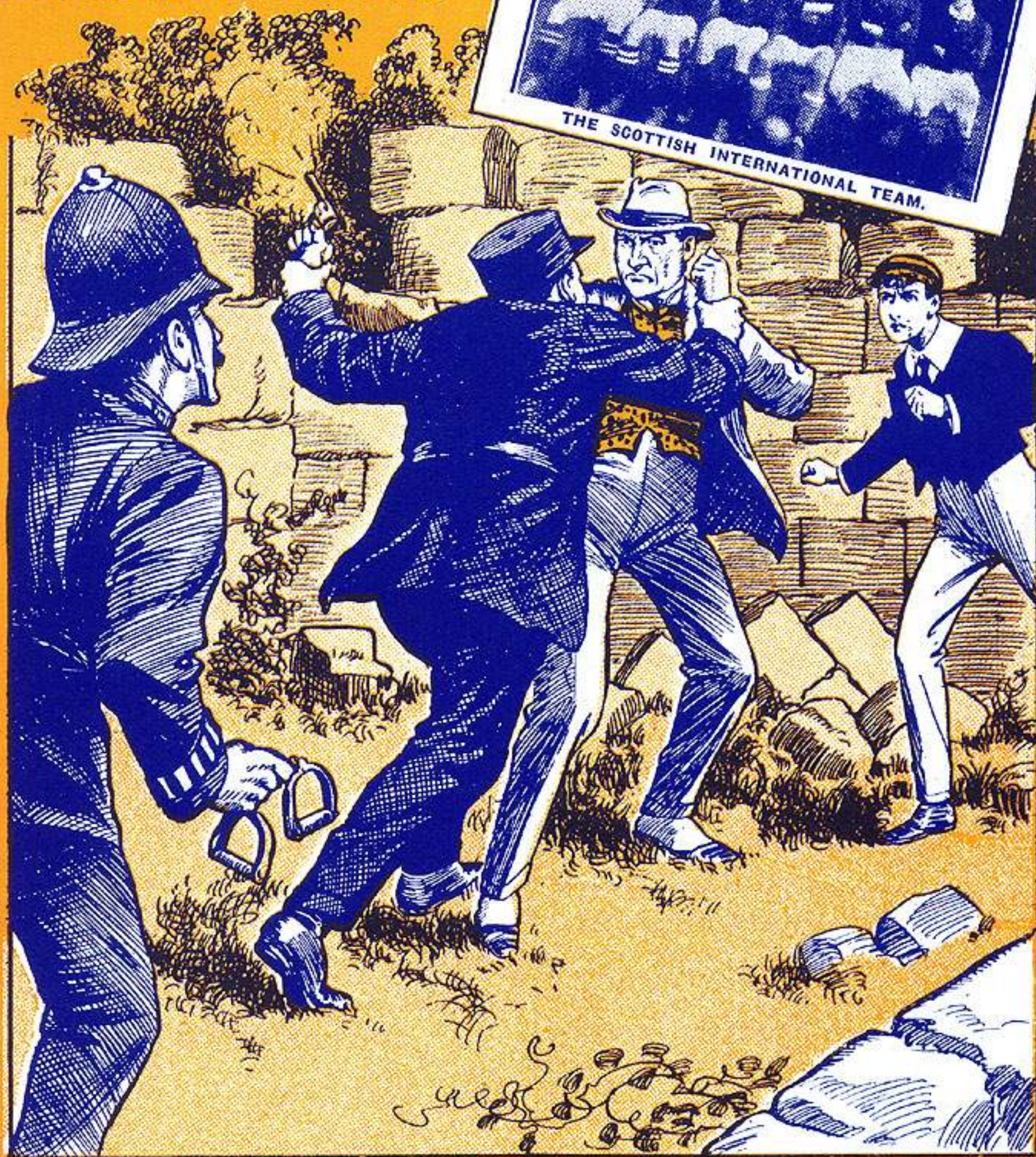


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No. 784. Vol. XXIII. Week ending February 17th, 1923.

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"ALONZO, THE ATHLETE!"

IT seems to me that the title of next week's ripping yarn of Greyfriars tells almost enough, for Alonzo Todd is not an athlete. What is more, I should say it is extremely doubtful whether that worthy youth, with his studious ways and eccentric lapses into alleged philosophy, ever will be one. He is not in the sporting class at all. He never has been. Peter Todd, his doughty cousin, is a fellow of another description entirely.

STUPENDOUS HAPPENINGS!

But for reasons which are adequately explained by Mr. Frank Richards in this screamingly funny story, Alonzo figures on the footer field. It is altogether most unexpected. Alonzo knew there was a sort of winter game called footer. He had heard other fellows mention the merry little pastime, but he had not deemed it requisite to descend into the muddy arena and take his share in the bizney. Well, it is simply astonishing what things will happen if you give them a chance. You never know your luck. Alonzo certainly never knew his until he found himself arrayed for combat, prepared to do battle for his side. It was something to tell Uncle Benjamin afterwards—assuming he survived.

The theme has its painful as well as its hilarious features. Make sure of next week's "Magnet," and read a rollicking tale which goes to one long laugh. Mr. Frank Richards was never in better form, and he brings in some of the most engaging and fascinating of our old company of Greyfriars' favourites.

AN ENERGY NUMBER!

Next Monday's Supplement of the "Greyfriars Herald" will cause uneasiness. Lord Mauleverer took exception to it from the first. But in these matters it is impossible to pay attention to personal proclivities, so to speak. Therefore the great Energy Number was decided upon, and it reflects Greyfriars in no uncertain way. For there is superb energy at the school. You have only to feast your eye on Coker as he rides his motor-bike to be convinced of the fact. Bunter, too, has claims. It has been reckoned that the porpoise expends simply enormous energy in the swift transference of his hand from his plate to his labial orifice. The new issue of the Supplement is a sparkling affair.

FERRERS LOCKE.

It is very seldom indeed that the distinguished detective fails to drop sooner or later on the clue to any mystery he is out to solve. With Locke a failure is only a postponement of triumph. But there is no question of deferred success next week in the thrilling story entitled:

"THE FACE ON THE FIUM!"

You will find the well-knit yarn a treat. Locke shows himself once again a superb investigator, and just the man to be called in by anybody who has been robbed.

THE WEDNESDAY!

Next Monday a supremely fine photograph of this team will be found accompanying the record number of the "Magnet."

ARE YOU HANDY WITH YOUR HANDS?

Can you make things with your hands? Are you interested in any kind of home hobby? If so, you should take in "Harnsworth's Household Encyclopedia," which was published for the first time on Thursday last, and has already scored such a big success that several reprints have had to be put through the presses.

This wonderful new illustrated book for the handyman is issued in fortnightly parts at 1s. 3d. each, and, for useful hints and diagrams on how to make, mend, and do everything for the home, it is just first rate.

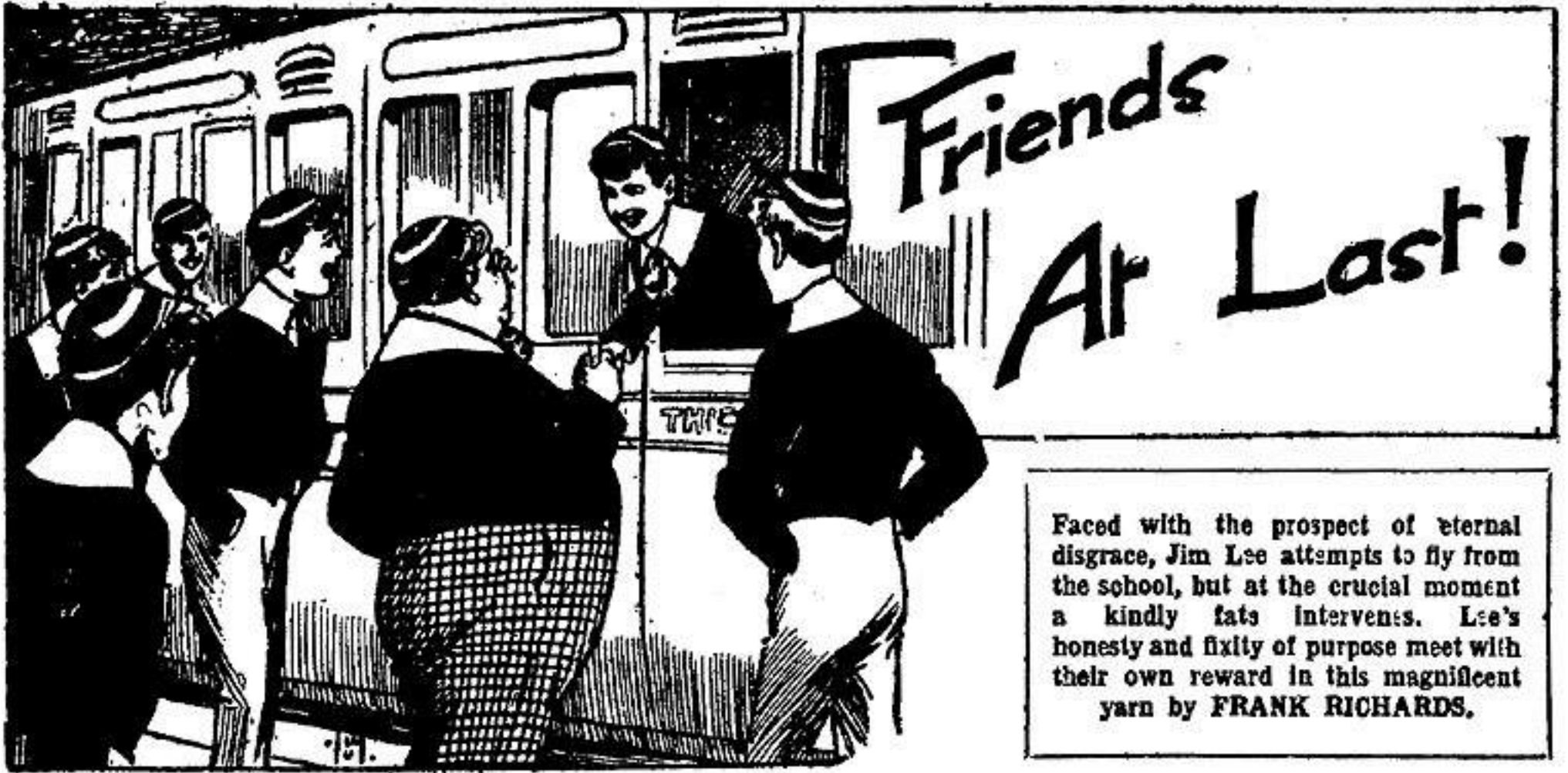
It will show you a million ways of spending your spare time in profitable home hobbies, and is the only work of its kind ever put on the market.

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"STAND AND DELIVER!"

Just a word of advice concerning our companion paper, the "Popular." Don't miss the grand new serial, "Stand and Deliver!" which is starting in the cheery "Pop." This fine yarn by David Goodwin is the most dramatic and thrilling romance of Dick Turpin and the stirring days of the highwaymen ever written. I want all my chums to read this tale. It is great. The famous author has presented in vivid fashion the colour and excitement of the old times when the stage coaches were held up in lonely parts of the country by armed robbers who never took "No" for an answer, and shot at sight. The addition of this new serial just completes a topping "bill."

Your Editor.



Faced with the prospect of eternal disgrace, Jim Lee attempts to fly from the school, but at the crucial moment a kindly fat intervenes. Lee's honesty and fixity of purpose meet with their own reward in this magnificent yarn by FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Startling!

"IT'S jolly old Tozer!"

Bob Cherry made that remark as the portly figure of Tozer appeared in the office.

The Remove were out after morning lessons, and there were cheery voices and faces in the old quad of Greyfriars. Harry Wharton & Co. were coming down the School House steps in a merry group when Bob's glance fell on the portly figure advancing from the gates.

"Bunter!" called out Bob.

Billy Bunter blinked out of the doorway through his big spectacles.

"What—"

"Look out, Bunter!" said Bob warningly.

"Eh—what am I to look out for?" demanded Bunter.

Bob Cherry pointed towards the advancing figure in official blue.

"It's Tozer!" he said. "Stands to reason he's after you, Bunter. Nobody else here likely to be wanted by the police!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!" roared Billy Bunter in great wrath. "Do you think I've done anything, you dummy?"

"I don't think—I know!" said Bob Cherry solemnly. "Who was it burgled the pantry the other day?"

"I—I don't know who it was, you awful boast! I wasn't there! I don't even know the way to the pantry! And there was only one measly jar of jam—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Poor old Bunter!" said Frank Nugent commiseratingly. "What an awful end for a Greyfriars chap!"

"I—I say, you fellows," gasped Bunter, blinking at the Famous Five in alarm, "you—you don't think the Head has sent for Tozer about that jar of jam, do you? It was only a small one."

"Well, here's Tozer!" said Bob. "What else do you think he's come for? You're our only rogue and vagabond!"

"Beast! I can prove I never went to the pantry at all!" howled Bunter. "Skinner will bear witness. I gave him some of the jam."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter scuttled into the House. The Famous Five chortled as he

disappeared. It was highly improbable that Police-constable Tozer had walked over to Greyfriars to investigate officially the mystery of a missing jar of jam. But William George Bunter had so many sins on his conscience that he was easily alarmed.

"I say," murmured Johnny Bull suddenly, "what's the matter with Lee?"

Wharton glanced round.

Jim Lee, the new fellow in the Remove, was standing by the steps—alone, as he generally was.

His eyes were fixed on the advancing portly constable, who was quite close to the House now, puffing and blowing as he came.

Lee's handsome face had gone quite white.

He seemed unconscious of the startled looks cast on him by the Famous Five and by several other fellows who were near at hand.

If ever there was terror in a fellow's face, it was in Jim Lee's face at this moment.

"What the dickens—" muttered Bob Cherry.

Why the sight of fat Mr. Tozer should terrify Jim Lee of the Remove was a mystery to Harry Wharton & Co. The hapless boy stood rooted to the ground, scarcely breathing, as the fat constable came up.

Mr. Tozer stopped at the foot of the steps to get his second wind. Mr. Tozer had so much circumference to carry that he was always a little short of breath.

The Famous Five ceased to smile now. The look on Lee's drawn, almost haggard face was more than enough to banish their merriment.

Lee made a sudden movement forward and intercepted Mr. Tozer as that podgy gentleman was about to mount the steps.

"I'm ready!" he said in a husky whisper.

Mr. Tozer gazed at him.

"'Arternoon!" he said affably, not understanding.

"You—you want me?" muttered Lee.

"Eh?"

"No need to make a fuss—I—I'm ready! For the love of mercy, get it over, and let me get away!"

Harry Wharton & Co. heard every one of the husky, broken words, and they stood dumbfounded.

Mr. Tozer was still more astounded.

For a moment or two he blinked at the white-faced junior in blank amazement.

Then his brow was ruffled in a frown. He concluded that the junior was trying to pull his official leg; it really was the only conclusion Mr. Tozer could come to. He raised a heavy hand.

"You be hoff!" he said loftily.

"What!"

"Hoff!" said Mr. Tozer emphatically. "Don't you try your little games on me, young gentleman!"

Lee stared at him almost stupidly.

"You can't pull my leg!" said Mr. Tozer warmly. "Don't you give me any of your impudence! You be hoff!"

Lee stood quite still, silent, his face like chalk. Police-constable Tozer, having thus reprovved the practical joker, as he supposed, mounted the steps and disappeared into the doorway.

Lee's glance followed him.

He took a deep breath, almost gasping. Whatever he had feared, it was clear that Mr. Tozer's visit to Greyfriars had had nothing to do with Lee of the Remove.

Harry Wharton went quickly down the steps and touched the new junior on the arm. Lee stared at him dully.

"What's the matter with you, Lee?" said Harry in a low voice.

Lee did not answer.

"For goodness' sake, pull yourself together!" said the captain of the Remove. "You'll make the fellows think you've got some reason to be frightened of the police! Have you gone off your rocker?"

Still Lee did not speak; he hardly seemed to hear. He turned and walked away, quickly and unsteadily.

Bob Cherry gave a low whistle.

"Well!" he said.

"There's something jolly wrong with that chap!" said Johnny Bull. "He thought Tozer was after him!"

"But why?" said Nugent.

"Goodness knows!"

"I never saw a fellow look more awfully scared!" remarked Harry Wharton in a low voice. "But—but Lee can't have done anything."

"It's jolly queer!"

"The queerfulness is terrific!" parried Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "The esteemed Lee is an odd fish!"

The Famous Five watched Lee as he went, in wonder. The outcast of the

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Remove quickly disappeared out of the gates.

Ten minutes later the dinner-bell rang. But when the juniors crowded in to dinner there was a place left vacant at the Remove table. Jim Lee was absent, and Mr. Quelch, the Remove master, noted his absence with a frown. Apparently Jim Lee had not yet recovered from the shock Mr. Tozer's sudden appearance at Greyfriars had given him, though why he had been given a shock by the appearance of the harmless and necessary Mr. Tozer was a deep mystery.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Under the Shadow!

WHAT shall I do? Oh, what shall I do?"

Jim Lee almost groaned out the words.

The outcast of the Remove had forgotten all about dinner-time; he had forgotten everything except the terrible trouble that weighed upon his mind, and seemed to blot out the sunlight for him.

He was tramping along the towing path by the Sark, his hands driven deep into his pockets, a deep wrinkle in his brow.

There was sunlight on the river, a musical murmur from the water that lapped the half-frozen rushes; but Jim Lee did not notice it. All was dark and dreary that sunny winter's day to the hapless outcast schoolboy.

He tramped along, hardly seeing whither he went. He felt himself at the end of his tether.

At the sight of Mr. Tozer he had not doubted for a moment that the blow had fallen at last—the blow he had been expecting for days. It had not fallen. How long was the terrible suspense to last?

That there was some strange mystery connected with the new fellow in the Remove, Harry Wharton & Co. had already learned; but they little dreamed what it was.

"Jim!"

It was a sharp, clear voice, that seemed to strike Jim Lee like a blow. He halted suddenly and faced a man who stepped from the fringe of trees along the towing-path.

"Ulick!" he muttered.

It was Ulick Driver, Lee's cousin and guardian. The boy had not expected to see him there, but he was not surprised. He stood and looked at the man, his face dark and bitter.

Driver scanned him curiously.

"Well met, Jim!" he said.

"You were coming to the school?" asked Lee.

Driver nodded.

"Yes; but I am glad to have met you outside the gates. I would rather not show up at Greyfriars, for the reasons you know."

Lee gritted his teeth.

"Why were you coming? I've given you my answer."

"If the mountain will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain!" said Ulick Driver. "You refused to keep your appointment with me."

"I told you I would not come."

"You rang off when I spoke to you on the telephone."

"There is nothing more to be said between us," said Lee in a low, firm voice. "I have refused to obey your orders. I am in your power. You have threatened to send the police for me. Send them!"

"You can face that?" said Driver.

"Better that than the alternative," replied Lee with a bitter accent. "Better than obeying your orders, and helping you to rob the school I belong to, to rob the fellows who might trust me, to become a thief and a crook like you, Ulick. Better anything than that!"

Ulick Driver, gentleman crook, stood silent, looking at the boy before him. There was suffering to be read in the schoolboy's face, but a relentless determination was to be read there also. Jim Lee's answer had been given before—more than once; but the crook had been reluctant to take an answer which meant the destruction of his schemes—the fall of his house of cards.

"Jim," he said, at last, "I was coming to see you, to make a last attempt to bring you to reason."

"To make me a thief, you mean!"

"Listen to me, Jim: You were a penniless orphan when I took you in hand—"

"I know that."

"I paid for you at your preparatory school; I have sent you to Greyfriars. You owe me something, Jim."

"Not now I know why you did it," said Lee. "And where did the money come from? Was it yours?"

"Never mind that. If you turn your back on me, what is to become of you?"

"I don't know—I don't care!"

"And that is your last word?" asked Ulick Driver, biting his thin lip till the blood almost came.

"I have told you so. It's in your power to have me sent to prison for something I have not done—intentionally, at any rate. I am not asking you for mercy, you scoundrel!" said Lee in a low, passionate voice. "Why could you not let me alone in the first place? I never asked anything of you. If I had known that your money came by theft I would have thrown it in your face. You know I would. Do your very worst. You will never make a thief of me!"

Driver laughed unpleasantly.

"A few years in a reformatory may do the work for me," he ground out harshly. "What will be your prospects when you come out?"

Lee shivered.

"You can't frighten me," he muttered. "I know what is right, and I'm going to do it. But make an end of it. What's the good of letting it hang over me day by day? Make an end of it!"

"That is my business!" said Driver coolly. "Look for the police—look for them day by day—and in the long run you may come to your senses before the blow falls."

"You coward!" panted Lee.

"If you refuse to obey my orders," went on Driver, in a low, concentrated tone, "you go down to ruin and lifelong disgrace. I am waiting for you to write to me and tell me that you are obedient."

"I shall never write."

"Then you may expect the blow to fall—at any moment," said Ulick Driver. "Perhaps to-morrow, perhaps to-day, perhaps weeks hence! Think of it, dream of it, and come to your senses before it is too late!"

"You coward!" repeated Lee passionately.

Driver shrugged his shoulders.

Not a spark of remorse awoke in his callous heart for the torture he was inflicting on the unhappy boy. Twenty years of secret crime had hardened Ulick Driver to the hardness of steel.

Lee came nearer to him, his fists clenched and his eyes blazing. The man backed away a pace.

"Take care, you young fool!" he muttered.

"You coward! You scoundrel!" exclaimed Lee; and with all his force he struck at the hard face before him.

Driver caught at his arm, but too late. The blow landed on his mouth, and he went staggering backwards.

"Now!" panted Lee.

Ulick Driver recovered himself in a moment. His face was ablaze with rage as he sprang at the schoolboy.

His grip fell on Lee's collar, and he swung up his Malacca cane.

Lash! Lash! Lash!

Lee struggled furiously in the grip of the well-dressed ruffian; but the savage blows descended without mercy.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

It was a shout along the towing-path. A Greyfriars junior came racing up.

The malacca was descending again, when a clenched fist was driven full into Ulick Driver's face, and he reeled back and rolled on the ground. Bob Cherry stood over him with blazing eyes.

"Now, you brute—"

Driver panted out an oath, and sat up dazedly. Bob Cherry had put plenty of "beef" into that mighty punch.

"Oh, my hat!" stuttered Bob.

He recognised Driver the next moment. He dropped his hands and stepped back in utter amazement.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Bob Cherry is Puzzled!

BOB CHERRY stared blankly at Lee, and then at his guardian. From a distance he had seen Lee struggling in the ruffian's grip under a shower of blows from the heavy cane, and he had rushed to the rescue on the instant. He was fairly dumbfounded to discover that the "ruffian" was Lee's guardian—the man who had brought him to Greyfriars a few weeks before. Bob Cherry felt as if his head was turning round.

"M-m-m-Mr. Driver!" he stuttered.

Lee was panting for breath. The lashing of the cane had hurt him severely. His face was white.

Driver staggered to his feet.

He clutched his malacca, for the moment disposed to hurl himself upon the junior who had knocked him down; but he restrained his rage.

"You—you young fool!" he gasped.

"I—I—" stammered Bob, not knowing what to say. He wondered whether he had been too hasty in interfering.

"How dare you interfere when I am—am correcting my ward?" snarled Ulick Driver.

"You've got rather strenuous ideas about correction, haven't you, Mr. Driver?" said Bob Cherry. "You were going it rather strong, you know. But, of course, I didn't know it was you when I came up."

Driver calmed himself with an effort.

"I—I— Excuse me," he muttered.

"I—perhaps I lost my temper a little. You should not have been—been impudent, Jim."

Jim Lee's lip curled.

It was the crook's game to keep the real state of affairs a secret, of course. To Bob Cherry the affair was to appear simply a dispute between a schoolboy and his angry guardian.

"Well, I—I'm sorry I butted in," said Bob. "I didn't know you from a distance, of course, Mr. Driver. All the same, you oughtn't to have pitched into Lee like that. You were giving him worse than a Head's flogging."

"I lost my temper." Mr. Driver was

There's a laugh in every line of "Alonzo, the Athlete!" Don't miss it!

quite amiable again now—outwardly, at least. "I am sorry, Jim, that I punished you so severely. But you must learn to respect your elders. This is a schoolboy friend of yours, I suppose?"

"No!" said Lee grimly.

"Yes," said Bob Cherry, with a grin. Lee did not smile. His face was white and hard and bitter.

"I am glad to see that my ward has made so energetic a friend," said Mr. Driver. "Only do not be so hasty another time, my young friend."

"I have no friend at Greyfriars!" said Lee in the same uncompromising tone.

"Rats!" said Bob cheerily. "You've got me. You see, Mr. Driver," went on Bob, "Lee is rather a queer fish. He keeps to himself, and the fellows call him a giddy hermit. But I'm his friend whether he likes it or not. He saved my life when I took a tumble over the cliffs the other day."

"Indeed!" said Ulick Driver.

"If you'd seen the place—the Seagull Cliff—you'd know how much pluck it needed to come over the edge for me," said Bob. "Lee did it, and tried to keep it dark afterwards. But it came out. So, you see, I'm his friend, whether he likes it or not; and if he won't be chummy I'm going to punch his silly head!"

Driver smiled.

There was something that even the hardened crook liked about the cheery and breezy Bob Cherry.

"I am glad to hear it," he said. "Jim, my boy, you are much too reserved. This will not do, as I have often told you. I should like to see you make friends in your new school."

"I've no doubt you would," said Lee, his lip curling again. "But I'm going on my own way, all the same, Ulick."

Driver gave him a warning glance.

"Dash it all, Lee, you oughtn't to speak to your guardian like that!" said Bob remonstratingly.

"My ward has a somewhat sullen temper, I fear," said Mr. Driver. "Well, good-bye, Jim! I shall not come on to Greyfriars now that I have seen you. I shall expect to hear from you soon."

"I shall not write!" said Lee.

"Lee, old chap——" murmured Bob.

Ulick Driver's eyes blazed for a second; but he smiled again, and held out his hand to Lee.

"Good-bye, Jim! I hope you will think better of the duty you owe me. Good-bye!"

Lee drove his hands deeper into his pockets.

"Good-bye, my young friend!" added Ulick Driver, with a smile and a nod to Bob Cherry.

"Good-bye, sir! I—I hope I didn't hurt you much," stammered Bob.

"That is all right."

Mr. Driver walked away along the towing-path in the direction of Friar-dale, for the station. The two juniors were left together on the towing-path.

Bob looked at Lee very curiously.

"I don't want to butt into your affairs, kid," he remarked, "but oughtn't you to be a bit more civil to your guardian? Looks to me as if he may have had some cause of laying into you with that stick."

"Thank you for chipping in!" said Lee. "You needn't have troubled, though."

He made a movement to pass on, but Bob Cherry detained him.



Lee made a sudden movement forward and intercepted P.-c. Tozer as that podgy gentleman was about to mount the steps. "I'm ready!" said Lee in a husky voice. "Eh?" "No need to make a fuss—I—I'm ready. For the love of mercy get it over, and let me get away!" Harry Wharton & Co. heard every word, and they stood dumbfounded, whilst Tozer, thinking that his leg was being pulled, frowned portentously. "You be hoff!" he said loftily. (See Chapter 1.)

"Do you know you've cut tiffin?" he asked.

"Dinner! I forgot."

"Quelchy hasn't forgotten!" grinned Bob Cherry. "I came out to look for you, Lee. You won't get any dinner now."

"It doesn't matter."

"You can get a snack at the tuck-shop," said Bob consolingly. "But you'd better go in and let Quelchy see you."

Lee shook his head.

"You'll get into an awful row!" said Bob.

"I don't care."

"Well, you ought to care!" said Bob Cherry, rather tartly. "What the thump are you such a sulky beast for, Lee?"

"Leave me alone!" said Lee.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" said Bob Cherry, his temper beginning to rise. "Blest if I can make you out, Lee! But I'll leave you alone fast enough, if that's what you want! Go and chop chips!"

And Bob Cherry turned away and strode back up the towing-path towards Greyfriars without turning his head.

Lee looked after him for some minutes.

His face was darkly clouded.

Then he turned and tramped on by the towing-path, evidently reckless of what Mr. Quelch would think of his prolonged absence. Matters weightier than even his Form master's wrath occupied Lee's tormented mind.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Job for Skinner!

"WHARTON!"

"Yes, sir!"

Harry Wharton stopped as his Form master called him. That afternoon was a half-holiday at Greyfriars, and the Remove footballers were booked for a match with the Shell. Harry Wharton was wanted on Little Side, and he was bound thither when Mr. Quelch called.

"Have you seen Lee?" asked Mr. Quelch.

"Not since just before dinner, sir," said Harry.

"You do not know where he is?"

"I think he went out of gates, sir."

"Very well! If you see him tell him to come to my study immediately."

"Certainly, sir!"

Harry Wharton, with the football under his arm, proceeded to the playing-fields. He was quite willing to give Lee Mr. Quelch's message—if he saw him. But he was not likely to see him. Jim Lee always gave the football-ground a wide berth. He joined in no games or other occupations of the Remove.

"What did Quelchy want?" asked Bob Cherry, joining his chum in the quad. Bob had just come in at the gates.

"Inquiring after the giddy hermit," answered Harry. "He's cut tiffin."

"It's a row for him when he comes in," said Bob.

"I fancy so. Well, he's asked for it,"

As a footballer the Duffer knows no equal!

said Harry. "He's been long enough here now to know the rules."

"I suppose so," assented Bob.

Wharton dismissed the new junior from his mind; but Bob Cherry was looking thoughtful as he went with his chum to the football-ground. But for one episode Bob would probably have taken little notice of the new fellow, who seemed to want to have no notice taken of him. But that one episode

A REAL GLOSSY FREE PHOTO of—

Bob was not likely to forget in a hurry—how Jim Lee had saved him from death on the Seagull Cliff at a fearful risk to himself. A fellow who would do a thing like that was a decent fellow, however "queer" he might be in his ways; and Bob would have been glad to show some friendship to the lonely junior. He was already forgetting having parted so hastily from Lee on the towing-path.

But Bob was wanted in the match with the Shell, and he had no time to concern himself further with Jim Lee just then.

Mr. Quelch was frowning as he turned into the School House after questioning the captain of the Remove. Punctuality was a serious matter with Mr. Quelch, and missing dinner was a serious matter. For some days past Mr. Quelch had been losing patience with the new junior, and his wrath was getting now to overflowing point.

There were several Remove fellows lounging about inside when the Form master came in, and he addressed them.

"Has anyone here seen Lee lately?"

"I saw him when Tozer came, sir," said Skinner with a covert grin.

Harold Skinner was one of the fellows who had observed Lee's startled terror at the sight of Mr. Tozer.

Billy Bunter gave a fat chortle.

Bunter was another observer. Bunter had been blinking out of the hall window, keeping a wary eye upon Mr. Tozer, at that time, in doubt as to whether the fat constable was at Greyfriars on account of the missing jar of jam. And Bunter had also been an interested spectator of Jim Lee's strange emotion.

Mr. Quelch's eyes turned grimly on William George Bunter. Chortling in the Form master's presence was not respectful.

"Bunter!"

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped the Owl of the Remove.

"Kindly acquaint me with the cause of your merriment, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch in a deep voice.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter, not looking very merry now. "Oh, certainly, sir! You—you see, I—I wasn't laughing!"

"What?"

"I—I mean, I—I was laughing, sir!" stammered Bunter. "That's what I meant to say, sir!"

"I am asking you the reason, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch grimly. "Do you see anything of a comic nature in the question I have just asked?"

"Nunno, sir! I—I was thinking—"

"Well?"

"About Lee, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Do you know where Lee is?"

"Only he's bolted out of gates, sir," said Bunter.

"Bolted!" repeated Mr. Quelch.

"He was no end frightened, sir," went on the fat junior confidentially. "He, he, he! I—I mean, he was scared to death, sir!"

"I fail to understand you, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch, his grim look causing Bunter's renewed chortle to die a sudden death. "Do you mean to say that Lee was frightened?"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"Of what?"

"The—the bobby, sir!"

"Bobby!" repeated Mr. Quelch.

"I—I mean the peeler, sir."

"Peeler!" ejaculated the Remove master.

Bobby and peeler, apparently, were words not included in Mr. Quelch's vocabulary.

"The policeman, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Old Tozer, sir!"

"You must not speak of Mr. Tozer as old Tozer, Bunter! It is a very disrespectful manner of alluding to a member of his Majesty's Police Force!"

"Oh crikey! I—I mean, yes, sir! Certainly! I mean, certainly not!"

"And why, Bunter, should Leo have been frightened at the sight of Mr. Tozer?" asked Mr. Quelch, regarding the fat junior very curiously and keenly.

"I don't know, sir. But he was."

"He was, sir," said Skinner. "He turned as white as a sheet. A lot of fellows saw it."

"White as chalk!" said Snoop.

"He's done something, sir," said

—THE WEDNESDAY F.C.—

Bunter, emboldened by this support, and feeling rather glad now that the Remove master was questioning him.

Bunter had a deep grievance against the new junior. Bunter had "swanked" as Bob Cherry's rescuer until the facts had come to light. And the Owl of the Remove could not forgive Jim Lee for having, as he regarded it, robbed him of his glory.

"Done something?" said Mr. Quelch.

"That's it, sir!" said Bunter sagely.

"Everybody knows Lee is a queer fish! He's done something, and he thought old Tozer—I mean, Mr. Tozer—was after him. A murder, perhaps!" added the Owl, as an afterthought.

"What?"

"I—I mean, a burglary or something, sir!"

"Do not be ridiculous, Bunter!"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"Leo has missed dinner," said Mr. Quelch, raising his hand as a sign to Bunter to be silent. "You boys, I think, are not playing football this afternoon. Please find Lee for me, and see that he comes to report himself without delay."

And Mr. Quelch passed on to his study and closed his door, apparently unconscious of the discontented looks of Skinner & Co.

Skinner and Snoop, Stott and Bunter looked at one another and breathed hard. It was true that the slackers of the Remove were not playing football that afternoon, or even thinking of watching the game. They were slacking about the fire in the Hall, loafing in their usual

style, and doubtless Mr. Quelch deemed that a little run in the open air would be a good thing for them—in which he was quite right. But Skinner & Co. did not see it at all.

"Cheek!" breathed Skinner.

"Neck!" growled Stott. "He's no right to fag us on a half-holiday!"

"Jolly well sha'n't go!" exclaimed Snoop.

"I say, you fellows, it's too thick!" said Bunter. "I don't see why we should go out in this wind looking for that cad Leo!"

"Hang him!" growled Skinner.

"Going?" asked Snoop, as Harold Skinner sorted out his cap.

Skinner gave a snarl.

"Got to, haven't we? Quelch will take it out of us if we don't, and he's always glad of a chance to drop on us. We're not giddy favourites like Wharton and Cherry and that gang! By gad, I'll punch the cad's head when we find him!"

"Mind he doesn't punch yours!" grinned Snoop. "He's handled Bolsover major, and he's awfully hefty!"

"Oh, rats!" growled Skinner.

He started for the door, and the other slackers followed him. Billy Bunter halted in the quadrangle.

"I say, you fellows, wait till I tie up my shoelace!"

"Go and eat coke!" growled Skinner.

Skinner & Co. went on, and Bunter stayed behind. The Owl of the Remove gave a fat grin. He was not anxious to face the winter wind, looking for Lee out of gates. Leaving Skinner & Co. to pursue the quest of the absent junior, William George Bunter proceeded to look for Lord Mauleverer, in the hope of extracting a loan from his easy-going lordship.

Skinner & Co. walked out of gates, with discontented faces. In the road Skinner paused.

"You chaps know where the rotter is likely to be?" he asked.

"Somewhere around!" said Snoop vaguely.

"Might be anywhere," said Stott. "He often goes rambling on the cliffs on a half-holiday. That was how he came to be on the spot when Bob Cherry took his tumble the other day."

Skinner compressed his lips.

"I'm not climbing dashed cliffs on a cold day, to please Quelch or anybody else!" he said.

"No fear!" agreed Stott.

"Might be in Friardale or on the two-path," said Snoop.

"Might be!" agreed Skinner. "But

—In Next Monday's Bumper Issue of THE MAGNET!

my idea is that we'd better look for him in Courtfield."

"Not likely to be there," said Snoop, with a stare. "It's a good long walk from here."

Skinner nodded.

"Quite so! But we'll look in Courtfield—in the picture-palace."

"Wha-at!"

"If we find him there we'll bring him back to dear old Quelch!" said Skinner

Dick Trumper & Co., of Courtfield Council School—

with a grin. "If we don't, it can't be helped. We shall have done our best—what!"

"What?"
"We can explain to Quelchy how we hunted high and low, even going so far as Courtfield. That's bound to please him."

"Good!" said Stott heartily. "They've got a new picture at Courtfield that I want to see."

"Come on!"
And the three young rascals started for Courtfield, with the intention of "going to the pictures" instead of hunting for Jim Lee. They were certainly not likely to find Jim Lee in the picture-palace at Courtfield; but, equally certainly, they did not intend to look anywhere else for him.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Chance Encounter!

"NEXT train?"
"Courtfield, sir, in five minutes!" said the Friardale porter, with rather a curious look at Jim Lee.

"Thank you!"
Jim Lee bought his ticket and went on the platform, the porter still glancing after him curiously.

Lee's face was pale and set. It was easy for anyone to see at a glance that the schoolboy was in deep trouble.

But Jim was not thinking of his looks. Tramping on the towing-path till he was tired, he had wrestled with his problem, and had come to a decision at last. He was scarcely conscious that he had missed his dinner and was hungry, though the faintness within him added to the black depression of his spirits.

He had made up his mind at last. The shock he had received at the sight of Police-constable Tozer at Greyfriars had been the finishing stroke.

It had been a false alarm, as it proved. Mr. Tozer's visit had nothing to do with him. Mr. Tozer had called to see the Head on quite some other matter.

But that shock had brought home to Lee's mind with terrible distinctness his position. The gentleman crook, playing with him as a cat with a mouse, had brought the boy's nerves to a state of the greatest tension.

He felt that he could endure no more. Sooner or later, if he did not obey Ulick Driver, the blow would fall, and he would be taken from Greyfriars by the police, amid a buzz of excitement, all eyes directed upon him in wonder! Under that load of shame and humiliation he felt that he would sink. His fate might be delayed. Ulick Driver might delay it for weeks, to torture him with the suspense. But it must come, determined as he was never to enter into the lawless schemes of the crook. If he was to go, better to make the break now—better than to wait till he was seized at the school, and taken away under a burden of overwhelming shame.

His mind was made up. He knew that he would not be allowed to leave the school if the masters became aware of his intention. There was no chance of taking away with him any of his belongings. Indeed, he knew that he would be lucky to get clear with what he stood up in, for as soon as he was missed he was certain to be searched for. But the half-holiday gave him a start. His absence would be noted, but no misgiving would be felt until evening call-over. Then, if he did not return, he

would be searched for; but by that time he would be far away.

Prospects before him he had none. In all the wide world there was no friend to whom he could turn for aid. Ulick Driver was the orphan's only relative, and he was an enemy instead of friend. There was a vague idea in the back of Lee's mind of finding work somehow of some kind—of tramping his way anywhere, so long as it was to a distance from Greyfriars and from his dastardly guardian.

If he fell by the roadside, if he found even death in the wastes of the unknown world before him, it was better than the fate Ulick Driver destined for him. Anything but that! He had made up his mind at last, and he was now only feverishly anxious to get away.

He paced the railway platform with hurried steps, waiting for the train to come in. Courtfield, he knew, was a junction, and he could get the express there to anywhere—he cared little where. He was feverishly anxious to be in the rushing train, with his back to Greyfriars School.

The local train came in, and Leo jumped into it. Friardale Station dropped out of view behind him.

Two or three other passengers in the carriage glanced curiously at Lee, as he sat silent, deep in troubled thought, strangely pale and worn.

"Courtfield Junction!" came a porter's voice at last, as the train stopped.

Lee stepped from the carriage. He called to the porter.
"When is the express due?"

"Express for Canterbury, fifteen minutes, sir."

Jim Lee went down to the booking-office and bought his ticket for Canterbury. Then he strolled out into the street, conscious at last that he was exhausted for want of food. He remembered the bun-shop close to the station, next to the picture-palace, and he went in to buy sandwiches. And three Greyfriars juniors, coming in a row up the street towards the picture-palace, ejaculated together:

"There he is!"

Skinner gave a growl of disgust. He had been thinking of anything but Jim Lee at that moment. He had not the faintest idea of finding Lee, or even of looking for him, in Courtfield Town.

And here he was, face to face with the three slackers whom Mr. Quelch had commanded to find him and bring him back to Greyfriars.

Lee glanced at them carelessly, and passed on into the bun-shop. He came out with a couple of sandwiches in paper in his pocket, and started for the railway-station.

"Hold on, Lee!" called out Skinner.

"What do you want?"

"You!" grinned Skinner. "Quelchy's sent us to fetch you home, dear boy!"

"Why couldn't you have sense enough to keep out of sight, you dummy?" demanded Stott with a scowl. "Now we've seen you we've got to take you back to the school, bother you!"

Lee backed away.

"I'm not going back now!" he said.

"Oh, don't be a fool!" snapped Skinner. "Quelchy's sent us for you."



Driver's grip fell on Lee's collar, and the Malacca cane came into play. Lash! Lash! Lash! "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" A Greyfriars junior came racing up. The Malacca cane was descending again when a clenched fist was driven full in the face of Ulick Driver. The newcomer proved to be Bob Cherry. "Now, you brute——" he gasped. (See Chapter 2.)

—play a very important part in next Monday's Greyfriars yarn!

Skinner was deeply annoyed. He wanted to go to the pictures; but now that he had fairly walked into Lee, he knew that it would not do to neglect his Form master's commands. If he had not seen Lee he could have "spun a yarn" about hunting for him in vain. Skinner had no scruples so far as that was concerned. But having seen him, Skinner felt that it was too risky. There was some solace, however, in marching Lee back to Greyfriars, since it was obvious that he did not want to go there. The more Lee didn't want to return to the school, the more pleasure the amiable Skinner was likely to find in taking him there.

He caught the new junior roughly by the arm. Skinner & Co. were three to one, so they were not disposed to stand on ceremony.

"Come on!" he growled.

Lee shook his arm angrily.

"Let me go!" he said.

"Fathead! You've got to come to Greyfriars at once!"

"I won't, I tell you!"

"Don't be a silly ass, Lee!" said Snoop. "Don't we keep on telling you that Mr. Quelch has sent us specially to look for you and take you back?"

"Well, I won't go!"

"Are we to tell Mr. Quelch that?" asked Stott with a grin.

"Yes, if you like."

"Phew!" said Stott.

"Are you coming?" snapped Skinner. "We're not going to hang about here, you dummy! What's the matter with you?"

"Let go my arm!" said Lee.

"Rats! Take hold of his neck, Stott, if he won't come! We'll jolly well give the cad the frog's-march back to school!" said Skinner savagely.

"Good egg!" grinned Stott.

Jim Lee breathed hard, his eyes beginning to glitter. He had made up his mind. He had solved his problem in the only way it seemed that it could be solved. This encounter bade fair to ruin all his plans. His ticket for Canterbury was in his pocket. The express was due in a few minutes.

He clenched his fists, the black look on his face rather startling Skinner & Co.

"Will you let me go?" he exclaimed savagely.

"No, you fathead!"

"I shall hit out!"

"Will you? So shall we, if you come to that!" said Skinner. "Now, get a move on! Ow! Oh! Ah! Oooop!" spluttered Skinner, as the new junior suited the action to the word.

Skinner went over backwards as a fist hard as iron caught him on the chin. He rat down with a sudden jar, yelling.

"My hat!" ejaculated Stott. "Would you?"

He clutched hold of the new junior, and Snoop followed suit, and they struggled fiercely. Skinner jumped up and piled in, and the four juniors—three against one—fought and struggled in a breathless bunch, while a crowd began to gather round and stare on the scene.

"Bless my soul! What—what—Cease this at once! Do you hear?" exclaimed a rather fat and wheezy, but commanding voice.

And a portly gentleman—no other than Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth Form at Greyfriars—bustled through the crowd.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Down on His Luck!

MR. PROUT was horrified. He was flabbergasted, if such a word may be used to describe the emotions of so august a personage as a Form master.

Mr. Prout had been taking a stately walk that afternoon through the High Street of Courtfield, exchanging lofty salutations with people he knew—bestowing a kind nod upon the greengrocer, a kind word upon the bookseller, three minutes' valuable conversation upon the rector—feeling quite at ease with himself and the world generally, and conscious of what a stately and imposing figure he made. And then, all of a sudden, he came upon a street row, a common, dreadful street row, a disorderly scene of boys fighting. And Mr. Prout was blinking round in search of a policeman when he recognised that the struggling youths were Greyfriars boys!

His horror was almost too deep for words.

Mr. Prout could scarcely believe his eyes, aided as they were by his spectacles.

He bustled forward, bristling with horror, wrath, and indignation.

Result of Tottenham Hotspur Picture Puzzle Competition.

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

T. JOBSON.

2, Charlotte Street,
Tidal Basin, E. 16.

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

E. Ashworth, 750, Oldham Rd., Fallsworth, Manchester; Edwin Jesty, 2, Douglas St., Birkenhead; C. J. Isherwood, 16, Bank St., Clayton, Manchester.

The ten prizes of 5s. each have been divided among the following twenty-two competitors, whose solutions contained two errors each:

Percy Ashworth, 750, Oldham Rd., Fallsworth, Manchester; Mrs. Foster, 44, James St., Doncaster; N. Phillipson, Suggitts Lane, Cleethorpes; R. Buttery, 70, Victoria Avenue, Hull; Leonard Hayes, 4, Little Church St., Coventry; H. Knighton, 46, Wellingboro' Rd., Northampton; W. G. Jeffrey, 14, Park St., Southend-on-Sea; J. A. Calvert, 2, Temperance St., Broadbottom, nr. Manchester; Leslie Varah, 10, Ainsley Road, Crookmoor, Sheffield; John Thomson, 135, Naburn St., Glasgow, S.S.; R. Jones, 35, Cedar St., Bootle, Liverpool; W. Guyatt, 143, Queen's Rd., West Croydon; A. E. Crooks, West St., Banwell, Somerset; A. Butters, 245, Robert's St., Grimsby; C. Kelly, 5, Hands St., Litherland, Liverpool; C. Cook, 36, Seymour Place, London, S.W. 10; Ernest Shooter, 15, Manor Rd., New Village, Askern, nr. Doncaster; Albert Earp, 163, Holland St., Newton, Manchester; H. Broadbent, 6, Kirby St., Stockton-on-Tees; Arnold Harris, 30, Salisbury St., Pelaw-on-Tyne; A. Richardson, 23, Newstead Rd., Lee, S.E. 12; Maurice P. Hales, 45, Artillery St., N. Colchester.

SOLUTION.

Tottenham Hotspur at one period had the reputation of being one of the luckiest football teams in the country. The club enjoys wonderful popularity and is very wealthy. One or two of its star players have cost huge sums. The Spars have won the English Cup twice.

"Boys! Wretched boys!" thundered Mr. Prout. "Cease this instantly!"

"My word!" gasped Snoop. "It's Prouty!"

Skinner & Co. were not unwilling to cease. They were angry and annoyed, but they had already found Jim Lee a very tough handful, even for the three of them. They let go and jumped back, breathless and untidy, leaving Lee panting for breath.

"How dare you!" thundered Mr. Prout in great indignation. "Are you boys members of a public school, or are you common hooligans? I shall report this disgraceful scene to your Form master!"

"Ow!" said Stott, rubbing his nose.

"'Twasn't our fault, sir."

"Mr. Quelch's orders, sir!" said Skinner, with a venomous look at the new junior.

"What? What? How dare you make such a statement, Skinner?" Jim Lee stood rather dazedly, dabbing at his nose. He heard the roar of the express in the station and knew that his train was gone.

"Mr. Quelch sent us to fetch Lee in, sir," said Skinner. "Lee refused to come. We had orders to take him back."

"You can ask Mr. Quelch, sir," said Snoop.

"Bless my soul! Lee, is this the case?"

Jim was silent.

"Skinner, if you assure me——" said Mr. Prout, very much taken aback.

"On my word, sir!" said Skinner. "Lee missed dinner, and Mr. Quelch gave us orders to find him and take him back. He knows it."

"Lee, have you refused to return to the school at your Form master's order?"

Lee did not answer. He was only anxious now to keep from the Fifth Form master's knowledge the fact that he had intended to "run." Skinner & Co. did not suspect that so far. They had only attributed Lee's conduct to his usual sulkiness, as the Remove regarded it. Lee was very anxious to keep it unsuspected. Once his intention was known he would never have another chance. He knew that. Fortunately, neither Mr. Prout nor Skinner & Co. dreamed that the "queer" new junior had any motive for planning to bolt from the school.

"You are a rebellious and unruly boy, Lee!" said Mr. Prout. "I am ashamed of you! I shall myself take you back to the school."

"I will go, sir!" said Lee quietly.

"You will come with me!" said Mr. Prout.

"Very well, sir."

"Come!"

The portly Form master stalked away, frowning, with the slim, handsome junior at his side. Skinner & Co. grinned at one another.

"The cad's landed now!" said Skinner, rubbing his nose. "The beast punched me pretty hard. Quelch will take it out of him!"

"Why wouldn't the sulky brate come back, though?" said Snoop. "He knew Quelch had sent us for him."

"Blest if I know! Just sulks, I suppose. He's a queer rotter!" said Skinner. "Let's get in to the pictures now old Whiskers has taken charge of the cad!"

And Skinner & Co. paid their deferred visit to the "movies," what time the stately Mr. Prout marched Lee of the Remove back to Greyfriars, with an angry, eagle eye upon him all the time.

Alonzo's extraordinary resemblance to his cousin—

Mr. Prout did not address a single word to Lee on the way back to the school. He was angry and disgusted with the sullen-looking junior, and in his stately mind he was preparing a report for Mr. Quelch, which was to "feature" Lee's delinquency in the strongest possible light.

Lee, with a heart like lead, walked along with the portly Form master.

He was not troubling about what Mr. Prout thought of him. Neither was he giving much thought to the punishment that probably awaited him at the hands of his own master. He was thinking of his baffled plan with a deep sinking of the heart. But for that luckless encounter with Skinner & Co. he would have been now in the express, speeding away for Canterbury and the wide world beyond. The unendurable shame with which Ulick Driver threatened him would have been left behind, farther and farther behind with every revolution of the wheels. And now—

Now it only remained to keep deeply secret what he had intended. He must go. He had to go! His mind was settled on that. He must go, if it was only to hunger and want. But if they guessed, or suspected, what he intended there would be no chance. And it was very probable, too, that his guardian would be informed. And the blow that Ulick Driver was cruelly delaying would fall soon enough then. At once, if the crook learned that his victim was attempting to escape.

That was what Jim Lee was thinking as he walked back to Greyfriars with the indignant master of the Fifth. So long as they did not suspect that he had intended to run away from school he cared for nothing else.

He entered the school gates with Mr. Prout—the old gates he had thought never to enter again. There was a shout from the direction of the football-ground.

"Goal!"

"Bravo, Wharton!"

"Goal! Goal!"

Lee glanced towards the distant footballers. How gladly he would have joined those active figures on that crisp, sunny afternoon; how gladly he would have been a Greyfriars fellow like the rest—a happy, careless schoolboy! It was not by his own nature that Jim Lee was a schoolboy "hermit." His very soul yearned for the free, frank cordiality and happy-go-lucky breeziness of the Remove. But it was not for him, not for the self-made outcast!

Billy Bunter was loafing about the School House steps, and he grinned as he saw Jim Lee marched in by Mr. Prout. The truant had been brought back, and Bunter anticipated his licking with satisfaction. Lee, as Bunter looked at it, had robbed him of his glory as Bob Cherry's rescuer, and for that offence boiling in oil was really too good for Lee.

Mr. Prout tapped heavily at the study door of the Remove master, and almost lurled it open.

Mr. Quelch looked up rather irritably from his writing-table. But his frown changed into a polite smile at the sight of his colleague.

He glanced at Lee.

"I have brought this boy back to Greyfriars, Mr. Quelch!" said the Fifth Form master. "I hand him over to you."

"Thank you, Mr. Prout!"

"I feel bound, sir, to inform you in what circumstances I found this boy!"

"Indeed?"

"Engaged, sir, in a street scuffle!" said Mr. Prout. "He was fighting with



Ulick Driver's eyes blazed for a second; but he smiled again and held out his hand to Jim Lee. "Good-bye, Jim. I hope you will think better of the duty you owe me. Good-bye!" But Lee merely drove his hands deeper into his pockets. (See Chapter 3.)

three other members of your Form in the High Street of Courtfield, with a crowd, sir, looking on at the shocking scene!"

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch.

"I do not wonder that you are shocked, sir," said Mr. Prout. "I was horrified. I may say that I was dumb-founded. According to the statement made to me by Skinner you sent him to fetch this boy in—"

"That is correct."

"He not only refused to obey the order conveyed to him, but resisted the attempts of Skinner, Snoop, and Stott to carry out your instructions, sir. Hence the disgraceful scene in the High Street of Courtfield."

"This is very serious!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Extremely so, in my opinion!" said Mr. Prout. "Far be it from me to intervene in the affairs of a colleague, sir. But I should certainly recommend a condign punishment, a very condign punishment. That boy's conduct is shocking—shocking!"

And with that Mr. Prout took himself off, and the door closed behind him, and Jim Lee was left to the tender mercies of his Form master.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Suspicion!

MR. QUELCH seated himself again, and fixed his eyes upon Jim Lee.

Lee stood before the table, quiet, pale, his glance on the floor. For a full minute there was silence in the study.

Lee waited wearily.

He knew that there was punishment to come, and he only wanted to get it over and to get away.

But, in spite of Mr. Prout's recommendation, the Remove master was not thinking specially of punishment.

"You did not appear at dinner, Lee," said Mr. Quelch, breaking the silence at last.

"No, sir."

"Why were you absent?"

"I forgot."

Mr. Quelch raised his eyebrows a little at this answer. A junior schoolboy who forgot dinner was rather a phenomenon.

"Skinner told you that I had sent for you, Lee?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why did you not come back, then?"

No answer.

There was another long silence, during which the Remove master scrutinised the pale, set face before him, and Lee kept his gaze downcast.

"Lee," said Mr. Quelch kindly and quietly, "you are an unusual boy in some respects. It has long been my intention to speak to you. For some reason you have shown a very remarkable reserve since you have entered my Form here. That you were received with kindness by some of the boys, I am certain; yet you have preferred to maintain a stollen distance, and to make no friend in the school. Is not that the case?"

"Yes, sir."

"For what reasons was this, Lee?"

"I had my reasons, sir."

"You do not care to state them to your Form master?"

—produces a most amusing situation next Monday!

"No, sir."

"It is not my custom to force the confidence of any boy in my Form, Lee," said Mr. Quelch, "but it has always been my wish to be regarded as a friend as well as a Form master. Any boy in my Form who is in trouble is at liberty to come to me for counsel."

"You are very kind, sir!" faltered Lee.

"You have nothing to confide to me, Lee?"

"Nothing, sir."

"You do not desire my advice?"

"No, sir."

"You are in no trouble at the present time?"

The red began to creep into Lee's pale cheeks, but he did not answer. He wished passionately that his Form master would punish him and let him go. Mr. Quelch's kindness was harder to bear than the severest punishment.

"I note that you do not answer that question, Lee," said Mr. Quelch. "I take it that you are in trouble—some trouble that has caused you to act strangely. Now, Lee, I must refer to another matter. This morning Police-constable Tozer, of Friardale, called to speak to the Head with reference to a subscription for a charity in connection with the local police."

Lee started.

"At the sight of Mr. Tozer you displayed an unaccountable terror," said Mr. Quelch. "This was noticed by several boys on the spot."

The unhappy boy seemed scarcely to breathe.

"Some of these boys have referred to the circumstances to me," said Mr. Quelch. "Probably I should have taken little or no notice of it, Lee. But I was myself an observer of the scene."

"You, sir!" gasped Lee.

Mr. Quelch made a gesture towards the study window.

"From my window I saw what passed," he said. "I was in my study at the time, and it passed under my very eyes. I could not help being very much startled, Lee. You spoke to Mr. Tozer. I did not hear your words, being at too great a distance; but I was so concerned that I spoke to Mr. Tozer when he left the Head, asking him what you had said."

Lee almost groaned.

"Your words to the police-constable were amazing!" continued Mr. Quelch. "Mr. Tozer regarded them as a foolish joke. I cannot regard them in that light, Lee."

Lee's lips twitched convulsively. There was perspiration on his forehead now.

"I trust you comprehend, Lee, that my wish is to be kind to you, and as considerate as possible," said Mr. Quelch. "But this matter must be explained. It is my duty to question you. You entered Greyfriars as the ward and relative of an Old Boy of the school—Mr. Ulick Driver. This gentleman, of course, was considered by the Head competent to answer for your character."

A bitter smile curved Lee's lips—a smile so bitter, so strange, that it struck the Remove master, and he paused involuntarily. But the schoolboy was still silent, and Mr. Quelch resumed:

"The strange and unreasoning fear you displayed at the sight of a police-constable, and your words to him, lay you under a very shocking suspicion, Lee! This tallies with your very peculiar conduct since you have been a member of my Form—the conduct of a boy who felt that he was not fit to associate with the other boys." Mr.

Quelch paused impressively. "I must now ask you, Lee, whether you have ever done any action contrary to the laws of this country?"

Mr. Quelch waited for an answer in vain.

"Lee, you must realise that a refusal to answer places you in a very bad position!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"I know it."

"Then answer at once!"

Lee raised his eyes at last.

"I have never intentionally done anything that any Greyfriars fellow would be ashamed to do, sir," he said clearly.

"Very good. But why could you not say so at once, Lee?"

No reply.

"One moment!" said the Remove master. "Am I to understand that, though you have done no wrong intentionally, you have done so unintentionally? Is that what your words imply?"

Silence.

"You must be aware, Lee, that the matter cannot rest here," said Mr. Quelch. "I am driven to conclude that before you came to Greyfriars you must have been guilty of some action contrary to the law. This, doubtless, was unknown to your guardian when he sent you here—Why do you look at me so strangely, Lee?"

Still silence.

"You are a very perplexing boy, Lee!" said the Remove master. "Judging by your looks, I find it hard to believe that you can have been guilty of a dishonest act. Yet there seems to be no other explanation. If, by some inexplicable misfortune, you were led into doing wrong unintentionally, there is surely no reason why you cannot confide the whole matter to me, who desire to be your friend and helper."

Again the Remove master waited for a reply, and again he waited vainly. Lee's face was set and almost expressionless.

"Very well!" said Mr. Quelch after a long pause. "If you refuse to speak, Lee, you drive me to place the worst construction upon your silence. I shall acquaint the Head with the matter, and your guardian will be communicated with! You may go!"

Without a word, Jim Lee left the study, leaving his Form master in very deep and troubled thought.

Lee's steps were faltering as he went down the corridor. The interview had been torture to him. He had not been punished; he cared nothing for that. Mr. Quelch's last words rang in his ears. His guardian was to be communicated with—his guardian, Ulick Driver; Ulick Driver, the Old Boy of Greyfriars who had gone to the bad—the gentleman-crook who had sent him to his old school, to be his instrument in robbery and swindling; Ulick Driver, who had been considered "competent to answer for his character." Lee gave an almost hysterical laugh.

What would Ulick Driver say and do when the communication reached him? Would he hold his hand any longer after that?

Would the blow fall then—the threatened blow that had been withheld to make him suffer in bitter suspense? Well, he would be no longer at Greyfriars to feel it. He had been defeated once, but he was resolved that the rising sun on the morrow should see him far from the school.

"He, he, he! Licked!"

Lee did not even hear Billy Dunter's fat chuckle. He went up the stairs to the Remove passage. He was on the worst of terms with his study-mates, who

had turned him out. But Russell and Ogilvy were busy on the football-ground that afternoon—Ogilvy in the Remove team, and Russell was sure to be present at the match. Lee found Study No. 3 empty, as he expected. He threw himself into the armchair, tired, exhausted, with almost the bitterness of death in his heart.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Lee Speaks!

BOB CHERRY eyed Lee when the Remove fellows turned up in their dormitory that night.

Bob was not a specially observant fellow, and he was very little given to minding affairs other than his own; but he could not help being concerned about the outcast of the Remove.

The terms Lee was upon with his guardian—as Bob had discovered that afternoon on the towing-path—were distressing enough, though Bob was far from suspecting the true inwardness of that matter.

Skinner & Co., in the Common-room that evening, had related the incident at Courtfield, the Remove fellows taking it as one more example of Lee's sulky and sullen temper.

But to Bob it was one more sign of the deep trouble the unfortunate lad was in—a trouble of which Bob could not guess the nature, but which he realised was deep and terrible. The new junior was mysterious to him. He could not understand him. But Lee had risked his life for Bob, and that was more than enough to make Bob Cherry interested in him and concerned about him.

It was Bob Cherry's custom to fall asleep a minute or two after laying his head on the pillow, but on this special night he was feeling in a worried mood, and he did not sleep so easily.

For some time the juniors talked, chiefly of the football match with the Shell, and of the poor show Hazeldene had put up in goal—Hazel having let the ball through thrice, when once, as Johnny Bull remarked, would have been enough.

Lee, as usual, took no part in the talk. Nobody wanted to hear his opinion on football, even if he had cared to offer it. He had become an outcast by his own intention. Nobody had desired to "cut" him in the first place, but the Remove fellows had quickly settled down to regard him as of no account—taking him at his own estimation, as it were.

When the talk died away, and the juniors went to sleep, Bob Cherry was still wakeful.

Perhaps a kick on the shin that he had received from Hobson of the Shell in the play that afternoon helped to keep him awake; but he was thinking about Jim Lee.

At ten o'clock Bob was nodding off at last, when there was a movement in the dormitory.

Bob started into wakefulness again as he heard the unmistakable sounds of a fellow getting cautiously out of bed.

He sat up.

If it was Skinner or Snoop, or some other bold blade of the Remove starting to break bounds, Bob was ready to give him his candid opinion of such proceedings before the bold blade started. There was moonlight at the high windows of the Remove dormitory, and Bob easily spotted the fellow who had turned out of bed; but it was not Snoop, or Stott, or Skinner.

To Bob's amazement he saw that it was Jim Lee!

Amazing fact! The weedy Duffer actually scores a goal—

Lee had many unusual ways, but certainly he had never been suspected of such proceedings as breaking bounds after lights-out. Yet he was dressing himself, quietly and swiftly, even to his collar and tie. Bob sat and blinked at him in surprise, wondering whether he should speak.

Lee did not observe that there was anyone awake. His thoughts were concentrated on his own movements.

In a very few minutes he crossed to the dormitory door on tiptoe, opened it, and passed out silently. The door closed softly behind him.

Bob Cherry rubbed his eyes.

Where was Lee gone?

Bob remembered the incident of Courtfield, related by Skinner & Co. Lee's refusal to return to the school at his Form master's order had been inexplicable. And his terror at the sight of the police constable that morning! A suspicion dawned in Bob Cherry's mind—a suspicion that was almost a certainty. He remembered a talk with Lee a few days before, in which the new junior had seemed to hint that he would not be long at the school. Was it possible that the strange fellow was thinking of bolting from Greyfriars?

As the thought came into his mind, Bob realised that it was not only possible, but that it was fairly certain; and at that Bob Cherry turned rapidly out of bed.

Whatever Lee's motives might be, Bob intended to have him from taking such a step. The consequences of running away from school were too serious to be lightly faced.

He stepped to Wharton's bed, and shook the captain of the Remove by the shoulder. Harry Wharton started into wakefulness.

"What—"

"Hush!" muttered Bob. "Don't wake the fellows."

"What's the row?" asked Wharton, blinking up at him.

"Lee's just gone out of the dorm."

"Has he?" mumbled Wharton.

"I fancy he's thinking of bolting," whispered Bob. "I'm going to stop him. Will you come?"

"Like a bird!" said Harry at once.

He was out of bed in a twinkling. The two juniors hurried on trousers and jackets, and without staying for more they quitted the dormitory. There was no time to be lost if Lee really was intending to leave the school.

All was dark and silent outside in the corridor, but towards the stairs there was a glimmer of light. The masters were not gone to bed yet, and most of the Sixth were still up.

"He couldn't have gone downstairs," whispered Harry. "Somebody would have spotted him at once. Try the box-room."

"Let's!" answered Bob.

They hurried in the darkness to the box-room at the end of the passage. Adventurous juniors had reached the ground from that window more than once, and Lee, of course, knew it.

In a few moments they were in the box-room.

The window was open, and a dark figure blotted the moonlight there. It was impossible to recognise him in the gloom, but they knew it was the outcast of the Remove.

"Lee!" breathed Bob.

The figure started violently.

Jim Lee spun round from the window. He stood with throbbing heart, staring at the dim forms of the juniors.

"Who—what—" he panted.

"Don't be an ass, Lee!" said Harry

Wharton, advancing towards him.

"Where are you going?"

"Leave me alone!"

"Can't be done, if you're going out of House bounds at this time of night," answered the captain of the Remove quietly. "What's the game, you young ass?"

"That's my business!" muttered Leo thickly.

"And ours, old chap," said Bob Cherry. "You can't clear out of school in that style. Don't play the goat!"

Lee made a movement, and Bob quickly placed himself between the new junior and the window. Lee breathed hard as Bob drew the sash down and fastened it.

"Will you let me alone," he said between his teeth. "What business is it of yours what I do?"

"Lots!" answered Bob cheerfully.

"This was your game when you were stopped at Courtfield this afternoon. I can see that now."

"That's my business, not yours!"

"Lee, old man, you can't play the goat like this," said Bob. "You'll be brought back and flogged. What's the good of that?"

Lee laughed harshly.

"You don't understand. The Head won't want me back. I'm going now, but I should have to go, anyhow, in a few days."

"Blessed if I catch on to that!" said Wharton. "But if you're going openly in a few days, why can't you wait the few days?"

"I can't!"

"Not good enough, old nut!" said Bob. "Sorry to chip in, but it's for your own sake. You'll be glad later on that we stopped you."

Lee gritted his teeth.

"I tell you I'm going!"

"You're not, old chap!"

"Are you going to stop me by force?" muttered Lee.

"Yes, if necessary," answered Harry Wharton at once. "I think you must be off your rocker to think of such a silly prank. Come back to the dorm, and go to bed like a sensible chap."

"You don't understand. Look here"—Lee spoke in a hoarse whisper—"I'll tell you why I'm going! If I stay here—"

He choked.

"Well?" said Bob.

"If I stay here now I shall be taken away in a few days by—by—"

"By your guardian?"

"The police!" answered Lee.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Secret is Out!

"THE police?"

Wharton and Bob Cherry uttered the words together in tones of horror and incredulity.

"Are you mad?"

"I've told you now!" said the new junior doggedly. "Now you know why you'd better let me alone. Do you want a scene at Greyfriars—a Greyfriars fellow taken into custody by the police, and walked off, perhaps, with handcuffs on his wrists?"



Skinner went backwards as Lee's fist, hard as iron, caught him on the chin. Several Courtfield urchins who had gathered on the scene were thoroughly enjoying themselves, when a rather fat and wheezy voice broke in upon their merriment. "Bless my soul—what—what! Cease this at once! Do you hear, boys?" And a portly gentleman—no other than Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth—bustled through the crowd. (See Chapter 5.)

—but finds afterwards that he's put the ball through his own net!

"You're mad!" said Bob Cherry huskily. "Do you mean to say that the police want you?"

"Yes."

"It's impossible!"

"Hold on!" said Harry Wharton quietly. Back into his mind came the remembrance of Lee's white, terrified face at the sight of Police-constable Tozer. "I'm afraid it's not impossible, Bob. But you'll have to make it a little clearer, Lee. If you're wanted by the police, what have you done?"

"Passed counterfeit banknotes," answered Lee. He spoke quietly, dully, mechanically.

"You have?" stammered Bob Cherry.

"I have!"

"Then how is it you've not been taken before?" demanded Wharton. "How is it you ever came to Greyfriars at all?"

"Yes," gasped Bob; "how's that, Leo? You're dreaming. You're out of your mind! You've done nothing of the kind."

"I've done as I've said."

"Then, as yet, the police do not know, or you would not be free at this minute," said Harry.

"Yes."

"And when Tozer came this morning you thought it was known—"

"Yes."

"You—you thought Tozer had come for you?" breathed Bob.

"I thought so."

"But—but—" said Bob, bewildered. "It can't be so. Do—do you mean to say you're a—a—a criminal?"

"I shall be called one."

"But—but—"

"Let's have it clear," said Harry Wharton very quietly. "You've done this, but it's not known yet, and you expect it to become known?"

"Yes."

"How is that? Somebody is giving you away, do you mean?"

"Yes."

"Can it be proved against you?"

"Yes."

"Good heavens!" muttered Bob Cherry. He moved a little farther back from Lee, and a bitter smile curved the unhappy boy's white lips as he noted the involuntary movement.

"Now you know!" said Leo dully. "Now you'd better let me go. You don't want your school disgraced, I suppose. What good would that do?"

"If it's as you say the sooner you go the better," said Harry. "If it's as you say it was shameful to come here at all."

"I had no choice about that," muttered Lee, his voice trembling. "I shouldn't have come—I wouldn't have come if I could have helped it! I was not my own master."

"But—but," panted Bob, "does your guardian know?"

Lee laughed, almost wildly.

"What's the good of talking? Let me go."

"Not yet," said Harry Wharton. "There's more in this than you've told us, Lee. If you've done such a thing as you say, you are a criminal. And how could you be that without your guardian knowing? Does Mr. Driver know that you have done this?"

"He does," said Lee desperately.

"And he brought you to Greyfriars, knowing that you might be collared here by the police for having committed a crime!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Yes."

"If that's true he's worse than you are!" said the captain of the Remove.

"But I can't believe that, Leo—not

without jolly strong proof, anyhow. You can tell us that you've passed counterfeit banknotes, but how could a kid like you get hold of such things?"

"Will you let me go?" panted Leo.

"No. If you're out of your mind you want taking care of," said Wharton.

"And it looks to me as if you are."

Lee drew a deep breath.

"I must go—I must! I'll tell you. You ask me where the counterfeit notes came from. They came from Ulick Driver."

"Your guardian?" ejaculated Bob.

"Yes."

"You're dreaming or mad!"

"My guardian, Ulick Driver, an Old Boy of Greyfriars, is a thief, forger, and crook!" said Leo steadily. "Now I've told you!"

Bob Cherry peered at him in the pale moonlight from the window. Lee's face was colourless.

"It can't be true," said Bob—"it can't! The young ass is pulling our legs, or he's gone off his rocker!"

"You don't believe me?" asked Leo bitterly.

"How can we believe you?" said Bob.

"Can't you see?" said Leo passionately. "Oh, why can't you leave me alone, to go my own way? I'm trying to save the school from disgrace. Can't you see that that's the reason why I've acted as I've done ever since I've been at Greyfriars? Can't you see that it's always been on my mind, torturing me till it's a wonder I didn't lose my senses? Can't you see now why I was sent here?"

"Good heavens!" muttered Wharton.

"I'll tell you!" said Leo. "You shall know it all. You'd know it soon enough after I was gone. I was sent here to make friends among the fellows, to butter up the wealthy chaps, and get asked to their homes—Lord Mauleverer and you, Wharton, and others—and I could have done it easily enough. And then I was to help Ulick Driver and his gang, help them to rob fellows who trusted me—"

Lee's voice broke.

"Lee!" whispered Bob.

"That wasn't all. I was to spy out things in the school, learn where valuables were kept, so that they could make a clean sweep here one night at Greyfriars."

"Lee!"

"Now you know enough!" panted Leo. "Now let me go. I wouldn't have told you. I'd have died sooner almost. But now you know. Can't you see I'd better get out?"

"Good heavens!" groaned Bob. "And you—you saved my life, Lee."

"Is that why you are meddling now?" exclaimed Leo passionately. "I tried to keep that dark, didn't I? I never wanted a fellow to take notice of me here. I've kept to myself, haven't I? Haven't the fellows nicknamed me the 'hermit'? I've never made a friend here. I've stood against that villain all along the line, and I've got to pay for it."

"You've stood against him?" said Harry.

"Can't you see I have?"

"Yet you say you have passed false money for him?"

"Oh, you're blind!" said Leo savagely. "That is how he got me

under his thumb. Do you think I would have done it if I'd known? But after I'd done it I was at his mercy."

"I understand," said Wharton quietly. "And how long have you known that Driver was that kind of man?"

"I knew it a couple of weeks before I came to Greyfriars," said Leo, "that's all. Up to then I thought he was a kind relative—a man of wealth, too. He took me when I was left an orphan. He sent me to a preparatory school. I hardly ever saw him, and never dreamed of what he was. Do you think I'd have taken a crust from him if I'd known? I'd have died on the roads rather. But I never knew. How was I to know? The police don't know. If I told them they'd laugh at me. There's no proof. He's clever. He's always kept up appearances. When he gives me away he will be able to keep himself clear. He's taken care of that."

"When he gives you away?" repeated Bob Cherry.

"Oh, can't you see yet?" said Leo bitterly. "Haven't you any sense? I've told you why he sent me here. I've told you I stood against him all along. I've got to face the consequences."

Wharton caught his breath.

"Do you mean to say that he tricked you into passing counterfeit notes before you knew what he was?"

"Yes."

"And then held it over your head?"

"Yes."

"And now—"

"Now he's going to betray me because I won't play his game here," said Leo. "It's been hanging over my head for weeks; he's torturing me like a cat with a mouse. He thinks I shall lose my nerve and give in. When he understands at last that there's no hope of that, he will take his revenge. It may come any day—any hour. When I saw the constable to-day I thought that it had come!" Lee shuddered. "You heard what I said to him?"

"I heard," said Wharton.

"I thought it was the finish. But it wasn't. It's still hanging over me. I can't stand it any longer! I'm going!"

"But—but—" said Bob Cherry.

"When I'm gone he will strike," said Leo. "He will know then, and he will make me suffer for it. I may get clear. Anyhow, I shall save being dragged away under the eyes of all Greyfriars. That's something. Now let me go."

Lee turned to the window again.

Wharton and Bob Cherry stood silent, almost dumbfounded by what they had heard.

Strange as the story was, they realised that it was the truth they had heard; indeed, it was the only explanation of the strange conduct of Jim Lee ever since he had been at Greyfriars.

What had been a perplexing mystery was explained now, and the chums of the Remove understood what the past few weeks must have been like to the schoolboy outcast.

Lee pulled up the sash.

Then Bob Cherry started forward and caught him by the arm.

"Stop!" he said.

Lee uttered a fierce exclamation.

"You fool! I've told you why I'm going! Can't you see that I'd better go? Leave me alone!"

"You're not going," said Bob Cherry quietly. "You've got friends here to stand by you, Lee, and somehow or other we're going to see you through. You're not going away from Greyfriars! You're

(Continued on page 17.)

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2!

The antics of Alonzo Todd will send you into screams of laughter!



BULLIES OF THE PAST!

By GEORGE WINGATE.

(Captain of Greyfriars.)

IN the olden days—often falsely styled "the good old days"—bullying was much more rife than it is at present. Fifty years ago, it was the rule, rather than the exception, for big fellows to bully smaller ones.

I have been glancing through some of the old defaulters' books which are kept in the school tower, and I find that they literally reek with cases of bullying.

In 1872 a hefty giant named Noakes established quite a Reign of Terror at the school, owing to his bullying tactics.

Noakes was a senior and a prefect. He believed in brute force, and he had no use for methods of kindness or persuasion. If he wanted a fag, he wouldn't stand at the door of his study and shout for one. He would go striding out into the passage and grasp the first fag he saw by the scruff of the neck. He would then signal to the fag to lay his table, and if the nervous youngster was unfortunate enough to smash any crockeryware, he was thrashed without mercy.

Some of my readers may ask, "Why didn't Noakes' fellow-seniors interfere and prevent this state of affairs?" Well, I am afraid they either feared the burly giant too much, or they were indifferent. Anyway, Noakes continued to rule with a rod of iron.

But the Reign of Terror came to a speedy and sudden end.

One day, in his insensate fury, Noakes threw a fag down the stairs. What the hapless kid had done to merit this treatment is not clear. But he broke his leg, and had to be conveyed at once to the sanary. There was an inquiry into the black business, and without hesitation the Head sentenced Noakes to expulsion. He is said to have been hissed and hooted off the school premises; and I can quite understand it. Bullies are never exactly popular with their schoolfellows.

A few years after Noakes passed out of the school's history, another bully, of an even worse type, arose. This was Snape of the Sixth.

Now, there are several kinds of bullying, and Snape's was the cruel and calculating kind. He did not openly cuff and cane his victims. He would bully them behind locked doors, and in a most dastardly manner, yet so cunningly that no marks of violence would appear on their persons. He would shut them in his cupboard, twist their thumbs, or make them remain in cramped and uncomfortable positions for hours together.

Snape's career as a bully lasted a long time. But truth will out, and a petition to the Head caused that worthy gentleman to make investigations. All the fags rose as one man to give evidence against Snape, and he went the way of Noakes. The bitter March morning when he was expelled is still remembered by many Old Boys.

I could go on quoting instances of bullying from the records which are before me. But this is not a palatable subject.

My article, however, should act as a stern warning to Loder and others of his kidney.

EDITORIAL!



By HARRY WHARTON.

THE success of our Special Flogging Number has prompted me to produce a Special Bullying Number, since flogging and bullying have much in common.

There are few faults so hard to forgive as bullying. When a strong fellow so far forgets himself as to persecute and ill-treat a weaker spirit, he is acting in a most mean, cowardly, and contemptible manner.

Fortunately, bullying is not so rampant at our public schools as it used to be. The traditional school bully—a bullet-headed brute who was for ever pitching into the members of the smaller fry—has practically disappeared.

But there are still a few fellows in our midst who are too fond of the heavy hand.

Loder of the Sixth can boast of being the biggest bully at Greyfriars. And so far as the Remove is concerned, that doubtful honour is enjoyed by Bolsover major. Loder's disposition, however, is much more cruel than that of Percy Bolsover, who has proved himself quite a decent fellow on occasion.

There is only one effective way of dealing with bullies. They should be given a dose of their own medicine. The language of force is the only language they can understand. It is useless to reason with them, after the manner of Alonzo Todd, or to appeal to their finer instincts.

Of course, it is not always easy to deal with a fellow like Loder, who is a prefect, and, consequently, a person of power and position. But even Loder gets a rough handling at times, and is made to realise that he can't have matters all his own way.

This Special Bullying Number is not being published just for fun, although there happens to be plenty of fun in it. I believe that it will do a power of good, and strike a crushing blow at the Greyfriars bullies.

So long as there are stout fellows who are always willing to help the weak and to face the strong, bullies will not have a very enjoyable time of it at Greyfriars. It is all very well to tell a timid youngster that he must fight his own battles. He must be protected from the clutches of the bully, and protected he will be, so long as the Famous Five are here to do their duty!

EXTRACTS FROM A BULLY'S DIARY!

MONDAY.

My fag was half an hour late in calling me, so I threw the little brat over the banisters. Fags are guaranteed unbreakable, so he didn't come to any harm. It was only from the lower landing that he fell, and a number of his inky-fingered comrades broke his fall.

I haven't seen my fag any more to-day. He has deliberately kept out of my way, so I'll make things warm for the cheeky young cub to-morrow.

TUESDAY.

My fag didn't call me at all, with the result that I was late for chapel and taken to task by the Head. After breakfast I saw the young wretch—I mean my fag, not the Head—in the Close. I swooped down upon him, cuffed both his ears, spun him round and round like a catherine-wheel, tossed him into the air three times, and eventually left him lying in a squirming heap on the flagstones. The cheeky young rascal! I'll show him that I'm not a person to be trifled with.

WEDNESDAY.

The unspeakable little brat smashed all my crockeryware—every single cup and saucer and plate, and the teapot into the bargain. I tanned the young whelp's hide until his yells for mercy grew so alarming that I was obliged to desist. I am certain the young monkey smashed all my crockery with malice aforethought, because I found him wallowing about among the wreckage with a cheery grin on his face.

THURSDAY.

My fag committed the crowning offence of pouring scalding tea down the back of my neck. As soon as I recovered, I proceeded to chastise him with a cricket stump, when in walked that interfering beast Wingate. "Let that kid alone!" he commanded. "Mind your own business!" I retorted. Whereupon Wingate rushed at me with clenched fists, and gave me a proper pasting. I feel an absolute wreck this evening, and my face is so badly disfigured that I shall have to hide it from the public view for days. Confound our interfering skipper!

FRIDAY.

Spent a miserable day in my study, patching myself up. No sign of my fag. I hear that Wingate has offered him a job, and that he has left my employ. As I write these lines I am fairly gnashing my teeth with rage and chagrin. I'll get the little brat back, you see if I don't!

SATURDAY.

My fag is like the young lady in the song—"lost and gone for ever." He declares he is going to work for Wingate in future, and he has just sent me a note to the effect that I can go and eat coke! If only I had him here! I'd paste him, I'd punch him, I'd pommel him, I'd pulverise him! I'd knock him into next Wednesday—in other words, into the middle of next week!

Look out for the grand supplement next Monday!



Taming a Booly!

A gripping, seizing, arresting story of Skool Life, with conviction in every line, and a thrill in every sentence.

By **DICKY NUGENT.**

SAVVIDGE of the Sixth was a broot and a booly.

Everybody at St. Bill's knew that. And the helpless fags felt savvidge at the savvidge tyranny of Savvidge.

Now, it so happened that Savvidge was hard up. And he began to think of ways and means of emulating Coker's motor-bike, and raising the dust.

Savvidge sat in his armchair, with a savvidge scowl upon his savvidge features.

(Not so much of your Savvidge, Dicky, or you'll make me savvidge!—Ed.)

"I know!" cried Savvidge, after a paw.

"I've got a jolly good wheeze for making munney! I'll be the Offishul Booly of St. Bill's. If any fellow wants another chap punished, he'll bring him to me for that purpuss. I'll inflict the necessary punishment, and charge a tanner a time for doing it."

This struck Savvidge as being quite a good idear. And he pinned the following notiss to the door of his study:

"SIDNEY SAVVIDGE,

Professional Booly.

Fags Waited on Daily—With an Ashplant!

If a fag cheeks you, bring him along to me, and I will administer the necessary punishment. My fee is only a tanner. I am the biggest booly at St. Bill's, and will faithfully carry out any commissions entrusted to me."

Snooks of the Sixth was the first fellow to see that notiss. Snooks remembered that Miggs miner had been cheeky to him that day.

"He called me 'Beaver,' bekwase I've got two hares on my upper lip," said Snooks. "I'll take him along to Savvidge to be punished. It will only cost me a tanner."

Snooks went in search of Miggs miner, and found him, and, lifting him up between his thumb and fourfinger, took him along to savvidge's study.

"I want you to deal with this cheeky young cub, Savvidge," he said. "He has the ordassity to call me 'Beaver.'"

"Right you are!" said Savvidge. "Leave him in my hands, and I'll put him to the torcher. Sixpence, please!"

Snooks hurriedly dropped a bad sixpence on the table, and departed.

There was a horryfied silense in the study. Miggs miner was alone with the booly of St. Bill's!

"Mersy!" he pleaded.

Savvidge larfed harshly.

"The word is forrin to me," he said. "You have been brought to me for punishment, and I'll see that you get it in the neck. Get across that table! I'm going to give you ninety-nine strokes with the ashplant!"

"Can't you make it a level hundred?" asked Miggs miner.

Savvidge gave a rore like an angry bool.

"What! You dare to jest with me?" he eride. "Get across that table!"

Miggs miner obeyed. Then Savvidge peeled off his coat, and picked up the ashplant, and got busy.

Swish!
Swish!!
Swish!!!
Swish!!!!
Swish!!!!!

(Hold on, Dicky! I'm not going to let you write this ninety-nine times! That's too much like easy munney!—Ed.)

Blow after blow desended on Miggs

miner's annatermy with crool, stinging force.

The dust rose in a cloud from the victim's trowsers.

"Ow! Yow! Wow! Woop!" he yelled. "Chuck it, Savvidge! I can't stand corporal punishment!"

"This isn't corporal punishment," said Savvidge, with a feendish grin. "It's private punishment—see?"

"Don't!" wailed Miggs miner. "I wish you were a 'left tenant' of this study. I can't think what major start lamming me like this!"

"I'll show you no 'quarter, Master' Miggs!" growled Savvidge.

And he continued to hit harder than ever.

Miggs yelled and skreemed, and kicked and struggled, but all to no purpuss. He was powerless in the clutches of the booly.

When Savvidge had delivered fifty strokes his arm began to ake. So he transferred the ashplant to his left hand, and started afresh with renewed vigger.

By the time the ninety-nine strokes had been administered, Miggs miner was like a limp rag. He felt himself all over, to make sure he was still in one peace.



As falls the giant oak, so fell Savvidge; and at that junkcher in came the Head.

"Ow-ow-ow!" he groaned. "You've neerly broken my spine, and I don't think I've any sholderblades left! I've got a good mind to show my wheels to the Head!"

"If you do," hist Savvidge, "I'll k-kill you, you bratt! Hallo! What's all this?"

The study door opened, and Phillips of the Fifth came in. He carried a cupple of fags—one under each arm.

"These young cubs have refused to fag for me," he said. "Will you lick them for me, Savvidge?"

"Sertainly!" said Savvidge, with a grin. "That'll be a bob, please."

Phillips paid over the munney, and departed, leaving the two fags to the tender mercies of Savvidge.

The booly of St. Bill's gave them a terrihul time. He twisted their arms till they squeaked—the fags, not the arms! He cuffed them, he clumped them, he nocked their nappers together, he spun them round and round like catherine-weals, and by the time he had finished, the unforchunitt fags didn't know weather they were on their heads or their heels.

Savvidge then booted the two fags and Miggs miner out of his study, and sat down and waited for fresh victims.

O, crool monster! O, base brant! Have you no sense of shame? You yourself deserve to be booted out—not only out of your study, but out of St. Bill's.

But our time will come! Ha, ha! Mark my words! The day will soon dorn when you will be hounded out of the skool, and your name will be nothing more than a garstly memmery.

(Stop this rambling, Dicky, and get on with your narritiff.—Ed.)

Savvidge did plenty of bizziness that evening. He punished forty fags altogether, and this brought him in a quid. He was no longer hard up. The post of professional booly was a very paying one.

But the forty-first victim proved very trubblesome, and Savvidge got more than he bargained for.

The name of this partikular fag was Yo Sang, and he was a Japp. Some, however, declared he was a Jew, for he had such a sound nollidge of Jew-jitsoo.

"Come hear!" said Savvidge.

"Shan't!" squeaked Yo Sang.

"Do you here me?"

"I here you."

"Then obey me!"

"Rats!"

Savvidge, looking as savvidge as a savvidge, took a savvidge stride towards the fag. But the little Japp was too quick for him. He caught the booly round the waste, and, with a clever trick that he had learnt in Jappan, he sent the hooge Sixth-Former sprawling.

Savvidge fell like a log, and lay proan. As falls the giant oak, so fell he. He was down, defected, dished, diddled, and done!

At this junkcher who should come on the seen but the Head?

"What is the meaning of this?" he cried horsely.

Yo Sang eggspalined.

"This big broot tried to booly me, sir," he said. "He has already put forty fags through the mill this evening, but I wasn't going to let him do the same to me. By means of a Jew-jitsoo trick I konkered him!"

The Head looked grim.

"This is news to me," he said. "I had no idear that Savvidge was such a boolying beast. Get up, you fulking lout, and lissen to me! You're going to get it in the neck for this!"

"Please, sir—" began Savvidge, rising to his feet.

"Dry up!" snapped the Head, in his most dignified manner. "Don't bandy words with me, you rotter! You shall pay dearly for these outrages! I'll sack you from St. Bill's, bust me if I don't!"

"Mersy!" walled Savvidge.

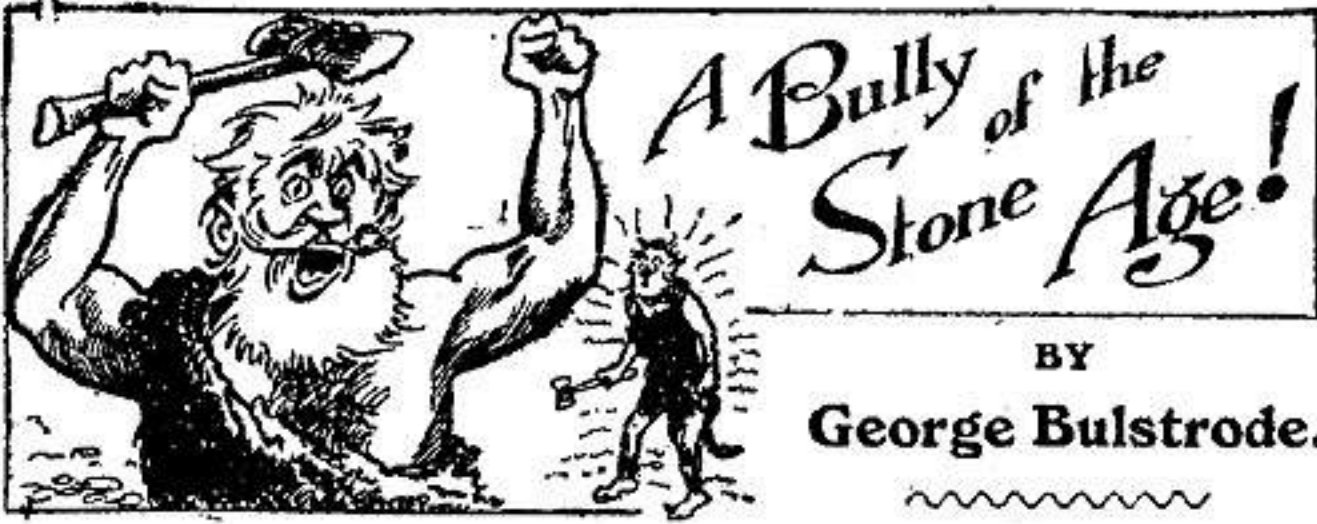
"Mersy!" echoed the Head skornfully. "What mersy did you show to your poor victims? You went for them baldheaded, and now I'm going to give you a dose of the same fizzaick!"

Savvidge was given a public flogging in Big Hall. The Head gave him a hundred strokes, and he would have given him more, only he happened to split the birch in half.

What was left of Savvidge departed by the next tran. And thus St. Bill's was rid of the biggest booly who had ever disgraced its historrick foundation!

THE END.

A special "Energy" number next week!



BY
George Bulstrode.

THEY called him the "Red Terror," because he had red hair and a bushy red beard. The youngsters of to-day would have called him a king "beaver."

His real name was Wulfstein. Sounds a bit Hunnish; still, he was British all right. Wulfstein stood twelve feet in his sandals. This may seem absurd; but in those days a six-footer was quite a pygmy.

I won't give you Wulfstein's chest measurements and the measurements of his biceps, because they would startle you and stagger you. And, anyway, you wouldn't believe me. Imagine Sandow and Hackenschmidt and Joe Beckett rolled into one, and you will get some idea of what the Red Terror was like!

He was the biggest bully in Ancient Brit, was the Red Terror. His motto was "Might is Right," and he put it into practice on every occasion. He bullied his fellow-countrymen into giving him what he wanted. He bullied a well-known firm of contractors into hewing him a cave out of the rock. He bullied the king into making him an O.D.E. He bullied his neighbours; he bullied his wife; he bullied everyone with whom he came into contact.

"By my halidom," he used to declare, "I will bully the king into handing over his throne, if I get half a chance!"

And the more the Red Terror bullied the more power he gained, until he came to be looked upon as the most mighty man of the time.

Now, at that period there lived in the ancient fortress of Londicusa a youth named Ethelbert, so called because his mother's name was Ethel and his father's was Bert.

Ethelbert was a fine little fellow of fourteen. He was quite one of the "nuts," so to speak. His goatskins fitted him to perfection.

One evening Ethelbert was sitting in the entrance to his cave, reading the "Boys' Friend"—(Draw it mild, Bulstrode! We know that the "Boys' Friend" is one of the oldest boys' papers in existence, but it doesn't date back to the Stone Age!—Ed.)

As I was saying, Ethelbert was reading the "Boys' Friend"—which in those days had its stories carved on to the wall of each cave—when in came his father.

The old man was in a bad way. His nose was swollen to twice its normal size. His ears were thickened. His front teeth were missing. He had obviously been in the wars.

"Gadzooks, pater!" gasped young Ethelbert. "What's happened to thy chivvy, forsooth? Hast fought a fierce duel with a giddy dragon?"

"Nay, my son!" moaned the parent. "The fact is I fell into the clutches of the Red Terror, and he hath disfigured my countenance!"

Ethelbert sprang to his feet. "Tis high time the Red Terror was cured of his bullying habits!" he exclaimed.

"Ay, but who can do it, lad?"

"I can!"

"You?"

"Yea, verily, and in good sooth! I will challenge the Terror to a six-round fight on the cliffs!"

So saying, Ethelbert went striding forth from the cave.

The boy's pater yelled after him in alarm: "Come back, my son! This is madness—madness, I tell ye! Thou wilt never come home alive!"

"Rats!" said Ethelbert gaily. And he went on his way.

In due course he arrived at the Terror's cave, and, in a loud, clear voice, he challenged him to a fight.

The Red Terror laughed so heartily that the walls of the cave rocked to and fro.

"Ho, ho, ho! Thou hast a sense of humour, young jackanapes! Why, I could batter thee to pulp with my little finger!"

"Better try it on, then!" said Ethelbert boldly.

Together they went out on to the cliffs, and a goodly crowd assembled to see Ethelbert commit suicide—for that was what it seemed like.

The boy's head hardly came up to the Red Terror's waist. And his arms were like straws by comparison with the giant's huge, knotted biceps.

The Red Terror bent down, and murmured in Ethelbert's ear.

"I would fain deal leniently with thee," he said. "Run home to thy mother, whilst thou hast the chance!"

Ethelbert laughed scornfully.

"No jolly fear?" he exclaimed. "Thou art going to get the licking of thy life!"

With this, he sprang at the towering form of the bully, and proceeded to climb up him with the agility of a monkey.

The Red Terror tried to shake the boy off, but without success. Ethelbert clung to him like a leech.



Securing a foothold on the giant's hip-muscle, Ethelbert dashed his fist in the Red Terror's face.

At length, securing a foothold on the hip muscle, Ethelbert dashed his fist into the Red Terror's face.

Biff! Thud! Biff! Thud!

A great, bellowing roar of anguish came from the Terror. He encircled young Ethelbert with his arms, nearly crushing the life out of him.

But the boy stuck gamely to his task. He peppered and hammered at the giant's eyes and nose and mouth and chin. The eyes were soon closed, and the nose was swelling visibly.

The spectators looked on spellbound.

Biff! Clump! Smash! Thwack!

The Red Terror could endure that hurricane of blows no longer. His great head fell back, his arms relaxed, and he went crashing to earth like a giant tree!

Ethelbert dropped to the ground on all fours. Then, picking himself up, he bowed politely to the crowd.

As for the Red Terror, he lay insensible for hours. And when at last he managed to crawl back to his cave he was a broken man. His power had gone; and from that time he ceased to be the biggest bully of Brit.

**BOYS OF GREYFRIARS!
DON'T BE BOOLIED!**

(Glance below.)

TAKE LESSONS IN SELF-DEFENCE
AT THE BUNTER SCHOOL OF
FIZZICAL CULTURE, STUDDY
NO. 7.

KONKER YOUR NERVOUS FEERS!

STOP MAKING YOUR LIFE A
MIZZERY BY BEING KICKED AND
CUFFED ALL OVER THE PLAICE!

Lissen to what some of my pupils say
about my wonderful sistem of instruction!

ALONZO TODD, ESQ., writes:

"Before taking your course I was lean, skinny, and ugly. I used to flee in terror from bigger boys, and would never have dreamed of standing up to them in fistic combat. I am now a fine, vigorous specimen of British boyhood, and I fear no foe in shining armour! I scarcely know how to express my gratitude for the benefits I have gained by your valuable tuition. You may publish this testimonial with the greatest of pleasure."

WUN LUNG, ESQ., writes:

"Me velly muchee pleased with your wonderful lessons. Me no longer showee whitee feather when Big Bully Bolsover swoop down on me. Me standee up to him, and biffee and clumpeeo him until he howl for mercy. Me sendee herewith your fee of half-a-crown, in Chinese money."

ROBERT CHERRY, ESQ., writes:

"Bunty boy, you are a giddy marvel! You know what a timid weakling I used to be. I used to squeal like a terrified mouse if a fellow threatened to give me a thick ear. Before I took your course of tuition, I would run a mile rather than face your minor or Dicky Nugent! But now—why, I am as strong as a merry ox! I can lick anything on two legs! I owe it all to you, Bunty, and I shall recommend all my pals to take your course of instruction. I enclose the half-crown fee, and an extra half-crown for yourself. You can make use of this testimonial in any way you like."

THESE LETTERS FORM JUST A
SELECKSHUN, TAKEN AT RAN-
DUM FROM MY TEN THOUSAND
TESTIMONIALS! THE REMAINING
NINE THOWSAND NINE HUNDRED
AND NINETY-SEVEN CAN BE
SEEN AT MY SCHOOL OF FIZZICAL
CULTURE.

N.B.—I will pay the sum of ONE
HUNDRED POUNDS to any fellow
who can prove that the above testi-
monials are faked!

DON'T BE BIEFED, BOOLIED,
BASHED, AND BADGERED!

TAKE A COURSE OF INSTRUCTION
RIGHT AWAY!

(Signed) W. G. BUNTER,
Porker-Weight Champion of
Greyfriars.

Introduce the MAGNET to your friends! No value like it on the market!

OPEN LETTERS TO GREYFRIARS BULLIES!

To GERALD LODER, Sixth Form.

Lanky Lout,—Yet again you appear to have been on the warpath. You found Nugent minor, Gatty, and Myers playing football in the Sixth Form passage, and, instead of contenting yourself with cuffing them, you hauled them into your study and belaboured them with a belt. It is said that Gatty nearly fainted as a result of your brutality.

Every time we hear of a parallel case to this we shall not hesitate to expose you in the GREYFRIARS HERALD. The thought that the Head may read this paper will doubtless make you shiver in your shoes. Personally, I sha'n't be sorry if the Head does see this. He will hold an inquiry, and you will find yourself in that undesirable thoroughfare known as Queer Street.

Your bullying tactics are sufficient to make the very walls of Greyfriars rise and mutiny!

Yours contemptuously,
HARRY WHARTON.

To ARTHUR WOODHEAD CARNE, Sixth Form.

Contemptible Cad,—As a bully you have only one superior at Greyfriars—your pal Loder.

Whilst acting as referee in a fags' hockey-match on Saturday you lost your temper over a mere trifle. Snatching Bolsover minor's hockey-stick out of his grasp, you forced the fag across your knee and chastised him unmercifully.

We are sending a petition to Wingate, captain of games, requesting you be debarred in future from acting as referee in any match. A referee should, above all things, be cool-headed. Nothing can excuse your barbarity, and I hope you will be made to pay a heavy price for your ill-treatment of Bolsover minor.

Yours grimly,
HARRY WHARTON.

To PERCY BOLSOVER, Remove Form.

Dear Bolsover,—It is a pity you don't fake a leaf out of your minor's book, and try to be a little less of a cad and a little more of a sportsman. You are not a hopeless case, by any means, and at times you act quite decently. But you ran amok with a cricket-stump the other day, just because a small fag had annoyed you. Not content with chastising the culprit, you lammed a number of innocent kids into the bargain.

Unless you keep a firm rein on your temper, you will find yourself court-martialled by the Form, and sentenced to a punishment that will make you squirm. I give you fair warning.

Yours,
HARRY WHARTON.

Alonzo in a footer jersey—a sight for men and little fishes!

TURNING THE TABLES!



By Wun Lung.

Lanky bully Loder
Say to me, "Be quickee!
Lay my study table
Or I lickee-lickee!"

Me reply to Loder,
"Me no slave or navvy.
Lay your study table?
Li'l Wun Lung no savvy!"

"Then I'll make you savvy,
Pigtailed little pest!
Will you do my bidding,
And follow my behest?"

Me return no answer.
Loder mighty strongee,
Pick me up by pigtail,
Cally me alongee.

"Work, you Chinese heathen!
Get my supper ready!"
Me pick up the teapot,
Hurl it at his headee.

Loder spin round sideways,
Fall with mighty crashee.
Out of bully's study
Wun Lung swiftly dashee!

When me next see Loder,
Bump is on his nuttee
Size of pigeon's eggee.
Who's to blame? Tut-tuttee!

Lofty, lanky Loder,
Velly muchee solly
That he tried to fag me—
It was fatal folly!

NO FILES.

"Well, John," said the doctor, who had been rather rudely roused from his afternoon nap, "what's wrong with you?"

"I've sprained my wrist rather badly, sir," explained the blacksmith.

The doctor examined the wrist, and looked grave.

"Thomas," he called out to the surgery boy, "go upstairs and bring down that phial on the table."

With indignation in his face, the blacksmith started to his feet.

"File!" he yelled. "No, you don't! If this hand's got to come off, you'll use a knife or an axe!"

MORE REPLIES TO READERS!

By HARRY WHARTON.

"Tiny Tot" (Northampton).—I am afraid a special Babies Number would not appeal to the majority. We cater for those who have grown out of the long-clothes and feeding-bottle stage!

"Gay Sport" (Wimbledon).—Yes, I hope to attend the English Cup Final at Wembley Park. But I won't ask you to look out for me, because you might miss me among the eighty thousand odd spectators that will be present!

"Right-Half" (Gosport).—Greyfriars Remove were knocked out of the Public Schools' Cup contest by St. Jim's, after two drawn games. We hope to go farther and fare better next season.

J. W. H. (Nottingham).—We hope to have another Fashions Number later on. Lord Mauleverer hopes to wake up in time to contribute to it!

"Candid" (Cheltenham).—You are not the first person who has charged me with being unfair to Billy Bunter. You say he doesn't get a fair show in the "Herald." Well, he has a column to himself every week, which I consider ample, bearing in mind that he also has a paper of his own. Most editors would give Bunter a miss altogether!

"Young Blood" (Bromley).—You are wrong in supposing that our special Fags Number dealt with cigarette-smoking. It was a number edited by Dicky Nugent. Smoking is a subject which we bar from the "Herald."

B. R. (Stafford).—Is Bob Cherry still our Fighting Editor? Yes, as lots of long-haired poets and writers of piffle know to their cost!

"Heraldite" (Handley).—I cannot ask Dick Penfold to write an Ode to a Bad Egg, as you suggest. The subject is not sufficiently savoury.

"Horace" (Hastings).—I can't agree that we are always running Coker down. The truth is, Coker is always running us down—on his motor-bike!

"Up-to-date" (Brixton).—"Why haven't you a telephone in Study No. 1?" We've been agitating for one for months, but the powers that be have turned a deaf ear to our petition.

"Merry Joker" (no address).—"I am sending you a 'Sonnet to a Squirming Slug.' You won't use it, I know, so you can go and eat coke!" The slug wouldn't be the only thing that squirmed if we had you here!

"Jimmy" (Basingstoke).—"I have just bought a tame rabbit." We see nothing in this statement to rouse our editorial excitement.

"Maisie" (Birmingham).—"When you get tired of running the 'Herald,' please hand it over to Billy Bunter." Dear lady, we shall never get tired!

FRIENDS AT LAST!*(Continued from page 12.)*

sticking here, and we're going to help you!"

"You can't help me! Nobody can help me!"

"We can try," said Harry Wharton. "If it's true what you say—and I believe it—you want help badly enough. Clearing off like this won't help; it will only make you look guilty if you're accused. There must be some way out of this, and we're going to help you find it!"

"You can't!"

"Give us a chance," said Bob. "Lee, old man, you saved my life, and I'm going to stick to you like glue! Leave it to us, and we'll see you through somehow!"

Lee drew a deep, almost sobbing breath.

"You want to stick to me, after what I've told you? I tell you I shall be sent to a reformatory—very likely to prison!"

"If that's the case, you won't get clear by running away," said Wharton. "The police would find you fast enough if they wanted you."

"I know—I know! But it wouldn't be at Greyfriars then," muttered Lee huskily, "before a crowd of fellows!"

"I understand. But, all the same, you ought to stay," said Harry. "We'll help you somehow; there must be a way. Look here, old chap, you've stood it a long time; stand it for one day more while we think out what can be done to help you!"

Lee made a hopeless gesture.

"I told you all this to make you let me go. I—I couldn't stand it if anybody else knew!"

"We shall say nothing, of course."

"Of course!" said Bob reproachfully. "You can trust us, Lee. Stick it out for another day, and if nothing can be done we'll help you to clear."

"I don't care!" said Lee. "I'm getting past caring for anything, I think. But I'll stay, if you choose. It won't do any good!"

"While there's life there's hope!" said Bob. "Come on!"

He slipped his arm through Jim Lee's, and the three juniors returned to the Remove dormitory together.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.**Harry Wharton Takes Control!**

USELESS!"

"But, my dear chap—"

"Useless, I tell you!" said Lee wearily.

It was after morning lessons the following day. The morning had been painful enough for Lee. Mr. Quelch's eye was upon him very grimly more than once, but the Remove master had not spoken to him on the subject of the talk the previous day. Doubtless Mr. Quelch was still turning that matter over in his mind, reluctant to act hastily in so very strange a juncture.

But Lee felt the suspicion in the eyes that turned on him occasionally with keen scrutiny, and writhed under it. He regretted now that he had yielded, and remained at the school. The end could not be far off, he felt; and Wharton and Bob, however keen to do so, could not help him. After lessons were over that morning the two juniors walked Lee away by themselves, leaving Johnny

Bull, Nugent, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh wondering what was "up." But Lee was feverishly anxious for his miserable secret to be made known no further, and so the rest of the Co. had to be left out of the affair.

Wharton's opinion was that Lee should tell his story to Mr. Quelch, as he had told it to the chums of the Remove. But Lee persisted that it was useless.

"Useless!" he repeated. "I tell you it wouldn't do any good. How could he believe me? My word—with such a tale—my word with no proof! It's useless!"

"Quelch is a downy old bird," said Bob Cherry sagely. "He would very likely understand—"

"Even so, he could not help me. Nothing can help me. It's in Ulick's power to send me to prison—and he will do it. You'd better have let me clear."

Wharton shook his head.

"We're going to help you out," he said. "It can be done, and it shall be done. I wish you'd told us this sooner; we should have understood you better, old chap. If you won't speak to Quelch or the Head—"

"Useless—useless!" repeated Lee.

"There's Inspector Grimes, at Courtfield," said Wharton quietly. "He's a keen man—and a police officer. Come with us to Courtfield after dinner, and let us consult the inspector."

Lee quivered.

"I—I can't! I—I—"

"You've got nothing to fear, old fellow," said Harry. "If you're in Ulick Driver's hands, as you say, your position can't be worse. It will tell in your favour before a magistrate if you make a clean breast of it to the police. Dash it all, that's what the police are for—to protect the innocent from the guilty! Mr. Grimes will listen to you. If he doesn't believe the story, it will make matters no worse. And if Driver gives you away, as he threatens, the inspector will know then that it is true, and he will be bound to speak up for you."

"Good!" said Bob, in relief.

Lee stood hesitating.

After his long and bitter loneliness, it was oddly pleasant to him to have these two friends, deeply concerned in

his fate, ready to do anything they could to help him. But he had little faith in help from anyone. He had lost all hope. It was rather to please Wharton and Bob than from any belief that it would help that he assented at last.

"Well, it won't do any harm!" he said at last. "Mr. Grimes won't believe a word of it; it sounds too wild. And when Ulick denounces me, he will get it done through a third party not connected with himself at all openly. I tell you he's cunning, and guards himself at every point. He knows he has nothing to fear from me. But I'll come if you like."

"Good!" said Harry.

Perhaps Wharton had little hope; but, in such a strange state of affairs, he was willing to catch at a straw. And he knew that, at least, it was only sensible to get advice from an older head.

After dinner the three juniors wheeled out their bicycles.

"Whither bound?" called out Johnny Bull.

"Tell you later, old scout!" answered Bob Cherry.

And the trio rode away to Courtfield, leaving Johnny rather astonished.

At Courtfield Police Station Wharton asked to see Inspector Grimes. He had met that gentleman more than once. The three juniors were shown into the inspector's room, and Mr. Grimes greeted them politely, though evidently a little puzzled by the visit from three schoolboys.

Wharton plunged into the matter at once, Lee, silent and crimson, feeling his position acutely enough. The inspector's plump jaw almost dropped as he listened to Wharton.

"Come, come!" he ejaculated. "If this is one of your little Greyfriars jokes, Master Wharton—"

"Nothing of the kind, sir," said Harry earnestly. "I know it sounds thick, but we believe every word Lee has told us. In fact, we know it's true, from a lot of circumstances."

"Every word, Mr. Grimes!" said Bob Cherry.

The inspector fixed his eyes very keenly and curiously on Lee's flushed face.

It was easy for him to read the signs of haunting trouble and distress in that handsome face, and his own look grew very serious.

"If there is anything in this," he said, "it's my duty to go into it. I will ask you a few questions, Master Lee."

"Ask me anything you choose, sir," said Lee. "I don't expect you to believe me, but I shall tell you nothing but the truth."

"I fancy I shall be a pretty good judge of that," said Mr. Grimes, with a slight smile. "You state that your guardian Mr. Ulick Driver is a crook keeping up an outward appearance of respectability."

"That is so."

"When did you first learn this?"

"Just before Christmas."

"In what way?"

"I left my preparatory school at the end of the term," said Lee. "I went home to River Lodge—that is Mr. Driver's house—near Kingston. I knew it had been arranged for me to go to Greyfriars—Mr. Driver's old school. After I had been at home a day or two I was sent to make some purchases for my guardian, and given three five-pound notes to change. I did not suspect for

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THIS
NEWS!**

□ □

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a moment that there was anything wrong with them."

"And after that?"

"The following day Ulick began to give me hints about what was expected of me when I went to Greyfriars. I did not understand at first, but he let it out a little at a time—I suppose so that I should get used to the idea. I understood it all at last. I—I was—was overwhelmed—" Lee's voice shook. "I am dependent on him. I had no other home. I did not know what to do. But I refused to do as he asked. I told him I would never be used as he planned. Then he told me—he told me that the banknotes I had changed were counterfeit ones—that it could be proved against me—" He broke off.

"And then you agreed?"

"No, no!" exclaimed Lee passionately. "I never did! But—but I did not know what to do. I felt like an animal caught in a trap. So it drifted on till I came to Greyfriars, but every time I saw him I told him I would not do as he wished. He wanted me to spy in the school for him, so that he could rob the headmaster at a time when there were valuables to be taken. He wanted me to make friends with the better-off fellows, and get a chance of getting into their homes in the vacation, so that I could help him to rob them. A lot more things— But I made enemies instead of friends. I—I was afraid I might yield, and so I put it out of my power to act as he ordered—"

He broke off.

"Poor old chap!" murmured Bob Cherry softly.

The inspector drummed on his desk.

"What is this Mr. Driver's present

occupation—his ostensible occupation, I mean?" he asked.

"He is supposed to be something in the City," said Lee. "He buys and sells shares sometimes. He paints, too. But all that is only a blind. He is a cracksman and a thief. I have seen things in his house which, after my eyes were opened, I knew must have been stolen."

Mr. Grimes' eyes glinted for a moment.

"Anything else?" he asked.

"There were rooms in the house that I was never allowed to enter," said Lee. "Something was going on there. Men used to come and go. I don't know what it was, but it was something illegal. I am sure of that."

There was a silence.

"You've told me a very queer story, Master Lee!" said Mr. Grimes at last. "Without an atom of proof—"

"I know that!" said Lee wretchedly.

"Mr. Driver, doubtless, would say that he has an ungrateful and evil-minded ward, who dislikes him, and has attempted to defame his character," said Mr. Grimes.

"Oh!" exclaimed Bob.

Lee nodded.

"I know, I know! I told Wharton it was no use to come to you. Even if you believe me, you can do nothing. And you don't believe me. I don't blame you. It's too steep, without any proof."

"Don't be in a hurry, young man," said the inspector. "No action can be taken without something in the nature of evidence; that must be clear to you. But"—the inspector paused—"taking it that this story is valid, you are willing to give me proof if possible?"

"There is no proof. I will do anything I can."

"I can only act unofficially in the matter, so far," said Mr. Grimes. "But if the story is true, proof can be obtained. Are you prepared to do exactly as I tell you, without saying a word outside?"

"Certainly."

"You place yourself entirely in my hands, and will carry out my instructions?"

"Yes."

"Very good!" said Mr. Grimes. "Then I will give you instructions, and if Mr. Ulick Driver is the man you declare him to be, I can answer for it that he will get his due, and that you will have nothing further to fear from him."

A quarter of an hour later, Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry and Jim Lee left the Courtfield Police Station together. And Jim Lee's face was brighter than it had been for weeks past, as he walked back to Greyfriars with his friends.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Snared!

ULICK DRIVER lighted a cigar, blew out a little cloud of smoke, and smiled genially.

The gentleman-crook had walked down the lane from Friardale Station, and turned into the footpath that led to the old priory in the wood. He seemed to be in a mood of great satisfaction.

As he came up to the rambling old ruins he caught sight of a boyish figure



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Does Alonzo seriously intend to become an athlete?

standing there, leaning against a mass of old masonry. It was Jim Lee of the Remove.

Lee stood as if sunk in thought, his eyes fixed on the ground, and did not seem to see the crook as he came up.

"Jim!"

Lee raised his eyes as his name was spoken. Ulick Driver gave him a pleasant nod.

"So you've come to your senses, Jim?" he said.

"You had my letter?" said Lee abruptly.

"Yes, and came at once," said Driver. "You've left it pretty late, Jim, but better late than never. You've played the fool, and you've come to your senses only just in time. Another day or two—"

"What then?" asked Lee.

The crook laughed.

"Never mind what then," he answered. "As it's all over, we needn't go into that. You've come to your senses, and you intend to obey orders, and that's good enough."

"I've not said that I intend to obey your orders, Ulick."

The crook's genial expression vanished like a mask that has dropped. His eyes glinted.

"What do you mean, Jim?" he asked between his teeth. "Is this some more fooling? By gad, if it is—" He broke off. "Tell me at once what you mean. If you've brought me here for nothing—"

"Suppose I wanted to make an appeal to you?" said Lee in a low voice. "Suppose I asked you to go your way, and let me go mine? Only to leave me alone, and not try to make me into a thief."

"So that is it!" said Driver savagely. "More whining. But, by gad, this is your last chance. If I go back to London with 'no' for an answer, look out for your punishment this very evening."

"If you make a charge against me, you will disgrace yourself as well as me," said Lee.

"So you've thought that out. You think that will help you?" sneered the crook. "Do you think I am a fool? The charge will not be made by me, but by one of the tradesmen you passed false money upon. What I do in the matter will be behind the scenes. I shall be the injured guardian—the kind-hearted benefactor who took a viper to his breast, and was stung in return. I shall receive public sympathy, when the ward for whom I have done so much is sent to a reformatory, or to prison. Cannot you understand that, you young fool?"

"I understand," said Lee. "But—"

"But what?"

"The notes you gave me to change, and which I believed to be genuine—"

"Prove that if you can!" said Driver contemptuously.

"At least I can say that I received them from you."

"Which I shall denounce as a wicked slander. Was anyone present when I handed them to you, you young fool?"

Lee bowed his head.

"I don't want to be hard on you, Jim. But you must obey orders. I've spent money and time on this scheme. I am not going to be a loser by it. Why do you think I wasted time and money on you for years? At Greyfriars you can be useful to me—you can repay all you've cost me, and put by a good sum for yourself, if you're sensible. It's the chance of a lifetime for you. What are you without my help? A beggar!"

"I know!" muttered Lee.



The box-room window was open; and a dark figure blotted the moonlight there. Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry knew that it was the outcast of the Remove. "Lee!" breathed Bob softly. The figure started violently and spun round from the window. (See Chapter 8.)

"Then have a little sense. Leave off your squeamish whining, and make up your mind to do what cannot be helped."

"What am I to do?"

"You know what you're to do. First of all, give me the information I've asked you for, about the interior of the school—there have been changes since my time. Find out when the crib is worth cracking—you are sharp enough for that—and let me know in time. Above all, stop playing your fool's game in the school—make friends. I have given you a list of the boys who are worth your while—Lord Mauleverer especially. Butter him up, make a friend of him. Why, you young idiot, if you could get asked home by Lord Mauleverer, and give us a chance at Mauleverer Towers, our fortunes are made. It might never be necessary for you to play that game again. I'd let you stay on at Greyfriars, and go on to Oxford, and see you through." The crook's voice was eager now. "Jim, can't you see what a chance you're trying to throw away?"

"I see."

Ulick Driver blew out a cloud of smoke and smiled again. He was assured now that he had won in the long conflict.

"That's sensible, Jim. You needn't owe me a grudge for the affair of the banknotes. I had to get a pull over you, to prevent you from throwing away my chances, and your own. Keep in with me, and do as you're told, and I shall make you rich."

"Rich, and a thief!" said Lee bitterly.

"That again? What's good enough

for me is good enough for you, I fancy. Answer me—yes or no?"

"No!" said Lee.

"By gad! I—"

The crook stopped suddenly.

From behind a mass of broken wall in the ruins two figures rose into view—the figures of Inspector Grimes of Courtfield and a constable.

Ulick Driver gazed at them, his jaw dropping.

He stood petrified.

It was only too clear to him that the two officers of the law had heard every word that he had spoken to his ward; that, indeed, they had been concealed in the ruins for that purpose.

The cunning, unscrupulous crook, for once in his lawless life, was caught napping, and taken utterly by surprise.

He stared at the two men, open-mouthed. Inspector Grimes, with a grim smile on his plump face, stepped quickly forward.

"Good-afternoon, Mr. Driver!" he said genially.

Ulick Driver panted.

His brain whirled for a moment. Never had the rascal been taken so utterly at a loss. His eyes turned on Jim Lee, standing pale and silent, and his look was murderous.

"You—you—" he choked. "You—you've given me away! You've fixed up this for me! You—" His rage choked his utterance.

Lee met his furious gaze steadily.

"Yes," he said unflinchingly, "it was the only way to save myself, Ulick; and, thank Heaven, I found a friend in this gentleman, who told me what to do. You can blame yourself."

Look out for next Monday's detective thriller!

"You—you——"

Ulick Driver's hand slid into his pocket, and it flashed out again with a revolver in it.

Leo faced him coolly, unmoved. Even the sight of the deadly weapon, with Driver's finger on the trigger, did not make him falter.

But the infuriated ruffian had no chance to use the weapon. Inspector Grimes, plump and portly as he was, was on the crook with the spring of a tiger.

Ulick Driver struggled furiously in his grasp. But the revolver was forced upwards, and as a shot rang out the bullet sped away harmlessly towards the tree-tops.

The constable's grasp was on the crook the next moment.

In the hands of the two officers, Ulick Driver still struggled desperately, striving to use the revolver. But it was wrenched from his hand, and the crook went to the ground heavily. A moment more and steel handcuffs clicked on his wrists.

Lee stood looking at him with a face of stone.

He had carried out the inspector's instructions without faltering. He could not pity the rascal who had tortured him so long, who, for his own evil ends, had sought to drag him into crime.

The inspector, if he wanted proof, had it now in plenty. Mr. Grimes slipped the revolver into his pocket.

"That will be wanted in evidence," he remarked. "You will find attempted murder a rather serious matter, Mr. Driver."

"A thousand curses——" panted Driver.

"That's enough."

Ulick Driver's eyes turned, blazing, on Jim Lee.

"You—you—you've done this! But you shall repent it! I——"

"What have you done to me?" said Lee. "You would have made me a thief, and ruined me for life because I would not become one. You've asked for this, Ulick; you've deserved it, if ever a man did. I'm not sorry for you. Take what you've deserved!"

Mr. Grimes jerked the handcuffed man to his feet.

"You'd better get back to your school, Master Lee," he said. "I'll let you know

when you're wanted. This bird has given himself away pretty thoroughly; but a visit to his house at Kingsion will be useful, and a search-warrant can be asked for now. I shall telephone to Scotland Yard at once, and I fancy they will make a haul on my information. I'm much obliged to you, Master Lee."

Mr. Grimes and the constable marched the prisoner away in great satisfaction. Jim Lee stood and watched them out of sight, and then turned slowly and made his way back to Greysfriars School.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

All Clear!

HARRY WHARTON and Bob Cherry were waiting for Jim Lee to come in. They joined him eagerly as he appeared in the old gateway.

"Well?" exclaimed both the juniors breathlessly.

Lee smiled faintly.

"It's all right," he said.

"Where's Driver?" asked Bob.

Jim Lee explained what had happened in the wood. The two Removeites listened with great satisfaction.

Bob Cherry threw his cap into the air in his exuberant delight.

"Good old Grimey! Jolly lucky you let us take you to Grimey, after all—what?"

"Jolly lucky!" said Lee.

"This sees you clear," said Harry Wharton. "The police know the whole story now, and know that you were innocent of doing wrong."

Lee nodded.

"Hurrah!" chortled Bob Cherry.

And the chums of the Remove marched Leo into the School House in a state of great delight.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, greeting Bunter with a mighty slap on the back.

"Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the row?"

"Beast!" gasped Bunter. "Ow! Wow, wow! Quelch wants Lee. Lee's to go to his study. Yow-ow! I hope it's a licking."

"I think I know what Mr. Quelch wants," said Lee quietly. "It doesn't matter now."

He proceeded to the Remove master's study. Mr. Quelch greeted him with a somewhat grim look.

"I have consulted the Head, Leo, with reference to the matter spoken of on Wednesday," he said.

"Yes, sir."

"Dr. Locke has requested me to deal with the matter, if possible. Unless you can give me a satisfactory answer, Leo, your guardian is to be communicated with."

Lee laughed; he could not help it. Mr. Quelch little dreamed where his guardian was at that moment.

"Lee! What——" exclaimed the Form master.

"Excuse me, sir. But you cannot communicate with my guardian, Ulick Driver, now."

"And why not?" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"Because he is in prison."

"Wh-a-a-t?"

"He has gone where he threatened to send me," said Lee. "I am safe from him now—the law protects me. I will explain to you now, sir, if you wish."

Mr. Quelch blinked at him.

"You are talking in riddles!" he snapped. "I command you to explain at once, Lee."

Lee explained.

Mr. Quelch looked like a man in a dream as he listened to the strange story. When Lee had finished, the Remove master, without answering a word, went to the telephone, and rang up Inspector Grimes at Courtfield. The answer he received from Mr. Grimes was enough.

He turned to Leo with a very kind expression on his face.

"My dear boy," he said, "you have been through a time of trouble and stress that might very well have been too much for your strength. You have come through this trial Leo, in a way that is to your credit. I wish you had asked me to help you——"

"I couldn't, sir," said Lee. "You wouldn't have believed me. Even the inspector did not believe me—only he took the chance of putting it to the proof in a way I never thought of. You could not have helped me."

Mr. Quelch coughed.

"Well, at all events, I hope I should have understood," he said. "But the matter is very happily ended now. It was a happy thought, at least, to go to the police——"

"Wharton and Bob Cherry made me go," said Lee. "I shall never forget what they have done for me."

"And now, Lee——"

Lee's face clouded.

"I am free from that man, sir. But I was dependent on him. I shall have to leave Greysfriars now. But I don't care! The money he paid for me was not his own. I never wanted——"

"Then you have no resources, Leo?" asked the Remove master.

"None, sir."

"What are you thinking of doing when you leave?"

"I don't know."

Mr. Quelch's usually severe face was very soft.

"My dear boy," he said, "you have acted with great courage, you have won a very hard fight. You have done what was right, and you will not find yourself without friends. You will come with me now to the Head. Dr. Locke must know this. And you will find a friend in need,

(Continued on page 28.)

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THE SCOTTISH INTERNATIONAL TEAM!

(THE MEN WHO BEAT ENGLAND.)

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It is not altogether a happy reflection for the people of England to think that the players born in Scotland should so frequently beat them on the International Soccer field. On forty-six occasions have the chosen of England and Scotland met in an International match, and of these Scotland have won twenty against fourteen English victories, the other twelve games having been drawn.

In the last two seasons the men from north of the Border have won by 3-0 and 1-0 respectively. When we come to look into the matter, however, there is even some sort of consolation for the people who live south of the Border. It is to be found in the fact that when Scotland chooses her team it generally contains a fair sprinkling of men who have had experience with English clubs.

It may even be suggested that these men, having learnt the rudiments of the game near their homes north of the Border, have become the greater footballers because of their experience in the rather different class of game played in England. Anyway, not for many years has Scotland relied solely on players actually with Scottish clubs, and this was the case last season.

The goalkeeper, Kenny Campbell, although connected with Partick Thistle at the time he played against England last season, has come back to England to play for New Brighton, and, of course, he played for many years for Liverpool. Then both the full-backs—Marshall and Blair—are associated with English clubs. Marshall, the right full-back, is perhaps the greatest defender in his particular position in the world, unruiled always, and as safe as the Bank of England. James Blair, who captained the side, played for a long time with the Wednesday of Sheffield ere going to Cardiff City, who he has helped to the best class of football.

Naturally, the successful Glasgow clubs contribute their share of Scotland's players each season. Gilchrist, the right-half, is one of them, and Gringan, the centre-half, is another; but the latter has also had English experience—with Sunderland. Neil McBain, the left half-back, is the player of Manchester United who has been the centre of much controversy in recent weeks. Incidentally, he is one of those men who found his most useful position by accident, for until he played with a Service team during the war he had always been looked upon as a forward.

Of the five forwards who beat England last April, three were Glasgow Rangers men—Archibald, the outside-right, a rare flyer along the right wing, while the left-wing pair, Cairns and Morton, have probably no equals as a couple anywhere in the world. As leader of the attack, there was a Middlesbrough man in Andrew Wilson, and he scored the all-important goal. Wilson is not one of those centres who believe in dashing up and down the field at top speed; rather does he wait for things to turn up. But when they do he can be depended upon to make the very utmost use of them.

Crosbie, the inside-left, is the Birmingham player for whom they paid a big fee to Ayr United some time ago. He is a brainy footballer, but rather lacking in thrustfulness in front of goal.

When Scotland's team next takes the field there will probably be one or two changes from the eleven successful last season. But, whatever the changes, the men who represent England can depend upon it that they will have no walk-over. The Scottish selectors seem to have a happy knack of getting a better blend in their International teams than the selectors of England's side.

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The Greyfriars Parliament

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A GOOD deal of interest was displayed in the chief subject under discussion at the weekly meeting of the Greyfriars Parliament.

The Speaker: "I have the pleasure to offer to the House the views of Reader S. J. NEVITT, Wansford, Clarendon Road, Watford, Herts, on Indoor Games. Reader Nevitt says:—'I consider indoor games a most fascinating subject. In the evening when it is too dark for outdoor games, such as football and hockey, there are plenty of indoor games. The best of these, in my opinion, is Table Tennis. You can either buy sets (and they cost very little) or make them. Many people imagine that all you have to do is to knock the ball over the net, hoping it will bounce on the other half of the table. But, of course, this is not so. Table Tennis or Ping-pong requires great skill. If people saw two famous Ping-pong players busy, the speed of the game would surprise them. Ping-pong calls for speed and brain, and can only be mastered by much practice. Ping-pong players are made, not born. The popularity of this game is growing immensely. Another indoor game is Blow Football. This is tremendously exciting as well. But then you know every detail of this game, and can judge the pleasure derived from it for yourself. Of course there are softer indoor games, such as Tiddleywinks, etc., but these do not come near the two games I have mentioned, and which should appeal to the heart of every British boy.'

Mr. Bunter rose at once, but was shouted down. The Member of Pufftown got as far as "I was only going to say—" but he never said it. After the turmoil had subsided (Mr. Horace Coker was threatened with expulsion) the Speaker called on Mr. Peter Todd.

Mr. Todd: "I must say I like what Reader Nevitt says, but I fancy Greyfriars has come to consider Ping-pong a bit old-fashioned, while—"

Mr. Bunter: "I will speak! There, keep your wool on, Wharton, old top. We are not among the fuzzy-wuzzies now. It's that bit about football."

The Speaker: "Well, what of it? The hon. member has contravened the rules of debate, but if Mr. Todd cares to give place—"

Mr. Todd: "Oh, pray don't mind me. Let the Bunter bird get it off his chest."

Mr. Bunter: "Thanks, Toddy, you burbling chump! I am the chap to speak on football. There isn't a fellow at Greyfriars who can play it like me."

Lord Mauleverer: "Thank goodness!"

Mr. Bunter: "His lordship can pretend to be sarcastic, but sarc. cuts no ice."

The Speaker: "What is the hon. member driving at?"

Mr. Bunter: "You will hear, if you give me a chance, Mr. Squeaker—always butting in."

The Speaker: "I can tolerate interruptions, and so-called witty asides from Mr. Coker, but I distinctly decline to be styled a Squeaker. I am not a Squeaker."

Mr. Bunter: "It was only a lapsus lingvo. I am here to defend the honour of the national, I would say the international game of football."

Mr. Nugent: "Oh my giddy aunt!"

Mr. Gatty: "Now we have got it! Bunter as a giddy champion."

Mr. Bunter: "I am a champion, but not giddy. I never am giddy. I do not suffer from vertigo, or coma. See me on the Mountains of the Moon out in Africa. I did not turn a hair."

The Speaker: "Well, what's it all about? Why this heat?"

Mr. Bunter: "Heat! I should say so. It makes my blood boil."

Mr. Teddy Myers: "Bunter on the boil!"

Mr. Bunter: "Cease this foolery! Are we football players at Greyfriars—are we or not? That's what I ask! I put it to you, gentlemen—and others."

The Speaker: "Is the hon. member suggesting that some members are not gentlemen?"

Mr. Bunter: "Take it or leave it, as they said to old Walker when the glue fell on him. Please yourself. Fish is not here. I am here as the representative of the honest men of Pufftown. They never falter at goals. They stand for a straight game. And now we, sitting here in our own House of Parliament, can remain quiet while anybody says 'Blow football!'—Gentlemen, it is an outrage!"

Mr. Tom Dutton: "Just what I think; slow football! Football isn't slow. It's the fastest game I know, and I am a bit of a dab at it myself. See me charging!"

Mr. Wibley: "Permit me to say that it is a pity, a thousand pities—"

Mr. Johnny Bull: "Take a million while you are about it."

Mr. Wibley: "This is trifling with the intelligence of the House."

Mr. Bob Cherry: "It isn't as if the House had much intelligence. Pity to trifle with what is there."

The Speaker: "Red herrings are being drawn across the track."

Mr. Tom Dutton: "What's that? You don't play football on a track. Surely the Speaker knows that much?"

Mr. Bunter: "I hold to my point. I am here for a cause, seemingly, to judge from the indifference of members, a lost cause."

Mr. Tom Dutton: "Now he's getting on to music. Why not stick to the point, or sit on it? Bunter sat on a pin the other day in his study. Old Toddy had put it there. Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Bunter: "What are you driving at?"

Mr. Tom Dutton: "You got talking about the Lost Cause. It's a song. An aunt of mine sings it when I am at home, and I wish she wouldn't. It makes me have that all-overish feeling."

Mr. Bunter (with magnificent tolerance): "I am speaking of causes. Surely Mr. Dutton knows what a cause is—as when Charles the First quite lost his head, or when Mr. Quelch gave up trying to teach Coker that twice two make four."

Mr. Coker: "You wait till I get you outside."

Mr. Bunter: "Things said in this House are privileged. Surely the thickheaded Fifth-Former knows that much? That's the beauty of it."

Mr. Coker: "I—I—" (Mr. Coker had risen to his feet, but he was dragged back, and Mr. Bunter was permitted to proceed.)

Mr. Bunter: "Even old Gosling knows better than to cast slurs on a noble game. Blow football indeed."

The Speaker: "Now we have it! There is an error here."

Mr. Bunter: "I don't think. I am speaking as editor, as champion of all sports, as—"

Mr. Kipps: "As champion cheesecake muncher."

Mr. Bunter: "A fellow of my marvellous brain capacity can afford to look with despicery on such trivial remarks. I know I am waxing thin under the enormous strain. It has come to this: I am Grayfriars, but, gentlemen, do I shrink from the immensity of the burden? Not so! I am ready, eye ready, as Nelson said at Trafalgar Square, and I am prepared to fight the matter to the end. As for football, it stands supreme, and if I chose I could play in any team."

The Speaker: "The hon. member is working himself into a passion for nothing."

Mr. Coker: "Silly ass!"

The Speaker: "Is that epithet addressed to the chair? If so I shall not hesitate to name Mr. Coker."

Mr. Coker: "No, you chump! I was referring to the porpoise."

The Speaker: "No nicknames in debate, please."

Mr. Coker: "You heard what he said about me, just because of my mistake in mathematics."

The Speaker: "I always bar personalities, but Mr. Coker must not be too thin skinned."

Mr. Bob Cherry (sotto voce): "Old Coker thin skinned, chap with a hide like a hippopotamus!"

Mr. Alonzo Todd (meekly): "If I might be allowed to speak after you have concluded with the sensitive epidermis of Horace Coker—"

Mr. Coker: "You just leave my epidermis alone, else you'll get a thick ear."

Mr. Alonzo Todd: "I have not the slightest wish to touch such a delicate subject. What I do want to say is that the interesting, indeed, if I may be permitted to interpolate the auxiliary adjective, the fascinating game of Blow Football, is really the only kind of footer to which I am constitutionally addicted. I like the touch of subtlety, and the opportunity for the intellect it affords."

Mr. Bob Cherry: "He means it's a jolly good game. So it is."

Reader Nevitt was thanked for his contribution, and the House adjourned.

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THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Unwelcome Client!

FULL-TIME football results! "Mazing murder in the city!" That was the cry, in the raucous voice of a newsboy, which greeted Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake as they followed their luggage porter out of Euston Station. The detective and his young assistant were setting foot in the metropolis for the first time since their visit to America.

"My aunt," ejaculated Jack Drake, with a happy grin, "it's good to be back in dear old London again! While the porter's getting that luggage on to a taxi I'll slip across the road and get a paper—must see how Chelsea and the Spurs got on!"

The boy purchased his paper, and tumbled into the taxi which had been secured. Locke tipped the porter who had brought their luggage from the train, and gave a curt direction to the taxi-driver:

"To Baker Street!"

As the taxi bowled out of the station yard the famous detective leaned back comfortably. It was Saturday evening, and he looked forward to a real rest till Monday morning.

As the taxi drew to a halt outside the detective's residence, the door of the house opened immediately. Revealed beneath the light of the hall was a small Chinese, whose passive yellow face showed no trace of the inward satisfaction that possessed him. This was Sing-Sing, the Asiatic servant of the great detective.

Having greeted his master, Sing-Sing helped to get the luggage into the house. Locke stayed to pay the taximan, tipping him handsomely, and then followed Drake and the Chinese indoors.

"Well, Sing-Sing," said the sleuth heartily, "you can bet we're glad to be home again. How's everything been going? All in order, eh?"

"Yessie, Missa Locke—everything in the garden is lubly, as Missa Drake say! I make a nice rabbit stew for supper to-night."

"Rabbit stew!" echoed Drake. "Oh, joy!" But Locke's keen eyes had noticed something in the demeanour of the Chinese which puzzled him.

"You've got something on your mind, Sing-Sing," he said, halting at the foot of the stairway. "Is there a pile of bills waiting for me?"

"Plenty bills, letters, telegrams, and all sorts, Missa Locke," replied Sing. He hesitated. And then: "Please, Missa Locke, it was no my fault. Me tellee him go away, but he stoppee here allee same. Me no savvy his name."

Ferrers Locke gave a deep groan.

"Where is 'he,' Sing-Sing?"

The Chinese nodded his head sorrowfully towards the consulting-room on the first floor.

"Well, Sing-Sing, you can be taking our luggage up and unpacking. Drake, you and I'll have a quick wash and brush-up, and then look in upon our unwelcome caller."

After a hasty and refreshing toilet, Ferrers Locke, followed by his young assistant, made direct for the consulting-room. As they entered, a stout, well-groomed man of about sixty years put aside a magazine and rose from an armchair to greet them.

"Mr. Locke! At last you are home!"

"Good-evening, sir!" said the detective, rather coldly. "You must excuse me if I ask you to state your business as briefly as possible. But I have had a long and tiring journey, and was not prepared to see anyone this evening."

"I know—I know, Mr. Locke," said the visitor, drawing a hand wearily across his forehead. "Your excellent servant did his best not to admit me. But I'm afraid I rather forced myself into the place. Learning from the morning papers that you would arrive home this evening, I determined to risk your displeasure, and see you at all costs."

The detective and Drake seated themselves, and the former waved the visitor back into the armchair.

"Have you read the papers of this evening?" asked the client. "No? Then you haven't learned about the amazing crime which was committed in the City this morning? If you will bear with me for a minute, Mr. Locke, I will briefly outline what occurred. For it is partly in connection with this terrible affair that I called this evening."

Fidgeting nervously with his necktie, the client resumed:

"At ten-thirty this morning a business man named Dobson Harper, of the Dobson Harper Straw-Paper Manufacturing Co., fell dead outside the main entrance to the premises of the Felix Fire Insurance Co.'s offices in Great Cannon Street. The street, at the time, was thronged with pedestrians and vehicles. Those who saw the man fall thought at first he had had heart stroke. But a stain of crimson showed on his clothes. Mr. Dobson Harper had been shot through the heart!"

As the visitor paused, Ferrers Locke said: "Perhaps, sir, before you go any further, you will enlighten me as to your own identity and your particular interest in this tragedy?"

The well-groomed City man in the chair fidgeted with his collar.

"I—I'm sorry!" he said. "Of course, I didn't give your manservant a card to hand you. My name is Theodore Murray. I am the managing-director of the Felix Fire Insurance Co., outside of whose premises this—this murder was committed."

"H'm!" murmured Locke. "The police have decided that it is a murder, then?"

"There is no doubt about it, Mr. Locke. I

was talking late this afternoon with a friend of yours who is in the Force—Inspector Pycroft by name."

"Ah, Pycroft has charge of the case, then?"

"Yes. His theory, right from first, was that a very modern pistol of French make was used in the terrible deed. This kind of pistol, according to Inspector Pycroft, is fitted with a silencer arrangement, and fires a peculiar type of copper-nosed bullet. Another amazing occurrence, which took place later, I will briefly outline. Early this afternoon a taximan was found dead beside his vehicle not far from a little place called Sudcombe, in Surrey—that's some distance south-east of Reigate, you know. This poor fellow had been fired at twice. Near him on the ground was a pistol of French manufacture, with ten copper-nosed cartridges still in the magazine."

"That's interesting," said Locke. "No doubt it has helped Pycroft in getting on the track of the assassin of Mr. Dobson Harper?"

Theodore Murray shook his head.

"I don't know," he said. "Pycroft was in no good humour when he called on me again this afternoon. He would not say much, but I gathered that the rain, which has been falling most of the day, had washed out the tracks of the assassin, who must have left the taxicab, and gone off afoot somewhere. Some fingerprints were found on one door of the taxicab, but none on the automatic pistol. But, of course, these fingerprints, if made by the assassin, will prove of no use, unless the find is in the Rogues' Gallery at Scotland Yard."

"Or until an arrest is made," said Locke. "I suppose Pycroft's theory is that the same man shot both Mr. Harper and the taximan?"

"Certainly. Pycroft reckons that Mr. Harper was shadowed until it was definitely seen that he was coming to the premises of my company. Then the shadower engaged a taxi, and as the vehicle passed down Great Cannon Street the shot was fired from the window. Later, on the principle that 'dead men tell no tales,' the assassin shot the chauffeur dead."

"Who was the taxi-driver?"

"A most respectable fellow of the name of Robert Brown, who lived in Camberwell. And now," resumed the insurance manager, "I come to that part of the story which chiefly affects me and my insurance company. Mr. Dobson Harper had his straw-paper works very heavily insured with us. Yesterday morning I received a letter from him. Here it is."

Mr. Murray took a missive from his breast-pocket and handed it to the detective. It ran as follows:

"Theodore Murray, Esq., Managing Director, Felix Fire Insurance Company.

"Sir,—If you will grant me an interview at your very earliest convenience, I will bring before your notice a matter of the

Ferrers Locke will be here again next Monday!

greatest importance to your company. Tomorrow (Saturday) at 10.30 a.m. would be a convenient time for me.—Yours faithfully,
DOBSON HARPER."

Ferrers Locke handed back the letter.

"You arranged the appointment, then? Have you an inkling of the 'important matter' to which Mr. Harper referred?"

The insurance manager wrinkled his brow.

"That's the unfortunate part of it," he said. "I have no definite idea of the subject at all. But certain circumstances of which I shall proceed to tell you may possibly have a bearing on the matter. As perhaps you know, Mr. Locke, the last few months have been among the most disastrous ever experienced in fire insurance companies."

The detective inclined his head slightly.

"My own company," resumed Mr. Murray, "has had to pay out no less than fifteen claims of over three thousand pounds apiece above the usual average during the last six months. Naturally, we have been extra careful in our investigations. Yet, although in three or four cases our experts found grounds for strong suspicion of incendiarism, we have been totally unable to obtain any definite proof of deliberate fraud against the company."

"I see," said Ferrers Locke; "and Pycroft's theory is that Mr. Harper's visit was in connection with something of this nature?"

"Yes; the inspector reckons that Harper knew of some business rival who, hard pressed for cash, deliberately set fire to his own premises to raise a lump sum by the insurance money. Harper was coming to lay information before me when this rival or some murderous agent of the man deliberately killed him to prevent the words from being spoken."

"Good old Pycroft!" said Locke, with a slight smile. "If that theory is correct, he and his men should speedily be able to unravel what mystery remains. The instigator of the murder must be someone who has had very intimate dealings with Harper. In all probability, it is someone with whom Harper has recently fallen out badly. However, I will undertake to investigate some of the recent fire claims made against your company."

Mr. Theodore Murray rose and clasped the detective's hand.

"Then you'll undertake the case? Come and see me at Great Cannon Street on Thursday morning, and you shall have access to our books."

"Very well, I shall be there—unless, of course, my old friend Pycroft renders it completely unnecessary for me to present myself. One question before you go: Can you give me a few details about your unfortunate client, Mr. Dobson Harper?"

"With pleasure. He was a middle-aged man, who, shortly after the war, established a factory in Bethnal Green for the manufacture of a patent kind of packing-paper. He has insured with us from the first for the sum of twenty thousand pounds against the loss of his premises and machinery by fire. At first his business gave every promise of being very successful. But it came to my ears recently that he had made a big loss on his trading during the last year."

After answering one or two further questions, Mr. Murray took his departure.

To Drake's intense surprise, no sooner had the insurance manager left the house, than Ferrers Locke announced his intention of paying a call.

The detective was absent from his chambers for nearly an hour. But he returned just at the time appointed for the introduction of Sing-Sing's rabbit stew to the supper-table.

"My hat, sir!" said Drake. "I thought you were going to have a nice restful evening."

"I haven't had a very strenuous one," remarked Locke, with a smile. "I've been sitting in a taxi most of the while. But, in addition, I've had a chat with Pycroft at Scotland Yard, and with him I went to the mortuary to view the bodies of the two murdered men."

"Any result, sir?"

"None. The mystery has deepened. Pycroft's men have scoured the neighbourhood of Sudcombe for clues of the assassin, but have drawn blanks every time."

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Fire at Markheim's!

TING-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling!

Ferrers Locke awakened with a start. On the solid mahogany cabinet by the side of his bed the telephone-bell was ringing furiously.

Never did the detective feel more like hurling the instrument into the middle of the room than at that moment, for a glance at the illuminated dial of the clock on the mantelpiece told him that it was barely seven o'clock.

"Hallo!" said Locke, taking down the receiver.

A voice at the other end of the wire spoke excitedly for a couple of minutes. Once during the monologue Locke made a pencilled note on the writing-pad which was always kept to hand on the cabinet.

At last, after a brief "Very well," he hung up the receiver and leaped out of bed. A hurried sluice in icy-cold water invigorated him, and he hastily dressed. Stepping noiselessly from his room on to the landing, he ran into Jack Drake, fully dressed like himself.

"Drake! Why the dickens aren't you beneath the blankets?"

"I heard the phone, sir. Knew it must be something important for anyone to ring you up at seven o'clock in the morning. So I prepared in case you wanted me."

Locke clapped the youngster on the shoulder.

"Good lad!" he said. "But there was really no need for you to have got up this morning. However, now you are fully awake and dressed, you can come with me if you like. I'll explain everything while we're on our way."

They obtained a taxi in the Marylebone Road, and Locke gave an address which set the driver heading eastward at a rattling pace through the almost-deserted City.

"We're on our way to Carton Lane, which is situated at the back of St. Paul's," the detective informed Drake, as they sat side by side in the taxi. "There has been a robbery and a fire in the cloth warehouse of Alexis Markheim, and Pycroft is at the place now."

"Did Inspector Pycroft notify you of the occurrence, sir?"

"No; it was our unwelcome visitor of yesterday—Mr. Theodore Murray, of the Felix Fire Insurance Company. You see, he had informed the police of his suspicions that his company was being swindled. Very wisely, too, he had supplied them with a list of all the firms in the London area which were insured in his firm. And he requested the police that in the event of a fire taking place at any of the addresses given, he should be notified. Well, he was informed by telephone at his private address of a fire at Markheim's, who are insured with the Felix. Then Murray immediately got on to me so that I could personally investigate the matter immediately on behalf of his company."

Arriving in Carton Lane, Ferrers Locke paid off the taxi. There was little excitement in the narrow thoroughfare, which was flanked on either side by gaunt and grimy looking cloth warehouses and show-rooms.

A burly police-constable and two or three early-morning loungers outside of one of the buildings indicated the position of the warehouse of Messrs. Markheim & Son.

The policeman touched his helmet as Ferrers Locke approached.

"Inspector Pycroft is inside, Mr. Locke," he said. "He expected you to come."

"Thank you, my man."

Ferrers Locke, followed by his young assistant, entered the cloth warehouse, which showed little signs of having been the scene of a conflagration. A dark-haired, olive-complexioned youth—an employee of the firm—who had been summoned from his home at Aldgate, was nosing about among a number of bales of cloth. In response to an inquiry from Locke, he jerked his thumb down a flight of stone stairs.

Descending the stairs, Locke and Drake found a small group of individuals gathered in the dim light of the basement. One was a fireman who had been left as a guard in case of any fresh outbreak of fire among the cloth bales. An elderly and rather disreputable-looking man was sitting on a wooden box, his hands thrust between his knees. The keen, trained eyes of the detective

and his assistant at once noted that a pair of "darbies" encircled his wrists. Beside the fellow stood a burly policeman, and near by was Inspector Pycroft, of Scotland Yard.

"Ah, here you are, Mr. Locke!" said the inspector, shaking hands. "He turned and greeted Drake. "How are you, Jack, my lad? You're looking fit after your trip 'across the pond.'"

Ferrers Locke touched the inspector on the sleeve.

"I see you have made a capture, my dear Pycroft," he murmured softly.

"You bet I have, Mr. Locke!" said the inspector in a hearty voice, which caused the unfortunate prisoner to look up with a start. "I delayed his departure for the station for a little, as I thought you might like to see him. Knowing you had been engaged to work on behalf of the Felix Company, I thought you would show up on the scene."

"That's very good of you, Pycroft."

"Not at all—not at all," said the inspector. "But let me say here and now that old Mr. Murray, of the Felix, has set you on a wild-goose chase, old man. He's got a bee in his bonnet that half the fires that have taken place in London and the provinces during the last six months were deliberately started with the idea of extorting money from the insurance companies. Rot! That's the only word to describe it, old fellow. Still, you've got to earn your salt, and I know that old Murray was mighty keen on you coming along here."

"He was," said Ferrers Locke, ruefully. "Well, what happened exactly, Pycroft? The fire didn't do much damage in this instance. But it was deliberately started, I see."

He indicated a splash of oil on the foot of the lowest stone step beyond a heap of charred cloth and debris.

"The fire was deliberately started all right," admitted Pycroft. "There are signs that a couple of thieves broke in through a window at the back of the premises. They were not after cloth on this occasion; it was money they wanted. They ransacked the till in the office on the first floor. But there was only some petty cash—about nine shillings—in the place. That young clerk you saw nosing about upstairs told me that. We sent to Aldgate for him, after having got his address from the night-watchman."

Locke glanced in the direction of the handcuffed man, who maintained a morose silence.

"Yes, that's the watchman," said Inspector Pycroft, following the other's gaze. "I've got him all right. He was in league with the thieves. In my opinion, he put 'em on to the job."

"H'm!" murmured Ferrers Locke. "It's rather surprising he should have put 'em on to taking a paltry nine shillings in cash, isn't it?"

"Ah, that's just the point," said Inspector Pycroft in a triumphant tone. "The watchman—Grayson's his name—thought that quite a large sum of money had been left on the premises. That clerk you saw upstairs heard Mr. Markheim junior tell Grayson that he was leaving three hundred pounds here, which he had been unable to deposit in the bank in time. But the clerk says that, unknown to Grayson, Mr. Markheim took the money away with him yesterday afternoon, deeming it would be safer in his own possession."

"Where is Mr. Markheim, Pycroft?"

"Both the father and son left yesterday to spend a day with some relatives in Manchester. This is a simple and sordid case of robbery and arson, and I flatter myself that I've got one of the culprits here."

The old watchman sitting by the constable gave an angry snarl, and vehemently protested his innocence.

"Better keep your mouth closed, dad," said Pycroft, in kinder tone. "I've warned you once that anything you say may be taken down and used in evidence against you."

"Perhaps, Pycroft," murmured Locke. "you wouldn't mind giving me a few details of the fire and the capture of this unfortunate man."

"I'll give you the whole thing in a nutshell," said Pycroft, drawing his chest up a little. "This is the way I figure things. Grayson told a couple of his pals that there

On no account miss "The Face on the Film!"

would be a good haul of money from a robbery of these premises. He let them work their own way in by the back window to take suspicious from himself. Then he struggled silently with his pals to get his clothes disarranged a bit, and let them gag and bind him."

"With what?"

The Scotland Yard man pointed to a scarf and some cut and knotted cord which lay on an undamaged bale of cloth. Locke picked up the articles and began casually examining them as the inspector resumed.

"No need to say," said Pycroft, "that the intruders didn't gag and bind the watchman very tightly. And it was lucky for old Grayson that they didn't. Fed up with finding only nine bob, the precious pair upset a can of oil on some of the cloth, set light to it, and made their getaway. You can bet that the old man quickly got the gag and bonds off himself. He rushed upstairs, where he met a watchman from the opposite building who had been attracted by the smoke. This other chap with great presence of mind had put through a call to the fire-station, which is only a couple of streets away. The outbreak was got under in a few minutes."

"And what is the night-watchman's version of this affair?" asked Ferrers Locke.

"A pack of lies," said Pycroft confidentially, and in a low tone so that the prisoner should not hear. "I tripped him up right from the start by a rather smart question, although I say it myself."

"Indeed?"

"Yes; I asked him how it was that if he were either on the ground floor or the basement—the only parts of this building occupied by the firm of Markheim—he hadn't heard the thieves breaking in. He replied that he had heard a noise, and had gone out into the street, thinking it proceeded from there. Two hours ago there was a heavy shower of rain. Yet old Grayson's boots were as dry as a bone. I'm keeping that up my sleeve to use against him, as you may suppose. The old man was in this building when the thieves broke in."

Unconsciously, the worthy inspector had raised his voice somewhat while making his last emphatic statement. The old watchman employed by Markheim's, sitting with the "bracelets" over his wrists, overheard, and again came to life.

"You're right, copper," he said, in a restrained voice; "I lied about that."

Although Pycroft winced visibly at being addressed as "copper," his face revealed his pleasure at having his own deductions corroborated in so authoritative a fashion.

"There you are, Locke!" he muttered.

"I lied about going outside," repeated the old watchman, in the same restrained manner. "I didn't hear the thieves break in at all. I was down 'ere all the time—sleeping on that there stack o' cloth what got burnt up."

Pycroft's lip curled ever so slightly. He was used to hearing a variety of statements during the first period of a criminal's captivity.

But Ferrers Locke regarded the pathetic figure of the old watchman with a tinge of sympathy.

"It's a pity you didn't make that statement at first, Grayson," he said.

"It was my mistake, gov'nor. I didn't say nothin' about my goin' to sleep 'cause I was afraid o' losin' my job when Mr. Markheim got to know about it. Those thievish blokes had already got in when I woke up. One of 'em biffed me on the 'ead—you can feel the bruise—then they tied me up wi' some o' that packin'-cord, and shoved a dirty scarf over me mouth."

"Could you describe either of the men?"

"N-no. You see, it was pretty dark, and I was knocked out almost at once."

"Did you hear them talking?"

"Ay, I heard a few words. I was sort o' dazed in my mind after gettin' that bang on the head. The blessed brutes what done it reckoned they'd done me in altogether. I know. Anyway, they talked a bit between themselves quietly like."

"What did they say?"

"One bloke in a gruff voice says to the other: 'O' course, you've only just joined us.' I don't know what he meant. The same chap says a few moments later: 'I've gotter meet the boss at the house by the ring to-morrow night.' Then the other chap

asked somethin', and the first one says: 'In Surrey.'"

Ferrers Locke turned to the Scotland Yard man.

"Well, what do you make of that, my dear Pycroft?" he whispered.

Pycroft shrugged his shoulders.

"The old man told me that before," he said. "I doubt very much if any such words were spoken. The old boy has a pretty fertile imagination, I should say. However, I can soon test the matter. 'The house by the ring' is obvious. It either means the licensed house by the Ring at Blackfriars, or nothing at all. And the Ring is on the Surrey side of the Thames. There's a big boxing show at the Ring to-morrow night—there usually is on a Thursday. I shall have one or two smart men in the licensed house by the Ring to keep their eyes and ears open for anything out of the way."

The eyes of Ferrers Locke twinkled humorously.

"Really, my good Pycroft," he said, "that is a most ingenious deduction."

The inspector plumed himself.

Turning to Jack Drake, the famous detective asked the boy to switch on his electric torch. This Drake did. Beneath the strong light thus afforded, Ferrers Locke carefully examined the articles. The scarf—a greasy, dirty length of gaudily-coloured mercerised silk—particularly attracted his attention. He took out his magnifying-glass and went over it in detail. Then he drew a measuring-tape from his pocket, and took a couple of measurements. Finally, the sleuth held the scarf close to his nose, with a rapt expression on his face.

Inspector Pycroft was plainly impatient at this lengthy examination.

"There's nothing much to be learnt from 'em, eh?" he said, as Ferrers Locke lowered the scarf from his face.

"No," mused Locke; "beyond the fact that one of the rogues you are after is a skinny individual of Italian origin, with black curly hair and a cut on his neck, who has recently had a haircut, there is certainly not much to be learnt."

The eyes of the Scotland Yard man almost popped from his head.



The fire leaped at the detective's clothes, and little flames burst from the sides of his coat; but he reached the hall and dashed out through a swirling vortex of smoke and sparks, to fall senseless over his burden at the feet of Inspector Pycroft and Jack Drake! (See Chapter 3.)

"I don't think there's much wrong with it," he admitted modestly. "But presuming for a moment that the night-watchman's tale is true, I think it's a pity that he didn't get a sight of one of the rogues. There's this, however."

The inspector showed Locke a small, blackened medallion with a safety-pin attachment. On the face of it was a curious sign—a flaming torch.

"This is important," said Locke. "It was worn probably by one of the men who effected an entrance into this place."

"H'm! It's a puzzling sort of find," was Pycroft's comment. "There are all sorts of societies and gangs—secret and otherwise—which wear badges nowadays. I'll look into the matter."

Ferrers Locke fingered the other articles in his hand.

"Have you examined this cord and scarf?" he asked.

"Yes. There's nothing much to be learnt from 'em, though. The name of the makers on the scarf won't afford much of a clue, I'm afraid."

"A—a skinny individual of—"

"And probably he's left-handed," added Locke in the same gentle tone. "You should bear that in mind, Pycroft."

"Left-handed!" ejaculated the inspector. "Why, how the dickens—"

"This cord," said Ferrers Locke, handing the article in question to the other; "the knot you are touching with your right hand, close to where the cord is cut, was tied by a left-handed person. You can see how the cord fitted on the watchman's body. He couldn't possibly have tied the knots himself. Therefore it is safe to assume they were tied by someone who was standing or kneeling in front of him. No right-handed person would tie a knot of that particular type in that fashion."

"B—but how d'you make out that the fellow was skinny and of Italian origin, and—"

"Simple, my dear Pycroft. The scarf is old and greasy, and plainly shows the marks where it was last tied. Only a man with a skinny neck could have worn the article. There are some short, freshly-cut hairs adhering to the scarf. Also there are one

Dr two long, curly ones. There is a thin streak of fairly fresh blood, showing plainly that the owner of the neckwear had cut himself—probably while shaving. That the fellow was of Italian origin is revealed by a small blob of grease on the scarf and the odour of it. This grease is a hair cosmetic which only has a sale amongst Italians. It is called Florino-Napoli, and is a patent preparation. One of the chief ingredients is olive oil."

"Well, I'm blessed!" said Pycroft.

He paused, and then said:

"I'll go to the licensed house by the Ring to-morrow night myself, Mr. Locke. And you can bet I'll keep my eyes skinned for such a chap as you have described. Glad you thought my deduction about the Ring was good."

"Yes," said Locke. "As I said, I think it is most ingenious. Sorry I can't say that I think it's correct!"

"Eh?" said Pycroft, startled.

Ferrers Locke took the inspector by the arm.

"A man was assassinated outside the premises of the Felix Insurance Company," he reminded the Scotland Yard man. "Then a taxi driver was killed near Sudcombe. In my opinion, there is a link between those cases and this affair we are at present investigating."

"Nonsense, Mr. Locke!" said Pycroft.

"Think it over, old man," said Ferrers Locke gently. "Thanks very much for your courtesy of this morning. I hope I shall soon be in a position to repay it. Good-morning, Pycroft!"

Then, as the great detective started to mount the stone steps leading from the basement, he turned to the unfortunate night-watchman.

"Keep your pecker up, Grayson!" he encouraged.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The House by the Ring!

"**D**RAKE, my boy, put on your hat and your heaviest overcoat. We're going for a little motor run out into the country."

Thus Ferrers Locke as he entered the room at Baker Street where his young assistant was busy writing.

It was Monday evening. Dusk had settled over the grim old metropolis, and a steady rain was falling. By no means was it the sort of evening one would choose for a motor run. But Jack Drake donned his hat and coat without comment.

Well did the boy know that his chief had been engaged single-handed on some investigations concerning the case of the previous day. But he asked Ferrers Locke no questions. He was quite content to do whatever job the great detective set him and wait on the turn of events.

A magnificent grey Daimler car was softly purring outside the detective's residence. Locke ushered the boy into it, and spoke to the smart-looking chauffeur before he himself took his seat.

But no sooner had the sleuth settled himself on the soft cushions beside his assistant than he became communicative.

"Mr. Theodore Murray put this car at my service, Drake," he murmured. "The driver is a fellow named Jennings, a most trustworthy man whom I have known a long time. We are going down to Sudcombe."

"Sudcombe, sir. It was close to that place where they found the body of Robert Brown, the taxi-driver?"

"That's right, my boy."

He paused as the car swung swiftly round a corner. Then, taking a map from his pocket, he spread it on his knee beneath the electric light which glistened in the roof of the luxurious car.

"This, Drake, is an Army ordnance map of the district within a five miles' radius of Sudcombe. Now, see this." He indicated a small dot on the map with the point of a pencil. "This, my boy, in my opinion, is 'the house by the ring.'"

Jack Drake stared in astonishment.

"The house by the ring!" he echoed.

"Why, the inspector deduced that—"

"I know," said Locke with a chuckle. "To my mind a most dangerous incendiary gang is at work. The gang which was responsible for the deaths of Mr. Dobson Harper and the taxi-driver are also concerned in the

affair at Messrs. Markheim's. We know that the assassin of the taxi man made his getaway somewhere in the vicinity of Sudcombe. He must have found sanctuary in the district, I think. And, believing that the old watchman employed by Markheim, was speaking the truth when he said he heard one of the assailants use the phrase 'the house by the ring,' a sudden idea struck me."

He stopped to tell the chauffeur through the speaking-tube of a short cut to Westminster Bridge. Then he resumed.

"There are various kinds of rings, as you know, Drake," he said. "The worthy inspector took the ring to mean the famous boxing stadium. But it was hardly likely that one of the gang should tell the other that the boxing Ring was in Surrey. Everyone knows where that is. Besides, one wouldn't use the expression that it was in Surrey; one would say in the Blackfriars Road or in South London. You see?"

Drake nodded.

"I see your point there, sir. But what other sort of ring would a house be near?"

Ferrers Locke indicated a small, irregular circle on the ordnance map.

"That marks an old Roman encampment, Drake," he said. "It is a raised piece of ground, circular in shape, and with a hollow in the centre. There are numerous specimens of these old encampments—or rings, as they are called locally—in the Southern Counties. This particular one, which is about three miles from Sudcombe, is called the Pinberry Ring. There are numerous cottages near it, but only one building pretentious enough to be called a house. This is called Roman View. It is rented by a gentleman named Unwin Garfield. I have found out a good deal about his past history. One thing that interested me was the fact that he started life as a clerk in a fire insurance company in Newcastle. He is now reputed to be an exceedingly wealthy man."

"My hat, sir!" cried the boy in frank admiration. "It is a giddy marvel the way you cottoned on to that clue! So we're likely to have an adventure to-night?"

"I shouldn't be surprised," said Locke. And he added with a chuckle: "But I'm afraid that poor Pycroft won't have one in the Blackfriars Road!"

After crossing the Thames the car made rapid progress, and before six o'clock it drew up at a spot indicated by Locke some distance from the little village of Sudcombe. After telling the man to await his return the sleuth set off afoot with Jack Drake by his side. Soon they turned off the road and strode along swiftly and noiselessly on the soft turf of a meadow beyond a hedge.

By this time the rain had ceased. A pale, watery moon shone a faint light over the dreary landscape. To the right of them they could see the contour of the Roman encampment, Pinberry Ring. Ahead gleamed a yellow light from the window of a fairly large mansion. This house, Locke whispered to Drake, was Roman View.

Suddenly the detective gave his assistant the signal to halt. Someone was approaching hurriedly up the road on the other side of the hedge. As the pedestrian passed the watchers caught a glimpse of him. He was a slight man of an apparently swarthy countenance. But the light was too bad to distinguish his features properly.

That the solitary wayfarer was making his way to the large house seemed clear. Locke and Drake followed silently on the other side of the hedge. But to their surprise their quarry eventually entered a small outhouse—a tool-shed—and closed the door.

A long wait ensued. Then, taking a revolver from his pocket, the detective and his assistant cautiously crept nearer, and, slowly opening the door of the tool-shed, peered in. It was empty!

"There must be a secret passage from this place to the house, Drake," muttered Locke. "Stay here awhile. I think I can get a peep into the lighted window of the house."

By cautiously climbing a great elm which grew at the side of the house, Ferrers Locke was able to peer between the slats of the venetian blind. Two men were in a large and well-furnished room. One was a thin, foreign-looking man, with short, curly black hair and a small scar on the side of his neck. The other was a broadly-built, middle-aged Englishman of the type commonly met

with in the professional classes. Both were poring over some account-books on a table.

For some time Ferrers Locke maintained his position in the tree, watching. But when he saw the man, whom he rightly guessed to be Unwin Garfield, replace the books in a safe, he descended and rejoined Drake.

"I'm afraid I must do a little house-breaking to-night, my lad," said the sleuth. "But the time is not ripe yet."

By the closed door of the tool-shed the two waited in silence until nearly eleven o'clock. No one emerged from the shed, and Locke expressed the opinion that the foreigner must be staying the night at Roman View.

The lights in the house had been out for some time when the detective left Drake and mounted the tree again. From a branch of it he swung himself on to a water-pipe which ran down the wall of the house. Then, gaining the sill of the window of the room in which he had seen the two men, he quickly and silently effected an entrance.

With the aid of his electric-torch, Locke examined the small safe. It had a combination lock, and, placing his head close to it, the detective set to work with delicate fingers to manipulate the disc. In a few minutes he had unravelled the combination and unlocked the safe—a feat of which the cleverest cracksmen might well have been proud.

Quickly he glanced over the contents of the safe, examining the papers and ledgers beneath the ray of his torch. Then, selecting two of the books, which he eventually crammed into his pockets, Locke shut the safe and took his departure. Without mishap he rejoined his assistant.

"Drake," whispered the sleuth hurriedly, "I have made discoveries of the utmost importance. You must remain here. If that foreigner or anyone else comes out of the house or shed, shadow him. If not, remain at this spot until my return. I hope to be accompanied by the police then."

With that, Ferrers Locke sped away back to the tired chauffeur, who was drowsing peacefully in the waiting Daimler.

"Wake up, man!" he cried. "Drive like the blazes to Sudcombe!"

Arriving at the village, Ferrers Locke knocked up the local doctor and explained that he must use his telephone on a matter of the greatest urgency. Learning the identity of his midnight visitor, the practitioner readily gave permission. In less than five minutes Ferrers Locke was through to Scotland Yard, with Inspector Pycroft on the other end of the wire.

"Hallo, Pycroft!" said the detective. "This is Ferrers Locke speaking. What luck did you have at the Blackfriars Ring? None, eh? Hard lines, old man! But listen to me! I'm going to give you the chance of making the greatest coup in your career. No, can't explain over the phone! Pile into a couple of fast motor-cars, with a dozen of your best men, and meet me as soon as you can at the cross-roads near the Green Man Inn, three miles west of Sudcombe. That's all!"

Ferrers Locke paced restlessly up and down the road near the Green Man Inn by the side of the big Daimler car. Every now and again he glanced at his watch. He had been waiting, as it seemed to him, for ages.

"At last!"

A whirring crescendo of sound fell on his ears, and two big touring-cars bowled up laden with men. Out of the leading car sprang Inspector Pycroft of Scotland Yard.

"Well, here we are, Mr. Locke! Perhaps you'll explain—"

"Quick! Take a glance at these!"

Ferrers Locke pushed a couple of books into the hands of the inspector, who held them in the light of one of the lamps of the Daimler.

"Great Scott!" said the inspector. "These books are stamped with the Sign of the Flaming Torch! This one seems to be an account of transactions in setting fire to business premises!"

"That's so," said Ferrers Locke. And in a few words he explained how he became possessed of the books. "This man, Unwin Garfield, who rents Roman View, is the head of a most amazing incendiary gang. Setting fire to business premises for unscrupulous traders who are going bankrupt and need

ready money has been his speciality. His transactions are all set down in a most business-like way in one of those books you are holding. The other book contains the names of past and present members of the fire gang, and particulars of some initiating ceremonies and oaths. But let us get to the house!"

Arriving at Roman View with the Scotland Yard men, Locke at once sought out Drake. The boy reported that no one had left the house or shed. The sleuth then made a rapid disposition of the men. Two he ordered to remain by the door of the tool-shed. Others, with Drake, he set at various points about the house. Then, with Pycroft and two others, he went to the front door and loudly knocked.

Some minutes elapsed. Voices sounded within the house. Then an ill-favoured man, wearing pyjamas and an old coat thrown over his shoulders, peered out. At once one of the Scotland Yard men covered him with a revolver.

"Quick—upstairs, Pycroft!" Leaving the man who had opened the door in the charge of their comrade, Ferrers Locke and the inspector rushed up the stairway. A partially-dressed figure darted into a room leading off the landing and banged the door.

"Garfield!" said Locke. He and the inspector put their shoulders to the door, but it was solid, and resisted their efforts. But at last, with a combined rush, they burst it in. Immediately a cloud of smoke blew into their faces. The safe was opened. The books and papers had been strewn over the floor. A can of oil had been hastily upset on them, and a light applied. Unwin Garfield was nowhere to be seen.

"Fire!" The cry was raised from outside the building. "There's at least one other man in this house!" gasped Locke, staggering back. "We must find him! Garfield must have left by some secret exit."

But although a rapid search was made the foreigner whom Locke had seen with Garfield on his previous visit was nowhere to be found. The idea struck them that he had been captured by some of the men outside. But such had not been the case. Unwin Garfield himself, though, had emerged by the way of a secret passage and out of the door of the tool-shed. There he had been promptly captured by the two officers whom Locke had posted in readiness.

Suddenly a cry rose from Drake's lips. "Look! There's a chap on the roof!" He made a dash towards the entrance of the house, but Ferrers Locke roughly hauled him back.

"No, you don't, my lad!" cried the detective. "The house is too well alight. I can't afford to have you burnt!"

And, so saying, Locke dashed into the house himself.

"Good heavens!" panted Inspector Pycroft. "He's mad! The place is becoming a raging furnace."

But the brave detective had little difficulty in reaching an attic and getting out of the skylight. To a chimney near by was clinging the foreign-looking man, squealing pitifully. He had rushed nally to the roof in a panic on becoming aware of the police raid.

"Get inside!" ordered the detective, pointing to the skylight. The fellow continued to cling tremblingly to the chimney. His nerve had gone completely.

Locke knew there was no time for dalliance. He grabbed the coward and dragged him back into the attic. Then, slinging him over his shoulder, he dashed headlong down the stairs. Volumes of smoke poured upwards at him, but he gained the first floor.

Here the sides of the banisters were in flames. The detective's lungs felt like bursting under the density of the acrid smoke. He knew that the man he had rescued had fainted.

The fire had got at the sleuth's clothes, and little flames burst out from the sides of his coat. His hands blistered; sparks flung into his face, stabbing him like the points of needles.

But he reached the hall and dashed out through a swirling vortex of smoke and sparks, to fall senseless over his burden at the feet of Inspector Pycroft and Jack Drake.

For the next few days, Ferrers Locke occupied a bed in the Sudcombe Cottage Hospital. His burns, though painful, did not prove to be serious. And the satisfaction of having brought to book one of the most amazing gangs in the history of crime aided his recovery.

Unwin Garfield proved to be the leader of the incendiary gang. The foreigner whom Locke had rescued, imagining himself to be dying after he had been removed to hospital, confessed all. He said that he was an Italian named Matteo Mallinni, who had resided in Soho for the past few years. He was Garfield's right-hand man. He it was who had murdered Mr. Dobson Harper and the taxi-driver. This was at Garfield's instigation.

Garfield, it appeared, had approached Harper, who was fast heading towards bankruptcy, with the suggestion that he should have a fire on his premises. Harper pretended to acquiesce, with the object of finding out more. Then he had notified his intention of informing the manager of the Felix Company. He had been warned by Garfield of the danger of such a course, and had paid the penalty for his courage.

Nine other members of the gang, all of whom had sworn allegiance to Garfield and his Sign of the Flaming Torch, were rounded up by the police. In the books that Ferrers Locke had obtained from Roman View before the building was destroyed was found sufficient evidence to send all of them to long terms of penal servitude. Unwin Garfield and the Italian, who, among his other crimes, confessed to the affair at the premises of Messrs. Markheim & Son, paid the extreme penalty of the law.

Furthermore, a vigorous campaign by Inspector Pycroft, and his men unearthed the part which several prominent business men had played in frauds against the insurance companies. Alexis Markheim and his son were among those sentenced to imprisonment. They had conspired with Garfield to have their premises fired so that they could secure a large sum from the Felix Company on account of insurance.

THE END.

(Be sure and read "The Face on the Fibre!"—next Monday's grand story of Ferrers Locke.)

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FRIENDS AT LAST!

(Continued from page 20.)

Lee, in your headmaster, and another in your Form master. Come!"

All Greyfriars knew the strange story of Jim Lee on the following day. There was plenty of information in the newspapers, for that matter, for anyone who cared to look for it there.

Ulick Driver was in prison, with a variety of charges hanging over his head. His house had been raided by the London police, and unlimited evidence had been found there of his way of life. Two of his rascally associates had been found there and arrested. The blow had fallen utterly without warning, and the crooks had had no time to prepare for it. They were in the hands of the police before they knew there was danger. Lee was the cynosure of all eyes at Greyfriars. The new boy's secret was a secret no longer—the schoolboy hermit's motives were known now and understood; and it was known that in spite of his rascally relation, he was straight as a die. Lee

had been without a friend in the Remove, but it seemed now that all the Remove fellows were his friends.

They were pleasant days for Lee—the few remaining days that he spent at Greyfriars.

All the Remove would have been glad for him to stay; indeed, Bob Cherry declared that he wouldn't let him go.

But older and wiser heads decided that it was better for Lee to leave—though not friendless as he had expected. It was better for the boy to make a fresh start where he was not known, after the sensation of Ulick Driver's trial and condemnation had had time to die away.

But he was not friendless now. The Head and Mr. Quelch had talked the matter over, and some of the school governors—among them Major Cherry and Colonel Wharton—interested themselves in the matter. Jim Lee had fought an up-hill fight for honour and right, and won it; and he was not left unrewarded. His future was in the care of friendly hands, and his heart was light when he quitted the old school, sorry as he was to leave his friends there.

Harry Wharton & Co. gave him a great send-off when he went. The Famous Five were on the platform when Jim Lee's train started. And Billy Bunter rolled up unexpectedly to say good-bye.

Lee shook hands all round with the Famous Five twice over, and then, smiling, shook Bunter's podgy hand.

"Sorry you're going, old chap," gasped Bunter. "Awfully sorry! But before you go, old chap, there's one thing—rather important—"

"Buck up, Bunter, train's going!" bawled Bob Cherry.

"Shut up! I say, Lee, it's rather important!"

"What is it, Bunter?"

"I'm expecting a postal-order—"

"Wha-a-at!"

"If you wouldn't mind handing me the five bob now, I'll send the postal-order on when it comes— Yaroooooh!"

Billy Bunter roared as Bob jerked him back from the train. But it was only just in time. The train was moving.

"Good-bye, Leo! Best of luck, old chap!"

"Good-bye!"

"I say, you fellows," howled Bunter, "you interrupted me! The least you can do now is to cash my postal-order—"

But that postal-order was never cashed!

THE END.

(Next Monday's ripping yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars will send you into roars of laughter. The title alone—'Alonzo, the Athlete!'—speaks for itself. Don't miss it, chums!)

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