

CLEAN, WHOLESOME STORIES EVERY WEEK!

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Week ending May 12th, 1923.

The Magnet 2⁰

Library
of
School & Detective Stories.



THE FIGHT OUTSIDE THE HEAD'S STUDY!

(A Lively Incident From This Week's Magnificent Story of Greyfriars.)



"A DEBT REPAID!"

THAT is the title of next Monday's magnificent yarn of Greyfriars. As the majority of my readers are aware, Ernest Levison is in debt to Vernon-Smith to the tune of £10. To pay off that sum of money the St. Jim's junior will have to forego innumerable pleasures during the whole term. Every penny of his meagre pocket allowance will have to be put aside. Levison, however, is now a high-principled fellow, and is determined to make the sacrifice rather than remain in the Bounder's debt.

The St. Jim's junior, in turn, is also owed £10 by Hazeldene; indeed, Levison's obligation to Vernon-Smith arose out of Hazeldene's shady transactions with a billiard sharper; but there seems little chance of Hazeldene "squaring up" with the junior who befriended him in the time of his trouble.

The Bounder shows up in a strong light in this splendid story; he finds a method of wiping out both debts with one sweep of the hand, so to speak. In striking contrast to the serious side of Frank Richards' latest yarn is the introduction of Bessie Bunter, of Cliff House School. Rumours begin to circulate in

the Lower School at Greyfriars that Levison is "mashed" on W. G. Bunter's fat and unattractive sister. Whether or not this is the case, my readers will gather from reading

"A DEBT REPAID!"

By Frank Richards.

In addition to our complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., there is, of course, a further thrilling detective story featuring Ferrers Locke and the amazing Mr. Fang. It is entitled:

"THE TREASURE OF WONG MOH!"

The resource and supreme cunning of the Yellow Spider finds a redoubtable line of opposition in Ferrers Locke, whose daring activities amongst the dreaded league of the Ho: Hanga itself will surprise and fascinate you. Don't miss this latest achievement of Mr. Owen Conquest's—it's a thriller.

SWIMMING!

The mere mention of the word conjures up long stretches of sea, river, and shimmering pools where one and all at

this time of the year are wont to forget their cares and worries in the delightful embrace of Father Neptune or his half-brother, Freshwater. Summer is very close at hand, and the swimming fever is catching. Harry Wharton's staff has developed the symptoms, and each one of them has been burning the midnight oil in consequence. Result:

A SPECIAL SWIMMING SUPPLEMENT

will be published in next Monday's bumper number of the MAGNET.

THE WIRELESS DICTIONARY.

I am very glad to learn from my host of chums that our Wireless Dictionary has "caught on." Of course, that was a foregone conclusion, really. Very little appears in the good old MAGNET that does not meet the general literary taste. Look out for our next article, my friends; you'll find it extremely useful.

COMPETITIONS.

There is very little to say on this subject, delightful as it is. A competition usually speaks for itself. I am glad to see MAGNET readers entering our two novel and interesting competitions with zest. That's the idea! Of course, you can't all win prizes—that's impossible; but there are some splendid cash awards for the skilful ones. Stick to it, chums. Who knows? It might be your turn to "bag" a prize!

Your Editor.

THE "MAGNET" LIMERICK COMPETITION!

NO ENTRANCE FEE REQUIRED.

First Prize - - - £1 1s. Od.

and

CONSOLATION PRIZES OF 2/6 FOR ALL EFFORTS PUBLISHED.

In order to win one of the above prizes all you have to do is to supply the last line of the verse given below, taking care to see that your effort bears some apt relation to the theme.

RULES GOVERNING THE "MAGNET" LIMERICK COMPETITION.

1.—The First Prize will be awarded to the sender of what, in the opinion of the Editor and a competent staff of adjudicators, is the best Last Line received.

2.—Consolation prizes of 2s. 6d. will be awarded from week to week to those competitors whose efforts show merit.

3.—The coupon below entitling you to enter for this competition must be either pasted on to a postcard, in which case your Last Line must be written IN INK directly beneath it, or enclosed separately in an envelope with your Last Line effort attached.

4.—Competitor's name and full postal address must accompany every effort sent in.

5.—Entries must reach us not later than May 17th, 1925, and MUST NOT be enclosed with entrance forms for any other competition. They must be addressed "MAGNET Limerick No. 5," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4.

6.—Your Editor undertakes that every effort sent in will receive careful consideration, but he will not hold himself responsible for coupons lost or mislaid, or delayed in the post. Proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of delivery.

7.—This competition is open to All Readers of the THE MAGNET LIBRARY No. 796.

Companion Papers, but the result each week will appear only in the MAGNET.

8.—It is a distinct condition of entry that your Editor's decision must be accepted as binding in all matters. Acceptance of these rules is an express condition of entry.

Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

"MAGNET" LIMERICK COMPETITION.

No. 5.

Down the banister-ran Cheryl sped,
"Short cut to the bottom," he said.
Then he gave a wild yell,
As he toppled and fell.

THIS EXAMPLE WILL HELP YOU:
To alight at the "feet" of the "Head"!

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CUT HERE



A powerful story of school life, bringing Vernon-Smith, commonly known as the Bounder, into the limelight. Underneath his hard nature and his rugged exterior the Bounder possesses a heart of gold. With everything against him in the hour of his trial, Ernest Levison finds a staunch champion in Vernon-Smith, the junior to whom he had once rendered a great service.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Startling News!

“HAZEL!”
 “Don’t bother!”
 “Ahem! Where’s Levison?”
 “Hang Levison!”

Hazeldene of the Remove did not seem to be in a good temper. He scowled at Harry Wharton, as the captain of the Remove looked in at the doorway of Study No. 2.

Wharton did not possess the most equable temper at Greyfriars. He felt—as fellows often felt in dealing with Hazel—a strong inclination to take the irritable junior by the scruff of the neck and give him a good shaking. However, he controlled that inclination.

“What’s up?” he asked.
 “Nothing!”
 “Then what the thump are you so ratty about?”
 “Find out!”

Wharton breathed hard.
 “Well, I want Levison,” he said. “This is his study, and he came in a little while ago. I thought you would know where he was.”

“I don’t care a rap where he is!”
 “I hope you haven’t been rowing again with Levison, Hazel?”
 “It wouldn’t be your business if I had.”

The desire to take Hazel by the scruff of the neck became almost irresistible, but Wharton combated it manfully.

“We’re having a jaw about the cricket in my study,” he said. “As Levison seems likely to be staying on here after the matches begin, I’m thinking of trying him in the Remove eleven. We want to talk it over. Will you come along?”

“No.”
 “Oh, all serene!” Wharton turned away, feeling that his temper would not stand the strain of a longer conversation with Hazel.

“So you’re thinking of putting Levison into the cricket?” said Hazel; and the captain of the Remove turned back.

“Yes; he’s a good man,” he said.
 “He wasn’t much of a cricketer when

he used to be at Greyfriars!” sneered Hazel.

“I know that; but he’s considered a good man at his present school. He plays for Tom Merry’s team at St. Jim’s. While he’s staying here he’s working with the Remove, so there’s no reason why he shouldn’t play for the Remove.”

“Blessed if I see why he should hang on at Greyfriars like this, when he doesn’t belong here!” said Hazel sullenly. “I don’t see why he’s not gone back to St. Jim’s before this.”

“Well, he’s staying until his young brother’s well enough to leave the sanatorium,” said Wharton. “That won’t be for some weeks yet, I believe.”

“All rot!” said Hazel. “His young brother’s got no business here, if you come to that. I thought we were quit of the Levisons when the fellow was kicked out of Greyfriars. Blessed if I can understand the Head letting him stay here at all, considering the kind of fellow he used to be!”

“Oh, rubbish!” said Wharton gruffly. He walked away, leaving Hazel scowling. Evidently Hazel was not feeling amiable towards the St. Jim’s junior, who was his study-mate for the present at Greyfriars.

Wharton looked into his own study—No. 1 in the Remove. His chums were there—Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, Nugent, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

“Hallo, hallo, hallo! Haven’t you got Levison?” asked Bob.

“No; Hazel doesn’t seem to know where he is. I’ll ask Smithy; he may know.”

Wharton walked on to Study No. 4 and looked in. Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing were there.

“Seen Levison, Smithy?” asked Wharton.

“He came in here to speak to me half an hour ago,” said the Bounder. “Haven’t seen him since.”

Wharton nodded and walked along the Remove passage. Levison of St. Jim’s seemed to have vanished. Skinner and Snoop were in the passage, and they had

heard Wharton’s inquiry. They grinned at one another.

“Looking for Levison?” asked Skinner.

“Yes. Know where he is?”
 “Out of gates,” answered Skinner. And he winked at Snoop.

“Dash it all, he was about here half an hour ago!” said Harry. “It’s close on lock-up, too. What are you grinning at, Skinner?”

“You see, I saw Levison a little while ago,” remarked Skinner. “He was going up the towing-path. He’ll be back for call-over all right, though. Levison’s too cute to be caught out.”

“Caught out?” repeated Wharton.
 “Well, I fancy he wasn’t trotting up the towing-path just for exercise!” grinned Skinner. “I fancy he was going somewhere.”

“The jolly old Feathers is up the river, you know,” said Snoop, with a chuckle. “That’s where Levison used to go for billiards when he was a Greyfriars chap, isn’t it?”

Wharton knitted his brows.
 “Cut that out!” he said sharply. “You don’t believe it yourself, and you know it!”

Skinner laughed.
 “I know Levison’s jolly old reputation,” he said. “I believe it’s a well-known fact in natural history that a leopard doesn’t change his spots.”

“Oh, rats!”
 “It’s a bit risky if Levison’s gone there to-day!” grinned Snoop. “I saw Wingate of the Sixth mooching along the river. I fancy the prefects have been told to keep their eyes on that quarter. There’s been a lot of talk about it lately.”

“And you two rotters started it,” said Wharton. “Go and eat coke!”

And he turned his back on the two cads of the Remove, and returned to Study No. 1, leaving Skinner and Snoop chuckling.

In Study No. 1 the Famous Five discussed cricket affairs, and forgot, for the time being, the existence of Ernest

Levison of St. Jim's. They were interrupted after a time by the door of the study being hazled open, and a fat, excited face appearing in the doorway.

"I say, you fellows!" gasped Billy Bunter.

"Roll away, barrel!" said Bob Cherry.

"He's caught!" yelled Bunter, in great excitement.

"Eh? What— Who's caught? What do you mean?"

"Levison!"

"What?"

Harry Wharton & Co. jumped up. Billy Bunter's little round eyes were fairly dancing with excitement behind his spectacles.

"He's caught!" he gasped. "Wingate's got him!"

"How? Why?"

"Caught in the act!" spluttered Bunter. "I say, you fellows, you know I said all along that Levison was pulling your leg, didn't I?"

"How can we remember what rotten things you said, or didn't say?" growled Wharton. "What's this about Wingate and Levison?"

"He's got him!" yelled Bunter. "He's just marching him in! Got him by the collar! He's caught him out of bounds! He, he, he!"

"Rot!" exclaimed Nugent.

"Come and look at him!" gasped Bunter. "There's a crowd already. I thought I'd come and give you fellows the tip. You're missing it! He, he, he!"

And William George Bunter rolled away to spread the glad tidings further. Harry Wharton & Co. looked at one another blankly.

"Can't be anything in it, surely!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

"Only Bunter's rot," said Bob.

"Let's go down, anyway," said Harry Wharton abruptly.

The Famous Five quitted the study.

As they hurried towards the stairs Hazeldene caught Wharton by the arm. There was a startled, scared look on Hazel's face.

"Have you heard?" he panted. "They're saying that Levison's caught."

"Only rot, I expect."

"If they caught him at the Feathers there—" stammered Hazel.

Wharton looked at him hard.

"Do you know anything about it, Hazel?"

"I! No—oh, no! Nothing!" stammered Hazel.

And he went back into his study.

The Famous Five hurried downstairs.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Caught in the Act!

ERNEST LEVISON of St. Jim's was entering the School House.

He was walking quietly by the side of Wingate of the Sixth Form, head prefect of Greyfriars.

Wingate's face was stern and grim.

It was evident that the junior was in the custody of the Sixth Form prefect, and Wingate's expression showed that the matter was serious. There was a buzz of excitement in the Hall. Skinner gave Snoop a glance of almost ecstatic satisfaction. Levison had been caught out at last, and Skinner's opinion of him had proved to be well founded. Fellows who had looked on Skinner as a back-biter and a suspicious cad would have to own up now that Skinner had been in the right all along—which was a great satisfaction to the cad of the Remove.

Levison's face was a little pale, but it was quite calm. Whatever trouble might be in store for him, Levison had the nerve to face it.

He glanced round at the mob of excited juniors as if in search of someone. If he was looking for Hazel, he was disappointed. Hazeldene had not come downstairs.

Levison's pale face coloured at the sight of Harry Wharton & Co. He dropped his eyes.

"Levison!" exclaimed Harry. He came forward at once. "Levison, what's the row?"

"Caught!" chuckled Skinner.

"Shut up, Skinner!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Stand aside, there!" said Wingate gruffly. "Give a fellow room to pass! Levison, you will come with me to your Form master!"

"Very well, Wingate."

"But what's happened, Wingate?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"You'll know soon enough!"

"It's all a mistake, you fellows," said Levison quietly. "I hope it will turn out all right. I can't say more than that."

All the juniors noticed the look of disgust that Wingate turned upon him as he spoke.

"That will do, Levison!" said the captain of Greyfriars contemptuously. "Lying won't help you much now! Come along!"

He dropped his hand on the junior's shoulder, and led him towards Mr. Quelch's study. An excited crowd buzzed behind.

The buzz had reached the Remove master. His door opened, and he stepped out of his study, coming face to face with Wingate and Levison and the buzzing crowd behind them.

Mr. Quelch raised his eyebrows.

"What does all this mean?" he asked.

Wingate halted.

"I was bringing Levison to you, sir," he said. "I'm sorry to say that I have to report him for disgraceful conduct!"

"Is it possible?" exclaimed the Remove master.

The buzz among the juniors died away. Faces were very serious now. Levison was white.

"You are aware, sir, that since some talk was heard of a Greyfriars fellow being seen at the Feathers—that's a den up the river—the Head instructed all the prefects to keep their eyes open in that direction," said Wingate. "I found Levison there, and collared him as he was leaving!"

"Bless my soul!"

Harry Wharton & Co. looked on, dumb. The prefect's statement was like a blow in the face to the chums of the Remove.

They had been down—emphatically down—on Skinner's attempts to revive the old story of Levison's former ways—in the old days when he had belonged to Greyfriars.

In spite of Skinner, and in spite of one or two curious incidents to which Skinner had carefully drawn the general attention, the Famous Five had stood by Levison, and refused to allow doubts to enter their minds.

This news was like a thunderclap to them. They could only stare at the scene in amazement and dismay.

Mr. Quelch seemed as amazed as the Famous Five.

Since Levison's return to his old school he had won golden opinions from the Remove master. Indeed, but for the belief of Mr. Quelch and the Head that

Levison's reform was sincere and beyond question, he would certainly never have been allowed to set his foot within the precincts of Greyfriars at all.

"Bless my soul!" repeated Mr. Quelch blankly. "Wingate, there is—is no possibility of a mistake in this matter, I suppose?"

"I am sorry to say, none, sir!" said Wingate. "I saw Levison in the garden at the Feathers in conversation with a rascally character named Mulberry—a man who is known to have been in prison. He talked with Mulberry for some time, and handed him money. He was leaving the place when I caught him."

Mr. Quelch's brow became black. Amazement was giving place to anger now. His eyes glittered like steel as they were fixed upon the St. Jim's junior.

Levison's face was almost as white as chalk now. But he was still calm, and his eyes were steady.

"What have you to say to this, Ernest Levison?" asked the Remove master harshly.

"It's true, sir."

"You admit it? Not that there would be any use in denying it, certainly!" added the Remove master dryly.

"But it's not as Wingate thinks, sir," said Levison. "I admit that I was out of school bounds, but I never went to the Feathers with any bad object. If you knew—"

He broke off.

"I am waiting to know!" said Mr. Quelch. "You are entitled to give what explanation you can, Levison!"

The St. Jim's junior coloured, and was silent.

"For what reason did you visit that place, which has been put out of bounds by the Head?"

"I—I—"

"Did you go there specially to see this man Mulberry?"

"Yes, sir."

"That is enough, I think," said Mr. Quelch. "The man, I suppose, is an old acquaintance of yours?"

"No, sir," said Levison, his lips quivering. "I never knew him when I was at Greyfriars before, and I went to see him now with a special object."

"And that object?"

"I—I can't explain now."

"I am assured of that," said Mr. Quelch dryly. "When you were a Greyfriars boy, Levison, you visited that place and other places of the same character, and for that reason you were sent away from the school. Your record at your new school justified the Head and me in believing that you had seen the error of your ways and reformed. It appears that you have deceived us; and I am driven to the conclusion that you have been deceiving your headmaster at St. Jim's, since it is clear that you have not changed your old ways!"

"It's not so, sir!" said Levison huskily. "If I could explain—"

"You are at liberty to explain—"

"I'm not at liberty!" muttered Levison. "I—I—"

"Nonsense! In any case, no explanation could alter the fact that you have broken the Head's strict command, and visited a place that is frequented by no respectable person!" said Mr. Quelch. "If you still belonged to this school, Levison, Dr. Locke would undoubtedly expel you from Greyfriars. As the jurisdiction is not in his hands now, he will send you back to your own school without delay, with a full and explicit explanation of the circumstances to Dr. Holmes."

"Oh, sir!" groaned Levison.

Next Monday's magnificent story of Ernest Levison's stay at Greyfriars—

"I shall acquaint Dr. Locke with what has happened!" said Mr. Quelch, with withering contempt. "It is for him to decide. But from what I have said, you know what to expect! You may go to your study until you are called into the Head's presence!"

Mr. Quelch turned away.

Levison glanced round, his face crimson. Then he moved to the staircase and slowly ascended, all eyes following him. A minute more and the door of Study No. 2 closed on him.

In the Remove passage there was a buzzing crowd of excited juniors, all discussing the one absorbing topic. Levison had been bowled out. Levison had been taking the fellows in. Levison was still the "old Levison," and it had come out at last unmistakably. There was endless and breathless discussion of that topic. Skinner was triumphant. He was the fellow who had "known all along." And Harry Wharton & Co. had not a word to say in defence of the fellow by whom, up to that moment, they had stood loyally.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Up to Hazel!

"WHAT'S happened?"

Hazeldene panted out the words as Levison came into Study No. 2 and shut the door behind him—shut it hard, to close out the buzz of voices and the inquisitive looks.

Levison leaned heavily on the table.

With all his nerve, all his courage, he felt this blow. It was hard to stand up to a knock-out.

"Haven't you heard yet?" he muttered.

"You've been caught?"

"Yes."

"At Dawes' place—the Feathers?"

"Yes."

"By a prefect?"

"By Wingate."

"You fool! Oh, you fool!"

Hazel almost spat out the words.

"You fool!" he repeated. "Caught—you, an old hand, caught like a Second Form fag sneaking out of bounds! Oh, you fool!"

Levison breathed hard and deep.

"Is that your thanks?" he asked.

"It's all you'll get from me. Did you pay Mulberry?"

"Yes."

"Then that's settled."

"Yes," said Levison, with bitter irony, "that's settled. And I—I'm settled, too!"

"Wingate brought you back?"

"Yes."

"Have you told him anything—about me, I mean?"

"No."

"Are you going to?"

Hazeldene could not mask his anxiety as he asked that question. His eyes were fixed almost feverishly on the St. Jim's junior.

Levison did not answer.

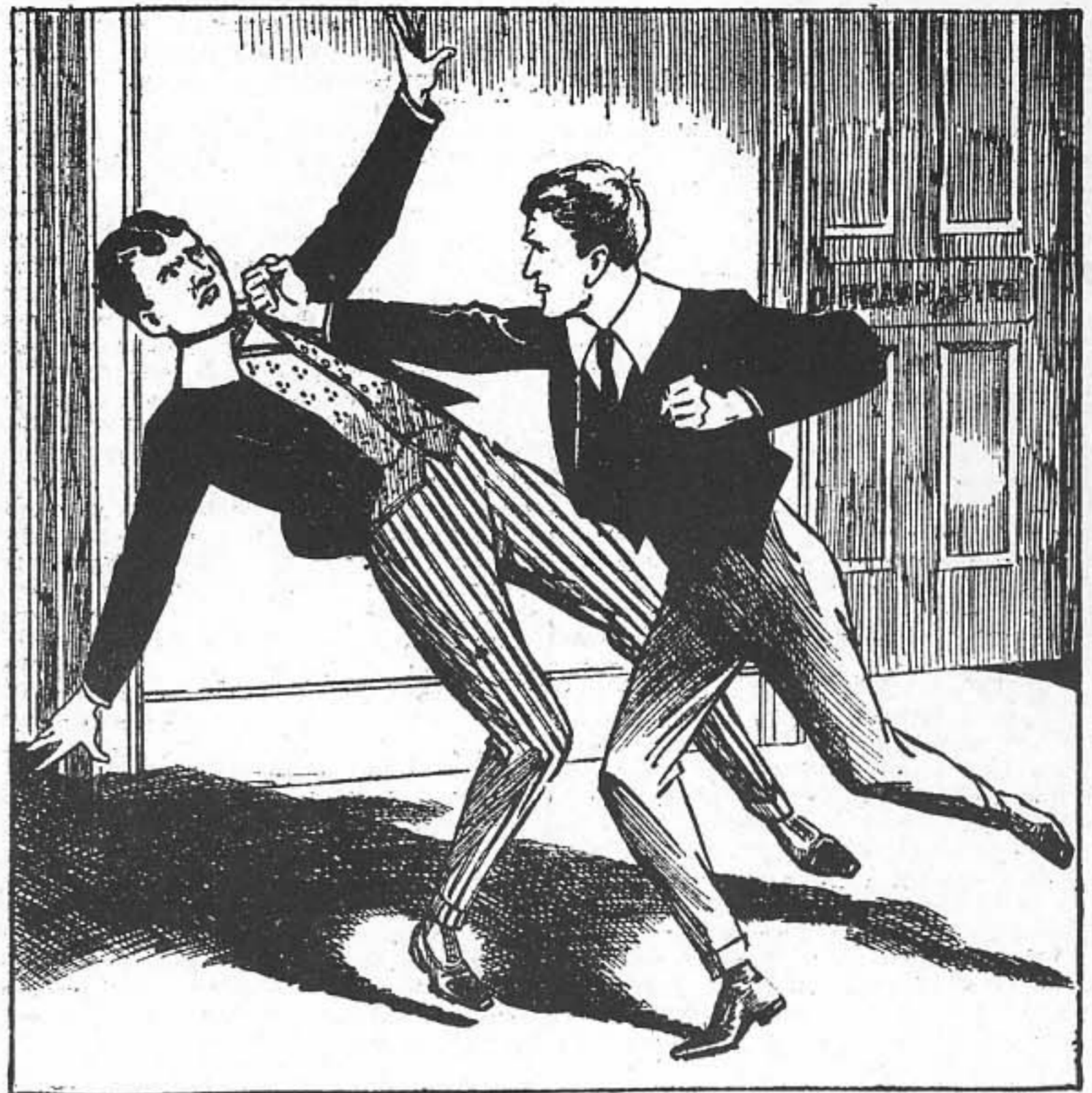
"Can't you speak?" asked Hazel shrilly. "You can't give me away, Levison. It's the sack for me."

"What is it for me?" groaned Levison.

"It's different. You don't belong to the school. You're a St. Jim's chap, here on a visit. The Head can't sack you, can't do anything but send you away—"

"In disgrace!" said Levison.

"You've stood that before when you were a Greyfriars chap," said Hazel.



"Will you get out and mind your own business?" asked Hazel. "Hardly!" replied the Bounder scornfully. "Then take that!" roared Hazel. Crash! Vernon-Smith staggered back under a terrific drive, the blood streaming from his nose. (See Chapter 5.)

"You were about as deep down as you could be, and you seem to have survived it. It would be ruin for me, utter ruin! You can't give me away. You can't be such a rotter. I trusted you. I never asked you to go to the Feathers to pay Mulberry. I wanted to go myself. You know I did."

"And you'd have played again and gambled away the money I raised to pay your debt," said Levison bitterly.

"That wouldn't have hurt you, anyhow. You chose to go against my wish. I was against it. You can't blame me now that you've got landed. If you give me away—"

"Well?" said Levison grimly. "If I give you away—"

"I shall deny it."

"Deny it!" said Levison.

"Yes," burst out Hazel passionately. "You butted in to help me out of a scrape—you said you did, anyhow—and if you've made it worse instead of better you can face the music. I trusted you. All I ever said to you was in confidence, and you know it. If you give me away you deserve anything I can do, and I shall defend myself. I'm not going to be expelled from the school because you've butted into my affairs, and made a mess of the whole thing. You can't expect it."

Levison did not answer. He stood leaning back on the table looking at Hazel. It was hard to tell from his expression what he was thinking.

Hazel, unable to keep still, moved about the study, a good deal like a wild animal in a cage. He was tormented

with the fear of what might follow. His nerves, never strong, were in a twitter. If the Head learned that it was upon his account that Levison had gone to see the fat sharper at the Feathers— But he should never know! But for Levison's blundering, as Hazel chose to regard it, the affair would have been over and done with. He should not have got himself caught.

Hazel came to a halt at last before the silent St. Jim's junior.

"What are you going to do?" he breathed.

"I don't know."

"Are you going up before the Head?"

"Yes. Mr. Quelch said so."

"When?"

"When I'm sent for."

"What will you say?"

"I don't know."

Hazel set his teeth.

"You'd better think out something," he muttered. "Think of a good thumping lie, something in your old style. You used to have the deuce's own luck at crawling out of a scrape. Even Skinner was a fool to you at such things."

"I shall not tell Dr. Locke any lies."

"Oh, you fool! Is it a time now for sticking at trifles?"

"Such trifles as that, yes."

"You can make out you were passing the place, that Mulberry called you into the garden to show you something; that you'd forgotten about it being out of bounds, being away from Greyfriars so long—"

"I can't tell the Head that."

"Why not?"

—is entitled, "A Debt Repaid!" It's simply great!

"Because it isn't true."

"Oh, you fool—fool!"

Levison smiled slightly, a hard, bitter smile.

"Keep your advice," he said. "If I were rotter enough to spin lies to the Head I shouldn't come to you for suggestions. You're as silly at lying as at everything else, Hazel. I should be bowled out at once."

"But you must say something!" panted Hazel.

"I know that."

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"What are you going to say, then?"

"I don't know."

Hazel roamed round the study again, more like a caged animal than ever. When he looked at Levison his look was savage and spiteful. It seemed as if he would have liked to lay hands on the St. Jim's junior.

It was his own danger that was tormenting him. Of Levison he thought little or nothing. He had no time to look at the matter from Ernest Levison's side just then. He was not going to be sacked from the school; that was the governing thought in his mind.

"Well, say what you like," he said. "Don't drag me in, that's all. They can't prove that you've any dealings with Mulberry, that you paid him anything."

"Wingate saw me pay him."

"Good heavens! You let him see—"

"The man was in the garden. I was in a hurry to get through and get away. I did not know the prefects were on the watch. I suppose some of Skinner's tattle has reached them," said Levison wearily.

"You couldn't keep friends with Skinner. He was willing to be friendly when you came back. You had to quarrel with him. You've got yourself to thank for it."

Levison stood silent.

"Tell me if you're going to mention my name!" hissed Hazel. "If you're going to be my enemy after promising to help me, let me know what to expect."

Ernest Levison drew a deep breath.

"I shall not mention your name," he said.

"You mean that?"

Levison's lip curled.

"You thought I should give you away to save myself? You would!"

"Well, it wouldn't be decent. But you never were a decent chap when you used to be here," muttered Hazel. "But—but if you're going to do the decent thing, all right."

"The question is whether you're going to do the decent thing, Hazel," said Levison, looking at him steadily.

Hazel started.

"I? What do you mean?"

"You got into a scrape with that sharper, playing the blackguard," said Levison. "You landed your scrape on me—just as you always land your troubles on somebody. I was a fool to let you do it; but I did, and you did it. I borrowed ten pounds—a sum it will take me a whole term to repay—to get you clear of Mulberry. I took

risks to save you from your own stupid folly. Now it's come to a muck-up, you know that it's up to you."

"What's up to me?"

"To own up."

Hazel burst into a shrill, angry laugh.

"Own up! Do you think I'm mad?"

"You won't?"

"Of course I won't! I'm not going to Dr. Locke to ask for the sack! I've got my people to think of—"

"You should have thought of your people before you went in for low blackguardism and earned the sack!"

"That's enough! I'm not going to say a word! You can't expect it! You shouldn't have butted in if you didn't want to face the music! You say I asked you to help me out. You could have refused. You've no right to help me and, after taking a hand, to round on me because it's gone wrong! I should have been better off without your help at all!"

"That's true," said Levison quietly. "I've no right to ask you, and no right to give you away. But it's up to you."

"I don't see it! I can't do it, anyhow!"

Levison looked at him curiously.

"You're willing to stand aside and see me lagged for having taken a hand in your affairs to help you?" he said.

"You shouldn't have taken a hand if you hadn't the nerve to carry on!"

Levison nodded.

"That's true," he said. "I was a fool. I knew I was a fool at the time. And it wasn't wholly for your sake that I chipped in, either."

Enter for our grand Cricket Competition To-day—

"Oh, I know that!" sneered Hazel. "You took it on yourself to look after my sister Marjorie! You fancied that I was worrying her for money—"

"I know you were."

"Well, if I were, it isn't your business! You butted in, and now you can stand the racket! And it won't be so bad for you as for me. You can only be sent back to your school. I should be sacked!"

"Sent back in disgrace, with an explanation to Dr. Holmes!" said Levison bitterly. "Do you think he will let me stay at St. Jim's after that? He will think worse of me for disgracing myself and my school here than if I had done it at St. Jim's!"

"I can't help that! After all, you always fall on your feet," said Hazel. "Your luck was always a proverb in the Remove. Look here. You borrowed that ten pounds—"

"Yes."

"Did you mention my name in borrowing it?"

"Was I likely to?"

"Did you?" almost shouted Hazel.

"No."

"Then nobody knows?"

"Nobody."

"That lets me out!" said Hazel, with a breath of relief. "I'm sorry, Levison; I'll do anything I can to help. But now you've let yourself be caught you have got to stand the racket on your own! You would take the affair in your own hands—"

Levison turned to the door. He had had no hope that Hazel would do the decent thing; he knew the weak, irresolute, selfish fellow too well. Hazel had been saved from his scrape, and the whole scrape—and worse—had fallen on the shoulders of the fellow who had helped him.

There was nothing more to be said. He could not betray Hazeldene, and Hazel did not intend to own up and face the music. There was no more to be said, and he did not care to stay to listen to Hazel's recriminations and self-exculpations. He opened the study door and went out into the crowded passage.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Loyal to Levison!

"HERE he is!"
"Here's the giddy young plunger!"

"He's sober, too!" said Skinner, with a grin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, I told you so all along, you know!" chirruped Billy Bunter. "Levison never took me in! I can say that!"

"He never took me in!" grinned Skinner. "He seems to have pulled Wharton's leg pretty thoroughly!"

"You awful ass, Levison!" said Tom Brown. "You ought to have had more sense!"

"Landed at last!" said Snoop.

"What on earth did you do it for, Levison?" asked Peter Todd. "Have you been spoofing us all this while?"

"Looks like it!" said Ogilvy.

"You might have thought of young Frank, anyhow!" chimed in Squiff. "This will be a hard knock to that kid!"

Levison started violently. In the stress of mind he was labouring under then, he had for the moment forgotten Levison minor—the fag who, in his bed in the school sanatorium, knew as yet nothing of what had happened. Frank Levison had been so pleased, so happy to find his brother on the best of terms with his former schoolfellows at Greyfriars—the old, unpleasant past so thoroughly put away and forgotten. What would Frank think now? Levison could have groaned as he thought of it.

"It's too thick," said Bolsover major "too thick altogether! I don't say a fellow shouldn't have a flutter; I've dropped in at the Bird-in-Hand for a game of billiards myself. But that low

—You'll find it on page 27. Simple and Interesting!

den up the river—it's too thick! It's a wonder that that man Dawes keeps his licence at all! No decent fellow would go there, bounds or no bounds!"

"No decent fellow does!" grinned Skinner. "It's our distinguished visitors from St. Jim's who patronise the Feathers!"

"It's too thick!" repeated Bolsover major. "Of course, I knew that Levison was humbugging all the time, making out that he never touched even

Hazeldene owes the St. Jim's junior £10!

a cigarette! But I think he might have kept decent while he was staying in our school! You might have left this kind of thing over till you got back to St. Jim's, Levison!"

And Bolsover major shook his head seriously at Levison.

"Oh, let the chap alone!" said Russell. "He will get it in the neck for this! No need for us to rub it in!"

"He's shown up, anyhow!" said Stott.

"Not much doubt about that!" grinned Skinner. "I can't say I'm sorry!"

Levison looked over the crowd of Removites, a bitter smile on his lips. All the fellows were down on him, which was natural enough. Most of them had taken the St. Jim's junior at his own valuation, as it were; they had believed in his reform, and they felt now that they had been deceived. They were not likely to think of the true state of affairs. They had no clue.

Without answering a word, Levison moved along to Study No. 1. He went in and found Harry Wharton & Co. there. It was time for prep, but the Famous Five were not thinking of prep.

There was an uncomfortable silence in the study as Levison entered. Levison broke it.

"I've looked in to say a word to you fellows," he said rather awkwardly.

"Well?" grunted Johnny Bull.

"You know what's happened?"

"We know," said Bob Cherry uncomfortably.

Levison breathed hard.

"I suppose you're thinking pretty badly of me?" he said.

"Well, what did you expect us to think when you were found out?" demanded Johnny Bull gruffly. "Nobody likes to be taken in! You've taken us in!"

"The take-infulness was terrific, my esteemed and blackguardly Levison!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Harry Wharton did not speak. He stood with his eyes fixed curiously on Levison's face. There seemed to be no doubt in the matter; yet the captain of the Remove wondered.

"I can't explain," said Levison, his colour deepening. "I shall have to go. But I'd like to tell you fellows—" He paused.

"Go ahead!" said Harry quietly.

"The matter's not as it looks. I can't tell you how it is, but there's a mistake. I haven't taken you fellows in. I've not done anything that a fellow need feel ashamed of. I suppose you can't believe me—"

There was an uncomfortable silence.

"We'll try to," said Wharton, at last.

Johnny Bull grunted.

"I don't see any need for mystification," he said. "If you've got anything to say you can say it, I suppose."

"The trouble is, that I can't."

Wharton looked at him quickly.

"Is there anybody else in this, Levison?" he asked.

"I can't answer any questions. I can only say that the thing isn't as it looks, and leave it at that," said Levison. "If you can't believe me, I'm sorry. That's all."

He left the study with that.

"Looking for you, old top!" said a cheery voice at his elbow. It was Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars.

He slipped his arm through Levison's, and led him away into Study No. 4. Tom Redwing was there. Redwing nodded rather hastily to Levison and walked out.

The Bounder closed the door after Redwing.

Then he stood facing Levison with a curious expression on his face. The St. Jim's junior did not speak.

"You're pretty well landed," said the Bounder.

"It looks like it."

"You're taking it coolly."

Levison shrugged his shoulders.

"Any use in howling?" he asked.

"No!" said the Bounder, laughing.

"I believe you always were a cool card, Levison. It's odd for an old hand like you to be caught napping by a prefect, like some silly fag."

"It's because I'd chucked being an old hand," said Levison, with a grim smile.

"If I'd gone to the Feathers to play the blackguard there, I should have been more careful. I should have been on the look-out for prefects."

"That's struck me," said Vernon-Smith, with a nod. "You borrowed ten quid of me, Levison. I asked you at the time if you were going blagging, and you said you were not. I believed you."

"Thanks!"

"I believe you now," added the Bounder.

"Thanks again!"

"What are you going to do?"

"Take the chopper when it comes down. There's nothing else to be done, is there?"

"Young Frank will feel this when he hears."

Levison winced.

"No need to rub that in," he said. "He needn't hear till he's well, anyhow. He

need only know that I've left Greyfriars."

The Bounder was eyeing him very curiously.

"I've mentioned more than once," he said, "that you did me a good turn when you came over to Greyfriars some time ago. That was why I lent you the ten quid you wanted."

"That made us quits," said Levison.

"Not quite," said the Bounder, smiling. "I'm not a fellow to forget either a benefit or an injury. Luckily for you it was a benefit I had at your hands. I want to help you out of this."

"You can't."

"Two heads are thicker than one," suggested the Bounder, with a grin. "Tell me exactly what's happened, and let me judge."

Levison was silent.

"Most of the fellows have made up their minds," said Vernon-Smith. "You can't blame them."

"I don't."

"You really seemed to have asked for it, you know. But I'm not quite satisfied. I want to know why you went to the Feathers this afternoon."

No answer.

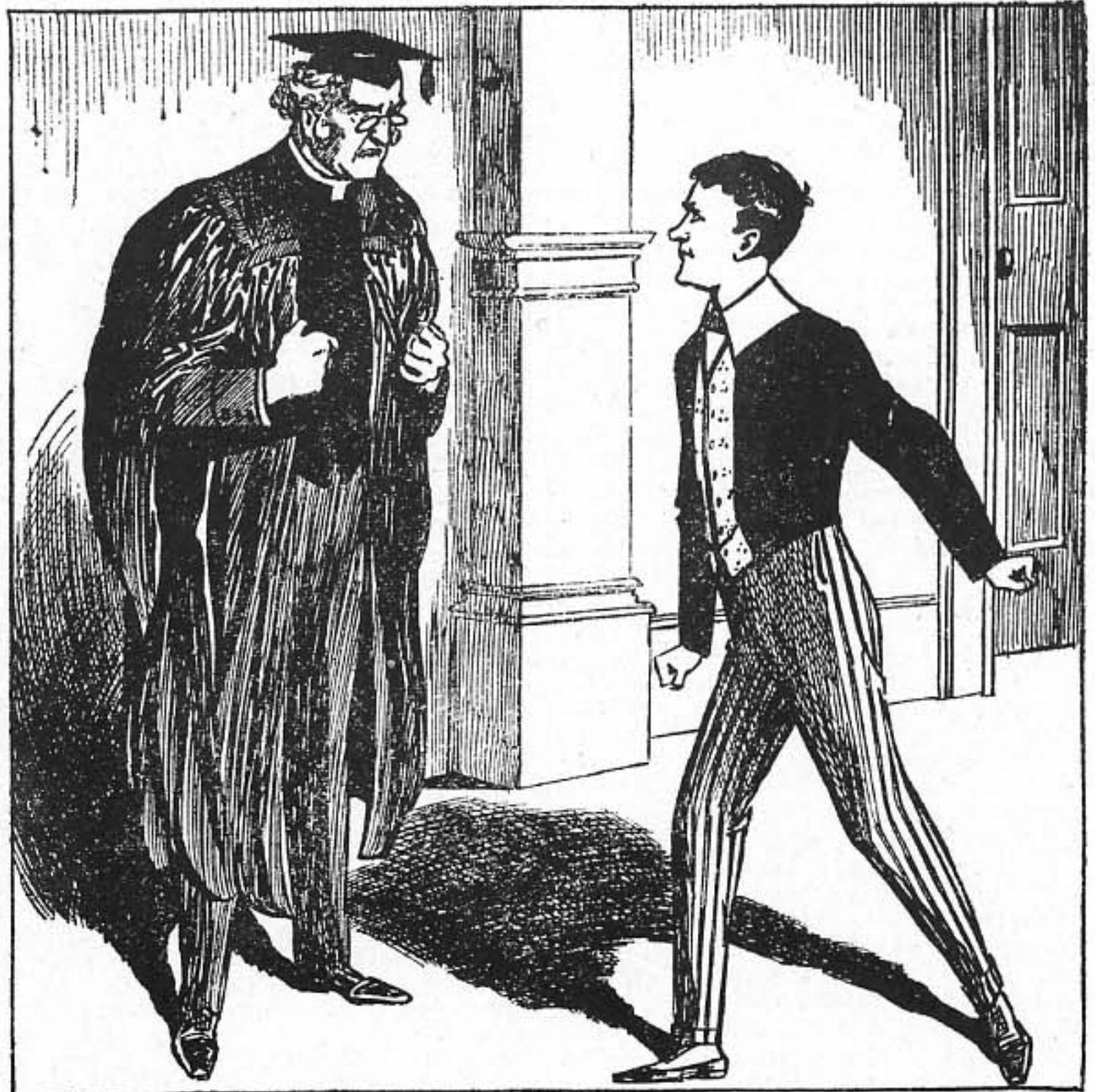
"I want to know why you needed ten pounds in a hurry."

Silence from Levison.

"You weren't playing the old game," continued the Bounder. "You've said so, and I believe it. What fool-game were you playing, Levison?"

Still Levison did not speak.

"Somebody else is in this," said the Bounder coolly. "You're standing by



The Bounder moved along by the Head's side. "I must tell you, sir," he said desperately. "I don't care if I'm flogged. You're doing Levison an injustice!" "What?" The Head came to a sudden halt. "Vernon-Smith! How dare you?" (See Chapter 8.)

His methods of "raising the wind" are hardly to his credit!

somebody else, and he's let you down. Shall I give a guess at the name?"

"I'd rather you didn't butt in."

"Quite so! But you butted in once, when I was in a scrape, and saved my hide. One good turn deserves another. You see," grinned the Bounder, "I've got a sort of clue. It was ten pounds you wanted from me in a hurry, just before going to see Mr. Mulberry. As it happens, a certain esteemed member of our Form had been trying to borrow ten pounds from me last week—on Saturday, to be exact."

Levison started.

"I told Hazel to go and eat coke," went on Vernon-Smith calmly. "I knew that he'd been playing the goat again, and landing himself, and it's not my business to pull him out of all the mud he tumbles into. He told me he might have to get out of Greyfriars if he couldn't raise the money, and I told him that that would be a jolly good thing for Greyfriars."

Levison smiled slightly. Hazel must have been in a state of desperation to have applied to the cool, mocking Bounder for money. Certainly he had not had the remotest chance of "touching" Herbert Vernon-Smith for the sum of ten pounds. The Bounder had plenty of money—more than was good for him; but he had a remarkable faculty for taking care of it.

"Hazel's your study-mate," went on Vernon-Smith. "I know his little way of getting into a scrape and landing it on the next man. Wharton's been through that, as I happen to know. Hazel was in no end of a hate the other day. I remember he wouldn't go over to Cliff House with Wharton's crowd to tea with Marjorie. He quarrelled with Tom Brown in your study, too. He's always like that when he gets into these little troubles. It was for Hazel you wanted the money."

It was rather an assertion than a question.

Levison did not answer.

"You won't tell me?" smiled Smithy. "Well, I'm fairly clear on that point without your telling me. Somehow or other he roped you into his troubles, and you've got landed. And you're fool enough to keep your mouth shut and take Hazel's medicine for him. I suppose you couldn't very well give the fellow away to the Head, but—"

Levison turned to the door.

"You won't tell me anything?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"No."

"I'll manage without, then."

Levison left Study No. 4. When Tom Redwing came in for prep he found the Bounder stretched in the armchair, with a thoughtful pucker in his brow. Smithy looked up at his study-mate with a smile.

"You're down on Levison—what?" he asked.

Redwing frowned.

"I think he might have kept that kind of thing till he was back in his own school, Smithy," he answered.

"Suppose," drawled the Bounder, "suppose, just for a minute, that Levison is standing between another chap and the chopper, and feels bound not to give the other chap away?"

"What rot! He went to that boozey den of his own accord, I suppose."

"Suppose he went on another fellow's account—to get him out of a scrape?"

Redwing stared at his chum.

"But he didn't!" he said.

"As it happens, he did!" said the Bounder.

"You think—"

"I don't think—I know!"

"It sounds rather thick," said Redwing doubtfully. "Are you pulling my leg, Smithy?" Redwing did not always know quite what to make of his study-mate, and he was very dubious now.

"Not at all, old top! I remember, dear man, that once when I had a row with Skinner you told me I oughtn't to remember injuries so long."

"I still think so," said Redwing.

"But even you will allow that I ought to remember a benefit?" said the Bounder, in a bantering tone.

"Certainly! But—"

"I've told you how Levison saved me from the chopper once."

"I remember."

"He was casting his bread on the waters," said Vernon-Smith. "Now it's coming back—after many days! I'm going to pull him through this—somehow."

And the Bounder fell into silence, thinking hard. While Tom Redwing was working at his prep that evening the Bounder sat in the chair, thinking out the problem he had set himself. There was one friend, at least, who remained loyal to Levison of St. Jim's.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Coming to Blows!

ERNEST LEVISON was not seen in the junior Common-room that evening. The fellows did not wonder that he preferred to keep out of sight. Billy Bunter reported, with a fat grin, that the St. Jim's fellow was packing his box, and putting together his things in the study.

"He's got to go before the Head after prayers in the morning," Bunter informed the Remove generally. "I heard Quelchy tell him so. Old Quelchy gave

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The Second Prize of £2 10s. has been divided among the following eight competitors, whose solutions contained one error each:

Mrs. A. T. Cole, Thorpe Morieux, Bury St. Edmunds; Ian Wight, 11, Inchaffray Street, Perth, N.B.; L. Bachelor, 19, Kettering Road, Levenshulme, Manchester; N. Axon, 68, Nugget Street, Oldham; A. Mills, 8, Whitecross Road, Hereford; O. Mills, 8, Whitecross Road, Hereford; F. Marshall, Tanyard, Cranbrook; Charles H. Morton, 7, Eyre Street, Pallion, Sunderland.

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SOLUTION.

Clapton Orient has had a hard struggle for a long time. Every difficulty which could beset a football club appears to have fallen to their lot—lack of decent ground, indifferent support, and, above all, lack of funds. But their magnificent esprit-de-corps has pulled them through.

him a look like cold steel when he told him."

"Quelchy's got his rag out about this," grinned Skinner. "He was fairly taken in by the fellow. Look how he kept up appearances in class. He was a giddy model pupil."

"Let's go and have him out!" suggested Bolsover major. "He ought to be ragged!"

"Let him alone!" growled Bob Cherry.

Bolsover major's suggestion was not received with any warmth by the Removites. The fellows were down on Levison, there was no mistake about that. But they felt that he was going to get enough without anything from the Remove. Nobody envied him his interview with the Head after prayers in the morning. And his reception at his own school was likely to be bad enough when all was known there.

"Poor beggar!" said Peter Todd.

"Well, I wouldn't mind if he didn't carry his dashed nose so dashed high!" growled Bolsover major. "A fellow shouldn't keep his ears up when he's got it in the neck. But he always was a hard case."

Hazeldene came into the Common-room.

"Where's your giddy study-mate, Hazel?" called out Bolsover major.

"Oh bother!" snapped Hazel.

And he threw himself sulkily into a chair and took up a book. Vernon-Smith, with a keen eye on him, noted that he held the book upside down without noticing it. Apparently Hazel was not deeply interested in the volume.

He was thinking his own black and bitter thoughts under the screen of the book. He could not stay in his study as Levison was there, and he did not care for the company of the fellow whom he was sacrificing to his own safety. Hazel was not without a conscience, and his conscience was tormenting him—all the more because Levison had acquiesced in his silence.

Had he feared that the St. Jim's junior would turn upon him Hazel would have been furiously determined to defend himself, at any cost of falsehood, with the fury of a rat driven into a corner. But he did not need to defend himself. He was safe in Levison's silence. And so he was left to his conscience. He was feverishly anxious for the hour of Levison's departure to strike. When the fellow was gone he would be able to drive the whole matter from his mind; at least, he hoped so. It was a miserable enough evening for Hazel.

It was not an agreeable one for Levison. He had Study No. 2 to himself, and he did no preparation. It was useless to prepare lessons when he was to leave the school on the morrow. He sat down or moved about the study restlessly, trying to think of some way out of the disaster. But there was only one way—by betraying Hazel. And that he could not do. Indeed, it was not certain that that would have served him, for Hazel, in fear of his own skin, would have passionately denied everything.

Hazel was conscience-stricken now, but at the first hint of danger to his precious self, conscience would have been forgotten, and he would have thought only of saving himself.

Levison was glad when bed-time came, though he shrank a little from facing the crowd of fellows in the dormitory. But when he faced them it was with a calm and sedate countenance, and the Removites wondered once more at his nerve.

But the Bounder, who, in turn, is owed £10 by Levison—

Wingate gave the St. Jim's junior a grim look when he came in to turn the lights out, but he did not speak to him.

After lights out Skinner & Co. started a conversation from bed to bed on the subject of breaking bounds and playing poker and backing horses and getting the "sack," and some of the fellows chuckled. But there came no sign from Levison. He refused to be drawn.

But he lay awake a long time after the other fellows were asleep. His thoughts were bitter enough.

The chance that Frank Levison had been taken in at Greyfriars, and that his brother was allowed to stay at the school until he was well, had seemed to Levison a lucky chance. It gave him the opportunity, long desired, of setting himself right with his former schoolfellows, of showing the Remove that he was not what he had been.

It had turned out unfortunately enough, as it had happened. Partly for Marjorie Hazeldene's sake, partly from compassion, he had tried to help Hazel out of his wretched, disgraceful scrape, and it had turned out like this.

Levison slept at last.

He was one of the first up in the Remove dormitory the next morning. He went down by himself, and walked in the quadrangle in the fresh air of spring.

Harry Wharton & Co. would have joined him, but he did not look at them. He gave them no sign. He knew what they thought, what they could not help thinking. And he would accept pity from no one.

He was to go before the Head after prayers, and he was beginning to feel anxious for it to be over. It was likely to be a very unpleasant interview, and the sooner it was over the better.

Hazel came out into the quad and looked for him. Levison walked into the Cloisters to avoid him. He wanted no talk with the scapegrace of the Remove just then.

Hazel went sullenly into the House.

He was deeply uneasy. He relied on Levison. The fellow would not, could not betray him. But Hazel was miserably conscious of what he would have done in Levison's place, and the knowledge made him uneasy.

He hung about the Head's corridor to speak a word to Levison when he came in. The Head was to be there soon after prayers. And at prayers he had seen Levison, but the St. Jim's junior avoided him afterwards, evidently determined to keep clear of him.

That determination intensified Hazel's uneasiness.

He hung about the corridor with his hands thrust deep into his pockets, and gnawing care eating at his heart.

There was a footstep, and he spun round, expecting to see Levison. But it was Vernon-Smith who came along the corridor towards the Head's study.

The Bounder's eyes glittered at the sight of Hazel's pale, worn face and restless, biting lips.

"You here!" he said.

"What do you want here?" asked Hazel sullenly. In his present mood he was suspicious of everyone, though he did not yet suspect the Bounder's connection with the affair.

Vernon-Smith smiled.

"I've something to say to the Head," he replied.

"You'd better not butt in while he's dealing with that St. Jim's chap," grunted Hazel.

"I'm going to butt in before he deals with him," explained the Bounder



"Outside!" bawled Gosling. Mr. Mulberry faced the irate porter with lofty dignity. "Who you torking to, my man?" he inquired. "I'm talking to you!" roared Gosling. "And what I says is this 'ere—outside!" (See Chapter 10.)

coolly. "You see, I rather think I can let some light in on the subject."

Hazel started violently. The colour fled from his face, leaving him chalky pale.

"You! What do you know about it?" he panted.

"Lots!" said the Bounder cheerfully.

"What do you mean? Has Levison told you—"

"Nothing."

Hazel tried to calm himself. But the growing fear in his heart made him almost hysterically angry and suspicious.

"What have you got to say to the Head?" he hissed. "What are you butting in at all for?"

"Fair play's a jewel," said the Bounder, watching Hazel's face curiously as he spoke. "I fancy there's something that Levison hasn't let out."

"What? What then?"

"He's shielding somebody else," said the Bounder coolly.

Hazel's heart almost stood still.

"You're going to tell the Head that?"

"I'm going to suggest it."

"You've got no proof."

Vernon-Smith shrugged his shoulders.

"Levison hasn't asked you to interfere, I suppose?" exclaimed Hazel, with a look of deadly animosity at the Bounder.

"Not at all."

"Then mind your own business!"

"What does it matter to you?" asked the Bounder pleasantly. "What's your interest in the matter, old scout?" His eyes mocked the wretched black sheep of the Remove. "Where do you come in?"

Hazel clenched his hands.

"Get out of this!" he said thickly.

The Bounder laughed.

"I'm going into Dr. Locke's study to wait for him," he said. "He won't be long now. Let me pass, will you?"

Hazel stood in the way, and he did not move. His hands were clenched convulsively, and his eyes flamed.

"Get out of it!" he said, between his teeth. "You're not going to the study, Vernon-Smith! You're going to mind your own business! You're going out of this!"

"Who's going to make me?" sneered the Bounder.

Hazel advanced on him.

"Get out, or I'll smash you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Bounder. "I can see you doing it! Ha, ha, ha!" He laughed in Hazel's furious face. "Get aside, you duffer, before I knock you over with my little finger!"

"Will you get out, and mind your own business?"

"Hardly."

"Then take that!"

Hazel rushed at him.

The Bounder, in his contempt for Hazel, had made a miscalculation. In ordinary circumstances, Hazel could not have stood up to the cool, iron-limbed Bounder for two minutes. But he was not himself now; he was almost beside himself with rage and terror. To Smithy's amazement, he was swept back by Hazel's desperate rush.

Crash!

There was a yell from Vernon-Smith as he went down on his back in the corridor, with blood streaming from his nose

—finds a simple method of wiping out both debts!

"Now get out!" shouted Hazel, standing over him with blazing eyes.

Vernon-Smith gritted his teeth and scrambled up. He did not answer, but he sprang at Hazel.

Hazel met him half-way, and the next moment they were fighting.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Hand to Hand!

"A FIGHT!"

"In the Head's corridor!"

"Oh, great Scott!"

"I say, you fellows, Smithy and Hazel—"

There was a rush to the spot. The Greyfriars fellows who came upon the scene stared in blank amazement at the fighting juniors.

Fighting in the Head's corridor, almost outside the Head's own study, was utterly unprecedented and unheard of.

In that corridor the fellows walked almost on tiptoe when they had to pass that way, and they seldom passed that way if they could help it. The Head's study was a good deal like a lion's den, in the juniors' imagination.

As for fighting in that corridor, no one in his senses would have dreamed of it. It was not to be thought of.

And here were Hazeldene and Vernon-Smith fighting furiously, utterly reckless of the sacred precincts.

"Hazel, stop it!"

"Smithy, are you mad?"

"Look out for the Head!"

"Great pip!"

The two combatants did not heed. Hazel, indeed, was scarcely in his right senses just then; he was on the verge of hysteria with fear and anxiety and passionate rage. Vernon-Smith's intervention in the affair, and all that it might mean, had given Hazel's self-control the finishing touch, and it was quite gone.

As for Smithy, he had little choice in the matter. Hazel was attacking him with savage energy, and Smithy had no choice but to fight or to run. He was not likely to run before an adversary like Hazel. So he, too, forgot where he was, and stood up to the infuriated junior, giving blow for blow with fierce animosity.

At the corner of the passage a crowd of fellows collected, seniors as well as juniors. Coker of the Fifth looked on, and one or two of the Sixth; but the latter, not being prefects, did not intervene. As soon as a prefect heard the "row" intervention was certain, but as yet no one in authority had appeared.

"Tramp, tramp, tramp!"

"Smithy!" shouted Wharton.

"Chuck it, Smithy!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Hazel, you ass!"

Hazel was attacking with savage passion, and Smithy had his hands full—more than full. He had never imagined that Hazel could put up a fight like this. Vernon-Smith had to go "all out" to keep his end up, and even then he did not succeed very well. Amazing as it was, Hazel was getting the better of that fierce encounter.

There was a buzz of amazement as Smithy went down again with a crash, and Hazel stood over him.

"My hat! Smithy down!" ejaculated Bob.

Tom Redwing ran forward.

"Come away, Smithy!"

The Bounder struggled up. His face was dark with rage now. Not for the Head or a dozen headmasters would he

have yielded a foot of ground now. He thrust Redwing aside, and sprang at Hazel. In a second more they were going it hammer-and-tongs again.

"Cave!" yelled Johnny Bull. "Here's Wingate!"

"Look out, you chaps!"

Wingate of the Sixth came striding up, with a black brow. But before he reached the scene of action there was a still more startling alarm.

"The Head!"

Dr. Locke, on his way to his study, came on the scene. The juniors fell back right and left as he passed.

Dr. Locke passed through the crowd, amazed to see them there, and came on the fight—two juniors, struggling and hammering furiously, almost at his study door.

"What is this?" gasped the Head.

He rustled forward.

"Boys!"

"Oh!" gasped Smithy.

A dead silence fell on the excited crowd. Vernon-Smith and Hazel dropped their hands, and stood panting, with heaving chests. Both of them blinked at the Head in dismay and apprehension.

Dr. Locke's usually kind face was like a thundercloud.

"How dare you!" he stuttered.

"Boys! Vernon-Smith! Hazeldene! How dare you!"

He raised his hand.

"Go to your Form master at once! Wingate!"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you conduct these two boys to Mr. Quelch, and inform him of what has taken place here, and request him to deal with the matter?"

"Certainly, sir!"

Vernon-Smith gasped for breath.

"If you please, sir—"

"Go with Wingate!" thundered the Head.

"I came here to—"

"Go!"

"But, sir—"

"Take this insolent boy away, Wingate!"

The captain of Greyfriars dropped his hand on the Bounder's shoulder and jerked him away. Vernon-Smith had to depart, with Wingate's grip on him. Hazeldene followed in silence.

Both of them had an unpleasant interview to face with their Form master. But Hazel gave the Bounder a triumphant grin as they reached Mr. Quelch's study. He had succeeded, at all events, whatever the consequences; the Bounder's intended interview with the Head had been prevented. In Mr. Quelch's study Wingate made his report, and the Remove master, with a grim brow, took up his cane.

After they left Mr. Quelch's study Smithy and Hazel had no thought or attention to give to any matter but the ache in the palms of their hands. That occupied them to the exclusion of everything else.

The crowd of fellows was still buzzing at the corner of the Head's corridor when Levison of St. Jim's came along. He glanced round at them in surprise.

"Going in to the Head?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Yes. What's the row here?"

"A fight outside the Head's study," said Harry Wharton. "Smithy and Hazel. Goodness knows why!"

"They're getting it from Quelch now!" grinned Billy Bunter. "He, he, he!"

Levison went on as the crowd began

to disperse, still discussing that amazing outbreak in the Head's corridor.

"What on earth was it all about?" asked Squiff, as the Removites cleared off. "What's the trouble between Smithy and Hazel? They've always been on pretty good terms."

"Blessed if I know!" said Bob. "Hazel had a row with Levison the other day, but I didn't know he had his rag out with Smithy. Some more of his dashed tantrums, I suppose!"

"But who started it?" asked Tom Brown.

"I don't know. Hazel, I should think. Smithy has more sense than to start fighting outside the Head's door."

"Something up with Hazel if he tackles a chap like Smithy of his own accord!" said Squiff, with a whistle.

"Let's ask Smithy," said Peter Todd. But it was useless to speak to Smithy—or to Hazel, either. The two culprits were mumbling and groaning and squeezing their hands when the juniors found them, and they did not answer a word to the questions put to them. The juniors left them in peace, much perplexed over the strange affair.

Both Smithy and Hazel looked quite white when they came into the Form-room for class that morning, for Mr. Quelch had not spared the rod. On their white faces the marks of the combat showed up with startling distinctness.

And to whispered questions in class Hazel replied only with black scowls and Smithy with a grim silence.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Chopper Comes Down!

LEVISON of St. Jim's stood before the Head of Greyfriars quietly, his eyes directed towards the floor. Dr. Locke gazed at him across his writing-table for some moments in silence. It was a painful and difficult matter that the Head had to deal with, and he was angry at having such a matter forced upon him. He was disappointed, too, and grieved. He had believed in Levison; he had trusted him. It was not pleasant to reflect that the junior had been deceiving him, laughing at him in his sleeve while he betrayed that trust. And to that conclusion the kind old Head could not choose but arrive.

He broke the silence at last in a low voice.

"You know why you are before me, Levison?"

"Yes, sir," said the St. Jim's junior quietly.

"I am very shocked and grieved, Levison."

"I am sorry, sir."

"I trusted you," said the Head. "There was a time, Levison, when you were sent away from this school for bad conduct. When I learned that you were making good progress at another school, and redeeming your past, as I believed, I was very pleased. I was interested in you, and more than once asked Dr. Holmes regarding your progress. I told you that, believing in your reform, I should be willing at any time to receive you again into this school. When your brother was found ill in this neighbourhood and brought here by some Remove boys, I gave you permission, without hesitation, to stay here with him. I trusted you."

The Head paused.

"How have you repaid that trust, Levison? It appears that, after all,

Billy Bunter's sister plays an important part in this yarn—

your reform was a pretence — dust thrown in the eyes of those who trusted you. You could not refrain from a reckless and blackguardly outbreak even while under this roof for a few weeks. You have sought out your old haunts, your old rascally associates. You have been guilty of the same conduct for which you were forced to leave Greyfriars long ago. This is a great shock to me."

Levison's lips opened to speak, but the Head made him a sign to be silent.

"During your stay here, Levison, you have attended classes in your old Form, and you are therefore under my authority as headmaster. I shall not, however, punish you for this conduct. I realise that I made a mistake in trusting you—that I have my own lack of judgment to blame for the disgrace you have brought upon your Form and this school. If you still belonged to Greyfriars I should expel you. As the matter stands, I shall leave the task of dealing with you to your own headmaster. You will be sent back to your own school to-day, and I shall write a full account of the transaction to Dr. Holmes. He will deal with you as he thinks fit. I suppose you have packed your box?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very good. If you wish to say good-bye to your brother, you may visit him in the sanatorium at the usual hour. Otherwise, you should take an earlier train."

"I—I should like to speak to Frank, sir," faltered Levison.

"Very well, you may do so. You will then take the afternoon express from Courtfield Junction," said the Head. "In the meantime, you are excused from classes. I do not wish you to meet the boys of this school again in any form of association. You may go, Levison."

The Head made a gesture of dismissal.

But Levison did not stir.

"Mayn't I speak, sir?" he asked.

"If you have anything to say, certainly," said the Head. "But understand, Levison, that falsehoods will not serve you. The matter is too plain for that."

Levison's lips twitched. It was evident that, in the Head's eyes, he was the "old Levison" again now, and that he was expected to lie. The Head had trusted him wholly, and now that that trust was gone it was wholly gone.

"I shall not tell you any falsehoods, sir," said the St. Jim's junior in a low voice.

"I trust not," said the Head dryly. "Well, what have you to say? You do not deny Wingate's statements, I presume?"

"No, sir."

"Then what is there to say?"

"I was at Mr. Dawes' place on the river, it's true, sir," said Levison. "But I went there for a special reason. It was a—a sort of message—"

"Was it the first time you had been there since your return to Greyfriars?"

Levison hesitated.

"Enough!" said the Head.

"I—I had been there once, sir," stammered Levison. "Yesterday was only the second time."

"On each occasion for some special purpose?" asked the Head, with a touch of irony.

"Yes, sir!" groaned Levison.

"I am quite prepared, Levison, to hear you state what this special reason

may have been, and to judge the matter impartially."

"It—it was a—a sort of message. I—I never went there to see that man Mulberry on my own account—"

"Then why did you go?"

"I had to see him, because—"

"Because of what?"

"I—I can't tell you that, sir," said Levison huskily. "But I give you my word that there was no harm in anything I did."

The Head eyed him grimly.

"Do you mean to say that you were sent on a message there by some senior boy?"

"Oh, no, sir! Nothing of the kind!"

"Then what do you mean?"

"I can't quite explain. But—"

"Do you expect me to listen to this folly?" exclaimed the Head sharply. "You had better go, Levison!"

Levison realised that himself. He could not hope to clear himself in any degree without revealing the fact that he had been acting for another fellow. And that was to betray Hazeldene.

The temptation was strong. Why should he suffer for the sake of a cowardly fellow who was not man enough to own up and take his gruel now that it had come to this?

Levison's lips opened; but he closed them again, and went drearily to the door. Without another word, or a look at the Head, he let himself out of the study.

He did not seek the other Removites. When the hour for classes came he did

not go to the Form-room. He walked in the sunny quadrangle by himself, his hands driven deep in his pockets, his brow black and troubled.

The game was up for him at Greyfriars. That was only too clear. Once he had gone to the bad with a crash, and had had himself to blame. Now he had gone down again, through his attempt to help a weak and selfish fellow who could not help himself. But that would never be known, unless Hazel should choose to speak, and he knew that Hazel would not speak. There was nothing to hope for in that direction.

There was no hope, unless he spoke himself, and betrayed the weak, wretched fellow who had trusted him. And he knew that if he did that he would despise himself from the bottom of his soul for the rest of his life. He could not save himself at the cost of his own self-respect.

Levison did not try to deceive himself. He knew that, after taking Hazel's affair in hand, he had no right to betray the wretched fellow because things had gone wrong. He had been free to stand out of the affair altogether, and leave Hazel to his fate, had he so chosen. He had not so chosen, and now he was bound to face the consequences of what he had done. He had known the risk when he had taken it. It was Hazel's duty to own up, and he refused to do his plain duty; but that did not justify Levison in turning upon him and betraying him.

Levison was too clear-headed to think of deceiving himself upon that point. Self-deception had never been one of his weaknesses. He knew that if he betrayed Hazel it would not be because Hazel



"I have brought this man here, sir, so that you can ask him for a straight account of Levison's dealings with him," said Vernon-Smith. "Well, my eye!" exclaimed Mr. Mulberry. "I've been made a fool of! Bringing a man 'ere and wasting his time!" (See Chapter 11.)

—likewise the Owl himself! His role is that of the aggrieved brother!

was a rotter, a coward, a dingy black-guard and false friend; it would be because he wanted to save his own skin.

And Levison of St. Jim's did not care to save his own skin at that price!

He had to go, in disgrace, to face disgrace and condemnation at his own school. It was hard enough. He wondered what Frank would have said if Frank had known. Frank Levison would never have advised him to act dishonourably, he was sure of that; but what a blow it would be to the fag when he learned what had happened. Levison's lips quivered as he turned his steps in the direction of the school sanatorium. He waited there in the gardens till the hour of admission came, and then he was taken to Frank's bedside.

Levison minor was sitting up in bed, still pale and worn, but cheery. His face lighted up as his brother came.

Levison sat by the bedside and chatted with the fag, forcing himself to be cheerful. Frank need not know yet. Nobody was likely to tell him—at least, until he left the sanatorium; but it was necessary to tell him that Levison was going.

"You'll be coming in again to-morrow, Ernie?" said Frank.

Levison shook his head.

"I'm afraid I sha'n't be able to stay here so long as I thought, Franky," he answered. "I've got to get back to St. Jim's."

Frank's face fell.

"I suppose the fellows want you back, old chap," he said. "I—I thought—"

"I'd stay if I could, kid," said Levison. "I'd like to stay on. But Dr. Locke thinks—"

"I understand. It was good of him to let you come at all and stay," said Frank. "Shall I see you again, Ernie, while I'm here?"

"I think not. I—I'll say good-bye, in case I don't see you again before you're back at St. Jim's."

"I'll buck up and get well," said the fag, with a faint smile. "After all, I shall be glad to get back to St. Jim's with you, Ernie."

Levison forced himself to smile. Would he still be at St. Jim's when Frank returned there, he wondered? But he smiled down at his brother.

He left him with a smile on his lips, but his face was dark when he walked away from the sanatorium. Why should he go, under a cloud, a shadow on his name, leaving dislike and scorn behind him among the fellows whose respect and friendship he prized? It was hard—cruelly hard! But there was no help for it, and Levison of St. Jim's faced it, as he had faced many a trial and trouble, with cool resolution.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bearding the Lion!

"MAY I speak to you, sir?"

Dr. Locke stopped.

He was on his way to lunch when Vernon-Smith of the Remove addressed him very respectfully.

The Head glanced at him with strong disapproval. Smithy's face was considerably marked by the savage fight that had taken place in the Head's corridor that morning.

"Vernon-Smith! You are one of the boys who fought outside my study this morning?"

"Yes, sir."

"I understand that your Form master has punished you."

"Yes, sir," said the Bounder, wincing slightly. His palms were still feeling something of the effect of that punishment.

"Very good!"

The Head made a movement to sweep on.

"It wasn't about that that I was going to speak, sir," said Vernon-Smith hastily. "Quite another matter, sir, if you could give me a minute."

"Your Form master—"

"It's a matter that concerns you, sir."

"Indeed! You may speak."

"About Levison, sir."

Dr. Locke made a gesture.

"I desire to hear nothing about Levison, Vernon-Smith. The matter is closed, and Levison is leaving Greyfriars. All is clear enough without further evidence. Neither should I care to listen to any information."

Vernon-Smith crimsoned.

"It's not that, sir! I'm not a sneak! I mean, that I know something about the matter—"

"I have said that the matter is closed, Vernon-Smith."

The Head got into stately motion again, like a full-rigged ship getting under way. But the Bounder was a sticker. He was not to be dismissed so easily as that, even by so majestic a person as the Head. He moved along by the headmaster's side.

"Boy!" said the Head, in an awe-inspiring voice.

"I must tell you, sir!" said the Bounder desperately. "You're doing Levison an injustice—"

"What?"

The Head came to a sudden halt and faced the Bounder, with an expression on his face that made Smithy fairly quake.

"Vernon-Smith! How dare you!"

"I—I—"

"Go!"

"I've got to speak," said the Bounder. "I don't care if I'm flogged! It's not true about Levison, and I know it."

Dr. Locke breathed hard.

"Vernon-Smith! Do you mean to imply that you are acquainted with some circumstances that tell in that unhappy boy's favour?"

"That's what I mean, sir!" said Smithy. It was what he meant, though certainly Smithy would never have dreamed of putting it into such imposing language.

"Even so, the matter is closed now," said the Head. "Levison does not deny his guilt, Vernon-Smith. Kindly say no more!"

"I must, sir!" said Smithy, inwardly wondering where he found the nerve to talk to the Head like this. "I've got to tell you. Levison went to that den, sir, for a reason you don't know. He went on another fellow's account—to try to get another fellow out of trouble."

"Bless my soul!"

The Head was a little impressed at last. At all events, he was induced to listen.

"If that is the case, Vernon-Smith, Levison could have stated as much in my presence," he said.

"He couldn't, sir, without giving the other fellow away," said the Bounder eagerly. "That's why he didn't tell you."

Dr. Locke fixed his eyes upon the Bounder with a very penetrating look. It was quite obvious that he looked on this as a cock-and-bull story, got up by a friend of Levison's to help him out. Not that the Head would have described it as a cock-and-bull story. He would

have described it as an unsubstantiated fabrication.

"I mean it, sir," said Vernon-Smith. "If you'll listen to me, sir—"

"I have no doubt whatever, Vernon-Smith, that you are wasting my time," said the Head coldly. "Nevertheless, I will listen to you, to avoid the remotest possibility of injustice. Who is this other boy you allude to?"

"I'd rather not mention names, sir," said Vernon-Smith. "I've no right to give him away, any more than Levison has."

"That is doubtless correct," said the Head, after a pause, a long pause. "I should be very far from desiring or encouraging any boy to give information about another. But you do not expect me, I presume, to take heed of an unsubstantiated statement?"

"I can tell you what I know, sir. I know that Levison has never kicked over the traces—"

"What?"

"I—I mean, he hasn't blagged—that is, he hasn't broken any of the rules," stammered the Bounder. "All the Remove chaps know that he has been as straight as a die since he's been here. He went to the Feathers to see that man Mulberry, to pay him money, as Wingate reported. But it wasn't on his own account. There's another fellow who's got himself into silly trouble, and Levison was trying to help him."

"Nonsense!"

"I—I—"

"Have you one atom of proof to offer, Vernon-Smith, in support of this extraordinary statement?"

"Yes, sir."

"I will hear it," said the Head.

"Levison borrowed ten pounds of me—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"I—I happened to be flush of money, sir. My father had sent me a whacking—I mean, a good remittance. I lent Levison ten pounds, and it's clear that that's the money he paid Mulberry. Of course, I should not have mentioned it to anybody. But now it's a question of Levison being kicked out—I mean, sent away—" Vernon-Smith was rather a slangy youth, and he found a little difficulty in picking and choosing phrases suitable for the Head's august ears. "Now he's got it in the neck, sir, I thought I'd better—"

"I do not see how this incident affects the matter, Vernon-Smith. It was already known that Levison handed money to a card-sharper at the Feathers. Where he obtained the money is immaterial."

"That isn't all, sir. A few days earlier another fellow tried to borrow ten pounds of me, and I refused. Putting two and two together I had no doubt that Levison was borrowing it on the other fellow's account. That other fellow is always getting himself into trouble and landing it on somebody else. This time he landed it on Levison, and Levison was ass enough—I mean, Levison was let in—"

"Is that all?"

"It's something, isn't it, sir?"

"Nothing at all, Vernon-Smith. A boy you do not choose to name sought to borrow money of you. It happens to be the same sum that you lent Levison in order to pay that disgraceful character Mulberry. I see no reason to suppose any connection between the two episodes."

(Continued on page 17.)

Skinner starts the rumour that Levison is "mashed" on Bessie Bunter!

THE GREYFRIARS HERALD



HARRY WHARTON



FRANK NUGENT



BOB CHERRY

Supplement No. 124.

HARRY WHARTON
EDITOR



MARK LINLEY



HURREE SINGH



PETER TODD

Week ending May 12th, 1923.

THE BIKE THAT BROWNEY BUILT!

By George Bulstrode.

WANT to sell your bike, Bulstrode?" inquired Tom Brown, my genial study-mate.

"All depends," I said. "I'm not prepared to part with it for less than seven quid."

Browney gave a shriek.

"Seven quid!" he echoed. "What do you take me for—a priceless mug, or a bloated millionaire, or both?"

"That bike of mine's a real beauty!" I replied. "I gave fourteen guineas for it."

"But that was in the-year dot."

"No, it wasn't; it was only two years ago."

"Well, if it's had two years' wear and tear, it must be an awful old creak by now!" said Tom Brown. "Look here, I'll give you fifteen bob for it."

"You won't!" I said grimly. "Seven quid is my price—not a penny less!"

"You're a pig-headed profiteer!" hooted Tom Brown.

"Then I'll remain one," I said calmly.

Tom Brown badly wanted a bike. He was tired of borrowing other people's. There's a peculiar satisfaction in having a bike of your own.

But Browney was not disposed to pay more than fifteen bob for a machine, so he was likely to be unlucky.

He offered to purchase Hazel's bike at this figure. Hazel told him he must be clean off his rocker. He then offered to buy Wharton's and Bob Cherry's; but there was nothing doing.

"There's only one thing for it," said Tom Brown, that evening. "I must manufacture a bike of my own."

I stared at him.

"But you're not a mechanic," I said. "I don't see how you're going to do it."

"You leave it to me!" said Browney, with a chuckle. "I'm going to the lumber-room to explore, and I bet I shall find all the ingredients for a first-class bike!"

I accompanied Tom Brown to the lumber-room. It was stocked with a miscellaneous collection of odds and ends. Nothing was considered of any value, and if a fellow cared to help himself to any of the rubbish he was quite welcome.

The first thing Browney spotted was the frame of a bicycle. It was an ancient frame which had belonged to an ancient machine, and it was terribly rusty. Tom Brown wrenched it out from the debris.

"This will form a good foundation for my bike," he said. "I shall build the machine round it."

"You madman!" I shouted. "That frame's utterly worthless! It's only fit for the scrap-heap!"

Browney made no reply. He was rummaging about in the corner, and he unearthed some handlebars, with a rusty bell attached. The handlebars had no grips, and the bell refused to ring; but Browney said he would soon alter all that.

The next find was a pair of pedals. They were terrible things, and the rubber had worn off; but Browney cocked an approving eye at them.

"We're getting on famously!" he said. "Now, I wonder where I shall find some wheels?"

A search in the bicycle-shed proved profitable. Tom Brown came across a disused pair of wheels. One was much bigger than the other—about as big as a penny in relation to a farthing. This was certainly a great drawback, but Browney didn't seem to mind.

"I don't believe in looking a gift-horse in the mouth," said he. "I'm now going to beg, borrow, or steal a saddle from somewhere."

Monty Newland happened to have an old saddle which had long been pensioned off as unfit for service. He gave it to Browney with his blessing.

With his fifteen bob Browney then purchased a pair of tyres. They were second-hand tyres, and they had already been punctured and patched in a dozen places.

After he had collected all his ingredients, as he called them, Tom Brown buried himself in the workshop, and we saw very little of him for days. He was engaged in fitting all the spare parts together into one glorious whole.

He was also obliged to re-enamel certain fittings, and to polish others.

At last, on a sunny half-holiday in May, the amateur mechanic emerged into the Close with his home-made bike. It looked a curious contraption. Some parts were very ancient, others were quite modern. The front wheel was ever so much bigger than the back one, and the machine was minus brakes. It also lacked such modern conveniences as a three-speed gear.

I stared at that weird and wonderful bike in amazement.

"Browney," I said, "if you attempt to ride that funny-looking freak of a bike you'll spend the rest of the term in the sanny!"

"I'm not going to ride it—not yet, anyway," said Tom Brown. "I shall get somebody else to try it first, just to test it and see how it goes."

"A very wise policy," I said, "but rather rough on the poor beggar who makes the experiment."

Tom Brown called for volunteers to ride his bike down to the school gates.

"Don't all rush!" he said.

And nobody did! But at length Bob Cherry offered to risk his neck on Browney's machine.

Bob mounted the bike rather gingerly, and we looked on with anxious faces.

The pedals revolved all right, and that was a great triumph for the amateur bike-builder. But there was a suspicious looseness about the handlebars.

Bob Cherry had got up quite a speed, and seemed to be going strongly, when suddenly there was a most appalling crash. The handlebars came clean away from the frame, and the bicycle came in two and collapsed, with Bob Cherry sprawling on top of it.

Fortunately Bob escaped with nothing worse than a few scratches. It was Tom Brown who got damaged, for Bob Cherry jumped to his feet and went for him baldheaded, calling him a raving lunatic and other choice things.

After Browney had recovered from Bob's furious onslaught he collected up the portions of his bicycle, and bore them away to the lumber-room. And that was the last we saw of the bike that Browney built.

THE END.



IS CYCLING DOOMED?

By George Wingate.

WE live in an age of hurry and scurry and petrol and perpetual motion. The roadhog reigns supreme, churning up dust and slaughtering fowls as he careers along the King's highway.

It is no exaggeration to say that one man in every ten possesses either a motor or a motor-cycle.

Lots of people are apt to despise the "push-bike," and they cheerfully assert that cycling is doomed.

A few years ago we were told that cricket was on its last legs. It was too slow; it wanted brightening; it was no game for a go-ahead Englishman.

Well, the prophets were wrong. For cricket has taken a new lease of life, and it is as popular as ever it was, in spite of the fact that lawn tennis has leapt into public favour.

I fancy the prophets will be wrong in regard to "push-cycling," also.

True, the cyclist does not have a very happy time of it nowadays, owing to the congested state of our main roads. But he may still speed gaily down the by-roads, to his heart's content. He loves cycling for cycling's sake, and he would not exchange his trusty machine for the finest car ever invented. He likes to feel that he is getting along by his own effort, and he prefers this to sitting still in a car.

Then there are lots of picturesque places which the cyclist can get at which are inaccessible to motors. During the last summer vacation I did a cycling tour in Scotland, and thoroughly enjoyed it. Of course, one has to toil up a good many hills, but no fit fellow minds that.

Another point is that we cannot all afford motor-cars even if we wanted them!

I understand that cars are so reduced in price that it is possible to get one for eighty pounds. But, personally, I should not care to be the owner of a cheap car. I should spend all my time underneath it, trying to find out what was wrong!

Please do not think that I have any grudge against the motoring fraternity. A person may use any method of transport he chooses. If he is disinclined for physical exertion, he will not want a push-bike. And if he wants to cut a dash or to "do the grand," he will choose a more speedy means of locomotion than the humble push-bike aforementioned.

It does not matter to me whether a fellow rides in a Rolls-Royce or in a sugar-box on wheels. I have simply set out to answer the question: "Is Cycling Doomed?" And my answer is an emphatic "No!"

Progress will march on with its sweeping stride; but, whatever fresh means of locomotion may be invented, the push-cyclist, like the poor, will be always with us! And jolly good luck to him!



I have to thank that dear old bean,
My only Uncle Michael,
For sending me a new machine,
A ripping motor-cycle.

I flashed along the dusty road
From Courtfield down to Dover.
I killed two chickens and a toad,
And bowled a maiden over.
The dust was rising in a cloud,
Enough to choke and blind me;
But, oh, I never can forget
The girl I left behind me!

I travelled, free and unconfined,
At just a mile a minute;
A rival roadhog, left behind,
Confessed he wasn't in it!
The brakes were useless, I'm afraid,
And though I kept on bawling,
I bumped into another maid,
Who in the ditch went sprawling.
If I had been arrested, sir,
The bumbles would have fined me,
For damaging the dainty dress
Of the girl I left behind me!

I chanted gaily, as I flew,
The strains of "Annie Laurie";
Knocked down a constable or two,
And never said, "I'm sorry!"
I then swept past a perfect peach,
Some wealthy magnate's daughter;
She gave a startled little screech,
And toppled in the water.
Take warning, all ye maidens fair,
Who never heed or mind me,
Lest you should share the dreadful fate
Of the girls I left behind me!

The Return of Don Darrel!
Read his Amazing New
Adventures in

"DON DARREL
ON THE TURF!"

By VICTOR NELSON.

Just Commencing in the
"BOYS' FRIEND!"

OUT TO DAY!

OUR ADVERTISEMENT COLUMN!

BICYCLE FOR SALE! Brand-new machine; cost 20 guineas. Complete with all modern accessories. Owner would like to ride it, but finds it too much fag. Will accept any reasonable offer.—Apply LORD MAULEVERER, Remove Passage.

GUESS I've got the identical machine you've been looking for! Don't go over to Courtfield and buy your bikes at profiteering prices! Come and look at my collection of old crocks—I mean, smart, reliable machines! When you've once ridden one, I guess you won't want to ride another! Call to-day, you galoots, and inspect my stock!—THE FISHY CYCLE AGENCY, Remove Passage.

BEAUTIFUL BIKE FOR SALE! Fitted with oil-bath, three-speed gear, pump, lamps, etc., etc. Will sell for £5, or exchange for Ford car. Apply, S. Q. I. FIELD, Remove Passage.

I SAY, YOU FELLOWS! I'm sick of borrowing bikes! I want one of my own. Will pay for it by monthly instalments of one penny. You'd better answer this advertisement at once, because I shall snap up the first offer I get. Of course, it will be a good many centuries before all the instalments are paid off, but you can rely on my honesty and integrity.—W. G. BUNTER, Study No. 7, Remove Passage.

GENTLEMAN'S HOOP for sale, or will exchange for a bicycle or gramophone. It's an iron hoop, and it's bent so much that it won't go round, but otherwise it's in top-hole condition.—Apply, GEORGE TUBB, Third Form.

LOST, STOLEN, OR STRAYED! The front and rear lamps of a bicycle. If any fellow can throw light on this illuminating subject, let him speak up like a man! I nearly got arrested last night by old Tozer for riding without lights.—JOHNNY BULL, Remove Passage.

ME, HORACE COKER, which intends to go to Canterbury on Saturday next on my motor-bike, hereby offers to take a passenger in the side-car, free of charge. I'm a very careful driver, so embrace this jennerus offer, and have no fears.—Apply in person to my study in the Fifth Form passidge.

MR. JOE SCRAPPER, old iron merchant, of Courtfield, will call at Greyfriars on Monday morning next, so get all your bikes ready!

HOW TO RIDE A BIKE! Pupils taught in one lesson. Don't waste any more shoe-leather. Learn how to cycle to Courtfield in comfort. Fee, fourpence per lesson. No trickery; no welshing. Everything fair and square and above-board.—Apply, WILLIAM WIBLEY, Remove Passage.

Make a "dive" for our "Swimming" Supplement! It's next!



By
BOLSOVER MINOR.

IT was the eve of the great cycling race for the championship of England.

Sammy Scorchler, mounted on his magnificent road-racer, was putting in a last spin in preparation for the great kontest.

Sammy whizzed along the road at a terrific speed. He overtook heaps of motors and motor-bikes, leaving them far behind.

"My little road-racer beats all their twin-sylinder, twenty horse-power, air-cooled contraptions!" muttered Sammy, as he sped along. "It will race anything on the road!"

Having scattered a crowd of chickens and ridden clean over a pig, which was being taken to market, Sammy decided that it was time to slow up a little. So he applied his breaks and took it easy.

"I shall win to-morrow!" he muttered to himself, as he glided lezzurely along the country lane. "I've nobody to fear, eggexcept Charlie Crook. He's a dangerous rival. Cunning as a fox, too. If he starts playing any low down tricks——"

Even as Sammy Scorchler spoke a number of masked rough uns sprang out from the hedge.

"Collar him!" cried a voice, which Sammy instantly recognised as that of his deadly rival.

Sammy was knocked clean off his masheen, and he rolled over in the roadway. The masked figgers leapt on top of him.

Handicapped though he was, our hero put up a game fight. He shot out his right and hit somebody on the nose. Then he shot out his left, and it found a billet in Charlie Crook's eye.

But the odds against Sammy were overwhelming. He fought until he was in a state of comma, and then he came to a full stop.

When Sammy Scorchler came round he found he was alone. Darkness had fallen, and he was imprizzened in a lonely barn.

"The villens!" he cried, jumping to his feet. "This is a dasterdly plot to keep me out of the race to-morrow!"

The door of the barn was locked, but Sammy hurled himself at it boddily, and it was swept off its hinges.

On quitting the barn Sammy started to look round for his bicycle—his magnificent road-racer. But it was not there. Instead, there was an old-fashioned bone-shaker, which must have been manufactured somewhere about the year Dot.

Sammy Scorchler rang his hands in despare.

"That villen Crook has stolen my bike and given me this old-fashioned grid-iron in its place!" he muttered. "How on earth can I hope to win the championship of England on an old crock like this?"

Our hero was in a terrible preddica-

ment. He could not afford to buy a new masheen, and it was hardly likely that he would be able to recover his road-racer from Charlie Crook. That preshus scoundrel meant to ride the road-racer himself.

Sammy took the old-fashioned bike on to the road and tested it. He had to stand on top of a fence before he could get into the saddle.

The bike crawled along at a snail's pace, and it creaked and clanked as it went along.

"Not so dusty," said Sammy. "I'll soak it in oil all night, and ride it to-morrow in the great race. Everybody will laugh at this old boneshaker, but I'll get some pace out of her somehow. It isn't the bike that matters; it's the fellow who rides it."

So Sammy Scorchler rode home on the prehistorrick bike which Charlie Crook had left him.

Next day, at the appointed time, he turned up at the racing-track.

There was a howl of laughter from the crowd when they saw Sammy's bike.

"Any old iron?" shouted a wag.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"How do you eggspect to win on that old crock, Scorchler?"

"You wait and see!" said Sammy grimly.

Just then the rest of the competitors arrived on the scene. Charlie Crook was among them.

Sammy Scorchler shook his fist at his deadly rival.

"That's my road-racer you've got, you villen!" he roared.

"What rot!" answered Charlie Crook coolly. "This is my own bike. I paid fifteen bob for it before the war!"

"That's a lie!" shouted Sammy. "You stole it from me last night. You can't deny it. You tried to disguise yourself by wearing a mask over your eyes, but I should know that ugly nose of yours anywhere! You're a low-down crock, Crook!"



Charlie Crook uttered a wild howl. His back tyre had gone as flat as a pancake!

With a mocking larf Charlie Crook turned away and went into the dressing-room to get ready for the race.

It was impossible for Sammy Scorchler to take possession of his road-racer bekwase the crowd was looking on, and they would think he was stealing it.

But Sammy did something which the crowd couldn't see. He took a pin out of the lapel of his coat and stooped down and made a slow puncture in one of the tyres of the road-racer. The crowd thought he had merely been making an eggsamination of the tyre.

Shortly afterwards the great race started.

There were a duzzen competitors. The starter fired a pistle in the air, and off they went, peddling like fury.

Sammy Scorchler made serprizingly good progress on his ancient bike. Now that it had been oiled it whizzed along without making a sound.

Fast as Sammy went, however, Charlie Crook went faster. He forged right ahead on the road-racer, and the crowd cheered him to the echo.

"Good old Charlie!"

"He's well away!"

"He's got the others beaten to a frazzle!"

There was a triumphant grin on Charlie Crook's face. He bent his head over the handle-bars, and flashed along like a streak of lightning.

Bang! Pop! Sizzzzzz!

Charlie Crook uttered a howl of rage and mortification. His back tyre had gone as flat as a pancake!

The road-racer stopped dead on the track. Then along came Sammy Scorchler on his old boneshaker. He gave a mocking laugh as he whizzed past Charlie Crook.

"This is where I smile!" he shouted.

The fickle crowd, which had been cheering Charlie Crook one minnit, now changed its tune.

"Go it, Sammy!"

"A million to one on Scorchler!"

Sammy was miles ahead of all the other competitors by this time, and he won in a canter.

The papers were full of it that evening. As he made his way joyfully homewards Sammy Scorchler saw on the placards:

"AN AMAZING FEET!
SAMMY SCORCHER WINS
CYCLING CHAMPIONSHIP ON AN
ANCIENT BONESHAKER!
DRAMMATIC DEFEEET OF
CHARLIE CROOK!"

"These sporting journalists think they know a lot," muttered Sammy. "But they don't know why Charlie Crook was defeeted. Ha, ha, ha!"

And Sammy went on his way with a light heart and a heavy purse, for the cycling championship carried with it an award of five pounds in coppers.

THE END.

Drama and humour freely mingled—next Monday!

OUR CYCLING CORNER!

By TOM BROWN.

SAMMY BUNTER is a most ardent cyclist. I saw him in the Close the other day with a top, and when I asked him what he was going to do, he said he was going to have a nice "spin"!

Overheard in a Courtfield cycle-shop: Skinner of the Remove: "I'll buy this bike, but you must deduct a couple of quid from the price."

Shopman: "Good gracious! I can't possibly do that, sir!"

Skinner: "But I flatly refuse to pay for the wheels!"

Shopman: "Why's that, sir?"

Skinner: "Because you distinctly told me this machine was a 'free-wheeler'!"

Collapse of shopman.

Overheard in the Junior Common-room:

Bob Cherry: "I didn't know that Smithy was an emotional sort of fellow."

Wharton: "Well, he isn't. He never shows a sign of emotion."

Bob Cherry: "Yes, he does. He went for a cycle-spin yesterday, and when he got the other side of Courtfield he completely 'broke down'!"

Then Wharton sobbed.

Why is a cyclist a very dangerous person to meet on a dark night?

Because his wheels are "revolvers"!

Peter Todd: "Why did you turn the hose-pipe on Coker of the Fifth, Dutton?"

Dutton: "Because he passed me on his motor-bike, and he was 'scorching'!"

Squiff: "The Head's had his hair cut."

Penfold: "Well?"

Squiff: "And he's had his side-whiskers trimmed. He seems to have a mania for being shorn. I saw him out cycling the other day, and even his trousers were 'clipped'!"

And then Squiff wondered why Penfold aimed a cushion at him!

EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

CYCLING does not rank as the greatest of our summer sports. It is, in fact, more of a pleasure than a sport.

But what a glorious pleasure to speed swiftly along the open road, either with the sun streaming down or under cover of night, when you seem to ride out of the unknown into the unknown!

Of course, there are wet days as well, and the least said about these the better. They are the cyclist's abomination. As the Poet Penfold hath it:

"The rain it raineth every day
Upon the cyclist, on his jigger;
Wet through, he squelches on his way,
Whilst other fellows stand and snigger."

Now that our main roads are congested with motor-charabancs, lorries, automobiles, and so forth, cycling is not quite so pleasurable as it used to be. But, although the main roads may be congested, the pleasant byways are free from heavy traffic, and one may cycle along them in ease and comfort.

Greyfriars fellows have always been keen and ardent cyclists, and I wager that the majority of our readers are keen cyclists also. This being so, I need not apologise for putting this Special Cycling Number in your hands. Most of us revel in the joys of the open road, so an issue of this sort will not come amiss.

Lots of you have written asking me to publish a Camping-out Number. This I hope to do in a few weeks. There is a special charm about being under canvas—unless it happens to be raining cats and dogs! That always takes the gilt off the gingerbread. But we are making arrangements with the clerk of the weather for our Camping-out Number to be published on a fine day!

By the way, we have a new contributor this week in the person of Bolsover minor. Dicky Nugent will have to look to his laurels!

HARRY WHARTON.

MORE REPLIES TO READERS!

"Warrior" (Colchester).—"What about a Special Number dealing with Battle and Bloodshed? I should fairly revel in it."—I dare say you would; but I don't think the majority of my readers care for fiction of the blood-and-thunder type. If I am wrong, let them speak up now, or for ever hold their peace!

S. Tomkins (Gold Coast).—"I have read your most beautiful paper, Massa Wharton, for much long time, and I do you the honour to write and say that your lovely paper make strong appeal to a educated negro. If you will send me gold watch and photographs, and good sum of English money, I will send you in exchange some ostrich feathers of most beautiful quality."—My dusky friend evidently takes me for a "mug." Alonzo Todd might be taken in by his gush, but I happen to be a trifle more wide-awake than the guileless Alonzo! I'm not parting with my gold watch and pocket-money to any "educated" negro!

"A Supporter of W. G. B." (Lincoln).—"I don't believe Billy Bunter is half so greedy as you make out."—Bet you wouldn't like to keep him for a month. Why, he'd eat you out of house and home!

"Surreyite" (Guildford).—"Has Billy Bunter ever made a hit for six at cricket?"—No; but he once hit an umpire when slogging out blindly with the bat. Wingate was the umpire, and he went about for days afterwards with a bump the size of a pigeon's-egg on his cranium!

R. C. B. (Blackheath).—"Could Bolsover major lick Bob Cherry in the ring?"—This question pops up every week. The answer, as the photographer said, is in the negative!

"Gay Sport" (Highgate).—"What do you think? I was cautioned by a constable for singing in the street."—If you've got a voice like Hoskins of the Shell, I can quite understand it. Better make a noise quietly in future!

"Conundrum" (Paisley).—"Why is the 'Greyfriars Herald' like a fish cutlet?"—Because it's usually "devoured" with "relish," I presume!

A. H. J. (Edmonton).—"I am sending you some new jokes."—New? Ye gods! I remember hearing them when my pater took me to a music-hall at the age of five!

"Student" (Bath).—"I think it's perfectly ridiculous to play cricket in flannels."—What do you suggest—oil-skins and sea-boots, or a suit of shining armour? Personally, I regard flannels as very cool and comfortable, and cannot see what you've got to cavil at.

Carry it mournfully
Through the school gate;
Do not laugh scornfully
At its sad fate.
Peter Todd merrily
Cackles, the chump!
Heartless? Yea, verily!
Give him a clump!

ODE ON A BATTERED BIKE!

By DICK PENFOLD.

Take it up tenderly,
Lift it with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
Wrecked, I declare!
Beautiful bicycle,
Speeding along,
Bumped into tricycle,
Now it's gone wrong!

Faithful old pal it is,
My steed of steel;
Now—grim realities!—
Buckled of wheel,
Past all repairing,
Frail and forlorn;
Owner despairing—
Oh, tragic morn!

Not fit for riding
Along the broad highways;
Neither for gliding
Down beautiful byways.
Hopelessly buckled
And bent out of shape.
Who was that chuckled?
Silence, you ape!

Take it up tearfully,
Lift it with care.
How dare you cheerfully
Mock my despair!
'Twas a delightful
And ripping machine;
Now it's a frightful
And battered "has-been"!

Can you imagine W. G. B. in the water? He's there—next Monday!

A FRIEND IN NEED!

(Continued from page 12.)

"You would if you knew the fellow," said Vernon-Smith. "Anyhow, sir, if you would look into the matter—"

Dr. Locke raised his hand.

"There is no line of investigation to be followed, Vernon-Smith, and, moreover, the matter is closed. If you had anything to say you should have come to me this morning before I dealt with Levison."

"I tried to, sir, but I was stopped," said the Bounder.

"Nonsense! I have always made it a point to be accessible to every boy in the school, senior or junior," said the Head, with dignity. "I am quite assured that your Form master would not have intervened if you had had a serious reason for speaking to me."

"It wasn't my Form master, sir. I was stopped from speaking to you when I wanted to," said the Bounder. "But now, sir, it's not too late—"

The Head gave a slight start.

"Bless my soul!" he said.

He eyed the Bounder keenly.

"You were fighting in the corridor near my study this morning, Vernon-Smith, shortly before I saw Levison. Had you come there in order to speak to me?"

"Yes, sir," stammered the Bounder.

"Why were you fighting with Hazeldene?"

"We—we had a row, sir."

Dr. Locke looked at him hard and long. To the Bounder's great relief he asked no further questions. He stood for some moments in thought, and then made a gesture of dismissal.

"You may go, Vernon-Smith."

"Yes, sir. But—"

The Head made a still more decided gesture of dismissal, and walked on. And Vernon-Smith could only go, hoping for the best. And his hopes rose higher when, just after dinner, he heard Trotter, the page, deliver a message to Mr. Quelch at the door of the dining-room. Dr. Locke desired to speak to the Remove master, that was all. Did it mean some further investigation into the affair of Levison? The Bounder could only hope that it did.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

"WHARTON!"

"Yes, sir?"

"Please find Hazeldene, and send him to my study at once!"

"Certainly, sir!"

Mr. Quelch passed into his study and the captain of the Remove went out into the quadrangle to look for Hazel. The Remove master gave a slight start as he saw Ernest Levison standing by the table in his study. He looked at the St. Jim's junior questioningly.

"I am going, sir!" said Levison. "The Head has instructed me to take the afternoon express from Courtfield Junction. I thought I ought to speak to you, sir, before I left."

"Quite so, Levison," said Mr. Quelch, eyeing him very curiously. "Have you anything to tell me before you go?"

Levison hesitated a moment.

"I'm afraid it's no use to tell you anything, sir, as you can't very well believe what I say. I should like to tell you that appearances have been against me, in a way I cannot explain. I—I hope you will try to believe that, sir, after I am gone."

"Why cannot you explain, Levison?"

No reply.

Mr. Quelch mused for a moment or two, his eyes still fixed on the downcast face of the St. Jim's junior.

"The matter was regarded as closed, Levison," he said. "The circumstances in which you were detected by Wingate left me no choice but to believe that you had resorted to your old habits and your old associates on your return to this school, that you had deliberately deceived the headmaster and myself. You have been able to say nothing to alter this view. A suggestion, however, has been made by another boy—"

For an instant Levison's face lightened and his eyes gleamed. His heart beat faster. Had Hazel, driven by conscience to do the right thing, spoken at the last moment. But the hope died away as soon as it arose. He knew that Hazel would never have the courage to speak.

The change in his expression did not escape the Remove master, though it perplexed him a little.

"Vernon-Smith has spoken to the Head—"

"Vernon-Smith!" exclaimed Levison, in amazement.

"Yes. He has made a suggestion which Dr. Locke has requested me to investigate. Was Vernon-Smith aware of any of your proceedings, Levison, with regard to your visit to Mr. Dawes' inn up the river?"

"None, sir."

"He lent you a sum of money?"

"That is true," said Levison, flushing.

"You need not resent Vernon-Smith's mention of this circumstance, Levison. He mentioned it to the Head, stating his belief that you borrowed it on account of another boy, and that it was upon that boy's account you visited the Feathers yesterday."

Levison drew a deep, hard breath.

"If this is the case the matter is serious enough," said the Remove master. "But it is, of course, very different from what

has been supposed. Is Vernon-Smith's belief well founded, Levison?"

The unhappy junior closed his lips tightly. Temptation was strong upon him to speak. The line of investigation opened by the Bounder was only too probable to lead to the facts becoming known. A word or two from Levison would be enough. But he checked the impulse. If Hazel was found out, well and good. If the Bounder brought the facts to light, with proof of them, it was an act of loyal friendship. But it was not for Levison to speak. He stood silent before the Remove master, dropping his gaze lest the keen-eyed master should read the truth in them.

"I am waiting for your answer!" said Mr. Quelch.

"I have nothing to say, sir."

"I am sorry that you should leave us like this, Levison!" said the Remove master, after a pause. And his face had hardened again. "I cannot help suspecting that Vernon-Smith—with or without your concurrence—is striving to make some sort of a mystification, to cast doubt upon your guilt. However, I intend to make what investigation is possible. You may remain in my study for a few minutes while I see Hazeldene."

Levison stifled a cry.

There were footsteps in the passage, and the pale, alarmed face of Hazeldene of the Remove appeared in the doorway.

He started at the sight of Levison in the study, and for a moment the pale face became paler, every vestige of colour fleeing from it in sudden terror.

Levison had betrayed him, after all; that was Hazel's instant thought. That was why the Remove master had sent Wharton to fetch him to the study. Hazel did not doubt it. He stood rooted to the floor in the doorway. Mr. Quelch's eyes turned on him.

"You may come in, Hazeldene!"

Hazel dragged himself into the study. He tried to pull himself together, but his terror was so great that he was almost dizzy for some moments. His glance turned on the St. Jim's junior for a second with volumes of hate and animosity in it.

"I have some questions to put to you, Hazeldene?" said the Remove master.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Hazel huskily.

His brain was in a whirl. Levison had betrayed him—that was the thought that was hammering in his brain. Denial—passionate, unscrupulous denial—that was his immediate resource. Anything—any depth of falsehood and baseness—rather than the heavy punishment that awaited him in case of detection. The same wretched weakness of character that had led him into blackguardly pursuits made it impossible for him to face the consequences with courage.

"This morning," said Mr. Quelch, eyeing him sharply, "you were found by the Head fighting outside his study door, Hazeldene!"

"Oh!" gasped Hazel. "Yes, sir!"

Was he mistaken, after all? If it was only that fight with Smithy—

"You were fighting with Vernon-Smith?"

"Yes, sir. You caned me for that this morning," said Hazeldene, his self-possession reviving.

"Quite so. It appears that Vernon-Smith was going to the Head's study to speak to Dr. Locke before Levison was dealt with."

"Oh!" murmured Levison, under his breath.

"Owing to the fight that took place, Vernon-Smith was unable to speak to the Head before classes," resumed Mr.

THE SPIDER OF THE NORTH



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Quelch. "Had you any motive, Hazel, for seeking to prevent Vernon-Smith from seeing the Head?"

"I, sir? Oh, no, sir!"

"You are sure, Hazeldene?"

"If Levison says—" began Hazel, with a bitter look at the silent, quiet St. Jim's junior.

"Levison has said nothing, and has not mentioned your name."

"Oh!" stammered Hazel, quite taken aback. "Well, sir, if Smithy has told you that I—"

"Vernon-Smith has not mentioned your name, either to me or to the Head."

Hazel was silent, utterly confused. He had not been betrayed. Why was he being called to account at all?

"Vernon-Smith has stated that he was going to see the Head before classes, but was prevented from doing so," said Mr. Quelch. "It is his belief that some other boy was concerned in the affair for which Levison has been condemned. Apparently, it was his fight with you, Hazel, that prevented him from speaking to the Head, although he has not said so. I require you to tell me, therefore, whether you knew Vernon-Smith's purpose, and whether you prevented him intentionally?"

Hazel understood now.

He calmed himself. Nothing was known—nothing had been said. All was safe—if he could keep it so. Hazel was not a fellow like Bunter, and, in ordinary circumstances, he would have shrunk from falsehood. But his whole thoughts were fixed now on the one object of saving his skin. Without even a moment for reflection, his answer came.

"No, sir! Certainly not!"

"One question more. Was it upon your account that Levison visited the Feathers Inn yesterday?"

"No, sir!"

"You have no connection with the place or with the disreputable characters there?"

"None, sir!"

Levison looked at him—more in compassion than in anger or scorn. Fate was hard just then upon Ernest Levison, but he would rather have stood in his own shoes than in Hazel's at that moment. No disgrace, no disaster, could be so black as this shameless falsehood, wrung from the wretched junior by the extremity of his fear.

Mr. Quelch pursed his lips.

"Very well, Ha.eldene! You may go!"

Hazeldene went. He did not dare to look at Levison as he went. Mr. Quelch turned to the St. Jim's junior.

"You bear out Ha.eldene's statements to me, I presume, Levison?"

Levison breathed hard.

"I can only say what I said before, sir—that I've nothing to tell you," he answered steadily.

The Remove master's eyes glinted for a moment.

"Very well. You will go, Levison, and the gates of Greyfriars will never open to you again!"

Levison bowed his head and left the study. Vernon-Smith was lingering in the passage, and Mr. Quelch followed Levison to the door, and called to the Bounder.

"Vernon-Smith!"

"Yes, sir!"

The Bounder came up, half in hope, half in doubt.

"Your attempt to cause a mystification has failed, Vernon-Smith. Your object, presumably, was to cause doubt and perplexity in the interests of that boy whose presence will never disgrace this school again! You have failed!"

"Mr. Quelch, I—I—" stammered the Bounder.

Mr. Quelch raised his hand.

"I shall not punish you for this, Vernon-Smith—I leave the matter to your own conscience—but I shall not forget it."

Mr. Quelch closed his door in the Bounder's face. Smithy turned round to Levison blankly.

"Then the game's up!" he said.

Levison smiled faintly.

"Thanks for trying to help me, Smithy! But there's nothing doing. I'm done for here!"

"You dummy! It was Hazel!"

"Never mind who or what it was!"

"You're going to let that cowardly cad lie and skulk out of it, while you take his medicine for him!" exclaimed the Bounder savagely. "You're a fool for your pains, Levison!"

"Let it go at that!" said Levison wearily. "Good-bye, Smithy!"

"Good-bye, be hanged!" said the Bounder roughly. "You're not going!"

I've a card to play yet, and I'm going to play it!"

"But—"

"You're wasting time! Stick to Greyfriars for another hour, and I tell you I'll see you through!"

And with that the Bounder strode hurriedly away, leaving the St. Jim's junior staring after him blankly.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Mulberry Looks In!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"Great pip!"

"The great-pipfulness is terrific!" ejaculated Hurreo Singh, in amazement.

It was getting on time for afternoon classes, and the Famous Five were sauntering in the quadrangle, in rather dismal discussion of the Levison affair. That affair was driven from their minds by the sight of a fat, red-complexioned gentleman who rolled in at the school gates. He was a very remarkable visitor for Greyfriars. From the tips of his toes to the crown of the bowler-hat that was set rakishly on one side of his head, the man looked what he was—a racing tout and sharper of an especially disreputable and "boozy" kind.

What such a character could mean by presenting himself at the school was a deep mystery to the chums of the Remove. He really could not be supposed to have any acquaintances there.

Gosling, the porter, was as surprised as the Famous Five. He jumped out of his lodge like a lion from his lair.

"Outside!" he bawled.

Billy Bunter came up to the Famous Five in great excitement.

"I say, you fellows, that's Mulberry!" he gasped.

"Mulberry!" repeated Wharton.

"Yes! I've seen him about! That's Mulberry, the man Levison went to see at the Feathers yesterday, you know! He's come to say good-bye to Levison! He, he, he!"

"Great Scott!"

Mr. Mulberry had faced the irate Gosling with lofty dignity.

"Who you torking to, my man?" he inquired.

"I'm talking to you!" roared Gosling. "And what I says is this 'ere—outside!"

"I've called 'ere," said Mr. Mulberry crushingly, "on the special invitation of your employer, my man, the 'eadmaster of this school! Keep your place, my man! I ain't arguing with blooming menials!"

And Mr. Mulberry stalked on loftily, leaving Gosling transfixed.

The gentleman from the Feathers paused, and gave an affable nod to Harry Wharton & Co.

"Arternoon, young gents!" he said.

"Good - afternoon!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"You—you haven't really called to see our headmaster, surely, Mr. Mulberry?" asked Nugent.

Mr. Mulberry nodded.

"Course I 'ave!" he said. "I got a telephone-call at the Feathers, and come up at once. If I can oblige a gentleman like Dr. Locke, why shouldn't I, as one gentleman should another?"

"The Head telephoned to you to come here?" exclaimed Wharton blankly. He was utterly unable to credit that statement.

"Not the 'Ead hisself, as I understand," said Mr. Mulberry. "Sounded

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to me like a young gent's voice. But he said that Dr. Locke specially wished to see me, and gave me his name—a name I know well enough. Master Vernon-Smith, it was."

"My only hat!"

"Seeing as I'm a stranger 'ere, p'r'aps you young gents will sort of pilot me, seeing as that blooming menial ain't got any civility to waste on a gentleman calling on his employer!"

"I'll show you in, certainly!" said Wharton, in utter bewilderment.

He led the fat gentleman to the School House, leaving his chums staring. Wharton was completely amazed. Telephoning to this remarkable character to call on the Head might be a jape, though an extremely risky one. But, in such a case, Vernon-Smith would not have given his name. He had given it, and so his part in the affair would be known to the Head at once, and if it were a jape, a severe flogging was the certain result. Yet it was scarcely possible that the Head had commissioned Vernon-Smith to telephone for him.

Mr. Quelch, with a frowning brow, met the red-faced gentleman and Wharton in the doorway of the School House.

"What does this mean?" snapped the Remove master. He knew Mr. Mulberry by sight.

"All serene, old cock!" said Mr. Mulberry affably. "I've called to see the 'eadmaster, by appointment! Always pleased and 'appy to oblige a gentleman!"

Mr. Mulberry seemed a little "puffed up" by the honour of calling upon the Head of Greyfriars—and he had honoured the Head by coming along perfectly sober.

"Bless my soul!" murmured Mr. Quelch. "I will take you to the Head's study myself, my man!"

"Much obliged, sir!" said Mr. Mulberry, with a wave of a podgy hand. "Arter you, sir!"

The astounded Remove master led him away. Dr. Locke was more than astounded when his visitor was shown in. He seemed dumbfounded.

"What—what— Who is this, Mr. Quelch?" he articulated.

"Jack Mulberry, at your service, sir!" said Mr. Mulberry. "Pleased to meet you, sir!"

"Mulberry! I—I think I have heard the name—"

"I think this man is the—the person at the Feathers, sir," said Mr. Quelch. "Ho stated that he had called to see you, so I thought—"

"Jest so, sir!" said the cheerful Mr. Mulberry. "I'll sit down, sir!" He sank into a chair, and, by an after-thought, removed his bowler-hat. "Can I offer you a cigar, sir?"

"Eh? No! Oh, no thanks!" stammered the Head.

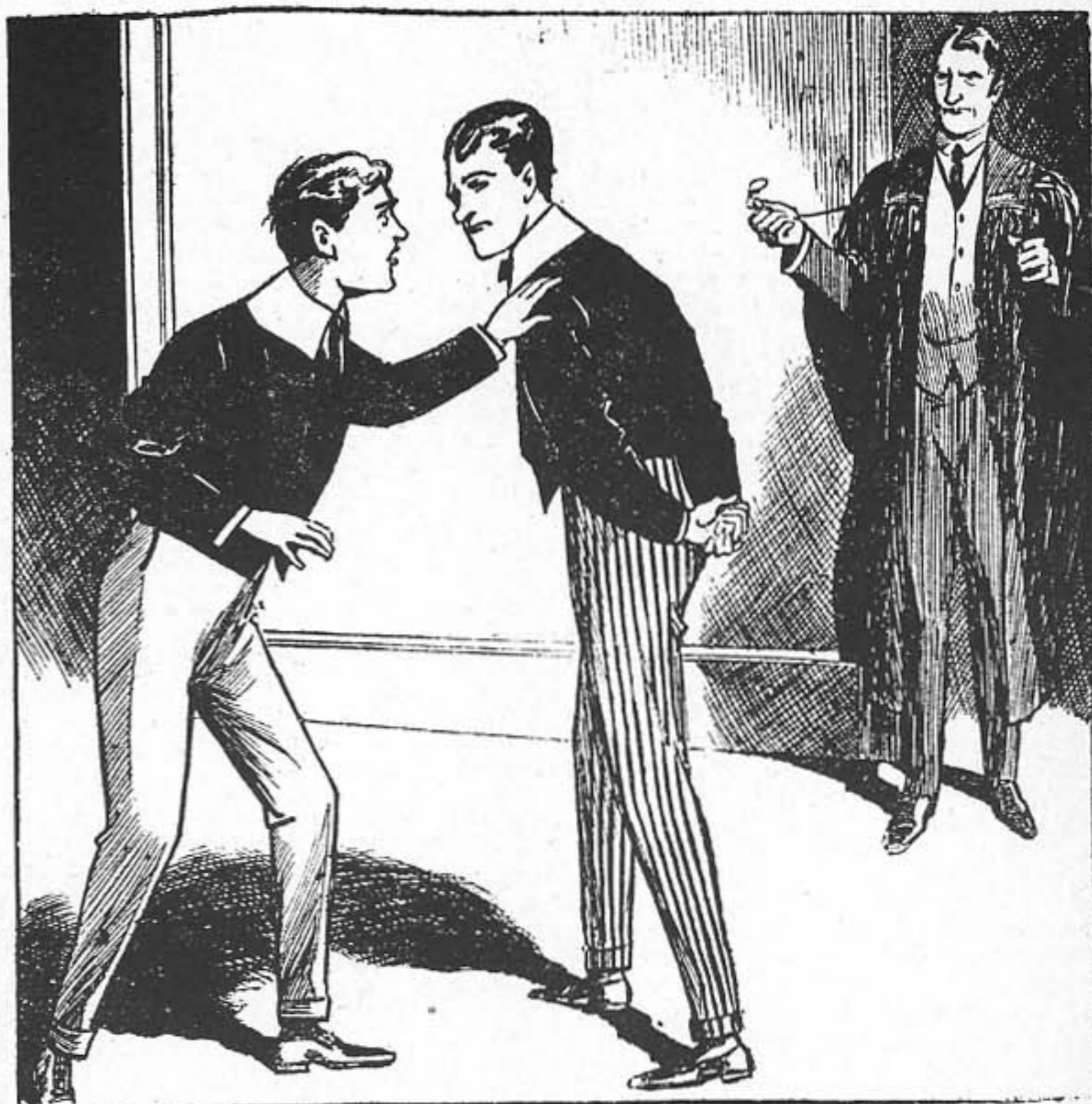
"Bit too old for 'em—what?" asked Mr. Mulberry. "Well, sir, 'ere I am, at your service! Came along as soon as the young gentleman telephoned, sir! What's the game, sir?"

"The—the what?"

Mr. Mulberry winked.

Whether the Head of Greyfriars had ever been winked at before cannot be stated with certainty. Certainly it now seemed to produce a paralysing effect upon him. He sat and blinked like a man in a dream.

"You couldn't get 'old of a better man, sir, though I say it!" said Mr. Mulberry confidentially. "Course, I



"Has Mulberry told him?" almost screamed Hazel, gripping the Bounder by the shoulder. "You fool, can't you see it's driving me wild? Is it all up with me? Tell me—tell me—" "Hazeldene!" It was Mr. Quelch's stern voice. He had heard all. (See Chapter 11.)

understand—gentleman in your position! Must be kept dark, and all that! I'm as silent as the grave, sir; never gave a man away in my natural! You put a bit on a 'orse, sir, in my 'ands, and you rely on it, sir, there won't be a blooming whisper!"

"Is the man mad?" gasped the Head. "It would really seem so!" said Mr. Quelch. "He appears to be under some extraordinary impression that he is wanted to act as a bookmaker, so far as I can gather!"

"Good heavens!" "Ain't that it?" asked Mr. Mulberry, in surprise.

"Sir!" gasped the Head. "How dare you!"

"No offence, old gentleman—no offence!" said Mr. Mulberry. "Naturally, I s'posed you wanted to see me on business! If it ain't that, why did you send for me, may I ask, as one man to another?"

"I did not send for you!" exclaimed the Head indignantly. "How dare you, sir, suggest that I desired you to come here!"

"Then why was I telephoned for?" exclaimed Mr. Mulberry, indignant in his turn.

"What?"

"Young gent of the name of Vernon-Smith," said Mr. Mulberry. "Come up to the school at once, says he. 'Ead wants to see you on important business, says he. And 'ere I am. Naturally, I supposed it was 'orses. But if it's billiards—"

"Is it possible, Mr. Quelch, that

Vernon-Smith has played such an impudent prank?" said the scandalised Head. "Please call him here!"

"Certainly, sir!" Mr. Quelch quitted the study, and returned in less than a minute with the Bounder of Greyfriars.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Bounder's Trump Card!

VERNON-SMITH was a little pale, but quite calm and composed as he followed the Remove master into the study. He had seen the arrival of Mr. Mulberry, and had been lingering near at hand, so it had not taken Mr. Quelch long to call him in.

The Head's eyes fixed on him with a thunderous look.

"Vernon-Smith! This man says that you telephoned to him from this school, and—"

"That is correct, sir." The Bounder spoke calmly. "I told him that you desired to see him on important business."

"You—you dared—" stuttered the Head, quite taken aback by the Bounder's cool avowal.

"Yes, sir. It was the only thing left for me to do," said the Bounder. "Mr. Mulberry is the man to whom Levison paid the ten pounds yesterday. He knows all the circumstances of the case—"

"Vernon-Smith!"

Who parades in the quad at Greyfriars with a funny placard on his back?

"I have brought him here, sir, so that you can ask him for a straight account of Levison's dealings with him," said the Bounder fearlessly.

"Upon my word!"
 "Well, my eye!" said Mr. Mulberry. "I've been made a fool of! Bringing a man 'ere and wasting his time!"

Vernon-Smith stood silent now, dropping his eyes before the Head's. For some moments the atmosphere of the study seemed charged with electricity. The anger in the Head's face was terrible. The mere presence of such a character as Mr. Mulberry was an offence in itself. He looked a hideous blot upon his surroundings. For a full minute there was tense silence, and Smithy wondered whether he was going to get a flogging or the sack, or both. He had risked it all, and he did not regret it; but he waited in tense anxiety for the result. It was Mr. Quelch who broke the electric silence.

"It was an act of unprecedented impudence for Vernon-Smith to bring this man here, sir!" said the Remove master. "But, since he is here, may I suggest that it would do no harm to question him?"

"I ain't 'ere to answer questions," said Mr. Mulberry surlily. "If you think you're going to get anything out of me you're making a mistake. I never gave a man away yet, not if he treated me square!"

"You misapprehend, Mr. Mulberry," said Mr. Quelch courteously, as the Head did not speak. "If you make a statement it will do no harm to the person involved. The Head merely desires to know the facts."

Dr. Locke nodded slowly. It was immensely beneath his dignity to hold any sort of converse with a character like Mr. Mulberry. But he was accustomed to relying upon Mr. Quelch's judgment, and he gave the Remove master his head, so to speak.

"A boy named Levison——" said Mr. Quelch.

"I don't know him!" said Mr. Mulberry grimly.

"He was seen to hand you a sum of money in the garden at the Feathers Inn yesterday," said Mr. Quelch. "I do not intend to speak of your conduct, sir, in having such dealings with a schoolboy. That is not the point at present. But Dr. Locke will be obliged if you will explain to him the precise circumstances in which Levison came to hand you this sum of money."

Mr. Mulberry shifted his hat in his hands, evidently ill at ease. He was quite well aware that he sailed very near to the wind of the law in his peculiar dealings, and he was very uneasy. Mr. Quelch read his thoughts without difficulty.

"There is nothing to fear, Mr. Mulberry," he said. "If you make a plain statement to the Head you will then leave this school, and nothing more will be said about the matter. The boy Levison is already under sentence to leave Greyfriars, so it is not a question of obtaining evidence against him."

Mr. Quelch could see that this man, rascal as he undoubtedly was, had his point of honour, which was not to "give away" anyone who "treated him square," as he expressed it.

"No 'arm in the kid speaking to me that I know of," said Mr. Mulberry. "I seed him only twice, if there was any 'arm, too. And I can tell you there'd 'ave been a row if I hadn't seed him. If he hadn't brought me the money when he did——" Mr. Mulberry paused.

"You will not be asked to return the money," said Mr. Quelch. "The Head only desires to know why Levison handed you the money."

"It was a payment," said Mr. Mulberry.

"The payment of a debt?"

"Yes."

"Contracted by whom?"

"By the cove Master Levison was acting for, of course," said Mr. Mulberry, raising his eyebrows. "Who else?"

The Head gave a slight start. Vernon-Smith's eyes gleamed. Mr. Quelch, however, showed no sign.

"Levison was acting for another person who owed you money, Mr. Mulberry?" he asked.

"Course he was! If you know all about it you know that much, I suppose?" grunted Mr. Mulberry.

"Who was the other person?"

"I ain't giving anybody away. I've been treated square; the money was paid. I ain't rounding on a cove for nothing."

"I presume that it was a boy belonging to this school?" said the Head, speaking for the first time.

"You can persoom anything you like, old gentleman, but you ain't getting any more outer me than if I was a hoyster," said Mr. Mulberry. "I'm a fair man, I am. The young idjit badgered me into playing the game with him—poker it was—and refused to give me even an I O U on it. I'd 'ave showed him up all right if I hadn't had my money. But I ain't rounding on a cove for nothing, and don't you think it. 'Tain't my bu'ness to 'elp you manage your school, old gentleman."

And with that Mr. Mulberry rose to his feet, jammed his bowler-hat firmly on his head, and stalked out of the study.

"Bless my soul!" said the Head faintly.

There was silence in the study. From the window Mr. Quelch noted Jack Mulberry's portly figure rolling away to the gates. The Head fixed his eyes upon Vernon-Smith, and the Bounder felt an inward tremor.

"You may go, Vernon-Smith!" said the Head at last, obviously at a loss to know quite how to deal with the Bounder.

Vernon-Smith left the study. He was satisfied. He felt that Levison could not be condemned now. He had not taken three steps down the passage when a grasp was laid on his shoulder, so convulsive that it brought a cry of pain to his lips. Hazel's white face stared into his. Hazel's eyes were blazing with the light of fever.

"Has he told him?" Hazel panted out the words. "I saw him as he went—Mulberry. You sent for him, you villain! You sent for him to give me away! I heard Wharton say you sent for him. You've done for me here! Has he told the Head?"

"Let me go!" said the Bounder roughly.

Hazel's convulsive grip tightened.

"Has he told him?" His voice rose almost to a shriek. "You fool, can't you see it's driving me wild? Is it all up with me? Has Mulberry given me away to the Head? Tell me—tell me——"

"Hazeldene!"

It was Mr. Quelch's deep, stern voice in the doorway of the Head's study. Hazel spun round towards him wildly. A sob broke from him, a sob of utter misery and despair. He reeled against the wall.

"It's all up!" The wretched junior realised that, in his terror, he had

betrayed himself beyond hope. He broke into convulsive sobbing.

The sternness in Mr. Quelch's face passed. He realised that the unhappy junior was on the verge of hysteria. What he had gone through of late had been too much for Hazel. He was not built to stand such a strain. Between haunting terror and the pangs of a tormented conscience he was on the very edge of a breakdown.

Vernon-Smith gave him a compassionate look and walked away. The Bounder had not counted upon anything like this. Without this Levison was saved. But if further proof was wanted the unhappy Hazel had supplied it. Mr. Quelch's hand dropped gently on his shoulder.

"Come, Hazeldene! Calm yourself. Tell the Head the whole truth and relieve your mind. Come!"

He led the sobbing scapegrace into the Head's study.

Vernon-Smith found Levison of St. Jim's in the quadrangle. He gave him a nod and a grin.

"How long before you start for the giddy express?" he asked.

"A quarter of an hour," answered Levison.

"Saved by a neck!" grinned the Bounder. "Dear old scout, you're coming into class with us this afternoon. You can go and unpack your box."

"What——"

"It's all out, old bean. You're staying."

And a few minutes later Levison learned from Mr. Quelch's own lips that he was cleared and that he was to stay. The Remove master showed emotion in his usually severe face as he spoke to the St. Jim's junior.

"You acted recklessly, Levison," he said. "Hazeldene has made a full confession now, though after Vernon-Smith's extraordinary action that was not needed to clear you. You acted chivalrously, and I cannot speak harshly of your attempt to save Hazeldene from the results of his wicked folly, though it led you into disregard of the rules of the school. You acted nobly and generously to that misguided boy, and I am glad to know that he now repents of the wicked ingratitude with which he repaid you. I am to tell you, from the Head, that he desires you to forget this and to remain at Greyfriars as long as your brother remains, as if nothing had happened. I am only sorry, my boy, that I was misled into misjudging you."

Levison's face lighted up.

"But what of Hazel, sir?" he asked.

"I—I hope—— He's not bad, sir, really, only weak and foolish."

"I trust that the Head will deal with him as leniently as possible, Levison," said Mr. Quelch, with a kind smile. "I hope it may not be necessary to send him away from the school. He is quite broken down now, and I am of opinion that so severe a lesson will not be lost on him."

When Levison left Mr. Quelch's study he was pounced upon by Harry Wharton & Co. They knew the facts now.

"You ass!" said Johnny Bull.

"You duffer!" said Bob Cherry.

"The dufferfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But the jolly-good-fellowfulness is also great."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was hardly a fellow in the Remove who did not congratulate Levison or thump him on the back. Even

(Continued on page 27, col. 3)

Is Levison really keen on Bessie Bunter? See next week's story!



WAVE-LENGTH.—This is the distance between the crest of one wave and the crest of the next wave to it. A wave is caused by a displacement of the medium in which it occurs; a rise in the medium is accompanied by a corresponding depression, therefore a complete wave consists of the half above normal level and the half below normal level.

WAVE-VELOCITY.—This is the distance which a wave travels in one second. A wave which travels six feet in one second has a velocity of six feet per second.

WAVE - FREQUENCY.—Wave-frequency is the number of waves which pass a given point in one second. For example, if a series of waves passing under a cork raise it five times in one second, then the wave-frequency would be five per second.

Wave-frequency may be ascertained by dividing the velocity by the wave-length. If the water-surface between two points fifty feet apart is occupied by a series of waves, then the number of waves must be fifty feet divided by the wave-length. Therefore, if the wave-length was ten feet, the number of waves would be fifty feet divided by ten feet, or five waves. Now, if the wave-velocity was fifty feet per second, all the waves occupying a space of fifty feet would pass out of that space in one second. Therefore, the velocity, fifty feet per second, divided by the wave-length, ten feet, gives us the wave-frequency, which is five per second. This may be expressed by the formula:

$$\text{Frequency} = \frac{\text{Velocity}}{\text{Wave-length}}$$

If we transpose this, we get: $\text{Velocity} = \text{Frequency} \times \text{Wave-length}$. Or, by again transposing: $\text{Wave-length} = \frac{\text{Velocity}}{\text{Frequency}}$.

PRESSURE - WAVES.—The waves used for wireless signalling are pressure-waves. They travel through the medium, not over the surface. Surface-waves differ in several important essentials from pressure-waves; but they have been described so that they may help one to form an idea of wave-motion, because they can be seen.

Pressure-waves are governed by the following laws:

A pressure-wave always travels at the same speed through the same medium, no matter the size of the wave.

The amplitude of a pressure-wave decreases as the distance from the starting-point increases—that is, it gets smaller as it gets farther away from the point of origin.

No matter how far a pressure-wave may travel, the wave-length does not vary. If a wave having a length of 100 feet is started, it remains 100 feet long, no matter how far it may travel.

The velocity of a pressure-wave depends on the elasticity of the medium through which it travels. In air the velocity is 1,090 feet per second; in water the velocity is 4,700 feet per second.

The effect produced by a series of waves depends on the frequency of the waves, but the strength of the effect produced depends on the amplitude of the wave. If a floating object is so arranged that when waves pass it taps a board fixed above it, then the number of taps produced will depend on the frequency with which the waves occur, but the volume of sound produced will depend upon the wave-amplitude. A high wave will produce a louder tap than a low wave.

It has been explained that there is a substance called ether, which permeates everything, and it is through this substance that wireless waves travel. The velocity of pressure-waves in ether is 300,000,000 metres, or 186,000 miles, per second. Light travels by means of ether waves, and that is the reason why light travels quicker than sound, which is conveyed by means of air waves.

Different effects are produced by ether waves, according to the wave-length. The X-ray is about 2.5 millionths of an inch in length. Light rays are from 10 to 18 millionths of an inch. Heat rays at their greatest intensity are about 15 millionths of an inch. Electric rays, which are used in wireless telephony, vary from 300 feet to 50,000 feet.

A pressure-wave depends for its existence by a difference in the pressure of the adjacent particles of the substance through which it travels. To produce a complete pressure-wave the pressure must be increased above normal, reduced to normal again, then be reduced below normal, and finally be increased to normal again. If this cycle of operations is performed in one second, then the wave-frequency would be one per second.

Hertz, a German scientist, acting on the theory of an English mathematician named Maxwell, proved the existence of electric rays, and showed how they could be produced by electrical means. That is why these waves are referred to as Hertzian waves. Sir Oliver Lodge, the English scientist, continued the research in this direction, and made many important discoveries. It remained for Marconi, however, to discover the means to utilise these rays as a means of communication, and it is to him that the credit for the development of wireless telegraphy and telephony must go.

Electric rays differ from light rays in so far as they will pass through or over intervening objects which are impervious to light rays, and can therefore be used as a means of communication in cases where light rays would be useless. They will also follow the curvature of the earth, thus enabling messages to be sent by this means beyond the limits of

the horizon, which is an advantage that light rays do not possess.

CONDENSER.—Apparatus consisting of two or more metal plates separated by the dielectric which forms a collector of electrical energy. The ether in the dielectric is in a state of strain which produces electronic motion.

DISC CONDENSER.—Consists of semi-circular plates in the form of interleaving vanes separated from each other by insulators or by air, the whole being arranged in such a manner that one set of vanes is fixed, the other set being mounted on an insulating spindle, so that the vanes may be turned through an angle of 180 degrees, thus enabling a variable interleaving of the vanes to be obtained, and consequently any capacity ranging from minimum to maximum.

ELECTRIC PRESSURE-WAVES.—When a condenser is charged the dielectric is in a state of strain, and this strain exerts a pressure on the ether in the dielectric, which in turn causes a pulse in the surrounding ether which is radiated in all directions. This pulse, however, does not cause a complete wave. To cause a complete wave it is necessary to charge the condenser positively, then to discharge it, and then to charge it negatively, and again discharge it. The complete cycle of these operations produces one pressure-wave in the ether. To produce a series of waves it is necessary to produce a series of these cycles following each other in periodic sequence.

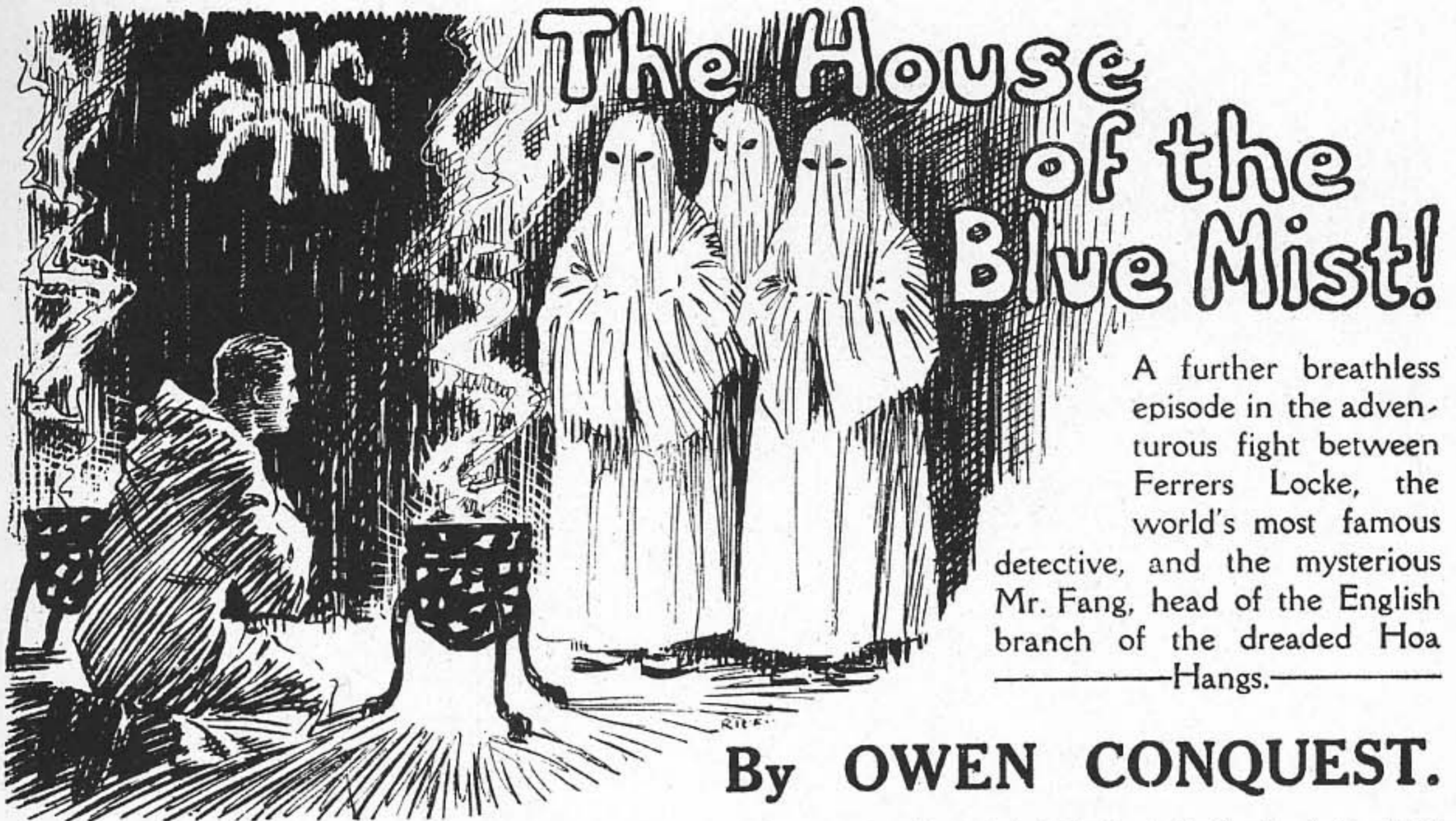
CONTINUOUS WAVES.—If in each succeeding cycle the condenser is charged to the same voltage, the waves produced will have the same amplitude, and where a series of waves have the same amplitude they are said to be continuous waves. Continuous waves are those where the series of waves are all of the same amplitude. They may be produced by an arc discharge, oscillating valve, high-frequency alternator, and also by frequency-multiplying transformers.

DAMPED WAVES.—If in each succeeding cycle the charges in the condenser are of a less voltage than in the preceding cycle, then each wave would have less amplitude than the wave preceding it, and where, in a series of waves, the waves are of a decreasing amplitude these waves are said to be damped waves.

AERIAL.—When a wire is supported in air by a mast and insulated, the wire, air, and earth form a condenser, in which the wire is one plate, the earth the other plate, and the air the dielectric. If this wire is charged positively, discharged, charged negatively, and again discharged, each of the four operations will cause a pulse in the ether, and the four pulsations will form a complete electric wave.

(To be continued.)

Another instructive Wireless Article next Monday!



The House of the Blue Mist!

A further breathless episode in the adventurous fight between Ferrers Locke, the world's most famous detective, and the mysterious Mr. Fang, head of the English branch of the dreaded Hoang Hongs.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Man with a Stoop!

STANDING by the first-floor window of a house overlooking Baker Street, his face drawn with care and anxiety, was a well-knit, athletic-looking lad of about sixteen years. He was Jack Drake, the brilliant young assistant of Ferrers Locke, the world-famous private detective.

But a short week before the boy had been his own bright self, his cheeks flushed with health, and his eyes sparkling with enthusiasm and the sheer joy of living.

Now he felt as though the mantle of another twenty years had dropped over his shoulders. Fate had played him a scurvy trick just at the very time when he had needed all his health and energy. A Chinese workman, in Hemen Causeway, Limehouse, had dropped a brick on the lad's shoulder, breaking his collar-bone. So Drake had taken a short, enforced rest in that excellent institution, the London Hospital.

It was true that before he went he had accomplished a clever stroke of detective work by shadowing Pompey Cree to Limehouse. For Pompey Cree had been sent by the dread Chinese secret society, the Hoang Tong, to take the life of Ferrers Locke. Undoubtedly, too, he would have succeeded but for the promptitude of Jack Drake. And before getting his "packet" on the shoulder Drake had discovered to which resort in London's Chinatown the would-be assassin had gone.

But now a cruel Fate had dealt the convalescent lad a far worse blow than a mere broken collar-bone. Ferrers Locke had gone down to Chinatown to follow up the clue which Drake had unearthed—the haunt to which Cree had proceeded. He had been gone just on a week, and had not returned. Not one word had reached Jack Drake nor anyone else as to the detective's whereabouts.

At last Inspector Pycroft, of Scotland Yard, an old friend of Locke, had been notified by the boy of the absence of the sleuth. The newspapers had ferreted out

the fact that the great private detective had disappeared, and had drawn their own conclusions.

As Jack Drake stood mournfully at the window he heard the raucous voice of a newsboy down in Baker Street conveying the tidings:

"Death of Ferrers Locke! Full story o' his life! Paper!"

Drake had seen the papers. Some lay in a crumpled heap on the sitting-room table. Approximately all had the same story—how Locke had last been known to visit Limehouse, and had not returned. It was a news story of sensational interest. The detective's life had been threatened by the Hoang Hongs, the great Chinese criminal organisation. They had "got him" at last. And the newspapers did not forget to drag in the mysterious Mr. Fang, or Yellow Spider, who was supposed to be the arch-criminal of the tong, and the hidden leader of the English branch of the world-wide secret society. Extracts were given from previous newspaper accounts of some of the detective's greatest cases, and one and all the papers deplored the death of the man they dubbed "the crooks' greatest enemy."

A soft footstep sounded behind the boy, and Jack Drake swung round to see that Sing-Sing, the faithful Chinese servant of the sleuth, had entered the apartment.

"Me bling along lunchee now, Massa Drake?"

"Yes, please, Sing-Sing! Oh, no! Hang it all, I can't eat!"

In his distraction the boy flung himself almost savagely on a settee, and succeeded in giving his injured shoulder a painful twinge.

"Me tinkee I bling lunchee in, allee same," said Sing-Sing stolidly.

Sing-Sing, although his emotions were not revealed in his impassive, yellow face, was as concerned as Jack Drake about the safety of the detective. Both he and the boy retained a faint hope that their master was alive. Yet each knew in his heart of hearts that the chances were all that Locke had met a

violent death at the hands of the dread tongmen.

As the servant was about to turn away Drake sat up, his eyes flashing with the flame of a great new resolve.

"Sing-Sing," he said, "as you know, I've had a bad time myself of late. This wretched shoulder of mine hasn't given me a chance to get moving. But, my aunt, this very day I'm going to set out to discover the fate of Mr. Locke. If I have to go into the web of the Spider himself, and wring the truth from this Li Fang with my own hands, I'll find out what the fiends have done with our chief! Henceforth my whole life shall be devoted to bringing to book the foul assassin who did the deed—if Mr. Locke is—is dead."

His voice trailed away somewhat under the emotion that surged up in his being. Sing-Sing's face lost for a moment its Oriental calm.

"Missa Locke is dead," he said, in solemn tones of conviction. "Me tellee him tongman catchee him in end. But it is no good for you go down Chinatown. Tongman allee same killee you, too."

"I'll risk that," said Drake. "That ex-mercantile marine officer, Arthur Cree—or Pompey Cree, as he's generally called—will be in the know, I'll be bound. As likely as not he's succeeded in assassinating the chief at a second attempt."

"Me tinkee velly likely," murmured Sing-Sing.

"Well, he's the man I'm going to seek out. To-night I want you to help me disguise myself as a Chinese. I can talk pidgeon English all right. Then I'll go down into Limehouse and try to get on the track of Pompey Cree."

The Chinese servant tried to dissuade the boy. In Sing-Sing's opinion it was only throwing away another life. But Jack Drake was adamant.

That evening, with the help of Sing-Sing, the boy altered his appearance from that of an English lad to a Chinese of the type which hovers about the docks and streets of the Limehouse district in the East End of London. He donned

Will Ferrers Locke's imposture amongst the Hoang Hongs be discovered—

blue, dirty-looking trousers and coat, a muffler, a cap, and a pair of rubber-soled shoes. Then he made up his face with grease-paint, drawing up the corners of his eyes to give the almond-shaped effect of that of an Oriental. Sing-Sing himself put the finishing touches to Drake's disguise.

Directly darkness had fallen Drake left the house in Baker Street. He did not, however, depart from the front of the residence. Gliding out of the back door he stopped to pat Lion, the bloodhound, on the head, and then shinned over a couple of walls, and so out into a side street. Glancing about him to assure himself that no one had seen him, he hastened to the Tube station, and took the train to Aldgate East. The rest of his journey to Limehouse he performed by bus and on foot.

Apeing the slouching gait of the true Oriental the boy made his way along to the grocery shop which bore the name Wing Chow, for it was here that Drake had last seen the man, Pompey Cree, before he himself had met with the injury to his collar-bone.

For some minutes the boy walked backwards and forwards along the street. During this time he saw three Chinese enter Wing Chow's premises; but when Drake passed the shop again not one of these men were visible.

"I expect," muttered Drake to himself, "that this old boy, Wing Chow, is running a gambling-den at the back of his shop like so many of his fellows."

The youngster considered the advisability of trying to obtain an entrance to the place, but reason told him that it was putting his head into the lion's mouth with a vengeance. He was disguised as a Chinaman, and if any Chink addressed him in the language of China he would be done. To pretend to be dumb would only arouse an interest in himself that he did not want. No, Drake considered that his best plan for the time being was to lounge about Chinatown, where he would be almost unnoticed in his Chink's rig-out, and lie in wait for Pompey Cree to put in an appearance. That the man was hiding somewhere in his district under the protection of the Chinese community he had not the slightest doubt in his own mind.

For over an hour the boy lounged about Hempen Causeway, and then, even as he was thinking of moving off to some other part of Chinatown, lest he brought suspicion on himself, he saw the man he had come to seek.

At first Jack Drake could hardly believe his eyes. Deep down in his heart he knew he had come down here to Chinatown simply because he felt he must be doing something. He had had little real hope of getting on the track of Pompey Cree. Yet here was the man himself!

The fellow emerged from the shop of Wing Chow, and furtively crossed the road. The street was almost deserted, and Drake had no difficulty in watching the man. Cree—for Drake had no doubt that it was he—moved along at a quick gait in the direction of the River Thames. His back was stooped, and a cap was drawn well down over his eyes. But although the boy could not see the other's face he was positive of Cree's identity, owing to that peculiar stoop and quick, nervous walk.

"Snakes!" muttered the lad. "You got away from me last time, Cree! This time I'll take you, if I have to pump an ounce of lead into you to do it!"

His hand dropped instinctively into his jacket-pocket, where lay a small, automatic revolver ready for instant use. The

sight of the man whom he believed might be the slayer of Locke caused his blood to run feverishly in his veins. His mouth set in a hard, determined line; he was willing, if necessary, to sacrifice his own life if he could only bring the notorious Pompey Cree to book.

Luckily, his whole training had tended to give him judgment and caution in dealing with a quarry. Like a panther on the trail of its prey, he glided through the shadows of London's Chinatown in pursuit of the man he had seen leave Wing Chow's place.

At last Cree turned into a narrow, deserted side street close to the dark riverside. Fearful of losing the fellow, and realising that the time for action had come, Jack Drake ran, crab fashion, along the walls of the tumbledown buildings.

Suddenly Pompey Cree disappeared. Drake dashed up, to find an open doorway in one of the buildings leading into a dark passage. The boy drew his automatic-pistol from his pocket and cautiously entered. Hardly had he done so that he felt a strong hand wrap itself round his. His forefinger was deftly hooked off the trigger, and the pistol fell with a clatter on the wooden boards of the flooring. Cree, instead of passing along the dark passageway, had lain in wait behind the open door.

No sooner had the pistol dropped from his grasp than Drake hurled himself forward. Simultaneously a dark form emerged from behind the door, and threw a pair of sinewy arms about the boy's body. The two rolled to the floor, linked together. Not a word was spoken by either of them. Only a hoarse grunt left the boy's lips. He felt that this was to be a fight to the death, with all the odds in favour of a man whose muscular arms held him in a grip of steel.

Drake fought tooth and nail to get a grip on the neck of the man who had fallen beneath him. But the fellow drew his chin in, and the boy merely succeeded in gripping his antagonist by the nose.

"You scoundrel!" hissed Drake. "Where is Ferrers Locke?"

A gurgling sound proceeded from the lips of his struggling adversary. Then a familiar voice spluttered in his ear:

"Egad! Go easy with my nose! It's the only one I've got!"

Jack Drake gave a gasp of blank astonishment. He ceased struggling, and gazed down at the features of the man he had shadowed. Then, after a brief pause, during which he sought to regain

some of the breath which had been knocked from his body, he found his tongue again.

"Ferrers Locke!" he gulped.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Drake Makes His Go-away!

THE man pushed Drake aside and rose to his feet.

"It is, my lad," he said in a whisper. "You have come here to seek Pompey Cree?"

Drake stood upright, and regarded his chief somewhat reproachfully.

"I—I did, sir," he said. "It is reported in all the papers that you are dead. Old Sing-Sing and I have been in a fever of anxiety about you. As soon as I was well enough I disguised myself, and came down here to seek out the man I thought might have been your assassin."

The famous sleuth placed his hand on the youngster's shoulder, and gave him a look of mingled gratitude and affection.

"It is Pompey Cree who is dead," said Ferrers Locke. "I captured him on a barge moored off a Wapping wharf. He took a pellet of poison, and ended his career. Four Chinese who had shadowed us came peering among the cement-bags of the row of scows of which this barge was one. Thinking I might be trapped, I exchanged clothes with Cree and fixed on him my false beard. Apparently, the Hoa Hangs had penetrated my former disguise. In one of Cree's pockets I found a small, yellow spider symbol. This I pinned to Cree's breast. Then I lay low until the Chinks found the fellow's body. They thought the body was mine, and weighted it and dumped it into the river. And they thought, moreover, that Cree, who had been ordered by the tong to encompass my death, had accomplished his object."

"But—but why couldn't you have let us know about it at Baker Street, sir?" asked Jack Drake in a rather hurt tone. "You—you don't know how jolly upset we've been about you!"

"I knew you would be, my boy," said the detective. "But ever since that moment when I adopted the character of Pompey Cree my life has been hanging by a thread. I have been lying low in Wing Chow's place, and have only been out twice. The risk of communicating with you was far too great, and so I had to allow you, much against my inclination, to believe, like the rest of the world, that Ferrers Locke was dead."

There was a slight pause. Then Drake asked:

"Don't you think, sir, you should come back home? Is this game of hunting out the tongmen worth the candle?"

"I have set my hand to the plough, and I shall not turn back!" said Ferrers Locke determinedly. "Now I have the greatest opportunity in my life of discovering some of the inmost secrets of this dread organisation."

The boy looked startled.

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Simply this. I have discovered that the man Pompey Cree was never initiated in the Hoa Hang Tong. He wanted to join, for there are rich financial rewards for a desperate and unscrupulous man. To show his fitness for joining the tong, Pompey Cree was required to encompass my death. The Chinese think that I am dead, and so Pompey Cree is now to be initiated into the secret society."

"Great pip, sir!" gasped Jack Drake. "D'you mean to say you're going to join



JACK DRAKE,
Ferrers Locke's young assistant.

—or will he bring the notorious Mr. Fang to book? See next week's yarn!

the tong as Pompey Cree? It—it's madness!"

"So it may be, my boy. But we have to do mad things at times—in other words, take desperate chances—to accomplish our ends. I have been ordered to attend a special initiation meeting of the tong this very night. I was on my way there when you shadowed me. Your disguise is excellent, and, had you not spoken, I confess I should not have known you. Now you must return to Baker Street, and tell no one—not even Sing-Sing—that I am alive. And on no account must you come down here to Limehouse again unless you hear from me. Those are my orders!"

Drake inclined his head. He knew that nothing he might say or do would turn Locke from his purpose. Besides, it was his duty to obey his chief.

The two shook hands.

"Good-bye, my boy!" whispered the sleuth. "I am glad you have had your anxiety relieved; but now you must return to Baker Street with all speed. Directly I can do so safely, I will communicate with you. Meantime, you must deal with any clients, for you are bound to have some come to you." He paused, clutched Drake's arm, and whispered a tense: "Listen!"

Shuffling footsteps sounded outside in the narrow street.

"Great Scott!" muttered Locke. "Chinks!"

Hardly had he whispered the remark than two Chinese turned stealthily into the narrow passage. Immediately Locke threw his arms about his young assistant, and began struggling violently.

"Now tear yourself away and beat it!" he muttered into the youngster's ear.

Drake flung himself backwards as the two Chinese drew short lengths of lead piping from their sleeves and hurried forward. But the boy lowered his head and charged. He caught one of the yellow men in the region of the belt, and sent him reeling to the ground, with every ounce of breath knocked from his body.

The other Chinese essayed to strike the lad on the head, but Locke, with a feigned cry of rage, pretended to hurl himself after Drake. But, instead of clutching the boy, he bumped roughly against the other Chinese, thus diverting his aim with the deadly strip of lead piping.

Meantime, Drake dashed out into the street, and sped away as fast as his legs would carry him. The Chinese who had been toppled over by the boy staggered to his feet, gave a guttural exclamation in his own native tongue, and made as though to follow the lad. Locke also sprang forward, apparently for the same purpose, but clumsily jammed the Chinaman at the exit of the narrow passage. When they got outside, Jack Drake was nowhere to be seen.

Both Locke and the two Chinks who had followed him into the street returned to the narrow, enclosed passageway. Locke recognised the Asiatic who had been bowled over by Drake as a thorough-paced rascal called Chang Lung. This man, he knew, was a member of the Hoa Hang Tong. The Chinaman, too, thought he recognised the white man.

"Hallo, Pompey Clee!" said he. "Do you savvy who makee fight with you?"

Locke adopted the mannerism and the tone of voice of Cree as he replied.

"Some johnnie from Wing's gaming-joint, I guess—eh?"

It needed all his control to conceal

the surprise he experienced at the answer he received.

"No!" hissed Chang Lung through his clenched teeth. "That was Jack Drake, who worked with the man you kill!"

"Sh—'sh!" said the other Chinese. "Sometimes the walls, allee same, got ear! Come!"

He led the way through the passage to a room that, at some time or other, must have been the kitchen of this tumbledown, unoccupied house. From this a narrow, stone stairway led down into a foul, mildewed cellar.

"Wing Chow tellee you how to find the House of Blue Mist?" asked Chang Lung of Ferrers Locke, with a leer.

Locke nodded. He had received his instructions as to how to obtain entrance to the mysterious place which the Chinese, among themselves, referred to as the House of the Blue Mist. Locke himself reckoned that this was only a fanciful Eastern name for an opium-den. But he was only partly right, as subsequent events were to show.

The Chinaman, Chang Lung, stepped up to one of the moisture-covered brick walls of the cellar, and taking the lead piping from his sleeve, rapped three times. Then, after an interval of about four seconds, he rapped a fourth time. From behind the wall came a response three taps, a pause, and another tap. Chang Lung gave a leer.

"Allee light!" he murmured. "We waitee here two or tlee minutes. Chinee guard behind wall soon takee away blicks."

And Ferrers Locke could hear someone behind the wall engaged in making an aperture. Soon a small hole appeared. A yellow hand took brick after brick away, and in less than three minutes there was a hole in the wall big enough for any ordinary man to squeeze through.

One after another Locke's companions squirmed through the aperture and disappeared. Then the detective himself squeezed his way through. Where he was he had no idea, but he was helped through the hole by the strong hands of a Chinese attendant and gently pushed forward along a dark passage-way.

He had not proceeded more than a few steps when he found himself herded with Chang Lung and the other Chinese. A slight hissing sound came to his ears. A great wooden door rolled back. Locke and the two Chinese passed through and into a long, winding passage dimly lighted with small coloured lanterns.

As they went along, door after door automatically opened—obviously operated from some secret chamber by compressed air—and closed behind them. Not a soul did they see as they made their way to the meeting-place of the tong. And Locke rightly guessed that this way was only one of a number of getting to the House of the Blue Mist.

On their way Locke ventured to put a question which had been on the tip of his tongue for some time.

"I say, Chang," he said in the voice of Pompey Cree. "How do you know that rogue who attacked me was young Jack Drake?"

Chang Lung gave an unpleasant chuckle.

"Li Fang, our great chief, has had the house in Baker Street watched allee same night and day. Tongman hide in next door back garden, and see Chinee-man come cleepy-cleepy out to-night. He tinkee this Chinee-man allee same Jack Drake."

"Why didn't he follow the young rip

and kill him?" demanded Locke in a fierce whisper.

As he hoped, he drew an instant response from the Chinese.

"Tongman lose sight of Jack Drake. I expect Li Fang be velly annoyed. Maybe have tongman's head choppee off!" He gave a grim chuckle, and continued: "When I see little Chinee-man struggle with you, Pompey, me tinkee that allee same Jack Drake. But he not live long. In good time Li Fang order some tongman killee that boy. He not live long, you can makee bet."

The calm, cruel way in which the Chinese uttered the remark sent a cold thrill through the detective. But he tried to dismiss the thought of his young assistant from his mind for the time being. Drake, he felt sure, would be safe for a little while, especially as he had ordered the boy not to come down to Limehouse again. He needed all his thoughts and wits about him for what lay ahead.

By calm, skilful play-acting Ferrers Locke had taken the role of Pompey Cree for nearly a week, momentarily expecting all the time to receive a summons to a meeting of the tong. During this period he had almost given himself away through lack of knowledge of Cree's previous relationship with the Chinks. But a keen wit and a cool nerve had pulled him through. Gradually he had learned much about the dead man's history and ways. He knew that Cree, who had been kicked out of the Mercantile Marine for disgraceful conduct generally, had spent a good deal of his time round the China Coast. Here it was, presumably, that the man had become acquainted with the Hoa Hang Tong. But Locke had learned much more, too, which he knew would hold him in good stead. The danger, however, was great, for he never knew at what minute some unsuspected trifle might turn up to throw suspicion upon him.

With almost startling suddenness Locke and his two Asiatic companions came to a short flight of stairs which led downwards. The keen eyes of the sleuth noted that there was a kind of door which could be dropped to shut off these stairs. This might have been for the purpose of impeding the police in the event of a raid.

A door at the foot of these stairs opened, and an acrid puff of blue smoke caused the detective to cough violently. When he had recovered himself somewhat he found himself in an opium-den, far more comfortably furnished than any other he had seen in Chinatown. Several men were reclining on wooden couches, rolling and smoking the little black opium pellets. But an attendant came forward and ushered Locke and the two Chinese into a room beyond the opium-den.

This room was almost in darkness, but Locke could glimpse hooded forms hovering about. He was dimly aware that Chang Lung and the other Chinese donned robes of a yellowish hue. Then each in turn stepped behind a silk-embroidered curtain and disappeared from his vision. It was like a conjuring-trick.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Among the Hoa Hangs!

FOR some moments Locke had to wait. Two Chinese came and interviewed him. Both spoke English perfectly, and Locke, using his knowledge of Pompey Cree's

On no account must you miss "The Treasure of Wong Moh!"

former life among the Chinks, answered readily enough. Finally, they garbed him in a plain yellow cloak and hood, and requested him to step behind the mysterious curtain.

He did so. The floor revolved, and before he had recovered his breath he found himself in an atmosphere of thick blue mist.

Ferrers Locke tugged at the hood which enveloped his head. His eyes were peering through the two peep-holes, but at first he could discern nothing but a short stretch of Japanese matting at his feet and the nauseating blue vapour. That this latter was not opium smoke the sleuth knew well enough. There was no comparison between this atmosphere and that of the opium-den that he had passed through. This was a chemical gas which slightly stung the eyes, but which acted as a tonic on the brain. His thoughts were as clear as crystal.

Suddenly he heard the sing-song tones of someone chanting something in Chinese. The voice might have been a hundred miles away, so strange and distant did it appear. Hardly had the last echo of it vibrated than a voice spoke in English, evidently translating the first incantation.

"Welcome, O white man, into the company of the Heaven-chosen Celestials, the great Hoa Hangs, blessed of a hundred thousand illustrious ancestors and guardians of the sacred Lotus Flower of Peking!"

What the sacred Lotus Flower was Ferrers Locke had no idea. He presumed it was some other symbol of the tong. The Yellow Spider idea, he knew, had only been adopted by Mr. Fang, the leader of the English branch of this dreaded criminal organisation.

Gradually the mist cleared somewhat, and an amazing sight met the detective's eyes. He was in a large room, hung with weird-looking Chinese lanterns and tapestries. Every one of the pictures worked in the tapestries which covered the walls depicted some kind of blood-thirsty scene. Right ahead of him was a large black silken screen, with a wonderful representation of a spider worked into it in yellow silk.

The walls of the room were lined with motionless, hooded figures. Each figure bore on his dress the insignia of the Yellow Spider. Locke knew that he himself was not wearing this symbol, for he had noticed his raiment before it had been placed upon him.

The blue mist was ascending in curling wisps from two wrought-iron braziers, one on either side of the large, embroidered screen. They were burning out now.

Once again the Chinese voice spoke, first in Chinese and then in English.

"Step forward, Arthur Cree, and kneel before the symbol of the Yellow Spider!"

Ferrers Locke, keeping his wits about him, moved with Cree's gait to a spot between the braziers, and knelt down.

"You have done well, O white man!" came the voice apparently from behind the screen. "You have slain a deadly enemy of the tong. Therefore have you proved yourself worthy of complete membership. Are you willing to take the oaths and submit to the ceremonies of our illustrious order?"

"I am."

"It is well. Let the initiation proceed."

For fully an hour Ferrers Locke endured a nightmare which might have cost many a weaker man his reason. The

sonorous voice read out the rules and penalties of the Hoa Hang Tong from behind the embroidered screen. A score of terrible deaths were described in detail and a variety of ceremonies, some merely spectacular, others nerve-racking in the extreme, were carried out. The lights were dimmed. Not a sound proceeded from the assembled tongmen who were visible. The whole ceremonial was mystic and eerie in the extreme.

Once, as an impressive symbol of the power of the world-wide tong in dealing with a traitor in its ranks, everyone present drew a gleaming kris, or crooked knife. With each kris pointed at the detective, the whole gathering of robed and hooded tongmen slowly moved towards him. Locke watched them closing in nearer and nearer and as silently as cats, until a hundred sharp-pointed knives touched his body. Then as silently the tongmen withdrew.

that he had been badly bitten. His hand and wrist after a few moments felt as though they were on fire, and he suspected they were swelling somewhat. But he made no moan, although inwardly he registered this incident as another account to pay off against the fiend who called himself the Yellow Spider.

"You are brave, O white man!" came the sonorous voice from behind the screen. "But one thing remains before you are admitted to full membership of the tong. Kneel and draw back your hood!"

Ferrers Locke did so, and knelt bare-headed among the spectral throng. And then began what was to the sleuth the worst ordeal of all. Each tongman in turn walked to him, stopped, and gazed earnestly at him. Clearly each tongman was supposed to know his fellow-members by sight.

But Ferrers Locke knew that Pompey



Pycroft was half-raised in his bed. Above him hovered Chang Lung, kris in hand, ready to perform his dastardly crime. But the inspector had secured a firm grip on the Chinaman's wrist. Revolver in hand, Locke clambered through the window. (See Chapter 4.)

With the perspiration streaming down his face under the yellow hood, Locke had to endure even worse experiences than this. Once a small flap cut in the embroidered screen near the head of the yellow spider opened and a gnarled hand appeared. It was holding a small ebony box with the lid downwards.

"Place your left hand open below the box, O white man!" said the voice, which Locke strongly suspected belonged to Li Fang himself.

The sleuth did so. With a dexterous movement the yellow hand holding the box withdrew the lid. Into the detective's hand dropped a large, yellow-coloured spider, and Locke felt a sharp stinging sensation on his palm. Next instant the spider dropped to the floor and went crawling away, no one appearing to take any notice of the ugly insect.

Nevertheless, Ferrers Locke realised

Cree had had a cast in one eye. He himself had noticed it on one occasion. It was possible that some Chinese here present was also aware of the slight abnormality. Therefore, Locke had the wit to keep his eyes half-closed, and his make-up was so good that no one present suspected for an instant that he was anyone but the man he represented himself to be. Had it been otherwise his life would not have been worth a moment's purchase.

When this ceremony had been completed an embroidered spider was fastened to his raiment. Then the screen was removed to reveal a wonderfully-carved chair with a small, hooded figure huddled in it. It was Mr. Fang.

On the knee of the chief of the tong was an open book and a pad of Chinese ink. But what attracted the sleuth's horrified gaze at once were two scraps of paper, one a lottery ticket and the other

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a printed handbill. And on each of these, as Ferrers Locke well knew, was a finger-print of his own!

"Kindly impress your fingers on this pad and then on the page of this book," said the Yellow Spider, in oily accents. "We keep a full record of finger-prints of our members. It is very useful at times. And here I have two very interesting finger-print souvenirs of the man you so ably sent to his doom, Mr. Cree."

There was nothing for Locke to do but to obey the mandate of the Spider. He dipped his fingers against the pad and made a series of prints in the Chinaman's record book.

As he made the last he stumbled forward slightly and pressed hard down on the book. One side of it fell, and, clumsily attempting to save it, Locke knocked the lottery ticket and handbill out from between the leaves and down to the floor.

With a muttered exclamation of apology in the voice of Pompey Cree, he stooped to retrieve the objects. As he did so his hawk eyes regarded the two scraps of paper keenly, and his inky fingers wandered over them.

The Yellow Spider looked at the lottery ticket and the handbill, and his voice came from behind his yellow hood in an angry rumble.

"You were careless, Mr. Cree," he said menacingly. "Fresh ink marks have obliterated those of the detective. I had intended keeping these papers as interesting souvenirs of my cleverest enemy."

"Forgive me—forgive me!" cried Locke, making a gesture characteristic of Pompey Cree. "After all, I—I killed the chap, and he won't trouble you no more."

There was a pause filled with anxiety for the disguised sleuth. Then the Yellow Spider gave a satisfied chuckle and handed the two scraps of paper to Locke.

"After all, what does it matter, Mr. Cree?" said Fang. "I am grateful to you for what you have done for me in removing my enemy. The finger-prints of Mr. Ferrers Locke are not needed now. He is gone out of our lives for ever, and we may proceed to other business. Take your place among the tongmen, Mr. Cree. I will interpret my further remarks into English for your benefit."

Locke, with nervous stride, joined the tongmen who lined the walls. When he had done so Mr. Fang drew out a scroll of papyrus, marked with Chinese characters.

"At our last meeting," he said, interpreting each sentence for the benefit of those two or three white men he knew to be present among his tongmen, "I had the pleasure of erasing the name of Ferrers Locke from this scroll. We shall now deal with the next name on the list. As usual, we will decide by ballot who shall have the honour of removing this obnoxious enemy of our organisation from our path."

He clapped his hands together. Two of the hooded Hoa Hangs fetched a carved box with rows of slits in one side of it. From these slits were suspended a number of strips of black silk ribbon. The box was placed on the knees of Li Fang and the tongmen resumed their places.

"Each one of you in turn, commencing from the left, will come forward and select a ribbon," said the Spider. "You will look at it yourself, show it to me,

and drop it in the top of this box. The tongman whose ribbon bears the sign of the yellow spider will know that he has been selected by a kindly Fate for the removal of the man doomed for destruction."

One by one the tongmen walked past the box, took a ribbon and glanced at it. Apparently no others present, save the Spider and the man concerned, could see whether the thin strip was marked or not. At last it came to the turn of Ferrers Locke. He selected a strip of ribbon and drew it forth. On it was the sign of the Yellow Spider.

"Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Cree," whispered the Spider, his lips scarcely moving. "Fate is indeed kind to you. You are given the chance of again showing your metal."

"Who—who am I to kill?" gulped Locke.

And in oily accents the mysterious Mr. Fang replied:

"Inspector Pycroft, of Scotland Yard!"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Race For Life!

ON the evening following Locke's initiation into the Hoa Hang Tong, at the mysterious House of the Blue Mist, the sleuth, in his disguise, was sitting in the gambling-den at the back of Wing Chow's grocery shop.

For some time during the day Ferrers Locke had tried, by means of cunning inquiries, to learn the exact locality of the House of the Blue Mist; but others, like himself, had been led to the place through long, winding passages, and had no idea in which building the meetings of the tong were held.

If only Locke had been able to make this discovery he might have been tempted to get out of Limehouse, warn Pycroft, and urge the police to raid the premises. But to attempt to raid the meeting-place via the winding passages, with their countless doors and traps, appeared to be utterly useless. Yet by some means he must warn Pycroft. But when and how? Those were the questions.

Until nearly midnight the sleuth remained watching the monotonous movements of the croupier in charge of a Fan-tan game. Suddenly he became aware that a slovenly-dressed white man had seated himself near-by. The man slowly drew the two fingers of his left hand down over his left cheekbone. It was one of the greeting signs of the Hoa Hangs.

Locke responded with the counter-sign, his right forefinger hooked into the neck of his coat. At once the man shifted nearer to him, and opened a conversation in a low, crafty voice.

"You're Pompey Cree," murmured the fellow. "I'm called Slim Bouchard. You may have heard of me by reputation. My job in the tong is to help get the dope through to the West End agents. I saw you initiated last night."

"Huh, yes?" grunted Locke, in the polite manner of the late Pompey Cree.

The other drew closer until his mouth was within a few inches of the sleuth's ear.

"When is the job coming off comrade?" he asked, with a gloating smile.

"The job?"

"Yes. You were selected for a stunt last night. I was the end man of the line, and I saw you draw a lucky ribbon. I don't know who you've got to do in, and I don't want to; but take my tip and be slipper about getting the job done. I'm telling you as one white man to another."

"What do you mean, mate?" muttered Locke.

"Of course, you've only just joined us," said Bouchard. "Didn't the Spider tell you the rules about these—he, he!—killing little jobs?"

"No," said Locke. "He gave me a pistol fitted with a silencer, and suggested that might do the trick. And, of course, he told me the name of the—er—victim."

Slim Bouchard chuckled.

"I know—I know," he murmured, a trifle impatiently. "But don't you realise, comrade, that you aren't the only one told off for the job?"

A cold chill ran down the detective's spine.

"I was the only one, so far as I know, who was given instructions," he said. "I drew the ribbon with the sign of the yellow spider on it."

"Yes, but there were two ribbons marked that way; there always are. I was at the end of the row of tongmen, as I said. I saw Chang Lung draw the other embroidered ribbon."

"Chang Lung!"

"None other, comrade. As a white man I want to warn you to be nippy about that little job. Two men always are selected. If one fails the other will probably succeed. But the man who does the deed gets the glory, and the other must give an explanation before the supreme tribunal of the tong. The Spider, particularly, is very severe with slackness. Take my tip and get moving. Chang Lung has gone on his errand."

And after that whispered warning Bouchard gave a nod and edged away.

With every nerve a-tingle at what he had learned, Ferrers Locke rose from his seat and left the gaming-den. He had no reason for doubting what Bouchard had told him was true, and if it was, then the life of Inspector Pycroft was in the gravest danger. He dare not delay another instant. No matter what risk he took, he would go and warn his old friend.

Emerging into Hempten Causeway, Ferrers Locke glided swiftly through Limehouse until he came across a belated taxicab which had taken some mercantile marine officers back to the docks. Luckily he had plenty of money on him, for the Hoa Hangs had treated him liberally. He struck a bargain with the taximan, and was driven rapidly through London, across Blackfriars Bridge, and down to West Norwood, the suburb in which the Scotland Yard officer resided.

Locke paid off the taximan at the corner of the street in which was situated Pycroft's residence. Then, slipping through a gate marked "Tradesman's entrance," he reached the back garden and glanced up at the window of the room which he knew Pycroft used as a bed-room when he was at home. The bottom half of the window was open, but this circumstance did not unduly disturb him, for Pycroft had the reputation of being a fresh-air fiend.

"It's hardly likely Lung will have been here," thought Locke. "I'll shin up to Pycroft's room and waken him. I

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don't want to disturb his old housekeeper."

He clambered on to a coal-shed and grasped a stout water-pipe which ran down the wall. Even as he did so he heard a muffled exclamation from the room above. Then there came the gruff, breathless voice of Inspector Pycroft to his ears.

"Drop that knife, you yellow dog!" Locke shined up the water-pipe with the dexterity and speed of a seaman. From that he clambered on to the window-sill, and, kneeling there, drew his revolver from his pocket.

The moonlight streaming through the unshuttered window revealed a strange sight. Pycroft, garbed in striped pyjamas, was half raised in his bed. Above him hovered the sinister form of Chang Lung, the tongman. A kris glistened in the Chinaman's hand.

Revolver in hand Locke entered the room. Pycroft was too busy struggling for his life to notice him. With a sudden twist the lithe Oriental released his right hand. He lunged as though to bury the kris in the inspector's body, when Locke brought the butt of his revolver down on the man's head. Without a moan Chang Lung dropped to the floor in an inert heap.

The inspector gave a gasp of amazement, and his hand darted under his pillow. Immediately Locke twisted his revolver in his hand, and pointed the muzzle at his old friend's breast.

"Don't be an ass, Pycroft!" he abjured. "Let that gun alone! I came here to save you, and I reckon I was only just in time."

He used his natural voice, and the

inspector gave a cry of delight and astonishment.

"Mr. Locke!" he exclaimed, leaping out of bed and wringing the sleuth's hand. "I'd given you up for dead! What is the meaning of it all?"

As briefly as possible Ferrers Locke explained the situation. When he had finished he had a request to make.

"Listen, Pycroft!" he said. "I am going down to Limehouse again. I have now the greatest opportunity of my life of discovering the inmost secrets of the Hoa Hangs. This man, Chang Lung, who shows no signs of coming to life yet awhile, will, of course, receive a heavy sentence for your attempted murder. He won't know what struck him, and certainly won't be aware that it was his fellow-tongman, Pompey Cree, alias Ferrers Locke. You, my friend, for my safety must give it out that you were attacked by a second man who got away, so I shall safely be able to return to Chinatown and the Yellow Spider."

Only after some fervent argument was Pycroft persuaded to this course. He tried to induce Locke to give up his idea of returning among the Chinks; but the great detective was resolved to see through his self-imposed task to break up the dreaded Chinese tong.

As Locke made his way back to Limehouse shortly afterwards he gave vent to a satisfied chuckle. It had been a good night's work.

THE END

(Next Monday—"The Treasure of Wong Moh!"—another detective thriller which will keep your interest at a high pitch!)

A FRIEND IN NEED!

(Continued from page 20.)

Skinner had the grace to say that he was sorry. There was a great celebration in the Rag that evening in honour of Levison, who was not leaving Greyfriars under a cloud, after all. When Levison looked in on Frank the following morning he had good news for the rag—the news that he was staying.

"Good!" said Frank. "You'll be in the Remove cricket eleven, after all, Ernie!"

"I hope so!" said Levison, with a smile.

Levison was very cheery that day. The black cloud had rolled by. He was once more on his old footing with the chums of the Remove.

"You saved me, Smithy!" he said to the Bounder.

Vernon-Smith nodded. "You saved me once," he said. "One good turn deserves another. We're quits at last!"

"Quits now, and friends always, I hope!" said Levison.

"You bet!" said the Bounder tersely. And they shook hands on it.

THE END.

(There is another splendid story of Greyfriars next Monday, entitled "A DEBT REPAID!" Ernest Levison is, once again, among the chief characters on the stage. This latest yarn of Frank Richards is the real goods, chums. Don't miss it!)

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