

6 WONDERFUL PICTURE STAMPS FREE Inside.

# The MAGNET

2<sup>d</sup>



# THE SCAPEGRACE OF THE SCHOOL!



## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### A Boot for Bunter!

**Y**OU fat sweep!" roared Harry Wharton.

Billy Bunter jumped. "Oh!" he gasped.

Bunter was startled.

Harry Wharton had arrived rather suddenly at his study, No. 1 in the Remove. He had run up to finish an "impot" which had to be taken in to his Form master before tea. Fifty lines remained to be written, and he had barely a quarter of an hour, so he had no time to lose. The study door was closed, and he threw it open and hurried in, naturally expecting to find the study empty. Frank Nugent, who shared Study No. 1, never came to the study these days—few fellows, in fact, came there, since Harry Wharton had become one of the most unpopular fellows in the Form.

But the study was not empty. The fattest fellow at Greyfriars School—on anywhere else—was seated in the armchair in an attitude that was comfortable if not elegant. Sprawling in the chair, Billy Bunter had his feet on the table, regardless of the fact that one of them rested on Wharton's unfinished lines.

Bunter, of course, had no right to be sprawling in Study No. 1—he had his own study, No. 7, to sprawl in; if he desired to sprawl. But that was not what roused the wrath of the proprietor of the study. Billy Bunter, as he sprawled at his fat ease, had a cigarette in his large mouth. A spiral of smoke rose from it. On the arm of the chair was a box of smokes—on the other arm a box of matches! Round Bunter, on the floor, the rug, and the fender, were scattered burnt matches and cigarette-ends! The Owl of the

## By FRANK RICHARDS.

Remove had evidently been going strong—having quite a field day!

Harry Wharton glared at him.

According to Mr. Quelch, master of the Remove, Harry Wharton, once his trusted head boy and captain of the Form, was the worst boy at Greyfriars this term. But if faults of temper and pride had been Wharton's undoing, there were, at least, no petty vices about him. Fellows like Skinner and Snoop smoked in their study and fancied themselves frightfully doggish; the Bounder smoked sometimes, chiefly because it was forbidden. Wharton, whether he was the "worst boy in the Form" or not, had a healthy contempt for such dingy folly; and the sight of the fat and fatuous Owl, puffing at a cigarette in an atmosphere like that of a tap-room, roused his wrath. He made a stride across the study—and Bunter jumped out of the armchair in a great hurry.

"Ow!" spluttered Bunter.

As he made that hurried jump the cigarette slipped into his mouth. The hot end felt very hot indeed!

"Ow! Wow! Oooooogh!" spluttered Bunter. "Wooogh! Beast! You made me—ooogh—jump! I thought it was Smithy! Wooooogh!"

Bunter ejected the remains of the cigarette, coughing and spluttering. He glared at Wharton through his big spectacles.

"Ooogh! You silly ass—" he gasped. "Making a fellow jump—"

"You fat villain! What do you mean by smoking in my study?" roared Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton! Toddy would kick up a row if I put on a fag in

Study No. 7. I thought you were out of gates! Here, keep off, you beast!"

Billy Bunter dodged round the table. Across that article of furniture he eyed Wharton warily through his big spectacles.

"I say, old chap, don't be stuffy!" he gasped. "What's the good of getting shirty, old fellow? Have a smoke!"

"You fat, frabjous, fatheaded frump, I'll—"

"Be a man, you know," said Bunter encouragingly. "Like me! Look here, I've got lots of fags—that's a box of twenty-five. They're good, you know—Smithy always has expensive smokes—I mean, I got those smokes in Courtfield this afternoon. I never found them in Vernon-Smith's study, you know. Look here, light up and be a man, old chap! What?"

Harry Wharton turned to the armchair and picked up the box of cigarettes. Evidently Billy Bunter had pinched those smokes from the Bounder's study—though it was probable that he had dropped into Smithy's quarters in search of something of a more edible nature. But all was grist that came to Bunter's mill! He would have preferred a cake or doughnuts, but smokes did not come amiss, so long as he got them for nothing. There were still fifteen or sixteen cigarettes in the box.

"That's right, old chap!" said Bunter, apparently under the impression that Wharton was going to help himself to a smoke. "Help yourself, old top! Let's be jolly, what?"

"You frumptious fathead!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! Quelch says you're the worst fellow in the Remove," said Bunter, with a fat grin. "Well, why not have the game as well as the name, what? I say— Yaroooooh!"

Wharton's hand rose with the box of

cigarettes in **h**. He had not picked it up to help himself to smokes. He had picked it up to help Bunter to smokes—in bulk! The box whizzed across the table and landed with a crash on the fat little nose of the Owl of the Remove.

Bang!  
"Yaroooh—hoop!" roared Bunter. He staggered back, and sat down with a bump that shook the study. The box rolled on the floor, and cigarettes scattered round Bunter like leaves in Vallombrosa of old.

"Ow! Wow! Beast! Whooooo-hoop!"

Harry Wharton laughed.  
"Now get out, you fat chump!"  
"Ow! Beast! Wow!" roared Bunter, rubbing his fat nose tenderly. "Ow! I've a jolly good mind to lick you, you beast! Wow!"

"Are you going?" snapped Wharton. "I've got my lines to finish, and precious little time to do them! Do you want me to kick you?"

"Beast!"  
Harry Wharton came round the table. He really had no time to waste on Bunter, if he were to finish his lines in time for Mr. Quelch. And that he was very anxious to do. Other fellows might be late with lines and nothing said, but there was never any allowance made for the scapegrace of the Remove. If Wharton's lines were not handed in on the tick of the clock it meant trouble for the junior whom Mr. Quelch disliked with a deep and intense dislike—all the more intense because he had once liked and trusted him, and felt that he had been deceived in him.

Bunter scrambled to his feet. There was rather a pain in his fat little nose, and his cigarettes—or, rather, Herbert Vernon-Smith's cigarettes—were scattered far and wide.

"Keep off, you beast!" he howled. "Wait till I've picked up my smokes—do you think I'm going to leave them here, you rotter—"

"Get out!"  
"Beast!"

Billy Bunter stooped to pick up cigarettes. Unintentionally he placed himself in an excellent position for foot-work.

Wharton's foot flew out. There was a crash as it landed on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars.

"Yooop!"  
Bunter rolled.  
"Ow! Beast! Wow! I'll ask Bob Cherry to lick you!" he yelled. "I'll go to Bob and say— Whooo-hooooop!"

Thud, thud, thud! Rapid footwork cut short the flow of the fat Owl's eloquence. He squirmed to the door of Study No. 1, barged into the passage, and fled for his fat life.

Harry Wharton laughed, slammed the door after him, and sat down at the table. He had ten minutes—barely time to get through the impot and rush down to his Form master's study with it. He forgot Billy Bunter's fat existence as his pen raced over the paper.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Appearances Are Deceptive!

"SEEN Wharton?"  
Sampson Quincy Ifley Field—who was called Squiff because life was short—asked that question. Squiff was the new captain of the Remove since Harry Wharton had been turned out. Four juniors had just come up to the Remove passage for tea in Study No. 13—Bob Cherry's study—

Bob and Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

A few weeks ago, anybody who had wanted Wharton, would have asked one of the "Co." as a matter of course. The Famous Five of the Remove had been inseparable. But matters had changed since then. The rift in the Co. had widened to a complete breach, and the one-time leader of the Famous Five was now a stranger to his old friends. No word or look from Wharton ever betrayed that he knew that they were at Greyfriars at all. Squiff, perhaps, forgot that circumstance, with his head full of Soccer, and his new responsibilities as captain of the Form.

"Haven't seen him," said Bob Cherry briefly while Johnny Bull merely gave a grunt, which implied that he hadn't seen him, and didn't want to. Frank Nugent shook his head.

"I thinkfully opine that the esteemed and absurd Wharton is out of gates," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Some man said he'd seen him come in," said Squiff. "I want to speak to him about the footer."

"Fat lot of good speaking to him about the footer!" growled Johnny Bull. "What does he care?"

"Well, he doesn't seem to care a lot," admitted Squiff. "But it's all rot for the fellow to chuck games because he's been chucked out of the captaincy. And we don't want to lose our centre-forward if we can help it. Blessed if I know why he's got his back up to such an extent!"

Lines, lickings, detentions—  
Harry Wharton gets a full share of punishment for "crimes" he has committed—and for "crimes" he has not committed. But the "worst boy in the Form" doesn't care—he's out looking for trouble!

Grunt from Johnny Bull.

"Hasn't he got his back up with all Greyfriars?" he demanded. "Isn't he up against Mark Linley because Quelch made him head boy this term? Up against you because you've been elected skipper? Up against us because we used to be his friends? Up against Quelch because he won't be checked? Up against the prefects and everybody else? Up against his uncle, Colonel Wharton, because the old bean doesn't think him always in the right and everybody else always in the wrong? Br-r-r!"

Squiff grinned.  
"Well, all that's got nothing to do with Soccer," he said. "Wharton's the best forward in the Remove, though he's rather a hot-headed ass. I want to keep him in the game."

"I say, you fellows—"  
"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Bunter! Ask Bunter. Peeping Tom knows everything," said Bob.

"I say, you fellows, I've been waiting for you to come up to tea!"

"Seen Wharton, Bunter?" asked Squiff.

Snort from Bunter.  
"Blow Wharton! Cheeky cad! I can tell you fellows I'm fed-up with Wharton! I've a jolly good mind to go into his study and whop him this very minute!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Blessed if I see anything to cackle

at! Kicking a fellow!" exclaimed Billy Bunter wrathfully. "If the beast thinks he can kick me, he's a jolly well mistaken—see? I say, Bob, old man, you could lick him—"

"Fathead!"  
"I'll hold your jacket," said Bunter eagerly. "I say, he said you were a silly, thick-headed, blithering ass, old chap! He said you've got a face like a hyena!"

"Wha-a-t?"  
"And manners like a bear! I'd lick him for it, if I were you, old fellow," said Bunter.

"Would you?" gasped Bob. "Well, I won't lick him; I'll kick you! Like that, and that, and that!"

"Yarooop!"  
Billy Bunter departed in haste. "Well, if he's in his study—" said Squiff. He tapped at the door of Study No. 1, which was next to the landing, and threw it open. "You here, Wharton? Oh, my only summer hat!"

Squiff broke off, coughing. He stared blankly into the study, and Bob Cherry and Co., who had been about to pass on up the passage, stared too. All of them were surprised, or rather, amazed. The atmosphere in Study No. 1 was reeking with tobacco smoke, so thick that a wisp of it rolled out at the doorway when the door was opened. Cigarettes, smoked stumps, and burnt matches, were very much in evidence. It was an utterly unexpected sight in Study No. 1 in the Remove, and it made the fellows stare.

Harry Wharton, grinding hard at lines, looked up impatiently.

"What the thump do you want?" he snapped.

"I was going to speak to you about the footer," said Squiff dryly. "But—"

"Hang the footer! I've got to finish these lines for Quelch!" snapped Wharton irritably. "I've not a second to spare. You know the old cormorant will be after me like a shot if I'm late."

"No need to be late, that I can see. You've had lots of time since class," said Squiff, in the same dry tone. His eyes were on the smokes.

"I've been out—not that it's any business of yours!" snapped Wharton.

"Leave a fellow alone."

"You seem to have been rather busy since you got in," said the new captain of the Remove sarcastically.

Wharton stared.

"What do you mean? I'm busy enough! Oh!" He followed Squiff's glance, saw at what the Australian junior was staring, and understood. "You fool!" he added scornfully.

"Thanks!" said Squiff. "I'd rather be a fool than a smoky sweep! I won't say any more about the footer. You won't want to play footer, if that's your game."

And with a snort of contempt the captain of the Form swung away and walked up the passage.

Harry Wharton laughed. Squiff's error was a natural one, in the circumstances—especially as all the Remove knew that the former captain of the Form was well on his way on the downward path. With a single word he could have undeceived his Form captain, but he did not choose to do so. Squiff stalked away, and Wharton fixed a sarcastic stare on the four faces that were looking in from the passage. Astonishment and dismay seemed to root the Co. to the spot.

"If you're coming in, Nugent, come in and shut the door!" snapped Wharton. "This is your study, and you can come in, I suppose. But you needn't

bring in a crowd of fellows when I've got work to do."

Johnny Bull, with a grim and scornful expression on his face, was going up the passage. Nugent's lip curled.

"I'm not coming in," he said curtly. "I shouldn't care to come into a study in this state—thanks!"

"Please yourself. If you're not coming in, shut the door!"

Nugent pulled the door shut.

The three juniors slowly followed Johnny Bull up the passage. Nugent's face was dark and troubled.

"You—you saw——" he muttered.

"Couldn't help seeing," growled Bob Cherry. "Is the chap going off his rocker? He never was that sort of dingy ass."

"The neverfulness is terrific," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But the esteemed and idiotic Wharton is preposterously changed this term."

"I say, you fellows——"

"Buzz off, you fat chump!" roared Bob Cherry ferociously. He was in no mood for Billy Bunter.

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

Bob made a motion with his foot, and Bunter retreated.

"Beast!" he hooted. "I jolly well won't have tea with you now—see? Who wants your measly spread? Yah!"

And Billy Bunter rolled away to Study No. 12, which belonged to Lord Mauleverer, in the hope of touching his easy-going lordship for a tea. Bob Cherry and his comrades stood in the passage. They were not, for the moment, thinking of tea, though they had come in hungry after games practice. They were no longer friends of the scapegrace of the Remove, but they were deeply disturbed by what they had seen in his study, which seemed, so far as they could see, to indicate that he was following in the footsteps of the Bounder and Skinner & Co. He had been friendly with the black sheep of the Form of late, but somehow they had never imagined that he would pick up their dingy ways.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" muttered Bob suddenly. He made a gesture towards the end of the passage.

A head was rising into view over the landing from the Remove staircase. It was the head of Henry Samuel Quelch, master of the Remove.

"Quelch!" breathed Nugent.

"After Wharton," muttered Bob. "Wharton's got lines, and he's not done them yet. Quelch is as hard as nails these days, he won't give him a second. Oh, my hat! The fat's in the fire now!"

"The fatfulness in the esteemed fire is terrific," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, in dismay.

The chums of the Remove watched their Form master. Mr. Quelch crossed the landing into the passage, and they saw that his face was set and grim. There was little doubt, or rather none, that he was going to Study No. 1 for Wharton. And that study was reeking with smoke, scattered with cigarettes and cigarette ends—a startling sight for the eyes of any beak.

"My esteemed chums!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "let us chip in, and draw the estimable and idiotic Quelch, and give the absurd Wharton a chance."

"How?" breathed Nugent. Frank was only too willing to chip in and give his former friend a chance if he could.

"The terrific scarpfulness is the proper caper," whispered Hurree Singh.

"Wha-a-at?" stuttered Bob. "Oh, my hat! What are you up to? You howling ass, what the thump——"

There was no time for the nabob to explain. Quelch was almost at Whar-

ton's door. There was time for action, but not for words. Hurree Singh astounded Bob Cherry by giving him a sudden thump on the chest, which sent him staggering across the passage. He jumped after him, grabbed his neck, got his head into chancery, and punched.

"Whoop!" roared Bob. "You mad idiot, what the dickens——"

"Go it, Inky!" yelled Nugent, catching on at once.

Thump, thump, thump!

Doors opened along the passage, and Remove fellows stared out at the uproar. And Mr. Quelch, stopping at the door of Study No. 1, about to open it, stared along the passage instead, and then came rustling wrathfully towards the scene of the sudden combat.

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### The Leg-Pullers!

"I SAY, you fellows! It's a fight!" squeaked Billy Bunter. "Inky and Bob Cherry——"

"Go it, Bob!"

"Pile in, Inky!"

"More trouble in the happy family!" grinned the Bounder, looking out of Study No. 4. "Oh, my hat! Hero's Quelch!"

"Stop it, you duffers!" shouted Tom Redwing.

"Cave!" shouted Hazeldene.

"Ware beaks!" yelled Skinner.

But the warning was lost on the combatants. Bob Cherry had been taken quite by surprise by Inky's sudden and unexpected onslaught. But he "caught on" after a moment or two—realising that it was a dodge to draw Quelch along from Study No. 1, and give Wharton time to get rid of the evidence of his supposed smoking. A few minutes would be enough if the fellow had his wits about him—certainly a single minute would have been enough for any of the black sheep of the Form, in the same circumstances. "Catching on" to the nabob's idea, Bob entered into the spirit of the thing.

He grasped the Nabob of Bhanipur and thumped back, and the two juniors reeled and staggered all over the passage, scuffling and struggling and thumping—though the thumps did not do much damage. But the combat certainly looked a wild and whirling one, and the combatants seemed too wildly excited to observe their Form master whisking up the passage towards them.

"Boys!" hooted Mr. Quelch.

"Take that, you booby!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Take that, you terrific sweep!" panted Hurree Singh.

"I'll jolly well mop up the passage with you!" yelled Bob.

"The mopfulness will be a boot on the other leg, you preposterous tick!" gasped the nabob.

"Boys! Cease this at once!" roared Mr. Quelch. "How dare you fight in the passage—under my very eyes! Cherry! Hurree Singh! Do you hear me? I order you to desist at once!"

But the two excited juniors seemed deaf. Heedless of that voice of thunder, they struggled and wrestled and reeled and punched and thumped. Mr. Quelch made a grab at them, but they avoided the grab, staggered into Frank Nugent, and bumped him over. Nugent caught hold of them as he went and dragged them down in a sprawling heap.

"Oh gad!" gasped Lord Mauleverer, gazing out of the doorway of Study No. 12. "You men, chuck it! Can't you see Quelch?"

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "Field—Mauleverer—Vernon-

Smith—Fish—Todd—separate them at once!"

The juniors named rushed in. But it was not easy to separate those excited adversaries. Peter Todd found himself dragged down by the neck and added to the sprawling heap; Smithy was hooked over and went down, yelling; Squiff and Mauleverer and Fisher T. Fish got hold of the combatants, but the combatants also got hold of them. Instead of two or three fellows struggling, there were now seven or eight, mixed up in a wild and whirling heap of howling humanity.

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

There was a cane under the Form master's arm. He had brought that cane up to the Remove studies with him, perhaps considering that it might be needed for the scapegrace of Greyfriars. Now he slipped it down into his hand, with a grim expression on his face. Words seemed to be wasted on the Removites—and Mr. Quelch tried the effect of the cane.

Swish, swish, swish, swish!

"Oh, my hat! Yaroooh!"

"Whoooop!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

The cane was effective. Mr. Quelch laid it on as if he fancied that he was beating a carpet. It was difficult to distinguish one fellow from another in the struggling heap—and the swishes landed impartially. Fisher T. Fish gave a fearful howl as he caught one on the back of his neck.

"Oh, great gophers!" yelled Fishy. "Wake snakes and walk chalks! Great Abraham Lincoln! Yarooop!"

"Oh, my esteemed hat!" gasped Hurree Singh.

"Oh crikey!"

Swish, swish, swish! Whack, whack, whack!

Mr. Quelch was warming to the work. Seldom had the Remove master been so exasperated. Fellows who persisted in scrapping under the very eye of authority needed the heavy hand. And Quelch's hand was heavy enough! The scrappers and the fellows who had been trying to separate them came in for equal shares of the swishes. They rolled and squirmed away, yelling.

The scrap was over.

"Cherry! Hurree Singh!" hooted Mr. Quelch. "How dare you!"

"Oh crumbs!" groaned Bob Cherry, rubbing his shoulder where the cane had landed hard. "Oh scissors!"

"Ow! Wow!" mumbled the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Mr. Quelch glared at the breathless and dishevelled juniors. He was angry, but he was more surprised than angry. Bob Cherry and the nabob were the best of friends; never since they had first met had there been trouble between them. It was quite a surprise to see them scrapping so furiously that they were actually deaf to their Form master's voice.

"What does this mean, Cherry?" boomed Mr. Quelch.

"M-m-mean, sir?" stammered Bob.

"Why were you fighting with Hurree Singh?"

"I—I—I——" stuttered Bob. It was rather difficult to explain. Certainly he could not tell Mr. Quelch that the scrap was intended wholly and solely to keep him away from Study No. 1 till the scapegrace of the Remove had had time to get his smokes out of sight!

"The faultfulness was mine, esteemed sahib!" gasped the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"It was I who began, sir."

"And why?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"The esteemed Cherry charged me over in games practice, sir," said the Nabob of Bhanipur meekly.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob. Hurree Singh's statement was veracious. Bob had charged him over in games practice, though certainly that was not the cause of the scrap in the Remove passage.

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "You should be ashamed of yourself, Hurree Singh, to have lost your temper for such a trifle!"

"The shameful is terrific, honoured sahib!" murmured the nabob meekly. "Now that the coolness of reflection has followed the terrific fury of idiotic scrapfulness, I bow my absurd head with preposterous shame."

"You absurd boy!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Hurree Singh, you will take two hundred lines as a punishment for this reckless outbreak of temper."

The nabob chuckled. "The sportfulness would not be terrific, my idiotic Squiff. But that was not the absurd reason."

"Fathead!" said Bob. "We were giving Wharton time to clear up before the beak put his nose into his study."

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Squiff. "Pulling Quelch's leg!" ejaculated the Bounder. "Oh, my hat! But what's wrong in Wharton's study?"

"Smokes all over the shop!" answered Bob.

"Great pip!" "He, he, he!" came from Billy Bunter.

"Wharton smoking!" exclaimed the Bounder. "That's not in his line."

"Well, the study was like a tap-room

everer's study. What was going to happen in Study No. 1 was not, after all, so important as tea.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Found Guilty!

HARRY WHARTON wrote his last line, and threw down his pen. He had heard, without heeding, the uproar in the Remove passage.

After coming in, he had had barely time to get that impot finished—and he had had interruptions, with the result that the lines were not finished in time. He knew that a row was going on in the passage, and that Mr. Quelch was



Harry Wharton pushed open the door of Study No. 1 and beheld Billy Bunter sprawling in the armchair, his fat feet on the table, puffing away at a cigarette. "My hat!" roared Wharton. "You fat sweep!"

"Yes, sir," said the nabob submissively.

"Let there be no more of this!" said the Remove master, frowning. "You must control your temper, Hurree Singh."

"The controlfulness will be terrific, sir."

"If there is any renewal of this quarrel I shall send both of you to your headmaster!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"There will be no renewfulness, sir."

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Bob.

Mr. Quelch turned and walked back down the passage. Bob Cherry winked at his chums when the Form master's back was turned.

"All serene!" he murmured. "I'll help you with the lines, Inky, old black bean."

"You silly chump, Inky!" said Squiff. "What do you mean by pitching into a man for a charge on the footer field? Call that sporting?"

at the Cross Keys," said Bob. "He's had time to get it clear now, if he's got any sense. He must have heard Quelch in the passage."

And feeling that they had done all they could, and hoping that it had been effective, Bob Cherry & Co. went into Study No. 13 to tea. Billy Bunter blinked after Mr. Quelch, who had now stopped again at the door of Study No. 1, with a rather alarmed blink through his big spectacles. Unless Wharton had taken advantage of the respite, and cleared away the traces the fat Owl had left there, Mr. Quelch was going to make a startling discovery in that study.

"Oh crikey!" murmured Bunter. "Well, the beast kicked me! He kicked me jolly hard! Serve him jolly well right if he gets six! Kicking a chap—"

And Bunter rolled into Lord Maul-

there; and he fully expected his Form master to look into the study for the lines that were now overdue. He only hoped that the row would keep Quelch, occupied long enough for him to finish; so that he might have the completed imposition to hand over when the master looked in. In that case, Quelch, sour as he was, could hardly double it, or hand out any other penalty.

With his pen racing over the paper, and Latin lines running off the nib at top speed, Wharton did not give a thought to the smokes that Bunter had left in the study. Had he been smoking himself, no doubt he would have taken advantage of the respite to get rid of the evidence, with his Form master in the offing. As it was, he was only thinking of getting the lines finished before Quelch came down on him like a wolf on the fold, and he barely succeeded. As he rose from the table the

last line done, there was a sharp tap at the door, and it opened.

Wharton smiled faintly, as the tall and angular figure of the Remove master stepped in. He had finished—the row in the passage had saved his bacon. He had his completed lines just ready to hand over.

"Wharton——" began Mr. Quelch, in the cold and hard tone he always used to the scapegrace of the Form. "Your lines——"

"I was just coming down with them, sir," said Wharton. "They are finished."

"You are late!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "You are very well aware, Wharton, that an imposition should be handed in——"

He broke off.

His gimlet-eyes had been fixed on Wharton, and he had not, for a moment, seen what was to be seen in the study. He saw it now! A startling change came over his face as his glance fell on scattered cigarettes on the floor, burnt stumps and burnt matches on the rug, and in the fender; and he became aware, too, of the smoky atmosphere of the room. Wharton had opened the window, and the smoke had cleared off to a good extent; but there was still a strong flavour of tobacco about Study No. 1.

Mr. Quelch breathed hard and deep.

"Upon my word!" he said. "You have been smoking here, Wharton."

Wharton gave a start. His race against time with the lines had prevented him from giving the least thought to Billy Bunter's antics. His mind had been wholly concentrated on getting the impot done.

"Disgraceful!" said Mr. Quelch.

Wharton's lip curled. He was aware of the misapprehension of the juniors who had looked into the study. He could hardly blame the Form master for falling into the same error. Really, it was difficult for Mr. Quelch to think anything else, as it was well-known that only Wharton used that study, since his break with Nugent.

"I have not been smoking here, sir," said Harry quietly. "I do not smoke."

"Have you the audacity to make such a statement, Wharton, when the evidence of your wrongdoing is under my eyes?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"I have not been smoking, sir!"

"Then whose are these cigarettes? Who has been smoking here? I understand that your former study-mate does not now use this study?"

"That is the case, sir."

"Then Nugent has not been here?"

"Not that I know of!"

"Then these cigarettes are not his?"

"I imagine not."

"Whose are they, then, if not yours?"

Harry Wharton did not answer that question. As Bunter had let slip the fact that he had bagged those smokes in Smithy's study, it was clear that they belonged to the Bounder. But it was hardly for Wharton to tell his Form master so. It certainly was not his business to give any fellow away.

"I have asked you a question, Wharton," said Mr. Quelch, in a rumbling voice.

"I heard you, sir," answered Harry calmly.

"You deny that these cigarettes belong to you, although they are in your study, and there has been smoking here?"

"Certainly, sir."

"Very well. I do not believe you, Wharton," said the Remove master harshly. "But you shall have every chance to prove what you say. You

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are the worst boy in my Form; but you shall have justice."

"Thank you, sir!" said Wharton, with a touch of sarcasm that made the Form master's eyes glint.

"You are late with your lines," said Mr. Quelch. "It is clear to me that you are late, because you have been smoking, instead of getting your task done. I am scarcely surprised—nothing, indeed, from you, can surprise me, after your conduct since the first day of the present term. But I will hear you. You state that these cigarettes belong to some other boy?"

"Yes, sir."

"His name?"

Wharton was silent.

He would willingly have kicked Herbert Vernon-Smith, for having the smokes at all, and still more willingly Bunter, for having brought them to Study No. 1. But he had no intention of giving away either of them to a beak.

"I am waiting for your answer, Wharton," said Mr. Quelch, in an ominous tone.

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"I've nothing to say, sir," he answered.

"I thought not," said Mr. Quelch bitterly. "I imagined not, Wharton. You would like me to believe that some other boy brought these cigarettes to your study, and smoked some of them here; but you will not venture to mention a name."

"A fellow isn't bound to give another fellow away, sir," said Harry. "I know whom the cigarettes belong to, and know who brought them here. If I told you, all the fellows would call me a sneak."

Mr. Quelch looked at him. There had been a time when he would have taken Harry Wharton's word without question. But that time was past. The "worst boy in the Form" could not expect to be believed, against overwhelming evidence.

The cane was tucked under Mr. Quelch's arm. It slipped down into his hand now.

Wharton's eyes glittered.

"You will gather up those cigarettes, Wharton, and place them in the box!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

Wharton obeyed.

"Now bend over that chair!"

"You are going to cane me?" asked Wharton, breathing hard.

"Most certainly I am going to punish you, for impudently and viciously breaking a strict rule of the school!" said Mr. Quelch sternly.

"I have told you that the cigarettes are not mine, and that I have never smoked."

"I do not believe you. Bend over that chair!"

Wharton's eyes flashed.

"You mean that you do not choose to believe me," he broke out passionately. "You know that I am telling the truth."

"What? What?" Mr. Quelch fairly spluttered. "Wharton! Another word of such insolence, and I will take you to your headmaster. Bend over that chair this instant."

Wharton paused. It was on his lips to refuse. But he caught the deadly gleam in the eyes of Henry Samuel Quelch. It was no secret in the Remove, that Quelch would have been glad to get rid of the rebel of the Form. It flashed into Wharton's mind, that the Remove master would not have been by any means sorry to march him to the Head and report him for deliberate disobedience. He realised that defiance meant playing into the hands of the master who was fed-up with his presence in the school.

He set his lips hard, and bent over the chair.

Swish, swish, swish! rang the cane. Swish, swish, swish! Mr. Quelch stopped at six; though he was powerfully tempted to go on.

But the swishes were handed out with great vim. Loud whacks rang along the Remove studies, and apprised most of the Lower Fourth that Wharton was going through it.

But they heard no sound from Wharton himself. With dogged defiance he bore the infliction silently.

"Let that be a warning to you, Wharton!" Mr. Quelch tucked the cane under his arm again. "If you have added surreptitious vices to rebellion and disrespect, take warning in time! I shall warn the prefects to keep this study under observation!"

With that the Remove master walked out, taking Wharton's lines and the box of cigarettes with him.

Wharton stood leaning on the table, his face white, his breath coming thick and fast. Injustice piled on injustice, punishment for no fault committed, punishment on any pretext—that was how it seemed to him. Quelch would not have come to the study at all had he given the junior a few minutes' grace with his lines, as he would have given any other fellow. Passionate indignation and resentment burned in the junior's breast. Somehow—anyhow—he would get his own back, he told himself savagely; his tyrant should not have it all his own way! Mr. Quelch's footsteps died away, and three or four fellows came along and glanced into the study.

Wharton pulled himself together at once. He had had a severe "six," but he would not let the fellows see that he was hard hit.

"Had it bad?" asked the Bounder.

Wharton forced a laugh.

"Oh, nothing! Quelch can't whop!" he said carelessly.

"It sounded as if he could!" grinned Smithy. "Blessed if it didn't sound as if you'd got the carpet-beaters in!"

"What the thump did you let him spot you for?" asked Skinner. "Those fellows kicked up a shindy to give you time. Why didn't you get your smokes out of sight before the beak barged in?"

Wharton started.

"Who did?" he exclaimed.

"Your old pals," grinned Skinner. "Cherry and Inky got up a scrap to draw Quelch along the passage. You had lots of time."

"The cheeky rotters!"

"Eh—is that your way of rendering thanks for a good turn?"

"Yes; I knew they fancied I'd been smoking when they looked in here," said Wharton. "The meddling fools!"

"And you hadn't?" grinned Skinner. "My dear man, the study's reeking with it now!"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" snapped Wharton. "I'll make that rotter sit up somehow for giving me six for nothing!"

"Nothing?" grinned the Bounder.

"You silly idiot! They weren't my smokes!" snapped Wharton. "I was rather a fool not to tell Quelch whose they were, I dare say."

"You were—if they weren't yours!" chuckled Smithy. "Did they walk in here and smoke themselves?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Skinner.

"It's not too late to tell him now!" said Wharton savagely. "It would do you good to get six, you smoky sweep! They were your smokes!"

"Mine!" ejaculated the Bounder, with a jump. "I had a box in my study. Mean to say you borrowed my smokes?"

"You silly idiot! Bunter brought them here, and I found him smoking and kicked him out!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Oh, really, Wharton"—Billy Bunter blinked in at the doorway—"look here, don't you make out that I pinched Smithy's smokes, you beast! I never knew Smithy had any smokes! I never went into his study at all, and never found them hidden under the biscuit-tin in the cupboard! I didn't lift up the biscuit-tin to see if there were any biscuits in it, and I can jolly well—Whooooooop!"

Billy Bunter travelled up the passage, with the Bouncer behind him. A series of fearful yells woke the echoes as Smithy dribbled the fat junior up the passage. Wharton slammed the door of Study No. 1.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### A Friend in Need!

**C**EDRIC HILTON of the Fifth Form started.

He sat up and stared.

Hilton of the Fifth was in his study, reclining on a settee under his window. The November dusk had long set in, and it was dark in the study; but Hilton had not troubled to rise and put on the light. His study-mate, Price, was in the games study with other Fifth Form men, and Hilton was lazily leaving it to him to turn on the light when he came along. Hilton, the dandy of the Fifth, was a sportsman, in his own estimation, and a sporting problem was occupying his thoughts as he sprawled lazily on the settee. He had not yet been able to make up his mind whether to back Bonny Boy or Love of Mike for the race that was to be run at Wapshot the following day. One or the other of those "gees," Hilton was convinced, was going to "pull it off." But which? That was a knotty point for Cedric Hilton to decide before he laid his money on either.

Thinking out that knotty point, Hilton had finished his cigarette and thrown away the stump, and lay on the settee with his slim, white hands clasped behind his handsome head, while the darkness deepened in his study.

The door suddenly opened.

Supposing that it was Price of the Fifth coming in, Hilton did not trouble to stir. He expected Price to switch on the light.

But the light was not switched on. The door closed again, swiftly and softly. Someone stood within the study, scarcely seen in the gloom, breathing hard; Hilton could hear his quick, suppressed breathing. It was then that the dandy of the Fifth sat up and took notice. Obviously, the newcomer was not Stephen Price. From what Hilton could make out of him in the gloom, it was a junior—he was not tall enough for the Fifth. For what reason a junior could have dodged into a Fifth Form study in that mysterious and surreptitious manner Hilton could not guess. He just sat and stared.

Suppressed, but quite audible, came the panting breathing through the shadows. The half-seen figure was standing just within the door, apparently listening for sounds from without.

Hilton grinned.

He found this rather amusing. He did not speak. Evidently the junior who had dodged into the study did not know that he was there; the study being in darkness, he had taken it for granted that it was unoccupied. He did not turn or glance towards the dim-

glimmering window where the Fifth Form man sat.

Hilton peered towards him, grinning. Some young rascal, who had been up to something, had dodged into hiding, and chosen Hilton's study for the purpose, that was plain. Hilton wondered idly what he had been up to. Cedric Hilton was a good deal of a blackguard in many ways, but he was tolerant and good-natured. He grinned, and said nothing.

There was a sound in the passage—footsteps and voices. Pursuit, it seemed, was on the track of the junior who had whipped into the unlighted study so suddenly. What the dickens was up was a mystery to Hilton—not that he was very much interested. The half-seen junior suddenly left the door and crossed the study towards the window. He bent as if it was his intention to take cover under the big settee. At the same moment he caught sight of Hilton's shadowy form sitting there and gave a violent start.

Hilton chuckled.

"All serene, kid!" he drawled in his

been asking for trouble all the term, and gettin' more than you can handle. No need for me to give you a kick that I can see when you're gettin' so many. Get into cover, and I'll say nothin'."

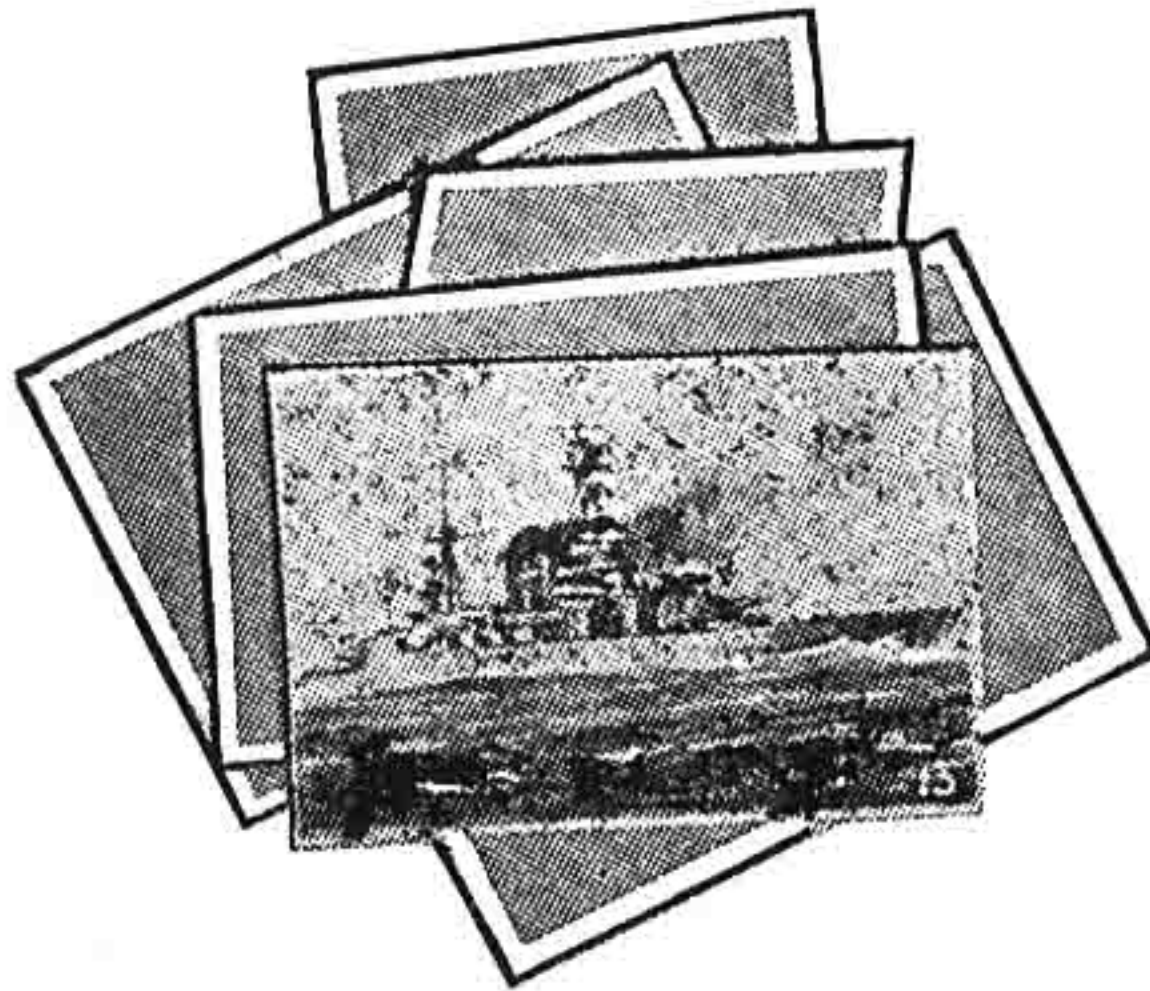
It was sheer good nature on the part of the Fifth Form man. Wharton gave him a rather strange look. He had never thought much of Hilton of the Fifth, whose ways were not quite unknown in the Lower School. Many juniors knew or suspected that Cedric Hilton broke school bounds and had dealings with bookmakers. The "worst boy at Greyfriars" had only contempt for that kind of thing. But Hilton, as a matter of fact, was far from being a "rotter" like Loder of the Sixth. He had more money than was good for him, and he was nobody's enemy but his own.

"I say, that's jolly decent of you, Hilton!" said Harry. "But—"

Hilton yawned, and rose from the settee.

"Better get a light on," he remarked. And he switched on the light. "Now get out of sight, in case they look in, whoever they are."

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pleasant voice. "Only little me, thinkin' out a jolly old problem in the dark! What's the trouble?"

"You—Hilton!" muttered a startled voice. "Oh crumbs! It's all up, then?"

"Is that Wharton of the Remove?" asked Hilton, bending towards the junior and peering at him curiously.

"Yes!" was the snapped answer.

"Somebody after you?"

"Yes!"

"Loder of the Sixth?" yawned Hilton. "I've heard you've had a lot of trouble with him. Wasn't it through you the Head chucked him out of the prefects? Don't be alarmed. Loder can't throw his weight about in a senior study."

"It isn't Loder."

"If it's a prefect, don't be alarmed, either," drawled Hilton. "You were just goin' to dodge under this settee. Well, dodge away!"

Harry Wharton stared at him in the gloom.

"You mean that?" he muttered.

"Why not?" said Hilton, laughing. "From what I hear, you're pretty much up against it, kid; you seem to have

Many voices could be heard in the Fifth Form passage. The powerful tones of Coker of the Fifth came clearly through the buzz.

"I haven't seen him, sir—not here, I think! He would hardly have the cheek to come here."

"I am certain he came in this direction, and ran into this passage—"

It was the acid voice of Mr. Quelch.

"What the dooce have you been up to?" murmured Hilton.

"You'd better chuck me out, Hilton," said Wharton quietly. "I had no idea there was anybody in this study, as it was dark. I don't want to get you into trouble."

"What have you done?"

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"You'll hear soon. I fancy they're going to search the passage. I got Quelch over the landing banisters with a bag of flour."

"Oh, great gad!" gasped Hilton.

"He whopped me for nothing yesterday," said the junior sullenly.

"Hard cheese, to be whopped for  
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nothin'!" said Hilton gravely. "A thing that's continually happenin' to you innocent fags, I believe."

"It's true!" said Wharton curtly.

"Oh, quite! But, you young ass, you might be sacked for getting your Form master with a bag of flour—"

"I thought I should get clear! But he was after me like a shot and cut me off from my own study. I dodged into this passage to get cover."

"Well, get it—and sharp!" said Hilton. "All right, kid; I'll see you through! Get out of sight. They're comin'."

Wharton hesitated a moment. Then he stooped and squeezed under the settee by the window. It was a big article of furniture, and there was plenty of cover for him. Hilton, who was generally lazy and slack in all his movements, acted promptly now, as he heard footsteps and voices coming up the passage towards the study. He grabbed a Greek lexicon and propped it open against the inkstand, dipped a pen into the ink, and sat at the table, apparently up to the ears in Greek. Anyone opening the study door would have fancied that Hilton was a studious youth, hard at work.

The voice of Blundell, the captain of the Fifth, was heard outside the study door. Hilton smiled and scribbled Greek.

"I've seen nobody, sir. Who was it?"

"I did not see him; the light had been turned out on the landing. I have a suspicion, however." Mr. Quelch's voice was bitter. "I am absolutely certain that the boy ran into this passage—"

"Shall we look into the studies, sir?" That was the voice of Wingate, head prefect of Greyfriars.

Evidently the prefects were on the scene, helping to search for the unknown delinquent who had "got" Quelch with a bag of flour.

"Yes, Wingate; I am certain the boy is here—quite certain! Let every study be examined."

"Very well, sir!"

There was a tap at Hilton's door, and it opened. Wingate of the Sixth looked in. Hilton, deep in Greek, did not appear to hear.

"Hilton—" began Wingate.

"Oh!" Hilton gave a start and looked round over his shoulder. "Oh! You, Wingate! Trickle in, old bean—welcome as the flowers in May! Look here. I'm fairly bottled by this passage in Thucydides. Lend a man a hand, will you? It's just pie to you men in the Sixth."

"Sorry! No time now," said Wingate. "I'm looking for some junior who seems to have dodged along this passage—"

"Is he here?" Mr. Quelch appeared, staring in over Wingate's shoulder. Hilton gave another start—a genuine one, this time—at the sight of the Remove master. Mr. Quelch looked rather like the ghost of himself. A bag of flour, apparently, had burst on his scholastic head. He was clothed in flour as in a garment. His face was floury; his clothes were floury; he was floury from head to foot. He was, so to speak, of the flour floury.

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed Hilton. "Have you had an accident?"

"A disrespectful boy has smothered me with flour, Hilton!" said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice. "As he had turned out the light on the landing, I did not see him; but I am certain he ran into this passage. If you have seen any Remove boy—"

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"My door was shut, sir," said Hilton regretfully. "I am sorry—"

"We must search farther, Wingate," said Mr. Quelch, and he stepped back, and the Greyfriars captain drew shut the study door and followed him.

As Hilton was in his study, it was obvious, of course, that no intruder could have entered without his knowledge. Naturally, it did not occur to Mr. Quelch, or to the prefect, that Hilton was sheltering the culprit, who was wanted for such a very serious offence. They proceeded farther in the search.

Hilton whistled softly.

In allowing Wharton to take cover in his study he had acted from sheer thoughtless good-nature. But it occurred to him now that the matter might turn out rather serious for himself. Wharton might regard what he had done as a "rag," but the Head would regard it as an assault on a Form master; and, as likely as not, the culprit, if found, would be "bunked" from the school. And if it came out that a senior man had helped him to escape detection the result would be extremely serious for that senior man.

The door opened, and Price came into the study. Stephen Price was grinning.

"Seen Quelch? Sight for gods and men and little fishes. What?"

"He looked rather a knut," agreed Hilton.

"Some kid in his Form has mopped a bag of flour over him! My hat! It will be warm work if they spot him! He seems to have cut into the Fifth to dodge."

"Not really?"

"So they're sayin'. I remember hearin' somebody scud past the games study," said Price. "That would be the kid, I suppose."

"I shouldn't wonder!" Hilton gave a yawn. "Let's go and lend a hand in the huntin', Pricey. The young rascal may have cut up the back staircase to the dormitories. We'll take a squint there—"

"What rot!" said Price, with a stare. "No bizney of ours."

"My dear man," said Hilton gravely. "It's up to every Greyfriars man to uphold discipline and order, and respect for beaks, and such things. I'm simply yearnin' to bring that young villain to book! I'm goin' to lead the merry chase up to the dormitories. It will be good exercise for Quelch and the prefects, anyhow. If that young rascal's dodged out of sight in a study he will have a chance to get clear—but that can't be helped."

Price stared blankly. Under the settee. Wharton grinned. He understood that Hilton was going to lead the hunt on a false scent and give him a chance to get clear.

"Come on, Pricey!"

"Look here, you ass—"

"Oh, come on!"

Hilton turned off the light in the study.

Price grunted, but he left the study with his friend. Mr. Quelch and the prefects, and several Fifth Form men who had joined in the hunt had passed on up to the end of the passage. Hilton coolly turned off the passage light as he passed the switch, and Price uttered an exclamation.

"What the thump—"

"Shut up, ass!"

Harry Wharton crept out from under the settee. Standing at the open door, he listened. There was a shout in the distance, from the direction of the back staircase. It was Hilton's voice.

"Here! Stop! This way—here, this way!"

There was a patter of hurried feet. The hunting-party crowded up the back staircase after Hilton of the Fifth. Wharton chuckled softly, stepped out into the dark passage, and scudded away in the other direction. In less than a minute he was far from the Fifth Form studies.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### Cecil Reginald Comes in Useful!

"I 'M not standin' any nonsense!" said Cecil Reginald Temple, captain of the Fourth Form at Greyfriars.

"Come on!" said Fry.

"If he isn't jolly civil—"

"Come on!" repeated Fry. "Strike the iron while it's hot, you know."

"Oh, rather!" agreed Dabney.

Temple gave a sniff. But he came on. Temple of the Fourth was a great man—a very great man! But he often yielded to the gentle persuasion of his chum, Edward Fry. Perhaps, somewhere at the back of Temple's aristocratic brain, was a lurking perception of the fact that Fry could make rings round him in the matter of intelligence. Cecil Reginald Temple was far from realising that he was an ass. Nevertheless, he was often, as the poet puts it, tenderly led by the nose, as asses are!

The three Fourth-Formers were crossing the landing into the Remove passage. They were bound for No. 1 Study. Fry was keen, Dabney was rather keen, but Temple seemed doubtful. He was not sure that in this affair due regard was being paid to his lofty dignity. However, he came on.

Fry knocked at the door of No. 1 Study and pushed it open. He entered, followed by his friends. They stared round the study.

"Not here!" said Temple.

He did not seem wholly disappointed. He had his doubts—deep doubts—as to the judiciousness of that interview with Harry Wharton of the Remove.

"Bother the man!" grunted Fry.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"Well, we're not goin' to wait for him," said Temple positively. "I'm not hangin' up for a Lower Fourth fag—"

"Here he comes!"

There was a rather hurried step in the passage, and Harry Wharton came into the study, a little breathlessly. He started at the sight of the three Fourth-Formers there. Fry and Dabney nodded to him; Temple honoured him with a rather lofty stare.

"Hallo! You men want anything?" asked Harry, in surprise. Temple & Co. were rather unaccustomed visitors.

"We've come in for a jaw, old chap," said Fry amicably. "Lots of time before prep."

Wharton stared a little, then he smiled.

"Take a pew," he said, "and fire away!"

Fry took a 'pew,' and Dabney sat on the table. Cecil Reginald Temple remained standing, with his hands in the pockets of his elegant trousers. Wharton's manner was cordiality itself; but Cecil Reginald wasn't sure whether it was quite dignified to accept cordiality from a Remove fag.

Wharton had his own reasons for that cordial welcome. The hunt for the unknown person who had floured Quelch was still going on; but the false scent provided by Hilton of the Fifth was not





"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Quelch, as he eyed the whirling mass of howling humanity. He slipped his cane down into his hand and laid it on the Removites as if he were beating a carpet. Swish, swish, swish! Whack, whack, whack!  
 "Yow-ow-wow!" yelled the unfortunate victims.

likely to keep the hunters long. When he was sure that the culprit had escaped, Mr. Quelch was fairly certain to visit the Remove studies. Although he had not seen his assailant in the dark—the scapegrace of the Remove had taken care of that—it was pretty certain that he would suspect Wharton. Innocent or guilty, the rebel of Greyfriars was sure to be suspected. So it suited Wharton to have visitors in the study when Quelch came along. A fellow who was chatting peaceably in his study with other fellows, was less likely to be identified as the unknown culprit who had dodged into the Fifth Form quarters.

"It's about the football," said Fry. "Go it, Cecil!"

"Well, about the football, you know," said Temple grudgingly.

Wharton did not ask Temple what he knew about football—as he might have been tempted to do at any other time. His cue was to keep the unexpected visitors there till Quelch had come and gone.

"Yes, what about the football?" he asked politely.

"I understand that you're not playin' for your Form these days."

"That's so."

"Well, then, I was thinkin' of offerin' you a chance in the junior eleven," said Temple.

Wharton suppressed a smile. It was Temple's fixed conviction that his eleven was the junior eleven of Greyfriars, and that they were the goods, so to speak. He declined to recognise the existence of the Remove eleven, except as a fag Form team that he sometimes played. The fact that that fag Form team walked all over him, at

Soccer, made no difference to Cecil Reginald. Cecil Reginald thought far more of his lofty dignity than of winning matches.

"I see!" assented Wharton. "That's decent of you, Temple."

"You know how the matter stands," said Temple, still lofty. "We're the junior eleven. You've got up an eleven of sorts, in the Remove, and you've had the neck to fix up outside matches—St. Jim's, and Rookwood, and other schools—just as if you were a genuine team. But you're not."

Fry looked a little uneasy. If the best footballer in the Remove was to be captured for Temple's team, a little tact would not be wasted, in Fry's opinion. But Temple had little use for tact. Dignity came first. Wild horses would not have dragged Temple into the admission that the Remove football club was anything but a mob of cheeky fags, lacking in proper respect for their elders and betters.

To Fry's surprise and relief, Wharton nodded a cheerful assent.

"I rather think you're hitting the right nail on the head, Temple," he said gravely. "What's the next?"

"Well, bein' the junior eleven of this school, properly speakin', we're open to play men from all junior Forms, of course," said Temple, thawing a little. "You're not a bad man at the game."

"Thanks!"

"There's room for you in my team. Don't fancy I'm beggin' you to come in," added Temple hastily, remembering the vast importance of his personal dignity in this matter. "But if you care to do so, we'll take you on. You can take your usual place—centre-forward."

Harry Wharton's eyes were glimmering. Temple he regarded as an ineffable ass, as indeed he was. Temple & Co.'s Soccer he found amusing. But in his present circumstances the offer was a very welcome one. On the worst of terms with his old friends, obstinately standing out of Remove football since he had been turned out of the captaincy, he had condemned himself to give up games—which he certainly did not want to do. Temple's timely offer afforded him the chance of keeping on football, and at the same time keeping on his stubborn attitude towards the Form that had turned him down.

"Done!" he said at once.

"Good man!" said Fry, heartily.

"Oh, rather!" assented Dabney.

"It's got to be understood, of course, that I'm captain, and that I've no intention whatever of allowing any man in my team to throw his weight about," said Temple.

"Naturally!" assented Wharton.

"You were captain of the Remove until lately—captain of sorts—but in the junior eleven, you'll just be a man like any other—and it will be best for you to remember that all the time."

"I shall make it a point to remember it," said Wharton blandly.

"Well, that's all right," said Temple, very much mollified, and feeling that his dignity was quite safe now. "I don't mind sayin' that we shall be glad to give you a trial."

It was difficult for Wharton not to smile at that. The ineffable Temple was going to give him a "trial," while he was perfectly well aware of the fact that Wharton could play his head off

at Soccer or any other game. But the Removeite contrived not to smile.

"Right-ho!" he said cheerily. "Any time you like! I'm your man!"

Temple unbent still further. He could not deny that Wharton was civil—very civil indeed. If the fellow understood his place, and kept in it, all would be well. Also, he might help Temple win matches. Temple had no objection to winning matches!

"Well, look here," said Temple. "I'm goin' to fix up another game with the Remove—and I'll give you a chance in that, if you like. If you turn out all right, I'll play you against the Shell next time."

"I'm your man!"

"You'll be willing to play against the Remove?" asked Fry, with a rather curious look at the former captain of that Form.

"Why not?" asked Wharton indifferently.

"Certainly, why not?" said Temple warmly. "If Wharton's in my team, Fry, he'll play when he's wanted to play."

"Quite!" said Wharton.

"Well, on Wednesday, then—"

Temple was interrupted by the opening of the study door. Mr. Quelch—still very flourey—looked in. A flourey Form master was rather an uncommon sight at Greyfriars; and Temple & Co. stared at him in astonishment. Wharton's stare of astonishment was quite as pronounced—it was, in fact, worthy of the best traditions of the Remove Dramatic Society.

"Oh! You are here, Wharton!" said Mr. Quelch, evidently taken aback.

"Eh? Yes, sir," answered Wharton innocently. "Have you had an accident, sir?"

Mr. Quelch did not answer that ques-

tion. His gimlet-eyes scanned Wharton as if they would bore into him.

"Have you been long in this study, Wharton?"

"Oh, yes, sir, quite some time," answered the junior. "I've been talking football with these fellows."

Temple and Dabney simply stared at the flourey Form master. But Fry was quicker on the uptake. He remembered how hurriedly and breathlessly Wharton had entered, and he caught on at once, and played up.

"We've been here some time, sir," he said, which was quite an accurate statement, though it did not perhaps give the Remove master an accurate impression. "We came in after tea." It was not necessary or judicious in the circumstances to specify exactly how long after tea!

"Very well!" said Mr. Quelch.

And he went on up the passage, to look into Study No. 4. If Wharton was not guilty, it was likely that the Bounder was; so that was the next covert for Mr. Quelch to draw.

Fry closed the door, and looked round at Wharton.

"My Aunt Selina!" he murmured.

"Did you—"

"How could I, when I've been here talking football with you fellows?" answered Wharton, with a laugh.

Fry chuckled.

"Right-ho! Let's keep to football," he said.

And there was quite a long and cheery talk on that interesting subject before the Fourth Form men left. They left, at last, in a state of complete satisfaction. The best man at Soccer in the Remove was now a member of Temple's team; and that constituted an admission of what Temple had always claimed. And his inclusion gave that

rather footling team a very much needed leg-up. Most important of all, Cecil Reginald's lofty dignity had been observed and respected, and he took it away with him unimpaired.

Wharton smiled when they were gone. They had helped to save him from discovery, and they were giving him the chance he wanted to keep on with football, after his break with the Remove footballers. So he was as satisfied as his departing visitors.

He was sitting down to prep when Squiff looked in.

"Busy?" asked the new captain of the Remove.

"Frightfully."

"Well, just a word. What about football? I've told you more than once that I want to keep you in the team."

Wharton raised his eyebrows.

"You said yesterday that you had nothing more to say about the footer," he remarked.

"I thought—"

"You thought I'd taken up smoking, like Skinner, because that fat fool Bunter smoked Smithy's cigarettes in my study!"

"Well, what did it look like?" snapped Squiff. "I wasn't the only fellow that thought so—and Quelch seems to have lammed you for it—"

"Oh, quite! I'm used to that sort of thing from Quelch. But I should have expected you to have a little more sense than Quelch."

"Well, it was a mistake, and I'm sorry—"

"Thanks!"

Wharton turned to his books.

"I've told you I want you!" said Squiff.

"You want a smoky sweep to play football for the Remove?"

"Oh, don't be an ass! Will you play, or not?"

"No, I won't!"

"Then you're chucking football, because you've got your silly back up over a mistake I've said I'm sorry for?"

"Not at all," answered Wharton coolly. "I'm keeping on football! You're not the only pebble on the beach."

"Has Wingate put you in the First Eleven?" asked Squiff sarcastically.

"No. Temple's put me in the Junior Eleven!"

Sampson Quincy Illey Field stared at him.

"My hat! So that's it! You're going to fumble about with those footling fat-heads—"

"Shut the door after you."

Squiff shut the door after him with a slam that rang the length of the Remove passage.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Not for Wharton!

HILTON of the Fifth sauntered out of the House, looking, as he generally looked, the picture of elegance.

It was a rather raw November afternoon, and mist hung over a grey sky. Hilton's handsome hat reflected what sunshine there was; his well-cut coat was the last word in the tailor's art; from his beautiful necktie, to the ends of the well-creased trousers that were turned up over his shapely boots, he looked a genuine knut.

Fellows glanced at him, some in admiration, some in envy, a few with a tincture of disdain. Among the latter was Horace Coker of the same Form, who gave expression to an audible snort as the handsome, well-dressed Fifth-Former passed him. Coker told his friends, Potter and Greene, that he



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hoped he would never be a tailor's dummy. Potter and Greene, looking at Coker, thought that he was in little danger. The rugged, hefty Horace, who always looked as if his clothes had been made for somebody else, and carelessly at that, was certainly a striking contrast to the elegant Cedric.

Mr. Prout, master of the Fifth, glanced at Hilton with a benevolent smile, on the other hand. Prout liked to see men in his Form well dressed. Temple of the Fourth fairly glued his eyes on him. Temple was rather a dandy, and Hilton of the Fifth was his model—Hilton being, in fact, the glass of fashion, and the mould of form among the dressy men of Greyfriars School. Temple's dominant wish, at that moment, was to know the name of Hilton's tailor.

With ease and grace, Hilton of the Fifth sauntered towards the gates. For once, his inseparable companion, Price, was not with him on a half-holiday.

Price had been devoting such deep and concentrated attention to the gee-gees, who ran away with most of his spare cash, that he had had no time left for Form work—and Mr. Prout had taken it amiss. Prout, of course, did not know how deeply Price was interested in the odds against Love o' Mike for the Wapshot two o'clock. But he knew that Price, whatever the reason, had made a succession of howlers in his "con" that morning, and he had given him a detention. So Cedric Hilton walked forth on his elegant way on his own.

Possibly for that reason he remembered the existence of Harry Wharton of the Remove when he sighted that junior in the quad.

Wharton was loafing—it could hardly be called anything but loafing—under the leafless elms. There was junior games practice that afternoon, but it was not beginning yet. In these days, when Wharton was on unfriendly terms with almost all the fellows he knew, he was very often alone—with pride for his solitary companion. If he missed his old friends, however, his looks gave no indication of the fact. His face was indifferent.

Hilton gave him a rather curious glance, slowed down, and bestowed a nod on him. The loafing junior came across to him, with a rather brightening face. He had not had an opportunity of speaking to Hilton since the episode in the latter's study. Lower Fourth came seldom into contact with the Fifth.

His private opinion of Cedric Hilton was that he was a bit of a dandified ass, like Temple of the Fourth, and a bit of a shady blackguard, like Loder of the Sixth. But Hilton had a careless, generous good nature that was not like either of them, and the junior rather liked him for it.

Carelessly, but kindly, Hilton had done him a good turn. He had taken some risk in doing it; unthinkingly, perhaps, but there it was! Wharton was rather anxious to thank him for it, though probably he would not have spoken to the Fifth Form man unencouraged. As Hilton stopped to speak, however, the junior had an opportunity.

"Turned out all right, what?" asked Hilton. "They never bagged you?"

"No; I got clear, thanks to you," said Harry. "I'm really ever so much obliged, Hilton! It would have been a break's whopping—perhaps—" He paused. It might have been the "sack," and he knew it. "It was decent of you to stand by a fellow, as you did."

"All serene!" Hilton paused. "On your own?" he asked.

Wharton coloured a little.

"Yes," he said briefly.

"You've been rather in the limelight

lately, kid," said Hilton, with a smile. "You've bagged a lot of rows this term."

"Not my fault!"

"It never is a fellow's own fault," said Hilton, shaking his head. "You were always one of a mob—have you rowed with the mob?"

"Yes."

"Not your fault, either?"

"No!"

"Faultless characters," said Hilton, with great gravity, "are rare at Greyfriars. I congratulate you on being one of the few."

Harry Wharton compressed his lips. He did not want any badinage on this subject from the dandy of the Fifth. He stepped back to let Hilton pass on his way. But the sportsman of the Fifth was not finished yet.

"Hold on, kid! Like to come with me?"

Wharton stared. It was rare enough for a Fifth Form man to pick a companion from the Lower School. Wharton could not help wondering whether it was his new reputation, as the "worst boy at Greyfriars," that interested the black sheep of the Fifth in him.

"I'm on my own, too," said Hilton. "Pricey's got a detention." He lowered his voice. "It's rather against the jolly old rules—but you won't mind that! I'm goin' up to the Three Fishers. There's a scrap on—glove fight, you

This SNAPPY GREYFRIARS  
LIMERICK Wins A HAND-  
SOME POCKET WALLET for:  
Frank Constable, 96, Forest Road,  
Lr. Edmonton. N.9.

Cried Coker: "Just give me  
a show,  
I'm a footballer born, you  
know."  
Said Wingate: "Without  
doubt,  
You're a perfect 'wash-  
out.'  
Try marbles, or playing 'Yo-  
Yo'!"

Now you have a shot at winning  
one of these useful prizes, chum!

know—this afternoon. Worth watchin' I believe. Like to come?"

Wharton did not answer for a moment. On his own, as he was, on a half-holiday, he would rather have liked to join up with the elegant dandy of the Fifth. But most decidedly he did not want to visit the Three Fishers, a disreputable place up the river that was strictly out of bounds. Still more decidedly he did not want to join the smoky, drinking crowd who were going to watch the fight and make bets on it. The worst boy at Greyfriars had no taste whatever for such things.

He could not help wondering at Hilton. The fellow was speaking from careless good nature—being kind to an unfriendly junior who was left on his lonesome. It did not seem to cross his careless, volatile mind, that there was anything wrong in leading a younger fellow into his own questionable ways.

Wharton was rather tempted to tell Cedric Hilton what he thought of him and his ways.

But he remembered what he owed him—escape from a flogging, if not a more severe punishment. The fellow, after all, was only an ass.

"Thanks. I'm going down to games practice soon," said Harry.

And Hilton, with a careless nod, passed on, and went out at the gates.

Obviously he did not care a brass button whether Wharton went with him or not.

Wharton walked away slowly to the House. A fellow like Hilton was rather a puzzle to a fellow like Wharton. Handsome, wealthy, well-connected, a good man at games when he chose to exert himself, Hilton could easily have made his mark, and he chose instead to dabble in shady pursuits, and play the "giddy goat," at the risk of being found out and "bunked" from the school. He could have got his colours if he had tried for them, and he preferred to watch two beefy bruisers punching one another in a shed. Wharton shrugged his shoulders and dismissed Hilton from his mind. He was far from guessing at the moment what the result of that talk with the dandy of the Fifth was to be for him.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### A Tip for Two!

**B**ILLY BUNTER came up to the Remove passage, with an expression of suppressed excitement on his fat face, blinking round him through his big spectacles. Bob Cherry & Co. were on the Remove landing, and the fat Owl called to them.

"I say, you fellows! Seen Smithy?"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Has Smithy had a remittance?" asked Bob.

"Eh? Not that I know of," answered Bunter.

"Then what do you want him for?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"The esteemed and ridiculous Smithy is in his absurd study, my idiotic Bunter," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Oh, he hasn't gone yet, then?" asked Bunter.

"Gone where, fathead?" asked Nugent.

"That's telling," said Bunter, with a fat wink. "I fancy he won't go, though, when I've seen him. He, he, he!"

And leaving the chums of the Remove staring, the fat Owl rolled along to Study No. 4. The door of that study was open, and Bunter blinked in, and saw the Bounder sprawling in his armchair, and Harry Wharton sitting on the edge of the table. This term Harry Wharton dropped into the Bounder's study much oftener than he had been wont to do.

"Oh, here you are!" said Bunter. "I say, Smithy—"

"Cut!" said the Bounder briefly.

Instead of cutting Billy Bunter rolled into the study and shut the door carefully behind him—a proceeding that was watched in astonishment by both the juniors in Study No. 4.

Having shut the door, Bunter placed his podgy back to it, and blinked at Herbert Vernon-Smith through his big spectacles.

"I've come here as a pal, Smithy," he announced.

"You fat idiot!" was the Bounder's ungrateful reply. Apparently he was not feeling pally.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Cut, you podgy ass!"

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter. "I'll cut! You don't want to hear what I was going to tell you! All right! If you prefer to be bunked, have your own way."

The Bounder stared at him.

"You blithering idiot!" he said.

"What are you drivin' at, if you are drivin' at anythin'?"

"I may have heard Wingate talking to Gwynne, and I may not," said Billy

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Bunter mysteriously. "They may be on the track, and they may not. They may suspect a man in the Fifth of going out of bounds, and they may not. If you don't want to know, I won't tell you."

"You blithering bandersnatch!" said the Bounder. "What the dickens does it matter to me if the prefects are after some sportsman in the Fifth?"

Bunter grinned.

"Think I don't know why you're cutting games practice this afternoon?" he demanded. "You've told Squiff you've got to meet your pater at Lantham. That's good enough for that ass, Squiff. He, he, he! You told Skinner something rather different. He, he, he! I happened to hear you! He, he, he!"

The Bounder rose to his feet. There was a gleam in his eye that might have alarmed Billy Bunter had he observed it.

"You hear too much for your own good, Bunter," he said quietly. "But thank you for coming here to be kicked!"

"I—I—I say, Smithy! Yaroooooh!" roared Bunter, as Smithy grasped him by the collar and slewed him round. "I say, old chap— Whoop!"

The Bounder's foot landed hard. William George Bunter flew across the study. He landed on the carpet with a bump.

"Wow!" roared Bunter. "Beast! Ow! Keep off! I say, old chap, I never heard you say— Whoop! I never heard you say you were going up to the Three Fishers this afternoon. Yaroop! I never knew anything about it! Wow!"

Thud, thud, thud!

The Bounder apparently was cutting games practice that afternoon, but he was getting in a little practice with Bunter. The fat Owl of the Remove rolled round the study rather like a football, as the Bounder kicked, and kicked again.

"Beast!" roared Bunter. "Whoop! I say, Wharton, you rotter, stop him! I say, old chap, collar him, will you? Make him leave off! Yaroooooh!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"You shouldn't ask for these things, Bunter," he said.

"Beast! You're a worse rotter than Smithy!" howled Bunter. "Ow! I say, Smithy, old chap, I came here to give you a tip."

"I'm givin' you one instead," said Smithy.

"Yarooooop!"

Bunter rolled and roared. Herbert Vernon-Smith was not a patient or good-tempered fellow, and he seemed in a very bad temper now. The Bounder's manners and customs could not be kept too dark, and evidently Billy Bunter had been somewhere near the keyhole when Smithy had spoken to Skinner about his plans for that afternoon. Smithy was impressing on Bunter that his keyhole work was not popular in Study No. 4.

"Now cut!" snapped the Bounder, throwing the door open. "If you wait for me to help you out—"

"Ow! Wow, wow!" Bunter sprawled and gasped. "Beast! I jolly well won't tell you now! You can jolly well go to the Three Fishers and get copped! I hope you'll be sacked! Yah! Beast! Wow!"

The Owl of the Remove squirmed doorward.

But the Bounder, with a start, shut the door again. It dawned on him that the fat and fatuous Owl was not, as usual, merely talking out of the back of his podgy neck.

"Hold on, Bunter!" he said sharply.

"Shan't!" roared Bunter. "I won't

say a word! Kicking a chap! You can jolly well go and get copped along with Hilton, so yah!"

Smithy put his back to the door.

"Stay where you are, you fat fool!" he snapped.

"Beast!"

"Now cough it up before I kick you round the study again!" snarled the Bounder. "Sharp's the word!"

Billy Bunter blinked at him almost ferociously. Vernon-Smith made a motion with his foot. There was no escape for Bunter, with the Bounder's back to the door. He had to "cough it up."

"I heard Wingate and Gwynne jawing," he said. "Wingate's window was open, you know, and I stopped to tie my shoelace, and—"

"Cut that out, you cavesdropping toad!" snapped Smithy. "Mean to say that the prefects are goin' after a man up to the Three Fishers?"

"They're going after Hilton of the Fifth, you beast! They know all about him; they guess, at any rate. And I came here to give you the tip," said Bunter, with deep indignation. "You'd be copped along with that Fifth Form sweep—"

"Pheh!" The Bounder whistled softly. "If that's genuine, you've done me a good turn, you fat chump!"

"That's what I came here for, you beast! I came here as a pal," said Bunter. "I jolly well knew—"

"Well, you shouldn't have jolly well known!" snapped Vernon-Smith. "You know too much about other fellows' bizney."

"You—you ungrateful beast!" roared Bunter. "If that's how you thank a chap—"

"Oh, rats! Look here! Is this true, or are you pulling my leg?" demanded the Bounder suspiciously.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"I suppose it's true. I know they've had an eye on that show ever since that old idiot, Sir Hilton Popper, spotted a Greyfriars man there. My hat! I might have walked into their hands!" The Bounder whistled again.

"And I gave you a tip, out of pure friendship," said Bunter, with dignity. "That's me all over—always thinking of my pals. As soon as I heard Wingate say he was after a disgraceful black-guard, I thought of you at once, old chap."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wharton.

"You fat owl—"

"Oh, really, Smithy! Look here, I've jolly well saved your bacon, and chance it!" said the fat Owl. "And if you don't lend me five bob till my postal order comes, I wish I'd jolly well let you be copped."

The Bounder laughed.

"It's worth that," he said. "My hat! Fancy Quelch's face, if Wingate had walked me in from the Three Fishers!"

Billy Bunter rolled out of Study No. 4 the richer by two half-crowns. The Bounder whistled once more—a long, expressive whistle. He realised what a narrow escape he had had. He glanced at Harry Wharton with a grin.

"I fancy I'll tell Squiff that my pater's not payin' for that visit to Lantham, after all, this afternoon!" he chuckled.

"Me for footer, what?"

Wharton's lip curled involuntarily.

"Mean to say you were fibbing to Field?" he asked.

"Well, I wasn't exactly tellin' him the frozen facts!" said the Bounder sarcastically. "When I go up to the Three Fishers to see a glovefight, I don't advertise it. That's a sort of case where advertisin' doesn't pay!"

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, I'm joinin' up for games practice, anyhow," said the Bounder

sharply. "Pretty near time to get changed. Comin'?"

"You think Bunter had it right?"

"No doubt about that—I know they've had their eye on that show. Hilton of the Fifth is just the man to butt into trouble. A bit of a sweep—but more ass than anythin' else." The Bounder laughed contemptuously. He had no sympathy to waste on lame ducks. "They'll make a jolly old example of him—and give other fellows a rest for a bit. Hilton's the kind of fool who gets nailed—asks for it! I'm rather surprised at Price, though—he's deep!"

"Price never went out with Hilton this afternoon—I saw him go, and he went alone!"

"Then his number's up! Price is deep—he might wriggle out somehow—but Hilton will be starin' at the prizefight like a cow at a train, till he feels a hand on his shoulder. Prout will make faces when they sack a man in his Form. Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bounder laughed again, evidently amused by the prospect of Prout's face when a Fifth Form man was expelled.

"Well, comin'?" asked the Bounder. "I'm goin' down to change."

Wharton followed him from the study, but they parted company in the Remove passage.

Harry Wharton was not thinking of games practice now. He was thinking of a reckless, thoughtless fellow who had saved him from dire punishment, and who was now in danger of direr punishment. Contempt for Hilton's pursuits made no difference. The fellow was doing wrong; still, Wharton could hardly have said, of himself, that he had been doing right when he hurled a bag of flour over the banisters at his Form master. Cedric Hilton was a shady sweep—but it was not for Wharton to judge him.

One good turn deserved another! Hilton of the Fifth was in danger, and Wharton knew of his danger! How was he going to save the shady sweep of the Fifth from the chopper that was coming down? There was no time to lose—but what was he to do?—what could he do?

He remembered Price. Price was Hilton's pal—his closest pal. And he remembered that Hilton had said that "Pricey" had a detention, which was the reason why he had not gone out with his friend. Price was the man—and as he thought of that, Wharton cut away in the direction of the Form-rooms.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### A Fight in the Fifth!

**S**TEPHEN PRICE scowled at Cicero on his desk in the Fifth Form Room.

Price was in a savage temper. For a week or more he had been looking forward to seeing the fight at the Three Fishers. He had bets on the fight; from which he hoped to indemnify himself for his losses on the elusive geo-gees.

Much thought had Price given to that important matter—with the rather unexpected result that, instead of seeing the fight, he was sitting in the Fifth Form Room that afternoon, with Cicero to keep him company.

Price took a good many risks, in one way and another; but he was not of an openly venturesome nature, and he did not think of cutting detention. He sat and scowled, and grappled with the polished Latin periods of Cicero—with the deepest loathing for that eloquent



Hilton gave a start at the sight of Mr. Queleh, who was covered with flour from head to foot. "Oh, sir!" he exclaimed. "Have you had an accident——" "Some disrespectful boy put out the light on the landing, and then smothered me with flour," said the Remove master, in a grinding voice. "I thought he may be in here!"

and long-winded classical gentleman. He was scowling at Cicero when the Form-room door opened, and Wingate of the Sixth came in; upon which, Price scowled at the Greyfriars captain instead.

Wingate's brows were knitted. Price always felt a little uneasy under George Wingate's eyes; and he had a sudden pang of alarm now. He realised swiftly that detention might, after all, have been a stroke of luck for him that afternoon.

"Where's Hilton?" asked Wingate abruptly.

"Hilton?" Price reflected swiftly. That question, from the head prefect, could only mean that the sportsman of the Fifth was under suspicion—as he had been more than once before. "Gone to the pictures, I think."

"The pictures?" repeated Wingate.

"Yes; we were goin' together, but Prout gave me a detention," explained Price. "It's all serene, Wingate—I know that Lantham is out of bounds, but Prout knows; Hilton got leave."

Wingate looked at him hard.

"Camouflage?" he asked.

"I don't quite understand you, Wingate."

"Did Hilton ask Prout for leave to go to Lantham to throw dust in his eyes because he had something on much nearer at hand?"

Price breathed very hard. He had not expected George Wingate to jump to it like this!

"Certainly not!" he answered. "There's a new film—somethin' rather good—at the Lantham Arcade. Hilton's got tickets. He showed them to Prout, I believe, when he asked leave."

"No doubt," said Wingate. "He would."

He walked out of the Form-room without saying anything more. Price sat staring at the door after he had gone. Obviously, something was suspected. And in those very moments, Cedric Hilton was mingling in the crowd at the Three Fishers—the most disreputable den in the vicinity. If Wingate guessed—

The Form-room door opened again. A junior stepped in, closed the door after him, and came quickly across towards Price. The Fifth Form man stared blankly at Harry Wharton of the Remove.

"You young sweep!" he snapped.

"What do you want here? Get out!"

"I saw Wingate come in here," said Harry.

"There's no doubt about it now, Price. He's after Hilton."

"What the thump do you mean?"

snarled Price. "What do you know about Hilton, you cheeky little tick?"

"No time for gas, Price!" said Wharton curtly.

"A Remove man has got a tip that the Three Fishers isn't safe this afternoon—the prefects are after a Fifth Form man there. That's Hilton!"

"Then—they know?" breathed Price.

"Wingate's going there—and I think Gwynne with him—but they've not started yet, as I saw him here. There's time to give Hilton the tip," said Wharton hurriedly.

"It's the sack for him if he's caught."

"I don't see that it concerns you," said Price staring.

"Perhaps not! But Hilton did me a good turn the other day—and so I've come to tell you! You've got time to give him the tip."

"I?" ejaculated Price.

"You know where he is—you know what will happen if he's spotted there,"

said Wharton impatiently. "There's no time to lose."

Price gazed at him blankly. He could hardly realise that this junior was suggesting that he should put his head into the lion's mouth, as it were, to warn the fellow whose head was already in! But that, evidently, was what the cheeky young sweep meant! Indeed, it had not occurred to Wharton that the Fifth Form man would think of leaving his friend in the lurch, once he knew of his danger.

"You blithering little idiot!" said Price at last. "I'm under detention—I can't get out!"

"Talk sense!" snapped Wharton.

"You'll get a big impot for cutting detention; but Hilton's up for the sack!"

"Are you mad? Anybody who started for the Three Fishers now would get there along with Wingate!" said Price staring.

Wharton's eyes flashed.

"Are you leaving Hilton in the lurch, you tick?"

"Get out of this Form-room," muttered Price. "If Prout come in and found you here——"

"Never mind Prout now! You're Hilton's pal—are you standing by him, or not?" snapped Wharton.

"You know what he's up for. He's a shady black-guard to be where he is at all—but you don't care about that! Are you going to get to him and warn him?"

"I can't!"

"Oh, you rotter!" breathed Wharton.

"You're his pal—you'd have been with him now if you hadn't been detained. You're leaving him to it?"

"What can I do, you little fool?"

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(Continued from page 13.)

breathed Price huskily. "I should be nailed along with him—what good would that do Hilton?"

"There's a chance—you might get ahead of them—anyhow, you're bound to try it on! You know you are!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Don't cheek me, you little sweep! Get out of this Form-room—Prout may come in any minute—"

"Hang Prout! Will you go?" hissed Wharton. "Are you afraid, you cur?"

"By gad!" Price jumped up from his desk. He dared not take the risk, or rather the certainty of being "nailed" in an attempt to save his friend. But he had a feeling of shame at his own cowardice and disloyalty; and he found relief in working himself into a rage. And the lashing words of scorn from a Lower School boy were exasperating enough. "By gad! You cheeky young scoundrel—get out, or I'll pitch you out!"

"You cur!" breathed Wharton. "The man's your pal—and you're leaving him to be grabbed by the prefects! You're worse than he is, and you know it—lots of fellows know that Hilton would be a decent chap enough, if you let him alone. And you're leaving him to it—you cur! You cur!"

That was too much for Stephen Price. He fairly sprang at the junior, and grasped him by the collar.

"Now, you cheeky little rotter—" he hissed. "Oh! By gad! Oh!"

He let go Wharton's collar and staggered back, as the junior struck him full in the face.

It was in Wharton's mind what he was going to do—what he must do—if Price refused to stand by his friend. Hilton had saved him—and he had to save Hilton in his turn! It was up to Price—and Price refused. He had to take the risk that Price refused to take, or leave Hilton to his fate. For him there was more risk, and less chance of success; for he did not know his way about that disreputable den as Price did. And he hated the idea of setting foot in such a place—he shrank from the thought of mingling with the disreputable, black-guardly crowd of dingy outsiders there. And it was left to him—because this cowardly rotter failed his friend in the hour of need!

Wharton's eyes were blazing with rage, and he struck hard as the senior grasped him, and Price staggered and fell at full length.

There was a crash on the floor of the Fifth Form Room. Stephen Price lay dazed, blinking dizzily up at the junior.

Wharton's eyes blazed down at him. "You cur!" he panted. "You're leaving him in the lurch—leaving him to be nailed—and it was you that led him into it! You rotter! You rotter!"

Price scrambled up, crimson with fury. He hurled himself at the Remove, and Wharton met him with right and left. Enraged by what he

knew that he had to do, sorely against the grain, there was some satisfaction to the junior in punching Price. And he punched hard and fast. A Remove junior was no match for a Fifth Form senior, but there was little pluck in the oad of the Fifth, and he backed away from Wharton's lashing fists.

"You beastly little hooligan!" panted Price. "Get out, I tell you—get out!"

The Form-room door opened. Mr. Prout, rolling along to see how Price was getting on with Cicero, stopped dead in the doorway, staring at the amazing scene that met his eyes.

Mr. Prout stared blankly. He gasped. He gurgled. Never had Prout been so astounded.

"Upon my word!" gasped Prout.

He strode in.

"Wharton! What are you doing here? How dare you, a Remove boy, come to this Form-room? Price! What—what—"

Wharton, panting, dropped his hands.

"Oh, sir!" gasped Price. He gave Wharton a venomous look. "I—I'm sorry, sir! This fag came in here, kicking up a shindy. I was turning him out—"

"I am amazed!" gasped Prout. "I am astounded! This junior is, I believe, the worst boy in his own Form! I believe that he is the worst boy in the school! But that he should dare to enter my Form-room and make a disturbance here— Upon my word, I can scarcely believe my eyes! Wharton, how dare you enter this Form-room and make a disturbance!"

Wharton gave Price a look. But there was nothing to say. He was in the Fifth Form Room, where no junior had a right to be—he had been fighting with Price of the Fifth! Certainly he could not tell Prout that he had come there to "tip" Price to cut off to a place out of school bounds to warn a shady sweep that the prefects were after him! Such an explanation would assuredly not have poured oil on the troubled waters!

"This passes all patience!" boomed Prout, who really was shocked, and, indeed, horrified. "It passes all bounds—all toleration! Even my own Form-room—a senior Form-room—is not immune from Lower Fourth ruffianism! Wharton, I shall take you to your Form master. Follow me!"

Price returned to his desk. He was uneasy and anxious about Hilton, it was true; though his uneasy anxiety was far from driving him to take the risk Wharton had expected him to take as a matter of course. It was some satisfaction for the junior who had called him the names he knew were deserved to be up for severe punishment. Price found consolation in that, as Wharton followed the Fifth Form master.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### Bolted!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Great pip!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"What the thump—"

"Asking for more!"

There were exclamations on all sides, and every fellow at hand stared in amazement as Harry Wharton cut out of the House doorway. Behind Wharton loomed the portly and portentous figure of Paul Prout, master of the Fifth Form. Prout's face was a picture. Amazement, wrath indignation, stupefaction were depicted there. Prout was speechless. But his face spoke volumes.

"What on earth—" breathed Frank Nugent.

"Wharton—"

"Oh crikey!"

"I say, you fellows, Prout's after him—"

Harry Wharton gave no heed to the staring, buzzing fellows in the quad. He cut across to the gates as if he were on the cinder-path.

Prout stared after him, speechless, purple.

If such things as this could happen at Greyfriars, Prout would have liked to know what the school was coming to.

A Lower Fourth junior had made a disturbance in a senior Form-room—Prout's Form-room. Prout had bidden Wharton follow him to Mr. Quelch's study, there to be handed over to condign punishment. Instead of which the young rascal had suddenly cut off and dashed out of the House.

Amazed, breathless, speechless, Prout gazed from the doorway.

Wharton—from his own point of view, at least—had had no choice in the matter. Reported to Mr. Quelch, he would have been caned—for which he cared little; but he might have been given a detention—and, in any case, he would have been delayed. And there was not a moment to lose. Minutes might make all the difference. He had gone to the Fifth Form Room, believing that a "tip" to Stephen Price would settle the matter and take it off his hands. Certainly he had never dreamed what the outcome would be.

This was the outcome—and it could not be helped! He raced for the gates, well aware that he was piling up more trouble for himself. But if a fellow like Hilton could run risks to help a man in a scrape, surely it was up to the fellow he had helped to run risks!

Under a sea of staring eyes the rebel of the Remove raced down to the gates and vanished from sight.

Prout still stood speechless.

His face was purple. He really looked as if he stood in some danger of an attack of apoplexy.

"Upon my word!" Prout found his voice at last. "Stop that boy—Loder—Carne—Walker—North—Blundell! Stop that boy!"

"He's gone, sir," said Blundell of the Fifth.

Walker winked at Carne. A good many of the fellows were grinning. Prout, after all, was a senior Form master, and had nothing to do with the Remove. He had no authority over Wharton. Prout often assumed authority where he had it not; that was one of Prout's little ways.

"Follow that boy—bring him back!" gasped Prout. "Such insolence—such astounding, unexampled impertinence—"

"Certainly, sir," said Loder.

Loder of the Sixth started for the gates at a trot. What the trouble was Loder did not know, and did not care. But he was ready—more than ready—to take a hand against his old enemy in the Remove. But nobody followed Loder. Sixth Form prefects—of whom there were three or four at hand—did not feel disposed to chase a Lower Fourth boy at the order of the Fifth Form master. Loder was no longer a prefect—and he owed his fall from his high estate to Harry Wharton of the Remove! If the prefects were not keen, Loder was.

Swiftly he cut down to the gates after the elusive junior.

Prout, purple, spluttered. Personally, Prout was not equal to a foot-race. He had too much weight to carry—his handicap was altogether too great. He spluttered, and at last turned back

from the doorway and rolled along to Mr. Quelch's study.

Into the Remove master's ears he poured his tale of wrath and indignation.

Quelch was well-known to loathe hearing complaints about his Form from other beaks. But the present case was an exception. Wharton—the mutineer and scapegrace—was the culprit! That made all the difference!

Henry Samuel Quelch lent a ready ear—and the look on his face told that the insult to Prout's dignity would be fully avenged—when the insolent young rascal came back to the school!

Neither master had the remotest suspicion of the real cause of Wharton's bolt. To them it appeared an outbreak of hardy insolence—in keeping with the young rascal's unruly conduct all that term!

"Wharton's the man to ask for it!"

chuckled the Bounder, as he went down to Little Side with a crowd of Remove fellows. "Jevver see a man keep on askin' as he does? But what on earth has he been raggin' Prout for?"

"Can't make the chap out these days," said Bob Cherry. "He's got nothing to do with Prout!"

"He hasn't enough trouble with his own beak, you see!" grinned Skinner. "So he hunts for a little more with other beaks."

"Like Prout's cheek to get after a Remove man!" said Squiff.

"Hear, hear!"

"I say, you fellows!" Bunter rolled up, full of news. "I say, I know all about it, you fellows! Wharton's been fighting in the Fifth Form Room! Prout's telling Quelch—fairly shouting it out!"

"Fighting in the Fifth!" ejaculated Nugent.

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter. "From what I hear, he butted into the Fifth Form Room, where there's a man detained, and pitched into him."

"What rot!" said Nugent.

"The rotfulness is terrific!"

"I heard Prout!" roared Bunter. "He's fairly booming! Half the House can hear him from Quelch's study! Roaring! Bellowing!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"From what I could make out, Wharton was half-killing a Fifth Form man, when Prout barged in, and Wharton hit him—"

"Wharton hit Prout?" shrieked Bob Cherry.

"In the eye—"

"Oh, great Scott!"

"Knocked him over and jumped on him!" pursued Bunter, warming to his

(Continued on next page.)

**T**HE people in big football circles have this season got themselves all hot and bothered over the question of the best tactics to be carried out by the centre half-back. Should he be a real half-back, which means being half a forward as well, or should he be content to act as a third full-back with the sole idea of seeing that the opposing centre-forward does not score goals? That is the problem.

It is quite natural, of course, that when there is a problem like this being discussed in respect of big football, the younger players of the game—those who are yet a long way from top class—should get interested in it. I have several letters from centre half-backs of school teams, asking me what I think about it. Is the three full-backs' game the best? Don't let us be in too big a hurry over this question. It isn't one which can be simply answered with a "yes," or "no." Let us talk about it.

### MARY'S LITTLE LAMB!

In the first place I have to confess that, so far as the majority of the big football clubs of to-day are concerned, they do play with this rough tactical idea: that the place of the centre-half is mostly between the other two backs; that is making himself a third full-back. He does this because the opposing centre-forward will go up the field, and the notion behind this tactical idea is that the centre-half should act the part of Mary's little lamb to the opposing centre-forward. Where the centre-forward goes, the centre-half is sure to go.

Peter O'Dowd, the Chelsea centre-half, does not believe in the idea, however. He thinks very emphatically that it is part of the duty of the centre-half to advance in support of his forwards when those forwards are acting. He doesn't believe in the policeman idea. And here is a point to remember:

*That by the selectors of the English Football League teams, and the English International teams—two different bodies—O'Dowd has been honoured already this season. This seems to suggest that the "heads" of football think O'Dowd is right, and that the centre-halves who adopt the purely defensive role are wrong!*

### A TIP FOR THE CENTRE-FORWARD!

**T**HE point as I see it, however, is that football tactics can't really be discussed in relation to the play of one member of the side. If certain tactics are adopted by one player, then other members of the team

## OUR FOOTER FANS' CORNER.



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must adapt their tactics to fit. Football is a team game, and the only way to look at this question is in that sense.

If the centre-half of a team becomes little more than a third full-back, then somebody must do the work which in other circumstances would be done by the centre-half. There is no team I have watched—no big team—in which the three full-backs' idea is carried out more thoroughly than Arsenal carry it out. Yet Arsenal have been very successful. Why? Because Alex. James, who is inside-left on the programme, is really the centre-half for most of the time through each game.

Coming to the matter of the proper tactics for the centre half-backs of boys' teams, this is the way I should put it.

*If the opposition have a very dangerous centre-forward, and the other members of the opposing team keep on slipping the ball through to the dangerous centre-forward, then the centre-half cannot afford to leave him. The centre-half must block that passage down the middle; he must act the policeman to the opposing centre-forward to keep his side out of trouble!*

Another question closely allied to the one we have just been discussing. What can the poor centre-forward do if the centre-half just sticks to him closer than a brother? Well, there is one thing the centre-forward must not do: resign himself to fate. No use merely complaining about being watched. The centre-forward must get busy. "If I find I am being closely watched," said George Brown, the Villa centre-forward, the other day, "I stroll away from the middle of the field—take the opposing centre-half for a walk. He can please himself whether he comes. If he does, then he must leave the centre of the field open. If he doesn't—well,

I have succeeded in my job of getting away from him for the time being." I pass on the tip. It is a good one.

### INTERNATIONAL CAPS!

**O**NE of my readers wants to know which England player of the past has the greatest number of International caps, and which present-day player holds the record in this connection? The answer will probably be of interest to other readers. Bob Crompton, who used to play at full-back for Blackburn Rovers—he was one of those men who did not play for any other big club—appeared in 24 International games for England at right-back. No other English player has come up to that record as yet, and it is extremely unlikely that any other English player will approach that record for quite a long time to come. Footballers don't live as long in the game as they used to do.

There are two footballers who share the distinction of the greatest number of caps gained by men still actively engaged in the game.

*They are Bob Kelly, now on the staff of Preston North End, and Ernest Blenkinsop, the left-back of Sheffield Wednesday. Both these players have appeared in thirteen International matches for England. As Blenkinsop is considerably younger than Kelly, and can justifiably look forward to more honours, it is likely that he will, before the end of the present season, be the Englishman who, of modern active players, has the greatest number of caps.*

These Englishmen, of course, do not hold the record of International caps for all countries. Billy Meredith played in fifty-one International matches for Wales. Alan Morton holds the Scottish record with thirty International caps.

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work, as it were. "Jumped on his tummy—"

"Gammon!"

"Might have burst him. Prout's fat, you know! Jumped right on his bread-basket—"

"You silly owl!" roared Bob Cherry.

"And took hold of his ears, and banged his head on the floor! Nearly brained him! And, I say—Yah! Leave off kicking me, you beast!"

It was clear that Bunter was exaggerating, and Bob Cherry cut short his thrilling tale by planting a football boot on his tight trousers. The juniors went down to games practice, leaving Bunter roaring.

Meanwhile, Harry Wharton was scudding away down the road. Whether the prefects had started yet he did not know; but it was probable. Exactly what their intentions were, and exactly how much they knew, he could only surmise.

He could hardly imagine Wingate and Gwynne entering the Three Fishers and mingling with the mob there, in search of the suspected sportsman. More likely they had planned to catch him as he came out.

That was simple enough, for Hilton, unaware of his danger, was fairly certain to walk right into their hands. But if that was the plan, it was only necessary to warn Hilton in time, and he could leave by climbing a fence in some obscure corner of the rather extensive grounds of the riverside inn.

The difficulty was, that Wharton could only surmise what Wingate intended to do. All he knew for certain was that the prefects were after Hilton.

That they had started he soon became aware, for he sighted two stalwart figures ahead of him on the road—Wingate and Gwynne of the Sixth, walking swiftly.

He slowed down. It was not judicious to run into the prefects. As he slowed he became aware of a pattering of running feet on the road behind him, and turned his head. Loder of the Sixth was coming on fast.

"That rotter!" breathed Wharton.

He had not noticed Loder in the quad when he cut out of the House. Evidently Loder had noticed him, and was in pursuit.

"Stop!" shouted Loder.

Wharton did not heed that order. Loder was not a prefect now, and had no authority to order a fellow to stop. Not that Wharton, in the circumstances, would have heeded, anyhow. He ran on.

"Stop him, Wingate!" roared Loder, catching sight of the two prefects ahead. "Stop him, Gwynne!"

Wingate and Gwynne turned round. They stared at Wharton and stared at Loder. As they had started from the school some time before Wharton, they were ignorant of what had happened since. Wingate frowned and Gwynne grinned.

But the Greyfriars captain signed to Wharton to stop.

With the prefects in front and Loder behind, Wharton had little choice in the matter. He stopped, but he kept out of reach. He was ready to make a sudden bolt into the woodland bordering the road, if there was no other way of escape.

Gerald Loder came panting up. He reached out a hand towards Wharton, and the junior promptly jumped back.

"Hands off, Loder!" he snapped. "If you fancy that you're still a prefect it's time you woke up! Keep your paws to yourself!"

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"What's the row, Loder?" asked Wingate impatiently.

"That young rascal's wanted!" panted Loder. "Prout ordered me to fetch him back—"

"Prout!" repeated Wingate. "Prout's got nothing to do with Quelch's Form. What have you been up to, Wharton—playing japes on Prout?"

"Not at all," answered Harry. "Prout gave me an order, and I cut. He's not my Form master."

"Prout was after him—"

"If he's not satisfied, he can complain to Quelch, Wingate," said Wharton coolly. "Quelch doesn't like Prout butting in and giving Remove men orders."

"Faith, and that's so!" grinned Gwynne. "I don't see why you couldn't mind your own bizney, Loder."

Loder scowled savagely.

"That young sweep's been up to something!" he snapped. "I'm taking him back! Prout said—"

"Rot!" interjected Wingate. "Let the kid alone!"

"Look here—" roared Loder furiously.

"Don't shout at me," said Wingate. "Let the kid alone! If Prout's not satisfied he can go to Quelch, as the kid says."

"I tell you—"

"You needn't tell me any more! I tell you, as a prefect, to let the kid alone!" snapped Wingate. "You can cut, Wharton."

Wharton, with a cheery grin on his face, ran on up the road. Wingate and Gwynne followed, walking quickly. Loder was left standing and scowling.

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Caught!

THE gateway of the Three Fishers faced the towpath and the Sark. The gates stood wide open when Harry Wharton came up the towpath at a rapid trot.

He had left the two prefects well behind; but he was aware that they were coming in the same direction, and that they were losing no time.

But they were out of sight now, and there was no one to see the breathless junior slip in at the gates of the disreputable inn. In the summer the towpath and the river were well frequented; but on a dim and drizzly November afternoon there was hardly a soul to be seen.

Wharton was glad of it. It went against the grain to enter such a place at all, and he was very anxious not to be seen doing so. Later, when the fight was over, there would be a crowd swarming out at the gate; but, from the fact that no one was coming out, Wharton knew that the glove-fight could not have ended yet. He was in time.

He ran in at the gate, and in a few moments the straggling trees and shrubberies of the ill-kept inn garden hid him from the towpath. Then he paused to look round him.

There were Greyfriars men who knew their way about the place—the Bounder was one, Skinner was another, and Angel of the Fourth, and Loder and Carne of the Sixth. But it was strange country to the "worst boy at Greyfriars." And he knew that there was no time to lose.

He thought of Price of the Fifth with bitter anger and scorn. Price could have headed straight for his pal to give him the tip. And, but for the shindy in the Fifth Form Room, Wharton could have got out his bicycle, and arrived at

the Three Fishers in less than half the time.

He had had no time for that; he had been lucky to get clear anyhow. He had snatched up a cap from the lobby when he cut; but he had had no time to grab a coat, and the raw afternoon was turning to wet, a light drizzle beginning to fall.

He stood in wind and drizzle, wondering what had better be his next step now that he was on the spot. To go into the inn and inquire of some potman was not to his taste; but he had to find Hilton.

A sound of many voices, shouting in the distance, enlightened him. He could guess that that hullabaloo proceeded from the scene of the glove fight. Picking his way by weedy, ill-kept paths, he hurried in the direction of the shouting.

At some distance from the inn, and a still greater distance from the towpath, was a large shed, which hummed with noise. A number of men were grouped about the doorway; among them Wharton glimpsed a stout, red-faced man whom he knew by sight—Mr. Joe Banks, the disreputable book-maker, whose usual haunt was the Cross Keys at Friardale.

A feeling of deep distaste and repugnance came over him. To shove into that dingy, excited, betting, low-down mob, in search of the black sheep of Greyfriars was too unpleasant, and he realised that it would be futile.

The shed, large as it was, was packed. Looking for Hilton in that thick crowd would be like looking for a needle in a bundle of hay. And he dared not miss him.

By this time, it was fairly certain Wingate and Gwynne were in sight of the gate by the river, waiting to spot the Fifth Form sportsman as he came out. If Hilton was not warned in time the game was up for him.

How much the prefects knew, and how much they only surmised, Wharton, of course, could only guess. But it was clear that they were well-informed. Hilton had more courage, but far less wary cunning, than fellows like Price and Loder. Something had come out—as something was bound to come out, sooner or later—and the prefects were there to make a "catch." And all the more because the task was a disagreeable one, they would make that catch relentlessly. The reckless fellow, walking out at the gate with the departing crowd, would walk fairly into the hands of the prefects, unless he was warned. Wharton would have felt sorry for the fellow; but he would not have concerned himself about the matter, but for the good turn Hilton had done him the evening before. It seemed to him impossible to leave that debt unpaid.

He lingered by a fringe of wet and ragged shrubbery, watching the doorway of the crowded wooden building.

People began to trickle out in twos and threes, from which he gathered that the fight was over. The twos and threes were followed by a crowd, and Wharton watched anxiously for Cedric Hilton among them.

He looked for the gleam of Hilton's topper, but there was not a topper to be seen in the crowd. Then suddenly he spotted a well-cut coat, and knew that it was Hilton's. The Fifth Form man had left his topper somewhere, and was wearing a soft hat slouched over his face. Apparently, reckless as he was, he was not lost to all sense of prudence. Wharton ran after him, pushed through several others, and tapped him on the arm.

"Hilton!" he breathed.

The Fifth-Former started violently as





Wharton clambered over the top of the fence bordering the "Three Fishers" and dropped on the other side. As he landed in the grass a startled exclamation reached his ears. "Wharton! By gad!" The junior sprang to his feet and stared blankly at Gerald Loder, his old enemy of the Sixth.

he heard his name uttered. He swung round with a startled face.

"Who—what—Wharton!" He stared at the junior.

Wharton gripped his arm.

"Come this way! Get out of sight—quick!"

"You young ass! What—"

"Come, you fool!" snapped Wharton.

He almost dragged the Fifth Form man away from the crowd going down the path, into the draggled shrubbery.

"You young ass!" repeated Hilton, in wonder, and with an angry note in his voice. "What do you mean? Did you come along after all?"

"No!" snapped Wharton. "I came afterwards. I've been waiting for you—watching. Thank goodness I've spotted you! You've changed your hat. I nearly missed you."

"Yes, I left it in the inn—bit too conspicuous in that mob. But what the thump—"

"Wingate's there!"

"Wha-a-t?"

"And Gwynne!"

"Great gad! Are you sure?"

"They were nearly on my heels when I came. I haven't seen them inside the fence, so it's pretty clear they're waiting at the gate to nab you as you go out!" whispered Wharton hurriedly.

Hilton stood very still, looking at him. His handsome face, shaded by the slouch of the borrowed hat, was a little pale.

"How did you know?"

"Never mind that—a Remove man got a tip—never mind all that! You've got to get clear. If you go out by the gate you're done for."

"You came to warn me?" asked Hilton, staring at him.

"Do you think I'd have come to this

putrid den for anything else?" grunted Wharton angrily.

The Fifth Form sportsman laughed.

"Well, thanks for the tip, kid! I'll go to the inn and get my hat, and get out another way. There's a back gate on Oak Lane."

"Never mind your hat, you ass! Cut!"

"My dear man, I'm not turning up at Greyfriars without my hat!" drawled Hilton. "It's all O.K. now—now I know. How the thump did the prefects get on to it, I wonder? Wingate's keener than I gave him credit for. But they can't know I'm here—they can only guess. I'm supposed to be at Lantham. I've got leave from Prout—"

"Are you going to stand talking, when they may come in and look for you any minute, if they don't catch you at the gate?" hissed Wharton.

Hilton laughed again.

"Keep cool, kid! You've done me a good turn. They'd have had me, sure as fate, if you hadn't tipped me. I never dreamed—"

"They may come in after you—"

"Oh, they'll watch the mob going out!" said Hilton carelessly. "But look here, kid, you're not safe here. You'd better cut while I go for my hat."

"You silly ass!" exclaimed Wharton, exasperated. "Leave your hat where it is, and bunk over the nearest fence while you've got a chance."

"You're a good kid, and you've done me a good turn," said Hilton, with lazy coolness. "But don't imagine that I'm a scared fag. Cut, and leave me to mind my own business."

And with that the Fifth Form sportsman walked away towards the inn. Wharton stared after him. Then he shrugged his shoulders. He had done

what he had come to do—he had done all he could. It was up to Hilton now, and if he chose to run reckless risks, it was his own affair. Leaving him to his own devices, Harry Wharton turned and ran through the dripping grounds of the Three Fishers.

The gate on the towpath was watched; that was a certainty. And Wharton could not feel sure that the back gate on Oak Lane was not watched, also. He cut away towards a high fence that bordered the Courtfield Road—the grounds of the Three Fishers, in that spot, filling up the space between the river and the high road. It was a ten-foot fence, and not easy to climb; but the active junior scrambled up and clambered over the top. He swung himself over, held by his hands for a moment, and then dropped on the belt of grass between the fence and the road.

And as he dropped and rolled in the grass, a startled exclamation reached his ears.

"Wharton! By gad!"

And Harry Wharton sprang to his feet and stared blankly at Gerald Loder of the Greyfriars Sixth.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### Luck or Loder!

**L**ODER of the Sixth stared. He was more surprised than Wharton.

Indeed, Loder found it difficult to believe, for a moment, that it really was Harry Wharton who had dropped from the fence surrounding the most disreputable den within a radius of ten miles.

He loathed that particular junior, and he had done all he could to blacken him

in the eyes of his Form master and his headmaster. It was because he had gone too far in that direction that he had lost his prefectship. But he had never believed any real harm of the junior he disliked so intensely; indeed, it was not for his bad qualities, but for his good ones, that he disliked him so much!

It was all very well for an exasperated Form master to stigmatise Wharton as the "worst boy at Greyfriars," but Loder, at least, could have told Mr. Quelch that there were worse fellows about. It was a sheer surprise to Gerald Loder to find the scapegrace of the Remove escaping surreptitiously from such a hectic den as the Three Fishers.

In point of fact, it was only Loder's wariness that had prevented him from being there himself that eventful afternoon. Although no longer a prefect, he had friends among the prefects, and he had had a warning from Walker to give that particular spot a wide berth for a time. Loder had been thinking of the jolly entertainment going on behind that high fence, as he strolled along the Courtfield Road, and keeping one eye open for Harry Wharton. But though he had hoped to fall in with the junior again, he certainly had not dreamed for a moment of falling in with him like this. It was a complete surprise.

"Wharton!" he repeated, staring at the breathless junior with his eyes almost bulging with astonishment. "Wharton! It's you—you!"

"Little me," answered Wharton coolly, though his heart was heavy. "Did you think it was my ghost, Loder?"

Loder's eyes danced.

After the first shock of surprise, he realised what this meant. Wharton, caught dodging out over the fence of the Three Fishers! The young rascal had delivered himself, bound hand and foot, into his enemy's hand.

"So that's your game!" Loder almost gasped. "You disreputable young rotter, that's your game, is it, on a half-holiday? That's why you cut out of school in such a hurry. My hat!"

Loder fairly gloated.

"May I remind you that you're not a prefect now, Loder?" asked Wharton,

with cool politeness. "It's no business of yours, that I can see."

"Isn't it?" grinned Loder.

"You can't give a man away," said Harry. "That's sneaking, Loder! Sneaking—just as much as if you wore a measly fag in the Third!"

Loder laughed.

As a prefect, it would have been his duty to report Wharton at the school. As he was no longer a prefect, Wharton's escapade concerned him no more than it concerned any other fellow who was not invested with authority. But that mattered very little to Gerald Loder—very little indeed. If Wharton was relying on that, he was leaning on a very frail reed.

"You disgraceful rotter!" It suited Loder to forget that the Three Fishers was his own favourite resort, when the coast was clear. "You unspeakable little toad! Pub-haunting—betting on prizefights—by gad! I must say I never thought it of you, cheeky young cad as you are!"

"More in your own line, what?" said Wharton coolly.

"I heard that your Form master had whopped you for smoking in your study," went on Loder. "I heard that. So I dare say he won't be surprised to hear of this."

"You're going to sneak?"

"Put it how you like, my pippin," grinned Loder. "You're coming back to the school with me now, with my hand on your collar."

Loder was exuberant with satisfaction. Not only vengeance, though that was sweet—not only a leg-up with Quelch—but reinstatement as a prefect, was in his mind now. It was through this junior that he had lost that rank—having "stretched a point" a little too far. But when this very junior was caught—by Loder—disgracing himself and his school, surely the Head would reconsider the matter. There was a good chance of it; at least.

Loder stepped towards Wharton with outstretched hand.

"Come on!" he grinned.

Rap! Without ceremony, Harry Wharton struck the outstretched hand aside. It was a sharp rap, and it

caused Loder to utter a yelp. Wharton jumped back.

"Hands off!" said Wharton coolly. "I keep on reminding you that you're not a prefect now, Loder. Can't you get it into your head?"

Loder made a jump at him. He had hoped to fall in with the rebel of the Remove, to give him the thrashing which, in Loder's opinion at least, he deserved. Now was his chance.

But the bully of the Sixth did not make much of the chance. The grassy bank from the fence sloped down to the road. As Loder charged up, Wharton charged down. They met with a crash.

"Oooooooh!" spluttered Loder, as he rolled over backwards.

He rolled and pitched down the slope to the road. Wharton stumbled after him, and fell on him as he landed. He fell heavy and hard.

That Loder was going to report him to Mr. Quelch—although he had no right whatever to make any report to any master—was certain. Trouble, more serious than he had had to face before, awaited the scapegrace at Greyfriars. Perhaps it was natural that he found it agreeable to make Loder pay a little in advance for it.

Loder sprawled under him on the muddy road. Wharton grasped him with both hands before he could recover, rolled him over, and plunged his face into a deep puddle by the roadside. A heavy smack on the back of the head drove Loder's features deep into water and mud.

"Groooooogh!"

Loder gurgled horribly.

Wharton jumped up. Loder sat up, streaming water and mud, his face almost unrecognisable.

"Urrrrrrgh!" he gurgled.

Wharton made a grab at Loder's cap, pulled it down over the Sixth-Former's face, and then scudded up the road towards the distant school.

"Urrrrrrgh! Oooogh! Urrrrrrgh!"

Loder staggered to his feet. He wrenched off his cap, and dabbed mud and water from his face. Spluttering with rage, he started in pursuit of the rebel of the Remove.

Harry Wharton glanced over his shoulder and laughed. Loder, with his muddy face and his clothes streaming mud, was a remarkable sight. But the Sixth-Former was coming on hard and fast, and the junior put on speed. If the enraged bully's hands had fallen on him just then, it would have fared hard with Wharton. Loder was going all out, and his rapid footsteps drew closer behind.

There was a whir of a bike, and a cyclist came spinning round a corner into the high-road. He was a rather plump fellow, with a shiny complexion and a prominent nose. Wharton shouted to him.

"Hold on, Lazarus."

It was Solly Lazarus, a member of the Courtfield School football team, with whom the Remove played matches. Solly grinned at Wharton, stared back at Loder, and braked.

"Like a lift, old chap?" he asked.

"Just that!" gasped Wharton.

"Hop on!"

Wharton stepped up behind, his foot on the footrest, his hands on Solly's shoulders, and the bike shot on again. Loder put on a desperate spurt; but Solly's legs were going like lightning, and the bike whizzed away. Panting, the bully of the Sixth dropped behind.

"Drop me at the school, old bean," said Harry.

"Right-ho!"

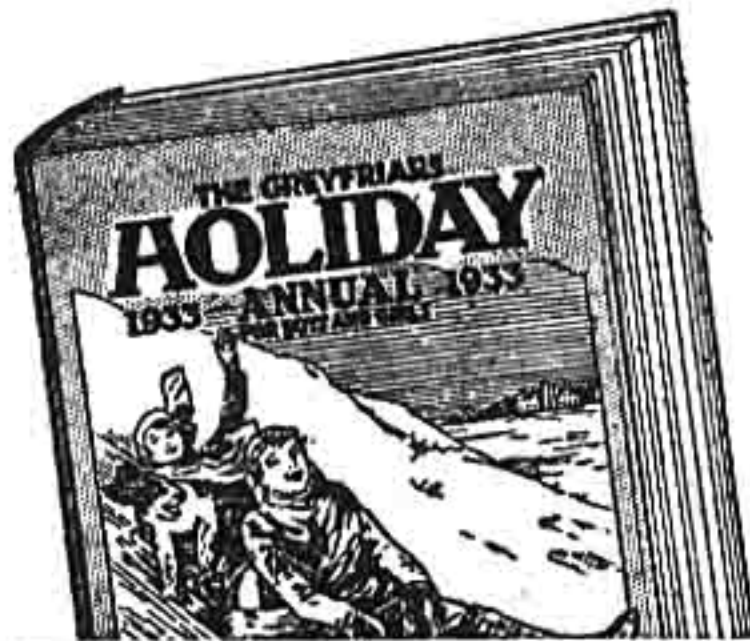
Wharton jumped down at the gates of

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Greyfriars. Solly waved a plump hand, and rode on, and Harry Wharton walked in at the school gates.

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

For It!

"BOY!"  
"Man!"  
"What-a-a-t?" ejaculated Mr. Prout.

There was a chuckle from some fellows in the quad. Wharton's reply to the portly Prout seemed to strike them as comic.

That Harry Wharton was booked for trouble—serious trouble—when Loder came in, there was no shadow of doubt. But no one would have guessed it from his look. He strolled in at the gates with his hands in his pockets, his manner careless and unconcerned. Wharton had had so much trouble that term that he was getting hardened to the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."

Prout sighted him, and bore down on him. He addressed him with portentous dignity. Wharton's reply was rather flippant.

Prout glared at him.

"Boy!" he boomed.

"Man!" repeated Wharton calmly.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from several directions.

Prout purpled. He waved a fat hand at Wharton.

"Impertinent young rascal! Go at once to your Form master! I have reported your conduct! Punishment awaits you! Go!"

Wharton walked on. But he did not walk towards the House. He desired to make it clear that a Remove man did not take orders from any Form master but his own. Coker of the Fifth came over to him, as he sauntered, with a deep frown on his rugged brow.

"Cheeking my Form master, what?" said Coker.

"Fathead!" answered Wharton politely.

Coker let out his foot. Coker of the Fifth had a short way with fags, as he often declared. On this occasion, a fag had a short way with Coker. Wharton, with a rapid movement that was much too rapid for Coker's rather slow brain to follow it, whipped out of the way of the lunging foot, caught the ankle attached thereto, and gave it a sudden sharp jerk upwards.

Coker, the next moment, was lying on his back in a puddle in the quad, wondering dizzily how he had got there.

Wharton strolled on and left him to wonder.

Remove men were coming off the ground after games practice. Among them was Mark Linley, the head boy of the Remove. He hurried over to Wharton as he saw him.

"Mr. Quelch wants you in his study, Wharton," he said. "He told me to tell you as soon as you came in."

"Oh, all right!"

Wharton went into the House, to his Form master's study. He tapped at Mr. Quelch's door and entered. The Remove master was engaged with a pile of papers, and after a glance at the junior, he made him a sign to wait.

Wharton stood and waited.

It was ten minutes before Mr. Quelch turned from the papers, and deigned to take note of his existence.

"I have received a serious complaint of you from Mr. Prout, Wharton," he said. "It appears that he found you fighting with a boy of his Form, in the Fifth Form Room. It appears further that you ran off when he ordered you to follow into my presence."

"Mr. Prout had no right to give me orders, sir," said Wharton calmly. "I was going out—and I went out."

The Remove master coughed.

"Nevertheless, in the circumstances, you should have followed Mr. Prout," he said. "Mr. Prout has informed me that you entered his Form-room, which no Lower boy has a right to enter, and made a disturbance there."

"I went to speak to Price."

"You are well aware, Wharton, that no one is allowed to speak to a boy under detention."

Wharton was silent. He was, of course, aware of that.

"You not only entered a senior Form-room, where a boy was under detention, but you made a disturbance there!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Price started the row."

"Possibly; but he could scarcely have done so if you had not entered a room you had no right to enter."

Wharton made no reply to that.

"Hitherto," said Mr. Quelch in a deep voice, "your reckless and rebellious conduct, which has been outrageous all this term, has been confined to your own Form. Now, it appears, you are carrying it into other Forms, and I am forced to listen to complaints—just complaints—from other members of the staff. You can have, I imagine, no excuse to offer for this latest outbreak of reckless ruffianism!"

Wharton did not speak. He was in the wrong, and there was no excuse that he could offer. Mr. Quelch would hardly have regarded it as an excuse had he told him why he had gone to see Price of the Fifth.

"I have assured Mr. Prout," continued the Remove master, "that the severest punishment will be administered for this outrage—Mr. Prout regards it, very properly, as an outrage! I am only in doubt whether to administer punishment myself or place the matter in the hands of your headmaster!"

Tap!

The door opened, and Loder of the Sixth stepped in.

Wharton's face set grimly. It was coming now! Loder started a little at the sight of the junior in the study.

"What is it, Loder?" asked Mr. Quelch, turning from the junior.

His glance dwelt rather curiously on the Sixth-Former. Loder had washed off some of the mud in a wayside pond, but he still looked rather muddy and untidy.

"Wharton is here," said Loder. "As I find him with you, sir, perhaps he has confessed?"

"Confessed?" repeated Mr. Quelch blankly.

"I hope so, sir," said Loder smoothly. "It is impossible for me to remain silent, in view of what I have discovered. But if Wharton has confessed—"

"I do not understand you, Loder!" Mr. Quelch's sharp glance passed from Loder to Wharton and back again. "Has this boy been guilty of some new outrageous action?"

Loder coughed.

"My position is rather awkward, sir," he said. "I am, as you know, no longer a prefect, and I have therefore no right to make a report.

At the same time, I feel that I cannot leave you in ignorance of Wharton's disgraceful conduct."

"To what do you refer, Loder?"

"I am referring to Wharton's visit

to a disreputable place called the Three Fishers this afternoon, sir, where a prizefight has taken place!"

Mr. Quelch fairly jumped.

"Loder, is it possible—"

"I caught him leaving the place, sir," said Loder. "I should have brought him back to the school with me, but he pushed me over and escaped. Although no longer a prefect, sir, I felt that I could not leave you in ignorance of this."

"Most decidedly!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

His gimlet eyes turned on the junior. "Wharton, where have you been this afternoon?"

"Out of gates, sir," said Harry. "It is a half-holiday, sir."

"Have you entered the place that Loder mentions?"

Wharton paused a moment. He was the worst boy in Greyfriars. His Form master more than once had refused to take his word. A sarcastic smile came over his face. Plenty of fellows in his position would have uttered a cool denial; he could imagine the Bounder or Skinner or Price or Loder himself standing in his shoes. Loder was not a prefect. This was not an official report; it was, in point of fact, "sneaking." If he denied it, it was one fellow's word against another's. But the worst boy in Greyfriars could not lie himself out of a scrape!

"Yes, sir!" he answered.

"Upon my word!"

Mr. Quelch sat bolt upright in his chair, staring at the worst boy in his Form. That term he had the lowest opinion of Wharton, yet this was a surprise to him, and a shock. But he remembered the smoking in Study No. 1. That had been a surprise and a shock to him; now he was learning more of this mutinous boy's progress on the downward path!

"I trust, sir," said Loder, breaking the silence, "that you consider that I had no choice but to bring this matter to your knowledge?"

"Assuredly, Loder. I have every hope that Dr. Locke will reinstate you in your position as a prefect; and, in the meantime, I am glad to see that you have the good name of the school at heart. I am obliged to you, Loder!"

"Thank you, sir!"

Loder left the study, and he grinned with malevolent satisfaction as he went down the passage. All his schemes against the junior he loathed seemed to have gone amiss somehow, but he had him on the hip at last! A flogging or the sack—it was quite pleasant for Gerald Loder to contemplate!

In Mr. Quelch's study there was a deep silence for some moments. Wharton stood cool and steady under the gimlet eyes.

"Wharton," said Mr. Quelch at last, "have you anything to say?"

"Oh, yes, sir! That sneak—"

"What?"

"That sneak, Loder," said Wharton, with perfect coolness—"that sneak—"

"How dare you, Wharton!" thundered Mr. Quelch. "Loder has done his duty in reporting your rascally conduct!"

"Only a prefect has a right to make

(Continued on next page.)

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reports to a Form master, sir!" answered Wharton calmly. "Any other fellow who does so is a sneak! It has always been your rule, sir, never to take notice of a tell-tale!"

Mr. Quelch almost choked. He could not, as a matter of fact, deny that Wharton was right there. Information that reached a master from any but an official source was "sneaking"—that was the long and the short of it. In his own Form, Mr. Quelch would have given a tell-tale short shrift. Indeed, it was known that he had caned a Remove boy for telling tales. Any Remove fellow who had thought of "greasing" to Quelch by such a method would have found the Form master in his grimmest temper.

"You are adding to your offence, Wharton!" Mr. Quelch almost gasped. "Loder is—temporarily, I believe—deprived of his rank as a prefect. Certainly it was his duty to bring this matter to my knowledge! I refuse to discuss it with you! I understand now why you were in such haste to leave the school this afternoon. You were going to a disreputable place that is out of school bounds!"

Wharton's lip curled. Mr. Quelch seemed in rather a hurry to get away from the subject of Loder. He was not quite easy in his mind on that subject.

"I am very well acquainted," pursued Mr. Quelch, "with the reputation of that detestable resort! Glovefights—which are, to all intents and purposes, prizefights—take place there. It has been rumoured of late that Greyfriars boys have been seen there—I believe the matter is now in the hands of the prefects for investigation, though it has been supposed that the offender was a senior boy. It transpires that the offender was a junior—a boy in my own Form!"

"Nothing of the kind, sir!" answered Wharton. "I did not go to the Three Fishers to see the glovefight, and I have never been there before."

"Then why did you go?"

No answer.

"Have you acquaintances at that disreputable place?"

Wharton almost laughed.

"No, sir."

"Then why did you go?" repeated Mr. Quelch.

Wharton drew a deep breath. He made no answer, for there was none to make. Even had he been disposed to betray Hilton—which he certainly was not—it would not have benefited him to explain that he had gone to the Three Fishers to defeat the Sixth Form prefects in the execution of their duty.

"Have you nothing to say, Wharton?"

"No, sir—except that no fellow will ever feel safe if sneaks are listened to."

"Silence!" almost roared Mr. Quelch. "Leave my study! I shall place this matter in Dr. Locke's hands! Go!"

And the rebel of the Remove went.

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Taking It Calmly!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter almost shrieked. His fat face was red with excitement. His little round eyes almost popped through his big round spectacles.

Evidently Bunter had news. He was almost bursting with it. The fellows in the Rag stared at him.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Has your postal order come, old fat bean?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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"I say, you fellows," Bunter spluttered—"I say, have you heard? Wharton—"

"You needn't tell us that Wharton's in trouble!" grinned the Bounder. "That's chronic these days!"

"What's the latest, though?" chuckled Skinner.

"They've caught him!" gasped Bunter.

"Caught him!" repeated Frank Nugent. "What do you mean, you fat chump?"

"They've spotted him!" gasped Bunter. "Got him at the Three Fishers—"

"What?" yelled the Bounder.

"Grabbed him as he was getting out over the fence!" howled Bunter. "That's where he went this afternoon! That's why he bunked away from Prout. Fancy the silly ass, you know—after he heard me give Smithy the tip—"

"Gammon!"

"I tipped Smithy!" gasped Bunter. "I got it from Wingate—and I gave Smithy the tip—and Wharton was there—he was in your study, wasn't he, Smithy—"

"Shut up, you fat idiot!"

"Well, you know he was there. And he heard me tell you, and then he went off to the very place and got copped!"

Bob Cherry made a stride at the fat Owl, gasped him by the collar, and shook him. Bob's face was wrathful.

"You fat, frabjous, frumpious fat-head!" he exclaimed. "If Wharton was here he would kick you for telling such whoppers. And as he isn't, I'll kick you instead! You frabjous, footling freak—"

"Yaroooh!"

"Give him one for me!" growled Nugent.

"And one for my esteemed self!" said Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"Yooop! Whooop!" roared Bunter.

"Leggo, you beast! It's true, you rotter! All the Sixth know! I've just heard Wingate say—Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've just heard Wingate say—Yarooooooop!"

"Give him a chance," said Skinner, chuckling. "Get it off your chest, Bunter. Who copped Wharton, if he was copped?"

"Shut up, you silly ass!" snapped Bob. "You know there's nothing in it."

"I know Wharton cut games practice this afternoon, and he was in a mighty hurry to get away," grinned Skinner. "The Three Fishers, by Jove—a juicy sort of show! Is that where he got his smokes from the other day?"

"It came out that they were Smithy's smokes, you worm, and Bunter took them to his study!" snapped Nugent.

"Quelch didn't think so, did he?" chuckled Skinner. "Look here, let Bunter cough up the news. If Wharton's going to be bunked, I want to go and say good-bye to him, I haven't rowed with him like you fellows have."

"I—I say, you fellows!" Bunter jerked himself away from Bob. "It's true! Everybody will know it soon. Wingate and Gwynne went to that den, you know, after a Fifth Form man. I heard them jawing about it, and tipped Smithy. That's why Smithy never went—"

"That's why Smithy didn't have to go to Lantham, after all, to see his pater!" chortled Skinner. "What?"

"I never knew Wharton was going there, you know!" gasped Bunter. "You'd have fancied he'd have sense enough to keep away after hearing me give Smithy the tip. But he went—and

Loder got him! The prefects were watching on one side of the place for a Fifth Form man, and Wharton was sneaking out on the other side—and Loder copped him."

"Loder's got no right to cop anybody—he's not a prefect!" said Hazeldene.

"Anyhow, he copped him, and told Quelch—and Wharton's up for the sack! I say, you fellows, fancy the silly ass giving Quelch such a chance at him! Old Quelch has been watching for a chance all this term—"

"Kick him!" said Johnny Bull.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's Wharton!"

Harry Wharton walked into the Rag. There was a buzz of excitement, and every eye fastened on him. Few fellows believed that Bunter had got it right, and there certainly was nothing in Wharton's look to bear out the fat Owl's startling news. He strolled into the Rag with his hands in his pockets, humming a tune.

"I knew it was gammon!" growled Bob Cherry. He forgot for the moment that he was no longer on speaking terms with his former chum. "I say, Wharton—"

Wharton gave him a cool stare and walked past him. Bob's ruddy face reddened to crimson.

"I say, you fellows, it's true!" howled Bunter. "Ask Wharton!"

"Give us the tip, old bean," said Skinner. "Is there anything in it?"

"In what?" asked Wharton calmly.

"Bunter says that Loder bagged you at the Three Fishers—getting out over a fence or something—"

"Oh, yes, that's so!" drawled Wharton carelessly.

"It's true!" yelled the Bounder.

"Quite!"

"Great pip!"

"Wharton, old man," said Lord Mauleverer, "this sort of thing isn't a jokin' matter. It really isn't, old thing."

"I'm not joking, Mauly!" yawned Wharton. "Sober as a judge. But don't be shocked, old bean; I haven't been looking on the wine when it is red, or the billiards-table when it is green! I never saw the glovefight, and never wanted to. I never spoke a word to a soul there, except another Greyfriars man; and that was only to give him some good advice! Can you swallow that, Mauly?"

"Yaas, old bean."

"Let's hope the Head will swallow it!" chortled Skinner. "My hat! It will want some getting down!"

"Truth is stranger than fiction, you know," remarked Wharton.

"Truth! My hat!"

"A rotten sneak saw me getting out and told Quelch!" went on Wharton. "Quelch is improving; he used not to take any notice of sneaks. But I fancy he was rather glad to hear something against me. For some reason I can't get on to, the dear man doesn't love me any more."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And you didn't go there on the razzle?" grinned Skinner.

"Not at all!"

"Why did you go, then?"

"Quelch asked me that," said Wharton.

"What did you tell him?"

"Well, I couldn't tell him to mind his own bizney; you can't tell a beak that! But you're not a beak, Skinner, so I'll tell you! Mind your own bizney, old bean!"

Wharton picked up a "Holiday Annual" from the table, went to the window-seat, and sat down to read.



Wharton grasped Loder with both hands, rolled him over, and plunged his face into a deep puddle by the roadside. "Grooooooh! Urrrrrgh!" gurgled Loder, struggling helplessly. "Yooh-gug-gug! Woof!"

Apparently he had dismissed the matter from his mind that was causing all the Rag to thrill with excitement. Every fellow looked at him. Billy Bunter's startling news, it was clear, was well founded. And that news was getting known through the House, as was soon evident, for fellows came to the doorway of the Rag and looked in—obviously to see Wharton.

"There he is!" squeaked Tubb of the Third. "He ain't sacked yet."

And there was a laugh.

Hobson of the Shell stared in, with several other Shell fellows. Cecil Reginald Temple, of the Fourth, came along and addressed Wharton.

"What's this I hear?" asked Temple severely.

"Is that a conundrum?" inquired Wharton, glancing up from the "Holiday Annual."

"Well, I hear you've been spotted pub-hauntin'," said Temple, with lofty scorn. "I never thought you were that kind of a rotter when I offered you a place in the Junior Eleven. That's washed out. You'd be quite out of place in my team."

"I suppose a footballer would be!" assented Wharton.

There was a chuckle from the fellows who heard that reply. Cecil Reginald Temple gave a sniff and stalked away.

More and more fellows gathered in the doorway of the Rag. Wharton, calmly perusing the interesting pages of the "Holiday Annual," was the cynosure of all eyes, though he did not appear to observe it. Coker of the Fifth came pushing through.

"Where's that young rotter?" demanded Coker. "Oh, here you are!" Horace Coker planted himself before Wharton. "So you've been caught,

eh? Caught in a pub! What sort of a disgraceful young sweep do you call yourself?"

Wharton did not answer that question in words. He closed the "Holiday Annual," grasped it with both hands, and smote.

There was a terrific crash as the volume established contact with Horace Coker's prominent nose.

"Yooo-hoop!" spluttered Coker, as he sat down unexpectedly and suddenly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Chuck him out!" shouted the Bounder.

Coker of the Fifth, as he struggled up, found himself in the grasp of many hands. Fifth Form men were not allowed to throw their weight about in the Rag. Coker, roaring, was escorted to the door—head-over-heels. He was landed in the passage outside, still roaring.

A little later Wingate of the Sixth looked into the Rag.

"Wharton!"

"Hallo!"

"You're wanted! Come with me."

"Pleased, old bean!"

And the scapegrace of Greyfriars followed Wingate, leaving the Rag in a buzz behind him. Bob Cherry gave his chums a dismal look. Somehow, though they were no longer friends, the thought of Harry Wharton being "up for the sack" had a dismaying effect on the Co.

"He's done it now!" muttered Bob.

"The donefulness is truly terrific!" mumbled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"He doesn't seem to care!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"He's game," said the Bounder—"game to the last!"

Certainly Wharton, to judge by his

looks, did not seem to care. His manner was cool and careless; there was even a smile on his face as he followed the Greyfriars captain to the Head's study. He was, as the Bounder said, "game"—game to the last! And if black care sat at his heart, he gave no outward sign.

## THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Bitter Blood!

**H**ILTON of the Fifth lounged into his study, where Price was getting out his books for prep. Having had late leave from his Form master, Hilton had only just come in.

"Been scrappin'?" he asked.

Price looked as if he had been scrapping. His nose was red and bulbous, and one of his eyes persisted in winking.

"You got clear?" he asked, without answering the question.

"Yes; I'm just back from Lantham," drawled Hilton. "Quite a good picture at the Arcade!" He laughed. "Wingate gave me a look when I came in. I fancy I've rather disappointed the good man!"

"You've been lucky," said Price dryly. "Blessed if I know how you got clear. They nabbed one man at the Three Fishers this afternoon."

"Oh gad! Who's the happy man?"

"Young Wharton of the Remove."

Hilton gave a violent start.

"They've nabbed young Wharton! Great Scott! How on earth—What do you mean? He wouldn't be fool enough to run into their hands, after

giving me the tip that they were on the warpath?"

"Wharton gave you the tip?" ejaculated Price.

"Yes; that's why the young ass came there! I got away by the back gate, and went on to Lantham—I thought it safer in the circus. But young Wharton—how on earth did they get him, then?"

Price whistled. He realised that Wharton, after the row in the Fifth Form Room, must have gone at once to warn Hilton.

"Loder of the Sixth bagged him, getting out over the fence," he said. "It seems that Prout told him to go after Wharton, and he was lookin' for the kid when the young ass dropped right into his hands."

"Loder's not a prefect—he's no right to meddle."

Price shrugged his shoulders.

"Mean to say the kid's up before the Head?" exclaimed Hilton, in utter dismay.

"He's been up before the Head—I don't know the jolly old verdict! They'd sack a senior man—might let a junior off with a floggin'. Not if his Form master can help it, though," grinned Price. "Quelch is down on him like a ton of bricks. What the dooce did he come and tip you for—no bisney of his."

"The young ass! Where is he?"

"In his study, I suppose, as it's just on prep. Where are you going, you ass?" exclaimed Price, starting up as Hilton turned to the door. "You'd better keep clear of him. Look here, Hilton—"

Cedric Hilton walked out of the study without heeding. Price stared after him, and then shrugged his shoulders and sat down again. Hilton of the Fifth hurried away to the Remove passage.

It was close on prep, and the Remove had gone up to their studies. A group of them on the Remove landing stared at Hilton, wondering what he wanted there. Fifth Form men were unusual visitors in that passage. Without heeding the curious looks of the juniors, Hilton walked quickly to Study No. 1, and threw open the door.

Harry Wharton was alone in the study. Nugent was never there now. He was standing by the fireplace, with a dark and clouded face. He looked round as the door opened, and smiled faintly at the sight of Hilton.

"Oh! You've heard?" he said casually.

"I've just heard, kid." Hilton came in, and shut the door behind him. "You've been up before the beak?"

Wharton nodded.

"Did you—"

Hilton broke off, and coloured under the Remove rebel's sarcastic gaze.

"No. I didn't mention you," said Harry. "Why should I?"

The sportsman of the Fifth was anxious for Wharton. But the deep breath of relief he drew at that reply, showed that his anxiety for himself was deeper.

"You might have got off, if you had!" muttered Hilton.

"Well, I didn't."

"Good kid! But look here, Wharton, what's the verdict? It's not"—Hilton's voice faltered a little—"not the long jump?"

Wharton shook his head.

"That's good! But what if you were caught there, what do they think?"

The scapegrace of the Remove laughed—a laugh that was not very pleasant to hear.

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"What would they think?" he answered. "My Form master thinks I've gone from bad to worse—and become a thoroughly bad hat! Luckily, the Head has a little more sense! He thinks I've been a reckless young rascal; but he was willing to believe that I was up to no harm. Of course, it's a flogging."

He laughed again.

"I'm let off with a flogging and a warning! If it happens again, it's the sack! Quelch would have been glad to see me turfed out! I dare say he would be pleased if it happened again! I'm not going to gratify him."

"You can stand a whopping!" said Hilton.

"Oh, quite!" said Wharton carelessly.

"It was awfully decent of you to come and give me the tip!" muttered Hilton.

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"I never knew! I should have been nailed, and it would have been the long jump for me! You've done me a good turn, kid."

"One good turn deserves another," said Harry. "It's all right."

Hilton nodded and left the study.

Wharton leaned on the mantelpiece again, with a dark and moody brow. The prospect of a flogging in the morning was unpleasant enough; but he did not give much thought to that. He had known the risk he was taking, and he was not the fellow to whine when it materialised.

It was the disgrace that he felt keenly. To his Form master's bitter condemnation, he could oppose sullen resentment and defiance. But the kind old Head had been more grieved than angry. Scapegrace as he had become, Harry valued his headmaster's good opinion; and now he had lost it.

And the rest of the school? Most of them had shown already what they thought of him.

In the Remove he was classed with the Bounder and Skinner. Every fellow who knew him looked on him now as a shady young sweep. The Bounder rejoiced in such a reputation; but the worst boy at Greyfriars was very different from the Bounder.

And he had done no wrong! It was a misunderstanding that could not be set right; and he owed it to his enemy in the Sixth! Loder was not a prefect, and had no right to give a fellow away. Quelch had no right to listen to him. Blacker and more bitter grew the junior's face as he thought of that.

He shook himself impatiently at last, and sorted out his books and sat down to prep.

But it was difficult to put his mind into Latin. He pushed his books away and rose, and moved restlessly about the study.

A tramp of feet and a buzz of voices in the passage announced at last that prep was over in the Remove. Wharton heard his own name spoken a good many times outside. All the fellows knew that he was up for a flogging in the morning, and most of them, undoubtedly, considered that he richly deserved it—his old friends among the rest. There was a pang in that thought. He told himself that he was indifferent to them, and to their opinion, yet it irked him sorely that they should think him a dingy "rotter," like Skinner. He threw open his door and stepped into the passage.

"Gratters, old bean!" called out the Bounder from the doorway of Study No. 4. "Glad it's only a whopping!"

Wharton did not heed him, hardly heard him. The Co. were coming down the passage, and his eyes were on them.

Three of them looked away from him. Only Johnny Bull returned his gaze with a grim, uncompromising stare.

They had to pass Study No. 1, and Wharton, following an impulse, stepped out as they came by. They were not friends—he did not want their friendship, or fancied that he did not—yet the desire to set himself right in their eyes was strong.

"Hold on a minute, you men."

It was the first time he had spoken to them for weeks. They stopped in sheer surprise. Johnny Bull gave an expressive grunt.

"Look here! Come on!" he said.

"I won't keep you a minute!" said Wharton, with a touch of sarcasm. "But if you'll step into the study for a tick, I'd like to tell you—"

"You fellows can please yourselves," said Johnny Bull, in his slow, deliberate way, "but I'm not going into that study! I bar frowsy outsiders."

The blood rushed to Wharton's face.

He had followed an impulse—founded, if he had realised it, on the fact that the loyal old friendship was not dead in his breast. The rebuff met him like a blow in the face.

His eyes blazed.

"You cheeky rotter—" he panted.

"Oh, chuck it!" said Johnny Bull contemptuously. "Keep your distance! You're up for a flogging for pub-haunting—and you jolly well ought to be bunked, and you know it! Leave decent fellows alone!"

Smack!

Johnny Bull gave a roar, as he staggered back, Wharton's open palm ringing on his face like a pistol-shot.

He staggered across the passage, and brought up against the opposite wall, gasping.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Nugent. "Johnny—"

"Get aside, you fool!" roared Johnny.

He shoved Frank Nugent out of the way, and rushed at Wharton, with his fists clenched. Wharton met him with

his hands up, his eyes burning over them. That fierce rush hurled him back into the study—but he rallied at once, and Johnny Bull was driven back into the passage under a rain of fierce blows.

"I say, you fellows, they're scrapping!" squeaked Billy Bunter. "I say, you fellows—a fight!"

Tramp, tramp, tramp! Harry Wharton and Johnny Bull were fighting furiously, and the whole Remove crowded round.

Bob Cherry and Nugent and Hurree Singh looked on with dismayed faces. Once already blows had been exchanged between the former friends, and now it had come to it again. Mutually exasperated, the two juniors fought with fierce determination in the centre of an excited ring.

Johnny Bull was a tough antagonist, with plenty of beef, and full of pluck. But he was hardly a match for Wharton—and in his rage and bitterness, Wharton seemed now to have the strength of two or three. Bull, fighting hard, was driven back and back, till at last he went crashing to the floor.

"Man down!" grinned the Bounder.

"Look here! Stop it!" panted Bob.

Johnny Bull was up in a twinkling and rushing in. Hammer and tongs they went, and damage was done on both sides—and again Johnny Bull went down with a crash.

"Two to one on Wharton in doughnuts!" said the Bounder.

"Shut up, Smithy!" muttered Redwing.

"No takers!" grinned Skinner.

Up jumped Johnny Bull, like a Jack-in-the-box. He hurled himself at his enemy, and was met with a left and right, crashing—and once more he went down. This time he lay gasping.

Wharton stood, panting. Bob Cherry gave the fallen junior a hand up. Johnny stood unsteadily, leaning on him, breathing in gasps. He was tough, but he was done. He did not speak; but he gave Wharton one grim, savage look as Bob led him away up the passage, to bathe his face under the tap. Nugent and Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh followed, without a look at Wharton.

The Bounder tapped him on the arm.

"Better bathe your chivvy, old bean, before Quelch sees it—"

"Hang Quelch!"

Harry Wharton went into his study, and the door crashed shut.

Third school the following day was followed by Hall—the whole school being assembled to witness a Head's flogging. After it was over, Lord Mauleverer slipped his arm quietly through Wharton's, and led him away.

Wharton was not seen again till dinner. Many eyes turned on him when he came in. They rested on a face of cool, calm indifference. Pride, if he had nothing else left, still upheld the scapegrace of the school.

THE END.

(The next yarn in this novel series is entitled: "NOBODY'S PAL!" Watch out for it, chums, in next Saturday's MAGNET. This issue will also contain six more FREE picture stamps to stick in your album.)

## COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS!

Always glad to hear from you, chums, so drop me a line to the following address: The Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

**I**F a couple of bullies tried to bar your path, would you know the best thing to do? No! Then just have a look at the first of this week's free gift picture stamps, and you'll soon learn. Just walk between your two bullies and jab the palms of your hands suddenly under their chins! It's easy, isn't it? And you'll find it is surprisingly effective if you put some beef into it!

If one of them bolts—as is quite likely—you can hold the other by gripping his right arm at the wrist and elbow, and forcing it up behind his back, thus making him bend down helplessly, when he is entirely at your mercy! You'll find the way to do this neatly illustrated in the second of this week's stamps. Try these two self-defence tips on your chums—but don't "treat 'em rough" while you are practising!

Now have a look at the fine "Southern Belle" All-Pullman Express. Probably my South Country readers know this fine train by sight, for she runs between London and Brighton on the Southern Railway. She covers the distance of 50½ miles in exactly one hour. The "Southern Belle" does two journeys each way per day, and is always "on time."

The famous Avro aeroplanes—one of which is pictured in this week's set of stamps—have been specially designed for the complete instruction of military pilots. The Avro 626 Training Aircraft is one of the very latest types, and is especially safe for a beginner. It is fitted with an Armstrong Siddeley "Lynx" engine of 215 h.p.; has a span of 34 feet and a height of 9 feet 7 inches, and can travel at a speed of 112 m.p.h.

Don't this week's dogs look real beauties? The Afghan Hound as shown in No. 2 of the "dog" series, is a very expensive animal, and is only kept as a show dog in this country. In their own country they are used for hunting.

Do you know how the British bulldog got its name? In the bad old days, "bull-baiting" used to be a sport in this country. Bulldogs were trained to fix their teeth in the muzzle of a bull and hang

on like grim death while mastiffs dragged down the unfortunate animal. Owing to the fact that its nose is set so far back, the bulldog can hang on without interference to its breathing.

**H**ERE is a query from a reader who signs himself "Magneticus." He wants to know something about

### CONQUERORS OF THE CHANNEL.

How many people have swum the English Channel? The total number is seventeen; but only three of them have swum from England to France. These three—all of whom were English—were: Captain Webb in 1875, T. W. Burgess in 1911, and H. Sullivan in 1923. Of the other fourteen conquerors of the Channel, six were English, three American, and one each Argentine, German, French, Egyptian, and South African. Seven women have swum the Channel as against ten men.

The fastest time for the swim was put up by George Michel, a Frenchman, who swum from Cape Grisnez to Dover in eleven hours five minutes. The longest time was that of H. Sullivan, from Dover to Calais, in twenty-seven hours twenty-five minutes—but you must remember that, owing to tides, the swim from England to France is the most arduous! Captain Webb took twenty-one hours forty-five minutes over the job, also swimming from Dover to Calais.

Altogether, English swimmers are well to the fore where Channel swimming is concerned!

Here are some

### RAPID-FIRE REPLIES

which have been held up for a little time owing to pressure of space.

Arrangements of a Biplane's Wings (A. W., of Carlow): Experiments have proved that the present position of the wings of a biplane enable it to develop a given lift while using less power than a monoplane.

**Hints on Keeping Gold Fish (S. Porteus, of Walthamstow):** Don't overcrowd your aquarium. Not more than six small fish should be kept to each gallon of water. Put the aquarium or bowl in a nice light place, but don't allow the direct rays of the sun to shine on it. The water must be kept cool and changed once a day. Don't handle the fish, and feed sparingly. You can get special gold fish food quite cheaply at any pet stores.

**About Charterhouse School ("A Regular Reader," of Oxford):** Charterhouse School, at Godalming, was founded in 1611, and has 614 scholars. Sorry I can't tell you what "initiation" new boys must undergo! Your chum will soon discover for himself!

**A Titchish Teaser (H. J., of Salford):** Can I tell you which English word of seven letters has eight left if I take two away? 'Seasy! The word w-eight-y!

By the way, chums, have you placed your orders yet for

### THE MOST POPULAR BOYS' BOOKS

that are now on sale? There is a tremendous demand this year for the "Greyfriars Holiday Annual," and the "Popular Book of Boys' Stories," which are 6s. and 2s. 6d. respectively. Ask your newsagent for particulars of his Christmas Book Club. They'll interest you—and you won't be satisfied until you've added these two bonzer books to your collection.

Look out for next week's issue! Frank Richards has turned in a top-notch yarn which will make you sit up and take notice! It's called:

### "NOBODY'S PAL!"

and it's one of the best tales of the Greyfriars chums which I have yet had the pleasure of publishing.

In addition there'll be a fine long instalment of our ripping serial "The Red Falcon!"—a "Greyfriars Herald" that will make you chuckle loud and long, another Soccer talk by "Linesman"—and six more free picture stamps to stick in your album! Don't miss this splendid FREE GIFT issue, chums!

YOUR EDITOR,

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,292.

# THE RED FALCON!

By ARTHUR STEFFENS



## The Six Bells!

**S**AMUEL LOVETT waited until they had gone. Then, seizing his hat, he rushed out and tore through Clare Market to Bow Street, where he burst into the police office and surprised Martin Cosgrave, who was pouring over a copy of the "London Gazette."

"Hallo!" said the Bow Street Runner, putting down the paper and eyeing Lovett, with a calculating leer. "What's brought you here? Got tired of your thieving ways and come to give yourself up on a confession of receiving? Mind, I warn you, it may mean a ride to Tyburn, Samuel!"

"This is no time for joking!" rasped Lovett, pointing to the door. "Jerry McLean came into the shop with my son Hal and threatened me just now. I've sent them to look for Isaac Quilt. You ought to know where to find Isaac Quilt, Mr. Cosgrave."

The Bow Street Runner sprang to his feet with surprising agility for a man of his age, weight, and size, and grabbed his hat and coat.

"To be sure I know where to find Quilt," he said, as he brushed past Lovett and made for the door. "I'm taking a posse with me, and with a bit of luck I shall have all three under lock and key before the morning breaks."

"And I shall touch four hundred and fifty pounds reward," chuckled Samuel

Lovett half to himself, as he followed the officer out into the station yard and watched him and his patrol mount and ride away.

As soon as they had disappeared in the distance Samuel Lovett walked painfully but not unhappily home.

The highwaymen and thieves of London had their own secret code, and their own network of hiding-places round and about the City of London in the reign of his Most Gracious Majesty King George III. And, of course, they had their own sets and cliques, ranging from that of gentlemen highwaymen to the lowest order of sneak-thief. And to one of these cliques the adventurers belonged.

Both Jerry McLean and Hal Lovett were aware of the risk they ran in showing themselves in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden, where they were both so well known, and after they had paid their visit to Samuel Lovett they hastened to the Inn Yard, where they had left their horses, mounted, and rode away.

"That's a grand nag you've got, gen'lman," said the ostler, winking his left eye at Hal as the boy mounted. "And I think I know of a gent as would be werry glad to see him again."

"Oh," said Hal, as he slipped a piece of silver into the man's grimy hand, "and who's that?"

## READ THIS FIRST.

Convicted of robbing the Earl of Huntford, Hal Lovett and his chum, Jerry McLean, are conveyed to the convict hulks at Woolwich, whence they escape. They seek sanctuary in the "Retreat," Epping, where they rescue the chief of the Bow Street Runners from the ruthless hands of a gang of highwaymen. Later, they confront Samuel Lovett, who, at the pistol point, confesses that he is not Isaac's father and tells them to go to Isaac Quilt from whom they will learn the secret of the Red Falcon. The two adventurers thereupon leave in quest of Isaac Quilt.

"Mr. Cosgrave, the Runner," replied the ostler, with another wink, and slipped the coin into his pocket.

Hal Lovett was not afraid. The ostler would not betray him.

"Where shall we find Quilt, Jerry?" he asked, as they rode along the Strand and headed in the direction of Mayfair.

"We'll try the Dog and Duck," answered Jerry. "If he's not to be found there we shall hear something about him."

The Dog and Duck was an old ale-house just beyond Shepherd's Market, and smoke lay heavily below its raftered and blackened ceilings as Jerry and Hal entered and made their way through the laughing company of footmen and chair-bearers and jarveys to a room at the back, where the better-class customers were served.

Here they called a potman aside and questioned him.

"The gentleman with the scar on his cheek, sir?" said the waiter. "Mr. Isaac? He's gone away, sir. But maybe you'll hear something of him at the Six Bells, down Chelsea way."

Jerry knew the place. It was in King's Road—a gabled inn, which had dispensed first-class hospitality for many years.

The two adventurers rode there at once, gave their horses into the hands of the ostler, telling him to stable them near at hand, and then went in search of Quilt.

They found him sprawled in a pew, drinking ale and smoking a long pipe.

"Well," he said, as the three sat together at the end of the table, "and what had Samuel Lovett to say?"

"He owned up that Hal was not his son," said Jerry McLean; "but he swore he knew nothing about the Red Falcon."

"Then he lies," said Quilt.

He was an odd-looking man this, with a scarred and lined face of parchment hue. Of uncertain age, but hard and active, and a dangerous man to meddle with, to judge from his cold, steel-like eyes and his wicked smile.

Hal and Jerry had chanced upon him at the Dog and Duck Inn, in Mayfair, when Jack Pryce led them there; and when they challenged him about the hold he seemed to have over the Earl of Huntford and the hidden knowledge he seemed to possess about the Red Falcon he had referred them to Samuel Lovett.

"He lied at the point of death then, Quilt," said Jerry McLean. "for I very



nearly discharged the pistol and sent a ball into his brain."

"Samuel's a deep 'un," said Quilt, sipping at his ale. "He'd risk a bullet through his head if there was money to be made."

"Well, Quilt," said Hal, leaning upon the table, "he owned up that I was not his son, and he said you could tell me who I really am. That's why we've come to you."

"Who's the boy?" asked Jerry. "Come, out with it, Quilt! He's a right to know!"

Quilt laughed, then, draining his tankard, he brought it down on the oak table with a dull thud.

"I'll tell him some day," he said. "And soon, maybe. But before I do I've got an appointment to keep."

"With whom?" asked McLean.

"I've been exchanging letters with the Earl of Huntford," said Quilt, with a mocking smile. "And the result is that his Lordship is coming to London from Huntford Hall to-morrow evening especially to see me."

"Is he coming to his town house in St. James' Square, Isaac?" asked McLean.

"Yes. And he will be there for supper at ten."

"Why not to dinner?" asked McLean.

"Because the house is at the moment shut up. The earl is not in town. Besides, he would not care to dine with me. Supper between us two, with Albert, the footman, to wait at table, is another matter. Albert does not know me. The others do—or they might."

"Why do you talk in riddles, Quilt? Why all this mystery?"

"I have business with the earl. He is bringing money to town to-morrow—"

"Money for you?"

"Yes, and after I have seen him I may have something to say about the Red Falcon, McLean. We shall see."

A potman passed by the end of the pew, and Quilt called to him.

"Bring us some drinks," he said.

Before he could give the order, however, a clatter of iron-shod hoofs out in the stable yard caused Jerry to sit up straight and the potman to turn towards the door. There were many horses. Jerry could hear loud voices, the ring of spurs as men dropped to the cobbles, the clank of scabbards, and a hoarse command.

A door crashed open. Leaping to his feet, Hal Lovett looked over the back of the pew. He saw men crowding into the inn, a flurry of three-cornered hats and the flash of bright red waistcoats. He saw Martin Cosgrave at the head of a posse of Bow Street Runners hold aloft his short staff with the gold crown on it.

"In the King's name!"

Cosgrave's voice rang as clear as a bell, and men whose consciences were not quite clean overturned tables and chairs as they scrambled for the nearest exit.

"Stay where you are, everybody!" shouted Cosgrave. "Boys, guard the doors, and shoot down any man who tries to get away!"

He moved towards the pew, and his sharp eyes picked out Isaac Quilt sitting, grim-faced and tight-lipped, in a corner.

"That's our man!" said Cosgrave, pointing. "Seize him! Isaac Quilt, I arrest you in the King's name!"

Jerry McLean had sprung upon the wooden seat and was reaching for the window-catch. He turned it and pushed the window open. It opened on to a

narrow passage, which was at the moment empty.

"Come on, Hal!" said McLean.

Hal Lovett could not understand why the Runners did not take him and Jerry, seeing that they were escaped convicts; but, instead, they hurled themselves on Isaac Quilt, and, bearing him down, snapped a pair of handcuffs on his wrists. Then they hauled him to his feet and dragged him out of the pew.

As Hal scrambled to the open window and looked back, he saw Martin Cosgrave stride up to Quilt and look the prisoner full in the eyes. The Bow Street Runner did not even glance at the window or the men who were going through it, and Hal heard him say: "Why, Quilt, I've been searching London for you for a long time! What a bit of luck I came here to-night!" And Quilt's answer: "Well, what have I done? What do you want me for?"

The Bow Street Runner's rejoinder was evasive, and yet conclusive:

"You'll soon find that out when we get you to Bow Street!"

Then Hal leapt down into the passage and raced after Jerry McLean without troubling to close the window behind him.



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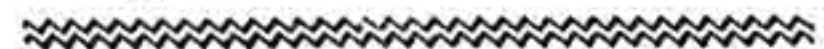
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A Prisoner Goes By!

HERE was, apparently, a reason for Martin Cosgrave's carelessness in letting Jerry and Hal get away from the crowded bar, for when they ran through the kitchen and scullery and gained the stable yard they found it packed with horses and four of the Runners held possession of the outer doors.

Just inside a horse stall, however, they saw the ostler, and he, placing his finger to his nose, winked knowingly. Then the man turned and pulled Galloper forward by the reins. Jerry took the reins, led the horse behind the group of horses belonging to the posse, and set his foot in a stirrup. The ostler then gave Hal Lovett his horse, Bow Street Beauty. In a moment Hal was up and riding, his body flattened on the horse's shoulders.

At the Beauty's flying steel shod heels rode Jerry, and Jerry, with his head bowed, held the shortened reins in his teeth and a pistol in each hand.

Out after them raced the ostler, shouting in a high-pitched voice:

"Stop 'em! Thieves! Murder!"

The Bow Street Runners who guarded the yard swung round, but before any of them could draw either sword or pistol, Hal was upon them.

The charging horse bore one of the men down. As he fell Jerry discharged

his pistols, aiming at the night, but sending the balls so near the heads of the police officers that they ducked and dropped as the bullets whistled by.

The sure-footed Galloper avoided trampling upon the prostrate Runner and followed Bow Street Beauty out into the night. But the moment they had gone the man was up and racing for his horse.

"Come on!" he shouted. "If we're smart we ought to catch 'em at the first turnpike."

There was much scrambling and shouting and cursing. Then the mounted officers poured down to the gate, where they found the way blocked by an eager, bleary-eyed ostler, whose pointing finger showed the way to Putney.

"There they go!" shouted the man, in a frenzy of excitement. "Quick! You'll catch 'em! They just went round that belt o' trees!"

"Dash you, get out of the way!" said the leader of the Runners, as he crashed a fist at the ostler's jaw and felled him.

Then, with a rush and a clatter, they were out on the road and riding madly in the direction indicated by the ostler, their hoofbeats drowning the sound of the highwaymen's horses as Hal and Jerry McLean rode the other way.

Hal and Jerry made the pace a cracker until they were within half a mile of the turnpike, and then they pulled up and listened.

Faint hoofbeats echoed in the far distance, diminishing beats, which showed that the posse had gone the other way, and Jerry laughed.

"Our friend the ostler must have fooled them, Hal," he said. "But I hope they will not punish him for it."

They rode coolly to the turnpike and paid their toll.

In the shade of some trees they halted again and drew their horses back behind a leafy screen. The moon was veiled by flying clouds that threatened rain. The wind was rising. Around them everything was black and forbidding. And in the far distance the sky was aglow from the lights of London.

"I wonder, boy," said Jerry, "if the Runners will bring Quilt this way? They may have turned on to the Kensington Road."

"Why? You're not contemplating trying to rescue him, are you, Jerry?" asked Hal Lovett. "We are only two against the lot. We could never do it, and would only be taken instead."

"It's not that, Hal," answered Jerry uneasily. "I'm wondering why they've taken Quilt. He's a housebreaker, I know, but he swore the other day that the police could prove nothing against him."

"The earl can," said Hal. "He recognised Quilt the other day at Huntford Hall."

"Maybe that's it," muttered Jerry, frowning thoughtfully. "And the Earl may want to get rid of him as badly as he wants to get rid of you. If that is so, and he gets news of Quilt's arrest, I suppose he won't be bringing his bags of money to London to-morrow. There would scarcely be the need."

Jerry stopped speaking, and held his breath. From the far distance came a dim echo of cantering hoofbeats, the sound of a ringing voice. The sounds grew louder, the hoofbeats more distinct. Then suddenly there came into view a group of horsemen, wearing three-cornered hats, who had in their midst a man whose legs were tied together beneath the body of the horse he rode. His hands were free, so that he could guide his horse, and the

Runners on either side of him rode with their pistols bared.

The prisoner was Isaac Quilt. He was hatless, and in the veiled light his face looked ghastly. Martin Cosgrave chose the moment he was opposite the spot where Jerry and Hal were hiding to ask a question.

"Feeling comfortable, Quilt?" he jeered.

"Curse you, no!" answered the prisoner. "What have you arrested me for?"

"Burglary—and you'll hang!" answered Cosgrave. "I've got a whole list of charges up against you!"

"But you can't prove 'em!" came Quilt's defiant voice.

Cosgrave's answer rang clearly. "We've got ways and means by which to make you speak!"

And then the sounds died away.

Half an hour later Jerry and Hal, deeming it safe to move, urged their horses out on to the highway.

"Whither now?" asked Hal.

"The bridge at Westminster, boy,"

answered Jerry. "We'll get over on the other side of the Thames, and we'll stop the earl if he comes driving to London town to-morrow."

The arrest of Isaac Quilt had a depressing effect upon the adventurers who crossed the river in silence, thinking it safer to be on the Surrey side, with the Bow Street Runners so active and aware that the escaped convicts and wanted highwaymen were in London Town.

With their cloaks drawn about them and their hats pulled down to hide their faces, they rode into the Borough, and there a sudden squall of rain providing them with a good excuse, they rode into the stable yard of the Mermaid Inn and asked for accommodation.

There were rooms to spare, and, having made sure that their horses were in good hands and tipped the ostler handsomely, they partook of some light refreshment and went straight to bed.

Late arrivals were quite a common thing, but to any man who lived in

constant fear of the police, the arrival of horsemen had more than ordinary significance, and so a visitor, whose bedroom opened on to the balcony which ran round the entire square of the coach yard, peeped cautiously out of the window of his darkened room.

He saw Jerry McLean and Hal Lovett dismount, watched them as they spoke to the ostler, the dim light of a candle-lamp casting fitful beams upon their faces, and he held his breath in grim satisfaction.

Colonel York, whose shoulder had been grazed by the bullet fired at him out at Epping, and who was staying at the inn in the guise of a commercial traveller, smiled evilly as he climbed back into bed.

(The treacherous Colonel York has long been waiting to get even with the two adventurers. Now his opportunity has come! Don't miss next week's thrill-packed chapters, whatever you do, chums. And don't forget next Saturday's MAGNET will contain six more super picture-stamps.)

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Conjurer needs additions to his outfit to enable him to fulfil future engagements. Small gifts of good toppers, silk scarves, live rabbits, tame mice, gold watches, diamond rings and sovereigns welcomed. Send early and avoid the rush!—**OLIVER KIPPS**, Study No. 5, Remove.



No. 8 (New Series).

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

November 19th, 1932.

# THE NEW Greyfriars Herald

EXTRA GOOD EDITION

**WHO WANTS A HUMAN FOCHORN?**  
Gentleman (voice completely broken) offers services in any capacity where strong lungs are needed. Experienced community-singing conductor, election agent and referee-batter. Terms mod.—**P. BOLSOVER**, No. 10, Remove Passage.

## AS OTHERS SEE THEM

What I Think of Horace Coker

By DICK RAKE

Coker is the most important fellow at Greyfriars. Without a doubt he ought to be captain of the Fifth. The only thing that stops him is the unanimous opposition of the rest of the Form. This opposition is prompted by jealousy of his good looks, his brains, and his outstanding ability at games. The only two fellows in the Fifth with any pretensions to horse-sense apart from Coker are Potter and Greene, his two satellites. They get it, of course, from contact with their famous leader.

At least, that's what Coker thinks! But there's always the possibility of even a genius being mistaken sometimes, and I think Coker has made several little mistakes. As a matter of fact, he is one of the least important fellows at Greyfriars; he's the last fellow capable of leading the Fifth; while as to his looks, his brains, and his outstanding athletic ability, they provoke plenty of mirth, but no jealousy whatever.

Potter and Greene, far from getting their horse-sense from Coker, have to repress it altogether while he's about, for Coker and horse-sense don't go at all well together! But three cheers for good old Coker for all that, chaps! What should we do without him?

Just think of it! If Coker went, there'd be nobody left to punch pompous prefects, noses; nobody to tell the Head how to run Greyfriars or Wingate how to run the First Eleven; nobody for us to throw down the Remove stairs an average of once a week; nobody to laugh at from one year's end to the other! What an awful prospect!

What makes Coker such a frightfully funny figure, of course, is his terrific seriousness. He takes himself in deadly earnest, and the more earnest he feels, the more humorous he seems to other people! Of course, it would be unfair to wind up without mentioning that in spite of all his drawbacks, Horace Coker's true blue—brave as the proverbial lion and as honest and truthful as the day is long—But he really is a perfect scream!

## THE MODERN BOY AGAIN

Has He Stopped Asking Questions?

Questions?

They're at it again, chaps! The London "Daily Express," in yet another of its attacks on the schoolboy of 1932, shrieks: "The smug, self-satisfied modern schoolboy takes everything for granted! Unlike the intelligent generations of boys that went before him, he never asks questions!"

With a view to finding out the truth about that statement, one of our reporters took a stroll round the quad. Tabb of the Third promptly bumped into him and asked: "Please, can you tell me the time?"

Having answered the question, our reporter took another half-dozen steps and met Dicky Nugent of the Second. Young Nugent promptly hurled another question at him.

"Do you call that a face?" he asked. Before our reporter could muster up an answering kick, Bunter rolled up. "I say, old chap, can you lend me half-a-crown till the postal order I'm expecting from Lord Bunter de Bunter turns up?" he mumbled. Having given a firm and unambiguous negative reply, our reporter turned away and accidentally trod on Bolsover major's pet corn. "Yaroooooh!" hooted Bolsover, as he performed a wild leap in the air. "Do you want a thick ear, you clumsy idiot?" Our reporter hastily returned to the editorial office to be greeted with yet another question from the Editor: "How did you get on, old bean?" Judging by our reporter's (Continued at foot of next column.)

## BROADCASTING FROM STUDY NO. 1

HUGE SUCCESS, BUT—

Questions?

Listeners will be delighted to know that the broadcast programme from Study No. 1, arranged for last Wednesday, went off without a hitch. At five o'clock to the second the comb-and-paper band struck up and Harry Wharton and his guests made the welkin ring with "Tea for Ten and Ten for Tea." Everybody then sat down to tea, and Study No. 1 echoed to the cheery clatter of crockery and the buzz of conversation. There was nothing



At five-twenty the door was unlocked and a furnished programme from Study No. 1, arranged for last Wednesday, went off without a hitch. At five o'clock to the second the comb-and-paper band struck up and Harry Wharton and his guests made the welkin ring with "Tea for Ten and Ten for Tea." Everybody then sat down to tea, and Study No. 1 echoed to the cheery clatter of crockery and the buzz of conversation. There was nothing

## FORM MASTER'S GUILTY SECRET

Cut by His Colleagues

Questions?

Fellows who keep their eyes open can hardly have failed to notice the changed attitude of Mr. Wiggins' colleagues recently. It was a revelation to walk in the Second Form master's walk yesterday morning. First of all, Mr. Wiggins ran into the Head. The Head elevated his eyebrows and gave a disapproving sniff. Mr. Quetch bumped into him soon after that. He flung him a scornful glance. Mr. Capper of the Upper Fourth stopped and gave the unhappy Second Form master a derisive look. Mr. Prout sneered. Mr. Twigg sneered. Monsieur Charpentier shrugged eloquently. Herr Otto Gans stopped eating his sausage and muttered "Ach! Mein Gott!" Mr. Lasseles, the maths master, averted his eyes as he passed, and walked away, shaking his head sadly.

After that, we ventured to approach the cause of all the trouble and ask him what it was all about. For answer, Mr. Wiggins stared at us with wild eyes and laughed hysterically. "I suppose I cannot hope to preserve my guilty secret any longer," he said, tremulously. "Truth will out. Blazon it across the front page of your paper, therefore, if you wish, that WIGGINS WAS SEEN IN THE MASTERS' COMMON-ROOM PRACTISING YO-YO!"

"I have brought this humiliation upon myself. I can never hope to regain my self-respect. My cup of bitterness is full. Woe is me!" Mr. Wiggins then rushed off and buried his head in an ornamental flowerpot.

## FOOTER IN THE FOG PLAYERS DISREGARD BLOT-OUT

Extraordinary scenes were witnessed on the playing-fields last Saturday.

Questions?

At least, they would have been witnessed, but for the thick fog that hung over Greyfriars! The First Eleven were booked to play St. Jim's on Big Side, and the Remove had a fixture with Abbotsford on Little Side. But no sooner had play started than the fog, which had been threatening, thickened into a regular "pea-soup."

The referees for both matches promptly declared play impossible; but despite that decision, the players unanimously decided to carry on in the fog! Amid unflinching cheers from the invisible spectators, play started again. Some difficulty was experienced at first in locating the ball, and most of the players started lighting matches to help them in the search for it. It was quite weird from the pavilion to see the little pin-points of light that kept appearing through the gloom!

After a time, however, the players seemed to get accustomed to the extraordinary conditions, and the faint "plink" of boot meeting ball became more noticeable. The way the ball went from one end of the field to the other eventually was marvellous. One moment a ghostly figure would fit past the pavilion with the ball at his feet. A moment later, a muffled yell of "Goal!" would come from the other end of the field. A fraction of a second later, by some miraculous means, the other side would score a goal, too. The chief difficulty was in keeping the score. At half-time, Abbotsford were convinced that they were leading by 10 goals to 3. The home team were equally convinced that they were leading by 11 goals to 4! It was agreed to split the difference and call it a draw of 7 goals each, and on this understanding the game was resumed. We're awfully sorry we can't say much about the second half.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

ANKSHUT'S (Study No. 7).—

Questions?

"Even a worm will turn." Does this apply to that ass, Alonzo Todd? Don't be alarmed, old barrel! Lonzy is only a bookworm, and the only time he "turns" is when he "turns" over the pages of those massive volumes he's always reading!

"HONNEST HORACE" (Fifth).—"I believe in calling a spade a spade." Well, what are you grumbling about, Horace? We ourselves often have a sly dig at you!

"MIENS SANA" (Third).—"No, dear child, Highlife is a school, not a mental home. Of course, as you've only met Pensonby and his pals, the mistake is quite understandable."

## THE HUMAN GIRAFFE

Now showing every evening in the Fifth Games

Questions?

Study! Answers to the name of "Horace." Blundell says his head's sorewood on the right way but he's got an awful neck!

For answer, Mr. Wiggins stared at us with wild eyes and laughed hysterically. "I suppose I cannot hope to preserve my guilty secret any longer," he said, tremulously. "Truth will out. Blazon it across the front page of your paper, therefore, if you wish, that WIGGINS WAS SEEN IN THE MASTERS' COMMON-ROOM PRACTISING YO-YO!"

"I have brought this humiliation upon myself. I can never hope to regain my self-respect. My cup of bitterness is full. Woe is me!" Mr. Wiggins then rushed off and buried his head in an ornamental flowerpot.

## GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

Dear Editor—

Questions?

On my acquainting Mr. Question of my inadvertent omission to perform preparation, be unreasonably administered corporal punitive measures, thereby originating in me acute discomfort of the anatomy. Surely, dear Editor, the excuspation of this perturbing and pernicious perversion of pedagogic puissance can eventuate only on the understanding that it is symptomatic of a lack of empathy and an existence of insubstantial functional disorder, involving mental repercussions.

Trusting that you agree with me, Yours truly, ALONZO TODD.

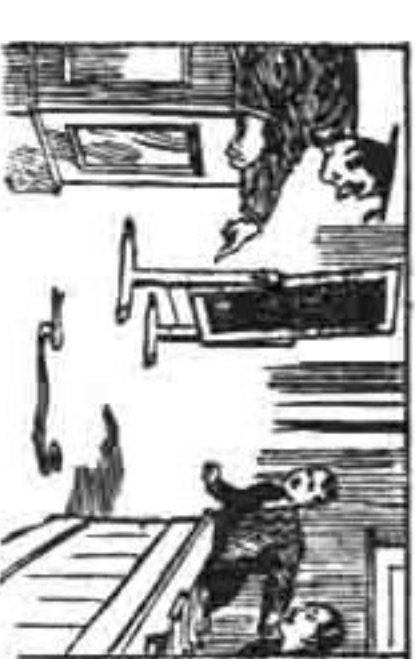
"We agree with every word you say," old chap! What does it all mean?—Ed!

## DICKY NUGENT'S WEEKLY WISDOM

The Head recently told my pater that the Second was a "really bad Form." Personally, I consider it was really bad form of him to mention it!

## Snoop Goes Straight

Snoop says he has reformed and is depending all his spare time practising light-rope walking. For the sake of his bodily comfort, we hope he'll remember never to take another step in the wrong direction!



Kissall keeps reptiles for pets, but got into trouble when he let loose a harmless grass snake on the Form-room floor!

Bunter claims to have been given 27,300 lines by various markers and prefects during his career at Greyfriars.

Mark Linley can use his head on the football field as well as in the Form-Room. Against Highlife he "headed" a goal from 8 yards range!

Reginald Temple, the dandified captain of the Upper Fourth, considers he has a "dim face," and yearns to try his luck as a film star.

Sir Jimmy Vivian has a baby cine camera, and films some of the Remove football fixtures.

George Wingate obtained his certificate as an air pilot. Will he fly the Atlantic? Who knows!

Dear Editor—On my acquainting Mr. Question of my inadvertent omission to perform preparation, be unreasonably administered corporal punitive measures, thereby originating in me acute discomfort of the anatomy. Surely, dear Editor, the excuspation of this perturbing and pernicious perversion of pedagogic puissance can eventuate only on the understanding that it is symptomatic of a lack of empathy and an existence of insubstantial functional disorder, involving mental repercussions.

Trusting that you agree with me, Yours truly, ALONZO TODD.

"We agree with every word you say," old chap! What does it all mean?—Ed!

**LONZY'S LITTLE LETTERS**

As the two games ended, a breeze sprang up and the fog lifted. Two remarkable discoveries were then made. The first was that the senior game had somehow finished up in the Cloisters; and the second, affecting the junior game, was that some practical joker had been at work distributing footballs all over Little Side! Altogether, ten balls had been in use simultaneously in the Abbotsford match, so it wasn't at all surprising that the players had found the net so often!

Asked in the pavilion what he thought of the game, Bob Cherry said it was one of the most "striking matches" he had ever seen!