

BOYS! THIS IS YOUR PAPER!

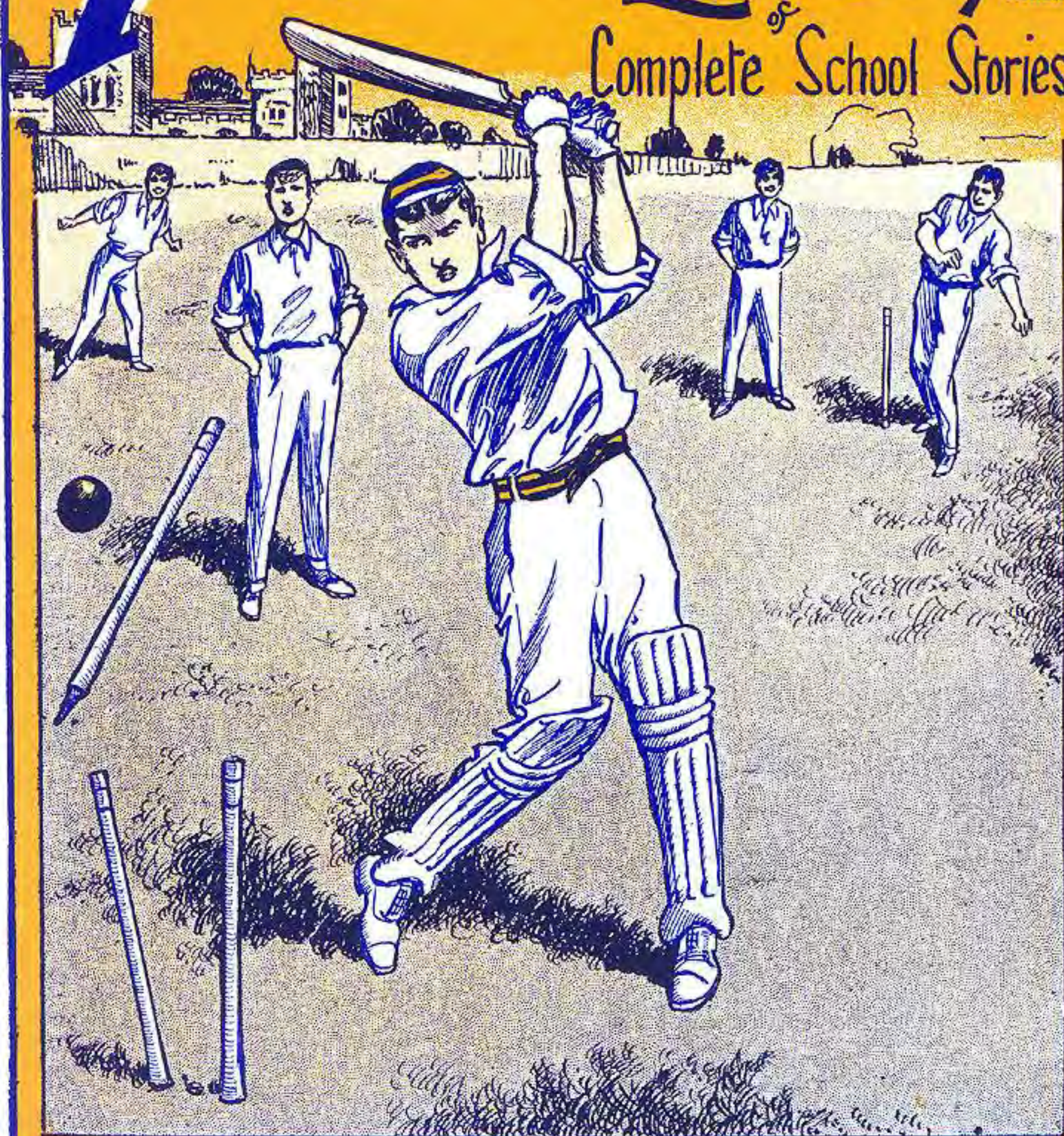
No. 899. Vol. XXVII.

Week Ending May 2nd, 1925.

The Magnet ²/₂

Library EVERY MONDAY

Complete School Stories.



"HOW'S THAT?"

THE BOUNDER'S BOWLING BEATS TEMPLE OF THE FOURTH!

(A diverting incident from the long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. inside.)

**"BUCK UP, BUNTER!"**

By Frank Richards.

STORIES of the great William George are always well received by my host of readers, for the antics of the Owl will make even a cat laugh! In this coming yarn we see Billy Bunter at his wit's end because his father writes and says that he is dissatisfied with the progress his young hopeful is making at Greyfriars. That's quite to be expected in a way, for the fat and fatuous Removite knows not the meaning of the term progress, and certainly does not think that he is at Greyfriars to "learn things."

BUNTER THINKS!

You wouldn't believe it, really, but our tame porpoise does get his intellectual machinery in motion. In short, he's got the wind up! His father must be convinced that the one and only William is a credit to his Form, to Greyfriars, to his family. But how's it to be done? Rome wasn't built in a day, and certainly the Bunter that the Owl thinks he ought to be would never materialise in a whole lifetime—Bunter and heroism, Bunter and truthfulness, Bunter and learning will never spring from Bunter and laziness, Bunter and greediness.

BRAIN-WAVES!

Bunter must do something of which his father would be proud. He must rescue someone from a watery grave, he must knock up centuries and things at cricket. But—that word sends cold shivers down Billy Bunter's spine—how's it going to be done? Strangely enough, no one is charitable enough to fall into the river for the express purpose of letting Billy Bunter fish him out. Selfishness, really, but there it is. Bunter is forced to admit to himself that he is a "dud"—a wash-out; there's nothing he shines at except telling whoppers and scoffing tuck—usually other people's. It is hardly to be expected that Mr. William Samuel Bunter will be satisfied; in fact, it is quite on the cards that he will withdraw his son from the school. And yet—just when Bunter has drawn upon all his resources and failed—there happens one of those rare opportunities which touch up a miserable and sordid existence with a glow of colour. Bunter actually plays a hero's part—unconsciously, of course. Bunter will do almost anything for a cake. Strange, that seems, but there it is. Bunter's heroism is prompted by thoughts of an ordinary cake. I'm leaving you curious at this point so that Mr. Richards can talk about this cake in HIS way. Don't miss

"BUCK UP, BUNTER!"

whatever you do. You'll enjoy every line of it; you'll be anxious to reach the end of the story, and when you do you'll regret that there isn't more of it. That's the way of a good story.

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"THE GOLDEN PYRAMID!"

There is another long instalment of this popular detective serial, chums, in our next issue. Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake come face to face with Arthur Bristow, who holds the whip-hand. But not for long does this consummate scoundrel score a triumph. Ferrers Locke is far too wily a bird to have his wings clipped, whilst Jack Drake has repeatedly shown his great worth when it comes to getting out of a tight corner. Look out for this coming instalment, boys. If you'd take a tip from me you'd do well to hop round to your newsagent at once and order next Monday's MAGNET.

PICNICS!

The season is here when picnics become the order of the day. And, after all, there's many a less delightful way of spending a sunny day or an afternoon. Harry Wharton & Co., who pride themselves upon being "seasonable," have put their shoulders to the wheel and given us a "picnic" supplement. Tom Brown contributes a highly-interesting article on Picnics—Past and Present. He even takes us—or rather his imagination takes him—into the picnicking days of the Stone Age. You'll like this number, chums; mind you read it!

GRAND NEW SERIAL!

I made mention in last week's Chat of the new detective serial I have in hand.

For the benefit of those readers who missed the announcement, let me say that this story is a real top-notch. Mr. Hedley Scott has given us a fine mystery yarn with movement in it from beginning to end. Sport, too, in the shape of King Cricket, is woven into the story. This serial is going to make a big hit—take it from me. When does it appear? Ah, perhaps in next week's Chat I can give you a definite date. Look out for it!

THE LUCKY THIRTEEN!

Next week's issue will contain the names and addresses of the "winners" of our "Puzzle Pars" Competition No. 1. Your name, chum, might be amongst them. 'Nuff said!

The "SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY!"

Nos. 3 and 4 of this wonderful new school-story library are now on the book-stalls. There's going to be "some" rush to secure them, so it is up to Magnetites to jump in while the going is good. No. 3 records the adventures of Fisher T. Fish in the "amateur business world," and is aptly entitled "The Greyfriars Business Man!" No. 4 introduces Willy Handforth & Co. of St. Frank's in a rousing yarn of school life and adventure, and is entitled "The Fighting Form of St. Frank's." You'll enjoy both these 64-page volumes. Make certain of your copies by ordering now. Don't forget—ask for Nos. 3 and 4 of

The "SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY!"

Now On Sale at all newsagents. When you have read—and enjoyed—these ripping yarns, do me the favour of recommending them to a non-reader pal. Many thanks.

Your Editor.

RESULT OF "CROSS WORDS" LIMERICK COMPETITION No. 9.

In this competition the FIRST PRIZE of £5 for the best "last line" sent in has been awarded to:

JOHN W. DARLING,
c/o Imperial Hotel,
Darlington,

for rounding off the following verse:

"I don't care two straws for the Head!"
Skinner cried (did he mean what he said?);
"He's too fat, and he's dozey,
And—here comes the old fogey—"

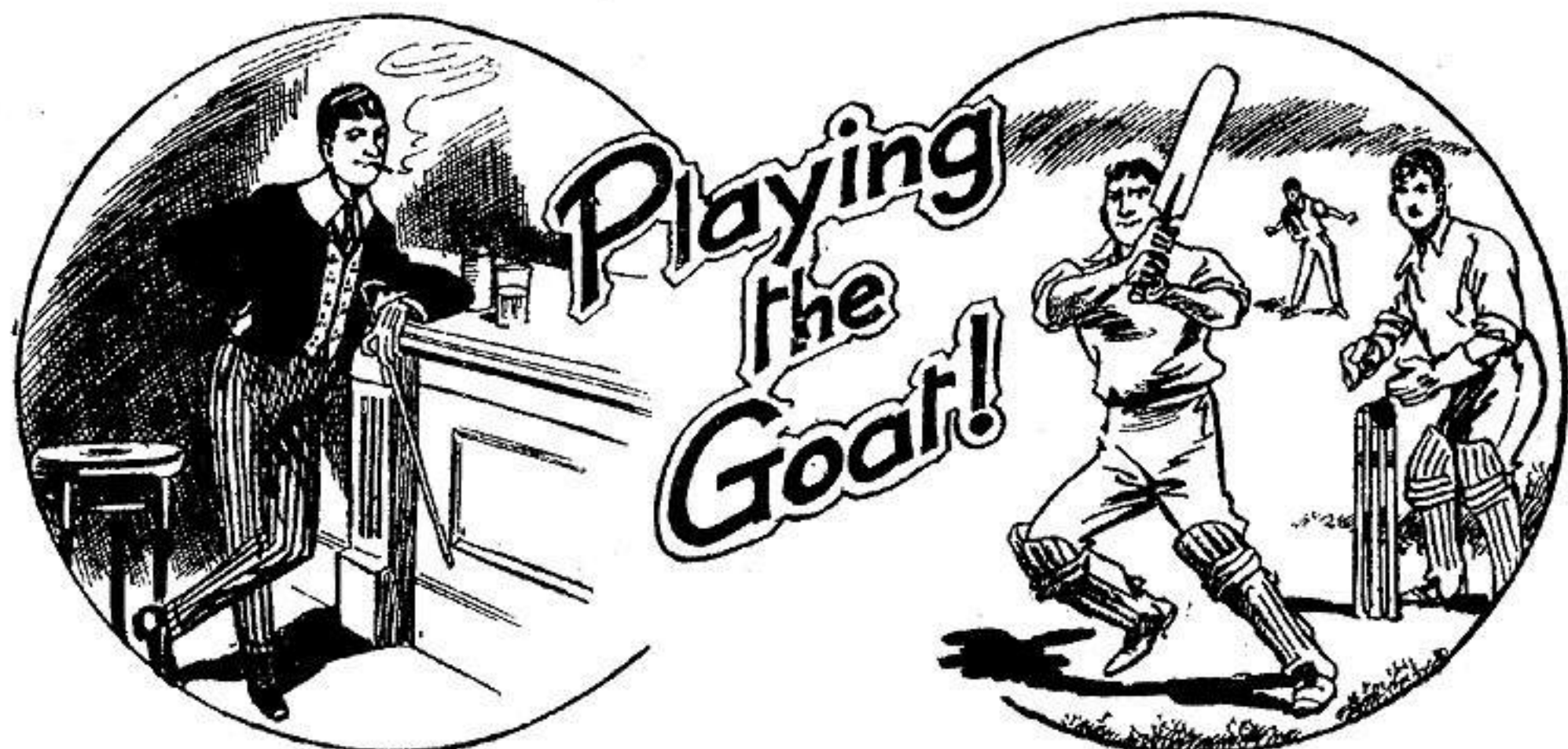
with:

"But his 'nerve' turned to 'nerves' and he fled."

The TWELVE CONSOLATION PRIZES of POCKET-KNIVES have been awarded to the following:

STANLEY ADCOCK, 4, Salvin Road, Putney, London, S.W.
MAURICE BEEBEE, 19, Persehouse Street, Walsall, Staffs.
FRED BOOTHROYD, 121, Blackburn Street, Radcliffe, Manchester.
THOMAS BRENNAN, Tullamaine College, Upper Leeson St., Dublin.
HORACE BRIDEN, 53, Durants Road, Ponder's End, London, N.
MARY DALE, 11, Church Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.
LESLIE IVES, 4, Church Street, Kelvedon, Essex.
STANLEY KNIGHT, 12, Carminia Road, Balham, London, S.W.
G. W. J. LEESON, 21, Chasefield Road, Tooting, London, S.W.
ANDREW PARKER, 16, Pennington Terrace, Bradford, Yorks.
E. J. PORTER, 192, Linden Road, Gloucester.
DONALD STIRRUP, Whittle Hall Lane, Great Sankey.

THE OLD BOUNDER! Not for any length of time can Vernon-Smith keep to the straight and narrow path. He seems to take a sheer delight in wrong-doing, and is for ever fighting against that "other self" which, in the past, earned for him the title of the Bounder!



A Magnificent, New, Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, introducing Vernon-Smith, commonly known as the Bounder.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

High Words!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH, the Bounder of Greyfriars, lounged into Study No. 1 in the Remove with his hands in his pockets.

Harry Wharton, at the study table, glanced up. His pen was busy, but he arrested it for a moment.

"Can't stop, Smithy!"

"Busy?"

"Yes—lines."

"Can't spare a minute?"

"Well, if it's important——" Harry Wharton laid down his pen. "You see, I've got a hundred to do for Mr. Quelch, and I'm expected on Little Side. The lines have got to go in first—see?"

"Wash it out!" said the Bounder. "Bother the lines!"

Wharton smiled.

"Well, that would mean trouble with Quelch," he said. "I'm not looking for that, Smithy."

The Bounder smiled in a rather sarcastic way.

"It's not such a jolly long time since you used to look for trouble with Quelch," he said. "You put most of your time into it, not so very long ago."

"That's over," said Wharton briefly.

It was a disagreeable topic to him, and the Bounder knew it. That brief period when Harry Wharton had been the rebel of the Remove was never mentioned by his friends; Harry himself was trying hard to forget it. He did not take any reference to it kindly, and the Bounder was well aware of that fact. Nevertheless, he pursued the topic.

"Not so very long ago, Quelch giving you lines was reason enough for you to leave them unwritten," he said.

"I was an ass!" said Harry. "Luckily, I realised it before it was too late. Chuck that subject, Smithy! Surely you didn't come in here to talk about a thing you know I'm sick of."

"Well, no! If you have resumed your ancient character of model youth and shining light, and so on——"

Wharton looked at the Bounder sharply.

"Have you dropped in here for a row, Smithy?" he asked.

"Not at all."

"Then ring off. If you've got anything on your chest, cough it up, and let me get my lines done. They're due at three."

"I'm going out for the afternoon," said the Bounder.

"Cutting games practice?"

"Yes. I suppose that won't hurt."

"Well, no, not once in a way," said the captain of the Remove. "But the matches are coming along now, you know. We play St. Jude's before very long, and there's the Form match with the Fourth——"

"That's practically only a practice game," said Smithy. "You don't fancy that Temple's crowd could beat us?"

"No. Still, we're bound to keep in form. But if you want to cut games this afternoon, all right."

Wharton dipped his pen in the ink. "Hold on a minute! I want you to come with me," said Vernon-Smith. He stood with his hands in his pockets, eyeing the captain of the Remove across the study table.

Wharton shook his head.

"Sorry, can't be done! I've got these lines to finish, and then games practice. Busy till teatime."

"Bob Cherry will take the cricket practice off your hands. Look here, Wharton, I want you to come."

"Thanks no end. But——"

"It's important."

Harry Wharton laid down his pen again. He was rather surprised by the pertinacity of the Bounder.

They were friends, in a way, but they had never been chums. There had been a brief period, at the time when Harry Wharton was in disgrace with his Form master, and unfriendly with his old friends, when he had chummed with Smithy. But that period had been very brief; it had ended, in fact, in a fight in a very short time. They were friends now, but seldom or never companions. Their ways were wide as the poles asunder. Wharton valued Smithy chiefly as a tower of strength in the Remove eleven, and assuredly he did not want trouble with the Bounder. But he did not affect to be specially keen on his companionship.

"I don't quite follow," said Harry, after a pause. "Why do you want me specially, Smithy? Skinner or Snoop would be glad——"

"I don't want Skinner or Snoop."

"Well, there's your own pal, Redwing——"

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.

"Redwing's too angelic for this business. I don't want to shock him."

Wharton's brows contracted.

"Anyhow, Redwing's booked for games practice," he said. "I'm thinking of giving him a trial in the Form match next week. But look here, Smithy, if it's something you can't ask Redwing to join in, it's something you can't ask me to join in, either. Dash it all, what the thump do you mean, anyway?"

Wharton's eyes glinted a little. He was growing angry.

He guessed, by this time, that the Bounder of Greyfriars had planned one of his shady excursions for that half-holiday, one of the excursions in which his chum Redwing never joined.

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The Bounder smiled sarcastically.

"I'm going to see some fellows," he said. "It's possible there may be a row, and I want a fellow to stand by me. Skinner or Snoop wouldn't have the pluck. Redwing's got heaps of pluck, but he wouldn't be found dead in the show I'm going to. I want you to come. Look here, Wharton, every fellow kicks over the traces at times. You kicked over the traces a jolly good deal not so long ago, and you came jolly near being bunked from the school. You've been jolly careful since, I know; but once in a while——"

Wharton rose to his feet.

His eyes gleamed at the Bounder across the table.

"That's enough, Smithy!"

"Well, will you come?"

"No, I won't, and it's like your cheek to ask me. Because I played the goat once, when I was on bad terms with my friends, and worried about some private matters, too, you've no right to suppose that I'm a shady blackguard like yourself."

"Thanks!"

"That's plain English," said Wharton savagely; "and there's another thing, while we're on the subject. You don't seem to understand that you've insulted me, so we'll pass that over. I've no right and no wish to preach at you; what you do is a matter for your own conscience, if you've got any, till you're found out and bunked from the school. I've got no dealings with you except as captain of the eleven you're a member of. Well, this kind of thing won't do. If you're going to play cricket for the Remove this season, you've got to chuck it."

"Got to?" said the Bounder unpleasantly.

"Yes, that's the word. You coolly tell me that you're cutting games practice this afternoon, to go and play the blackguard at some rotten show, that you'd be expelled for visiting if the Head knew. Is that the way to talk to your cricket captain?"

"Yes, if I choose," said the Bounder coolly.

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"Then it won't do! You'll chuck up this dingy foolery this afternoon, Smithy, and turn up to games practice with the rest."

"Rot!"

"If not——" Wharton paused.

"Well, if not?" sneered the Bounder.

"You'll be dropped out of the eleven."

Vernon-Smith yawned.

"Dear me! And all because I don't believe you're a giddy model character, and a shinin' light in the Remove, because I believe you're only playing a careful game, because you came near being bunked, and are afraid of getting the chopper——"

"That's enough! Are you turning up for games practice this afternoon?"

"No!"

Wharton sat down again.

"Please yourself! But if you don't, your name is taken out of the Remove list."

"Take it out, and be hanged to you," retorted the Bounder.

And with that, Herbert Vernon-Smith swung out of the study.

Wharton, with a ruffled brow, resumed his lines.

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THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Redwing Says No!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry greeted the Bounder cheerily as Smithy strolled down to Little Side.

Most of the Remove cricketers were gathering there, for games practice; and four members of the Famous Five were already on the spot. Bob Cherry, Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, stood in a little group, and Tom Redwing was with them. They were waiting for Wharton.

"Where's Wharton?" asked Nugent. "I saw the dear man in his study, grinding out lines for Quelch," said the Bounder lightly. "It's rather a change from the time when he used to get it hot and strong for refusing to do his lines, isn't it?"

"Oh, rot!" said Bob Cherry. "What a fellow you are for digging up things better left buried, Smithy."

"The tactfulness of your excellent remarks is not terrific, my esteemed Smithy," observed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Tom Redwing gave his chum an anxious glance.

He was accustomed to the Bounder's varying moods; and loyal chum as he was, he did not always find it easy to bear with Smithy. He could see that the Bounder now was in one of his most unpleasant tempers, prone to quarrel with friend or foe. Something, evidently, had happened to ruffle Smithy's temper—never very reliable.

"I stand corrected," said the Bounder sardonically. "One must not breathe a word of criticism concerning the great and only Wharton."

"Oh, don't be an ass," said Johnny Bull gruffly.

"But I seem to remember a time when you fellows criticised him pretty freely, all the same—even to the extent of punching his head."

Bob Cherry gave the Bounder a grim look.

"Drop that, Smithy!" he said.

"Why?" yawned the Bounder.

"Because I shall jolly well punch your head if you don't," said Bob hotly. "If we have our little troubles sometimes, it's no bizney of yours, and you're not called on to butt in."

"Smithy, old man——" murmured Redwing.

"I can jolly well see that you're in one of your rotten tempers, Smithy," said Johnny Bull, in his slow, steady way. "Take a walk and get over it. Don't say any more."

"The fact is, I didn't walk down here to enjoy your conversation," said the Bounder. "I want you, Redwing."

"What about, Smithy?"

"I'm going out for the afternoon, and I want a fellow to come with me."

Redwing looked troubled. "Games practice, you know," he said. "Wharton's going to give me a trial in the Form match, and——"

"You don't want to come?"

Bob Cherry and Co. moved off a little. They did not want to be concerned in recriminations between Vernon-Smith and his chum. Smithy's tone was distinctly unpleasant; and they wondered how Tom Redwing could take it so patiently as he did. But Tom had many reasons for being patient with his wayward comrade; he knew the sterling qualities that underlay the rather hard and cynical exterior of the Bounder, and he had not forgotten the times when Smithy had been a good and loyal friend to him.

"I'd like to come, if you want me, Smithy," said Redwing. "But——"

"Well, I do want you."

Redwing suppressed a sigh. He was keen on wicket; keen on a chance of getting into the Remove eleven. He had changed for practice, too; and his skipper would expect to find him on Little Side. But he had long been accustomed to conceding to the Bounder.

"Right-ho!" he said, as cheerfully as he could.

"If you'd rather not come——"

"I'll come!"

"I daresay his Highness will rag you for cutting games practice," said the Bounder, raising his voice a little so that Bob Cherry & Co. should hear. "He's told me that I'm to be dropped out of the cricket if I go—and I'm going all the same."

"Smithy!"

Bob Cherry looked round.

"That's rot," he said.

"Fact!" said the Bounder. "Wharton is a little tin god, you know; and isn't his word law in the Remove? I'm to be chucked out of the cricket if I clear off this afternoon—and I don't care a button, either. If the eleven can get on without me, I fancy that I can get on without the eleven."

"Rot!" repeated Bob. "If Wharton's really said that, there's something in it that you haven't mentioned."

"Quite! You're getting quite perspicacious!" assented the Bounder. "You see, I'm going to see some racing men——"

"What?"

"Up the river, at the Feathers!" continued the Bounder coolly, apparently unconscious of the sensation his words caused among a dozen fellows who heard them. "I asked Wharton to come—but he's funky. They're rather a doubtful gang I'm visitin', and there may be a row. Come on, Redwing."

Tom Redwing did not stir.

His cheeks were crimson.

"Is that the fact, Smithy—you're going up to that rotten show, to see a set of blackguards——"

"Just that!"

"And you ask me to come!" exclaimed Tom indignantly.

"I've asked you."

"Well, I won't come," said Redwing quietly. "You ought to be jolly well ashamed of asking me, and jolly well ashamed of going."

"Dear me! I haven't dropped into a Salvation Army meetin' by mistake, have I?" asked the Bounder, looking round.

Some of the juniors laughed. Some of them looked disgusted, and some angry, which did not affect the Bounder in the least. It pleased Smithy sometimes, in his wayward and malignant moods, to run counter to the opinions and feelings of every fellow he knew.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes Wharton!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

The captain of the Remove was coming down to the cricket ground at a trot. The lines had been hurriedly finished, and handed in to Mr. Quelch, and Wharton had lost no time.

"Waiting for you, old chap," said Nugent.

"Here I am," said Harry cheerily. "Jolly glad to see you here, Smithy! Let's pile into the cricket!"

It was the olive-branch, if Smithy had chosen to accept it. The captain of the Remove was evidently willing to forget all about what had been said in the study, and to act as if Vernon-Smith's reckless words had never been uttered.

But the Bounder was not in a mood for the olive-branch. He shrugged his shoulders.

"I'm not here for cricket," he said. "I'm just off—only called here for Redwing."

Wharton's brow darkened.
"Redwing won't go with you, if you've told him what you told me," he said.

"Just what he's confided to me," said the Bounder lightly. "Sure you won't come, Redwing."

"You know I won't."

"Right-ho—stay here, then; and don't trouble to speak to me when you see me again. I'm fed-up with you."

The Bounder swung away, leaving Tom Redwing biting his lip. Harry Wharton called out to Vernon-Smith.

"Haden't you better stay, Smithy?"

"Thanks; no!"

"Well, I mean what I told you in the study: If you go blagging this afternoon instead of doing your duty, you'll be dropped out of the cricket."

"My dear man, you're repeatin' yourself. How long is it since you went blagging with me?"

Harry Wharton turned his back on the Bounder, with flushing cheeks.

"Get out, Smithy!" snapped Bob Cherry.

The Bounder laughed, and walked away. Cricket practice started on Little Side, but Tom Redwing did not enjoy it as he had expected. More than once his friendship with the Bounder had been broken, and it was clear that there was to be another break. Doubtless, in the course of time, the Bounder's evil mood would pass; but in the meantime, Redwing was troubled and distressed, and he wondered, sadly, whether after all it was worth while trying to keep on friendly terms with so uncertain a fellow as Herbert Vernon-Smith.

In that troubled mood, Redwing did not show up well in games practice; and when it was over, he knew that his captain was more than doubtful about giving him, after all, that chance in the Form match with Temple & Co. That knowledge did not cheer him, as he went to his study in the Remove passage—to a lonely tea.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Bounder Asks For It!

"VERNON-SMITH!"

Mr. Capper, the master of the Fourth, was taking the roll in Big Hall.

There was no answer as the Bounder's name was called.

Some of the Remove fellows exchanged glances.

Many of them were aware that the Bounder was engaged, that afternoon, upon one of the shady excursions in which, at times, he delighted. It was clear that he had not yet returned.

Mr. Capper blinked towards the ranks of the Lower Fourth, and repeated the name:

"Vernon-Smith!"

But the Bounder was not there to answer "Adsum!" and the Fourth Form master went on with the roll.

"I say, you fellows, Smithy's asking for it," remarked Billy Bunter, as the Remove fellows left the hall. "Capper will report him absent to Quelch. I jolly well know where he's gone, too!"

"No bizney of yours, fatty," said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

Harry Wharton walked away with a rather grim expression on his face. He had given Vernon-Smith a plain warning, and the Bounder had disregarded it; he had, in fact, taken deliberate trouble to display his disregard of the Remove captain's opinion. So far as



"Smithy!" The Bounder stared at Redwing as he came into the House. His eyes glinted evilly. "You! Didn't I ask you not to speak to me again?" he said. "Mr. Quelch wants you," went on Redwing. "You're to go to his study, Smithy!" "Mind your own bizney!" snapped the Bounder, turning on his heel.

(See Chapter 3.)

the captain of the Remove was concerned, he was done with the Bounder; in making up the cricket team, there was no question now of Smithy's name appearing. Most of the cricketers were in full agreement with Wharton on that point. There was a limit, and the Bounder had passed it. Still, it meant a serious loss to the Remove eleven, and gave the captain of the Form plenty of food for thought. He was sorry, too, to see Smithy at his reckless old game again.

Since Tom Redwing had been at Greyfriars, Smithy had changed very much—sometimes he was scarcely recognisable as the reckless old Bounder. But there seemed to be an ineradicable kink in his nature; every now and then he would break out into his old blackguardism, and exhibit all the unpleasant traits that had once made him thoroughly disliked in the Remove. He knew that he was a valuable member of the eleven, and there was little doubt that he presumed on that fact. Probably he did not believe that Wharton would go to the length of dropping him out; but if he expected the captain of the Remove to eat his own words, he was booked for a disappointment. Being left out of the next few matches would be a lesson he needed.

Tom Redwing hung about the doorway of the School House, looking into the falling dusk in the quad.

He was anxious about the Bounder. After his reckless occupation of the afternoon, it would have been only judicious on Smithy's part to turn up

promptly for roll-call, to avoid possible suspicion. But he was clearly in one of his most reckless moods that day, and he was taking chances. That strange kink in Smithy's nature was a thorn in Redwing's side; he never thought of interfering with his chum, and he closed his eyes to what he disapproved of; but with his own straight and simple nature, he found it difficult to understand that curious leaning towards dingy blackguardism in another fellow. He was quite prepared to forget Smithy's angry words on Little Side, and to receive him when he returned in the old friendly way, as if nothing had happened, and he knew it was possible that the Bounder would come in tired and half-ashamed, and friendly; and, on the other hand, it was probable that he would come in tired and nervy and irritable, and in one of his most savage tempers. Only too well he knew how uncertain the Bounder was, and realised how difficult it was to keep any terms with so complex a character.

"Redwing!"

The junior turned at Mr. Quelch's voice.

"Yes, sir?"

"Has Vernon-Smith come in?"

"I think not, sir."

"Mr. Capper has reported him absent from roll-call," said the Remove master. "Tell him to come to my study when you see him, Redwing."

"Very well, sir."

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Redwing waited at the door with a heavy heart. Smithy was booked for trouble with his Form master, as well as with his Form captain; really, it seemed that his restless nature made it impossible for him to live long without trouble with somebody. Redwing was determined that the trouble should not extend to himself if he could help it; but he had a deep misgiving that he would not be able to help it.

It was dark when the Bounder came in at last. Redwing glanced at his face as he came into the light. It was a little pale, and looked tired and strained. There was a slight bruise under his eye, too, and a cut on his lip, and Redwing wondered whether there had been "scrapping" at the rough and disorderly place where Smithy had spent his half-holiday.

"Smithy!"

The Bounder stared at him. His eyes were glinting evilly.

"You! Didn't I ask you not to speak to me again?" he said.

Evidently the Bounder had not returned in a repentant mood.

"Mr. Quelch wants you—"

"Bother him!"

"You're to go to his study, Smithy."

"Mind your own bizney!"

Tom Redwing turned away at that without another word. It was a breach once more, and he was feeling that his patience was nearing its end.

He went to his study in the Remove passage to begin prep.

Redwing had been in Study No. 4 about ten minutes when the Bounder came in, hurling the door open savagely with a crash.

Redwing looked up.

The Bounder rubbed his hands, and threw himself into the armchair, and lighted a cigarette.

"Licked?" asked Redwing.

"Yes."

"Sorry!"

"Rubbish!"

Redwing resumed his work, the Bounder watching him with glowering eyes over the cigarette. Probably he expected Redwing to make some remark on the cigarette; but Tom did not speak. Vernon-Smith flung it, half-smoked, into the grate.

"Six!" he said. "Six—for missing call-over! That's pretty thick, isn't it?"

Redwing nodded without speaking. He was quite aware that he could say nothing without giving offence, in the Bounder's present mood.

"Why don't you say it serves me right?" sneered the Bounder.

"It's no business of mine."

"But you think so?"

No answer.

"Can't you speak?"

Tom Redwing looked up, and fixed his eyes steadily on his study-mate.

"You know it serves you right, Smithy," he said quietly. "You asked for it, and you got it. I'm sorry—but it serves you right, as you know perfectly well."

The Bounder laughed jeeringly.

"Has Wharton picked you out for the Form match?"

"Not yet."

"He might as well—you'd be useful enough against a fumbly crowd like Temple and Fry and that crew. A serious match would be a different matter."

"Thanks."

"Not at all. That's my opinion. But if he has the cheek to leave me out of the St. Jude's match, there will be trouble." The Bounder rose. "I may

as well go and have it out with him now."

Tom Redwing stirred uneasily.

"Leave it till to-morrow, Smithy."

"Why?" jeered the Bounder.

"What's the good of picking a row with Wharton?" said Tom.

"Mind your own business."

Redwing flushed.

"That's the second time you've told me that, Smithy."

"I'll tell you again, when you butt into my affairs."

"Very well; I won't," said Tom very quietly. "You've asked me not to speak to you—and I'll take you at your word. Let it go at that."

The Bounder gave him a moody look, and strode out of the study. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were at prep, in Study No. 1, when the Bounder looked into that celebrated apartment, with his most unpleasant expression on his face.

"About the cricket, Wharton—" he said.

"Well?" said Harry.

"I suppose you were only gassing to-day about leaving me out?"

"No."

"Did you mean it?"

"Yes."

"In a word, am I playing St. Jude's?" said Vernon-Smith. "You can leave me out of the Fourth Form match, and welcome. But if I'm left out of the St. Jude's match, look out for trouble."

Wharton eyed him contemptuously. Frank Nugent flushed with anger, but he did not speak.

"Do you think you can come here and bully me, Smithy?" asked the captain of the Remove. "You're left out of the St. Jude's match, and every match to follow until you learn to behave yourself decently. Is that plain enough?"

"Quite! Look out for trouble."

"Rats!"

Vernon-Smith came a little further into the study, clenching his hands, his eyes gleaming at the captain of the Remove.

Wharton rose to his feet.

He did not want trouble with the Bounder; but he was quite prepared for it, if it came. He was about the last fellow at Greyfriars to endure patiently the bullying tone the Bounder was adopting. His clear glance met the Bounder's savage stare coolly.

"Well?" he said.

"You rotter—"

"That's enough!" said Harry.

"There's the door."

It seemed, for a moment or two, that the angry Bounder would hurl himself at the captain of the Remove. But some remnant of common-sense restrained him, and he turned and strode from the study, slamming the door savagely behind him.

Frank Nugent smiled faintly.

"One of Smithy's tantrums!" he remarked.

"He can hardly expect to scare this study with his tantrums," said Wharton, with a curl of the lip.

"Not quite," said Frank. And the chums of the Remove resumed prep, and dismissed the angry Bounder from their minds.

Vernon-Smith tramped along the Remove passage, with a black brow; and it was Billy Bunter's ill-fortune to meet him, and indulge in a fat chuckle.

"He, he, ho! Had it hot, Smithy? What did you expect? He, he, he!"

The Bounder gave him a black look.

"I hear you're chucked out of the cricket," went on the Owl of the Remove cheerfully. "How do you like it? He, he, ho!"

Smack!

"Yarooooop!" roared Bunter.

The fat junior sat down in the Remove passage, roaring.

Vernon-Smith left him roaring, and tramped back to Study No. 4. He found Tom Redwing quietly at work in that study, and the sailorman's son did not look up as he entered.

"Well, I'm chucked!" said the Bounder.

Redwing did not answer.

"Do you hear, Redwing?"

"I hear," said Tom, looking up at last. "What's the good of talking about it, Smithy? Let's get on to prep."

"Hang prep—and hang you!"

The Bounder flung himself into the armchair, and smoked cigarettes while Tom Redwing was finishing his preparation. Prep over, Redwing left the study, without a word.

When they met later in the Remove dormitory, they did not speak or exchange a glance. The following day, after class, the Bounder joined Skinner and Snoop, and Redwing went his way alone. There was a rift once more between the Bounder and his chum; and this time it looked as if it would last.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Pride Goes Before a Fall!

CECIL REGINALD TEMPLE, captain of the Fourth Form at Greyfriars, came up the Remove staircase, and stopped at the door of Study No. 1.

The door of Study No. 1 was half-open, and Temple of the Fourth could see five juniors in the study—the Famous Five of the Remove. Harry Wharton & Co. were gathered round the study table at tea—a cheery party.

Temple gave the door a shove, and it flew open.

He did not trouble to knock.

Temple rather prided himself upon his nice manners; he was, in fact, the glass of fashion and the mould of form in the Greyfriars Fourth. Nevertheless, he did not tap at Wharton's door before entering. That, in Temple's opinion, was too much honour for a mere fag in the Lower Fourth.

Between the Upper Fourth and the lower Fourth there was, in Temple's opinion, a great gulf fixed.

Having shoved the door open, Cecil Reginald Temple walked in.

The tea-party glanced round at him.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "I didn't hear you knock, Temple."

"I didn't knock."

Temple's answer was lofty and disdainful. It was intended to convey, in a few syllables, the immense superiority of the Upper Fourth over the Lower Fourth.

But the cheery Removeites did not look crushed. They were quite used to Cecil Reginald's swank, and they found it entertaining.

"I see," assented Bob, with a nod.

"They don't knock at doors, in the slum you were brought up in, old bean."

Temple reddened.

That was certainly not what he had intended to imply.

"Don't apologise, old man," said Harry Wharton gravely. "We can excuse bad manners."

"We can make allowances," said Johnny Bull. "Early training will tell. Temple hasn't picked up Greyfriars manners yet."

"The excusefulness is terrific," said Harree Jamset Ram Singh, the dusky member of the famous Co.

"Don't blush, old chap," added Frank Nugent. "Nothing to blush about."

You simply didn't know any better. It's all right."

Temple was not exactly blushing for his bad manners; but his face was growing crimson.

"You cheeky fags!" he exclaimed. "I didn't come here to listen to any Remove cheek, I can tell you. I've come here to speak to you about the cricket, Wharton."

"Cricket!" repeated the captain of the Remove.

"Yes—cricket!"

Wharton shook his head.

"My dear chap, keep to matters you understand," he answered. "Tell me about marbles and hop-scotch. Keep off cricket!"

Cecil Reginald Temple breathed hard and deep. Incessantly did Cecil Reginald seek to impress the Remove fellows with his importance. Somehow or other, it never came off.

"Hold on, though," said Bob Cherry seriously. "Perhaps Temple means that he's thinking of taking up cricket. If he's going to try to learn the game, and he's come to us for help, this is the right place."

"Yes, that's so," assented Wharton. "Are you thinking of taking up cricket, Temple?"

Five cheery Removites looked at Temple of the Fourth with smiling inquiry.

Temple breathed harder.

He was captain of the Upper Fourth, and he regarded himself as junior captain of the school. He captained the Fourth Form team in the cricket-field, and he prided himself on his play. Certainly, in the Form matches, the Remove generally beat him. But that was, apparently, in Temple's estimation, a trifle light as air. He was a great cricketer—sometimes he had, in fact, compared himself with Wingate of the Sixth, and found the comparison not in Wingate's favour.

So the suggestion that he was applying to the Remove to learn cricket had an exasperating effect on Temple.

"I believe in backing up a fellow who's taking up games," said Bob Cherry heartily, as Temple did not speak. He was really too enraged to speak for a moment.

"Certainly," said Wharton. "Our time's fairly full up, Temple, but we'll manage to give you some coaching at the nets."

"I don't know about that," said Bob. "Temple's hardly up to that yet, I think. Everything has to have a beginning. A few tips about the rudiments of the game—"

"True! I suppose you know, Temple, that cricket is played with a bat and a ball, to begin with?" asked Wharton.

"The batsman takes the bat, and the bowler takes the ball," said Frank Nugent, with owl-like gravity.

"Three stumps are set up, with bails on top," said Johnny Bull.

"At each end of the pitch," said Bob, taking up the tale. "The team consists of eleven men—"

"Eleven a side," said Wharton. "There are two sides in a cricket match. Better make it quite clear to Temple, as he's a beginner."

"I—I suppose you think that's very funny!" gasped Cecil Reginald Temple, finding his voice at last. "I've a jolly good mind to punch your cheeky heads all round!"

"Begin with me!" said Bob, with a grin.

"No—with me!" implored Johnny Bull.

"Little me!" urged Wharton.

Temple controlled his wrath. If the pinching of heads had started in Study No 1 in the Remove, Temple was conscious of the fact that his own lofty head would have received the hardest knocks.

"I came here to talk sense!" he snapped.

"You did!" exclaimed Wharton, in surprise.

"Yes!" roared Temple.

"That's rather a new departure for you, isn't it?"

Cecil Reginald Temple did not answer that question.

"About the cricket," he said. "Things are coming to a head, Wharton. You call yourself captain of the Remove; you've had the cheek to form a separate cricket-club in the Lower Fourth—"

"We have," assented Wharton. "But that's rather ancient history now, isn't it?"

"You fix up matches with outside schools, St. Jim's, and Rookwood, and so on, just as if you were a school eleven, and not a dashed Form eleven," said Temple. "Wingate, as head of the games, oughtn't to allow it. But he does."

"He does—he do!" assented the captain of the Remove.

The Removites grinned cheerily. It was a sore point with Temple—it had always been so since Harry Wharton had become captain of the Remove.

But Temple's opinion on the subject did not matter to the cheery Removites in the least. His criticisms and objections passed by them like the idle wind which they regarded not.

"Well, it's got to stop!" snapped Temple.

"To hear is to obey!" said Bob Cherry meekly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I should like to make some friendly arrangement," went on Temple, a little less loftily. "The present arrangement is a rotten one. I am junior captain of the school, and my team ought to represent Greyfriars in junior matches."

"I've heard Hobson of the Shell say the same thing," remarked Wharton, with a smile.

"Oh, bother Hobson of the Shell!"

"Certainly. Bother him as much as you like."

"I'm willing to make concessions," went on Temple. "I'm prepared to take a certain number of the Remove fellows into the junior team. I'm prepared to play as many as four or five from the Remove."

"That's kind!" said Harry.

"I want to be fair. You've got some fairly good players in the Lower Fourth, and I don't want to ignore you entirely. When you've got as many as four or five fellows up to the right standard I'll put them in the eleven. I can generally find a place for you, Wharton."



Vernon-Smith tramped along the Remove passage with a black brow. Billy Bunter, who met him, indulged in a fat chuckle. "He, he, he! Had it hot, Smithy? What did you expect? He, he, he!" The Bounder gave him a black look. "I hear you're chucked out of the cricket," went on the Owl cheerfully. (See Chapter 3.)

"Thanks."

"And for Hurree Singh—he's a good bowler. Not up to our form, perhaps; still, a good bowler."

"The gratification is terrific, my esteemed and ludicrous Temple."

"All of us pulling together, we shall win matches," said Temple. "This rift in the lute has gone on long enough. I'm prepared to concede a lot. In return, I shall expect the Lower Fourth to take their proper place—backing up the Fourth—see?"

"I see!"

"We shall take over your fixtures—such of them as are worth while. The St. Jim's match, for instance, which is comin' off soon."

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob.

"We want peace, and union, and all that," said Temple. "Union is strength, you know. Well, what do you say, Wharton? Shall we combine forces and stop this petty wrangling between the two Forms?"

"Jolly good idea," said Wharton heartily. "We've only got to agree on some minor details."

Cecil Reginald Temple unbent considerably.

"Well, that's all right," he said. "I'm a reasonable chap. I'll go as far as I can to meet you. What do you ask?"

"First of all, you hand over the captaincy to me—"

"Eh?"

"That's indispensable. You see, it's necessary for a cricket captain to know something about cricket. That bars you out, doesn't it?"

"You cheeky ass!" yelled Temple.

"Second, the Upper Fourth will have to take their proper place—backing up the Remove," pursued Wharton. "I hope I shall always be able to find room for some Fourth Form men. Say, two or three. But if you stick to the game, and catch on to it a little, I may be able to put in four or five—sometimes."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Co., greatly tickled by the expression on Cecil Reginald Temple's face.

"These details agreed on, we can amalgamate the two clubs at once," said Harry Wharton. "Is it a go?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Cecil Reginald Temple glared at Wharton. His wrath was too much for his prudence. He reached suddenly across the study table, with the intention of pulling Wharton's nose.

Pulling Wharton's nose seemed to Temple the only adequate reply to his remarks.

But his outstretched hand did not reach Wharton's nose. Harry Wharton's hand came up quickly, and he caught Temple's wrist.

He caught it with a sinewy grip that made Cecil Reginald yell.

Temple's other hand came across the table, clenched, and aimed at Wharton's smiling face. But again Temple had bad luck. His other wrist was caught in Wharton's other hand, in a grip from which he could not release it. Temple, crimson and gasping, leaned over the tea-table, with both his wrists imprisoned as in a steel vice. His handsome waistcoat dipped in the butter-dish.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let go!" yelled Temple.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple struggled frantically to drag away his hands, while the Remove fellows roared with laughter.

But he could not drag them away. Instead of that, he was himself dragged over on the table.

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His beautiful waistcoat—the handsomest waistcoat at Greyfriars—mopped all the butter from the dish. It mopped also the jam. The tea-party did not mind—Temple was welcome to the butter and the jam, taken in that fashion.

"Let me go, you cheeky rotter!" howled Temple.

Wharton chuckled.

"Will you be a good boy?" he asked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I—I—" spluttered Temple.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows"—Billy Bunter blinked into Study No. 1 through his big spectacles—"what's the joke? Oh, my hat! He, he, he!" yelled Bunter, as he spotted Cecil Reginald in his peculiar predicament.

Temple, crimson with rage, made a terrific effort to jerk away his imprisoned hands. He put all his strength into it.

Wharton let go suddenly; so suddenly that Temple shot backwards at the doorway.

Crash!

"Yooooop!" roared Bunter.

Temple crashed into the fat junior, sending Bunter fairly spinning. William George Bunter sat down in the passage—Temple in the doorway.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Famous Five.

"Do that again!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Do it again, Temple, old man. It's no end of a funny turn."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple of the Fourth staggered to his feet. He did not do his funny turn again. He shook an enraged fist at the yelling Removites, and turned away—only pausing a second to kick Bunter as he went. Then he hurriedly departed, leaving Harry Wharton & Co. yelling; and Billy Bunter yelling, too, though in a different manner.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Not Wanted!

AND a dozen dough-nuts." Billy Bunter pricked up his ears.

It was the following day, and classes were over. William George Bunter had drifted down to the school shop in the corner behind the elms. Thither Bunter's straying footsteps often led him.

Having been disappointed about an expected postal-order—not for the first time—Bunter was in an impecunious state; and he knew that Mrs. Mimble knew him too well to let him have so much as a penny bun on "tick." There was no hope of softening Mrs. Mimble's hard heart—Bunter had tried that often enough to know. Often and often had he told Mrs. Mimble that a postal-order was due by the very next post; the good dame at the tuckshop always advised him to call again when the postal-order arrived. She was willing to cash it when it came. Bunter wanted her to cash it before it came. On that point they never could agree.

There was no postal-order. Bunter seemed to have been overlooked entirely by his titled relations—if any. And Mrs. Mimble's heart, on the question of "tuck on tick," was still as hard as the nether millstone. But, as the poet has assured us, hope springs eternal in the human breast. There was always a chance that some fellow, in funds, and with an expansive heart, might stand the Owl of the Remove a dough-nut or a tart or an eclair. If that faint hope failed, Bunter could at least linger in

the tuckshop, gazing on the good things he could not touch, like a fat Peri gazing on the forbidden paradise.

Thus it was that William George rolled into Mrs. Mimble's little shop while Skinner of the Remove was giving what seemed to be a "shipping" order.

"And two dozen jam tarts!"

Bunter breathed deep. A dozen dough-nuts and two dozen jam tarts would have seen him nicely through tea-time. But Skinner was reputed one of the meanest fellows in the Remove—excelling even Fisher T. Fish in his closeness. Orpheus, with his lute, drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek, but his sweetest strains would scarcely have drawn a dough-nut from Harold Skinner of the Greyfriars Remove.

"And six ginger-beer!"

Bunter's eyes, blinking through his big spectacles at the growing pile on the counter before Skinner, were fairly dazzled. Skinner was spreading himself at an uncommon rate.

"And a cake—a ten-bobber!"

A ten-shilling cake! Unless Skinner had suddenly become a millionaire, there was no accounting for it.

"And three pounds of mixed biscuits."

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bunter. "I say, Skinner, old chap, are you standing a spread in the Rag?"

"Catch me!" said Skinner contemptuously. "Fools and their money are soon parted. I'm not a fool."

"I say, that's a thumping lot of tuck, old fellow."

"And a dozen chocolate eclairs, Mrs. Mimble," went on Skinner. "I think that's about all. Change this five, will you?"

"Certainly, Master Skinner."

"I say, Skinner, I've been disappointed about a postal-order," said Bunter.

"Go hon!"

"I suppose you could lend me five bob out of all that?"

"Of course I could."

"Hand it over, old chap—"

"Only I'm not going to."

"Beast!"

Skinner grinned, and collected up his parcels. He called to Snoop and Stott, who were lounging in the doorway.

"Lend a hand, you fellows."

"Right you are, Skinner."

"I say, old fellows, I'll help you carry them!" exclaimed Bunter eagerly. "Give me the biggest parcel. I don't mind."

"But I do," grinned Harold Skinner. "I fancy I shouldn't see it again."

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"My hat! What a giddy cargo!" said Sidney James Snoop, taking parcels under both arms. "The old Bunder's doing this in style."

"Good old Smithy!" said Stott.

Then Billy Bunter understood. Since his break with his chum Redwing, and the dispute with the Famous Five, Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bunder of Greyfriars, had chummed up with Skinner & Co. Skinner was shopping for the Bunder—the five was Smithy's.

Billy Bunter rolled hurriedly out of the tuckshop, while Skinner & Co. were still gathering up their parcels.

He headed for the School House at a trot.

The split in the Remove was old now. All the Lower Fourth knew that the Bunder was trying to make for himself a party against the captain of the Form.

Bunter, hitherto, had rather favoured Harry Wharton & Co. in his predilections. In Study No. 1 he was often tolerated, if not exactly welcome. And the Bunder had a way of kicking him out if he found him prowling in Study No. 4.

But if the Bunder was going to stand feeds on this scale to his supporters,

Bunter's support was his for the asking—or without the asking. Bunter suddenly realised how right the Bounder had been all along the line, and how much he had always liked Smithy—what a really fine chap he was.

Bunter rolled into the Remove passage, and found Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent chatting at the door of Study No. 1. He paused a moment to give them a disdainful blink through his big spectacles.

"I'm not coming to tea in your study, Wharton!" he announced.

"You're not!" agreed Harry. "I don't remember asking you; but I'm glad to hear you're not coming."

"A few measly sardines," said Bunter disdainfully. "Pah! Keep them for fellows who want them."

"You generally want them, and anything else you can get," said Frank Nugent, laughing. "What's happened, Bunter? Has your postal-order come at last?"

"I'm going to tea with my pal Smithy," said Bunter. "I'm backing him up. I'm exerting all my influence on his side, Wharton. You fellows have treated him badly."

"Fathead!"

"I'm backing him up," said Bunter. "If there's a new Form election, I shall vote for him. He's my man!"

Bunter rolled on, leaving Wharton and Nugent laughing. If it came to a fight to a finish, in the Remove, between Harry Wharton and the Bounder, Wharton was not likely to seek the support of William George Bunter. Neither was the Bounder, for that matter. Bunter's "influence" in the Form existed only in his own fat imagination.

Bunter rolled on towards Study No. 4, the Bounder's study. He passed Tom Redwing in the passage, and paused a second to turn up his fat little nose at Redwing.

Then he knocked at Vernon-Smith's door and entered. Skinner & Co. were coming upstairs now with their parcels.

Herbert Vernon-Smith was in the study, with Fisher T. Fish and Micky Desmond and Trevor. The three guests were chatting cheerily, and seemed to be in a merry mood, perhaps on account of the forthcoming feed. The Bounder was silent, hardly answering the remarks they made to him.

"I say, Smithy, old chap," said Bunter affectionately.

Vernon-Smith looked at him without speaking.

"I'm backing you up, old fellow," said Bunter. "I've turned Wharton down. I've told him so. Fed-up with him, you know, and his high and mighty airs. Who's Wharton?"

The Bounder did not speak. Skinner & Co. came into the study and landed their many parcels on the table.

"If it comes to a Form election, Smithy, I'm voting for you," said Bunter.

"You needn't worry," said the Bounder. "If there's a new election, I'll give you a doughnut for your vote on election day."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Get out, Bunter!" said Skinner.

"Shut the door after you."

"Oh, really, Skinner—"

"Vamoose the ranch, you fat clam," said Fisher T. Fish.

"Mind your own bizney, Fishy. I suppose Smithy can ask me to tea if he wants to?" exclaimed Bunter warmly.

"But I haven't asked you," said Vernon-Smith grimly.

"Hem! I say, Smithy—"

"Get out!"



Cecil Reginald Temple glared at Wharton and reached across the table to pull his nose. But his outstretched hand did not reach Wharton's nose. The captain of the Remove grabbed Temple's wrists and dragged him across the table. "Let go!" yelled Temple. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Co. as Temple's expensive waistcoat dipped into the butter-dish. "Now will you be a good boy?" asked Wharton. (See Chapter 4.)

"I'm with you all along the line," said Bunter effusively. "If you make up a rival cricket eleven in the Form, Smithy, I'll play for you. There! As for that cad Redwing, I'm down on him, old chap. The fact is, you were rather an ass ever to pal with such a rotten outsider, Smithy. Like his cheek to turn you down and give you the go-by. I really think so, Smithy."

Skinner & Co. looked at Bunter and grinned. Evidently he was seeking to propitiate the Bounder. The black look growing on Vernon-Smith's face did not indicate that Bunter was succeeding.

Vernon-Smith rose to his feet. He did not speak, but he grasped Billy Bunter by the collar.

With a swing of his powerful arm he turned Bunter in the doorway. Then he kicked.

"Yaroooo!" roared Bunter.

The door slammed after Bunter as he rolled in the Remove passage. There was a sound of laughter from Study No. 4.

"Ow! Ow! Wow! Beast!" gasped Bunter.

He picked himself up and opened the door of Study No. 4 cautiously.

"I say, Smithy— Whoop!"

A cushion caught Bunter on his fat chin, and he sat down in the passage again. The door closed, and this time, when Bunter picked himself up, he did not reopen it. He realised, at last, that there was no share for him in the feast of the gods in Smithy's study.

He stooped to the keyhole and yelled: "Beast! I'm backing up Wharton! Yah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter rolled away to Study No. 1 purple with indignation. Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were sitting down to tea when he arrived.

"I say, you fellows—" gasped Bunter.

"Don't!" said the captain of the Remove.

"I'm coming to tea, after all—"

"You're jolly well not!"

"You don't want a few measly sardines!" chuckled Nugent.

"Oh, really, Franky—"

"If you call me Franky, you fat villain, I'll take the poker to you. Roll off!"

"I'm backing you up, Wharton."

"Fathead!"

"Look here, if you don't want my support—"

"Ass! Get out!"

Frank Nugent jumped up and slammed the door. Billy Bunter jumped back just in time to save his fat little nose.

"Beasts!" he yelled.

Then William George Bunter rolled away to Study No. 7, reduced to the necessity of "teasing" in his own study, after all. But the study was empty. Peter Todd and Tom Dutton had gone along the passage to tea with Johnny Bull and Squiff in Study No. 14.

Billy Bunter blinked round the study.

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"Beasts! Nothing for me! After all I've done for them, too! Oh dear!"

And the Owl of the Remove plodded his weary way down to Hall, to capture the school tea before it was too late.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Something Like a Fizzle!

"HEM!"
"Ham!"
"Ah!"

Vernon-Smith looked round his study with a sarcastic glance.

It was Saturday afternoon.

There was quite a numerous meeting in Smithy's study. Redwing was not there—he was never in Study No. 4 now except for prep. He had not spoken to the Bounder since their quarrel, and the Bounder had shown no desire to speak to him. Neither had Smithy exchanged a word with any member of the Famous Five since he had been dropped out of the Remove cricket team. The Bounder was going on his own perverse and wilful way, but he was finding more difficulties in his new course than he had, perhaps, anticipated.

Smithy had always been a prominent figure in the Remove, and he knew his value in the Form games. Many of the Remove fellows were of opinion that if the Bounder "tried it on," he would be able to give Wharton a fall. Now the Bounder was trying it on, but so far fortune did not seem to have smiled on him.

In making a party for himself in the Form he had had some success, but the kind of success that was not very encouraging. All his supporters were at the present meeting, but they were not really the kind of supporters that Smithy wanted. If it came to a Form election their votes would count, but that prospect was a very distant and uncertain one. In other respects their value was more than doubtful.

Skinner and Snoop and Stott were ready to back up the Bounder, or anybody else, against the captain of the Form, so far as they could do so without danger of over-much trouble to themselves. Fisher T. Fish and Micky Desmond were prepared to give the Bounder all the flattery and encouragement he liked, in return for lavish spreads in Study No. 4. Trevor was a more lukewarm supporter, and Hazeldene was extremely uncertain and unreliable. As for other fellows in the Remove, they had no intention whatever of being made use of by the Bounder, and they let him understand that quite plainly.

Vernon-Smith, in fact, realised that his influence in the Form, which was very considerable, depended a good deal upon his playing the game, as the Remove fellows regarded it. As a member of the Remove eleven, doing his best for the school, he was a prominent figure, but as an outsider trying to make trouble for his skipper it was quite a different matter. To turn the Remove fellows against Wharton he required to have a better cause than the gratification of his own resentment and malice.

So his little scheme of making a split in the Form, and carrying it to the length of a new election, faded away, as a plan that had no prospect whatever of being realised.

The Bounder had a realistic mind, and he knew how to look facts, however unpleasant, in the face.

He knew that so long as he pursued his present course, all he could hope for was to be a thorn in the side

of the captain of the Remove, a discontented outsider making mischief.

But he did not think of changing his course. If that was all that was left to him, he intended to make the most of it. Anyhow, he would give Wharton all the trouble he could.

Hence the meeting on this special Saturday afternoon. All the slackers of the Form were backing up the Bounder, and that afternoon was "compulsory" games practice. Since his break with Harry Wharton, the Bounder had not turned up to games practice once, and the captain of the Form had made no sign. It was Wharton's task to round up the Form on compulsory days, and for that he was answerable to the head of the games, Wingate of the Sixth. To leave the Bounder out was liable to cause him trouble, when Wingate came to take note of it, and the more trouble the merrier, in Smithy's opinion.

Smithy eyed his precious meeting sarcastically. He had suggested that the whole party should cut games practice that afternoon; he announced his own intention of doing so, and called on his followers to follow his example.

Hence the dubious looks and murmurs of the meeting.

The slackers were keen enough to cut games, there was no doubt on that point. The fact that Smithy had done so several times, without being called to order, was encouraging. Wharton's desire to avoid, if he could, further trouble with the Bounder was taken as a sign of weakness. But entering personally into the scheme was another matter.

"Well?" said the Bounder, breaking the discouraged silence. "You don't seem in a hurry to speak."

"You see—" murmured Skinner.

"Hem!" said Snoop.

"The idea is, to show Wharton that he isn't the little tin god he thinks himself," said Vernon-Smith. "I've set the example. Has anythin' happened to me?"

"Hem!"

"You fellows follow my lead, and a good many more will follow," said Smithy. "It only needs a few fellows to break the ice."

"That's all very well," said Skinner uneasily. "But—"

"I guess—" murmured Fisher T. Fish.

"You—you see—" mumbled Hazeldene.

The Bounder's lip curled.

"Any fellow who refuses to back me up in this needn't consider himself a friend of mine any longer," he said.

The meeting looked quite troubled. This meant that the lavish spreads in Study No. 4 would be "off."

"Well—" murmured Stott.

"Look here," said Skinner. "We're up against Wharton—that's all right. I'd like to see him taken down a peg or two. But facts are facts! He's taken no notice of you, so far, Smithy; but he can't let a whole crowd dodge games practice on a compulsory day without getting into trouble. He's bound to take some action."

"Let him!"

"That's all very well, you can stand up to Wharton if he cuts up rusty. I don't pretend that I can."

"Might be trouble with the prefects, too," said Snoop. "Wingate may take a hand himself."

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders. "If you're afraid of Wharton, leave him to me."

"Put it plain," said Skinner. "If we all stick in this study, Wharton is bound to come here and rout us out.

He can't do anything else. If he comes, are you going to stand up to him, Smithy, and make a fight of it? If you are, we'll chance it."

"That's what I mean," said the Bounder coolly. "If Wharton puts his nose into this study, I'm going to punch it—hard!"

"I daresay you could lick him," said Skinner. "If you do—well, that will make a difference. You'd have to go all out, though."

"I mean to."

"It's a go, then," said Skinner, though still doubtfully. "We stay here, and chance it."

There was a heavy footstep in the Remove passage as Skinner ceased speaking.

The rebels of the Remove exchanged uneasy looks.

"That's Wharton," said Snoop. "It's time we were on Little Side, you know! We're relying on you, Smithy."

"I guess it's up to you, Smithy."

The Bounder sneered.

"Leave him to me!" he said.

The footsteps stopped at the door of Study No. 4. The door was thrown open.

Every eye turned on the doorway, in the expectation of seeing Harry Wharton there.

But it was not the captain of the Remove who appeared. It was George Wingate, of the Sixth Form, the captain of the school.

The rebels jumped up in alarm.

Wingate eyed them grimly.

"Why are you not on Little Side?" he snapped.

"We—we—hem—"

"Vernon-Smith, you have cut the last two practices," said Wingate.

"Has Wharton told you?" sneered the Bounder.

"Wharton has not said a word to me; but I've a habit of keeping my eyes open," said the captain of Greyfriars. "You've cut practice twice on compulsory days, and now I find you in your study when you ought to be on Little Side. Bend over that chair!"

"What?"

"Sharp's the word!"

Wingate had his ashplant under his arm. He let it slip into his hand, and pointed to a chair with it.

Vernon-Smith breathed hard.

Really, it was cruel luck, from his point of view. He wanted trouble with the captain of the Form; but he was very far from desiring trouble with the captain of the school. Wingate had taken the matter in hand personally on this especial afternoon, and the Bounder realised only too clearly that that circumstance knocked his scheme into little pieces.

In his savage annoyance, it was on the Bounder's lips to utter words of defiance, even to the head of the games. A tame surrender after all his high words, in the presence of his dismayed supporters, was too humiliating. But to enter into a contest with the captain of the school was hopeless. He might refuse to "bend over," and refuse to go down to Little Side. That only meant that he would be licked, resisting or not, and that he would be marched down to Little Side with the prefect's hand on his collar. For a moment or two the Bounder stood hesitating, his eyes flaming, his heart beating fast with rage and chagrin. Then, setting his teeth, he bent over the chair.

Whack, whack, whack!

Skinner & Co. looked on with lurking grins as the licking was administered. It was a case of pride going before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. The Bounder, as he rose

after his punishment, with a white and furious face, was quite keenly conscious of the suppressed mockery of his associates. It was an end to his attempt to make a split in the Remove, and he knew it.

"Now get a move on, the lot of you," said the captain of Greyfriars, tucking his ashplant under his arm again.

"Yes, Wingate!" said the rebels meekly.

And they got a move on—the Bounder last to move.

That evening, in the Rag, there was much chuckling amongst the Remove fellows over the incident. Skinner & Co., with an eye to the fleshpots, had sought to placate the angry and humiliated Bounder, and had received only savage words in reply, and so Skinner & Co. were now the loudest in their mockery of the hapless rebel. Vernon-Smith's party in the Remove was now reduced to one member—himself!

But the rebel was not at the end of his tether yet, as the Remove fellows were to discover.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

An Unexpected Recruit!

"CHEEK!" said Temple, of the Fourth.

"Oh, rather!" agreed Dabney.

Fry, of the Fourth, nodded, and helped himself to jam.

The three chums of the Fourth were at tea, and Cecil Reginald Temple was eloquent upon a topic that was a frequent one with him. That was the cheek of the Remove fags, who had the nerve to set up an independent cricket club in their Form, instead of taking their humble and proper places as dutiful followers of the great Cecil Reginald.

"Cheek!" repeated Temple gloomily. "Blest if I know what Greyfriars is comin' to!"

"Oh, rather!"

"If we're not the junior eleven of Greyfriars, what are we?" demanded Cecil Reginald Temple.

"Echo answers, what?" agreed Fry.

"Hobson of the Shell makes a silly swanky claim, I know. But Hobson of the Shell is an ass!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Still, the Shell is a Form a step above the Fourth, and we could stand Hobson's cheek," said Temple. "But cheek from the Remove—the Lower Fourth—a mob of fags—"

"It's the limit!"

"Oh, rather!"

"Setting up a club and fixing up matches, and, mind you, outside matches," said Temple. "Playing schools like St. Jim's and Rookwood, as if they were a genuine eleven. They're not. Are they?"

"No fear."

"Wingate, as head of the games, ought to be down on them. But he isn't. I've even spoken to him about it," said Temple. "Last term I put it to him plain when the footer was on. He had the nerve to tell me he understood that the Remove generally beat us in Form matches."

"Did he?" murmured Fry.

"As if that made any difference, even if true!" said Temple. "Right is right, I suppose, even if we have lost a few matches to the Lower Fourth. I admit they've got some good men, and if they'd line up with us, as they ought, I'd be willing to play some of them—Wharton and Cherry and Vernon-Smith, and perhaps Field. I'd do the

fair thing. Of course, the Fourth Form would have to make up the majority of the team."

"Oh, rather!"

"It's cheek!" said Temple. "Pure, unadulterated cheek!"

Edward Fry carefully concealed a yawn. He sympathised, but he had heard all this before. He had heard it many times. He had heard it during the football; he was hearing it over again during the cricket. Really, Cecil Reginald Temple was in danger of becoming a bore on this subject.

"It looks to me," continued Temple, fortunately not observing Fry's yawn, "as if there's only one way of bringing these cheeky fags to their senses. I've talked to Wharton about it; called on him in his study, and had only a lot of low chaff and horseplay. But there's one way of putting those fags in their place." Temple paused impressively.

"What's that?" asked Fry, a little interested at last.

"Mop them up at cricket," said Temple.

"Oh!"

"Beat them hollow, game after game, with an innings to spare, if possible," said Temple.

"If possible," murmured Fry into his teacup.

"What did you say, Fry?"

"Nothin'. Get on, old fellow. I'm no end interested."

Temple gave him rather a suspicious look.

"It's no good denying that the Remove have had a lot of luck in the matches. They have. I shouldn't wonder if their list of wins worked out bigger than ours, if a fellow took the trouble to count."

"Three or four to one perhaps," said Fry blandly.

"Look here, Fry—"

"They do have a lot of luck," said Dabney, with a nod. "They make out they're better players."

"That's rot, of course!"

"Oh, rather!"

"Well, the programme is now wins all along the line," said Temple. "We're goin' to pull up our socks and go all out, an' all that, and give them a series of crushin' defeats. That's the only thing that will bring them to their senses, and that's what we're goin' to do."

"Hear, hear!" said Fry heartily, but perhaps with a tincture of irony. It was all very well for Cecil Reginald Temple to map out that masterly programme, but Fry wanted to know how it was to be carried out. However, he did not ask Temple. He doubted whether Cecil Reginald could have told him.

Tap!

"Come in!" said Temple.

The door opened to admit Herbert Vernon-Smith of the Remove.

Cecil Reginald Temple glanced at him



It was not Wharton who appeared in Study No. 4—it was George Wingate, captain of the school. The slackers jumped to their feet in dismay. Wingate eyed them grimly. "Why are you not on Little Side?" he snapped. "We—we—" "I—I—" "You see—we—" The slackers were at a loss for words.

(See Chapter 6.)

rather sourly. The Bounder was one of the best of the Remove sportsmen, who had played ducks and drakes with the Fourth in the Form matches. And his sarcastic and sometimes bitter remarks on the Fourth Form style of play had cut rather deep, and were not easily forgotten. The Bounder had a glib tongue, and he had never spared Temple & Co.

"Well, what do you want?" asked Temple, rather gruffly. "I don't remember askin' any Remove fags to tea."

"Cut it out!" said the Bounder. "I haven't come to tea. I want to speak to you about the cricket."

He closed the door and sat down without waiting to be asked.

"Has Wharton sent you?" asked Temple.

"Hang Wharton!"

"Smithy's been rowing with Wharton," said Fry, with a grin. "I've heard that he's rowed with nearly all his Form, in fact."

"These fags are a disorderly lot," remarked Temple.

"Oh, rather!" grinned Dabney.

"When you've done blowing off your mouths I'll speak," said Herbert Vernon-Smith brusquely.

"If you've got anythin' to say——"

"I've heard about your puttin' it to Wharton the other day," said the Bounder. "You want the Remove to back up your crowd instead of runnin' an independent club. There's a lot to be said for it."

"Oh! Think so?" exclaimed Temple, in astonishment. He had not expected to hear a Remove fellow admit as much.

"Yes. You're playin' the Remove on Wednesday in a Form match," said the Bounder. "Practically it's a practice match. The Remove look on it as a practice, to get them in form for St. Jude's."

"Cheeky young cads!" snapped Temple.

"Do you want a Remove man to play for you?" asked Smithy. "If you got one—a good man, I mean—it would give your claims a leg-up. You could point out that your position is admitted by a man who has played in the Remove eleven, and has changed over to the Fourth Form eleven on the ground that it is the genuine junior team of Greyfriars."

"You!" exclaimed Temple.

"Little me!" said the Bounder.

"Oh, my hat!"

Temple looked quite keen.

The admission of his lofty claims by a prominent member of the Remove was something. But much more important was the accession of a cricketer of the Bounder's quality. Temple might say, and even think, what he liked about Fourth Form cricket, but in his heart of hearts he knew perfectly well that his men were not in the same street with the Removites.

Temple himself was a good man, in a rather showy way; but he could never have taken Harry Wharton's wicket in a lifetime, and he could never have kept his sticks up against the bowling of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh or Squiff. In any game the Bounder was worth Temple and any three of his men all rolled together, and in his inmost heart Cecil Reginald knew it.

Temple was too slack and easy to make much of a games captain, and he generally relied on players whom he liked personally, and who made themselves agreeable to him, which was not the way to pick out a winning team. Such as his methods were, he was satisfied with

them. But he could not deny that somehow the matches went the wrong way.

Self-satisfied as he was, Temple had an eye to business to some extent. He did not admit even to himself, in so many words, that the inclusion of the Bounder in his eleven would give it a backbone that it sorely needed. But that was how he really looked at it. And he grinned at the idea of springing on the Removites, in the Form match, a player of such quality from their own ranks.

"Is it a go?" asked the Bounder. "I'm ready to play in your eleven if you choose and admit that your crowd are the genuine goods. Others may follow my example, but, anyhow, I'm your man."

Had Temple followed his impulse, he would have closed with the offer eagerly. But Cecil Reginald and swank were inseparable, and he did not utter the words that were upon his lips.

Instead of that he assumed a thoughtful air.

"Well, of course, as junior eleven we're already bound to play a few of the Remove if they're worth their salt," he said. "But in a Form match I don't know."

"Take it or leave it!" snapped the Bounder.

"Take it as a practice match, as Smithy says the Remove do," suggested Fry. "We play the Shell later, and that's serious."

"Yaas, somethin' in that," assented Temple. "I may be able to find room for you, Vernon-Smith. Of course, it means leavin' out a Fourth Form man, so——"

"It means leavin' out a Fourth Form dud, and you know it as well as I do!" interrupted the Bounder ruthlessly.

"Look here, Vernon-Smith——" said Temple, flushing.

The Bounder rose.

"I've made you the offer," he said curtly. "I want a direct answer, and you can wash out the swank. Yes or no."

Temple's eyes gleamed, and it was on his lips to say "No." But the chance was too great. It might mean beating the Remove in the Form match, and Temple would have given much to beat the Remove.

"It's a go, Smithy," he said.

"Right-ho!"

"It's settled," said Temple. "You play on Wednesday."

"Rely on me."

The Bounder left the study with that. Temple & Co. looked at one another. Fry and Dabney looked extremely satisfied; Temple was satisfied, too, but a little irritated.

"He's a good man," said Fry. "I've seen him standin' up to Hurree Singh's bowlin', in practice, and you know what that's like."

"A good thing for us," said Dabney: "and it will take the wind out of Wharton's sails, too—a Remove fellow turnin' him down."

Temple nodded.

"It's all right," he said. "Vernon-Smith is a good bit of an outsider, and his manners are horrid; but I admit he's a jolly good player. I sha'n't stand any cheek from him, of course; but I'll play him." Temple smiled cheerily. "This may be the beginnin' of the end, you fellows; where one sheep goes the rest

follow. This may mean the end of the Remove fags settin' up to be our rivals."

"Oh, rather!"

"Anyhow, we've got a jolly good chance of beatin' them on Wednesday, now," said Fry.

"We had a jolly good chance, anyway," said Temple, frowning.

"Hem!"

"Look here, Fry——"

"Have it your own way, old scout; anyhow, we've got a better chance now," said Fry. "Smithy was one of the very best men in their eleven, and his weight is taken out of their scale and put into ours. I wish Field and Cherry would follow his giddy example. I say, it will make Wharton rather wild if he sees Smithy's name in your list, Cecil, old man."

Temple smiled.

"I'll jolly well post up the list in the Rag after tea," he said.

From which it might have been guessed that Cecil Reginald Temple foresaw some satisfaction in "making Wharton wild."

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Not a Thunderbolt!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. were chatting in the Rag after tea, when Cecil Reginald Temple came in with Fry and Dabney. Temple had a paper in his hand, which he proceeded to stick up on the door of the Rag—the usual place for posting junior notices.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Is that your giddy list, Temple?" asked Bob Cherry.

"That's it," said Temple. "Like to look at it?"

Bob glanced at the list.

The last name on it made him stare a little.

"H. Vernon-Smith!" he read out.

"Hallo! What's that?" exclaimed the captain of the Remove.

"Is that a joke, Temple?" asked Frank Nugent, staring at the Fourth Form skipper. "You've got a Remove man's name there."

"I'm giving a Remove man a look-in," said Temple carelessly. "Smithy has shown some form in your fag games recently."

"What?"

"So I'm thinkin' of takin' him on as a member of the junior eleven of Greyfriars," explained Temple blandly.

"Oh, rather!" grinned Dabney.

"Of course, though we call this a Form match, it's really a sort of practice match," went on Temple. "We look on your Remove mob as a scratch team that we play to keep our hand in. See?"

"Fathead!" said Johnny Bull politely.

"I shouldn't mind giving you a chance, Cherry. Your style is a bit wild, but I would give you some tips——"

"My hat! That would be the blind leading the blind, with a vengeance!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"So Temple's taking up cricket?" grinned Johnny Bull. "He was saying something about it the other day in the study, you remember."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have you learned the difference yet between a cricket-bat and a brick-bat, Temple?" inquired Bob Cherry.

Temple frowned.

He was rather annoyed to see that the captain of the Remove showed no sign of being "wild" at the inclusion of Smithy's name in the Fourth Form list. Surely he could not like to see one of his best men transferred to the rival team. He did not seem to mind.

"Nothin' to say against this, I suppose, Wharton?" asked the captain of

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY—PRICE 2:

the Fourth, seeking to draw the Remove captain.

"Not at all," said Harry.

"Of course, you couldn't expect a man to stay in your fag crowd, if he's wanted in the junior eleven, could you?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Vernon-Smith wasn't in the fag crowd," he answered. "Smithy has been dropped from the Remove eleven some days since. You're welcome to him, if you want him. If any member of my eleven turned me down, I should have something to say about it, I can assure you. But you're more than welcome to the Bounder. I'm glad to see that he will be getting some cricket."

"Oh!" said Cecil Reginald, quite taken aback.

Evidently Wharton was not going to be "wild." Temple & Co. walked out of the Rag, a little crestfallen.

"So that's Smithy's new move!" remarked Bob Cherry with a grin. "We're going to have him against us in the Form match. Can't say I'm sorry; it will put some life into it to have a good man among that crowd of fozzlers. They're never up to our weight."

"It's not the thing, though," said Johnny Bull. "All very well playing for Temple against the Shell, or in an away match; but not against his own Form. That's not the thing."

"Well, he was dropped out of our crowd," said Bob. "Can't blame him for getting a game where he can."

"No; that's so."

The Bounder's latest move had not disturbed the equanimity of the Famous Five, though assuredly it had been intended to do so.

Temple's list caused a good deal of discussion in the Remove when the other fellows saw Smithy's name there.

Peter Todd called it "Smithy's Latest," and there was some merriment on the subject. Some of the fellows wondered how long the imperious temper of the Bounder would be able to stand Temple & Co.; he was likely to pull with them much less amicably than with the Famous Five. Cecil Reginald's lofty patronage was sure to "get his rag out" in the long run; and many of the Remove expected to hear of a row between the new allies, even before Wednesday's match came off. It was pretty clear that Vernon-Smith had intended his desertion of his Form, and his joining up with the rival club, to be something in the nature of a bombshell for the Remove. But the bomb had not, so to speak, exploded. Nobody seemed a penny the worse.

That evening the Bounder sauntered into the Rag, fully expecting to hear murmurs and to see dark looks, and probably expecting a bitter dispute with Wharton on the subject—probably an offer to take him back into the Remove eleven if he would give up this new alliance.

Instead of which, there was nothing said; only some of the fellows smiled as they looked at him.

Smithy began to wonder whether they had seen the list at all. But there it was, stuck quite conspicuously on the door. The Bounder strolled over to the corner where Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent were playing chess, with Bob Cherry looking on.

"Wharton!"

The captain of the Remove looked up.

"Hallo, Smithy!"

"You've seen Temple's list?"

"Yes," assented Harry. And he dropped his glance to the chess-board again.

"I'm playing for the Fourth as a regular member now," said Vernon-Smith. "My view is that Temple's

GREYFRIARS CELEBRITIES. No. 3.

WILLIAM GOSLING,



team is the school junior eleven, and I'm acting up to that."

"Just as you like," said Wharton amicably.

"You can't grumble, as you turned me out of the Remove eleven."

"That's all right; I'm not grumbling."

Vernon-Smith breathed hard.

"So you don't mind?" he asked.

"Not in the least."

It was clear to the Bounder that his thunderbolt had missed fire, so to speak. His brow was black, and his eyes glinted at the captain of the Remove.

"Well, if you don't object there's nothin' more to be said," he muttered.

"Nothing at all. Check, Franky."

"Not that it would make any difference if you did object," added the Bounder savagely.

"Wouldn't it?"

"It wouldn't."

"All serene—if wouldn't, then," assented Wharton, without looking up from the chess.

Vernon-Smith's teeth were set as he turned away. He met a smiling glance from Peter Todd, and scowled at the cheery Peter. He loafed about the Rag for a few minutes, and then walked out, angry and chagrined and discontented. He heard two or three chuckles as he went, and his cheeks burned.

He told himself savagely that he would make the fellows care—if the Fourth beat the Remove, with his aid,

they would understand that it was serious. He would play the game of his life; and if Temple & Co. chose to pull themselves together, and put some beef into it, there was no reason why they should not beat the Remove. But would they choose? They had their own way of dealing with the great game of cricket; and they were not accustomed to exerting themselves overmuch at games. They were not really likely to depart from their usual manners and customs to please the Bounder.

But Smithy told himself, fiercely, that they could and should win. He would make them win somehow. The Remove should learn that it was not a matter of indifference whether the Bounder was for or against them. That prospect of a victory for Temple, Dabney, & Co., and a crushing defeat for his own Form, was the only solace left to the perverse junior. And upon that prospect, doubtful as it was, the rebel of the Remove centred his hopes.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Whale Among the Minnows!

"SMITHY!"

"Hallo!"

"Three-thirty for practice. Don't forget."

Temple of the Fourth spoke in a casual, careless sort of way, and walked (Continued on page 16.)

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THE GREYFRIARS HERALD

Supplement No. 222.

HARRY WHARTON
EDITOR

Week Ending May 2nd, 1925.



TOM BROWN.

"THINGS ain't like wot they used to be," said Gosling, the porter, with a sad shake of his partially bald pate. "Cricket, fr'instance. The game's goin' to the dogs. We prides ourselves on our progress, but wot I says is this 'ere—we're progressin' back'ards, as far as cricket's concerned."

"You don't say so, Gossy!" I said solemnly.

"I do say so, an' I says it blunt an' emphatic!" said Gosling. "Now, when I was a lad, we perjured some tip-top cricketers. Hexperts, that's wot they was. Giants at the game. But there ain't no giants nowadays. Look at the Test matches in Australia! Garstly failure, that's wot I calls it!"

"From England's point of view, perhaps," I said. "But you must remember that Australia have got a jolly fine team, and they're at their zenith now. I doubt if any team of cricketers in the world could touch them."

Gosling sighed heavily.

"If only I was thirty years younger," he said. "I'd 'ave offered to captain the English side, an' we should 'ave brought back the hashes, as sure as hogs is hogs!"

I burst out laughing.

"You don't mean to say you're a cricketer, Gossy?" I gurgled.

"I'm one of the 'as-beens, Master Brown. When I was in the flower of me youth, as the sayin' goes, I was a rare fine cricketer. Later on, when I was in me prime, I was good enough to play for a county, only I couldn't 'appen to remember wot county I was born in, so I couldn't qualify. Step into my parlour, Master Brown, an' I'll show you some relics of me cricketing days."

Consumed with curiosity, I followed Gosling into his little parlour. He rummaged in the bottom of the cupboard, and produced a very ancient-looking bat, cobwebbed from disuse.

"With this 'ere bat," said Gosling impressively, "I made nigh on two thousand runs."

"My hat!"

"An' with this selfsame bat I nearly brained a humpre wot give me out l.b.w. once when the ball 'it me on the nose!"

"Great Scott!"

"I wouldn't part with this bat, not at no price," Gosling went on. "It's a reminder of the dear dead days of long ago. An' 'ere are some old newspapers in which my famous cricketing feats are recorded. Jest look at this! 'W. Gosling, not out 170.' 'W. Gosling, c Hands, b Shuter, 144.' You don't see no scores like that knocked up nowadays. I tell you, Master Brown, I oughtn't never to 'ave been a porter at a public school. I

should 'ave made me fortune as a professional cricketer. But there! Wot's the good of cryin' over wasted opportunities? Run away now, Master Brown! An' if ever you wants any tips—"

"But it's you that's always wanting tips, Gossy—"

"Cricket tips, I mean," said Gosling. "If ever you wants any useful 'ints on 'ow to 'andle a bat, or bowl a googly, or catch a skier, you'll know where to come! I'm anxious to see the old game revive, an' get on its feet again. But I'm afraid it won't—not in my Jenny-wot's-her-name."

"Generation?" I hazarded.

"That's it. Modern cricket ain't the real thing at all. It's only a worthless imitation. We prates about our progress; but, as I said afore, we're progressin' back'ards!"

And, with a grunt of despair, William Gosling progressed backwards into his armchair.

CRICKET TERMS EXPLAINED!

By BOB CHERRY.

A "late" cut is what Loder of the Sixth makes when he breaks bounds in the evening.

A "silly point" is what Temple of the Fourth makes in his Debating Society speeches.

A "daisy-cutter" is what Mr. Joseph Mumble, the gardener, uses when he mows the Head's lawn.

"Extra cover" is what my Latin Primer needs after Billy Bunter has borrowed it!

"A catch in the deep" is what Coker of the Fifth hopes to get when he goes sea-fishing. But his hopes seldom materialise.

A "full toss" is what Alonzo Todd received the other day when pursued by a furious bull!

"Drawing stumps" is the painful duty of Mr. Wrench, the Friardale dentist!

A "duck's egg" is the kind of missile we hurl at Fishy when he calls a meeting to discuss his latest swindle—I mean stunt!

EDITORIAL.

ALL hail to that merry monarch, King Cricket, whose reign is about to commence! It won't be a long reign—our English summers seem all too short—but it will prove an exciting and prosperous reign, I have no doubt. If the Weather Clerk is kind to us, and sends sunshine instead of snowstorms, everything in the garden will be lovely.

One of the most joyous jobs of my editorial career is to prepare a cricket number. Cricket is a cheery subject to write about, and one does not need the aid of wet towels or lumps of ice. Inspiration flows freely.

Cricket has ever been a most popular pastime at Greyfriars; and the old school has turned out some sterling players, many of whom are taking part in county cricket to-day. Many a bronzed colonel and muscular major learned his cricket at Greyfriars, and learned, moreover, to "play cricket" in the other sense of the term. For Greyfriars breeds true sportsmen, and equips them for the greater game—the game of life.

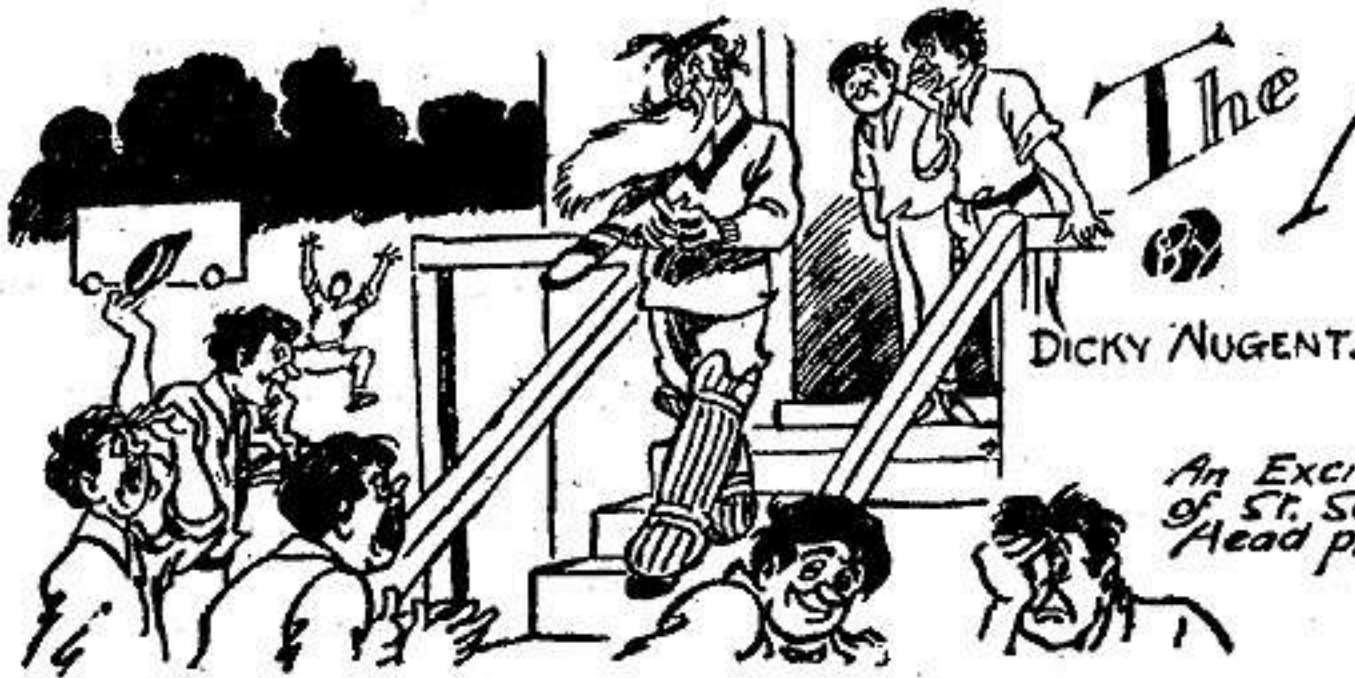
All is in readiness for the cricket season to commence. The pitch has been rolled until it is like the surface of a billiards-table. The funds have been drawn upon for the purpose of buying new gear. And a junior captain has been elected—or, rather, re-elected. I have again been selected to skipper the side, and a very attractive fixture-list with the rival schools has been drawn up.

Billy Bunter, of course, has a bee in his bonnet. He is furious at having been left out in the cold, and he declares that the electors were out of their senses to vote for me, when there was such a brilliant performer as Bunter knocking around. Billy claims to come of a great cricketing family. His grandsire, he tells us, assisted the Strolling Players. If the worthy gent's proportions were as ample as those of Bunter, "Rolling" Players would seem to fill the bill better.

As soon as I have had an opportunity of watching the fellows at practice, I shall be able to select my eleven for the first match of the season. But the illustrious name of William George Bunter will be absent from the list—unless he shows a miraculous improvement on last season's form!

Dicky Nugent, the "talented orther," as he sometimes styles himself, has again risen to the occasion, and given us a cricket story of St. Sam's. Dicky has quite a host of admirers among our readers, and I am sure that if ever he writes a novel it will prove a "best-seller." The quaint spelling alone will ensure that!

HARRY WHARTON.



DICKY NUGENT.

An Exciting Cricket Story of St. Sam's, in which the Head plays a prominent part.

The Match with the Old Boys!

"A MAN is not too old at ninety!" said the Head, with some heat. "I am surprised at you, Burleigh, for suggesting that I am too old to take part in a cricket-match! There's life in the old dog yet!"

So saying, the Head started frisking round his study like a two-year-old.

Burleigh of the Sixth, the kaptin of cricket, blinked at the frisky old buffer in dismay.

There was to be a very important match that afternoon—School versus Old Boys—and the Head had sent for Burleigh, and coolly informed him that he meant to play.

"But—but I doubt if I can squeeze you into the team, sir!" stammered Burleigh. "You see, the eleven's already made up."

"Then you must drop somebody to make room for me," said the Head. "I suggest you drop yourself, Burleigh! You're not much use to the team, you know—merely an ornament!"

"My hat!" gasped Burleigh.

Had anybody but the reverend and respected Head spoken to him like that Burleigh would have biffed him.

"I am determined to play for the school against the Old Boys, anyway," said the Head, "so you can put that in your pipe and smoke it!"

"Smoking's against the rules, sir!" growled Burleigh.

And he swung out of the Head's study in a huff.

It was really too bad of Dr. Birchmell, he reflected, to barge in like this. It means that Burleigh would have to drop somebody from the eleven to make way for the Head. On due consideration, he decided to drop Swotter of the Fifth. Swotter wouldn't like it a little bit, but he would have to lump it.

The Old Boys turned up shortly after dinner. They were skippered by General Blaize Popham, a very distinguished Old Boy, who had won the D.S.O. for sitting on an ammunition dump just as it was about to explode. The general was a very keen cricketer, and the light of battle gleamed in his eye.

St. Sam's turned out in force to see the match, and there was a titter when the Head came on the scene. He was wearing the same blazer he had worn when playing for Eton about eighty years previously. Either the blazer had shrunk or the Head had developed in size. Anyway, the blazer was a very tight fit, and Dr. Birchmell seemed likely to burst clean through it at any moment.

The Old Boys won the toss, and Burleigh led his men on to the field.

"Would you like me to hole, Burleigh?" asked the Head. "I should skittle the Old Boys out like rabbits!"

Burleigh frowned.

"You'd better field at silly point, sir," he said.

"Oh, all right!" said the Head. "I don't care whether I field at silly point, stupid slip, or ridiculous cover!"

"You'll make a priceless ass of yourself wherever you field!" muttered Burleigh, sotto voce.

"What did you say, Burleigh?" demanded the Head sharply.

"Ahem! I—I said, please yourself where you field, sir!"

The Head wandered off into the deep field, and Burleigh watched him go, with a sigh of relief.

"Silly old buffer!" he growled. "He ought to be drawing his old-age pension instead of playing cricket!"

The opening pair of batsmen for the Old Boys were General Blaize Popham and Colonel Sparkes, and they went for the bowling baldheaded, piling up the runs at a terrific rate.

The score was at 60 before the general lost his head, his balance, and his wicket. And the score had risen to a 100 before the last Old Boy was disposed of.

"We have a tuff proposition to tackle, Burleigh," said the Head. "Two hundred runs will want some getting, by gad!"

"I quite agree, sir," said Burleigh stiffly.

"Put me in last," said the Head. "They always leave the good wine till last, you know, and the same policy ought to apply to batsmen. I feel in fine trim this afternoon, and I shall knock spots off the Old Boys' bowling!"

"How-wow!" muttered Burleigh, as he strode away.

St. Sam's were indeed faced with a tuff proposition. They would have all their work cut out to make 200 runs against the deadly bowling of General Blaize Popham.

Burleigh gave them a jolly good start by hitting up 50; but the others gave a mizzere eggshibition, and when the ninth wicket fell St. Sam's still needed a hundred runs to win.

"It's a forlorn hope!" said Jack Jolly of the Fourth. "The Head will be bowled first ball for a dux-egg!"

That opinion was shared by everybody with the exception of Dr. Birchmell himself.

The Head came down the pavillion steps, his long white beard waving in the breeze. His pads were on upside-down, and he looked a comic figger.

"Why don't you cheer?" he demanded of the onlookers. "Can't you see I'm just going in to bat? Give me a rowing cheer at once, or I'll take your names, and give you a jolly good birching in Big Hall on Monday morning!"

Instantly there was a loud cheer.

"Hooray!"

"Play up, sir!"



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"Give the Old Boys six!"

The Head grinned, and swaggered on his way. When he reached the wicket he made a signal to Snicker of the Sixth, who was batting at the other end.

"Just keep your end up, Snicker," said the Head, "and leave the hitting to me!"

"Eye, eye, sir!" said Snicker.

General Blaize Popham was bowling, and he smiled in anticipation of taking the Head's wicket.

The Head started off by nearly braining the wicket-keeper with a powerful back-stroke. The unfortunitt man yelled with anguish as the Head's bat crashed upon his nose. As for the ball, it wipped the Head's middle stump clean out of the ground.

"How's that?"

Mr. Lickham, the master of the Fourth, was the umpire, and he hezzitated before making his decision.

"Was that out, Lickham?" demanded the Head, with a savidge glare.

"Nunno, sir!" said Mr. Lickham hastily.

"That was—ahem—merely a trial ball!"

"Good!" said the Head. "Don't you dare to give me 'out' without my konsent!" General Blaize Popham was in an awful stew, and he put all his beef into the next delivery. The Head managed to hit the ball, but he spooned up a simple catch right into point's hands.

"Drop it!" thundered the Head.

And point, terrified by that thunderous command, promptly obeyed.

The third ball was a regular scorcher, and it hit the Head on the shin, which was right in front of the wicket. The general appealed for l.b.w., but Mr. Lickham dared not give it. It was more than his job was worth.

The Head was stumped off the fourth ball, and caught off the fifth; and when the last ball of the over was sent down he sat on his own wicket. But Mr. Lickham, like Lord Nelson, viewed these events with a blind eye.

General Blaize Popham was fairly dancing with rage.

"You are out, sir," he roared at the Head—"very much out, begad! You've been clean bowled, and caught, and leg-before, and stumped, and yet you refuse to go! I believe you have formed a conspiracy with that blockhead of an umpire!"

The Head drew himself up with dignity. "Bow-wow!" he retorted.

And Dr. Birchmell went on batting. He was clean boled on numerous occasions, but he always had some excuse handy. And he remained at the wickets until the winning hit had been made.

"Now we'll declare!" he said. "I always believe in being jennerus to one's opponents!"

The general's face was purple. He could not trussed himself to speak.

Making a meggaphone of his hands, the Head shouted to the spectators.

"Hi!" he roared. "Can't you see I've won the match? Come and carry me off shoulder-high, or it will be the worse for you! Don't sit there like graven images! Come and make a fuss of the konkering hero!"

Like fellows in a dream, the St. Sam's skollers swarmed on to the playing-pitch and hoisted the Head on to their shoulders, and carried him to the pavillion, while Jack Jolly played "See the Konkering Hero Comes" on his mouth-organ.

The Head fairly revelled in his triumph.

"I think you will agree with me now, Burleigh," he said, "that there's life in the old dog yet!"

THE END.

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(Continued from page 13.)

on without waiting for any answer from the Bounder.

Vernon-Smith stared after him, with frowning brow and glinting eyes.

There were some Remove fellows in the corridor, and they smiled. The lofty manners and customs of Cecil Reginald Temple, captain of the Fourth, were not gratifying to Smithy. Temple spoke to him as a senior fellow might have spoken to a fag—doubtless, from Temple's point of view, that was how the matter stood. In the lofty opinion of Cecil Reginald, there was a great gulf fixed between the Upper and the Lower Fourth.

It was irritating, and the Bounder's looks showed irritation. For, in point of fact, there was no great difference in standing between the two Fourth's; and, moreover, as a cricketer, Smithy was worth about twenty of Cecil Reginald Temple. On his merits Smithy ought to have captained Temple's team, and shown them how to play cricket.

Indeed, there was little doubt that, at the back of his mind, Smithy had some idea of taking that "foozling" team in hand, and getting it into better form. The Fourth were not likely to accept a Lower Fourth man as skipper; but with Temple as a sort of swanking figure-head, Smithy could have captained the team "under the rose," as it were. He would have been content to leave the swank to Cecil Reginald, so long as he could have been allowed to pull the eleven together and lick them into shape to beat the Remove.

Fry of the Fourth, and some other fellows, were of opinion that this was what should be done. But Cecil Reginald Temple was deaf and blind to such considerations. Certainly, he wanted to beat the Remove, and he was willing to profit by his new recruit. But he was not willing—not in the very least—to step down from his high horse.

Advice from the Bounder—which he had already received—Temple listened to with a patronising smile. He was quite polite—and politely made it clear that he did not value counsel from a Remove fellow whom he had admitted into his team. A Remove fellow's place was that of a humble follower, Temple considered; and glad as he was of Smithy's services, he would rather have dropped him again than have abated an iota of his own lofty superiority.

But for the peculiar position in which Smithy's ungovernable temper had landed him, he would have broken with Temple promptly enough; he simply yearned to tell Cecil Reginald what he thought of him, and to back up his words with a punch on Cecil Reginald's superior nose. But that would have been to give up all his plans; it would have been rather futile, to follow up the row with his old skipper with a row with his new skipper. He had told himself that he would not "put up" with Wharton; and he found that he had very much more

to "put up" with, in dealing with Temple of the Fourth.

In Wharton's team he had been a valued man; in Temple's crowd he was patronised by fellows who were not a patch on him at the game. He had, as it were, jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire; and it was borne in upon his mind that his last state was considerably worse than his first.

But he felt that there was no going back now; and he bore Temple's lofty cheek as patiently as he could. He had hopes, too, of influencing some members of the team who were keen on cricket, and bringing their opinion to bear on Temple.

So—having swallowed Temple's lofty instructions with some difficulty—the Bounder turned up for practice with the Fourth as directed. Some Remove fellows came across to look on, curious to see how the Bounder would show up among his new comrades. Temple of the Fourth was putting his new man through his paces—assuming, as a matter of course, that Smithy was a fag to whom he was giving a trial.

Cecil Reginald, in spotless and expensive flannels, with a handsome and expensive bat, lounged to the wicket with his usual air of implying that cricket was only one of the many things he could do to perfection.

"Here, Smithy—"

The Bounder gave him a glare.

"You can send me down a few!" said Temple.

"I will!" said Smithy, rather grimly.

Temple made a handsome figure at the wicket, and certainly would have looked the complete cricketer in the eyes of his sister or his cousin or his aunt. Fellows who knew something about the game, however, would not have thought that Temple looked as if he would stop the Bounder's bowling—and they would have been right.

The ball came down like a bullet from a rifle, with all Smithy's vicious temper behind it. What Temple was expecting—if he was expecting anything in particular—cannot be said. Certainly he swiped at the ball, or where he supposed the ball to be. There was a faint surprise in his face, as his bat swept the empty air, and the middle stump was whipped out of the ground.

"How's that?" inquired the Bounder sarcastically.

Temple turned pink.

Fry, with a suppressed grin, set up the bails again. Temple was rather more careful next time. He did not think of sending the ball over the tops of the elms. He thought only of stopping it. But it booted not, as a poet would say. There was a crash as his wicket was spread-eagled, and a laugh from some fellows looking on. Temple's lofty countenance grew pinker.

"Try that again, Smithy!" he drawled.

"As often as you like," said Smithy sardonically.

Smithy tried again, with the same result. In a match it would have been the "bat trick." Temple was pink, undoubtedly; but he preserved his lofty equanimity.

"That's not bad, Smithy," he said.

"Not?" jeered the Bounder.

"No. Take the ball, Dab."

Cecil Reginald did not want any more of Smithy's bowling. He realised that this sort of thing was not compatible with his own lofty superiority. Which, of course, was a far more important thing than the mere game of cricket. Later on, however, Smithy put in

some batting, and Temple—very keen indeed to show this Remove fellow that he was not a whale among the minnows, as he evidently believed—tried hard to bowl him. Temple had a great style in bowling—more 'style' than bowling, in fact. It was a harder "practice" than the Fourth were accustomed to; they had to fetch the ball back from unaccustomed distances, after the mighty swipes the Bounder gave it. And Temple might as well have been bowling at a brick wall, for all the effect he produced on Smithy's wicket.

Fry and Dabney, and Angel and Kenney, of the Fourth, tried their luck in turn, with no better fortune than Cecil Reginald. They could not touch Smithy, and they had to acknowledge it.

After the practice—which caused some merriment among Remove fellows who watched Smithy's performance—Cecil Reginald walked back to the House with a rather thoughtful face. He was doubting his wisdom in having accepted Smithy's services after all. True, Smithy was an exceedingly valuable recruit; even Temple could not doubt that. But it was distinctly unpleasant to have this cheeky Remove fellow putting his whole crowd into the shade in so conspicuous a way. The Bounder had not been nice about it, either—he had grinned in a very unpleasant sardonic way while the bowlers were striving in vain to get within a yard of his stumps; and he had laughed—actually laughed in a jeering style—when he had knocked Temple's wicket over. Valuable recruit or not, Cecil Reginald felt that he could not be expected to stand cheek from Smithy—especially such jeering cheek as this.

"I rather think I've made a mistake," Temple observed to his comrades thoughtfully.

"In thinkin' you could bag Smithy's wicket?" asked Fry innocently.

"No!" said Temple. "Nothin' of the kind. If you think that's funny, Fry—"

"Not at all, old chap," murmured Fry. "Go on."

"In lettin' that Remove cad into the team, I mean," said Temple; "I rather think it would be advisable to shoo him off."

"After the Form match, I suppose?"

"No," snapped Temple; "before."

Fry looked at him. His look was expressive. Even the faithful Dabney did not chime in with his "Oh, rather!" as usual.

"Look here, Temple," said Fry abruptly, "don't play the goat."

"What?"

"We've got a good man. Keep him. He's an unpleasant rotter, so far as his manners go, I know that. But we want to beat the Remove, and he can help us to do it. Stick to him."

"Who's captain?" demanded Temple angrily.

"You are, old man—but there'll jolly well be trouble if you chuck away a man who can take wickets like Smithy."

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

Temple stared at Dabney; generally his faithful echo. Even William Walter Dabney was against him.

"Well, I'm jolly well goin' to think it over," snapped Temple, greatly incensed.

Probably, on thinking it over, Temple decided that it would be unwise to run counter to the opinion of his followers to such an extent. At all events, he said no more about dropping the Bounder out of the team. Smithy was safe in his place there—for what that was worth.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Led by the Nose!

"REDWING!"

Tom Redwing glanced at the Bouncer without speaking. It was a good many days since they had spoken; and prep in Study No. 4 was a very silent and rather dismal function. On this particular evening, the Bouncer seemed to have made up his mind to break the ice.

"Still ratty?" asked Vernon-Smith sarcastically.

"I never was ratty, Smithy," said Tom mildly. "But I'm rather fed-up with your temper. If we're to keep on rowing, off and on, it's really better not to speak at all."

"That means that you want to keep on bad terms, does it?"

"No; not at all. But—"

"Well, it's not very cheery in the study, these days, is it?" said Vernon-Smith. "I miss your help with my prep, too."

"I'm ready to help you as much as you like."

"And there's another matter: I want you to back me up, Reddy," said the Bouncer, rattling on as cheerfully as though there had never been any trouble between him and his chum. "You know I'm playing for the Fourth in the Form match to-morrow."

"Yes, Smithy."

"I want you in the same team to back me up."

"You want me to play for the Fourth?" exclaimed Tom.

"That's it; I can speak to Temple and fix it. I want a man to keep the other end up when I'm batting."

Redwing laughed.

"I sha'n't put it like that to Temple, of course," said the Bouncer, laughing too. "But that's what it amounts to. Will you do it?"

"I can't, Smithy! Wharton's told me I can play for the Remove in the

Form match, after all, and I may get a chance in the St. Jude's game if I turn out well. I can hardly go back on him."

"You're willing enough to go back on me, it seems," said the Bouncer, with a sneer. "Look here, Redwing—Hazeldene has promised to follow my lead, and I want you to do the same. I want to stiffen up that crew of fozzlers as much as I can. I'm out to beat the Remove."

"Your own form," said Tom.

"Oh, cut that out! Will you help me?"

"I can't!" said Tom quietly. "I think it's rather a rotten thing you're doing, anyhow, Smithy—and still more rotten to pull that silly fellow Hazel's leg. It's not because we've had a row—I'm bound to stand by my own club and my own skipper."

"Think again, old fellow," urged the Bouncer. "There's a lot in what Temple claims—and his team would make a good school second eleven, with some backbone put into it. It would be a giddy triumph to put the Remove crowd right in the shade, by putting a better team into the field. What?"

"I've no doubt Temple will think so. I suppose you think so now, Smithy. But you can't expect me to agree with you."

"I ask it as a favour!" said the Bouncer.

"There are some favours a fellow shouldn't ask, Smithy! Nothing doing!" said Redwing, and he turned to his prep again.

The Bouncer gave him a black look. He was well aware that Tom Redwing would not refuse to make friends again, if he said the word. But there was evidently a limit; his influence over his chum was not unbounded. It was a disappointment for Smithy.

The door opened, and Hazeldene of the Remove looked in. Vernon-Smith's scowl vanished, and he gave Hazel a pleasant smile.

"Spoken to Wharton yet?" he asked.

"I'm just going to, Smithy," said Hazel, but he seemed to hesitate. "I've told you I would, and I'm going to. Of course, if he does the decent thing, I'm going to stand by him."

"Oh, of course," said the Bouncer, "if you like being taken up and thrown over, just as he pleases, I've nothin' to say against it."

Hazel flushed.

"I shall jolly well tell him plainly that he can't treat me exactly as he likes," he snapped.

"Blessed if I think you've got the nerve to tell him anythin'," said the Bouncer coolly.

"You'll see!" grunted Hazel.

He slammed the door, and walked along the passage to Study No. 1. It was easy enough for the Bouncer to play on the facile feelings of a sensitive, weak-willed fellow like Hazel, and he had done so without scruple. He was keenly desirous of taking followers with him in his desertion of his own Form; but so far, he had been successful only with Hazeldene; and even with Hazel, success was not certain as yet.

Hazel knocked at Wharton's door, and threw it open. He stepped into the study with a moody, resentful expression on his face, that the captain of the Remove knew well. Hazeldene was always a difficult fellow to deal with, all the more because he considerably over-estimated his value to the eleven; and was well aware that Wharton had reasons for not wishing to quarrel with him; chiefly because he was Marjorie Hazeldene's brother.

"Hallo, old scout! Trot in!" said Wharton, affecting not to observe Hazel's expression. "Don't say you're not feeling fit for the game to-morrow."

"Fit enough to play the Fourth any time, I should think," said Hazel disdainfully. "I don't know that I'm very keen on it. Still, I'll play."

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ON SALE FRIDAY!

"Right-ho!" said Harry, suppressing his feelings.

"But what I want to speak about is the St. Jude's match," went on Hazel. "That's a match worth playing in, and I want to know whether I shall be in the team. If I am I shall keep the date open, but you can't expect a fellow to be hanging on a nail waiting for you to take him down if you want him at the last minute, Wharton."

Frank Nugent looked up from his prep with a curious glance at Hazel.

"Did Smithy put it like that to you, Hazel?" he asked.

Hazeldene crimsoned.

"I suppose I can ask Wharton a plain question without it being supposed that Smithy has been pulling my leg?" he exclaimed.

He turned to the captain of the Remove.

"I want a plain answer, Wharton."

"You'll get one," said Harry. "You know as well as I do that the Form match is more or less a practice game, and after it is over the team will be picked out to play St. Jude's. We have to go all out to beat St. Jude's, and the best men will get the places. That's all I can say."

"Do I play St. Jude's or not?" snapped Hazel. "I want an answer—yes or no!"

"I've nothing more to say."

"I shall take that as meaning no."

"Take it as you please," said Harry.

"Very well!" Hazel breathed hard.

"Leave me out of your crowd to-morrow, Wharton. If you can leave me out of school games you can leave me out of Form games."

"Very well!"

"I'm asked to play for Temple's team," added Hazel. "In the circumstances, I shall consent."

"You'll do as you choose," said Harry. "I think you're an ass to let Smithy pull your leg like this; and he's the chap to let you down after making a fool of you, too. But please yourself."

"Smithy's got nothing to do with it."

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

Hazeldene stood looking at him for some moments, apparently expecting him to speak again. But Wharton was devoting his attention to his prep; and Hazel, after remaining a minute or two in the study, walked out. He slammed the door and returned to Vernon-Smith's study. His angry, passionate expression as he came in apprised Vernon-Smith that he had secured a recruit in Hazel.

"Count me in, Smithy," said Hazeldene. "It's high time Wharton had a fall, if you ask me. I'm fed-up with his airs."

"Right-ho!" said the Bounder cordially.

"Is Redwing with us?" asked Hazel.

"No!" said Tom, looking up.

"Still hanging on to Wharton, and sucking up to that gang?" sneered Hazel. "I wish you joy of it!"

Redwing made no reply to that. He had no desire to quarrel with Hazeldene; he only felt sorry for the weak, passionate fellow who was being made unscrupulous use of by the Bounder.

Smithy left the study with Hazel, and they went down to the Rag together. Hazel's name was in the Remove list posted up in the Rag—to be removed when Wharton came down after prep. Hazel glanced at it and seemed troubled and dissatisfied; but in the Bounder's company, and listening to the deft flattery that Smithy knew so well how to administer when it served his turn, he

cheered up and began to feel that he had asserted his dignity and independence.

"Let's go and see Temple," said the Bounder cheerily. "Better let him know; you want to see your name up. Between ourselves, old man, Temple's a prize ass; but if things go well Temple won't remain captain of the second eleven a jolly long time; we're simply making use of him to give Wharton a fall."

Hazel laughed.

"Come on!" he said.

And the two Removeites proceeded to the Fourth Form passage to apprise Temple of the fact that he had secured another of the rival party's cricketers—news which the Bounder had no doubt at all would give him great satisfaction. Hazel was not a specially valuable member of the Remove team, but there was no doubt that he was a better man than any Temple could put in the field, and certainly Cecil Reginald ought to have been glad to secure him if he wanted to beat the Remove—and undoubtedly he did. But there were some little things Temple of the Fourth prized more highly than even a victory over the rival team in the Lower School of Greyfriars, and the Bounder, astute as he was, had not given sufficient weight to that little circumstance.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The High Horse!

CECIL REGINALD TEMPLE was in his study, not in his pleasantest mood. He had finished prep, and was leaning back in the armchair, with his elegantly-trousered legs stretched out, thinking over the morrow's match and other things.

On the whole he was glad that he had the Bounder in his crowd. But he was unpleasantly conscious of the fact that his new recruit threw him, personally, hopelessly into the shade, and that was not nice—not nice at all. Had he consulted only his own impulse he would have dropped the Bounder like a hot potato, but the Fourth Form cricketers had something to say about that.

Fry wanted to know, on that subject, what the merry dickens Temple was thinking of. Here was one of the best players in the Remove acknowledging that the Fourth Form team was the "goods," so to speak, and joining up—exactly what Temple had always wanted. What more did he want?

But Temple was not quite sure, now that he had his wish, that it really was his wish, after all. He disliked being put in the shade, he disliked the new traces of insubordination in his team, and he distrusted the Bounder.

True, his eleven was the genuine junior eleven of Greyfriars, and the Lower Fourth were entitled to have some men in it—if they dropped their ridiculous rivalry. But it dawned upon Temple that with the Bounder and a few more like him in the team, that team would change its character very considerably; the Remove element would be very strong, and, in fact, indispensable, and he, Cecil Reginald, might very easily find the ground cut from under his feet, as it were. There were members of the Fourth quite dissatisfied with Temple's easy-going ideas about cricket matches, and the Bounder might very likely form a rallying point for the malcontents. It would be distinctly unpleasant if Cecil Reginald should find himself pushed by a consensus of opinion into a back seat, and

the leadership handed over to Smithy—who was so obviously better fitted to handle it.

In history class Temple had read about the ancient British King who called in the Saxons against the Picts and Scots, and found that his new allies turned out to be masters of the situation and himself a back number, as it were. Temple had no desire at all to share the fate of that ancient King.

So when Vernon-Smith and Hazeldene arrived in the study the captain of the Fourth eyed them far from hospitably. Personally, he was more than fed-up with the Bounder; and as for Hazel, he did not know the fellow and did not want to know him.

"Just looked in to tell you I've got you another recruit, Temple," said the Bounder in a rather breezy way.

"That's awfully kind of you, Smithy!" Temple was always polished in his manner, even when he meant to be most disagreeable.

"You've seen Hazel at cricket," said Vernon-Smith.

"I've seen him."

"He was down to play in the Form match to-morrow. He's thrown Wharton over, and he's joining up."

"Is he?" said Temple airily.

"The fact is," said Hazel, "I agree with Smithy that it's rot for the Lower Fourth to set up a rival eleven. It ought to be one club and one team. You've always said so, Temple."

"Yaas, I remember I have," assented Temple. Really Temple thought that he had been rather too emphatic on the point, on reflection. It had only occurred to him quite lately that with the two clubs amalgamated there would be no room for him at the top.

"I was going to make a suggestion about the team, too," went on Smithy. "You haven't got Wilkinson of the Fourth down to play, Temple."

"No," assented Temple.

"He's a jolly good man, you know."

"I don't know."

"Well, he is," said the Bounder, nettled. "The best bat in the whole Fourth Form, if you want my opinion."

"But I don't!" smiled Temple.

Smithy breathed hard. This was the kind of thing he was up against in his new surroundings.

"I don't think much of Wilkinson," said Temple airily. "Certainly I'm not thinkin' of playin' him. Thanks so much for the suggestion, though."

He yawned slightly.

"By the way, the eleven's made up. I'm goin' to put up the list in the Rag presently. I've decided to play you, Smithy."

The Bounder controlled his feelings with an effort. Patronage from a cricketer like Temple was hard to bear.

"But I'm sorry there's no room for Hazeldene," went on Temple, quite enjoying Hazel's expression as he spoke. "I'll see what I can do for him later, when I've seen him at practice a little. I haven't noticed him much, but I've an impression that he's rather wild at the wicket, and a bit of a dud in the field. Still, I'll certainly give him a trial later on—perhaps when we play the Third."

Hazel's face went crimson.

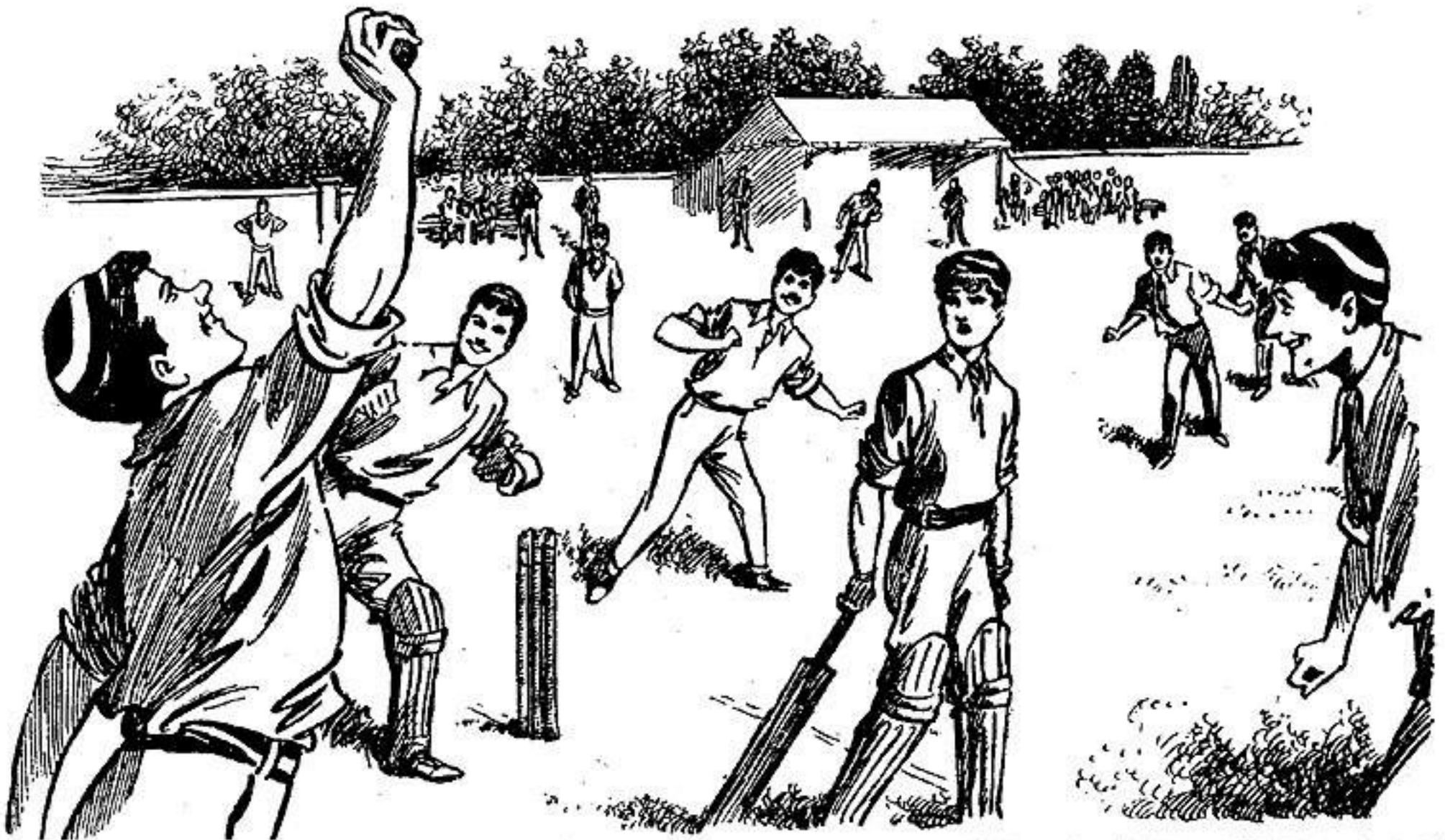
"You don't want me in the Form match to-morrow?" he exclaimed.

"No—thanks all the same."

"Look here, Temple—" broke out the Bounder savagely.

"Don't shout, old man."

"You do want Hazel—you know as well as I do that he plays cricket better



"Oh, well caught, Smithy!" There was a sudden shout as Vernon-Smith leaped at the whizzing ball, hot from Cherry's bat, and brought off a difficult catch. "Played, sir!" The Bounder held up the ball with a grin, and Bob carried his bat out. (See Chapter 12.)

than any man in the Fourth—excepting one or two that you've left out because you don't like them personally."

It was true, but it was scarcely judicious, Temple being master of the situation.

Cecil Reginald coloured faintly.

"Thanks for your opinion, Smithy," he said. "Shut the door after you, will you?"

"Are you playing Hazel to-morrow?"

"Sorry; nothin' doin'."

"My hat! Then I've a jolly good mind to drop out myself!" exclaimed the Bounder fiercely.

Cecil Reginald Temple raised his eyebrows languidly.

"Mean that, Smithy?"

"Yes, I do!"

"Well, I'll try to bear it, if you desert us," yawned Temple. "Think it over, and let me know before dinner to-morrow. Shut the door after you, there's a bit of a draught from the passage."

The Bounder gave him a look, and his impulse was to follow it up with a blow. But he restrained his rage, and stalked savagely out of the study, with Hazel at his heels. They returned to the Remove passage in angry silence. The Bounder was deeply incensed; he had known that Cecil Reginald Temple was a conceited ass, but he had not realised that he was asinine to this extent. As for Hazel, he was in a state of passionate resentment against everybody and everything—but chiefly against the Bounder.

"Well, what now?" he asked at last. "You told me Temple would jump at the chance, and he's turned me down after—"

"I'm not responsible for Temple being a blithering fool, I suppose," snarled the Bounder. He was too concerned about his own anger and disappointment to bother about Hazel's.

"Well, I've thrown Wharton over, and what am I going to do about it?" demanded Hazel angrily.

"Anythin' you dashed well choose!" growled Vernon-Smith. And he went into his study and slammed the door.

Hazel stood trembling with rage in the Remove passage. The door of Study No. 1 opened, and Wharton and Frank Nugent came out. They glanced at Hazel, surprised and a little startled by the expression on his face. Wharton came a step towards him.

"Anything up, Hazel?" he asked good-naturedly.

"Only I've been made a silly fool of," said Hazel savagely. "Smithy led me to believe—"

He broke off.

Wharton smiled faintly. He did not know what had happened, but he could see that the foolish fellow had had a bitter disappointment.

"Is it about the cricket?" he asked. "Look here, Hazel, if you've changed your mind about what you told me in the study, wash it out. I'll be glad to have you in the game to-morrow."

Hazel's face cleared a little.

"Your name's still in the list—shall I leave it there?" asked the captain of the Remove.

"Yes, if you will," muttered Hazel shamefacedly. "I—I'm sorry—"

"That's all right."

On the way to the Remove dormitory, Vernon-Smith joined Hazel, with an agreeable smile. His temper was in better control now.

"You needn't worry about what that ass Temple said, old chap," he remarked. "The fellow's a swanking duffer; but if all goes well, he will jolly soon find that he isn't monarch of all he surveys, as he thinks he is. You won't be playing to-morrow; but—"

"But I shall be playing to-morrow," said Hazel coolly. He quite enjoyed being able to make that reply to the scheming Bounder.

"Have you seen Temple again, then?"

"Oh no! I've seen Wharton."

"Wharton!" repeated the Bounder.

"Yes; I'm playing for the Remove, after all."

Vernon-Smith drew a deep, hard breath.

"Then you've eaten humble-pie—you've decided to kow-tow—"

"Oh, cut it out!" said Hazel derisively. "That chicken won't fight, Smithy—you can't pull my leg twice in the same way. Can it, old man!"

The Famous Five came along the passage, and Hazel joined them, and walked to the dormitory with them, leaving the Bounder to follow with a black brow.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Something Like Cricket!

"PLAYIN' to-day?"

Temple, of the Fourth, put that question to the Bounder after class the following morning.

His manner was very casual; he wanted to make it quite clear that it was a matter of absolute indifference to him whether Smithy played or not in the match with the Remove.

As a matter of fact, he was not quite indifferent; he would have been pleased had the Bounder, in an outburst of anger, refused to remain in the Fourth Form eleven. Temple did not feel that he could turn him out; but he would have been by no means sorry to see the Bounder turn himself out.

Vernon-Smith was careful not to take offence, however.

"Yes," he answered shortly.

"You were sayin' something last night—"

"Never mind that; I'm playing."

"Oh, very well, I'll play you," said Temple in his most patronising manner, and he walked on, leaving the Bounder almost pale with rage.

The last state of the Bounder was undoubtedly worse than his first! His

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ungoverned temper had caused the break with Wharton and the Remove cricketers, with the result that he had to govern his temper very carefully indeed to keep in with the ineffable Cecil Reginald—whom he despised from the bottom of his heart.

He was still clinging to the hope of beating the Remove in the Form match, and if a win came along, it might mean a good deal to him. The game would prove, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that he was the best man in the eleven—indeed, the only good man in it. Temple himself was more likely to capture duck's eggs than anything more valuable, and the Bounder hoped for a century on his own. Such a difference would be too striking to be passed over; it would strengthen his position and weaken Temple's and help him in his secret plans of undermining the captain of the Fourth. Temple he regarded simply as a conceited ass, and, keen as he was, he did not realise that even a conceited ass might be rendered keen and wary by the instinct of self-preservation.

The Bounder was going to play the game of his life, and distinguish himself greatly, and put Temple hopelessly in the shade. But, as a matter of fact, Temple had his own ideas about that.

Harry Wharton & Co. came down to Little Side in a cheery mood, and Hazel gave the Bounder a mocking grin, as he saw him among Temple's men. Temple won the toss, and elected to bat, and it had not even occurred to Smithy that he would not be put on to open the innings—he was so obviously the fellow best fitted to do so. But Cecil Reginald was making his own arrangements, as indubitably he had a right to do, and he was making them with a ruthless disregard to the Bounder's feelings, and to the general fitness of things.

Temple himself was opening the innings with Dabney.

"Where do I come in, Temple?" asked Vernon-Smith, as civilly as he could.

"You? Last man in," said Temple carelessly.

"Last man!" hissed the Bounder.

"Yaas."

"Look here, Temple—"

"That will do, Smithy."

With feelings too deep for expression in words, if words had been of any use, Vernon-Smith watched the Fourth Form innings. He was in great form, and he knew it, and he had hoped to be first in and "not out."

Now he had the pleasure, or otherwise, of watching the wickets go down to the Remove bowling at a rapid rate, knowing that his own innings must, in the circumstances, prove as rotten as the rest. The most magnificent batsman could not keep going, without a man at the other end. Smithy had hoped to keep up his wicket, with the whole remainder of the team coming and going at the other end; and he might have done so, if Temple had chosen to make the best use of his new recruit. As last man in, his innings would last just so long as his partner could keep in—a few overs, at the most, against the doughty bowlers of the Remove.

Wicket after wicket went down. The score was at 60 when last man in was called. Vernon-Smith, with a savage face, went in to join Angel of the Fourth, and Angel had the bowling.

Hurree Janset Ram Singh went on to bowl against Aubrey Angel. The Bounder looked on grimly while

Angel's middle stump was whipped out of the ground.

The innings was over, and "last man" had not even had a ball.

"Smithy seems to be enjoying himself this afternoon!" murmured Peter Todd, as the field came off. "Look at his jolly old chivvy!"

There was a grin among the Remove cricketers.

"Temple must be a howling ass," said Harry Wharton. "He's got a good man, and doesn't know how to use him."

"Perhaps he doesn't want to," said Toddy shrewdly. "He made the glorious total of sixteen himself, and he mayn't have wanted to see Smithy knock up sixty or so."

"My hat! Is that his idea of cricket?"

And the Removees chortled.

"If I were a betting chap," said Peter, "I'd lay three to one that Smithy will punch Temple's nose when this game is over, if not before."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry opened the innings for the Remove. Wharton was expecting bowling from Smithy, and he was prepared for a hard tussle; but he need not have troubled.

It was the great Temple himself who went on to bowl against the captain of the Remove.

Temple rather prided himself on his bowling, for what reason nobody but Cecil Reginald had ever been able to discover.

Certainly his present display did not show much cause for pride or satisfaction.

Wharton knocked the ball wherever he pleased, and ran and ran and ran, and the over gave him sixteen. Then the ball was given to Dabney to bowl to Cherry.

Vernon-Smith bit his lip till it almost bled. Dabney had as much chance of taking Bob's wicket as Temple had of taking Wharton's. But the captain of the Fourth did not seem to require Smithy's services in the bowling line.

The Bounder's idea of distinguishing himself in the match, and showing the Fourth what a good man they had captured as a recruit, did not seem to have much in it now. Whether it was conceit, or whether it was cunning, or whether it was sheer stupidity, Temple obviously did not intend to give his new man much chance.

But in the field, even Temple could not bar the Bounder from some successes. There was a sudden shout as Vernon-Smith leaped at the whizzing ball, hot from Bob Cherry's bat, and brought off a catch.

"Well caught, Smithy!"

Bob made a grimace.

The Bounder held up the ball with a grin, and Bob carried his bat out. Peter Todd came on in his place.

Over followed over, with runs piling up for the Remove, and the batsmen were very careful not to give the Bounder any more chances in the field.

Smithy came up to Temple at last, as the field crossed after an over.

"Look here, Temple—"

"Get into your place, Vernon-Smith!"

"Do you want me to bowl?"

"Thanks, no!"

"Give Smithy the ball for a bit, Temple!" urged Fry.

Cecil Reginald seemed deaf.

The Bounder gave him a look of suppressed fury.

"They're fifty-six for one, so far," he said. "You were sixty for your first innings. What sort of a game do you call this, Temple?"

"That's enough!" said Temple, frowning.

"Give me a chance in the bowling, then!" rapped out the Bounder savagely. "You know jolly well that I'm the only man here who can bowl."

Temple's lip curled.

"You Remove fags have a jolly good opinion of yourselves, haven't you?" he remarked. "I'm not surprised that Wharton turned you out of his team, Vernon-Smith, if this is the way you talk to your captain. I can jolly well tell you that I'm not standin' it!"

The game went on, with the runs piling up, and the innings closed for 260. Then there was an adjournment for tea. The Remove fellows were in cheery spirits; it was clear that they would not have to bat again, though that was not at all clear to Temple of the Fourth. Cecil Reginald was still dreaming of centuries.

Vernon-Smith was doubtful whether he would keep on at all. He was down last on the list, and it hardly seemed worth while hanging about for a few minutes at the wickets at the tail-end of a rotten innings. All his schemes had fallen into pieces. And yet there was a chance of pulling the game out of the fire, and at least forcing the Remove to bat again, if Temple gave him a chance to show what he could do.

When the Remove fellows went into the field, the Bounder approached Temple, to plead for a chance.

"Come on, Dab!" said Temple.

"Temple—" began the Bounder.

"Don't bother!"

"Look here—"

"That's quite enough!"

The Bounder looked on savagely as the second Fourth Form innings started.

This time Temple kept his end up better. He was twenty to the good when Hurree Janset Ram Singh bowled him. But the other wickets were going down. Still, the Fourth made a better show than before. The figure was ninety-eight when Smithy was called to the wickets, with Fry at the other end. He had a glimpse of hope. Fry was the best man in the eleven, and might keep the innings alive for a time. And the Bounder had the bowling.

He knocked away the first ball for four, and then another four, and then a two. Cecil Reginald Temple looked on rather grimly. In a way he was glad to see this palpable proof that his tactics were all wrong.

Vernon-Smith followed with a single, which brought Edward Fry to the batting end.

The Bounder watched Fry, as Squiff bowled, almost with anguish. If Fry only succeeded in keeping the innings alive!

But he didn't!

Edward Fry was doing his best, but Squiff was doing better. There was a shout from the Remove fellows as the leg stump was whipped out.

"Out!"

The innings was over. Harry Wharton & Co. had beaten Temple, as they had expected to do, by ninety-one runs and an innings to spare. Vernon-Smith came back to the pavilion with a white, set, and savage face.

He came up to Cecil Reginald Temple.

"Do you call this cricket?" he asked. His temper was quite out of hand now, which really was not surprising after his experience of Cecil Reginald Temple's unusual gifts as a cricket captain.

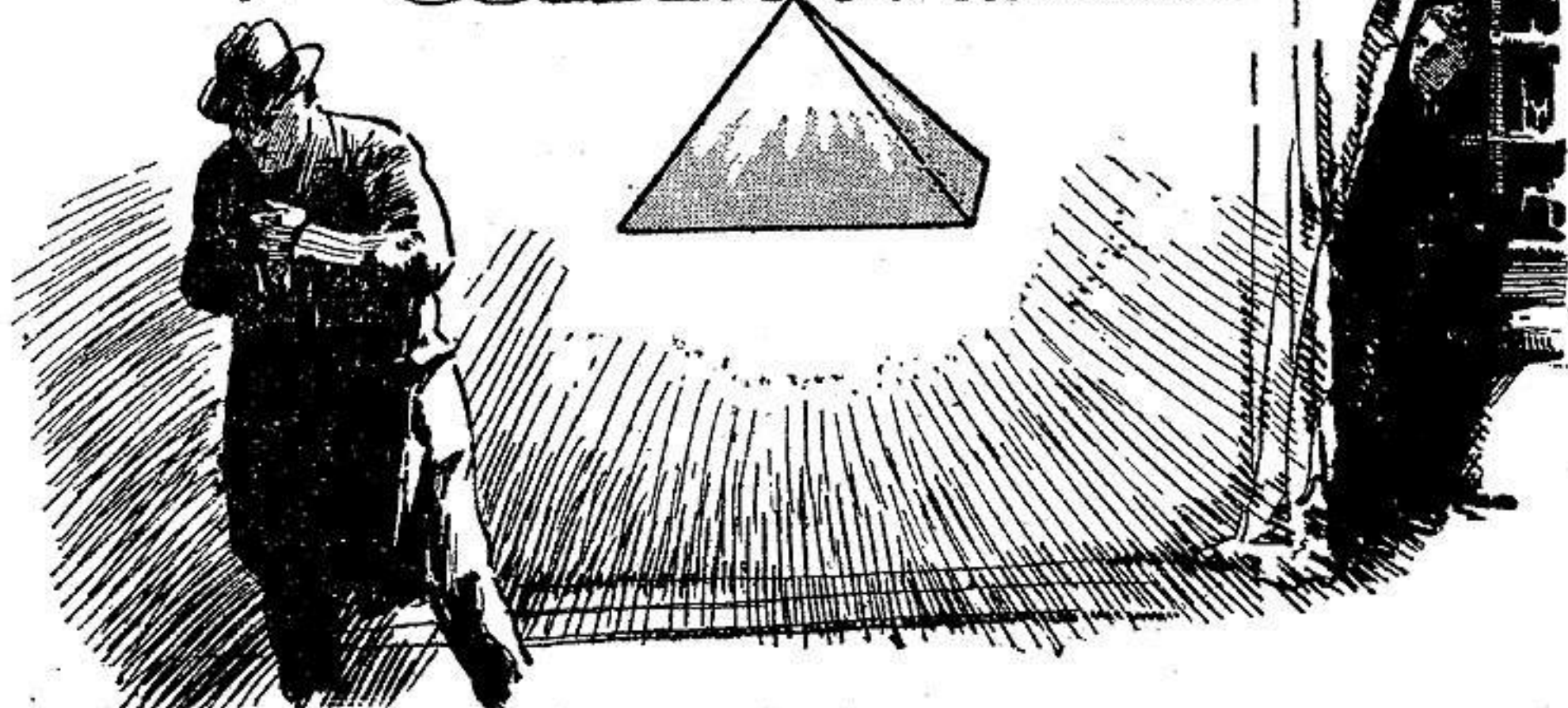
Temple regarded him with lofty disdain.

"I don't want any criticisms from a cheeky fag!" he answered.

(Continued on page 28.)

BUT—! Mr. Rennie is found, Gordon Carr is found; there now remains only to bring the miscreants responsible for their incarceration to justice. But—and there's always a but—the birds have got wind of the storm impending and flown!

The GOLDEN PYRAMID



Ferrers Locke Acts Swiftly!

"DRAKE!" Mr. Mardyke's voice sounded like the rasp of a file as it cut into the momentary silence. The Fifth Form master stood rooted to the floor. His beady little eyes glittered with concentrated fury.

"What are you doing here, in this room, at this time of night?"

Jack Drake's mind moved swiftly. He had not heard Mr. Mardyke's approach, and this, in itself, suggested that the master had crept up here bound on no very good mission. It was on the tip of his tongue to retort by asking the Fifth Form master what he was doing here, likewise.

But he checked himself. There was nothing to be gained by inviting deliberate antagonism from this source. For the same reason Jack decided, against his own better feelings and principles, to tell a deliberate lie in answer to Mardyke's inquiry. He disliked doing it, but could see no other way out of the difficulty short of causing undue suspicion, and thus putting the master very much on his guard.

"I—er—I was just looking for my trunk, sir," he replied. "I—er—the fact is, I had a rotten headache, sir, and I forgot to take my bottle of aspirin tablets from the trunk."

"Indeed?" Mr. Mardyke peered suspiciously at him, as if striving to read into his very soul. "And so you came up here, in the dead of night, to fetch your—er—aspirin tablets?"

"Yes, sir!"

"It seems curious to me," went on the master acidly, "that a boy of your singular powers—assistant to a famous detective—should have so far failed to develop your memory as to have forgotten a little thing like aspirin tablets—"

"That's just it, sir!" cut in Drake eagerly. "Being such a little thing, it was apt to be overlooked—"

"Evidently!" The master's voice was like ice. "But I repeat that it seems curious. Very curious. Almost unbelievable, in fact. However, I suppose I am bound to accept your statement, seeing that you are not a—er—scholar

here, and can only advise you to be a little more systematic in the future. I'm afraid your esteemed and brilliant chief, Mr. Ferrers Locke, would hardly feel edified were he to learn of this result of his, doubtless, painstaking teaching. You may go!"

Jack Drake soothed inwardly, but kept silent. He crossed the room, and passed Mr. Mardyke, who stood just inside, watching him narrowly, as a cat watches

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

FERRERS LOCKE, the world-famous detective.

JACK DRAKE, his clever boy assistant.

INSPECTOR PYECROFT, of the C.I.D. at Scotland Yard.

SIR MERTON CARR, a South African mining magnate.

GORDON, his son.

GERALD ARTHUR BRISTOW, a professional crook, nephew of Sir Merton (known also as Arthur the Dude).

Ferrers Locke is engaged to find Gordon Carr, who has mysteriously disappeared from Stormpoint College. Hardly has the famous sleuth set out on his quest when news reaches him that Mr. Rennie, the master of the Remove at Stormpoint, has also unaccountably disappeared.

Drake is sent down to Stormpoint to investigate, while Locke and Pyecroft proceed to Moorvale. The private detective runs across Sir Merton Carr, who begs him to throw up the case. This, naturally, Ferrers Locke refuses to do.

Some time later Locke finds the Golden Pyramid, around which is some deep mystery, and incidentally bumps into Gerald Bristow, who demands the tiny cone of gold at the point of the revolver.

Locke manages to give Bristow the slip.

Meantime, Drake is operating at Stormpoint College. He finds Gordon Carr—a mere wreck of his former self—suffering from a lapse of memory. Drake instantly wires for Ferrers Locke. In the interval the detective's assistant gets on the track of Mr. Septimus Mardyke, the master of the Fifth Form, who is, it turns out, an accomplice of Bristow's. In response to information supplied by Adolphus van Dom—a junior in the Remove, nicknamed the Phantom—Drake leaves the comfort of his bed one night to explore a certain box-room. In the midst of his investigation Mr. Septimus Mardyke, an ugly expression on his ferret-like features, appears.

(Now read on.)

a mouse. Jack almost shuddered at the glint in the master's ferret eyes; they were positively green and full of a slumbering fury.

He made his way back to his own room without once looking back, and, arrived there, he closed the door quickly behind him and turned the key in the yock. The Phantom had evidently returned long since to his own dormitory—at any rate, he was no longer in Drake's room.

"There's something wrong in that box-room!" muttered Jack, as he clambered back into bed. "Something darned wrong! And Mardyke's at the bottom of it!"

But there was nothing to be done now, as he very well knew. He settled himself down, therefore, and dropped off to sleep again, this time remaining undisturbed till morning.

Immediately after breakfast Jack Drake was for making his way again to the box-room, but, unfortunately, a number of circumstances prevented him.

For one thing, the local inspector of police had unexpectedly called on Dr. Lampton, who had forthwith sent for Jack and explained that the police wished to discuss a new theory they had formulated with regard to the disappearance of Gordon Carr.

With his knowledge of what had occurred at Stormpoint Abbey the previous night, Jack was naturally not altogether predisposed to entering into any such discussion, which savoured to him of flogging a dead horse.

But, as he had already made up his mind that he should say nothing of his discovery, even to the Head, until Ferrers Locke arrived, there was nothing for it but to listen patiently to what the inspector of police had to say, and to offer the most intelligent answers he could evolve on the spur of the moment.

That ordeal occupied about an hour, after which Dr. Lampton himself detained Jack for a further half-hour talking about the matter.

More than once Drake felt he was acting in rather a caddish manner in not taking the Head into his confidence.

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The venerable gentleman was obviously distraught. The continued absence of one of his best pupils had played havoc with his health, and he looked more worn and haggard than ever.

But Jack forced himself to keep an unrelenting silence, feeling sure, it was the best thing to do in the circumstances.

And at last he was permitted to leave the Head's study, only to run full tilt into the egregious Van Dom, who was the centre of an excited crowd, to whom he was relating, with sundry embellishments, his adventure of the previous night.

Afraid lest the Phantom should say too much, Jack had instantly joined the crowd, and, seizing the lanky junior by the collar, had forcibly dragged him away on the pretence of wanting him to do something.

He yanked the skeleton of the Remove to his own private room, where he compelled that wild-eyed, irresponsible youth to remain while he read him a sulphurously worded lecture on the evils attendant upon tittle-tattling.

By this time more than half the morning had gone. And then a car drove up to the school gates, and Jack gave a profound sigh of relief as he caught sight of the tall, lithe figure of Ferrers Locke alighting from it.

Five minutes later Locke was in Jack's room, listening intently to all that his young assistant had to say, his face very grave, but his eyes sparkling with genuine satisfaction when he learned of how Jack had found and rescued Gordon Carr.

"You've done jolly well, my lad," said Locke, as Jack finished his story, "and I'm no end proud of you. But before we do anything further I think we'd better have a look at that box-room. I've got an idea that every moment we waste in this respect is costing somebody very dear indeed!"

Jack glanced keenly at the detective, unable fully to understand the meaning of those enigmatic words. But Locke said nothing further, beyond asking his assistant to direct him to the box-room, which, of course, Drake did with alacrity.

On their way up the stairs they passed Mr. Mardyke, who was coming down. He glanced at them both keenly from beneath puckered brows, but did not speak. But Jack Drake smothered a grin as he noticed the thunderous look on the master's face.

They reached the box-room at last, to find it locked. But the detective soon overcame that difficulty with the aid of a master key, and a few moments later they stood within, staring up at the trapdoor, and the queer-looking patch on the roof near to it.

Then Locke ran lightly up the spiral staircase, and, being somewhat taller than his assistant, was able to study the dark patch more closely.

"It's grease, as you say, my boy," he muttered after a moment or so, "and by the general appearance of it I should say it was a sort of hair-oil, or cream. You see what I mean? Somebody has been in the habit of clambering up these stairs and then leaning back to get sufficient leverage to force open that trapdoor. In doing so, he has doubtless rested the top of his head against the roof, and his hair being plastered with cream or brilliantine—" He broke off, suggestively raising his eyebrows.

Jack's eyes gleamed. There was only one master at Stormpoint who was in the habit of smothering his hair with cream, and that was Mr. Mardyke!

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"Things are getting distinctly feverish!" he muttered to himself.

Then he gave a gasp as a sudden sound broke the momentary stillness.

Locke, who was still at the top of the stairs, examining the trapdoor, likewise started, and glanced significantly down at his young assistant.

The sound came again, clear and distinct—the low, trembling moan of a man in pain or distress.

"It's coming from the other side of that trapdoor!" exclaimed Jack, pointing upward excitedly. "There's somebody imprisoned in there. Hark! There it is again!"

But Locke had already acted. Raising his arm, he brought his clenched fist up with a thunderous rain of blows on the trapdoor, while Jack stood watching and waiting expectantly, every nerve in his body tingling with suppressed excitement.

Gone!

It did not take Ferrers Locke very long to force the skylight door open, and a moment later he had vaulted lightly upwards, his lithe body disappearing into the raftered loft.

Jack Drake waited in breathless expectation. He could hear Locke moving about above, and a few seconds afterwards the detective's voice broke the stillness.

"Are you there, Jack? Come up here at once—quick!"

Jack needed no second bidding. He ran up the spiral staircase like a flash of lightning, and found Locke waiting with outstretched hand to help him through the skylight.

It was impossible to stand upright in the loft. Locke himself was bent almost double, feeling his way about in the darkness almost on all fours.

"Got your torch?"

The detective's voice was sharp, and there was a note of suppressed excitement in its tone.

Jack nodded, and a moment later a shaft of bright light streamed forth, cutting into the darkness.

Hardly had this happened when Locke moved swiftly forward, and Jack saw him crouching over what looked like a vague, nebulous heap in one corner of the loft. Locke's assistant stifled a gasp as a faint moan came from the bundle.

He moved forward as quickly as the cramped space would allow, keeping his torch shining brightly before him as he did so. Its rays fell upon the bundle, revealing it to be the figure of a man, trussed up like a helpless fowl and bent almost double.

The man's face was upturned and looked horribly grey in the light of the torch. The eyelids flickered slightly, and the lips moved, emitting another feeble moan.

It only needed a glance to recognise the helpless, half-conscious fellow.

"Mr. Rennie, the Remove master!" gasped Jack.

Ferrers Locke nodded, but did not speak. He was too busy slashing away at the lengths of cord which held the hapless master's limbs.

In a few moments the last cord had fallen away, and Locke's brows drew together in a frown of disgust and anger as he noted the blue marks round the man's wrists where the cord had bitten into the flesh.

"Lend a hand here, Jack!" muttered the detective.

It was obvious at once that, although the Remove master was not exactly insensible, he was not fully conscious, and

was, besides, far too weak to do anything save moan now and again as if in pain.

Jack locked the catch of his torch to ensure that it would not switch off. Then he stuck it in his pocket, lodging it in such a way that its rays still lent them some assistance in probing the darkness. After which he assisted Locke in dragging the Remove master towards the skylight.

It was a painfully difficult task, rendered none the easier by the fact that they were compelled to shuffle along, inch by inch, with their backs bent almost double, owing to the extremely narrow space which the loft afforded.

Mr. Rennie was obviously unable to help himself in the least degree. His body hung limp in their hands, a dead weight. Only his occasional gasps and groans assured them, in fact, that he was still alive. Evidently he had been through a frightful ordeal.

Inch by inch they crept towards the skylight, grunting now and then as they caught their heads against the rafters. But at last they reached the aperture and set down their burden for a moment, while Jack edged his way backwards down the spiral staircase, and then seized the master's ankles, Locke gently propelling the limp body through the skylight.

Step by step they found their way down the iron staircase with their burden, and when at last they reached the floor of the box-room they each gave a deep sigh of relief and wiped the perspiration from their faces. It had been a stiff task, taxing their strength to an unusual extent.

They set down the inert form of the master, and as they did so the box-room door opened, and Val Terry, accompanied by Dick Meredith, his chum, peeped within.

Their eyes widened in amazement as they caught sight of Locke and Drake and the figure between them.

"M-m-my hat!" gasped Val. "W-what the dick—"

"Come right in, Terry!" said Locke, with a grim smile. "And you, too, Meredith. See if you recognise this poor fellow."

Val and Dick moved forward in tense silence and stared down at the almost marble-hued face.

"Mr. Rennie!" they gasped in unison. Ferrers Locke nodded.

"We've just found him—in the loft," he explained. "And I'm afraid he's in in a pretty bad way."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Val Terry, the blood draining from his face. "How—how on earth did he come to get up there, anyway? He looks starved and at the point of death."

"We heard strange sounds as we were going down the corridor," said Dick Meredith, "and we peeped in here to see—"

"I'm glad you did," answered Locke. "And now perhaps you'll be good enough to ask Jaggs, the school porter, to come up here with a stretcher. Also, you might tell the matron of the sanmy to prepare a bed for Mr. Rennie, and then telephone to the doctor to come at once."

Val and Dick sped away on their mission, and, while they waited, Locke and Jack Drake turned to their charge.

Mr. Rennie appeared to have relapsed altogether into unconsciousness now, for his eyes were fast closed and his breathing was so faint as to be almost unnoticeable. His face was ashen and almost emaciated.

"He looks starved," muttered Jack.



With infinite care Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake carried their burden down the spiral staircase. As they reached the bottom step the door of the box-room opened, and Val Terry, accompanied by his chum Meredith, looked in. Their eyes opened wide in astonishment. "M-m-my hat!" ejaculated Terry. "Mr. Rennie!" (See page 22.)

"Strikes me the doctor will have a stiff job in front of him."

Locke nodded grimly.

"Yes," he returned; "I'm afraid we found him only just in time. Another day and he would—"

He broke off, leaving the rest of the sentence unspoken.

"This is some of Mardyke's dirty work," said Jack, his eyes glittering and his hands clenching in righteous anger. "I knew he was a dingy sort of beast, but I hardly thought he could be as villainous as—as this. Why, he's come pretty near to—to murder, guv'nor. What are you going to do about it?"

But before Locke could answer the door opened again, and Jaggs entered, followed by Skirrell, the boot-boy, carrying a stretcher between them.

"Which it's the biggest surprise o' me bloomin' nateral!" exclaimed Jaggs. "When I 'eard about it from that there young rip, Val Terry, you c'd ha' knocked me down with a fevver, you could, and me no light-weight, neither. I ses to young Squirrel here—"

"Never mind what you said to Skirrell!" cut in the sleuth sharply. "Lend a hand here quickly, so that we can get Mr. Rennie to the sanny."

The garrulous Jaggs mumbled something under his breath, but did as he was told, and in a few moments the strange and solemn little procession made its way down the narrow flight of wooden steps, along the corridor, and so to the school sanatorium, where Mrs. Meek, the matron, received the unconscious master into her kindly care.

A few moments later Dr. Kennedy,

who, by a stroke of sheer good fortune, happened to be in the school to see one of the Third Form boys, hurried forward, and to him Ferrers Locke briefly explained what had happened.

Then, leaving Mr. Rennie in the care of Dr. Kennedy and the matron, Locke and his young assistant hurried off to Dr. Lampton's study.

The Head was apparently expecting them, and by the blank expression on his face he had already heard of what had occurred.

"My dear Locke," he exclaimed, hastening forward as the couple entered, "this—this is terrible. I hear you've found poor Mr. Rennie, bound and gagged and unconscious in the loft above the box-room. I must go at once to see the poor fellow!"

But Ferrers Locke held up a restraining hand.

"I don't think it would be wise or useful to go just at present, Dr. Lampton," he said quietly, "though of course I can fully appreciate your natural anxiety. We have left Mr. Rennie in the charge of Dr. Kennedy and the matron, and I am sure we can rely on them to do everything possible."

The Head fell back and sank down in his chair, wiping his forehead with his handkerchief.

"Of—of course, if you advise it," he replied, "I'll not trouble them until it is convenient. But, really, this is too, too terrible! Tell me, is—is he—"

Locke nodded, a faint smile curving his lips.

"Mr. Rennie is, happily, alive," he replied at once, "though he is in a very

bad way. I know a little about doctoring, and I think I can safely say that, with care, he will pull through. But we found him only in the nick of time."

"But—but who on earth can have been responsible for this terrible outrage?" exclaimed the Head, growing indignant. "By the very fact that Mr. Rennie has been found within the precincts of the college, it seems that the scoundrel responsible for his disappearance must be amongst us here."

Ferrers Locke nodded gravely.

"I am afraid that it is only too true, sir," he replied slowly, "and I should be glad, therefore, if you would kindly ask Mr. Mardyke, the master of the Fifth Form, to present himself here."

Dr. Lampton jumped out of his chair, his face a picture of dismay.

"Mr.—Mr. Mardyke?" he repeated blankly. "But—but surely you don't mean to suggest—"

"I do more than suggest, Dr. Lampton," said Locke sternly. "I accuse Mr. Mardyke of being responsible for the disappearance of Mr. Rennie. But I will give him the opportunity of offering any—or—explanation he may desire, before telephoning for the police!"

"Explanation! P-p-police!" Dr. Lampton fell back with blanched face. "B—but this—this is unthinkable, Mr. Locke! Surely—surely you must have made some grievous error? Mr. Mardyke is one of the most respected members of my teaching staff, and— Oh, but it's impossible, incredible!"

"I assure you it is nothing of the kind, Dr. Lampton," said the famous

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detective quietly. "I am in a position to prove every word of my charge against Mr. Mardyke. Will you be so good as to send for him, please?"

There was a moment's tense silence, during which the Head fastened his eyes upon those of Ferrers Locke in an expression of dumbfounded amazement, mingled with a sort of mute appeal.

Locke's sensational statement had come as a most tragic shock to the Head, whose sensitive and proud nature shrank painfully from the slightest shadow of unpleasant publicity. Also, Dr. Lampton was one of the most loyal of men, and it hurt him personally to be compelled to listen to this grave and terrible charge against one of his own colleagues.

But he could read no hope in Locke's steady, almost cold gaze, and at last, with a deep sigh, he crossed to the telephone, lifted the receiver, and pressed one of a row of tiny buttons on a panel beside it.

"Ask Mr. Mardyke to step this way, please," he said, and then replaced the receiver and sank limply back in his chair, too overcome to speak.

Locke and Jack Drake remained standing. Neither spoke. The silence was so acute as to be almost painful. Only the stately tick-tock of the clock on the Head's mantelpiece could be heard.

Several minutes passed and Dr. Lampton began to show signs of uneasiness.

It was not like Mr. Mardyke, or anyone else in the college, to keep the Head waiting.

Then there came a sharp knock on the door, a quick, nervous rapping that seemed almost to suggest the advent of another shock.

Dr. Lampton jumped.

"Come in," he said, and his voice was strangely shrill.

The door was all but flung open, and Norfield, the captain of the college, stood on the threshold, his face expressive of complete mystification.

"Norfield," exclaimed the Head, frowning. "I can't see you now. I—I'm engaged."

"I know that, sir," answered Norfield quickly. "You're waiting for Mr. Mardyke. Skirrell, the page, received your instructions, but being unable to find Mr. Mardyke, he came to me—"

"Dear me, this is most irritating!" snapped Dr. Lampton, whose nerves now showed signs of breaking under the strain. "Why couldn't Skirrell find Mr. Mardyke? He should be on the point of taking his class—"

The Sixth-Former nodded, and the look of mystification on his handsome face deepened.

"I know, sir," he replied, "but he is not in the class-room, sir, nor is he in his own room."

"Not—not in the class-room?" echoed the Head, rising from his seat. "But—but—bless my soul—" He glanced quickly at his watch.

"He's not anywhere, sir," went on Norfield. "I've personally conducted a search all over the college; that's why you've been kept waiting so long. Mr. Mardyke has completely disappeared, sir!"

Ferrers Locke States His Case.

"DISAPPEARED!"

Dr. Lampton echoed the word in complete bewilderment, staring at Norfield as if that young gentleman had suddenly taken leave of his senses.

"I'm afraid there's no doubt of it, sir," said the captain of the college. "I made a point of seeing that my search

was as thorough as possible before coming to you, sir. Terry, of the Remove, and Higgs, of Mr. Mardyke's own Form, assisted me, and I think you know, sir, that they can both be trusted to—"

"Oh—ah—yes, of course, naturally!" stammered the Head. He was almost too overcome to speak.

There was a short silence, then Dr. Lampton nodded to the Sixth-Former.

"All right. Thank you, Norfield," he said. "You may go."

When the door had closed behind Norfield, Locke turned to the Head.

"I'm afraid the bird has flown," he said with a grim smile. "It's a pity, but it at least affords you a startling confirmation of my assertion that Mr. Mardyke was personally responsible for what happened to the Remove master."

"But why?" insisted Dr. Lampton. "Why in the name of goodness should he so wantonly attack Mr. Rennie? It's positively grotesque!"

"If you can give me a little time, sir," cut in the detective, "I may be able to explain everything. I can say this much now—the disappearance of Mr. Rennie was all of a piece with the disappearance of the boy Gordon Carr, and the discovery of his father, injured and apparently dead, on the Devonshire moors. And, by the way, I have another bit of news for you, or rather, my young assistant here has. But first, do you feel you can stand yet another—er—shock?"

And he smiled sympathetically as he gazed at the Head.

Dr. Lampton passed his hand wearily over his face.

"I dare say I can stand anything—now," he muttered.

"Well, it is a piece of good news this time," said Locke with a smile. "The boy Gordon Carr has been found."

The Head jumped out of his seat for the second time.

"Gordon Carr found?" he repeated, almost shouting the words.

Locke nodded.

"My young assistant, Jack Drake, found him," he replied, "so perhaps he had better tell you about it himself."

And forthwith, at a nod from the detective, Jack Drake briefly narrated his adventure at Stormpoint Abbey, to which the Head listened like one entranced.

Jack Drake told everything, concluding with the story of how he had taken Gordon Carr to Harchester, and left him in charge of old Dr. Quill, one of Locke's friends.

"And you say the poor boy has lost his memory?" said Dr. Lampton, as Jack concluded. "Bless my soul, what the lad must have suffered, for him to be stricken like that! And I suppose you'll tell me next that Mr. Mardyke was responsible for this, too?"

"Well, it certainly looks as if he had a big hand in it, doesn't it?" put in Locke, "seeing that Drake, here, actually followed him to the underground crypt at the abbey."

"The man must be a fiend!" exclaimed Dr. Lampton hotly. "He ought to be handed over to the police at once."

"That is precisely what I intended to do," said Locke, "had not Norfield brought the startling news of his disappearance."

"And what do you propose to do now, Mr. Locke?"

"Well, first of all," answered the criminologist, "I am going over to Harchester to see Gordon Carr, and find out how he has progressed. Jack Drake tells me that Dr. Quill thought of sending for a London specialist, but I hope that this will not prove to be necessary."

"Surely Drake should have brought the poor boy straight here?" said the Head; "where he could have received my personal attention, and the care of the school doctor—"

"No," returned Locke. "Drake did the best thing in the circumstances, Dr. Lampton. You forget that had he brought Carr here it would have put Mr. Mardyke on his guard even earlier than has already happened, and that might have seriously handicapped Drake's investigations into the disappearance of Mr. Rennie."

Dr. Lampton nodded.

"You are quite right, Locke," he returned. "I had forgotten that."

"Well, I think I'll get along with Jack to Harchester now," said Locke, moving towards the door; "and meantime perhaps you would care to go along and see Dr. Kennedy about his patient. I hope to be back in the afternoon, when perhaps it will be possible to interview Mr. Rennie."

And with a reassuring smile the detective left the Head's study, followed by Jack.

Arrived at length at Harchester, they found Dr. Quill looking very grave.

"I am glad you have come, Locke," said the kindly old medico, as he ushered them within. "I have been worrying a lot about this poor boy. He does not seem to be getting any better, and I really think I'd better send for a specialist."

"May we see him?" asked Locke, and Dr. Quill nodded at once.

"By all means," he replied. "In fact, I wish you would see if you can make sense of what he keeps jabbering about. Something about a Golden Pyramid—"

Both Locke and Jack jumped, and the former turned to Dr. Quill.

"Golden Pyramid!" he echoed. "What has he said to you about that?"

But Dr. Quill merely returned a blank look, shaking his head hopelessly.

"Nothing," he replied; "at least, nothing intelligible. He just jabbers about it—apparently it is on his mind, worrying him. But come this way and see for yourself!"

He led the way into another room.

There was a movement from a large bed in one corner as they entered, and Locke reached the bedside as the wan face of Gordon Carr was turned towards them.

The boy began to sit up, but Dr. Quill hurried forward and gently urged him back.

"Now you must lie still, my boy," said the old medico kindly. "You've been through a severe strain, and I cannot allow you to excite yourself."

The boy frowned slightly, but offered no resistance.

"Who—who are these people?" he asked suddenly. "I recognise one of them—the one who calls himself Jack Drake—"

Jack hurried forward with a smile.

"That's right, old top," he said cheerily. "Glad to find you're going on so well. How do you feel?"

"I'm A1," returned Carr; "but Dr. Quill won't believe me. He insists that I shall remain in this stuffy old bed—"

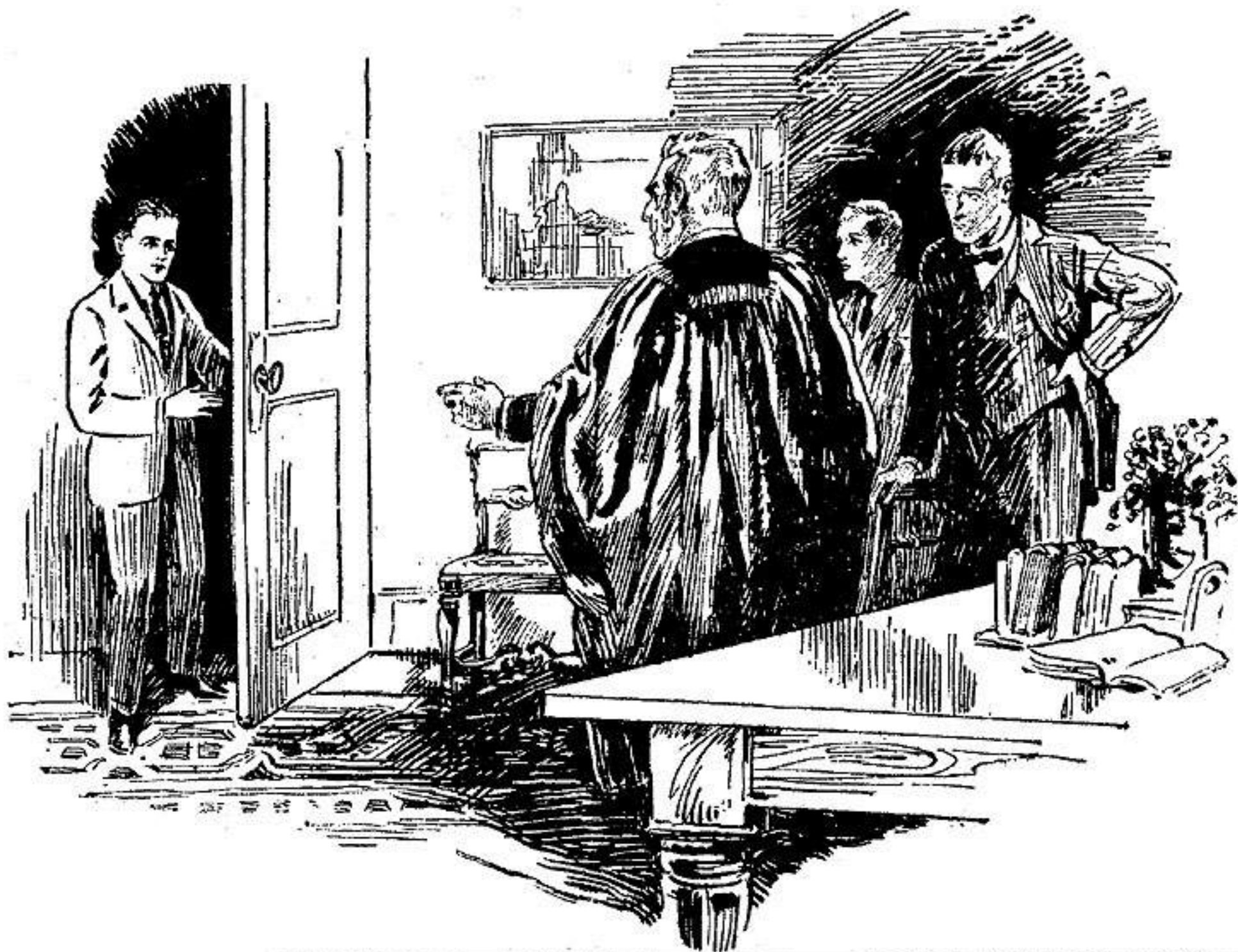
"And he's quite right, my boy," put in Locke kindly. "I've heard all about you from my young assistant here."

"This is Mr. Ferrers Locke, the famous detective," said Dr. Quill. "You've heard of him, of course?"

But Gordon Carr only shook his head wearily.

"I don't know," he replied. "I can't remember anything!"

Dr. Quill looked meaningfully at Locke, who nodded and made a quick sign. The medico turned and left the room.



The door of the Head's study was almost flung open, and Norfield, the captain of the school, stood on the threshold. "Norfield!" exclaimed Dr. Lampton. "What—what—I can't see you now, I'm engaged." "I know that," said Norfield. "I know that you're waiting for Mr. Mardyke. But he's nowhere to be found—he's disappeared!" (See page 24.)

Ferrers Locke saw at once that it would be useless to try to question the boy or to explain what had actually happened. It was painfully obvious that Gordon Carr's mind was an utter blank.

All he could remember was the fact that he had been saved from some dire peril by Jack Drake. Events which had happened prior to this were absolutely unknown to him.

After a few moments of quiet conversation, designed to place the boy at his ease, Locke ventured to touch upon the Golden Pyramid.

"You don't remember your name, or anything about what has happened to you," he said kindly. "Yet you seem to be worrying about something called the Golden Pyramid. Tell us about that."

Gordon Carr's eyes gleamed for a moment, but the next instant the old, worried look had returned to them.

"I can't tell you anything, sir," he said. "It's the just the name—'The Golden Pyramid'—that keeps going through my mind."

"You've heard it somewhere?" suggested Locke, looking intently at him.

"I must have done," came the response; "but for the life of me I can't place it. It's a funny name, too, isn't it? Egyptian, it sounds like. I wonder what it means?"

And he passed his hand wearily over his head.

"Do you think it refers to this?"

Locke spoke quietly, but the words and his subsequent action electrified Drake, for the detective had suddenly whipped the tiny golden emblem from his pocket,

and now held it up between finger and thumb for the boy to see. It gleamed and sparkled in the light from the window, and Gordon Carr gaped at it wonderingly.

"My hat, that's a dinky-looking article, sir!" he exclaimed excitedly.

"It's a Golden Pyramid," said Locke softly, watching Carr's face closely.

"A Golden Pyramid!" echoed Carr suddenly. "Yes, of course; that's what he was talking about. 'We must get hold of that Golden Pyramid,' he said in a sort of husky whisper; 'whatever the cost, we must get hold of it.'"

"Yes?" urged Locke tensely. "And what then?"

The boy stared at him dazedly for a moment, opened his lips as if about to speak, and then fell back on the pillows with a weary sigh.

"It—it's gone," he muttered despairingly. "I—I can't remember any more!"

For a moment Locke remained silent, wrapped in thought. Then he turned quickly to the boy.

"Perhaps I can help you," he said with a smile. "Just listen to me carefully. You say that someone said something about getting hold of a Golden Pyramid?"

"That's right, sir," nodded Carr interestedly; "but—"

"Wait a minute!" Locke held up his hand. "I'm going to suggest to you that what you heard was something like this."

And then he did something that even made Jack Drake gasp in astonishment. There was a momentary silence. Then

Jack wondered if his ears were playing him tricks. For the words that next came from Locke's lips were so astounding, both in their meaning and their expression, that they took his breath away.

"We've got to land that Golden Pyramid somehow, by hook or by crook. And we've got to do something to put this young fool Carr safely out of our way. I've already fixed that meddling fellow Rennie—"

The words came from Locke's lips, but they were spoken in the voice of Mr. Mardyke, the Fifth Form master.

Jack positively gaped.

He knew that the famous detective was gifted in many ways, but this was the first time he had ever experienced Locke's amazing power of mimicry. The voice was marvellously lifelike—low pitched, almost husky, with just that trace of a guttural snarl which was so completely characteristic of the master. It was astounding—uncanny!

And apparently it had the effect which Locke had hoped it would have.

Gordon Carr listened, at first interestedly, and then with gradually widening eyes. And as the voice went slowly on, intoning the words with just that queer, husky whisper, Carr's eyes dilated, the blood drained from his face, and he cowered back, his hands beating wildly before his face.

"It's Mardyke! Keep him away! He's a fiend—an inhuman fiend!" he almost screamed.

Locke sprang forward quickly.

"Don't alarm yourself, my boy," he said. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 899.

said softly, speaking now in his natural voice. "It was just a little imitation. But I'm glad it worked. It has helped you to remember at last!"

Gordon Carr still stared distrustfully at the detective, but under the soothing influence of the detective's words he grew calmer, and at length he lay quiet.

"I could have sworn it was Mardyke!" he muttered at last. "Are you quite sure—"

And his eyes began to rove distractedly round the room as if half expecting the sinister figure of the Fifth Form master to appear out of the shadows.

"Mr. Mardyke is nowhere near here, Carr," said Locke gently. "It was just a little imitation, on my part, of his voice. I thought that if you heard it again it might serve to awaken your memory—"

"It's a wonderful imitation, sir!" cut in Carr, admiration in his gaze. "It quite took me in. But as you say, it has helped no end. Mr. Mardyke was keeping me a prisoner in that awful underground cell—"

"That's right," urged Locke, encouragingly. "And why was he keeping you there?"

"Because—because—"

He seemed to be straining visibly at the chords of his memory, but at last he gave up.

"It's no use," he said miserably. "I can't remember anything else. I only know that he caught me and knocked me out, and then, when I came round, I heard him talking, as if to himself, about getting rid of me and finding the Golden Pyramid. And he did say something about Mr. Rennie, too!"

Locke turned to Drake.

"We've done remarkably well," he said softly, "and I think we'd better let matters rest where they are for the moment. We'll come back again later and see if we can help him to remember more. It might upset him and make him ill to go on any further just now."

With a few further words of cheer to Gordon Carr, Locke left the room, followed by Jack Drake.

They met Dr. Quill in the passage, but said nothing of what they had done.

"I have sent a telegram to Sir Richard Deane," said Dr. Quill, "the famous mental specialist, you know. I expect he'll be down here before long."

"Good!" nodded Locke. "I hope he will be able to do something for the boy. I think it is at worst only a temporary lapse, and he will eventually regain his memory completely. You will, of course, keep me informed of how he progresses? I shall be at the school for the rest of the day, and after that perhaps you'd better either phone or wire to my Baker Street address."

They made their way back to Stormpoint in silence, Jack Drake wondering to himself what Locke had meant by that last remark to Dr. Quill.

The detective had said that he would be at Stormpoint College for the rest of the day, but that afterwards Dr. Quill had better communicate direct to Baker Street.

That meant that Locke had some idea of returning to London. But why?

Jack glanced covertly at the detective as they sat in the White Hawk, Locke's speedy racing-car. But he decided not to ask any questions. It was apparent that Locke was not in a talkative mood, and to try to make him speak would be fruitless.

When they alighted at Stormpoint College Locke went straight to the sanny, where he was pleased to find that Mr. Rennie had recovered sufficiently to be able to make a brief statement.

Dr. Kennedy granted Locke and Drake ten minutes only with his patient, impressing upon them that it might be dangerous to remain longer, as Mr. Rennie, although now fully conscious and fairly comfortable, was in a weak state, and had a temperature which was somewhat rocky.

But Locke did not remain with the stricken master more than half that time, at the end of which he had obtained a very brief but illuminating statement from him.

The gist of Mr. Rennie's statement was simply this:

One evening about a fortnight previously, he had been returning from a visit to Harchester on his cycle, when he saw a light moving about in the ruins of Stormpoint Abbey.

Being surprised at seeing such a thing—for the ruins were ordinarily completely deserted, especially at night—he had dismounted and crossed the stretch of grass to the summit of the

hill on which the ruins were perched, with a view to investigating the cause.

He had then glimpsed a figure which, apparently, had seen him at the same time and decamped at a run, as if afraid of being recognised. Mr. Rennie had not recognised the figure, for the night was dark and there was no moon.

His suspicions aroused, Mr. Rennie had returned to the ruins the following night, and the figure appeared again. It was that of a medium-sized man, carrying a small suit-case, and, even as Mr. Rennie watched, the figure seemed to disappear into the very earth itself.

The Remove master had waited, and after about twenty minutes the figure had reappeared. Mr. Rennie had a vague idea that there was something familiar about the man's outline, but he could not just place it. In his desire to get a better view, he made a noise which disturbed the mysterious man, who, catching sight of Mr. Rennie, had again fled precipitately.

The next day Mr. Rennie had received an amazing letter, warning him to keep clear of Stormpoint Abbey and to give up his interest in the disappearance of Gordon Carr, who was one of the boys in his Form and a young fellow in whom he was especially interested.

Mr. Rennie had at first intended reporting this to the Head, but afterwards decided to do a little detective work on his own.

He had thereupon paid several more visits to Stormpoint Abbey, but without success, and then one night the mysterious man had turned up again, this time carrying a hurricane-lantern, the rays from which had clearly revealed his features. And Mr. Rennie had been astounded to see that it was Mr. Mardyke, the Fifth Form master.

Mr. Rennie had forthwith challenged the master, who, however, again broke into a run and disappeared.

Next day a further letter of warning had come to the Remove master, and he had gone at once to see Mr. Mardyke and had openly accused him of sending the letter.

Mr. Mardyke had at first angrily denied this, and then, in a paroxysm of fury, had set upon the Remove master. There had been a struggle, but Mr. Rennie had broken free, and had then told Mr. Mardyke that he would go straight to Dr. Lampton and report what had happened.

He had then crossed to the door, but even as he had been on the point of opening it, he had felt a sudden terrible blow on the back of the head, which had knocked him into unconsciousness.

The next thing he remembered was being in the loft above the box-room, with his hands and feet securely fastened with cord and a cruel gag thrust between his teeth.

Mr. Mardyke had come up to see him on one or two occasions, and had brought him a little food, temporarily loosening his bonds to enable him to eat and drink, and then re-fastening them.

But the food had been inadequate, and the long period of exposure, coupled with the blow on the head and the suffering he had endured, tied up helpless in the loft, had sapped his strength till he had sunk into unconsciousness. In that state he had been found by Locke and Drake.

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That, in effect, was the Remove master's story, and though it was necessarily incomplete, it yet shed some useful light on the mystery and added yet one more link to the chain which was slowly but surely being forged against the unscrupulous Fifth Form master.

Ferrers Locke went at once, with Jack Drake, to Dr. Lampton's study, where the detective quickly outlined what had transpired since the morning, mentioning his interview with Gordon Carr and his attempts to restore the boy's memory.

He then briefly sketched the salient points of Mr. Rennie's story, which he had taken down in shorthand at the time, to all of which the Head listened with open-mouthed amazement.

"And what do you make of it all, Mr. Locke?" asked Dr. Lampton, as the elucidator concluded. "What is the meaning of the disappearance of young Carr, the attack on his father, and the kidnapping of Mr. Rennie? It's all a baffling enigma to me!"

"I'm afraid it is to everyone," smiled Locke, "though I have personally formulated a theory which I shall now proceed to test without further delay."

"May I ask what that theory is?" "Certainly," returned Locke; "but I'm afraid it won't help you much. It is necessarily incomplete, and I must remind you that it is purely hypothetical."

"Briefly, my theory is this: Gerald Bristow, Sir Merton Carr's nephew, who was once a scholar at this College, has recently come back to England from South Africa, where he was staying under his uncle's patronage, Sir Merton having found him a post in Johannesburg with a view to keeping him to the straight path."

"Bristow—unable, I suppose, to resist that queer twist in his nature which has caused him to turn to crime—overthrew his uncle's restraint, returned here and got mixed up once more with the shady characters who had previously landed him in trouble. Maybe he resumed his old game of robbing large country houses—you will remember that of late there has been a positive epidemic of burglaries in various parts of the country, particularly in Hampshire and in Devon."

"The burglars have never been caught and the loot has never been traced. My theory is that young Carr, in wandering about, perhaps while on a stroll to or from Harchester during a school 'half,' accidentally discovered the secret crypt under the ruins of Stormpoint Abbey, and surprised either Bristow or one of his cronies, who promptly took the boy prisoner to prevent him from talking about what he had found."

"The abbey crypt was unknown to anyone here, according to what you yourself have told me. But it must have been known to Bristow, probably when he was a scholar at the college—which was not so very long ago, remember—and it must have been known to Mardyke, who obviously is in league with Bristow."

"That sounds a reasonable enough argument," agreed the Head, "but what about the attack on Sir Merton?"

"I think that is explainable, too," said Locke. "Sir Merton, hearing from you that his son had disappeared, and knowing that Bristow had decamped to his old haunts, had come post haste to England, doubtless worried lest perhaps Bristow had somehow got Gordon Carr entangled in some of his crooked schemes."

"Just why Sir Merton went direct from London to Dartmoor is still a

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mystery—perhaps he made an important discovery in London—he may even have run across Bristow or one of his pals.

"But, anyway, he went there, and apparently did the very same thing that his son did—he surprised Bristow and his confederates, probably stumbling unexpectedly on that cave in the rocks where I found some of the loot, and was attacked in the night by one of Bristow's accomplices—the man Hobbs, I believe. But why Sir Merton should have suddenly begged me to give up the case, and why he should himself have disappeared again of his own free will is, I admit, beyond me for the moment."

"It is the most extraordinary series of events I've ever heard of," said the Head. "Why, it—it's like one of those detective stories that I sometimes catch Terry or one of his young friends reading—"

"And which you sometimes read yourself, on the quiet, I'll be bound!" suggested Locke, with a mischievous smile.

"I plead guilty to that, Locke," answered the Head, with a laugh. "It's a little weakness I share with some of my boys! But, tell me, what are you going to do now?"

"I'm going to have a prowling round Mr. Mardyke's room if I may," said Locke. "I've got a strong suspicion that he has decamped for London, but I'd like to see if I can prove it."

"By all means," returned the Head at once. "I'll ring for the page—"

"Please don't trouble," interposed Locke, rising. "Both Drake and I know Stormpoint well enough to find our own way—and we'd rather go about it as free from observation as possible, if you don't mind."

They left the Head's study a moment later, and made their way at once to the room previously occupied by Mr. Mardyke, where Locke at once began a thorough and systematic search of the apartment.

At the end of an hour the search had produced nothing beyond four London bus tickets and a strand of what looked like hemp, which Locke had picked from the fold in a pair of trousers that the Fifth Form master had left behind. Jack Drake looked disconsolate.

"A lot of information we've found here. I don't think!" he growled.

"On the contrary," smiled Locke, "I fancy we've done very well."

Jack Drake stared at the detective.

"What—with those wretched old bus tickets, and—"

"And this fragment of rope—yes," returned Locke, still smiling. "The bus tickets, you will observe, are punched in each case at a point very close to the Surrey Docks, which means that Mardyke was in the habit of visiting this locality fairly regularly. And this fragment of rope can have come from only one quarter, and that is London's dockland. I think if we hurry back to London and undertake a little prowling in the East End, we may stumble across friend Mardyke sneaking about either in one of the back streets adjacent to the Surrey Docks, or—what is more likely—a chop suey joint near Limehouse Causeway."

Jack Drake positively blinked in astonishment.

"How on earth—?" he began.

"Easy, old top," laughed Locke, vastly amused by his young colleague's amazement. "Just another example of putting two and two together. They always make four. Not once now and then, but very time, as I've mentioned before."

He suddenly reached out and dragged a waistcoat from the cupboard in Mr. Mardyke's room. Then he turned one of the pockets inside out, and, with the blade of his penknife, began to scrape at the fabric of the lining.

In a few moments a few grains of greyish-white powder fell into his outstretched palm.

"I was studying that waistcoat while you were ferreting about in the fire-grate," he went on, "and I noticed this stuff then, but I didn't bother to collect any of it. However, as you appear to be such a doubting Thomas, I'll make you a present of it. But if you're wise you'll throw it away."

"What is it?" asked Jack, staring at the tiny grains in surprise.

"Opium," answered Locke tersely. "And now, if you don't mind, we'll get a move on, or old Mardyke will again slip through our fingers!"

(Will the Fifth Form master prove too clever for Ferrers Locke, or will he meet with his just reward? Next week's long instalment of this fine serial will give you the answer. Mind you read it, boys!)

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PLAYING THE GOAT!

(Continued from page 20.)

"You've chucked the game away!"

"That's quite enough, Vernon-Smith!" answered Temple, with a wave of the hand. "Cheese it!"

"You crass dummy—"

"I tell you that's enough! I hardly think I shall play you again."

The Bounder laughed savagely.

"You won't!" he said. "I'd rather chuck cricket for good than be found dead in such a crew of duds. Take that, you dummy!"

Crash!

"Whoop!" roared Temple.

He went over backwards.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Harry Wharton.

Peter Todd chuckled.

"I should have won that bet!" he remarked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple leaped up again, his face aflame. Temple might be a dud, and an

ass, and no cricketer; but he had plenty of pluck. He fairly leaped at the Bounder, and the Greyfriars fellows were treated to the unusual sight of a desperate scrap following a cricket match.

But the other fellows closed round and dragged them apart, and walked them off the field in different directions.

Harry Wharton looked into Study No. 4 that evening after prep. He found the Bounder looking ghastly and gloomy, and Tom Redwing rather troubled. Vernon-Smith met the captain of the Remove with a sneering look.

"You've come along to rub it in?" he asked. "Go it!"

"Not exactly," said Harry. "I've come along to ask you whether you're fed-up with playing the goat, Smirby. If you are, your old place in the Remove eleven is open to you."

"Oh!" exclaimed the Bounder, taken quite aback.

Wharton smiled.

"You've played the goat, Smirby;

but I haven't forgotten that not so very long ago I was playing the goat. We all make a bad break at times. What do you say, shall we wash it all out and start fresh, with your name down for the St. Jude's match?"

The Bounder was silent for a full minute. Then his grim face relaxed, and he smiled.

"You're a good chap, Wharton. I'm sorry! You only gave me what I asked for, and it served me right! I'll be jolly glad to let bygones be bygones."

"It's a go, then," said Harry; and, with a cheery nod, he left the study.

"That's good, Smirby, old man," said Tom Redwing brightly. "I'm jolly glad."

"Thanks, old chap! I'm finished with playing the goat."

It was the end of the split in the Remove.

THE END.

(Now look out for "Buck Up, Bunter!"—next Monday's ripping Greyfriars story.)



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