

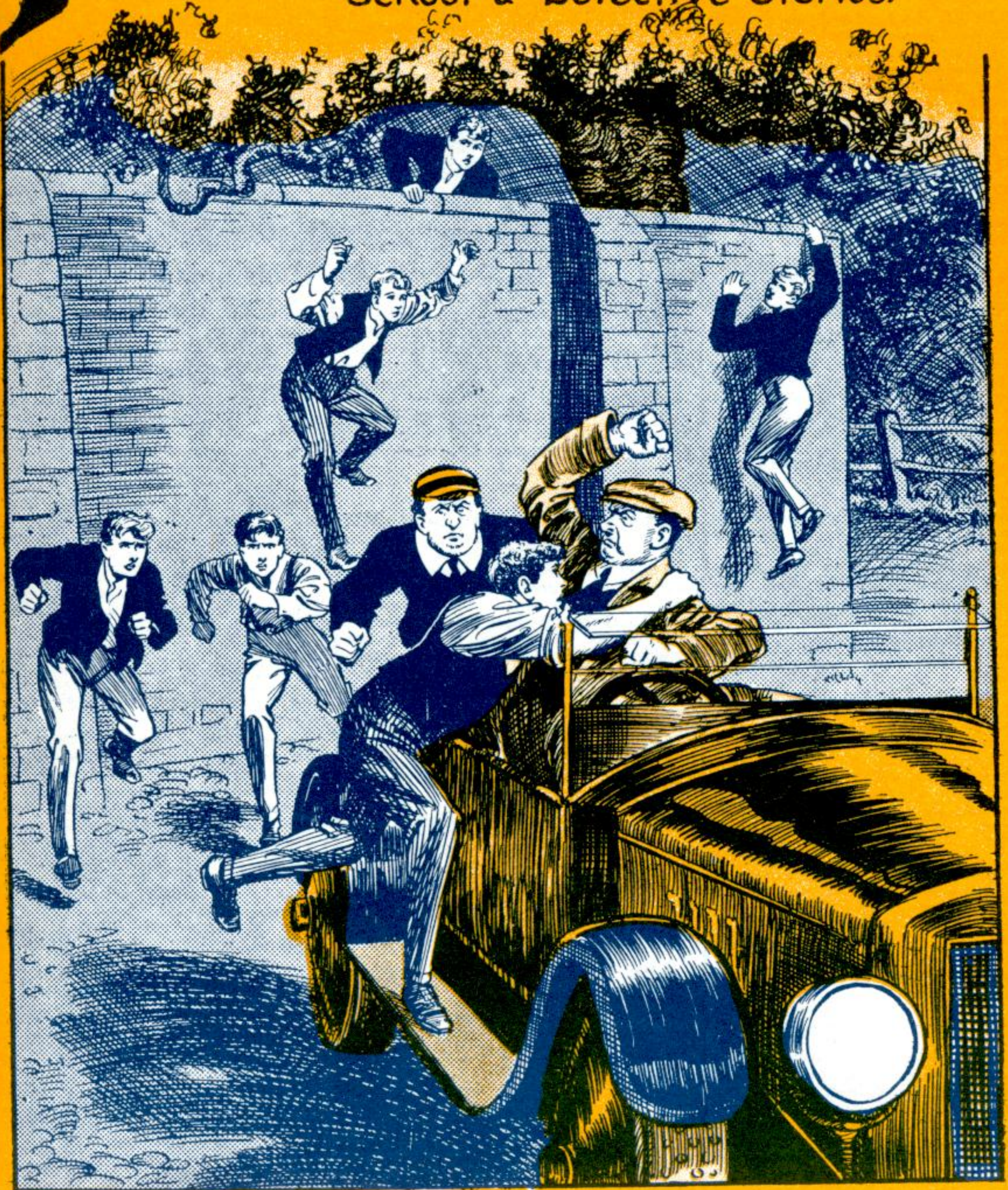
YOU WANT THE BEST STORY PAPER? HERE IT IS!

No. 790. Vol. XXIII. Week ending March 31st, 1923.

The Magnet 2^d

Library

School & Detective Stories.



AFTER THE THIEF IN THE NICK OF TIME!

(An exciting episode from the powerful story of Harry Wharton & Co., inside.)

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





"THE JESTER OF GREYFRIARS!"

SKINNER is a bold and venturesome fellow, as well known for his partiality to wit as he is for his highly developed bullying abilities—when the other party carries no weight! In next week's yarn of Greyfriars we find Skinner at the top of his form; not a conspicuously great form, but such as it is we are at liberty to give Skinner credit for, and one can even congratulate him on his hardihood. He rushes in where more experienced people would hesitate, but the result is hilarious, so all is well.

One expects to find plenty of humour and sparkle round about All Fools' Day, and there isn't a reader of the MAGNET who will not feel a debt of gratitude to Skinner for what he does in this amusing yarn, in which the fun is fast and furious. Of course, it is the fashion to run down Skinner. He gets reckoned in with all the meaner lights and toadies, and it has to be admitted Skinner has some very shady actions to his discredit. But he can play a better part. It will long be remembered to his credit the yeoman service he did for Billy Bunter by curing the sudden dumbness of the porpoise. The faculty of speech soon came back to the poor old Owl when Skinner bumped his cranium on the table. Drastic remedies are often excused by reason of their lightning-like effect.

Without a doubt, Skinner starts afresh in next week's tale. He plays up to the merry, jest-inducing spring-time. April the First has often shown a fellow in new colours. Mr. Frank Richards has hit on some very bright and engaging wheezes in "The Jester of Greyfriars." I refer you in confidence to next Monday's treat for full particulars, but don't run away with the notion that the kaleidoscopic and often fickle Skinner trots off with all the honours. He is not the only jester or quip merchant at Greyfriars, so he need not think it. April 1st is celebrated at the school in the most becoming fashion, and you will laugh over the story, and be ready to hand out the sympathy just where it is wanted. But I am not going into that matter.

AN APRIL FOOLS' SUPPLEMENT.

The "Greyfriars Herald" has a grand issue next Monday. The anniversary is duly honoured. Somebody must have started the business way back in the limbo of the bygone, but who the first April Fool may have been escapes me. Anyway, the worthy wight has left a handy date in the calendar for the benefit of the world. April jests are what people expect. These may be bags of soot and treacle, or the joke may partake of a subtler trend. If the latter is the case, so much the better for the useful individual who is the means, indirectly, of supplying a hearty laugh for others. Who would not be ready to

stand forward and sacrifice himself in the noble cause of laughter, and the dissipating of long faces? Have you never noticed how right down pleased the "victim" of an April jest always looks? You call the fellow a victim, but it's the wrong term. He is no victim, but rather the hero of the piece. It is said of Herminius in the Lays that he "started back," and as likely as not he had some adequate cause, but it would ill become the chief actor in an April joke to do any such thing. Let him go forward and be smothered by a booby trap, or otherwise immolate himself on the altar of good fun. I should like to point out that April the First has been dealt with in masterly style on this occasion. The journalistic spirits have risen to it like trout to the alluring fly. And there is heaps more to be said of the great day. You can see all the bright sparks of the staff hard at it, that is if you direct your mind's eye to the scene—inkpots upset in the excitement, groans over copy which some giddy genius has sent in, and Harry Wharton skipping round with his blue pencil.

"THE CLUE OF THE EIGHTH CHAIR!"

But it would not do for me to linger over the lightsome side of the picture. There is sterner stuff. I will say this for Mr. Owen Conquest's latest Ferrers Locke yarn, bearing the above title—namely, that it is one of the brainiest and most brilliant detective yarns ever penned. You find yourself in a perfect labyrinth of conjecture, and Ferrers Locke himself has a tidy time of it unravelling the tangled skein of black crime and sinister intrigue.

A SURPRISE IN STORE!

Among a horde of new features, I have an A1 competition coming very shortly, the most captivating which even the MAGNET can boast. Of this more anon.

THE WIRELESS DICTIONARY!

The useful guide to radio has settled down into a well recognised stand-by; but, of course, this was only what could be expected, considering the immense fascination of the subject.

THE FOOTBALL COMPETITION!

Those readers who have not as yet troubled to look into this business would be well advised to get on the track of the substantial money prizes which I am offering. It is cash for next to nothing, merely a little brain exercise, and that is good for everybody.

"THE PEN!"

This is the title of a new amateur magazine issued by Ernest C. Ford, 176, Essex Road, Islington, London, N.1. There will be very special features about this magazine which will make it of particular interest to all who are keen on amateur art and literary work. It will contain sixteen printed pages. Ernest C. Ford will be glad to hear from anyone who can assist him in the work of production, etc.

A NEW CORRESPONDENCE CLUB!

Mr. Alan S. Richards, 16, Upper Winchester Road, Blythe Hill, Catford, S.E. 6, informs me that he, in conjunction with F. S. W. Wiffen, Bridge End, Hocking, near Braintree, Essex, is forming a correspondence club, with amateur magazine, for the benefit of all readers of the Companion Papers.

CORRESPONDENCE.

F. H. Harris, Ebor House, 16, Acland Road, Willesden Green, N.W. 2, wishes to hear from readers on the subject of the "Holiday Annual."

H. Morgan, 36, Longford Street, Regent's Park, N.W. 1, wishes to hear from readers interested in his forthcoming amateur magazine. The magazine will cover a lot of subjects, including wireless and cinematography.

H. Page, 115, Durham Road, Newport, Mon, wishes to correspond with readers in Australia, South Africa, and Canada. Subjects: All kinds of sports, also to exchange postcards and newspapers. Ages 14-17.

Olive Morgan, MacPherson Street, Clapham, South Australia, wishes to correspond with readers in England and America. Ages 14-15.

Albert E. Walker, 58, Constance Street, Valley, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere, interested in stamp-collecting. All letters answered.

J. Harris, Stokedayle, 26, Balfour Road, Ilford, Essex, wishes to correspond with readers interested in theatricals and entertainments.

Leslie Riley, 5 Bray Street, Erskineville, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere interested in stamps.

Gerald McBrien, 42, Mountpottinger Road, Belfast, wishes to correspond with readers interested in boxing.

E. M. Stainer, 19, Northbrook Road, Lee, London, S.E. 13, wishes to correspond with readers overseas for the exchange of foreign stamps.

W. Morrison, 38, Edward Street, Deptford, S.E. 8, wishes to correspond with readers interested in cricket in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

R. Petts, 24, Faraday Road, Wimbledon, S.W. 19, wishes to correspond with readers in Ireland, Australia, and America. All letters answered.

Will Alex Laing, of 20, Woodworth Avenue, St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada, write to A. Beasley, 243, Market Street, Shawforth, near Rochdale, Lancs?

T. Young, Reception House, Bridge Street, Paisley, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere. Ages 14-17.

Your Editor.

A smile, a laugh, a roar—next Monday's MAGNET!



A Message From The Sea!

: : BY : :

Frank Richards.

A long complete story of Greyfriars, with a powerful mystery theme, which finds its solution at the hands of Harry Wharton & Co.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

In Distress!

HARRY WHARTON sat up in bed in the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars and listened intently.

It was a wild, wintry night. Outside, a fierce gale shrieked and howled round the ancient roofs and turrets of the school with fiendish violence. Sweeping gusts of rain and sleet struck the windows of the dormitory, making them rattle and shake, while doors creaked and groaned all over the building.

But though the noises of the storm were terrifying enough, it was another sound which had caused Harry Wharton to sit up and listen. His straining ears had caught a curious, muffled, booming sound, carried by the wind from seawards—a sound that seemed to tell of tragedy and disaster happening out there on the storm-swept sea.

Owing to the storm the juniors had been unusually late in falling asleep. But, try as he would, Harry Wharton could not sleep. For hours he had lain there listening to the tumult outside and the soft breathing of his schoolfellows inside.

Now, however, as he sat up on hearing that ominous booming sound he discovered that he was not the only luckless fellow who could not sleep. From a bed near him another dim figure sat up.

"That you, Harry?" came Bob Cherry's drowsy voice. "Still awake, then?"

"Yes. I thought I was the only one awake, though, Bob. How these chaps can sleep through all this awful din beats me. But I say, did you hear that noise just now—a dull, booming noise?"

"I fancied I did—yes. You think it is—"

"A rocket-gun," said Harry gravely. "I'm sure of it. And that means a wreck, Bob. I pity any vessel-in distress out there on a night like this!"

Bob Cherry nodded in the darkness. His usually cheery face was now grave. The two juniors sat up in bed motionless, hardly hearing the incessant roar of the storm as they listened apprehensively for a repetition of that dread sound again.

1 It came again at last, clearly and distinctly this time, above the voice of the storm.

Boom!

As they heard the deep, ominous note the anxious faces of the juniors whitened, and their hearts began to thump faster. Hardly had it sounded, however, when Harry Wharton was out of bed and at the tall window, peering out into the inky blackness of the storm-filled night.

For a moment he could see nothing, and then he caught a swift glance of a blue streak of light that shot up into the inky-black sky, startling him with its vividness.

There was no doubt about it now, unfortunately. Somewhere out there off that rock-bound coast a vessel was in danger, hapless men were fighting for their lives.

"It's a signal, right enough," said Harry unsteadily. "It's a rocket fired from the lifeboat-station."

In a flash Bob Cherry was out of bed and standing by his chum's side, staring into the murky confusion outside in breathless silence.

Hearing the sound of voices, others were by now awake in the dormitory, and from several beds came drowsy questioning.

"What's the matter?"

"What are you chaps doing out of bed, Wharton?"

"Phew! What a storm! Anything wrong, you fellows?"

Someone produced and lighted a piece of candle, and then Wharton turned away from the window.

"It's a vessel in distress, I think," he said. "Bob and I heard the signal go, and I've just seen the light of the rocket from the lifeboat-station."

"My hat!"

Faces went tense and white in the candle-light, and a low murmur of excited chatter arose. It ceased, however, as yet again came that sullen, dull, booming echo through the night. A rush was made for the window, and many of the juniors were just in time to see the warning signal streak across the sky.

Billy Bunter, who was sitting up in

bed with the clothes huddled round him and looking like a great gargoyle, gave an excited gasp.

"I say, you fellows, can you s-see the wreck?" he inquired.

"No, you ass!" said Harry Wharton, turning away from the window. "It was only the— What are you doing, Bob?"

Harry broke off with that startled question on seeing that Bob Cherry was huddling on his clothes as fast as he could.

"I'm going to see the wreck, if there's any chance," said Bob grimly.

"It's jolly risky!" muttered Harry uneasily. "There'll be trouble if—"

"Blow trouble!" rejoined Bob Cherry. "It isn't every night we get the chance to see a wreck. Besides, we may be able to help."

"That's true," said Tom Redwing quietly. Tom Redwing was the son of a sailorman, and it was not so long since he had been a sailorman himself. He knew that every hand was of help on such an occasion as this. "I'm coming, too, Bob Cherry!" he added.

"And I!" said Johnny Bull and Hurren Singh almost together.

There would doubtless have been more willing to risk breaking bounds that night, but just at that moment a heavier gust than ever shook the building, and the sound of the fierce sheets of rain and hailstones hurled against the windows acted as a strong deterrent.

"Not for me—no jolly fear!" remarked Bulstrode, pulling the sheets closer round his shoulders. "It's bad enough listening to it in here, without going out in it without reason. What good can you idiots do? Leave it to the coastguards and lifeboatmen, whose job it is!"

"Wouldn't catch me going!" said Stott.

"You silly asses can go if you want to, but you won't get me!" was Skinner's contribution.

That speech of Bulstrode's and the supplementary remarks of Skinner and Stott settled the matter for Harry Wharton.

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"Trouble or no trouble, I'll come, too, Bob!" he said.

"Count me in as well," added Frank Nugent promptly.

"Good! Then buck up!" urged Bob Cherry.

Once having resolved to go, the six juniors—Wharton, Cherry, Nugent, Bull, Hurree Singh, and Redwing—set about the business briskly. In a very few moments all were dressed, and within five minutes they dropped one by one through a lower box-room window into the glistening quad.

Then, turning up the collars of their raincoats, they started out.

Outside, the gale was worse even than it had seemed to be from indoors. The branches of the old elms in the quad swayed and shook grotesquely in the fury of the wind. Blinding gusts of icy rain and hailstones beat into their faces as they battled their way across the Close. They could scarcely see a yard before them, for moon and stars were hidden behind huge banks of flying clouds that overspread the sky.

Almost in silence the six adventurers clambered over the school wall and dropped down into the roadway. Then, staggering ahead, scarcely able to keep their feet, they battled seawards in the teeth of the gale.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Rescued!

"**P**HEW! What a night!" panted Bob Cherry breathlessly. "Hark to the breakers, you fellows!"

Confused and battered by the buffeting wind, with faces that burned and stung with the cutting hailstones that swept into their faces like showers of steel, the juniors had now come within sound of the waves. And a terrific tumult of sound it was.

They had had to fight every inch of the way, and the force of the wind, blowing dead on shore, grew more terrific as they advanced. They could see nothing of the sea as yet, but its spray was on their lips and showered salt rain upon them.

There was no mistaking the fact, however, that they were near it, for the roar of the breakers was deafening.

Then quite suddenly they saw lights flickering and dancing before them.

"Lanterns on the beach!" gasped Harry Wharton. "We're not the first, then."

With renewed energy the juniors staggered on, now with stinging sand and seaweed and flying blotches of foam blowing in their faces.

Almost before they were aware of it they felt sand and pebbles beneath their feet. Then dark groups of dim figures, some of whom held flickering lanterns, loomed before them.

Most of these were Pegg fishermen, with here and there a white-faced, silent woman. All were staring out to sea, and the juniors followed their glances.

They could see nothing at first—nothing but gigantic, white-topped waves racing shorewards, to break into masses of water and foam on the beach. The blinding wind, the flying stones and sand, and the awful noise confounded them.

Then they saw it—close in upon them.

It was a small fishing-smack, lifting and striking with inconceivable violence, helpless in the grip of sea and storm. Her mast was broken off short, and lay over the side, entangled in a maze of sail and rigging. A single glance was enough to show that she was doomed.

As his eyes fell upon the craft, Tom Redwing gave a cry.

"Good heavens! It's the *Cristabel*, of Pegg; I know the old boat well. An old chum of mine—Sid Hemsley—helps his father and another man to run her. If old Sid's on her now—"

He broke off with a gulp, and grasping the arm of a grizzled old boatman standing stolidly by, he asked a question, shouting to make himself heard.

"Yes; you're right, lad! It's the old *Cristabel* right enough," was the answer. "She's made her last trip, I'm afraid. And them poor souls—"

"But is nothing being done? What about the lifeboat?" said Tom Redwing, in horrified alarm. "Haven't they—"

"They've tried, you bet!" was the grim response. "But it ain't no good; couldn't get near her. No boat built could do it to-night."

"But—but is there no chance—no way of saving the crew?" cried Redwing wildly. "Couldn't—"

"There's a chance—ay," said the boatman, jerking his head in the direction of Pegg village. "They're fetching the rope-rocket from Pegg now. They'll save them poor chaps if—if the rocket don't get here too late."

And the old man turned his anxious gaze again towards the wreck. The juniors understood what he meant. Certainly, if communication between the wreck and the shore could be brought about by means of the rope-rocket, there was still a chance. But it seemed impossible that the tiny, storm-buffed fishing-smack could stand much more of that awful rolling and beating from the tremendous seas.

In a silence fraught with suspense the juniors watched and waited. Now they could see two figures, at least, clinging desperately to the broken stump of mast. Suddenly there came a commotion a few yards away. In the light of a lantern they saw a group of men, coastguards and lifeboatmen, drop something on to the beach.

"It's the rope-rocket come at last," said the boatman.

He struggled away to join the men gathered round the "mortar" and the rest of the rocket apparatus that had been dumped on the beach. The juniors were about to follow when a sharp cry came from Redwing, whose keen eyes had never left the wreck.

"One of them's gone!" he cried. "It was young Sid, I think. I saw him dive overboard—with a rope or something. Look—there he is!"

They followed his pointing finger. The wild moon, seeming to be plunging headlong, showed just then through a rift in the heap of tossed-up clouds, and in its feeble light they caught a swift glimpse of a black speck, rising with the huge waves, falling into deep valleys, lost beneath the rugged foam, but borne steadily towards the shore, striving valiantly.

"Oh, good man!" breathed Harry Wharton.

But nobody heard him. The tense attention of all was fixed upon that struggling figure. The distance was nothing, but the force of the buffeting waves made the fight deadly.

Then for a full, breathless minute the black head vanished. In silent suspense they watched for its reappearance. It was Tom Redwing who saw him first again.

His keen eyes caught a glimpse of a dark object struggling amidst the foam of an incoming breaker, and he dashed headlong into the surf.

In a moment he was swept from his feet, but his grasp was upon the dark object he had seen. He clung on desperately, buffeted by the water, and half-dazed. And but for Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry, who had dashed to the rescue, both Redwing and the form he held would either have been swept out to sea, or badly knocked about on the shingly beach.

With their help and the help of others who had come rushing into the surf, the two were hauled out of danger and laid gently on the beach.

Redwing, however, was on his feet again in a moment, bending over the still form, clad in fisherman's clothes. He was but a boy, with fair, curly hair; but his weather-stained face was now ashen. There was blood also on his face, and he was insensible.

Quickly, feverishly, the line was untied from around his waist, and while Redwing, Harry Wharton, and Bob Cherry strove to bring life into the still form, others worked hard getting the carrying cable fixed between the boat and shore.

Though badly knocked about, the young fisherman was not seriously hurt, and he opened his eyes presently and glanced about him. With a mighty effort he strove to sit up, but Tom Redwing pushed him gently back.

"Take it easy for a bit, Sid, old man," he said. "You've done your whack. These fellows will soon have your father and Jackson in safety now."

"My—my father—" The survivor's voice trembled weakly. "My father's gone! We missed him some minutes ago. He must have been washed overboard. There's—there's only Jackson left on the wreck. Be quick, or—"

His voice trailed away, and he sank back exhausted on the beach.

"Poor kid's done up," said a burly fisherman. "Better get him to bed somewhere. Have to be Friardale, I suppose—"

"No. The school is the nearest place," interrupted a quiet voice.

As they heard it, the juniors spun round in alarm. It was Mr. Quelch. He stepped into the lantern-light, clad in a raincoat that seemed to cover him from head to toe. Behind him were the drenched forms of Wingate and several other seniors.

Without seeming to notice the juniors, the Remove master knelt by the boy and made a swift examination. Then he turned to the group of men standing round.

"Rest and careful attention will soon put him right," he said. "I suggest that he be carried up to the school. In the school infirmary he will receive the care and attention he needs. Faulkner and Gwynne, you had better accompany him to the school. Wingate and the rest can remain with me here in case we are needed."

There were plenty of willing hands, and, helped by the two seniors detailed by Mr. Quelch, the almost unconscious boy was lifted and borne away into the darkness schoolwards.

Then Mr. Quelch turned a steely eye upon the juniors.

"You six juniors will return to Greyfriars at once!" he snapped. "I will speak to you in the morning concerning your presence here at this time."

There was a note of finality in the words, and the juniors knew better than to argue with Mr. Quelch. It was hard lines having to leave without seeing the finish; but the juniors had the satisfaction of knowing they had been of some little use, after all.

Who is the jester at Greyfriars?

"We're booked for trouble, of course," muttered Harry Wharton, as they turned and tramped away through the darkness. "But I'm glad we came, for all that. I wish we could stop, though—Hallo! What's that?"

The juniors turned on hearing a loud cheer from behind them. They were just in time to witness the last of the rescue work.

Suspended from the carrying cable, which had been slung between the wreck and shore, could be seen the carrying cradle, creeping slowly shorewards, and hauled by lusty arms. In it could be discerned the dark figure of a man.

Breathlessly the juniors watched it as it passed over the boiling surf, and then they heard another loud cheer as its burden was received in the waiting arms of the rescuers.

"Oh, good!" breathed Harry Wharton thankfully. "They've got Jackson, then!"

"Only just in time, too," said Frank Nugent quickly. "Look!"

Following his glance towards the wreck, they were in time to see a vast hillside of water sweep over it. It swept on shorewards, and the place where the wreck had been was empty. The fishing-smack had vanished.

Awed and silent, the six juniors turned again and tramped back schoolwards. They were satisfied now. Within five minutes of reaching Greyfriars, they were safe between the sheets in their dormitory.

And though the night's exciting adventures ended there, in so far as Harry Wharton and his chums were concerned, they were to hear further developments yet of the wrecked fishing-boat from Pegg.

who cleans up the cottage for them. Sid and his father, you know, lived alone just outside Pegg."

"How are the patients?" asked Harry Wharton.

"A good sleep soon put Jackson right, and he's already gone to his home at Pegg. Sid, though, is still very rocky. He's upset about his father, too, poor kid. I suppose you've heard they picked up his body on the beach this morning?"

"Yes; Gosling told us a few minutes ago," said Harry, with a grave nod. "It's hard lines on young Hemsley. I suppose the Head'll let him stay here for a day or two?"

"He is staying here for good," replied Redwing quietly. Then, seeing the surprise on the faces of the others, he went on—"It's like this, you fellows, young Sid is an old chum of mine, and I mean to help him all I can. He's not only lost his father, but his employment as well. And there's little work going at Pegg. Anyway, I've seen Quelohy about him, and—well, the Head's going to find him a job on the outside staff here."

"Oh, good!" said Harry Wharton. "He seems a jolly decent sort, poor beggar. I hope he'll do well here."

"I think he will," said Redwing. "Old Quelohy was awfully decent about it. Anyway, I'll be getting on. I suppose you chaps don't feel like a tramp that way?"

"We do—we does," remarked Bob Cherry. "As it happens we're just going along the cliffs, Reddy."

"No reason why we shouldn't go along to Pegg," put in Johnny Bull. "What about having tea there?"

"Jolly good idea," said Harry. "Just pass the afternoon away—"

"I say, you fellows—"

Harry Wharton was interrupted by the opening remarks of Billy Bunter, as that fat junior rolled up to the group.

"I say, you fellows," repeated Bunter. "Isn't that lucky, now?"

"What's lucky?" ejaculated Harry Wharton.

"Why, I just—just happened to hear you say you were going to Pegg for tea, Harry, old man. Matter of fact, I'm just off there myself, so I'll come along with you. Bit of luck, I call it!"

"For us or for you?" inquired Bob Cherry blandly.

"Well—ahem—for you, of course! You—you see—"

"We see," said Bob Cherry, nodding. "Well, we've no objection to you going to Pegg, of course, Billy. But I'm afraid you'll be unlucky if you happen to stray within twenty yards of my boot, I'll promise you!"

"You shut up, Cherry. My remarks were addressed to Wharton. Look here, Harry, old man—Ow! Stop it, Cherry, you beast! Ow! Wow! Stop it!"

Bunter departed hurriedly, helped not a little by Cherry's hefty boot. The Famous Five and Redwing walked through the gates, chuckling.

But though a trifle discouraged, Billy Bunter was not dismayed. He stopped some distance away, and watched the juniors vanish through the gates, his eyes glittering with rage. Then with sudden decision he rolled after them.

Harry Wharton and his chums walked

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter's Find!

"W HITHER bound, Redwing?" Bob Cherry sang out that question as the Famous Five met Redwing when they were crossing towards the gates after dinner the next day. It was a half-day at Greyfriars, and the juniors were just starting out for a walk along the cliffs.

None of the six, save for feeling a trifle heavy-eyed and sleepy, had suffered physically from the drenching and exposure of the night before.

Nor had they, to their surprise, suffered much in any other way. For the interview they had dreaded with Mr. Quelch proved to be a very tame affair, and their punishment extremely light in comparison with the crime.

Certainly the reprimand they received from their Form master was severe enough; but when Mr. Quelch ended by sentencing them to two hundred lines each, they felt themselves extremely lucky. But apparently Mr. Quelch had taken it for granted that they had gone out solely to be of help if necessary, and had taken this into consideration when punishing them.

Tom Redwing, who was coming from the direction of the school infirmary, was looking very grave as he came up to the chums. Like the Famous Five, he was wearing a thick overcoat, for though the storm had passed away with the dawn that morning, there was a stiff breeze blowing with a keen nip in the air.

"I'm just going over to Pegg," said Redwing in answer to Bob Cherry's question. "Poor old Sid Hemsley wants me to take a message to the old dame



Tom Redwing caught a glimpse of a dark object struggling amidst the foam of an incoming breaker, and he dashed headlong into the surf. In a moment he was swept from his feet; but his grasp was now upon the unfortunate mariner. (See Chapter 2.)

Read next week's story of Harry Wharton & Co.!

fast, but apparently they were unaware that Bunter was behind them. Very soon the sea, calm and unruffled now, came into sight, and a few minutes later they were treading the springy turf of the cliff path.

By this time Billy Bunter was puffing and panting in his efforts to keep up with the juniors in front. Though surprised, he was quite relieved when the juniors ahead vanished over the brow of the cliff.

But Bunter knew where they had gone. At that spot a series of rock-hewn steps led down to the beach. Evidently, he reflected, the Famous Five intended to finish their walk to Pegg along the beach.

He hastened his steps, and was soon descending the winding path to the beach below. Barely had he disappeared, when, from a pile of boulders near the cleft in the cliff-edge, six juniors emerged. They listened a moment to Bunter's footsteps on the rocky steps, then they clambered out on to the turf.

"Now we've got rid of that fat nuisance," remarked Bob Cherry. "we'll get on towards Pegg. Exit Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And laughing at Bob's little ruse for getting rid of the troublesome Bunter, the Famous Five and Redwing continued their walk along the top of the cliff.

They still kept their eyes on the lookout for Bunter, however, and presently they saw his fat figure rolling across the sands below them.

Apparently Billy Bunter had not discovered their ruse yet. A jutting shoulder of rock hid from his sight the stretch of sand beyond, and it was evident he believed they were still ahead of him.

"Poor old Bunt," remarked Harry Wharton. "It's rough going on those sands, and I fancy Bunter will be like a wet rag before he gets to Pegg."

"He won't get there," grinned Bob Cherry. "He'll turn back when he reaches that shoulder of rock and finds we're not in front. You watch."

They stopped walking, curious to see if Bunter would keep on or not. Sure enough, Bob Cherry proved to be right. As the fat junior came in sight of the

stretch of empty sand, he stopped and blinked wrathfully around him."

For a moment he stood undecided, and then he turned and retraced his steps with obvious disgust.

"Ever get left?" chuckled Cherry. "I wish, though, he'd gone—Hullo, what's the fat ass up to now?"

Bunter had stopped suddenly, his eyes seemingly fixed upon some object that sparkled in the sun as it bobbed about on the incoming tide near the water's edge.

"It's a bottle," said Redwing, whose eyes were keen. "Looks as if Bunter means to get it."

All the juniors were interested now. They watched Bunter as that youth hovered along the brink of the water, waiting his chance to make a grab at the bottle as the incoming waves brought it shorewards.

It came at last. A wave sent the bottle rolling over the sand, and as the water receded, Billy Bunter pounced upon it, and bore it out of danger.

"Must be thirsty," chuckled Johnny Bull.

Harry Wharton was looking very curious.

"I fancy he thinks it may contain a message of some sort—from shipwrecked mariners or something like that," he said, half in jest. "For all we know, it may be, too. I—Hullo!"

From the beach below came the faint sound of breaking glass. Apparently, unable to take the cork out of the bottle, Billy Bunter had smashed it upon a stone. Harry Wharton's eyes gleamed a trifle excitedly as he saw the fat junior bend down and snatch something from the scattered pieces of broken glass.

Even from that distance they could see that it was a piece of rolled paper.

"My hat!" breathed Harry Wharton.

Their amusement gone now, the six juniors watched Billy Bunter as he eagerly scanned the missive he held.

Apparently it was not a very long message—if message it was—for after blinking at the thing for a minute, Billy Bunter stuffed it into his trousers-pocket, and started with great haste for the steps up the cliff.

"My hat!" repeated Harry Wharton, exchanging a glance with the others.

"Of course, it may be a hoax—a mare's nest. But—but—"

"Better tackle Bunter and see," suggested Frank Nugent. "Won't do any harm, anyway. Soon get rid of the fat rotter again."

Redwing nodded, as Wharton glanced at him, and next moment they were hurrying back to the top of the cliff-path. They had scarcely arrived there when Billy Bunter reached the top, panting and puffing and perspiring.

He gave a start on seeing the six juniors waiting there.

"I—I—I say, you fellows," he began hesitatingly.

"What was it you found down there, Bunter?" asked Wharton.

"F-found!" gasped Bunter. "Why, nothing. Absolutely nothing. I was just—"

"You fat fibber," said Bob Cherry, "we saw you from up here. You—"

"You fellows are mistaken," said Bunter uneasily. "If you chaps think there was anything in that bottle, you're jolly well wrong. There wasn't. Certainly not. Besides, there wasn't any bottle—"

"N-nun-no bottle?"

"Of course not! I must say I'm surprised at you fellows, spying round on me like this," said Bunter loftily. "Can't a fellow even take a quiet walk out without you chaps hanging round him?"

"Oh, my hat! Why, you fat fibber," roared Bob Cherry, "weren't you hanging round us? Weren't you—"

"Nuff said, Cherry," exclaimed Bunter, waving a fat hand. "I'm in rather a hurry. But kindly refrain from spying on me in future. When I want your company I'll ask for it."

And with that Billy Bunter rolled away—rather hurriedly—towards Greyfriars.

"Well, the cheeky rotter," gasped Bob Cherry. "Come on—after the fat toad. We'll bump him well for his cheek, and we'll soon make him tell us what he's found."

"Half a mo," said Harry with a laugh. "Let the fat ass go. It's probably only a fake, and in any case, we can't very well go through Bunter's pockets—too high-handed even for dealing with him. Let's get on."

Bob grunted, and somewhat reluctantly followed the others along the top of the cliff to resume their delayed walk. But though Harry Wharton had decided against using force on Billy Bunter, he was very thoughtful and curious as he strode along with his chums.

It was fairly plain that Bunter had found something in the bottle, and equally plain that Bunter had no intention of telling them what it was. What had Bunter found? Knowing Bunter's queer ideas of right and wrong, Harry Wharton began to wish now that he had agreed to the somewhat high-handed action suggested by Bob Cherry.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Message!

"BEASTS!" That, apparently, was Billy Bunter's opinion of the Famous Five and Redwing.

Not until the juniors had disappeared from his sight did Billy Bunter slow down. He had fully expected them to chase him, and he was not a little surprised that they did not; but he was more relieved than surprised.

Puffing and blowing, he stopped at

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Harold Skinner steps in where others fear to tread—

last, and seated himself on a fence to rest and to consider the position.

"Beasts!" he repeated with a grunt. "Thought they'd rob me of what I've found, did they? Then they'd rush off to that chap Hensley with it, and leave me out of it—collar all the glory themselves. No jolly fear. I'm taking this to Hensley myself. If the bounder's any good, he'll stump up handsomely. Let's have another squint at it."

And taking the crumpled scrap of paper from his pocket, Billy Bunter began to study it with eyes that gleamed excitedly.

It was a dirty piece of paper, and the message on it was ill-spelt and badly written in pencil. But the message itself fairly made Bunter blink as he read it.

It ran as follows:

"To the person what finds this.

"I, Caleb Hensley, am writing this quick and rough, as the old Cristabel is doomed, and is sinking fast, and I know I sha'n't ever see Pegg agen, and I swear what I say is true. Young Sid, what everybody thinks is my son, is not my own son. His name is Cyril Lembolt, and he is the rightful hare to the Towers at Courtfield. He was stolen when a kid, and I've been paid by his uncle to bring him up as my own. But I know my number's up, and I'm sorry now I did it. I've never been a good father to him; but he's a good kid, and I mean to do what's right by him now. Me and Jackson can't swim, but young Sid can, and he stands a chance. That's why I'm writing this. The proofs of what I say will be found in the rosewood box. Young Sid knows—"

The tragic message broke off abruptly there. Evidently the fishing-boat had struck the rocks just then, and knowing every moment was precious, Caleb Hensley had stuffed his confession into the bottle and flung it into the sea.

But it was enough for Billy Bunter. Not for one moment did he doubt that the message was genuine, or that the confession was the truth.

It was undoubtedly queer. But it was impossible to imagine the skipper of the Cristabel, feeling that death was near him, could have written such a message unless it were the truth.

Again and again Bunter read the crabbed handwriting. Then, returning the paper to his pocket, he dropped from the fence and rolled away at top speed for Greyfriars.

Billy Bunter loved the limelight, and to be the bearer of such exciting news filled him with glee. Besides, a fellow deserved a reward for finding the thing, reflected Bunter. And when Hensley did come into his inheritance, he would undoubtedly handsomely reward the fellow who had brought such good fortune to him.

That was how Bunter looked at it. And the more he looked at it in that way, the more important his own part in the business became in his own eyes.

"Hang it all," mused the fat junior, as he rolled along, "that blessed scrap of paper must be worth thousands to Hensley. And I'm blessed if I'm going to part with it for nothing. No fear! Hensley's only a blessed common fisher-lad, and if I give it up to him he'll not even thank me. A cad like that wouldn't. I wonder—"

By the time Billy Bunter reached Greyfriars he had ceased to wonder, and had made up his mind.

He would not hand the document to young Hensley at all—not yet, at all



"Bunter, you fat thief—that's Wharton's jigger you've got!" yelled Peter Todd. "Mind your own business, Toddy," snapped Bunter. "Here—leggo, you beast! Oh crumbs!" Toddy made a grab at the Owl, and Bunter promptly shoved out a fat hand, more to save himself than anything else. Crash! Peter Todd sat down with a yell. (See Chapter 4.)

events. Not until he had exhausted other ways of parting with the valuable document which would promise to be more profitable to himself. The prospect of a reward from Hensley was a little too remote.

Bunter knew the house called the Towers, near Courtfield, fairly well. It was a large, imposing house, standing in its own grounds just off the main road. While passing the house less than a week ago, Bunter remembered having seen a luxurious car emerge from the gates, and in it was seated a fat, prosperous-looking gentleman.

That, of course, would be Hensley's real father, and young Hensley would be his long-lost son. Bunter, in his own fat mind, had little doubt about that.

"I'll take it to him," mused Bunter, grinning at the thought. "My hat! Won't he just jump for joy when I break the good news to him. He'll give me a thumping big reward for bringing such good tidings, I'll bet. Blow young Hensley himself! A bird in the hand's worth two in the bush. My hat! Besides, the outcome of it all will mean the same for Hensley."

Full of this new idea, Billy Bunter entered the school gates almost at a run. He pulled up short, however, at sight of Gosling, the school porter, who was dreamily smoking his after-dinner pipe on the doorstep of his lodge.

It occurred to the fat youth that it would be just as well if he made sure of his facts before proceeding further with his scheme.

As Bunter rolled up to him, Gosling

removed his pipe and eyed him suspiciously.

"I say, Gossy, old fellow," began Bunter eagerly, "you've been a long time round here, haven't you?"

"Wot I sez is this 'ere. If you're pulling my leg, Master—"

"Of course I'm not! Wouldn't do such a thing," exclaimed Bunter indignantly. "Look here, Gosling, old man, I know you're a good sort, and I know you've been here a long time. And—"

"Man and boy, I've bin 'ere nigh on fifty years," said Gosling, a trifle mollified.

"Then you'll know something about the people at the Towers, just outside Courtfield, Gosling," said Bunter quickly. "Who lives there now, Gossy, old man?"

Gosling blinked curiously at Bunter's excited face.

"I've 'eard tell of 'em—yus," he remarked, puffing stolidly at his pipe. "Not as I knows much about 'em, except that the feller's name's Lembolt—Godfrey Lembolt, if I recollects right. And I've 'eard tell as he's a 'ard 'un with them as works for 'im, too."

Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his spectacles.

"Then—then wasn't there a son—a son who was lost, or stolen, years ago, Gossy?" breathed Bunter eagerly. "Have you heard—"

"I did 'ear tell of summat of the sort," said Gosling, rubbing his bald head reflectively. "But that was nigh on fifteen years ago, I reckon. The kid was only a year old, and folks say he was stolen by gipsies or summat. I dunno; but he wasn't this 'ere Godfrey Lem—"

—and the result is far-reaching in its effects!

But Billy Bunter didn't stay to hear more, unfortunately. To Gosling's surprise, he turned and scuttled across the quad towards the School House, his fat face ablaze with excitement.

If Billy Bunter had had any doubts before, he had none now. To his fat mind Gosling's remarks had proved the case up to the hilt.

To his great relief Study No. 7 was empty, and in a moment Billy Bunter had snatched pencil and paper, and after tearing several pages from his exercise-book, he began to make a careful copy of Caleb Hemsley's confession.

Very few people trusted Billy Bunter, and, contrariwise, very few people were trusted by Billy Bunter. The crafty Owl of the Remove had no intention of parting with the original document until he himself was ready to hand it over.

The handwriting was almost as illiterate as Bunter's own, and after many attempts the Owl succeeded in making a fair copy of the original. He burnt the spoiled sheets, and stuffed the original into one pocket and the copy in another. Then he snatched his cap and hurried round to the cycle-shed.

Bunter's own bike was only fit for the scrap-heap, and after careful consideration he selected Harry Wharton's machine.

"Old Wharton won't know," grinned Bunter, as he wheeled it out. "And I'll be back again before he returns from Pegg. My hat! I'm in luck, and no mistake. Now for old Lembolt!"

He ran the machine across the quad, heedless of the curious glance Gosling gave him as he hurried through the gates. He was just mounting the machine when Peter Todd and Dutton, his study-mates, came along. They stared in astonishment at Billy Bunter. Then Peter gave a yell.

"Bunter, you fat thief, that's Wharton's jigger you've got!" he yelled, running towards Bunter. "Where the thump are you off to with it?"

"Mind your own business, Toddy!" snapped Bunter, who had just succeeded in mounting the bike. "Here, leggo, you ass! Oh crumbs!"

Toddy made a grab at Bunter, and Bunter shoved out a fat hand, more to save himself than anything else.

Crash!
Peter Todd sat down with a bump in the lane, and gave a yell of wrath and pain. For one dizzy moment Billy Bunter wobbled unsteadily, then he regained his balance, and pushing desperately at the pedals, shot away down the lane.

There was likely to be trouble for Bunter when he arrived back at Greyfriars. But Bunter had almost forgotten the incident before he had gone a hundred yards. His fat mind was too occupied with the business before him to worry about such small matters.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Shock for Bunter!

BILLY BUNTER didn't enjoy that ride to Courtfield. Exercise did not appeal to the fat junior, and the fact that the saddle of the machine was much too high for him made the journey additionally uncomfortable.

But the thought of the glory and profit in store kept him going, and he plugged away until the perspiration streamed down his fat face, and he panted and

wheezed and grunted with every push of the pedals.

Exhausted and spent, he arrived at the Towers at last, and fell rather than dismounted from his—or, rather, Wharton's—machine.

Breathing heavily, he pushed the bike along the gravel drive up to the entrance doors. There he leaned his machine against one of the stone pillars, and only stopping a moment to regain his breath, rang the bell.

A trim maidservant answered the door, and she eyed the fat, red-faced Bunter curiously.

"I want to see Mr. Godfrey Lembolt," announced Bunter with all the dignity he could muster. "My business is most important—of vital importance, in fact. Tell him that. My name is Bunter—William George Bunter."

Evidently Bunter's name—or his message—impressed the owner of the Towers, for within a couple of minutes Bunter found himself ushered into the library and facing Mr. Godfrey Lembolt.

Billy Bunter was not at all favourably impressed by the look of him. He was fat, like Bunter, certainly; but his eyes were sharp, and set too close together, and there was something about his hard, tight mouth which made the excited Bunter shiver.

"Well, boy," he began, eyeing the fat junior irritably, "what do you want with me? What is your business?"

"It—it's like this," gasped Bunter, "I—I—"

He broke off feebly. Mr. Godfrey Lembolt's appearance and greeting did not put the fat junior at his ease by any means. With those hard, suspicious eyes fixed upon him, he found it anything but easy to lead up gently to his errand as he had intended to do.

"It—it's like this, sir," stammered Bunter. "I've come about—about your son—the one who was lost years ago, you know."

"What?"

Bunter fairly jumped.

"What on earth are you talking about, boy?" thundered Mr. Godfrey Lembolt, gripping Bunter by the shoulder and shaking him fiercely. "My—my son, you say. Lost! Why he's in the house here now. Is this a joke, or—"

He broke off abruptly, and a strange expression came over his face—an expression which terrified Bunter more than ever.

"Nunno! It isn't a joke, sir. I swear it isn't!" gasped Bunter. "I—I mean your—your other son—the one who was supposed to have been stolen by gipsies years ago."

"Oh!"

"That's it," muttered Bunter, more than a little startled by the sudden glitter in Mr. Godfrey Lembolt's small eyes. "He—he wasn't stolen by gipsies at all, sir. I know where he is, in fact. I've found him for you, sir. I've got the confession by a chap named Caleb Hemsley which—"

Bunter again broke off. Mr. Godfrey Lembolt had given a cry at the sound of Caleb Hemsley's name, and his face had gone livid. But it was only for a moment. His look of rage changed swiftly to a smile of amusement.

"Go on, my boy," he smiled encouragingly. "You were saying something about a confession—about a man named Hamsley—or was it Hemsley?"

"Hemsley," corrected Bunter, encouraged by the sudden geniality in the man's tone. And next moment the fat junior was telling his story—not by any

means as he had intended to tell it, however.

It came out in a sudden rush. Bunter's nerve had gone, and he couldn't help himself.

He told of the wreck of the fishing-boat the night before, of young Hemsley's bravery, and of his (Bunter's) finding of the bottle containing the confession that afternoon.

"Ah! Very amusing!" was Mr. Lembolt's cool comment, when Billy paused breathlessly at last. "And you have the—the message with you now, have you? Let me have a look at it, my boy."

Bunter hesitated a moment, and then, reluctantly, he drew from his pocket the copy he had taken, and handed it over. Though bewildered by the unexpected turn of events, the Owl was sufficiently wide awake to stick to the original document.

Mr. Lembolt took the paper from him carelessly enough. He read it through with a smile on his face. Bunter quite failed to see the hard glitter in his small eyes, however.

He looked up at last, and fixed a curious look on Billy Bunter. Though that fatuous youth did not know it, Mr. Godfrey Lembolt had already summed up his obtuse mentality fairly correctly.

"And this is the precious confession, is it?" he exclaimed, smiling amusedly down at the astonished Bunter. "You have not, I presume, shown this—er—document to anyone else?"

"Not a soul, sir!" said Bunter eagerly. "You—you see, I wanted to be the first to bring you the news. I—I thought you—"

"You haven't even mentioned the matter to this—this boy Hemsley—eh?"

"Cer-certainly not!" gasped Bunter, not a little surprised at the way Mr. Lembolt referred to his newly-found "son."

"Ah, that is very fortunate!" remarked Mr. Lembolt grimly.

As he spoke the words, Mr. Godfrey Lembolt tore the document into tiny pieces, and scattered them into the fire.

"I—I say, sir," stammered Billy Bunter. "What—"

"Very fortunate—for you, my boy!" repeated Mr. Lembolt calmly. "Cannot you see, you silly fellow, that this is either a stupid hoax, or, worse, a blundering attempt to get money out of me. If the police were to discover that you had brought that paper to me, they would immediately arrest you as being a member of the gang!"

"Oh—oh dear!" groaned Bunter.

"You have no need to fear anything, however," proceeded the genial Mr. Lembolt, "providing, of course, that you keep this matter strictly to yourself. I believe you are innocent of any intention to blackmail me, my boy. You imagined that you were bringing me good news. I shall therefore refrain from acquainting the police about your visit. But you must, of course, never mention this matter to anyone—for your own sake!" he added grimly.

"M-mum-must I not?" gasped Bunter, his fat knees knocking together with fright.

"Naturally. There is, however, another very serious point," went on Mr. Lembolt, shaking his head gravely. "You realise, of course, that you have lain yourself open to a long term of imprisonment by taking upon yourself the responsibility of opening that—that bottle and keeping the contents?"

"Oh dear!"

Skinner has the laugh of the whole school—at first!

"Yes. It was your duty, of course, to take it to the nearest coastguard or policeman. Instead, you have actually read it, and brought it to me, hoping to profit by it. I am willing to believe, however, that you acted in ignorance of the crime you were committing, and, as far as is possible, I will try to save you from the consequences. Only your own silence and secrecy can save you. You realise that, of course?"

Bunter did—or thought he did. He was bitterly disappointed, and he could have wept at this unexpected end to his hopes. But he was more terrified than disappointed now. Mr. Lembolt had played upon his fears and his ignorance with marked success.

"I wouldn't dream of mentioning a word of it," he mumbled at length. "I—I thought——"

"Of course you did. Well, that ends the matter so far as I am concerned. You should consider yourself a very fortunate young man that I have chosen to take such a lenient view of your exceedingly questionable conduct."

Bunter actually did at that moment. That Mr. Godfrey Lembolt was bluffing him with absurd lies and bombast he did not dream for one moment. And the next moment Billy Bunter felt himself still more fortunate.

"However," resumed Mr. Lembolt, putting his hand in his pocket, "as I say, I realise that you acted solely on my behalf, and I feel I must compensate you a little for the trouble you have taken. Take this, my boy."

Bunter took it. It was a small piece of paper that crinkled crisply in his fat grasp. It was a five-pound note. Bunter was staggered, but not too staggered to delay pocketing the fiver. Hardly knowing whether he was on his head or his heels, the fat junior found himself being led to the door by the "kindly" Mr. Lembolt. At the door, however, the latter paused.

"One moment. I had almost forgotten that young rascal Hemsley," he said casually. "You say he is remaining at Greyfriars?"

"Ye-es, sir."

"Ah! Then I strongly advise you to have nothing to do with the rascal in any way. He is undoubtedly in league with the gang who are engineering this—this plot, if plot it is. But if you should happen to hear or see anything further concerning this affair, come to me, my boy—come to me. I can see you are an unusually shrewd and clever boy."

Bunter purred like a well-fed cat.

"About the rosewood box mentioned in the paper," went on Mr. Lembolt reflectively. "It is absurd and unlikely that such a thing exists. You—you haven't, I suppose, seen or heard of it?"

"Nunno, sir. That's all rot, of course. If that old chap Hemsley did have it, I expect his son will have it now, though."

"Ah! Quite so. Well, I mustn't keep you longer, I suppose."

And, with a last warning regarding secrecy, Mr. Godfrey Lembolt laid a fat hand on Bunter's fat shoulder and showed him out.

Billy Bunter staggered down the steps to his bike, his mind in a whirl, but his fat face beaming. He was still a little dazed and bewildered, and his thoughts were confused as he rode unsteadily down the drive.

One thing was clear to his fat mind, however. There was now no question of breaking the news to young Hemsley or anyone else. He felt he had had a

narrow escape, and Mr. Lembolt's remarks concerning arrest and imprisonment had terrified him. Not for the world would Bunter have breathed a word to anyone about the matter now.

Bunter was dense—very dense; but had he only thought deeply about the matter he would perhaps have perceived several obvious flaws in Mr. Lembolt's remarks. And had he known what Gosling almost told him—that the present owner of the Towers was not the father of the missing heir, but the successor to the estates—he might have realised that Mr. Godfrey Lembolt had a very good reason to wish that the missing heir should not turn up.

But Bunter did not know that, nor did he think deeply about the matter. He had no desire to do so, either. Things hadn't turned out quite as he had expected; but, on the whole, he was quite satisfied. He had a crisp fiver in his pocket, and, by accepting Mr. Godfrey Lembolt's view of the affair, he felt there was a chance of more fivers coming his way.

It was dusk as he entered the old gateway, and, running Wharton's bike across the Close, he shoved it inside the cycle-shed, and made a dive for Mrs. Mible's tuckshop under the old elms.

That fiver was burning a hole in Bunter's pocket, and his one desire was to exchange a goodly portion of it for as much of Mrs. Mible's stock of good things as he could pack under his fat skin.

As he was crossing the quad, Billy Bunter caught a glimpse of the Famous Five and Redwing entering the gates, and he felt a momentary twinge of apprehension.

But the six juniors did not see him.

In fact, by this time they had forgotten all about that queer scene on the beach.

It was only when Harry Wharton and Nugent were doing their prep that evening that they were reminded of the incident by the entry into Study No. 1 of Peter Todd.

"I say, you fellows," began Peter, whose face was unusually grave, "I suppose you don't know of anyone who's lost or mislaid a fiver?"

"A—a fiver? Why?" demanded Harry Wharton.

"Because that fat thief Bunter's got hold of one from somewhere. He went out on your bike this afternoon, Wharton, and——"

"My bike?" ejaculated Harry, jumping up suddenly. "The fat——"

"No good thinking of walloping him now, Wharton; he's too ill. The greedy rotter's already blued half his fiver in the tuckshop. He's gorged himself ill, and he's groaning away in Study No. 7 now, or I'd jolly well wallop him myself! I tried to stop him taking your bike, and the fat ass actually bumped me over."

"But—but the fiver——"

"Blessed if I know where he got it from!" said Peter Todd. "I thought I'd better make inquiries, in case anyone's lost one. You know what Bunter is!"

And Peter Todd departed to pursue his investigations elsewhere. Peter considered himself Bunter's keeper, and he deemed it his duty to find out if the fat youth had come by the fiver honestly.

When he had gone Harry Wharton looked at Nugent expressively.

"That's jolly queer!" he said, shaking his head. "How on earth could Bunter have got hold of a fiver? My hat! It



With a howl of wrath Billy Bunter shot out a fat hand and gripped Manton's raised right foot. Then he tugged viciously at it. The bully gave a yell and sat down with a bump and a roar of fury. (See Chapter 6.)

The conclusion finds him "laughing" somewhat differently!

couldn't have been a fiver he found in that bottle this afternoon, surely?"

"Hardly likely," said Nugent. "It's rummy, though. First, Bunter finds something on the beach, and swears afterwards he hasn't. Then he rushes back to Greyfriars and collars your bike. It isn't like Bunter to take exercise of any kind without a good reason. Then he comes back with a fiver. The fat rotter has some shady game on."

"No doubt about that," murmured Harry Wharton thoughtfully. "I'd better tackle the fat ass about it to-night."

And Harry Wharton did. That night in the dormitory he questioned Billy Bunter. But it came to nothing. Bunter was still suffering from the effects of overeating, and he did not feel like answering questions of any kind. And at last Harry Wharton gave it up and left the fat junior to groan and grunt himself to sleep.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The New Boy!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. kept a very close eye on Billy Bunter during the next few days. But the Owl knew he was under observation, and he was very careful of what he said and did. And gradually the Famous Five allowed the matter to pass from their minds. They had other important matters to think of without bothering about the doings of Billy Bunter. They had almost forgotten about that wild night of the wreck, too. Young Sid Hemsley had settled down quickly at Greyfriars. He had been given work in the Head's garden to do, and he had soon made himself a popular favourite with all. He and Harry Wharton & Co. became great friends—much to the disgust of snobs like Skinner, Stott & Co.

Then, about a fortnight later, came an event which caused no little excitement among the Remove. It was the arrival of a new boy at Greyfriars. Billy Bunter, of course, heard about it first, and he was soon in possession of the facts that the new boy's name was Manton, and that he was to go in the Remove Form.

Manton arrived at the school during afternoon lessons, and Mr. Quelch took the opportunity of introducing him to the Form. And Harry Wharton & Co., at least, were not favourably impressed by the newcomer.

He was stout, like Bunter, but taller. His features were pasty and pimply, and he looked much older than the fifteen years he claimed to be.

It was Billy Bunter also who came into contact with the new boy first. Bunter always made a point of being friendly with new boys. It was usually quite an easy matter to raise a loan in that quarter on the strength of a mythical postal-order—until the unsuspecting new fellow learned that the postal-orders never came, and that Bunter never paid up.

In the case of Manton, however, Bunter found himself up against a snag.

He found him wandering disconsolately about the quad after lessons, and he rolled up to him. Bunter's five pounds had long ago found its way into Mrs. Mumble's till, and he was in his usual state of impecuniosity.

But he had great hopes of touching Manton for a bob, at least. In a vague sort of way Bunter felt that he had seen Manton's ill-favoured features somewhere

before, and he intended to work up to the question of a loan on the strength of it.

"Hallo, new chap!" began Bunter, with a fat smile. "I was just looking for you. Fact! I say, haven't I seen you before somewhere?"

Manton stopped and stared offensively at Bunter.

"Not that I'm aware of, fat face," he remarked coolly. "Lemme see, though. I fancy I've seen you somewhere. Was it in the Chamber of Horrors, or the monkey-house at the Zoo? I think it was in the monkey-house; I remember now."

Bunter's fat face flushed crimson; even Bunter couldn't stand that from a new kid.

"Why, I'll—I'll— Yow! Yarough! Leggo by dose, you rodder! Yooup!"

But Manton did not let go of Bunter's little fat nose for the moment. Still gripping it tightly between finger and thumb, he ran the luckless Bunter backwards and sat him down with a bump on the hard stony quad. Then he released his grip and carefully wiped his heavy boots on Billy Bunter.

It was too great an indignity for Billy Bunter. With a howl of wrath he shot out a fat hand and gripped Manton's raised right foot in a fat, vengeful grasp. Then he tugged viciously at it.

RESULT OF "THE WEDNESDAY" PICTURE-PUZZLE COMPETITION.

In this competition two competitors sent in correct solutions of the pictures. The first prize of £5 has therefore been divided between the following:

G. PURDEY,
9, Rosedale Road,
Richmond,
Surrey.

DORA WILLIAMSON,
39, Willoughby Street,
Gainsborough

So many competitors qualified for the third grade of prizes that division among them of the prizes offered was impracticable. The second prize of £2 10s. and the ten prizes of 5s. each have therefore been added together and divided among the following sixteen competitors, whose solutions contained one error each:

Peter Wood, 21, Pleasance, Edinburgh; W. A. Ellsey, 97, Carlton Terrace, Radcliffe, Manchester; Cyril H. Horton, Rodford, Westleigh, Chipping Sodbury, Glos; Mrs. McMahon, 35, Macclesfield Street, Chester Road, Hulme, Manchester; Henry Urquhart, 115, Causewayend, Aberdeen; E. Nunns, 1, Alexandra Road, Windermere; James Russell, 44, Norman Street, Glasgow, E.; Cecil Winslow, 6, Fairfield Terrace, Douglas, I.O.M.; Wm. Mustoe, 5, School Lane, Cirencester; R. B. Curtis, Hillside, Taplow, Bucks; Norman Reed, 48, Northcote Road, Clapham Junction, S.W. 11; David Johnstone, 30, Martin Street, Bridgeton, Glasgow; Miss D. Stephenson, 68, Keppel Road, East Ham, E.; Fred Archer, 96, Humberstone Road, Plaistow, E. 13; Leslie Tapscott, 141, Coronation Avenue, Stoke Newington, N. 16; S. Walker, 26, Padwell Road, Southampton.

SOLUTION.

The Wednesday is an ancient club, for it began in the '60's, 12 years before football properly took root in the provinces. Like many other well-known clubs, the Wednesday has had several homes, and its association with the Cup competition has been long and honourable.

Manton gave a yell and sat down with a bump and a roar of fury. What happened after that Billy Bunter hardly knew—though he felt quite a lot during the next few moments.

Barely had the fat junior scrambled to his feet when Manton sprang up and went for him with fury in his little eyes. A fist like a leg of mutton took Bunter full in the mouth, and Bunter staggered back with a yell of pain.

That blow was followed by another and another until the hapless Bunter was reeling about blindly under the rain of savage, brutal blows, and his yells for help rang out far and wide.

There came the sound of hurrying footsteps and a shout; but in his blind fury the bully did not hear. He sent the unfortunate Bunter to the ground at last with a punch under his fat chin, and then he kicked the prostrate fat youth in the ribs.

At that moment Harry Wharton, followed by Bob Cherry and a crowd of fellows, ran up. They could scarcely believe what they had seen.

"You—you howling cad!" cried Harry Wharton through his teeth. "You beastly bully!"

He grabbed the scowling Manton by his collar and flung him angrily against the wall of the school.

"Now put your hands up, you rotter!" shouted Wharton.

But Manton hardly waited to be told to do that. With a savage growl he went for Wharton, his long arms whirling.

But Wharton was ready. His right fist shot out, and Manton reeled backwards, gasping. The next moment the two were at it hammer and tongs.

"Go it, Wharton!" yelled Peter Todd. "Mop the ground up with the cad! We'll teach him to use his boots like that!"

And Wharton did "go it." In a moment a ring was made, and the fight—if fight it could be called—went on at a mad pace.

Though enraged, Harry Wharton kept his head. But Manton had lost his long ago. Moreover, though he was fully a head taller than Wharton, and well built to boot, his blotchy face was a good indication of his physical fitness. He was flabby, and he was soon panting and gasping painfully.

Up to now Harry Wharton had contented himself with defence—cleverly avoiding the mad rushes of his opponent. But seeing Manton was winded he sailed in in fine style, hitting out right and left. It was soon over.

A hefty right hook sent Manton down at last, and he stayed down.

Harry Wharton mopped his heated face and looked down at the groaning Manton.

"That settles you, you cad!" he said grimly. "You've jolly soon shown the type of rotter you are. If you start any more of your bullying games here you'll get another licking like that. Savvy?"

If he did "savvy," the new fellow did not reply. He staggered slowly and painfully to his feet and tottered away, glaring back with a deadly glare at the fellow who had licked him.

"My hat! What a specimen!" remarked Bob Cherry, staring after him. "Fancy having a chap like that in the Remove!"

The group of fellows was breaking up now, and Harry Wharton turned to Billy Bunter, who was still standing near, nursing his nose and groaning.

"How did it begin, Bunter?" he asked curiously.

There's a deal of truth in the old saying—

"It—it wasn't my fault!" groaned Bunter. "I merely spoke to him, and the beast—"

Billy Bunter was interrupted by an exclamation from Frank Nugent, who had picked something up from the ground. It was a pocket-knife.

"That rotter must have dropped it," said Nugent, examining the knife carelessly. "I'd better— My hat! I thought that chap's name was Manton?"

"So it is," said Harry Wharton curiously. "Why, what—"

"Nothing, only the name scratched on this knife is Lembolt—Leonard Lembolt. Funny that. Perhaps, though— What's the matter, Bunter?"

For on hearing that name Billy Bunter had forgotten his injuries. He gave a violent start, and eyed Nugent with goggling eyes.

"I say, Nugent—what—what name did you say?" he gasped.

"Leonard Lembolt—why, do you know the name, Bunter?"

"Know it? I should just think— Nunno, I mean I don't know it!" gasped Bunter hurriedly. "Why should I? Never heard of it, in fact."

Harry Wharton and his chums eyed Bunter curiously.

"Blessed if I can understand you these days, fatty," remarked Harry keenly. "What the thump's the matter with you? You know the name, and yet you don't, eh? You silly ass! Anyway, come along to the bath-rooms to get cleaned up before Quelch spots us like this."

And Harry Wharton led the way indoors, not a little puzzled about both Bunter and Manton. But he did not refer to the matter again; neither did Billy Bunter.

But the fat junior did quite a lot of thinking in the bath-room. A vague and curious suspicion was forming in his mind. The name of Lembolt had reminded him in a flash of his visit to the Towers, and he knew now why Manton's features seemed familiar to him.

Manton was the living image of Mr. Godfrey Lembolt. Though younger, the new boy possessed the same flabby features and close-set, pig-like eyes as the owner of the Towers. It was an amazing likeness.

Bunter remembered now that Mr. Lembolt had mentioned his son, who was in the house, he had said. And the name on the haft of Manton's knife was Leonard Lembolt!

What did it mean? Was it possible that Manton was Mr. Lembolt's son? And, if so, what was he doing at Greyfriars under another name? The more Bunter thought about it the more did that vague suspicion grow, astonishing as it seemed.

Bunter determined to satisfy his curiosity on that point, and on leaving the bath-room he hurried up to the Remove dormitory. There was no one else about, and in a moment Bunter was kneeling by the new boy's locker.

Evidently Manton had already unpacked, for besides being unlocked, the locker was full of his belongings. But Bunter had not to hunt far. He soon found an Eton jacket of Manton's, and in the lining of the pocket he found what he sought—a narrow linen tab stitched to the lining. It was marked with the name of "Leonard Lembolt."



Manton started back with a strangled yelp of alarm as he saw the five juniors before him. Something he carried beneath one arm dropped with a hollow crash to the stone floor, and then his electric torch beamed out. "You—you spying hounds!" he breathed hoarsely. (See Chapter 7.)

That was not all. All Manton's underclothing was marked. Some of it was new, and marked with the initials "J. M."; but the older garments and collars were marked with the initials "L. L."

Bunter left the dormitory, his eyes glittering behind his big spectacles. His suspicion was a certainty now. Manton was none other than the son of Godfrey Lembolt, masquerading under another name. The discovery brought a new idea into the fat junior's mind.

Manton was a rotter, undoubtedly. What about his father? During the last few days a dim suspicion had been growing in Bunter's mind that he had been bluffed by Mr. Lembolt, though how and for what reason he wasn't clear.

Bunter wasn't wilfully wicked, and now his eyes were opened he began to view Mr. Lembolt's strange conduct in a new light.

"My hat!" breathed Bunter, as he went down to tea. "I wonder, after all, if that message in that bottle was genuine, and young Hemsley is the lost heir. But, hang it all, why should old Lembolt say what he did if the kid's really his long-lost son. Queer. Anyway, I'm jolly well going to keep my peepers on that new rotter. I'll put a stopper to his game, whatever it is. That rosewood box now. I wonder—"

Bunter reached Study No. 7 just then. The table was set for tea, and his eyes glistened as they fell upon a big plum cake on the white cloth. And Bunter stopped wondering then, and drew his chair up to the table.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

More Mystery!

AFTER what had happened it was unlikely that Manton, the new boy, would make many friends at Greyfriars. As a matter of fact, he made none. Even Skinner and his set fought shy of him. He had been placed in Study No. 5 with Hilary and Oliver Kipps, and they were not proud, or pleased with him.

But curiously enough, Manton did not mind—or rather he did not seem to mind. It seemed to suit him to be left severely alone.

"Blest if I can make the beggar out," said Harry Wharton, as the Famous Five were discussing him some days later. "He's a rotter—there's no doubt about that. Hilary and Kipps are fed up with him already. He smokes and uses rotten language, I believe."

"I notice he's trying to pal on with the servants now," remarked Johnny Bull. "Seen him chatting with old Gossy a lot lately, and he seems to be pally with young Hemsley."

Harry Wharton nodded a trifle uneasily. "I've noticed that, too," he said, with a frown. "He can't do much harm to Gossy, but I'm not so sure about Hemsley. He's a decent sort, and I think we ought to warn him of the sort of fellow Manton is. Look here, you chaps, we'll go and have a chat with young Hemsley now. Come on!"

The suggestion was promptly approved of by Cherry and the others, and they went in search of Hemsley. They found him round by the woodshed at last, cleaning a spade.

—"There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip." Ask Skinner!

He dropped the spade, however, as the juniors trooped up to him and greeted him cheerily.

Young Sid Hemsley looked a different fellow now from the white-faced and bedraggled young fisher-lad who had swum ashore from the wreck that eventful night. His cheeks were rosy, and his eyes sparkled with health. There was about him something—a suggestion of refinement—that made itself manifest despite the rough clothes he was wearing.

Harry Wharton came to the point at once, as was usual with him.

"Look here, Hemsley," he exclaimed seriously, "we've seen you several times chatting with that chap Manton of our Form. What does he want with you—what's he after, I mean?"

Hemsley shot a curious look at his questioner.

"I don't know," he said quietly. "I've wondered that myself. But—but he seems to take an interest in me, and—well, it's not my place to tell any of the young gentlemen here to clear out. I admit I don't like him, though. He—he seems curiously interested in my family affairs; said he'd read about the wreck in the papers. Still, he was decent enough about it, and wants me to take him to my home in Pegg sometime."

"But—but what for—what's his little game?" gasped Wharton. "Look here, Hemsley, don't have anything to do with the rotter. He's a bad egg, and up to no good. I certainly shouldn't take him to your home."

"I can't very well; it's shut up now," said Hemsley quietly. "In fact, after to-morrow, the cottage will be empty. The sale's in the morning, and I'm selling up everything. I've told him so."

"Well, I'm hanged!"

The juniors were astounded. What connection or interest a lordly, supercilious fellow like Manton could have in a humble fisher-lad's private affairs they could not imagine. But Hemsley was about to surprise them still more yet.

For a moment he stood hesitating, his face flushing, and then, as if he had come to a decision, he said slowly:

"Look here, you fellows, I—I wasn't going to mention it to a soul, but now you've tackled me about that chap I think I ought to tell you. Last night I—I woke up to find him rummaging about my things in my room. He must have got to know where I sleep, and he was after something—goodness knows what. Ought—ought I to report it?"

The juniors were staggered.

"That fairly beats the band!" gasped Harry. "But—but if nothing was taken I don't think I should say anything to anyone, Hemsley. Look here, you can leave Mr. Manton to us. We'll keep an eye on the sneaking rotter after this."

The sound of the dinner-bell just then put an end to the conversation, and Harry Wharton & Co. hurried indoors.

But all that afternoon and evening they thought a great deal about what Hemsley had told them, and though they were no nearer to the solution of the mystery by bed-time, they had decided upon one thing.

They would keep a close watch on Manton, and if he should make any more nocturnal excursions to the servants' quarters during the night, they would be ready for him.

Until long after lights-out the five juniors remained awake, listening and watching. But nothing happened, and, one by one, Cherry, Nugent, Bull, and

Hurree Singh dropped asleep, until only Harry Wharton was awake.

The new fellow's bed was opposite to Harry's, and he lay silent and motionless, staring hard into the darkness before him.

And at last Wharton's vigil was rewarded.

There was a movement in the bed opposite, and Harry saw a dim figure sit up and slip from between the sheets. Breathlessly he watched Manton dress, and then, as the new boy crept to the door and vanished, Harry sprang out of bed and hurriedly wakened his chums.

Rapidly he told them what was afoot, and rapidly the juniors flung on their clothes. Obviously, Manton intended to leave the school this time, and they were not a little surprised. But they were to be still more surprised before the night was out.

Less than a minute from the time Manton had vanished the juniors were dressed and following Harry out of the dormitory on tiptoe. Harry guessed that the new boy had learned how to leave the house after lights-out, and he led the way at once to the lower box room.

Sure enough, the window was open slightly, and the juniors clambered cautiously through and dropped on to an outhouse, and from thence to the quad below.

Then they paused, undecided. Staring around him, Harry Wharton suddenly gave a start as he caught the gleam of a light across the dark quad.

"The cycle-shed!" he whispered. "My hat! The beggar must be going out on his bike! Wonder how he got hold of the bike-shed key? And how on earth does he expect to get out with a bike?"

They were soon to know. They saw the dark figure of the junior crossing the quad with his machine, and they followed cautiously. To their amazement, he stopped at last by the little side-door used only by masters, and after a moment's halt there, he passed through. Evidently he had obtained the key of the door also, though how the fellow had got hold of it they could not imagine.

But there it was, and as they realised it the juniors dashed to the cycle-shed for their own machines. Fortunately, Manton had left the door unlocked behind him, and in a moment they had yanked out their bikes and were running across the quad.

Manton had also left the side-door unlocked, and in a flash they were through it with their bikes and out into the road. Then the juniors looked for Manton.

They soon saw him—a dim glimmer of light far up Friardale Lane.

"Better not light up—he may look round," warned Harry Wharton. "Buck up!"

"But—but what about old Tozer?"

"Blow old Tozer! Come on!"

And Harry jumped into his saddle and led the way at top speed in pursuit of the light in front. He was determined not to allow P.-c. Tozer or anyone else to stop him from solving the mystery now he was fairly on the trail.

Fortunately, it was not a very dark night, and riding was simple. Though it was cold, and the juniors were without their greatcoats, the brisk exercise kept them warm enough.

The juniors had supposed that Manton was bound for Friardale, but they were soon undeceived. Just on the outskirts of the village the mysterious junior branched off to the right at the cross-roads.

"Making for Pegg," breathed Harry. "My hat! We might have guessed it. I'll bet he's making for the cottage where young Hemsley lived—though goodness knows why!"

And Harry proved to be right there. It was not a very long way to Pegg by road, and very soon the twinkling lights of the fishing-village came into sight. Five minutes later they saw the lights from their quarry's machine go out suddenly.

Manton had reached the end of his strange journey, and, as Harry had predicted, it proved to be the little cottage where Hemsley had lived with his father.

Redwing had pointed the place out to the chums when they had visited the village with him. Cautiously the excited juniors free-wheeled towards it, and when about fifty yards away, Harry gave a whispered word to dismount.

Leaving their bikes against the hedge, the juniors crept towards the cottage. No lights showed from the place; the tiny windows were shuttered. It was a lonely spot, for the cottage stood on the outskirts of the village.

Almost bursting with excitement and curiosity, the five juniors crept nearer, until they were right up to the shuttered window of the front room. Leaning against the wall, they could make out the shape of Manton's machine. Evidently the midnight adventurer was inside.

Then suddenly a tiny gleam of light winked from between the shutters of the living-room, and Harry Wharton peeped cautiously through the crack of the shutters.

What he saw astounded him—though he had expected it. Manton was there right enough. He was rummaging about in the living-room, obviously in search of something, for the flash-light he carried was moving about from corner to corner of the little room.

It was burglary—nothing less! That a junior of Greyfriars—even a new fellow—should undertake such work, amazed and horrified him. But what on earth was Manton after in Hemsley's cottage? What did it mean?

"The nerve of the rotter!" gasped Harry, as his chums joined him at the shutters. "Hush! Not a sound! We've fairly got the beggar now!"

Guessing Manton had found an entrance at the back, Wharton led the way with breathless caution round the building. He stopped at last near the little kitchen window. The shutters hung wide, and the window was open. A broken pane showed how Manton had reached the catch.

The window-sill was low, and it was the easiest thing in the world to climb through. One by one they passed through. In a moment all stood silent as mice in the little kitchen, listening to the sounds of movement from the next room.

Suddenly those sounds ceased, to be followed a moment later by a faint gasp of satisfaction. Evidently the youthful burglar had found what he sought. A

(Continued on page 17.)

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2!

The Remove in the limelight—next week!

THE GREYFRIARS HERALD

Supplement, No. 118.

HARRY WHARTON
EDITOR

Week ending March 31st, 1923.

SOME CURIOUS FINDS!

By George Wingate.

THE life of an explorer is full of thrills and fascination. Whether he goes exploring in quest of new and unknown land, or whether he is just a treasure-hunter, he gets quite a lot of excitement out of existence.

The greatest discovery of recent years is, of course, that of the tomb of the ancient Egyptian king. The newspapers have been full of this amazing find, and no wonder. How thrilled the discoverers must have been when they stumbled upon these relics of a bygone age!

But here at home, within a couple of miles of Greyfriars, some wonderful discoveries have been made.

Our school football-field was dug up in the year 1872, and the ground was entirely re-turfed. Whilst this work was in progress, the workmen discovered human bones and fragments of swords and battle-axes; so we may be sure that Greyfriars was once the scene of a great battle. This must have taken place many centuries ago, for battle-axes are by no means modern weapons.

On Courtfield Common the remains of a Roman encampment may still be seen. There are also a number of curious stones, similar to those at Stonehenge. The object of these stones has never been ascertained; but they date right back to the Dark Ages—thousands of years B.C. Some say that the Druids used these stones for the purpose of making sacrifices; but antiquarians say that the stones were erected long before the Druids came.

The caves by the seashore have been a happy hunting-ground for explorers. There have been several discoveries of treasure-trove, one in recent years.

Greyfriars fellows are still fond of exploring these caves, in the hope of locating treasure, for we have proof that there is still a good deal of undiscovered wealth, buried by smugglers and others; but it takes a deal of finding! One might dig and burrow for weeks, months, or even years without tangible reward.

A few years ago a party of Greyfriars fellows were excavating on the shore near Pegg when they discovered the bones of a gigantic monster of the deep. In the days of Ancient Britons these monsters abounded; but they no longer infest our shores—much to the relief of the bathers! The bones in question were presented by the school authorities to the Natural History Museum.

Ancient coins have been found in abundance. Our own school museum is full of them. And other relics of past generations are continually cropping up.

There are worse ways of spending a half-holiday than to go exploring. In this historic corner of Kent there must be enough hidden treasure to make the finder a millionaire.

Let us hope that the next great discovery of treasure-trove will fall to the lot of a Greyfriars fellow. And if he will have the kindness to remember me in his will, I shall be duly grateful!

EDITORIAL!



By HARRY WHARTON.

THERE are very few fellows at Greyfriars—or anywhere else, for that matter—who are not fond of exploring.

I well remember one of my earliest exploring stunts, which was carried out when I was six years old. I set forth to explore the woods in the vicinity of Wharton Lodge. I wandered for miles, right off the beaten track, and got lost! Darkness came on, and I was in a sorry plight. I yelled for help, but the only response was the cry of the night-owl. "Tu-whit, tu-who! Here's a pretty go!" it seemed to be saying. I sat down on a tree-stump, and started to howl, for one hasn't a great deal of fortitude at six years of age. Eventually I was discovered by one of my uncle's gamekeepers, who took me back to Wharton Lodge, where I was severely lectured and sent supperless to bed.

That was one of my first experiences as an explorer, and I vowed that I'd never go exploring again. But there is a touch of magic and romance about exploring, and I soon broke my vow. I am now as keen an explorer as ever. Nothing can damp my enthusiasm for exploring lonely caves or wild tracts of seashore.

Knowing, as I do, that a love of exploring is in the heart of every boy, I am not a bit nervous as to the reception this number of the "Herald" will receive. Some special numbers I launch in fear and trembling, wondering whether my readers will approve of them or otherwise. But I have no qualms at all about this Special Explorers Number.

All our favourite contributors are to the fore this week with brilliant stories and articles. Even Mr. Quelch has unbent to the extent of writing an article. Billy Bunter tried to get Mr. Quelch to write exclusively for his "Weekly," but the Remove master wasn't having any!

I am allowing Bunter a column in this issue, and this ought to pacify some of my correspondents, who complain that the fat junior doesn't get a fair show. Bunter offered to fill the whole issue with a story of his exploring feats on the Congo; but his kind offer was declined—without thanks!

HARRY WHARTON.

COKER'S CRUISE!

By Tom Brown.

Old Coker, in a cockleshell,
Once started out exploring;
Black was the sky, the wind was high,
And the rain was simply pouring!

The giant breakers boomed and crashed,
And loudly pealed the thunder;
And Coker said, in tones of dread,
"Shall I survive, I wonder?"

"I wish I'd never started out
Upon this mad excursion;
For storms at sea unsettle me,
They are my pet aversion.

"I want to find the Mystic Isle,
Where treasure-trove is hoarded;
But if I sink, I hardly think
That I shall be rewarded!

"Old Potter warned me not to come,
And Greene was anxious, also.
I'm in despair; I cannot bear
To see waves rise and fall so!"

The tiny craft then reeled and rocked
Till Coker grew quite dizzy;
The thunder crashed, the lightning
flashed,
The elements were busy!

Old Coker then pulled hard for shore,
Though much against his wishes;
A swift retreat he had to beat,
Or he'd be food for fishes!

The boat was swamped from helm to
stern,
And Coker's clothes were dripping;
"If I can reach the friendly beach,"
He panted, "'twill be ripping!"

Then came a mighty tidal wave,
Which washed old Coker over;
And far away, beyond the bay,
Twinkled the lights of Dover.

"Oh, help! I'm sinking!" Coker
groaned,
"This is the giddy limit.
The blessed shore's a mile or more,
It's much too rough to swim it!"

What dreadful agonies of mind
Did poor old Coker suffer!
Till he awoke, and Potter spoke—
"It's rising-bell, you duffer!"

A special April Fools' Supplement next Monday!



THE story of Robinson Crusoe is one of the greatest tales of adventure and exploration which has ever been written.

The adventures of this amazing hero, on a desert island, are purely imaginary, but when the story was first published it made a tremendous sensation, and nearly everybody believed it to be a true tale. This is a great tribute to the writer, Daniel Defoe; for not many writers can make the reader feel that his characters are living beings. Defoe, by the way, is known as the Father of English Fiction.

Having made a fortune as a sugar planter in South America, Robinson Crusoe decided to embark on a life of adventure. Accordingly, he and a number of others set sail for Africa. But they were overtaken on the twelfth day of their voyage by a terrific storm,

and, their vessel being in a battered condition, they resolved to make for the West Indies. But another tornado came along, and they were helpless, and could do nothing but drive before the wind.

Eventually the crew had to take to the boats. The seas were mountain high, and the little craft was soon overturned. All were drowned with the exception of Robinson Crusoe, who was miraculously thrown upon a desert island.

Of course, Crusoe was delighted at this stroke of good fortune. But his troubles were by no means over. Here he was, stranded on a desolate island, without a change of clothing and without food and drink, his sole possessions being a knife, a pipe, and a quantity of tobacco. Moreover, it was beginning to get dark.

On setting out to explore the island, which was uninhabited by man, Robinson Crusoe discovered water, and quenched his thirst. He slept in a tree that first night—a very wise precaution—in case any wild animals should be prowling around.

Next day the storm had passed, and Robinson Crusoe, by swimming out to the wrecked vessel, was able to obtain quite a store of provisions. He swam out several times, and brought back to the shore everything he could lay his hands on. He employed a raft for bringing the provisions ashore.

The next item on Crusoe's programme

was to build for himself an island home. He enlarged the hollow of a rock into a spacious cave, and constructed a strong fence, which neither man nor beast could overcome. Into this cave which he had made—it was fairly easy to make, the rock being soft—he carried all his provisions.

Robinson Crusoe was a very ingenious person. In order not to lose count of time, he cut the following words on a post: "I came on shore here on September 30th, 1659." Every day he cut a notch on the sides of the post. A special notch was made to mark the Sundays.

Crusoe was twenty-three years on his desert island before he found a companion. This was a black man, who had been brought to the island by cannibals to be devoured. Crusoe rescued him, and christened him "Friday," this being the day of the week on which the incident occurred.

Crusoe and Friday shared their island home for some time, and eventually an English vessel came in sight, and in this Robinson Crusoe set sail for the Old Country. He was destined to have many more adventures, however, but these do not come within the scope of my article.

Altogether a remarkable story is "Robinson Crusoe," and I do not wonder that it is as popular with the boys of to-day as it was with the boys of bygone generations.

THE CALL OF THE WILD!

By DICK PENFOLD.

I'd love to sail uncharted seas
In quest of spoil and treasure;
For precious stones and ancient bones,
I'd search with eager pleasure.
Or, landing on some lonely isle
(Some day I'm sure to do so),
I'd delve and toil beneath the soil,
And dig up Robinson Crusoe!

I'd love to see the Blue Lagoon,
Where not a breath of breeze is;
Or find the isle where man is vile
But every prospect pleases.
To Treasure Island I'd embark
If I could get permission;
In vain, in vain! Who'll entertain
My eager proposition?

I'd love to run away from school
And be a Scott or Peary;
The Southern Pole would be my goal,
And I'd be gay and cheery.
I shouldn't mind the cold a bit,
I'd brave it like a hero;
Onwards I'd pass, although the glass
Had dropped right down to zero!

I'd give the world if I could be
A daring deep-sea diver;
The ocean bed, which countless dread,
Would yield me many a "liver."
The monsters that infest the deep,
The sharks and fierce sea-dragons,
I'd put to flight, and then I might
Bring home the loot in wagons!



But what's the use of dreaming dreams,
Indulging each fond fancy?

I'll never sail, through gust and gale,
On board the "Lady Nancy."

But here at Greyfriars I'll remain,
Where work is dull and boring;

For I'm not free to taste, you see,
The pleasures of exploring!

MY GREATEST DISCOVERY!

DICKY NUGENT.—I once dug a hole in the Head's garden, six foot deep, to see if I could discover gold. I didn't! But when the Head discovered the hole I had made, I discovered that he was angry, and he discovered his cane, and I discovered that he knew how to lay it on! So between us we made quite a lot of discoveries that day. I have never made a really grate discovery yet, but I trussed the happy day will soon dawn.

BOLSOVER MAJOR.—I once had the good fortune to find a halfpenny in the Close. That's about the biggest discovery I've ever made. And that was a beastly sell, because when I went along to the tuckshop to buy a ha'porth of bullseyes, Dame Mimble informed me that the coin was a bad one! Never mind. Better luck next time!

MARK LINLEY.—Afraid I have nothing exciting to report. I sat down in Friardale woods one day last summer, and discovered a wasps' nest. I hope my next discovery will be less painful!

DOCTOR LOCKE.—My greatest discovery was that of an original manuscript of the poet Milton. They were some verses he wrote when a boy at St. Paul's School. I have no doubt they would realise a lot of money, but I prefer to keep them.

Look out for the funny merchants at Greyfriars!



By PETER TODD.

"HALLO! Where's Bunter off to?" Harry Wharton glanced from the window of Study No. 1 as he spoke.

It was tea-time at Greyfriars. But Billy Bunter had either had his tea already, or he was giving it a miss—a surprising thing for Bunter to do.

The fat junior was rolling down to the school gates. Over his shoulder he carried a spade, which looked suspiciously like the property of Mr. Joseph Mimble, the school gardener. In his other hand Bunter carried a lantern, which bore a striking resemblance to the lantern belonging to Gosling, the porter.

Bob Cherry, who had just dropped in to Study No. 1 for tea, gave a mirthful chuckle.

"I've pulled Bunter's leg beautifully!" he said.

"How?" asked Nugent.

"Tell us all about it, my worthy chum," said Hurree Singh.

Bob Cherry proceeded to explain. His explanation was punctuated by chuckles.

"I drew up a document, on a musty old sheet of paper, relating to an oak chest, full of treasure, that was supposed to have been buried in the sands, a couple of miles from Pegg Bay, by one of the old-time smugglers. I wrote a lot of doggerel about this treasure, and I drew a chart showing the exact spot where it's supposed to lie buried. I left the document on the desk in my study, knowing that Bunter would get hold of it and swallow the bait."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I heard Bunter's footsteps in the passage," continued Bob, "and I dodged behind the screen. Bunter came into the study—prowling around for grub, I suppose—and the first thing he saw was the document on my desk. He grabbed it, and read it, and his eyes nearly fell out of his head in his excitement!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's now going off in quest of the merry treasure," said Bob Cherry. "It will be a wild-goose chase, but it's Bunter's own fault for being such a Nosey Parker!"

"Yes, rather!"

"He'll go to the exact spot I have described," said Bob. "So many paces to the south, then so many paces to the west, and so forth, and he'll dig for the old oak chest that isn't there!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wish we could follow him and see the fun!" said Johnny Bull.

"We haven't time, I'm afraid," said Wharton. "Chess tournament comes off after tea."

It was a merry meal in Study No. 1. At the thought of Billy Bunter, with his coat off, digging away furiously on the lonely shore, the Famous Five laughed long and loud.

Bunter was a gullible youth, and he had never doubted that the document

he had found on Bob Cherry's desk was perfectly genuine. He had set forth with spade and lantern in quest of the buried treasure. He left Greyfriars with two-pence-halfpenny in his pocket; he hoped to return to the school rolling in riches.

Bunter had not told a soul about the treasure. He never shared a good thing with others. He intended to dig for the treasure himself, and to keep it to himself when he got it. Even his minor Sammy was not taken into his confidence.

After tea, the Famous Five forgot all about Bunter. The chess tournament claimed their attention. They went along to the junior Common-room, where the great tussle of brains was to take place.

Darkness descended upon Greyfriars, and with the darkness came a fierce storm. The wind whistled around the old tower and turrets, and the windows of the junior Common-room creaked and rattled. Doors banged all over the building.



Bunter sets forth on his expedition.

And still the Famous Five, in the heat of the chess tournament, were forgetful of Billy Bunter.

After many games—most of them short, sharp, and exciting—Hurree Singh got into the final with Monty Newland. And it was while this last tussle was taking place that Bob Cherry suddenly remembered his jape on Bunter.

"My only aunt!" ejaculated Bob, springing to his feet. "We've forgotten Bunter!"

"He's surely back by now?" said Wharton.

"Let's go and see."

Leaving Hurree Singh to go on with his game, the other members of the Famous Five set off in search of Bunter. But the fat junior was not to be found.

Bob Cherry's usually sunny face was clouded over. He looked quite anxious.

"I don't like the idea of Bunter being out in this storm," he said. "And it's pitch dark outside, too!"

"Better go and find the porpoise, and fetch him home," said Johnny Bull.

"Yes, rather!"

The juniors put on their caps and raincoats and sallied forth into the storm.

It was a wild night. A gale was blowing from the sea, and Greyfriars caught the full force of it.

Harry Wharton & Co. had to battle their way against the boisterous wind. They said very little as they trudged along, for the strong wind caught their breath. They took the narrow, winding road to Pegg, and when they reached the little fishing-village they were astonished and alarmed to find how rough the sea was. Showers of blinding spray were dashed into their faces. Giant breakers hurled themselves on to the rocky shore.

"We've got another couple of miles to go," said Bob Cherry. "Come on!"

Harry Wharton gave a violent start.

"Where was the treasure supposed to be, Bob—on the far side of the headland?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Then no wonder Bunter hasn't returned. He's cut off by the tide! It's nearly high water!"

"Great Scott!"

"It will be useless for us to go along the shore. We sha'n't be able to get past the headland!"

Wharton's chums realised that he was stating a fact. Billy Bunter was in all probability cut off by the tide!

Bob Cherry was pale as death now. His little jape on Bunter looked like having tragic results. Bob would never have played such a jape, could he have foreseen the possible consequences.

"The tide isn't at the full yet, thank goodness!" said Frank Nugent. "So Bunter will be safe for a time. But how are we going to get at him? No boat could live in a sea like this!"

"We must get a rope, and go along the cliffs," said Bob Cherry. And he rushed away in the direction of the nearest fisherman's cottage. Here he obtained a stout coil of rope; and the juniors then hurried up the cliff-path, and made their way along the cliff-top.

When they had proceeded about two miles, they bawled Bunter's name in chorus. For some time there was no answer, but they persevered, and eventually a faint cry came from far below.

"Thank goodness he's safe!" muttered Bob Cherry fervently.

Bob threw himself down on the sodden grass, and wormed his way towards the edge of the cliff. He gazed down the almost sheer wall, and presently discerned a crouching figure at the base.

"Bunter!" he roared. "Hold on! There's a rope coming down!"

There was a reply from below, but Bob Cherry could not catch it.

"I think you fellows had better lower me down," he said. "I've an idea that Bunter's pretty well whacked, and will want help!"

Tales of japers and their victims—next week!

Accordingly, the rope was tied round Bob's middle, and his three chums lowered him, very gently and cautiously, down the face of the cliff.

Bob reached the shore in safety, to find Billy Bunter unhurt, but scared almost out of his wits.

"Ow! Save me!" pleaded the fat junior.

"You're all right now," said Bob. "Let me fasten this rope round you. There are three fellows at the top waiting to haul you up."

"I—I say, Cherry, will the rope stand the strain?"

It was a natural question to ask, for Billy Bunter turned the scale at fourteen stone, and the rope would be severely tested. However, it was an exceptionally strong rope, and there was little fear of it snapping.

Bob Cherry did not reply. The tide was coming in fast, and there was no time for idle conversation. He made the rope secure round Bunter's waist, and shouted a signal to his chums.

Billy Bunter was gradually hauled up to safety. And when this feat had been accomplished, the rope came down again for Bob Cherry's benefit. It did not come a moment too soon, for the water was already up to Bob's knees.

Bob was his old cheery self when he bobbed over the edge of the cliff. Of his own danger he had recked nothing. His one concern had been for Billy Bunter.

"I say, you fellows," panted the Owl of the Remove. "I'm drenched to the skin, and I'm bound to get pneumonia or something. I hope you don't think I came down here to search for treasure-trove, or anything like that. The fact is, I was just taking a stroll along the shore, when the tide came in and cut me off."

"But you don't need a spade and a lantern to walk along the shore," said Nugent, glancing at the two articles which Bob Cherry had brought up with him.

"Oh, really, Nugent——"

"Tell the truth, Bunter," said Bob Cherry. "You came along to dig for treasure. You found that document on my desk, and you swallowed the bait."

"What!" roared Bunter, facing round on Bob. "Do you mean to say that the document wasn't genuine? Have you been japing me, you rotter?"

"Guilty, m'lord!" said Bob.

"You—you——" spluttered Bunter wrathfully. "This might have cost me my life!"

"How much is that worth?" asked Johnny Bull. "Fourpence?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Now that the danger was over, the juniors could afford to laugh and jest. But they had felt precious little like laughing and jesting when they had set out from Greyfriars.

The rope was returned to the fisherman's cottage, and the party made their way back to Greyfriars, arriving just in time for locking-up.

It had been a night of adventure and peril, but all had ended happily, except for Billy Bunter.

The next time Billy finds a document relating to buried treasure, he will send it to the Antiquarian Society to make sure it is genuine before he arms himself with spade and lantern and goes exploring!

THE END.

IN POLAR REGIONS!



By BILLY BUNTER.

AS the readers of the "Greyfriars Herald" are aware, I am a fellow of many parts. By this I don't mean that you can unscrew my arms and legs, or anything like that. I'm not a fellow of many pieces, but a fellow of many attainments.

As an eggsporer, I have no equal at Greyfriars. I devote nearly all my spare time to eggsporing studdy cubberds in search of tuck.

Some of you may larf, and say that it's easy to eggspore cubberds; but it is a very delicate and dangerus bizzness, and you have to tread warily.

I also eggspore every nook and cranny I come across. Some fellows don't call this eggsporing. They have another name for it. They say it's prying. As if a fellow like me would dessend to be a Paul Pry!

There have been lots of famus eggsporers. Columbuss, Livingstone, Scott, and Shackleton are names which leap reddily to the mind. To this list must be added the name of W. G. Bunter.

Who discovered the trezzure that was berried from underneath the tuckshop to the hollow oak in Friardale Wood? Me again!

Who discovered the winkle-beds off the coast of Pegg? Once again I plaice my hand on my hart, and bow!

It was Columbuss who discovered America, but then he had an unfair advantage, being born about five hundred years before me.

But wait! The East Pole and the West Pole haven't been discovered yet; and that's where W.G.B. will come in! When I get enuff money saved up, I shall equip an eggspedition, and go sailing away in search of these two Poles. Wonder what they will be like? Broomsticks stuck in the ice, I eggspoct. Can you picture me, dear readers, wrapped up in furze, strutting proudly over the ice, with the Union Jack in one hand, a chopper in the other, and a tellyscope in the other. (First time we knew you had three paws, Billy!—Ed.)

When I go eggsporing, there will be no stopping me. I do not fear the feerce heat of the Antartick regions, or the intense, bitter cold of the Equator. Icebergs and heat-waves are all the same to me. I shall push on to the goal, as the centre-forward said when he fainted past three opponents in succession!

I mean to add many new Colonies to the Empire when I grow up. Meenwhile, I must content myself with eggsporing studdy cubberds. It isn't nearly so eggsporing as finding a Pole; but if I eggspore Loder's studdy I shall find, not a pole, but an ash-plant!

An eggsporer's life is not all honey, and his motives are often misunderstood. But a Bunter always marches breast forward, and never turns his back on any enterprise.

I must now konklood this artikle, as I wish to go eggsporing in Studdy No. 1.

(The moment we see the tip of your nose protruding round the door of our studdy, we'll let fly at it with our peashooters!—Ed.)

OUR FOOTBALL COLUMN!

By H. Vernon-Smith.
(Sports Editor.)

SOME of you may think that a football column is out of place in a Special Exploring Number. But it isn't, for the Remove Eleven had to do quite a lot of exploring last Wednesday afternoon. The village of Little Plumpton had challenged us to a match, to be played on their ground. Their skipper had telephoned to Harry Wharton, and he accepted the challenge.

Little Plumpton happens to be five miles from a railway-station, and there were no conveyances to take us there. So we had to tramp the distance—in a drizzle of rain, too. We were anything but a cheery party, I can tell you! Even Bob Cherry wasn't in a mirth-making mood. We tramped along the slushy road in a dismal procession, until at last we reached ye ancient village of Little Plumpton.

But our troubles were by no means over. They had, in fact, only just begun! On reaching the village, we were unable to find the football-ground. There was an old-fashioned inn called the Cricketers' Arms—but the cricketers' arms couldn't have ached so badly as the footballers' legs! There was a village street, and a village hall. There was one general store, which was post-office, grocery store, butcher's, baker's, and barber's combined. But there was not a sign or a suspicion of a football-ground.

"Here's a pretty go!" grunted Harry Wharton. "What are we going to do about it?"

"Here comes the Oldest Inhabitant," said Bob Cherry, as an ancient "Beaver" came hobbling into view. "Let's ask him where the footer-ground is."

"I say!" shouted Wharton. "Can you direct us to the football-ground?"

The old man stopped.

"Which I've lived in this 'ere village, man an' boy, for nigh on ninety year," he said, "but there ain't never been no football-ground 'ere, not so far back as I can remember."

"My hat!"

"This is Little Plumpton, isn't it?" said Johnny Bull.

"Ah, it be!"

"And there's no footer-ground here?" The Oldest Inhabitant shook his head.

"We don't go in for them noo-fangled things, young gents," he replied. And he bade us good-afternoon, and hobbled on his way.

Gradually it dawned upon us that we had been hoaxed. There was no football eleven at Little Plumpton. Some practical joker had called up Harry Wharton on the telephone, and spoofed him.

We discovered, anon, that the practical joker was Skinner of the Remove. And we gave the precious rascal a bumping that rattled every bone in his miserable body!

Next week's war-cry—"April Fool!"

A MESSAGE FROM THE SEA!*(Continued from page 12.)*

moment of silence, and then he appeared in the doorway of the inner room.

He started back with a strangled yelp of alarm as he saw the dim, silent figures of the juniors before him. Something he carried beneath one arm dropped with a hollow crash to the stone floor.

For a tense moment Manton stood as if turned to stone. Then his electric-torch flashed full upon the juniors. As he recognised them he gave a snarl of rage.

"You—you spying young hounds!" he breathed hoarsely. "You—you've followed me! You—you—"

"Exactly!" grinned Bob Cherry. "We've bowled you out, my burgling pippin! Now, tell us all about it—do. What's that you've got there, eh?"

For answer, Manton bent suddenly and snatched up the object from the floor.

"No, you don't!" snapped Harry Wharton. "Collar him, you chaps!"

Many hands grasped the fuming rascal, and his frantic struggles availed him little. Harry Wharton easily snatched the object from him. It proved to be a box; and it seemed to be empty. In the light from his torch, Wharton examined it curiously, and noted that it was old, and made of thin rosewood.

Taking it into the living-room, Harry placed it on the top of a cupboard, and returned to Manton and eyed him grimly.

"Now, you rotter!" he said quietly. "I suppose it's no good asking you to tell us what this means—you'd only tell us some yarn—"

"I'll tell you nothing, hang you!" snarled Manton. "I don't care what you do with me—though I suppose you'll get me expelled for this!"

"I ought to!" said Harry, his lip curling. "But you'll get expelled soon enough, if you go on at this rate. You've proved yourself only fit for a reformatory—not a decent school. But I'll decide what we're to do with you later, you cad! For the present, you'll come back with us to the school. I'll watch you don't get up to any further tricks. Out with him, you fellows!"

To their surprise, Manton did not resist, and the next moment they were all outside, and Harry had closed and shuttered the window again.

Then, having no desire to be caught there in such circumstances, the juniors mounted their bikes, and, with Manton riding in their midst, they made all haste back to Greyfriars.

Hardly a word was spoken during the return journey, and not until the school was reached did Wharton address Manton. Then, as they housed their bikes, Harry spoke to him sharply.

"I'm not going to mention a word of this—for the present," he told him. "You've done a rotten and serious thing to-night, but I don't want to be the means of getting you expelled. I don't know what on earth you want to poke your nose into Hemsley's business for. But I warn you that if there's any more of this I'll not hesitate to report it!"

Manton said nothing. He followed the juniors in silence as they crept back to their dormitory. In silence they disrobed and crept into bed. The

mystery of the whole business was beyond them, and they were too tired out to puzzle their brains about it—for that night, at least.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.**A Disappointment for Bunter!**

SINCE his little affray with Manton in the quad that first day, Billy Bunter had given the big new fellow a wide berth. But like the Famous Five he kept a close watch on Manton's movements, for all that. With the result that he very quickly found out what Harry Wharton had already discovered—that young Hemsley's company held a peculiar attraction for the new boy.

Unlike Harry Wharton and his chums, Billy had no scruples whatever as to the manner in which he obtained his information. Keyholes and such-like were simply listening-posts in an honourable campaign, to Billy Bunter.

And though the chums of the Remove believed that the story Hemsley had told them of the ransacking of his room by Manton was a close secret, the crafty Bunter was soon in possession of the facts.

And this settled the matter for Billy Bunter. He already knew who Manton really was; he now knew that Manton—alias Leonard Lembolt, was at Greyfriars for a purpose—to get something which belonged to Hemsley. Was it the rosewood box? Did such a thing really exist?

In his own fat mind Billy Bunter was certain on that point. What else could it be? Once settled upon that fact, it did not take Billy long to find out that the box was not in Hemsley's possession at Greyfriars, and to reason it out that the thing must therefore be at the cottage.

Then Bunter learned what Manton had been told by Hemsley himself—that the few sticks of furniture and other belongings of the skipper of the *Cristobel* were to be sold by auction, and that the cottage was to be given up.

But Bunter only learned this last on the morning of the sale, and the news filled him with alarm. Was the mysterious rosewood box to be lost after all?

"I'm blessed if I know what I ought to do," mused the Owl of the Remove, as he rolled out from dinner that morning. "I suppose I ought to tell everything to Wharton or somebody, but if I do, where do I come in? They'll say I should have taken that blessed paper straight to that chap Hemsley, and I shall get it hot. No. I've simply got to get hold of that blessed box somehow. When I've got that, and the proofs, I can easily wangle out of it somehow. My hat! Blessed if I don't go to Courtfield and try to get it!"

Luckily it was Wednesday—a half—and Bunter, once resolved, set to work briskly.

"I'll tackle Mauly for a small loan," mused Bunter, at last.

And he did so—to such good purpose that when he left Lord Mauleverer's cosy study some minutes later he had several silver coins jingling in his pocket. Then Bunter made a dive for the cycle-shed.

He had not been ragged, after all, for "borrowing" Wharton's bike, but he decided not to tempt Fate too far, so this time he selected Mauleverer's

glittering machine. And soon the fat junior was riding hard for Courtfield.

Bunter was obtuse, but he had a certain amount of common-sense, and he had reasoned it out that the quickest way to find out who had bought the box was to inquire at the offices of the auctioneer who had put through the sale of Hemsley's belongings.

He went straight there on arrival in Courtfield, and very soon learned what he wanted.

The rosewood box had been purchased by Mr. Solomon Lazurus, whose dingy second-hand shop was in the High Street.

"My hat!" breathed Bunter. "I—I might have guessed it. Just the sort of thing old Lazurus would buy. Crumbs! I'm fairly on the trail."

Bunter was delighted with such early success. He hurried to the shop of Mr. Lazurus, breathless with excitement. And scarcely had he crossed the threshold of the frowsy shop when he realised that his quest was ended.

On the shop floor was a pile of miscellaneous household goods—rubbish mostly—that had evidently been dumped down there recently. And on the top of the heap was a box. It was not large, and it was old and battered. And the wood it was made of was rosewood! Bunter's eyes gleamed.

It was undoubtedly the rosewood box he was in search of. Bunter didn't doubt that for one moment.

He rolled into the shop. Young Solly, Mr. Lazurus' hopeful son, was behind the counter. He knew Bunter very well—indeed, he knew most of the fellows at Greyfriars.

"Hallo, Billy, old man!" he greeted him, with a cheerful grin. "Is this a blethed social visit, or is it bithness?"

Billy Bunter gave him a lofty blink through his spectacles.

"Business, of course," he said, with dignity.

He glanced carelessly round the shop. "I want a box—a small box to keep my—my private correspondence in," he said. "Just a cheap box— Ah! This old box will do nicely. How much is it—a bob?"

And Bunter picked up the rosewood box and planked it on the counter.

Young Solly eyed him rather sharply. "That box," he said briskly, "wath bought at a sale thith morning. But I'll sell it to you, Bunter, for three bob. Ith a very fine box, I might tell you, and—"

"What rot!" snorted Bunter. "Why, the blessed box isn't worth sixpence! Look here, I'll give you a bob for it, Solly; that's generous!"

"Ath there isn't a key to the blethed box," said Solly, "I'll let you have it for two bob, Bunter. Thath a bargain at that."

The fat junior grunted; but he was far too eager to possess the box to bargain further, and he agreed to the price.

"Right," said Solly. "Now let'h see the colour of your money, Billy, old thon."

Billy snorted indignantly; but he planked down the two shillings without comment, impatient to be off. A minute later he left the shop with a brown-paper parcel under his fat arm.

Once outside the shop, however, Bunter's disgusted expression gave place to one of beaming satisfaction. With desperate haste he tied the parcel to his carrier, and next moment he was riding hard along the High Street.

He had scarcely gone many yards

Bunter finds a use for his powers of ventriloquism!

when another cyclist dismounted in front of Mr. Lazurus' shop, and hurried inside. It was Manton, the new boy. His flabby face was red, and he was breathless and panting.

But Bunter did not see him; he was too excited to notice anyone just then. Wobbling from side to side on the saddle, he plugged away, and not until he reached the outskirts of Courtfield did he slacken his speed.

Then, once in the quietness of Friar-dale Lane, he slowed down and dismounted. Running the machine on to the grass, he rested it against the trunk of a tree, and with trembling fingers untied the parcel and laid it on the grass.

But even as his fingers closed on the lid of the mysterious box there came a sudden whir of cycle-wheels, and Manton came scorching up.

He sprang from his machine, and flung it away from him, dashed towards Billy Bunter.

The Owl sprang to his feet in alarm.

"Wharrer matter?" he gasped.

"That box!" gasped Manton fiercely. "Hand it over, you fat fool! Quick!"

He made a rush for the box, but Bunter was too quick for him. He grabbed it under his arm, and staggered back, his fat face set and determined.

"Keep off, you cad!" he panted. "I'm not giving this box up! If—if you touch me, I'll—"

"You silly fool!" breathed Manton. He seemed about to take the box by force, and then he paused and grinned.

He knew Bunter's reputation fairly well; but he did not know that even a Bunter had his limits.

"Now, look here, old chap," he said cunningly. "I know all about you. I know that a certain gentleman gave you a fiver for a certain document the other day. If you hand over that box without any fuss, I'll see you get another fiver—a tenner, in fact. Hand it over!"

"I won't!" gasped Bunter, though his voice shook. "I don't care what you do, you rotter, but that box belongs rightly to Hemsley, and he's going to get it. I'll spoil your dirty game—"

Bunter got no further. With a grunt of rage, Manton flung himself upon him. But the fat youth's star of fortune was in the ascendant.

Once again there came the whir of cycle-wheels, and six juniors rushed up, and there was a clatter of falling bikes as Harry Wharton & Co., and Redwing flung themselves upon Manton.

Manton had tracked down Bunter and the box, certainly; but he little dreamed that, in his turn, he had been followed and tracked down.

In a moment he was hauled from the yelling Bunter, and held helpless in the juniors' grasp.

"Up to your bullying games again!" exclaimed Harry Wharton angrily. "You howling cad! I've a jolly good mind to give you another hiding now. Clear out, you brute, before I do it!"

Manton scowled, and was about to speak, but Bob Cherry grabbed him by the scruff of the neck, and, with Johnny Bull's help, ran him across the grass, and flung him into the lane.

Manton picked himself up, hesitated, and then, with red and furious face, walked to his bike, and, mounting it, rode away.

Then Harry Wharton's eyes fell upon the box, which Bunter had taken charge of again.

"Bunter," he cried in astonishment, "where on earth did you get that? How has that come here?"

"I—I just bought it from—from old Lazurus!" gasped Bunter. "It was this that beast Lem—I mean, Manton—was after. You—you—"

The fat junior stammered and hesitated. Harry Wharton gave him a searching look.

"Look here, Bunter," he said quietly. "I can see you know something about this business—this business of Hemsley's rosewood box, I mean. Now, no humbug! What do you know about it? I advise you to tell us for your own sake. This affair looks like becoming serious. It'll pay you to act straight with us."

Bunter had already come to that conclusion. Moreover, he saw that Wharton knew something about the matter, though how, and how much, he had no idea. He decided to tell all.

"It's all right, Wharton!" he gasped eagerly. "I was going to tell you. I was only waiting to get that box first. I know all about it. I'll tell you everything."

And he did. He told the story as he knew it, omitting no details. And as he proceeded the juniors listened spellbound. When he had finished, Bob Cherry gave a gasp.

"Well, that takes the giddy biscuit!" he breathed, eyeing Bunter admiringly. "I've heard a few Bunter yarns, but this one's the limit. And yet, hang it all, there must be some truth in it!"

Harry Wharton nodded. His eyes were sparkling with excitement. There was undoubtedly truth in it. He remembered the occasion when Bunter had found something in a bottle on the beach; that he had gone off somewhere—that same day—on a bike, and returned with five pounds. Then there were the initials on the penknife, and finally the curious behaviour of Manton, and the rosewood box.

Astounding as Bunter's story seemed, everything fitted perfectly with it.

"And—and you say you handed that—that confession of Caleb Hemsley's to this Mr. Lembolt himself?" asked Harry, after a silence.

Billy Bunter gave vent to a fat, satisfied smirk.

"Not me," he grinned. "I was just a bit too smart for that, Wharton. Trust me for that! What I handed to him was a blessed copy—one I took myself. He,

he, he! I've got the original here somewhere."

And, fishing from his trouser-pockets a conglomerated mass of string, marbles, toffee, and other articles, Billy selected a sticky, crumpled, dirty piece of paper, and handed it over to Wharton.

Wharton opened it out, and read the pencilled message on it. And as he read that tragic, eleventh-hour confession of the hapless Caleb Hemsley, all his doubts went.

Silently he handed it to his chums to read.

"And that box contains the proofs, does it?" he remarked grimly at length. "My hat! Lucky we came along just now. You've acted like a fool, Bunter. You ought to have taken this straight to young Hemsley or to Mr. Quelch. Anyway, you played up well by refusing to hand the box to that brute, and by owning up just now, so I suppose we mustn't be too hard on you!"

"But the fat clam must have known this Godfrey Lembolt wasn't the father of the missing kid!" said Johnny Bull.

"I didn't—never dreamed of it!" gasped Bunter, with a start.

"Of course he wasn't, Bunter!" said Harry. "I remember being told about it by someone. The kiddie's mother died when he was born, and his father died just after the kid was lost. This Godfrey Lembolt is the kid's uncle. Anyway, let's see to that box now. No, don't open it; that's young Hemsley's job—if we can call him by that name now. We'll take the box to him, and then, when we've got the proofs, we'll take the whole thing to Quelch."

The box was packed again in the brown paper, and the juniors started back for Greyfriars.

It was nearly tea-time when they arrived, and once again they found young Hemsley at the woodshed. He was putting his gardening implements away, and he looked up in surprise at the excited faces of the juniors.

Harry Wharton planked the rosewood box on a bench just inside the door of the shed.

"We want you to open this, Hemsley," he said, in a voice of suppressed excitement. "Unless we've been hoaxed, I fancy we've wonderful news for you."

And as Hemsley gazed in surprise at the box, Harry began to tell the strange story. Hemsley listened quietly at first. But as Harry proceeded, helped by Bunter and the others, his face showed his growing bewilderment and agitation.

"But—but I don't understand," he stammered huskily, when the story was finished. "I—I can't believe it. It—it can't be me—"

"Look at that," said Harry quietly. He handed the confession to the trembling boy. "Is that your—your father's writing?"

Hemsley took the paper. He read it slowly. Then he turned a white face to the chums.

"It—it's his writing right enough," he stammered. "But—Caleb Hemsley—not my father! I can't believe— And yet, now I think of it, I remember many things. I—I—"

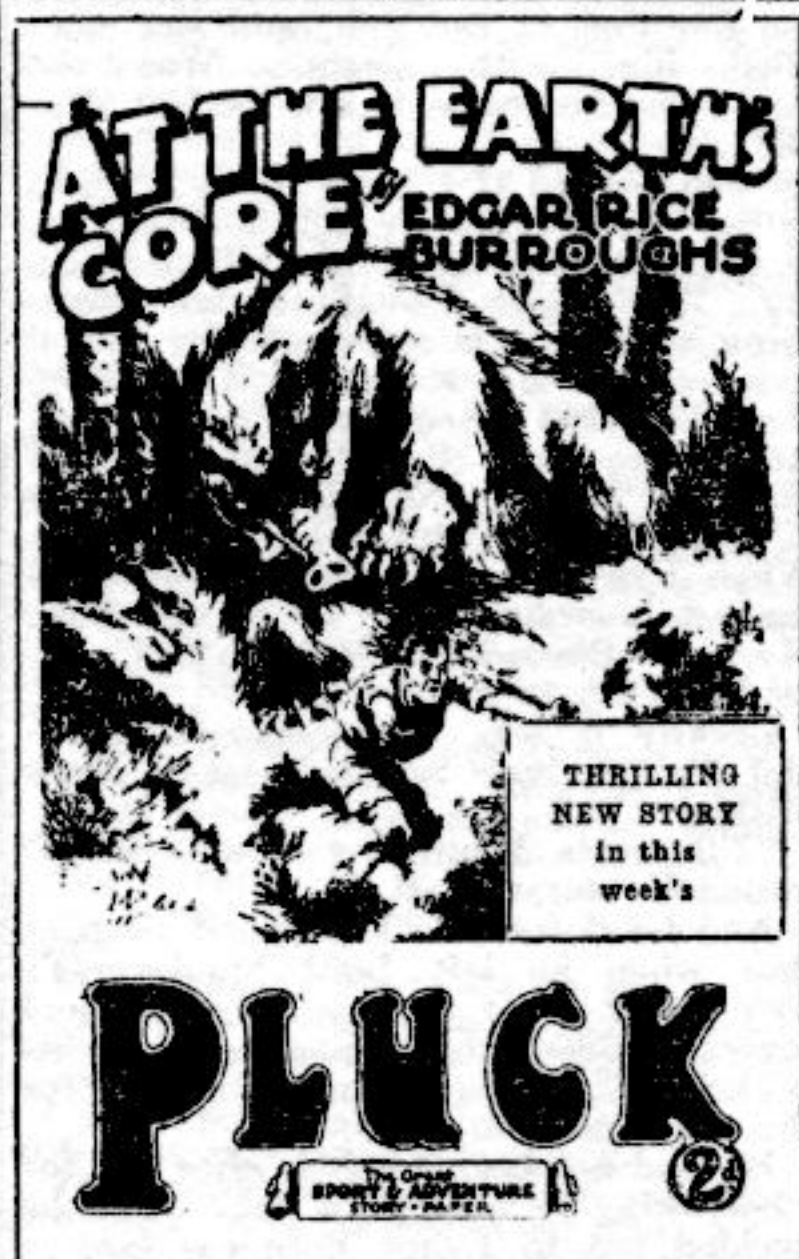
"What things?" asked Harry quickly.

"I don't know. But—but he didn't seem fond of me. And— Yes, he always appeared to have lots of money to spend. People used to wonder where he got it from."

"I've heard about that," added Redwing quietly.

"Well, this box contains proof," said Harry. "Open it."

"But it can't," said Hemsley, with a



And Gerald Loder's noble leg is pulled!

wry smile. "There's nothing in the box, I know. I emptied it myself only yesterday. I was clearing up—getting ready for the sale. There was nothing but rubbish inside. Look!"

He fumbled with the lid of the box. It swung open at last.

The box was empty; there was nothing to be seen—nothing!

The juniors were staggered.

"Then—then it must be a hoax, after all!" muttered Nugent.

"I can't believe it—I won't!" snapped Harry. He was bitterly disappointed—as all were. But he wasn't dismayed. "What about the facts—Manton, and the rest of it? What did you take out of this box, Hemsley, and where did you put the stuff?"

"There was only rubbish in it—a few old letters and oddments. Nothing of value," said Hemsley. "I glanced through them, and shoved them in a chest of drawers, meaning to go through them later and destroy what I didn't want to keep. But I forgot about them. The chest of drawers is sold now."

"Then our course is clear," said Harry. "We've got to find it and get that stuff back. The proofs may be among the rubbish, and you've overlooked them."

"I don't think so."

"We're going to try it, anyway. For the present, though, say nothing to anyone of this. You hear, Bunter? We'll keep it a secret until we've found the stuff and the proofs!" said Harry grimly. "Take charge of the box and paper, Hemsley, and guard them well. Tomorrow we'll hunt round, and when we find the proofs, we'll go straight to Quelchy. Now let's get some tea."

The juniors crowded out of the shed and streamed across the quad, chatting excitedly in whispers. Young Hemsley picked up the box, placed the confession inside, and went out dazedly with the box under his arm.

He crossed the quad in the gathering dusk to the servants' quarters; and as he did so a hulking youth, with a flabby, pimply face, emerged from behind the woodshed. It was Manton, and his small eyes were glittering.

He had waited for the juniors' return by the gates, and had followed them to the woodshed. And after waiting a while he had crept near to listen.

He had not heard much, but he had caught Wharton's last words to Hemsley, telling him to guard the box and paper, and that on the morrow they would take the proofs to Quelchy.

But it was enough for the spy. He waited another minute, and then he hurried indoors, his thick lips compressed, and made straight for the prefects' room.

Most of the prefects were at tea—a fact Manton knew, and the room was empty. In a moment he was at the telephone, ringing up the exchange. And the number he gave was the number of the Towers.

And had Harry Wharton & Co. only heard the long conversation which followed they would have been very startled indeed!

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

A Midnight Adventure!

HARRY WHARTON awoke suddenly and abruptly.

What had awakened him he did not know. He rubbed his eyes sleepily, and then quite suddenly he became aware that someone was shaking him by the shoulder.



The juniors crowded out of the shed and streamed across the quad. Young Hemsley picked up the box, placed it under his arm, and made off in the direction of the servants' quarters. And even as he did so a hulking youth, with a flabby, coarse face, emerged from behind the woodshed. It was Manton!
(See Chapter 8.)

He blinked into the darkness of the dormitory, startled for the moment, and then he saw a figure standing by his bedside.

He sat up quickly.

"That you, Bob? What's the matter?"

"It's Hemsley, Wharton," came the hurried, excited reply. "Something's happened. I thought I'd better come and tell you at once. That fellow Manton's been in my room again. He—he's taken the rosewood box!"

"What?"

Harry was wide awake now. He leaped from his bed. Almost unconsciously his glance went across to Manton's bed. It was empty.

"Where is he—quick!" snapped Wharton, beginning to rush into his clothes.

"He's left the school, I think. I woke up to find him in the room. He'd found the box then, though, and before I could get out of bed he'd vanished."

"Was he fully dressed?"

"Yes. I dashed after him, but he'd gone downstairs then," said Hemsley. "I couldn't follow, as I don't know how to get out at night."

"Right! Cut off and get some clothes on. Then come back here," snapped Harry. "I'll see to that rotter!"

As he spoke Harry stepped to Bob Cherry's bed and cautiously wakened him.

"Listen, Bob," whispered Harry, as Cherry sat up in bed. "Manton's got that box. He's left the school with it, I think. Wake the others quickly, and follow me out. I'll wait by the wall if I don't see anything of the rotter. Understand?"

Bob Cherry soon grasped the situation, and, leaving him to rouse his chums, Harry hurried from the dormitory. He knew his way about without a light to guide him, and hastened downstairs to the lower box-room. A moment later he was out in the dark, silent quad.

His first thought was of the cycle-shed; but there were no lights or signs of movement there. Then suddenly he gave a start. From a part of the roadway beyond the school wall came a blaze of white light.

"Great Scott!" breathed Harry. "A car! I bet he's got his rascally pater on the job!"

And with the thought, Harry Wharton dashed across the quad, heedless of the darkness. He did not fear a mistake. He realised it must be after midnight, and for no other reason would a car be outside the school walls at that time of the night.

In a very few seconds the school wall loomed up before him. A large tree almost touched the wall here, with its branches overhanging the road beyond.

In a moment Wharton had swarmed up the tree, and had dropped down on the other side of the wall into the roadway.

He found himself standing full in the glare of the headlights of a large motor-car, less than twenty yards away. Almost instantly there came a sharp, alarmed cry from that direction.

Harry recognised the voice in a flash. It was Manton's! And the leader of the Famous Five hesitated no longer.

He could see two figures seated in the car, but he never thought of the odds.

Even Lord Mauleverer wakes up for the occasion!

From the top of the wall Harry had seen one—the bigger of the two—stooping down in the driving-seat, working away at something at his feet. Evidently some part of the mechanism of the car—probably the starting gear—was giving trouble, which would account for the rascal's delayed departure.

Now, however, as Wharton started forward the engine gave a sudden roar, and he knew it was now or never.

He gave a shout, and made a running leap for the footboard. His feet rested upon it, and he made a desperate grab at the arm of the driver as he reached for the clutch.

With a savage exclamation, the man half rose, struggling furiously to free himself from the junior's frantic clutch.

But Harry hung on like a terrier. With his free fist the man rained savage blows at his face and body. From beyond him, Manton, his flabby face flushed with rage, was doing his share whenever his fist found an opportunity of getting home.

For fully a minute Harry Wharton held his own, though half-dazed and sick with pain under the storm of blows. And then from the wall came a sudden heartening shout.

"Hold on, Harry—hold on!" And one by one six figures dropped from the wall. With a rush they came up and swarmed over the car and its occupants.

"Quick!" panted Harry. "Collar the rotters!"

The "rotters" were collared quickly enough. Fighting furiously, they were dragged from the car into the roadway.

As Manton came flying out something else came out with him, and fell to the road with a crash.

It was the rosewood box. Harry Wharton, though still half-dazed, fairly blinked at it. For the crash had sent its lid flying open. And from inside several white objects—a couple of photographs, several old letters, and one or two documents tied with ribbon—fluttered out on to the road.

Harry and the others could scarcely believe their eyes. How had this come about? The box had been empty—they had seen it empty.

Harry stooped and picked up the box. He examined it in the light of the lamps. Then he started.

He saw the reason now. In the bottom of the box there was a secret compartment. It was open now. That crash as the box fell must have released a hidden catch.

"Well, my hat!" breathed Harry. He picked up the precious documents and the other articles. He did not doubt what they were. They were the missing proofs—the proofs mentioned in that message from the dead.

Harry placed them in the box and closed the lid.

As he did so the big man, who had been standing motionless in the strong grasp of Cherry, Hurreo Singh, and Frank Nugent, now gave a furious exclamation, and began to struggle desperately, striving to reach Harry Wharton.

"You young hounds!" he hissed. "Let me go. I'll—I'll make you suffer for this. I'll—I'll—"

The man's voice became inarticulate with rage. His fat, small, close-set eyes were glittering savagely, his fat features red with mortification and apprehension. But Harry Wharton had already guessed who he was.

"It is you who will suffer, Mr. Godfrey Lembolt," he said quietly. "Yes. I know who you are, and what you are here for. But the game's up, you rascal. You can shove those rotters in the car now, you fellows. Hemsley, you had better take charge of the box again, and to-morrow we'll take it to Quelchy before—"

"'Quelchy,' as you choose to call him, is here, Wharton!" came a stern voice.

And from the side-door in the wall near by there stepped Mr. Quelch, the Remove master. He had every appearance of having hurriedly dressed, and he carried a lantern. He glared at the scene in amazement.

"Wharton!" he rapped out. "What is the meaning of this extraordinary affair? I am amazed. And why are you boys holding that—that gentleman, and that— Bless my soul, it is Manton! Release them at once!"

But the juniors had already released the fuming father and son. And now, neither the boy known as Manton, nor the elder man, made any effort to reach Wharton and the box he held.

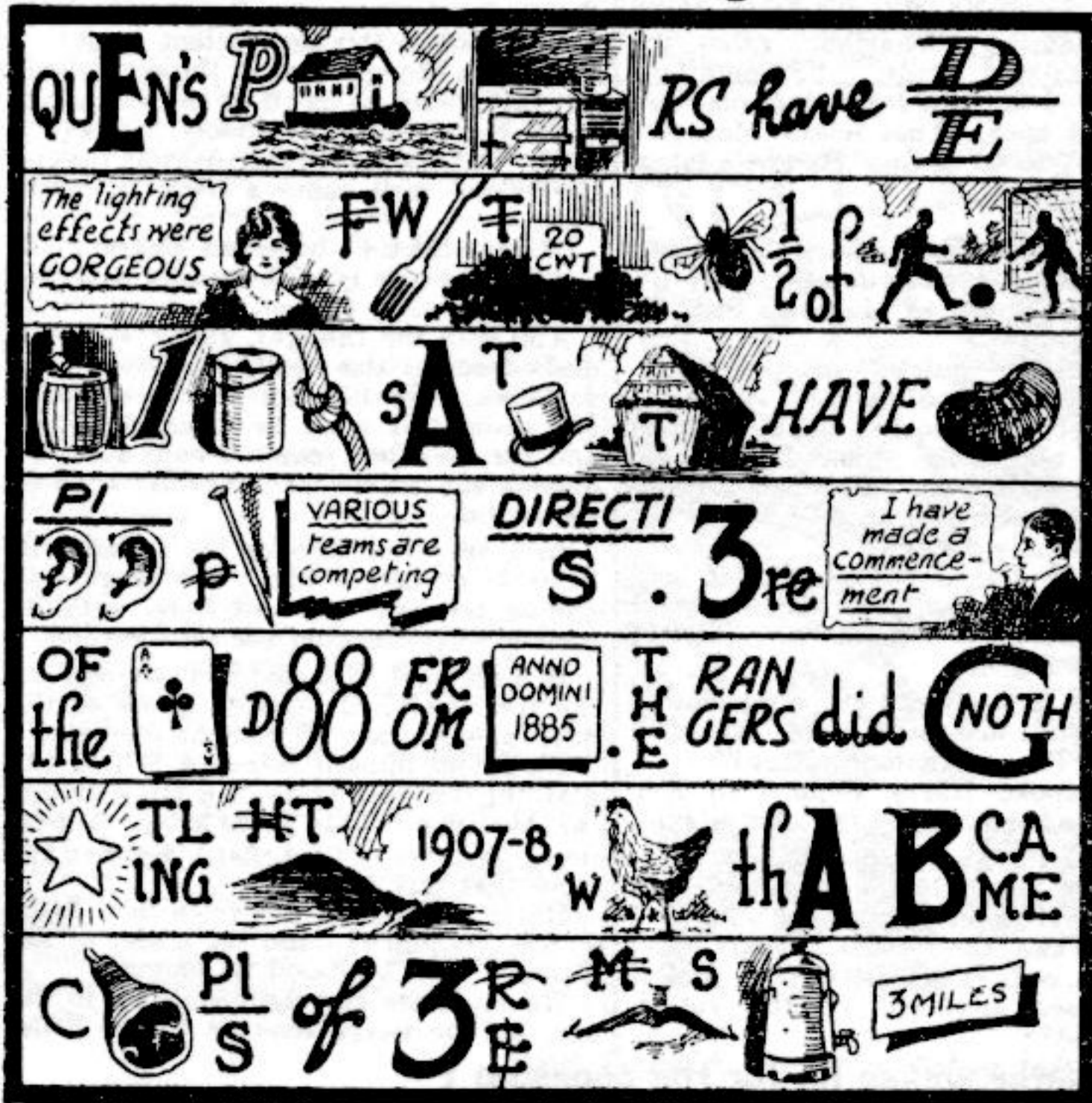
With the coming of Mr. Quelch, they had realised, if they had not done so before, that the game was up. The moment they were released they both sprang for the car.

None of the juniors made any attempt to stop them. They had got all they

**HERE'S AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU!
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**FIRST PRIZE £5. SECOND PRIZE £2 10s.
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WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

Here is a splendid Footer competition which I am sure will interest you. On this page you will find a history of Queen's Park Rangers Football Club in picture-puzzle form. What you are invited to do is to solve this picture, and when you have done so, write your solution on a sheet of paper. Then sign the coupon which appears below, pin it to your solution, and post it to "Queen's Park Rangers" Competition, MAGNET Office, Gough House, Gough Square, E.C. 4, so as to reach that address not later than THURSDAY, APRIL 5th, 1923.

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

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

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

Name

Address

M

wanted. Next second there was the sound of a clutch being driven viciously home, and the car shot away.

Mr. Quelch fairly blinked after it. "Manton!" he almost yelled. "How dare you? Come back at once!"

But Manton—otherwise Leonard Lembolt—did not come back. A muffled imprecation echoed out to them from the dark lane as the car shot away, and it was as well that Mr. Quelch and the juniors did not catch its significance.

Breathing deeply in his agitation, Mr. Quelch turned and glanced expressively from Hemsley's white, thoughtful face to the excited faces of Harry Wharton & Co. When he spoke his voice was hard.

"I need not say how astounded and bewildered I am," he said in a grim tone. "But this is neither the time nor place for an explanation. You may return to your dormitories now, as quietly as possible, please."

Harry Wharton hesitated. Then his face set determinedly.

"Excuse me, sir," he began. "But—but I don't think this matter ought to be left until the morning. It—it's rather important. Those rascals may do a lot before morning. If—if you could deal with it now, sir?"

Mr. Quelch frowned and hesitated. Then he nodded.

"Very well, Wharton," he assented quietly. "Boys, follow me to my study."

They followed in silence. Within two minutes all were standing round the table in the master's study. Hemsley placed the box on the table in the light from the shaded reading lamp.

"Now, Wharton, I am waiting," said Mr. Quelch grimly. "You may begin." And Wharton began. He told the full story, clearly and concisely. And when he had finished Mr. Quelch's face was a study.

"Here is the confession, sir," concluded Harry, handing the master the dirty piece of paper. "And the proofs of it all are, I hope, in that box."

Mr. Quelch took the confession almost mechanically. He read it carefully, and placed it on the table. Then he opened the box. He took out first the photographs. He looked from them to the flushing Hemsley.

It was then that his face took on a keen look of interest. But he made no comment, and turned to the letters. He perused them carefully yet quickly. When he looked up at last his face bore traces of keen excitement.

"You were right, Wharton," he said quietly. "This boy we have known as Hemsley is undoubtedly the missing son of the former owner of the Towers. And these documents are certainly genuine, and prove his claim without question."

He turned with a smile to young Hemsley, or, as we must call him now, Cyril Lembolt, and held out his hand.

"Allow me to congratulate you, my boy," he said. "I would not raise your hopes unless I felt certain, you may be sure. Of course, a certain amount of delay and legal procedure will have to be faced, but you need not fear that. Nor need you fear any further trouble from your rascally uncle, or your cousin, the boy who has so wickedly deceived us

all. If he and his scoundrel of a father are wise, they will never show themselves in this neighbourhood again. And now, my boys, you must retire. I will place the whole matter before Dr. Locke in the morning."

Mr. Quelch proved to be right. Neither Mr. Godfrey Lembolt nor his precious son gave any further trouble. In fact they vanished completely from that night forth. If any further proof were needed, their disappearance supplied it. But no further proof was needed. And so Cyril Lembolt, the erstwhile fisher-lad, came into his own.

The affair was more than a nine days' wonder at Greyfriars. And one bright day, some weeks later, quite a crowd of juniors spent a day at the Towers as guests of the new owner. Harry Wharton & Co. were there, as were Redwing, and, of course, Billy Bunter. And a right royal time they had.

"You'll see a lot more of me later on," grinned Cyril Lembolt, as he parted with his friends. "Dr. Locke has advised me to have a tutor for a few months, and I'm doing so. And later on, I shall be coming to Greyfriars."

"I'm jolly glad," said Harry Wharton heartily.

And the rest of the juniors, including Bunter, were not slow to respond in like fashion.

THE END.

(Next Monday's grand story of Harry Wharton & Co. is entitled "The Jester of Greyfriars!" Don't miss it!)

THE WIRELESS DICTIONARY FOR BOYS!

THE object of this dictionary is to explain in simple language the meaning of the technical terms or expressions used in connection with electricity and wireless telephony.

It is of first importance that you should understand the relationship to each other of the measurements, given at the end of last week's article, and the application of Ohms Law.

You must know that the coulomb represents a definite quantity of electricity, and that it is the unit by means of which all quantities of electricity are measured. Just as you express a quantity of water as so many gallons, the gallon being the unit of quantity of liquids, so you express a quantity of electricity as so many coulombs.

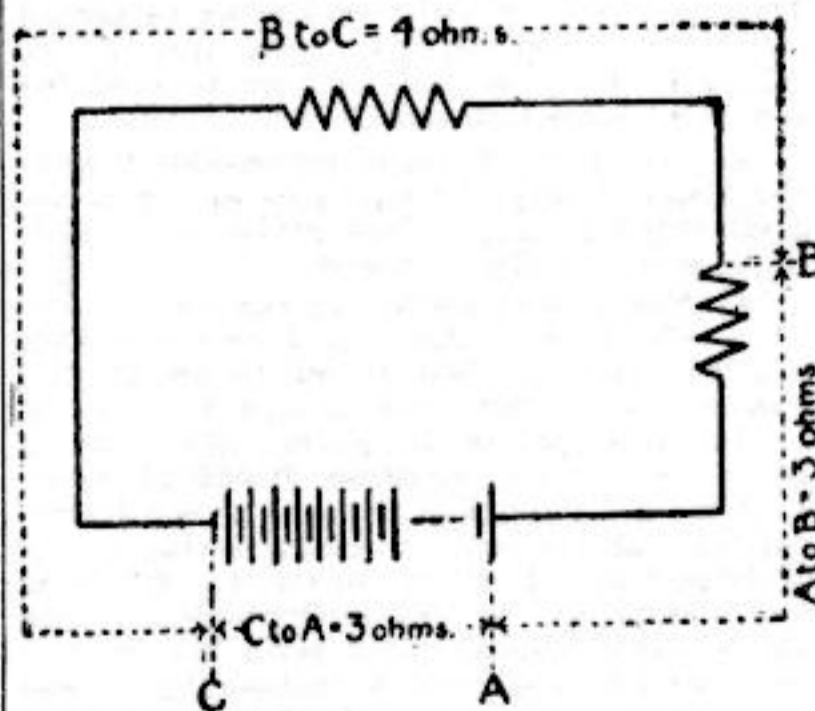
In the performance of work it is necessary for the electricity to be conducted from the place where it is generated to the place where the work is to be done. This flow of electricity from one point to another, through a conductor, is called an electric current. The unit of current is the ampere, and we know that the ampere represents a flow of one coulomb of electricity per second, that the amperes depend on the electromotive-force in volts applied, and to the resistance offered to the flow by the conductor.

There are two methods of increasing the flow of most things—one is by increasing the speed of the flow, the other is by increasing the quantity without increasing the speed; but in the case of an electric current it is impossible to increase the speed because this is constant—that is, it never varies, however

the pressure causing the flow may vary.

No matter whether the pressure be high or low, electricity always travels at the same speed, the distance travelled per second is always the same. Therefore, to increase the rate of flow per second the number of coulombs travelling abreast of each other must be increased.

To illustrate this in a simple manner, imagine that there are four rows of beads lying in four parallel grooves; if you imagine that a pressure applied at the end of any row causes the beads to move forward over a distance equal to the



diameter of one bead in one second, then you will get a flow of one bead per second when the pressure is applied, and all the beads will move forward simultaneously at exactly the same speed, so that at any point along the groove you will get a flow of one bead per second.

Assume that this is the greatest speed at which the beads can move. Now, if

you want a flow of two, three, or four beads per second, past any given point, it would be necessary to apply pressure to the second, third, and fourth rows, according to the desired flow; then, by increasing the pressure—that is, by causing pressure to be applied to more rows, you would increase the flow at the rate of two, three, or four beads per second, without increasing the speed, because the additional flow is obtained by the beads moving abreast of each other.

This is exactly what happens in the case of electricity. If a pressure of one volt is applied to a conductor having a resistance of one ohm, a current of one ampere will flow—that is, one coulomb per second; now, if you increase the pressure to two volts, then two coulombs will flow per second (two amperes), but they will flow abreast of each other. The speed of the current will not be increased, it will be exactly the same as it was when one coulomb was flowing under a pressure of one volt.

We have spent some time in trying to make this clear to you, because it is important that you should realise that when you increase the rate of flow of an electric current you do so by increasing the density of the flow, and not by increasing the speed of the flow.

Now let us ascertain what we learn by applying ohms law to an electric circuit.

In the accompanying diagram A B C is a circuit in which resistances (Ω) have been inserted. C A is a battery of twenty cells, each cell having an E.M.F. of 1.5 volts. Therefore, as the cells are

(Continued on page 27.)

Another splendid Wireless article next Monday!

Tracking down Tracey!



A further thrilling episode from the career of Ferrers Locke, and his no less redoubtable assistant, Jack Drake, related by

OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Who Kidnapped Tracey?

THREE voices sounded in conversation from the hallway of Ferrers Locke's house in Baker Street. Each was in marked contrast to either of the others. The first was loud, aggressive, and nasal; the second, quiet and flavoured with the Oxford accent; the third was a curious falsetto piping forth the "pidgin-English" of Hong Kong and Shanghai.

Ferrers Locke, examining some correspondence with his young assistant, Jack Drake, in his consulting-room, looked up with a smile. "Listen, Drake!" he said. "You have read all about the case of the kidnapped school-boy in the newspapers?"

"Why, yes, sir!"

"Well, unless I'm greatly mistaken, Sing-Sing is about to show up two of the principal characters in that case."

Footsteps sounded on the stairs, and halted outside the door of the consulting-room. Then Sing-Sing, the Chinese servant, appeared.

"Dr. Graham and Missa Tracey!" he announced.

The two gentlemen entered. They had been relieved of their hats and coats by Sing-Sing down in the hall. And a curious contrast the pair presented!

One was burly, red-faced, and pompous, and garbed in a tweed suit of green-and-brown mixture. A large gold nugget tiepin was stuck carelessly into his red, floral tie. The other was slight, white-haired, and scholarly looking. He wore quiet, black morning clothes, and his aquiline nose was surmounted by a pair of gold pince-nez. The stoop of his shoulders gave him a genteel and weary air.

As Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake rose to greet the visitors, the burly individual introduced himself and his business with blunt, American directness.

"Say, you're Mr. Ferrers Locke? I'm Ford B. Tracey, of Chicago! Shake! You've heard o' me, I opine? Folk back in the Middle West call me the Wallpaper King. I've lost my son. Kidnapped! Guess you've read about it in the dailies. Want your help to find him. Heard you're some sleuth!"

"Someone was kind to tell you that, Mr. Tracey," said Ferrers Locke with a smile. "Take a seat, sir! And you, Dr. Graham, you'll find that armchair by the fire a comfortable one."

"Thank you, Mr. Locke!" said the white-

haired old gentleman as he sank gratefully into the seat indicated. "I trust we have called at no inconvenient time. But as you can imagine, we have been greatly worried by—"

"Of course we have!" boomed Ford B. Tracey. "Say, your British police are slower than a broken-down trolley-car! Why, way back in the States—"

"Perhaps, Mr. Tracey," interposed Ferrers Locke quietly, "if you wish me to aid you, you will be good enough to give me all the information you can of the case. I've read the newspapers, but I should like to have the facts from the lips of yourself and Dr. Graham."

"Waal, Mr. Locke," said the American, "mebbe you know I'm a tolerable wealthy man—worth a couple o' millions or so. Some months ago in Chicago, where I have my biggest wallpaper factories, I was warned of two crooks, called Chip Davson and Tyson Cornby. These fellows, so I was told, intended to kidnap my son Harry Ford Tracey, and hold him to ransom. One night a patrolman found the pair of 'em slinking around the back of my house on Sixteenth Avenue. They got three months apiece as suspected characters. Before they were due to be released, the police advised me to send my son away from Chicago."

"Evidently the Chicago police didn't want the responsibility of keeping an eye on him," commented Locke. "They preferred to shift it to someone else's shoulders."

"I opine you've about hit the nail on the head, Mr. Locke. Anyway, I reckoned that it'd be safer to send Harry to an English public school. Six months ago I sent him to Dr. Graham, of Bingham. He went in charge of an old business friend of mine. Last week I arrived in England to see Harry. After booking a suite o' rooms in the Grand Metropolitan, I went down to Bingham School and had an interview with my son. He was his bright young self, but he told me that two guys had been hanging around the school. He reckoned they were none other than Chip Davson and Ty Cornby, who had come over from the States on his track again. Gee, it sure gave me a nasty scare!"

Mr. Tracey paused to light a black cigar, and resumed:

"You bet I made swift tracks for the headmaster's study. Dr. Graham instituted inquiries. My son's bosom pal, a fellow named Blascheck, said he'd glimpsed the men one day, but no one else had ever seen 'em."

The schoolmaster toyed with the gold watchchain which spanned his waistcoat.

"Ahem!" he said. "When Tracey disappeared—"

"One moment," interposed Locke briskly. "Let's have the full details from the beginning. How long after Mr. Tracey's visit was it when young Tracey disappeared?"

Dr. Graham thought for a moment.

"Three days," he said. "The boy disappeared on Saturday, the twenty-fourth of this month. It was a half-holiday, and he and his friend, William Blascheck of the Fifth Form, went off together into the countryside. Blascheck took his camera with the idea of obtaining some snaps for a forthcoming photographic competition. He is an ardent member of the school photographic society."

"At four-thirty in the afternoon, as they were returning along a little-frequented lane towards the school, a motor-car drew up by them. Both the occupants of the car were heavily muffled and wore goggles. One man presented a brace of pistols at Tracey and Blascheck, and told Blascheck to walk on for a couple of hundred yards without looking back. Naturally, the boy was exceedingly frightened. He did as he was bidden. As he walked he heard the car drive away, and, when he looked round, the road was entirely deserted."

"Ah," said Locke, "that was the statement that Blascheck himself made to you on his return to the school, and which has been published in the papers. You asked him, of course, if he could describe the men and the car?"

"Certainly. As you may imagine, the boy was nearly terrified out of his wits by having a pistol pointed at him. He was quite unable to describe the car. But he said the men were slim and of medium height. The one who addressed him spoke with an American accent."

"That's just it!" boomed Ford B. Tracey from the depths of his chair. "If the two scoundrels who took my son away weren't Chip Davson and Ty Cornby, I'll send a gift o' wallpaper to every hospital in London! Besides, I've got on me the note that arrived at my hotel."

He drew from his pocket a well-thumbed letter and handed it to the detective. It read as follows:

"Ford B. Tracey, Sir,—We are holding your son to ransom. Stump up £2,000, or his life will pay the forfeit. We will give you

Don't miss "The Clue of the Eighth Chair!" next week!—

till Saturday, March the thirty-first, to raise the dibs. Bring the money in British Treasury notes of one pound denomination to the second milestone due west of Tanford on the London road. Be there at ten o'clock prompt on the night of the thirty-first, and put the money down by the milestone. If you bring anyone with you or attempt any trick, your own life as well as your son's will pay the penalty. It is no use your hunting for your boy, as we have got him where all the police in Britain will not find him."

The note was written in block capitals, and the envelope bore a South London post-mark.

"The police tried to find out who posted that," said Ford B. Tracey, "but there was nothing doing. They're a dud lot—couldn't even get on the track o' the car that took my son away. And, say, what do you think the crazy galoots want me to do?"

"I think I can guess," replied Ferrers Locke, smiling. "They want you to visit the milestone and let a couple of 'tecs watch in the neighbourhood."

"Gee, that's real cute o' you, Mr. Locke! That's just it. The boobs want me to double-cross these kidnapers. Chip Davson and Ty Cornby are too slick to be tricked like that, believe me. They'd fulfil the threat they set down in this note of theirs—kill Harry and me, too."

Ferrers Locke closely examined the note through a magnifying-glass.

"This was written with a fountain-pen," he remarked. "If you will leave the letter in my possession I can make tests to discover the exact kind of ink that was used, as I presume the police have done. Now give me a description of the missing boy."

Ford B. Tracey did so, together with a photo of the lad and a eulogy of his son's cleverness, prowess in athletics, and moral virtues. The detective and Jack Drake examined the picture with interest. It revealed a slim, good-looking lad of sixteen who did not, however, appear to possess the physique of an athlete.

At the end of his recital of his son's attributes the American said:

"Waal, Mr. Locke, you must excuse my staying any longer; I've an appointment at the Grand Metropolitan at twelve. If you'll agree to take up this case I'll pay you your own figure, and add five hundred pounds if my son's restored and his kidnapers are behind bars by the thirty-first."

"And should I fail to find your son by that day, Mr. Tracey—what, then?"

"Then," replied the Wallpaper King, "I guess I shall have no option than to fall in with the terms of Davson and Cornby—drat 'em!"

As Ford B. Tracey rose from his chair, Dr. Graham also prepared to leave. But Ferrers Locke ushered him back into his seat.

"Perhaps, Dr. Graham," he said, "you would accept my hospitality to luncheon? You may be of some assistance to me in this case."

"I should be delighted if I can be of any help whatever. Needless to say, I am deeply grieved that such an—untoward occurrence should have befallen a pupil at my school."

When Sing-Sing had shown Mr. Tracey out, the atmosphere of the consulting-room seemed about fifty per cent more quiet and peaceful.

"Now, Dr. Graham," said Ferrers Locke. "I can quite understand a father's opinion of his own flesh and blood, but I should like to have yours of young Tracey. Was he the model youth his father made out? I doubt it."

"Ahem! To be perfectly frank, Mr. Locke, I found Tracey somewhat backward in his studies. His doting father supplied him with too much pocket-money, and, naturally, the boy was always seeking ways of spending it. He was helped to this end by Blascheck, a youth who is even more backward than Tracey himself."

"How did Tracey spend his money?"

"On luxuries and books. Upon examination I found his study full of books of highly-coloured adventures. Blascheck has somewhat similar tastes, hence the friendship of the two. This boy I fear has gained for himself a rather unenviable reputation for bullying."

Ferrers Locke closed his eyes in thought for a few seconds.

"I think, Dr. Graham," he said at length, "I should like to start my investigations at Bingham School from where Tracey set out on his last fateful half-holiday jaunt. You could accept a boy for your Fifth Form, I suppose?"

"Why, yes, Mr. Locke. But what—"

"Then I will send my assistant, Jack Drake, to school. Drake, how would you like to be a schoolboy again?"

"Top-hole, sir!" cried the youngster enthusiastically.

"Good! Then that's settled. Now, Dr. Graham, could you arrange for me to come as a master for a few days?"

The Head of Bingham looked surprised, but he answered readily enough.

"I could arrange that, too. As it happens, my games master has been called to the North of Scotland on urgent private matters. Of course, I did not intend to have anyone in his place, as he will only be away for a few days. But you can come to Bingham and act as games master for a few days, with pleasure. It would create no great comment."

"It's agreed, then. I think that Drake, by associating with Blascheck, may possibly obtain a slight clue from his lips. Boys are notoriously shy of the police or of any official inquiry. And I've a feeling that careful handling might induce Master Blascheck to remember some apparently slight feature of the kidnapping which may be of immense help in unravelling this puzzling affair."

"Quite so, Mr. Locke. When do you both propose to come?"

"I shall return with you if you are going back this afternoon. Drake shall come down

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by train to-morrow morning. We have not much time for our task. Tracey disappeared last Saturday. It is Wednesday now, and Saturday next is the date set for Mr. Tracey to deliver the ransom money. So between now and ten o'clock on Saturday night we must move heaven and earth to find the missing boy!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER. Newcomers at Bingham!

THE worthy and venerable headmaster of Bingham School—situated four miles from the town of Tanford, Sussex—sat at his desk in his private study. By his side, garbed in a black gown and mortar-board, stood a tall, athletic figure. This was the new games master, Henry Lavery, alias Ferrers Locke, the world's greatest detective.

It was the morning following the visit of Dr. Graham and Mr. Tracey to the sleuth's abode in Baker Street. Bingham had been rather surprised by the advent of the new master. But the boys merely regarded the newcomer's appearance as a sign that their former games master would be absent longer than had been expected. Moreover, those of them who had caught a glimpse of Locke voted the new man "a decent-looking sort" who was not, however, likely to be easily imposed upon.

"Well, Mr. Locke," Dr. Graham was saying, "how—"

"Lavery, if you please, sir," murmured the detective.

"Very well, Lavery," said the Head gravely. "How did you get on last night?"

You were quite comfortable in the quarters that were prepared for you, I trust?"

"Quite, sir. I went for a long stroll last night, and did not get back until late. I walked as far as Tanford."

Although he did not trouble to mention the fact, Locke had also found his way to the spot where, as Blascheck had averred, Tracey had been kidnapped by the two motorists. This was three miles from the school.

As Dr. Graham was about to make some comment, a knock on the study door sounded, and a tall youth of about seventeen diffidently entered the room.

"The Form master told me you wished to interview me at ten o'clock, sir," he said to the Head.

Dr. Graham adjusted his pince-nez with a frown, as though trying to recollect the occasion.

"Ahem!—ah, yes, Finden!" He opened a drawer of his desk and took out an envelope. Ferrers Locke excused himself, and started towards the door, but the Head restrained him with a gesture.

"Please don't go, Mr. Lo—Lavery," he said. "This is but a matter of ordinary school routine."

Then, turning to the tall youth, he said: "Finden, as a prefect, you should be fully cognisant of the rules of the school relating to 'out of bounds.' You know that it is strictly against the law for any boy to enter licensed premises in the village of Dacombe or any other hamlet or town in this district."

The prefect grew a shade paler.

"Why, yes, sir," he said. "But—"

"Do not trouble to assert your innocence, Finden," said the headmaster sternly. "I have the proof in this envelope that you were playing billiards in a hostelry known as the Coach and Man in Dacombe."

The lips of the accused youth trembled perceptibly as Dr. Graham took a small photograph from the envelope and extended it towards him.

"The camera never lies, Finden," he said. "Is not that you standing by that window in your shirtsleeves, and with a cue in your hand?"

Finden looked at the photograph in blank dismay.

"I—I— Yes, it is, sir! I—I was at the Coach and Man last Saturday. It was the only occasion."

The Head took the photo from the youth's nerveless fingers.

"That picture was sent me anonymously," he said. "But however much I may regret the mean spirit of the person who took this underhand method of giving you away, I cannot overlook the fact that you, a prefect, have deliberately broken the rules of the school. Your name will be erased from the roll of prefects forthwith, and you are 'gated' for the rest of the term. You may go!"

Finden, deathly white now, inclined his head, turned about and staggered out of the Head's dreaded sanctum.

When he had gone Dr. Graham showed Ferrers Locke the photo which had brought about the downfall of the tall prefect.

"It is a remarkably good photograph, ah—Lavery!" said the Head. "And in my opinion it was taken by one of the boys of this school. I wish I knew by whom. Finden, I happen to know, is thoroughly disliked by a section of the junior school, but I am sorry that anyone should have seen fit to take this unsporting method of bringing him to book."

As a matter of interest, Ferrers Locke took the picture in his hand, and looked at it closely. To the right was a window and a tall figure in shirtsleeves, in profile, which the sleuth had no difficulty in recognising as Finden. To the left was the portion of the outer wall of a building with some lettering and a large clock.

"That must have been taken from the other side of the road in Dacombe from which the Coach and Man is situated," murmured Dr. Graham. "I recognised the clock immediately as that just at the side of the billiards-room of the inn."

But the detective was regarding the picture with an air of one whose thoughts were pre-occupied with some problem of their own.

"Four-thirty!" he muttered, as though to himself. "Four-thirty! Wasn't that the time given by Blascheck when Tracey was kidnapped near Tanford?"

—It's a real detective thriller!

"It was. But what has that affair to do with the case of Finden?"

"There is no connection between them, as far as I am aware, Dr. Graham," answered Ferrers Locke, with a light laugh. "Only the hands of this clock in the photo point to the hour of half-past four. Finden himself admitted that he was in the Coach and Man on Saturday last. Probably it is the merest coincidence that Tracey was kidnapped at the same time as the camera was recording the indiscretions of the unfortunate Finden."

"Ahem! Dear, dear!" murmured the Head. "It is certainly a curious—hum!—coincidence, Mr. Lo—Lavery. Still, there can be no significance in the matter. I will destroy the photo, and—"

"Please don't!" said Ferrers Locke. "There may be no special significance in the matter, as you say. On the other hand, the coincidence is sufficiently curious that it is worth bearing in mind. With your permission, Dr. Graham, I will take charge of this photograph for the time being."

"Certainly, if you wish! But—ahem!—it is getting on for half-past ten. The—ah—new boy Drake—I—ah—mean, Derwent—should arrive at Dacombe Station at ten-fifty. I will proceed to carry out the instructions you gave me."

Ferrers Locke nodded, and the venerable Head of Bingham School touched a bell. A short interval elapsed, and a pageboy appeared.

"Send Blascheck to me."

A few minutes later a burly lad with close-cropped, sandy hair entered the study. He appeared considerably more ill at ease than Finden had done. Usually a summons from the Head portended a severe caning for Bully Blascheck, who now wondered for which of his many unlawful acts he had been thus brought up "on the carpet."

"Blascheck," said Dr. Graham in a kindly voice, "I wish you to go to Dacombe to meet Derwent, a new boy, who will join the Fifth Form. Stibbins may go with you."

Bully Blascheck grinned like a Cheshire cat. Not only was he intensely relieved that he was not to get a licking for anything, but also he welcomed the opportunity of missing class that morning. He knew that Stibbins, one of his cronies, would be equally delighted.

"I hope you will give Derwent a very cordial welcome," Blascheck," said Dr. Graham. "After you have brought him here for me to interview, you can help him to shake down among his future Form-fellows."

"Yes, sir."

"Oh, and one moment, Blascheck! Mr. Lavery, who has just joined my staff, wishes to despatch some important registered letters. You and Stibbins will show him the Dacombe post-office before you proceed on to the station."

"Yes, sir."

But this time Blascheck's tone was not quite so enthusiastic. He had no wish to have the company of a master on his jaunt with Stibbins to the village. However, despite this fly in the ointment, Blascheck

went off in high spirits to find his fellow-Fifth-Former, Stibbins.

Five minutes later Ferrers Locke, in the company of the two boys, strode briskly through the school gates and down the lane leading to the village of Dacombe. Blascheck pointed out the post-office, and the sleuth thanked him and stepped inside. When, however, the two Fifth-Formers had gone hurrying on to the station, Locke emerged and strolled casually to the Coach and Man Inn.

Casually he glanced up at the building and saw the clock depicted in the photo, which had been the undoing of the prefect. The proprietor of the inn was standing outside the building. Locke got into conversation with him, and, while comparing his own watch, with the big timepiece, managed to elicit the fact that the clock was always kept correctly to time.

As the innkeeper went inside his hostelry to attend to a customer, Locke walked across the road to a newsagent's shop, where he purchased some stationery. From the appearance of the photograph, he was convinced in his own mind that the snap had been taken from the first-floor window of the newsagent's shop. But although by gentle insinuation he tried to pump the newsagent, Snooks, the man refused to be drawn.

Meantime, while Ferrers Locke was amusing himself with what appeared to be quite a side issue of the case, William Blascheck and James Stibbins reached the station. The train came in promptly to time, as it happened, and they watched curiously for the new boy they had been sent to meet. They had no difficulty in discerning their quarry, as only one person stepped from the train, save for the uniformed guard.

The newcomer was a lad of about Blascheck's own height. He was dressed in a smart Eton suit and cap, and carried an overcoat and a bag marked with the initials, "J.D."

Blascheck thrust his hands into his pockets, and strolled up to the newcomer.

"Hallo!" he grunted in an insolent tone. "You're the new kid for Bingham, I suppose? Pick up your traps!"

Without a word, Jack Drake—for it was he—picked up his bag and followed Blascheck and Stibbins from the station. As they went through the village, both the Bingham boys questioned Drake with the air of prefects addressing a new fag. But the young detective answered their queries good-humouredly, though inwardly he was laughing at the check of the couple, either of whom he could have licked with one hand. None suspected that Ferrers Locke was watching them from the interior of a hosier's shop, which he had entered on the pretext of purchasing some handkerchiefs.

Just after passing the Coach and Man Inn, William Blascheck halted suddenly.

"My aunt!" he muttered. "I'd almost forgotten. I've got to buy a packet of envelopes. You go on, Stibby, with the new kid!"

Somehow, as Blascheck hastened back and

dived into the newsagent's shop, Drake knew that the Fifth-Former had lied.

When, half a minute later, Blascheck caught them up, he said:

"Look here, Derwent, I and my pal Stibby have our own affairs to discuss. You can drop back about twenty yards, and follow us. If I whistle, double along and catch us up again—and be slipper, too, unless you are looking for a licking!"

It took the greatest effort on the part of Jack Drake to restrain his inclination to give the cheeky schoolboy a sudden and severe "biff." But in Locke's service he had been schooled to control his feelings while engaged upon important business, and he meekly did as he was requested.

Having assured themselves that the "new kid" was about the allotted distance behind them, Blascheck and Stibbins slowed down to a snail's crawl. It was clear that neither of the worthies were in any hurry to get back to school.

Hearing brisk footsteps to the rear of him, Jack Drake glanced back to see a tall, athletic figure in bortar-board and gown hurrying up. At first he did not recognise his chief. When he did, he merely contented himself with raising his cap politely, as any boy would do in the presence of a master.

"Drake," whispered Ferrers Locke, as he came abreast of the boy, "Blascheck was handed a stamped letter over the counter by the newsagent. I want you to find out the contents of that letter if you can."

Then, in a few words, he put his assistant wise to what had occurred since his advent at the school on the previous day, even mentioning the case of the prefect Finden. Drake, in response to Locke's inquiry, told the detective of Blascheck's whim that he should walk behind the mighty Fifth-Formers.

There was a merry twinkle in the eye of Ferrers Locke as he hastened to catch up with the precious couple.

"Ha, boys!" he cried cheerily. "It's a splendid morning for exercise, isn't it? You both look athletic fellows. We'll have a run back to school and see if we can't do it under five minutes flat. Here, give me your bag, Derwent! That shall be my handicap."

Groaning under their breath, Blascheck and Stibbins had no option but to obey the "master."

Ferrers Locke set the pace—a good, fast, loping trot. Drake, always in the pink of condition kept level with him. Not to be outdone by the new kid, Blascheck and Stibbins plodded along gamely. When at length the school hove in sight, the pair were running with perspiration and panting and grunting like porpoises.

"Now!" cried Locke. "Race you to the school gates, boys!"

Blascheck and Stibbins responded, while Drake sprinted over the remaining stretch of road like a hare. As he halted at the school gates the Fifth-Formers staggered up red-faced, and with bellows to mend, to drop, gasping, at his feet.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Clue of the Negative!

WHEN, a few minutes later, the four were inside the schoolhouse, Ferrers Locke, in his role of master, sent Stibbins to the Fifth-Form class-room.

"You, Blascheck," he said, "take Derwent along to Dr. Graham!"

Blascheck did so, and from the Head, who had made a previous arrangement with Locke, he learnt that the new boy was to share his study in the place of Tracey for the time being.

"You can show Derwent the study now, Blascheck," said Dr. Graham; "then you may proceed to your Form."

Not at all pleased at having the new lad thrust upon him, Blascheck nevertheless took Drake to his study, and told him brusquely to unpack his gear. While Drake was doing so, the Fifth-Former turned his back and drew a stamped envelope from his pocket. Drake, with an eye on his companion, guessed it was the letter Blascheck had received in so furtive a fashion from the newsagent in Dacombe.

As Blascheck appeared to finish reading

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Ferrers Locke is confronted with a most complex case—

the letter, Drake got up suddenly and threw open the door.

"Someone called, I think," he said. Then aloud, he cried: "All right, sir! I'll tell him!"

Turning to Blascheck again, he said: "Mr. Lavery's wanting you."

But Blascheck was not to be panicked into any hasty action.

"Let him wait!" he growled.

Very carefully he laid some newspaper in the fire-grate. Striking a match, he lighted this. Then he placed the letter full into the flames, and watched it blaze up.

With a sudden bound, Drake pushed the Fifth-Former violently away.

"Look out, you crazy ass!" he cried, snatching the burning paper from the grate.

"Do you want to set the chimney on fire?" He stamped the paper out with his foot, leaving the charred remnants of paper smouldering in the fender.

"You cheeky kid!" snapped Blascheck savagely. "I've a good mind to give you a thumping good hiding for bumping into me! Wait till I've seen Lavery!"

Having satisfied himself with a glance that there was practically nothing left of the letter he desired to destroy, he left the room. As his footsteps died away, Drake bent down and rummaged quickly among the burnt scraps of paper. A portion of the newspaper had escaped the fire, but only one tiny scrap of the letter. This Drake hastily slipped between the leaves of his notebook to examine at his leisure.

Hardly had he done this when Blascheck returned.

"Old Lavery wasn't in his room," he said. "You must have been mistaken about hearing him calling—unless that was your idea of a jape! Lucky for you I can't stop now. I'm going along to class. You can stop here and get your gear straight. I'll deal with you later!"

When Blascheck had gone, Drake hastily finished his unpacking. The possibility that Blascheck had been bribed by the pair of American crooks to lead Tracey into a trap was now to the forefront of his mind. He therefore began a search of the study.

So engrossed did he become in his self-appointed task that he failed to notice the passage of time. It was noon when, having made a fruitless hunt through the rest of the study furniture, he found himself confronted by a small locked drawer in Blascheck's desk. Taking a skeleton-key from his pocket, he managed to unlock it after a little manipulation.

Only some old exercise-books seemed to be in this dusty drawer at first, until a thorough search revealed a quarter-plate photo negative. But before he had a chance to look at the negative, he heard footsteps approaching. Without a moment's hesitation, the boy dropped the negative into his coat-pocket and shut the drawer quietly. Then he dropped down on his knees, and began sorting over a few of his books which he had taken out of his suit-case. He was only just in time, for Blascheck and Stibbins entered the study.

"Hallo! Haven't you finished straightening your gear yet, new kid?" Blascheck said. "I hoped to find you here. I'm going to lick you for trying to make a fool of me."

He picked up a wooden ruler from the study table, and curtly ordered Drake to "hold out his hand."

Drake did put it out—with clenched fist—and more suddenly than Blascheck expected. The blow caught the bully on the chest, and Blascheck reeled back, knocking Stibbins head over heels into the coal-scuttle. Then, before the two could recover from their surprise, Jack Drake, with a merry laugh, darted gaily from the study.

He found Ferrers Locke surrounded by a group of healthy young Bingham boys at the end of the passage-way.

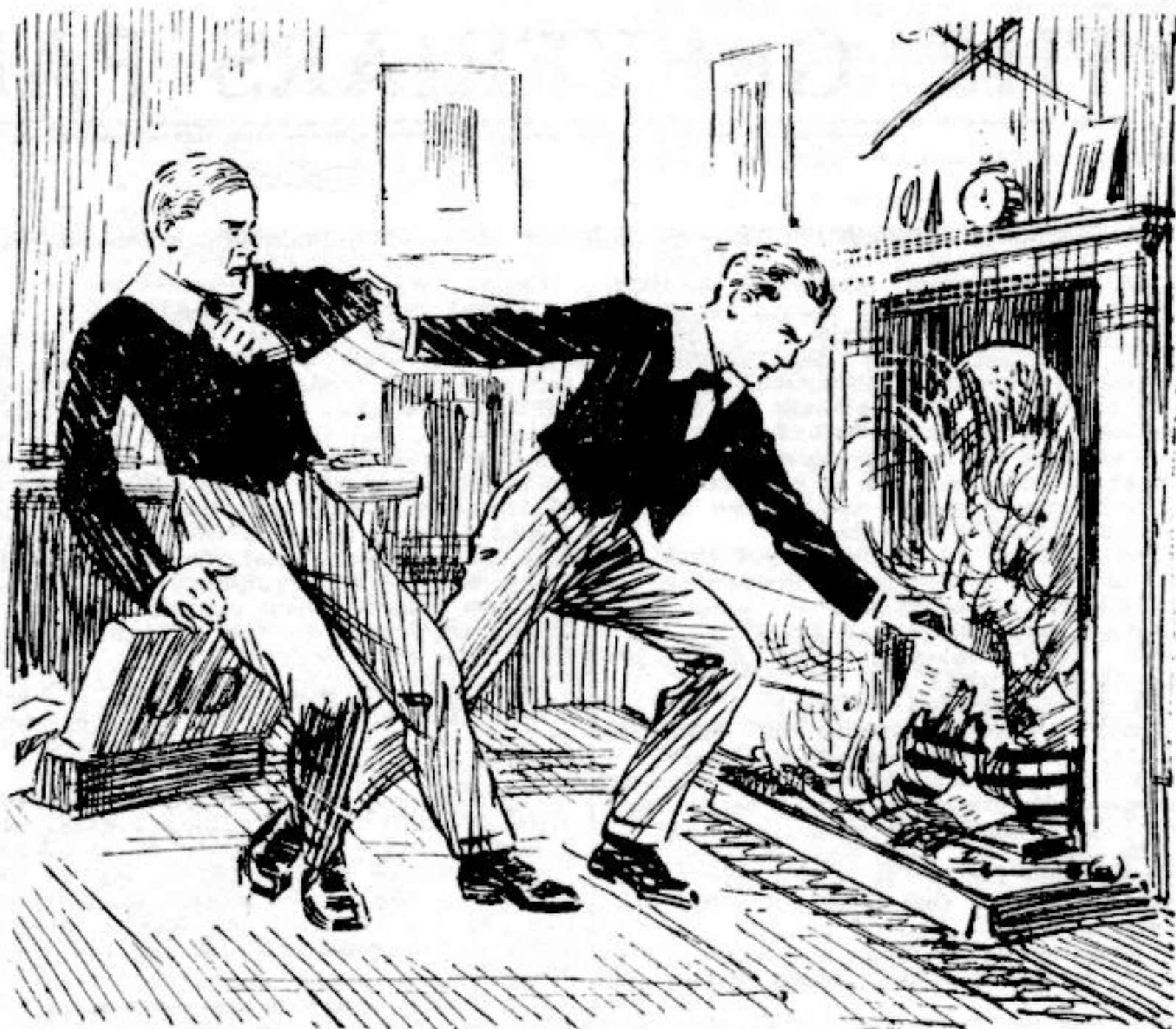
"Please, sir," said Drake, diffidently approaching. "I—I'm the new boy Derwent. I—I play footer, and—"

"Ah, then I don't suppose your name is on the lists Dr. Graham gave me," said Locke. "Come along to my room, my boy."

And little did the other juniors guess that the master and boy who walked off together were the world's greatest detective and his famous young assistant.

Ferrers Locke shut the door of his room

—but his master-mind proves equal to the occasion!



With a sudden bound Drake pushed the Fifth-Former violently away. "Look out, you ass!" he cried, snatching the burning paper from the grate. "Do you want to set the chimney on fire?" (See Chapter 3.)

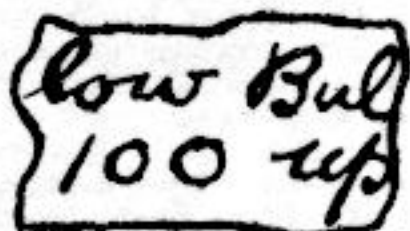
after he had ushered Drake inside, and plugged the keyhole.

"Now, my boy!" he murmured. "What luck?"

For answer Drake drew out his notebook and revealed the scrap of paper which he had rescued from the fire lighted by Blascheck.

"H'm!" ejaculated Locke. "You did well to get even this, my boy."

Together they examined the scrap which is reproduced here:



"Crums!" muttered Drake, his brow wrinkled in perplexity. "We're not likely to learn much from that, sir."

For some time Locke said nothing. Then he took from his pocket the letter demanding the ransom, which he had borrowed from Ford B. Tracey on the occasion of the latter's visit to Baker Street. He placed this side by side with the scrap of paper, and examined both under a powerful magnifying-glass.

"There's not a doubt about it!" he said, looking up. "The kidnapper's letter and the letter to Blascheck were written with the same fountain-pen and with the same thin kind of ink. That is a curious circumstance."

"It looks to me, sir," said Drake, "that this chap Blascheck has been the tool for the scoundrels who kidnapped Tracey."

Locke neither agreed nor disagreed with this theory. He rose and took up a directory of Tanford and the villages in the Bingham locality. Opening it, he ran his finger down the section containing the list of hotels and inns. There was a smile of triumph on his keen, clever face as he looked up to his young assistant again.

"Ah, here we have it, my boy—the clue to the mysterious letter Blascheck received. The upper two words—or, rather, portions of words—on the scrap of paper are part of the name Yellow Bull, which is a hostelry in Tanford. That immediately suggests to me that the figure on the lower line refers to a 'hundred up,' an expression, as you know, commonly used in billiards. It is possible

that someone has invited Blascheck to the Yellow Bull for a 'hundred up.' You must make it your duty to shadow Blascheck, my boy. But do not go inside the inn or let him become aware that he is being followed."

"My hat, you're a giddy marvel, sir!" exclaimed Drake. "By the way, I found this tucked away in his desk."

He handed Locke the photographic negative, and the sleuth emitted a low whistle. It was the negative from which the photograph of Finden had been taken!

"By Jove, this is important!" said Ferrers Locke. "Undoubtedly it was Blascheck himself who took the picture of Finden. It is the time—four-thirty—which is registered by the clock in the picture which is so important. The innkeeper told me that clock has always been kept right. Yet this is the time that Blascheck said Tracey was kidnapped three miles along a road in the opposite direction from the school. I'll have another shot at pumping that newsagent fellow."

Locke was as good as his word. And so successfully did he perform his task that he discovered that Blascheck alone had visited the shop to secure the photo of Finden, whom he hated.

Jack Drake meantime shadowed Blascheck in the spare time he had away from class. On the Friday evening he was able to report to Locke that Blascheck had indeed visited the Yellow Bull at Tanford.

"Thanks, my boy," Locke said; "the case is as good as finished."

And he went to the Head's private study, where he put a trunk telephone call through to the Grand Metropolitan Hotel.

"Mr. Tracey," he said over the wires, "to-morrow night at ten o'clock you must put the ransom at the spot arranged in the letter sent to you if you want your son back. Afterwards proceed to the Yellow Bull Hotel in Tanford, where I shall meet you."

"Then you have failed!" came through the telephone-receiver in a nasal groan. "However, I guess I'll meet you in Tanford and pay you your fees."

"Thank you," replied Locke quietly. "Au revoir!" And as he hung up the receiver he gave a satisfied chuckle.

It was dusk on Saturday evening. Leaving his young assistant to the task of shadowing Blascheck, the detective made his way

(Continued on page 28.)

THE GREYFRIARS PARLIAMENT!



THE usual weekly meeting of the Greyfriars Parliament opened up with a short speech from the Speaker detailing briefly the number of subjects to come under discussion.

In the middle of his address the Speaker was compelled to call a halt, for the rowdiness amongst the lower portion of the House—that occupied by the hon. members of the Second Form—was such as to drown effectually any attempts at oration.

The Speaker: "I would request that the hon. members of the Lower Bench observed the golden rule of silence—"

Several members: "Hear, hear!"

Mr. Dicky Nugent: "Why don't you observe it yourself?"

Mr. Coker (angrily): "Order!"

Messrs. Nugent, Myers, and Tubb (in unison): "Go and fry your face, Coker!"

Mr. Coker: "Mr. Speaker, these young sweeps of the Second should be barred from the House. You heard what they said?"

The Speaker: "The hon. member, Mr. Coker, asked for it. It is the duty of the Speaker to rule this House—not the hon. members!"

Expressive snort from Mr. Coker, duly echoed by his confreres, Messrs. Potter and Greene.

The Speaker (severely): "If there is any further disturbance from the Lower Bench I shall deem it my unpleasant duty to request those hon. members who are responsible for it to leave the House."

Mr. Coker: "Why can't you say you'll chuck 'em out? They're no blessed good, anyway! Look at Gatty—eating toffee! I ask you, Mr. Speaker, is it good for the dignity of this House that its junior members should turn the place into a common tuckshop? This is the place where one has to think—not eat!"

Voice from the Lower Bench: "What on earth are you doing here, then, fathead?" (Laughter.)

Mr. Coker (rising to his feet): "If you won't make an example, Mr. Speaker, I'll take it upon myself to do the community a service!"

Mr. Dicky Nugent: "Good! He is going to leave us in peace. Shut the door behind you, Coker!" (Laughter.)

The Speaker (severely): "Order—order, please!"

Several members: "Sit down, Coker!"

Mr. Coker (in warlike attitude): "Who's telling me to sit down? I'll jolly well stand if I want to—"

Mr. Myers: "Your blessed feet are large enough, anyway!"

From all parts of the House: "Ha, ha, ha!"

The Speaker (frantically): "Gentlemen, I beseech you to be—"

The Lower Bench, as one man: "Come off it, Wharton! Those stunts might work with the Remove, but they cut no ice with us. Give your chin a rest!"

Mr. Coker: "Let me get at 'em!"

The Lower Bench: "Come on, then, fathead! We'll mop up the floor with you!"

That genial "invitation" could best be likened unto the application of a lighted match to a barrel of gunpowder. It was useless for the Speaker to call for order. The members of the Lower Bench had entered the House in search of trouble—and they looked like meeting it!

Mr. Coker's voice was raised above all others. The mighty Horace, who had a way all his own of dealing with recalcitrant fags, shed, as it were, his last garment of dignity, and charged headlong at the junior portion of the House.

Whiz!

An orange, so well matured that even a ravenous Second-Former could find no better use for it, flew in a deadly straight line for the head of Horace Coker. And its flight was the signal for a regular bombardment of sundry other edibles of doubtful origin.

Crash! Whiz! Crash!

"Yowp! Ow—wow! Grouough!"

Horace Coker, mighty man of valour though he was, could not advance in face of such opposition. He staggered wildly under that bombardment, clutched for support, and fell. Like the cohorts of old, the Second-Formers swept down upon their old enemy with an ear-splitting whoop of triumph. Potter and Greene, who had rushed forward to assist their fallen chief, came in for a rough handling at the hands—and fists—of the exuberant juniors; and ere two minutes had elapsed they were adding their yells to those of the mighty Horace—on the floor!

"My hat!" exclaimed Wharton. "What a din! This blessed row will bring a dozen prefects on the scene! I think it's about time we took a hand. Pile in, chaps!"

The "chaps" needed no second bidding. With one accord they rushed towards the struggling heap of humanity on the floor, and commenced to haul off the fags of the Second by the scruff of the neck—a process which added considerably to the prevailing din.

But if they expected the members of the Lower Bench to give in without a struggle, they were doomed to disappointment. Dicky Nugent and his merry crowd of followers had entered the House well armed. As if from nowhere a dozen bad eggs and over-ripe oranges appeared in the grubby hands of the fags, but only for a second. The next, and they were speeding towards the crowd of Removites in a showering fusillade.

"Yowp!"

"Grooouugh!"

"Oh—ow! Stoppit! Yaroooh!"

The marksmen of the Second were well in form. Removites dropped like so many ninepins under that terrific fire.

Only one person in the House was unaffected by the disturbance, and that was Lord Mauleverer. The schoolboy earl was stretched out on a bench just beneath the window, snoring tranquilly. Temple, Dabney, and Fry of the Upper Fourth surveyed the proceedings with disdainful grimaces, and endeavoured to fight their way to the door—not a very easy task.

"Backs to the wall, Second!" Dicky Nugent was yelling. "We'll show 'em what we're made of! Take that, Franky!"

"That" was a very stale egg, and it caught Dicky's major fairly on the point of the chin. Followed a wild howl and a crash; another of the enemy was rendered hors de combat—for the time being, at any rate.

The House now resembled a miniature battlefield. Coker had scrambled to his feet and was rushing into the fray with renewed vigour. His face was a picture. The yolks of several eggs gave a vivid touch of colour to his beetroot complexion, whilst the juice of several oranges and tomatoes, plentifully sprinkled with both red and black ink, completed a fair imitation of a Futurist landscape. His study-mates, Potter and Green, presented much the same type of picture—only more so!

Harry Wharton & Co. were having the tussle of their lives. Backs against the wall, the Second-Formers peited all who came within range; and the toll was heavy.

"Back up, you fellows!" spluttered Wharton, who was endeavouring to clear his vision of the remnants of an orange. "Rush 'em!"

"Yah!" hooted Dicky Nugent defiantly. "Try it on! Plenty more where that one came from, old scout!"

"Altogether—go!" commanded the leader of the Famous Five, who had now mustered his forces. "Collar the cheeky young cubs!"

The Removites caught hold of any missiles that came to hand—chiefly those which had already been used against them—and once again the air was thick with edibles which

had been placed in the balance and found wanting, so to speak.

A chorus of cheers, cat-calls, and booing issued from the ranks of the valiant Second-Formers; followed by a heavy counter-attack.

In the midst of the scuffle a piercing yell went up from the region of the door. It proceeded from the dignified Reginald Temple of the Upper Fourth, who had chosen for his intended exit from the scene of operations an unfortunate moment. He staggered under the impact of two stale eggs,

and his surprise and consternation in a manner most unbecoming to such an illustrious member of the Upper Fourth:

"Yaroooh! Wow! Yooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hostilities ceased for the moment, and both factions displayed their appreciation of Temple's little effort in a roar of laughter. Spluttering wildly, Temple swayed dizzily upon his feet.

"Who—ow!—dared to—yowp!—t-throw those eggs?" he feebly demanded.

"One of them came from me, Temple, old bird!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"And the other came from me!" grinned Dicky Nugent. "You are quite welcome to it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll skin you, you little beast!" roared Temple savagely.

He took a rapid stride forward with the intention of putting his threat into practice, but a significant glance passed between Dicky Nugent and his band of followers. Ten grubby hands grabbed at anything within reach, and a perfect shower of articles sped in the direction of Reginald Temple. Cheering and yelling, the Second-Formers peited the enraged junior of the Upper Fourth, and Harry Wharton & Co. added to the noise by their uncontrolled laughter.

"Boys!"

In the midst of the bombardment no one noticed the arrival of the Head, who stood petrified with amazement in the doorway.

"Boys, what does this mean? Bless my soul! Stop at once! Do you hear? Stop!"

"Give him another round!" roared the voice of Dicky Nugent. "All together! One, two, three—go!"

Crash! Wallop! Whiz!

"Boys—yowp! Oh, d-d-dear! B-bub-bless my soul!"

Bump!

The luckless Temple received a goodly portion of that bombardment, but he managed to dodge the greater part of it. The reverend Head, however, was not so fortunate. A peculiar Fate had ordained that he should be in a direct line with Reginald Temple, and that same Fate had decreed that whatsoever passed the Fourth-Former by should not be wasted. Every article was destined to find a billet, and in this case the billet was Dr. Locke himself.

Gasping and spluttering as several eggs splashed over his features and clothes, the Head collapsed in a twisted heap upon the floor. And when the hilarious juniors saw the magnitude of their offence, a pin might have been heard to drop, so tense was the silence. Harry Wharton was the first to break it.

"Oh crumbs!" he muttered, horror-stricken. "The—the Head!"

Starting forward, followed closely by Bob Cherry and the remainder of the Co., Harry reached the side of the prostrate head-master.

"We—we—we're awfully sorry, sir!" stammered the leader of the Famous Five. "We d-d-didn't k-know y-you were in the doorway, sir—d-did we, you chaps?"

"Nunno!" gasped the Co. in unison.

"Grooough! Outrageous—owp!" mumbled Dr. Locke, who had not recovered from that unexpected attack. "Assaulting your head-master! Unheard of! Grooough!"

"Let me assist you to your feet, sir," said Wharton, politely offering his arm.

But the dignity of such an august personage as the Head of Greyfriars had sustained such a blow that, for once in a way, Dr. Locke was positively ungracious. He swept Wharton's arm aside and scrambled to his feet unaided, his eyes—all that could be seen of them through a film of egg yolk, etc.—gleamed with righteous wrath.

"Boys!" he thundered, and every junior quaked in his shoes. "How dare you! How dare you!"

Harry Wharton, feeling that it was up to him to explain, commenced a spasmodic statement of the facts; but Dr. Locke was in no mood to listen to him. He turned upon him furiously.

"I have heard enough, Wharton," he rapped. "Your excuse only adds to the enormity of the offence"—which was a trifle unjust, but, in the circumstances, perfectly understandable.

"If you please, sir," commenced Dicky Nugent, coming forward somewhat nervously. "it was our fault, sir—us Second-Formers," he added hastily. "The fun—ahem!—I mean the accident, sir—started at the beginning of the meeting of the Greyfriars Parliament. We came into the House with the—ahem!—intention of a rag, and—"

"Indeed!" was the Head's sarcastic remark. "Then it is full time that this—er—Greyfriars Parliament, as you call it, should be abolished. If such an experience as I have met with to-day at the hands of you—er—hon. members is a sample of the business of this—er—House, then the sooner this parliament—ahem!—is out of power the better!"

The jaw of every junior dropped as one man. This, indeed, was retribution of a heavy kind.

Harry Wharton stepped forward.

"But, sir," he expostulated, "the speeches! What is to become of all those speeches which have been selected for debate? Readers will be expecting prizes and—"

"That is no affair of mine, Wharton!" snapped the Head a trifle unreasonably. "Through your own mismanagement of affairs, resulting in a personal and savage attack upon your headmaster, this—er—House is

closed. You understand? A parliament, indeed! A common bear-garden would be a more fitting description."

"Oh dear!" murmured Dicky Nugent miserably.

"Every boy present," went on the rasping voice of Dr. Locke, "will write out a hundred lines from Virgil, and will be gated for a month."

The Head swept his gimlet eyes over the whole assembly, and then turned on his heel. At the doorway he paused.

"Wharton!"

"Yes-es, sir!"

"You fully understand that this Greyfriars Parliament must no longer continue."

"Ye-es, sir!" answered the leader of the Famous Five.

"Very well, Wharton; I shall look to you to see that my orders are obeyed."

The majestic figure of the Head rustled out of the House.

The moment his footsteps had died away along the passage a scething bubble of comments, groans, and rebukes rent the air. Harry Wharton & Co. told Horace Coker and the Second-Formers exactly what they thought of them without mincing words.

Thus was the passing of the Greyfriars Parliament.

But in his eagerness to put himself right with those readers of the "Magnet" whose speeches had already been accepted by the Editor, Harry Wharton wrote a lengthy letter of explanation, placing the blame of the whole affair upon his own shoulders in consequence of his inability to conduct the affairs of the House in the way they should go. He finished his epistle with a request that the Editor would see that justice was done in the matter of successful speeches which were now, alack, upon the "shelf"!

A telegram came for the leader of the Famous Five the following morning. It ran:

"Hard lines re abolition of Parliament. Take comfort; readers' successful speeches will be published in the Chat page of the 'Magnet' from week to week, and the usual money prizes awarded.—The Editor."

THE END.

THE WIRELESS DICTIONARY FOR BOYS.

(Continued from page 21.)

connected in series—that is, the positive terminal of one cell is connected to the negative terminal of the next cell—the total E.M.F. is 1.5 x 20 equals 30 volts. The internal resistance of each cell is 0.15 ohms, giving a total resistance from C to A of 0.15 x 20 which equals 3 ohms. - Now, to ascertain the current flowing through the circuit we must apply ohms law which is:

$$\text{Current} = \frac{\text{Electromotive-force}}{\text{Resistance}}$$

The resistance must be the total resistance of the circuit, including the internal resistance of the battery. The E.M.F. equals 30 volts, and the total resistance is A B equals 3 ohms, B C equals 4 ohms, and C A equals 3 ohms, which gives a total resistance of 3+4+3, which equals 10 ohms. Thus the

$$\text{Current} = \frac{30}{10} = 3 \text{ Amperes.}$$

The current flowing through the circuit is therefore three amperes, and this current is the same at any part of the circuit. There are 3 amperes flowing from A to B, from B to C, and from C to A. We are also able to learn by ohms law the voltage required to push the current from A to B, from B to C, and from C to A. This will also give us the drop in pressure at the points A, B, and C.

(This wonderful dictionary will be continued in our next issue. Readers who are keen followers of wireless should make a point of keeping these articles handy, so that they can read straight on from article to article.)

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TRACKING DOWN TRACEY!

(Continued from page 25.)

to the second milestone on the Tanford-London road. Instead of walking up the highway itself, he furtively crept along hedges and among gorse. With him he had a small entrenching tool such as was used by the infantry in the Great War. Also he had a revolver stowed in his hip-pocket.

The gorse near the milestone was rather sparse. But Locke quickly and quietly dug himself a small pit behind some thin bushes so that he could see without himself being seen. Then, well wrapped up in his overcoat, he settled himself down to wait.

At ten o'clock prompt he saw a burly figure approach and deposit a sealed packet behind the milestone. Then the figure went off in the direction of Tanford.

"There goes old Pa Tracey—two thousand quids the poorer!" thought Locke to himself.

The minutes passed. Then a youthful figure emerged from some gorse on the Tanford side of the milestone. Going to the stone, the newcomer dropped on one knee and picked up the sealed packet. Immediately Locke crept out of his hiding-place and approached the fellow, whose back was turned to him. Then he stood like a gaunt spectre, revolver in hand, waiting for the figure to rise.

Slowly the fellow got up and faced about, and a hoarse gasp left his lips as he found himself confronting the immovable figure of the sleuth.

"Gosh! Who—who are you? D-d-don't shoot! D-d-don't shoot!"

Ferrers Locke extended his left hand palm upwards.

"Give me that packet, Harry Ford Tracey!" said Locke slowly and deliberately. "Your father is a wealthy man, but he can't afford to lose that. Ah, thank you! Now promise to come quietly back with me to the Yellow Bull Hotel."

The youngster gave a stuttering assent. "There's no need to be alarmed," said Locke. "This revolver isn't loaded. I'll put it away. It wouldn't look well to carry it openly into Tanford."

Together they marched into the Yellow Bull Hotel at Tanford, where Mr. Tracey was waiting. He started to question Locke at the rate of a hundred words a minute, but the detective led the way into a private room which he had engaged.

"Yes, Mr. Tracey," he said, "I am glad that your son is restored to you. And here is the packet you so carelessly left lying about near the milestone. You might have lost it, you know."

"By gum!" gasped the Wallpaper King. "You're wonderful, sir! I thought the kidnapers had taken that."

"The kidnapper tried to," said Locke. "Ask him! You see, your son kidnapped himself."

Mr. Ford B. Tracey sank floundering in a chair, gasping like a stranded goldfish.

"I'm afraid," went on Ferrers Locke gravely, "your son isn't by any means the model youth you have believed him to be. He had a bad companion called William Blascheck, who may have helped to lead him astray. What the lads obviously intended to do was to get a goodly sum of money out of you and go abroad in search of adventure. Both boys, I discovered, were keen on books of wildly improbable fiction.

My young assistant Drake has been shadowing Blascheck, who is probably waiting at Tanford Station for this lad to show up with the plunder."

Young Tracey dropped in a seat and buried his face in his hands.

"It's true! It's true—every word of it!" he groaned. "You didn't let me have enough money, pop, and so Blascheck and I hit on this scheme for getting some. We played on the notion that there was a couple of crooks after me. As far as I know, Chick Dawson and Ty Cornby aren't in this country. It was all lies about my having seen 'em. I simply left Blascheck last Saturday afternoon as we had arranged, made some changes in my appearance, and got a job as billiard-marker in this very hotel until we should collar the cash."

Then for five minutes Pa Tracey spoke his mind without stopping for breath.

"And, gee-whiz," he concluded, "I'll take you right back to li'l old Chicago with me, you young crook, and put you to work in one of my wallpaper factories!"

Having received a handsome reward from the "American," Locke went to Tanford Station, where, sure enough, he found Drake keeping an eye on Blascheck, who was beginning to wonder what had detained his fellow conspirator. Locke took the crest-fallen lad back to the school, from which he was expelled later by Dr. Graham.

"A most interesting little case," was Locke's comment to Drake. "I have dealt with kidnapping stunts before, but it is the first case I've tackled in which the kidnapped person was also the kidnapper!"

THE END.

(Next Monday's complete story of the world-famous detective is one of the finest Mr. Owen Conquest has ever written. Make a note of the title: "The Clue of the Eighth Chair!")

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