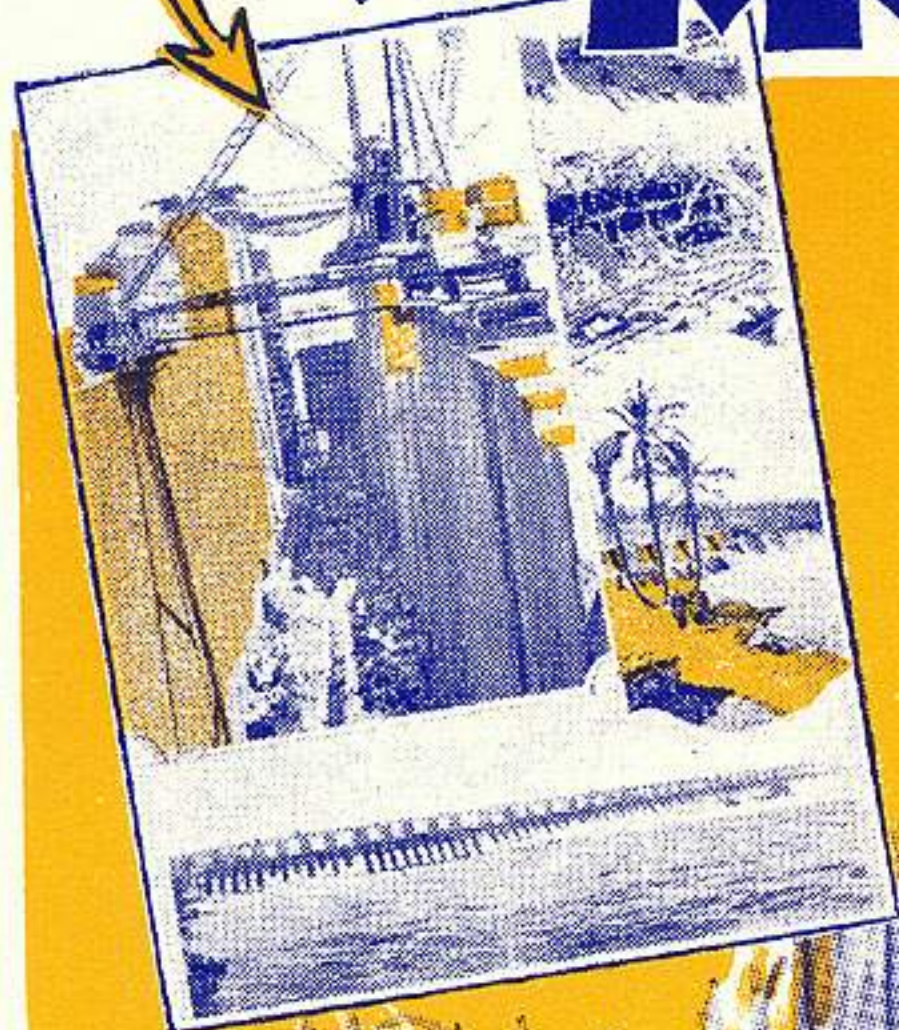


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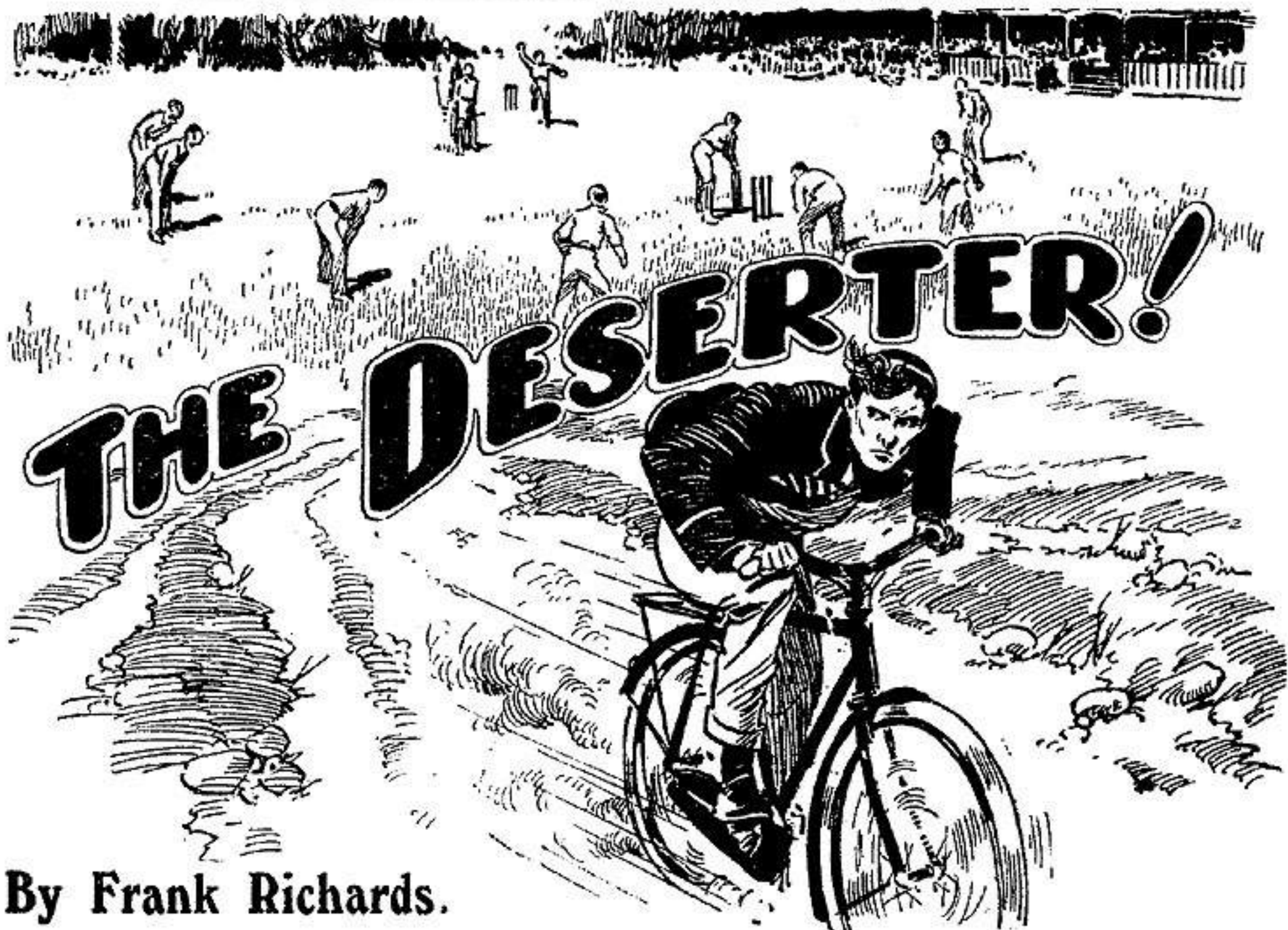
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By Frank Richards.

Once again, Harry Wharton & Co. are at loggerheads with Vernon-Smith—and with good reason! For the Bounder deserts his side at the very moment when his skill as a batsman is most needed. Yet the Bounder has a good reason, too.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Smithy Loses His Temper!

RUBBISH!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Thanks!"
"Utter rubbish!"

Harry Wharton, captain of the Greyfriars Remove, knitted his brows for a moment. Really, that was not the way for a member of the Remove cricket eleven—even an important member like Smithy—to talk to his skipper. But the Bounder of Greyfriars was in an angry temper, and when Smithy was ratty he did not measure his words.

"Look here, Smithy—"

"Rot!" snapped the Bounder.

Frank Nugent, who was sitting on the corner of the table in Study No. 1 in the Remove, smiled.

"If what Wharton says is rubbish and rot, Smithy, why continue the conversation?" inquired Nugent. "You know your way to the door."

The Bounder gave him a scowl. But he did not answer him. His glance turned back to Wharton, who was sitting in the armchair, with a paper resting on his knee and a stump of pencil in his fingers. That paper contained the list of Remove cricketers for the St. Jude's match, due on Wednesday. There was a name missing from that list which Smithy wanted to see included in it. Hence the Bounder's black looks and angry words.

"If you're leaving Redwing out—?" resumed Smithy.

"There's no question of that," said Harry. "Reddy's not in, so he can't be left out. Look here, Smithy, you're making a fool of yourself—and making Reddy look a fool, too. No harm in putting in a word for your pal, but there's a limit!"

"You're leaving my pal out to put your own pal in. Redwing could play Nugent's head off."

"That's a matter of opinion," said Wharton mildly.

"That's my opinion!" snapped the Bounder.

"Well, when the Remove elect you skipper, your opinion will be the goods. At present, I happen to be skipper. You might try to remember that occasionally."

"You're sticking to it, then?"

"Naturally."

"Then I've a jolly good mind to stand out of the game myself."

Wharton shook his head.

"You can't do that, Smithy!"

"And why can't I, if I choose?" demanded the Bounder fiercely.

"Because we want you too much, old bean," said the captain of the Remove amicably. "You're one of our best bats—if not the very best. And you're a topping bowler—almost as good as Inky when you're in form. I think I'm rather a better bat, and Inky's a better bowler, but, you see, you're a double turn. And we want you to shine both ways. See the point?"

The Bounder stared at Wharton.

Probably he had expected angry words in reply to his own. But the reply rather took the wind out of his sails. In spite of his deep irritation something like a grin dawned on his face.

"You silly ass!" he said.

"And you've shown such tip-top form since cricket started," went on Wharton. "I'd as soon leave out Bob Cherry, or Inky, as you, Smithy. I'd as soon stand out myself. Forget it, old bean!"

"I'll play, of course!" grunted the Bounder. "But I don't see why Reddy shouldn't have a chance. Nugent's no good!"

"What I like about Smithy," remarked Frank Nugent, "is the nice, pleasant, complimentary way he speaks of a fellow. Where did you pick up these polished manners, Smithy?"

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

Vernon-Smith stamped, rather than walked, out of Study No. 1. Wharton and Nugent exchanged a smile as he went. The Bounder was angry and indignant, having no doubt that his own opinion was more reliable in cricket matters than Wharton's. But the captain of the Remove could not be quite expected to agree with him.

As Smithy stamped angrily out of the study a fag was coming along from the stairs. It was Nugent minor of the Second Form, Frank's younger brother. Smithy almost ran into him, and Dicky Nugent barely jumped back out of his way.

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This FREE GIFT issue contains another

SUPERB PHOTOGRAVURE PLATE

"Look where you're barging!" said Nugent minor warmly.

The Bounder gave him a black scowl. He was fed-up with Nugent major, and he did not want any cheek from Nugent minor!

Dicky grinned. The Bounder's scowl had no terrors for the cheekiest fag at Greyfriars; and Dicky seemed amused. That grin did it!

The Bounder's wrath found vent in a hefty smack, which rang like a pistol-shot along the Remove passage.

Dicky Nugent staggered back with a yell.

"You rotten bully! I'll jolly well back your shins!" he roared, and he jumped at Vernon-Smith.

The moment Smithy had delivered that smack at the fag's head he was sorry he had smacked. But he ceased to be sorry as Nugent minor came at him like a stone from a catapult. A back on the shin made him gasp, and he grasped at the fag with both hands and smacked right and left.

"What the thump—" exclaimed Wharton, within the study.

"That's my minor!" exclaimed Frank.

He slid from the table and made one bound into the passage.

"Why, you rotter—"

Nugent grasped the Bounder by the shoulders and dragged him off the fag by main force. Nugent was hardly half the Bounder's weight, but at that moment he seemed to have twice Smithy's strength, and Smithy went whirling and spinning along the passage as Frank hurled him away. He went down with a crash, at quite a distance.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Wharton.

"Ooooh!" gasped Dicky, rubbing his head. "What's the matter with the brute, pitching into a chap—"

"Leave him to me!" said Frank, between his teeth.

The Bounder staggered to his feet. His face was crimson with fury. He pushed back his cuffs and came at Nugent like a tiger. Harry Wharton jumped between.

"Stand back, Smithy!" he rapped.

"Get out of the way!" roared Vernon-Smith. "I'll smash him! I'll—"

"Let him come on!" snapped Nugent.

"Stand back—"

"I tell you—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry looked out of Study No. 13. "What's the jolly old row? Oh, my hat!"

The Bounder grasped Wharton savagely to hurl him aside. His temper was at boiling-point. Wharton grasped him in turn, and Bob came racing along the passage and added a grip that was like an iron vice. Smithy, with both arms hold, struggled furiously.

"Keep cool, old bean," said Bob.

"What the thump—"

"Let go!" roared the Bounder.

"Bow-wow!"

"Let him go, you asses!" snapped Nugent.

He was very nearly as angry as the Bounder. Any fellow who laid hands on Nugent minor was booked for trouble with Nugent major.

"But what's the jolly old trouble?" demanded Bob.

"He was bullying my minor—"

"Oh crumbs! Your blessed minor!" groaned Bob. "Oh, these minors! Smithy, old man, chuck it! Don't you know Franky's potty on that subject? Don't you know that he would wallop the Head if he whopped his minor? Don't you know that Dick's Form master walks in fear and trembling when Franky's eye is on him—"

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"You silly ass!" roared Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from a dozen fellows, looking out of the Remove studies.

"Smithy, old man—" Tom Redwing came hurrying out of Study No. 4. "Smithy—"

"Will you let me go?" hissed the Bounder.

"Not till you're cool, old bean," said Bob. "You're not going to scrap just before the first big match of the season. You're too precious, old thing! We really ought to keep you in a band-box."

"You silly fathead!"

"That's right—let off steam!" said Bob. "Go it!"

"You blithering chump!"

"Hear, hear! Wharton, will you kick Nugent down the stairs while I sling Smithy into his study?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, chuck it!" growled the Bounder. The scene was growing ridiculous, and Smithy did not like looking ridiculous. "Let it drop, and leave me alone, you fathead!"

Smithy stamped into Study No. 4 and slammed the door. Nugent unclenched his hands and unknitted his brow. Dicky tapped him on the arm.

"Look here, Frank, I came up to speak to you—"

"Come into the study!" grunted Nugent.

The fag followed his major into Study No. 1. Harry Wharton glanced after them, but did not go back into the study. The famous Co. were very tolerant of Nugent's young brother, but they did not enjoy his society. Indeed, Wharton was feeling rather inclined to kick Master Dicky for butting in and causing trouble between two members of his team. He went along to Study No. 13 with Bob, leaving major and minor to themselves.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Shindy in the Second!

"A ND a dozen doughnuts!" Billy Bunter started.

The mere mention of doughnuts was enough to attract the attention of William George Bunter, of the Greyfriars Remove.

Bunter loved doughnuts. But, as a poet has remarked, true love never did run smooth. Bunter never saw so much as he wished of the object of his affection.

"And what about two dozen jam tarts?"

Bunter's mouth watered.

His deepest emotions were stirred by doughnuts. But jam tarts came a good second.

And the voice that uttered those thrilling words was the voice of his minor, Sammy Bunter of the Second Form.

Billy Bunter had just arrived at the door of the Second Form Room, where no Remove man had any business. But Bunter was there to see his minor. It was no brotherly love that drew him. Sometimes Billy Bunter did not see his minor for weeks together—and did not want to. Still, sometimes he gave Sammy a look-in. Generally, it was when he was in an absolutely stony state, and had tried other resources in vain. On such occasions Billy Bunter would remember that he had a young brother in the school, and would drop in and ask him if he had a "tanner."

Billy Bunter blinked in at the half-open doorway, through his big spectacles, with a very interested blink. If

Sammy was talking about doughnuts by the dozen, and jam tarts by the two-dozen, Samuel was the man that William George wanted to see. It looked as if Sammy must have had a remittance from home.

Quite a little army of the Second were gathered in their Form-room. The fags had no studies, and in the Rag they were rather overwhelmed by the Remove and the Fourth. They preferred their Form-room, where they were allowed to congregate between class and prep. Fearful and wonderful feasts took place there sometimes.

The bright sun of the May afternoon streamed in at the windows on a little crowd of cheerful and excited faces. Sammy Bunter was sitting at a desk, with a stump of pencil and a fragment of paper, jotting down items in what was evidently to be a spread on a scale of unusual significance. Gatty and Myers sat on the desk, swinging their legs. Legge and several other fags were gathered round. All were keen and interested.

"Will it run to it?" Gatty was asking, as Billy Bunter blinked in.

"More than that!" answered Sammy. "A pound note's a lot."

"What about ham and eggs?" asked Myers.

"Of course! Ham and eggs to begin with," said Sammy Bunter. "And sosses. Sosses are cheap, and I like sosses!"

"Never mind what you like, you young pig!" said Gatty severely.

"Rats! I'll cook the sosses," said Sammy Bunter. "We can make a fire of exercise-books and things, and—"

Billy Bunter rolled in.

"Look here, what does that Remove tick want here?" demanded Gatty. "You get out, Bunter. See?"

"I've looked in to see my brother," said Billy Bunter, with dignity. "I don't want any of your cheek, Gatty."

"Look out again," suggested Sammy.

"I came to ask you to tea, Sammy!" said the Owl of the Remove—a statement which was not very near the truth, but as near as Billy Bunter generally got to it. "But I'll tell you what—if you're standing a spread here I'll join you, and you can come to tea with me to-morrow. See?"

Sammy Bunter grinned.

"Tain't my pound note, fathead!" he answered. "It's Nugent mi's!"

"Oh," said Billy Bunter, disappointed. "I thought—"

"Look here, it's time Nugent mi was back," said Legge. "He's a jolly long time. Seen anything of Nugent mi, Bunter? He went up to the Remove jolly nearly an hour ago."

"He's in his major's study," grunted Billy Bunter. "He's been kicking up a row there, the cheeky young ass, and jolly nearly started a fight between his major and Smithy!"

"His major's a silly ass!" said Gatty, shaking his head. "Still, I hope he'll get that exercise done for Dicky. It's got to be taken to Twigg before tea, and we're all waiting for Nugent mi!"

"And it's past tea-time!" grunted Myers. "Rotten for Nugent mi to keep us waiting like this! Twigg will be after him, too, if he doesn't take that rotten Latin in. And I'm hungry!"

"Same here!" said Gatty feelingly.

"If he'd left his pound note with us we could have done the shopping already," said Legge discontentedly. "Now one of us will have to cut down to the shop when Dicky comes back—if he ever does!"

"Well, it's his pound note," said Gatty tolerantly, "and it's pretty decent

of him to blow the whole lot in a spread for half the Form!"

"Yes, that's jolly decent!"

There was a murmur of approval from the gathering of fags. Evidently it was the general opinion that this was uncommonly decent of Nugent mi.

Billy Bunter grunted.

He understood now. It was Richard Nugent who was standing—or, rather, was going to stand—that ripping spread in the Second Form Room. Sammy was only one of the many guests. There was no chance for Billy! Had it been Sammy's spread he might have wedged in. But the hope of wedging into Nugent minor's spread was very faint indeed.

"Well, it's not yours, either," said Sammy.

"If you're asking for a thick ear, young Bunter—"

"Hallo, here's Dicky!" exclaimed two or three fags at once, as Richard Nugent came into the Form-room with an exercise paper in his hand and a tired look on his face.

"Done it?" asked Gatty.

"My major's done it," grunted Dicky. "But the silly ass made me go through it with him, in case Twigg asked questions about it—making a man work for nothing! My major always was a fool!"

That, no doubt, was Richard Nugent's way of expressing gratitude for Frank

slaying ink-balls at his Form-fellows' heads.

That was exasperating enough to a young gentleman of Master Richard's spirit. But that was not all. As a reward for a frightfully bad "con," Mr. Twigg had set him a Latin exercise, which was, in the expressive language of the Second, a "stinker." Getting that exercise done meant an amount of labour for which Dicky was utterly unprepared. His brother in the Remove was his usual resource in such cases.

In the Remove passage the Bounder had smacked his head hard! And Frank, though he had done the work for him, had made him go through it—



"Here, keep off, you cheeky little beast!" howled Bunter. "Ow! Wow! Why, I'll skin you—I'll—yooop!" As the fat junior advanced, Dicky Nugent's right shot out and caught Bunter on the tip of his fat nose. "Yaroooh!" yelled the Owl of the Remove. "Ow, yow, wow!"

"And biscuits!" said Sammy.

He jotted down notes and added the figures. The Second were giving a good deal of thought to this important matter. Nugent minor, having nobly declared his intention of "blowing" the whole pound note, the fags were making up a list of things to the exact value of twenty shillings. Quite a lot of tuck could be obtained for a pound, and many heads were put together with a view to getting the absolute limit in money's worth for the expenditure of that handsome sum.

"And a cake—one of Mrs. Mimble's big plum cakes!" said Gatty. "One of those big five-bobbers—what?"

"That will mean cutting out something else," said Myers.

"Cut out the sosses," suggested Gatty.

"I like sosses!" said Sammy Bunter.

"Look here, Bunter mi, you shut up! What you like doesn't matter. This is Nugent mi's spread, not yours," said Gatty warmly.

having given up an hour of the afternoon to him. Dicky would have preferred to sit in the armchair, taking only an impersonal interest in that Latin exercise for Mr. Twigg.

"Well, it's done, anyhow," said Sammy Bunter. "Cut along to Twigg's study with it, before he comes after it. Twigg's down on you, you know. I'll do the shopping for you, Dicky!"

"You jolly well won't!" retorted Dicky. "I wonder how much of it would get as far as this Form-room if you did?"

"Look here—"

"Oh, dry up, young Bunter! You're all jaw, like your major. Look here, what's your major here for? Kick that Remove tick out, you men!"

Richard Nugent seemed to be in a very cross temper. Really, he had plenty of reason. His Form master, Twigg, insisted upon Master Dicky working in class, instead of drawing wild Indians and pirates in his exercise-book, or

unnecessary trouble, in Dicky's opinion. Master Richard had come back to the Second Form Room in a very bad temper indeed. Kicking a Remove man, in such circumstances, was grateful and comforting. And Billy Bunter was the only Remove man whom any fag would have ventured to kick.

But even Billy Bunter was not the fellow to take too much cheek from such inconsiderable microbes as the Second Form. He gave Dicky an angry and disdainful blink through his big spectacles.

"You cheeky little beast!" said Bunter. "I'd like to see you kick me! Do you want your cheeky head smacked again?"

"Hallo! Who's been smacking Dicky's head?" asked Gatty, with interest.

"Smithy has! Smacked it right and left for his cheek!"

"I jolly well hacked his shins!" exclaimed Nugent minor. "And my
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major jolly well slung him over on his neck, too!"

"Pooh! Smithy would have mopped up the passage with your major if the fellows hadn't held him back!" jeered Bunter. "Your major can't scrap."

"Well, if he can't, I can!" roared Dicky, and he charged at Billy Bunter.

"Here, keep off, you cheeky little beast!" howled Bunter. "Ow! Wow! Why, I'll skin you—I'll—Yooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the fags. "Go it, Dicky!"

Billy Bunter backed towards the door as Dicky tapped him again and again on his well-filled waistcoat. The fags looked on, yelling with laughter, even Sammy grinning an unbrotherly grin. Suddenly Dicky's right shot out and caught Bunter on the tip of his fat nose.

"Yarooop!" yelled the Owl of the Remove. "Ow! Yow! Wow!"

When Billy Bunter got one home at last, his weight told—and he had plenty of weight. Dicky sat down with a terrific bump.

"Whoooop!" roared Dicky.

"Man down!" chuckled Legge. "Get up and go it, Nugent mi!"

Nugent mi was up like an indiarubber ball, and charging at the fat Owl of the Remove. Billy Bunter dodged hastily out of the doorway, and into a little gentleman in cap and gown who was coming up. Mr. Twigg, the master of the Second Form, gave a yelp as he received Bunter's weight, and staggered across the passage.

"What—what—" stuttered Mr. Twigg, gasping.

"Kick him along the passage, Nugent mi!" came a howl from the Form-room.

"I jolly well will! I—" Dicky broke off suddenly as he charged out, and came face to face with his Form master. "Oh, my hat!" Richard Nugent stopped dead.

"Well?" said Mr. Twigg, in an icy tone.

"Oh!" gasped Dicky again. "Oh! Um!"

"Bunter, what are you, a Remove boy, doing here?" snapped Mr. Twigg.

"I—I—I came to—to speak to my minor!" gasped Bunter. "I—I—"

"Go away at once!"

Bunter was glad enough to go. Richard Nugent backed into the Form-room, and Mr. Twigg, with a frowning brow and a glinting eye, followed him in.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Awful!

SILENCE fell on the Second Form Room as Mr. Twigg came in.

Mr. Twigg was really quite a good-tempered gentleman, but every now and then he came down hard and heavy on the Second. An unthinking young rascal like Dicky Nugent was enough to try any Form master's patience. Dicky was a bright and intelligent lad, and could have done his Form credit, had he chosen. But as it was, the problem of making Dicky work was one that Mr. Twigg had not yet solved. Even when Dicky showed up a good exercise, Twigg suspected that the bulk of the work was done by an older head.

The fags eyed their Form master uneasily. They were allowed to "tea" in their Form-room if they liked, so long as the thing was kept within limits. Twigg did not really approve of it, but he kindly let it pass. But there was a limit—and cooking sausages, impaled on pens, over a fire of exercise books in the Form-room grate had led to trouble more than

once. Twigg could not have arrived at an unluckier moment for the Second—especially as that ass, Bunter minor, was standing like a stuffed dummy, with the list of eatables in his fat paw right under Twigg's eyes.

"You have not brought your exercise to me, Nugent minor," said Mr. Twigg sternly.

"I've got it here, sir," stammered Dicky. "I—I was just coming to your study with it, sir."

He held it out.

Mr. Twigg took it, and glanced at it. The Second-Formers waited in silence for him to be gone. Twigg frowned over that Latin exercise. It was well done—so well done that Twigg suspected at once that Dicky had not done it. Dicky could have done it if he had worked hard ever since class; but Mr. Twigg was quite assured that he hadn't. He knew his Dicky.

"Is this your own work, Nugent minor?" asked Mr. Twigg coldly.

"Oh, certainly, sir!" answered Dicky.

As he had been through the rotten thing with Frank, Dicky considered that that answer was near enough to the facts—as near as a beak could expect, at any rate.

"You received no assistance?"

Dicky squirmed inwardly. He was not naturally a liar. But what the dickens did a man expect when he asked questions like this? Dicky was an ungrateful young rascal; but he could not give Frank away, and get him a licking from Quelch.

"Well, sir, I—I asked a chap to look out some words in the dic," said Nugent minor, with an air of ingenuous frankness.

"Is that all?"

"Oh, that's all, sir!" said Dicky, with a reluctance which convinced Mr. Twigg that he was not speaking the truth.

Mr. Twigg compressed his lips.

"I hope, Nugent minor, that you are speaking truthfully," he said. "When did you finish this exercise?"

"A—a few minutes ago, sir."

"A few minutes ago you were engaged in creating a disturbance with a Remove boy."

"I—I mean, a—a few minutes before that, sir," stammered Dicky, devoutly hoping that his Form master had not seen him coming down from the Remove passage.

"Very well!" Mr. Twigg's lips were a tight line now. "Very well! Now what are all you boys gathered here for at tea-time? Why are you not in Hall?"

"We—we were going to have tea here, sir, if—if you don't mind," ventured Gatty.

"Give me that paper, Bunter minor."

"Oh!" gasped Sammy.

The other fags looked daggers at him. Any fellow but Bunter minor would have had sense enough to shove that paper out of sight, with a beak in the offing. But Twigg's eyes had spotted it from the first in Sammy's fat paw. Evidently Twigg was on the warpath.

He took the paper from Sammy, and the fags watched him almost in anguish. Tea in the Form-room was more or less allowed; but a feast on the lines indicated in Bunter mi's list was quite another matter. "Sosses" were in that list, and twice already that term Twigg had interrupted frying operations in the Form-room. Twigg frowned grimly over the list.

"Upon my word," he exclaimed, "this passes all patience! Bunter minor, if it is really your intention to expend money in this reckless way upon what I can only describe as an orgy, you must have in your possession more

money than is allowed to a boy of this Form!"

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Sammy Bunter. "Not at all, sir! It's Nugent mi's spread, sir. I—I've only got a—a—a ha'penny, sir."

The name of Nugent minor just then was rather like a red rag to a bull to Mr. Twigg. He spun round at Richard Nugent.

"Nugent minor, the list of eatables here amounts to a pound. Am I to understand that you intended to spend a pound on this—this orgy?"

"I—I had a tip from my uncle, sir," stammered Dicky. "My—my uncle gave me a pound note, sir."

"And you intended to expend such a sum in reckless extravagance," said Mr. Twigg grimly. "You did not tell your uncle that pocket-money in this Form is strictly limited by the rules of the school?"

"N-no, sir!"

"Then I shall acquaint your uncle with the fact," said Mr. Twigg. "Hand me the pound note immediately! I shall return it to your uncle, and explain to him that he has, no doubt unintentionally, broken a strict rule."

"Oh lor'!"

"I am waiting, Nugent minor."

Slowly, painfully, Dicky Nugent extracted a crumpled pound note from his pocket, and handed it over to his Form master. The gaze of the fags followed it in anguish till it disappeared.

Twigg was coming down uncommonly hard. The rule to which Twigg alluded did, of course, exist; but it was generally more honoured in the breach than the observance. Fellows whose allowance was one shilling per week, might sometimes be seen changing a ten-shilling note, and nobody took any notice. Still, there was a limit, and Mr. Twigg seemed to think that the limit had been reached in this case. The fact was that he was exasperated with Dicky—and this was the last straw.

"You will all go to Hall to tea," added Mr. Twigg. "Tea in the Form-room may be permitted, within reasonable limits. But an orgy of this description—Only a few days ago I had to speak to you severely for frying some—some comestible in this room, and I found that you were using covers torn from school books for fuel! All of you will leave the Form-room at once, and you will not return here till preparation."

In dismal silence the fags marched out.

Twigg followed them out and shut the door.

Richard Nugent and his friends did not enjoy tea in Hall that day. That gorgeous spread had gone from their gaze like a beautiful dream. The pound note was in Twigg's desk in his study—unspent. Pound notes did not often come any fag's way; and this was awful! Dicky Nugent & Co. looked, during tea, as if they had accumulated most of the miseries of the universe on their youthful shoulders.

After tea they kicked Bunter minor for having been such an ass as to let Twigg spot that paper. This was some solace, but not much. Gatty and Myers agreed that it was chiefly Dicky's own fault.

"If you hadn't got Twigg's rag out—" argued Gatty.

"Blow Twigg!" growled Dicky.

"Ho jolly well knew your major had done that Latin for you," said Myers. "After all, a man oughtn't to tell lies."

"Oh, shut up!" said Dicky. "I can jolly well tell you this—Twigg's not

going to send my pound note away. I'm jolly well going to get it back somehow!"

"Going to burgle a beak's study?" asked Gatty sarcastically.

"I'm going to have my pound note!"

"Look here," said Myers in alarm, "don't be a fool! Your uncle will give it back to you next vac. Look here—"

"I'm going to have it back, I tell you. It's mine, isn't it?" snapped Dicky. "Well, I'm going to have it!"

"Rats!" said Gatty and Myers together. "It's all your own fault, Dicky, so you'd better shut up."

And Dicky's friends walked away and left him to digest that.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Row in the Rag!

"**C**HEEKY cad!" The Bounder made that remark, in the Rag. He was standing before the paper posted there by the captain of the Remove, giving the list of men selected for the St. Jude's match on the morrow. His chum, Tom Redwing, had come into the Rag with him, perhaps with a faint hope of seeing his own name in the cricket list. Smithy, perhaps, expected to see it there—after his talk to Wharton in Study No. 1. But it was not there; and F. Nugent was. Several fellows overheard the Bounder's remark, which was made quite loudly, and exchanged glances. Smithy, evidently, was alluding to the captain of the Remove, whose selection of the team did not meet with his lordly approval.

"Oh, shut up, Smithy!" muttered Redwing, colouring with vexation. The Bounder's way of pushing his chum's claims, in season and out of season, was no doubt a proof of his friendship, but it was awkward for Redwing, who was by no means a pushing fellow. He would have been glad to play, but he never thought of questioning the skipper's decision, and a "row" on the subject made him extremely uncomfortable.

"Don't you like the list, Smithy?" asked Skinner, with a grin.

Skinner was always ready to add oil to the flames.

"Not bad," said the Bounder. "All right, but one. Wharton, Cherry, Bull, Hurreo Singh, Vernon-Smith, Todd, Field, Brown, Linley, Penfold—nothing the matter with them. Nugent's no good."

"He's Wharton's pal," grinned Skinner.

"Exactly!" said the Bounder.

"Oh, don't be a rotter, Skinner!" broke in Squiff. "Last term Wharton left Nugent out of the footer. He was his pal then, just the same."

"His cricket's about as good as his footer," said Vernon-Smith. "There are better men in the Remove."

"Plenty," said Peter Todd. "I'm one, and you're another, Smithy. And there are others—all in the list! But Nugent's as good for the tail as any other man we've got available."

"I don't agree!"

"Well, nobody expects you to agree," remarked Toddy. "You're not a very agreeable chap, are you?"

"He, he, he!"—from Billy Bunter.

"Redwing's a better man," said Smithy.

"For goodness' sake, shut up, Smithy!" exclaimed Tom, his face crimson. "You're talking rot!"

"Rot's the word," said Squiff.

Here is an interesting article which tells how British engineers accomplished the colossal task of

"Harnessing the Waters of the Nile"

(which forms the subject of this week's photogravure plate).

TO turn two hundred miles of the length of a river into a great lake sounds like sheer impossibility—the dream of a mad engineer. But British engineers who were far from being mad had the idea to do it—to put the mighty River Nile, in Egypt, into harness. And they did it! The result of their tremendous labours is the colossal Assuan Dam, which prevents many thousands of acres of land from being flooded in the rainy season, and also stores up water in its enormous lake-reservoir, for irrigating the land when otherwise the thirsty crops would be parched up.

A Steel Lock Gate Sixty Feet High!

The solid masonry of this amazing dam extends right across the Nile, and it has 180 water-gates which can be opened or closed at will—to stem back the flood-waters or, at other seasons, to let loose water for which the surrounding country and people are panting. Thus, disastrous floods, famine and drought, from which all that part of Egypt suffered from the dawn of history, are no more.

The dam itself is three miles from the town of Assuan, which was the starting-point in olden times for the merchants' camel-caravans that wended their slow and perilous way across the great Libyan Desert and right across North Africa.

Four enormous locks in the Assuan Dam keep the river open for navigation. When the great reservoir itself is full, its surface is 66 feet above the level of the river which is below the dam. To enable ships to pass up and down, there

Watch Out for Another FREE Souvenir Photo-Plate Next Week, Boys!

"Reddy's as good a man as Nugent, but no better. I dare say it was a toss up between them."

"He's miles better," said the Bounder. "And, anyhow, he sticks to practice. I didn't see Nugent at the nets this afternoon."

"Too jolly busy," grinned Skinner. "He had some work to do for his minor. Helping him pull old Twigg's leg."

"He, he, he!" chuckled Billy Bunter. "I say, you fellows, young Nugent is in a fearful row with his beak. He had a pound note, and his beak took it away to send to his uncle. Sammy told me—"

"That's Nugent's game," said the Bounder scornfully. "Helping a lazy young sweep to spoof his Form master, instead of putting in practice at the nets! And he needs it. Never saw a fellow who needed it more! I've a jolly good mind to cut his name out of the list!"

"Oh, don't be a silly ass, Smithy!" said Tom Brown.

"Nugent's name ought not to be there," said Vernon-Smith. "He's



is a channel on one side of the dam, and here the four great locks are situated. The largest of them has a steel gate 60 feet high, which can be slid back when required into a slot in the wall, by means of hydraulic power.

A Clever Arrangement!

So that the outflow of dam-water can be regulated—instead of it all going out in a mighty rush when the flood-gates or sluices are opened—the 180 sluices which pierce 4,600 feet of the dam's length have been placed at four different levels, a clever arrangement which puts the water under absolute control.

When the ancient Egyptians built their wonderful temples and statues they never dreamed that hundreds of years after their temples and statues had crumbled to dust, there would appear on the scene British engineers who would go to the very same quarries which yielded up the building-stone that the old Egyptians used, and that these modern engineers would get therefrom the blocks of masonry required to make this amazing Nile Dam possible.

Even when the mighty dam was operating, the engineers were not satisfied, because they realised that hundreds of thousands more acres of neighbouring land needed similar provision and protection. So they calmly started to put another 26 feet of solid masonry on to the top edge of their first dam—with the result that vast areas of unprofitable desert are now being cultivated, and people are prospering where once human life existed only with the greatest difficulty, and in face of awful privations!

squeezed into the team, and squeezed a better man out, because he happens to be Wharton's pal—"

"That's a lie, Vernon-Smith!" Frank Nugent came into the Rag at that moment. He caught the Bounder's words and came towards him, his eyes flashing.

Vernon-Smith set his lips. As a matter of fact, he did not believe his own words. And, apart from his intense irritation at seeing Nugent's name in the list instead of his own chum's, he liked Nugent. The Bounder's nature was rather a queer mixture. He liked Nugent all the more for having stood up to him in defence of his minor, for in a scrap Frank had absolutely no chance against the tough, sinewy Bounder. The Bounder could admire pluck.

"Oh, that's a lie, is it?" said Vernon-Smith. "Mind what you say, dear boy, Wharton and Cherry aren't here now to save your bacon."

"He, he, he!" came from Bunter.

"I said it's a lie, and I say it again!"

retorted Frank. "And if you don't like it, put up your hands, you rotter!"

Redwing made a movement, and the Bouncer laughed.

"All serene, Reddy! I'm not going to whop him. He wouldn't put up much of a game against St. Jude's to-morrow if I gave him what he's asking for."

Frank Nugent's eyes blazed. Whether he was a match for the Bouncer or not, he was not going to be contemptuously spared.

He made a rapid step towards Herbert Vernon-Smith, and his knuckles rapped on the Bouncer's nose.

"Now will you put up your hands?" he exclaimed.

"By gum!" Vernon-Smith's eyes blazed, and his hands shot up. "Well, if you will have it—"

"Smithy!" shouted Redwing, and he grabbed his chum by the arm.

Smithy shook him off fiercely.

"Do you think I'm going to let that milksop punch my nose?" he roared.

"Why, I'll knock him into little pieces!"

"Milksop or not, come on, you cad!" said Frank, between his teeth. "You fellows stand back. This is my bizney, not yours."

The Bouncer came on fast enough. Nugent faced him with gleaming eyes. He attacked furiously, and the Bouncer had to give ground, capturing several smart raps as he did so.

"Shut the door!" exclaimed Skinner. "We don't want any beaks or prefects here!"

Snoop shut the door quickly.

"Stop it!" shouted Squiff.

"This is Smithy's way of getting his pal into the team," remarked Wibley. "Nugent won't be good for much to-morrow."

Perhaps it was fortunate that the Bouncer caught those words. Such an idea had not been in his mind; but there was little doubt that it would have worked out like that if the fight had gone on to a finish. The Bouncer did not want to be classed as a fellow who had deliberately knocked out a member of the cricket eleven the day before a match.

He backed away from Nugent.

"Chuck it, you silly ass!" he snarled.

"Don't keep on asking for more than you want. Chuck it before I have to hurt you!"

That was too much for Nugent. Instead of "chucking" it, as the Bouncer advised, he came on more fiercely than ever. Smithy had to go all out to defend himself.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

The Co. came into the Rag in a bunch. Harry Wharton's brow darkened as he saw what was going on, and he ran forward.

"Smithy, you rotter, stand back!"

"Only too pleased!" drawled Smithy. "I've asked the dear boy to let me off, but he won't. I've told him I'm afraid of hurting him."

"He, he, he!"

"Frank!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Let me alone, will you?" shouted Nugent, utterly exasperated at the bare idea of being protected by his friends.

"Can't you mind your own business?"

"Oh!" gasped Wharton.

"That's one for his nibs!" murmured Skinner; and some of the fellows laughed.

"My esteemed Franky—" exclaimed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Leave me alone, Inky!"

"But, my ridiculous chum—" exclaimed the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Shut up!"

And Nugent, in a very unusual state of rage and exasperation, pushed the attack hotly, and his friends, with grim faces, looked on.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Rough Luck!

HERBERT VERNON - SMITH backed and backed till Nugent was driving him round the long table in the Rag.

It seemed to Frank for the moment that he was getting the upper hand, and he hardly understood the cool, sardonic grin on the Bouncer's hard face. But he soon realised that, though Smithy was giving him ground, none of his blows were reaching the Bouncer now.

And no blow from the Bouncer reached him.

Vernon-Smith was contenting himself with defence, and, in point of fact, simply playing with his adversary. And if his sardonic grin of mockery had not told Nugent so, a sound of chuckling from some of the onlookers would have apprised Nugent how the matter stood.

The fact was that Frank had no chance at all, and if the Bouncer had chosen to pile in, and use his superior weight and strength, Nugent would have been knocked all over the room.

The Bouncer did not choose to do so. He was not going to have it said in the Form that he had knocked a man out to make room for his pal in the team. Neither did he desire to hurt Nugent, if it came to that. If the result had been in doubt, the Bouncer was the man to go all out and fight till he fell. But the result was never in doubt for a moment, and it amused the sardonic Bouncer to play with his assailant and spare him, and make him look a fool.

It was clear enough to Nugent after a few minutes, and he exerted himself to his utmost to break through the Bouncer's guard. But that guard seemed like bars of triple steel. Smithy gave ground, and they went the length of the long table, round the end, and down the other side. There was something rather absurd in a smiling fellow retreating and an enraged and exasperated fellow following him up in vain, and the onlookers grinned as they looked on.

"Here we go round the mulberry-bush!" sang Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't kill him, Nugent!" called out Snoop.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, it's funny, ain't it?" squeaked Billy Bunter. "I say, Nugent, chuck it before Smithy hits you!"

"Shut up, you fat owl!" growled Johnny Bull.

Harry Wharton compressed his lips. If it had been the Bouncer forcing the fight, he would have intervened promptly enough. Now intervention was impossible, and he could only look on while his best chum made a fool of himself. It would have been bitter enough to see Frank hammered as the Bouncer could have hammered him if he liked. But it was humiliating to see him played with like an infant.

Nugent gasped for breath as he strove to break through and get at the Bouncer. But whenever he looked like getting in, a quick backward jump saved Smithy, and the game went on. Every now and then the Bouncer gave him a gentle tap—a reminder of what he could do if he liked—but the hapless Nugent would have preferred knock-down blows:

"Tired?" asked Smithy, after a time. "We've been twice round the table, old bean. Going round again?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"For goodness' sake, Frank, chuck it!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"The chuckfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed idiotic Franky!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Oh, don't stop the entertainment!" implored Skinner.

"I guess it's a sight for sore eyes!" chuckled Fisher T. Fish. "Yep! I'll say this surely is the elephant's side-whiskers!"

"He, he, he! I say, you fellows—He, he, he!" chortled Billy Bunter.

Frank Nugent stopped, panting, and dropped his hands. His face was scarlet with exertion and rage and humiliation. It was futile to carry on, with the fellows grinning at his vain efforts, and



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the Bounder smiling at him with sardonic amusement. Nugent stood panting, and Vernon-Smith, who had not turned a hair, sat on the edge of the table and laughed.

"Had enough?" he queried. "I fancy I could go on a bit longer. I'd try, if you're frightfully keen!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Nugent bit his lip so hard that it almost bled. He gave the Bounder one look, turned away, and walked across to the door. His friends would have joined him, but his look did not encourage them. Poor Nugent wanted to be alone just then. He walked out of the Rag, and the door closed after him.

The Bounder gave the grim-faced Co. a mocking look. Bob Cherry, with a red and wrathful face, came towards him. Smithy eyed him with perfect coolness. He was no more a match for Bob than Nugent was a match for Smithy, but he did not care two straws for that.

"You rotten worm!" said Bob. "As you're so keen on scrapping, put up your paws and try it on with me!"

"Scrapping—the day before a match!" drawled the Bounder. "I'm surprised at you, Cherry!"

"Chuck it, Bob!" said Wharton tersely.

Bob unclenched his fists. He would have given a great deal to knock the mocking Bounder spinning off the table. Still, he did not want to knock out one of the best men down to play St. Jude's on the morrow; also, he realised that it would have been no comfort to Nugent—rather the reverse—if his friend had taken up the quarrel.

He turned his back on the Bounder and left the Rag, and the other members of the Co. followed him. They heard the Bounder's mocking laugh as they went.

Skinner & Co. gathered round the Bounder in great glee. Any defeat for the Famous Five was agreeable to Skinner and his friends. Tom Redwing left the Rag quietly. He was ashamed of his chum—not for the first time.

Tom was in Study No. 4, getting out his books for prep, when Herbert Vernon-Smith came up. Smithy strolled into the study, with a smile on his face.

"What's the row?" he asked, as he noticed Tom's clouded face.

"Oh, nothing!" said Redwing curtly.

"I've done my best," said Smithy. "But there's no chance of you getting into the eleven to-morrow, I'm afraid."

"Your worst, you mean!" grunted Redwing. "Why can't you leave the thing alone? It's for the cricket captain to decide, not you, and you make me look a fool, trying to shove me in where I'm not wanted!"

The smile died off Smithy's face.

"Is that how you thank a pal for backing you up?" he inquired, with a sneer.

"It's all the thanks you'll get from me!" growled Redwing. "I believe I'm as good a man as Nugent, but it's not for you to decide, or me, either. And I'm friendly with Nugent—so far as it's possible for a friend of yours to be friendly with anybody!"

"No need for you to stay a friend of mine that I can see."

"Oh, ring off!" It was seldom that Redwing was angry with his wayward chum, but he was angry now. "You've acted rottenly, Smithy!"

"In backing you up?"

"No—that was only fatheaded and obstinate; but in handling Nugent as you did! It was rotten!"

"I never hurt him."

"He would have liked it better if you had. The chap's as decent as any man

in the Remove, and you amused yourself by humiliating him and making him look an ass! You ought to be jolly well ashamed of yourself!"

"Oh, give us a rest!" grunted the Bounder. Perhaps he realised the truth of Redwing's words, and found the truth discomfiting.

They sat down to prep in grim silence. Hardly a word was spoken till work was over. But Smithy was thinking. At heart the Bounder was far from being a bad fellow, with all his reckless, headstrong, and arrogant ways. He was feeling more than a twinge of remorse.

When he left the study after prep the Famous Five were gathered in a group outside Study No. 1, talking over the morrow's match, and Smithy noticed that Nugent was looking unusually quiet and subdued. He was not feeling any bodily ill-effects from the scrap in the Rag; the Bounder had hardly touched him. But his proud and sensitive spirit had been wounded, and Nugent, placable as he was by nature, would rather have given Smithy the thrashing of his life than have won the St. Jude's match off his own bat. Smithy was no fool, and he could read Nugent's feelings easily enough, and from the bottom of his wayward heart he wished that he had acted otherwise.

TO READERS IN THE IRISH FREE STATE.

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He paused as he was passing the chums of the Remove. Nugent's face flamed; and he clenched his hands. Wharton slipped his arm through Frank's and drew him into the study. Bob Cherry and Hurree Singh followed; and Johnny Bull stayed only to give the Bounder a glare expressive of scorn before he went in also.

Smithy stared after them; then, shrugging his shoulders, went down the Remove staircase. He had had a vague intention of saying something friendly—of trying to wash out his offence somehow. But the moment evidently was not propitious; and he went his way, shrugging his shoulders.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Bitter Blood!

"LOVELY day!" chirruped Bob Cherry; first out of bed in the Remove dormitory, as usual, the following morning.

Bright sunshine streamed in at the dormitory windows. Gosling was ringing the rising-bell; and Bob was out of bed with a bound at the first clang.

"It's going to be a topping day!" declared Bob. "Couldn't be better, old beans!"

"Looks like rain to me!" yawned Skinner. That was one of the cheery remarks Skinner was wont to make on the morning of a day devoted to the summer game.

"It would!" agreed Bob Cherry. "But you can't see what the weather's like from that bed! Let me help you out."

"Look here, you ruffian—Yaroo!" roared Skinner as he rolled on the floor in a tangle of bedclothes.

"Still think it looks like rain?" asked Bob genially.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was a glorious sunny morning, and the heroes of the Remove turned out in great spirits. Perhaps there was a touch of east in the wind, as is so often the case in merry May. But the Remove fellows were at the happy age when one is indifferent to a touch of east in the wind. Mr. Quelch, at breakfast, had a very thoughtful look; and Prout, at the Fifth Form table, was snappy, and spoke sharply twice to Coker of the Fifth—once when he knocked the salt over, once when he knocked a tea-cup over. Knocking things over was one of Horace Coker's chief occupations. Mr. Twigg, at the fags' table, looked a trifle cross. That touch of east in the wind had found the beaks out. Between fifty and fifteen, there was a great gulf fixed.

After brekker Harry Wharton & Co. went down to look at the pitch—a ceremony that could not possibly be omitted on the great day. Billy Bunter rolled after them.

Bunter had something to say to his Form captain on the subject of cricket. Cricket, as a rule, did not interest Bunter. When he gave that great game his attention it was chiefly in devising excuses to get out of practice on compulsory days. But circumstances alter cases, and Bunter was thinking of cricket very seriously this bright May morning.

"I say, you fellows!" began the Owl of the Remove, meeting the Famous Five as they were coming back. "I say, hold on a minute! Have you really made up your mind to play Nugent to-day, Wharton?"

"Yes, ass!" answered Harry curtly. He did not want to hear anything on that subject from Bunter.

"Well, it's rather a rotten idea," argued Bunter. "Tain't as if it was a Form match, played in the afternoon. But in a School match, you get out of third lesson."

"What on earth has that to do with it, fathhead?"

"Lots!" answered Bunter. "Every man that isn't in the team has to go in for third school. And it's maths, with Lascelles, to-day." Bunter blinked very seriously at his Form captain. "I'd jolly well like to get out of maths, as much as any other fellow. Look here, Wharton, it's a bit thick putting Nugent in and leaving a better man out—"

"Oh, dry up!" growled Bob Cherry. "Are you going to start boosting Redwing, like Smithy, you fat duffer?"

"I'm not talking about Redwing! He's no better than Nugent, if you come to that! I'm talking about myself!"

"You usually are!" grunted Bull.

"The fact is, I'd like to play," said Bunter. "And St. Jude's are said to be in great form, so you can do with a century or two—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And I bowl best on a hard wicket. I'll give 'em some leg-theory, too!" said Bunter. "If they look like sticking in I'll brain 'em, see?"

"If you brained anybody with the cricket ball, old fat man, it would be somebody behind you in the deep!" chuckled Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Harry Wharton laughed. Even Bunter's generous offer to brain the St. Jude's batsmen did not seem to tempt him.

"Well, is it a go?" asked Bunter. "Dash it all, it's time I had a show in the matches! And it's maths in third school—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle

at! Look here, do I play or don't I?" demanded Bunter. "Yes or no?"

"No!" said Harry, laughing. "Well, I think it's rotten," said Bunter. "Nugent's better at maths than I am—I own that! I'm better at cricket than he is. So it would be the fair thing all round. Now look here, Wharton, I'm really rather keen on this, Nugent's no good, as Smithy says—simply no good at all! You'll admit that yourself, Franky, old man! Smithy's quite right there—"

"Oh, ring off!" snapped Nugent. "You needn't get waxy just because you can't play cricket, Nugent! Some fellows can, and some can't!" explained Bunter. "As it happens, you can't—any more than you can scrap—he, he, he! And, I say— Yaroooooop!"

Bunter sat down so suddenly that it made his head swim. Having sat him down, Nugent crammed his cap down the back of his fat neck. Then he walked on with his friends.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "Wow! Why, you rotter—why, you beast—I'll jolly well whop you again!" yelled Bunter at the top of his voice.

Nugent affected not to hear; but he walked on with a heightened colour. Near the House the chums of the Remove came on the Bounder.

"Been looking at the pitch?" asked Smithy.

"Yes, it's topping!" said Bob. Nugent walked straight on without appearing to notice the Bounder's existence. It was an uncomfortable moment for the Co., who did not want to "cut" a fellow-member of the eleven. But they followed Nugent into the House, leaving the Bounder frowning.

"I say, Smithy!" Bunter came up gasping. "I say, old chap, pull my cap out of my back, will you? I can't get it out! That beast Nugent shoved it there! Just because I said he couldn't scrap, you know!"

"Did he kick you?" asked Smithy.

"Eh? No!"

"Ah! That was a mistake! I'll set it right!"

"Why, you beast, wharrior you kicking me for?" yelled Bunter in surprise and

indignation. "Oh crumbs! Oh lor'l Whoooooop!"

Bunter fled—without waiting to have his cap disinterred from the back of his neck.

Vernon-Smith walked away by the path under the windows of Masters' Studies, with a frowning brow. Mr. Twigg's study window was open, to let in the morning sunshine; and as the Bounder passed it he heard the voice of the Second Form master. It was raised in angry tones; and Smithy paused and glanced into the study.

A fag stood beside the table there—Dicky Nugent of the Second. His face was red and startled. Evidently his Form master had just come in and caught him in the study.

"What are you doing here, Nugent minor?" Twigg's voice was loud and sharp, and easily heard through the open window.

"N-n-nothing, sir!" stammered Dicky. "You did not come here for nothing, Nugent minor. If I find that any trick has been played in this room, I shall know to whom to attribute it," snapped Mr. Twigg. "Take a hundred lines and go."

Dicky Nugent went.

"Young ass!" murmured the Bounder as he walked on. At any other time Smithy would have dismissed that incident from his mind without another thought. But just at present he was feeling remorseful for his treatment of Frank Nugent; and when the Remove went into first lesson he joined Nugent as the juniors went up the Form-room passage. Nugent quickened his pace, and Smithy quickened also.

"Hold on a minute, Nugent," he said amicably. "I thought I'd tip you that your minor seems to be looking for trouble with his beak. You'd better speak to him and warn him off. Twigg's fearfully shirty with him."

"You're very kind to be worrying about my minor," said Nugent. "Is that why you were bullying him yesterday?"

"Look here, Nugent—"

"I'd rather you minded your own business."

The Bounder breathed hard. "The young ass was up to something in his beak's study," he said. "And Twigg spotted him there, and gave him lines."

"No bizney of yours, that I can see." "Look here, you silly ass," exclaimed the Bounder, his temper breaking out, "if you can't be civil—"

"Go and eat coke!"

Frank Nugent walked on without even looking at the Bounder. Probably at any other time he would have been glad of that tip, and would have spoken a word in season to the reckless young rascal of the Second Form. Certainly he would have done so had he had the remotest suspicion of what was in Dicky's mind. But he could not forget that scene in the Rag; and he wanted no tips from Vernon-Smith. He walked on, ignoring his existence, and the Bounder scowled as he followed him into the Form-room.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The St. Jude's Match!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. were looking merry and bright when the bell rang for third school. The cricketers had leave to "cut" third school, and, though they were, of course, thinking chiefly of cricket, it was rather a catch to cut maths and Lascelles.

Billy Bunter, on the other hand,

grunted with deep discontent. In the cricket team Bunter could have cut maths, too. And what did the game matter, in comparison with that? Nothing at all—less than nothing, if possible. Bunter was feeling a deeply injured youth as he trailed off to the Form-room with the other unlucky ones. And the cheery cricketers did not even notice that Bunter was shirty—did not even notice Bunter at all. They even forgot that he existed.

A bright day, a good wicket, leave from class, and the prospect of a good game, made the heroes of the Remove feel that life was really worth living—if they had ever doubted it, which they hadn't. Every man in the team was in good shape, and even the "tail" was a very respectable tail.

The Bounder might hold the opinion that Nugent was a "rabbit," but nobody else agreed with him. No doubt he was the weakest man in the team; but somebody always had to be last. He was a good and capable player, and did not claim to be in the same street with the Bounder. But he was certainly as good as any man that could have been picked to make up the required number—Redwing, Dutton, Newland, Russell, Kipps, Desmond, and others were as good perhaps, but no better. Ogilvy would have had the place, but he had a damaged wrist. Wharton, as cricket captain, would rather have had the Scottish junior; but he was glad of a chance to play his best chum. And Nugent was very keen to play. His face was bright when he came down with the rest of the cricketers, and he nourished a hope of knocking up runs to an extent which would convince the doubting Thomases that he was the right man in the right place.

"First knock to us," said Harry Wharton, when he had won the toss. "You come in with me, Bob."

The Bounder glanced at Tom Redwing, who, happier than the rest of the Remove, was there to score. It was like the Bounder to carry on his arrogant obstinacy to the last moment. He tapped Wharton's elbow.

"There's still time," he murmured.

Wharton stared at him.

"Time for what? What do you mean, Smithy?"

"Time to put the right man in, and leave the wrong man out," answered the Bounder coolly.

Wharton's eyes glinted for a moment. "Don't be a silly ass!" he snapped. "Are you going to begin that rot again now? I can tell you I'm fed-up with it."

"Look here, Wharton—"

"That's enough!" Wharton walked away to the wickets, leaving the Bounder biting his lip. He bit it harder as he caught a contemptuous smile on Nugent's face.

Sulkily the Bounder leaned against the pavilion, and watched the opening of the innings. He came next on the list, but he did not expect to be wanted yet. Wharton and Bob Cherry were expected to make a good beginning. But in cricket it is often the unexpected that happens.

Had anyone told Harry Wharton that he would be clean bowled in the second ball of the first over he would have laughed. But that was precisely what happened. Lunn, the St. Jude's skipper, had been cultivating a ball which looked like a wide, and wasn't; and the Remove captain fell a hapless victim to it. Wharton's face was rather a study when his "sticks" went down. He gazed at them for a

(Continued on page 12.)

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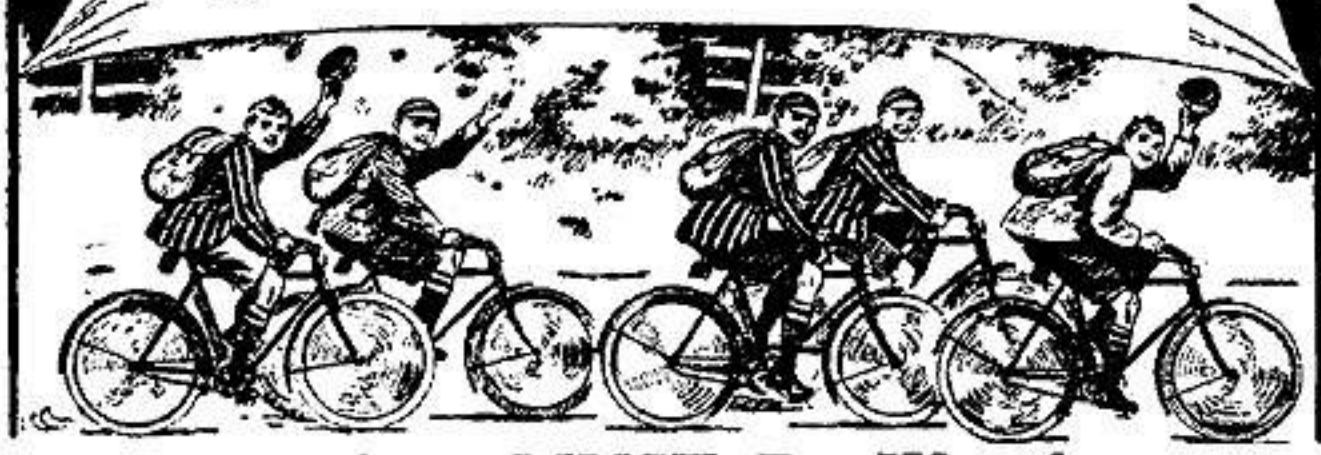
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Post your entry to:

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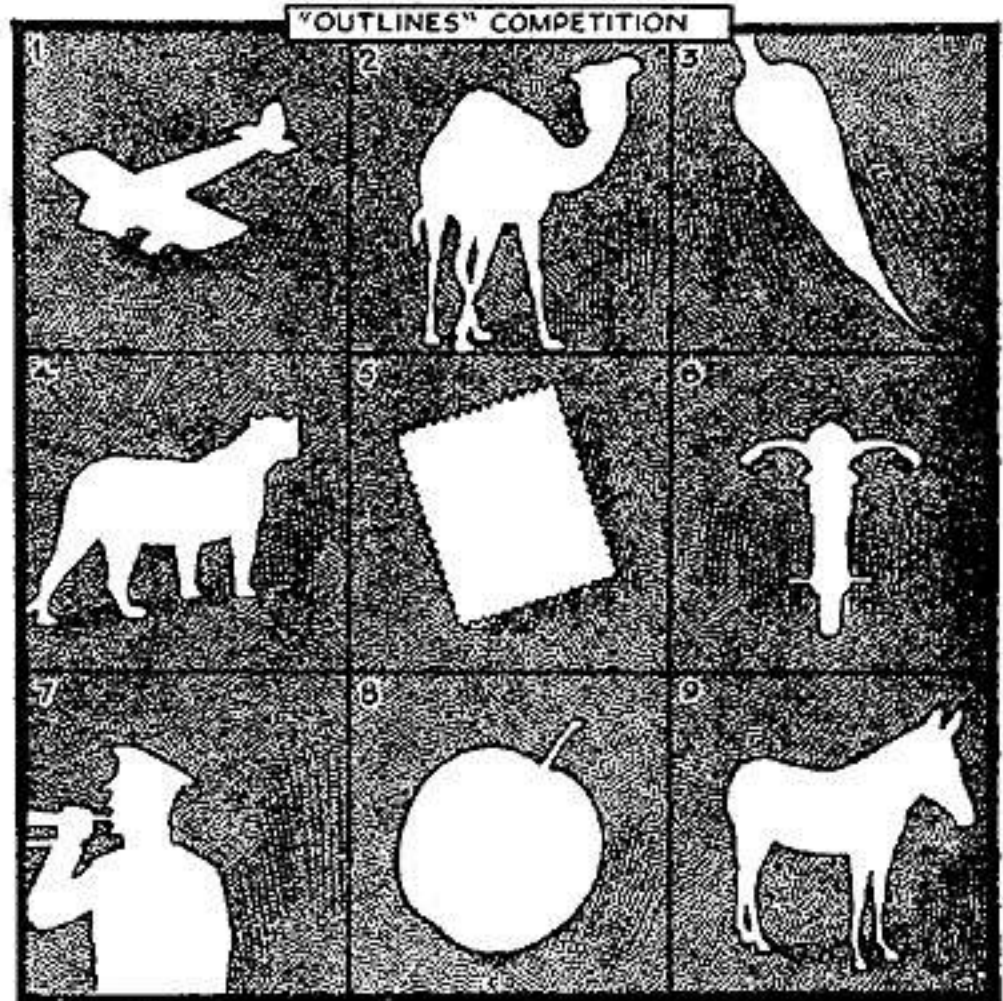
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RULES allowed, and the decision of the Editor will be final and legally binding. Employees of the proprietors of this paper must not compete. The **Correct Solution** will appear in the "Gem" issue dated June 24th, 1933, and competitors must get it to check their entries. Failure to claim by the date stated will entail forfeiture of all interest in the competition.

HURRY UP FOR A FREE "BIKE"!

THE DESERTER!

(Continued from page 10.)

moment as if he could scarce believe the horrid sight.

"Oh crumbs!" ejaculated Nugent.

"The crumbliness is terrific!" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur, in dismay.

Wharton, rather slowly, carried out his bat.

His face was pink as he came towards the pavilion. Smithy, thus unexpectedly wanted, began to buckle his pads.

"Man in!" said Harry, as he came up.

"Rough luck, old man!" said Nugent. Wharton nodded.

A good beginning meant a great deal in any game; and this was a rotten start. Wharton's feelings were rather deep just then. With the score at one for nought, second ball, he really could not feel happy. Just for a while the sunshine had lost its brightness.

"Man in!" repeated Wharton. "Don't keep the game waiting, Smithy! For goodness' sake, get a move on!"

Wharton did not mean to speak sharply; but there was something irritating in the Bounder's leisurely movements. After all, a batsman ought to have been ready. Anyhow, he ought to buck up when he was wanted. St. Jude's had not come over that morning to stand about the field waiting for a man to come in. But the Bounder was in one of his irritating moods.

"I didn't expect to be wanted so soon," he drawled. "Give a man a chance!"

Wharton looked at him. He was tempted to tell Smithy to take still more time, and send another man in before him. But cricket came first, and a good stand by the Bounder meant much. The captain of the Remove suppressed his feelings.

"Look out for that ball from Lunn," he said. "Lunn's dangerous to-day. He caught me napping."

"Looks as if he did," assented the Bounder. "I'm hoping that he won't catch me with my eyes shut."

"Pride goeth before a fall," remarked Peter Todd. "Don't shout till you're through the wood, Smithy."

"My dear man——"

"Look here, get going, Smithy!" said Wharton. "This is cricket, not a chin-music match! If you're going to bat, get in; if you want to jaw, I'll send another man in!"

"Do!" said the Bounder coolly. "Send Nugent in. His innings will give me time to buckle my pads—just."

Some of the cricketers grinned at that remark; and Nugent's face flamed. Wharton set his lips. He wanted the Bounder to take his knock; but he was not taking any more "back-chat" from Smithy.

"You go in, Nugent," he said briefly.

"Right!"

Nugent was ready quickly enough. Vernon-Smith straightened up, rather regretting his leisurely movements and his cheek. Nugent's place was at the tail; and Smithy did not want to be shifted one step farther towards that undesirable position. He had hardly imagined that Wharton would take him at his word.

"Look here, Wharton——" he began hotly.

"Nuff said!" answered Harry curtly.

"Are you fool enough to throw away another wicket at the start?" snarled the Bounder.

"I'm not fool enough to take any more impudence from you, Smithy. You'd better shut up!"

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"If you send Nugent in——"

"Your own suggestion!" said Wharton, with a curl of the lip.

"You know I never meant——"

"I don't care what you meant! Get in, Frank!"

Nugent settled the matter by walking out to the wickets. The Bounder, who had picked up his handsome and expensive bat, flung it down. The look on his face was black and bitter. He knew that he was at the top of his form that day. He felt that he could make the stand that the Greyfriars men needed to give them heart after Wharton's hapless failure. From the point of view of the game he ought to have gone in. Still, there was a limit to the amount of cheek a cricket captain could be expected to stand, even from the most valued member of the team. It really had to be borne in on the Bounder's mind that, good man as he was, he was not running the show.

The Bounder scowled, and the other men looked rather grave. And Harry Wharton's eyes followed his chum with intent keenness. He longed to see Frank make a good stand. He would have given almost anything to watch

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him standing up to the bowling undamaged. But he had sent him in to face the best bowler from St. Jude's at the very start. And perhaps, as he saw Nugent take his place at the wickets, he wished that he had swallowed the Bounder's impudence once more. At least, he might have sent in a steady stone-waller like Johnny Bull, a big hitter like Squiff, or a good bat like Peter Todd or Tom Brown or Mark Linley. He hoped intensely that Frank would be able to see it through.

It was a vain hope! Where Wharton himself had failed, Frank was not likely to succeed. True, Frank was watching for that ball which looked like a wide and wasn't! But that deceptive sweep, Lunn, gave him a fast one to leg, and Nugent hardly knew what he did with it, till mid-on held it up with a cheery grin.

"Caught!"

"The catchfulness is terrific!" moaned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Snort, from Bunter.

That snort very nearly earned him a rap from Harry Wharton's knuckles. Fortunately, it did not quite.

Wharton's disappointment was deep. Added to that was the knowledge that he had made a mistake—just when a mistake was extremely awkward. He could have found pleasure at that

moment in kicking Herbert Vernon-Smith all round the pavilion. Nugent's face was red as he came off. He had done no worse than his skipper, if it came to that; both had been dismissed for a duck. But Wharton's fall was sheer bad luck; while Nugent had a dismal feeling that his failure justified the bitter criticisms of the Bounder, and that he ought not to have been in the team at all. It was absolutely certain, anyhow, that he ought not to have taken second knock.

"Man in!" grunted Wharton, without looking at the Bounder. He felt as if he would hit him if he looked at him.

Vernon-Smith, sitting against the pavilion rail, did not stir. He did not seem to realise that he was spoken to.

"Gone to sleep, Smithy?" asked Squiff.

"Eh! No! I'm watching the funeral!" answered the Bounder.

"Are you going to keep the field waiting again, Vernon-Smith?" asked Wharton, his voice trembling with anger.

"Who's keeping the field waiting?" drawled Smithy. "They're not waiting for me, I suppose?"

"What do you mean? What——" It was hard for Wharton to keep cool under the Bounder's cool stare.

"Oh! Am I next man in?" asked Smithy, as if it had suddenly occurred to him.

"You know you are!"

"How should I know?" Smithy raised his eyebrows. "You gave Nugent my place—I naturally supposed I was taking his. I was counting on taking a rest till last man in, of course."

The Remove skipper's eyes gleamed. Smithy might have supposed that that was the case—but he certainly did not suppose anything of the kind. He was 'out' to rag his captain; that was the long and short of it. And he was as cool as a cucumber about it—while Wharton was barely able to suppress his anger. Again, in the heat of the moment, Wharton made a mistake—and again the Bounder unexpectedly found himself taken at his word.

"Right!" said the captain of the Remove. "Quite right! You go in last, Vernon-Smith! Man in, Field!"

Squiff went out to the wickets. The Bounder stood as if thunderstruck. He grabbed hold of Wharton's arm.

"You're not sending me in last, Wharton?"

"You've asked for it."

"What about the game?" hissed the Bounder.

"That's my business, not yours."

"By gad!" All the Bounder's mocking coolness was gone now. Last man in, with some third-rate partner to lose his wicket and send him out, what was to become of that magnificent innings Smithy had been going to put up! That magnificent innings was not likely to be in the picture now. "By gad!" The Bounder almost choked. "I've a jolly good mind to walk off the field."

"Walk off as soon as you like."

"If you mean that, Wharton——"

"I mean every word! I've stood all your dashed cheek that I'm going to stand! Get off the field if you choose—in that case, you'll go to the Form-room. Tell Russell I want him, if you do."

The Bounder, much more angry than Wharton now, clenched his fists. But he unclenched them again, and with a black brow, walked off the ground. Whether he meant to carry out his threat, or whether he would turn up again for the last knock, none of the fellows could say—and Wharton, at least, did not seem to care.



Dicky Nugent was clambering on the broad stone window-sill of Mr. Twigg's study when a sudden voice from behind made him jump. "Nugent mi!" "Oh crikey!" ejaculated Dicky, turning round to face Wingate. "Well, what are you up to, you young sweep?" demanded the prefect gruffly. "I—I—I left something in Twigg's study!" stammered Dicky.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Bounder's Knock!

SQUIFF, at the wicket, stopped the "rot," well backed up by Bob Cherry at the other end. Runs began to come in at last; and the fellows who had dreaded to watch a "procession" were relieved.

Squiff was a good man; and Bob a mighty hitter, and they made a powerful pair. But there was no doubt that the St. Jude's bowling was very keen; and they had evidently been giving a great deal of attention to work in the field—a branch sometimes neglected a little by young cricketers.

A good fielding side is always dangerous, and so it proved on the present occasion. A two that looked, to a hopeful eye, good for three, was Bob Cherry's undoing. The ball came in much more smartly than Bob had expected; and his bat was six inches off the crease when the bails went down. The six inches might as well have been six miles—Bob was out for a total of eight of his own, not more than a quarter of what his side had confidently counted on from him.

"It never rains but it pours!" murmured Toddy.

"And the pourfulness is preposterous!"

Wharton looked round.

He was looking for the Bounder. Had Smithy been present, the captain of the Remove—very much alive now to the necessities of the game—would have tacitly washed out offences, and sent him in next. But Smithy was not there. He had taken Wharton at his word—as undoubtedly he had a right to—and was not to be seen. Wharton com-

pressed his lips, and gave Tom Brown a nod, and the New Zealand junior crossed Bob coming out.

"Rotten luck," said Bob, as he came up. "But we'll put paid to 'em, with Australia at one end and New Zealand at the other."

It seemed that Bob was right, for Tom Brown and Samson Quincy Ifley Field of New South Wales kept the ball rolling in good style for some time. It was sheer bad luck when Tom Brown was caught in the slips. But caught he was; and Johnny Bull went in. Johnny was a solid and stolid cricketer of the stonewalling variety, and generally could be relied upon to keep his end up while a more brilliant bat made the fur fly. But Johnny was not at his best now. Nothing puts a man off his form more than a rapid fall of wickets at the start; and the "rot" had its effect on Johnny. He was a cautious player—and now he was, perhaps, a little too cautious. Wharton felt like groaning when he saw Johnny staring blankly at dislodged bails at the last ball of the over.

"Oh, my hat!" he exclaimed, involuntarily.

The St. Jude's men had smiling faces. They had come over to Greyfriars expecting a hard struggle. This did not look like it. It was beginning to look to St. Jude's like a walk-over. Lunn remarked to another man that they might be home to tea; and the other man rejoined that they might be home to lunch! Really, it almost looked like it when Peter Todd, following Johnny Bull, was out l.b.w., and Mark Lanley, following Toddy, was clean bowled at the second ball.

"Oh crikey!" groaned Bob Cherry.

"Is this a cricket match! I want to go to a funeral and be cheered up!"

Penfold went in rather like a man going to an execution. The "rot" was not to be stayed now. The only comfort was that Squiff, the mighty man from down under, seemed set for the day. While his partners came and went, the Australian was steadily piling up runs. Nobody was surprised when Pen went down for a duck.

"Eight down for thirty!" murmured Bob, "and Squiff's taken more than half of that! Give him a chance, and he will save our jolly old bacon. But—"

"The butfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh, who was next man in. Inky was a wonderful bowler, but he concentrated on that branch; he was not expected to make records with the willow.

"Keep the game alive for Squiff, old man!" said Harry, pressing the nabob's arm. "For goodness' sake, old nut, keep it going."

"The keepfulness will be preposterous, if within my esteemed and ridiculous powers," assured the nabob. And he went out, prepared to do or die.

"Look out for Smithy, Bob," said Harry. "Last man will be wanted soon, I'm afraid. If the fool's playing; he'd better be here!"

"I'll find him!"

Bob went in search of the Bounder. Smithy had not gone to the Form-room. Bitterly angry as he was, he had no intention of exchanging cricket for maths. Bob found him in the tuck-shop, refreshing himself with ginger

(Continued on page 16.)



(Continued from page 13.)

beer. But it seemed that he had been keeping an eye on the game.

"What a lark!" he remarked, as Bob joined him.

"I don't see where the lark comes in!" grunted Bob, gruffly.

"Well, the St. Jude's men seem to think it funny! They came over here to play cricket; and we're giving them a game of skittles. Still, skittles isn't a bad game, I dare say!" yawned the Bounder.

"Oh, cut it out! You'd better get on the ground, if you're going to play."

"Last man wanted already? Oh, my hat! What a game!"

The Bounder lounged out of the tuck-shop and dawdled down to Little Side. Bob Cherry went with him. A shout from the cricket field greeted them.

"How's that?"

"Out!"

"Poor old Inky!" said Bob.

But it was not the nabob who was gone. It was Squiff! That tower of strength to his side had gone down, and it was the dusky nabob who remained at the wickets to partner Herbert Vernon-Smith.

"Man in!" said Harry Wharton, as the Bounder lounged up; and his eyes glinted at Smithy.

He had made mistakes that morning, as he realised only too clearly; but the fault was the Bounder's, as both of them knew very well.

"Lot of good going in!" sneered the Bounder. "Walk in and walk out—what? Reddy may as well shove up the score now: H. Vernon-Smith, not out, nought."

And with that gibe the Bounder picked up his bat and went out to the wickets as Squiff came glumly up to the pavilion.

Wharton watched him. If Hurree Singh kept the innings alive, Smithy was the man to score. He would go all out to do it, if only to show the other fellows what they had missed. But Hurree Singh, deadly as he was with the ball, was, as a batsman, nowhere near the Bounder's class; and the St. Jude's bowling was as good as ever, and it seemed only too likely that Smithy would be, as he had said, not out for nought. Still, while there was life, there was hope. It was really awful to think of the fellows coming out of the Form-rooms to find the Remove all down for 30 runs.

Luckily, the Bounder had the bowling. It was the first ball of an over that had dismissed Squiff. Wharton watched him anxiously. Irritation and dislike were forgotten now; he wanted to see scoring. The Bounder was confident—likely to be over-confident. That was one of his weaknesses. Swank was a failing of Smithy's. And he had gone in expecting to come out again as soon as his partner had the

bowling, which was enough to dishearten a fellow. And he was intensely exasperated at being left to the tip of the tail; and exasperation was not good for cricket. Altogether the prospect was far from rosy.

When the Bounder stopped the ball dead, some of the watching juniors grunted with disappointment; but Wharton was relieved. Smithy was not going to throw his wicket away from over-confidence, at least. He stopped the next ball in the same way. But he stepped out to the third, and the whack of willow on leather rang like a shot. Hurree Singh made a movement, grinned, and stopped. There was no need to run.

"Oh, good!" gasped Bob Cherry. "We want a few boundaries now! We want a few dozen if we can get 'em! Good old Smithy!"

"Good man!" said Wharton in deep relief.

Smithy was evidently in form. The rest of that over gave him 11 runs; the wary Bounder cunningly stealing a single at the finish to keep the bowling. Wharton's face brightened as the field crossed over. Many times that morning he had been strongly tempted to crash a set of knuckles on the Bounder's nose. Now he felt like thumping him on the back. With luck—and the Bounder's luck was often phenomenal—the game might yet be pulled out of the fire. Smithy was the man to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

Breathlessly the Remove men watched the innings. Good as the bowling was, it seemed to have no perils for the Bounder. The fielding was almost as keen as at the start. St. Jude's had not had enough leather-hunting to make them tired. But Smithy seemed to have the eyes of Argus, and he gave no man in the field a chance. And he calculated his runs like a calculating machine. That over gave him 15; leaving him once more at the batting end.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a dusky grin on his good-tempered face, was playing only to back up the Bounder. In speed, at least, he was quite the Bounder's equal, if not superior; he crossed the pitch like lightning. The Nabob of Bhanipur was a sportsman to his dusky fingertips; he did not care two straws whether he made any runs or not, so long as they were made. And Smithy was making them—fast!

Harry Wharton's face glowed.

If Smithy had only gone in early and played this game! It was too late to think of that. The century that might have been was lost to the side. But a good innings was a good innings, even at the tip of the tail!

"Oh, good man, Smithy—good man!" said Wharton. "Oh, ripping!"

"Good old Bounder!" said Bob Cherry.

"Bravo, Smithy!"

"Hurrah!"

The shouts from the pavilion were meat and drink to the Bounder. Nevertheless, his temper was bitter. With anything like a chance, he might have played the game of his life to-day. Piled up a century—more than a century—and put all comers into the shade. Now it was not to be; his position was too precarious for that. It was doomed as soon as St. Jude's got a chance at his partner. And a man could not keep the batting all the time. In his third over, the Bounder made 12, and he had to let the last ball go by. When the field crossed, the

batting was up to the Nabob of Bhanipur.

The glow died out of Wharton's face as he watched. He could not help feeling that it was the inevitable that was coming. Vernon-Smith had knocked up 38; eight more than the rest of the batsmen combined. It showed what he might have done, given a chance. But the chance was not given; it was the inevitable that happened. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh played with great caution. He had no desire to shine; only to live through the over and give his partner another chance. But it was not to be. The fourth ball found him wanting; and there was a shout from St. Jude's.

"How's that?"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh made a grimace.

"All down for 68," said Bob Cherry. "That's not bad, you men! Vote of thanks to Smithy!"

"If he'd gone in early——" sighed Peter Todd.

"No good crying over spilt milk," said Bob. "And there's another innings to come, old beans; don't forget that! We're going to toast St. Jude's."

"We open with Smithy this afternoon," said Harry, with a nod. "By gum, the man's a prize-packet to-day—a real prize-packet!"

"Gratters, Smithy, old bean," said Bob, as the Bounder came up with a brow as black as thunder.

"Thank you for nothing!" snarled Vernon-Smith. "Wharton, you fool——"

"Steady on!" said Bob.

"Do you call this cricket?" Smithy seemed to be choking with rage. "You put that dud Nugent up to bat——"

"That's enough!" said Wharton quietly.

"You've got one man that can bat, and you stick him at the tail!" hissed the Bounder. "I'd have made a century, you know that! By gad, I've a jolly good mind to cut the second innings!"

He flung his bat down with a crash and stalked away.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Nugent Minor Means Business!

"DON'T be an ass!" said Gatty of the Second.

"Don't be a goat!" advised Myers.

Dicky Nugent sniffed.

"Safe as houses!" he declared.

"I tell you——" said Gatty and Myers together.

"It's my pound note, isn't it?" snapped Nugent minor.

"Yes; but——"

"It's a half-holiday to-day. We can't have a spread in the Form-room, with old Twigg's eye on us! We can have a car out!"

"Oh!" said Gatty and Myers, visibly tempted.

"You can do a lot of things with a pound," said Dicky Nugent, "and it's my pound, ain't it? Old Twigg had no right to take it away. I know where it is—in a drawer in his desk. I was scouting in his study this morning before brekker. He caught me there, blow him, and gave me a hundred lines. But he never guessed what I was after."

"Lucky for you he didn't!" said Gatty. "Why, he'd have taken you to the Head! You might be bunked."

"Bunked, for taking my own pound note!" said Dicky scornfully. "Don't be a silly ass, George Gatty!"

"It's yours all right; but Twigg's going to send it back to your uncle. You can't argue with a beak," said

Gatty. "It would be an awful cheek to take it out of his desk. You can't do it."

"I jolly well can, and I jolly well will!" said Nugent minor obstinately. "It's safe as houses! I heard Twigg talking to Prout. They're going out on a walk this afternoon. They'll be miles away. May see them starting any minute. As soon as Twigg's gone—"

"And what will he do when he finds that you've snaffled the pound note?" demanded Myers.

"Anything he jolly well likes; it's mine!"

"You're a young ass, Dicky! Look here! The Remove are playing St. Jude's to-day. Your major's in the team, I've heard. Let's watch the cricket. A chap ought to watch his major playing."

"Catch me watching Frank making ducks!" granted Nugent minor. "I heard that he made one in his innings before dinner. He can bag his pair of spectacles without me seeing him do it."

Dinner was over at Greyfriars school. The school dinner was the cricketers' lunch. St. Jude's had started to bat before lunch, owing to the unexpected brevity of the Greyfriars innings, and they had been one down for six when play stopped. Remove cricket was always—or generally, at least—worth watching, and plenty of fellows in other Forms were going to give them a look in when play was resumed. But Richard Nugent of the Second Form was evidently not interested. Richard Nugent had quite other plans for the half-holiday.

"We're not wasting time watching mouldy cricket," said Dicky scornfully. "We're going out in a car. My pound—"

"Now, look here," said Gatty impressively. "You're not going to do it, young Nugent. It's too jolly risky. If you don't want to watch your brother's cricket we'll go down to Friardale and muck about in old Baker's boat. He will let us have it."

"Good egg!" agreed Myers. "Cut it out, Dicky. Twigg would get you flogged by the Head. It's not good enough. Besides, he's not a bad old bean, really. He may let you have the pound, instead of sending it back, later, if you play up and give him some soft sawder."

"I'm going to have it this afternoon!" said Dicky Nugent obstinately. "And you can talk till you're black in the face—I'm jolly well going to have it, all the same. So there!"

"Then you can leave us out of it," said Gatty. "Come on, Myers! You can come after us when you want to, Nugent mi."

"I shan't come," bawled Dicky after his pals. "If you don't want to come in the car I'll ask Legge and Sammy Bunter."

"Ask them and be blowed!" retorted Gatty.

And the two fags went down to the gates, to head for the village and "old Baker's boat," quite determined not to encourage Dicky in so risky a proceeding; and still more determined not to have a hand in it themselves.

Richard Nugent stared after them angrily. His wilful and obstinate mind was already made up, but if he needed spurring on he was spurred on by the knowledge that Gatty and Myers expected him to "chuck" it and follow them to Friardale. They did not really believe that he would have the nerve to take his pound note from the Form master's desk. Dicky's view was that

he was going to "jolly well show them!"

He waited in the quad until he saw little Mr. Twigg and the portly Prout walk away together. He was standing under Twigg's study window, with the back of his head touching the sill, as he watched them go. That window was open, like most other windows that sunny day, and it was in Dicky's mind to "nip" into the room by the window when no eyes were turned in that direction. Having watched his Form master and Prout out of sight, Dicky

looked this way and that way, like Moses of old, and then, finding the coast clear, clambered on the broad stone window-sill.

"Nugent mi!"

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated Dicky.

It was the voice of Wingate of the Sixth. The coast had been clear a minute ago; now the Greyfriars captain was walking directly towards him, with a frown on his face. Squatting on the window-sill, Dicky blinked at him guiltily.

(Continued on next page.)

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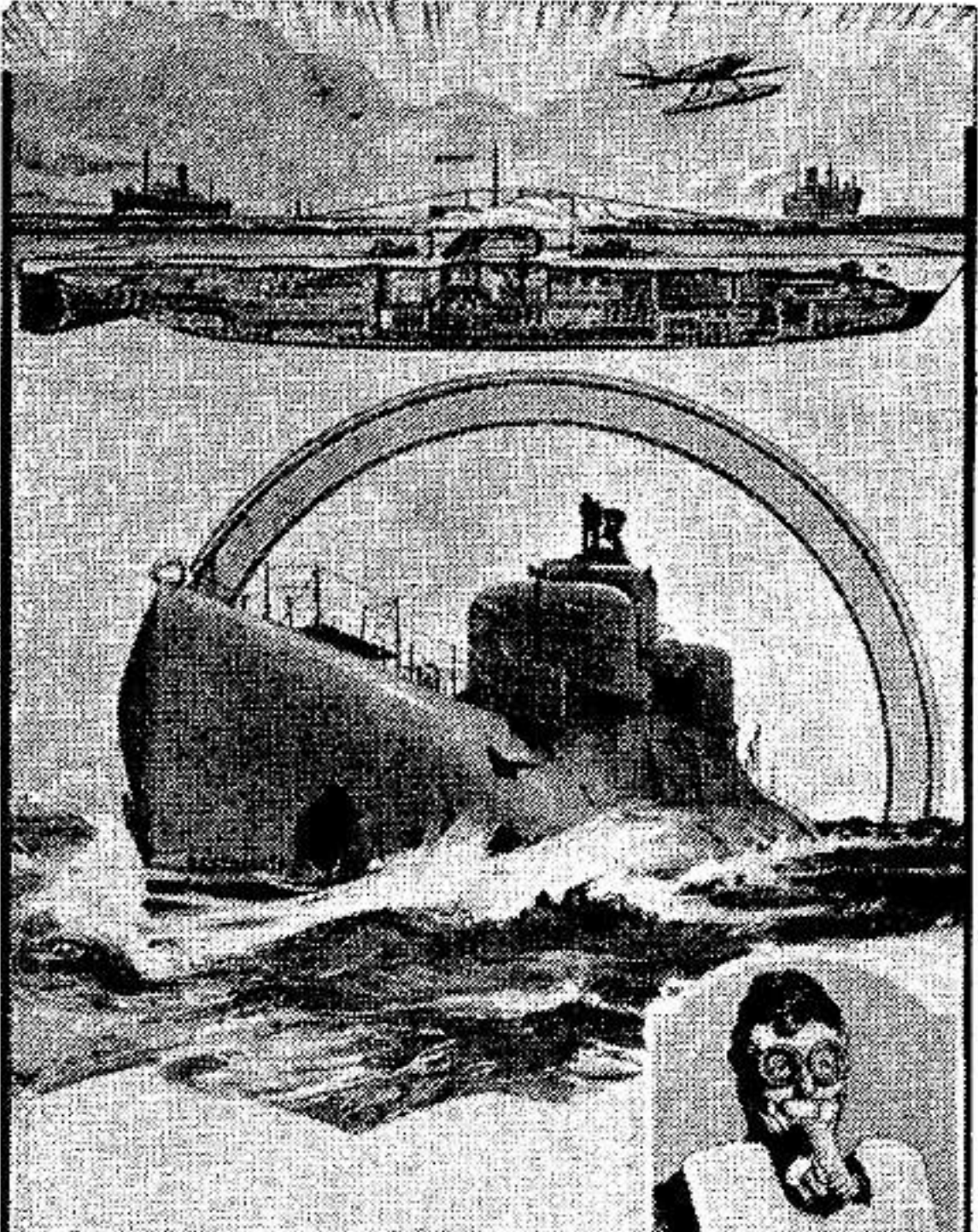

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"Well, what are you up to, you young sweep?" demanded the prefect gruffly.

"I—I—I left something in Twigg's study," stammered Dicky.

"The window isn't the way into a Form master's study. Get down!"

Dicky got down. Wingate had his ashplant under his arm, and Dicky had a well-grounded apprehension that he was going to make closer acquaintance with that article. He was right.

The Sixth Form man slipped it down into his hand.

"Bend over!" he said laconically.

"I—I—I say, Wingate, there—there's really something of mine in Twigg's study," stammered Dicky.

"Leave it there till he comes in, then. Touch your toes!"

Richard Nugent bent down and touched his toes.

Swipe!

"Wow!" gasped Dicky.

Wingate tucked the ashplant under his arm and walked away. He joined Gwynne of the Sixth, and they disappeared together. But Dicky did not think of trying the window again.

Wriggling a little as he went, he went into the House. There he met his major coming out. Frank called to him.

"Hallo, Dicky! Coming down to the cricket?"

"No," grunted the fag.

"It will do you good to watch a good game, kid!" said Frank.

"I know how to score duck's eggs, thanks," answered Dicky sarcastically, and he went on, leaving Frank with a pink face, and several other fellows grinning.

With a casual air, Dicky Nugent strolled into Masters' Passage. Most of the "beaks" were out, but from Mr. Quelch's study came the faint clicking of a typewriter, showing that the Remove master was there. Twigg's study door stood wide open. Twigg had left it unlatched, and there was a strong draught down the passage from a wide-open window at the other end, and it had swung wide. Dicky gave a hasty glance up and down and ran breathless into the study.

There, as he stood panting a little by his Form master's desk, he hesitated. But the thought of the grinning of Gatty and Myers if he failed to make good his foolish words determined him. He was not going to be told in the Second that he had swanked, and funked when it came to the pinch. After all, the pound note was his. He was only taking his own! If there was a row—he had been in rows before—and Twigg was always more or less down on him, anyhow.

He pulled out the drawer where he believed the note to be. It was a drawer from which he had seen his Form master take money sometimes, and he had "squinted" into it that morning and seen two notes there—a pound note and a five-pound note—before Twigg came in and spotted him. Had not Twigg interrupted him at that time Dicky would certainly have had his pound note, whatever the consequences. Now he was going to have it. It would not take two ticks, and he could either dodge out of the door or drop from the window and scud.

But—To Dicky's dismay there was no longer a pound note in the drawer. The fiver was still there, but of the pound note there was no sign.

"Oh, the beast!" murmured Dicky.

He wondered whether Twigg had taken that pound note with him in a

letter to post. Or possibly he had suspected Dicky's intention that morning and put it in his pocket-book for safety. Whatever the explanation—which really did not matter very much to Dicky—there was no pound note. He was beaten at the post, as it were; and Gatty and Myers would never believe that the note hadn't been there, they would simply say that he had funked it, as they jolly well knew he would!

Dicky's eyes gleamed. Anger and disappointment, the determination to show them he hadn't funked, worked together, probably helped by the twinge of the cut Wingate had given him for his good. The fag picked the five-pound note out of the drawer.

After all, Twigg would know he had bagged his note, if he had bagged it. So it made no difference if he took the fiver, changed it, and put four pounds back! There was no question of concealment. He had to face a row afterwards. Whether he took his own particular note or changed Twigg's fiver and took a single pound out of the five made little difference. It was, perhaps, a little more cheeky, that was all.

With the banknote in his fingers Dicky stepped away from the desk. There was a sound of a footstep in the passage, a tap at a door. Some "beak" had come along to speak to Quelch. Whoever it was, it was not near Twigg's doorway, and Dicky could not be seen, but he kept well away from the door.

He stepped quickly to the window.

In the distance, fellows were gathering on the cricket ground, and other fellows were heading in that direction. The Remove match would be going on again before long. There was nobody near the windows of Masters' Studies. It was easy to drop out and scud. Mrs. Mumble would change the banknote at the tuckshop. She would suppose Dicky had brought it there to change for Loder, whose fag he was. Once or twice Loder of the Sixth had sent him to the school shop with a banknote. It was easy enough. But again Dicky hesitated. Wilful and unthinking as he was, some sense of the seriousness of what he was doing penetrated into his careless mind. He stood at the open window, irresolute, the banknote in his fingers, uncertain whether to put it in his pocket and clear, or to replace it in Twigg's desk, as common sense urged him to do.

And as he hesitated, the May wind, which had been growing more gusty during the day, sent a whistling draught down Masters' Passage, swinging the study door, rustling papers on the table—and flicking the crisp, flimsy strip of paper from Dicky's fingers. He made a wild grab after it as it blew out of the window.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Up to Smithy!

"SMITHY, old man!"
 "Oh, leave me alone!"
 "But—"
 "Rot!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith was extended in his armchair in Study No. 4 in the Remove. He had a cigarette in his mouth and a box of matches in his hand when Redwing looked in at the doorway. He had not lighted the cigarette so far.

"Aren't you coming down?" asked Redwing mildly.

"I'm not sure I'm going to play again," answered the Bounder coolly. "What's the good of bein' made a fool of?"

"It's too late to talk like that now, old chap," said Tom. "You've batted, and Wharton can't play another man in your place."

"Oh, he's got Nugent! He will count as two, bein' twice as good!" sneered Smithy.

"Don't be an ass! The fellows are going down to the field. Do come on!" urged Redwing. "It was rough luck on you this morning. But there's the game to think of. We're licked if you don't bat this afternoon."

Grunt! from Smithy.

"You can't let the team down, old man. Don't dream of that for a minute," said Redwing. "You're not that kind of rotter."

"No; I can jolly well be made a fool of, and counted on to play my hardest all the same. That's how it stands!" snarled Smithy. "I've a jolly good mind to cut the whole show!"

"You can't, old man! Besides, you don't want to. Chuck that rubbish away, and come along, like a good fellow!"

The Bounder struck a match, and Redwing's face darkened. Sometimes the scapegrace of the Remove smoked in the study, but smoking in the middle of a cricket match was an act of folly really outside the limit. But it was only swank. As the match burned down Smithy tossed it into the fender, and the cigarette after it. Redwing was relieved; he knew that that meant that the Bounder was going to play.

"Come on, old fellow!" Redwing was very patient with his chum. "The St. Jude's men are on the ground; they'll be beginning in a few minutes now."

"Cut off, then!"

"Come with me, Smithy!"

"We're not battin'. And if we were, I'm at the tip of the tail!" sneered the Bounder. "What's the hurry?"

"You're not in the tail second innings. I heard Wharton say that he was going to open with you."

"Oh!" said the Bounder, his expression changing a little.

"You're wanted to bowl in the St. Jude's innings, Smithy. You're the only man we've got as good as Inky."

"I dare say Wharton will be givin' Nugent the bowlin'!" sneered Smithy; "and if I'm late, Lunn will let him put in a substitute to field. I'm not comin' down yet."

"Look here, old chap—"

"Shut the door after you!"

"I tell you—"

"If you say any more, Reddy, I won't come down at all!" said Vernon-Smith. "I mean that! Wharton chose to make a fool of me this mornin', and he can wait for me if he wants me!"

Redwing gave him a look, and turned away, saying no more. Evidently it was Smithy's intention to keep his captain waiting for him, as a Roland for an Oliver. As Greyfriars would be in the field, there would be no great harm done, as it would be easy enough to arrange for a substitute to take Smithy's place in the field till he came. The fact that he was wanted to bowl did not move the Bounder. He was wanted to bat in the first innings, and his skipper had chosen to leave him in the tail. If Wharton could wait for his batting, he could wait for his bowling!

Left alone in the study, however, Smithy—as was often the case with him—did some thinking, and was not wholly satisfied with himself. It would serve Wharton right—he had no doubt about that—and there were plenty of men on the spot to field; nearly all the Remove were on Little Side, as it was a half-holiday. Lunn would make no difficulty about a substitute fielding if a



The ball came hot from Lunn's bat, and Frank Nugent jumped at it, caught it in his outstretched hand! It was the catch of the match—for Lunn was the best bat in the St. Jude's side, and had looked like being not out after being first in!

Remove man had not turned up. It would do the captain of the Remove good! But—Smithy rose from the armchair, with a dissatisfied grunt, and went to the window.

From his study window he could see a part of the playing fields, and he saw that the St. Jude's innings had been resumed. Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh had the ball; the other Removites were in the field, and his keen eyes picked out Russell among them. Evidently, as the Bounder was not there to take his place, Russell had taken it pro. tem. Wharton, it seemed, would not wait a few minutes and take the trouble to send for the Bounder. Well, if he wasn't worth sending for, he might as well take his time! After Russell had dropped a few sitters, the captain of the Remove would know how to value a good man when he got him.

That was all very well; but the thought of the substitute fieldsman dropping catches stirred the sportsman in Smithy. He left the window and crossed to the door. As he stepped out into the Remove passage another figure stepped out of Study No. 1, at the end of the passage towards the stairs.

The Bounder stopped dead. What was the matter with Nugent minor? Anger and annoyance and irritated conceit vanished from Smithy's mind and heart as he saw the white, ghastly face of the wretched fag. Dicky Nugent did not see him—he seemed to see nothing. Something—something terrible—seemed to have happened to the young rascal of the Second, and the cheekiest fag at Greyfriars School looked like the ghost of his former self. He disappeared quickly down the Remove staircase as the Bounder stood staring blankly along the passage.

Smithy whistled softly.

Something was "up" with Frank Nugent's young brother—terribly up.

From his window he had seen Nugent fielding in the slips, unconscious of anything wrong. But something was wrong—fearfully wrong! Smithy remembered the incident of the early morning, and the unheeded "tip" he had given Nugent on the subject. The young rascal had been up to something in his beak's study then—goodness knew what! Now he had been up to something in Nugent's own study—what?

The Bounder stood in thought. He had treated Frank rottenly the previous day, and had been sorry for it—he had, in fact, made more than one attempt to wash it out, though unavailingly. Frank's concern for his minor rather moved the Bounder's mockery, as a rule, but he knew how real it was. And Frank was playing cricket—while his young brother was looking like a fellow expecting the "sack"—knowing nothing, suspecting nothing!

All the good in Smithy—and there was plenty of good—was uppermost in these moments. He went along the passage to Study No. 1. The clue to the mystery lay there—he knew that. Dicky could not have gone there to see his major; he knew that Frank was in the cricket match. He had gone there for some other reason, and when Smithy learned what that reason was, he would know what was the matter, and could either put Nugent on his guard about it or handle the matter himself, if that were possible. That ghastly look in the fag's stricken face haunted Smithy; he knew that it was the look of a boy frightened by some irreparable disaster—some disaster, at least, that he believed to be irreparable.

He had no idea of what he expected to find in Study No. 1—some clue to the fag's distress, that was all. As it happened, he found it at the first glance when he was in the room.

On the table lay a sheet of inport paper, scrawled on in the fag's hand, and weighted down at the corner with an inkpot to prevent it from blowing away. Smithy looked at it. Obviously, it was a message for Nugent major; Dicky had come there specially to leave it for him—that much was clear. Nobody, of course, was likely to come to the study except Frank or his study-mate, and no doubt Dicky did not mind if his brother's best chum saw it. Probably he did not mind if anybody saw it. Anyhow, the Bounder saw it now, and he gave a low whistle through his teeth as he read what the terrified fag had written.

"Dear Frank—I'm going home. It's not my fault. Twigg took away my pound note, and I was going to take it back, only there was only a five in his desk, and I was going to change it and take my pound only it blew away I don't know where I looked everywhere for it but it's gone. He will think I've pinched it only I didn't but he will think so the beast. He saw me in his study this morning and Wingate saw me at the window so they will know who it was. I wasn't going to change it after all but the wind blew it before I could put it back and I hunted all over the shop but it was gone goodness knows where and I'm not going up to the Head and it would be the sack anyway and I'm going home. I've got enough munny for my fare if I catch the two o'clock train at Courtfield, I shall have to hurry I shall take your bike or mightn't catch it so no more from

Dicky.

P.S. I never meant to pinch it tho' the beast will think I did."

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"Oh crumbs!" whispered the Bounder.

That wildly confused missive, evidently written in a state of terror and stress, went somehow to Smithy's heart. No wonder the wretched little rascal had looked ghastly, looked as if his world had fallen in fragments round him. He was going home—running away from school!

Likely enough he was right in supposing that Mr. Twigg would condemn him as having "pinched" the banknote, when he missed it. The only explanation he could have given was that he had intended to be guilty of an act of rebellious impudence, and that then an accident had happened! Without being a distrustful gentleman, Mr. Twigg might very probably decline to believe that the banknote had blown away—unless it turned up again promptly. But a flimsy slip of paper, the sport of a gusty wind, was not likely to turn up in a hurry—and according to Dicky's scrawled statement, he had "hunted all over the shopp" for it in vain.

"The little idiot!" breathed Smithy. "The pernicious little idiot. My only hat—what a piece of news for poor old Nugent! The little scoundrel!"

Nugent, whom he had mocked and ridiculed the previous day—whose hopes had been dashed in the cricket that morning, and whose failure he had giped at—this was waiting for Nugent when he came in! Herbert Vernon-Smith felt a deep twinge. And the little idiot, in his terror, had done the worst thing possible—run away from school! He had to be got back at once, that was certain! Vernon-Smith crumpled the scrawled paper in his hand and shoved it into the pocket of his flannel bags. No eyes must see that—except his own and Nugent's. To cut down to the cricket ground, call Frank off the field, and warn him—

There was no time! Dicky was going all out on his brother's bike to catch the two o'clock train at Courtfield. Instant pursuit might not overtake him. But if there was a chance, it meant that not a second, not a fraction of a second was to be lost. Swiftly the Bounder made up his mind. He owed Frank Nugent something—and this was how he would square the account. Russell was fielding in his place—he could keep it up for another half-hour—the St. Jude's innings was bound to last a good deal longer than that. A swift rush on his bike—Nugent minor brought back, by the neck, if necessary—the Bounder was the man for rapid action. He left the study and ran down the stairs two at a time.

"I say, Smithy!" Billy Bunter hailed him on the landing. "I say, Wharton says—"

So Wharton had sent for him, after all! The Bounder passed Bunter in a flash and was gone. But he did not head for the cricket field. He headed at a rapid run for the bikeshed.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Let Down!

HARRY WHARTON gave a glance towards the House, and then concentrated his attention on the game again.

Before lunch, St. Jude's had been one down for six; now they were two down for twenty. Why did not Smithy come? Redwing had said that he was coming—but he had not come. It made the captain of the Remove bitterly angry to realise that that cheeky member of his team was deliberately keeping away

for no reason but to cause trouble and annoyance. To keep the innings waiting till Smithy chose to come was scarcely practicable; but a word to Lunn was enough, and Russell took the Bounder's place in the field. That mattered little to carry on for a few overs—but it was not for fielding, it was for bowling that Smithy was wanted.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the demon bowler of the Remove, was in fine form. But the dusky nabob could not handle all the bowling. Tom Brown and Squiff were good men with the ball—tip-top change bowlers. Wharton himself could bowl fairly well. But the Bounder was the only man in the team who could do the double turn—he had always been a splendid bat, and of late he had developed great powers as a bowler, too, running the nabob very close. He was wanted—badly wanted—and he was not there. It was intensely exasperating to his captain, especially as, Smithy having batted for his side, he could not be kicked out and another man taken on in his place. And still he did not come.

Over followed over; and the Greyfriars men had plenty of leather-hunting. The batting was good; Hurree Singh seemed the only man who could get wickets. The change bowlers exerted themselves in vain. The Bounder was wanted to take on the bowling in turn with Inky. And he did not come!

If the fellow had been five minutes late, ten minutes late, it would not have mattered so much. But it was getting serious, as half an hour passed and the Bounder did not appear. Inky was putting in as much bowling as the rules of the game allowed; but he was not made of iron; he could not keep it up for ever. And the other bowlers were unable to touch the batsmen. It began to look as if Smithy did not mean to be late, but meant to cut the rest of the game altogether—which would not only mean the loss of his bowling, but the loss of his wicket when Greyfriars batted again. That was an intensely exasperating thought to the captain of the Remove; and he regretted that he had played Smithy at all, good man as he was.

Billy Bunter had been sent to remind the Bounder, and Wharton saw the fat junior return—alone! Smithy did not come. Once more the captain of the Remove glanced round towards the distant House, in the hope of seeing a figure in white sprinting towards the field.

It was only for a second that Wharton was off his guard—but a second was exactly enough. The ball came hot from Lunn's bat—a real "sitter." Wharton grabbed at it just a second too late, and it fell at his feet!

His feelings could not have been expressed in words.

But fellows, crowded round the ground, found words in which to express their opinion of that dropped catch.

"Butterfingers!" yelled Skinner.

"Gone to sleep?" hawled Bolsover.

"He, he, he! I say, you fellows, did you see that? I say, a baby could have caught that! He, he, he!"

"They call this cricket!" said Temple of the Fourth to his friends. "In the field their skipper goes to sleep standin' up, like a horse! And they call it cricket!"

"Oh, rather!" chuckled Dabney.

"Butterfingers!"

Wharton threw in the ball, with a crimson face. All through that day he had been making mistakes; and every mistake was, in one way or another, due to the Bounder. It was bad enough this time; for Lunn, the St. Jude's skipper, was not the man to give a lot of chances in the field. He was scoring

well—and now he was given a new lease of life to keep on scoring. And that narrow escape made him doubly careful. Wharton was not likely to have such a chance again.

But fortune smiled once more, when the field crossed, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh took the ball again. He was bowling from Lunn's end; and the St. Jude's man at the other end swiped vigorously at a ball that was not there, and a clatter of falling bails followed. And next man in went west at the next ball. And the next man followed him; and the Greyfriars crowd cheered the "hat-trick" loudly. Wharton smiled again. If old Inky kept on at this, they could do without the Bounder. Three wickets down for nil was heartening.

And the nabob was not finished yet. Next man in hit the ball back like a bullet at the bowler; and Hurree Singh was seen to jump—and hold up the leather—and there was a roar.

"Well caught!"

"Bravo, Inky!"

"Good old Jampot!"

Harry Wharton's face was bright. Four wickets in an over put a different look on things. But the brightness died out of his face as he saw the finish of that over. Something was amiss with the nabob. When it ended Hurree Jamset Ram Singh came towards his skipper, with a rather dolorous expression on his dusky face.

"What's up, Inky?" Wharton felt like groaning; it really seemed as if misfortunes would never cease.

The nabob held up a dusky hand.

"I am terrifically infuriated," he said apologetically, "but that esteemed catch has damaged my ridiculous fin preposterously, and—"

"Don't say you're crooked!"

"I will do my esteemed best, but—"

The ball had come into the dusky palm like a bullet. Wharton looked at the split skin and suppressed his feelings.

"Not your fault, Inky! You've done wonders—you're the only cricketer in the team. Can't be helped!"

"I can make esteemed catches with my ridiculous left!" murmured the nabob.

"Make all you can!" said Wharton, with a wry face.

Even with only one hand available, Inky was a valuable man in the field. But it was bowling that the Remove wanted—and bowling was now precisely what they had not got. Obviously Hurree Singh could not bowl again—the change bowlers had already proved futile—and the Bounder was not there!

With grim resignation, Wharton settled down to see St. Jude's stack up runs. The deserter should pay the price after the match, but that was not going to help the cricketers.

Still, it was not all one way. St. Jude's were 90 for six, when Frank Nugent brought off a catch—the first chance Lunn had given since Wharton had spared him. It was the catch of the match—for Lunn was the best bat in his side, and had looked like being not out after being first in. And it was not an easy catch, either. Nugent jumped to it and caught it in his outstretched hand—and held it—amazed at his own good luck. There was a deafening roar from the Greyfriars crowd.

"Well caught, Nugent!"

"Oh, good man—good man!" roared Bob Cherry. "Good old Franky!"

Wharton's eyes danced as he saw Frank holding up the ball. Apart from the hat-trick by Inky, it was the best thing that had happened for Greyfriars in that innings—Frank had proved that he was worth his place in the team, in spite of his duck. It was sheer joy to

(Continued on page 22.)

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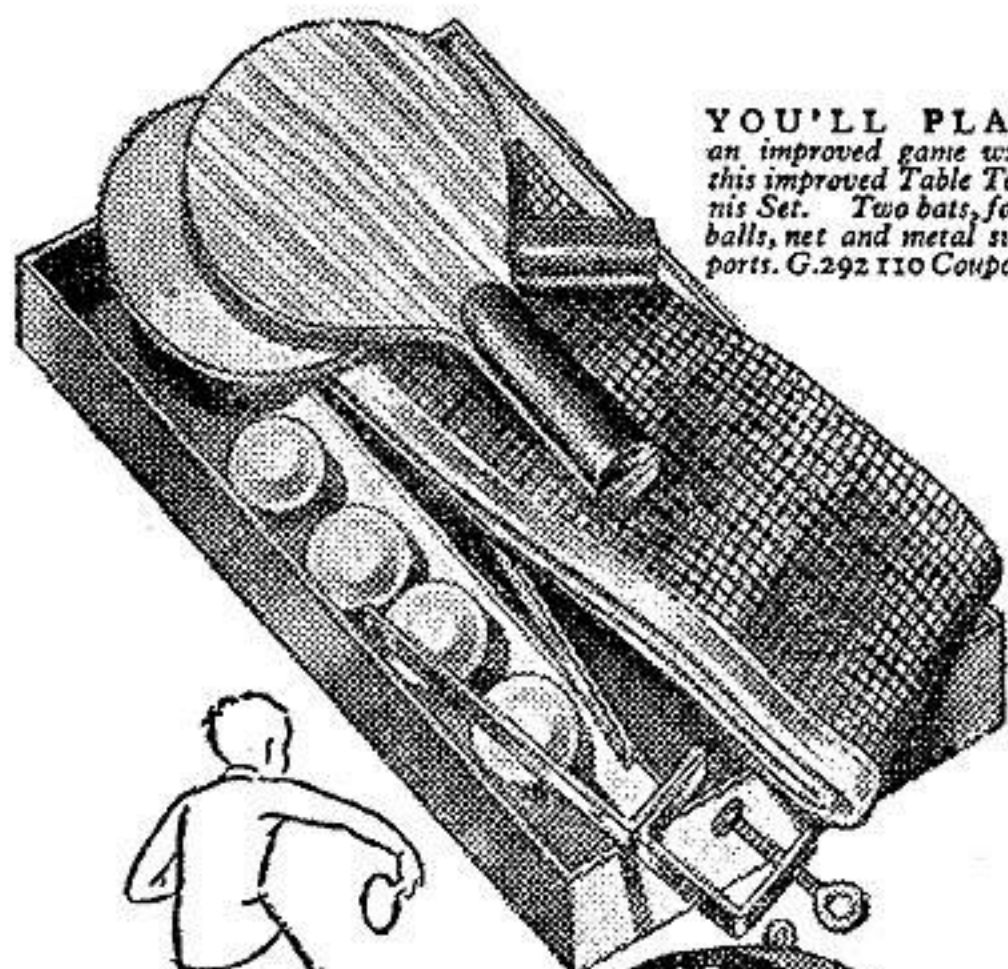
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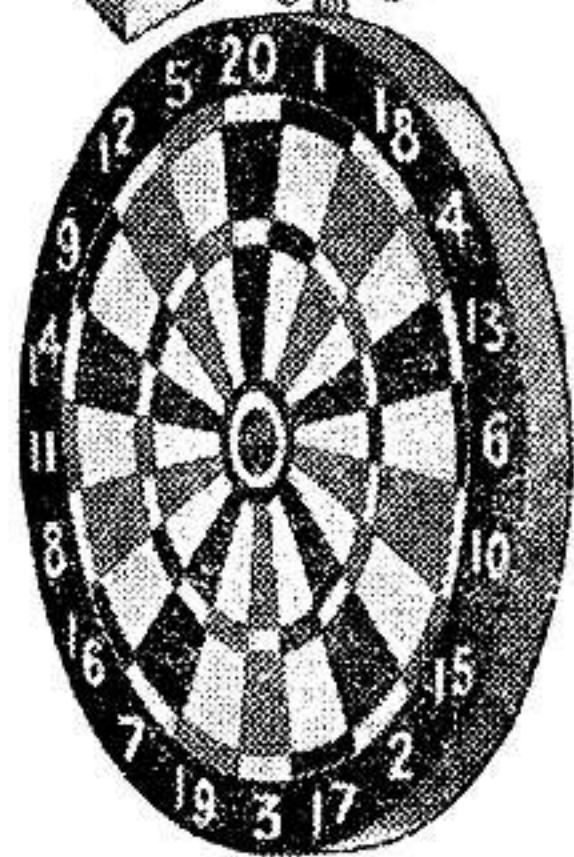
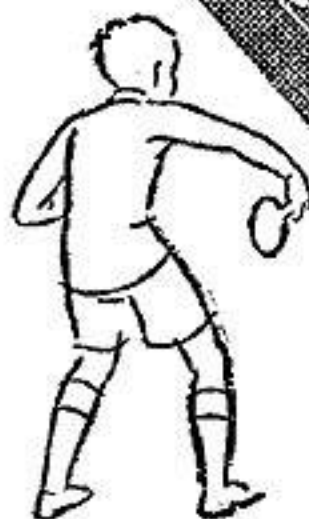
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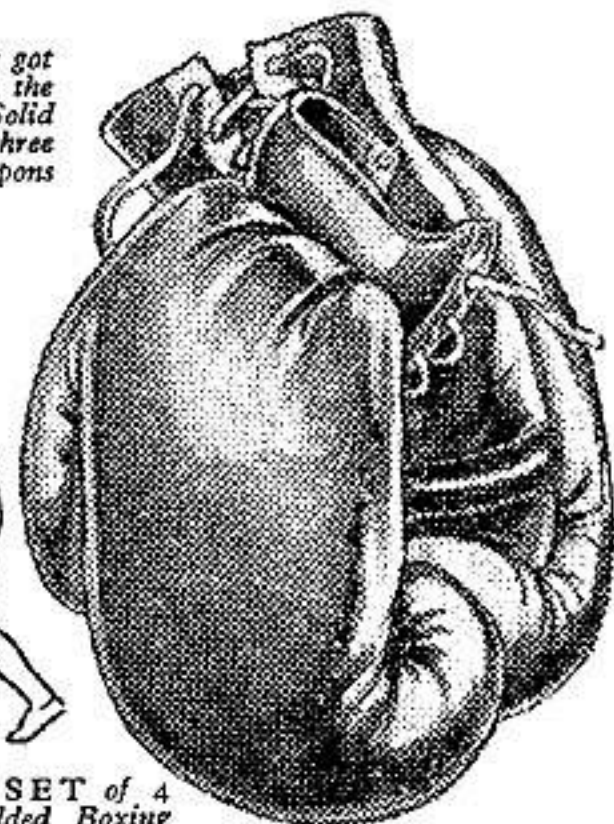
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THE DESERTER!

(Continued from page 20.)

the captain of the Remove to see Lunn carry out his almost invincible bat—dismissed by Nugent! He ran over to his chum and clapped him on the shoulder.

Nugent gave him a cheery grin.

"What luck!" he said.

"Oh, good man!" said Harry. "I thought Lunn was set for the innings! Thank goodness we played you, Frank!"

"Thank goodness you've reason to say so!" smiled Frank. "That catch has made me feel good."

"Give us some more," said Harry, with a smile. "We want some more like that, now that our Smithy has let us down!"

"Has Smithy really cut the match?"

"He's not here!"

"Frightful rotter!" said Nugent, little dreaming how the Bounder was occupied in those moments.

"He will have to pay for it!" said Wharton, knitting his brows. "But never mind Smithy now—we've got to pull it off without him!"

"We'll try!"

The tail of the St. Jude's innings, fortunately for Greyfriars, was rather feeble. Only ten more runs were added before the last wicket fell, and the visitors were a level 100 on the innings. That was 32 ahead of the home team, which, considering all things, was not so bad as might have been expected. It was certain that matters would have been much worse, but for Nugent's fortunate catch.

"Where's Smithy?" asked Bob Cherry, when the field came off.

"Echo answers that the wherefulness is terrific!" said the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"He can't really have let us down! A man couldn't! Here, Reddy, don't you know what's become of Smithy?"

Redwing shook his head in dismal silence. To him, as to the rest, it appeared unquestionable that the arrogant Bounder had indulged his temper to the extent of deserting his side.

Wibley came over to the cricketers.

"What did Smithy cut off for?" he asked.

"Has he cut off?"

"I saw him going out on his bike soon after you started. He was riding like mad. I called to him, but he never answered."

"Gone out on his bike—in the middle of a cricket match—and not come back!" said Bob Cherry blankly. "The rotter—the unspeakable rotter!"

"We'll win without him somehow," said Harry.

He tried to infuse confidence into his voice; but it was not much of a success. Only if the Bounder turned up to bat was there a chance of pulling the game out of the fire. And nobody expected to see the Bounder now.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Caught!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH had, as Wibley said, been "riding like mad" when he left Greyfriars on his bike.

There was not the remotest idea in Smithy's mind, when he started, that he would be absent all through the St. Jude's innings, and certainly it never crossed his mind that he might not be on the spot to take his "knock" when Greyfriars went in again. He meant to scorch down to Courtfield, going all out—either overtaking the fleeing fag on

the road, or catching him at the railway station.

If he lost him there, if the train had gone with Nugent minor in it, he meant to ride back at top speed and rejoin the cricketers. He would be in lots of time to carry on with the bowling—after having done his best for Frank Nugent. That was Smithy's programme—which did not allow for the chapter of accidents.

Hard as he rode, he did not sight the fag on the way to the town. Two o'clock was striking when he entered Courtfield. Trains were not always punctual at Courtfield, and there was still a chance—and the Bounder took chances among the traffic that made alarmed drivers yell at him furiously. But it was market day in Courtfield, and, recklessly as the Bounder rode, he was more than five minutes late at the station.

Leaving his machine in the street, he hurried in. The two o'clock had left precisely at two o'clock—as it sometimes did!

But it was not at all certain that Dicky Nugent had caught it, and the Bounder questioned the porters. He learned that a schoolboy had arrived on a bike just after the train had gone, and had left the station again.

Evidently the fag had missed the train.

That was so much to the good. Dicky was still in Courtfield. The Bounder had not been far behind him—it had been a matter of only a few minutes. He could not be far away—and Vernon-Smith hurried out of the station to look for him. From one of the loungers outside, he picked up the information that a schoolboy with a bike had inquired the shortest cut out of the town to the Redclyffe road.

If it was Dicky—which the Bounder did not doubt—it looked as if he was heading for Lantham Junction, where there were plenty of trains for all parts. It was a long ride for a Second Form fag—but Dicky, in his desperate frame of mind, would give no thought to that. All he was thinking of was getting away from Greyfriars.

Herbert Vernon-Smith stopped a minute or two to consider. That hard ride to the town had had no effect on the iron-limbed Bounder—but it must have pumped the fag very considerably. Probably he was not a quarter of a mile away—on a straight road, where the Bounder could run him down with ease. Having come so far, Smithy was, naturally, unwilling to go back unsuccessful, if he could help it. He remounted his machine, and rode out of Courtfield, on the Redclyffe road.

The ground fairly flew under his wheels as he drove at the pedals. The long, white road unrolled before him like a ribbon. His keen eyes watched for a sight of Dicky Nugent ahead. Three miles had reeled off before he sighted him.

"The little ass!" grunted the Bounder.

There was Dicky ahead of him, plugging away on his brother's bike. It was easy to see that he was tired; but he was keeping up a good speed, all the same. It was some minutes more before the Bounder was within hailing distance. Then he shouted:

"Stop!"

He had to shout several times before the fag heeded. Then Dicky glanced over his shoulder.

Vernon-Smith waved his hand.

"Stop for me!" he shouted again.

Dicky did not stop. The Bounder was nothing to him—he disliked him, so far as he thought of him at all. He was not likely to stop for the fellow who had smacked his head in the Remove

passage the previous day. Instead of stopping, he exerted himself to put on more speed.

The Bounder gritted his teeth.

He had already spent more time on the chase than he had intended. He was tempted to leave the wilful fag to his own devices, and turn into the path through Redclyffe Woods, and go all out for Greyfriars and the cricket match. But it was rather futile to come so far, and give up the chase with his quarry in sight. He was thinking, too, of Nugent major—of the crushing blow it would be to Frank if the foolish fag was not brought back to the school.

Wharton, of course, would be feeling bitterly savage at his desertion. But even Wharton, had he known how matters stood, would have said that it was more urgent to save the fag from his folly than even to win the St. Jude's match. For it was quite certain that if Dicky did not return to Greyfriars now, he never would return.

A boy who ran away from school after taking a banknote from his Form master's desk was done for. Who would believe that he had not gone with the money in his pocket? Indeed, in spite of that distressful note in Study No. 1, the Bounder half-suspected that that was the case himself. It was almost entirely on Frank's account that he was bothering about the wretched scamp of the Second.

He drove savagely at his pedals, and his machine fairly flew. Dicky rode hard, panting over the handlebars, but he had no chance in a race with the Bounder. Smithy drew level at last.

"Stop, you young fool!" he barked savagely.

"Shan't!" panted Dicky.

"I'll run you down!" shouted Vernon-Smith angrily.

"Leave me alone, you rotter!"

Dicky pedalled on defiantly. The Bounder could hardly carry out his threat. He rode for a minute or two level, and then shot ahead, jumped off his machine, and stood waiting for Dicky to come up.

The fag would have ridden by him; but Vernon-Smith grasped him and fairly dragged him over, landing him on the ground, while the bike went spinning and clanging.

"Now, you cheeky little rotter—" panted Smithy.

"Let me alone!" yelled Dicky, struggling.

Smithy was there to save the young rascal if he could, but he could barely resist the temptation to give him the hiding of his life first. His temper was getting near boiling point. Chiefly to save time, he let Dicky off what he was so earnestly asking for. He grasped the fag's collar with an iron hand.

"Listen to me, you little idiot—"

"Let go! I'll hack your shins!" howled Dicky shrilly.

"Better not!" said Smithy. "I'll smash you if you do! You dishonest little scoundrel, listen to me! I saw your note in your brother's study—"

"You beast! You spying rotter!"

"That's why I came after you—"

"Mind your own business!" shrieked Dicky. "Leave me alone! What's it got to do with you, you beast?"

"You're coming back to Greyfriars—"

"I won't! I won't! And you shan't make me!" shouted Dicky.

"Will you listen to me?" Smithy tried to speak calmly. "There's no time to lose. I've cut the cricket to come after you—I've got to get back. If you go home you'll be sacked—they'll think you pinched Twigg's banknote! You've got to get back to the school at once."



Vernon-Smith rode for a minute or two level with Dicky Nugent; then he shot ahead, jumped off his machine, and stood waiting for the fag to come up. Dicky would have ridden on; but the Bounder grasped him and fairly dragged him over, while the bike went spinning and clanging. "Now, you cheeky little rotter!" panted Smithy. "Let me alone!" yelled Nugent minor, struggling.

"And be sacked!" snarled Dicky. "Mind your own business! What are you butting in for, I'd like to know?"

"Because I'm a bigger dashed fool than I ever knew I was, I suppose!" said the Bounder savagely. "But I'm not going to see Nugent's brother sacked as a thief, if I can help it."

"A lot you care about Frank! It's a lie—"

"You've got to go back! You've got to put that banknote back where you took it from, before Twigg comes in! Got that?"

"You fool! It's lost!" said Dicky shrilly. "It blew away from the window—I couldn't find it again—"

"You've not got it about you?"

Dicky glared at him.

"Why, you—you—you awful rotter!" he panted. "You said you read that note in the study— Oh, you beast! You know I've not got it!"

The Bounder's was not a trusting nature! But he could see that the wretched fag was speaking the truth. Whether the note had blown away or not—and Smithy's doubting mind was not sure on that point—it was, at all events, no longer in Dicky's possession. That was the fact, and it was the actual fact that Vernon-Smith had to deal with.

"Oh, you beast! So that's what you think!" mumbled Dicky. His passionate rage gave way to something very near hysterics, and he gave a sob. "I couldn't help it—it blew away—I was going to put it back. But old Twigg will think the same as you do—"

"How's he to think anything else, you young fool? Don't blub! Look here, we can fix this. Never mind what's become of the note—you've not got it, and that's that! I—I believe it blew away—that's all right! For goodness'

sake don't blub! I tell you we can fix it. Look here!"

Letting go the sobbing fag, Vernon-Smith groped in his pocket. Dicky stared through his tears at the notecase he jerked out—a well-filled notecase, as the wealthy Bounder's always was.

Like a fellow in a dream, Dicky watched him take out a five-pound note, and return the notecase to his pocket. Smithy thrust the banknote into the amazed fag's hand.

"Put that back in Twigg's desk. Ten to one he never noticed the number—a thousand to one he'll never dream that it's a different five. Why should he?"

Dicky gaped.

"But—but—" he stuttered. "It—it's five pounds! I can't pay you five pounds—I—I never have five pounds—I had a pound note, only Twigg took it away—I—I—" he babbled helplessly.

"You blithering little idiot! Do you think I expect you to pay me five pounds?" snarled the Bounder. "Put it in your pocket and get back to Greyfriars. Your only chance of getting out of the sack is to shove that banknote in Twigg's desk in time. See?"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Dicky.

"You'll do it?" snapped the Bounder.

He was feverishly anxious to get away. If he could trust Dicky to return to the school on his own, it would save delay—no end of a delay. He had left himself little time for bowling in the St. Jude's innings, unless it was very prolonged—if he wasted much more time he would not be able to open the innings with Wharton for Greyfriars. If the Remove had had luck, St. Jude's might be all down, this very minute, while he

was arguing with a silly fag miles away on the Redclyffe road.

But he saw, at least, that he could rely on Dicky. Sheer terror had driven the fag into the desperate step of running away from school—but any other resource was preferable. In his relief and delight, as soon as he understood that Smithy really meant him to have the five-pound note, Dicky forgot his terrors, and almost grinned. It was an utterly unexpected escape from the whole trouble. Dicky did not even begin to understand why the Bounder was doing it. He was doing it—and that was enough!

"I'll ride back with you, if you like," he said. "It's all right about Twigg—I heard him talking to Prout—they're not coming in till call-over. Bags of time! I'll—"

"Get back as fast as you can—I can't wait for you," said Vernon-Smith. "Look here, take care of that five—they don't grow on blackberry-bushes. Put it in your inside-pocket—that's right! Now get going—I'm going to take a short cut through the woods—you'd better keep to the road. So-long!"

"I say, Smithy, I'm no end obliged—"

Vernon-Smith did not wait to hear the fag's stammered thanks. He wheeled his machine into the footpath in the wood that bordered the road, mounted it there, and started.

Dicky looked after him—the Bounder vanished from sight in a few seconds. More slowly, Dicky remounted his brother's bike and pedalled back to Courtfield, to take the road for Greyfriars.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Knocked Out!

THE crash came suddenly. From somewhere in the distance the quarter-past three was chiming when Vernon-Smith started to ride through Redclyffe Woods. He had been absent much longer than he had intended—but, after all, he had succeeded.

It was worth it—even Wharton would have admitted that it was worth it, if he had known! Now for a record ride back to the school—in time, at least, for the Greyfriars second innings.

Back by way of Courtfield was six or seven miles. By cutting across the woods, the distance was reduced to less than half, and that was more than enough to decide the Bounder. The fact that cycling was not permitted on the footpaths and bridle-paths in Redclyffe Woods could not be helped—and such prohibitions did not at any time affect the lawless Bounder much. He did not even think about it as he started.

Neither did he think of keeping to the main footpath, which was fairly open. He knew the shorter ways, and he took them.

Every minute was precious now—every second! There were narrow bridle-paths, where the branches from either side mingled, and where twigs brushed against his shoulders as he raced on at the fastest speed of his machine.

Fortunately, Redclyffe Woods were generally lonely—he did not meet a soul for the first mile. He was taking chances—reckless chances—for a meeting with either a rider or a walker on the narrow paths, with the bike going full tilt, was perilous.

He hoped for a clear run, and trusted to luck—and half-way through the woods his luck let him down, as he might really have expected. He could hardly count upon having that extensive tract of woodland all to himself that afternoon.

He was going along a narrow bridle-path like an arrow, when a horseman turned into it from another path.

The Bounder was almost upon him

before he saw him. He barely avoided a collision, by jamming on both brakes hard, so suddenly that the bike rocked and skidded, and went whirling over. It clanged to the earth, and the Bounder sprawled within a yard of the horse's hoofs.

The horseman stared down at him. "Good gad!" he said. "You young fool! Do you want to get yourself killed?"

And he carefully stepped his horse round the fallen bike and trotted on his way.

The Bounder sat up dizzily. He was breathless and badly shaken; but he cared nothing for that. What he cared for was a twinge of sharp pain in his ankle, which had twisted under him as he crashed.

It was a full minute before he crawled to his feet, holding on to a tree for support as he did so.

His face was pale with pain. "More haste and less speed!" was the maxim that the Bounder never could keep in mind.

It was his way to take reckless chances, and generally he seemed to get away with them. This time his luck had failed him, and let him down with a crash.

He stood on one leg, resting against the tree. The pain in his ankle was sharp and bitter. But pain the Bounder could bear; he was tough as hickory. But he knew what a twisted ankle meant. He could not ride again—unless at a snail's pace. Not that the pace mattered, for he could not play cricket when he got in. He was crooked—hopelessly crooked. So far from batting for Greyfriars that afternoon, it was likely to be a week at least before he handled a bat again. He knew it perfectly well—before he sat down again to examine his ankle, hugging a delusive hope that it might not be so bad, after all.

He got up again at last, his face white and bitter. The game was up. He had taken a chance too many, and that was that!

It was still nearly two miles to the school. Two miles to crawl with a crooked ankle! He broke into a laugh—an angry, bitter laugh. He had meant to keep the cricket captain waiting for him. He had to keep him waiting now. What a fool he had been!

As if Nugent, and Nugent's young brother, mattered a straw to him! For the sake of a fellow who disliked him, and a young rascal who would never remember a good turn for twenty-four hours, he had knocked himself out of the St. Jude's match. And all the fellows would be thinking that he had intentionally let them down! What else were they to think, when he did not turn up at all?

He picked up his machine and wheeled it slowly on, limping painfully as he went. Somehow, bitter as he felt, he did not quite regret that he had done what he had done—that he had saved a foolish "kid" from the sack, and a fellow like Nugent from a disaster that would have been utterly overwhelming.

After all, it was not that that had knocked him out—it was his own recklessness. But for the accident he would have got back in time to bat for Greyfriars. He might have been in time had he gone back easily and safely by the high road, as Dicky had gone. Anyhow, he would have been in time to take second or third knock. "More haste and less speed"—that was really his undoing.

He tramped on dismally. There was no need to hurry now as he could not have played cricket to save

his life; but he could not have hurried, anyhow. Every step cost him pain. And he felt as if he would never get out of that endless wood. But he got out of it at last, tired, aching, full of bitterness, and heard half-past five chiming in Friardale. He wondered dismally what had become of the St. Jude's match by that time.

"Hallo, that's Smithy!"
He heard the voice of Gatty of the Second Form as he passed a field bordering Friardale Lane. There was a pond in that field, and Gatty and Myers, in a rather damp and muddy state, were enjoying life in "old Baker's boat."

"Had a spill, Smithy?" called out Myers.

Vernon-Smith did not answer; he tramped wearily on. It was not a long way down the lane to Greyfriars, but the leafy lane seemed unending to the Bounder.

He got in at last, put up his machine, and limped to the House. From the direction of the cricket field he heard a sound of shouting. The game was not yet over. But he had no concern with it now, and he was almost at the end of his strength; he wanted to get in and rest. The House seemed deserted when he went in—everybody was out of doors.

But as he went slowly and painfully up the Remove staircase he heard a patter of feet behind him, and guessed who it was before he looked round. Dicky Nugent came up breathlessly. He had seen Smithy come into the House.

"I say, Smithy!" chirruped the fag. "I say, it's all right!"

"I'm glad it's all right," said the Bounder, with a bitter sarcasm that Nugent minor did not even notice.

"I thought you'd like to know," said Dicky. "Old Twigg ain't back yet. I've done it. Safe as houses! I say, he won't notice it's a different number on the fiver. If he did, he would think he had dreamed it—what?" Dicky chuckled. "I say, Smithy, it was ripping of you! Look here! If I find that fiver that blew away, it's yours."

The Bounder leaned on the banisters with a bitter smile on his face. Dicky rattled on.

"I've looked for it again—honest Injun! It's gone! I suppose a fiver isn't much to you, Smithy. I wish my father was a millionaire. I say, I've looked in Frank's study. What did you do with that letter I wrote?"

"Oh!"
The Bounder took the crumpled missive from his pocket, and handed it to the fag.

"No need for Frank to see this now. I shan't tell him anything about it," said Dicky. "No good having his jolly old sermons for nothing."

Richard Nugent evidently had recovered from the terrors that had driven him into wild flight from Greyfriars. He did not even notice that the Bounder's face was drawn with pain.

"I've really been hunting for that dashed note of Twigg's," he said. "But it may be a mile away, you know. No good looking for it any longer. I say, if you came back through Redclyffe Woods, you must have come down Friardale Lane. Did you see anything of Gatty and Myers? They were going to have old Baker's boat out on the pond."

"Yes, I saw them," said Smithy, with grim patience. "You'll find them on Baker's pond, if you want them."

"Oh, good!" said Dicky. "Thanks! They'll make out that I funk'd taking my pound note back from Twigg."

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They won't believe that it wasn't there. Well, I shan't stand any rot from them—I can tell them that!"

Richard Nugent went down the stairs again. All was serene, from Master Dicky's point of view. He was quite himself again. He did not even ask the Bouncer if he had got back in time to play cricket. He had forgotten that the St. Jude's match was going on. The Bouncer looked after him as he went with a strange expression on his face. Then he shrugged his shoulders, and limped on to his study.

He sank into his armchair there with deep relief. It was some time before he could summon energy enough to rub his damaged ankle with embrocation. That and a rest abated the pain a good deal; but the Bouncer did not leave his study. He lay back in the armchair staring before him in as black a mood as he had ever known.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Beaten to the Wide!

HARRY WHARTON did not expect to see the Bouncer again that afternoon. He had not the slightest doubt that Smithy had kept his threat to cut the rest of the match.

Yet as the Greyfriars second innings wore on, he found himself hoping every minute to see the man who was wanted so badly turn up on the cricket ground. Even if the Bouncer went in last, it would save a wicket—and every little helped. Deeply angry as he was at Smithy's desertion, Wharton would have been overjoyed to see him turn up, and would have welcomed the straying sheep back into the fold. But the innings went on to a finish without a sign of Vernon-Smith.

Greyfriars did better in the second knock. In the first Wharton had had cruel luck, which was not likely to happen again. In the second he put up a good forty off his own bat, which was a godsend to the side. Other men did fairly well, especially Squiff, who was good again, and Toddy and Tom Brown. And Nugent added ten before he fell.

The innings was over in time for an early tea, with a total of 132 for the Remove—very much better than their first score, and better than St. Jude's. With a total of 200 on both innings, Greyfriars had not done so badly, after all. And St. Jude's wanted a 100 to tie, 101 to win when they went in again after tea.

In other circumstances the captain of the Remove would not have feared for the result. But he knew there was little hope now. Hurrce Jamset Ram Singh could not bowl; and the Bouncer was not there. Inky's disaster was sheer ill-luck—one of the things a sportsman has to stand. But the Bouncer's absence was a very different matter. To lose a game, owing to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, was one thing; to lose because a man had let the side down was quite another. It was bowling that the Remove wanted now; and in bowling they were nowhere. The change bowlers were good, but not good enough for St. Jude's. And all the fellows knew that Lunn & Co. could not only get the 101 they wanted, but twice as many if they had wanted them.

Up to the last moment the captain of the Remove hoped against hope that Vernon-Smith would come. He could have forgiven him cutting the Greyfriars innings and throwing a wicket away, if only he would have turned up to bowl against the enemy. Three or four fellows went to look for Smithy.

in the faint hope that he might have come back from his bike ride; but he had not come back when St. Jude's went in again after tea. And it could not be doubted that he did not mean to come back.

Wharton gritted his teeth, and made up his mind to it. Afterwards the fellow should pay for it; there was no question about that. All the Remove cricketers were yearning to lynch the Bouncer. Even Tom Redwing had nothing to say for his chum; he was almost as angry and disgusted as the rest.

Lunn started the ball rolling, and was soon going strong. The runs came fast. The Remove fielding was good; but the bowling was not strong enough. There were no more hat-tricks for the Remove. They could hope for little, but to keep down the margin of defeat. It was something, on such a day of misfortunes, not to be beaten by an innings. But they knew that they were going to be beaten by wickets.

Squiff put up some good bowling, relieved by Toddy and Tom Brown. Wickets fell slowly; runs piled up fast. In an hour St. Jude's were fifty for three—a plain indication of what was to come. Wingate of the Sixth had come along to give the juniors a look-in, and while the field crossed, after an over, he called to Harry Wharton.

"Hurrce Singh's not bowling. Why?"

"Crooked!" answered Harry, briefly.

"Young Vernon-Smith's pretty hot stuff. What about him?"

"He's not here."

"Not here!" repeated the Head of the Games, raising his eyebrows. "You mean he's gone off the field? Hurt?"

"He hasn't turned up."

"He was playing in your first innings—he's in the team. What do you mean?"

It had not been Wharton's intention to report Vernon-Smith's delinquency to the Head of the Games. The Remove were quite able to deal with the deserter themselves. But he had to answer Wingate.

"He's standing out," answered Harry.

"Why?"

"I don't know."

"I suppose he's told you?" snapped Wingate.

"No."

Wingate signed to him to go back to his place, and Wharton left him. The captain of Greyfriars frowned grimly. He proceeded to ask questions among the fellows round the field, and was soon apprised of the fact that Smithy had deserted the side while the match was going on. He walked away with a knitted brow.

"I say, you fellows, Smithy's for it!" grinned Billy Bunter. "He will have Wingate on his track now."

"Serve him jolly well right!" grunted Wibley.

"Wharton ought to report him to the Head of the Games, really," said Ogilvy. "He wasn't going to, I fancy. But Wingate's sure to take it up now he knows. I'm jolly glad, for one!"

"The rotter ought to be put through it," said Bolsover major. "He's let the side down because he was wild at Nugent being put in instead of Redwing. He ought to be jolly well boiled in oil!"

"It's Wharton's own fault, really," remarked Billy Bunter. "I offered to play, and he refused. I dare say he's sorry by this time."

"You fat idiot!"

"Hallo, there's another boundary for that man Lunn!" yawned Skinner.

"How many boundaries has that man put up? I've left off counting."

"They'll have four or five wickets in hand at the finish," growled Ogilvy. "It's all over bar shouting."

"They can't bowl," said Billy Bunter. "Now, if I were bowling——"

"Shut up, fathead!"

"Yah!"

"Oh, good man, Squiff! Good old Kangaroo!" roared a dozen voices, as Lunn went down at last to Field's bowling.

But it was only a flash in the pan—the last glimmer of hope for Greyfriars. Twenty minutes later it was over. St. Jude's still with four wickets in hand. Greyfriars had been playing a losing game, and they had lost—or, rather, the Bouncer had lost for them!

The Remove were sportsmen, and could take a defeat smiling. But a defeat like this they could not take smiling. It was the first big match, for the Remove, of the season, and it had been thrown away by treachery—by the Bouncer's desertion of his side. Wharton had made mistakes; but any fellow might make mistakes. Vernon Smith had let the side down, and, so far as the fellows could see, it was because he had his back up with his skipper, and for no other reason. That was not the kind of thing that the Removites could bear with patience. There was a time of reckoning coming for the deserter.

After the St. Jude's men were gone—which was rather earlier than had been expected—there was only one topic in the Remove. A crowd of fellows gathered in the Rag, discussing the matter, and debating what was to happen to the Bouncer when he came in.

"I say, you fellows——"

Bunter rolled into the Rag, in great excitement.

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"When the rotter comes in——" said Bob Cherry.

"He's in!" squeaked Bunter.

"What?"

"I say, you fellows! Smithy's in his study!"

"In his study?" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Then he's come back!"

"Just sitting in his armchair!" grinned Bunter. "He chucked a book at me when I looked in. I dodged it."

"Come on, you men!" growled Johnny Ball.

And the cricketers started in a crowd for the Remove passage. The Bouncer, it appeared, was not still out of gates, as they had supposed. He was in his study. And they were eager to see him.

Tom Redwing went with the crowd.

"Look here, you fellows," he said anxiously. "Give Smithy a chance. He may be able to explain——"

"We'll give him a chance to explain, if he's got anything to say!" said Harry Wharton. "If he has, I shall be glad to hear it, for one!"

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Facing the Music!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH did not rise from his armchair. He turned a cool eye on the swarming, angry crowd in the doorway. The Bouncer had to face the music. But he was the fellow to face it without turning a hair.

Harry Wharton waved back the more excited fellows. Smithy was in danger of being collared and dragged headlong out of his chair. But the captain of the Remove exercised restraint.

"So you're here, Smithy?"

Wharton spoke quietly.

"Adsum!" said the Bounder coolly, as if he was answering to his name at call-over.

"Just come in?"

"About an hour ago."

"That was before the game finished."

"I believe so."

"You didn't take the trouble to come down to the field."

"No."

"You've been out on your bike?"

"Yes."

The Bounder's cool, monosyllabic answers did not have the effect of oil on the troubled waters. Rather, they had the effect of a red rag on a bull. There was a roar of wrath.

"Have him out of that chair!"

"Scrag him!"

"Mop up the study with him."

The Bounder sat still. There was a deep throb of pain in his injured ankle, but his hard face gave no sign of it. That he was "crooked" did not occur to any fellow present. They did not know that he could not have got out of the chair without limping painfully on one leg. He eyed the enraged juniors, with perfect coolness—in fact, with a touch of scorn in his looks.

"Hold on!" said Harry, again waving the mob back. "Hold on! Redwing thinks you may have some sort of explanation to give, Smithy."

"And you don't?" sneered the Bounder.

"Well, if you have, I'll be glad. You threatened to cut the match and let us down. I thought it was gas. But you've done it. We've been beaten to the wide—a match we ought to have won. If you'd stood out before we'd started you'd have been a rotten worm. But you could have done that. But I suppose you don't need telling that a man can't desert his side in the middle of a game."

"Quite!"

"Well, then, if you've got anything to say—"

"Smithy, old man," urged Redwing, "you're bound to explain. If you were called away suddenly—if your father's ill, or something—"

"Rubbish!" growled Peter Todd.

"Might have been a telegram—"

"There wasn't!" said the Bounder.

"Nothing of the sort."

"Then what—" exclaimed Nugent.

"If you've got anything to say, Vernon-Smith, say it."

"You want me to—before all the fellows?" asked the Bounder, with a curious glimmer in his eyes.

"Certainly; why not?"

The Bounder laughed. There was something amusing to him in Nugent demanding the explanation in public—little dreaming what it would be when it came!

"If he had anything to say, he would say it," growled Johnny Bull. "He just let us down—and that's that."

"Last time of asking, Smithy!" said Bob Cherry.

"I've said that I'm not going to shout it out before a crowd," said the Bounder quietly. "I had a reason for cutting the game—and that reason I'm bound to explain to my skipper! I know that! I shall not say a single word to anybody else."

"Rot!" roared Bolsover major. "We're all jolly well going to know, if there's anything to know! It's all gammon! Wharton's an ass, and Smithy thinks he's going to stuff him."

"Oh, dry up, Bolsover!"

"Look here, Smithy's in the right," exclaimed Tom Redwing. "If he can satisfy the captain of the Form that's good enough. If it's a private matter the whole Form doesn't want to know."

"That's so," said Bob. "If—"

"If!" snorted Squiff.

"Well, give a man a chance!" said the Bounder, still as cool as ice. "I'll explain to Wharton, if you'll leave us alone—and see that Bunter hasn't got his ear to the keyhole—"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"And I'll leave it to Wharton to shout it out from the house-tops, if he wants to, when I've told him!" said the Bounder. "I fancy he won't want to—but he can take his choice. Can't say fairer than that!"

"I'm afraid that won't wash, Smithy," said Harry slowly. "Wingate's taking the matter up, as Head of the Games! You'll have to explain to him, so—"

Vernon-Smith gave a violent start.

"Wingate!" he exclaimed. "Oh, you fool! You idiot! Have you dragged a prefect into it?"

"Wingate isn't interfering as a prefect—but as Head of the Games," said Harry. "I never meant to say anything to him, but he came down to the match and found it out for himself. You'll be up before Wingate to-morrow—he isn't likely to pass it over."

"Oh gad!" said the Bounder. "Wingate's in it—is he? Head prefect—with a finger in this pie! Oh gad!"

"Well, what about it?" demanded Peter Todd impatiently. "We're wasting a lot of time, and it will be call-over soon."

"Have him out!" roared Bolsover major. "He's trying to spin it out till call-over."

"Look here, Smithy—"

Vernon-Smith drew a deep breath. He had fully intended to explain to Wharton, who, as Nugent's best chum, could have been relied on to keep Dicky Nugent's miserable secret. But the news that Wingate of the Sixth was taking the matter up altered it completely.

His silence exasperated the angry juniors. Wharton was trying to keep patient; but his patience was going fast.

"Look here, Smithy, this has gone on long enough," said the captain of the Remove. "We're giving you a chance—though we all know that you've acted rottenly, and have no excuse to offer. If Wingate wasn't taking the matter up, I could deal with it—and I dare say the fellows would leave it to me. As it stands, I can't, and you know it. Whatever you're going to tell the captain of the school when he calls you up to-morrow you can tell all the fellows now."

"Exactly!" said the Bounder with icy coolness. "And what I'm going to tell Wingate is precisely—nothing! You see, he would be bound to report it to the Head and somebody might be sacked!"

"We can guess whom!" said Nugent scornfully.

The Bounder laughed.

"You're amusin', old bean," he said. "You're frightfully amusin', Nugent! Never knew a chap so entertainin'."

"Smithy—" exclaimed Redwing.

"Cut it out, Reddy! I should have told Wharton, as in duty bound—if a prefect hadn't been mixed up in it! Now I can't! Even our respected and impeccable skipper might gabble a little

too much, with a prefect on his trail! I'm sayin' nothin'!"

Wharton set his lips.

"That does it!" he said. "You're saying nothing because you've nothing to say. Likely enough you've been pub-haunting while you've been out of gates—it's in your line! But you cut the match to let us down—throwing a Remove match away from sheer rotten malice. You won't play cricket again for the Remove, Vernon-Smith! We don't want a traitor in the ranks."

"Well roared, lion!" said the Bounder nonchalantly.

"And that's not all!" said the captain of the Remove his eyes gleaming. "You're going to get the ragging of your life for what you've done! You've asked for it, and you're going to get it!"

"Collar him!"

"Rag him!"

"Scrag him!"

Vernon-Smith yawned and rose to his feet—or, rather, to one foot.

"Go it," he said. "Pile in! If a dozen to one is your idea of fair play, go in and win! Mind my ankle, though—I had a spill on my bike, and I've got a bruise as big as an egg! All the rest is at your service—but you might keep clear of that ankle, if you don't really mind!"

"Gammon!"

"Rot!"

"Collar him!"

"Stand back!" exclaimed Redwing hastily. "Smithy's hurt—"

"Gammon!"

"Look!"

The sight of that big, black bruise was convincing. Even doubting Thomas could not have doubted that the Bounder had had a fearfully hard knock, and that he was crooked. Indeed, it was evident that all the time he must be in severe pain, little sign as he showed of it. Hands that were stretched out to grasp him dropped back.

"Oh, go it," said the Bounder sarcastically. "Get on with the ragging! I'm crooked—and couldn't scrap with a booby like Nugent even! Chance for you, Nugent—I couldn't take you for a walk round a table now, as I did yesterday—go in and win, old bean."

Frank Nugent's face crimsoned; and with a glance of contempt at the Bounder he turned away and pushed his way out of the study. The other fellows gave Smithy almost wolfish looks. To "rag" a fellow who was crooked, and in pain, was impossible, exasperated as they were. The Bounder, with his usual luck, had escaped the threatened ragging. He laughed.

"Why don't you pile in? It will be call-over any minute now! You're losin' time."

"You rotter!" growled Bob Cherry. "You—you—you last word in rotters, you—" He tramped angrily away.

Wharton's eyes glinted.

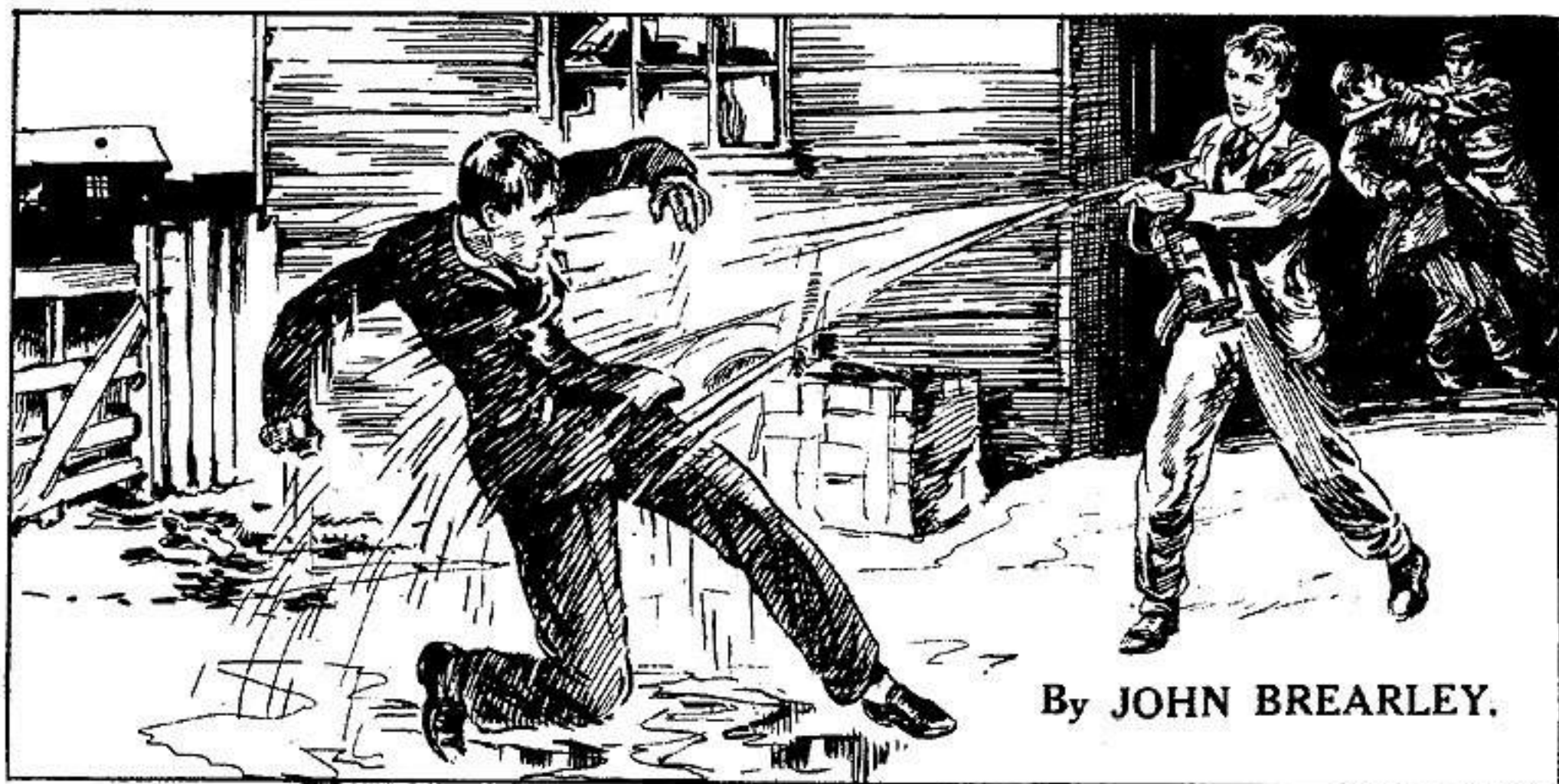
"You won't be ragged, Vernon-Smith! You'll be sent to Coventry by the whole Form!" And with that, the captain of the Remove left the study.

A few minutes later the bell rang for calling-over. Herbert Vernon-Smith limped into Hall and took his place among a silent Remove. No man in the Form had a word to say to the deserter who had left them in the lurch.

THE END.

(Be sure you read the next yarn in this grand new series: "BARRED BY HIS FORM!" which will appear in next week's Free Gift Number of the MAGNET. Order your copy early!)

ALLISON of AVONSHIRE!



By JOHN BREARLEY.

The Allison Feud!

FOR once in a way, Mike Doyle smiled—a quick, tight twitch of the lips, gone in a second.

But his eyes never shifted from Valetti, who stood glaring in return. At length, however, after a silence that seemed endless, he spoke in a low voice, strangely musical for such an ungainly, stolid-looking man.

"Uh-huh! Recognised me at last, then, Corsica Phil!" he nodded. "Funny, I knew you the minute you stamped in. But there—it's a long time since we met last, ain't it? And p'r'aps I've changed a bit—since then?"

Valetti snarled, and drew back another pace. This sudden dramatic turn of events seemed to have thrown him right out of his stride. As for the Allison, both were hopelessly bewildered onlookers.

That Valetti and Mike had met before was obvious, of course. Equally plain, too, but utterly inexplicable, was the fact that they were at daggers drawn! Valetti was like a man confronted by a ghost, while Mike, for all his uncanny quietness, reminded them of some lean old fighting-dog, tensing itself for a spring.

A storm was brewing fast. With nerves tingling, they waited for that storm to break.

But Mike, seemingly, was in no hurry.

"Funny to hear my old nickname again!" he drawled on, still impassive, still watchful. "Funnier still to meet Corsica Phil after all these years, in a little English village! Remember the last time, Phil? Dayton Motor Track, in Ohio—wasn't it?"

The mechanic smiled again—that queer grimace that held no mirth. Then, for the first time, he moved, sliding his left foot forward just a few inches.

"You were a bad lad that day, weren't you, Phil?" he went on softly. "A mad, double-crossing skunk who didn't care how many other drivers you killed or crippled so long as you roped in the cash. That left foot slid forward

another inch, and: "Well, you certainly crippled me!"

Valetti stirred; flexed his muscles, watching his enemy as closely as Mike watched him. The tension in the shed was becoming unbearable.

"Yes?" he sneered, after a long minute. "And spoilt the great Cannonball Mike's nerve for racing ever afterwards, eh?"

Mike nodded sombrely.

"Maybe, I've never raced since, anyway. But neither have you, Phil—not in America, leastways. And now you've come to England, eh—planning some more of your dirty rough stuff? Planning to help a swollen-headed young boob fight a square man. Gosh, but the world's small, Phil. I've longed for a chance like this you Corsican scum; never hoped I'd get it, though. And I've been listening—drinking in—every word you said, you—"

Mike Doyle's iron composure broke at last, and what followed was a revelation to Simon and Bill Allison, who had never heard the taciturn, self-contained mechanic say more than a dozen words at a time before.

Right and left, Mike tongue-lashed his old enemy, flaying him with fierce, acid words that stung like scorpions, though he never once raised his voice.

Valetti, his gloved hands plucking feverishly at his leather coat, chattered and squirmed with rage as Mike taunted him, deliberately, shrewdly. In

the end flesh and blood could stand the savage baiting no longer. Uttering a hoarse yell of fury, the Corsican suddenly launched himself full at his tormentor's throat.

Then the storm did break! Laughing coldly, Mike Doyle sprang to meet the attack, crashing into his foe like a cannon-ball. A wild blow landed on his chest. He ignored it. Valetti swung at his jaw—missed as the "Cannonball" ducked this time, and sidestepped, light as a feather despite his limp. Then all the Allison heard were two clean, sharp snacks, followed by a stifled groan, and the thud of a falling body.

Punched clean off his feet, the burly Corsican hit the floor, turned a complete somersault, and lay twitching and grunting.

With that, Len Allison went crazy and hurled himself at Mike Doyle. As he did so, Bill Allison burst into the shop with a roar:

"Now, you blighted road-hog!"

In one reckless jump, he tackled the plunging Leonard; grabbed him by the neck, and jammed an iron knee into the small of his back. There was a shout, a short, violent struggle, ended by the thump of a well-aimed boot. Then out of his uncle's workshop flew Avonport's biggest motor manufacturer—and, as he sprawled on the gravel path outside, Bill made a lightning grab for the patent fire-extinguisher hanging beside the door.

Whoosh!

Even as Len Allison staggered to his feet, a hissing, irresistible jet of fluid took him squarely in the chest, bowling him over again like a ninepin.

Gasping, spluttering, he scrambled up once more, only to go down a third time as the terrific stream hit him at the back of the neck.

In a moment he was drenched from head to toe. His smart clothes were ruined. Athlete though he was, all thoughts of continuing the fight were literally knocked out of him by that driving, merciless jet. Sobbing, with helpless rage, he turned tail and fled, Bill pursuing him gleefully to the gate.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,319.

HOW THE STORY STARTED.

Impoverished by years of misfortune, Simon Allison, once part-owner of the great Allison Motor Works, invents a powerful supercharger for small cars. Attempts to put it on the market, however, have failed through lack of funds. Foreseeing that the new invention would bolster up the reputation of the Allison Works, which have been grossly neglected since he has been in charge, Leonard Allison, Simon's nephew, hires a thug named Valetti to terrify the old man into parting with his supercharger at a low price. The attempt fails, thanks to the timely intervention of Mike Doyle, Simon Allison's mechanic, who recognises in Valetti an old enemy.

(Now read on.)

"This'll cool you down, my buck! Whoopee! Cars washed while you wait!" cheered the youngster, still squirting away as his cousin tumbled desperately into the roadster.

Next moment there came the sound of a scuffle, followed by an angry voice, and Bill jumped aside just in time to escape being flattened by the two men who came catapulting through the gate.

Pinned by an excruciating arm-lock, still groggy from the pile-driving punches he had received, Corsica Phil Valetti had lost all his truculent arrogance for the time being. Ruthlessly Mike whirled him out of the gate, heaved him up, and fairly tossed him into the back of the roadster. The last they saw of him that day was his heels lashing wildly in the air, as Leonard Allison, soaked and humiliated, let in his clutch and streaked away to safety.

"Phew-w!" Bill whistled long and loud. The instant the lane was empty he swung on Mike Doyle, admiration in his eyes, a score of eager questions on his lips.

Cannonball Doyle—here was a surprise! The lanky, quiet-spoken mechanic, who never talked about himself—never did anything at Kelsey except work for Simon Allison in his own stolid, patient way—now stood revealed in a new and glorious light to the hero-worshipping Bill. The youngster had learned a lot this evening. To him, this quiet cottage of his now seemed a veritable home of mystery.

Neither of his companions, however, spoke again for quite a while. Simon Allison, leaning heavily on the gate, looked tired and dejected. Mike, imperturbable as ever again, blew gently on his bruised knuckles.

"Who—who was that ruffian?" gasped the old inventor at last; and a brief flash of anger lighted Mike's blue eyes as he answered:

"The worst and cleverest thug in motor-racing! The fellow who finished me when I—I was Cannonball Doyle—"

"The finest racing driver in Ireland or America," put in Simon gruffly.

Mike scowled.

"That's all forgotten!" he snapped, and suddenly laid a firm hand on the old man's shoulder.

"Boss," he said, in a harsh voice, "you're up against it now—I'm telling you! That Leonard fellow's bad enough—got brains, influence, and no heart! But Corsica—he's poison! Afraid of nothing or no one. If he's in the Allison Works now, he'll get that new super-charger of yours or bust! With Corsica up against you—you've got to fight!"

"Fight!" Simon Allison shook his grey head drearily. He looked like a man whose energy is utterly spent. "Fight! What with? I'm old, Mike—

old, tired, and disappointed! And poor!" he added, almost to himself.

"Rot, dad! Of course we'll fight! And make some money to fight with, too!" It was Bill who spoke; Bill with his fists clenched till the knuckles shone white, and his young face no longer cheery, but hard and set. "You won't let me leave school—won't let me chuck up my scholarship. But now you must, dad! I can help by earning money somehow—cars—machinery—Dash it!" His eyes gleamed of a sudden. "Cricket! Maybe I could."

Bill checked, sighed, but went on again just as fiercely:

"Anyway, dad, we've got to get money to get your invention going! And we've got to fight Len and his new partner."

Bill is Worried!

CLICK!
"Got him!"
"Well bowled, sir!"
Out in the middle of the pretty little Avonport Grammar School ground an uprooted stump went twirling through the air, a Grammarian batsman slowly recovered from his futile lunge forward, and the bowler, jamming his hands into his pockets, turned away with a careless grin.

From the throng of schoolboys and townfolk, sitting or sprawling round the ground, came a ripple of clapping as the unlucky batsman, glancing sadly at his shattered wicket, started back towards the pavilion.

The ball which had beaten him all ends up had been a real beauty, that was some consolation; fast through the air and faster off the pitch, with a vicious nip back from the off. It would indeed have dismissed much better batsmen than Ron Cooper No 5 in the Grammarian batting order.

In spite of that, however, the applause that greeted the feat was but a ripple—brief, perfunctory, distinctly lacking in enthusiasm. For the general opinion in Avonport was that Len Allison, the successful bowler, throw quite enough bouquets at himself without others joining in!

"Look at him, grinning and swanking round—sidey ass!" snorted some of the Grammarian Fourth-Formers, a lively and candid crew. "Gosh, anyone'd think he'd just bowled Sutcliffe or Hammond instead of 'Stiffy' Cooper! Bet he don't get as many wickets like that when County cricket starts!"

Glumly they turned their eyes away from the white-clad figure of the tall, supercilious-looking young "boss" of the Allison Works, and frowned instead at the score-board.

Sixty-one for four! Not so good, especially against Avonshire Club and Ground, who had turned out with eight

of the regular County team that Saturday morning—seven pro's and Len Allison—to play against the school.

The County men, of course, regarded the fixture more or less as a "shoulder-opener," before the first-class season began in earnest. But to the Grammarians, the annual match against the Club and Ground was nearly as important as the great mid-term game against Avondale College.

"Sixty-one for four—we'll be lucky if we get a hundred now, even if Mason still keeps his end up, and Bill Allison clouts a few fours!" said the youthful pessimists. "A fat lot of good that'll be, too! The County'll rattle up about three hundred before tea, declare, and then shoot us out again for an inning's licking! Rats!"

"Huh! Shan't mind that so much if they play as well in the County Championship!" growled another. "Look at 'em last season—not one bloomin' win 'cept a couple on the first innings. And they've got nearly the same team this year, too!"

"Too many old 'uns amongst 'em! We want a few younger players—specially bowlers!"

"Oh, yes! Well, we've got one—Len Allison—and he gives me a pain! He's all right when things are going well and the wicket suits him. But wait till he gets knocked about a bit, and then watch him pack up! Remember him against Yorkshire last year, the great big—Hallo! Here's old Bill!"

Abruptly the arguments ceased; and this time a real honest-to-goodness round of clapping burst from the spectators as Bill Allison strode out of the pavilion, tapping a much-bound bat against his padded leg.

Even the disconsolate Fourth-Formers cheered up at the appearance of the tall, loose-limbed youngster; for Bill, besides being the school's star bowler, was a lion-hearted, if somewhat reckless, batsman when it came to the pinch.

"Good old Madman! Now we might see some hitting!"

"If he isn't bowled first pop! Golly, though, I hope he pastes his swanky cousin all over the field, eh, chaps?"

Eagerly the throng of schoolboys settled down in their places again, confident now that they were in for a display of fireworks. But though no one could have guessed it, Bill himself was feeling anything but confident that bright spring morning

(That Len Allison, the demon bowler, will be out for his blood Bill knows only too well! Boys, don't fail to read next week's exciting chapters of this great sporting story—every line will grip you. And don't forget that this issue will contain another handsome Free Photogravure Plate.)



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PREFECT'S ORDERS

A riot is expected in the Rag somewhere about 7.40 next Wednesday evening. Prefects will parade in the Sixth Form Passage with ashplants at 7.30, and wait till they hear a noise like an earthquake. They will then rush to the Rag and indulge in a general massacre.

By Order,
GEO. WINGATE.

THE NEW GREYFRIARS Herald

EXTRA GOOD EDITION

May 27th, 1933.

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

No. 34 (New Series).

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AS OTHERS SEE THEM

What I Think of Richard Russell

By William Gosling
(In an interview)

Wot I says is this 'ere! All boys oughter be drowned at birth. That's my view, an' soon. I've been School Porter at Greyfriars for the last forty years (don't you mean eighty, Gossy?—Ed.) I oughter know!

Owson, wot, seem as I'm arsk't to give readers of the "Greyfriars Herald" my opinion of Master Russell, I'll frankly admit that, considerin' 'e's a boy, 'e 'as his points. Wot I mean is 'e's not tight-fisted like Master Fish nor hump-backed like Master Skinner, nor too 'igh-spirited like Master Cherry.

Course 'e's a young rip like the rest on 'em, but wot I says is this 'ere—Master Russell ain't nearly so bad as some.

Many a time I've watched 'im from my lodge, steppin' in to stop some young rip pitchin' into another young rip 'arf 'is size, an', my heve, when Master Russell starts usin' 'is dooks, it's a sight worth watchin'!

They tell me 'e won a silver trophy in the Public Schools' Boxin' Tournaments at Alderley, an' I shouldn't be at all surprised to hear that 'is opponent won a couple of black heys an' a thick ear or two at the same time!

I dessey in a few years' time Master Russell will turn out to be a fine specimen of a man, both physical an' mental, as you might say. Meanwhile, 'e's a young rip, in course, although, as I've frankly admitted, not nearly so bad as most on 'em.

Thankee kindly, sir. Wot I says is this 'ere: I'll drink to your 'ealth—an' Master Russell's at the same time!

(And now look out for Russell telling the world what he thinks of William Gosling—positively featured in next week's issue—Ed.)

BUNTER CHALLENGES CARNERA

Staggering Sequel to New Invention

We've always thought it a great pity that so many fellows should be debarr'd from the pleasure of boxing by the fear of being hit, and it has often occurred to us that a far greater number of chaps would take up boxing if only the possibility of being hurt were cut out.

We're delighted to hear, therefore, that Snoop, who has always been interested in methods of avoiding pain, has just succeeded in perfecting a series of inventions which will eliminate all the terrors at present associated with the Ring.

The inventions in question take the form of guards or shields designed to cover all parts of the body liable to injury in the course of fistical argument.

For instance, the chap who would be an enthusiastic boxer, but from his haunting fear of getting a buff on the nose, can now affix the *Snoop Nasal Protector*, a steel device lined inside with velvet, and go in for the noble art of self-defence without the slightest danger of a damaged proboscis.

Should he also have a horror of black eyes, he can don a pair of Snoop's Patent *Boxing Goggles* fitted with bullet-proof glass and defy the world to give him a dot in the eye.

On his jaw he can wear Snoop's *Steel Double-Chin*, and over his ears *Anti-Thick-Ear Caps*.

He can strap a Snoop's *Steel Foot* round his mainly steel and a Snoop *Protective* Carnera.

SMITTHY SCORES

In the Crazy Collecting Competition organised last Wednesday afternoon by the Remove Lunnatics at Greyfriars, the following curiosities were shown:

1. A live snake.
2. A man with a beard.
3. A bust of Julius Caesar.
4. A tropical orchid.
5. A scarerow.

Remove-Smith of the Broom returned to the Association's headquarters at the time of thirty-five minutes and announced that he had secured everything with the exception of the tropical orchid which he found rather difficult to get. After a brief discussion the judges decided to excuse him from the ordeal and award him the prize of One Year's Pre-Subscription to the "Greyfriars Herald."

PRUNED ADENOIDS CREATE BRAIN

Lecturer's Revelations Startle Remove

Professor Pottipust gave a lecture in Courtyard recently on the subject of "The Effect on the Brain of Surgical Operations." This circumstance would have left us stone cold in the ordinary way. But when Mr. Quelch announced that boys wishing to attend the lecture could have a late pass, we sat up and took notice. In the end the entire Remove, with the exception of Lord Mangleover, turned up to hear the worthy professor's message to the world!

Now that it's over we must say we're jolly glad we went. The professor's revelations startled all of us with the exception of Dutton, who thought he was attending a display of conjuring.

Professor Pottipust started by saying that his ideas on the subject of the mental effects of surgical operations were entirely his own, patents applied for.

IF THE HEAD WROTE THRILLERS

Blood-Curdling Dialogue Certain

It's the fashion nowadays for Public school housemasters to write "thrillers," and we often get inquiries from readers as to whether Dr. Locke has ever turned his hand to such work. The reply to such inquiries is "No."

Still, there's no telling what's going to happen next in these exciting days, and it wouldn't surprise us a bit to see the Head sitting down for hours on end tapping out the adventures of a Screaming Sphinx or a Moaning Mummy or something!

Can't you imagine the kind of thing Dr. Locke would be likely to write? Something like this, perhaps:

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"Wretched youth!" he cried. "At least I have you in my power, ipso facto, and nothing shall prevent the revenge I have planned for you, line illos lacinae. And now—ha, ha—I am going to inflict on you a punishment that will scar your very soul."

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"Goodness gracious!" he snarled. "It was at that moment that Det-Insp. Sterne of Scotland Yard came on the scene. "Wretched boys!" he boomed. "How dare you break bounds at this hour of the night! How fortunate that I brought my ashplant with me! Bend over!"

All restraint departed from the gangsters and a frightful string of curses rent the air. "Dear me! Goodness, gracious! Bless my soul!" they snarled. "De jure! Gallia est omnia divisa in partes tres!"

But what's the good of going on? You know the sort of "thriller" the old Beak would write, don't you?

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

Wun Lung insists on wearing Oriental costume at Greyfriars. When he first came he was "regged" by the cad, but Bob Cherry put a stop to that.

Old Mumble, the Head's gardener, is very jealous of the Head's brooms, and guards them from trespassing lads—with a boy's pipe!

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?

Bob Cherry is very keen on athletic "stunts" of all kinds, and sets a high pace in a game of "Follow Your Leader!"

Robert Vernon-Smith used to be a frequent visitor to Skinner's study for a little game of cards, but since chumming with Beak-wing, he has forgotten his old habit.

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BUNTER SWALLOWED UP

Bunter was so keen on the tomato ketchup at dinner the other day that he poured out the entire contents of the bottle on to his plate, leaving the rest of the Remove without any!

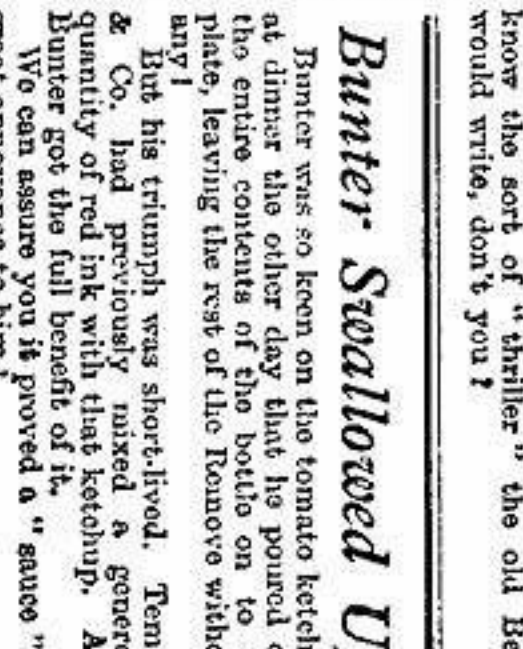
But his triumph was short-lived. Temple & Co. had previously mixed a generous quantity of red ink with that ketchup. And Bunter got the full benefit of it.

We can assure you it proved a "sausage" of great annoyance to him!

DICKY NUGENT'S WEEKLY WISDOM

My major says I'm always getting into hot water. Don't believe him, you fellows. The truth is that I haven't had a bath for nearly a year, so there!

Dick Penfold has spent a whole week trying to think of an arresting title for a crook melodrama he has written. Why not "Police"?



'Lonzy's Little Letters

Dear Editor.—Cousin Lonzy, in recently disseminating admulatory discourse, gratefully vocalized his conviction that I, his consanguineous relative, neglected to "throw my weight about" sufficiently.

In pursuance of the objective indicatively asseverated as the desideratum, dear Editor, I estimated the utilization of my prehensile members in the acquisition of a metallic conglomerate of appropriate size and density, and impelled my footsteps in the quadric bar direction, throwin' on-numbered. But, alas! I saw was my athletic maladministration that fortuitously affected the propulsion of the weight directly on to one of Mr. Quelch's pedal extremities, with such segmentary misapprehensions as scarcely necessitate my personal disclaimer.

If you are fatidically disposed, dear Editor, your prognostication will indubitably be that I shall seek to "throw my weight about" no longer!

Yours for psychological expediency (though I know not why),

ALONZO TOND.

(Apparently 'Lonzy took Peter's instructions literally and threw his weight about when Quelch was passing, severely damaging the beak's toes in the process. As far as we can see, this is the "sole" me'je in this week's outburst.—Ed.)

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