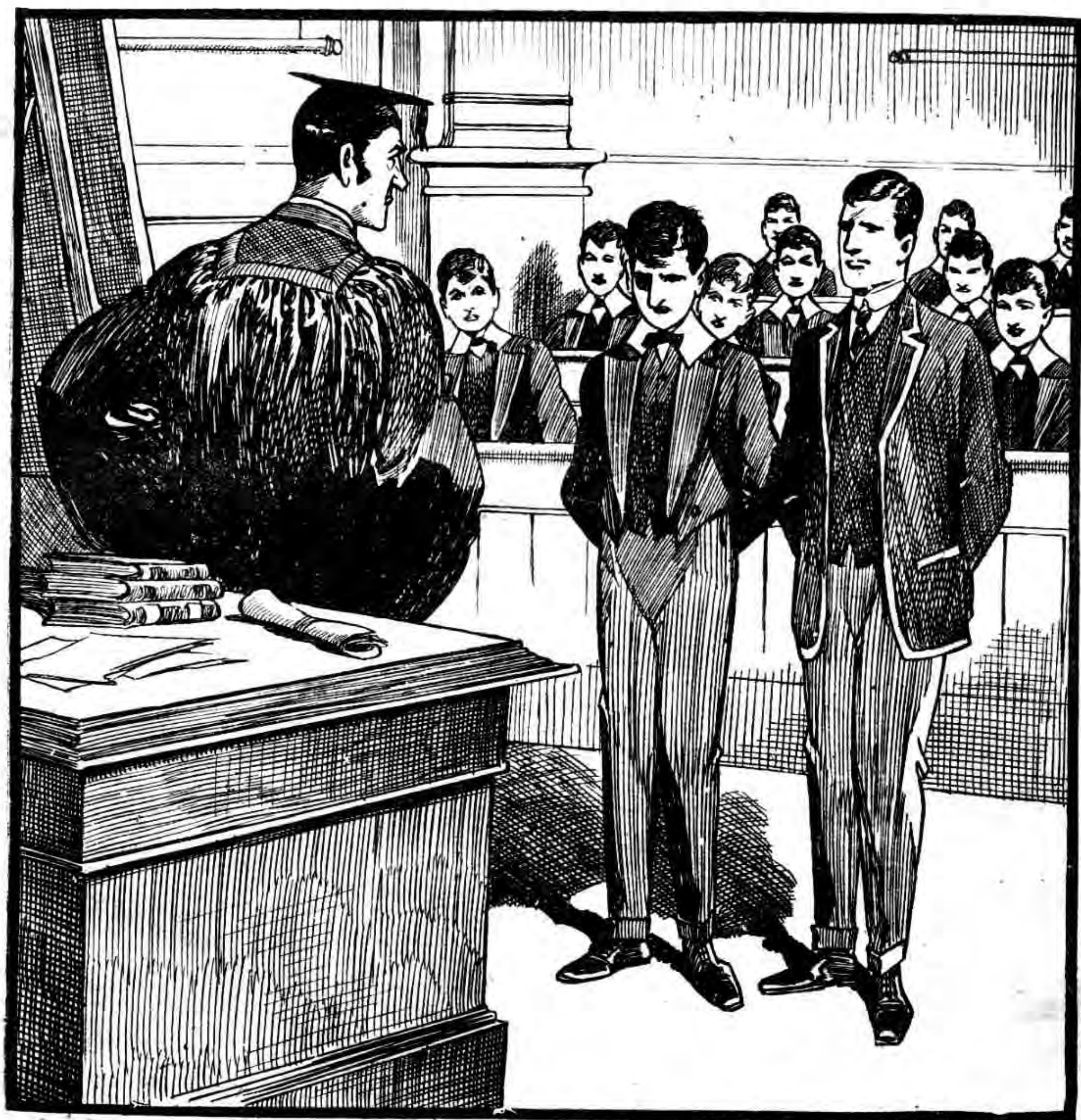




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ROUGH ON REDWING!



TWO ON THE CARPET!

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ROUGH ON REDWING!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

A Magnificent New Long Complete Tale of
Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars School.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Smithy's Difficulty!

"PENNY for them, Smithy!" Harry Wharton made that remark as he came on Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, in the quadrangle after lessons.

Smithy had his hands driven deep into his pockets, and a wrinkle in his brows. He looked as if he were thinking out a knotty problem.

"Thinking of the Rookwood match, Smithy?" asked Wharton. "Don't say you're not fit. We're relying on you for Wednesday."

The Bounder shook his head.

"Fit as a fiddle!" he answered. "But my pater's coming down to Greyfriars to see me on Wednesday."

"He can see you play in the match, then. Can't let you off."

"I don't want to be let off," said the Bounder, with a smile. "I'm keen enough on the match, and the pater won't mind. But Redwing's playing, isn't he?"

"Yes."

"Oh!"

"My dear man, your difference with Redwing doesn't make any difference to the cricket. You can play in the same match without talking to one another, if you want to."

"Yes, I know. But—"

"Blessed if I can see why you don't make it up with Redwing!" said Wharton frankly. "You used to be great chums. However, that isn't my bizney. But you're both down for the Rookwood match, and you'll both be wanted. The Remove will have to pull up their socks to beat Jimmy Silver's lot!"

"That's all right," said Vernon-Smith. "But—"

"What's the worry, then?"

"About my pater coming," said the Bounder. "He doesn't know anything about my being off with Redwing. He thinks we're great friends, as we used to be. He takes rather an interest in Redwing. And—and it's dashed awkward! Redwing was to have come home with me for the vac, and the pater is bound to speak about it. And—and I shall have to explain, somehow—"

He paused.

"Well, that's easy enough," said the captain of the Remove, with a smile. "Make it up with Redwing before your pater comes."

"It takes two to make a bargain!" answered the Bounder drily.

Wharton started a little.

"Oh! I—I thought—"

"You thought I was keeping up a grudge, and was to blame, as usual," said the Bounder, with a sarcastic grin. "Well, I was to blame, right enough. I don't deny that. But, you see that it's Redwing who's fed up, and it's he who's giving me the marble eye; not the other way about, as you naturally thought. I can't tell my pater so. He would think it no end cheeky of a scholarship kid to

give the cold shoulder to a millionaire's son. And he's been kind to Redwing, too. I'm afraid he'll lecture the chap."

"Oh!" said Wharton.

"Anyway, it's beastly awkward. He told me in the letter he's coming to see Tom Redwing as much as myself. And—and about that dashed scholarship—"

"Redwing's scholarship?"

"Yes."

"Your pater has nothing to do with that, has he?"

The Bounder did not reply.

"My hat!" exclaimed Wharton. "Smithy, you don't mean to say—"

"I never meant to tell a soul," said Vernon-Smith moodily. "But you can keep a secret, Wharton, and I'd like you to give me some advice, if you can. You know my pater offered to stand Redwing's fees at Greyfriars, out of gratitude because the chap got me out of the sea, when my boat was wrecked at Hawkscliff. Redwing was too independent to accept, and he refused the offer."

"I remember."

"Well, then, I hit upon the idea of a scholarship," said the Bounder, in a low voice. "I put it to my pater, and he agreed. He laid down the money, anonymously, to found a Memorial Scholarship, in memory of the Greyfriars men who've fallen in the war. I knew Redwing would have a good chance of winning it, and I backed him up to swot for it, and Quelchey gave him some coaching, too. You know he won it. But he never had the remotest suspicion that it was my father who had founded the new schol, and that it was my suggestion."

"I never guessed, either," said Harry.

"Nobody did—not even Skinner, sharp as he is," said the Bounder, with a faint smile. "Redwing never dreamed of it. He won the schol fairly, against about a dozen competitors. He's here now on the strength of it. But—but if he knew that—"

Wharton looked very thoughtful.

"If he knew—especially now we're no longer friends—I'm afraid he would get his back up and resign the schol," said the Bounder, speaking out at last. "That's what's worrying me. It would mean knocking all his prospects on the head."

"No need for him to know," said Harry.

"Quite so. Only, my pater— You see, the pater will be wrathful if he spots the state of affairs, and he will think Redwing cheeky and ungrateful, and—and he may tell him."

"Oh!" said Wharton.

Vernon-Smith flushed.

"That's the worry," he said. "It would be rotten. Redwing would chuck up the schol, then, and that means that he would have to leave Greyfriars, as he's got no money of his own. It would be a shame!"

"It would!" agreed Wharton.

The captain of the Remove looked at Vernon-Smith very curiously.

Smithy's friendship with the sailor-man's son had been surprising enough to the Remove fellows; but it was not very surprising that it had come to an end. But, as Redwing was no longer his chum, it was surprising that Smithy should care so much whether he lost his scholarship or not.

Wharton could not help seeing that the friendship still survived—on Smithy's side, at least.

"Well, then, what the dickens is a fellow to do?" said the Bounder. "The pater has rather a temper—he's a bit of a Tartar. He was ratty about Redwing refusing to let him pay his fees here, only I talked him over. If he finds that we're no longer friends he will want to know all about it; and if he gets ratty the fat's fairly in the fire."

"Can't you make it up with Redwing?"

"Can't be done!"

"You never know till you try."

"I've tried!"

"Oh!"

The Bounder's face crimsoned.

"He's in the right," he said. "I wanted him to change into my study, and I tricked Skinner into changing out. Redwing refused to have a hand in it, and I rowed with him. He—he asked me to make it up, and I wouldn't. I—I said some beastly things to him—my rotten temper, you know. I never meant it, really; but I said he was after my tin."

"Smithy!"

"Caddish, wasn't it?" said the Bounder grimly.

"It was rotten, and no mistake! You can't expect a fellow to look over a thing like that."

"I don't—and he won't! So that's all over. All the same, I don't want my pater to let loose the vials of wrath on him, and make him get his back up and chuck up the schol. So if you've got any good advice to give, Wharton, you can turn it on, and I'll be obliged."

Wharton knitted his brows.

"Blessed if I know what to advise!" he admitted. "If you can't make it up with Redwing, your pater will have to know you're bad friends with him; and I suppose he'll be ratty with Redwing, after all he's done for him, though Redwing doesn't know he's done it. Better keep him from knowing anything about the matter if you can. After all, your rows at school needn't interest him—no need to bother him with them, in fact."

"He's jolly keen!" said the Bounder.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here you are!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, arriving on the scene, with Nugent and Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh. "What about cricket practice, you slackers? Do you want Rookwood to beat us on Wednesday?"

"The beatfulness will be terrific, if we are not up to the esteemed mark," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Come alongfully, my ridiculous chums!"

The discussion had to end with the Bounder's difficulty still unsolved.

Vernon-Smith was looking very thoughtful as he went down to Little Side with the Famous Five. Tom Redwing was there, with a good many of the Remove. He did not speak to the Bounder. The former chums seldom spoke now, though they were civil when they met.

Harry Wharton glanced at the two. He would have done a great deal to heal the breach, and help the one-time chums to make up their difference; but there was nothing he could do. And if the Bounder's forebodings were realised, Tom Redwing would not be much longer at Greyfriars.

Wharton well knew the pride of the sailorman's son. Smithy's father was a good-hearted man in his way, but he was a millionaire, purse-proud and high-handed, and he would certainly think it was astounding insolence for the scholarship junior to quarrel with Herbert Vernon-Smith for any reason whatsoever. He was only too likely to rate Tom Redwing soundly, at the same time telling him his true position, and Redwing's answer to that was certain. He would resign the scholarship.

Wharton could not doubt that, and it troubled him. He liked Tom Redwing, as most of the Remove fellows did. He would have been very sorry to see him leave Greyfriars.

Tom Redwing, as he cheerily devoted himself to the cricket, little dreamed of the thoughts that were in the mind of the captain of the Remove.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Only Way!

"SWOTTING as usual, I suppose?"

Stott asked that question as Tom Redwing came into Study No. 11 after cricket practice. Sidney James Snoop looked up with a sneer, and Skinner, who was in the study, grinned.

Snoop and Stott and their visitor were not swotting. They never did swot. They were playing nap.

"I've got some work to do," answered Tom Redwing quietly. "So have you fellows, if you come to that."

"Oh, bother work!" yawned Stott. "I'm not workin', I know that. Quechey can jaw me in class about deponent verbs, but he can't make me mug 'em up out of class."

"Who the thump wants to know anythin' about deponent verbs?" said Snoop.

"Nobody but Redwing," grinned Skinner. "Redwing loves 'em. I believe he dreams at night about deponent verbs."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Redwing cleared a corner of the table, and sat down to work. Skinner & Co. had given up their pleasant little game of ragging the scholarship junior whenever he tried to work. They found that too many of the fellows were down upon it. Even Bolsover major, the bully of the Remove, had put his foot down.

A few minutes later there was a tap at the door, and Vernon-Smith came in.

Redwing went on working without looking up.

But the other three gave a chorus of welcome.

"Trot in, Smithy! Take a hand?"

The Bounder smiled sarcastically.

"I haven't come here to play the goat," he answered. "Can Redwing work while you're at that rat?"

"Don't know, and care still less."

"Well, chuck it!"

"Cheeky ass! Mind your own business!"

"Bolsover's in the passage!" grinned



Mr. Vernon-Smith is wrathful! (See Chapter 9.)

the Bounder. "Do you want me to call him in?"

Skinner & Co. looked savage. They did not want Bolsover major called in, since the burly Removite had undertaken to see that "the swot" was not ragged in his own study. Bolsover major was a high-handed fellow, and his fists were hard and heavy. Tom Redwing had never asked him to interfere, of course, but Bolsover major was a law unto himself.

Harold Skinner rose to his feet.

"Can't play with that fellow swotting," he said. "Let's get off to the box-room."

And the three young blackguards departed.

Vernon-Smith was left alone with Redwing, who went on working steadily. The Bounder watched him without speaking for some minutes.

"Greek?" he asked, breaking the silence at last.

"Yes," answered Redwing.

"Like it?"

"Yes."

"What a taste!"

"Linley likes Greek, too," said Redwing, smiling. "There's more pleasure in work that you're not bound to do unless you choose."

"They're Linley's books you're using, aren't they?"

"Yes. He's lent them to me."

"Awfully busy with them?"

"No, not awfully," said Redwing, laying down his pen. "Anything wanted?"

"A few words, if you can spare the time."

"Of course I can spare the time!"

Redwing made a gesture towards a chair. "Sit down, will you?"

"Well?" asked Redwing, as he did not speak.

"My pater's coming down on Wednesday," said the Bounder at last.

"Yes?"

"He wants to see you as well as me."

"He will see me, I suppose."

"He takes rather an interest in you."

"He is very kind."

"He doesn't know we've rowed."

"No need to tell him that I can see,"

said Redwing. "He would hardly be interested, I suppose."

"Good! Look here, Redwing, the fact is I don't want my pater to know anything about it," said Vernon-Smith. "It would distress him."

"Would it?" exclaimed Redwing, in surprise. "I don't see why it should."

"Well, I think it would."

"In that case, it would certainly be better not to say anything about it. I shouldn't like to distress your father. He was very kind to me."

The Bounder suppressed a smile. Mr. Vernon-Smith was not very likely to be distressed, but he was very likely indeed to be ratty if he knew that the scholarship junior had presumed to quarrel with his son. But the Bounder did not intend to explain that to Redwing.

"Well," he said, "we're both playing in the Rookwood match on Wednesday, and my pater will be here. We're not friends now, Redwing, but—but I don't see why we shouldn't keep it up for one afternoon. We're not enemies, I suppose?"

"Certainly not. At least, I hope not."

"Well, then, my pater is going to have tea with me in my study on Wednesday. Will you come?"

Redwing hesitated.

"Just to keep up appearances, you know," smiled the Bounder. "My pater really does set store by our friendship, though you'd hardly think it. You don't want to distress him—ahem! Come to tea on Wednesday. After my pater's gone we can scowl at one another again."

Tom Redwing laughed.

"I'll come if you like," he said. "All right."

"Good!" said the Bounder, evidently relieved. "It won't hurt you. Besides, it will be a good tea, and I'll ask Wharton and Cherry, too, so that you won't have to stand it alone. Sorry to bother you, but I'm thinking of my pater."

"I'm quite at your service," said Tom. He turned to his books again.

Vernon-Smith rose to his feet, a rather wistful expression on his face.

It was only a short time since he had been Tom Redwing's best chum, but

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between them now there was a great gulf fixed.

The cruel taunt that had passed his lips in a moment of perverse irritation had given their friendship the finishing blow.

Tom Redwing could forgive that, but he could not forget it, and the Bounder realised that very clearly.

He left the study without another word.

Redwing did not immediately resume his work. He sat for some minutes in deep thought. But at last he turned to his Greek again.

In hard mental work he could banish troublesome thoughts.

For a good hour he sat at his self-imposed task, and then he placed his papers in a heap, and left the study to take a turn in the fresh air before tea.

A few minutes after he had gone Snoop and Stott came in with Skinner. Skinner greatly preferred Study No. 11 to No. 4, which he shared with Vernon-Smith, though he had refused to change out from malicious obstinacy.

"Hallo, the swot's gone!" said Skinner. "Thank goodness for small mercies! Here's the rubbish. Fancy a fellow swotting at Greek without a master drivin' him to it!"

"Silly ass!" said Stott.

"Sickenin'!" commented Snoop.

Skinner glanced at the papers curiously.

"Pages an' pages of it!" he said. "The beastly swot is muggin' through the Anabasis. What rot!"

"Awful rot!" agreed his chums.

"Lot of work in that," said Skinner, with an evil gleam in his eyes. "I say, suppose something got upset over these papers! Redwing would have to mug up his blessed conjugations all over again."

"I say, better let 'em alone! Suppose Bolsover—"

"Bless Bolsover! I suppose an accident might happen in any study if a fellow leaves his rubbish about?"

Snoop grinned.

"Well, if an accident's going to happen, you can make it happen," he said. "I sha'n't have a hand in it, since Bolsover major's backing up that cad."

"Accidents will happen," said Skinner. "For instance, in clearing the table, a fellow might upset the ink—like that."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He mightn't notice that it was upset on Redwing's papers," continued Skinner calmly. "Quite unconsciously he might leave the ink to soak through the lot, mightn't he?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Snoop and Stott.

And Skinner & Co. sat down to tea, leaving the ink to soak through the papers that had cost Tom Redwing so much hard work.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

An Ambassador Wanted!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"We shall be a strong team," remarked Bob Cherry thoughtfully.

"I say—"

"We shall beat Rookwood," agreed Frank Nugent. "But it will be a bit of a tussle, all the same."

"Look here, you fellows—" roared Billy Bunter.

"The tussle will be terrific!" observed Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "But the smilefulness of esteemed fortune will be upon us."

"You know you can hear me!" exclaimed Billy Bunter, blinking at Harry Wharton & Co. through his big spectacles in great wrath.

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"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Is that you, Bunter?"

"Yah! Yes, it is!"

"Been talking?" asked Bob Cherry affably.

"Yah! You know I have!"

"Thought I heard a row like a rusty windlass," agreed Bob. "Have you done talking? If so, run away and play."

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! He's beginning again!"

"Ring off, Buntty!"

"You silly asses!" roared William George Bunter wrathfully. "I've got something to say to you, especially Wharton."

"Why me especially?" asked Harry Wharton, laughing. "I'm not rolling in money, any more than the rest; and I'm just as unwilling as anybody else to cash a postal-order for you in advance, Buntty."

"Tain't that this time—I mean, tain't that! It's about Smithy."

"Well, what about Smithy?" asked Harry. "Get it over! We're talking cricket, you know!"

"Bother cricket!" growled Bunter. "Rookwood will beat you, anyway; you needn't worry about that. You can't win matches without playing good men."

"Why, you silly ass—" began five voices together in indignant chorus.

"Not that I should refuse to play, if you asked me civilly," said Bunter magnanimously. "I've got other engagements for Wednesday afternoon, but I'd put them off to help you beat Rookwood."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! That's a fair offer, and you can take it or leave it, Wharton!"

"I think I'll leave it," chuckled Wharton. "I'm afraid you'd help Rookwood to beat us, old scout!"

"Oh, rot! You don't know much about cricket, Wharton!" said Bunter.

"Oh, my hat!"

"However, to come back to Smithy," continued the Owl of the Remove. "You'd better speak to him, Wharton, otherwise there'll be trouble. I'm not going to stand any of his rot. Either I'm his friend or I ain't. See?"

Wharton stared at the fat junior. Bunter's remarkable words quite took his attention off the cricket.

"No, I don't quite see!" he said. "I don't specially want to, however!"

"I'll tell you how the matter stands," said Bunter, blinking at him. "Smithy's pater's coming on Wednesday, and Smithy is getting up a bit of a feed in his study. The old sport's having tea with Smithy there. He's asked Tom Redwing, though they've fallen out. He wants his pater to think they're still friends, for some reason."

"How do you know all that?" grunted Johnny Bull.

"I happened to hear them talking about it—quite by chance, of course. You see, I was rather surprised to see Smithy go into Redwing's study, as they're bad friends now; and then Skinner and that lot came out, so I thought I'd—I mean, that I was passing the door, and stopped to—pick up a pin, and so I happened to hear what Smithy said to Redwing—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Quite by chance, you know. Well, it looks to me as if Smithy's going to spoof his pater," said Bunter. "I don't see why the old bounder shouldn't know that the young bounder has quarrelled with Redwing. Do you, Wharton?"

As a matter of fact, Wharton did, considering what Vernon-Smith had told him, but he was not likely to confide that to William George Bunter. So his reply

consisted only of the ancient and classic monosyllable:

"Rats!"

"Well, it seems to me a bit deceitful," said Bunter. "It may not strike you fellows the same way. You haven't got quite the same high ideas that I have about things!"

"Such things as listening at keyholes, for instance?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Ahem! Well, as Smithy is standing a tea," went on Bunter hastily, "I thought that, as his friend, I ought to be there. He's going to ask you, Wharton, and you, Bob; not the others, so far as I know. That doesn't matter, of course; but he's not going to ask me!" said Bunter, in an injured voice. "He knows I never have enough to eat; he knows how mean Toddy is in my study, yet he's leaving me out. After all I've done for him, too!"

"What have you done for him, you fat Owl?"

"I mentioned to him that I'd come," went on Bunter. "He actually said he'd sling me out if I did!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So, of course I told him I couldn't approve of his deceitfulness," said Bunter. "He didn't stop for me to explain. He kicked me—actually kicked me, you know! Hard, too!"

The Famous Five chortled. They did not seem to feel any sympathy as they listened to the tale of woe.

"Well, you can cackle!" said Bunter warmly. "But I think you'd better speak to Smithy, Wharton. The beast will only kick me again if I try to explain to him."

"What am I to say to him?" asked Harry, laughing. "That you're hungry, and you want to scoff his feed on Wednesday?"

"No!" hooted Bunter. "Tell him I'm prepared to come to the feed as a friend and to be civil to his father. I don't approve of that old bounder—in fact, I told Smithy so!"

"Ha, ha! Perhaps that was why he kicked you!"

"Well, there's a limit, and I think old Smith is outside it," said Bunter. "However, I overlook that, and I'll be civil to him. You can tell Smithy so. I'm prepared to receive a civil invitation to the feed."

"Is that all?" asked Harry.

"Well, not quite!"

"Better give full instructions to your ambassador, Buntty," suggested Bob Cherry. "Better appoint him plenipotentiary, with full powers!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five were considerably entertained by Bunter's idea of using the captain of the Remove as an ambassador to Smithy to conclude negotiations about the Owl coming to the study spread. The fact that Smithy had kicked him, and might kick him again if he reopened the subject, did not make Bunter want to avoid Study No. 4. Not at all! But it was necessary to find a third party to put the matter to the Bounder.

"Well, tell Smithy that," resumed Bunter thoughtfully. "And bring back his invitation, you see. But if he refuses to send one, then tell him that, on a matter of principle, I can't approve of his deceiving his father."

"Wha-at?"

"I disapprove of anything underhand. As his pal, invited to the spread, I should feel bound to keep it dark. But unless I'm treated as a pal I shall have to consider whether it's my duty to acquaint Mr. Vernon-Smith with the facts!" said Bunter, with great dignity.

"You—you want me to say that to Smithy?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Yes, exactly!"

"Well, my hat!" murmured Bob

Cherry, staring at the Owl of the Remove in wonder. "Of all the nerve——"

"Cut off and speak to Smithy now, Wharton! Never mind the cricket; you can watch that any time. It's only Wingate batting. Mind you impress on Smithy that I shall give him away unless he asks me—— Yaroooh!"

To Bunter's surprise, the captain of the Remove interrupted him at that point by seizing him by his fat shoulders and sitting him down on the grass with a bump.

Billy Bunter roared.

"Yaroooh! Wharrer you up to? Wharrer you do that for, you rotter? Oh! Ow! Oh, crumbs!"

The Famous Five moved farther off, leaving Billy Bunter to puzzle out for himself what he had been sat down for.

Peter Todd came along to look on at the First Eleven game. Spotting Bunter in the grass, Peter took him by one fat ear and helped him up, to the accompaniment of a loud yell from Bunter.

"Yow! Leggo! I say, Peter, old chap, will you speak to Smithy for me?" gasped Bunter.

"Can't you speak to Smithy for yourself, if you want to speak to him, fathead?"

"The beast would only kick me again!" said Bunter, rubbing his ear. "I say, he's standing a spread on Wednesday, and he won't——"

"And he won't stand you?" queried Peter.

"Oh, really, Toddy! You know these are awful hard times," said Bunter pathetically. "A fellow never gets enough to eat! A fellow can't afford to miss a chance, you know. Now, I want you to explain to Smithy that if I'm not present at the feed I shall feel bound to put a spoke in his wheel, and give him away to his pater. Yah! Hands off, you rotter!"

Billy Bunter dodged away just in time.

"Come back and be bumped!" roared Peter Todd.

"Yah!"

Bunter rolled away in a hurry. He did not try to find another ambassador. Evidently there was nothing doing!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Black, But Not Comely!

"HAD your tea, Redwing?"

Bolsover major asked that question with great civility, as Tom Redwing came up to the Remove passage.

"Not yet," said Tom.

He smiled a little. He had had one fight with Bolsover major, and trouble more than once; but for the present it pleased Bolsover to be very friendly. Redwing had no objection, however; he did not want to be on ragging terms.

"Come into my study, then," said Bolsover major. "I've got a lot of eggs, and Dupont has made a tip-top omelette. It's really good! Get your rations, and come along!"

"Thanks, I will!" assented Redwing.

As a matter of fact, he did not specially want to have tea with Bolsover major; but he felt that it would be rather uncivil to refuse. He went into his study for supplies—rationed articles always being taken by guests when they were asked to tea. Skinner and Stott and Snoop had finished their tea, and were winding up with cigarettes. They grinned at one another as Redwing came in.

Tom Redwing was crossing to the cupboard for his meagre ration of sugar and butter, when he noted the overturned inkpot on the pile of papers on the study table.

He stopped, with an exclamation.

The ink had soaked through all the papers and stuck them together, and most of the Greek on them was undecipherable now.

Tom Redwing had a very equable temper, but the sight made him angry, and he turned a flashing glance on the three young rascals.

"Who did that?" he exclaimed hotly.

"Eh? What?" yawned Skinner.

"My papers have been spoiled!" exclaimed Redwing.

"My hat! Somebody's upset the ink," said Skinner. "Rather clumsy of you, Redwing!"

"What? It was not upset when I went out!"

"Wasn't it?"

"You know it wasn't!" exclaimed Tom angrily.

"My dear man, how should I know? Accidents will happen," said Skinner blandly. "The inkpot must have got knocked over somehow!"

"Hallo! What's the trouble?" asked Bolsover major, looking in at the doorway.

"Nothing!" said Snoop hastily.

"Ragging again?" demanded Bolsover.

"Nothing of the sort!"

Bolsover major strode into the study. He had laid down the law that there was

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Notepaper is "some" price these days, but none of us would grudge Tommy all the paper he needs on which to write those cheery letters of his if paper were treble the price it is to-day. Still, it's no use simply "gassing" about it; it's up to each one to do his bit to pay the piper.

It costs the Y.M.C.A., who supply Tommy with free stationery, no less than £60,000 a year. Sixpence will supply your own or somebody else's pal with enough notepaper to write one letter each week for a year. Going to let him have it? Of course you are!

So send sixpence along to-day to Y.M.C.A. (Stationery Fund), Tottenham Court Road, London, W.C., mentioning that it comes from a reader of this paper.

to be no more ragging in No. 11, and he was prepared to bring his big fist into the argument at a moment's notice.

"Mucking up Redwing's papers—what?" he exclaimed. "Now, who did that?"

"It doesn't matter!" said Tom Redwing hastily. "Don't bother!"

"I'm going to bother!" retorted Bolsover major. "The other day I walloped these three rotters as a warning. I told them they were to stop it. Now, I want to know which of you shoved that ink over Redwing's papers?"

Skinner & Co. looked rather alarmed. Bolsover major was pushing back his cuffs, and he was in an aggressive mood.

The fact that Redwing did not want him to interfere did not matter to Percy Bolsover in the least. He had decided to interfere, and that was enough.

"You, Snoop?" he demanded.

"Nunno!" stammered Snoop.

"You, Stott?" roared Bolsover.

"No!" growled Stott.

"Then it was you, Skinner!"

"It—it was an accident!" muttered Skinner. "Redwing shouldn't leave his papers about!"

"Where could he leave them, except on the study table? Don't tell me rotten lies about an accident! Put up your paws!"

Skinner gave him a venomous look.

He was sometimes friendly with Bolsover major; but the bully of the Remove was a little unreliable in his friendships. Now he was evidently on the war-path, and Harold Skinner was marked out as the happy victim.

"You hear me?" roared Bolsover.

"I'm not going to fight you!" said Skinner sullenly. "Oh! Ah! Ow! Leggo my nose, you horrid beast. Gooooooh!"

Skinner jumped up as the burly Removeite seized his thin and somewhat prominent nose.

"Look here, Bolsover, I don't want you to interfere!" exclaimed Tom Redwing.

"Rats!"

"Well, let Skinner alone!"

"Rot!"

"Let go!" shrieked Skinner in anguish.

"Ha, ha!" roared Bolsover major, still grasping his agonised nose. "I'll lead you along the passage like this, and—— Ah, would you?"

Skinner struck out desperately, and Bolsover major yelled as he caught a bony knuckle with his nose.

He let Skinner go then, and put up his fists.

As he was fairly in for it, Skinner put up a fight, attacking the bully of the Remove with the fury of an angry cat. But he had no chance against Bolsover. By the suddenness of the attack he got in two or three blows which made Percy Bolsover gasp, and then the bully of the Remove hit out hard. Skinner caught his fist in his eye, and went to the floor with a crash.

He sat up on the carpet, holding his eye and gasping.

"Have some more!" jeered Bolsover major.

"Ow, ow! My eye! Ow!"

"That'll be a warning to you!" said Bolsover. "I've told you you're not to rag Redwing!"

"Ow, ow, ow!"

"I've a jolly good mind to boot you round the study, you howling funk!" said Bolsover major contemptuously.

Tom Redwing stepped quietly between Bolsover major and Skinner. Bolsover's intentions were good certainly; but Tom did not mean to be made an excuse for Bolsover's favourite occupation—bullying.

"Let Skinner alone!" he said curtly.

"Well, perhaps he's had enough! Come along to tea," said Bolsover major good-humouredly.

"Ow, ow, ow!" moaned Skinner.

Redwing gave him a hand to help him up. Skinner dashed it savagely away.

"Let me alone, hang you!" he snarled.

"Very well!"

Tom Redwing followed Bolsover major from the study.

Snoop and Stott stared at Skinner, as he scrambled up. His eye was looking dusky already.

"My hat! You're going to have a black eye, Skinner!" murmured Snoop.

"Ow! I know that. Ow!"

"You can't get a beefsteak for it, either. Better bathe it!"

Skinner, holding his damaged eye, left the study, and hurried to a bath-room. A black eye was rather a serious matter, and it was certain to attract the attention of the Form-master and lead to inquiry. More serious than that was the fact that it was very inconvenient and painful.

When Skinner came into his own study later for prep, Vernon-Smith stared at him and grinned. His eye was like unto the ace of spades.

"My hat! You've got a prize eye!" exclaimed the Bounder. "Where did you pick that up?"

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Skinner gritted his teeth.

"Bolsover major! He will have to answer for it when Quelch sees it. That's one comfort!"

"What did he do it for, then?"

"Because he's a rotten bully!"

"Nothing else?"

"No, hang you!"

The Bouncer shrugged his shoulders and went on with his prep. Skinner followed his example, with many grunts and groans.

In the Common-room that evening Skinner's eye drew many glances upon him, and was the cause of many smiles. It was, as Squiff remarked, a real corker; quite a perfect specimen in the way of black eyes. Bolsover major was rather startled by the sight of it. He had had no idea that he had hit so hard. And Bolsover major looked forward rather uneasily to the morning, when the Remove-master was quite certain to inquire into the matter.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Change of Quarters!

"SKINNER!"

Mr. Quelch spoke in a rumbling voice at the head of the breakfast-table the next morning.

Skinner's eye, blacker than ever now, had attracted his attention at once at the Remove table.

"Yes, sir?" mumbled Skinner.

"What is the matter with your eye?"

"It's—it's black, sir."

Some of the juniors grinned. Mr. Quelch really did not need telling that. Mr. Quelch frowned.

"I am aware that it is black, Skinner," he said tartly. "I can see that for myself. You have been fighting?"

"Ye-es, sir."

"Without gloves?" asked the Form-master sternly.

"I—I had no choice, sir."

"Indeed! I shall inquire into this in the Form-room. You may sit down."

The matter was postponed till the Remove met in their Form-room. Skinner sat down, with a venomous look at Bolsover major, who replied with a glare of defiance.

Neither of them looked forward with pleasure to the inquiry. Bolsover major had acted roughly, not to say brutally; but he had an excuse. Skinner had been the victim; but he was anxious not to let Mr. Quelch know why Bolsover had assailed him. Both would have preferred to keep Mr. Quelch out of the affair; but that was not possible.

When the Remove assembled in the Form-room Skinner was called out before the class at once.

His face was very red, contrasting with his eye, which was aggressively black.

"With whom were you fighting, Skinner, when you received this injury?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

"Bolsover major, sir."

"Step out here, Bolsover."

Percy Bolsover obeyed, with a knitted brow.

"You inflicted this injury upon Skinner?" demanded the Form-master sternly.

"I hit him, sir," answered Bolsover sullenly.

"I have many times had to reprimand you, Bolsover, for using your strength against boys weaker than yourself. You have been bullying again!"

Bolsover major crimsoned.

"I—I haven't," he said.

"You attacked Skinner?"

"I licked him!" muttered Bolsover.

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"Have you any excuse to offer before I take you in to the Head and request him to administer a flogging?"

There was a murmur in the Remove.

"The august Quelch has his esteemed rag out!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I—Skinner knows why I hit him, sir," stammered Bolsover. "I—I warned him. He knows he was in the wrong."

"I did nothing to Bolsover, sir," said Skinner.

"That's true; but you did to somebody else," growled Bolsover.

"Indeed! Do you mean to imply, Bolsover, that you struck Skinner in defence of another person?"

"N-n-not exactly, sir. It was to stop him ragging a chap."

"Whom?"

"Redwing, sir."

Mr. Quelch raised his eyebrows.

"Surely Redwing was quite able to defend himself, Bolsover," he said; and some of the juniors grinned. Tom Redwing could have dealt with two Skinners at once quite easily.

"You—you don't understand, sir," muttered Bolsover.

"Quite so. I am waiting for you to explain. Unless you can offer me a very good explanation, Bolsover, you will be flogged."

Bolsover major drew a deep breath.

"I—I don't want the matter to go any further, sir," muttered Skinner uneasily. "I—I forgive Bolsover, sir."

"Nonsense! I insist upon knowing the whole matter!" said Mr. Quelch sharply. "Explain at once, Bolsover!"

"Well, the cads have been ragging Redwing for a long time—Skinner and two others," said Bolsover major at last. "They won't let him work, because he's rather a swot. I don't want to sneak about them, but there it is. I hit Skinner because he mucked up Redwing's Greek exercises with ink."

"Bless my soul!"

Mr. Quelch was plainly astonished.

"Step here, Redwing," he said.

Tom Redwing reluctantly came out before the class. He was deeply exasperated with Bolsover major and Skinner, too. But he had no choice about obeying his Form-master's orders.

"Is it the case, Redwing, that you have been prevented from working by Skinner and others?" asked Mr. Quelch, eyeing him.

Tom stammered.

"You will kindly speak out, Redwing! I must get to the bottom of this matter."

"Well, sir, I—I—I haven't complained—I don't want to. There's been some trouble in my study—it's nothing much," stammered Tom, with a crimson face.

"Skinner does not belong to your study."

"No; but—"

"Are Snoop and Stott the 'others' you alluded to, Bolsover?"

"Yes, sir."

"Come here, Snoop and Stott."

Sidney James Snoop quaked as he came out before the class with Stott. It was only too clear that the persecution of Tom Redwing was to be brought to light at last; and they well knew how the Form-master would regard it.

"Have you joined with Skinner in ragging, as you call it, your study-mate?" inquired Mr. Quelch.

"We—we—" stammered Snoop.

"It—it was only a lark, sir," murmured Stott.

"Have you done so? Yes or no?"

"Ye-es, sir."

"What was your object?"

"Well, he—he's a swot, sir."

"You mean that he works?"

"Ye-es."

"And that is a high crime and misdemeanour in your eyes?" asked Mr. Quelch, with grim sarcasm.

"We—we don't like swots, sir," mumbled Stott. "Nobody does."

Vernon-Smith rose up in his place.

"That's not true, sir," he said. "Everybody in the Remove likes Redwing except those three fellows."

"Hear, hear!" came from Bob Cherry.

"Thank you! That will do," said Mr. Quelch. "Wharton, as head boy of the Remove, you should have interferred in this."

"I—I did, sir," said Harry uncomfortably. "I thought it had stopped."

"Very good! It appears, then, Skinner, that you have been accustomed to joining with Snoop and Stott to make their study uncomfortable for Redwing, because you disapprove of his taking his work seriously. Did you damage his Greek exercises yesterday?"

"By—by accident, sir."

"Such accidents should not be allowed to occur, Skinner! In fact, I cannot believe your statement. Bolsover appears to have interferred, and inflicted punishment upon you for what you did. Is that it, Bolsover?"

"Yes, sir," said Bolsover.

"I commend you for doing so; but there are limits. You appear to have had a good motive, but you have acted brutally, Bolsover. However, I shall take your motive into consideration. You will be detained on Wednesday afternoon. Go back to your place."

Bolsover major returned to his place in great relief. The flogging from the Head was not to come off, after all; an afternoon's detention was nothing in comparison. Redwing, at a sign from Mr. Quelch, followed him back into the class.

Skinner & Co. remained standing before the Form-master with downcast eyes. The Remove looked on with interest, wondering what was to happen to the three. Mr. Quelch surveyed them sternly.

"I am willing to believe," he said at last, "that you have acted thoughtlessly, and without bad intentions. I shall not punish you on this occasion; but I warn you very seriously not to let anything of the kind happen again."

"Ye-es, sir!" gasped the unhappy trio.

"I shall also make a change in your study arrangements," continued the Form-master. "Skinner, you will remove into Study No. 11, which you will share with Stott and Snoop in future."

"Yes, sir," mumbled Skinner.

"Redwing!"

"Yes, sir?"

"You will change out of Study No. 11 into No. 4 to-day."

"Very well, sir."

Skinner & Co. were sent back to their places, and the matter ended. Vernon-Smith gave Tom Redwing a very whimsical look. Mr. Quelch knew of the friendship between Redwing and Smithy, and had no knowledge of their late disagreement. He meant to be kind in placing them in the same study. It was rather too late, as a matter of fact.

Tom Redwing wore a troubled look.

A few weeks before he would have welcomed the change with his whole heart, and had it taken place then the difference between himself and the Bouncer could never have arisen. Skinner & Co.'s little game had not come to the Form-master's knowledge in time. Now, Redwing, little as he liked his study-mates, would have preferred No. 11 to No. 4. But that could not be explained to Mr. Quelch, and he had to make the best of it.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Study-mates!

AFTER lessons that day there were a "moving job," as Bob Cherry called it, in the Remove passage. Harold Skinner, with a face that Bob likened unto that of a demon in a pantomime, was busily engaged in taking his belongings from No. 4 to No. 11, and Tom Redwing was performing the opposite operation.

Skinner was not dissatisfied with his new study by any means. He did not pull with the Bounder, and he was chummy with Snoop and Stott. But he was bitterly chagrined at having to relinquish No. 4—the old bone of contention. There was no appeal from the Form-master's order, however. He could not very well explain to Mr. Quelch that he wanted to remain in Smithy's study simply because he was not wanted there.

Still, he had one comfort. Redwing and the Bounder were not friends now; so sharing the study was likely to be uncomfortable for both of them. That was his only consolation.

"After all, this is better," said Stott, as he marched in with a load of Skinner's dog-eared books. "I'd rather have you here than that swot, Skinney."

Skinney grunted.

"We can play banker now without that fellow glowering over us, and turning up his nose!" remarked Snoop.

Grunt!

"And you were always rowing with the Bounder, Skinner."

"That's what I wanted!" growled Skinner. "The cad wanted to shift me out of the study, and I was determined he shouldn't! Now that old fool Quelch steps in, and it can't be helped!"

"Well, Redwing doesn't enjoy the change, anyway!" grinned Stott. "I saw him go into No. 4, and he was looking as cheery as a funeral mate. I believe the Bounder would make it up if Redwing would—but he won't. Queer to me what Smithy sees in the blessed long-shoreman!"

Tom Redwing certainly was not feeling comfortable when he installed himself and his belongings in No. 4.

He took it, however, with his usual quiet seriousness, and he was grateful to Mr. Quelch for his intended kindness, though it was not what he wanted.

Vernon-Smith's feelings were mixed; but he was, at all events, pleased to have finished with Skinner.

He politely helped Redwing to arrange his books and other possessions, which were few. The study was mostly filled with the Bounder's belongings. It was Smithy's custom to "do himself" remarkably well, and No. 4 was the best-furnished study in the Remove, with the exception of Lord Manleverer's. It was a good deal more luxurious than No. 11, if Redwing had cared for sybaritic surroundings.

"Well, here you are!" the Bounder remarked, when Redwing's helpers had departed after putting in his things.

"Yes, here I am!" replied Redwing.

"Queer that you should dig in my study after all!"

"Yes. I hope I sha'n't bother you much."

"Not at all! You won't object to my putting on a smoke occasionally?" said the Bounder, with a sarcastic grin.

"I sha'n't object to anything you do, Vernon-Smith."

"Thanks!"

"You have a right to do as you like in your own study, I suppose."

"You can work here, at all events," said the Bounder, changing his tone.

"You can dig deep in Greek without being interrupted."

"Yes; that's good!"

"I'll smoke now, if you don't mind!"

"What you do is not my business!"

"You will only look on with a lofty, disapprovin' eye?"

"I shall attend to my own affairs."

The Bounder laughed, but he did not smoke. At tea-time Tom Redwing, having finished disposing his property, turned to leave the study. The Bounder glanced at him from the armchair.

"Clearin' off?" he asked.

"Yes; it's time to get into Hall for tea."

"Aren't you goin' to have tea in the study?"

"I generally go into Hall."

"We can get a better tea here."

"I don't see that it makes much difference. We haven't much outside our rations," said Redwing.

"I have," replied the Bounder calmly.

"Everything isn't rationed, even now; and I generally have somethin' decent."

"I'm afraid I can't stand my whack in anything of the kind, Vernon-Smith. My tin won't run to it!"

"What does that matter?"

"Well, it matters rather a lot," said Redwing, with a smile. "I can't let my study-mate feed me!"

"Skinner never bothered about that."

"That was Skinner's business. This is mine. I'll go down to Hall, I think!"

And Tom Redwing went.

Vernon-Smith did not care for tea in Hall. He had plenty of money, and he spent it in making himself comfortable. But his brow clouded as Redwing went. He knew that Redwing would not sponge on him, as Skinner had made no scruple in doing; and had they still been friends he would probably have modified his rather expensive habits, for the sake of his friend's company. But it was only too clear that they would never be friends. Even Redwing's cheery civility was a sign that that was over and done with.

The Bounder was not left to have his tea alone, however. Soon after Redwing had gone down Billy Bunter's spectacles glimmered in at the door. The look the Bounder gave him was not encouraging.

"All alone, old chap?" smiled Bunter.

"Oh, buzz off!"

"I thought perhaps you'd forgotten to ask me—"

"Well, I hadn't!"

"I'll have tea with you, old scout!" said Bunter. "I won't leave you on your lonely own!"

"You will!" answered the Bounder grimly.

"Ahem! That's a rather good cake for war-time, Smithy! I—I say, what are you looking for? Can I get you anything?"

"Yes! That stump in the corner!"

"Wha-a-at do you want the stump for, Smithy?"

"To lay round a fat, sneaking, greedy Owl!"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"I can get it myself," said Vernon-Smith, rising to his feet.

William George Bunter made a strategic movement towards the door.

"I—I say, Smithy! I'm going—"

"You'd better buck up, then!"

"About Wednesday, Smithy—I'm coming, you know!"

Vernon-Smith grasped the stump.

"Look here, Smithy, I'm willing to act as your friend. But if you don't treat a chap as a pal, you can't expect—Yarnoooh!"

Bunter dodged the lunge of the cricket-stump, and jumped into the passage. There he turned to blink at the Bounder in great wrath.

"You rotter!" he gasped. "Look here, I'll jolly well tell your pater—Oh, my hat!"

This time Bunter got the lunge, and he yelled.

"Have another?" asked Vernon-Smith, as Bunter dodged away.

"Beast!"

The Bounder went into the study and slammed the door. Billy Bunter did not interrupt his solitary meal again.

That evening Tom Redwing and Vernon-Smith did their prep together in Study No. 4. Redwing found it more comfortable than his former quarters. He was not interrupted by inane chatter about gee-gees, and the odds, and Ponsonby's style in neckties, which he had been accustomed to from Snoop and Stott. Hardly a word was exchanged between the study-mates. Redwing was still at work when the Bounder strolled out and went down to the Common-room.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Rookwood Match!

TOPPING weather!" said Bob Cherry.

It was Wednesday afternoon.

A bright flood of sunshine poured down upon Greyfriars School, and the cricket-field gleamed emerald.

Harry Wharton & Co. were in great spirits.

Jimmy Silver's team from Rookwood School was expected early, and the Remove cricketers were looking forward to a great game.

Wharton had been very careful in his selection of the Remove Eleven for that match. It was composed of Wharton, Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, Hurree Singh, Vernon-Smith, Redwing, Squiff, Tom Brown, Mark Linley, Peter Todd, and Delarey. Hazeldene, who often played for the Form, was standing out, and Frank Nugent had not been found a place. Nugent was Wharton's best chum, but he was too good a chum to expect the captain of the Remove to place friendship before cricket. Frank, perhaps, did not quite see that Delarey was a better man—for the present, at least. But he cheerfully left that to Wharton's judgment. It was upon Wharton that the responsibility rested, and, although Frank perhaps thought he had been a little too careful for once, he did not think of complaining.

Bolsover major grumbled. He looked upon himself as a really first-class recruit, if Wharton could only have seen it. But, as Frank Nugent was left out, too, Bolsover could not air his usual remarks about favouritism, and the matches being kept "in the family."

It was rather a distinction for Tom Redwing to play in the match, as he had not been very long at Greyfriars, and he did not conceal that he was very pleased. But he had proved himself a good man, especially as a bowler, and it was in bowling that the team had needed strengthening.

Vernon-Smith, who was in great form, was a leading member of the team; but the Bounder was thinking more of his father's visit, probably, than of the cricket-match. He waited at the gates for Mr. Vernon-Smith's arrival in rather an anxious mood.

His great desire was that Mr. Vernon-Smith's visit should pass off without the millionaire perceiving that there was a rift in the lute. The Bounder recognised that he had been to blame in the quarrel with Redwing; but he knew that his father would take the opposite view. In fact, it would have quite taken Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith's breath away to learn that the sailorman's son had dreamed of rebuffing his beloved Herbert. And when Mr. Vernon-Smith was angry his temper was not pleasant.



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He was quite capable of saying things to Tom Redwing that could not possibly be forgiven—in fact, he would probably consider it his duty to rate the boy for his presumptuous insolence, as he would regard it. That prospect filled the Bounder with dismay. He had a strong affection for his father, but he would have been relieved if something had occurred to prevent Mr. Vernon-Smith from paying that visit to the school.

The visit was not to be a brief one, as Mr. Vernon-Smith's visits generally were. The busy City man had marked off that day for his son. He was going to see Herbert play for his Form, and have tea in his study, and in a general way act the benevolent parent. He would be a good many hours at Greyfriars, and in that time anything might happen. And if he learned the facts, and the facts made him angry, as was pretty certain, Tom Redwing would learn the truth about the Memorial Scholarship, and then—

It was not in a happy mood, therefore, that Simthy waited for his father. He banished the clouds from his brow, however, as the station hack came rumbling up from Friardale. Mr. Vernon-Smith alighted at the gates, as he saw his son there, and dismissed the hack. His fat, florid face wore a frown. The war had deprived Mr. Vernon-Smith of the constant use of his tremendous motor-car, and he was not yet used to slow railway trains and crawling country hacks.

However, he recovered his good-humour as he shook hands with his son, and walked in at the gates with him.

Wharton and his friends were in the quad, and they capped the millionaire very respectfully. Mr. Vernon-Smith gave them a gracious nod.

"Where is your friend Redwing, Herbert?" he asked, as they progressed towards the House.

"On the cricket-field, I think, dad. He's playing in the match this afternoon."

"How is he getting on here?" asked the millionaire, who really took a friendly interest in the sailor-lad. Tom Redwing's independence of character had

irritated him a little; but he had graciously forgiven him, in view of the fact that he had saved Herbert Vernon-Smith's life.

"First-rate, dad."

"Rather a change for him, from a fisherman's cabin to a first-class public school—hey?"

"He soon got used to it."

"He is a lad of merit," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "I do not believe, as a rule, in taking a person out of his class, Herbert. But in Redwing's case I really think we shall have no reason to regret it."

Smithy winced a little. It was only to be expected that the millionaire would speak of Redwing in a patronising way, but it jarred on Smithy.

"The Head is satisfied with him?" pursued Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, quite!"

"How do the other boys treat him?"

"They all like him—or nearly all."

"Very good. He has shown no low tastes, or anything of that kind?"

"He's as fine a chap as any in Greyfriars, dad," said Vernon-Smith. "Most of the fellows here don't think much about matters of class. Those who do are not the best sort."

Mr. Vernon-Smith grunted.

Having risen to great wealth and influence by his own efforts, and having antecedents that he did not care to talk about, the millionaire was very strong on class distinction.

"Hallo! There come the Rookwood fellows!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith, glad of the interruption.

Mr. Vernon-Smith glanced round. Jimmy Silver & Co. had arrived.

"Very well, you may run away, my boy," said the millionaire. "After I have seen the Head I will come down to the field."

"Yes, dad."

Mr. Vernon-Smith went into the house, and the Bounder joined the cricketers.

The team from Rookwood were Jimmy Silver, Erroll, Mornington, Conroy, Dodd, Cook, Doyle, Lovell, Raby, Newcome, and Towle.

Stumps had already been pitched; the cricketers were not long in getting to work. Greyfriars batted first, and the innings opened with Harry Wharton and the Bounder.

Jimmy Silver delivered the first over for Rookwood, and Mornington went on at the other end. Wharton and Vernon-Smith proved themselves quite equal to the bowling, good as it was. They were still going strong when Mr. Vernon-Smith came down to Little Side.

Mr. Quelch was with him, intending to honour the match with a few minutes of his valuable time. Mr. Vernon-Smith was speaking about Redwing, and the Remove-master pronounced a warm eulogy of that junior, to the millionaire's satisfaction. The two gentlemen sat down in the pavilion, and Mr. Vernon-Smith watched his son at the wickets with a gratified eye. The shouts of "Well hit, Smithy!" "Bravo, Smithy!" were very pleasant to the father's ears.

Tom Redwing was waiting with the other batsmen, and when Mr. Quelch went away the millionaire signed to the boy to approach.

Redwing came up respectfully.

Vernon-Smith, though he was busy at the wickets, noted the incident, and a shade of anxiety crossed his face.

The Bounder had scored twenty when he was caught by Erroll, and came back to the pavilion. Squiff went in to join Wharton.

"Come here, Herbert!"

The Bounder joined his father, who was still chatting with Redwing. However, he was only asking Tom about his

father, who had gone to sea again. Redwing answered quietly and simply, not quite understanding the patronising tone in the millionaire's voice. So far as he knew, he was under no obligations to Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith. Smithy's desire that Redwing should not know who had founded the Memorial Scholarship was regarded as "stuff and nonsense" by his father, but the millionaire had conceded the point to his son. He could not help remembering, however, that he had laid down a large sum of money to found the scholarship which Redwing had won. Mr. Vernon-Smith's thoughts generally ran on money. But, though the millionaire's manner puzzled Tom a little, he was respectively attentive to that gentleman, and made an agreeable impression upon him.

"Redwing! Redwing!"

"Man in!"

The Bounder was glad when that call came, and the sailorman's son had to hurry away to go the wickets.

"A very respectful, well-behaved lad, Herbert," Mr. Vernon-Smith was pleased to pronounce. "I really consider that he is worthy of the advantages that have been bestowed upon him."

"Hum! Ahem!" was the Bounder's rejoinder to that.

"And he still does not know to whom he owes his advantages, Herbert?"

"He owes them to himself, father. He won the schol in competition with a dozen other fellows."

"No doubt; but it was founded at your request, Herbert, because you were aware that he stood an excellent chance of winning it. Really, I see no reason why he should not know how much he owes you."

The Bounder groaned inwardly.

The millionaire had been generous, but he was restive under the anonymity which made it impossible for him to receive the gratitude which was his due.

"We arranged, father—" muttered Smithy.

"I have no intention of breaking the

ALONZO TODD

will arrive like this when
he is called up, because he

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arrangement, Herbert, unless good cause is given. I think it is rather foolish, however."

"Redwing's shaping well at the wicket, dad."

"Is he?" The millionaire did not know much about cricket, and did not care much except when his son was prominent. "He seems a clever lad. You like him as well as ever, Herbert?"

"Ye-es."

"And he is still attached to you?"

"I—I hope so."

There was a cheer at a big hit by Harry Wharton, and it came as a fortunate interruption. The Bounder succeeded in keeping off the subject of Tom Redwing till the Greyfriars innings closed for 80 runs.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Takes a Hand!

DURING the Rookwood innings, as the Bounder and Redwing were both in the field, Smithy felt more at ease. Since he had seen his father he was more alarmed than ever at the idea of the millionaire learning the true state of affairs, and taking Redwing to task.

Skinner & Co. would have taken care to inform him if they had had the remotest notion that it would annoy the Bounder. But luckily that suspicion never even crossed their minds, and they had not even come down to Little Side that afternoon.

The Bounder threw himself into the game, and both bowled and fielded capitally. The Rookwood innings totalled 70 runs, leaving the Remove 10 ahead.

In the Greyfriars second innings Mr. Vernon-Smith stayed only to see his son's performance. Then he walked away from the pavilion, apparently fed up with cricket.

The Bounder was not displeased. As his wicket was down, he was not wanted again till Rookwood batted, and so he went with his father.

There was to be tea after that innings, but the Bounder was going to have his father in the study instead of having tea with the cricketers.

Redwing had agreed to come with him, and Nugent and Bob Cherry had accepted his invitation to bear him company, Wharton having to do the honours for the visitors.

Mr. Vernon-Smith sat down in Smithy's armchair in Study No. 4 with a benevolent, fatherly smile, in great good humour. Little as he knew of cricket, he was aware that his son had done well for his side that day, and that his name was shouted with cheers by the Greyfriars juniors, and that was very agreeable to him.

He watched his son preparing tea with great amusement, and asked him why Redwing was not there to help.

"He's having his innings," explained the Bounder. "He'll come in when his wicket's down."

"Oh, I see!"

"I say, Smithy"—Billy Bunter blinked in at the door—"here you are, old scout! Good-afternoon, sir! You remember me? How d'ye do, sir? I've come to lend Smithy a hand."

"Buzz!" snapped Vernon-Smith, who was not in the least disposed for Bunter's company.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Do you want my boot?"

"Look here—"

Vernon-Smith picked up a cushion, and Bunter rolled out, his eyes gleaming behind his glasses.

"Who on earth's that?" asked Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"Bunter. The fat bounder's always



Caught and bowled, Redwing! (See Chapter 10.)

wedging into a chap's study. He scents out a feed a mile off."

Mr. Vernon-Smith laughed.

A shout from the cricket-field told that the innings was ended. Redwing, after his wicket was down, had watched the game till the last batsman fell. He had agreed to have tea with Smithy and his father, but he did not want to turn up in the study before he was obliged to do so. He came in now with Frank Nugent and Bob Cherry.

"What's the figure?" asked Smithy, as they came in.

"Sixty-two for the second innings," answered Bob Cherry. "Rookwood's got some good bowlers."

"Chap they call Morny seems the best," remarked Nugent. "He put Bob out for a duck's-egg."

"A bit of a fluke, that," remarked Bob casually.

"More or less," grinned Nugent. "The Rookwooders didn't think so. They yelled."

"Oh, they'd yell for anything."

"Lend a hand, Redwing, old scout!" said the Bounder, with a very friendly manner. "We're doing the honours, you know."

"Right-ho!" answered Tom.

Bob and Nugent were both aware that the Bounder wanted to keep dark the rift in the lute, though they did not know why. They were quite willing to help in keeping any disagreeableness from the observation of a visitor, so they chatted very carefully, and it was hardly necessary for Redwing and Smithy to speak to one another.

Mr. Vernon-Smith sat at the table and talked in his most affable mood. He had learned that his son and Redwing were now sharing the same study, and he was pleased to express his approval.

"It must be very agreeable," Mr. Vernon-Smith remarked, "for the two friends to dig in the study together"—a remark which Smithy endorsed in the heartiest way, while Redwing coloured, and Nugent and Bob Cherry looked rather uncomfortable.

It occurred to them for the first time that there was an element of deceit in thus pulling the wool over Mr. Vernon-Smith's eyes.

They were not sorry when Sampson Quincy Ifley Field, otherwise Squiff, put his head in at the door and announced:

"Five minutes."

"Right-ho!" answered the Bounder. "We'll come along."

Billy Bunter was hovering outside the study like a plump Peri at the gate of Paradise.

The Owl of the Remove simply could not take his thoughts off the spread in No. 4.

He had had his own tea, but he was quite ready for another—for two or three others, in fact, if he could get them.

And he was feeling very injured.

Owing to his peculiar methods of obtaining information he was well aware that Smithy, for some reason, desired to keep his father in ignorance of the fact that he and Redwing were no longer friends.

Bunter did not know or care what his motive might be, but he knew the fact, and that it was in his power to open Mr. Vernon-Smith's eyes if he chose.

He felt that it was up to the Bounder to treat him like a pal. If he didn't, he couldn't expect his blessed secrets to be kept for him, Bunter considered. But the Bounder had never given him a chance to explain that he wanted to make terms.

Seeing that the spread was nearing its end, however, the fat junior realised that there was no more time to lose. It was now or never.

As Squiff went down the passage Bunter blinked in.

"You forgot to tell me you were having tea, Smithy," he said reproachfully.

"Blessed if that fat wasp isn't buzzing in again!" exclaimed the Bounder impatiently. "You're nearest him, Nugent. Kick him for me!"

Billy Bunter eluded Nugent's foot, and sidled into the study, to the surprise of the tea-party.

"I say, Smithy—"

"Oh, scat!"

"I'm not going to give you away, old chap!" said Bunter, in a stage whisper. "Rely on me!"

"What's that?" rapped out Mr. Vernon-Smith sharply, looking from Bunter to Smithy and back again.

"Oh, nothing, sir!" said Bunter. "Nothing at all!" He blinked meaningfully at Smithy, who was staring at him blankly. "Rely on me!" he added in a whisper that could be heard all over the room. "I'm not going to tell your pater anything."

"What does this mean, Herbert?" asked Mr. Vernon-Smith, very grimly.

"I suppose the fat duffer's potty!" said the Bounder. "Blessed if I know what he's drivin' at! I'm going to sling him out on his neck!"

Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his glasses.

"I say, Smithy, better not! Look here, I'm not going to give you away, you know. I won't say a word to your pater about your being bad friends with Redwing, and bringing the chap here to tea just to humbug him—"

Billy Bunter got no further than that, for the Bounder, white with anger, collared him and spun him through the doorway.

But he had said quite enough.

The Owl of the Remove felt that he was quite even with Smithy as he picked himself up and scudded away. The expression on the millionaire's face was enough to make him aware of that.

Vernon-Smith dropped into his seat again, breathing hard.

He had reckoned without Bunter and his tattling tongue; and the secret was out now, in the worst possible way.

A grim silence reigned in the study.

Wrath was gathering in Mr. Vernon-Smith's brow. Bob Cherry and Nugent exchanged a glance.

"I—I think we'd better be getting down to the ground," murmured Bob. "The—the innings will be starting."

"I was just thinking so," said Nugent.

And the two juniors quitted the study, feeling that their presence added to the general discomfort, under the circumstances. Tom Redwing made a movement to follow, and then Mr. Vernon-Smith found his voice.

"Stop, Redwing, please!"

Redwing stopped.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Vials of Wrath!

VERNON-SMITH rose to his feet, his lips set and his brows knitted. Redwing stood with a reddening face, while Mr. Vernon-Smith eyed both of them sternly.

"What does this mean?" rasped the millionaire. "I did not expect, Herbert, that my son would deceive me!"

"I—I—"

"That boy Bunter has made a statement. He states that I am being deceived by you and Redwing. Is it the case?"

"Oh, Bunter's potty!" said the Bounder uneasily. "He's always chattering some rot!"

"Is his statement true or false?"

No answer.

"It seems, then, that you have been arranging a little comedy for my benefit!" exclaimed the millionaire angrily.

"Not exactly. But it wouldn't interest you, father. You don't want to know all about our little rows at school."

"Certainly not! But if you have had a row, as you call it, with Redwing, why have you taken all this trouble to hide it from me?"

"You—you see—"

Mr. Vernon-Smith eyed the two juniors very suspiciously.

"Am I to understand, Herbert, that

this boy has disappointed you, and that you have not found him, after all, suitable to be your friend?"

"Oh, no! No!"

Redwing bit his lip hard.

"I think I had better go," he said.

"You will not go, sir, until you receive my permission!" exclaimed Mr. Vernon-Smith. "I am entitled to your respect, whether you are aware of it or not!"

"Father!" murmured the unhappy Bounder.

"Come, come!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith, a little more good-humouredly.

"If you have no fault to find with Redwing, Herbert, I conclude that your little difference is only some schoolboy dispute. Tell me what is the matter, and I will judge."

"It—it's nothing, dad—nothing, really!"

"Only some trifling difference—what?"

"Ye-es."

"Well," said Mr. Vernon-Smith benevolently. "I am glad the matter has come to my knowledge. I shall set it right. You must remember, Herbert, that your friendship is valuable to a lad in Redwing's position. If there is nothing the matter but a trifling dispute, you must overlook it and make friends again."

It did not occur to the millionaire for one moment that the refusal to make friends was on Tom Redwing's side.

The Bounder writhed inwardly.

He almost gasped with relief when Harry Wharton looked in.

"Time!" said the captain of the Remove.

"We're coming," said Smithy.

"Not for the moment," said the millionaire calmly. "I shall have to detain my son for a few minutes, Wharton."

"Oh!" said Wharton.

"We—we're just coming, Wharton," muttered the Bounder.

"We shall have to wait for you," said Harry. "We go into the field, you know."

And he went down the passage.

"Now, Herbert—Kindly do not leave the study till I have finished, Redwing!" broke off Mr. Vernon-Smith severely. "I cannot help thinking, Herbert, that something is being concealed."

"But—but—"

"I insist upon knowing the facts of the case!" exclaimed Mr. Vernon-Smith warmly. "You are no longer friends with this boy, yet you have played a comedy here, in my presence, to make me believe that you were. What does it mean? This is very much like deceiving your father, Herbert; and Redwing is a party to the deceit, and I have no doubt, over-persuaded you—"

"Nothing of the kind, Mr. Vernon-Smith!" said Tom Redwing coldly. "I certainly had no intention of deceiving you. I understood that, for some reason, it would distress you to know that your son and I are no longer friends, and for that reason only I came here this afternoon. It was not necessary, so far as I could see, to tell you anything about the matter, and I can't see why it should interest you in any way."

"Indeed!" snapped the millionaire.

"You are impertinent, Redwing!"

"I don't mean to be, sir; but I certainly can't see why you should care whether your son is my friend or not."

"Herbert!"

"Yes, dad?" groaned the Bounder.

"I can see that this boy has not come up to your expectations, and you are disappointed in him. You wished to keep it from my knowledge, so that I should not take him to task!" said the millionaire sternly. "That was wrong, Herbert. I have a right to know what he has done."

Redwing crimsoned.

"You have no right to take me to task,

Mr. Vernon-Smith!" he said firmly. "I don't want to be disrespectful, but I cannot submit to this! I will go."

"Stop!" thundered the millionaire.

"I cannot remain here, sir!"

"Stop, I tell you! How dare you answer me so!" exclaimed Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Have you no sense of duty or gratitude?"

Redwing looked at him in utter wonder.

"I owe you neither duty nor gratitude, that I am aware of, sir!" he answered.

"You may not be aware of it, but it is a fact, all the same!" said the millionaire harshly. "I did not approve of concealing it from your knowledge. That was simply a foolish idea of my son's."

"I don't even know what you are speaking of."

"Father!" exclaimed the Bounder.

"Enough of this, Herbert! Let us have the facts," said Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"You have ceased to be this boy's friend?"

"Ye-es."

"You had reasons, I suppose? It is your duty to acquaint me with them, under the circumstances."

"I was to blame, father."

"Nonsense!"

"It's true, dad. I was wholly to blame," said the Bounder.

"Even so, if that is the case, why are you remaining on bad terms, and at the same time trying to shield the boy?"

The Bounder did not answer.

"Is it possible," asked Mr. Vernon-Smith, with a thunderous brow, "that it is Redwing who has had the unexampled insolence to reject your friendship, Herbert?"

"We—we don't pull together, that's all, father. For goodness' sake, let the matter drop!"

"I refuse to let it drop! I can see that I have been deceived in this boy, and that it was a mistake to remove him from his proper station and send him to Greyfriars!" exclaimed Mr. Vernon-Smith angrily.

Redwing started.

"You did not send me to Greyfriars!" he said. "You offered to do so, and I refused. I am glad now, more than ever, that I refused."

Mr. Vernon-Smith's lip curled.

"You promised me, father—" muttered the Bounder.

"I did not promise you, Herbert! I allowed you to have your way, though I considered it foolish. It is proper that Redwing should know the facts, and know the obligation he is under to you. He ought to have been told all the facts concerning the scholarship at the time."

"The scholarship?" murmured Tom Redwing blankly.

Smithy avoided meeting his eyes. What he had feared had come to pass now, and worse than he had feared. The proud millionaire had been stung to bitter wrath and resentment at the bare idea of ingratitude on the part of the boy he had befriended. If Redwing did not know the claim on his gratitude it was high time he learned, in Mr. Vernon-Smith's opinion.

"So I am to understand," went on Mr. Vernon-Smith, with increasing bitterness, "that you are willing to be friends with this boy, this upstart, and that he declines? Answer me, Herbert!"

Vernon-Smith did not speak.

"Is that the case, Redwing?" thundered the millionaire.

Redwing faced him calmly.

"I am certainly unwilling to be friends with your son, sir," he answered quietly.

"You dare to tell me so!" spluttered Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"You asked me."

"You—you—you take it upon yourself to pick and choose, to hold yourself

superior to my son—my son!" Mr. Vernon-Smith seemed on the verge of an attack of apoplexy. "Good gad! And this is the beggar whom I took from his hovel!"

"I am no beggar, and I owe you nothing, sir!" said Tom Redwing, his face pale now.

"You owe me nothing!" thundered Mr. Vernon-Smith. "What do you call your scholarship, you insolent young rascal?"

"That was not your gift. I won my scholarship here by my own efforts, and it has nothing to do with you that I know of!"

The millionaire laughed harshly.

"It was by my son's wish that it was kept secret that I was the founder of the Memorial Scholarship!" he snapped.

"You?"

"Yes, I; and it was founded at Herbert's request, upon his belief that you would win it against your competitors."

"Oh!" gasped Tom Redwing.

Vernon-Smith gave him a haggard look.

"I'm sorry for this, Redwing, old chap!" he muttered. "You needn't mind. The schol's your own. You won it."

Redwing breathed hard, his face very pale. The news had come as a stunning shock to him. Never for a moment had he dreamed that he owed his presence at Greyfriars to the fellow who had been his chum; though, now that he knew the facts, he wondered that he had never suspected.

The scholarship had been founded so conveniently for him to enter for it. All the terms of it had been convenient to him. He had had every chance of winning it, and he had won it. He had congratulated himself upon his good luck; but he understood better now.

"Let's have this clear," he said, finding his voice at last. "You founded the Memorial Scholarship, Mr. Vernon-Smith?"

"I did!"

"Smithy—your son—asked you?"

"Naturally!"

"So that I could win it and come to Greyfriars?"

"I think it is time you knew that!" snapped the millionaire.

"Because—because I had refused to let you pay my fees here?"

"Precisely!"

Redwing's lips set.

"So I am under an obligation to you both, and I never knew it!" he said.

"You know it now!"

"Yes," said Redwing, very quietly.

"I know it now."

"It's not so!" said the Bounder huskily. "You're under no obligation, Redwing. The schol's yours, as you won it. There were a dozen other fellows might have bagged it."

"I am glad you have told me this, Mr. Vernon-Smith," said Redwing, without looking at the Bounder.

"It was my wish that you should know, all along, and only some absurd, chivalrous wish of Herbert's caused it to be kept secret!" rasped Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"I never approved of it. You are now aware that you owe me your duty, and that you owe my son your gratitude."

"Yes, I am aware of that now," said Tom Redwing. "And as I feel no duty towards you, sir, and no gratitude towards your son, I must get out of the position as quickly as I can. I shall resign the scholarship at once!"

"Wh-ah?"

"Did you think I should keep it after I knew the facts?" asked Redwing bitterly. "You are mistaken in me, sir! I am afraid I offended you once by show-

ing independence; but it was not humbug, as you seem to think. I shall certainly not accept any favours at your hands! What I have received already, in ignorance, cannot be helped. I shall receive nothing further! You may take your scholarship back, sir!"

"Good gad!" spluttered Mr. Vernon-Smith. "You ungrateful young rascal!"

"That is enough!" said Tom Redwing, turning to the door.

"Redwing," exclaimed the Bounder, "don't be a fool! You know I'm not to blame for this! You can't give the schol back. Once it's founded it's the property of the school, and my father has nothing whatever to do with it. If you resign it, it's simply bagged by somebody else in your place!"

"That is no business of mine. I shall not keep it!"

Redwing left the study.

Mr. Vernon-Smith gasped.

"Good gad! Of all the insolent, ungrateful, disrespectful young scoundrels—" he spluttered. "You need not look distressed, Herbert. You are well rid of that young jackanapes!"

The Bounder gave his father a strange look.

"I've got to get back to the cricket," he said. "They're waiting for me, dad. I must go!"

"I will come with you."

The Bounder's face was set and hard as he walked down to Little Side. He did not think of reproaching his father. It would have been useless, and Mr. Vernon-Smith would not have understood him. The harm had been done, and there was no undoing it now. But the Bounder's heart was very heavy with humiliation and shame and bitter regret.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Well Won!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were in the field, and the last innings was in progress. The cricketers had waited for Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing; but they could not keep the Rookwooders waiting too long. Now the two late-comers went to their places, and Mr. Vernon-Smith sat down to watch the game, his fat face gradually clearing as his wrath subsided.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were doing fairly well at the wickets. Jimmy himself had fallen to Hurree Janset Ram Singh's bowling for 6 runs; but Mornington and Erroll were making the fur fly.

The ball was given to Tom Redwing after the Nabob of Bhanipur had bowled in vain against Mornington.

Redwing went on to bowl, and the Bounder watched him curiously from the field.

He wondered whether the scene in No. 4 Study would make any difference to Tom Redwing's play. Smithy himself was feeling upset and out of sorts, and it was with difficulty that he gave any attention to the game at all.

But Tom Redwing seemed his usual self. His bowling was very good, and at the second ball a catch came to Vernon-Smith at point.

Wharton's face lighted up as he saw that catch on its way to Smithy. Not for an instant did he doubt that the Bounder would make good. But for once Smithy disappointed his fellow-players.

He muffed the catch, and the ball dropped.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" murmured Bob Cherry, in astonished incredulity.

He could hardly believe his eyes.

"Butter-fingers!" yelled Billy Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Call that cricket!" snorted Bolsover major.

"I guess I could beat that on my head, sir!" said Fisher T. Fish emphatically.

The Bounder returned the ball smartly enough; but the opportunity was lost, and Mornington had been given a new lease of life.

The Rookwood fellows looked relieved, as they felt; but some of the Greyfriars onlookers made extremely uncomplimentary remarks about the Bounder. He had shown topping form in the match so far, but he appeared to have gone off now.

But there was a loud cheer when Mornington's wicket fell to Tom Redwing's bowling, and the dandy of Rookwood was out.

Vernon-Smith was frowning with vexation, and he pulled himself together. He did not want to lose the match for his side because there was a black worry on his mind. With great efforts he did well after that one failure, and was a useful man in the field.

Wharton, realising that he was off colour, did not give him any of the bowling; but he had a couple of catches to his credit before the Rookwood innings closed.

The finish was very close.

With last man in, Rookwood had scored 68, and wanted 4 to tie, 5 to win.

The last batsmen were Tommy Dodd and Conroy—both good men. The Rookwooders were smiling, feeling that that pair were equal to more than the wanted five.

Their smiles grew broader when Tommy Dodd scored a 3, off Redwing's bowling.

Tom Redwing looked very determined as he prepared to deliver the next ball. On that ball the result depended.

It came down, and Conroy drove it hard back, and the batsmen started to run.

Smack!

There was a roar.

"Well caught!"

"Caught and bowled, Redwing! Good man! Oh, good man!"

Conroy stopped in his run, and stared as if rooted to the ground.

The bowler was holding up the ball!

Bob Cherry rushed up to Redwing, and gave him a tremendous smack on the back, which made him gasp.

"Good man!" roared Bob. "Oh, good man!"

"Bravo, Redwing!"

"Well done!"

Harry Wharton's face was very bright. He was glad that he had played the new recruit for the Remove that day. Jimmy Silver gave a philosophical shrug of the shoulders. The glorious uncertainty of the great game of cricket had been exemplified once more.

"Better luck next time!" Jimmy Silver remarked to Wharton, as the field came off. "You've got a good man there!"

"One of the best!" said Wharton smiling.

Tom Redwing received a good many congratulations from the Remove cricketers. He got away from the crowd as soon as he could, however, and went into the House. He was off the scene when the Rookwooders departed.

He had banished consideration of his own position from his mind while the cricket was going on, from a sense of duty to his side; but it had cost him a great effort.

Calm as his looks were, his heart was heavy as lead.

The end had come for him suddenly. He knew that he could not stay on at Greyfriars.

His cheeks burned at the thought of

remaining under an obligation to Mr. Vernon-Smith.

He did not go to his study. He was afraid the Bounder would come in there, and he did not want to see him.

He went to the deserted Form-room, and sat down at his desk.

He had to think out what he was going to do.

It had been a tremendous stroke of luck for him winning the Memorial Scholarship, and it was his own property now for the length of the term. He was not bound to yield it up unless he chose. Mr. Vernon-Smith had founded it, but he had no control over it in any way. But the junior really had no choice in the matter. The scholarship had been founded with a view to his winning it, and, though the contest had been an open one, the terms of it had been very favourable to him. He was under an obligation to Smithy and to Smithy's father if he kept it. And he was bad friends with Smithy, and Smithy's father had taunted him with his dependence and ingratitude. The obligation should not last a minute longer than he could help!

But there were difficulties in the way.

He had to explain to the Head. The step he proposed taking was almost unprecedented, and an explanation would be required. He did not want to say anything against Mr. Vernon-Smith, who, after all, had been very generous in his own, purse-proud way. He wondered how Dr. Locke would receive him when he explained what he wanted to do.

He rose at last, and stood staring out of a window into the gathering darkness in the quadrangle.

There was a sound of wheels, and a hack rolled away to the gates. He guessed that it was Mr. Vernon-Smith departing.

The millionaire's visit had meant much to Tom Redwing.

In that one afternoon what a change had come over his prospects! He was not afraid of facing the world, and earning his bread with his own hands. He had done that before, and could do it again. But he had grown to love the old school, and the parting would be bitter.

And his friends, too—Wharton and Bob Cherry and Squiff and the rest—how he would miss them!

There was a "step" at the door, and Harry Wharton came into the dusky room. Redwing turned round.

"Oh, you're here?" said Harry.

"Yes!"

Wharton peered at him in the gloom. The captain of the Remove was looking very serious.

"We've got supper going in the study," he said. "I've been looking for you, Redwing! Come along!"

"I—I won't come, thanks!" muttered Tom. "I—I've got to see the Head!"

"Oh!" said Harry.

Redwing left the Form-room with him, however. Wharton asked him no questions. He understood.

What the Bounder had told him he feared had happened, and there was nothing the captain of the Remove could say to mend matters.

In the passage Redwing paused.

"I've had rather a shock!" he said. "I—I may be leaving Greyfriars soon; in fact, I shall be leaving!"

"I'm sorry!" said Wharton.

"It comes out that—that I've been here at Mr. Vernon-Smith's expense, though I never knew it," said Tom Redwing. "He was the anonymous founder of the Memorial Scholarship, and it was

Smithy who made him do it, so that I could have a chance of coming here. I dare say all Greyfriars will know it soon. I—I'd like you to believe that I never knew it, Wharton."

"I'm sure of that, old chap!"

"You—you see, I refused to let Mr. Vernon-Smith pay fees for me here when he offered," muttered Redwing, with crimson cheeks. "I—I thought I ought to be independent, though he meant to be kind in his way. But—but I never knew that this scholarship was different from any other. I know it looks as if I—I accepted Mr. Vernon-Smith's bounty, after all; but I didn't! I never dreamed that he had a hand in it. I'd like you to believe that!"

"Of course!" said Harry.

There was a pause.

"What are you going to do, then?" asked Wharton.

"I'm going to the Head to resign the scholarship at once! I can't do anything else!"

"That means leaving Greyfriars?"

"Yes!"

"It's hard!"

"Very hard!" said Tom Redwing. "Harder than I should have thought. But it can't be helped!"

"You're not bound to resign it," said Harry hesitatingly. Mr. Vernon-Smith can't want that, and he's no right, anyway. And—and Smithy will be cut up!"

"I hope not! I've got no choice, anyway. After refusing Mr. Vernon-Smith's offer, I can't accept it under another form, and—and he has said some things, too, that make it impossible. It can't be helped!"

"I'm sorry!" repeated Wharton softly.

Redwing nodded, and went away towards the Head's study. Harry Wharton's brow was very thoughtful as he went to the Remove passage, where he met the Bounder.

"Seen Redwing?" asked Smithy.

"Yes. He's gone to the Head."

Vernon-Smith compressed his lips.

"Do you know what for, Wharton?"

"I'm afraid it's all up, old chap. He's going to resign the Memorial!"

"I knew he would!" muttered the Bounder restlessly. "I—I've done my best, Wharton. Only the pater—he was ratty, you know. I don't see that Redwing need resign it; it's his! I knew he would, though!"

The Bounder went moodily to his own study. Harry Wharton joined his chums in No. 1 for supper; but he was not quite so cheery as usual at supper. He could not help thinking of Tom Redwing—and of the Bounder, too.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Checked!

"YOU may come in, Redwing!"

Tom Redwing entered the Head's study.

Dr. Locke's expression was very kindly. He noted at once the distressed look on the sailor-lad's handsome, sunburnt face.

"You wish to speak to me, Redwing?"

"Yes, sir!"

"You may proceed, my boy."

Redwing cleared his throat.

"I wish to resign my scholarship, sir!" he said in a low voice.

Dr. Locke started. He peered very curiously at Redwing over his glasses.

"Do I hear you aright, Redwing?" he exclaimed. "You wish to leave Greyfriars?"

"N-no, not that, sir! I must leave—that is all. I think I ought to resign the

Memorial Scholarship, and I wish to place it in your hands, sir."

"Sit down, my boy!"

Redwing obeyed.

"This is most unusual and extraordinary!" said the Head gently. "You must explain your reasons for desiring to take this step, Redwing! Do you not find yourself happy at Greyfriars?"

"Very happy, sir!" said Tom, with an involuntary sigh.

"Then why do you wish to leave?"

"I don't wish to, sir; but I must. I—I have found out to-day what I did not know before—that the scholarship was founded by Mr. Vernon-Smith with a special view to my having a good chance of getting it. I cannot accept favours from Mr. Vernon-Smith!"

"You appear to be mistaken, Redwing. The scholarship was founded in memory of Greyfriars men who have fallen in Flanders," said the Head. "It was an open one, and you competed with others, and were successful. I understand that it was the founder's wish that you should win it if you could, on perfectly fair lines, of course. You won it, and it is yours. To resign it simply because it was founded by Mr. Vernon-Smith would be a most ungracious act towards that very kind gentleman."

"I don't mean to be ungracious, sir," faltered poor Tom.

"I am sure of it, Redwing, and I request you not to think of doing anything of the kind. Has Mr. Vernon-Smith given you some offence?"

"I—I—"

"If that is the case, Redwing, you must remember that it is your duty to bear with a gentleman old enough to be your father, and not to harbour resentment!" said the Head somewhat sharply.

"I don't bear resentment, sir. Only, I feel—"

"Come, come, my boy!" said Dr. Locke. "You must put this idea out of your head. You are getting on excellently well at Greyfriars. Your Form-master makes the most gratifying report of you. You cannot throw all this up in a moment of pique. Think it over, my boy, and remember that I strongly disapprove of your taking any step of the kind!"

Redwing stood silent and dismayed.

It was hard enough to make up his mind to leave Greyfriars, and all that Greyfriars meant to him, but he had not foreseen this difficulty. Dr. Locke evidently did not intend to allow him to resign the scholarship. The good old doctor could not be expected to enter into and understand the feelings of the junior. He did not know how Tom was situated, and an explanation would hardly have enlightened him.

As a matter of fact, the Head had had some experience of Mr. Vernon-Smith, who was not famous for tact or delicacy, and he supposed that the millionaire had wounded the boy's sensitive feelings by some tactless remark. But that was not a sufficient reason for Tom Redwing to throw up his future prospects.

"Leave this matter to my judgment, Redwing, continued the Head. "You can rely upon the judgment of your headmaster, who is also your friend, surely? If you are of the same mind at the end of the term, you may speak to me on the subject again, and I will listen to you."

"But, sir—"

"I am sure, Redwing, that you will not insist upon taking a step your headmaster strongly disapproves!" exclaimed Dr. Locke.

Tom coloured.

There was only one reply to be made to that.

"Very well, sir," he said.

"I am sure you will not regret taking

my counsel, Redwing," added the Head kindly.

And Tom, with eyes on the floor, quitted the study.

He went very slowly down the passage, troubled and dismayed.

He had not looked for this, and how to act now he did not know, except that he knew he would not retain the scholarship. That was impossible. To tell the Head what Mr. Vernon-Smith had said to him would be like pitching a tale of complaint. He could not do that. But he could not forget the millionaire's bitter words, though even without Mr. Vernon-Smith's taunts his decision would have been the same.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Done your prep?" asked Bob Cherry, meeting him in the corridor.

Redwing smiled faintly.

The question appeared almost ludicrous at that troubled moment. Yet, so long as he stayed at the school, he had to do prep as usual.

"No," he answered. "I'm going up now."

"Back up, or you won't get finished before dorm!" said Bob chidingly. "You don't want Quelch to rag you in the morning—what?"

Redwing went up to the Remove passage.

Herbert Vernon-Smith was at work in Study No. 4 when the sailorman's son came in. He was working without thinking, however, and only to kill time. He looked up at Redwing as the latter dropped into a chair at the study table.

Redwing began to work. His repugnance to speaking was very keen. The Bounder watched him in silence for some minutes, and then resumed his own work. But he rose from the table at last, prep unfinished.

"Look here, Redwing!" he said abruptly.

"Well?"

"You oughtn't to blame me for that scene this afternoon. The pater took the bit between his teeth, as I was afraid he would."

"I don't blame you, Vernon-Smith."

"I did my best, Redwing."

"Yes. I understand now why you wanted to keep your father in the dark. It was kind of you," said Redwing quietly.

"I knew he'd be ratty!" muttered the Bounder. "The pater is a bit high-handed, you know. He's the best pater breathing, but he's used to being kow-towed to, and being monarch of all he surveys. There's no need for you to remember every word he said."

"I shall forget them, most likely."

"You've been to the Head?"

"Yes."

"And resigned the scholarship?" exclaimed the Bounder.

"Yes. But the Head would not allow me. He wishes me to put it off till the end of the term, thinking I may change my mind."

Vernon-Smith brightened a little.

"That's good advice, Redwing."

"Perhaps."

"You're going to do as the Head thinks best, surely?" said Vernon-Smith.

"I can't refuse to obey him," said Redwing. "I can't keep the scholarship, either. I shall have to think of some way out."

"Why can't you keep it?" exclaimed the Bounder irritably. "You know I want you to keep it. My father does, too, though he was ratty when he spoke to you. It's yours!"

Tom did not answer.

"You won't be under any obligation to us, even in the remotest way—is that it?" asked the Bounder bitterly.

"Yes," answered Redwing calmly.

"Because you've quarrelled with me?"

"Not quite. But that matters, of course."

"I shouldn't have thought you were a chap to bear malice!" said Vernon-Smith.

"I don't bear malice, Smithy! Nothing of the kind!" answered Tom earnestly. "I wish you well, in every way!"

"I've asked you to make friends again. I've never asked anything of the kind of anyone. I don't usually put my pride in my pocket!" said the Bounder, in a

bitter tone. "You've refused. Because I said something I didn't mean when I was in a temper."

"It's no use talking about it," said Redwing. "You accused me of wanting your money, and chumming with you for it, and that was the end. It had to be. If you're sorry, I'm sorry, too; but there it is. I could never prove to you that I gave no thought to your money. You will always be rich, and I shall always be poor. No chap with any self-respect could take up the place of a toady, or a fellow suspected of being a toady."

"I never suspected—"

"You would if I made friends with you again, Smithy! It's no use. The less we see of one another the better. I don't complain. My old life was happy enough before I came here, and I shall go back to it. You needn't be concerned about it. Let it drop!"

Redwing turned to his work again.

"You'll never be friends again so long as I am rich and you are poor?" said the Bounder slowly.

"No. It's impossible."

"But you're staying till the end of the term?"

"I don't know. Not if I can help it."

"You're not thinking of clearing off, I suppose?" exclaimed the Bounder. "You're not going to bolt?"

Redwing did not answer. In point of fact, that solution of the difficulty had already occurred to his mind. But he bent steadily over his work, and did not speak again, and the Bounder left the study.

But the Bounder was no longer clouded in his looks. He smiled. An idea had come into his active brain, suggested by Tom Redwing's words—a plan, strange and startling enough, which might, and should, give him back his chum once more. But that is another story.

(DON'T MISS "FALLEN FORTUNES!" — next Monday's grand complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., by FRANK RICHARDS.)

Extracts from "THE GREYFRIARS HERALD" and "TOM MERRY'S WEEKLY."

AN UNSAVOURY BUSINESS!

By CLIFTON DANE.

"RIPPING place for a quiet smoke, this!" chuckled Crooke. "Now, who'd expect to find anyone smoking in Rylcombe Lane? Beats all your hole-in-a-corner smokes! Soon hear anyone coming down the lane. What?"

"Safe as houses!" remarked Aubrey Racke, puffing out a cloud of smoke. "Wonder we haven't thought of it before! It— Look out! Pitch those smokes away—quick!"

Racke's warning was hardly needed. Crooke and Scrope had also heard the sound of footsteps on the dusty road. In a flash three cigarettes were flung into the field behind them. Next moment the pedestrian appeared in view.

"Hang! It's only a beastly tramp!" snorted Racke, opening his gold cigarette-case and selecting another cigarette. "Light up again, you chap!"

A tramp it was; and a particularly ugly and disreputable specimen of the tribe, too. He eyed the three dingy rascals sitting on the fence idly as he shuffled past. Then suddenly his bleary eyes glowed as they fell upon the gold cigarette-case in Racke's hand. Stopping short, he sidled across to them.

"Spare a trifle, young sir!" he whined, holding out a dirty hand. "Spare a trifle for

a pore working-man wot's down on his luck!"

"Not a cent!" snapped Racke, eyeing the tramp up and down in disgust. "Clear off, you cad, or I'll put the police on your track!"

The tramp did not clear off, nor did he appear to be at all perturbed by the junior's threat.

"Then give us a fag, mister!" he went on heareely. "Surely you kin spare a fag for a pore, 'ard-working man wot's—"

"Oh, hang you! I've nothin' for you!" shouted Racke angrily. "So scoot, or— My hat!"

Racke stopped short. Along the lane from the direction of Rylcombe came the faint pattering of running feet. In the distance a lithe figure clad in running vest and shorts appeared in view. Racke grinned maliciously as he recognised Tom Merry, just returning from a training trot before lock-up.

"No," he continued with a chuckle. "I've nothing to give you; but if you'd care to earn five bob—"

"Ere, wot's that? Earn five bob? Wot-cher mean? Wot's the game?" demanded the tramp suspiciously.

"Don't be alarmed!" sneered Racke. "I'm not going to offer you work—nor even to

suggest a wash! It's quite a simple job. You see that chap coming towards us?"

"Yus!"

"Well, all you have to do is to pitch the rotter into that muddy ditch, and the five bob's yours!" said Racke, with an evil grin.

"Ha, ha, ha! Good for you, Racke!" laughed Crooke.

For a moment the tramp stared from the advancing figure of Tom Merry to the grinning faces of Racke & Co.

"Right y'are, young gents!" he grinned at last, spitting on his hands in a decisive manner. "And over that there five bob!"

"Not much!" snapped Racke. "You do the job first, my man! An' if you're not too gentle about it I'll make it half-a-sov!"

The "pore, 'ard-working man" scowled at the junior for a brief second; but as Tom Merry drew nearer he made up his mind to the deed, and hobbled out into the middle of the lane.

"Now, quick! Behind this hedge!" chuckled Racke. "Merry won't like us to see him havin' his dashed bath!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

In delighted anticipation the three black sheep hid behind the hedge to watch. It was

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a wheeze after their own hearts. The dirty work done by someone else, and no danger to themselves!

Tom Merry came trotting up, a healthy glow on his cheery, heated face. He stopped in surprise as the evil-looking tramp barred his path.

"Here, I say! What's the little game?" he demanded quietly, eyeing the tramp's appearance with considerable disfavour. "Let me pass, please!"

"Don't be in such a hurry, me lad!" said the tramp, grinning broadly. "You and me's going to 'ave a nice, 'omely chat! But fust of all, you looks 'ot and 'eated. An' as them doctor bloke's says, you ought ter 'ave a cold bath after exercise. So I'm going to act as your trainer, an' give you one. An' I 'opes you'll take it quickly, else—"

The humorous ruffian stopped, and raised a dirty fist suggestively.

A soft chuckle came from behind the hedge.

But Tom Merry didn't hear it. He was too amazed to notice anything—just then. Had the tramp demanded his money or his life he wouldn't have been surprised.

But this he could not understand. He had not time to think it out, however. The tramp gripped his shoulder, and the eyes of the junior captain of St. Jim's flashed dangerously.

"Here, take your paws off me and let me pass," he snapped, "or it will be the worse for you!"

"Ho, ho, ho!" guffawed the tramp, highly amused.

Then he took a firm grip of the junior, with the kindly intention of lifting him up, swinging him into the air, and letting him drop with a terrific splash into the ditch.

But somehow it didn't work out like that, to the tramp's surprise. A youthful fist, hard as iron, smote the rascal full on the nose.

"Wow! Yaroooh!" That was what the tramp said, as he staggered back in consternation. Up to this time he had taken his job as a joke. But now his bleary eyes glittered dangerously.

"Ang you, you little imp!" he howled wrathfully. "I'll smash you for that!"

Tom Merry stood his ground as the tramp rushed at him with whirling arms. With a slight movement of his head sideways he neatly avoided a huge fist that might have felled an ox. Then—one, two, three, and the tramp was stopped dead, panting and gasping, as Tom Merry's hard fists thumped his ribs.

Tom might easily have got away while the tramp was struggling for wind. But just then he heard something—the quick patter of running feet. Then came the welcome and unmistakable voice of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy:

"Wescue, St. Jim's! Buck up, Tom Mewwy! On the ball!"

After that the tramp was fairly in the soup. The new-comers—D'Arcy, Jack Blake, Herries, and Monty Lowther—were all over him, like hounds on a fox. He came to earth with a crash, swearing luridly.

"If you don't stop that dweadful language, you howlid bwute," gasped D'Arcy indignantly, "I will give you a feahful thwashin'!"

This terrifying threat had an instant effect on the tramp.

"'Ere, 'old on! I've 'ad enough!" he whined. "I won't do it again, young gents! It was only my fun! I never meant to throw the young gent inter the ditch!"

"Well, now we're going to have our fun!" gasped Tom Merry. "But, unlike you, my tulip, we do intend to throw you into the ditch! You look heated after your unusual exertion; and, as you yourself remarked a few moments ago, one ought to have a cold bath after exercise. Besides, you need a bath badly! Catch hold of him, you chaps!"

The unfortunate wretch wailed for mercy as he realised that he was about to make the acquaintance of the element he had always taken so much trouble to avoid—water. But the St. Jim's juniors were adamant to his entreaties.

"In with him!" commanded Tom Merry.

"One, two, three!"

"Yaroooh!"

Splash!

If Tom Merry had had any hope that the bath would remove any of the tramp's outer coating of dirt, he was speedily disillusioned when the ruffian, spluttering and gasping helplessly, crawled out of the ditch, dripping with water and covered with mud.

"You—you young 'ounds!" he yelled furiously.

"Well, I'm blessed!" said Tom Merry, in surprise. "He's no cleaner than he was before!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Never mind, old scout!" observed Monty Lowther cheerfully. "It's a step in the right direction. And remember that, though one touch of water won't give you a clean skin, whilst there's life there's spap!"

Laughing heartily, the juniors trotted on towards school, leaving the tramp shaking his fists after them and swearing horribly.

"My aunt!" chuckled Blake. "That beauty will never dare to attempt highway robbery on any of our chaps again. That ought to be a lesson to the thieving rotter!"

"That's the funny part of it!" muttered Tom Merry thoughtfully. "The brute never demanded money or anything. He just said he was going to pitch me into the ditch. Blessed if I can understand it!"

"Bai Jove! I wondah—" cried Arthur Augustus, suddenly stopping in his stride, while the others stopped also. "Suppose someone's put the wotten boundah up to it—Wacke, or some othah wottah? You know—Wow!"

D'Arcy broke off with a yell as Tom Merry thumped him vigorously on the back.

"Good old Gussy! I'm blessed if you haven't hit it!" he cried excitedly. "Of course! Didn't we pass Racke and Crooke and Scrope sitting on the fence only half an hour ago?"

"My hat! So we did!"

"We're going back," said Tom Merry determinedly. "And if those smoky rotters are anywhere about we'll give them something to remember this by! Besides, there are several of our chaps out for a run to-night, and if that beastly tramp is still hanging around he may try to get his own back out of any of them he catches alone. Buck up!"

The five retraced their steps in haste. Drawing nigh the scene of the tramp's enforced bath, they dived through a hole in the hedge and crept cautiously on.

Then upon their ears there broke the sound of voices raised in anger. One was the voice of the tramp, hoarse from drink, and the other was that of Aubrey Racke.

"My hat!" ejaculated Blake. "You were right, old son! Look there!"

Seated on a fence, with their backs to the approaching juniors, were Racke, Crooke, and Scrope. Standing facing them, and gesticulating wildly, was the tramp.

"I don't care a hang wot yer says!" that worthy was shouting. "I wants me ten bob, and wot's more I means to 'ave it!"

"But you didn't do the job!" snarled Racke. "I promised you ten bob to pitch that rotten cad into the ditch—not to get pitched in yourself!"

The tramp scowled threateningly.

"Mind wot yer sayin', young 'un!" he growled. "Jest yer 'and over that ten bob, or I'll go for yer—straight!"

"I dashed well won't!" replied Racke warmly. "Do you think I'm goin' to pay ten bob for nothin' to a drunken beast like you? Yaroooh! Wow!"

Racke's remarks ended abruptly in a yell as the tramp's ugly fist smote his nose, and sent him toppling backwards over the fence. But he did not fall alone. Feeling himself going, he grabbed convulsively at the nearest objects within reach—which objects happened to be Crooke and Scrope.

Bump!

"Yow-wow!"

The three reached Mother Earth as one man, and yelled as one man—or, rather, boy. They ceased to fall when they got there, but they did not cease to yell. Crooke had somehow managed to hit Racke in the left eye with his fist. Scrope's boot had landed with a nasty jar on Crooke's face; while Scrope himself was apparently not feeling at all comfortable with Crooke sitting on his head.

It was undoubtedly a victory for the tramp, and, like a wise general, he quickly followed up his initial success. Jumping the fence, he snatched up a stick of businesslike appearance, and stood threateningly over the struggling three.

"Now, me smart young toffs!" he snarled viciously. "We'll see if yer'll rob me of me ten bob! Smart, now! 'And over every blessed cent yer've got, or I'll smash yer!"

The ruffian was in deadly earnest now—

there was no doubt about that. But Racke & Co. were unable to give him their full attention at the moment. They were too busy trying to extricate themselves from the mix-up into which they had got.

From their hiding-place Tom Merry and the rest had watched the little comedy so far with delight. But this was highway robbery! They could hardly let it go on. Just as they were about to go to the rescue, however, an astonishing thing happened.

Dropping his cudgel suddenly, the ruffian stooped, picked up something from the ground, and vaulted the fence. Then he disappeared into the woods on the other side of the lane.

"My hat! What a rotten sell!" said Tom Merry, in disgust. "The rotter must have thought better of it, after all. Never mind; we'll settle up with these beauties now! Come on!"

Racke was staggering painfully to his feet as the five came running up. He viewed the new arrivals in no little alarm.

"Hallo, Racke, old son!" began Tom Merry, in pretended surprise. "What's wrong now? Has that beastly tramp been robbing you?"

For the moment Racke eyed Tom Merry nervously. He wasn't quite sure how much Tom had seen and heard. But apparently Tom Merry's sunny smile reassured him.

"No dashed fear! I'd like to see that beast rob me!" he snorted. "He would have done, though, if we hadn't put up such a good fight. If you'd been a minute sooner you'd have seen me dot him a beauty on the no—"

Racke stopped short suddenly, and began to search feverishly through his pockets.

"What have you lost now, Racke? Your ability to tell the truth?" inquired Monty Lowther sweetly. "Don't bother about hunting for it, dear boy! You'll never find it without a microscope!"

Without answering, Racke scanned the ground wildly for a moment. Then he gave a yell.

"My cigarette-case! That thievin' rotter's stolen my gold cigarette-case!" he shouted wildly. "Where is the brute? I'll—"

"Ha, ha, ha! No, you don't, my boy!" laughed Tom Merry, just as Racke was about to rush in pursuit of the tramp. "We've a little score to settle with you first. You can chase your pal the tramp afterwards. Collar those other cads, you chaps!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"But my cigarette-case!" shrieked Racke. "That brute must have pinched it! An' it's gold, and worth pounds! Let me go, you idiots! Yaroooh!"

Racke's protestations ended in a yell as he descended with a bump on the hard ground. A moment later Crooke and Scrope also found themselves treated likewise.

"Now, my noble jokers!" said Tom Merry. "Strikes me that giddy tramp is not the only dirty scug who wants a bath! In with the smoky cads!"

"Here, leggo! Stop it, you beasts! Oh, help!" yelled Racke, as he was frog's-marched across the lane and swung, kicking and struggling frantically, into the air.

Splash!

Racke's yells were only equalled by those of Crooke and Scrope as they followed him a moment later. There were about three inches of water and ten inches of mud in that ditch. And, like the tramp, none of the shady trio looked any the cleaner for their enforced bath.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The five executioners roared as the miserable figures crawled out of the ditch.

"Let this be a lesson to you, my young friends," said Tom Merry severely, "not to play your shady little tricks again! Good-bye-ee! Don't cry-ee!"

"You—you—you—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And not waiting to hear the bathers' remarks on the subject, Tom Merry, Jack Blake, D'Arcy, Monty Lowther, and Herries trotted leisurely home.

It was fully an hour before Racke was in a fit condition to go in search of the tramp. And, as might be expected, he never saw the tramp—or the cigarette-case—again.

Perhaps it was no great loss. It certainly served him jolly well right! Eh, what?

THE END.

FRAGMENTS FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM, THE GORGEOUS BUNTER!

With Notes by PETER TODD.

[Wharton insinuates that these fragments are not genuine. I repudiate the insinuation with despicery and contempt—in the purest Pickwickian sense, of course. That is to say, I don't really despise and condemn Wharton; but he ought to be more careful what he says. Don't the fragments speak for themselves? Read them, and judge whether they are not Bunter all over. Some of them are partly true; but Bunter does tell part of the truth at times by accident. Most of them are crammers. And who shall deny Bunter's cramming propensities? The title? Rather neat, isn't it? Must I own that I cribbed it? Some merchant named McCarthy wrote some sort of a novel called "The Gorgeous Borgia." Struck me as quite adaptable to Bunt—what do you think?—P. T.]

HERE THE FRAGMENTS COMMENCE.

I WAS borne of distinguished parents in the year 19—.

It is pollisy not to give the exact year, becouse no one knoes howe long the war will last. Even I do knot feal shore, thow I am a better profit than the chaps who wear certain that the hole Orstrian army wood be killed and wounded and prisners three times over befor the end of 1915.

I should not mind goeing into the Army if I could be given at once a job suetable to my talents and eddication. Brigadeer-General Bunter wood not sownd so bad. But I refuse to joyn up as a meer private if I can help it. Thearfor I am conceeling my age, and I don't care who knoes it.

[Bit queer to be concealing what he does not care who knoes—what? But Bunt never was consistent, even in his whoppers.—P. T.]

My parents come of a very old famerly—in fact, of two very old famerlies. Sam of my farther's ancesters were in the ark with Noah.

[Qui' ri! Two of every kind—clean and unclean, you know!—P. T.]

Since then they have dun menny nobel deeds awl over the world. Julius Caesar was related to us, it is sed, butt we are not very pround of the conection, oweing to his "Comentaries," witch have inflicted unspeakable torments on countless gennyractions of skoolboys. Besides, Julius was a meer comoner. Most of my reclations have had titels.

The Markwiss De Bunter came over with the Conquerer, and never went back.

[Looks as if they knew a thing or two in Normandy about A.D. 1066! I don't blame them for not having him back.—P. T.]

The Erl de Bunter went to the Crewsades with Richard of the Lion Hart. He came back with grate glorey.

[That was becouse the Saracens did not eat pork.—P. T.]

His son, Lord William de Bunter, was with the howled Barrons at Runnymed when King John was forced to sine the Habeas Corpus Act.

[Cricket match there, apparently. But I thought it was Johnny who was howled—howled out! And I didn't think it was the Habeas Corpus Act. We live and learn!—P. T.]

Butt enuff of my ancesters.

[Too, too much!—P. T.]

I shall return to them laiter on. At present I will deel with my own karear, witch is natcherally of moor general interest.

As a baby I was a singerly beautiful and well-behaved child. It is related in my famerly that fore attempts to kidnap me wear maid wile I was stil of tender age, and noboddy dowts that the reeson was my younike charm and bewty.

[Reason was probably someone's hunger, if there's any truth in the yarn at all—which there is not, of course. But Bunter, at any age below three, would have made a pretty good substitute for sucking-pig—that is, for anyone who wasn't too particular.—P. T.]

I lerned to talk at an unyousally erly staige of my existens, and my mother stil cherishes memries of the wit and genyus I shoed as a meer child. But it might be thowt vane to reproduce these hear.

[Besides which, if Bunter tried it would

give the show away. I know Bunt as well as anyone, and I never heard him talk anything but rot. I should fancy his earliest childish lisplings concerned postal-orders.—P. T.]

Wen I was abowt two and a half my brother, Samuel Tuckless, was borne. He is, as is wel knone, much inferior to me in evry way, but their are stil in him sum traces of the Bunter grace and spirit, and it is univversely admitted by awl kompetent to judge that their is no wun else kwite like him in the Sekond Form at Greyfriars.

[Jolly lucky for the Second, too!—P. T.]

At the first skool to witch I went I ekselled at every point, beeing ahd of all kompetiters alike in Form work and in manley gaimes. I was skiper of all the elevens and fiftens, and at the hed of the klass. Sutch was the impresion maid by me upon my skoolfelows that I was genrally knone as the Admirable Bunter.

[At Greyfriars the impression made is upon Bunt, not upon us. When we sit on him it makes a temporary impression—or should it be depression? Anyway, he always swells up again.—P. T.]

Butt I will pass over my erly yeers—for the preasant. I may return to them on a laiter okasion.

[Pity he can't return to them altogether, and leave a vacancy in No. 7! We could do with it!—P. T.]

Aekustomed as I was to every luckshury in my chiledhood, it was hard cheese for me wen my farther, threw the loss of his erldom, witch was yoursurped by a profligate kusun, alsoe lost awl his chink, amownting to abowt seven millyon pounds, moar or less.

[More or less, you know. Bunt is on the George Washington game here, you perceive. But it's interesting to learn how the title went out of the immediate circle of his relations. Only instance on record of a profligate cousin being allowed to collar things like that. But never mind!—P. T.]

Their was now nce prospekt of me ever beeing the Duke de Bunter, as had hithertoe been suspected. To that I submited with nobel resignachun; but I did feal the pinch of povverty wen their was only tripe for dinner, and not mutch of that.

It was on this okasion that I adminstered my rebuik to my brother Samuel, witch has alweis been a tressured memry by my famerly. On his blubing at the absents of the aekustomed luckshuries I kalmly transfered the frugle meal sett befor him from his plait to mine, and ett it up wile he was stil shedding salt teers.

Wen he notised what I had dun he floo into a pashun; but I nobely said:

"Sammy, despie not the grub witch Providents provided. If it is not good enuff for you, why wale at its loss? I, who am your elder brother, and imensely your superer in every respekt, have eeten it, and could stil do with moar."

[Some of this is true, I should fancy. It's in character, anyway.—P. T.]

In the efort to establish his clames to the markwisate my farther lost stil moar of his chink, and now had onely a few paltry mill-yuns left. This was hard to bare! But my bie spirit kept up the pekker of my famerly in this strate. I told them that as long as their was enuff for me to ete, thow of the planeest descriphun, their was no caws for anyone else to repign so biterly.

[This is not quite the truth. Enough to eat never yet satisfied Bunt. Unless he can get too much he is miserable. But you must not fail to admire his truly Spartan spirit. As long as he got enough to eat, why should anyone else repine? He brought that spirit with him to Greyfriars. But there has never been room for it in No. 7. 'Fraid we are small-minded people there!—P. T.]

In this extremity I maid up my mind that I must lougher my pride to work. I paynted sevrel pickshers, witch wood have been exhiberted at Westminster Abbey or sunwhear else if it had not bean for mean jellusy. Awl my life I have sufered from the jellusy of others—moar espeshully Wharton and Peter Todd, and witch of the too is the biggest beest I reelly do not kno.

[Queer, isn't it? Neither do I. Wharton doesn't seem to, either. But we are not worrying much about it.—P. T.]

I alsoe rote a novvel, in witch genyus was displaid at every point. I sent this mitey work to a firm of publisshers, whoos attitude I have nevver bean abel to understand.

They returned it with a polight noat to the efekt that they had never sean anything at all like it befor. Then why not publish it? I nacherally inkwired. I inkwired this of the hed of the firm himself, haveing obtaned an intervoo with him by knocking down three enornus comisyonares who tryed to withstand my entrans to the sanktum sanktorium.

He laffed—he aekshally laffed! And wen I sed that I wood talk half price, as munney seamed to be short in his establissment, he laffed sum moar. Even wen I menshuned the figger in my mind—a paltry five thow-sand down and what they call a royalty of three shillings a kopy—he stil went on laffing. Sily, I kalled it.

Then wun of the komishinares came in and lade a komplaint of asalt and battery against me, and the publissher man stoped laffing and looked seryus. Things subsekwently hapened, and wen I piked myself up from the pavement their was a bump on my hed as large as a peacock's egg, and my garments wear torne in a posishun witch I refrane from partiklerising.

[Somehow this sounds like something that might have happened—part of it, anyway. The chucking-out part, I mean. But it's news to me that peacocks ever laid eggs.—P. T.]

(To be continued in our neckst.—W. G. B.)
[Not so jolly sure about that!—H. W.]

NOTICES.

Football—Matches Wanted By:

IDA ATHLETIC—16—3 miles.—Wants also two backs, left half-back, and outside-left.—H. Pittard 58, Wotton Road, S.E. 8.

ACRE UNITED—16-17—5 miles.—H. Atkins, Montserrat House, Hale End Road, Woodford Green, Essex.

RAGLAN RANGERS F.C.—17½—6 miles.—H. Sickel, 69, Southlands Road, Bromley, Kent.

WEST MARYLEBONE UNITED—16—home and away.—W. Clark, 27, Clipstone Street, W. 1.

JARROW & DISTRICT LEAGUE want teams to compete—10-13½. No fee, cups, or medals.—4 miles radius—Referee wanted.—M. MacLoughlin, 25, Back Albion Street, Jarrow-on-Tyne.

ST. ANNE'S F.C.—16.—ground, Blackheath.—W. J. Chamberlain, 37, Thorburn Square, S.E. 1.

ST. PETER'S F.C.—17.—H. Hall, 66, Westminster Road, N. 9.

KENSAL RISE ATHLETIC—16½—5 miles.—E. G. Bailey, 7, Barsett Street, Queen's Park Estate, W. 9.

PARK UNITED F.C.—15½—1 mile.—R. L. Baker, 4, Eighth Avenue, E. 12.

PINSBURY F.C.—17.—C. W. Barnes, 57, Basinghall Street, London, E.C.

INNS OF COURTS F.C.—16—5 miles.—A. Fairbairn, 21, Peabody Flats, Wild Street, Kingsway, W.C. 2.

BRIXTON ATHLETIC—16—5 miles.—T. Partidge, 11, Brandon Road, Brixton Hill, S.W. 2.

Fixtures wanted with any Association club 7 miles of Chiswick.—15-16½.—R. E. Parkinson, 18, Kew Bridge Road, Kew Bridge, Brentford.

Football—Miscellaneous.

Two good players wanted, 16½-18. Also matches.—45, Park End, Bromley, Kent.

Two good players wish to join a Tottenham club—left-half, back, or goalkeeper.—W. Harvey, Seaford Road, N. 15.

F. L. Peacock—16—wants a place in team as outside or inside left.—Write or call.—18, Falcon Terrace, Battersea, S.W.

P. Peacock—12—outside or inside right.—18, Falcon Terrace, Battersea, S.W.

S. Blanks, 10, Persen Street, Lewisham, S.E., and his friend want places in a local football team. Age 16.

A. J. Brown, 64, Pownhall Road, E. 4, wants to join a football club within four miles. Right-back, centre, or inside-right. Age 17.

THE GREYFRIARS GALLERY.

No. 90.—HERACLES IONIDES.

IONIDES has long since dropped out of the stories, and is no longer at Greyfriars; but those readers who were enjoying the "Penny Popular" up to the time when its publication was suspended owing to paper difficulties will have made his acquaintance, as the stories of Greyfriars in that paper dealt with earlier days. So it seems worth while to include him here, and later Carberry, one of his special pals, may also find a place. One had imagined that the keenness of readers for these articles would have lessened when once all the more popular characters had been dealt with; but this does not seem to be at all the case. Every suggestion that the series is drawing to an end has brought letters of expostulation and reminders that So-and-so has not yet been included; and one enthusiastic reader is quite grieved because he can see no prospect of getting sketches of Bland, Glenn, Trevor, and Treluce. Can't be helped, you know! Those four are really little more than names to us; and an article of this sort cannot be written around a name. Of course, I could invent things about the four; but, though now and then I may have made slips in these character sketches, my memory not being quite infallible, I have invented nothing. I have simply dealt with Mr. Richards' evidence as to Mr. Richards' people, so to speak.

Heracles Ionides—by the way, the name is not pronounced like Ironsides with the "r" and the "s" left out, but more nearly like He-o-hee-dees, though, perhaps, that is not the exact pronunciation, for the vowels in most of the Continental languages have values so different from what they have in English that it is hard to indicate precisely how they should be sounded—was a Greek. He must not be taken as a typical Greek, however. In the times long ago the Greeks were the foremost nation of the world; and even now the world is in debt to ancient Greece for many things that can never be forgotten. The names of the old Greek cities—great Athens, stern Sparta, magnificent Corinth, staunch Plataea, brave Thebes—come to us with a trumpet-call out of the long-dead years. Plato and Socrates, Aristotle and Plutarch, Pericles and Alcibiades, Lysander and Agesilaus, Themistocles and Miltiades, Leonidas and Aristides—these men, and such as these, stand out in history and in literature.

But Greece groaned for centuries under the tyranny of the Turks; and her modern history is but a short one. She is striking for freedom now on our side, having rid herself of her German puppet of a king; and in Venizelos she has a man worthy to be compared with her old-time great ones. There must be many fine, gallant fellows in Greece to-day. But Ionides is a specimen of some of the worst faults of his race, not of their better qualities. He earned dislike directly he reached Greyfriars. Very much of a dandy, he was also more than a little of a bully. Having been placed in the Sixth, he regarded himself as having a right to fag anyone he chose; and he ordered Temple, the captain of the Upper Fourth, down to the village to fetch him a bottle of some patent face-wash. Face-wash for a Greyfriars senior! And the lordly Temple ordered to fetch it! Temple was in arms at once, naturally; and he and Dabney and Fry found themselves engaged in a row with the new fellow. Ionides was positively tigerish; he needed the Remove to deal with him before he could be brought to his senses. And the Remove, led by Harry Wharton, did deal with him most effectively and faithfully.

Bunter was his next victim. Bunter deserved punishment. He had been up to his usual tricks. But Ionides had no notion of what was reasonable in the way of punishment; and the Remove dealt with him again—this time by a real ragging.

Then he tried to mash Marjorie Hazeldene, ordering off both her brother and Wharton that the way might be clear for his mashing operations. They would not have gone but that Marjorie, knowing that they must not defy the authority of a Sixth-Former, asked them to. And Harry came back, for Marjorie had need of him. "From that moment it was war between Harry Wharton and the new prefect."

Wun Lung got to work. He "improved" a face-lotion of Ionides', and the Greek senior went to dine with the Head with a dark-green face. He came near to getting expelled then. As it was, he lost his office as a prefect, not

because his face was green, but because the Head had evidence of his violent and ungovernable temper.

The rotters of the Sixth—Loder, Carne, and Carberry—could get on all right with Ionides. But such fellows as Wingate and Courtenay and North and Faulkner had no use for him. Before he had been at Greyfriars a fortnight he was known as a black sheep as well as a bully.

Bunter played ventriloquial tricks on the Greek senior; and Ionides came, breathing fire and slaughter, to the Remove dormitory in search of the Owl. Now, that Bunter should get it hot on occasion is not a thing that the Remove worries about; Bunter often deserves to get it hot. But Ionides could not be trusted to know where to stop, and Wharton intervened. The Form followed Wharton's lead, and pillows and bolsters smote Ionides till he was more than half dazed.

It was Bob Cherry who brought about a collision between Ionides and his dear pal Loder. Bob was playing First of April tricks, and among them was the shifting of specially tempting eatables from one Sixth Form study to another. The muscatels were Loder's. Bob was caught in the act of leaving them in the Greek's study, and told him that he was such a nice chap that it was a pleasure to show him any little attention. Ionides failed to perceive the irony; he thought Bob was try-



ing to ingratiate himself—very like Bob Cherry that would have been—one does not think! Loder came along, found Ionides eating the muscatels, called him a foreign thief, and went for him. No doubt Ionides was sorry; possibly Loder was so when he found out his mistake; but it is not on record that the cheery Bob felt any remorse.

Later, Loder tried a swindle on his dear Greek pal, and used the guileless Alonzo Todd to help him in it. Loder got word by wire as to the result of a certain race, and then made a perfectly safe bet with the Greek on that race. Lonzy's part was to fetch the telegram from the post-office. Lonzy muddled his part as usual—not his fault, for he would have been flayed alive before playing a part at all had he known that there was craft and dishonesty in the business—and the truth came out. There was a row, and Ionides had his cash back.

But he and Loder were soon friendly again. They were together in the plot against Wingate, mentioned in the article dealing with Miss Rosalie Locke two or three weeks ago. He did not go in to the Head with Loder and Carne, but he was up to his neck in it, nevertheless. The plot failed, and out of it came credit to the stalwart skipper.

In fact, Ionides was to be counted upon to be in anything rascally and underhand; and during his time at Greyfriars no instance of anything generous, plucky, or even decent is recorded of him. There is no record of when and how he left, so we may take it that he escaped expulsion. Probably his people were asked to take him away—a course often adopted by headmasters in the case of fellows who are bound to come a cropper sooner or later. Anyway, he was not missed. Even Loder and Carne could get on very well without him.

The Editor's Chat.

For Next Monday:

"FALLEN FORTUNES!"

By Frank Richards.

This story is the fourth and last of the fine series concerning the falling out of those faithful friends, Herbert Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing.

It was plain from the first that they were bound to make friends again. That did not lessen the interest of the stories—to me, at least. I do not think it was lessened to any of my readers. After all, one does not read a yarn just to see what the end may be. It is what happens between beginning and end that matters.

The reconciliation had to be brought about by the Bounder, of course. Redwing's honest pride made it difficult, if not impossible, for him to take the first steps. His attitude was that he still wished his rhum of the past all possible good, that he was always willing to serve him if he could, but that what the Bounder had said in his anger had made any real friendship between them out of the question.

Perhaps he was too proud. Pride is not a bad quality in itself, though there are kinds of it that are positive vices. But I think that pride between friends is usually misplaced. Life is short, and the world is rough on most of us at times. Why should we make trouble for ourselves by setting up a wall of pride against those for whom we really care? That is surely false pride. A truer pride might show itself in humility.

Not that one blames Redwing. Yet it is easy, while seeing his point of view, to see the Bounder's also. Vernon-Smith had spoken in his wrath; the words had come out of the bitterness that is part of the worst in his nature. He wanted them forgotten. They were untrue; he had never felt that Redwing had sponged, or wanted to sponge, upon him.

A FEW MORE WORDS TO AMATEUR AUTHORS.

I did not intend in my Chat last week to trample on the feelings of those of my readers who are ambitious of writing. And I know it is easily done; authors generally are among the most touchy of people, and the younger they are the touchier they are.

But aspiration is not accomplishment. You may think you can write a story quite in the Frank Richards or Martin Clifford style; but you cannot—not one among the whole crowd of you! There are just a few who can supply something like a plausible imitation, usually of the yarns in lighter vein; and, of course, there is an opening now and then for a quite light story. But it would be little short of a miracle if any of you youngsters should really be able to do the Frank Richards stuff. See what goes to it! Wide reading, knowledge of the world and of human nature, facile invention, long practice, and the skill that comes with it—all these Mr. Richards has, and you have not. Even when you have written quite a fair story about the Greyfriars characters you have but a minor part of it to your own credit. You may have dealt with Fish, or Coker, or Skinner, or Bunter. But could you have invented any of them, or made them live as Mr. Richards has made them live? Not likely! It is much if, in reading the story, one feels that the real Fish, or Bunter, or Coker, or Skinner is in it; but if that measure of success has fallen to you, you have done little more than write a fair copy. As a rule, too, you are content to hash up old incidents, without any attempt to think out anything new for yourselves. What, then, is there left of your own in the story? The words? But they are Mr. Richards' words, or, if they are not, then the story is hardly a success. Some of you who appear to have read little but the MAGNET and the "Gem" have unquestionably got real benefit from them in the way of a workmanlike vocabulary and some notion of the manner in which a story should be told. But that is only part of a writer's outfit. The biggest part is character construction.

YOUR EDITOR.