

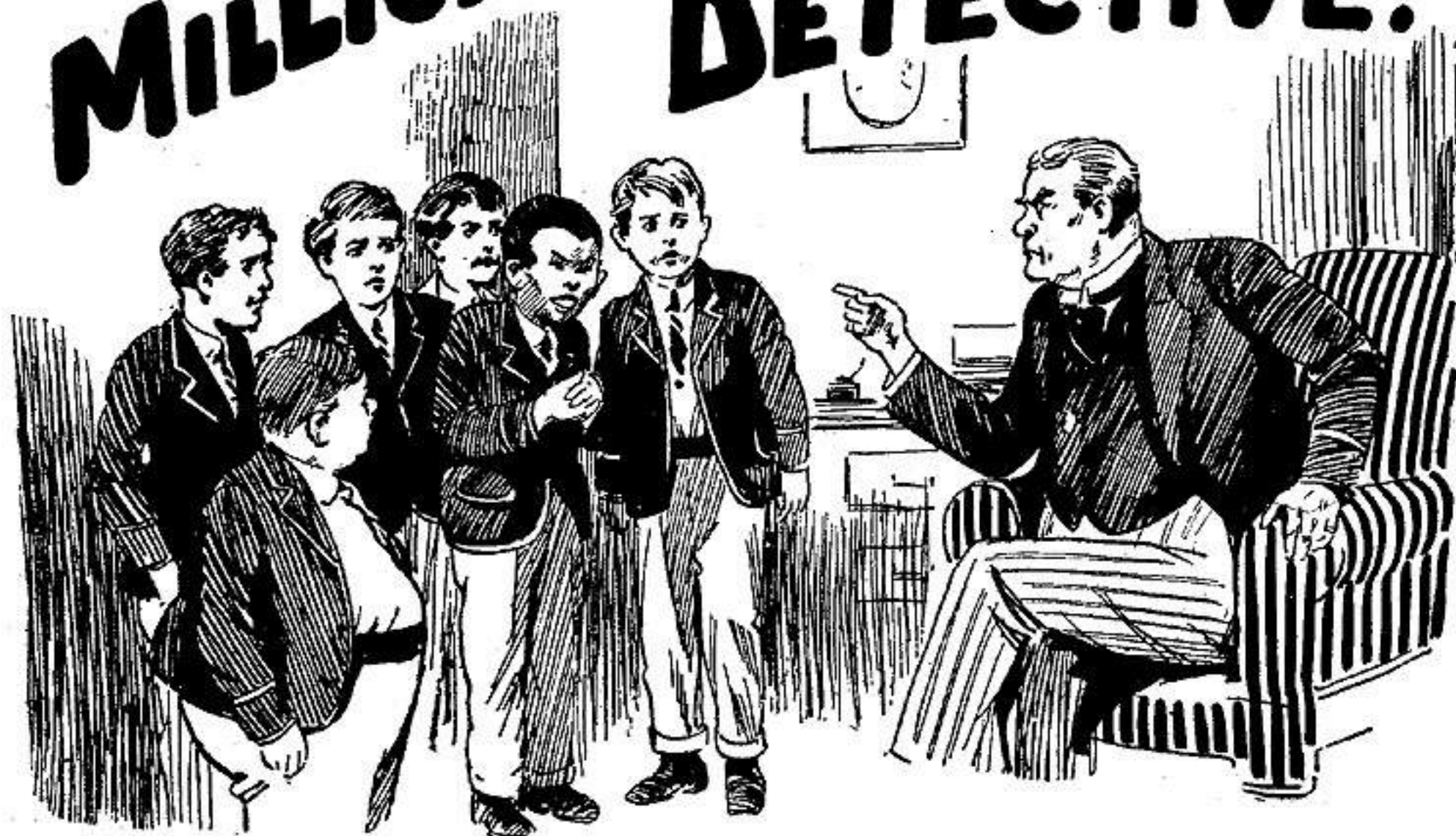
"THE MILLIONAIRE DETECTIVE!" Amazing Long Complete School Yarn of **HARRY WHARTON & CO.**

The **MAGNET** 2^D



A Boot for Billy Bunter!

THE MILLIONAIRE DETECTIVE!



BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Not Taking Any!

WHAT'S the game?" Bob Cherry asked that question in surprise. Half a dozen other fellows, in the Remove passage at Greyfriars, glanced round at Billy Bunter.

Bunter was coming out of Study No. 7.

He was heavy-laden.

His fat hands grasped the edges of a rather dilapidated tea-tray. On the tray were piled a number of school books. Their dingy and dog-eared condition showed that they were Bunter's books. On top of the pile of books lay a clock that was not ticking, a pair of slippers with more holes than soles, and a cushion from which the stuffing was exuding in several places. The tray rested against Bunter's well-filled waistcoat, and the top of the pile reached to his podgy chin. He blinked over it through his big spectacles at the Remove fellows who stared at him in the passage.

"I say, you fellows, get out of the way!" said Bunter.

"Moving job?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Eh—yes! I'm changing my study," explained Bunter. "I'm fed-up with Toddy, and I've told him so. Now Smithy's gone, I'm changing into Study No. 4. You can help me carry these things, if you like."

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob.

The door of Study No. 4 along the passage was closed. That study had been shared by Tom Redwing and Herbert Vernon-Smith. But Redwing had it to himself now. Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, was gone. Smithy had been "sacked" from the

school. Probably Redwing felt rather lonely in Study No. 4 on his own. But whether he would like to have his loneliness relieved by the fascinating company of Billy Bunter was a rather doubtful question to the Remove fellows. Bunter seemed to have no doubts. But, then, Bunter knew—what nobody else in the Remove seemed to realise—what an attractive and charming fellow he was.

Heavy-laden, Bunter rolled down the passage to Study No. 4, the juniors staring at him, some of them grinning. He blinked round.

"I say, Wharton, open the door for me, will you?" he squeaked. "I've got both hands full!"

"Has Redwing asked you?"

"Eh—no! I'm going to tell him."

"Pleasant surprise for him—what?" chuckled Bob.

"Yes, exactly! Redwing's been looking frightfully down in the mouth since Smithy went," said Bunter. "I don't know whether he misses Smithy. I don't see how he could, really—Smithy was rather a beast!"

"You fat owl!"

"Oh, really, Wharton, you jolly well know that Smithy was a beast! Why, he had a worse temper than yours!"

"You—you—"

"And that's saying a lot!" said Bunter, blinking at the captain of the Remove. "I fancy Redwing will be glad to have a really decent chap in his study after Smithy, you know. Open the door, will you?"

"Fathead!"

"Open the door for me, Bob!"

"Ass!"

"I say, Nugent—"

"Idiot!"

"Beasts!" roared Bunter. "I say, Bull—"

"You fat frump!" growled Johnny Bull. "Keep out of Redwing's study!"

"It's going to be my study now, you ass! I say, Inky, open this door for a chap, will you?"

Hurree Janset Ram Singh shook his dusky head and grinned.

"The botherfulness of the esteemed Reddy is not the proper caper, my idiotic, fat Bunter!" he said. "He is terrifically cut up by the departure of his chumful pal."

"Well, I suppose he would rather have me in the study than Smithy," said Bunter. "That's all right! It will cheer him up!"

"Oh, my only esteemed hat!"

"Will you open this door for me?" roared Bunter.

"The answer is in the esteemed negative."

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter could not open the door himself, neither could he knock at it. He lifted his foot to kick—and the pile on the tray swayed. He set his foot down again hastily. Skinner came along the passage, grinning.

"I say, Skinner, open this door for me!" squeaked Bunter.

"Certainly!" answered Skinner.

Skinner was not an obliging fellow, as a rule; but he could be obliging sometimes—in his own way.

"Look here, Skinner, don't do anything of the sort!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, frowning. "Bunter, you ass, keep out of that study! Redwing doesn't want to be bothered!"

Every fellow in the Remove except Bunter knew that Tom Redwing had been quite knocked over by the disaster that had fallen on his chum. Even Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, knew it, and he had been very considerate to

Redwing in class. But such things were trifles light as air to William George Bunter. Bunter's fat thoughts, as usual, were concentrated on his fat self. Besides, no doubt he supposed that it would cheer Redwing a whole lot to find his lost study-mate replaced by such a really agreeable fellow as W. G. Bunter!

"You mind your own business, Wharton!" advised Bunter. "Don't barge in, you know! I shall get on all right with Redwing! He's not exactly my class, of course, but I'm no snob."

"You blithering owl!"
"Yah! Get that door open, Skinner!"
"Look here, Skinner—" exclaimed Wharton.

Unheeding the captain of the Remove, Skinner turned the latch and threw the door of Study No. 4 wide open.

There was one fellow in the study—Tom Redwing.

He was seated at the study table, with books open before him. But he was not working. He was staring straight before him, with a dark cloud on his face, evidently deep in painful reflections. He started from his moody reverie, and turned his head as the study door flew open.

"What—" he snapped.
Usually Tom Redwing was the best-tempered fellow in the Remove, but he seemed irritable now.

"I say, old chap—" began Bunter.

"Don't bother!"
"Oh, really, Redwing—"

"There you are, Bunter!" said the obliging Skinner, and he stepped back.

The next moment Skinner brought his foot into play, and gave the Owl an unexpected jolt in the back.

Bunter had been about to enter the study. Now he entered it—much more quickly than he had intended. He flew.

"Ooogh!" gasped Bunter.
Crash! Bump! Thud! Crash! The tray fell from Bunter's fat hands, and books and clock and slippers and cushion—all Bunter's load, in fact—crashed and clattered on the study floor. On top of them sprawled Bunter, roaring.

"Whoop! Yooop! Beast! Yarooop!"
"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell from the passage.

"Oh crumbs! Oh crikey!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Redwing jumped up, with a dark brow. He was in no humour for jests.

"What the thump—" he exclaimed.
"Look here—"

"Ow! Wow!" Billy Bunter sat up amid his scattered property, like Marius amid the ruins of Carthage. "Ow! Beast! I say—Wow!"

"What do you want?" hooted Redwing. "What have you brought all this rubbish here for, you fat duffer?"

"Eh?" Bunter blinked up at him and scrambled to his feet. "It's all right, old chap! Help me to pick up these things, will you? And, I say, you can come and lend me a hand to carry the rest, if you like. I can't bring the armchair—"

"What?"
"Toddy says it's his," said Bunter.

"He makes out that the armchair's his, because he bought it, you know. But Smithy's left his here, so that's all right! You can have it when I don't want it—that's fair!"

"What the dickens—"
"I'm changing into this study," explained Bunter. "I'm fed-up with Toddy in Study No. 7. Now Smithy's gone—"

"You frabjous owl! Get out!"
"Eh?"

"Get out!" hooted Redwing.
"Oh, really, Redwing! If you mean that you don't want me here—"

"Just that! Get out!"
"You can't expect to have a study to yourself, you know. Nobody has, in the the Remove! I'm changing into here," said Bunter firmly. "Dash it all, man, you might be grateful!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the passage.
"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! Shut up, you fellows! Look here, Redwing, don't be cheeky, see? You ought to be jolly glad to get me here!"

exclaimed Bunter indignantly. "It's a bit of a catch, for a fellow of your class, to get a gentleman to share his study—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came another yell.
"And I'm rather an improvement on Smithy, I suppose!" said Bunter warmly. "A rank outsider, sacked for pub-haunting—Yaroooh! Leggo! Oh crikey! Leave off kicking me, you beast! Oh jiminy!"

There was a shriek of laughter from the passage. Billy Bunter, in Redwing's sinewy grasp, spun round to the door. A boot was planted on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars. Bunter came out of the doorway like a stone from a catapult.

Bump!
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Wow! I say, you fellows—Help! Keep him off!" shrieked

Mr. Vernon-Smith, a City stock-broker, is mighty wild because his son, Herbert Vernon-Smith—more commonly known as the Bounder—has been expelled from Greyfriars! In his amazing efforts to clear his son's name, Mr. Vernon-Smith becomes a first-class amateur detective!

Bunter. "I say, you fellows—Yaroooh!"

Whiz, whiz, whiz! Bang, bang bang! Dog-eared school-books came whizzing out of the doorway after Bunter, landing on him one after another. The fat Owl squirmed and roared under the hail. Following them came a clock, a pair of slippers, and a cushion, finally a tea-tray! They bumped and banged and clattered on Bunter, till the last article of his property had been ejected from Study No. 4. Then the door slammed.

"Ooogh! Ow! Wow! Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Once more Billy Bunter sat up, like Marius, amid the ruins. He gasped and spluttered for breath.

"I—I say, you fellows—" he gurgled.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Shall I open the door for you again, Bunter?" asked the obliging Skinner.

"Ow! No! Keep it shut!" yelled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Billy Bunter staggered up. He gathered up his property, stacked it on the tray once more, and rolled, gasping, back to Study No. 7, followed by a roar of laughter from the Removes.

In Study No. 7 Peter Todd gave him a stare as he rolled wearily in.

"Aren't you changing out?" demanded Todd.

"Ow! No! I'm not going to have anything to do with that fellow Redwing!" gasped Bunter. "He's an un-

grateful beast! Oh dear!" Bunter sank gasping into Toddy's armchair. "Ow! This is what comes of being kind to the lower orders, Toddy! They don't appreciate it—and they're ungrateful! I refuse to have anything to do with that fellow Redwing!"

"Lucky man!" said Toddy.
"You're not going to lose me, after all, Toddy!"

"Poor me!" sighed Toddy. "I fancied it was too good to be true!"
"Beast!"

And Peter Todd did not lose Bunter! It was, as he had feared, too good to be true!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Woes of Wingate Minor!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Enjoying life?" roared Bob Cherry.

Wingate minor, of the Third Form, jumped, as Bob clapped him on the shoulder.

"Oh!" he gasped. "You ass!"
The fag had been walking in the quad, with his hands driven deep into his pockets, and a deep cloud on his face. It was that deep cloud, rather unusual on the brow of a Third Form fag, that had drawn the cheery Bob's attention. Hence his greeting, and the smack on the shoulder that made Jack Wingate yell. It was a cheery, friendly smack; but there was a lot of beef in Bob Cherry's arm.

Why Jack Wingate should be looking so dark and gloomy that sunny afternoon was rather a puzzle. The Third Form, as a rule, took life cheerfully. And this particular member of the Third was the young brother of George Wingate, of the Sixth Form, captain of Greyfriars—which was a great distinction, and gave him some consequence among the other fags.

But there was no doubt that Wingate minor looked as if most of the troubles in the universe had descended on his youthful shoulders; and he had looked like that ever since Herbert Vernon-Smith, of the Remove, had been "turfed" out of Greyfriars School.

Few fellows, however, were likely to guess that there was any connection between Jack Wingate's glum looks and the Bounder's expulsion. The Forms had little to do with one another; and so far as most fellows knew, Wingate minor and the Bounder hardly knew one another by sight. Certainly, it did not cross Bob Cherry's mind that the fag was thinking of the fellow who had been expelled.

Jack Wingate rubbed his shoulder, scowled, and turned away.

"Hold on, kid!" said Bob good-naturedly. "Is anything up?"

"No!" grunted the fag.
"Wiggins been whopping you?"

Mr. Wiggins had the pleasure—or otherwise—of being Form master of the Third.

"Blow Wiggins!" snapped Jack Wingate.

He moved away, but Bob made a step after him.

"Look here, kid," said Bob. "the other day you asked me if I could lend you a quid, and I couldn't. Is it that? Hard up?"

"No!"
"What I mean is, if it's that, I've had a remittance."

"I don't want your money!" grunted Wingate minor.

Bob Cherry's blue eyes glistened. He did not have so many remittances as plenty of other fellows—and he had a

good many roads for one, when he did have one. A kind heart, and a rather thoughtless head, had prompted his offer; and the fag's ungrateful answer was rather irritating, even to a very good-tempered fellow.

"Well, you noxious little sweep, you wanted it the other day, or I suppose you wouldn't have asked!" said Bob sharply. "And if you weren't the captain's minor, I'd jolly well bang your head on a tree for your cheek!"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" said the fag. And he slouched away—very narrowly escaping a helping foot as he went. But Bob restrained his natural impulse to kick the cheeky young rascal. He did not think much of Wingate minor personally; but he thought a very great deal of "old Wingate," the captain of Greyfriars. For the major's sake, he magnanimously forgave the minor, and walked off in another direction, leaving Jack Wingate unknicked.

Tubb and Paget and Bolsover minor of the Third, called to Jack Wingate in the quad. Instead of answering them or joining them, Wingate minor walked on more quickly, leaving the fags staring.

"What's the matter with that shirty little sweep, you men?" asked Tubb.

"Goodness knows! Let him rip!" answered Paget.

"He's been stuffy ever since Monday, when he was trying to borrow a quid in the Form," said Bolsover minor. "As if any man in the Third had a quid to lend! Bother him!"

Headless of the comments of the fags, Wingate minor slouched on. He caught sight of Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove, in the quad, and changed his direction. He did not want to see Wharton!

Wharton somehow had guessed—the fag did not know how—that it was on his account that Smithy had broken school bounds at night—the offence for which the Bouncer had been sacked. Smithy had warned him that prefects were "on the prowl," among them his brother, head prefect of Greyfriars—and saved him from being caught out of bounds after lights-out.

He had escaped; but Smithy himself had not escaped, and Smithy had paid the piper! And Wharton knew—or, at least, suspected. The wretched fag did not want to meet his eyes.

When he had first heard that Smithy had been caught, his fear had been great that the Bouncer would speak out and give him away. The Bouncer had said nothing—and his fears were relieved. But almost as bad was the trouble on his conscience.

He dared not tell what Smithy had not cared to tell; but it weighed heavily on his mind. It was no wonder that the Third had found him morose and irritable since the Bouncer had left.

"Jack!"

The fag gave a jump as his name was called. He spun round, and his troubled face flushed crimson, under the eyes of Wingate of the Sixth. The captain of Greyfriars eyed him very curiously, and a little sternly.

"Come into my study!" he said.

"I—I was just going out—" stammered Wingate minor.

"Come along with me instead!"

The fag looked rebellious. But Wingate major was not only his brother George, but also captain of the school, whose word was law.

Unwillingly, Jack followed him into the House and to his study.

There, Wingate of the Sixth sat on

the edge of the table and surveyed the fag's sullen face with keen eyes.

"What's up?" he rapped.

"Nothing!"

"Now, look here, kid," said Wingate quietly, "I've had my eye on you the last few days. Last Monday you told me you owed some money up and down the Third, and I stood you a quid to get square. I supposed that was the end of it. It seems that it isn't! You've got something on your mind. What is it?"

"Nothing."

"It's a bit odd that a kid in the Third should owe as much as a pound. Was it more than that, and you didn't care to say so?"

"No!"

"If you're in debt, you young ass, tell me at once! Whatever it is, I shall see you through. Now, then!"

"I don't owe any money."

"Sure?" asked Wingate doubtfully.

"Yes."

"Well, then, what's the trouble?" demanded the Greyfriars captain. "I tell you I've had my eye on you, and I can see that there's something up. Especially the last day or two! What is it?"

"Nothing!"

Jack Wingate was edging towards the door. It was evident that he was only anxious to escape from the study. Wingate eyed him curiously and rather anxiously. The captain of Greyfriars had plenty of occupations, but he did not, like some elder brothers, forget that he had a young brother in the school.

"You've nothing on your mind?" asked Wingate at last.

"What could I have?" grunted Jack.

"Blessed if I know—but you look like it! I hear that you've been in hot water with Wiggins a good deal lately."

"Bother Wiggins!" grunted the fag.

"That isn't the way to speak of your Form master, Jack—and to a prefect! Any other prefect would give you six—and I ought to!"

"I don't care!"

Wingate slipped off the table.

"Cut!" he said briefly.

Jack Wingate, in palpable relief, scudded out of the study. Wingate of the Sixth was left with a thoughtful brow. Something, it seemed clear, was wrong with his minor, but it was equally clear that Jack did not mean to tell him what it was. And Wingate, though he thought deeply over the matter, never came anywhere near guessing the truth.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Up to Coker!

COKER, of the Fifth Form, gave a snort.

"This won't do!" said Coker.

"Eh, what?" yawned Potter.

"Give us a rest, old chap!" mumbled Greene.

Coker & Co., of the Fifth, had been taking a walk that afternoon. Coker, who was bursting with energy at all times, had nearly walked Potter and Greene off their legs.

Coming back to the school by way of the towpath along the Sark, the green mossy banks had tempted Potter and Greene—sorely in need of a rest. Coker was not the fellow to take a rest, or to let any other fellows take a rest. With great cunning, Potter had suggested that Coker should tell them all about that late cut of his—a late cut of which Coker was very proud, it being one of Coker's unfounded beliefs that he could play cricket. So they sat down under the trees for Coker to tell Potter

and Greene all about that late cut. And Coker told them, Potter and Greene resting luxuriously in the grass and heeding Coker's voice just as much as they heeded the drone of the insects in the summer air.

So long as a fellow did not listen to it, Coker's conversation, on the whole, was no worse than the hum of a bee or the buzz of a wasp. And Potter and Greene, of course, did not listen. After Coker had been talking for a quarter or an hour, their minds were still a beautiful blank on the subject of that late cut of his.

Suddenly, however, Coker snorted, sat up, and declared that it wouldn't do. Which his comrades supposed to mean that the strenuous Horace wanted to get going again and use his legs instead of his chin.

"But look here, we're frightfully interested, old chap!" said Potter hypocritically. "You were telling us—"

"It's really an education in cricket to hear you on the subject, Coker," murmured Greene. "Do go on, old chap!"

"If you fellows had your eyes open, instead of going to sleep while a chap's talking to you, you'd see what I've seen," said Coker, severely. "Look!"

He pointed. Potter and Greene lazily lifted their heads from the mossy bank on which the said heads rested, and looked.

Coming up the towpath from the direction of the school, was a fag of the Third Form—Wingate minor! He was tramping with his hands in his pockets and a moody look on his face.

From the other direction, where the Three Fishers Inn nestled among the trees by the river, came a man with a red necktie, a beery countenance, and a bowler hat on the back of a shiny, oily head.

Neither the fag nor the beery gentleman observed the three seniors under the trees, half-hidden by grass and ferns and foliage. But they observed one another.

Wingate minor gave quite a jump and stopped dead, almost opposite the spot where the Fifth-Formers lay under the trees back of the towpath. His face, at the sight of the beery man, registered dismay.

The man in the red necktie, on the other hand, gave him a grin and a nod of recognition, and quickened his pace. Evidently, he knew and recognised Jack Wingate, of the Greyfriars Third.

"This won't do!" repeated Coker of the Fifth. "You men see that? I've seen that blighter before—his name's Leach, I believe, and he's a billiards-marker at the Three Fishers. Nice sort of blighter to be speaking to a Greyfriars kid—what?"

"Little sweep!" said Potter, with a yawn. "I wonder what old Wingate would say?"

"I wonder what he'd do?" grinned Greene. "I fancy he would give that man Leache a prize nose to take home with him."

"Well, Wingate isn't here," said Coker. "I don't think a lot of Wingate of the Sixth—he's rather an ass in a lot of things. Look at the way he leaves me out of the cricket! But I'm not going to see a fellow like that speaking to his minor! If he speaks to him I shall hit him!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Potter and Greene.

They rather wished that they had walked on now. Coker was the man to hunt for trouble, wherever trouble was to be found by an assiduous hunter. But Potter and Greene really did not want to be mixed up in a shindy with

a disreputable loafer from a disreputable "pub."

"You're not a prefect, you know," Potter pointed out.

"That's the Head's fault and the school's loss," answered Coker.

"Better not chip in, old fellow."

"Don't be an ass, Potter!"

"Look here, let's get out!" suggested Greene.

"Don't be an idiot, Greene!"

Potter and Greene sighed, and gave it up. From of old, they knew that argument was wasted on Horace Coker.

Coker, in a determined mood, watched with grim eyes. Certainly, a character like Mr. Leach, of the Three Fishers, was a most undesirable acquaintance for a Greyfriars fag. And from the look of

anything now, Leach. I paid that pound on Monday."

"Who's saying you didn't?" asked Mr. Leach. "The 'orse lost, didn't he? And didn't I put the quid on for you? And didn't I wait a week for you to settle? And a precious row you'd get into at your school, I'll be bound, if it was knowed that you came along at 'arf-past ten at night to see a man."

Wingate minor's face paled, as if all the colour had been drained out of it.

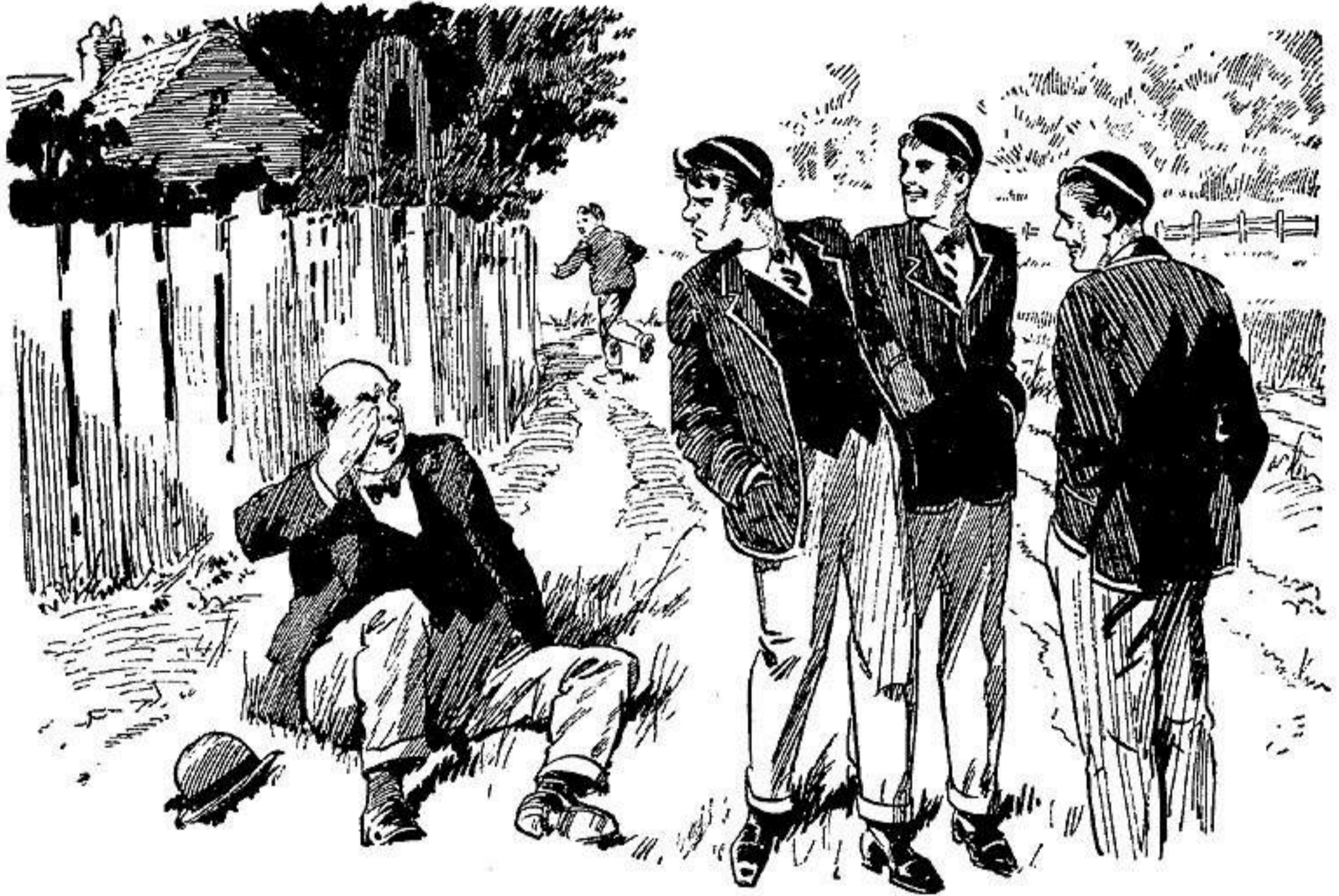
"You—you wouldn't tell!" he stammered. "You—you wouldn't be such a beast—you couldn't!"

"'Course I wouldn't!" said the billiards-marker of the Three Fishers. "But a man expects a civil word. And

"I happen to be a Greyfriars man," snorted Coker, "and I happen to see you trying to strike up an acquaintance with a kid belonging to my school—and I happen to be just the fellow to give you what you want! Get out of this, young Wingate! Now then, my man, put up your hands; I'm going to whop you!"

"I—I say—" stuttered Wingate minor. He had no objection to the whopping of Mr. Leach to any extent, but he was in terror of what the man's resentment might make him do afterwards.

"Get out!" snapped Coker. "You ought to know better than to let a fellow of this kidney speak to you! Get out!" He gave Wingate minor a push that



"Whoop!" roared Leach, when, after two or three wild and whirling minutes, he got Coker's right in his eye, and went down on his back. "Yoo-hoo-hoop!" "That's a tip!" said Coker calmly. "Keep clear of Greyfriars fellows. See? You're a bad egg, you are!" Meanwhile, Wingate minor was scudding away up the towpath.

things, he was forcing himself on Wingate minor. The fag looked as if he wanted to retreat, but did not dare to do so. It was not, perhaps, Coker's business—but minding his own business had never been one of Horace Coker's weaknesses. Anyhow, he had made up his mind that if the man Leach did speak to Jack Wingate he was going to weigh in, with emphasis.

And the man Leach did. He came up to where the fag was standing and stopped, with a grin on his face. The Greyfriars seniors were not near enough to hear what was said, but they saw that the man was speaking.

"'Ere you are again, sir!" said Leach. "Coming up to the Fishers, sir?"

"N-n-no!" stammered Jack Wingate. "I—I say, Leach, I—I wish you wouldn't speak to me here! We might be seen—"

"And s'pose we was?" said Mr. Leach disagreeably.

"It would get me into a row," faltered the fag. "I—I say, I—I don't owe you

if you wanted to put a quid on a 'orse again, ain't I ready to 'elp?"

"No fear!" gasped Jack Wingate. "Not likely! I was a fool to do it—I was a fool ever to set foot in the place at all. I—I— Look here, Leach, you leave me alone! I—"

A heavy tramping of feet on the towpath interrupted Jack Wingate. He stared round in terror, and Leach scowled round. Coker of the Fifth was weighing in!

"Now then, what does this mean?" demanded Horace Coker in his most dictatorial tone.

Jack Wingate could only gasp. A Greyfriars fellow had seen him in talk with the man from the Three Fishers! Fortunately, it was not a prefect. But a secret like the wretched fag's could not be too deeply hidden. He could only stare at Coker in utter dismay.

Leach, however, did not seem alarmed. "Who may you 'appen to be when you're at 'ome?" he demanded truculently.

sent him staggering, then he bestowed his attention on the beery man. Mr. Leach backed away along the towpath, looking a little alarmed. He was a man rather accustomed to shindies, and Coker was a schoolboy; but Coker was a big, burly, beefy fellow, and the more Mr. Leach looked at him the less he liked his looks. He backed away slowly at first, and then faster, till he was almost running backwards. Horace Coker followed him up as fast.

"I told you to put your hands up!" reminded Coker.

"Look 'ere, you keep off!" said Leach. "I don't want no trouble with you. What's the 'arm in passing the time of day with the young bloke?"

"Lots!" said Coker. "For one thing, it's going to get you a whopping. That's for a start."

"Wow!" roared Leach, as Coker's knuckles established contact with a beery nose. "Ow! Wow! Why, I'll—"

He jumped to Coker.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,330,

"Oh, my hat!" said Potter. Potter and Greene were on their feet now, looking on. Jack Wingate, catching sight of them, gave them a startled look and scudded away up the towpath towards the school.

Coker and Leach were too busy to see him go. They were going it hammer-and-tongs. Coker had about as much science as a buffalo—a rather backward buffalo. But he was enormously strong and packed full of pluck. And when one of Coker's terrific drives got home it did damage; it was a good deal like a tap from a sledgehammer.

"Whoop!" roared Leach when, after two or three wild and whirling minutes, he got Coker's right in the eye. He went down on his back on the towpath as if Coker's fist had been a cannon-ball.

"Man down!" chuckled Greene.

"Yoo—hoo—hoop!" howled Leach. "Oh, my eye! Oh, my 'at! Whoop!" Coker, panting, glared down at him.

"Have some more?" he demanded.

"Ow! Wow! You keep off, blow yer!" roared the billiards-marker of the Three Fishers. "You leave a bloke alone! Wow! Oh, my eye!"

"That's a tip," said Coker calmly. "Keep clear of Greyfriars fellows. See? You're a bad egg, you are! Come on, you fellows, we'd better be getting in to tea."

Coker walked down the towpath with Potter and Greene. Mr. Leach did not sit up till he was gone; then he sat up, caressing one eye—which was rapidly blackening—and blinking after Coker with the other.

"Oh gosh!" said Mr. Leach.

And he picked himself up at last and walked back to the Three Fishers to get a beefsteak for that eye—it needed it!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Father and Son!

"HERBERT!"

Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith, the millionaire, uttered his son's name in surprise. The school holidays were near at hand, but it was not yet the end of the term, and Mr. Vernon-Smith had not expected to see his son at home.

Smithy was standing in the hall of the house in Courtman Square, London, which was Mr. Vernon-Smith's town home. He had been there several days, since he had left Greyfriars School. His father had been absent.

Mr. Vernon-Smith was a busy financial gentleman, with many irons in the fire, and was often away on journeys for days or weeks. It had been rather a relief to Smithy to find that his father was away when he got home on the day of his expulsion from school; it postponed a painful meeting, at least. But as one day followed another Smithy restlessly wished that it was over. He knew that

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THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,330.

his disaster would be a terrible blow to his father, and he hardly knew how Mr. Vernon-Smith would take it. It was a heavy blow to himself, so far as that went, but the Bounder of Greyfriars found himself thinking more about his father than himself.

Mr. Vernon-Smith was abroad, the date of his return uncertain. Letters—among them the explanatory letter from the headmaster of Greyfriars—accumulated, awaiting his return. Larkin, the butler, could only tell Smithy that his father was expected back within the week. They were weary and restless days for Smithy.

More than once he repented, or half repented, of the resolve that had caused him to get it "in the neck" at Greyfriars. He called himself a fool—ten times a fool—for having bothered his head about a wretched, frightened fag at all, for having cared a straw whether Wingate of the Sixth found out his brother's disgrace. And yet at the bottom of his heart he could not be sorry for the line he had taken. But he dreaded the meeting with his father—not for his anger, but for his dismay and consternation.

A telephone-call to Larkin announced at last that Mr. Vernon-Smith was returning. When the big Rolls stopped in the square Smithy was in the hall waiting for his father to come in, anxious to get it over. The millionaire bustled in; Larkin took his silk hat, another manservant his coat, and then he saw his son and stared at him. After the first moment of surprise he looked pleased. Mr. Vernon-Smith was not a soft-hearted man; in the City he was considered hard as nails. But there was a soft spot in his heart for his only son; he was always glad to see Smithy.

"You at home, Herbert! School broken up early—or what?"

"No, father, but—"

"Extra holiday? Well, I'm glad to see you, anyhow! You're in time for lunch." Mr. Vernon-Smith did not yet know that his son had been days at home. "You'll lunch with me, and if you've got leave for the night we'll do a theatre this evening—what?"

"But—"

"That's all right; talk at lunch."

Mr. Vernon-Smith bustled away. The Bounder was left with a clouded face. His father had not the faintest suspicion of the blow that was to fall. Smithy knew that there was a letter from Dr. Locke, and he wondered whether his father would open it before lunch. But the cheery expression on Mr. Vernon-Smith's face when he came down to lunch showed that he had not heard the bad news.

While the servants were in the room Smithy did not care to broach the subject. He had no doubt that there would be an explosion from his father when he heard. Lunch was rather an ordeal to the Bounder; he said little, while Mr. Vernon-Smith talked freely. The millionaire was in great spirits. It was his custom to talk business affairs to his son, to prepare him for the position he was to occupy some day, and Smithy was keen and shrewd, and more than once, to his father's great delight, he had made some suggestion or observation which showed that he was a chip of the old block.

It seemed that Mr. Vernon-Smith had brought off a "coup" which was going to add considerably to his already enormous fortune. His talk ran on West African gold-mines. For years and years and years gold-mining in that quarter of the globe had swallowed up shareholders' money, like a sponge sop-

ping up water. Samuel Vernon-Smith, with his usual keen judgment, had spotted when the tide was turning. Shares that he had bought for shillings in the big slump were now worth pounds—and were going to be worth much more.

West Africa, he told his son, was the coming gold-producing country; it was going to be as big a thing as South Africa had been. Most people did not know it yet; but Mr. Vernon-Smith knew it, and he was laying in shares and concessions and options in that country—a risky business for any man who did not know how to tell the genuine from the spoofer, safe enough for Samuel Vernon-Smith. At any other time the Bounder would have been keenly interested; now he hardly listened, his mind full of what he had to tell his father.

After lunch, when Mr. Vernon-Smith settled comfortably in an armchair with the single cigar he allowed himself during the day, Smithy had a chance to speak. His father was so cheerful, so pleased to see him and talk to him, that he shrank from dealing the blow. But it had to be dealt.

"I've got something to tell you, father." The Bounder got it out at last. "I—I—I— Suppose I left Greyfriars?" He was trying to break it gently.

Mr. Vernon-Smith sat up and stared.

"Left Greyfriars? Nonsense!"

"You see—"

"I thought you were happy there. What's the trouble? You surely don't want to leave?"

"No. But—"

"I understand," Mr. Vernon-Smith smiled. "You're impatient. Plenty of time, Herbert, my boy—plenty of time! You must be a boy before you're a man. I was never at a Public school, but I know it's value; that's why you're there, Herbert. You're a keen, sensible lad, and I can talk freely to you. All you learn there is so much rubbish—granted! You'll never meet an ancient Roman in the City to talk Latin to. Ha, ha! The French you get there is useless, except as a foundation for learning the language elsewhere. You get shreds and patches of various subjects; nothing essential or useful in any of them. Unless you choose to learn, you learn nothing; and if you choose to learn, you'd have a better chance of doing it anywhere but in a Public school. All that's true, Herbert, but—"

"I mean—"

"But," went on Mr. Vernon-Smith, "you've not got to kick for yourself on the bottom rung of the ladder of life! If you had, a Public school education would be a handicap! You'd come away able to play games, and wanting to play games and disinclined to stick to work. You'd know all about county cricket, and nothing about the foreign exchanges! You might be able to read—who was it?—Livy, in the original Greek—"

"Latin, dad!" said Smithy, with a grin.

"It doesn't matter which, so far as the realities of life are concerned, as you know as well as I do, Herbert. The whole thing's piffle, from a practical point of view. But it's one of the graces of life—like music and painting. You will be able to afford it! And the games—that's really what the Public school exists for, and it's right, Herbert! Healthy mind in a healthy body—what? You can put that in Latin?"

"I hope so!" said Smithy, laughing.

"Well, put it in Latin. Let's see what we're getting for our money."

"Mens sana in corpore sano," said the Bounder, humouring his father.

"Good!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Games—plenty of open-air exercise—that's what a boy wants! Physical fitness is worth all the book-learning that ever was learned, Herbert! Get fit! That's the thing! Keep fit! You get fit and you keep fit at Greyfriars! Education—real education—will begin after you've left. Don't be in a hurry for it! It's hard work when it comes."

"Yes! But—"
"I never had your chance, Herbert! At your age I was stamping and posting letters in an office—and saving up sixpences. I should be a happier man today if I'd been playing cricket! There's a time for everything! Play cricket while you've got the chance, and the time! Everybody hasn't the chance, more's the pity! Now"—Mr. Vernon-Smith glanced at his watch—"I shall have to get to the City—"

"But, father—"
"My dear boy"—Mr. Vernon-Smith waved his cigar at the Bounder—"don't say any more! You're tired of school—of stuffing your mind with piffle, and pretending to take seriously a lot of old donkeys who haven't brains enough to be anything but schoolmasters! I understand! But it won't do. Toe the line, my boy—take your father's advice—"

"But—"
"Rot!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Think it over, and say no more. You're not leaving Greyfriars! Touch the bell, will you? I want to tell Larkin to order the car!"

Mr. Vernon-Smith rose. The Bounder had to get it out now.

"There's no choice in the matter, father," he said.

"What? What do you mean?"

"I'm sacked!"

It was out now!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Vials of Wrath!

"**S**ACKED!"
Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith stared at his son as if not understanding. Smithy rose to his feet.

"Sacked! What do you mean by sacked? You don't mean expelled!"

"Yes!"

"Expelled—from your school!"

"Yes!"

"Good gad!"

Mr. Vernon-Smith sat down again—or, rather, he fell into his chair. He gazed open-eyed, open-mouthed at his son. He forgot all about the City and the car—and even the prospects of West Africa as a gold-producing country! He gasped.

Smithy stood silent.

"You young rascal!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith at last. "What have you been doing?"

"I've had rough luck, father."

"You young rascal!"

"It wasn't wholly my fault—"

"Expelled! Kicked out of Greyfriars!" The millionaire seemed unable to assimilate the startling information. "Check! Dashed impudence! A dashed schoolmaster! By gad, I could buy him up, lock, stock, and barrel, with the dashed school thrown in! Expelled—my son! We'll see—we'll see!"

The Bounder bit his lip.

"There's nothing can be done, father—"

"That's not for you to say! Do you think I'm going to have my son expelled from school?" roared Mr. Vernon-Smith. It was the explosion!

(Continued on next page.)

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"By gad! This is because I've spoiled you, instead of thrashing you, Herbert! I thought you had sense—sense enough to steer clear of trouble with an old donkey! But he will hear from me—sharp!"

"Father——"

"You young rascal! You young fool! What have you been doing? You've been near this before. I've interfered more than once and saved your bacon! What have you done? It will have to be accommodated somehow. Can't you understand, you young idiot, that a thing like that will cling to you for life? Besides, it disarranges my plans for you! I shall not allow it for one moment!"

"But——"

"Not for a moment! We shall see! My son sacked! Great gad! The dashed impudence of a dashed schoolmaster—we shall see!"

The Bounder stood silent, waiting for the storm to pass. Mr. Vernon-Smith was angry and excited; but he soon cooled down. He was, first of all, a business-man, and anger and excitement were a useless waste of energy! He very soon pulled himself together.

"Sit down, Herbert! Tell me——"

"There's a letter from the Head waiting for you——"

"Never mind that! Tell me what's happened! I've got to see to this, and accommodate it! I shall have to cut appointments in the City! You young rascal! Get to it—don't waste time! The son of your father ought to understand that time's money! Now, what was it?"

"Breaking bounds——"

"Rubbish!"

"After lights-out——"

"You young rascal!"

Smithy made no reply to that. As a matter of fact, it was his father's reckless indulgence of him that had helped to make him the reckless scapegrace he was; and both of them were aware of it.

Mr. Vernon-Smith was silent, too, for some moments. He was well aware of the seriousness of the offence stated by his son. Personally, he regarded it lightly—and schoolmasters as a set of nervous and cranky old women! But he had to deal with facts—and he was accustomed to dealing with facts!

"Give me the whole story," he said at last, speaking calmly. "What did you break bounds for?"

"It was to get a silly kid out of a scrape."

The Bounder coloured as he made that answer. He wanted to make out as good a case for himself as he could; at the same time he loathed appearing in the character of the "good boy" of a nineteenth-century school-book. His father stared at him blankly.

"You young fool!" he said.

"I suppose I was rather a fool!" admitted the Bounder. "It's not in my line at all to play the fool like that! But, in the circumstances——"

"How did it happen?"

"A silly little idiot got into a scrape——"

"A friend of yours?"

"Oh, no; a kid in a lower Form. I hardly knew him. But his brother's the most decent chap in the school, and had been very decent to me—when I didn't deserve it, either. The little idiot got acquainted with a low brute at a pub, and put some money on a horse. Of course, the gee-gee lost, and he owed the man a pound. The man wanted his money—I think threatened him. He got the money from somewhere, and tried to get to the place to pay the man, but there were beaks about——"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,330.

"What?" barked Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"I mean, masters—and the long and short of it was that he got out at night to go to the Three Fishers and pay the rotter. I happened to find out that he had broken out——"

"What business was it of yours?"

"None, I suppose, only——" The Bounder paused, and went on again. "Quelch—my Form master—was suspicious of me. He had set the prefects on the watch for me. I knew it, and I knew that that little idiot would fall right into their hands when he came in. So—I got out and tipped him."

"And got caught?"

"Yes. The kid got clear, luckily. And I was just following him up to a window when a prefect grabbed me."

Mr. Vernon-Smith gave his son a rather keen and suspicious look.

"That's the truth, Herbert?"

"Father!"

Smithy's face crimsoned. Unscrupulous as the Bounder was in many ways, he would never have lied to his father.

"Well, it's the truth," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. He looked relieved.

"I believe you've got rather a bad record at your school, Herbert; and you can't be surprised at what you've got. But I think I see my way. If you'd broken out at night to play the goat I——"

"As it happens, I didn't."

"That's sheer luck. Why didn't you tell this to your headmaster? Dr. Locke could not have expelled you for that."

"I told him, but——"

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"But what?" rapped the millionaire testily.

"He did not believe me."

"What? You mean to say that the other boy denied——?"

"No—no—no! He wasn't questioned—he wasn't found out! They—they believe it was some chap whom I was leading into mischief. Once, this term, I was caught out of the House, after lights-out, and Bunter was with me. You remember that fat fool, Bunter? He followed me out, against my will, but——"

"He couldn't have, if you hadn't gone."

"That's how they look at it," said Smithy. "They fancy it was something of the same kind again—some silly fellow being led into mischief by a bad egg. That made the Head hard as nails."

"So it should, if it was true," growled the millionaire. "But I don't understand you. Why was not the boy questioned? A headmaster should be able to get the truth out of a boy."

"They don't know——"

"You gave his name?"

"No."

"Why not?"

The Bounder was silent. There were many reasons why not; but he had little hope that his father would understand any of them.

"Answer me!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith harshly.

"It's a thing no fellow could do," said the Bounder. "A chap can't give a man away!"

Snort, from Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"That's the Public school code, is it?" he snapped. "And isn't it the Public school code, too, that a boy owns up if another boy is landed in his place?"

"Well, yes."

"Has this boy owned up?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"He's afraid to, I suppose?"

"Great gad! So you are to stick to your schoolboy code of honour, while the other fellow doesn't, and leaves you to take the medicine!"

"He's only a kid."

"That's neither here nor there. If his headmaster questioned him, would he tell the truth?"

"He would be too frightened to do anything else."

"That's that, then! You should have given your headmaster his name. Dr. Locke could not possibly have expelled you, in the circumstances. You know that, as well as I do. I shall see Dr. Locke at once, and explain to him. Give me the boy's name. I must know that, to bring the whole affair into the daylight."

"I can't, father—not if you're going to Greyfriars!"

"You can't!" roared Mr. Vernon-Smith, glaring at his son as if he could not believe his ears. "Are you mad, Herbert? Give me the boy's name at once."

The Bounder's face set obstinately. His nature was as hard and obstinate as his father's, if it was put to the test.

There was a long silence. Then, to the Bounder's infinite relief, the thundercloud passed from his father's brow. Mr. Vernon-Smith rose from his chair. He touched the bell, and Larkin appeared.

"The car, at once, Larkin!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith briefly.

He turned to his son again, as the butler disappeared.

"I am going to Greyfriars this afternoon. I've no doubt that I shall clear up the whole matter. You need tell me nothing, you young donkey. Keep to your schoolboy code. I dare say you're right, from your own point of view. Never let a man down. It's bad business, as well as bad morality. Leave it in my hands!"

"But——"

"That will do!"

Samuel Vernon-Smith marched out of the room with his ponderous step. Herbert Vernon-Smith stood staring after his portly back. The matter was out of his hands now, and he wondered what would come of the millionaire's visit to the school.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Whose Pineapple?

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Hook it, Bunter!"

"I haven't come here to stick you fellows for a whack in your cherries!" said Billy Bunter, with dignity. "I don't care for cherries, really. I've come——"

"The hookfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed fat Bunter."

"Oh, really, Inky——"

"Shut the door after you!" said Frank Nugent.

"The fact is——" said Bunter.

"Buzz!"



Hefty and beefy as Horace Coker was, he had no chance in the hands of the Removites. Bob Cherry grabbed a handful of cherries and stuffed them down the back of his neck. Coker wriggled and roared. "Ooogh! Grooogh! Stoppit, you young villain! Oh crumbs! I'll smash you! I'll spifigate you! I'll— Yoo—hooop!"

Billy Bunter did not "buzz." he stood in the doorway of Study No. 1 in the Remove, and blinked in. There were six juniors in the study, and five of them were helping themselves from a large dish of cherries on the table. The sixth sat in the armchair with some of the cherries in his hand, which he seemed to have forgotten. Tom Redwing was not cheerful company these days. He hardly seemed himself in the days since his chum had been expelled. It seemed as if he was unable to get it into his head that Smithy was gone for good.

Bob Cherry, lately in receipt of a remittance, was standing the cherries. They were grateful and comforting, on a hot day. He had marched Redwing into the study almost by force to share in the feast. Every fellow in the Remove, almost, liked Redwing, the honest and cheery sailorman's son, and Harry Wharton & Co., who felt rather dismal themselves on Smithy's account, could realise how much more dismal his chum was feeling.

Redwing was not a fellow to wear his heart on his sleeve; but he had been silent, subdued, ever since the Bounder had gone, and given rather to solitude. That was not good for him, or for any fellow, and his friends did their best to drag him out of it. On the present occasion, Bob had literally dragged him out of it—by the collar, and Redwing had had to come to the feast, willy-nilly. But there was no doubt that he was rather a wet blanket.

"The fact is, you fellows," resumed Bunter, "I've come here to offer you—"

"To scoff the cherries?" asked Harry Wharton.

"No, you beast! I've come here—"

"Take a pawful and travel!" said Bob.

"Oh, really, you know—" Bunter blinked out of the doorway, and then turned back into the study. "I say, you fellows, that beast Coker's after me, I believe. He made out that I'd been in his study. I hadn't, you know. I was just going along the Fifth Form passage, and I hadn't anything under my jacket—you know what a suspicious beast Coker is. I say—"

"He's wound up!" said Bob. "He's going on till the bell rings for classes. Chuck something at him, for goodness' sake!"

"Oh, really, Cherry!" Bunter took a pawful of cherries, as Bob had suggested; but he did not, as Bob had also suggested, travel. He seemed to prefer to remain in Study No. 1 while Coker of the Fifth was in the offing.

"Buck up, Reddy!" said Bob encouragingly. "Don't you like 'em?"

"Oh, yes, rather!" Redwing coloured a little as he came out of a brown study and started eating cherries.

"I say, you fellows—" "Hand me a cushion, Frank," said Harry Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton— Oh crumbs! Here comes that beast!" exclaimed Bunter, as there was a heavy tread in the Remove passage.

The fat Owl dodged round the table as Horace Coker, of the Fifth Form, glared into the study.

"Oh, here you are!" bawled Coker.

"Hop in, Horace, old bean!" said Bob. "Have some cherries!"

"Don't be cheeky!" said Coker. "Bunter, you fat scoundrel, where's my pineapple?"

"Oh, really, Coker—"

"Hand it over!" roared Coker, in great wrath.

"I haven't got it!" howled Bunter.

"What should I know about your silly

pineapple? I don't believe you had one."

Coker made a stride into the study. The Famous Five rose to their feet as if moved by the same spring. Redwing followed their example. Whether Billy Bunter had snaffled Coker's pineapple might be a doubtful point. But one thing was not doubtful—Fifth Form men could not throw their weight about in the Remove passage! On that point there was no doubt—no possible, probable shadow of doubt—no possible doubt whatever!

"Outside, Coker!" said the captain of the Remove tersely.

"Keep out of this, Wharton! I tell you I saw that fat young scoundrel sneaking out of my study, and he had something under his jacket—"

"I hadn't!" yelled Bunter.

"Then I missed the pineapple," said Coker. "He's got it!"

"You can search me if you like," said Bunter, with dignity. "I—I'll eat all the pineapples you find on me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker made a rush. As a matter of fact, it was clear that Bunter had no pineapple about him, and there hardly seemed to have been time for him to dispose of it internally. So, for once, the chums of the Remove were rather disposed to believe him not guilty. Anyhow, there was no proof, and no Fifth Form man could be allowed to carry matters with a high hand in the quarters of the Greyfriars Remove. So six juniors collared Coker as one man, and, instead of reaching Bunter, the great man of the Fifth was hurled backwards and landed in a sitting position in the study doorway.

"He, he, he!" gurgled Bunter.

"Whoop!" roared Coker.

"Travel, old bean!" suggested Harry

Wharton. "Travel while the travelling's good!"

"I—I—I'll—"

Coker scrambled up. Instead of travelling he rushed to the attack again. "I say, you fellows, keep him off!" yelled Bunter.

The Famous Five were keeping Coker off! The great Horace went down again, and this time he was held down. Bob grabbed a handful of cherries and stuffed them down the back of his neck.

Coker wriggled and roared.

"Ooogh! Grooogh! Stoppit, you young villain! Oh crumbs! I'll smash you! I'll spifficate you! I'll— Yoo—hoooop!"

"Have some more?" grinned Bob.

"Urrrgh! Leggo! Oh, my hat! Leggo!"

"Roll him out!" chuckled Johnny Bull.

Coker was rolled out. Hefty and beefy as Horace was, he really had no chance in the hands of six Removites. He was rolled out and helped along the passage of the Remove staircase. Tipped over the stair, Horace went down without further help—the law of gravitation did the rest.

Harry Wharton & Co. returned rather breathlessly to the study. Coker did not return—he was busy extracting cherries from the back of his neck. The six juniors came into Study No. 1 and found that Billy Bunter was improving the shining hour. Cherries were disappearing down his capacious throat at a great rate.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry gave his fat paw a rap. "Are you going to scoff the lot, you fat porker?"

"Wow! I say, you fellows, is Coker gone?"

"Yes; and the sooner you're gone, too, the better!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! I say, those are pretty decent cherries! Not like what we grow at Bunter Court, of course, but good! I say, I hope you fellows don't think I came in here to bag your cherries! I came to offer you a share in my pineapple."

"Your what?" yelled Wharton.

"Pineapple! I've had one from Bunter Court," explained the fat Owl. "We grow a lot, you know, in our vineries—I mean our pineries! My idea is this—you've got cherries and I've got a pineapple, and we'll put them together and whack them out—what?"

"You—you—you've got a pineapple!" stammered Nugent.

"Yes! One of you fellows fetch it from my study! It's under the armchair."

"Do you usually keep grub under the armchair in your study?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Well, Coker might have looked in the cupboard—I mean, I put it under the armchair for—for coolness. You cut along and get it, Bob! I can tell you it's a jolly big one—that old sketch, Aunt Judy, sends Coker jolly good things—I mean—that is to say—"

"You snaffled Coker's pineapple!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I keep on telling you that Coker never had a pineapple. I haven't been in his study, and I didn't see it there! As for bagging it, I hope I'm not the fellow to bag a fellow's pineapple! This is a pretty rotten way to speak to a fellow who comes here to offer you a share in his splendid pineapple," said Bunter warmly, "and I can jolly well say— Yaroooop!"

Bump!

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter, as he

landed in the Remove passage. "Owl! Beast! Wow! Rotter! Ow—wow! Keep off, Coker, you beast! Whooop!"

"Got you!" roared Coker.

Apparently Coker was coming back for more. And Billy Bunter flew out of Study No. 1 just in time for him.

"Owl! Wow! Yaroooop!"

There was a sound of racing feet in the Remove passage. Bunter was doing that passage at about 60 m.p.h. After him went Coker of the Fifth! There was a chuckle in Study No. 1. Hunter and hunted disappeared up the passage, and the chums of the Remove finished the cherries without further assistance from William George Bunter.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Trouble in the Form-room!

MR. QUELCH frowned.

"Bunter!" he rapped.

"Owl! I mean, yes, sir!"

"Sit still!"

"Owl! Yes, sir!"

The Remove were in class. Several times Mr. Quelch's eye had been inimically on Bunter. It was a hot and drowsy afternoon, and the Form-room was warm and a little stuffy, and Mr. Quelch's voice seemed, to most of his pupils, rather like the drone of a persistent bumble-bee. Bunter, the fattest and laziest fellow in the Remove, might have been expected to loll at his desk. Instead of which, he was incessantly wriggling. Sitting still was one of the things that Bunter could do, and do well. But now he seemed unable to sit still.

How many kicks Bunter had captured before he escaped from the vengeful Coker he could hardly have counted. It was quite a large number. And they had left Bunter disinclined to sit down at all, and made it a practical impossibility to sit still. Bunter squirmed.

Mr. Quelch did not seem in the best of tempers that sunny summer's afternoon. There had been a telephone call from London for the Head. It was from Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith! It had announced that the millionaire was calling at Greyfriars that afternoon.

The headmaster who had expelled a boy, and the Form master to whose Form that boy had belonged, naturally felt no desire whatever for an interview with the boy's indignant parent.

Such an interview could only be painful to both sides.

It was, both the masters considered, in the worst of taste for Mr. Vernon-Smith to call. But he was calling—and he could not be refused an interview.

It worried the Head; it irritated Mr. Quelch! Any minute now the millionaire's car might be heard honking in at the gates. Dr. Locke had requested Quelch to be present at the interview. He was concerned in the matter, as the expelled junior's Form master. Also, he was the Head's right-hand man, and his stern and unbending character made him fitter to deal with the rather overwhelming millionaire than the mild old doctor. Mr. Quelch was grimly resolved to stand no nonsense. In the meantime—quite unintentionally, for Quelch was a just man—the Lower Fourth got the benefit of his irritation.

"Bunter!"

"Oh lor'!"

"If you do not sit still, I shall cane you!"

"Oh dear! I mean, yes, sir!" groaned Bunter.

"Mauleverer!"

"Oh! Yaas!" gasped Lord Maul-everer, starting out of a semi-doze.

"Take a hundred lines for closing your eyes in class!"

"Oh! Yaas, sir!"

"Cherry! Will you cease shuffling your feet? I have spoken to you times without number on the subject! Take fifty lines!"

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped Bob.

"Redwing!"

Tom Redwing gave a jump and hastily thrust his hand under his desk. There was a letter in that hand, which he had been glancing at under the cover of the desk—out of sight, as he had supposed. But Henry Samuel Quelch was well known to possess eyes with the penetrating qualities of gimlets.

"What were you reading, Redwing?"

"I—I was looking at a letter, sir."

"Is class the place for reading letters, Redwing?"

"Oh! No, sir!"

"Give me the letter, immediately."

Redwing rose reluctantly in his place, his face crimson. The Remove fellows exchanged significant looks. Redwing, in contrast to his chum Smithy, had always been one of the most orderly fellows in the Form, and was in his Form master's good graces.

Fellows like Skinner and Snoop called it favouritism—having no use for good behaviour, or a master's good opinion, themselves. It was very unusual for Redwing to be called over the coals; and fellows had noticed that Quelch had been uncommonly considerate to him since his friend had been "sacked." Now, however, Reddy was getting it—which, to the juniors, showed what a genuine tantrum Quelch was in! Still, it was true enough that class was no place for a fellow to read letters.

Mr. Quelch glanced at the letter, as Redwing laid it on his desk, and his frown deepened. He recognised the handwriting.

"Is that letter from the boy who was expelled from this school last week, Redwing?" he rapped.

"It's from Vernon-Smith, sir," said Tom quietly.

"Are you aware, Redwing, that it is forbidden for boys here to receive communications from an expelled boy?"

Redwing did not answer.

"This letter," said Mr. Quelch, "must have passed through my hands. Had I recognised the handwriting in the address, I should not have allowed it to reach you. Am I to conclude that it was addressed in a disguised hand, in order to delude me?"

"I—I think the envelope was addressed by somebody else, sir!" stammered Redwing, his face crimson.

"A trick—and worthy of the thoroughly bad boy who was expelled from Greyfriars!" boomed Mr. Quelch. "Evidently he has led you—a boy whom I trusted—into his own ways of deceit and trickery."

"Nothing of the kind, sir!" Redwing's voice was quiet, but it was very clear. "Smithy has a right to write to me, and I have a right to hear from him!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"What?" Mr. Quelch almost gasped. "What did you say, Redwing? You are aware that that boy, Vernon-Smith, was expelled for conduct disgraceful to himself and to the school—"

"No, sir! I believe that Smithy had injustice!"

The Remove fellows caught their breath. Even Billy Bunter forgot the effects of Coker's boot, and ceased to

wriggle! All eyes were fixed on Redwing. The quietest, the most orderly and respectful boy in the Form, was coming out unexpectedly! Even the reckless Bounder, in his most reckless moments, would hardly have bearded the lion in his den in that style!

Mr. Quelch gazed at Redwing dumb-founded. It was some moments before he found his voice.

"Redwing! You—you dare to say that Vernon-Smith was treated with injustice? You dare to accuse your headmaster—your Form master of injustice—"

"No, sir!" said Tom, in the same quiet tone. "I think there was a mistake—and the mistake caused Smithy to be unjustly expelled."

"Upon my word! I can scarcely believe my ears, Redwing!" Indeed, Mr. Quelch hardly could. "You dare to say this, in favour of that rascally boy—"

"Smithy was one of the best chaps at Greyfriars!" said Redwing. "He was my friend—and he's my friend still! He had his faults; but he was one of the best fellows breathing!"

Mr. Quelch almost gurgled.

"Redwing! Are you out of your senses? You are running the risk of being expelled from the school after your unworthy friend!"

"I don't care if I am!" said Redwing doggedly.

Mr. Quelch stared at him blankly.

"But for your excellent record, Redwing, and my former high opinion of you, I should send you to your headmaster for a flogging!" he gasped at last. "As it is, I shall cane you most severely! I shall—"

Honk, honk! The sound of a car, turning in at the gates, floated in at the open windows of the Form-room.

Mr. Quelch gave a start. He could guess who was arriving.

"Redwing, go to your place! I shall deal with you later! Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!"

"I am called away from the Form-room for a time. I leave the Form in your charge."

"Very well, sir."

(Continued on next page.)



How's THAT Umpire?

In addition to solving cricket problems of general interest, "Umpire" replies to readers' own queries. All letters

should be addressed to: "Umpire," c/o The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

THE OPENING PAIR I

LAST week I told you that the wise captain keeps his "order of batting" list flexible. This week, further to help the captains who want to get the best out of their teams, I propose to say a few words about the "sort" of batsmen who should go to the wicket in the particular places under normal circumstances. You must accept it as a fact that there are certain players who are better suited, because of their methods, for one position in the batting list than another.

First and foremost, of course, you want two good bats to open the innings; reliable fellows who will not give the opposition too much encouragement by getting out quickly.

The fellow who can't resist the temptation to "chance his arm" is not the player to go in first. By that I don't mean that the opening pair should be of the "sit on the splice" type necessarily. In my ideal batting team I like one very steady player to go in first, and with him a player who will attack the bowling. Jack Hobbs and Herbert Sutcliffe made what might be called the perfect pair of "openers."

You will remember that, in Test games and other representative matches, Hobbs almost invariably scored quicker than Sutcliffe. But the Yorkshireman was quite content to keep his end going while Hobbs did the attacking part; that is doing his best to convince the bowlers that they were not quite as good as they thought they were.

Much depends on a good start, and there must be reliable batsmen to start, because they face the opposition at its freshest and best—and usually when the ball is new.

THE SHORTER THE TAIL, THE BETTER.

NUMBERS three and four in the batting order must be players with stout hearts, and adaptable, too. If the opening pair have given the side a good start—knocked the

bowlers off their length, three and four will reap the harvest—or should do. If a bad start has been made, then numbers three and four must not be the sort daunted by the previous failures.

For number five, in ordinary circumstances, I like what might be called a "stodgy" or "stick it" player. He may have to stop a threatened collapse. Of such a type is D. R. Jardine, and he is the sort wanted—ready and willing to fight with his back to the wall, and pull the side round. At number six I like to have a hitter; a man who can do the hustle business, because a hustle is often wanted by the time that period in the innings has arrived. Number seven, too, should be able to get runs quickly against bowling which has lost its sting.

Given seven fellows of the different types I have mentioned, the rest of the batting won't matter very much, and in any case, it is almost inevitable that two or three bowlers have to be in the side who are not very good with the bat.

The shorter the tail, of course, the better. Incidentally, if the tail can't wag then there is a greater responsibility resting on the first few batsmen. They know they have to make all the runs.

THE FINANCIAL SIDE I

TALKING of Test matches, I can give this week the answer to a reader from Manchester who wants to know what it means, in cash, to play for England in a Test match at home. Well, the professional players who have played for England this season against the West Indies get twenty pounds per match, plus third-class travelling expenses. The pay for the Test matches against Australia in this country is more, because those games have four days allotted to them. The twelfth man in a Test team—if he is a professional—does not get so much as the players who actually turn out. For the matches against the West Indies this season, the twelfth man has received fourteen pounds per game. Easy money, of course, provided the twelfth man has nothing else to do but sit in the pavilion and watch the play.

By the way—and this replies to another question—it is generally accepted that the captain of a side will always allow his opponents to have a substitute fielder for any player who is hurt or ill so that he cannot continue.

It is a fact, however, that the skipper of the batting side has some sort of say as to the position the substitute should occupy in the field. For instance, the captain of the batting side might reasonably object to a substitute fielder going into the slips.

PLAYING BREAK BOWLING I

COMING back for a moment to the financial side, "Down Under," who writes to me, is quite right in his surmise that all the Australian Test match players are regarded as amateurs, both in their own country and when they come to play over here. That this should be so is one of cricket's mysteries. It is perfectly true that the Australians don't get "wages" for playing cricket, but they are allowed what are called expenses. And the only difference between an Australian Test match amateur and an English Test match professional is that the Australian gets more.

A young reader, L. Moore, wants a bit of advice on how to play break bowling. Now the most satisfactory way of playing break bowling is to get at the pitch of the ball; that is, to play the ball before the spin has had time to turn it to any appreciable extent.

To play at the pitch of the ball, however, demands quick and accurate footwork, but it is the best way, because the fellow who is playing the ball just as it comes off the pitch causes the bowler to drop them shorter, and then the batsman can step back with plenty of time to watch the ball turn.

If the bowler is pitching the ball habitually off the wicket and making it turn into the wicket, then the batsman can safely use his legs as a "second guard."

The batsman cannot be out leg before to a break ball which does not pitch on the wicket, but he can—and this replies to a Camberley reader—be out to a break ball. The ball may pitch on the leg stump and be breaking across just sufficiently to hit the off stump, or vice versa. If the batsman stops such a ball with his legs he is out l.b.w.

As a short reply, the batsman is not considered to have played the ball unless it strikes his bat, or hand. He cannot be caught out off his wrist or any other part of the body.

"UMPIRE."

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Mr. Quelch left the Form-room and almost slammed the door after him. There was a buzz in the room at once.

"My hat! The old bean's in a bate!" said Peter Todd.

"The batefulness of the esteemed old bean is terrific!"

"Redwing, old chap——" said Bob.

"Oh, my hat!" Bolsover major was staring from the window. "It's jolly old Smith!"

"What?" yelled the juniors.

"Smithy's pater!"

"Oh, my hat!"

There was a scramble to the windows. A stout gentleman in a shining silk hat was seen to step from a magnificent Rolls. All the fellows knew Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith by sight.

"Smithy's pater——"

"Great pip!"

"I say, you fellows, he's come to kick up a row with the Head! I jolly well said he would!" chirruped Billy Bunter.

"That's what's up with Quelchy!" chuckled Skinner. "He knew the old sport was coming. I wonder if they'll get to punching noses?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Take your places, you fellows," said the head boy. "Order, you know. If Quelch looks in——"

The bare idea of Quelch looking in, in his present mood, was enough to make the juniors rush back to their places. But there was not much in the way of order! There was an excited buzz in the Remove-room—a breathless discussion of Mr. Vernon-Smith, and what would happen when he saw the Head. Billy Bunter was not the only fellow who thought that Smithy's pater had come to Greyfriars to "kick up a row." And some of the fellows wondered, like Skinner, with breathless interest, whether, by any happy chance, it might get as far as "punching noses."

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Getting Down to Business!

MR. VERNON-SMITH was shown into the Head's study.

Dr. Locke, called from the Sixth Form Room, was there to meet him; Mr. Quelch, called away from the Remove, was also there.

Dr. Locke was a little perturbed. Mr. Quelch was grim and inflexible. If the Head needed stiffening in this disagreeable interview, Quelch was able to provide all the stiffening required. An iron ramrod had nothing on Quelch just then.

Mr. Vernon-Smith was a gentleman of terrific nervous force and energy. He was crammed with "pep." His mere presence made a mild old gentleman like Dr. Locke feel tired. His presence seemed to fill a room from wall to wall. He was imposing, impressive, almost overpowering.

But, to the surprise, and perhaps the relief, of the Greyfriars masters, the millionaire was unusually civil and conciliatory. If he was on the warpath he did not reveal the fact—as yet! He replied civilly, if briefly, to the Head's courteous greeting, and acknowledged Mr. Quelch's formal bow with a jerk of his head.

He accepted the Head's invitation to be seated, and sat down with his usual, decisive force—the chair creaking as if in protest. His keen, steady eyes fixed on Dr. Locke in a way that the old gentleman found a little disconcerting. And he plunged at once into business. The affair of his son was the most important of Mr. Vernon-Smith's affairs

—but he had many other affairs on hand, and he did not forget that his time was of immense value.

"Oh, quite, quite!" he said, in answer to some remark from the Head which he did not even hear. "Let us come down to brass tacks, sir——"

"To—to what?" asked the Head.

"To business. This morning I returned from a trip abroad, and very unexpectedly found my son at home. He informed me that he had been expelled from this school."

"Perfectly so!" assented the Head. "I was extremely reluctant, but——"

"I am here to arrange the matter."

"Really, sir——"

"I am not," said Mr. Vernon-Smith, "a Public school man myself. Fortunately, perhaps, as I had my way to make in the world! But I believe I understand your institutions, sir. Quite properly there is a rigid rule that no boy shall be allowed out of bounds at night. It appears that my son has broken this rule."

"On more than one occasion, sir——"

"The previous occasions we need not deal with, as he was not expelled on those occasions," said Mr. Vernon-Smith, ruthlessly keeping to the point.

"I gather from my son that on Monday—I think he said Monday—last week—he left his dormitory late at night, and was caught out of the House by a—a—what do you call it—a consul or something——"

"A prefect!" said the Head.

"Oh, yes, yes, a prefect! An elder boy, in a higher Form—what?"

"It was Wingate, of the Sixth Form. He——"

"Quite so! I have met the boy—a very fine lad!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "I have more than once advised my son to take him as an example."

"It is much to be regretted that your son did not follow that very excellent advice, sir," said Dr. Locke, rather dryly.

"No doubt! I am not denying that my son has faults. I am only too well aware that he has a great many! But he is my son, sir—my only son—and this is a great blow to me."

"I regret deeply——"

"From what my son tells me, it appears that there is a misapprehension in the matter. Had he left the school at night for any disgraceful purpose, I hardly see how I could have interceded for him. I quite understand your views—quite—and I have no doubt that they are very correct! But it appears that his action was, in point of fact, a foolishly quixotic one—a generous and thoughtless action, sir, for which a boy should not be punished with any great severity."

"I fail to see——"

"Herbert informs me that he had no intention of infringing any of the laws of the school—except, of course, the rule against leaving the House at night. His object in doing so was innocent—indeed, generous and kind!"

"Really, sir——"

"I gather that he learned, by chance, that a boy—some silly lad in a lower Form—had gone out of the House. He went out to warn him, so that he should not be caught. A foolish action, sir—a thoughtless action—but not a bad action."

"If I believed for one moment that such was the case, sir, I should certainly not have expelled Vernon-Smith!" said the Head warmly. "Such an action could not be allowed to pass unpunished, for discipline must be maintained. But I should certainly have taken his motive into consideration."

"You did not believe his statement?" "Not one word of it, sir."

"And the boy's Form master?" Mr. Vernon-Smith turned his stare on the Remove master.

"Not a syllable, sir!" said Mr. Quelch, in his grimmest voice. "I am sorry to say that your son has never scrupled to utter falsehoods in dealing with authority, and I place no reliance whatever on his word."

"I am sorry for that," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Nevertheless, let us keep our minds clear. Had my son's statement been proved, Dr. Locke, you would not have expelled him."

"Certainly not!"

"In that event, then, of proof being forthcoming, you would be willing to reinstate him at Greyfriars?"

The Head paused.

"I—I presume so!" he said. "But I fail to see how proof can be forthcoming of a statement obviously untrue, Mr. Vernon-Smith."

"I believe the statement!" barked Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Believing it, I have no doubt that it can be proved."

"Very well, sir!" said the Head. "Let it be proved, and undoubtedly I shall reconsider my decision. But you must surely be aware that your son was given every opportunity to prove his words."

"Quite! A point of honour, it seems, restrained him," said the millionaire. "He could have given the other boy's name, and thus proved his statement. He refused to do so."

"I am bound to speak plainly, sir," said Mr. Quelch. "Vernon-Smith is not a boy to be troubled by scruples of honour."

"In dealing with authority, sir, perhaps not—in dealing with other boys, most emphatically yes!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "There is a difference there, sir, not founded in either common sense or morality, but very real—as must be known to every schoolmaster."

"That is certainly true; but——"

"Herbert declined to give the boy's name. His motive——"

"His motive is quite clear," said Mr. Quelch. "On a previous occasion, when your son was flogged for leaving the House at night, he was in company with a foolish and obtuse boy, named Bunter, who was following his reckless and rascally example. There is little doubt, or, rather, no doubt, that Vernon-Smith's companion, on the occasion in question, was some thoughtless lad whom he was leading into his own bad ways."

"That is your view, Mr. Quelch?"

"That is my view, Mr. Vernon-Smith!"

"If I agreed with you, sir, I should not only consider Dr. Locke justified in expelling my son, but I should disown him. I do not agree."

"That is no doubt natural, sir; but the facts remain unaltered!" said the Remove master tartly.

"I am here to bring the facts to light! The facts can be established, beyond question or cavil, by questioning the boy concerned with my son in that foolish adventure. Is not that so?"

"Quite! But your son refused to give the boy's name," said Dr. Locke.

"Has the boy himself made no statement?"

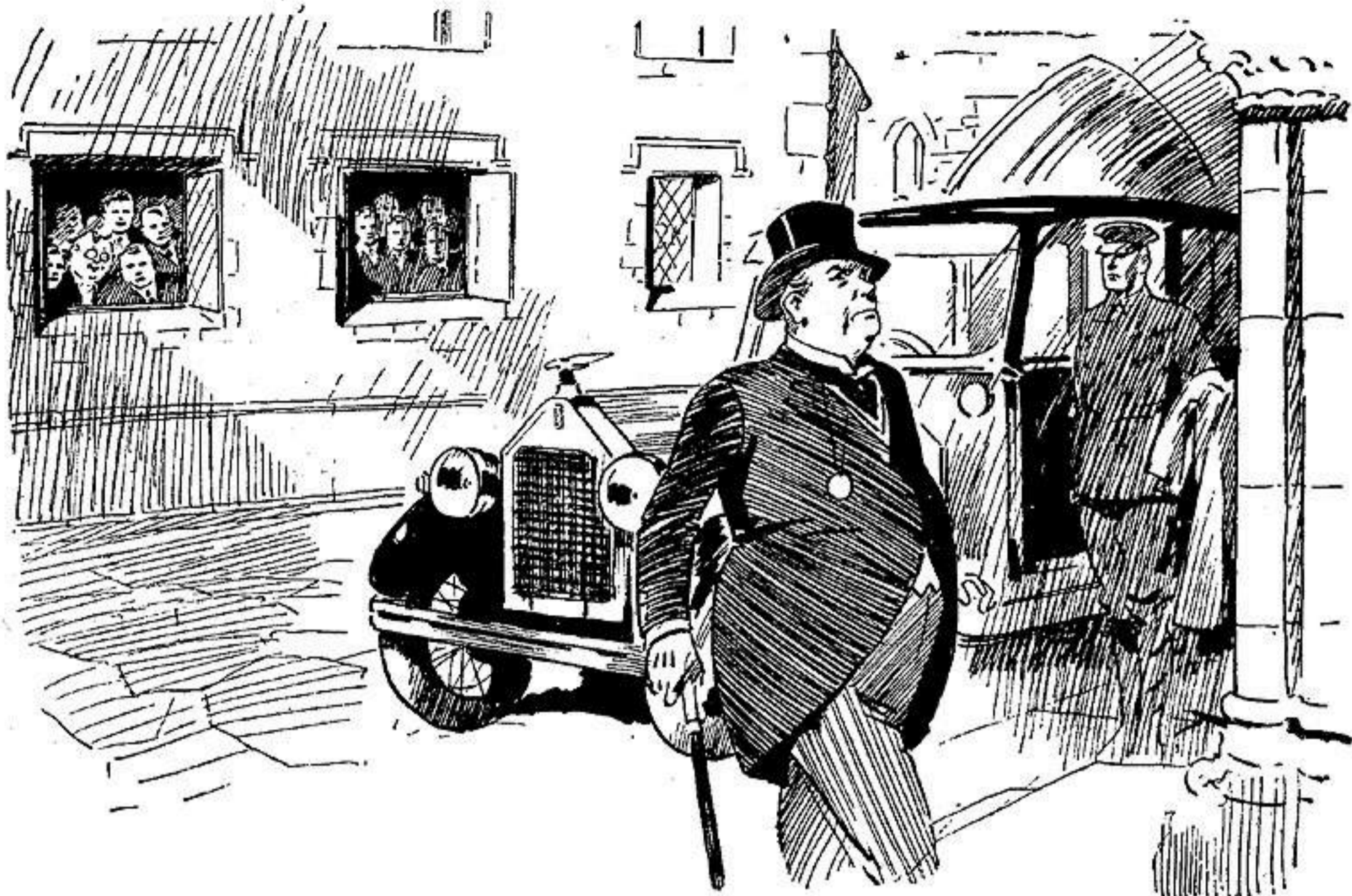
"He is quite unknown."

"He has not owned up, as I think you would term it?"

"He has not."

"Why has he not been discovered?"

"Wingate and the other prefects have been instructed to find the boy, if possible. But so long as he keeps his own counsel, and your son refuses to speak, we——"



"Oh, my hat!" said Bolsover major, staring out of the window. "Smithy's pater's here!" "What?" There was a scramble to the window. A stout gentleman, in a shining silk hat, was seen to step from a magnificent Rolls. "Smithy's pater!" "Great pip!" "I say, you fellows, he's come to kick up a row with the Head!" chirruped Billy Bunter.

Mr. Vernon-Smith raised a plump forefinger.

"That boy must be discovered, sir! I will go further, and say that it is your duty to discover him."

"Sir!" said the Head.

"This is no time to mince words, sir! My son's career and reputation are at stake! I take one view of his conduct, you take another—obviously, the facts must be brought to light."

"There is no doubt—"

"There is very considerable doubt! I demand that this boy be found!" barked the millionaire. "You say that Wingate has the matter in hand?"

"Yes; but—"

"Can I see Wingate?"

"I fail to see what purpose—"

"Understand me, sir!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "I am here to establish the facts, and I shall not leave until I have established them!"

"Mr. Vernon-Smith!"

"In the event of any obstacle being placed in my way, I shall take the matter before the board of governors, sir."

Dr. Locke coloured with indignation.

"If you intend that as a threat, sir—"

"Nothing of the kind! I intend it as a plain statement of fact! I do you the justice, sir, to believe that you are as anxious as myself to get at the truth of this matter."

"That is certainly the case; but—"

"Give me a free hand, then, sir, and we shall see what we shall see. Can I see Wingate?"

"You may certainly see him. It will serve no purpose whatever; but most certainly no obstacle shall be placed in your way, as you term it." Dr. Locke rose. "I must return to the Sixth Form, sir. I will send Wingate here."

"Thank you!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith.

Dr. Locke left the study; Mr. Quelch, with a last grim look at the millionaire, followed him.

Mr. Vernon-Smith, left alone in the study, opened his pocket-book, took out a paper, and began to peruse it. There was no doubt that the millionaire financier was keenly anxious about his son. Nevertheless, his time was precious. And while he waited for Wingate to arrive, he dismissed the matter from his business-like mind, and devoted his attention to a prospectus of the West African Wonkee Gold Mines, Limited.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Taking Control!

"WINGATE!"

"Yes, sir!"

The Sixth was waiting for their headmaster to return. They had been doing Livy with the Head.

Probably, on a warm and drowsy summer's afternoon, they were not sorry to give Titus Livius a rest—and get a little rest themselves—while the Beak interviewed his visitor. They looked by no means so glad as they ought to have looked when Dr. Locke came back to the Sixth Form Room.

"Kindly go to my study, Wingate," said the Head. "Mr. Vernon-Smith is there, and desires to speak to you."

"Very well, sir," said Wingate, in some surprise. And he left the Form-room, and left the rest of the Sixth to the Head and Livy.

He arrived at the Head's study, tapped, and entered.

Mr. Vernon-Smith gave him a glance, and put away the prospectus of the Wonkee Gold Mines, Ltd.

"I'm told that you wished to speak to me, sir," said the Greyfriars captain.

"Quite so—about my son," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "You are, I believe, head prefect; it was you that caught my son out of bounds last week."

Wingate coloured uncomfortably.

"I'm awfully sorry, Mr. Vernon-Smith. I had no choice in the matter; a prefect has his duty to do—"

"I quite understand that. I should think the less of you if you had neglected to do your duty. You have heard, of course, my son's explanation of his going out of bounds. Did you believe him?"

Wingate hesitated.

"You did not?" barked Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"Well, I couldn't, sir," said Wingate.

"I—I suppose you want me to speak plainly—"

"Yes, yes! Don't beat about the bush!"

"Well, sir, I had a talk with Vernon-Smith in the punishment-room. I asked him to tell me—in confidence, not to be repeated to the masters—the name of the fellow he was with that night. I could then have ascertained whether he was telling the truth, and could have spoken for him. But he refused to give the name, and I could only think—"

Mr. Vernon-Smith knitted his brows.

"That is very odd!" he grunted.

"Herbert, of course, trusted you, and he could have confided in you. His only object in keeping the name secret must have been to save the other boy from punishment. If he had told you in confidence, would the boy have suffered in any way?"

"No. I gave him my word on that."

The millionaire was silent for some moments.

"What did you conclude?" he barked at last. "Speak in plain English."

"Very well, sir. I had to conclude

(Continued on page 16.)

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THE MILLIONAIRE DETECTIVE!



(Continued from page 13.)

that it was untrue that he had gone out of bounds to warn a fellow of danger. I had to conclude that it was as the Head and Mr. Quelch supposed—that he had drawn some fellow into his own lawless ways; and that that was all that could be proved by giving the fellow's name." The Greyfriars captain was putting it into very plain English, as the millionaire requested.

"I cannot believe so!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith, after another pause. "At all events, the truth must be ascertained, whatever it may be. I understand that your headmaster has asked you to find out the boy, and that you have failed."

"That is so, sir."

"You have no idea who the boy was?"

"Not the remotest."

"I have learned from my son that it was a boy in a Lower Form."

Wingate looked incredulous. "I can't think so, sir! The fags here—well, I've never heard of a kid in the Third or the Second breaking out at night."

"I have gathered from my son that his silence is due as much to his regard for the boy's brother, an elder boy, as for the boy himself. He has told me little or nothing. But he said this much before he knew that it was my intention to come to the school—he said that the boy's brother, to use his own words, was the most decent chap in the school, and had been decent to him when he did not deserve it. Taking my son's statement as true, this narrows down the field. The boy we want is a boy who has a brother in the school."

"Lots of fellows have, sir—I have myself," said Wingate, with a smile. "There are several fellows in the Remove with brothers in Upper or Lower Forms. Nugent and Bolsover; Nugent has a minor in the Second, and Bolsover a minor in the Third—"

"I knew Nugent—a very decent lad. Is it possible that it was his young brother who was in a scrape?"

"I—I suppose it's possible; but there's no reason to think so, that I know of. Vernon-Smith could have said so, if it was so; when I asked him."

"My opinion is that it was regard for the little fool's brother that caused my son to act so recklessly. Is he very friendly with either Nugent or Bolsover of his Form?"

"Well, no. I think he's rather friendly with Nugent, more or less; but I believe he had only one real friend in the school—Redwing—who has no brother here."

The millionaire pursed his lips. He did not seem to be getting any "forwarder." But he was not the man to relinquish a task. He was rather like a bulldog who had got his teeth into a bone.

"The matter is, at least, narrowed down," he said. "We have to find a boy in either the Second or the Third Form who has a brother in a higher

Form. That boy is the one who broke out at night and went to the Three Fishers Inn to pay a debt to some man there."

"Um!" said Wingate dubiously.

Wingate was a kind-hearted fellow, and he was sorry that the Bounder had been "sacked." Also, he could make allowance for a father's feelings; and he could hardly blame a fellow's father for catching at straws, in such circumstances. But he could not help thinking that Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith was taking a great deal upon himself. Great man as he was in the City and in international finance, he was nobody at Greyfriars; but he seemed to be taking on himself the authority of the headmaster.

His thoughts were not hard to read by a keen man of the big world like Mr. Vernon-Smith. He rapped out:

"I am here to clear my son's name! I think your headmaster will give me leave to carry on. With or without it, I shall do so. I require you to bring, or send, into my presence every boy in the Second and Third Forms who has an elder brother in the school. You understand me?"

"I shall have to ask the Head's permission, sir."

"Ask it!" rapped Mr. Vernon-Smith. "And lose no time!"

Wingate left the study. He was a little concerned, a little amused, and a little offended. With that mixture of feelings, he walked back to the Sixth Form Room and acquainted the headmaster with Mr. Vernon-Smith's request.

Dr. Locke drew a deep, deep breath. He was disposed to refuse, and to send a message back to the millionaire requesting him to leave the school. But he, too, had to make allowances for a father. Also, he had a lurking doubt whether Mr. Vernon-Smith would leave if requested. He was so very determined a gentleman that a mere request was unlikely to get rid of him. After a few moments' thought the Head acceded.

"Do as Mr. Vernon-Smith desires, Wingate," he said. "I wish in every way to satisfy him, and it can do no harm. In a very short time now the Junior Forms will be dismissed; and if Mr. Vernon-Smith cares to wait, I have no objection to make. No doubt he would prefer to interview the boys in the visitors' room."

And with that the Greyfriars captain returned to the millionaire.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Vernon-Smith Going Strong!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter was grinning.

"Old Smith—"

"Is Smithy's pater still here?"

asked Harry Wharton.

"He, he, he! I've just spotted him through the window," grinned Bunter.

"He's sitting in the visitors' room, and, I say— He, he, he!"

"Cut out the 'He, he, he!' fathead! What's up?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Your minor's for it, Nugent!"

"My minor?" exclaimed Frank.

"Well, he's got to go to see old Smith! I heard him telling Gatty and Myers of the Second! Old Smith's on to something!"

"What the thump can Smithy's pater possibly want to see my minor for?"

exclaimed Frank Nugent in astonishment.

"I heard Wingate say— He, he, he!"

"You heard Wingate say 'He, he, he!'" exclaimed Bob.

"No, you ass! I heard him say to Gwynne that old Smith wanted to get hold of the kid who was out with Smithy that night, and he thinks it was a fag. He asked Gwynne to send along some of the Third."

"Well, my hat!" said Harry Wharton.

"And is the Head letting the old bean carry on in this style?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Looks like it. He seems to be giving orders like a beak," grinned Bunter. "I say, I'm jolly glad it wasn't me with Smithy that night! That old bird will nail the chap, you see! He's keen as a razor. Jolly glad he ain't our headmaster—what?"

And Bunter rolled away chuckling.

Classes had been dismissed, and the Remove fellows were mostly discussing the visit of Mr. Vernon-Smith, and wondering what had happened. It was a surprise to learn that he was still at the school. It was a still greater surprise to learn that he was, as it seemed, conducting an inquiry on his own account—a matter that should really have been in the hands of the headmaster.

Tom Redwing came over to the Famous Five. There was a rather eager expression on his face. Mr. Quelch, on his return to the Form-room, had not referred to Redwing's offence—perhaps he had forgotten it, or perhaps he did not wish to remember it. Perhaps his mind was fully occupied with Mr. Vernon-Smith—who probably would not have been allowed to "carry on" had Henry Samuel Quelch been headmaster of Greyfriars. It was really a very unusual state of affairs; but Tom Redwing, at least, seemed to be drawing hope from it.

"You fellows heard?" he asked. "Smithy's pater is still here, and he's making some inquiry or other. I can't make it out—they seem to be sending for fags to see him—Second and Third! Can the fellow who was with Smithy that night have been a fag?"

"Hardly," said Bob, shaking his head; and the other fellows shook their heads, excepting Wharton.

The suspicion was deep and strong in Harry Wharton's mind that it was the captain's minor who had been out of bounds that eventful night, and whom Smithy had saved from discovery. Wharton, at least, fully believed the Bounder's version, so far as he had told it.

"Perhaps Smithy's told his father," suggested Johnny Bull.

"No; he wouldn't," said Redwing.

"In that letter that Quelch spotted in the Form-room he's told me that he's got reasons for saying nothing—he wouldn't tell even me. Besides, if he's told his father, Mr. Vernon-Smith wouldn't want to see more than one chap. Smithy's said nothing."

"The old millionaire detective has got on to something," said Bob. "Blessed if I can guess what it is. Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's up, Bolsover?"

Bolsover major of the Remove came up with knitted brows.

"Look here, you men, what's this game?" he demanded. "They've sent my minor in to see old Smith! I'm not going to have my minor badgered! Who the dickens is old Smith, anyhow?"

"Bunter says my minor has been sent for, too," said Nugent. "I can't imagine why. He's a cheeky young sweep, but he's certainly never broken bounds with Smithy after lights out."

"Do they think my minor has?" hooted Bolsover major. "Look here, this is the limit! Have they made that fat City man a governor of the school

—what? Look here, let's go along and give him a yell, under the window, and show him what we think of him, barging in like this!"

"Better not," said Bob, with a chuckle. "I believe he's rather a dangerous old bean to cheek. Besides, if he finds out anything in Smithy's favour, more power to his elbow."

"Smithy never had justice," said Tom Redwing quietly. "He got the chopper, to save some other fellow's neck. I hope his father will find out the truth."

"Rot!" grunted Bolsover major, and he stalked away.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Some of the fags don't seem keen on interviewing Smithy's pater!" grinned Bob Cherry.

Gwynne of the Sixth was calling some of the Third. Three members of that Form—Wingate minor, Bolsover minor, and Smith minimus—had been gathered by the prefect, and they all looked rebellious.

"Look here, what does he want to see us for?" demanded Bolsover minor. "I'm jolly well going down to the cricket!"

"Same here," said Smith minimus. "I don't want to see Smithy's pater."

Jack Wingate did not speak. But he was edging away, as if he had some idea of dodging off unpermitted. Bolsover major broke in, with his bull-voice.

"Look here, Gwynne, what's my minor wanted for, I'd like to know? Are they going to make out that he ever had anything to do with Smithy's stunts?"

"Orders!" said Gwynne. "Shut up, kid! Now, come along, you young sweeps—I've got to get you in. Where are you going, Wingate mi? Come back at once, if you don't want six!"

And Gwynne marched the three fags into the House, and to the visitors' room, where the millionaire detective awaited them. Wingate had already shepherded in some of the Second—Nugent minor, Hop Hi, the Chinese fag, Sammy Bunter, and two or three others.

"Here they are, sir," said Gwynne. "That's the lot."

And Gwynne walked away, shrugging his shoulders, to tell other Sixth Form men that he didn't know what Greyfriars was coming to, when a fat man came down from the City to run the show!

Mr. Vernon-Smith, completely indifferent to the opinion of Gwynne, and all the rest of the Sixth Form of Greyfriars, eyed the fags as they stood in a group before him. Wingate waited. As the Head had given permission for Mr. Vernon-Smith to carry on, it was not for the Greyfriars captain to say him nay. But he was growing restive. His opinion was that the sooner Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith took his departure the better for all concerned. But Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith had no intention whatever of taking his departure just yet.

He scanned the group of uneasy fags with his keen eyes.

"Are these all the Second and Third Form boys, who have elder brothers in the school?" he asked.

"Yes, sir!"

"Very well! Now, my boys, I have a question to put to you," said the millionaire, fixing the hapless fags with an almost terrifying stare. "One of you, to the best of my belief, was out of bounds on Monday night last week, and my son left his dormitory to give

(Continued on next page.)

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a warning that prefects were on the watch. Which of you was it?"

His keen eyes scanned face after face. His stare and his words made all the fags feel and look uneasy. Indeed, all of them, on their looks, might have been guilty. That was, perhaps, a fortunate circumstance for Jack Wingate, whose looks might have betrayed him otherwise. There was an almost overpowering terror in the wretched fag's heart.

No one answered Mr. Vernon-Smith. It was Hop Hi, Wun Lung's minor, who found courage to speak at last.

"Me no savvy, sar!" he said. "Me no govy bleakee boundee. Me velly good boy, all samee blother, Wun Lung belong Remove."

"Listen to me!" rapped Mr. Vernon-Smith, as no one else spoke. "My son has refused to give the name of the boy for whom he sacrificed himself. That name must be ascertained, and shall be ascertained. I am here to discover it! It is only a matter of time. The boy concerned may as well speak out."

"Not guilty, my lord," said Dicky Nugent, recovering his habitual impudence. "I've never been out on the tiles with Smithy, sir!"

"What? What?" boomed Mr. Vernon-Smith.

Wingate interposed hastily.

"You will answer Mr. Vernon-Smith respectfully, Nugent minor. He has your headmaster's permission to question you."

"Oh, I don't mind!" said Dicky airily. "But I never—"

"Look here, I think this is pretty thick," said Bolsover minor rebelliously. "I don't see why we should be picked out."

"Mr. Vernon-Smith has a reason—"

"Well, let's hear the reason," said Smith minimus, recovering his courage, after the example of Nugent minor.

"I will tell you," rasped Mr. Vernon-Smith. "The boy befriended by my son was a Lower Form boy who has a brother in a higher Form, and it was chiefly from regard for this brother that my son acted so foolishly. That much I have been able to ascertain."

"Well, Smithy wasn't friendly with my brothers," said Smith minimus. "One's in the Fourth and the other in the Sixth. They wouldn't have anything to do with a Remove tick!"

"And he wasn't so jolly pally with my brother, either," said Bolsover minor.

"Allee samee along me," said Hop Hi cheerfully.

And the other fags in the group all disclaimed, one after another, any friendship between their majors and the Bounder. Only Jack Wingate did not speak—and Mr. Vernon-Smith eyed him.

"What is this boy's name?" he asked. Wingate smiled.

"This is my young brother, sir," he answered. "And as I happen to be a Sixth Form man, and captain of the school, I am afraid that I must disclaim the honour of having been admitted to your son's friendship."

The fags grinned, and Mr. Vernon-Smith grunted.

"One of these boys," he said, "has had some dealings with a bad character at the inn called the Three Fishers. He went out that night to pay the man some money, and my son foolishly took the risk of warning him that he was in danger of being caught. So much is to my mind certain. You cannot suggest which boy it is, Wingate?"

"I am certain that such a statement applies to none of them," answered the captain of Greyfriars coolly.

"They can go," grunted the millionaire. "Fortunately, there are other means. Where is that inn, the Three Fishers?"

He dismissed the fags with a wave of a plump hand, and they crowded to the doorway and crowded out. But one of them, Jack Wingate, lingered in the doorway as he heard Mr. Vernon-Smith's question.

"The Three Fishers!" repeated Wingate. "It's about a mile up the river—"

"Can I get there in a car?"

"You'll have to go to the entrance in Oak Lane, in that case, by Courtfield Common—near Popper Court."

Mr. Vernon-Smith rose.

"Very well, I shall go! You may tell your headmaster that I am leaving now, and that I shall return, when I hope to have some fresh facts to place before him."

"Oh, certainly," said Wingate.

Jack Wingate staggered away down the passage, his legs almost bending under him with terror.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter Enjoying Life!

BILLY BUNTER grinned.

Bunter was happy.

He was seated on a bench in the bikeshed. In his fat hands was a large, ripe, rich pineapple. On his fat face were smears of juice. Indeed, Bunter was juicy and sticky all over.

The bikeshed, perhaps, was not the place most fellows would have selected for a feed. But Bunter had his reasons. Just because the bikeshed was an unlikely place, the astute Owl of the Remove had selected it. Coker of the Fifth was not likely to look for him there!

Having kicked Bunter the length of the Remove passage and back again that day, Coker of the Fifth might have been expected to be satisfied. But he was not satisfied. He wanted his pineapple!

That was, perhaps, natural, the pineapple being Coker's property, specially sent by Aunt Judy to her darling Horace. The trouble was that Bunter also wanted it. What Bunter wanted was, of course, of much more importance than what any other fellow wanted.

Perhaps, too, Bunter felt that he had paid for it with that hefty kicking. Anyhow, he was going to have it! With great wariness and cunning Bunter had bagged it from its hiding-place, under the armchair in his study and conveyed it to the bikeshed, where a fellow could eat his pineapple in peace!

He dared not tackle it in the study. Coker might have barged in! Coker was not likely to barge into the bikeshed. Coker disdained push-bikes. He had one—Coker had everything that Aunt Judy could think of—but he hardly ever touched it. And he kept his motor-bike in the garage. So Coker was not likely to come along and catch Bunter devouring the pineapple. In case he did, Bunter had locked the door. Other fellows might want their bikes; but Bunter could not help their troubles. They would have to wait till Bunter had finished the pineapple. So long as a fragment remained, Bunter was not going to unlock that door. Coker was unlikely: but he was possible—and Bunter was not taking risks. Only too well he knew the weight of Coker's foot!

He grinned as the handle of the door was turned from the outside. The door shook. It was pushed; it rattled. But it did not, of course, open. During the day-time the key was left in the lock, for Gosling to lock it up at night. Bunter had changed the key to the inside, and turned it! Bunter was safe. The fellow outside could rattle the door as long as he liked. Why should Bunter mind?

Rattle, rattle—thump! He heard a breathless and angry exclamation outside. The fellow, whoever he was, was in a hurry. It did not sound like Coker! Whoever it was, Bunter did not heed. He was busy with pineapple!

Bang! Thump! Bang!

"Is anybody in there?" came a calling voice—certainly not Coker's. "Look here, I want my bike! Let me in, bother you!"

Bunter grinned, and did not answer. He fancied he knew the voice. It seemed to be young Wingate's. But if it had been old Wingate's, Bunter would not have heeded—till the pineapple was finished!

Bang! Thump!

"What rotten trick's this?" yelled the fag outside. "I can see that the door's locked! What's it locked for?"

No answer.

"Will you let me in, you fool?"

Bunter gobbled pineapple!

"I want my bike in a hurry, you dummy!"

Gobble!

"Oh, you rotter! I tell you I want my bike! Who are you in there, you silly ass? Let me in, you beast!"

Gobble! Gobble!

"Oh, I wish I could get at you, you rotter!"

Gobble!

Wingate minor moved along to the little window. It was shut and fastened inside; but he pressed his face to the glass and tried to penetrate the interior. Dimly he made out a fat figure sitting on the bench, pineapple in fat hands, gobbling, and caught the gleam of a large pair of spectacles. He tapped on the window.

"Is that you, Bunter?"

Bunter started. As he started, a section of pineapple went down the wrong way. He choked and gurgled.

"I can see you, you fat beast!" yelled the fag at the window. "Open the door, Bunter! Let me in to get my bike, you rotter!"

"Urrrrrrggh!"

"Will you let me in? I'll go to your Form master!"

"Gurrrrrgh!"

Tap! Tap! Tap! The last tap was so energetic that a pane cracked. Billy Bunter continued to gurgle, but gave no heed. Wingate minor stepped back, panting with terror and fury.

Already Mr. Vernon-Smith's car was going. He was going to the Three Fishers, to inquire there—to discover the name of the Greyfriars fag who had visited the place on Monday night last week! If the man Leach gave the name, the game was up. Very likely he would be feeling spiteful, after the way Coker had handled him, a few days ago. The wretched fag's only thought was to get to the place before the millionaire and speak to Leach—warn him to be silent—beg him to be silent!

If the man betrayed him all was lost! Somehow he must make the man promise to keep the secret—put him on his guard against letting anything slip if Mr. Vernon-Smith questioned him. There was time to get to the place first,



Wingate minor thumped and kicked on the door of the bikeshed, but no answer came from Bunter. He grinned and gobbled pineapple. Bang! Thump! "What rotten trick's this?" yelled the fag. "Will you let me in, you fool? I want my bike! I'm in a hurry!" Still Bunter gobbled. "Oh, I wish I could get at you, whoever you are!" said Wingate minor furiously.

by short cuts on a bike. Probably Mr. Vernon-Smith's chauffeur would have to inquire the way. He was a man from London, unacquainted with the neighbourhood. There was time—plenty of time—if he got his bike out and flew off at once. And a fatuous ass was sitting in the bikeshed with the door locked, and he could not get at his machine! The wretched fag, almost hysterical with terror, panted outside the bikeshed while Billy Bunter gobbled pineapple within.

He thumped on the door again; he yelled through the keyhole. He would have carried out his threat of calling Bunter's Form master, but there was no time. Moments were precious. He thumped and shouted. Bunter gobbled.

"Oh, you rotter!" groaned Jack Wingate. "You beast! Look here, I'll call a prefect!"

Gobble! Bunter had got over his choking, and was gobbling again. He was getting through the pineapple now.

Wingate minor rushed away. Evidently Bunter was not going to open the door. He had to have his bike. On foot, there was no chance. He would only reach the Three Fishers after Smithy's father had got there. A prefect would soon make the fat fool open the locked door. Wingate minor rushed back into the quad. And there was a wrathful yell as he rushed into a burly Fifth Form man before he saw him.

"Here, what's this game?" roared Coker of the Fifth, catching him by the collar. "Hay?"

"Ow! Let go—"

"Barging into a Fifth Form man!" booted Coker indignantly. "Think you

can barge into Fifth Form men because you're the captain's minor? I'll jolly well—"

"I say, Coker!" gasped Jack Wingate. "I say, I want my bike, and that fat idiot, Bunter, has locked himself in the bikeshed, and won't let me in. He wouldn't dare keep a senior out. I say, make him open the door!"

"Bunter!" ejaculated Coker. Coker of the Fifth was, in point of fact, looking for Bunter! He still wanted his pineapple! Though lost to sight, it was to memory dear! "Bunter—in the bikeshed, is he?"

"Yes; he's gorging something. And got the door locked. I say, make him open it, Coker! You're a Fifth Form man, and—"

"Gorging something—my pineapple! I'll gorge him!" roared Coker.

And he rushed away to the bikeshed, Wingate minor following at his heels.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Holding the Fort!

HARRY WHARTON looked on, while Mr. Vernon-Smith stepped into his big car, with a rather troubled expression on his face.

A group of fags, Second and Third, were discussing the examination in the visitors' room, some of them indignant, and some of them grinning. One of the party—Jack Wingate—had scudded away, taking no part in the discussion.

The fags who had been "up" before the millionaire detective were telling

other fags about it, and fellows of other Forms came along to listen. It was quite a crowd. The general opinion expressed was that Smithy's pater was "throwing his weight about" in the school, and Dicky Nugent even described him as a cheeky old ass! Harry Wharton, as he listened to the talk, had his eye on the departing millionaire, and he could not help feeling troubled in mind.

It was pretty clear now what Mr. Vernon-Smith's "game" was. Smithy had kept his secret, but the millionaire had some sort of a clue, in some unguarded words uttered by his son. He was after the fellow Smithy had saved from capture that wild night; and he knew that it was one of the many "minors" at Greyfriars. That was clear, from the fact that he had been questioning only fags who had older brothers in the school. The one he was least likely to suspect was the one who had a brother in the Sixth, captain of the school. But, unless Wharton was mistaken, that was the one he wanted. Now, it seemed, he was going—unsuccessful. Obviously, he had made no discovery, or some fag would have been taken before the Head.

The captain of the Remove was feeling sorely troubled. With a word he could have put the millionaire on the right track.

At all events, he felt sure of it. There was no proof, but his suspicion of the captain's minor was strong.

But he could not utter that word. Smithy had chosen to keep the secret.

and it was not for another fellow to give the wretched fag away.

Why had Smithy kept it? Why had he, in the first place, run such a risk for a reckless young rascal who was nothing to him? Evidently, it was on Wingate major's account—in his own way, the Bounder had been backing up the captain of the school! And it was the captain of the school who had caught him out of bounds, and marched him in to take the "sack"! Yet the Bounder had kept silent.

Wharton could not speak; but he could not help wishing, from the bottom of his heart, that Mr. Vernon-Smith would make a success of it. As Redwing had ventured to tell the Remove master in the Form-room, Smithy had had injustice; though he had only himself to thank for it. But the millionaire's departure looked as if he had given it up. The same thought was in Tom Redwing's mind; and he came running across to the car, as Mr. Vernon-Smith's plump weight plumped down on the cushions.

"Excuse me, sir!" panted Redwing, holding the door open. "You remember me, Mr. Vernon-Smith—Redwing—"

"My son's friend?" said Mr. Vernon-Smith, with a gracious nod.

"Yes, sir! Smithy's pal," said Tom, breathlessly. "I want to tell you, sir, that what they believe about Smithy isn't true—I'm not blaming them for believing it, in the circumstances, but it isn't true, sir. A good many fellows believe that it isn't, as well as I. Wharton can tell you what Smithy said to him that night he went out of bounds—"

Redwing turned his head, and beckoned to the captain of the Remove. Wharton came up, rather slowly.

"Tell Mr. Vernon-Smith what Smithy said that night, Wharton."

"Please do, my boy!" rapped the millionaire.

"Certainly, sir! I woke up when Smithy was going; and he said he was taking the chance of going, to warn a silly fellow who'd got out, and who didn't know that the prefects were on the watch."

"Have you told your Form master this?"

"Yes, sir; I thought I ought to tell him. He thought that Smithy was pulling my leg—but I'm sure not."

"What you say bears out what my son has said! All that is needed, is to find the young fool he went out to warn!" barked Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"But—you are going—" said Redwing.

Mr. Vernon-Smith smiled grimly.

"I am going to find out," he said, "Whoever the young fool was, he went to the place called the Three Fishers that night. That is, where I am going now—someone there must know his name, and whoever knows it shall tell me. I shall see that he does, by gad!"

He gestured to the juniors to step back; and the car rolled away to the gates. Harry Wharton drew a deep breath. He had never thought of that—but Mr. Vernon-Smith had thought of it! Evidently he was not going to leave a stone unturned.

"My hat!" said Redwing, and his eyes gleamed, "Smithy's pater is a brick, Wharton! He's the man for a thing like this! There's some man at the Three Fishers knows who the young rotter is, and he will give the name—Mr. Vernon-Smith will make him, somehow."

"Looks like it!" said Harry.

"The young rotter!" said Redwing.

"Any decent fellow would have owned up, when Smithy got it in the neck! I'll be jolly glad to see him shown up."

"Smithy didn't want him shown up!" said Harry.

"I know! If it was left to Smithy, the cad would never be known! Smithy's turfed out of school, not because he's done wrong, but because he's loyal to some cur not worth bothering his head about. I can't imagine who it was—but he must be a pretty fair sort of rotter!"

"A frightened little ass," said Harry, thinking of Wingate minor. "Well, it's up to Smithy's pater now."

Redwing walked away, with a much more cheerful face. He felt that the tangle was very likely to be unravelled, in Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith's extremely capable hands.

Wharton was glad to think the same; but he was troubled, too, at the prospect. He glanced at George Wingate, of the Sixth, walking with Gwynne and Sykes. If the truth came out, and if the truth was as Wharton suspected, what a blow for "old Wingate"! There was no shadow of foreboding on the kind, cheerful face of the captain of Greyfriars. Yet in all likelihood, it was his brother who was the unknown culprit; who would be ruthlessly exposed by Smithy's pater, and either sacked or flogged before another day had passed. Smithy had wanted to shield him from that shame and disgrace; but Smithy's father's views were very different. Mr. Vernon-Smith was not likely to care, or consider, who suffered, so long as his son did not suffer—and he was, of course, right! Justice had to be done! But Wharton's heart was heavy for "old Wingate."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry startled him out of troubled thoughts, with a smack on the shoulder that made him stagger. "Penny for 'em!"

"Fathead!"

"Well, coming out?" asked Bob, "Smithy's pater's gone—he doesn't seem to have had any luck, after all. Blessed if I quite know what he was up to. Anyhow he's gone—I saw Quelch looking after his car, from the window of his jolly old study—like a gargoyle!" Bob chuckled. "Smithy's pater seems to have rubbed Quelch the wrong way! I fancy he made the Chief Beak's head ache! Come on, and get your jigger, and let's get out."

Harry Wharton nodded, and followed Bob in the direction of the bikeshed. Nugent and Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh joined them on the way. When they came near the bikeshed, they were greeted by a sound of heavy thumping and banging, and the voice of Horace Coker raised in wrath.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's this game?" bawled Bob.

Coker of the Fifth was banging on the bikeshed door with a hefty fist. Wingate minor stood beside him, shaking with impatience.

"Open this door, you fat freak!" roared Coker, "See? I know you're there, and you've got my pineapple! Let me in, see!"

"Oh lor'!" came from within. "I—I say, Coker—"

"I'm going to smash you!" roared Coker.

"Beast!"

"Will you let me in, you frabjous frump?"

"Oh, really, Coker—"

Bang! bang! bang!

"What on earth—" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"That fat scoundrel's locked himself

in here, with my pineapple!" hooted Coker. "I dare say he's scoffed it by this time. I'm going to smash him into small pieces. Bunter! Let me in!"

"I—I can't!" squeaked Bunter, "The—

—the door's locked."

"Unlock it, you frowsy frump!"

"The—the key's gone, old chap! I—I'd let you in like a shot, but—but I can't find the key."

Bang! bang!

"You fat rotter! The key's in the lock—I can see it!" howled back Wingate.

"Beast!"

"Will you open this door, Bunter?" bawled Coker.

"No, I jolly well won't!" hooted Bunter. "I haven't had your pineapple! My pineapple came from Bunter Court! You can ask Wharton—I told him! Besides, I haven't had a pineapple at all! I—I don't like pineapples."

"By gum! If you don't open this door, I'll break it in."

"Beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Co.

Bang! bang! bang!

Harry Wharton's eyes rested curiously on Wingate minor. The fag was in a tremble with impatience to get into the bikeshed. Why did he want his machine in such a hurry? Certainly he did not look like a fellow who was going to enjoy a spin.

Bang! thump! bang! Bob Cherry joined in the thumping on the door. The Famous Five had come there for their machines, and they were not disposed to stand around waiting.

"Bunter, you fat ass," roared Bob, "open this door!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"We want our jiggers, you dummy!" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Well, look here," came Bunter's voice, "You fellows hold Coker—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You hold him, while I cut, and I'll open the door!" said Bunter, "The silly ass makes out that I've had his pineapple. Of course, I haven't! You fellows know that I wouldn't!"

"Let us in, you blithering fathead!"

"Yah!"

"We want our jiggers!" yelled Bob.

"Beast!"

Bang! bang! bang! Thump! The door of the bikeshed creaked and groaned. But it did not open. Billy Bunter was holding the fort—and he was going to hold it, so long as Coker of the Fifth was in the offing.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

"B end Over!"

"WHAT the thump—" It was the voice of Wingate of the Sixth. The uproar at the bikeshed had attracted quite a lot of attention by this time, and fellows were gathering round, to see what was on. Wingate and Gwynne and Sykes, the great men of the Sixth, who had been walking in the quad, came up—and the juniors made room for the great men.

Coker, however, gave them a truculent stare. Coker did not think much of the Sixth, and made no secret of the fact. Heedless of the arrival of the great men, Coker banged on the door again, and roared:

"You young scoundrel! Let me get at you!"

"Beast!"

Jack Wingate backed away behind the other fellows as his major came up. But the Greyfriars captain did not notice him there. He tapped Coker on the shoulder.

"Chuck it, Coker!" he said quietly. "What's the row about?"

"That fat pilferer's got my pineapple!" roared Coker. "He's locked himself in here to scoff it, and I'm going to smash him—see?"

"You're not!" said Wingate calmly. "Who says I'm not?" bellowed Coker. "Little me! If you don't want a prefects' beating, shut up!" said the captain of Greyfriars.

Coker gurgled! Words could not have expressed his feelings. If Horace James Coker of the Fifth Form got a prefects' beating, it would be time for the skies to fall—with a crash! Nevertheless, Coker was liable to a prefects' beating, just like an ordinary mortal!

Gurgling with speechless indignation, Coker restrained his natural desire to knock George Wingate spinning, and stepped back, giving place to the Greyfriars captain. Wingate tapped on the door.

"Bunter!"

"Oh lor'!"

"Open this door at once!"

"I—I'm not here!"

"What?"

"I—I mean, I never had the pineapple!" gasped Bunter. "I haven't tasted a pineapple for weeks! I—I've quite forgotten the taste of a pineapple! The fact is, I never eat them; I—I dislike them! I say, Wingate, if you ask Wharton he will tell you that I told him my pineapple came from home. It—it was in a hamper from Bunter Court. Not that I had one, you know," added Bunter cautiously. "It's weeks and weeks since I've had a pineapple—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Open this door at once!"

"I—I say, will you hold Coker?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll give you the whopping of your life if you don't unlock this door this very minute!" rapped Wingate.

"Oh lor'!" groaned Bunter.

The key was heard to turn in the lock. Deep as was his dread of the wrathful Coker, Billy Bunter did not venture to disregard the captain of the school. Wingate threw the door open.

A fat, alarmed face, smeared with pineapple-juice, appeared. Coker made a jump forward.

"Ow! Keep him off!" yelled Bunter. Wingate pushed the Fifth Form man back.

"Leave this to me, Coker—"

"Look here—" roared Coker.

"And shut up! Now, Bunter, what do you mean by locking yourself in the bikeshed?" demanded Wingate.

"I—I—I—I never had a pineapple! The fact is, I—I was going to do some Latin, and—and I wanted a quiet spot! There's such a row in the Remove passage—"

"Was it juicy Latin you did?" inquired Gwynne gravely.

"Eh?"

"Your face looks as if you've been doing something juicy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh!" Bunter gasped, and passed a fat hand over his sneary, fat countenance. "I—I—I— The—the fact is I—"

"There's the rind of a pineapple on the floor!" grinned Sykes of the Sixth. "But probably Bunter knows nothing about it."

"N-n-n-nothing!" gasped Bunter. "I—I hadn't noticed it! It—it looks as

—as if somebody's been eating a pineapple here! I—I wonder who it was!"

"The wonderfulness is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's scoffed it!" roared Coker. "And I'm jolly well going to smash him—see?"

Wingate, who had his official ashplant under his arm, slipped it down into his hand. Bunter eyed that action in great alarm.

"You've been pilfering tuck from a Fifth Form study, Bunter," said the Greyfriars captain. "I'm going to give you six! Bend over!"

"I—I never—"

"Bend over!" rapped Wingate.

"Oh lor'!"

Billy Bunter bent over dismally. Six from Wingate was not so bad as what he might have received from Coker of the Fifth. But Billy Bunter did not want six from Wingate. What Bunter wanted, however, was not considered. He had the six!

Whack, whack, whack, whack, whack, whack!

The ashplant fairly rang on Bunter's tight trousers, and every whack elicited a fearful howl from the hapless Owl of the Remove.

"That's that!" said Wingate, tucking the ashplant under his arm again. "You can cut, Bunter."

"You-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Coker, if you want Bunter to pay for the pineapple, you—"

"Rats!" roared Coker.

"Then the matter's ended."

"I'm going to kick him across the quad!" roared Coker.

(Continued on the next page.)

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"Not in the least! Shut up! Cut, Bunter!"

Bunter cut! He cut at great speed! Bunter was a heavy-weight; but he flew like the lightest of light-weights!

Coker made a rush after him, and Wingate caught him by the arm and jerked him back.

"Stop!" he rapped.
"Look here, you silly ass—"

"What?"
"Silly ass!" roared Coker. "If you think—"

Wingate slipped the ashplant into his hand again.

"Bend over, Coker!" he said laconically.

"Wha-a-at?!" stuttered Coker.

"Bend over!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the crowd of juniors, greatly entertained by the expression on Horace Coker's face.

"Why, I—I—I—" gurgled Coker.
"I—I—I—I—"

"Bend over!"

"Do you think you can whop a Fifth Form man?" shrieked Coker.

"I fancy so! Bend over!"

"No jolly fear! I'll—"

"Bend him over, you men!" said Wingate calmly.

Gwynno and Sykes took Coker by either arm, and the hefty Horace was bent over.

Whack, whack, whack, whack, whack, whack!

The cane rang on Coker's trousers as it had rung on Bunter's. It seemed like some awful dream to Coker of the Fifth! It seemed impossible that it really was he, Horace James Coker of the Fifth Form who was bending over like a fag, taking six! But it was! The "six" left no doubt about it! It was a hefty six!

"Now cut!" said Wingate. "Any more cheek, Coker, and I'll take you to the Head to be sacked! Cut!"

Coker, still like a fellow in a dream, tottered away. Wingate, tucking the ashplant under his arm once more, walked away sedately with the other great men of the Sixth.

A swarm of juniors were left chuckling; and Jack Wingate at last was able to get into the bikeshed, and grab his machine and rush it out.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Harry Wharton Takes a Hand!

"HOLD on!"

Jack Wingate did not hold on; he did not even glance back as Harry called to him. He ran his bicycle out at the gate, and threw his leg over the saddle. Leaving his comrades at the bikeshed, getting the machines out, the captain of the Remove ran swiftly down to the gate.

"Hold on!" he shouted.

He rushed after the fag; but Wingate minor drove at the pedals and flashed away up the road. Wharton halted, breathless, beaten by the bike; and as he stood he saw the fag turn in the direction of the towpath—where it was forbidden to ride bicycles. What had been a suspicion in his mind before was now a certainty.

Wingate minor knew, or guessed, where Smithy's pater had gone; and that was why he had been so anxious to get his bike out—to get to the Three Fishers first, and forestall the millionaire. Wharton spun round to Peter Todd, who was wheeling out his machine. There was no time to fetch his own.

"Lend me your jigger, Toddy—take mine—will you? I've got to get away quick!"

Todd gave him a surprised stare;

but nodded, and handed over the machine. The captain of the Remove jumped on it, and pedalled away, swinging into the towpath after Jack Wingate.

The fag was riding hard and fast. Already he was some distance up the towpath in the direction of the Three Fishers. So much time had been lost, owing to the egregious Bunter, that he was doubtful now whether he would get to the place first.

He rode frantically, perspiration streaming down his face in the hot sun. The hapless fag was not far from hysterics. The whirr of a machine behind him made him glance back in fear; and he stared at Harry Wharton, and rode on, regardless of the Remove fellow's shout.

But hard as he rode, he had no chance in a race with the captain of the Remove. Wharton was going all out, and rapidly overhauling the fag.

"Stop!" rapped out Wharton.
"Stop, you mad young fool! Stop and let me speak to you!"

"I won't! Mind your own business!"

"It's for your own sake!"

"Mind your own business, I tell you!" panted Jack Wingate. "You meddling fool! Leave me alone!"

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Wharton set his lips. He was tempted to take the young rascal at his word, and leave him alone. But he thought of "old Wingate"—and the fear and distress in the wretched fag's face disarmed him, too. He rode on by the side of the fag, easily keeping pace.

"You're going to the Three Fishers?" he said.

"No, I'm not!"

"What's the good of lying?" rapped Wharton. "Where else could you be going on the towpath? I guessed it when I saw you at the bikeshed. You've found out where Smithy's pater is going, and you're trying to get there first."

"Mind your own business!"

"I'll mind yours—and your brother's—for a bit," said Harry. "Last week I knew—or, as good as knew—that you were the fellow with Smithy that night—"

"I wasn't!"

"Well, if I was wrong, I'm sorry—and, in that case, you're not going to the Three Fishers now."

"I've told you I'm not."

"We shall see—in a few more minutes, then," said Wharton coolly.

"You—you rotter! Spying on a chap! Turn back and leave me alone!" the fag almost screamed. It was as good as an admission—if Wharton had wanted proof.

"You young ass! Can't you see it's no good?" exclaimed Wharton impatiently. "Likely enough, Smithy's pater is there already, in his car—but that's not all. The man you know there will give you away—Mr. Vernon-Smith will make him. There isn't a chance of keeping it dark now. Go to your brother—"

"You fool!"

"It's you that's the fool!" said Harry. "I tell you it's your only chance now. That rotter at the Three Fishers won't keep your rotten secret, if you go down on your hands and knees to him!"

"Why shouldn't he?" panted Jack Wingate. He was giving up lying now. The words of the captain of the Remove scared him to the marrow of his bones. "He hasn't any reason to give me away! It was he got me into playing the fool, and I paid him—I needn't have, but I did! Why should he give me away?" He panted. "I'm going to warn him—so that he won't be taken by surprise—and—and—he won't give me away, I'm sure he won't!"

The very words told how deep was the fag's dread that Leach would betray him. He hoped to prevail on the man to keep his identity a secret; but his fear was greater than his hope.

Wharton felt a wave of compassion for the unhappy young rascal; he had as good as confessed now where he was going, and why; and Wharton realised his state of almost hysterical desperation. But it was for the boy's own sake that Wharton was acting now. The bikes flew on side by side.

"I'm going there!" the fag panted.
"You shan't stop me! Mind your own business, Harry Wharton!"

"I shan't stop you!" said Harry. "I'm trying to make you understand that the game's up, you young ass! I don't know who the man is you know there—but he must be a precious rascal, whoever he is, to do betting with a kid like you! Do you think a man like that will keep a thing dark—when a man like Mr. Vernon-Smith wants to know? He will be afraid, for one thing. And for another, he will be on the make. What do you fancy he will think, as soon as he hears that a millionaire wants to know something that he can tell him? All he will think is how much he can make out of it!"

"Oh!" gasped Jack Wingate.
He had not thought of that. But, as Wharton spoke, he could see, in his mind's eye, the beery, squalid, greedy face of the man Leach. What he could tell might be worth a fiver to him, a tenner, a pony perhaps—if money would buy what Mr. Vernon-Smith wanted to know, money would not be spared. The game was up—he could offer the man nothing—nothing but hysterical pleading not to give away his name!

"Can't you see?" went on Harry patiently. "Smithy's pater is on this like a bulldog. He's got his jaws into it. He knows he can get the name he wants at the Three Fishers. Do you think they'll dare defy a man like him? And if they did, do you think the man you know would refuse to sell you out? For goodness' sake, kid, have a little sense! I'm speaking for your own sake."

Jack Wingate's bike still ran on; but he was not pedalling now. Even his scared and confused mind grasped the truth of Wharton's earnest words. His bike slowed down, and he would have fallen off in the grass of the towpath, had not the captain of the Remove jumped down and caught him.

"Steady on!" said Harry.

Wingate minor staggered against a tree beside the path.

"What can I do?" he muttered huskily. "He—he will find out—he will go to the Head and—and my brother!" He choked.

"There's no help for that now," said Harry pityingly. He did not add that the fag himself ought to have gone to the Head, long ago, when Smithy was "sacked." It was no time for



"Why, I—I—I—" gurgled Coker. "I—I—I'll—" "Bend over!" said Wingate. "Do you think you can whop a Fifth-Form man?" shrieked Coker. "No jolly fear! I'll—" "Bend him over, you men!" said Wingate calmly. Gwynne and Sykes took Coker by either arm, and the hefty Horace was bent over. The next moment Wingate's cane was ringing on his trousers.

reproaches. "As soon as I heard that Smithy's pater was going to that show I knew he would find out the facts. He will be coming back to Greyfriars—knowing your name—"

"He couldn't prove—" muttered the fag.

"Your name will be enough. When you're standing before the Head, do you fancy you could tell lies, and lie yourself out of it?"

Jack Wingate groaned. Only too well he knew that he could not. Once up before the Head, he knew that the falsehoods would die on his lips.

"And there'd be proof, too," went on Wharton. "Whoever you've seen at that den could identify you—Smithy's pater would bring him up to the school if necessary."

The fag groaned again.

"That's why I came after you, kid. I tell you, Mr. Vernon-Smith will come back to the school, with your name all pat to give to Dr. Locke. Your only chance is to get in first. It's got to come out now; but you'll get off easier by confessing—that will be something! Go to your brother first—he will get a shock, but he's got to get it now. Anyhow, he will stand by you as far as he can."

"I—I daren't!" The fag's voice was a husky groan. "I—I'd have owned up, when Smithy got it, only I daren't let my brother know! Captain of the school and head prefect, and all that. And I—I—"

He choked.

It was in Wharton's mind that the young rascal should have thought of that before he dabbled in black-guardism. But he did not say so.

"It's got to come, kid," he said quietly. "Your only choice is to tell

Wingate yourself, and get him to put it to the Head—or to wait till Smithy's pater comes back to the school with your name. You'll be in a better position if you've owned up—Wingate may be able to do something for you—but if you wait till it comes out—"

"I—I know!"

"They won't sack a kid in the Third!" said Harry.

"It—it's not that! It's the disgrace—my brother—"

Even the selfish young rascal, who had kept silent when Smithy was sacked, was thinking of his brother. And Wharton could believe that it was chiefly for that reason that he had been silent.

"Well, you're your own master," said Harry at last. "I thought I ought to tip you—and if you've got any sense you'll get in first. Think it over, kid, but don't take too long—there's not a lot of time to waste."

With that, the captain of the Remove remounted his machine, and rode back the way he had come. He had done all that he could—for Wingate minor's own sake, and for Wingate major's—and he had to leave it at that. But when he glanced back, a few minutes later, he saw that the fag was on his bicycle again, and following him.

When he reached Greyfriars, and rejoined his astonished friends, who were wondering what had become of him, Jack Wingate wheeled in his machine and walked off slowly to the House.

A quarter of an hour later, riding on the Courtfield road, the Famous Five passed a big car coming towards the school. In that car sat Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith, with an expression of grim satisfaction on his face. And Harry Wharton knew, after one glance

at Smithy's pater, that if Jack Wingate had taken his advice, he had only taken it in time.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Clean Breast of It!

WINGATE of the Sixth was standing by his study window, while Paget, his fag, was busy getting tea.

There was a thoughtful expression on Wingate's rugged, kindly face. He was thinking of Mr. Vernon-Smith's expedition to the Three Fishers, and wondering what would come of it. Mr. Vernon-Smith was not a man to be denied; if any of the shady crew at that disreputable den had anything to tell, there was little doubt that the millionaire would get it out of him.

Wingate wondered whether the millionaire's return to the school, when he came, would mean trouble for some Greyfriars fellow. He was not by any means pleased with the millionaire's methods of "carrying on." Still, he could hardly blame a father for taking any measures to clear the name of his son.

He gave a little start at the sight of a fag coming towards the House. It was his young brother, and the expression on his face made Wingate fix his eyes on him sharply. For more than a week past he had known that there was some trouble on Jack's mind, but he had been unable to discover—or guess—what it was. When he had questioned him the fag had been sullen and evasive, only anxious to get away. It had worried Wingate a good deal, and it

worried him more than ever now that he saw that strange look on his minor's face.

The fag came towards the House with lagging steps, as if he had to drag himself along.

"Paget!" Wingate turned from the window, and Paget looked up. "You can cut! Tell my minor to come here; he's in the quad."

"Yes, Wingate."

Not at all sorry to be relieved of his duties, Paget of the Third "cut." A couple of minutes later Jack Wingate entered the study.

"I told Paget to send you here," said Wingate, eyeing him.

"I was coming," muttered his brother.

"Shut the door. Now, what's the matter? I've asked you before; now you're going to tell me."

"I was coming here to tell you."

"That's good! Cough it up."

Wingate minor looked at him almost stealthily. Whatever the captain of Greyfriars expected, it was not what was coming—or anything like it. But the fag had to get it out. He was in terror of hearing the sound of Mr. Vernon-Smith's returning car before he had had time. But the words seemed to choke in his throat. He tried to speak, and stood miserably silent.

A look of anxiety deepened on Wingate's face. He realised that his brother was in more serious trouble than he had imagined. Yet what serious trouble could have fallen on a fag of the Third Form?

"Cough it up, kid!" said Wingate, and his voice was very kind. "If you've been making a fool of yourself somehow, I'm the man to tell. It—it can't be anything I should have to take up as a prefect." Already, however, he feared that it was.

"Yes!" gasped Jack.

"Then—what?"

"It was me with Smithy!" The fag gulped it out.

Wingate stared at him, not comprehending for a moment or two. The fag stood half crouched against the study table, his eyes on the floor. Slowly the Greyfriars captain got it into his head.

"You—with Vernon-Smith?"

Jack nodded, unable to speak.

"You—my brother—out of bounds at night! You, night-prowling with that young scoundrel Vernon-Smith! Are you mad?"

The fag did not speak. He had got it out, and now his voice seemed to fail him.

Wingate's face hardened like a rock.

"Is that true? Answer me!"

"Yes!" panted his brother.

"And I was sorry for that young villain when he was kicked out—and it was my own brother that he led into his rotten rascality! By gad!" He broke off. "Why have you told me?"

"Wharton advised me to—"

"Wharton knew?"

"He guessed somehow. I—I think I gave myself away the day Smithy was sacked. Wharton spoke to me that day. Now he's advised me—"

"Good advice, at all events!" Wingate clenched his hands. "That young scoundrel Vernon-Smith—that villain—that—" He choked with wrath. "But I don't understand! You have nothing to do with the Remove. How did you get in with the fellow at all? I should have noticed if I'd ever seen you together—"

"You don't understand," muttered Jack Wingate. "I never had anything to do with him; we were never together."

"He led you into this!" Wingate could

not get that out of his head. "He was the cause—I never quite believed it, but Quelch was right—and you were the silly kid he was leading into mischief!"

"Oh, you won't understand!" said Jack, with a touch of his old sullenness. "Smithy never had anything to do with it. I don't even know how he knew I was out of bounds that night. He found out, and he knew that you—that the prefects were on the watch, and he came out to warn me."

Wingate caught his breath.

"Why did you go out?"

"To pay a man a pound! A man named Leach—at the Three Fishers! That pound you gave me—"

"You young rascal! If I'd known—How did you ever come to be at the place at all and see such a man? Did Vernon-Smith take you there?"

"No! He spotted me going there one afternoon and warned me that the beaks were on the spot—that's all. He guessed where I was going somehow. You don't understand! He had nothing to do with it. He advised me to keep clear of the place, and I meant to; only that man said he wouldn't wait any longer, and I was scared; and—and I couldn't get there in the day-time, so I cut out of the dorm—"

The fag's voice trailed away; but he went on again:

"I—I never meant any harm! I only went there once—one day—to—to get a ginger-pop. I thought it rather a lark; and—and the man got talking to me—he's the billiards-marker there—and he said he knew a horse that would win, and—and—" His voice trailed off again.

"And Vernon-Smith had nothing to do with it?"

"Of course he hadn't! Think a fellow like Smithy would go about with a Third Form kid?" snapped Wingate minor. "He never knew till I told him, when he warned me to keep clear of the place. And—and that night I—I went, and I ran into that fool Coker, and there was a row. And—and—and as far as I can make out, Quelch thought it was Smithy up to his tricks, and set the prefects on the watch. And I never knew that, and they'd have bagged me as I came in, only Smithy—"

"Good gad!" breathed Wingate.

He was beginning to understand. Mr. Vernon-Smith's words came back to his mind. It was some loyal regard for the wretched culprit's brother that made the Bounder keep obstinately silent, when he had only to speak—to tell what Jack Wingate was telling now—to save himself from the sack. Smithy had stated that he had gone out to warn a silly fellow who was out of bounds; and the Head had told him that if he could prove that statement, it would not be expulsion. And he could have proved it!

"Good gad!" repeated Wingate.

"I—I never knew Smithy was caught that night," mumbled Jack. "He met me outside and tipped me, and we waited till the prefects had gone in, as we thought. I got in all right; I thought Smithy was all right, only the next day I knew—"

Wingate stared at him. He remembered very clearly the events of that night—when his hand had fallen on the Bounder's shoulder, the other fellow barely escaping. And the other fellow was his brother! He had had the narrowest escape of capturing his minor out of bounds, and Smithy had got it instead—and suffered for it!

"If it's as you say, you could have got Vernon-Smith off expulsion by speaking out!" he said at last.

The fag gulped.



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"I know! I was afraid to! Wharton guessed, and he told me. But I—I couldn't! I couldn't face—"

"The Head?"

"No; you!"

"Oh!"

Wingate went to the window and stared out into the sunny quad; his brain was in a whirl.

He remembered how he had asked, almost begged, the Bounder to give the name, so that his story might be proved, to save him from the sack. He remembered the curious glimmer in Smithy's eyes when he had asked him; he had not understood it then, but he understood it now.

It was for his sake, to save him from disgrace and humiliation, that the Bounder had taken the risk that night—and the Bounder was not the fellow to turn back when his hand was on the plough. He was not the fellow to weaken and whine because luck had gone against him. Even the fact that it was Wingate himself who had caught him and handed him over to authority had made no difference to the Bounder's resolution.

And his story was true. His companion that night was not a reckless boy whom he was leading into rascality, but, as he had said, a silly "kid" whom he had tried to save from disgrace. The Bounder of Greyfriars, the "hard case" of the Remove, the scapegrace of the school—in the role of guardian angel!

Wingate turned back from the window at last.

"You'll have to tell all this to the Head!"

"I—I know!" Jack Wingate shuddered. "I—I don't care much about myself—that's true, really, but—but—"

"It's a bit late in the day to think of me," said Wingate bitterly. "I shall have to face it somehow. You've disgraced our name, and, worse than that, you've let a decent fellow—a really decent fellow, with all his faults—you've let him be kicked out of the school when a word from you— But it's no good talking! That can be set right, at least! Thank goodness you've had the decency to own up before you were found out—and there's no doubt you'd have been found out. I dare say Mr. Vernon-Smith knows already! Come with me!"

Wingate minor walked, with lagging steps, by his brother's side to the Head's study.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER!

All Clear!

MR. SAMUEL VERNON-SMITH alighted from his car.

There was a grim smile on the millionaire's hard face as Trotter showed him to the Head's study. His visit to the Three Fishers had been a success—Mr. Vernon-Smith was not the man to fail. He knew now all that he wanted to know—and the headmaster of Greyfriars was to know it.

With a heavy stride the millionaire came down the corridor, and he had almost reached Dr. Locke's study when the door opened and two fellows came out—a Sixth-Former and a Third Form fag.

Mr. Vernon-Smith's look grew grimmer as he recognised the boy he knew to be Wingate minor. The senior and junior went in the other direction, and Mr. Vernon-Smith was shown into the study—after a very grim look after them. Trotter pulled the door shut and departed, and Mr. Vernon-Smith faced a troubled-looking headmaster and a worried Form master—Dr. Locke and

Mr. Quelch. They were speaking a moment before he entered; now they were silent, looking at him.

"I regret having to take up so much of your time to-day, Dr. Locke," said the millionaire detective, with a faint touch of sarcasm. "I have been following a line of inquiry which, probably, did not occur to you. I have visited the place called the Three Fishers."

"Indeed, sir!" said the Head, raising his eyebrows a little.

"It did not occur to you to investigate in that direction, sir," said Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"Certainly not. Neither should I dream of crediting any statement made by any habitue of such a place!" said the Head stiffly.

"Oh, quite!" assented Mr. Vernon-Smith. "A rascally crew—I never saw a more dingy and disreputable crew!

a charge of which he is guiltless, and my methods, so long as they are legal, are good enough for me.

"On Monday night, last week, sir, a Greyfriars Third Form boy visited the Three Fishers late at night to pay the man Leach a pound which, it seems, he owed him. The man is a dirty rascal—I would not take his word against a pickpocket. But he gave a name—that was all I wanted. The name was Wingate—the younger boy of that name—and I demand, sir, that this boy Wingate be sent for and questioned. I have no doubt that he will tell the truth to his headmaster."

The Head and Mr. Quelch exchanged a glance.

But for what they had heard, only a few minutes before the millionaire's return, that statement would have startled them, and would have been received with utter incredulity till the miserable fag had been questioned.

Now, however, they knew already, and the name came as no surprise to them.

"This boy," resumed Mr. Vernon-Smith, "was one of the boys I questioned myself—the one I least thought of suspecting, as a matter of fact. His brother is captain of the school—a Sixth Form boy—and I could not imagine, therefore, that he was the friend for whom my son sacrificed himself. Why Herbert made such a sacrifice, for a Sixth Form boy with whom he can have had little or nothing to do, is a mystery to me. But there is no doubt of the fact, for the boy he befriended that night was Wingate's young brother. I have no doubt that the young rascal will confess as much—"

"He has already confessed, sir!"

"What?"

"I was about to say, sir, when you interrupted me, that further inquiry was unnecessary," said Dr. Locke. "Only a few minutes ago Wingate minor came here with his brother and told the whole story."

"I saw him leaving your study. But"—Mr. Vernon-Smith's face set hard—"unless the boy's confession has exonerated my son, sir—"

"It has!" said the Head.

"Quite!" said Mr. Quelch.

"Oh!"

"From what this unhappy boy has confessed," said Dr. Locke slowly, "it appears that he became involved with a rascally character, named Leach, at that miserable place—and he visited the place that night to pay him a debt. Your son had nothing whatever to do with the matter except that, learning that the boy was in danger of being caught as he returned, he left his dormitory to warn him. This was the story your son told to me, but as he refused to give me the boy's name—"

"I see no reason now why he should not have given the name," said Mr. Quelch. "He was well aware that his word could not be taken without proof. Your son, sir, has only himself to blame."

"Possibly," said Mr. Vernon-Smith dryly. "But the principle of never letting a man down is a good one."

"If that was the reason—"

"What other reason, sir, could he have had?"

Mr. Quelch was silent for a moment or two. It was not easy to change fixed opinions. Neither was it easy to think of the reckless, unscrupulous Bounder as tied by a point of honour, and influenced by a chivalrous consideration for the captain of the school. Yet there

(Continued on page 28.)

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GOT A POSTCARD?

Then jot down on it that funny yarn you know and send it along to me. It may win

A USEFUL PRIZE!

G. P. Pim, of 601, Wardlaw Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, has done the trick. Here's his effort:



Doctor: "The best thing for you to do, sir, is to stop thinking about yourself—to bury yourself in your work."

Patient (suffering from nerves): "What! And me a concrete mixer!"

Now get busy and see what YOU can do!

But it is not a question of crediting statements made by such persons, sir, it is a question of investigating the truth of such statements."

"It is now unnecessary—" began the Head.

"Please let me complete my remarks, sir. I interviewed the landlord of the Three Fishers. I found him very willing to oblige—no doubt he knew that his licence was in danger if he provoked me. I was very soon in contact with a man named Leach, billiards-marker at the place. He was the man with whom a Greyfriars boy—a Lower Form boy—had had dealings. A five-pound note bought the whole story."

"Such methods, sir—"

"Such methods, sir, would never occur to a scholarly gentleman like yourself," said Mr. Vernon-Smith, with more or less polite sarcasm. "But a man of the world does not waste time beating about the bush. I am here to clear my son of

ALLISON OF AVONSHIRE!

By JOHN BREARLEY!



WHAT'S GONE BEFORE.

Simon Allison, once part-owner of the great Allison Motor Works, invents a powerful supercharger. Spurred on by a thug named Valetti, Len Allison, the old man's nephew and "boss" of the works, enlists the services of a masked hunchback to steal the plans. The raid is carried out, and old Simon is badly battered. With his crippled father to support, Bill Allison, a crack left-handed bowler, leaves Mike Doyle, a mechanic, in charge of the invention, and joins the county club as a pro. Bill very soon establishes himself as a match-winner. Later, the hunchback, armed with an automatic, makes another attempt to steal the plans, but is forced to flee without his prize. Bill gives chase on his bike, only to fall heavily.

(Now read on.)

Mike's Important Discovery!

MEANWHILE, Mike Doyle was in a bad way, too—lying face down, half-in, half-out of the cottage door.

Although Joe the Hump's bullet had only fanned him, blood was streaming fast from an ugly, ragged furrow below his eye. And, to add to his plight, in trying to follow Bill he had stumbled weakly again, knocked his head against the doorpost, and taken the count.

The ground was heaving and rocking under him when, at long last, the mechanic opened his eyes again and managed to haul himself upright. For several blank minutes he leaned against the door, staring perplexedly at the big automatic at his feet, what time he pressed a handkerchief to his injured face.

It was the throbbing pain of the wound that finally brought him to his senses once more.

"My thunderin' Sam! Bill! Bill, where are you? By gosh, I'll smash someone for this!"

All at once a surge of ungovernable rage rushed over him, sweeping away the last of his muzziness. Pain was disregarded, faintness conquered. Uttering a harsh word, sharp as the crack of a whip, Bill's indomitable partner staggered down to the gate, gripping the automatic fiercely.

Up and down the road he glared, but it was deserted. Strangely, no one from the village had been attracted by the fracas in the cottage. But to Mike, who knew the inhabitants of quiet, sleepy Kelsey, this was not surprising. Even if the report of Joe the Hump's gun had been heard, the Kelseyites would only have thought some poacher was at work in the squire's coverts near by. Certainly nothing short of a field-gun would have drawn them from the village inn or their own cosy parlours at this time of night.

Mike set his teeth hard.

Where was Bill? What had happened to him? Had the plucky youngster overhauled that fiend of a hunchback? If he had—

"Heaven help the lad!" groaned Mike, in an agony of dread.

Then, as he started groggily up the road, a sound that was suspiciously like a sob of relief burst from him at sight of a dim shape slowly approaching the cottage.

Mike ran forward. Yes, it was Bill all right; dusty and dishevelled, and the knees of his trousers gaping. The lad was limping in a way that made Mike bite his lip, and the wreckage of Wheezy Anna hung from the youngster's shoulder.

Without a word, Mike slung the bicycle into the hedge, hugged his young partner tightly for a moment, then hustled him back into the cottage.

"Thank Heaven you're safe, boy! Quick! What happened?" he panted.

Bill, however, ignored the question. He, in turn, stared aghast at Mike's wounded face.

"M-my goodness! That devil hit you, then?" he gasped—continuing in a burst of admiration: "Golly, you're a wonder, Mike! He had you right under the muzzle of his gun, yet you slung that teapot at him! Here, let me—"

"Oh, shush! Never mind me!" Mike, in a towering rage, made an impatient gesture. "What about you? Are you hurt, lad?"

"Bit. Not much. Scratches chiefly—

and I've cut both my knees. But, believe me, Mike, I'm fit enough for any more work," added Bill, with angry emphasis.

"Good! And where did the hump-backed hound go?"

Bill, sinking into a chair, shrugged.

"Dunno. He—he got away in a fast car again!" the youngster confessed dejectedly. "Just like last time, in fact. I chased him like fury, but just past Taylor's gate I came unstuck. Wasn't my fault, Mike—the road was simply littered with small cobbles. Wheezy ran slap into 'em, and the next I knew I was in the ditch and the car was—gone! That beggar must have slung the stones into the road—a whole sackful, I reckon, judging from the number I kicked into the gutter afterwards. Suppose he brought 'em with him in case of accidents, 'cos he looked as though he was emptying something over the back of the bus the last I saw of him. But, of course, I didn't expect—"

Mike Doyle's leathery face was granite-hard, and his eyes glinted.

"Ay, proper Chicago smash-and-grab trick, that! Cobbles, nails—huh, I saw 'em overturn an armoured police car with that stunt once. In fact, the whole stunt reeks of Chicago—robbery under arms, and a slick getaway afterwards. Well, did you see anything of the car?" he ended abruptly.

"Ordinary tourist, as far as I could see. No lights, no number—that's all!" replied Bill sadly. "Couldn't even get a glimpse of the driver. They were heading for Avonport, but they might just as easily have turned off into the hills or across the river." The lad sighed. "It's a wash-out!"

"Is it?" Mike's short, sharp laugh was unpleasant. "Well, it was a wash-out for them as well; they didn't get the supercharger. And now—"

A baleful scowl darkened Mike's face as he lowered the reddened handkerchief and glared at him. Almost roughly he thrust the automatic into Bill's limp hand, took an electric torch from the dresser, and crossed to the door, swaying slightly as he went.

"I'd better knock up old Doc Stevens first!" he jerked. "Get him to see to this cut before I lose any more blood. You stay here, Bill, and bathe those knees. And, for Pete's sake, keep a careful watch, and keep that gun handy, too!"

Left alone, Bill heaved himself out of the chair and poured some warm water into a basin. Now that his first hot blaze of wrath had abated somewhat, the youngster was feeling the sting of defeat keenly.

Nervous impatience held him in its grip; a feverish desire to carry on the hunt with all speed, though where and how he had no idea as yet. It seemed impossible, outrageous even, that such a conspicuous brute as Joe the Hump could get away with real Chicago rough stuff in a peaceful English countryside! But there it was!

Nearly an hour dragged by before firm footsteps sounded on the gravel outside, and his partner strode into the parlour again.

Then, however, at one glance it was obvious that Mike was himself once more.

Not only that, but there was a queer, intense light in the mechanic's eyes, a sort of smouldering fire that Bill had never seen before. Other crack racing-drivers had seen it often enough, though, in years gone by and known it for what it was—a beacon-light, a warning that Cannonball Mike Doyle, the coolest, most dashing speed-ace in the world, was on the warpath.

Two strips of sticking-plaster on his cheek added to the mechanic's tough appearance. His lips curled sardonically as he thrust an open hand under Bill's nose.

"Told you they'd make a bloomer some time!" he grated triumphantly. "Just look at this!"

Whereupon Bill looked—and whistled softly. For in Mike's calloused palm lay the butt of a Turkish cigarette, the burnt end crisp and brittle, the other end still slightly soggy.

"Corsica Phil Valetti's?" he breathed. "Where was it?"

"Found it farther up the road, near Taylor's gate," explained Mike. "And it's fresh, too. Matter of fact, I walked up there deliberately, hoping to find something like this. Y'see, Phil Valetti's a Corsican by birth, and, like all his breed, he'd smoke if he was going to be hung!"

Mike's clenched fist pounded the table. "Anyway, this is proof enough for me that Corsica Phil was right here on this job to-night with Joe the Hump!" he snapped. "Now I know where I am at last!"

"What are we going to do, then?" cried Bill eagerly—and stiffened with surprise at Mike's prompt answer.

"Go straight to your Cousin Len's house!" retorted the Cannonball coolly. "That's the likeliest place to find Phil; and, son, when you're up against men like him, attack's the best defence! Go right in after 'em the minute you get a good chance. And—"

The lawless gleam in the Irishman's eyes deepened.

"With this fag-end to put the wind up 'em, and this gun to back me up if anyone gets rough, by heck, I'm the man to do it! C'mon, Bill—step on the gas!"

Mike's Resolve!

YOU'RE g-going to Len's house? Now? Instead of obeying his friend and partner's command at once, Bill recoiled a step and gasped like a newly landed fish.

What on earth had come over old Mike all of a sudden, he wondered? Had the ugly events of the night, coupled with the injuries he had received, affected his brain in some way?

Certainly the ex-racing star looked anything but his usual cool and stolid self. The queer, smouldering glare in his eyes, the savage tautness of his lips, and the way his strong fingers curled and uncurled about the barrel of Joe the Hump's automatic, showed that inwardly Mike was a human volcano, liable to flare up into eruption any minute.

"Why, you—you can't do that, Mike!" Bill said feebly. "That's taking the law into your own hands with a vengeance, and maybe all you'll do is to land yourself in the hands of the law! Besides—"

The youngster pointed to the charred cigarette-end.

"Now we've got such a good clue as that, oughtn't we to take it to the police and tell 'em our suspicions about Corsica Phil and—"

"Police, my left foot!"

A scowl of impatience, not unmixed with pure exasperation, darkened Mike's face as he jerked out the scornful exclamation. But his irritation died down quickly. He gave Bill a friendly pat on the arm.

"Now, listen, boy—you don't know coppers like I do," he went on, more calmly. "They're good chaps, but they can't move for red tape as far as I've ever seen. Just think for a minute, and figure out exactly how much you've got to tell them."

"First, Joe the Hump paid us a visit. Well, he did that before, and got away with it after nearly killing your dad, and the police combed the country for him. He wasn't caught then, and I'll lay he's not caught now. Joe never has been caught, even in America. As far as the police are concerned, he's a bloomin' phantom. And I'd think so myself if I hadn't actually set eyes on him!"

Bill grunted. He was in full agreement with Mike on that point.

"Now, then," continued the mechanic, thumping the table emphatically, "what else is there to tell the police? Joe got away in a car, but you don't know the number, the make, or the colour. All you saw was that it looked like an open tourer—which means little or nothing. Trust him to make a slick getaway—he's used to it. Also, there's no number or any other way of tracing this gun to him—I've looked!"

STAR ITEMS IN— NEXT WEEK'S MAGNET!

A top-notch yarn by Frank Richards that will hold your interest to the very end, entitled:

"MICKY, THE SPRAT!"

It's one of the finest tales of the Chums of Greyfriars I have had the pleasure of reading.

Then follows another sparkling edition of

THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD,"

further chapters of our thrilling cricket story:

"ALLISON OF AVONSHIRE!"

and another interesting cricket talk by "UMPIRE."

DON'T MISS THIS BUMPER PROGRAMME. BOYS!—Ed.

"And now—this Turkish cigarette-end. Well, it's proof enough for you and me that Corsica Phil was right here on the job with Joe the Hump. But—"

Mike shook his head gravely.

"You couldn't get the police to make a downright arrest on this evidence, Bill. Other men smoke Turkish cigarettes beside Corsica Phil. And if it comes to that, they've only got my word that I found it up the lape here. Why, the instant Phil was questioned he'd swear that I was trying to frame him up. Anyway, bet your life he'd deny it was his—and how are the police to prove it? I know for certain that he's been in co. with Joe the Hump for years. The police don't!"

Bill snorted furiously. He had pinned high hopes to this clue of the Turkish cigarette, and now Mike had shattered those hopes badly. As far as the overwrought youngster could see, they were no for'arder than ever in their campaign against Valetti, Joe the Hump, and Len.

"Gosh, I'm sick of this!" Bill said at last. "We know who we're up against, and what they're after. And yet, in spite of anything—"

"We can't take a shred of real proof to the police," nodded Mike. His eyes flashed sudden fire. "And that's why we're going to be our own detectives! Listen:

"Your cousin Len is employing these crooks, and his house, I reckon, is the headquarters of the gang. Well, it never does any harm to have a look inside your enemies' h.q., for a start, so that's one good reason for barging in. And here's the second:

"Len, at heart, is a windy young skunk. He panics easily. So I'm going to see dear Len and scare the daylight out of him. By the time we get there I guess he'll know this raid's turned out to be another frost, so he'll be in a nice state of nerves. I'll just tell him flat that we've got the inside track on him, and that the race is as good as over. Bill—"

Down thudded Mike's fist again.

"Take it from me, by the time I've finished with your yellow cousin we may have some solid information to take to the police at last!"

Bill's eyes sparkled with excitement, then clouded again.

"But you can't bluff Valetti, Mike!" he pointed out. "Supposing he's there with Len! What will you do then?"

Mike smiled at that—a smile so bleak and mirthless that Bill caught his breath sharply.

"I'll smash him," he answered quietly. "Just on the strength of this fag-end clue I'll give Phil Valetti all that's been coming to him for years. One thing—I'll never need bluff, or the police, either, to fight my battles with Corsica Phil! And Corsica Phil knows it!"

Jamming the gun into his hip-pocket, the lean, saturnine Irishman nodded to himself and stood silent for a moment, his thoughts flashing back to that evil day in Dayton, Ohio, four years ago, when, thanks to Corsica Phil, his brilliant career as Cannonball Mike Doyle, the finest track-racer in the world, had come to an abrupt and disastrous end. Recovering, he gave Bill a level glance.

"So there's our programme! We're going to Len's house right now. Unless," he added, "you'd sooner I went alone?"

(Mike and Bill are booked for a big surprise, and so are you, chums, in next week's thrilling chapters of this powerful cricket story!)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,330.

THE MILLIONAIRE DETECTIVE!

(Continued from page 25.)

was really no room to doubt now that the facts were known.

"No doubt you are right, sir," said Mr. Quelch at last. "But the whole thing is very perplexing. Vernon-Smith has never seemed to be a boy to concern himself much about others—and if he was silent chiefly for Wingate's sake, it is more perplexing still, as he has always been rebellious and defiant, respecting Wingate no more than the other prefects. But—"

"But we have to deal with facts, sir," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Dr. Locke has stated that if it was proved that my son broke out at night for no bad motive, but from a thoughtlessly generous desire to save another boy from trouble, he would not have expelled him, and—"

"Undoubtedly," said the Head. "Had I known what your son could, if he had liked, have told me, certainly, he would never have been expelled from Greyfriars. I am quite prepared to rescind the expulsion."

"I should have ventured to suggest it, sir," said Mr. Quelch. "Vernon-Smith has risen very much in my opinion."

"I am glad to hear that you say so, sir," said the millionaire, more cordially; "and I hope and believe that my son will try hard to deserve your good opinion."

"Nevertheless," said Dr. Locke quietly, "whatever Vernon-Smith's motive—and I admit his motive to have been good, from a schoolboy point of view—the fact remains that he did break a very strict law of the school, by leaving his dormitory after lights-out. No motive, however good, can excuse such lawlessness. I shall allow the boy to return to Greyfriars next term, if you desire it, sir; but for the short remainder of the present term he will stay away—and reflect, I hope, on his conduct. Chivalry towards another boy, sir, does not justify an attempt to defeat authority."

"No doubt, no doubt," assented Mr. Vernon-Smith. "I am more than satisfied—with your permission for Herbert to return next term as if nothing had happened."

"Certainly," said the Head. "Then I thank you, and will take up

no more of your time," said the millionaire. "I will take my leave, sir."

And he took it—to the relief of the masters. Undoubtedly, Mr. Vernon-Smith's proceedings had been justified by the outcome; but the departure of the overpowering gentleman was a distinct relief.

Tom Redwing was waiting for him when he went back to his car. Mr. Vernon-Smith smiled, in response to Redwing's anxious look.

"The matter is cleared up, my boy," he said. "I came here to set it right, and I have done so."

"Oh, sir!" gasped Redwing. "And Smithy—"

"Herbert will return, as usual, next term," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "And you, my lad, will spend your holidays with him, I hope."

"I shall be jolly glad to see him again, sir," said Redwing, his face very bright.

And Mr. Vernon-Smith smiled, shook hands very cordially with his son's chum, and rolled away in his car.

In the Head's study Dr. Locke seemed to breathe more freely when the millionaire was gone. He sat for some minutes in silence. Mr. Quelch understood and sympathised.

"You are thinking of Wingate, sir?" he said.

"Yes," said the Head slowly. "This is terribly hard on him, Mr. Quelch."

"Very hard indeed, sir!"

"Vernon-Smith seems to have been prepared to suffer, rather than allow Wingate's name to be disgraced by his brother's fault. We must admit, Mr. Quelch, that he seems to have acted in a loyal, generous manner, thoughtless and lawless as he was."

Mr. Quelch nodded assent.

"I think we can do no less," went on the Head, "in view of the fact that the miserable boy came to me voluntarily with his confession. I—I think that no public reference to it need be made. He will be punished, of course—but Wingate's name may be spared—"

"Undoubtedly," said Mr. Quelch.

"He may be sent home for the last few days of the term—his father acquainted with the facts—that, I think, will be sufficient. His disgrace need not fall on his brother. The less that is said about the matter in the school, the better!"

"I SAY, you fellows!" Billy Bunter was brimming with news, when the Famous Five came in, some time after the departure of Smithy's pater.

"Hello, hallo, hallo! What's the latest, old fat bean?" asked Bob Cherry.

"I say, Redwing's been telling all the fellows—about Smithy, you know," said Bunter. "Smithy's coming back next term."

"Hurrah!" shouted the Famous Five together.

"I heard Wingate say that he was a young ass, but the decentest kid at Greyfriars!" said Bunter. "He said it was all true, what Smithy said about going out that night to tip a chap. He, he, he! I say, you fellows, Wingate told a lot of chaps—fancy Wingate taking that in! He, he, he!"

"It's true, you fat ass!" said Harry Wharton.

Bunter winked.

"Well, I don't believe all I hear," he remarked. "I'm not so simple as some fellows! He, he, he! Wingate believes it, and I suppose the Head does, as he's letting Smithy come back! I wonder how old Smith wangled it? They haven't said who the kid was, anyhow."

"All the better, if they haven't," said Harry Wharton.

"Some fellows asked Wingate, and he said that the Head had decided not to take the matter any further," said Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, I hear that his minor's going home—you know, young Wingate of the Third Form. Well, my minor, Sammy, says that he's going home before we break up—I don't think that's fair, do you? If they're giving fellows extra holidays, I believe in being fair all round—I'd jolly well like to cut the term short!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

During the last few days of the term there was much discussion on the subject of the Bounder. All Greyfriars knew that he was returning next term, just as if nothing had happened; and most of the fellows wondered how and why. But nobody was told—and those that knew kept their own counsel!

THE END.

(Next week's MAGNET will contain another grand long yarn of the Chums of Greyfriars, entitled: "MICKY, the SPAT!" You can only make sure of reading it, chums, by ordering your copy WELL IN ADVANCE!")

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 Why get wet and risk drowning when you can learn surf-riding in safety and comfort in an armchair at home? Fat-heads and nitwits who are thinking of learning surf-riding in the old-fashioned way would do well to write us first. Send no money, except 10s. for preliminary expenses. **THE SCHOOL OF SURF-RIDING** (Principal: R. Hazelden), c/o *Greysfriars Herald*.

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THE NEW Greysfriars Herald

EXTRA GOOD EDITION

PLEASE THE PATER!
 Send us Five Bob only for a gift that he'll never be absolutely matchless. **THE PRE-EMINENT PIPE-LIGHTER CO.** (Proprietors: H. Skinner), c/o GREYSFRIARS HERALD.

CHANCE FOR SEASIDE LANDLADIES!
 Young American would like to take holiday course in legal methods of quick money-making. Write F. T. F., Box No. 58, GREYSFRIARS HERALD.

SHOCK FOR SEASIDE SUTOR

Pretty Pierrette's Startling Secret

We'd have wagged a brace of doughnuts that Blundell of the fifth would be the last to fall for the wiles of a woman. But we'd have been completely wrong, for we hear on the highest authority that while spending a day at Margate this week Blundell fell with a bump that was heard as far away as the North Foreland. It was while Blundell was walking along the front on his way to tennis, his mind mainly occupied with thoughts of what a handsome figure he cut in his spotless flannels and blazer, that he suddenly saw Her. She belonged to a beach concert party. She was standing in the centre of the stage, singing. She seemed to spot Blundell at the same instant as he spotted her, and she smiled an irresistible smile.



Blundell stopped and smiled back. He can hardly be blamed for that. A more critical man than Blundell might have wondered what she looked like after her thick coating of make-up had been removed, but while it was on, she was undeniably attractive. Blundell didn't go to tennis. He listened to the concert-party instead—and came back in the evening, too! He hung about after the show, in the hope of catching a glimpse of the fair charmer as she came away. But Blundell's luck was out—among the young ladies who came away from

fection. "You don't mean to say you're spoozy over me, Blundell, old bean?" Blundell jumped.

"How on earth do you know my name?" he gasped. Then he blinched.

"To Blundell's utter astonishment, the object of his affections had suddenly revealed that was very familiar to him.

"Willey!" he howled.

It was Willey, of the Remove!

A moment later, crowds of holidaymakers along the Margate front were astonished to see the earth open and swallow up a tall, good-looking young man dressed in spotless flannels and blazer.

At least, that was how Blundell could have wished it! Unfortunately, the Margate front remained intact, so Blundell had to content himself with giving his ex-"lady-love" a homeward glance and then strolling away to spend the rest of the evening taking running kicks at himself!

"DUST" REALLY MEAN IT, GOSSY?
 Gosling lost three yard brooms in the course of a single week. He says that if he finds the young tips who did it, he'll use his newest yard broom to dust their pants with.

Pie, the Gossy! We know you're not always moderate in your ideas, but we're surprised to hear you utter such a "sweeping" statement as this!

OLD FALSE TEETH WANTED!
 By Editor, anxious to keep up his paper's reputation for "biting" wit—Apply: The Editor, GREYSFRIARS HERALD.

AS OTHERS SEE THEM

What I Think of Tom North

By COKER MINOR

Tom North told you last week of the difficulties I encountered when I was first placed in the Sixth at Greysfriars. But he modestly refrained from mentioning that he himself solved a great many of them for me. I am, as you all know, much younger than the average member of the Sixth and very much smaller, so you can well imagine that I wasn't a particularly welcome recruit to their august ranks. There were many others who greeted me with open hostility and that made me equally uncomfortable. But North was entirely different. From the very beginning he showed friendliness and sympathy and did his best to make me feel at home.

I've never forgotten that, and even now, when I can call quite a number of seniors my friends, North takes first place in my esteem.

Naturally, my admiration for him is influenced by his all-round ability in the sphere where I don't shine myself—namely, sport. I wouldn't go so far as to say that he's the best athlete at Greysfriars, for there's not much doubt that that honour belongs to Wingate. But North comes a good second, and if anyone thinks otherwise, I'll—debate the matter with him, willingly!

I was particularly backed, in reading his article last week, to see that he appreciates my major's sterling character. Honour is much misunderstood at Greysfriars and it's quite a treat to see that one fellow at least values him at his true worth. But it's no surprise to me to know that North understands. North's kindly disposition could hardly fail to exercise favourable judgment where real merit existed!

(Next week, Sir Jimmy Vinton, of the Remove, will tell you a few home truths about James Walker, of the Sixth. Don't miss it!—Ed.)

SCARLET RUNNER SPILLS BEANS



Whistling myself along the promenade at Winklessea the other day (writes a "Greysfriars Herald" correspondent), I was surprised to see Bulstrode, of the Remove, wearing a startlingly scarlet running costume, racing along the sands as if for a wager. Anxious to learn whether he was in training for an attack on the Heavyweight Champion-ship, I asked him and had the doubtful pleasure of a two-mile run in the broiling sun before Bulstrode tripped up over a stone and gave me a chance of catching him up.

"Gosh, old bean!" I said, as Bulstrode picked himself up. "If you keep it up like this, you should be in trim to beat Doyle and Parnson and Sharkey all rolled up into one!"

"I'll laugh him!" Bulstrode bowed.

"E. Why! There shouldn't be the slightest doubt about the result! Who's the candidate?"

"I'll put him!" Bulstrode roared.

"What's he?"

"Dashed if I know, old chap! You best ask even told me who he is, you! Is it Cannon?"

"Cannon?" shrieked Bulstrode. "What the thump are you talking about?"

"Why, the chap you're training to fight. I suppose there's

no other reason why you'd be taking two-mile sprints on a day like this, is there?"

"You— you dummy!" I hooted the burly Bulstrode. "I'm not in training for a fight, idiot!"

"Then why on earth did you do it?"

Bulstrode ground his teeth as he prepared to renew his dirt-track performance.

"To catch the man who pinched my clobber, of course! I went in for a dip, and when I came out, my clobber was missing! Some kids told me a man had made off in this direction and—"

"Did the kids tell you he'd taken your clobber with him?" Bulstrode stared.

"Well, they didn't actually say so, but I naturally assumed that—"

"Never assume anything, Bulstrode, old bean!" I said, gently. "Probably the kids were right; I don't doubt for a moment that a man has made off in this direction some time during the day. But he didn't have your clobber with him, for the simple reason that your clobber is still where the kids put it—just behind a rock near where you were bathing! I happened to notice it!"

"You'd have thought Bulstrode would have been awfully grateful, wouldn't you? But he trumped all the way back to his bathing place, which the kids had by this time vacated, and dressed himself without uttering one single, solitary word of thanks. It's an ungrateful world!

SEND US YOUR SNAPS

Free, Frank, Fearless Criticism

Send us your snaps, boys, and we'll give 'em the once-over and present you with an unbiased opinion free of charge. The reason we're doing it is that we love doing kind actions, and also we've had a lot of thoughts about holiday snaps sent up within us for a long, long time and we want to get rid of 'em. Don't be afraid that we'll be too technical or highbrow. We give you our solemn word of honour that what we know about photography could be written on a common or garden postage stamp. That's your guarantee!

And now for the first batch!

"FOTO-KRAZY" (Remove).—Your photo of the Remove playing football on Little Side certainly stands an excellent chance of winning a prize in the "Nifty Snaps" competition—but before sending it in we advise you to give it the new title of "LONDON FOG."

DICK RARE (Remove).—Your photograph of Morgan sitting on the sands in a deck-chair would have been excellent if you had (1) taken someone with a slightly less appealing expression; (2) used a better camera; (3) used better printing paper; and (4) allowed somebody a little less idiotic than your self to take it. If you will only pay attention to these little details, there is no reason why your next

picture should not show a decided improvement!

JOHNNY BULL (Remove).—As you say, your seascape is jolly good. Personally, we consider that it's one of the finest seascapes we've ever seen. By the way, would you mind telling us which way you're supposed to hold the photo up?

J. HOBSON (Shell).—In sending in your snap of the school tuckshop, you modestly mention that your own opinion is that it is well executed. After looking at the snap, we feel we'd like to be able to say the same thing about the photographer!

NO CHANGE
 A recent political argument between Penfold and I is well executed. After being somewhat sorry, I feel we'd like to be able to say the same thing about the photographer!

Lonzy's Little Letters

Dear Editor.—With what voraciousness doth the adolescent at this season supererogatorily embrace the opportunity of anatomical immersion in H2O! How spontaneously and coyly he transports his fuliginous person into propinquity with the undulatory intrinsics depths of their riparian succedaneum! At this psychological moment of receptive activity, admonitory exhortations may appear profanation; nevertheless, having regard to the swimmer's liability to adventures and unexpected contingency, I cannot forbear from counselling moderation in the exercise of anatomical propulsion through the oceanic or fluvial arena.

Trusting that your vacation will prove beneficial and felicitous, I remain, Admonitorily yours, Alosso Todd.

Dicky Nugent's Weekly Wisdom

My pater's so absent-minded that when he ties a string around his phinger to make him remember something, he can never think what it was he had to remember!

Incidentally, my pet name for that string is PATER'S FINGER-MR-NUGT!

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?

Bunter is always talking about his vast plans for the next year, but when the time comes he invariably does his best to attach himself to any soft-hearted fellow who will put up with him!

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

A "topper" belonging to Cecil Reinald Temple of the Upper Fourth now rests in the Wilkin-son's study at Highlife. Harry Watson & Co. are planning an expedition to recover the trophy, while Temple & Co. are merely talking!

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

Morgan rather fancies himself in the role of a farz grooner. His stud-mates, Willey Rake, and Desmond, are now and then driven to choose between domestic or sleeping between with cotton-wool!

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

Monsther Charpentier can be persuaded to talk about the scandals of his native France, he will forget "impos" previously Skinner is an adept at just to annoy Quelch, he was asked to remain and count his words his Form-master typed!

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

Peter Todd's legal acumen is proverbial—and he needs all of it when trying to make Bunter pay his "whack" towards tea in the study. Keen though he is, Toddy succeeds extremely rarely!

A JOKE YOU CAN PASS ON!

The Rev. J. AMBLE (in his last week's lecture at Greysfriars on "Covindie"): "When your master picks up a cow and calls you on to the front of the class, it's no good biling. Personally, we think he's entirely wrong. We know jolly well that when quickly picks up a cow and calls you on to the front of the class, that there's every prospect of a 'good biling'!"

Poor old Tony can't let the hats go by without warning us of the dangers of swimming. But it's all seems, Tony: you're taking it from us that the only time we're likely to get out of our depth is when we start trying to fathom the meaning of your encyclopaedictionary phlegms!—Ed.)