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# THE BOUNDER'S BLUNDER!

Featuring Harry Wharton & Co. and Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Beastly for Bunter!

"BUNTAIR!"

Billy Bunter jumped. Monsieur Charpentier, the French master at Greyfriars, rapped out his name like a bullet.

He frowned as he rapped it out. "Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I moan, wee, wee, monnseer!"

He blinked at the French master in surprise and indignation. Other fellows in the French set also regarded "Mossoo" with surprise.

Mossoo looked wrathful. Certainly a pupil like Bunter was enough to make any master wrathful. But it was very unusual for Monsieur Charpentier to let his angry passions rise.

Generally he was good-temper itself. His patience with his class might have made Job envious. All Greyfriars agreed that Mossoo was a good little ass.

Now there was a change. All the fellows in the French set had noticed it at the start. Mossoo was cross that morning.

Nobody knew what had happened to upset him. Nobody, perhaps, cared. But they felt rather indignant. They were accustomed to taking things easily in the French class. Often there was a little mild ragging. French with Mossoo was a pleasant and peaceful rest, after anything else with Quelch.

This particular morning it was not a rest. Mossoo, being upset, was taking it out of his class by making them work. Skinner whispered to the Bounder that if the little beast fancied he was going to make them work, like Quelch, he

would jolly well find out that he was mistaken. And Smithy agreed that he would.

Billy Bunter, at the back of the class, was not giving his attention to Mossoo. He never did, and Bunter saw no reason for changing his manners and customs simply because Mossoo was in a new mood. Besides, Bunter was busy. He was the happy possessor of a stick of toffee. Toffee, in Bunter's opinion, was more important than the French language, and the whole French nation,

**The Bounder of Greyfriars makes a good friend, but a dangerous enemy . . . In this fine story you will read how his enmity towards a master at Greyfriars nearly brings about his ruin.**

with France thrown in. Bunter sucked toffee, and turned a deaf ear to Mossoo—till his name was rapped out so sharply and thunderously that he jumped, and almost swallowed the toffee in a lump.

Monsieur Charpentier came nearer to his class, and his eyes gleamed at Bunter.

"My hat! Mossoo's waxy this morning!" murmured Bob Cherry.

That remark was not intended to reach Mossoo's ears. But Mossoo seemed very sharp of hearing that morning.

He spun round towards Bob.

"Sherry!" he rapped.

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

"You talk viz yourself, Sherry!" snapped Monsieur Charpentier. "I say not vunce but plenty times, I vill not have ze talk in ze class! But you, Sherry, you talk viz yourself!"

"Oh, no, sir!" said Bob innocently. "I was talking with Wharton, sir!" There was a ripple of laughter in the class.

Monsieur Charpentier glared. "Sherry, you make a choke of me, isn't it? You will write feefy lines of ze Henriade!"

"Oh, my hat!" "Silence! Taisez-vous! Zis class, he is like one garden of ze bear!" said Monsieur Charpentier. "Buntair!"

"Oh! Yes, sir! I—I've been listening all the time, sir," said Billy Bunter hastily. "I—I heard every word you were saying, sir."

"Vat? I say nozzing! I write on ze blackboard!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. Bunter had been too busy with the toffee to heed Monsieur Charpentier at all for some time.

"Vat you mean, Buntair? You say to me zat you hear me, when I say nozzings?"

"I—I mean I heard every word you wrote on the blackboard, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Silence! Buntair, you tell me one unroof. You eat ze toffee in ze class."

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bunter. Mossoo's eyes, as well as his ears, seemed uncommonly sharp that morning.

"I am verree angry viz you, Buntair! I am in one large wax! You eat ze toffee—"

"Oh, no, sir! I—I haven't tasted

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toffee for—for weeks! I—I wasn't eating toffee, sir! I haven't any—"

"Vat?"

"I—I assure you I haven't any toffee about me, sir. You can ask Nugent, sir. He gave it to me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Vill you be silent in zis class? Zis is not a matter for to laugh. Buntair, you are one mauvais garçon! Vous mangez—you eat in ze class! I vill not allow ze eat in ze class! Buntair, vill you give me a small attention?"

"Oh, yes, sir! Rather!"

Monsieur Charpentier had the pointer in his hand. He looked like using it on Bunter's fat knuckles. The Owl of the Remove realised that it was time to give a little attention—or a small attention, as Mossoo called it. He sat up and took notice.

Mossoo pointed to the phrase he had chalked on the blackboard.

"You vill translate, Buntair!"

Bunter blinked at the blackboard.

The sentence written there was easy enough for a fag in the Second Form. But what Billy Bunter did not know about French would have filled whole dictionaries to overflowing.

Bunter did not like French. It was not so putrid as Latin, of course; still, he did not like it. Indeed it was doubtful whether Bunter would have desired to learn even English, if he could have got on somehow without a language at all. Work, in any shape or form, had never had any appeal for William George Bunter.

Besides, a fellow did not expect to work in the French set. It was a quiet backwater, where a fellow took his ease. Mossoo, in this new mood, was distinctly exasperating.

Still, with the pointer grasped in Mossoo's hand, Bunter realised that he had better exert his fat wits a little.

"Je serai a Paris le vingt-cinq Novembre."

It really was easy enough. But it contained deep mysteries for Bunter.

"Vell?" rapped Monsieur Charpentier.

"I vait!"

"Je—I—" stammered Bunter. He knew that much. "I—I—I—"

"Continuez!"

"Je—je—je—I—I—I—"

"Mon Dieu! Zis is too much! You know nozzing—nozzing! E coutez! Listen! 'I shall be in Paris the twenty-fifth November.' Comprenes?"

"Will you, sir?" gasped Bunter.

He blinked at Mossoo in surprise. It did not seem to occur to his fat brain that Monsieur Charpentier was giving him the translation of the sentence on the blackboard.

"Vat? Vat you say, Buntair?"

"I—I mean, you can't, sir," expostulated Bunter. "It's past the twenty-fifth of November now, sir."

"Vat?" shrieked Mossoo.

"I—I'm glad to hear that you're going to Paris, sir! I—I mean, we—we shall miss you frightfully, sir—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mon Dieu! Zat boy Buntair, he turn ze hair grey! Buntair, vill you not comprehend? Je vous dis—I say to you—'I shall be in Paris the twenty-fifth November—'"

"But—but it's December now, sir!" gasped Bunter. "D-d-d-do you mean next year, sir?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the French class.

Monsieur Charpentier looked on the point of tearing his hair. He brandished the pointer and pointed to the blackboard.

"Regardez! Look! Vill you not

understand? Je serai a Paris le vingt-cinq Novembre—I shall be in Paris the twenty-fifth November! Now you vill understand, Bunter?"

"N-n-no, sir!" stammered Bunter.

"I—I don't see how you can be in Paris on the twenty-fifth of November, when we're in December now, sir. You—you've left it too late, sir."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Name of a name!" gasped Monsieur Charpentier.

He made a stride at Bunter.

Crack!

The pointer landed on a set of fat knuckles.

There was a yell that awoke every echo of the class-room.

"Yaroooooh!"

"Buntair—"

"Yaroooooop!"

Bunter sucked his knuckles frantically.

"Taisez-vous! Be silent viz you!"

"Yoooooooooooop!"

"Mon Dieu! Vunce more you yell, I give you somezing! Vill you be silent?" shrieked Mossoo.

He whisked away from Bunter, leaving the fat junior sucking his knuckles instead of the toffee. And Billy Bunter glared after him with a glare that almost cracked his spectacles.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Smithy Asks for It!

"SMEET!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, gave no heed.

The Bounder was lounging back on the form, with his hands in his pockets, assuming an elaborate carelessness of manner.

Monsieur Charpentier seemed to be on the warpath that morning. And Smithy wanted to make it clear that Mossoo on the warpath had no terrors for him. The more unruly spirits in the Remove looked to the Bounder for leadership, and Smithy was not the man to let them look in vain.

Even in Form with Mr. Quelch, who was not a master to be trifled with, Smithy prided himself on not being an easy man to handle. And he was accustomed to treating the little French master with an almost contemptuous indifference.

Generally, Smithy behaved himself in the French set, leaving rags on Mossoo to smaller fry like Skinner or Bolsover major, hardly regarding the French master as worth his powder and shot. But with Mossoo in this new irascible mood, the Bounder was getting his back up. It was an unwritten law that fellows did as they liked in the French class. If Mossoo was going to worry them, he was going to get as good as he gave.

"Smeat!"

A fellow whose name was Vernon-Smith certainly had a right not to answer to the name of 'Smeat'—which was the nearest Mossoo could get to it. The Bounder gave no heed.

"Smeat!" rapped out Mossoo, for the third time.

Harry Wharton glanced round at Smithy. He gave him quite an expressive look. But Smithy did not heed.

"Smeat!" squeaked Monsieur Charpentier.

Nearly all the class were grinning now. The Bounder sat looking straight before him, taking not the slightest notice of Mossoo. Apparently he did not know that he was being addressed.

Monsieur Charpentier's face was growing redder and redder. He began to gesticulate.

"Smeat!" he roared.

"Look here, Smithy—" whispered Harry Wharton.

Smithy did not "look there." He remained unmoved. Monsieus Charpentier picked up the pointer again, and approached the Bounder.

"Smeat! Vunce more I speak viz you! Repondez, dono! Is it zat you become deaf, n'est-ce pas? Vat? Smeat!"

There was a chortle at the back of the class. Even Bunter ceased sucking his fat knuckles and grinned. Still the Bounder gave no sign of having heard the French master.

Rap!

Herbert Vernon-Smith sat up and took notice then. It was quite a vigorous rap from the pointer.

He glared at Mossoo.

"What the thump are you up to?" he demanded angrily.

"Vat? Vat? I speak to you trois, quatre fois—three, four time—and you do not answer your name—"

"You never spoke my name."

"I call you quatre, cinq fois—Smeat—"

"My name's not Smeat!"

"Vat—vat?"

"My name's Vernon-Smith!" growled the Bounder. "And if you want me to answer, you'd better call me by my name!"

"Smeat! You are insolent! You are one mauvais garçon! You set ze example of to be insolent in zis class!"

Grant, from the Bounder. He rubbed his shoulder where the pointer had rapped. There was quite an evil expression on his face.

He had affected not to understand the French master's pronunciation, and he had made the class laugh. But he had not counted on the pointer. Mossoo could rap a nobody like Bunter with the pointer. But he could not rap a fellow like Smithy without trouble to follow.

Really, Mossoo seemed quite a new Mossoo this morning. Generally he avoided trouble with the stronger spirits in the class. He would affect not to hear whispering and chuckling; he would affect to believe that it was by accident that Bolsover major dropped a book with a loud bang, or Skinner fell off the form and dragged two or three other fellows over.

Schoolboys are rather thoughtless, and a master who allows himself to be ragged in class will generally be regarded as fair game.

Mossoo was always ragged, more or less, and the ragers were accustomed to getting away with it. It was quite unprecedented for Mossoo to get his ears up in this fashion.

Most of the fellows were of opinion that, in hunting for trouble with the Bounder, Mossoo was hunting for more than he could handle. And Smithy was the man to go "all out" to confirm them in that opinion.

"In zis class," continued Mossoo, "zere is too much of to rag, as you call him. Vous savez—you know quite vell zat I speak to you, Smeat!"

"My name isn't Smeat!" said the Bounder.

"Assez, assez! Zat is enoff! Take ze crayon, Smeat, and ecrivez—write on ze blackboard zose words zat I vill dictate. All ze class will copy zem and translate."

Vernon-Smith hesitated a moment or two. It was in his mind to refuse obedience; and the juniors looked on eagerly, wondering whether the rebel of the Remove would venture to go that length.

There was some disappointment when

The Bounder left his place and took the chalk and stood at the blackboard.

"Smithy's knucklin' under!" Skinner whispered to Snoop—a whisper that reached the Bounder's ears, as it was intended to do.

Smithy's eyes gleamed at Skinner for a moment.

"Now, zen, Smeest—crivez!"

"I'm ready!" grunted the Bounder.

Monsieur Charpentier proceeded to dictate in French. The Bounder proceeded to write on the board.

Mossoo was dictating from the "Henriade," which was a good deal used in the French sets.

"Je chante de ce heros qui regnait sur la France—" he commenced.

The Bounder wrote, but he did not write what Mossoo was dictating. There was a gasp from the juniors as they read what he was chalking on the blackboard.

"Monsieur est tres pauvre!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton frowned. "Monsieur is very poor" was what the Bounder had written; and it was a fact that was well known in the school, and sometimes commented on sarcastically.

There was a laugh from some of the fellows; but others looked rather grim.

The juniors watched Smithy eagerly. What he wrote bore no resemblance to Mossoo's dictation.

"Monsieur a peu d'argent."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mossoo has little money!" translated Skinner in a thrilling whisper. "Oh crumbs! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Chuck it, Smithy, you ass!" breathed Harry Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared a dozen fellows.

"He, he, he!" contributed Billy Bunter. Even Bunter could read that much French, and he found it entertaining.

Monsieur Charpentier stared at the hilarious class. He realised that something was going on, and he whisked forward to look at the blackboard.

A sudden silence fell on the class.

for a moment or two, had stood dumb-founded, but he woke to sudden action. His eyes gleamed, and he fairly jumped at the Bounder.

Smack! Smack!

A smack on one side of his head made the Bounder stagger—a smack on the other side righted him again. He gave a startled yell. Then a hand grasped his collar, and he was whirled over a desk. The pointer, in Mossoo's other hand, rose and fell.

Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack!

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Skinner. "Mossoo's going it!"

"The go-fulness is terrific!" ejaculated Hurrec Jamset Ram Singh.

Whack! Whack! Whack!

The Bounder roared and struggled. Whack! Whack! Whack!



Bunter made a frantic endeavour to elude Coker's clutches, and in doing so stumbled and fell in the lake. Splash! "Wooooooch!" gurgled the fat Owl, his head reappearing above the surface of the water. "Gug—gug—gug—gug!"

A rag was a rag; but this was rather hitting below the belt, in the opinion of a good many fellows. Certainly, it required plenty of nerve for a fellow to do what Smithy was doing. But there was a limit, and this was over the limit.

Monsieur Charpentier was standing at his desk now, and did not see the front of the blackboard, facing the class. As he supposed that Vernon-Smith was writing from dictation he was puzzled by the laughter.

"Silence in ze class!" he rapped out. "I say vunce more zat zere is too much of to rag in zis class! Taisez-vous! Continuez, Smeest!"

He went on dictating from the "Henriade," and the Bounder went on with the chalk.

"Et par droit de conquete et par droit de naissance!" said Mossoo.

Monsieur Charpentier looked at what Vernon-Smith had written. The Bounder faced him, with cool hardihood. The whole class hardly breathed, waiting for the thunderstorm.

The French master stood quite still for some moments. The angry red faded out of his face, leaving him quite pale.

As he saw the expression on the French gentleman's face, the Bounder's heart smote him. He realised—what a better fellow would have realised beforehand—that what he had done was mean and ungenerous—that such a taunt was worthy only of a rank outsider.

A moment more, and Vernon-Smith would have spoken—to tell Mossoo that he was sorry, and to ask his pardon.

But he had no time to speak. Mossoo,

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Nugent. "Oh crikey!"

There was a buzz of excitement in the class. The fellows were all on their feet. They stared on blankly at the scene.

Mossoo's face was flaming, his eyes sparkling. Never since he had been French master at Greyfriars had he let himself go like this—or anything like it. Never had the Bounder been so thoroughly thrashed, even when he had had "six" from Loder, or even a flogging from the Head. Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack! The pointer fairly rang.

The Bounder yelled frantically. He struggled with all his force. Physically, the little French gentleman was hardly more than a match for the hardy, muscular Bounder. But the excited man seemed to have double or treble strength now. The Bounder seemed like an infant in his grasp.

"Let go!" yelled Vernon-Smith

furiously. "Stop it! I'll jolly well hack your shins! You old fool, chuck it!"

Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack! Harry Wharton ran from his place. He caught the French master's arm as the pointer was crashing down again.

"Monsieur Charpentier!" he gasped. Mossoc gave him a fierce look for a second. But the concern in the face of the captain of the Remove recalled him to himself. He released the Bounder, and threw down the pointer.

"Zank you, mon garçon!" he gasped. "I do not remember myself, isn't it! I am too much in a large wax! Mon Dieu!"

The Bounder stood panting, white, and furious. There was a moment of stillness in the class-room. Then Monsieur Charpentier pointed to the door.

"Ze class is dismiss!" he said in a trembling voice. "Allez!"

And the juniors streamed out, buzzing with excitement, leaving the French master alone.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Sporting!

"I SAY, you fellows! Smithy's wild!"

"Bow-wow!" "Frightfully wild!" grinned Bunter.

It was tea-time, and the Famous Five had gathered in Study No. 1 in the Remove. That, no doubt, was partly the reason why Billy Bunter had rolled along and inserted a fat face and a large pair of spectacles into the doorway of that celebrated apartment.

But it was not a propitious moment for Bunter to roll in. Funds were low with the Co., and there was no sign of tea, yet, at all events, in Study No. 1. Harry Wharton & Co. were going through their pockets in search of cash—hoping to discover some forgotten coin.

Wharton turned out threepence, Frank Nugent twopence, Bob Cherry a penny, Johnny Bull a threepenny-piece, and Hurree Janset Ram Singh a sixpence. The combined resources of the chums of the Remove hardly seemed equal to tea in the study for five healthy fellows with fairly good appetites. Tea in Hall—the last resource of the stony—loomed darkly before them.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, bother!" said Harry.

"I've just seen Smithy—"

"Go and see him again!" suggested Frank Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Roll away, anyhow!" grunted Johnny Bull.

The Famous Five did not want to hear about Smithy. They were well aware that the Bounder was "wild." He had been like a bear with a sore head ever since the scene with Mossoc in the French set that morning. But the "wildness" of the Bounder did not interest the Co., who were up against an economic problem.

"I say, you fellows, he's been slanging Redwing like anything—"

"Oh, rats!"

"And he nearly bit my head off when I asked him if it still hurt," said the Owl of the Remove. "I suppose it does. He, he, he! Mossoc laid it on pretty hard. He chucked a loaf at me—"

"I hope it hit you!"

"Beast! I dodged it," said Bunter. "I went to his study to sympathise with him, you know. I've got a sympathetic nature. I didn't go because I knew he had a fiver from his pater this morning—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Blessed if I see anything to cackle at. I was going to ask him to tea in my study, out of sheer sympathy, you know—"

"Out of his fiver, you mean?"

"No, I don't!" roared Bunter. "As it happens, I'm in funds—at least, I shall be in funds when I go down for my letter. Did I tell you fellows that I was expecting a postal order—"

"I fancy you did!" said Bob Cherry, with deep sarcasm. "I seem to have heard something of the sort!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, it's come!" said Bunter.

"O day worthy to be marked with a white stone!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"At least, I think it's come! Carlow says there's a letter for me in the rack, and I fancy the postal order's in it. The fact is, I've been expecting that postal order for some time," said Bunter.

"Ever since you were in the Second Form!" remarked Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, don't cackle. What about tea?" asked Bunter, blinking rather anxiously at the Famous Five. "If my postal order's come—"

"If?" remarked Bob.

"The if-fulness is preposterous!"

"I fancy it's come, all right, and, if it has, I'm going to stand rather a spread, and ask you fellows. Now, look here," said Bunter, "what about it? Let's go down to see that letter, and if my postal order's come, you fellows tea with me—if it hasn't come, I tea with you! That's fair!"

The Famous Five chuckled.

They entertained very strong doubts as to whether Billy Bunter's celebrated postal order had come at last. Certainly it had been a very long time on its way to Greyfriars.

"That's a sporting offer!" said Bunter.

"The sportfulness it terrific!" agreed Hurree Janset Ram Singh, closing one eye at his comrades. "Let us accept the sportful offer of the esteemed and ridiculous Bunter."

"Let's!" chuckled Nugent.

"Done!" said Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton laughed.

"It's a go, Bunter!" he said.

Billy Bunter's fat face beamed expansively.

As a matter of fact, he did not feel at all sure that the postal order, so long expected, had arrived at last. It was much more probable that the letter from his pater, waiting for him in the rack downstairs, contained valuable parental advice on the subject of economy than a cash remittance. It was very much more probable that Bunter's "sporting" offer would lead to Bunter tea-ing with the Famous Five than to the Famous Five tea-ing with William George Bunter.

Which was extremely satisfactory to the fat Owl, as he was blissfully unconscious of the fact that the Famous Five, like the seed in the parable, had fallen in a stony place, and that they had already decided on tea in Hall.

"Come on, then, old chaps!" said Bunter briskly.

"Lead on, Macduff!" said Bob.

The Famous Five followed Bunter from the study. Still with that expansive grin on his podgy countenance, the Owl of the Remove rolled down the

stairs, and the chums of the Remove also grinned as they followed.

Undoubtedly there was a letter for Bunter in the rack. Undoubtedly it was addressed in his father's hand. But it was not undoubted that there was a postal order in it. There was a lot of doubt about that.

Bunter took the letter and inserted a grubby, fat thumb into the envelope. Before opening it, however, the fat junior blinked seriously at the smiling five. He felt that one could not have an arrangement of this kind too clear.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Get on with it, old fat bean," said Bob. "We're frightfully anxious to see that postal order. What about having it framed?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Buck up, Bunter! We are on the esteemed tender hooks," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Well, let's have it clear," said Bunter. "If the postal order's in this letter, you tea with me. If it isn't, I tea with you. That's understood. No larks, you know!"

"No deception, gentlemen!" said Bob Cherry. "That's the jolly old arrangement. Now, let's see."

Bunter's fat thumb jerked the envelope open. He took out the letter and unfolded it.

There was no enclosure. Evidently that epistle from Bunter senior contained only good advice; valuable in its way, but of no cash value.

"Oh, rotten!" said Bunter. "I say, you fellows, my postal order hasn't come, after all."

"Alas!" sighed Bob Cherry.

Bunter shoved the letter into his pocket without reading it. Parental advice could wait; tea couldn't.

"Well, that's that," said Bunter. "Sorry and all that. Another time, you know. I'm expecting several remittances from some of my titled relations. Now it's up to you fellows."

"It's up to us," agreed Harry Wharton. "Come on, Bunter!"

The Famous Five turned their steps in the direction of Hall.

Bunter blinked after them in surprise. "I say, you fellows, what about tea? It's tea-time, you know."

"Yes. Come on!"

"Where are you going, then?"

"To tea."

"That isn't the way to the study, fat-head!"

"We're not going to the study."

"Eh?"

"We're going into Hall to tea. Come on!"

"Why, you—you—you—" gasped Bunter. "Mean to say you were going to tea in Hall all the time?"

"Exactly!"

"The exactfulness is terrific!"

"Come on, old man!" said Bob. "A bargain's a bargain. Your postal order hasn't come, so you're coming to tea with us."

"In Hall," added Nugent. "Come on!"

"Why, you—you—you silly rotters!" howled Bunter. "I could go to tea in Hall if I liked, without you asking me."

"Of course you could, old fat man. But we're asking you, all the same. A bargain's a bargain."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—"

The Famous Five, chortling, walked away to Hall to tea. Billy Bunter glared after them. It dawned on his fat mind now why his sporting offer had been accepted so readily.

"Beasts!" he roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five disappeared, laughing. Billy Bunter snorted and rolled

away. Tea in Hall was a very, very last resource, and Bunter hoped to do better in the Remove passage. Harry Wharton & Co. tea'd in Hall without the fascinating company of William George Bunter.

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.**  
**A Bear with a Sore Head.**

**S**MITHY, old man—"Oh, shut up!" Tom Redwing compressed his lips a little.

The Bounder was in a bad temper. There was no mistake about that. Smithy's temper was always a little uncertain, and now it was at its very worst.

A good many hours had passed since that terrific licking in the French class, but Smithy was still feeling it. Monsieur Charpentier, who seldom even rapped a fellow's knuckles with the pointer, had fairly let himself go for once, and he had laid it on not wisely but too well.

Probably enough the kind-hearted little French gentleman had already repented of having allowed his anger to carry him to such a length. But the Bounder did not know that, and would have cared little had he known.

He was moving restlessly about his study, No. 4, in the Remove. In spite of the lapse of time since the licking, Vernon-Smith was still disinclined to sit down.

His chum Redwing sympathised. But the Bounder knew very well that Tom regarded him as being in fault. Redwing had not said so, but it was easy enough to guess his thoughts. To taunt a man with his poverty was outside the limit, and Redwing was not the only man in the Remove who thought so by many a one. Even Skinner & Co. said—among themselves—that it was rather thick.

The Bounder was quite well aware of that himself. But he was not the fellow to admit himself in the wrong.

Moreover, he had been made to look an ass. He had set out to rag the French master, expecting to get away with it, as usual. Instead of which he had been thrashed before a crowd of fellows, and it was bitterly humiliating to the arrogant Bounder. A licking from Quelch or the Head would not have been so humiliating. But a licking from Mossoo, who was regarded as a mere nobody, almost as a butt, made the Bounder sorer in mind than he was in body.

"Well, what about tea?" asked Redwing, after a long pause.

"Hang tea!"

"Look here, Smithy—"

Herbert Vernon-Smith came to a halt and fixed a bitter look on his chum. "I've got to think it out," he said. "I'm going to make that Froggy cringe for this! Do you think I'm goin' to take it like a lamb?"

"I think the sooner you put it out of your mind and forget all about it the better, Smithy," said Tom. "Mossoo's upset about something, or he wouldn't have been so ratty this morning."

"What do I care?"

"Well, he's a good fellow in his way," said Redwing. "Quelch wouldn't stand a tenth of what he puts up with as a rule. He went too far this morning, I know. But what you did—"

"Well?" sneered the Bounder. "Dash it all, Smithy, it was too thick. Everybody knows that Mossoo is poor, and they jolly well know, too, that he sends most of his money home to his people in France, and that makes him

**GREYFRIARS HEROES.**

No. 11.

**ALONZO TODD.**

The biggest duffer at Greyfriars has his hero, but he's not everybody's choice!

**R**ISE up, and sound the trumpet!  
Bring forth the drum and thump it!

*Professor Balmycrumpet  
Appears before your eyes;  
Whene'er he writes a column  
It grows into a volume;  
(Alonzo Todd, the solemn,  
Thinks this is very wise).*

*This mighty-brained old beaver  
Is a confirmed believer  
In all things that leave a  
Normal fellow cold;  
He stupefies and dazes  
A chap with crackjaw phrases;  
(Such things Alonzo praises,  
And thinks them very bold).*

*He'll burn the midnight fluid  
To write about a Druid;  
The dast old chump will do it  
You cannot make him stop;*



*He'd analyse a rumour  
Of tombs in Montezuma  
And such-like things, and sooner  
Than eat a mutton chop.*

*The theory of relation  
Darwin learned from his oration,  
He knew of gravitation  
Before Newton found it out;  
He formed the catastrophic  
Definition of a tropic—  
In fact, there's not a topic  
That he doesn't know about.*

*But in useful information  
The Professor's education  
Hasn't reached the elevation  
Of the grubby Greyfriars sags;  
Though he's hot on Herodotus  
And can find the Sacred Lotus,  
He can't cook a pair of blouters,  
Or sew buttons on his bags.*

*But these items do not matter,  
Though as mad as any hatter,  
We still hope he'll live to scatter  
Mighty wisdom, quaint and odd;  
Though as merciless as Nero,  
We would greet him with a "Chcer-  
ho!"  
All the time he is the hero  
Of the mild Alonzo Todd.*

hard up. You got him on the raw by jeering at his poverty."

"I'll get him on the raw again!" said the Bounder venomously. "The poverty-stricken little tick! A figure of fun like that to take on himself to handle a man as he did me! A man that all the other masters patronise and sneer at—"

"Not all of them, Smithy."

"I've seen the little fool showing photographs of his dashed family to the other beaks," sneered the Bounder. "Little Adolphe, and little Henri, and little Marcelle—and the other beaks winking at one another behind the little ass' back—"

Redwing smiled faintly.

"He's a good little ass, to be so fond of his relations," he said. "He rather wears his heart on his sleeve, I dare say—but he's a good little ass. It's pretty well known that he has to provide for his family, Smithy, and that's really why he wears that jolly old coat, and that ancient hat—"

"Poverty-stricken little tick!"

"Well, poverty isn't a crime," said Redwing mildly. "I've heard Hilton of the Fifth say that it's bad form. But it isn't a crime."

"Get on with it!" jeered the Bounder. "Tell me I think too much about money, because my father's a millionaire, and I'm a purse-proud bounder."

"I shouldn't be likely to tell you that, Smithy."

"Why not, when you think it?"

"Oh, don't let's row, old chap. What about tea?"

"Hang tea!" growled the Bounder.

"I'll cut down to the tuckshop, old fellow—"

"Oh, all right!"

The Bounder took his father's letter from his pocket, extracted a five-pound note from it, and threw it on the table. Mr. Vernon-Smith often slipped a bank-note into his letters to his son. Fivers were rare in most Remove studies; but there was no doubt that the Bounder of Greyfriars had more money than was good for him.

"Change that, and get something decent," grunted the Bounder.

Redwing did not make a move to pick up the banknote. He coloured rather uncomfortably.

"No need to change banknotes, Smithy. Trot out a half-crown, and I'll put another to it—"

"Oh, give us a rest!" snarled the Bounder. "I know jolly well what's in your mind, Redwing, though you beat about the bush."

Redwing looked at him steadily.

"If you're trying to pick a row with me, Smithy—"

"I don't care two straws whether we row or not. I'm jolly sick of your sermonising. Give us a rest."

"Well, I'm not going to row with you," said Redwing quietly. "If you want to splash banknotes about, there's plenty of fellows who will join up; but I'm not one of them. I'll give you a rest, as you suggest."

And Redwing left the study.

"Go and eat coke, and be hanged to you!" snarled the Bounder after him, a remark to which Tom made no reply.

Silence was golden, with the Bounder in his present savage mood.

Vernon-Smith continued pacing the study, with knitted brows.

He was in a mood to quarrel with friend or foe; and, as a matter of fact, it was only Tom Redwing's prompt departure that prevented a "row."

Deep down at the back of his mind the Bounder was aware that he thought a good deal too much about money. He realised sometimes that his chum was rather conscious of that little weakness of his. Generally, he was rather careful not to obtrude his wealth on Redwing. Redwing was not to be treated like Bunter or Skinner or Snoop; and in treating him so on this occasion, Smithy had been, half-consciously perhaps, seeking a cause of quarrel.

But Redwing was gone, and the Bounder's thoughts returned to Monsieur Charpentier. He was determined to "get back" on the French master, not only because he was feeling vengeful, but because he had his reputation to keep up in the Remove.

The most unruly member of the Form, the fellow who snapped his fingers at authority, who made it his boast that he did not care two straws for masters or prefects, could not take this "like a lamb," without losing his prestige. If the Bounder of Greyfriars was ever tamed, it was not going to be by the French master, the least considered member of the staff, the man who was ignored or patronised in Common-room, who was ragged with impunity even by fags of the Third and Second.

"I say, Smithy—"

Vernon-Smith spun round savagely as the door opened, to reveal a fat face and a pair of glimmering spectacles.

"Get out!" he snapped.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"You fat fool!" roared the Bounder. "Travel."

Smithy, in one of his worst tempers, was in no mood for Bunter. But it was written of old that fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

"I say, Smithy, old chap, don't be shirty, you know," expostulated Bunter. "I'm awfully sorry about that thrashing—"

"Will you clear off?"

"I don't think it served you jolly well right, you know, like most of the fellows," explained Bunter. "I sympathise—I do, really, Smithy! I said to Toddy that a fellow like you ain't really to blame for always thinking about money, because a chap can't help it, really, if he's a purse-proud bounder! I said those very words, Smithy."

Bunter evidently meant to be propitiatory. He was not succeeding, however.

The Bounder glared at him.

Bunter's eyes lingered on the banknote lying on the table, which Vernon-Smith, deep in his angry reflections, had forgotten. It was a trifle to the Bounder. To William George Bunter it was not a trifle—in spite of the alleged enormous wealth of Bunter Court.

"Cheeky little tick, if you ask me," went on Bunter. "Pitching into a man like that. I really expected you to knock him down, Smithy. I would have. I'd have whopped him."

"Get out, idiot!"

"I haven't finished yet, old chap! What about tea? Wharton asked me to tea, but I told him I was tea-ing with you, Smithy. I knew you'd like my company, old chap, as you're left all alone. I can stand your temper, if Redwing can't. I don't mind you blowing off steam, Smithy. After all, a man

wants to blow off steam when he's been jolly well thrashed, and I say—Whooooop!"

The Bounder made a stride to the door, seized Billy Bunter by the collar, and twirled him round into the passage.

There was a roar in the Remove passage, as Smithy's boot landed on a pair of tight trousers, with what a novelist would describe as a sickening thud.

"Ow! Beast! Wow! I'm jolly glad Mossoo whopped you!" roared Bunter. "Ow! I wish he'd given you some more. Wow! If you kick me again, you rotter, I'll jolly well—Whooooop!"

The Bounder did kick again, and yet again, seeming to find solace in it. Bunter roared and rolled.

Leaving him roaring and rolling, Vernon-Smith walked along the passage to Skinner's study. He was sure of a welcome there, and in his present mood the company of the outsiders of the Form was congenial to him.

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

Skinner's door slammed after the Bounder.

"Ow! Wow! Ow!" gasped Bunter.

Bunter was hurt. He was hurt in a double sense. He had come to Smithy's study to sympathise, and this was how his tactful sympathy had been requited. Bunter would have given a great deal to have followed Vernon-Smith into Skinner's study, and given him the licking of his life.

He did not think of doing so, however. The result would have been much more painful to Billy Bunter than to the Bounder. He would almost as soon have followed a tiger into his lair.

Bunter rubbed his injuries, and gasped and groaned, his little round eyes gleaming behind his big round spectacles. Even the worm will turn, and all the Remove agreed that Bunter was a worm.

He could not lick Smithy as he deserved. He could not give him the kicking he so richly merited. But there were more ways of killing a cat than choking it with cream.

Bunter gave a cautious blink up and down the deserted passage. Then he whipped into Vernon-Smith's study.

The forgotten banknote lay on the table. Bunter's fat fingers closed on it. He blinked round the study. On the shelf lay "Paradise Lost," a volume that Vernon-Smith was not at all likely to open till Saturday, when it would be wanted for "Sunday prep." Bunter slipped the banknote into the middle of the volume, and closed it again.

Then he rolled out of the study, grinning.

When Vernon-Smith remembered his banknote, he could come back for it, and hunt for it—and the longer he hunted, the better William George Bunter would be pleased. It would be rather entertaining for the Bounder to be raising Cain over his missing fiver, which was stuck in a volume in his study all the time.

Bunter rolled away grinning.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### Not Nice for Mossoo!

"HELAS!"

Monsieur Charpentier murmured the word, not once but many times.

The little French gentleman was pacing his study, in a worried and troubled mood.

He was as kind-hearted a little man as ever wore his heart upon his sleeve. And ever since that scene in the French set that morning, he had been troubled in mind.

He knew that he had gone too far. The Bounder had been insolent, deserving of severe punishment; but there was no excuse for the record thrashing Mossoo had given him—except the fact that Mossoo had been, at the time, worried and anxious, and that the cheeky junior had touched him on the raw.

Six with a cane was considered a fairly severe licking at Greyfriars. Mossoo had given the Bounder more than a dozen with a pointer! He was well aware that had the Bounder chosen to complain to the Head, Dr. Locke would have expressed a very grim disapproval. The Bounder was the last fellow at Greyfriars to complain to a beak, but the knowledge that he had nothing of that kind to fear added to Mossoo's remorse.

He had been insulted—and it had been a cruel insult. Mossoo was touchy about his poverty. He drew quite a good salary at Greyfriars as French master; though not, of course, so good as that of a Form master. There really was no reason why he should have worn the oldest coat in the school and the most ancient hat—but for the fact that in la Belle France L'Oncle Henri was the chief support of a large circle of small relatives.

Thrifty, like all Frenchmen, Mossoo spent little on himself, but he forgot thrift when he was sending remittances across the Channel for the benefit of little Adolphe, and little Henri, and little Marcello, and little Genevieve, and the rest.

He had full compensation in the love and affection with which those numerous small ones regarded "Uncle Henri," and the joyous welcome they gave him in the holidays.

After a vacation he would come back with his pockets full of photographs of the small ones, which he would display to anyone who cared to see them—as well as to a good many who did not. He bored the more patient masters in Common-room with them, and with his tales of the small folk at home; though the beaks did not, as the Bounder had said, wink at one another on such occasions.

Latterly, there had been an increase in Mossoo's financial troubles—which was the reason why his kind temper had become a little acid.

Like all Frenchmen, Monsieur Charpentier had rather resented the state of the exchange. Francs, in the old days, had been twenty-five to the pound. But for many years the exchange had stood at 125—which was rather humiliating from the point of view of a patriotic son of France.

But it had its advantages. When Mossoo sent a pound across the Channel, it was turned into a hundred and twenty-five francs for his relatives. That solid financial advantage compensated for a wound to national pride.

Now there was a change!

The exchange had altered since the country of his present residence had gone off the gold standard.

Pounds were not worth so much in France. Now, a pound dispatched across the Channel produced under a hundred francs.

Every pound that Mossoo squeezed for his family produced twenty-five fewer francs for them.

The improvement in the exchange pleased him as a patriotic Frenchman, but it was disastrous from a financial point of view.

To keep up the same amount of assistance to his family, he had to squeeze and scrape harder than ever; to give his old coat a new lease of life;



to have his already over-repaired shoes soled and heeled yet again.

He was aware, or, at least, he suspected, that his old coat was a joke among the fags, and that fellows sometimes asked one another whether Froggy was ever going to stand himself a new hat!

But there were few fellows at Greyfriars who would have dreamed of taunting him with his poverty. Even the Bounder, arrogant as he was, contemptuous as he was of people less blessed with the world's goods than himself, would not have done it, except in a moment of exasperation.

Mossoo was cruelly wounded. But he was a just little gentleman. He realised that he had allowed his private and personal worries to affect his temper in class; that after letting fellows do practically as they liked for whole terms, he had developed a sharpness of temper which they expected from Quelch, but never dreamed of expecting from him.

That, really, had led to the trouble with the Bounder, and the Bounder's cruel taunt had led to the exhibition of passionate temper of which Mossoo was heartily and thoroughly ashamed.

Pacing his study, he thought it over dismally. He had done wrong, and the knowledge was painful to him. The kindness of heart and softness of disposition, that made him the most thoroughly ragged master at Greyfriars, made him remorseful and uneasy over a fault of temper which any other member of the staff would probably have dismissed from his mind as a matter of little moment.

"Helas!" said Monsieur Charpentier for the twentieth time.

He left the study at last.

He had made up his mind.

He tripped down the passage, a trim little figure in the black frock coat that made him look even slighter than he was.

Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, was coming along, portly and ponderous. Prout's glance dwelt, for a moment, on the shiny seams of Mossoo's old coat. Prout—contrary to his usual custom when he caught another master in the corridor—did not stop him for a chat.

Mossoo's little troubles were quite well known in Common-room. The state of the exchange had been his chief topic for days. He was an effusive and confidential little gentleman, and his innermost thoughts were always ready to run off the tip of his tongue, if he could find a listener.

Monsieur Charpentier almost ejaculated "Helas!" again, as he came on Prout. He saw himself captured for one of Prout's lengthy chats.

To his relief, Prout rolled on. There was a doubt in Prout's mind whether

Monsieur Charpentier might not want to borrow, in the present state of circumstances,

Prout was always prepared to hand out advice to a colleague. Anything more substantial, Prout was not prepared to hand out.

He rolled on; and Mossoo, little dreaming of the thoughts in the Fifth Form master's mind, whisked on his way, glad to escape.

He ascended the stairs, heading for the Remove passage.

A fat junior was coming down the Remove staircase when Monsieur Charpentier arrived there.

"Buntair!" said Mossoo. Billy Bunter backed away across the stairs, eyeing him warily. If Froggy was still ferocious, Bunter did not want to get the benefit of it.

"Stop, Buntair!"

Monsieur Charpentier had made up his mind to see Vernon-Smith, and to express his regret for having chastised him so severely in the class-room. He had followed one of his usual kind and effusive impulses.

But the Bounder was not there, and Mossoo's effusive little speech had to remain bottled up in his own effervescent Gallic breast.

He looked out of the doorway of the study. Bunter had said that the Bounder was in the House, and that he had seen him a minute ago. So he could not be far away.

Squiff of the Remove came down the passage from the end study. He glanced at Mossoo, perhaps wondering what the French master was doing in Smithy's room. Mossoo called to him.

"Field! Vous savez—you know where is Smeet?"



"I—I say, Wingate," stuttered Bunter, "I—I haven't—grooogh—got a c-c-cold! Atchoooh-choooh-choooh! Chooooop! I—I don't want to go to sanny!" "Come on, you fat ass!" said Wingate.

"I—I say, it wasn't me, mounseer!" exclaimed Bunter hastily.

"Vat?" Mossoo stared. "Vat was not you, Buntair?"

"Nothing, sir! I—I mean, anything—"

"You are one foolish garcon, Buntair!" said Monsieur Charpentier mildly. "I wish to ask you one question. Is Smeet in ze House?"

"Oh, yes sir, I saw him only a minute ago, sir," said Bunter, glad that it was Vernon-Smith and not himself that was wanted. And the fat junior scuttled down the stairs.

Monsieur Charpentier went on his way up the Remove passage. He stopped at the door of Study No. 4 and tapped, and opened it.

"Smeet!" he said. He stepped into the study. It was vacant.

"Mon Dieu! Ze boy is not here," said Monsieur Charpentier, staring round the study. It was disappointing.

"Yes, sir," answered Squiff. "I heard him in Skinner's study, sir."

"Please tell him I wish to speak viz him."

"Certainly, sir!"

Monsieur Charpentier stepped back into the room. Squiff walked back up the passage to Study No. 11, and looked in. Vernon-Smith was at tea there with Skinner and Snoop and Stott.

"Mossoo's in your study, Smithy, and he wants to speak to you," said Squiff.

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders. "Tell him I won't come!" he answered.

"Yes, I'm likely to tell him that!" said the Australian junior. "Don't be an ass, Smithy! You'd better go."

"He's not my Form master, I suppose. I'm not at his beck and call. I won't go!"

"Please yourself!" said Squiff.

And he walked away. Monsieur Charpentier's neatly brushed head

popped out of Study No. 4 as he came along the passage again.

"You tell Smeed?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, I've told him," answered Squiff, colouring a little. He was not likely to give the Bounder's message.

"Zank you, mon garçon!"

Squiff went on his way. Monsieur Charpentier stood in the study, waiting for Vernon-Smith.

He waited in vain.

The Bounder did not arrive. It was not for some minutes that the French master realised that the junior did not intend to pay any heed to the summons.

When he realised that, the colour came into his sallow cheeks, and his eyes glittered. Vernon-Smith was within his rights, so far as that went; but his conduct was intentionally insolent, as Mossoo was well aware. All the kind and effusive feelings faded from Mossoo's effervescent heart. He stepped out into the passage and made a step towards Skinner's study—certainly not with the intention of making the graceful little speech he had intended for the Bounder.

But he stopped and turned away again. He was not going to give way to his temper a second time. With compressed lips, Monsieur Charpentier walked away, and went down the Remove staircase.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Wet!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

Billy Bunter jumped. The Famous Five had strolled out into the quad after tea in Hall. They had forgotten the unimportant existence of William George Bunter; but they were reminded of him by the sight of a fat figure that was stealing cautiously along towards the gate of the Head's garden. Billy Bunter's manner was so excessively cautious, that it would have drawn anybody's attention upon him at once, and the chums of the Remove grinned at the sight of him.

Bunter, apparently, was intending to trespass in the Head's garden—a spot that was barred to juniors without special leave. Bob Cherry hailed him in stentorian tones, and the Owl of the Remove blinked round in alarm.

"I—I say, you fellows!" he gasped.

"What are you up to, fathead?" asked Harry Wharton. "You'll get into a row if you butt into the Beak's private preserves."

"I wasn't going into the Head's garden, old chap! Nothing of the sort. Besides, I want to keep clear of that beast, Coker."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, you fellows, if—if you see Coker, you—you needn't mention that you saw me here. If he asks about me, say—say I'm doing extra toot with Quelch, will you?"

"You fat villain—"

"Or say I'm doing French with Mossoo—that will do. Or—or say I've gone home. Perhaps that would be better. Say I've been called home by a telegram, because my pater's been run over by a motor-omnibus."

"What the thump—"

"I—I haven't been near Coker's study," added Bunter. "If he fancies that I know anything about his doughnuts—"

"You've been bagging Coker's doughnuts, you fat burglar?"

"Nothing of the kind, old chap!" said Bunter hastily. "I never knew Coker of the Fifth had any doughnuts. I

didn't see him taking them to his study, and never went there to look for them. I haven't got them in this paper bag—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I—I say, you fellows, mind you tell Coker, if he asks, that I've gone to tea with the Head. That will be best. He can't go rooting after a chap in the Head's house."

And Bunter clambered over the gate and dropped into the Head's garden. He dropped the paper bag in the process, and two or three doughnuts rolled out of it. Bunter retrieved them hastily, and vanished along a shrubbery-lined path that led towards the ornamental lake. He disappeared from sight, leaving the Famous Five chuckling.

Evidently Billy Bunter had retired to that quiet and secluded spot to devour his prey at leisure.

"Bunter!" It was the bull-like roar

ROUSING RIBTICKLER  
wins a useful  
POCKET-KNIFE!



The constable was taking the offender's name and address.

"Why do you always lick your pencil before you write down the particulars?" asked the latter.

The constable frowned ominously, then replied:

"To make the case look blacker!"

Sent in by Samuel Clare, of 12, Little Edward Street, off Quay Street, Deansgate, Manchester.

Have a shot at winning one of these TOPPING PRIZES yourself, chum!

of Coker of the Fifth. "Bunter! Where's that young villain?"

"O where and O where can he be?" chuckled Bob Cherry.

Coker of the Fifth came striding up. Obviously Coker was on the trail of the raider who had nefariously borrowed his doughnuts.

"He glared suspiciously at the grinning five.

"Where's Bunter?" he demanded.

"He came this way. Greene saw him dodge out of my study. He's bagged my doughnuts. I got after the young scoundrel at once, but he's dodged away somewhere. Look here, he came this way. Has he dodged into the Beak's garden, or what?"

"Well, we've seen him," said Bob Cherry, "and he left a message for you, Coker, if you want to know where he is."

"Well, I do. Where is he?" demanded Coker.

"He's doing extra toot with Quelch,"

explained Bob, "and he's doing French with Mossoo."

"What?"

"And he's gone home because he's had a telegram saying that his pater has been run over by a motor-omnibus—"

"Wha-a-at!"

"And he's gone to tea with the Head!" concluded Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker stared.

"What the thump do you mean, you young ass?" he demanded.

"I'm giving you Bunter's messages. You pays your money and you takes your choice!" explained Bob.

"Where is he?" roared Coker.

"The wherefulness is terrific, my esteemed Coker," said Hurrec Jamsset Ram Singh.

"If you kids want a thrashing all round—" said Coker, breathing hard.

"Go ahead, old bean," said Johnny Bull invitingly.

Coker looked, for a moment, as if he would accept the invitation. But no doubt he was anxious about his doughnuts. If they were not recovered promptly, it was likely that an X-ray apparatus would be needed to discover what had become of them.

Leaving the Famous Five unthrashed, therefore, Coker strode towards the gate. It was pretty clear that the Head's garden was Bunter's retreat, as he had come in that direction and was not in sight. Coker lifted a long leg over the gate.

"Mind the Head doesn't catch you, Coker!" called out Nugent. "Kids ain't allowed to play in the Beak's garden, you know."

Coker did not heed. He dropped over the gate and strode up the path in search of Bunter.

He had not far to go. Between the shrubbery and the lake there was a garden seat, and on that seat reposed a fat figure, with a bag of doughnuts on its knees. One delicious doughnut was crumpling in a capacious mouth as Coker appeared in the offing.

"Got you!" ejaculated Coker.

Billy Bunter leaped to his feet. His mouth was full, and his sudden movement caused some of the doughnut to go down the wrong way.

"Groogh!"

"You young villain—"

"Ooooooh!"

"I'll jolly well—"

"Gurrrrrgh!"

Coker made a rush.

Billy Bunter, gurgling spasmodically, dodged round the seat. After him rushed Coker.

"Groogh! Oh crikey! I say, Coker— Oh crumbs! Ow!" gasped Bunter, and he fled wildly.

"Stop!" roared Coker.

Billy Bunter was not likely to stop, with vengeance on his track. He fairly raced along the path round the lake.

Tramp, tramp, tramp, came Coker's heavy footsteps behind him.

"Oh dear! Owl! Keep off, you beast!" gurgled Bunter.

"Got you!" gasped Coker.

Coker's long legs covered the ground much faster than Bunter's little fat ones. His outstretched hand dropped on Bunter's fat shoulder.

The Owl of the Remove dodged desperately.

He barely escaped Coker's clutch and jumped away. Coker jumped after him. Bunter made another frantic jump. He stumbled on the edge of the lake.

"Here, look out!" yelled Coker.

Splash!

"Wooooooh!"

(Continued on page 12.)

# FOOTBALL FAVOURITES!

No. 7.  
**HARRY HIBBS,**  
 of the  
**BIRMINGHAM F.C.**



Generally acknowledged to be one of the finest custodians in the country, Hibbs has been the inspiration of England's Eleven in more than one International Soccer match.

## The Pick o' the Bunch!

**I** FIRST met Harry Hibbs when he was a mere child of nine years old. On that occasion I did not converse with him. We were both looking on at a football match at Wilnecote, Warwickshire, where the Hibbs family resided, and the boy's father was keeping goal for the local team.

Some five years later I had occasion again to visit Wilnecote, to which place I had gone with the idea of "spotting" any youngster who showed particularly good form in another match, this "spotting" being in the interest of Aston Villa. The game was one in which the Wilnecote Church Lads' Brigade was engaged, and it had already been whispered abroad that the Brigade possessed some promising young footballers, the boy Hibbs being the pick of the bunch.

In the season 1923-24, or when he was about sixteen years old, Hibbs was selected for the important fixture, Birmingham Juniors v. Scottish Juniors, and there could be no doubt whatever about his being destined to play an important part in the history of football. A juniors' match is not taken much notice of by the ordinary followers of the game, but at Edinburgh there must have been present representatives of every English and Scottish League club before the teams lined up.

The movement of every youngster was carefully and critically watched by the eyes of a hundred individuals who knew football from A to Z. I sat with three men, and I discussed with them the various players and the likelihood of their making good in League games.

In regard to young Harry Hibbs, six of us were for waiting until we had seen him play in another important junior match, yet an hour or two later the same six of us met accidentally, when we were all eager to see the lad alone. The representative of the Birmingham Club won, and Hibbs was duly tried out against Aston Villa Reserves at Villa Park. What he has done for Birmingham is apparent by the number of times he has been selected to play for England.

## Ever Cool and Collected!

**I** HAVE made it my business to seek out Hibbs whenever I happen to be in Birmingham, and in reply to my question: "Well, Harry, and how are you getting on?" he invariably replies "Trying—still trying!"

A few days ago I got the same smiling answer to the question I must have asked a hundred times, and I followed it up by asking another: "But haven't you got to the stage where you needn't try any more? Don't you think you've achieved what you were aiming for?" His reply was simple as well as sound: "I'm only twenty-four, and am much too young to have learned all that there is to learn." A wise man is Harry Hibbs!

"Tell me," I said to him, after a match one day, "the names of England's best footballers." He named me at least twenty, and then I laughingly reminded him that he had left himself out. "Yes," said he, his face set in serious lines, "I have left myself out of the list, for immediately a man thinks he is great he must become small."

I was at Wembley the season before last to see the great International game, England v. Scotland, and the air seemed to be charged with electricity. There was a huge crowd present. England appeared to have a good team, but, on paper, Scotland were to be represented by a side which must be invincible. Before the game commenced I went with a prominent official into the players' dressing-room, where I realised that the men's nerves were at very high tension. I think they had changed too early. Anyhow, it was clear to one other man—and he was young Harry

Hibbs, then only twenty-three years of age—that something had to be done to keep the minds of his colleagues off the "importance" which always produces nervousness, so he started to tell them, in a loud voice, some football stories.

"I hope the Scotland side is not going to keep us waiting to-day as they did in a great Scottish Cup-tie very many years ago," he said. "On that occasion the crowd got impatient because the players didn't come out, and at last the referee strode into their room to ascertain the cause. 'Ay, we're a wee bit late,' said one of them; 'but, laddie, ha'e peetience, an' remember there's on'y ano wee corkscrew between twenty-two men.'"

Roars of laughter followed the story, and then, while they had all forgotten their nervousness, the signal was given, and they rushed out to play that great game which ended in the defeat of Scotland. There are not many of us enthusiasts who will forget that International match, for most of our men played exquisite football, Harry Hibbs being ever cool and collected, and dealing with each shot as if he and the man who made it had rehearsed together for weeks beforehand. If a slow motion picture of Hibbs' goalkeeping had been taken and exhibited at all the cinemas in England it would have been a grand object-lesson to young and would-be goalkeepers.

Some days later I saw a letter which a schoolboy player had written to Hibbs. It ran: "Last Saturday I saw your glorious exhibition in goal and was really astounded at the easy manner in which you dealt with the many shots that the Scotsmen made at goal. I wonder if you would be good enough to tell me what I can do? You see, I also am a goal-keeper, but I never seem to be on the right spot to deal with a shot when it comes, while you—well, you make it look as if the forward doesn't shoot to score, but merely shoots at you!" What a high tribute to a great goalkeeper!

## England's First Choice!

**E**VEN Harry Hibbs is human, and it was not long ago that I attended a League match at Birmingham where he and all the other twenty-one players performed very poorly. Every man has an occasional "off day," and it was somewhat astounding to find both sides at their worst. Now, on the Birmingham ground the spectators are a good-humoured lot, ever ready to shout advice and to chaff the players when they fail. On this occasion a lot of the former had been given to no effect, when suddenly Joe Bradford, their favourite forward, got the ball at his toes.

Bradford is famous for his wonderful goal-scoring ability, so, after he had made a run and was not far off the opponents' goal, it was not surprising to hear: "Shoot, Joe! Shoot, Joe!" which came from a thousand throats. Joe Bradford shot, but shot very wide, and, amid the silence of disappointment, there came a raucous voice from a section of the crowd: "Shoot, Joe? And why only Joe? Why not shoot the whole twenty-two?" Then the piping voice of a schoolboy was heard: "All except Hibbs!"

It has been generally acknowledged that Harry Hibbs must be England's goalkeeper so long as he retains the wonderful form which he has displayed during the last two or three seasons, and this fact was brought home to me with added force a few days ago when I was in the company of some of the Football Association Council. One of these "powers" described Hibbs as a "magical man whose rhythmical movements and brilliant saves are beyond compare." And with this eulogistic sentiment the others concurred in the heartiest possible manner.

## THE BOUNDER'S BLUNDER!

(Continued from page 10.)

Billy Bunter disappeared.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Coker, staring at the wide circles in the water. The water, fortunately, was only a couple of feet deep. Billy Bunter reappeared the next moment, gasping and gurgling.

"Oooooooooooooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Coker.

"Gug-gug-gug-gug!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Coker. "Serve you jolly well right! You can keep the doughnuts now! Ha, ha, ha!"

And Coker strode away, laughing uproariously. Billy Bunter crawled out of the lake spluttering. The doughnuts remained there; but even Bunter was not thinking about doughnuts now. Drenched and dripping, streaming with water, Billy Bunter gasped and gurgled and spluttered and puffed and blew—realising, as he had often had to realise before in his fat career, that the way of the transgressor was hard.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Not a Cold!

"**A** TCHOOOOOOOH!"  
"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"  
"Atchooh—chooh—chooh!"  
"Caught a cold, old fat man?"

"Choooh—oooh—oooooch!"

"The sneezefulness is terrific!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Poor old Bunter!"

"I say, you fellows—atchooh—I say—grooogh—that beast Coker—ooooch—grooogh—gug-gug-gug—"

The Remove fellows were going up to their studies to prep when Billy Bunter rolled into the Remove passage.

The fat junior had dried himself and changed his clothes. But the damage had been done. A cold plunge after a hot chase had done the trick. Billy Bunter had caught a cold, which was not surprising, and a series of Gargantuan sneezes announced the fact to all whom it might, or might not, concern.

"I—I say, you fellows, this—this isn't exactly a c-c-cold!" gasped Bunter. "I say—grooogh—don't you get telling Quelch that I've got a c-c-cold! I'm jolly well not going into sanny."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was all that beast Coker's fault! He made out that I had his doughnuts—as if I'd touch a fellow's doughnuts, you know! He was after me—grooogh—and I fell into the lake—ooooch—in the Beak's garden—woooooch—and caught this c-c-cold—"

"And you never had the doughnuts?" grinned Skinner.

"No! Never even heard of them—never touched them!" gasped Bunter. "And they were lost in the water, after all! Oh dear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! You might be sympathetic when a fellow's got a frightful cold! Not that I've really got a cold, you know. I'm not going into sanny. They keep a fellow short of grub—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You're jolly well not coming into the study," said Peter Todd. "I'm not catching your putrid cold!"

"Oh, really, Toddy, if that's what you call sympathy—"

"You fat ass," said Harry Wharton. "You'd better go to the House-dame at once—"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,242.

"No fear—grooogh! Mrs. Kebble would make out that I had a cold, and ask Quelch to send me into sanny! I'm not going to be starved to please you, Wharton."

"Poor old Bunter! They'll give him gruel—"

"And make him wash—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh dear! Atchooh—c h o o h—choooop! I say, you fellows—grooogh! There's nothing to cackle at—ooooogh!"

The Remove fellows seemed to think that there was. They yelled! Billy Bunter stood with streaming eyes and nose, sneezing and spluttering, a woe-begone object. There was no doubt that he had a cold, which was bad enough; but worse than the cold was the prospect of being relegated to the school sanatorium. In sanny a fellow was on diet; he was allowed to eat only what was good for him—a thing that Bunter never had done if he could possibly help it.

Bunter remembered, with horror, a spell he had had in sanny, and he was very anxious not to repeat the experience. Not a single jam-tart, not a solitary chunk of toffee, had come his way all the time. Life without jam-tarts and toffee could scarcely be considered worth the trouble of living.

"I say, you fellows—atchooh—I say, you have to feed a cold, you know!" said Bunter hopefully. "If you fellows think a study supper would do me good—"

"I say, Smithy, old chap—"

"Keep off, you fat freak!" said the Bounder. "If you bring your dashed microbes near me, I'll jolly well boot you!"

"Beast! I say, Toddy—"

"Sheer off!" said Peter Todd heartlessly.

"Wharton, old fellow—"

"Look here, ass, you'll have to have that cold seen to," said the captain of the Remove. "I'll take you to the House-dame—"

"Lemme alone!" roared Bunter.

"I'm not—atchooh—going to the—grooogh—House-dame! You know jolly well that she'll make out that I've got a cold—and that means sanny!"

"You fat chump!" roared Bob Cherry. "You've got to go to sanny! Do you think you're going to spread that beastly cold all through the Form?"

"Oh, really, Cherry! This is a—grooogh—time for a fellow's friends to—atchooh—chooh—chooh—rally round him!" gasped Bunter. "After all I've done for you—chooh—chook—chook!"

"Here comes Wingate," grinned Bob Cherry. "You'd better tell Wingate you haven't a cold, Bunter!"

Wingate of the Sixth came along the passage.

"Now then, prep!" he said. "What are you all doing out of your studies? Hallo! What's the matter with you, Bunter?"

"N-n-nothing!" gasped Bunter. "I—I—grooogh—I haven't a c-c-cold, Wingate! Atchoo—hooh—chooh—chooh! Nothing of the s-s-sort! I—I haven't fallen into the lake—"

"What?"

"I haven't been in the Head's garden at all! Grooogh! Besides, that beast Coker was after me! Oooooh! I'm not sneezing—atchooh—chooh—choooooook!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Wingate. "You young ass, come with me at once! You're for sanny."

Billy Bunter backed away.

"I—I say, Wingate, I—I haven't—grooogh—got a c-c-cold! Honest, you

know! Atchooh—c h o o h—chooh! Choooooop! I—I don't want to go to sanny! I—I'm afraid of—of missing my lessons, you know—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come along, you young ass!" said the Sixth Form prefect, and he dropped a hand on Bunter's fat shoulder.

"I—I—I say, Wingate—atchooooooh!" Bunter sneezed frantically. "I say, I haven't a c-cold—I haven't. really! Oooooogh! Groooooogh!"

Wingate led the Owl of the Remove away.

Whether he had a cold or not, Billy Bunter was booked for a spell in "sanny."

The Removites dispersed to their studies. From the Remove staircase floated back a Gargantuan sneeze as Bunter was led away.

"Atchooooooh—chooooooh—chooooooh! I say, Wingate, I really haven't got a—oooooh!—cold! Atchooh—chooooooh—chooooooh!"

After which no more was heard from Bunter.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### Missing Money!

**H** ERBERI VERNON-SMITH stood in his study, with a thoughtful expression on his brow, and a sardonic curve to his lip. He was silent, and had been silent for some time—and Tom Redwing glanced at him more than once. He wondered what that peculiar expression on the Bounder's face portended, and it made him vaguely uneasy.

The Bounder had been looking about the study, and moving the books and papers on the table, apparently in search of something. Whatever he had sought he had not found it.

"What about prep, Smithy?" said Redwing at last. He had sat down to work, but the Bounder seemed to have forgotten prep.

Smithy smiled—an evil smile.

"Something a bit more important than prep to think of," he answered. "By gad, who'd have thought it?"

"Who'd have thought—what?"

"We all knew the little beast was hard up," continued Vernon-Smith. "He mends that dashed old coat of his in his study."

"Are you speaking of Mossos?" asked Redwing quietly.

"You know I am."

"Well, chuck it," said Tom. "It's rotten to talk like that, Smithy, and you know it as well as I do. I'd heard that Mossos came here to speak to you, and I've no doubt that he's sorry for the way he treated you this morning."

"I'll make him sorrier."

"You didn't see him—"

"No. Squiff told me he was here, and I sent back a message that I wouldn't come."

"I don't suppose Squiff was ass enough to give Mossos that. But you ought to have seen him, Smithy. He could have had only one reason for coming to the study—to set matters right."

"You can't whop a fellow with a pointer and set it right by chin-wag!" sneered the Bounder. "And he may have had some other reason for coming to the study, too—while I was out."

"What on earth—"

"And he knows I've plenty of money," said the Bounder deliberately. "He may have been looking for a chance to help himself."

Tom Redwing started.

"Are you mad, Smithy?" he exclaimed.

"Not at all."

"If you said a thing like that outside this study you'd be sacked for it. For goodness' sake, Smithy—"

"I'm going to say it outside this study—and more, too," said the Bounder coolly. "I'm not going to be robbed as well as licked and take it lying down, I can assure you."

Redwing rose to his feet.

"You've got your knife into the man, and I don't say he wasn't partly to blame," he said. "But if you're going to talk like that, Smithy—"

"I am, and more, unless my banknote turns up."

"What banknote, you ass?"

"You know quite well. I threw a banknote on the table when you were here. You refused to change it at the school shop for me—"

"I suppose you picked it up afterwards?"

"I forgot all about it. I went to tea with Skinner, and then I was in the Rag till we came up to prep. I've looked for the fiver, and it's not here."

"What utter rot!"

The Bounder grinned unpleasantly.

"You can look for it, if you like. If it's in the study I'll make you a present of it."

"Don't be an ass! Of course it's here if you haven't picked it up."

"You can look for it, if you like."

Tom Redwing made no answer to that, but he left his prep untouched and proceeded to search about the study for the five-pound note.

The Bounder watched him with the same unpleasant grin on his face.

There was no doubt in Smithy's mind.

For whatever reason Monsieur Charpentier had come to the study—and Smithy was in a mood to attribute the worst possible motive to him—he had seen the banknote on the table, and taken it. It was not five minutes after Smithy had left the study that Squiff had told him, in Skinner's room, that Mossoo was in Study No. 4, waiting for him.

Redwing searched for some time.

Naturally, he did not think of looking inside books on the bookshelf. He searched in every possible place where a banknote, carelessly left on the table, might have been blown by a draught from the door or window, or where it might have fallen if brushed carelessly away.

He found nothing to reward him.

"Well?" said the Bounder, mockingly, when the sailorman's son ceased the futile search at last.

Redwing's face was set.

"It's all rot, Smithy! You know Mossoo can't have touched it."

"Where's the banknote, then?"

"Blessed if I know."

"You know it was left on the study

table; and you know it's not in the study now. Froggy was in the study—alone! What does it look like?"

"I don't care two straws what it looks like! Any fellow might have come into the study, if you come to that."

"You suggest that one of the Remove—"

"Don't put words into my mouth, Smithy! I suggest nothing of the kind. I say that any man in the school might have come into this study, and so he might. I might have come in myself—"

"Did you?"

"As it happens, I didn't! But—"

"Nobody else has any business in this study. And there isn't a thief in the

If the man fancied that a schoolboy would hardly dare to suspect, much less to accuse, a master, he would find out his mistake. He would find that he had made a dangerous enemy in Smithy. Every lash from the pointer should be bitterly paid for before Smithy was done with him.

Vernon-Smith grinned over his prep—an evil grin.

Redwing worked with a clouded brow. The disappearance of the banknote puzzled and troubled him. But he did not—he could not and he would not—believe as the Bounder believed.

Prep was over at last. There were footsteps and voices in the Remove passage. The Bounder threw his books aside and rose.



"Mon Dieu! Zat gareon, Vernon-Smeest, he zink me one zief!" said Monsieur Charpentier gesticulating wildly. "Ciel! Zat I live to be call one zief! I go to ze good Quelch—I go to ze Head, —I vill not be call one zief!"

Remove that I know of. Skinner's a bit of a rotter, and Bunter's a grub-pincher, but neither of them would touch a man's money, and you know it."

"I know! Neither would Mossoo."

Redwing sat down to prep again.

The Bounder laughed, and followed his example.

Smithy seemed in quite a good humour now. How he was going to "get back" on Mossoo had been rather a puzzle. It was a puzzle no longer. He had a weapon to use, and he was going to use it. To do the Bounder justice he would never have dreamed of using such a weapon had he not been absolutely convinced that Mossoo had "pinched" the banknote. To Smithy there did not seem the slightest doubt on the subject. Added to his bitter resentment and animosity was his scorn for a thief.

Mossoo had thrashed him—thrashed him like a dog. And he had followed it up by stealing his banknote! That was how Smithy looked at it.

"You're not going—" began Redwing uneasily.

The Bounder laughed, a hard laugh.

"I can't afford to lose five pounds, Reddy."

"Smithy, for goodness' sake, have a little sense!" said Redwing, in a low, earnest voice. "I admit it looks odd—suspicious, if you like! But if this gets as far as the Head, he will no more believe Mossoo a thief than he will believe that he pinched your banknote himself. You'll be sacked if you make such an accusation."

"Whether it's true or not?" jeered the Bounder.

"Unless you can prove it. Can you?"

"The circumstantial evidence seems pretty strong, doesn't it?" said the Bounder.

"I admit it does—except that the thing's practically impossible. It doesn't make me believe Mossoo a thief. Will it make the Head?"



## THE BOUNDER'S BLUNDER!

(Continued from page 13.)

The Bounder paused. He laughed again.

"Thanks for the tip, Reddy! I'll go slow! I'm not givin' the little cad a chance to play the injured innocent, and get me sacked for libellin' him! That's not my game." Smithy set his lips. "By gad! He would have the upper hand, unless I play my cards carefully—with my banknote in his pocket all the time, the measly thief! No, I'm not accusin' him. I know a trick worth two of that!"

He laughed, and walked out of the study.

Redwing followed him slowly. There was a cloud on his brow, as he joined the crowd of fellows going down to the Rag after prep.

### THE NINTH CHAPTER.

#### The Bounder Begins!

**H**ARRY WHARTON & CO. stood in a cheery group by the fire in the Rag, talking football. The coming match with Highcliffe occupied the thoughts of the Famous Five for the present. Squiff and Peter Todd, Tom Brown and Mark Linley and Penfold, and others of the footballing fraternity, stood round with them, and a cheery buzz of conversation went on. The Bounder, who was a great man in the footballing line, did not join in the talk; he sat in an armchair close at hand, listening, and smiling in a rather sardonic way. So far, he had said nothing about the banknote, and Redwing, watching him uneasily, wondered when it was coming—and how!

The Bounder was not in a hurry.

No doubt his first intention had been to carry on in his usual headstrong and reckless way, announcing as an undoubted fact that Monsieur Charpentier had stolen the banknote from his study. Redwing's counsel had prevented that, at least. The Bounder had reflected.

Certain as the matter was in his own mind, he realised that it would seem by no means so certain to others. He realised, perhaps, that his own fixed certainty was partly due to the fact that he had his "knife" into Monsieur Charpentier.

The circumstantial evidence was strong—convincing to the Bounder. But circumstantial evidence was not proof.

But all the more because he had to be cautious, all the more because he dared not make the accusation openly, he was determined to make the very most of it, to rub it in hard.

"Give it a name Smithy!" said Skinner at last. Harold Skinner had been watching the Bounder's face for some time, interested in the peculiar expression on it. He knew Smithy's mood when he had that sardonic expression on his face, and that evil glitter in his eyes. It meant trouble for somebody, and Skinner charitably hoped that it meant

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,242.

a row with Harry Wharton & Co. Smithy had been altogether too friendly with those cheery youths of late to please the amiable Skinner.

Vernon-Smith glanced at him.

"What's up, old man?" asked Snoop.

"I'm rather worried," said the Bounder gravely.

"Worryin' about Bunter?" asked Snoop, with a grin. "I hear he's been carried off to sanny. We shan't see him for a day or two. Awful, ain't it?"

The Bounder laughed.

"I'm rather worried," he repeated.

"It's rather a serious matter—and I want to ask my Form captain's advice about it, when he's got a moment to spare from the Highcliffe match."

Harry Wharton glanced round, with a smile.

"Go it, Smithy!" he said.

"With Johnny Bull and Marky at back," said Bob Cherry, "and Squiff in goal—"

"Give Smithy a chance," said Skinner.

"Eh? Smithy will be in the front line, of course," said Bob. "You're not thinking of cutting the Highcliffe match, Smithy?"

"I'm not thinkin' of football at all at the present moment," said the Bounder.

"A rather disagreeable thing's happened."

"Yes, we were all there," said Bob, with a grin.

The Bounder stared.

"You were there?" he repeated.

"Yes, if you mean about Mossco!" grinned Bob.

"You saw Mossco in my study?" exclaimed Vernon-Smith. He was following his own train of thought.

"Eh? No! I mean, we were all there when the disagreeable thing happened—if you mean that whopping this morning—"

"You silly ass!" snapped the Bounder.

"I don't mean anything of the sort."

"Something else happened?"

"Yes, you dummy! Mossco—"

"Not another licking, surely?"

"Don't be a silly owl, if you can help it. Look here, Wharton! As you're head of the Form, I think you ought to know before I do anything in the matter," said Vernon-Smith.

"Nothing serious, I suppose?" asked the captain of the Remove.

"Well, pinching money from a fellow's study seems to me rather serious. I don't know how it strikes you?"

Harry Wharton jumped.

There was a buzz in the Rag. Nearly all the Remove were there after prep, as well as a good many of the Fourth. Vernon-Smith's voice, though not loud, was very distinct, and his words reached every ear in the room—as they were intended to do.

"Pinching money?" repeated Wharton blankly.

"Smithy!" exclaimed Frank Nugent.

"Rot!" growled Bob Cherry. "What silly bee have you got in your bonnet now, Smithy?"

"You and your money!" grunted Johnny Bull.

The Bounder crimsoned.

"Cheese it, Johnny, old man," murmured Wharton. "If it's as Smithy says, it's jolly serious! What's happened, Smithy?"

Vernon-Smith gave Johnny Bull a dark look. Johnny shrugged his shoulders. Dark looks had no effect whatever upon his equanimity.

"Somebody's taken a banknote from my study," said Vernon-Smith very distinctly. "I laid a five-pound note on my table and forgot it. It was taken from the study while I was at tea with Skinner."

Every eye in the room was fixed on the Bounder. There was disbelief in every face.

"Rot!" said Wharton. "You'll find it blown into a corner, or something. Dash it all, Smithy—"

"I've searched my study."

"Search it again, then."

"Redwing's searched it, too."

"Oh!" said Wharton.

The Bounder's lip curled.

"I know it's frightfully bad form to talk about money," he said sarcastically.

"But I'm not going to be robbed. I want that fiver back!"

"That's all rot!" said Harry decisively. "Nobody's pinched anything from your study, Smithy! Utter trash!"

"The trashfulness is terrific!"

"You think the banknote developed wings and flew away?" asked Vernon-Smith. "Or what?"

"You shouldn't have left a banknote on your study table, in the first place!" said Wharton sharply.

"Very likely; but that's not the point. I did leave it there, and forgot it; and while I was tea-ing in Skinner's study it was taken."

"Oh, rot! It couldn't have been," said Nugent. "Who the thump do you think took it, then?"

"I'm not saying anythin' about that. So far as I know, only one person went to the study while I was out," said Vernon-Smith. "I'm not sayin' he bagged the fiver, of course."

His glance dwelt mockingly on Tom Redwing's troubled face as he spoke.

"Well, who was it?" asked Bob Cherry. "Whoever it was can say whether he saw the banknote there or not."

"I suppose he could be asked," said the Bounder thoughtfully.

"Of course he could! Who was it?"

"Froggy!"

"Wha-a-at?" Bob Cherry stared.

"Mossco? What the thump would Mossco be doing in your study, Smithy? He never comes up to the Remove."

"He was there," said the Bounder.

"Rubbish!"

"Squiff saw him there!" said the Bounder, unmoved. "You can take Squiff's word if mine isn't good enough for you."

All eyes turned on the Australian junior. Sampson Quincy Iffley Field coloured uncomfortably.

"It's so," he said. "Mossco was in Smithy's study at tea-time; he asked me where Smithy was as I passed."

"That was only a few minutes after I'd left the study and gone along to Skinner's," drawled the Bounder. "The banknote was there when Mossco got there. It's not there now. So far as I know, nobody but Mossco went to my study. If any fellow here did, he can say so."

There was silence.

Harry Wharton broke it.

"Smithy! You don't mean—you can't mean—that Monsieur Charpentier—"

He broke off.

Vernon-Smith shrugged his shoulders.

"By gum!" said Skinner, with a deep breath. "We all know how hard up the little blighter is—"

"Shut up, Skinner!"

"He's harder up than ever since the alteration in the francs exchange," said Vernon-Smith. "It costs him a fifth part more to send his money to his jolly old family in France. But I'm not sayin'—"

"You'd better not!" growled Johnny Bull. "Mossco's all right! If you were as decent as old Mossco you'd be a better chap."

"Thanks!" sneered the Bounder. "I've never been hard up; but I don't fancy I should pinch banknotes if I were."

"Mossoo never did——"

"I'm not sayin' he did!" said the Bounder airily. "I'm sayin' that a banknote is missin' from my study—and as banknotes can't fly it's been taken. Somebody's taken it. I'm askin' my Form captain, as head of the Form, what I'd better do in the matter."

Wharton compressed his lips. He knew exactly how much the Bounder needed, or wanted, his advice, as head of the Form. Smithy's object was to bring the matter out before a crowd of fellows, who would be certain to spread it over the school. He was willing to leave them to draw their own conclusions. Circumstantial evidence, it was certain, would be sufficient for a good many of them.

"You've got the number of the note?" asked Harry.

"I can get it from my pater."

"You'd better get it, then, and put a notice on the board that the banknote's lost."

"You think it flew out of the study and lost itself?" asked the Bounder blandly; and Skinner & Co. chuckled.

"Oh, don't be an ass! I don't believe it's been pinched! But if you feel certain it's been pinched——"

"I do!"

"Well, then, you can only go to Quelch and tell him so. You're bound to report it," said the captain of the Remove. "But if you take my tip you'll put a notice on the board that it's lost."

"As a good and obedient member of the Remove, properly respectful to the head of the Form, I will take your tip, old bean!" said the Bounder; and there was another chuckle from Skinner & Co.

"Oh, rats!" grunted Wharton; and he turned away and resumed the football discussion with his friends, though not with so cheery a face as before.

Before the Remove went to their dormitory that night there was a notice on the board in the Bounder's hand, and all Greyfriars was apprised of the fact that a banknote was missing from Study No. 4 in the Remove.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### Who Had the Fiver?

**M**R. QUELCH gave the Bounder a rather severe look in the Form-room the following morning. Evidently Quelch had seen the notice on the board and had not been pleased thereby. Smithy was well aware that he would not be pleased, and did not care two straws whether he was pleased or not—indeed, he was rather amused at displeasing him. He expected the Remove master to speak on the subject; and Mr. Quelch did so before class began.

"Vernon-Smith! There is a notice on the board signed by you," said Mr. Quelch, his gimlet-eye grimly on the Bounder.

"Yes, sir."

"You have lost a banknote for five pounds!"

"No, sir."

Mr. Quelch raised his eyebrows.

"What do you mean, Vernon-Smith? If a banknote is not missing——"

"It is missin', sir, but I haven't lost it," explained Vernon-Smith. "I never lose money, sir. I left it on the table in my study yesterday afternoon, and bein' called away, forgot it; when

I went back for it it wasn't there. I don't know what's become of it."

"Do you imply, Vernon-Smith, that someone has abstracted the banknote from your study?"

"Oh, no, sir! Not in the least! I can't account for it bein' missin'. But it's missin', sir, and I should like it to be returned to me if anyone finds it," said Smithy meekly.

Mr. Quelch pursed his lips.

"More than once, Vernon-Smith, I have had to speak to you on the subject of having more money in your possession than is allowed to junior boys here. You are very well aware that I do not approve of anything of the kind."

"One for Smithy!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Quelch will send that fiver back to the old bean when it turns up."

But the Bounder did not seem disturbed.

"This was a rather special case, sir!" he answered calmly. "I asked my father to send me a fiver, sir, for a very special reason."

"I require to know the reason, Vernon-Smith."

"The School Mission is short of funds, sir, and I thought I'd like to make a subscription," said Vernon-Smith.

Mr. Quelch, who was frowning, relaxed his brow.

Some of the Removites gasped.

If the Bounder had had any intention of subscribing five pounds to the School Mission, he was a very changed Bounder from the fellow they knew.

But Mr. Quelch, at least, was satisfied.

"That was very thoughtful, and very generous, Vernon-Smith," said the Remove master. "I hope you will soon find the banknote."

"Oh, I'm sure of it, sir," said Vernon-Smith. "It's in the House somewhere, and whoever has picked it up will know whom it belongs to."

"It is very odd that it has not been picked up already," said Mr. Quelch. "When did you leave it in your study?"

"Tea-time yesterday, sir."

"When did you miss it?"

"When I went up for prep, sir."

"That is a long interval," said Mr. Quelch, pursing his lips again. "The banknote may have blown out of door or window—indeed, there seems no other way of accounting for its disappearance."

"The window was closed, sir."

"You are sure of that, Vernon-Smith?"

"Quite, sir."

"Then it is very extraordinary!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "The banknote certainly must be found. I presume that you have made inquiries?"

"I've mentioned it to all the Form, sir, and put the notice on the board. I was thinkin' of askin' Monsieur Charpentier if he saw it when he was in the study——"

The Removites caught their breath. Mr. Quelch started.

"Vernon-Smith! I scarcely understand you! What could Monsieur Charpentier possibly know of the matter?"

"I thought he might have noticed the banknote when he was in my study yesterday, sir," said the Bounder, with calm deliberation. "That would help to fix the time it disappeared, if he happened to have noticed it, sir."

"Was Monsieur Charpentier in your study?"

"Oh, yes, sir!" said the Bounder cheerfully. "I wasn't there, but another fellow saw him in the study."

The Remove were breathlessly silent.

There was no hint in the Bounder's words or tone that he suspected the French master. He was too wary for that. But he was taking care to give Quelch the "circumstantial evidence," from which Quelch could draw any conclusion he liked.

There was a pause.

"I suppose, sir, that I may ask him whether he happened to notice the banknote on the table while he was in the study?"

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"Certainly you may ask him, Vernon-Smith. You will inform me immediately the banknote is found."

"Very well, sir."

The subject dropped with that, and the Remove plunged into lessons. But a good many fellows noticed a thoughtful wrinkle in Mr. Quelch's brow. It could scarcely be doubted that the peculiar circumstances had struck him forcibly.

The Bounder closed one eye at Skinner, and Harold Skinner had difficulty in suppressing a chuckle. Whether the missing banknote turned up or not, it looked as if the Bounder was going to get his five pounds' worth out of it.

When the Remove were dismissed after class that morning there was only one topic in the Form. What had become of Smithy's fiver—and had Froggy bugged it? That was the question.

Nobody knew. There was one Remove fellow who could have let in light on the subject, but that fellow was at present sneezing and sniffing and snorting in "sanny." Billy Bunter was absent from his accustomed place in the Remove.

Bunter, certainly, was not likely to be giving much thought to the trick he had played in Study No. 4. He was too busily occupied with a streaming nose and watery eyes, and dismal reflections on a shortage of foodstuffs. Bunter, for the present, was in blissful ignorance of the excitement in his Form.

"He had it, of course," said Skinner, to a group of juniors in the quad. "It was there when Froggy went to the study, and missing after he left. It couldn't be much clearer."

"The clearfulness is not terrific, my esteemed Skinner," said Hurree Jamsset  
(Continued on the next page.)

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Ram Singh, with a shake of his dusky head.

"Utter rot!" said Johnny Bull.

"Then where's the jolly old fiver?" asked Skinner.

"Oh, ask me another!"

"You're really going to ask Mossoo about it, Smithy?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Naturally. I've got my Form master's permission to do so, you know," smiled the Bounder.

"Fat lot you care about that!" growled the captain of the Remove.

"You simply wanted to tell Quelch—"

"You're a jolly old thought-reader!"

"Well, it's rotten, Smithy! I can't imagine what's become of that putrid banknote; but Mossoo knows no more about it than I do."

"I fancy he knows a lot more, old bean! Anyhow, no harm in askin' a man for information, is there?"

"He will know what you suspect—"

"That's what I want!" said the Bounder coolly. "I can't get the fiver back from him, and I can't accuse him, but I'm not letting him get away with it without trouble. I'm going to show him up as a thief to all Greyfriars."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, there's Mossoo!"

Monsieur Charpentier came out of the House in company with Mr. Capper, the master of the Fourth.

"Chance for you, Smithy!" said Bolsover major.

"I'm takin' it," said the Bounder, with a nod.

"You could see him in his study—" said Harry Wharton.

The Bounder laughed.

"I know I could; but I know I'm jolly well not goin' to! I want to catch him with another beak!"

"Look here, Smithy—"

"Rats to you!"

Vernon-Smith walked away, to intercept Monsieur Charpentier. And a crowd of juniors followed him, breathlessly eager to hear.

## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

### The Deep End!

**M**ONSIEUR CHARPENTIER frowned.

He had been chatting quite pleasantly with Mr. Capper when the Bounder came up. Perhaps that worrying question of the "exchange" was not worrying him so much as usual. But he frowned at the sight of Vernon-Smith.

Kind little gentleman as he was, he could not forget the rebuff he had received in Vernon-Smith's study.

Smithy had left him waiting there and had not come, and it was a severe wound to the French gentleman's dignity. It had banished his remorse for having thrashed the Bounder so severely; indeed, it had rather made him wish that he had given Smithy a few more.

Herbert Vernon-Smith stopped in the path the French master and Mr. Capper were following, with the evident intention of speaking. Mossoo's frowning glance had no effect on him.

"Excuse me, sir—" began the Bounder, with great politeness.

Mr. Capper looked puzzled. Quite unaware of the excitement reigning in the Lower Fourth, he was astonished to see a crowd of Removites gathering round, with excited faces.

Monsieur Charpentier made a gesture of dismissal.

"I desire not zat you speak, Smeet!" he said. "You are one

mauvais garçon, and very sheeky—tres sheeky! You go away wiz you!"

"Mr. Quelch thought I had better ask you, sir—"

Monsieur Charpentier's expression changed.

"Hein? If it is a message from Monsieur Quelch, of course you may speak! Proceed, Smeet!"

"It's about my banknote, sir!"

"Je ne comprends pas!" Monsieur Charpentier looked bewildered. "I understand you not, Smeet! Expliquez!"

"There is a notice on the board," said Mr. Capper, to enlighten his colleague. "This junior has lost a banknote, and a notice to that effect has been placed on the board."

"I have not see zat," said Monsieur Charpentier. "But vat do you vish to say to me about zis banknote, Smeet?"

"I wished to ask you if you'd seen it, sir."

"Non! I have not see him. I see no reason why you should zink perhaps I have see him. How should I see him?"

"I mean, when you were in my study yesterday, sir."

Monsieur Charpentier stared.

"I understand you not, Smeet! Expliquez! Explain viz you."

"The banknote was left on my table, sir, and it was there when you went to the study. It was gone when I went there afterwards!" said the Bounder calmly.

Monsieur Charpentier started almost convulsively. Mr. Capper opened his lips, and closed them again, staring very curiously at Herbert Vernon-Smith.

"Vat! Vat do you say, Smeet? Vat do you zink?" exclaimed Monsieur Charpentier, his sallow face suffused with scarlet. "You dare—"

"I thought you might have seen the banknote, sir; it was missing after you were in the study!" said Vernon-Smith deliberately.

The listening juniors caught their breath. Smithy was putting it plain, with a vengeance, now.

"Mon Dieu!" exclaimed the French master. "Smeet! Are you nat? Do you dare say zat I—I—I—" He choked.

"Calm yourself, monsieur!" said Mr. Capper soothingly. "Vernon-Smith means no such thing. He is simply asking—"

"I have my Form master's permission to ask, sir!" said the Bounder, with great meekness. "As the banknote was missing after Monsieur Charpentier went to the study, I thought he might have seen something of it while he was there. Mr. Quelch gave me leave to ask him."

"You do not choose your words very judiciously, Vernon-Smith," said the Fourth Form master severely. "You have given Monsieur Charpentier a very unfortunate impression of your meaning!"

"I am sorry, sir!" said Vernon-Smith. "I am certainly not accusing Monsieur Charpentier of stealing my banknote."

"Mon Dieu!"

"I should imagine not!" exclaimed Mr. Capper. "I should certainly imagine not, Vernon-Smith! If I thought so, I should advise Monsieur Charpentier to take you immediately to Dr. Locke, and demand your expulsion from Greyfriars!"

The Bounder breathed rather hard.

"Mon Dieu! Zat garçon, he zink me one zief!" said Monsieur Charpentier dazedly. "Ciel! Zat I live to be called one zief!"

"Nothing of the sort, sir!" said

Vernon-Smith in some alarm. He had intended to make his meaning clear—perfectly clear, but without committing himself too deeply. "I haven't said—"

"You zink!" almost shouted Monsieur Charpentier. "You zink!"

"I was merely asking you, sir—with my Form master's permission—"

"Smeet, you are one bad boy—one very mauvais garçon! In ze class you insult me, and I zrash you! Now, because of zat, you say zis, so terrible zing!"

"But I've not said—"

"You zink!" roared Mossoo. "You zink, isn't it?"

The Bounder's face set doggedly.

"My thoughts are my own, sir," he answered. "I haven't said anything of the kind. I consulted my Form master before speaking to you. I was simply asking if you saw the banknote while you were in my study!"

"Taisez-vous! I go to ze good Quelch—I go to ze Head—I will not be call one zief—"

"Monsieur Charpentier!" exclaimed Mr. Capper in great concern.

The Frenchman did not heed him. He spun round and started for the House, with rapid strides—his neat little figure whisking along at a great rate.

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Capper. He turned to Vernon-Smith. The Bounder was watching Mossoo, with a cool grin.

"Vernon-Smith! Was it your intention to imply that Monsieur Charpentier had any guilty knowledge of your missing banknote?"

"Oh, no, sir!" drawled the Bounder in a tone that very plainly meant "Oh, yes, sir!"

"I am afraid that Monsieur Charpentier understood you in that sense, Vernon-Smith!"

"I don't see why he should, sir," said the Bounder calmly. "I've asked lots of fellows if they've seen anything of the banknote, and they never faoiced that I was accusing them of anything!"

"You will be called upon to substantiate your statement that Monsieur Charpentier visited your study—"

"He was seen there, sir!"

"Oh!" said Mr. Capper.

He walked away, looking very thoughtful. A few minutes later, he joined Mr. Prout, and walked with him—deep in conversation. The Bounder eyed him from a distance with a cynical grin. Capper was telling Prout—by tea-time it would be a topic in Masters' Common-room. Smithy knew that; he could rely on Capper and Prout for that.

Mr. Prout and Mr. Capper came towards the House. Some of the fellows caught snatches of their talk as they passed.

"Extraordinary!" said Mr. Prout. "Quite impossible, of course!" said Capper. "But appearances—"

"Very unfortunate—"

"Very!"

"Well, you've done it now, Smithy!" said Tom Redwing. "It will be all over the school!"

The Bounder nodded.

"That's what I want!" he said. "Vernon-Smith!" Wingate of the Sixth came out of the House. "Go to your Form master's study at once!"

"Certainly," drawled the Bounder.

His manner was quite jaunty as he went into the House. But, as a matter of fact, he was feeling a little apprehensive within. Monsieur Charpentier, evidently, had carried his tale of woe to Quelch, and Quelch was not a man





"Silence in ze class! Smeet, you go on to speak!" said Monsieur Charpentier, encouragingly. "Vat is zat verb?" "It's the verb—yooooop!" yelled Vernon-Smith, as a stream of ink caught him in the ear.

to be trifled with. Vernon-Smith tapped at his Form master's door, and entered. "You sent for me, sir?" "I did!" said Mr. Quelch sternly, while Monsieur Charpentier gesticulated with both hands. "Is it possible, Vernon-Smith, that you have dared to hint, or to imply, that Monsieur Charpentier has any knowledge of your missing banknote?" "I've said nothing of the kind, sir!" "You zink!" spluttered Mossoo. "Sir, he zink!" "You gave me your permission to speak to Monsieur Charpentier, sir," said the Bounder. "I asked him a civil question, sir! I haven't the faintest idea why he has gone off at the deep end like this!" Mr. Quelch gave him a very searching look. "Is it your belief, Vernon-Smith, that the banknote missing from your study has been purloined?" "It hasn't been found yet, sir, and—"

"Answer my question!" "Yes, sir, I do believe so! There isn't anythin' else to believe, when a banknote disappears from a fellow's study!" "He zink—"

"You will scarcely think, Vernon-Smith, that a member of Dr. Locke's staff could have any knowledge of such pilfering?" "I haven't said so, sir!" "He zink—"

"If the boy thinks anything of the kind, monsieur, it shows a baseness of mind, of which I should be very unwilling to believe any member of my Form capable!" said Mr. Quelch. "Mais oui, but he zink—"

"I am convinced not, sir," said Mr. Quelch, though he was far from convinced. "Vernon-Smith, I warn you to be careful—very careful, indeed. If you should utter a word reflecting on the honour of a gentleman respected

by the whole school, I should take you to your headmaster, and demand your expulsion!" He pointed to the door. The Bounder breathed hard as he went. Monsieur Charpentier was still gesticulating wildly, and Mr. Quelch made soothing gestures, as if to a child.

"You see, sir, you are mistaken—the boy thinks no such thing—it is quite a misapprehension—"

"He zink!" wailed Mossoo. "He zink zat I bone—vat you call bone—zat banknote! I do not bone him, sair!"

"My dear sir—"

"Quelch—mon cher Quelch—you do not zink—"

"No! No! No!"

"Zank you, sair, zank you! But zat garcon, he zink—he zink viz himself, zat I bone zat banknote! Helas!"

"Bless my soul!" murmured Mr. Quelch as the French gentleman whisked out of his study. "This—this Gallic excitability—this—this Latin effervescence—bless my soul!"

In the corridor, Monsieur Charpentier came on Capper. He rushed up to the Fourth Form master. "Cappair! Mon cher Cappair! You do not zink—"

"What!" ejaculated Mr. Capper. "What!"

"You do not zink zat I, Henri Charpentier, am one zief, ain't it? You do not zink—"

"Good heavens, no!"

"Zank you, sir! If mes amis—my friends—zink zat I am one zief, I break zo heart—I weep—I cry—"

"For goodness' sake, sir, do nothing of the kind!" exclaimed Mr. Capper in alarm. "I—I assure you—"

He gazed after Mossoo as the excited gentleman whisked on. Prout, in the doorway of his study, was talking with Hacker, the master of the Shell. Both masters ceased suddenly to speak as the Frenchman came up.

"Prout! Hackair! You do not zink—"

"What? What?"

"Am I one zief? You do not zink—"

"Good gad! No, sir!" gasped Prout.

"Absurd, sir!" said Mr. Hacker, but his eyes dwelt very curiously on the French master.

"I zank you from ze top of ze heart!" Tears of gratitude welled into Mossoo's eyes. "I zank you, messieurs! Zis to me is a zing of ze most terrible!"

Prout and Hacker exchanged rather significant looks as the French master went on his way.

"Odd!" said Prout.

"Very!" said Hacker.

"Quite impossible, of course."

"Oh, quite!"

"Yet all this excitement—"

"As you say, all this excitement—"

Possibly Monsieur Charpentier would not have "zanked" his colleagues so earnestly had he been more observant.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Skinner Is Too Funny!

"VOLER!" said Skinner thoughtfully. "Eh?"

"Voler! Voler, my beloved 'earers," said Skinner oracularly, "is a French verb, which means to fly or to steal. Now, I'm frightfully interested in French verbs—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And this verb having a double meaning, of course, I'm doubly interested in it."

"What on earth are you driving at?" asked Bob Cherry.

"You didn't know I was keen on French?" asked Skinner.

"Blessed if I knew you were keen on anything, except smoking cigarettes behind the woodshed," answered Bob.

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"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I'm frightfully keen on French," said Skinner, unperturbed. "I admit it's rather sudden, but there it is. We get a French class this afternoon, and I'm going to please Mossoo by takin' a deep interest in his so beautiful language."

"If you're thinking of japing Mossoo, cut it out," said Harry Wharton gruffly. "The Bounder's making him sit up enough, poor old chap."

Skinner looked pained.

"Am I the fellow to rag in class?" he asked. "Am I the fellow to give unnecessary and inexcusable trouble to my kind teachers? I ask you."

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

"Go it, Skinner!" said the Bounder, with a grin.

It was a couple of days later, and the Remove had left Mr. Quelch for a French class, and were gathering round the door of the class-room where Mossoo took his junior sets.

During those days nothing had been heard of Smithy's missing fiver.

But a good many fellows in the Remove—and out of it—had made up their minds.

Mossoo had been in the study, the banknote had been missed after he had been there, and his hard-upness was known to all the school, and he had gone off the "deep end" at the merest hint.

Everybody, including Mossoo, knew that the matter was discussed in every study and in Masters' Common-room, with many serious and significant looks and shakings of heads.

Monsieur Charpentier, in these dismal days, looked rather like the ghost of a French master.

He was pale and worn and wan.

Some fellows put it down to a guilty conscience. Others, with better judgment, realised how bitterly the poor little gentleman must be feeling so terrible a suspicion.

It was all the more bitter because there was nothing to be done. Unless the banknote turned up, which nobody believed would happen, suspicion of a theft had to continue, and it was rather natural that it should rest upon the person to whom circumstantial evidence pointed.

Monsieur Charpentier had made matters worse by going off at the deep end. Instead of icily ignoring the mere possibility of such a suspicion, as any other master would have done, Mossoo had flown into a state of wild excitement and emotion. Frightened because he was found out, was the Bounder's opinion, and that opinion was very widely shared. Mossoo had asked nearly everybody at Greyfriars if he could possibly "zink" him a "zief," with the result that a good many did.

Taking a French class was not very agreeable to Mossoo now. The raggings he had once had to endure were as moonlight unto sunlight, as water unto wine, compared with what he had to face at present. Staring eyes, curious glances, whispers in class, tortured him. In every glance, in every innocent whisper, he read suspicion.

Once an extremely conscientious master, Mossoo was now falling into the way of being late for a class, and of dismissing them rather early. He was hardly ever seen in the quad. He sought seclusion, where, like Rachael of old, he mourned and could not be comforted. He was late on the present occasion. The juniors had been waiting five minutes, and still Mossoo had not appeared, when Harold Skinner began his humorous remarks on the very interesting subject of the verb "voler."

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Skinner was a humorous fellow, and his humour was not always good-natured. Skinner cared no more for French than for Latin or mathematics or any other branch of knowledge; but he saw possibilities in the French verb "voler." So he had mugged up that verb carefully.

"You see, my young friends," went on Skinner airily, "this jolly old verb having two meanings, a man's liable to get mixed. Last hols old Mossoo went home to France in a plane. Suppose I asked him how he liked flying—in French, of course. He might easily think I was asking him how he liked stealing."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Remove.

"I shouldn't like to be misunderstood like that," said Skinner solemnly. "It would hurt Mossoo's feelings—a thing I should hate to do. I've quite forgiven him for giving me two hundred lines from that dashed tripe, the Henriade, the other day. You know what a forgiving chap I am."

"He, he, he!" from Snoop.

"Mossoo's jawed me and chinned me for not taking any interest in his jolly old language. Well, my beloved 'earers, his remarks have gone home," said Skinner. "I'm going to take a deep interest this class. I'm going to ask him all about the verb voler, to fly."

"Not the verb voler, to steal!" chuckled the Bounder.

**GRAND CHRISTMAS  
NUMBER OF THE  
"MAGNET"  
IN A FORTNIGHT'S TIME, CHUMS!**

"Not at all," said Skinner. "He might take that personally, and perhaps begin to cry. I don't want to make him cry."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I shall stick to 'voler,' to fly," said Skinner. "I've worked out some sentences to ask him about: 'Le temps vole,' time flies. 'Monsieur vole,' Monsieur flies."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"'Monsieur vole'!" said Peter Todd. "That can mean either Monsieur flies or Monsieur steals."

"That's the fault of the French language, not of a humble seeker after knowledge," answered Skinner. "'Monsieur aime voler' means 'Monsieur likes flying,' doesn't it?"

"Ha, ha! It does!" chuckled the Bounder. "It also means 'Monsieur likes stealing'—if he likes to put on the cap that fits."

"He's rather late for class," remarked Skinner, "but I'm sure he will enjoy it when it begins. After all his jaw about my slackness and carelessness and all that, he will be quite bucked to see in me an earnest seeker after knowledge."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I dare say it's funny, Skinner," said Harry Wharton. "It's easy enough to catch poor old Mossoo. He's as soft as putty! But be a good chap, old bean, and chuck it!"

"I'm sorry to hear you suggest, Wharton, that I should carry on in my old slack way, instead of seeking earnestly after knowledge."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I do suggest it, Skinner," said Harry. "Poor old Mossoo's got enough from Smithy, without you butting in. Smithy's ass enough to believe that Mossoo pinched that fiver—"

"I know he did!" said the Bounder coolly.

"Well, he hasn't pinched any fiver from Skinner, and Skinner can let him alone," said the captain of the Remove. "I'm asking you to chuck it, Skinner."

"Sorry and all that," said Skinner.

"Well, then, as head of the Form, I jolly well tell you to!" snapped Wharton.

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry.

"My dear man," drawled Skinner, "you can't order me to slack in class as head of the Form. I've a right to ask Mossoo about the conjugation of a French verb, and I'm jolly well going to!"

"I'll back you up!" said the Bounder, with a defiant look at the captain of the Remove. "Stick to it, Skinner!"

"I'm going to!" said Skinner.

"You're not," said Harry Wharton quietly. "There's a limit, and you shan't call a decent man a thief to his face, Skinner. A rag's a rag, but that's too thick. And if you get going—"

"Here comes Mossoo!" murmured Nugent.

Monsieur Charpentier came along the passage at last. He was late—very late. Possibly he found it difficult to face his class at all, sensitive little gentleman that he was.

He hardly glanced at the waiting juniors; he knew, without looking at them, the number of curious eyes turning on him; he knew how the Bounder's lip curved sardonically, and Skinner and Snoop and Stott exchanged winks.

He opened the class-room door, and the French "set" went in and took their places. The lesson began in a murmur of voices; but Mossoo did not rebuke his class. He said nothing when Bolsover major dropped a book with a terrific bang. He even pretended not to hear when some fellow began to whistle.

The tartness of temper he had shown of late, was quite gone now. He was tamed, as Snoop remarked to Fish; he was cringing, as the Bounder scornfully muttered to Skinner—without troubling much to lower his voice. It was clear, at least, that poor Mossoo did not want trouble, and years and years of experience had not taught him that a master who tried to dodge trouble with his boys was pretty certain to land in it. Poor little Mossoo had never learned to "grasp the nettle."

Harry Wharton, and the more thoughtful fellows, compassionated the poor little gentleman, and were very careful to show the greatest respect, and even to give attention to his instructions. But the average fellow was thoughtless, and ragging was more amusing than French, and that was enough for most of the class. Plenty of fellows who meant no harm at all, helped to make Mossoo's life a torment.

"If you please, sir—"

Skinner was on his feet.

Harry Wharton gave him a warning look. It did not please Harold Skinner to heed it.

"Mais oui, Skinnair!" said Monsieur Charpentier mildly. "Vous desirez—you would ask me somezing, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir; I've been rather in difficulties about a French verb, sir, that seems to have more than one meaning—"

Monsieur Charpentier smiled genially, for a fellow like Skinner, slacker and frowster, to take an interest in his work came as a distinct relief.

"Tres bien, Skinnair! Continuez!" said Mossoo.

"It's the verb—Yarooooooh!" roared Skinner, as a French grammar shot through the air, landed on the side of his head, and bowled him over. There was a roar of laughter in the class as Skinner disappeared among many feet.

**THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.**

**A Royal Rag!**

**G**OAL!" chirruped Bob Cherry. "Ha, ha, ha!" "Yaroooh! Yow-ow-ow!" came from the infuriated Skinner.

"Mon Dieu!" gasped Monsieur Charpentier. "Ciel! Wharton, vat for you zrow one book at Skinnair? You very bad one—"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" Skinner sprawled among many feet. As he scrambled up, he grabbed at Johnny Bull's knees, and Johnny promptly drove out a boot, and Skinner yelled and sprawled once more.

"Let him alone!" exclaimed the Bounder.

"Rats to you!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner scrambled up at last, dusty and crimson and furious. He rubbed the side of his head and glared round at a grinning class.

"Who threw that book?" he yelled.

"I did!" answered Harry Wharton contemptuously, "and I'll let you have the inkpot next, if you don't shut up!"

"Hear, hear!" chuckled Frank Nugent.

"The hear-hearfulness is terrific!" chortled Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Wharton!" roared Monsieur Charpentier. "You make one rag in zis class—you are one bad boy—I expect bettair zings of you! Mooch bettair zings. But you are also so bad as ze rest."

"Sorry, sir!" said Wharton, colouring. He could not explain to Mossou why he had "buzzed" the book at Skinner; though it was rather hard to

be judged to be ragging in class, in the circumstances.

"You take one hundred lines, Wharton!"

"Very well, sir."

"Lines for Good Little Georgie, who loved his kind teachers!" murmured the Bounder, and there was a laugh.

"Silence in ze class! Skinnair, you go on to speak!" said Monsieur Charpentier encouragingly.

Skinner hesitated. Harry Wharton had captured a hundred lines for intervening; but his hand was hovering over the inkwell in his desk. He was evidently going to be as good as his word, and Skinner, more than satisfied with the book, did not want the inkpot in the same place.

"I—I—I've forgotten, sir!" he stammered.

Up jumped the Bounder.

"I can tell you, sir. I was goin' to ask you, as well as Skinner, sir."

"Vraiment!" Monsieur Charpentier gave the Bounder a doubtful glance. He expected nothing but insolence and derision from him; but he was willing—more than willing—to give Vernon-Smith a chance to behave himself. "Verree vell, Smeet; you may speak. Vat is zat verb?"

"It's the verb— Yooooop!" yelled the Bounder, as a stream of ink caught him in the ear.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the class.

"Mon Dieu! Wharton, you very mischievous one, you zrow ze ink at Smeet—" gasped Monsieur Charpentier.

Herbert Vernon-Smith turned a face crimson with fury—where it was not black with ink—on the captain of the Remove. Right or wrong, Smithy was not the man to be handled like Skinner.

"You cheeky rotter!" he yelled.

And he scrambled furiously through the chuckling class to reach the captain of the Remove.

"Smeect!" gasped Monsieur Charpentier.

The Bounder did not heed. He reached Harry Wharton, and fairly hurled himself upon him.

Wharton, nothing loth, met him with his hands up. Every fellow was on his feet now, and scrambling out of the way, as the Bounder and the captain of the Form closed in combat.

"Go it, Wharton!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Pile in, Smithy!" shrieked Snoop.

"Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tramp, tramp, tramp! Punch, thump, bang, crash! The combatants were going strong, in the midst of a yelling crowd.

Monsieur Charpentier almost tore his hair. He waved his hands, he shrieked, he raved, and he danced. There had been rags in the French class before, many a time and oft; but never a rag quite like this. The lesson was quite forgotten. A desk rocked as Wharton and Smithy crashed into it; books and papers flew far and wide. They struggled out of the desks, still fighting, and Monsieur Charpentier rushed at them gesticulating frantically.

"Stop! Zat you make one stop!" he raved. "You hear me—ecoutez! Ecoutez! Zat you do not do zis zing! Mon Dieu! I am enrage—I am in one very large wax! Zat you stop at vunce!"

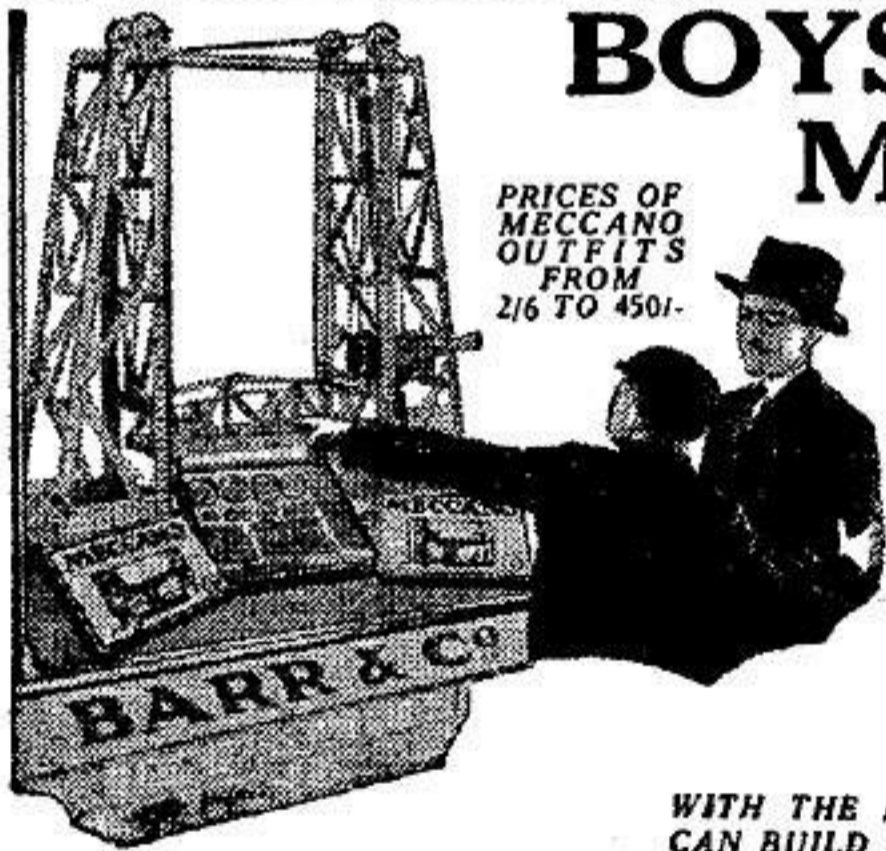
Tramp, tramp! Thump!

"You cheeky cad—"

"You rotter!"

"Go it, Smithy!"

*(Continued on next page.)*



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"Give him toco, Wharton!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Attention! shrieked Monsieur Charpentier. "Listen to me zat speak. Zat you stop! Ciel! Zis is one garden of ze bear! You sall heed me—moi qui vous parle! Yes! Name of a name of a name! You are both one verree bad boy! Zat you, vat you call chuck zis!"

Monsieur Charpentier grabbed at the two Removites, to drag them apart. By accident—or perhaps not by accident—the Bounder's fist crashed into his ribs, and he gurgled and sat down.

"Man down!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Squiff. "What a game! This is better than French."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Helas! Mon Dieu! I am hit—I am punch—I am vizout breff! Grooogh! In me zero is no more breff! Oooooh!"

Three or four juniors rushed to help Mossoo to his feet. Two or three more helpful fellows barged into the blackboard, and sent it flying with its easel, and it went over with a terrific crash. Other fellows, not to be left out, banged the lids of desks, with a succession of sharp reports that sounded like machine-gun fire.

There was another crash as the Bounder went down. He sprawled on the floor, his nose streaming crimson, gasping for breath. Harry Wharton stood panting. The Bounder's taunt of "Good little Georgie!" had roused his ire—and certainly he did not look much like good little Georgie now.

"Come on, you rotter!" he panted.

Smithy scrambled fiercely up.

"Zat you stop zis," wailed Monsieur Charpentier, "zis terrible noise—zis to rag—zis to fight—zat you stop—"

"Go, it, ye cripples!" yelled Peter Todd.

"Hurrah!"

Bang, bang, bang!

Mossoo had not the remotest chance of restoring order in the class. He raved and gesticulated in vain. But there was a sudden yell from Ogilvy as the door opened.

"Cave!"

"Quelch!" gasped Hazeldene.

There was a rush of the class to get back to their places. Under the cold gimlet-eye of Quelch the rag ceased as if by magic. Harry Wharton and Vernon-Smith jumped away from one another.

"Boys!"

Henry Samuel Quelch's voice was not loud, but deep. Like rabbits the juniors scampered into their places.

"Monsieur Charpentier! I fear that my Form has been giving you undue trouble," said Mr. Quelch. "Perhaps you would care to leave them to me."

There was no doubt that poor Mossoo preferred it vastly, little as he liked admitting his own helplessness.

"Zank you, Monsieur Quelch!" he gasped. "Sair, zis is one garden of ze bear—zis is one verree bad Form! All zese garcons are of ze most bad! I leave zem in your hands, sair."

Mossoo whisked out of the class-room, glad to escape. He left the juniors in their Form master's hands, and he could not have left them in better hands. The grim, gimlet-eye had already restored order.

"Vernon-Smith! You appear to be smothered in ink! You will go and wash yourself! Take five hundred lines! Every boy present will take five hundred lines! The class will remain in till six o'clock! The first boy who is guilty of the slightest disorder will be sent to the headmaster for a flogging!"

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Quelch was the man to deal with the Greyfriars Remove. There was no more disorder in that class. Fellows sat looking as if butter would not melt in their mouths. And when six o'clock—which seemed as if it never would come—came round at last they almost tiptoed from the room.

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Light at Last!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Oh, my hat—Bunter!"

"I suppose you hadn't forgotten me, you fellows!" said Billy Bunter, as he blinked into Study No. 1 through his big spectacles.

"Jolly well had!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, you know—"

"Dash it all, they might have kept you in sanny a little longer," said Johnny Bull. "You don't know how jolly it is in the Remove when you're in sanny, Bunter."

"Look here, you beast—"

"The esteemed Bunter has turned up like a ridiculous bad penny," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "It is terrifically fortunate that he has turned up too late for tea."

"Oh, really, Inky—"

## ANOTHER POCKET WALLET WON!

Here's another clever Greyfriars limerick for which Fred Naylor, of 45, Hope Street, St. Helens, Lancs, has been awarded a useful leather pocket wallet.

When Mauly's dressed up to attract,  
His clothing is neat and compact.  
He lounges and struts,  
For he's one of the knuts—  
A "nut" which appears somewhat cracked!

Now what about it, you other fellows? Fill in your spare moments writing Greyfriars limericks and win these prizes.

The chums of the Remove chuckled. Tea—a rather late tea—was over in Study No. 1 when Billy Bunter appeared in the offing. Billy Bunter did not regard it as fortunate. He had come out of sanny with a terrific appetite, like a lion seeking what he might devour. In sanny Bunter had had as much as was good for him. That was only about ten per cent of what he wanted.

"Well, here I am, old chaps," said Bunter. "I say, you fellows, I've seen Toddy and asked him whether he was going to stand a spread to celebrate my recovery, you know. And he said he wasn't."

"Go hon!"

"After all I've done for him, you know. And—and I've looked for my letters, and my postal order hasn't come. I think I told you fellows that I was expecting a postal order."

"I think you did," agreed Harry Wharton.

"The didfulness was terrific."

"Well, what about a study supper?" asked Bunter briskly. "I expect my old pals to rally round me. I've been starved in sanny—pining for food, you know. If you fellows are still stony I think you might borrow something, in the circumstances. Smithy would lend you a quid, Wharton."

"Probably not—as I've been scrapping with him," said Harry, laughing.

"Well, you must be a silly ass to scrap with a fellow who's got a fiver!" exclaimed Billy Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wondered what was the matter with your nose, old chap! Looks as if you'd caught it in a door. He, he, he! I say, you fellows, do you think Smithy would lend me a quid out of that fiver—in the circumstances, you know. I suppose he's missed me, like you fellows."

"The missfulness was not preposterous!" chuckled Hurree Singh.

"And Smithy's lost the fiver," added Bob Cherry.

"He, he, he!"

Bunter chortled, a fat chortle.

"I suppose you haven't heard about the row, as you've been in sanny," said Bob. "Smithy's lost his fiver—"

"He, he, he!"

"And he thinks it's been pinched—"

"He, he, he!"

"And he makes out that Mossoo pinched it."

Bunter jumped.

"Mossoo!" he yelled.

"Yes, the ass! That's what we've been scrapping about," said Harry Wharton. "You'd better give Smithy a miss, Bunter—he's not in a good temper now. He's nursing his eye."

"He, he, he!" shrieked Bunter.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at the fat junior. Bunter's merriment took them rather by surprise. The fat junior really seemed almost on the point of convulsions.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the jolly old joke?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"He, he, he!"

"You fat duffer, there's nothing funny in Smithy losing his fiver, is there?" demanded Nugent. "What are you cackling at?"

"He, he, he!" yelled Bunter. "Oh, my hat! He thinks it's been pinched—and he thinks Mossoo— He, he, he; Just like the Bounder—always jolly suspicious! He, he, he! I wonder what he will say when he finds it? He, he, he! Oh crumbs! He'll find it to-morrow all right! He, he, he!"

And Bunter went off into a fresh yell.

"You fat villain!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, staring at him. "Do you know anything about it?"

"He, he, he!"

"It can't have been Bunter," said Bob Cherry. "That was the day Bunter went into sanny. He was in sanny before we heard about the banknote being missed."

"But not before it went," said Johnny Bull. "Bunter, you fat frump, if you know anything about that fiver—"

"Ho, he, he!" Bunter was almost weeping with mirth. "It's all right, you fellows! Smithy will find it all right on Saturday."

"Why Saturday, you fat owl!"

"He, he, he! Saturday, you know—he's bound to. He, he, he!"

"What difference does Saturday make, you fathead?"

"He, he, he! Sunday prep," explained Bunter. "He will be using his Milton—we have to prepare a chunk of 'Paradise Lost,' you know. He, he, he! He will find it all right! He, he, he!"

"My only hat!" ejaculated Bob.

He made a stride across the study, grasped Billy Bunter by his fat neck, and tapped his head on the door.

"Now, then—"

"Yooop! Leggo! Whoop!" roared Bunter.

"Where's that fiver?" roared Bob.

"Ow! Wow! Leggo!" yelled Bunter.



"You silly, ill-tempered, suspicious fathead, Vernon-Smith!" said Wharton, as he shook the volume of Milton and a crisp, rustling paper dropped out. "Look!" The Bounder jumped, and stared at the banknote, his eyes almost starting from his head.

"I'm just going to tell you, you beast. Ow!" Bunter wriggled out of Bob's grasp. "I say, you fellows, don't tell Smithy—the beast would pitch into me. He would be ratty, you know—you know his beastly temper. He, he, he! The fiver's all right—he will find it when he opens his Milton! I put it there—" "You—you put it there!" gasped Wharton.

"You see, the beast kicked me," explained Bunter. "I'd have jolly well licked him, only—only I thought he'd had enough from Mossoo, you know. And—and I wouldn't soil my hands on the fellow, and—and—" "You silly owl, we know why you didn't lick Smithy! But do you mean to say—"

"Well, he kicked me," said Bunter. "Hard, you know! So I jolly well shoved that fiver out of sight in his Milton. I knew he jolly well wouldn't open it till Saturday night, see? Rather a lark, what?" "You call that a lark?" asked Bob Cherry, staring blankly at the fat Owl.

"Yes, rather!" grinned Bunter. "I've thought about it a lot of times in sanny—Smithy hunting up and down for that fiver, you know, when it was under his nose all the time! I thought it rather funny! But I never thought he would fancy that it was pinched—or that he would think Mossoo— He, he, he! Why the thump did he think it was Mossoo? Just because old Mossoo whopped him in the French class? He, he, he!"

"Well, you benighted bandersnatch!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "So the fiver's not lost, after all!" "He, he, he!"

"Come on!" said Harry Wharton, stepping to the door. "The sooner this is cleared up the better."

"I say, you fellows," yelled Bunter, in alarm. "Don't you tell Smithy I put it in the book, you know! I say, he would kick me—I say—"

"That's all right," said Bob Cherry. "I'll tell him you're kicked already. There you are!"

"Yaroooh!" "And there—" said Johnny Bull. "Yoooooo-hoooooop!" "And there, my esteemed idiot—" "Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

The Famous Five hurried out of Study No. 1, leaving Billy Bunter roaring. They ran along the Remove passage to Study No. 4.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Smithy!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH scowled blackly as his study door was hurled open.

The Bounder was seated in his armchair, tenderly caressing a damaged eye. Tom Redwing had taken out his books for prep; but Smithy was not in a humour for prep.

He rose to his feet, his eyes glittering at the Famous Five as they crowded in the doorway. Behind them appeared a number of other Remove fellows—Peter Todd and Squiff, Tom Brown and Hazeldene and Bolsover major, Russell and Ogilvy and several more. They had caught on to the fact that something was "on," though they did not yet know what it was.

Vernon-Smith's look was black and bitter. The fight in the class-room had been interrupted, with honours divided; but Smithy had been rather severely handled, and his temper was at its worst.

"Oh, here you are!" he sneered. "I'm ready, if you are. Wharton! I'll be glad to finish the scrap."

"You silly ass!" said the captain of the Remove. "I haven't come here to scrap. I've got something to tell you; and I think when I've told you you'll be sorry for the rotten things you've said about Froggy."

The Bounder set his lips.

"I haven't done with Froggy yet," he said. "He's got my banknote, and you know it as well as I do! You stopped the rag this afternoon—and you've given me this eye! Well, you've only made matters worse for the little blighter. Ho's for it now!"

"How's that, fathead?" asked Bob. "I'll tel. you!" said the Bounder venomously. "He didn't take that banknote to have it framed, I suppose? He's changed it before this!"

"Changed it?" repeated Nugent. "It stands to reason he has. He took it to spend, not to keep—and it's ten to one, a hundred to one, that he had changed it before he knew I'd found him out. He wouldn't have taken it if he hadn't been hard up for money—and a hard-up man doesn't keep fivers in his pocket. I'm writin' to my father to-night—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'm asking him," said the Bounder, with bitter deliberation, "to give the number of the note to the police, and set them tracing it. I suppose you know that notes can be traced by the numbers. Well, when they get on the track of that banknote, they'll get on the track of the man who changed it. What's going to happen to your pet Froggy then?"

"Smithy old man—" murmured Redwing.

"So that's the programme, is it?" said Harry Wharton.

"That's it! That's what you've done for Mossoo!" sneered the Bounder. "So you can put that in your pipe and smoke it, confound you!"

Harry Wharton laughed. "And suppose the banknote is in this study all the time?" he asked.

Vernon-Smith shrugged his shoulders. "You can suppose so, if you like. You know it isn't! You know that Froggy had it."

"The knowfulness is not terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,242.

"Smithy, old man, you're wrong!" said Redwing earnestly. "You'll make a lot of talk and scandal, and—"

"I know what I'm going to do," said the Bouncer. "Mossoo's got Wharton to thank for it."

"It's about time that fiver turned up, I think," grinned Bob Cherry. "With Smithy on the jolly old war-path in this style, it's rather lucky that Bunter came out of sanny to-day."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton crossed to the book-shelf and picked up the volume of Milton. He turned towards the Bouncer, with "Paradise Lost" in his hand.

"You silly, ill-tempered, suspicious fathead!" he said, in measured tones. "Look here!"

He shook the volume over the table. As the leaves opened, a slip of crisp, rustling paper dropped out.

"Look!"

There was a yell from the juniors packed in the doorway. Vernon-Smith jumped and stared at the banknote, with his eyes almost starting from his head.

"There's your fiver!" said Harry Wharton. "That silly owl Bunter hid it, to pull your leg, because you kicked him. You'd have found it when you opened Milton for prep. It would have been heard of before, if Bunter hadn't been in sanny—he would have owned up when he heard that you suspected Mossoo of pinching it, only being in sanny he heard nothing about it. There's your fiver, you silly ass—and if you've got a rag of decency, you'll say that you're jolly well ashamed of yourself."

Vernon-Smith did not speak.

He stood staring at the banknote, like a fellow spellbound.

"So that's it!" said Squiff. "You silly ass, Smithy—"

"How was I to guess—"

"You ought to have guessed anything, sooner than that a man had pinched it! You ought to go down on your knees and beg Mossoo's pardon! Yah!"

The Bouncer was silent again.

"Well, there it is!" said Harry Wharton. "Quelch told you to let him know when it was found, Smithy. You'd better tell him."

"I'll tell him!" said the Bouncer quietly.

He put the banknote in his pocket and left the study. He went slowly along the passage to the stairs.

There was a fat figure in the doorway of Study No. 1 as he passed. Billy Bunter had his back to the passage as he addressed the juniors within.

"I say, you fellows! What about that study supper?—ca. tell you, I've been starved in sanny—simply starved! I'm growing thin—Whooop!"

Billy Bunter flew headlong into the study, as a boot crashed on his tight trousers from behind.

He landed on his hands and knees, roaring.

"Ow! Oh, crikey! Who was that? What? Yarooooh! Oh crumbs! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Vernon-Smith went on his way, leaving William George Bunter giving a remarkably good imitation of the Bull of Bashan.

## THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Joy for Mossoo!

"MON cher Quelch—"

"My dear sir—"

"C'est fini!" said Monsieur Charpentier. "On en a assez! I go—"

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"But—"

"It is too mooch!" said Monsieur Charpentier, almost tearfully. "One of this has enough, mon cher! It is too much of the good thing, as you say in English. It breaks me ze heart! But I go! I have made up my brain!"

Probably Monsieur Charpentier meant that he had made up his mind.

He was standing by the staircase with the Remove master, as the Bouncer came down.

Mr. Quelch was feeling and looking uncomfortable. A most undemonstrative gentleman himself, he shrank from demonstrativeness. He sympathised with Mossoo—he was quite concerned about him—but he wished that the Gallic gentleman would do these things in private, if he had to do them at all.

But the fact that a dozen persons were glancing at him did not worry Mossoo. Prout and Capper and Wiggins were near at hand, three or four more Sixth Form men were in the offing, others were passing, and everybody heard the plaintive voice of Mossoo. Mossoo did not heed.

In the stress of his emotion he almost wept.

"Zey zink!" said Mossoo. "Zey do not say, but zey zink! Isn't it? Helas! You, mon cher Quelch, you do not zink—"

"My dear sir," said Mr. Quelch, "I regret—I regret deeply—that a boy in my Form should have caused you this—this distress! But I assure you that no one—"

"Zey zink!" wailed Mossoo. "Zey zink! It is to me a position of ze most painful! One of it has enough, my good Quelch! I make up ze brain to go away! Yes! Zis for me is no place any more! Non! Pas possible, mon bon Quelch! I go—"

Mr. Quelch's glance rested on the Bouncer as he came down the stairs. He frowned portentously. The sight of Vernon-Smith at that moment was like a red rag to a bull.

"Vernon-Smith! You should be at preparation now! What are you doing out of your study?"

"If you please, sir—"

"Zat garcon, he zink—"

"Vernon-Smith does not think anything of the kind, Monsieur Charpentier. He will assure you now, in my presence, that he does not!" said Mr. Quelch, with a glare at the Bouncer. "Vernon-Smith, answer me directly, do you dare to associate Monsieur Charpentier in any way whatsoever with the loss of a banknote from your study?"

"Certainly not, sir!"

"You see, monsieur—"

"Mais, but he zink—"

"Oh, no, sir!" said the Bouncer. "Not at all, sir! If such a thought came into my mind I'm very sorry. I came down to tell Mr. Quelch that the banknote is found—"

"Mon Dieu!"

"Found!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir!" said the Bouncer meekly. "It turns out that a fellow hid it for a lark, sir, and it's turned up. I've got it here."

He held up the banknote.

Monsieur Charpentier's dismal face brightened up wonderfully. Mr. Quelch's first feeling was one of great relief, but it was swiftly succeeded by anger.

"Vernon-Smith! Then the banknote was not lost at all! You have made all this trouble—you have caused all this distress—for nothing!"

"I'm sorry, sir—"

"No doubt you are sorry, Vernon-Smith; but I shall endeavour to im-

press upon you, by the severest punishment—"

"Mais non!" exclaimed Monsieur Charpentier eagerly. "In zis so joyful moment, sair—"

"A flogging—"

"Du tout! In zis so joyful moment—"

"At least, a severe caning—"

"Non, non! I pardon zat garcon, mon cher Quelch, and I beg zat you sall pardon him also."

"Really, Monsieur Charpentier—"

"Sair, I beg—I entreat—I vill weep—"

"For goodness' sake, do nothing of the kind!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Vernon-Smith, as Monsieur Charpentier intercedes for you—"

"It's awfully good of him, sir," said the Bouncer, sincerely enough. "I'm very sorry. I beg Monsieur Charpentier's pardon! I'd never have fancied such a rotten thing for a second, only I was wild about Mossoo licking me in class, and I deserved it all for cheeking him—"

"I am glad to hear you speak so frankly, Vernon-Smith. As Monsieur Charpentier intercedes for you so generously, I shall allow the matter to drop, more especially in view of the fact that you obtained the banknote to subscribe to the School Mission—"

The Bouncer started a little. He had not expected to see the banknote again when he had made that statement.

But there was no help for it now.

"You may place it in the box!" said Mr. Quelch, with a wave of his hand towards the box which received the collection for the School Mission, and which certainly received more bad six-pences and old trouser-buttons, than banknotes.

With a grimace he could not suppress, the Bouncer slipped the five-pound note into the slit in the top of the collection-box.

Monsieur Charpentier beamed on him.

"Zat is vun good garcon," he said.

"Zat is one verree good garcon, apres tout! I forgive him from ze top of ze heart! In zis so joyful moment, I vill embrace zat good garcon!"

The Bouncer retreated up the stairs in time.

Harry Wharton looked up from prep as the Bouncer stopped in the doorway of Study No. 1.

His look was rather grim, and Smithy smiled sarcastically.

"I've apologised to Mossoo!" he said.

"Good!"

"I know I've been an ass—"

"More than that!" said Harry.

"And rather a rotter—"

"Glad you can see it!"

"And the fiver's gone to the School Mission—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And Mossoo got me off a licking. And—and I'm jolly glad you stopped me ragging him in class to-day, and—and there won't be any more ragging if I can help it."

"Good man!" said Wharton cordially.

"And now," added the Bouncer grimly, "I'm going to look for Bunter."

He went to look for Bunter, and a few minutes later a sound of fearful yelling in the Remove passage told that he had found him.

THE END.

(Look out for another of Frank Richards' special Greyfriars yarns next week, chums, entitled "A BROTHER'S SACRIFICE!" You'll vote it one of the finest yarns of Harry Wharton & Co. you've ever read.)

# OOM, The Terrible!

## HOW THE STORY STARTED.

OOM, THE TERRIBLE, IS A FLYING-BANDIT WHO AIMS TO BE MASTER OF THE WORLD. HE HAS KIDNAPPED TOM DARE, A CLEVER INVENTOR, HIS BROTHER RICK, AND TWO CHUMS. RICK IS COMPELLED TO TAKE PART IN A RAID ON A MILLIONAIRE'S HOUSE. HE CONTRIVES TO WARN THE MILLIONAIRE, BUT HIS WARNING IS UNHEEDED. AS A LAST RESOURCE, RICK THEN FIGHTS A BATTLE WITH OOM IN THE AIR, BUT THE YOUNGSTER'S PLANE IS SOON CRIPPLED. MEANWHILE, BACK AT OOM'S HEADQUARTERS, TOM, AIDED BY HAM, THE BOYS' NEGRO SERVANT, DETERMINES TO DESTROY THE WIRELESS PLANT.

### The Getaway!

**I**N less than no time Tom Dare put the dynamos and the rest of the machinery out of action, for with his expert knowledge he knew just what parts to put out of commission so that it would take a month or two to repair them.

Then, with a brief word to the youngster to stand guard, he returned to the operating-room to put the wireless out of order in addition.

Meantime, Ham had been doing sentry-go as to the manner born. His keen ears had caught the sound of the double revolver shots, and he guessed Tom was busy, but orders were orders, and he remained where he was. Then he heard the hum of the great machines gradually fade away, and he guessed that his young boss had gained his objective.

"Golly, I suah wish Ah could gib him a hand, but dooty is fust. Ssh! De fun am about to begin!"

Ham had caught the sound of muffled yawns and movements from the guard-room, and a growling voice complaining at being awakened to go out into the cold on sentry-go.

"Yeah, 'tis de v'ice ob de sleep-hard. Him want to slumbah ag'in!" muttered Ham, with a grin. "Don' worry, Babe, jest come right along hyar to yo' Uncle Ham, an' yo' shall sleep good an' plenty! One at a time, bo!"

At last the man shuffled out, yawning and stretching himself. Ham saw that he had slung his rifle over his shoulder, but in such a position that it would not be easy for him to bring it down in a hurry.

The negro placed Antonio's rifle against the wall and waited in the shadow for the sleepy relief to come along. Tom had impressed upon him that the one thing to avoid was noise, and Ham had his own ideas about being quiet when disposing of the guard.

"Hallo, Antonio. Guess I'm a bit late," said the relief, "but I was dead tired. Yuh ain't sore, air yer? I'll make up for it later. Have a seegar? I'm going to light me pipe. Haff a mo'. Must have a few draws, though it's ag'inst orders. But when th' bawss is away, eh? Say, yuh ain't sore wi' me, air yer, chum?"

Glancing up over the lighted match the relief had seen the grim face, and was about to let out a yell when a huge fist was driven into his face, driving the stem of his pipe almost half down his throat. As the relief fell, Ham caught him, and another pile-driver completed the business. Unfortunately, the rifle slipped from the man's shoulder to the ground, and, being at full cock, exploded with a loud report.

"Golly, dat's tored it!" groaned Ham. "Mass' Tom done tol' me to keep quiet ober dis scrap, but it cain't be helped."

He slammed the unconscious man down in the shadows and waited whilst yells came from the guard-room and half a dozen men rushed out.

"Hyar, what's up?" cried the first man, a sort of non-com. under Antonio. "Who fired—"

"Ah did, yo' white trash!" yelled Ham, driving a mighty right into the man's face.

Before he could drop, the giant negro stooped, and, catching him by the ankles, swung him around his head like a club. As the first men raced up they were hurled back by their whirling mate, and two of them fell to the ground senseless.

Convinced that the Italian gunman had gone mad, two of the others following in the rear drew their revolvers and fired. But Ham gave them no chance of taking aim as he charged in and floored them with sledge-hammer blows. But the noise of the firing aroused the sleeping camp, and lights appeared in every hut, whilst half-dressed men rushed out, each armed with a gun.

"Ow! De fat am in de fire!" bawled the negro. "Quiet, sez yuh? Dis am one ob de quietest meetin's Ah hab eber attended. Glory be—he hab got de plane out!"

As the little bomber rushed out with prop whirling, Ham rushed across the basin, meeting some of the newly aroused men on his way. He snatched a rifle from the first and, whirling it around his head, fairly beat his way to the bomber plane, in which sat Tom and Terry Page.

As the negro leapt for the fuselage a huge bandit made a grab at his bare foot. He caught it—right in the mouth, and went reeling back, minus his front row of teeth.

Bullets peppered the little plane, but Terry took a snap shot at the great arc lamp, and in a second the basin was in almost total darkness. Then the engine hummed, the propellers whirled, and, taxiing across the basin, the plane rose gracefully and soared up over the surrounding hills, heading eastward for Titicaca!

### Trouble Brewing!

**R**ICK DARE had never spent more anxious moments than, as he kept the Tiger bomber as steady as possible at one altitude, he watched the great wireless plane sink gracefully, and practically vertically, out of sight amongst the forest trees.

Alf Higgs, clinging like a monkey to the wing, worked away with the cylinder heads as coolly as if he was standing before his bench in a workshop. It was not the first time he had been forced to attend to a damaged engine in mid-air; in fact, a dozen times or more, he and Tom Dare had worked under worse con-

ditions, with Hun aircraft seething around them like a swarm of angry bees.

Rick was on tenterhooks, for every second he expected to see the wireless plane swoop up from the depths and resume the attack, in which case he and Alf would have been helpless. He had no false impressions as to what their fate would be if once more they fell into the Flying-Bandit's hands. It would mean short shrift for them, and probably a painful finish.

Rick little knew that he owed his present safety and the collapse of Oom's wireless power to his own brother; that Tom had but a few moments before smashed up the great engines at the stronghold, and rendered the wireless plane harmless, bereft of her motive power, able to hover by means of the Dare Stabiliser, but totally unable to fly!

"Buck up, Alf!" Rick shouted, as if the little engineer could hear him. "If they come up now they'll have us by the short hair— Hurrah!"

Once more he heard the regular beat of the engine, and in his delight forgot for a second that he had got one perfectly good engineer spreadeagled out on the wing. As he felt again the power under his hand, and the instant response of his engines, he made the little machine nose-dive, in sheer exuberance of spirits.

The sudden jerk of the plane brought disaster to poor Alf, for it jerked the Cockney's hold loose, and he slid down the slant of the wing, with a yelp. Horrified, Rick realised what he had done, and jerked the plane's nose up again.

Poor Alf was like a pea on a tambourine, sliding from end to end of the wing. But he kept his head, and, as he almost went over the edge, managed to clutch a strut and hang on with his legs dangling over into space. Then, with a mighty heave, he got back and worked his way back to the cockpit.

He greeted Rick with a cheery wave of the hand and a broad grin, as if being spilled into a thousand feet of air-space was a joke.

"It's orright, guv'nor," he announced. "I nigh stepped orf th' bloomin' bus whilst she was a-goin'! But I've fixed up them 'eads, and she's good for another ten thahsand mile if so be we've got juice enuff!"

"Good feller!" smiled Rick through the telephone; "but you made my inside turn over, Alf. I thought I'd spilled you into the forest. By jingo, you're a dandy at doing 'running' repairs. Tom always said you could do anything on a plane in full flight."

"Yessir, that's right!" agreed the Cockney, with cheerful pride. "Tho' I sez it wot shouldn't, there ain't nuthink I can't ree-pair in a airyplane hengine eether stashunairy or in the air. Engines soled and 'celed whilst yer wait!"

"Right-ho! Strap yourself in again, Alf," said Rick, "'cause we may have to do some more stunts. I'm going down as low as I can to see what's happened to Oom & Co. Of course, it may be a little ruse of his to get us to come looking for him, so that he can swoop up and run us down. But I think they've had a breakdown, and we may be able to finish 'em off, with a bit of luck!"

He would have felt considerably more bucked if he had been able to see on board the wireless plane, for Oom was in anything but a good mood at the manner in which the small Tiger fighter had eluded him and the mysterious failure of both the wireless power and his communications with his secret stronghold. Never before had he been so left in the lurch, and on the few occasions when anything had gone wrong, it had been but a matter of minutes before he could get full power again.

"Gonzalez seems to have taken leave of his senses!" he growled, having slung down the receiver after getting Tom's last message. "His very voice seemed different, and his manner so curt—almost as if it were another—bah! It is that there is some little interference, that is all. Der teufel, but I will make Gonzalez and the other swinehunds smart for this when I return. It is time that I show them who is master supreme! But how has this spitfire plane found me out, and who is it flying her? She is a Peruvian Flying Corps machine. But they would not dare—"

The Flying-Bandit was frankly puzzled. Although he had no idea that young Rick Dare still lived and was trailing him in that little bomber, he realised that it must be someone who had an uncanny insight into his plans, who had stepped in and thwarted his coup on the Merger mansion.

So accustomed had he become to certain success in all his plans that to be thwarted thus nearly sent the master criminal crazy. Added to which, there was an air of unrest amongst his crew.

In the bitterness of his anger at the continued rebuffs to his plans, he had visited his wrath on the men who worked his great plane, and, frankly, these were

getting just a bit fed-up with Oom's domineering and bullying ways. Various sarcastic remarks had been made in his hearing as to the breakdown of his scientific "gadgets."

Truth to tell, the men were more than a little scared, for they knew that they were hopelessly at the mercy of any attacker armed with even one rifle!

As had been observed in the workshops, Oom was so self-centred, so sure of his scientific apparatus, so confident of his own ability to "beat the world," that he had laughed to scorn any suggestion of carrying a reserve of ordinary weapons. The ones he used were intensely high-power weapons operated by compressed air.

When working perfectly they were wonderful arms, throwing their missiles farther, faster, and with greater penetrative power than either powder or cordite could do, without any fouling of barrels, and with a self-feeding apparatus which enabled one man to fire ten or twelve thousand rounds at a time without reloading, by just keeping his finger pressing against the trigger.

But, with the failing of the wireless power the guns had been rendered useless, save those which Oom had for his own use carefully put away in his safe.

As he caught the mutterings of the men and saw the manner in which they fulfilled his orders, scowling and listless, he went to his cabin and got out his two automatics, and strapped them around him under his flying coat, with a plentiful supply of ordinary ammunition. He would have no compunction in shooting down his companions if they made themselves unpleasant. He could fly the wireless plane singlehanded if once the power came on.

### The Two Raiders!

**W**ITH the helicopter whirling, Oom allowed the great plane to settle down in a clearing amongst the trees, then called his head man to him, who acted as sort of lieutenant on the plane. He was a German-American whom Oom deemed was devoted to him both by self-interest and personal feeling. Born in the States, the man had led a wandering, criminal existence, and was absolutely fearless and ruthless—like his master.

"Fritz, those fellows seem to be grumbling among themselves!" he snapped. "You had better put a stop to it or I'll have to attend to them myself. I'll stand for no insubordination!"

Fritz turned a cold and satirical stare on the Flying-Bandit, his jaws working ceaselessly as he chewed plug tobacco.

"Yeah?" he drawled. "Me put a stop to them grousin'? I sh'ud say so! I'm grousin' some my own self, if yer wants th' truth. Say, what d'yer think we air, anyway? We're men, not Robots! Yuh've pinned yer faith to these scientific gadgets and whar have they got yuh? In th' soup, mister!"

"Fritz, how dare—" thundered Oom.

"Aw, out that out!" replied Fritz; and from his belt he took a formidable ten-inch spanner, which he hefted in his hand, with his cold eyes looking back into Oom's unblinkingly. "Doncher start any rough-housin' wid me or yuh'll find Jack's as good as his bawss an' mebbe a bit better! I'm all for peace in business like ours, but no guy's goin' to ride roughshod over me! Cut it right out!"

(Continued on next page.)

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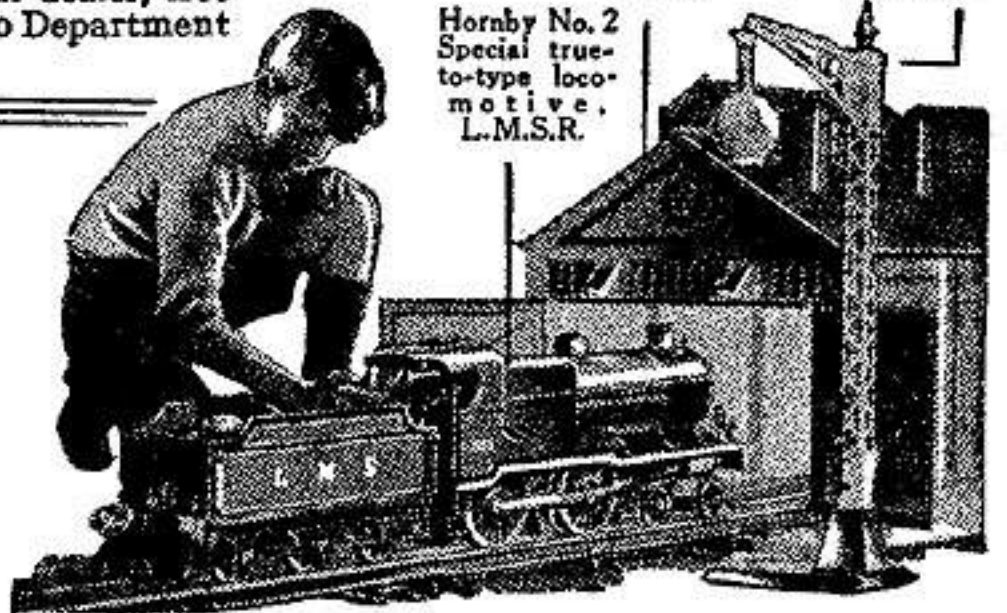
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"There, there, do not let us quarrel; it sets a bad example to the crew," said Oom soothingly; but there was a sort of subdued reddish glare in his eyes which boded ill for the other when once again "the Master" was in the ascendant.

"Okay with muh!" responded Fritz placidly. "I ain't quarrellin'. But what we want to know is—what's goin' to be done about this yer li'l scorpion plane we've come up against? Thar's two good men stiff, an' three more wounded, and without wireless our guns are useless. That's a Guv'ment machine, an' she's got a machine-gun, an' natterally, if she knoo, they'd have us by th' short hairs. She c'ud jest hover around us and drop us when and where she wished."

"But they do not know, my dear Fritz!" said Oom. "The machine has gone off, realising that we are too strong, and before she can return with reinforcements we shall be a thousand miles away, for the power will return in a little while—"

"Yuh seem mighty certain o' that—how d'yer know?" grumbled Fritz suspiciously, though he could not help being impressed by the Flying-Bandit's manner.

Oom could feel that, and he knew that now was the time for him to assert his authority if he was to keep control of his men.

Whipping off his flying-goggles, he turned on his lieutenant with eyes that fairly flamed.

"Donnerwetter, how do I know?" he hissed. "I am the brains of our band, the master mind who plans, directs, and carries out all our successful ventures, the man who has combed the world to procure the best brains of the scientific world to aid us in our fight against humanity—how do I know?"

"Say, I'm sorry, chief! I didn't mean—but yer see we got kinder skeery at things goin' wrong. The boys all look on yuh as a whale o' learnin', an' I guess they gits kinder rattled w'en things go slanty, that's all!" stammered the man.

"That's all right, then, Fritz," said Oom. "Reassure the boys. Tell them just what has happened—a very natural occurrence that has happened to us before, but which this time has been of longer duration and caught us perhaps a leetle unprepared, dat is all. An electric storm back in the Andes which has broken our wave-length for the time being and temporarily destroyed our receiving power; you understand?"

"Okay, chief! Thank'ee for tellin' muh," said Fritz. "I'll make it right wi' th' boys an' thar won't be no further trouble!"

The moment he had left the cabin Oom crossed to the door and secured it.

"The dogs are already snapping!" he growled. "It is time that I left them to their own devices, for I have a feeling that there is something more than a 'little' wrong. It is a wise general that knows when to retreat as well as when to advance—and now, I think, is the moment, whilst the way is clear."

During his conversation with Fritz the master-criminal had caught a glimpse of the little De Hay plane above the trees, and he knew that the relentless little "Tiger" was still patrolling, ready to swoop the moment

the fliers got an inkling of the crippled condition of his plane.

Oom went once more to his safe, and this time packed his pockets with currency notes and a little bag of diamonds which he always held in reserve for emergencies. In addition, he took a tin of "iron rations" sufficient to keep a man alive for a month, and a small outfit by means of which he could disguise his appearance completely. Then Oom touched the lever which controlled the trapdoor and the plateglass flooring, and stepped out on to the grass of the clearing on which the great plane had come to rest.

Working his way back under the hull, he glanced quickly round and then dodged off amongst the trees. Rapidly he made his way through the forest in the direction he had seen the De Hay Tiger hovering just above the tree-tops.

The Flying-Bandit had a certain curiosity to see whether she had actually landed, for he had what might be called a "hunch," and on this premonition he was working. He had no fear of being seen by his men, for he knew that his explanation to Fritz would keep them quiet. They would imagine that he was still in the wireless-room, anxiously awaiting the message that would tell of the renewal of their wireless power.

Suddenly he halted and dodged behind a great oak, for he had heard voices and stealthy footsteps. Was the crew of the little bomber coming on foot to attack the giant plane with its big crew? In that case they must know of the failure of the power, and consequently the weapons on the big plane, and were daringly banking on holding the crew at their mercy!

This pointed to a leakage somewhere, an uncanny knowledge of his affairs that made the bandit sweat. Who was

it that dogged him thus and knew that that invisible, noiseless power that he procured through his aerials was no longer at his command?

Then he saw two figures advancing, almost noiselessly, stealthily creeping from tree to tree as he himself had done.

They were carrying a Lewis gun between them, together with ammunition, and at the sight Oom congratulated himself on his foresight in getting clear of the plane before the attack matured.

He saw the two faces—and at the sight of them the cold sweat broke out again on his forehead and his knees knocked together.

"Donnerwetter, they are spirits!" he gasped, and crouched low in the undergrowth, trembling.

"Crumbs, this 'ere gun ain't 'arf 'eavy, guv'nor!" whispered Alf Higgs. "I on'y 'opes as Oom & Co. finds th' bullets 'arf as 'eavy. Won't they git a surprise? Not 'arf! To see th' two blokes wot 'e thought 'ad fell five thahsand feet alive an' kickin' with a sting in their tails. 'E'll fink 'e's seein' things!"

With a suppressed snarl like a wolf Oom drew one of his heavy automatics, and for a few seconds the lives of the two raiders hung by a thread. Then a thought struck the Flying-Bandit, and, with a grim smile, he lowered the weapon.

"It is bad luck to shoot at ghosts!" he muttered. "But ghosts have no need of aeroplanes. Good spirits fly on wings. Ach! Those two must have the lives of cats! But it is they who will get the surprise when they find their plane gone!"

(Next week's instalment of this fine serial story will be full of surprises for you, too! Don't on any account miss it, boys!)

## COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS!

Here your Editor is pleased to answer questions and discuss topics of general interest. Write to him: Editor of the "Magnet," The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, E.C.4. A stamped and addressed envelope will ensure a reply.

I'VE just been looking up my diary, and I find that by the time you fellows will be reading this chat of mine it will be only four weeks or so to Christmas. As a matter of fact, I need not have looked up my diary to discover that, for I happen to be an uncle—and nephews don't usually let uncles forget the approach of Christmas!

Already I've had one or two very broad hints, and the result is that I'm just going to send the office-boy down to get me a selection of

### THE FINEST CHRISTMAS ANNUALS

that any boy could desire. I must admit that my nephews know a good thing when they see it, so I am not at all surprised that they have all "plonked" for Annuals as Christmas presents this year. Yes! And even my nieces have fallen into line with the same requests. Well, I congratulate them on their choice, for, good as our Annuals have always been, I can tell you that they are something extra-special this year.

Needless to say,

### THE GREYFRIARS HOLIDAY ANNUAL

comes first on the list. It seems to be impossible for any manly British boy to have enough of Harry Wharton & Co. and the other chums of Greyfriars. Even if the MAGNET came out every day, there would still be a demand for more and more stories of these famous characters. So that is why "The Holiday Annual" is already selling like hot cakes, and why the printers are turning out more and more to meet the demand.

It is simply packed with splendid stories of school, sport, and thrilling adventures, many of which feature your old pals of Greyfriars in new surroundings. Frank Richards and his colleagues have surpassed themselves this year. There are plenty of articles, too, in it, together with poems and puzzles; and eight ripping plates to round off the programme. It's one of the best six-shilling's worth you could ever see!

Are you  
INTERESTED IN AIRCRAFT?

Of course you are! What up-to-date

boy isn't? Very well, there's a splendid NEW Annual on the market this year for you. It's called "The Modern Boy's Book of Aircraft," and never before has there been such a collection of first-rate reading matter and illustrations dealing with aircraft. It's one of the most novel Annuals on sale, and you'll appreciate the personal narratives by practical aviators which appear in it, together with the four colour plates and numerous other illustrations. It costs seven shillings and sixpence, and is worth every halfpenny—and a lot more!

### EVERYTHING UNDER THE SUN

seems to have been covered by "The Modern Boy's Annual," which is also now on sale at a cost of six shillings. No matter what your age is, you'll find tons and tons of things to interest you in this bumper volume. It deals with aeroplanes, railways, motor-cars, motor-cycles, ships, motor-boats, modern inventions—everything, in fact, in which a modern boy is likely to be interested. There are long, complete stories, coloured plates, and hundreds of photographic and other illustrations. For the boy who has his head screwed on the right way, and likes to know "all about everything," I can think of no better Christmas gift.

### MECHANICAL MARVELS OF TO-DAY

always have a wonderful appeal to boys, which is why I can firmly recommend "Every Boys' Hobby Annual," which is also priced at six shillings. If you like to know how to make things, and how things work, if you like to read about and see the mechanical marvels of to-day, then this is the book for you! There are hundreds of illustrations, most of them photographic, and two large folding photogravure plates. Ask your newsagent to let you have a peep

inside its pages, and if that doesn't make you want to possess a copy—well, I don't know what will!

### BOYS AND GIRLS ALIKE

will revel in the pages of "The New Zoo Annual," which, at six shillings, brings together a most wonderful collection of writings and photographs dealing with zoo animals and birds and wild life generally. There are coloured plates by that famous artist, Harry Rountree, while experts on animal life have combined together to evolve one of the most interesting Annuals that could be found. This Annual will instantly appeal to every one of you—and to your aunts and uncles, too! So if you get one of these, my advice to you is to hang on to it, or otherwise you'll have to wait until everyone else has had a look at it before you get it back again!

An Annual whose price is within the reach of every boy is

### "THE POPULAR BOOK OF BOYS' STORIES,"

which is a collection of yarns by the best writers of boys' stories of the present day. It costs only half-a-crown, and has 128 pages of real, thrilling adventure tales that will hold your attention till the last line! It is profusely illustrated, and, at its price, is certainly one of the best values that you could possibly find.

Lucky, indeed, is the boy who gets the whole bunch of these Annuals this Christmas. He'll have enough healthy reading matter to last him throughout the year—and he'll be able to do a good turn to his chums by letting them read the Annuals also when he has completed them. Take my tip, chums. Do as my nephews have already done, and drop a few broad hints to your uncles and

aunts—and any other grown-up relations!

By the way, you'll find that most newsagents have a system of Christmas clubs, whereby you can obtain these Annuals by payments of a small sum each week. Ask your newsagent for particulars. He will be pleased to give them to you!

Sorry that I haven't much room to spare this week. Next week I'll be able to deal with a number of queries which have been sent in by various readers. In the meantime, here is

### NEXT WEEK'S BUMPER PROGRAMME.

Frank Richards weighs in with a real tip-topper of a yarn which is entitled:

### "A BROTHER'S SACRIFICE!"

The title, together with Mr. Richards' reputation, tells you that you can expect something really good—and you won't be disappointed, chums. Thrills and fun abound in this splendid yarn, and you'll enjoy every line of it.

Have you written to me yet to tell me what you think of

### "OOM, THE TERRIBLE"?

If not, why not? Remember, I'm always pleased to hear from you, and if you've got any suggestions to make, I'll be pleased to hear them. Let me know what you think of our yarns, because, you know, it makes an Editor's work over so much easier and much more pleasant, if his readers take a personal interest in their own paper—as I am sure you all do!

Shorter features, as usual, next week, chums! Cheerio!

YOUR EDITOR.

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**'WARE GHOSTS!**

Keep away from the stairs leading from the Remove dormitory to the kitchen tonight, you chaps! I have exclusive information that the Ghost of Greyfriars will positively be about, so if you want to avoid being haunted for life, you'll keep well out of the way. Don't tell the cook, or she may suspect me if her cakes are missing to-morrow. You know what suspicious beastie these common servants are!

BY ORDER, W. G. BUNTER.

# Greyfriars Herald

No. 74.

LAUGH AND GROW FAT.

December 5th, 1931.

Edited by  
**HARRY WHARTON,**  
F. G. R.

**LATEST EXTRA GOOD EDITION**

**LOST—A VOICE!**

While practising ventriloquism last night, I threw it across the room and have not yet succeeded in recovering it! Finder, on returning to H. J. Coker, will be rewarded with one coffee-drop.

## WHO WON THE SINGING CONTEST?

### Answer Surprises Judges

### MUSIC AND MIRTH

The judges at the Remove Singing Festival in the Rag last Tuesday evening had to solve a peculiar problem when they failed to identify the singer to whom they had unanimously decided to award the prize.

After the competitors had all completed their efforts and the judges had conferred among themselves, Mr. Tom Brown, the official chairman, rose and announced that they had all voted in favour of the eighth competitor, who was not asked to step up and receive the plaudits of the crowd.

It then transpired that only seven fellows had competed. This revelation led to one or two murmurs of disapproval and even mild comments, such as "Chuck 'em out!" and "Make 'em run the giddy gauntlet!"

The matter was referred back to the judges, who held another conference. After a lapse of several minutes, Mr. Tom Brown rose again to announce their decision.

"Look here, you fellows," he said, "with that strict formality so characteristic of him, these chaps say they're positive they mean the eighth competitor. I can't help matters out myself owing to the fact that I can't stand singing. I had my ears stuffed with cotton-wool while the competition was on."

"But there were only seven entries!" came a howl from the crowd.

Mr. Brown shrugged.

"Can't be helped. Even if there were only six, the judges insist that they are going to award the prize to the eighth!"

"Let's knock their silly heads together then!" suggested Mr. Vernon-Smith.

It seemed a good suggestion, and there was a general move in the direction of the platform on which the judges were congregated.

The judges were Messrs. Wibley, Morgan and Hillary. They stood up rather hurriedly.

"Look here," protested Mr. Wibley, "Mop up the floor with 'em!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith.



## GREAT FOOTBALL COMPETITION

### \$10,000 for Being Wrong

### AMAZING OFFER

The Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald" has decided to offer the stupendous sum of £10,000 to the winner of the Great New Football Competition, particulars of which are below.

**RULES.**

1. Herewith you will not find a form containing football matches to be played next Saturday. This doesn't matter. You can choose your own matches in this competition. A couple of dozen will do.
2. The prize of £10,000 will be awarded to the competitor with the smallest number of correct results.
3. In the case of a tie, the prize will be given to the Home for Lost Dogs.
4. Fill up the form in pencil so that we can alter it if necessary.
5. Enclose the completed form in a sealed envelope, then wrap this in a paper wrapper open at both ends so that the envelope can fall out and get lost in the post.
6. Write in block capitals on the back of the envelope the name and address of any well-known firm.
7. If you have 20 or more results in correct send us a picture postcard view of the Tower of London with the words "Many Happy Returns from Herald."
8. The Editor can accept no responsibility for forms which he uses for the purpose of lighting the office fire. Proof of posting will be accepted as proof that you haven't received it.
9. In the event of anybody winning the prize, the Editor reserves the right to cancel the competition.
10. Enter and win, ladies!

## WHAT WILL THE 'BIG NOISE' SAY?

### Annual Report Bugbear

### EXPERT FORECASTS

With the approach of the Christmas vacation, many fellows are wondering what the Forecasts that Be are going to say about them in the Annual Reports issued to parents and guardians.

Our Form Room Correspondent writes:

"Trained observers say that there is likely to be the usual deep depression over many Remove homes when the fellows arrive for Christmas. There are no hopes, however, that reports will show at least a slight improvement on previous years. Mr. Quetch's eyes have been less like gimlets lately, and a distinct lessening in the acidity of his tongue has been noticed; it is said in reliable circles that he has even been able to leave off taking his dyspepsia mixture.

In the past, Mr. Quetch's reports have been just—just—just—just! This year we may hope that they will be just a little juster!

It is with this idea in mind

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## GREYFRIARS NEEDS A DICTATOR

### Senior's Startling Suggestion

### REVOLUTIONARY PROPOSALS

"Dear Editor—Greyfriars is going to the dogs! I had that sad fact painfully brought home to me this morning, when a crowd of cheeky leggs rolled me in the mud and walked over me. ME, you know!

Bravely people like myself have seen it coming for a long time. Never in the history of our grate school has discipline been at such a low ebb. The leggs are given unbridled license, and when a fellow takes the law into his own hands, he is ticked off. Only last week, Proust flogged me off for giving a fagg a dizzzen with a cricket-stump. ME, you know!

What can we do about it?

The answer is plain for all to see: GREYFRIARS NEEDS A DICTATOR! Don't misunderstand me. I'm not suggesting for a moment that the Head ought to start a bullying. A quiet, good-mannered and kindly

**LORD MAULEVERER**—A really hard worker, who is tireless in his efforts to reach the top of the Form. Is inclined to burn too much midnight oil. A little enforced rest now and again would do him good.

**H. VERNON-SMITH**—A respectful and obedient lad, whose constant aim is to please his Form-master. Is just a little timid—could do with a little more spirit.

**T. DUTTON**—Sharp as a needle. Never misses a word of the lesson.

**FISHER T. FISH**—A keen classical student with a genuine enthusiasm for English education. Is apt to overlook commercial subjects which might help him in his business, but careful guidance may enable him one day to look more kindly on the prospect of mere money-making. His greatest fault is his excess of generosity.

**H. CHERRY**—A studious lad with a brilliant record in class. Should be encouraged to take a greater share in outdoor games and pastimes—needs more fresh air.

**H. SKINNER**—Conscientious and trustworthy to a degree; thorough and painstaking in all his work. Spends all his spare time spreading good influences among his fellow schoolers.

**(EDITORIAL NOTE: You chaps must understand that we accept no responsibility for the accuracy of our Form Room Correspondent's exclusive forecasts!—H. W.)**

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## STOP PRESS.

As we go to Press now reaches us of a riotous scene in Dr. Locke's study. Passers-by were amazed to hear heated voices raised in argument, and a little later a peculiar rhythmic swishing sound and a series of unintelligible howls reminiscent of Redskin war-whoops. After the sounds had ceased, the door was flung open and an unrecognisable figure sprang into the passage. A close examination revealed the surprising fact that it was Mr. Coker, the writer of the above sensational letter.

Mr. Coker was immediately surrounded by newspaper reporters and political agents thirsting for information on the subject of what he was going to do when he became Dictator. We regret that we are unable to enlighten our readers on the matter but, for inexplicable reasons, Mr. Coker declined to answer in English. All he would say was spoken in a foreign language which nobody knew. It sounded something like "Gerraw! youyungous! buzzoff!"

Perhaps one of our readers can tell us what it means?