willing palm, and left the house by the back way. Owing to the numbers of toughs who were now in the streets, he practically passed unnoticed as he wended his way towards a narrow thoroughfare at the end of the block of buildings.

Avoiding the street in which he had made his escape from the police, Locke walked briskly towards the West Side Station, the position of which he knew. Thanks to his knowledge of geography, he was aware, too, that this railway ran to Buffalo. So it was somewhere in the region of the northern end of Lake Erie where Denver Galer intended to break across to Canadian soil. For Locke, a shrewd judge of human nature, had gauged that the old man had told him the truth.

Taking a circuitous route, he reached the railway sidings a few hundred yards west of the station itself. From the shadow of some repair sheds he watched a powerful locomotive, with gleaming headlight and a clanging bell just abaft the short, stumpy funnel, shunting trucks on to a long freight train. Then, as the train started to move, the sleuth saw a dark, human figure leap up a bank and enter one of the box cars.

Without a moment's hesitation Locke glided swiftly through the darkness towards the train, and clambered aboard by means of an iron ladder leading to the top of a car farther in the rear. But a lynx-eyed brakeman, standing on top of the last car, spotted him, and came rapidly forward.

That the man thought he was a hobo, or tramp, Locke was fully aware, and the detective climbed a bit higher on the iron ladder.

The brakeman took a heavy spanner from his overalls.

"Get off o' there, you hobo!" he snarled, "or I'll knock you off!"

Taking a wad of five-dollar bills from his breast-pocket, Locke held them in the brakeman's view. The fellow's eyes glinted greedily. It took but a few moments for Locke to strike a bargain. For twenty-five dollars the brakeman acquiesced to Locke riding on the train.

At the first halt, a few miles out of New York, the detective changed his position on the freight train. He climbed into an open truck loaded with bags of maize, which were covered by a stout tarpaulin. When the train was travelling fast he could shelter in comparative comfort from the icy wind. When it slowed down or stopped he was able, by raising his head, to keep a watch on practically the whole forward portion of the train.

Darkness gave place to dawn. Though heavy-eyed and in sad need of a wash and a meal, Ferrers Locke, nevertheless, felt satisfied that the man he believed to be Denver Galer had not left the train.

During the day the freight was shunted on numerous occasions into sidings. But Ferrers Locke never relaxed his vigilance. Once his accomplice, the brakeman, while passing the car, tossed a bundle containing food to him. For this Locke was grateful. He quenched his thirst by breaking off icicles from the edge of the car and gnawing at them.

For a journey of fully three hundred miles Ferrers Locke kept vigil, save when the train was travelling too fast for his quarry to disembark. Then before Buffalo was reached his patience was rewarded. While the engine was taking water, Denver Galer cautiously slipped from the train.

It was now dusk, but Locke had no difficulty in following the crook. The country was rough, but, apparently, Galer knew it well, for he speedily struck a well-worn track and strode on without hesitation.

Passing through a small clump of spruce, Locke lost sight of him. When he emerged upon the other side of the wood, however, the sleuth saw a cluster of wooden shanties, and a broad river beyond.

He quickened his pace, and, reaching the nearest shanty, proceeded more cautiously. Then he heard the steady splash of water, and discerned a canoe shoot out on to the river.

Locke glided swiftly to the river-bank at the outskirts of the little settlement. Galer was now out in mid-river and paddling hard down-stream. Several canoes of the Indian type were staked at the river-bank.

Without hesitation Locke cut the rope of one of these, and leaped into it. A half-breed Indian came rushing from a shanty yelling loudly.

Locke hastily tore a few five-dollar bills from his roll, and tossed them on the bank. Then he set off in pursuit of the crook.

Wielding the paddle with all the strength of his powerful muscles, Locke began to gain on his quarry. Galer had now become cognisant of the fact that someone was on his track. As the canoes drew closer together, he stopped paddling, and drew the revolver which the old foreigner in New York had supplied him. But it was the sleuth who fired first, and his shot pierced the hull of the leading canoe.

A small island loomed ahead in the darkness, and, swerving sharply, the crook ran aground. Locke paddled farther out, and a couple of shots whistled over his head as he passed fifty yards from the spot where Galer had landed. Taking his canoe in again, the detective effected a landing himself on the lower end of the small island.

An interesting, not to say highly dangerous, position had now arisen. The island was dotted thickly with bushes. It was wrapped almost in a darkness which was rapidly deepening. Neither Locke nor Galer now dared to leave the place, for whoever did so would afford the other a target. It was to be a battle of wits between the astute American crook and the great British detective.

Locke crept cautiously over the snow-covered ground, stopping every now and then

to listen for any movement on the part of his adversary. Once he thought he heard Galer, but, not seeing him, he dared not take a pot-shot, lest the flash from his revolver should reveal his own whereabouts. It was an eerie, uncanny experience.

Edging back quietly to the beach, he scraped up a large pebble, and hurled it into the centre of the island. It fell to the accompaniment of the cracking branches of a bush. But Denver Galer was not to be drawn into firing.

Then a brilliant idea struck Locke. He had noticed a battered tin can with a handle in the bottom of his canoe. With the point of a knife he bored a small hole in the bottom of the can. This done, he filled the can about three-quarters full with water, and put a large flat stone in his pocket.

Keeping his finger over the hole in the can the sleuth crept, inch by inch, among the bushes. Extracting the laces from his boots he took the stone from his pocket, and tied it to the end of one lace, and the handle of the can to the other. Next, he took out his spare revolver—the one he had picked up on the roof in the Bowery—and put the hammer to safety. Then he fixed the centre part of the lace to the trigger.

Without making a sound, Ferrers Locke tied the revolver to the branch of a barren bush with his remaining bootlace. The other lace, to which the stone was tied, he carried back over another branch. Thus the stone hung downwards, exerting a slight pressure on the trigger. But the weight of the water in the can counterbalanced, for the nonce, any heavy pressure being placed on the trigger by the weight of the stone.

Having rigged up the revolver, Locke drew the hammer back into the position ready for firing, and crept a few yards away.

The water slowly but surely trickled noiselessly from the tin into the snow. The pull of the stone increased as the water, running out, lightened the weight in the can. Then there was a blinding flash and a report as the hammer fell.

Immediately, Denver Galer fired in the direction of the contrivance which the sleuth had arranged for his benefit, what time Ferrers Locke scouted round noiselessly for a more favourable position. The crook's shot was followed directly by another from the revolver which the sleuth held in his hand. A loud shriek rang out, and Locke dashed forward, to find his victim writhing on the ground, his left wrist shattered.

Locke covered him with his revolver. "Galer, the game's up!" he said. "You are my prisoner!"

By loud "whoop-ees" Locke attracted the attention of the half-breeds in the little settlement. In less than an hour the detective and the captured crook were taken from the island.

With Galer in custody, it took but little investigation to prove that not only had he shot Red Guthrie, but also that he was the murderer of the "fence," Levistein, on the roof-garden. The bullets which killed both were proved to have been fired from the self-same revolver that Locke had used in his amazing trap on the island.

Needless to say, the American papers were full of the exploits of the great British detective. And Samuel B. Fiske, after he and Drake had been released from custody, was the most lavish of all in praise of the man whom he had intended to "teach a thing or two!"

THE END

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THE Speaker (Mr. Harry Wharton) took the chair at the ordinary weekly meeting on Monday. There was a good attendance.

The Speaker: "I should like to take this opportunity of making a suggestion. I trust it will be taken in good part. It becomes more and more clear to me, as to others, that the eyes of the world are upon Greyfriars. It therefore behoves us to conform to what is expected of us as members of the Greyfriars Parliament. Energy in all its branches, keenness of outlook, readiness to jump to the right opinion—that's the sort of thing the public wants. Now, it is to be regretted that some of our number show a tendency to slip away from the due observance of Parliamentary etiquette. Mr. Bunter—"

Mr. Bunter: "What about me, pray?"

The Speaker: "The Member for Pufftown has figured in several unfortunate scenes."

Mr. Bunter: "You know jolly well it was not me, but the other fellow!"

Mr. Peter Todd: "You shut up, porpoise, and listen! The gentleman is talking to you. You came in late this evening, with your shining morning face, creeping like snail—"

Mr. Bunter: "He's calling me a snail now, Mr. Speaker! 'Tain't fair! I'm no snail!"

Mr. Peter Todd: "At least, a snail shells out!"

Mr. Speaker: "No aspersions, please!"

Mr. Bunter: "That's right! Just what I always say—no nasturtiums!"

The Speaker: "I have issued my warning! It is enough!"

Mr. Bunter: "Old Wharton's talking like a giddy Sultan of Turkey now!"

The Speaker: "The first item on our paper is—"

Mr. Bunter: "Shining morning face! I like that!"

Mr. Peter Todd: "You are the only one who does, then."

The Speaker: "Reader Reginald Clark says—"

Mr. Bunter: "Has he got a shining morning face?"

The Speaker: "The next business on the paper is a contribution from Reader REGINALD CLARK, 16, Dean's Road, Hanwell, Middlesex, W.7. I will preface what I am going to say by appealing to members to curb any indignation they may feel at the statements made. Reader Clark says—'Why do the Greyfriars boys neglect hobbies? Harry Wharton & Co. think too much about sport. Why don't some of them take up hobbies? If any of them want to become engineers when they grow up they should start now. Of course, if they don't like the idea, don't try it, but my advice is to start now. A toy glider would be a good beginning.'"

Mr. Coker: "I like that."

Mr. Alonzo Todd: "If Coker likes it, it must be good."

Mr. Peter Todd: "Coker keeps white mice. Isn't that a hobby?"

Mr. Coker: "I don't."

The Speaker: "It certainly seems to me that we of Greyfriars have reason to protest against the assertion about hobbies. Reader Clark means well. It is only that he has not heard of them. What about Bunter?"

Mr. Bunter: "Well, what about me?"

The Speaker: "Aren't you a champion ventriloquist?"

Mr. Bunter (modestly): "I will leave that to others to say."

The Speaker: "And a journalist?"

Mr. Bunter: "I can let my world renowned Weekly speak for itself."

The Speaker: "There you are, gentlemen. Now take Alonzo Todd—pinch him somebody; he's asleep—he—"

Mr. Alonzo Todd: "I am not asleep. I was only thinking. I think very deeply, you know."

The Speaker: "I now have to lay before the house a highly controversial statement from Reader J. TOPP, 56, Gosport Street, Lymington, Hants. I hope the House will allow me to read it without interruption, though I give

warning that the patience of some members will be tried."

Mr. Bunter: "Go ahead. We don't mind."

The Speaker: "Very noble of Mr. Bunter, but let him wait a bit. Reader Topp says: The proposal which I have much pleasure in placing before the House is one which will be appreciated by all. You need a uniform scale of punishment. Raiding study cupboards, bullying, and swindling should be punished. I think the Greyfriars Parliament should draw up a list of such punishments. At present when Burglar Bunter—"

Mr. Bunter: "What?"

The Speaker (mildly): "I did warn the hon. member."

Mr. Bunter: "Call me a burglar! Why, I should never dream of taking anything that doesn't belong to me."

The Speaker: "The House understands." Then he continued the letter: "When Burglar Bunter resorts to crime he chooses the study of some weakling, like Alonzo Todd. He may in desperation raid a Sixth Form study. Now Mr. A. Todd, being a regular victim of this criminal, has come to regard punishment as impossible. Again Mr. Fish practises his abilities on those who are mentally weak, and Mr. Bolsover gets his amusement by bullying the feeble. I ask the Greyfriars Parliament to protect the weak from the ravages of these rogues."

The Speaker laid the paper on the table, and resumed his seat.

For a time there was silence. Then the storm broke. Messrs. Fish, Bunter, and Bolsover rose at once. Purple with indignation, Mr. Fish was heard to declare that he was not a rogue.

Mr. Bunter: "And as for me, I treat the accusations with despection. There is no more honest fellow going than me."

Mr. Bolsover: "I think it is an insult to the House to let such speeches be made."

Mr. Bunter: "I am content to leave

(Continued on page 28.)

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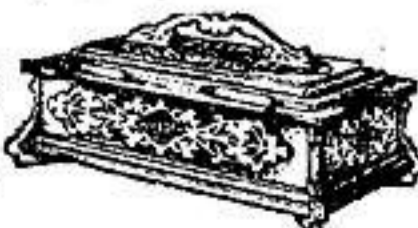
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THE GREYFRIARS PARLIAMENT.

(Continued from page 27.)

the whole thing to the judgment of the House."

The Speaker: "I was afraid of this. And yet I always feel that a public body ought to listen to allegations, and—"

Mr. Fish: "And then smash the alligator."

Mr. Bunter: "Talking of alligators, when I was in the Congo—"

The Speaker: "One thing at a time. Suppose we assume that Reader Topp has been misinformed."

Mr. Peter Todd: "But has he? That is the question."

Mr. Tom Dutton: "Please say the lady's name again. I missed it. You said Miss something."

The Speaker: "I said the facts might have been misinterpreted or words to that effect."

Mr. Tom Dutton: "Thank you very much. Then the subject is brought down to this—Is Bunter a burglar?"

The Speaker: "I doubt whether the act of borrowing a cheesecake can be brought within the burglary section of the code."

Mr. Bunter: "As the House knows, I take a generous view."

The Speaker: "It is much to the credit of the hon. member."

Mr. Peter Todd: "But what about the study raids?"

Mr. Bob Cherry: "Yes, touching them."

Mr. Bunter: "If Mr. Cherry is referring to me—"

Mr. Cherry: "What I have said I have said. If you put the cap on."

Mr. Bunter: "I wasn't wearing a cap at all. Anyway, you were not in the study at the time." (Laughter.)

The Speaker: "Recriminations are useless. I am disposed to think that Reader Topp goes too far. He refers to 'these

disreputable persons,' meaning the three legislators mentioned—Messrs. Bolsover, Bunter, and Fish."

(Shame.)

Mr. Bolsover: "As for me, I decline to have my name linked with him."

The Speaker: "With whom?"

Mr. Bolsover: "With Bunter, of course."

Mr. Bunter: "Oh come, that won't do, Bolsy, old chap. We are all in this. And then there's Fish."

Mr. Fish: "My financial stunts would bear the closest inspection."

Mr. Bunter: "He, he, he!"

The Speaker: "Does the House disapprove of the speech being read?"

Mr. Johnny Bull: "I do not think so. It is sheer weakness to refuse to listen to outside criticism." (Hear, hear!)

The Speaker: "Then we may take it that Reader Topp has merely been a shade severe?" ("Hear, hear!" from Mr. Bunter.)

Mr. Fish: "The fat clam ought to be punished, but as for me, I ought to have a medal for integrity and business acumen."

Mr. Tom Dutton: "Is Fish going in for natural history? Why does he refer to ichneumons?"

At this stage Mr. Bunter calmly produced a large parcel which he had tucked behind him, and started munching a large plum cake. At the sight of the comestible Mr. Bulstrode gave a yell, and vociferating that that was the identical cake his aunt had sent him for his birthday, made a rush for the Member for Pufftown.

The Speaker: "I must beg the House—"

The words were lost, and another of the lamentable scenes which have more or less marred the meetings of the House, must be recorded. The last seen of Bunter when this report left was his plump form being tossed hither and thither like a football. Unfortunately Reader Topp was not present to see his advice as to punishment being acted upon.

The House did not adjourn, or, at least, there was no official statement to that effect.

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