

Read Geo. E. Rochester's Brilliant "Foreign Legion" Story To-day!

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The MAGNET

EVERY SATURDAY.

2^d



Good-Bye, Bunter!

BUNTER ACTS THE GOAT!

"Whoop! Ow-wow-yow!" gasped Gerald Loder, as Billy Bunter's bullet head struck him amidships with a sickening thud. (An amusing incident from "Good-bye, Bunter!"—the grand school story of Greyfriars—inside.)



Come Into the Office, Boys!

Always glad to hear from you, chums, so drop me a line to the following address :
The Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House,
Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

WHOOSH! The first letter I have picked up this week comes from a reader who has been

SEEING STARS!

No, he hasn't been having an argument with a fellow who was bigger than himself, but he has certainly been star-gazing, and he has noticed that some stars are coloured. Is it possible, he asks, to recognise stars by their colours? I wouldn't advise anyone to try without a powerful telescope, but it certainly is a fact that different stars have different colours. Castor, for instance, is yellowish-green, while other stars—I won't worry you with their names—are mixtures of purple, blue, green, yellow, and white. The planet Mars sometimes looks quite red—even to the naked eye. It might interest my reader to know that the speed of coloured stars can be deduced by the slight changes in their colours.

I must confess that I had to take the next question to "Mr. X" to answer. It comes from one of those readers who occasionally try to pull my leg—and he very nearly succeeded! This is his question:

WHAT IS A VEDRO?

At first I thought he was referring to the famous bloodhound owned by Sexton Blake, but, to make sure, I asked "Mr. X." He never even blinked! "A Vedro," he said "is ten Shtoffs, or one hundred Tcharkas!" Naturally, I was as wise as when I started, but, seeing my bewilderment, he explained.

Shtoffs and Tcharkas, and so on, are, apparently, Russian measures, and a Vedro is just under three gallons! My hat! Aren't you glad you don't go to school in Russia? Fancy having to repeat such things as: "Sixteen vershoks, one arshin: three arshins, one sajen: five hundred sajens, one verst!" If Billy Bunter had that table to memorise, he'd probably finish up with: "One burst!"

And,

TALKING OF BILLY BUNTER,

here's a poser which Dicky Nugent propounded to me the last time I saw him. "What is the difference," he asked, "between a riddle, and Billy and Sammy Bunter sitting on a bun?" I don't believe in encouraging Master Dicky, but I fell for this one. "It's simple," he said. "A riddle's a conundrum, and the other is a bun-under-em!" Then he fled—which was a good thing for him!

HOWEVER, now that we are "in lighter vein," as the poets say, we'll have a chuckle at this yarn which H. B. Orr, of 33, Ardenlee Avenue, Belfast, Ireland, has sent along—and which earns him a useful MAGNET penknife.

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A DREAM THAT DIDN'T COME TRUE!



"I dreamt last night, uncle, that you gave me sixpence," said little Willie artfully, and then stood waiting expectantly.

"Well," replied his uncle, chuckling, "as you have been a good boy lately, I'll let you keep it!"



That diary of mine is really an interesting little book, and gives me quite a lot of useful information. For instance—but wait a bit! Have you ever been told to

GO TO JERICO?

Well, according to my diary, a party of British soldiers were told to go to Jericho twelve years ago. They did, with the result that Jericho was captured by our troops twelve years ago this Friday. I daresay many old readers of the MAGNET were numbered amongst them, for this little paper of ours was well in evidence on every one of the fronts during the War!

And here's a bit of information which should be kept dark from Dicky Nugent. This Saturday is a general holiday in the United States, because February 22nd was Washington's birthday. If Dicky hears that, he's got cheek enough to suggest that he should have a holiday as well!

ANOTHER piece of information for those of you who are Scouts. It's the Chief Scout's birthday on Saturday, too! He'll be 73 years of age, and he can certainly look back upon

A LIFE OF ADVENTURE.

Lord Baden-Powell was a great figure in the Boer War, and he was the man who held Mafeking against the Boers. After that war he organised the South African Constabulary, and later he returned to England to organise and train territorials. He was "some" organiser, and when he decided to found the Boy Scouts' movement, he left the Army to devote himself to the Scouts. In those days he never realised that it would grow to be such a tremendous thing. Last year he was made a peer—and I think you'll agree that he deserved it!

Question time, now! Let 'em all come!

Harry Derwent, of Cambridge, wants to know something about

THE BIGGEST THINGS IN THE WORLD.

He says the Americans are always bragging about the size of things in that country, and wants to know whether they hold all the records for bigness. Not by a long chalk! They have the tallest building in the world (Crane Building, Chicago) and the largest railway station

in the world (New York Central); but here are some "largest" records which they don't possess:

Largest Ship in the world: Majestic (British).

Largest Island in the world: Greenland (Danish).

Longest River in the world: Amazon (Brazil).

Longest Bridge in the world: Tay Bridge (Scotland).

Longest Canal in the world: Gota (Sweden).

Highest Mountain in the world: Everest (Himalayas).

Largest City in the world: London.

So, you see, the United States haven't got it all their own way!

WE'VE just got time for another laugh before I consult the black book. This limerick has earned a pocket wallet for "MAGNET Reader" of 14, Anderson Avenue, Gledhow Road, Leeds, Yorks.

Said Skinner to Snoopey one day:
"I'm having a 'fiver' each way."
He said: "It's a 'snip,'"
So Snoopey backed the "tip,"
And now there's the "bookie" to pay!

— — —

THERE'S a treat in store for you next week. Frank Richards, as usual, is in fine fettle, and when you've read:

"THE GREYFRIARS CRACKSMAN!"

you'll put down your copy with regret—regret that the story was not twice as long! Don't commence to read it unless you've got plenty of time to do so, because you'll be annoyed if anyone interrupts you in the middle of it, and spoils your enjoyment of as fine a yarn as we have ever published.

Then there's our brilliant new serial

"FOR THE GLORY OF FRANCE!"

I knew this yarn would prove to be deservedly popular with you, and I haven't been disappointed. Next week's instalment will grip you—so don't fail to read it.

Another treat in store for you next week, chums, is No. 1 in a series of MAGNET "Talkies," by William Wibley, of the Remove, the first of which will displace the usual "Dicky Nugent" shocker. In these "quick action" yarns you'll meet Jack Hanley, the slickest cowboy who ever rode the prairie. Jack's up against the toughest gang of rustlers in Kansas City, and his many thrilling encounters will hold you spellbound. You'll like this new feature, chums, believe me. Another point of interest about these "Talkies" is that they may be acted by any MAGNET readers who are keen on the dramatic art, so they will thus serve a double purpose.

To wind up the programme, there'll be another interesting "footer" article by "Old Ref," together with my usual invitation to "Come into the Office, Boys!"

YOUR EDITOR.

SEND ALONG YOUR JOKE OR YOUR GREYFRIARS LIMERICK—OR BOTH—AND WIN OUR USEFUL PRIZES OF LEATHER POCKET WALLET AND SHEFFIELD STEEL PENKNIVES. ALL EFFORTS TO BE SENT TO c/o "MAGNET," 5, CARMELITE STREET, LONDON, E.C.4 (COMP.).



GOOD-BYE, BUNTER!



Featuring your old favourites, Harry Wharton & Co., the Cheery Chums of Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Not a Success!

BOO-HOO!" "What the thump—" "Boo-hoo-hoo!" "Bunter—"

"Boo-hoo-hoo!"

Billy Bunter was blubbing!

He sat in the armchair in Study No. 1 in the Remove, with his fat hands before his fat face, blubbing!

Harry Wharton & Co. stared into the study.

It was time for prep, and the Famous Five had come up to the Remove passage. That sound of lamentation burst upon them as Wharton threw open the door of Study No. 1.

They stared at Bunter—not sympathetically.

Remove men were not supposed to blub. Even Bunter did not blub as a rule. Neither did there seem any reason why he should have chosen Study No. 1 to blub in, instead of his own study, if he was bent on blubbing.

But there he was—going strong!

"You silly ass!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Boo-hoo!"

"For goodness' sake, dry up!" snapped Frank Nugent.

"Boo-hoo!"

Wharton and Nugent entered the study. Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh, who had been about to pass along to their own quarters, stopped to gaze at the interesting sight.

"Wherefore the waterworks?" asked Bob.

"Boo-hoo!"

"The water-workfulness is terrific," remarked Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh. "What is the absurd matterfulness, my esteemed, idiotic Bunter?"

"Boo-hoo!"

"When a fellow blubs," said Johnny Bull, "it's a good idea to give him something to blub for! What about six with a five bat?"

"Oh, really, Bull—"

Bunter removed his fat hands from his face.

"I say, you fellows— Boo-hoo-hoo!"

"My hat! There he goes again! Has Steele licked you for not doing your lines?" demanded Wharton.

"No! Boo-hoo!"

"Loder been ragging you?"

"No! Boo-hoo!"

"Well, go and blub in your own study, you fat chump!"

"That beast Toddy's so unsympathetic!" said Bunter. "Boo-hoo! I—I expected sympathy here! Boo-hoo!"

"Well, you won't get any, so you may as well bunk!" said the captain of the Remove. "Ain't you jolly well ashamed of yourself, blubbing like a fag in the Second?"

"Boo-hoo!"

"Bump him!" said Johnny Bull.

"Beast! Boo-hoo!"

"Hold on!" said Harry. "There may be something the matter—bad news from home, or something. Is that it, Bunter?"

"That's it!" groaned Bunter. "Boo-hoo-hoo!"

Whereupon, the Famous Five, who had been prepared to give William George Bunter something to blub for,

They're sending Billy Bunter home on a rest . . . because he knows too much! And yet Billy's the biggest dunce at Greyfriars!

refrained. They were ready to bestow sympathy where sympathy was due.

Billy Bunter had been in trouble that day.

It had been a half-holiday for the Remove—excepting Bunter. Bunter had spent it, till tea-time, in the Form-room, writing lines.

Lines had accumulated on Bunter as thick as leaves in Vallambrosa. Bunter's excuses for not getting them done were many and various.

Mr. Steele, the new master of the Remove, had been very easy-going with Bunter. But that afternoon he had put his foot down.

Bunter had been sent to the Form-room, to sit there till he had wiped off his arrears of lines. As five hundred had accumulated, it looked like being a busy afternoon for Bunter.

A severe licking was to be his reward if the lines were not handed in before prep. Any other fellow would have bucked up and got them done. But Bunter's objection to work was constitutional. By tea-time he had written fifty. After tea he had not felt equal to

writing any more. And as it was now time for prep the threatened licking was suspended over Bunter's head like the sword of Damocles.

The first impression of the Co. when they found Bunter blubbing was that he had had his licking and found it uncomfortable. But that, apparently, was not the case.

They gazed at Bunter.

The fat junior blinked at them woefully through his big spectacles.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Well, give it a name!" said Bob Cherry. "What's the matter?"

"Boo-hoo!"

"Somebody ill?" asked Harry.

"Yes! It—it's awful! My—my poor old pater—" Bunter gave a deep groan.

The juniors looked serious enough now.

Family affection, so far as they had observed, was not highly developed in the Bunter tribe; so something very serious, apparently, must have happened to plunge the Owl of the Remove into this state of grief.

"Tell us about it, old chap," said Harry Wharton, quite sympathetic now.

"Blubbing won't do much good, but—"

"You see, it's so awful!" groaned Bunter. "My p-p-p-poor old pater! C-c-cut off in the bloom of his youth, you know! Boo-hoo!"

"An accident?" asked Frank Nugent.

"That's it! A—a frightful accident! R-r-run over by a motor-bus! Oh dear!"

"Poor old chap!"

"When the—the telegram came it fairly knocked me over!" said Bunter. "Boohoo! I'm not a fellow to blub, as you know. Boo-hoo! But to think of my poor old pater run over by a taxicab— Boo-hoo!"

"A taxicab?" ejaculated Johnny Bull.

"I mean a motor-bus! Boo-hoo!" blubbed Bunter. "He was in a taxicab, you know, when the accident happened. They've taken him to hospital, and—and— Boo-hoo! He may recover. But—but I can't help being overcome with grief! Boo-hoo!"

Bunter covered his face with his hands again and gurgled with woe.

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"Awfully sorry, old chap!" said Harry. "You must hope for the best, you know. Was it a collision?"

"That's it! The taxicab—I mean the motor-bus rushed right into the pater's Rolls—"

"His Rolls?" ejaculated Bob.

"Yes; and smashed it to—to a thousand fragments—"

"But you said he was in a taxicab."

"D-d-did I? I—I meant he was in the Rolls. My pater always goes up to the City in his Rolls, you know. Boo-hoo! Now he's lying in the hospital, and—"

"While you're lying here!" said Johnny Bull, with a grunt.

"Oh, really, you beast—"

"Dash it all, cheese it, Johnny old chap!" said Bob Cherry uneasily. "This isn't a joking matter!"

"Isn't it?" grunted Johnny Bull. "I don't know why Bunter's gammoning, but he is gammoning! His pater can't have been in his Rolls and in a taxicab at the same time!"

"I—I'm so overcome with grief that I hardly know what I'm saying," groaned Bunter. "I—I c-c-can't help thinking of my poor old pater under the awful wheels of that lorry—"

"A lorry?" yelled Johnny Bull.

"I mean the taxicab—that is, the motor-bus! It's rather unfeeling to catch a fellow up like that, Bull, when he's heartbroken! Boo-hoo!"

"Well, if it's true, I'm sorry," said Johnny Bull. "But—"

"Boo-hoo! I don't expect any sympathy from you, Bull. You're a beast like Toddy. Boo-hoo! I say, Harry, old chap, will you do something for me? Boo-hoo!"

"Certainly!" said Harry. "What is it, old chap?"

"I've got to go to Steele. Of course, I can't bother about Steele now, now I've had this awful news. Will you go to Steele and tell him? Boo-hoo!"

"Yes, of course," said Wharton.

"Tell him I haven't been able to do my lines, because—because I'm so cut up about my pip-pip-poor old pater!" sobbed Bunter. "He will understand when he knows that a fellow's pater is lying at death's door. Boo-hoo! My pip-pip-poor old pip-pip-pater—"

"That's all right, kid," said Wharton soothingly. "I'll go and tell Steele at once. Don't worry about that."

And Harry Wharton left the study. Bunter's lines were overdue, and it was possible that Mr. Steele might be looking for him at any moment, most likely with a cane. Bunter had enough to bear without that.

Wharton hurried down the passage towards the Remove staircase. The other fellows remained with Bunter; three of them very sympathetic, but Johnny Bull in a doubtful frame of mind.

"Look here, is it straight, Bunter?" demanded Johnny.

"Boo-hoo! Just like you to doubt a fellow's word," said Bunter. "It's unfeeling! It's c-c-cruel!"

"Well, if this is a dodge to get out of a licking—"

"Boo-hoo!"

"Oh, chuck it, Johnny!" said Nugent. Johnny Bull grunted.

"I'm only giving Bunter a tip," he said. "If it's the gammon, Steele's bound to find it out!"

Bunter started.

"Wharrer you mean?" he demanded.

"Why, you ass, next time your father writes to the school, Steele will know he hasn't been killed under a motor-bus."

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He jumped up from the armchair THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,149,

and rushed to the door. The juniors stared after him.

"I say, Wharton!" yelled Bunter.

But Wharton was already down the stairs. With a gasp of alarm Billy Bunter rushed down the Remove staircase.

"Wharton—I say, Wharton!" bawled Bunter.

On the lower staircase Harry Wharton stopped, and looked round.

"Hold on!" gasped Bunter.

"What—"

"It—it wasn't my pater, it—it was my uncle!" gasped Bunter.

"Wha-a-a-t?"

"Mum-my uncle! Remember that! M-m-my poor uncle—"

"Your poor uncle!" repeated the captain of the Remove dazedly.

"Yes," gasped Bunter. "My—my poor uncle was run over by a taxicab—I mean an omnibus. Tell Steele my uncle, not my pater. Mind you don't make a mistake—uncle, you know. My Uncle George."

Harry Wharton gazed at the Owl of the Remove dumbfounded. Billy Bunter blinked at him anxiously.

"You understand? My uncle—not my pater. See? I—I made a mistake—being overcome with grief, you know."

"I meant my uncle all along. Now go and tell Steele; he will be looking for me soon. Mind you tell him my uncle."

Harry Wharton did not descend the stairs further. Instead, he ascended them. Bunter blinked at him.

"I—I say, old chap, ain't you going to Steele, to tell him about my poor old pater—I mean my poor old uncle? I say—Yarooooooh!"

Wharton grasped the fat junior by the collar. All his sympathy had evaporated. There was a heavy bump as Billy Bunter sat down.

"Ow! Leggo, you beast! Yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

"You fat villain!" gasped Wharton.

"Yow-ow-ow!" Leggo!"

Bang!

Billy Bunter uttered a fiendish yell as his bullet head was tapped on the stairs. The captain of the Remove went back to the Remove passage and left him yelling.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Artful Bunter!

"TODDY, old fellow!"

"Shut up!"

"Dear old Toddy!" said Bunter.

Billy Bunter's tone was affectionate; but the look on Peter Todd's face showed that this was a case of unreciprocated affection.

The look he gave William George Bunter across the table in Study No. 7 was almost homicidal.

Peter was busy.

Before him lay a sheet of impot paper. And Toddy's pen had been travelling hard. Toddy, like Bunter, had lines to do. Unlike Bunter, he was getting them done.

That afternoon, a snowball hurled by Toddy, had, perhaps by accident, caught Loder of the Sixth behind the ear. Toddy had expected "six" after that accident. Toddy was tough, and considered it worth six from the asphalt to catch Loder so beautifully behind the ear. But Loder, instead of giving Toddy six, which he would not have minded very much, had given him a heavy impot, which he minded very much indeed. Four hundred lines was the sum, and if they were not handed in that evening, Toddy was booked for the six all the same—with the lines still to be done. So Toddy was working at

express speed, perhaps wishing that his snowball had missed the bully of the Sixth.

This state of affairs, of course, did not worry Bunter. Toddy's troubles were nothing to him. His own troubles filled his fat mind. If Toddy got a licking from Loder of the Sixth, it was, of course, unfortunate. But what really mattered was, whether Bunter got a licking from Mr. Steele. That was a matter of the very deepest concern.

Toddy, with the selfishness to which Bunter was sadly accustomed, did not seem to see it. He was thinking of his own troubles, rassing Bunter's by like the idle wind which he regarded not.

He glared at Bunter—actually glared, utterly unmoved by the fat Owl's affectionate tones. Then he resumed scribbling.

Bunter, of course, was not to be deterred by a glare. Toddy did not understand that Bunter's trouble was a serious matter, while his own was a trifle light as air. And the Owl of the Remove had to make it clear to him. He proceeded to do so.

"Dear old chap!" said Bunter. "Hold on a minute, Toddy!"

"Shut up!"

"Oh, really, old fellow—"

"Quiet!"

"I've been up and down the Remove," said Bunter, "but I've come back to my old pal. After all, there's nothing like a real old pal in time of trouble, is there, Toddy? I've always liked you, old chap, from the first day you came to Greyfriars."

"Cheese it!"

"I have, Toddy. I remember telling Wharton, the first day, that you were the right sort and that looks weren't everything."

"You fat frump, how can I write while you're wagging your fat chin at me?" shrieked Peter. "Go and gabble to somebody else."

"It's about my uncle, Peter," explained Bunter. "I want somebody to go to Steele and tell him that my poor uncle has been run over by a taxi-bus—I mean a motor-taxi—that is, a motor-bus. Being overcome with grief, I haven't been able to do my lines."

"You fat villain!"

"Steele may be after me any minute now, old chap. You wouldn't like to see me licked, would you?" asked Bunter.

"Yes, rather! Hard!" hissed Toddy.

"Beast!"

Toddy's pen scratched on. He was near the end of his long t-sk; and there was no doubt that his temper had suffered. If he was late with his impot, Loder would be glad of the chance of giving him the licking in addition. Peter was working against time now.

"Look here, Toddy—"

"Quiet!" howled Peter. "I've got to get this impot to Loder, or take six after doing the lines. Understand, fathead? Now shut up!"

Bunter sniffed.

"You're making a lot of fuss about a licking," he said. "After all, what's six?"

"If I had time to handle a fives bat, I'd show you!" booted Peter.

"If you're going to be a beast, Toddy, I—"

"Will you dry up?"

"But you don't seem to understand," said Bunter. "I've done fifty lines out of five hundred, and Steele may be after me any minute. Wharton's refused to go and tell him about the accident to my poor father—I mean my poor uncle—so—"

Peter Todd jumped up. He dived towards the armchair and grabbed a cushion. Bunter blinked at him.

"I say, Toddy," said Bunter, "I want somebody to tell Steele that my poor uncle has been run over by a taxi-bus—I mean a motor-taxi—that is, a motor-bus, and that I'm so overcome with grief, I haven't been ab's to do my lines."



"I—I say, Toddy, what are you going to do with that cushion?" he asked.

There was no need for Toddy to answer. Bunter knew the next moment.

Whiz!
Bump!

The cushion smote Bunter just under the chin, and helped him through the doorway. There was a heavy concussion in the Remove passage.

"Oh! Ow! Beast!"

"Now blow away!" roared Toddy.

"Another word, and I'll come out to you, and mop up the passage with you!"

"Varooogh!"

Peter settled down again, and his pen raced over the paper, transcribing Virgil at the speed limit. Bunter picked himself up in the passage, breathing fury.

He grabbed up the cushion.

It is stated proverbially that the worm will turn. Bunter was a worm; and he turned.

The cushion came whizzing back into Study No. 7. It landed on the top of the head that bent over the imposition, catching the inkpot as it flew.

There was a crash and a roar. The inkpot went flying, spilling its contents far and wide. The sheet that Peter had nearly finished was drenched with ink. Ink splashed over the countenance of Peter Todd, over his collar and jacket.

"He, he, he!" gasped Bunter, blinking in at the door.

Toddy leapt up.

He was inky, but worse than that, his impot was inky, too. Loder was not a neat or careful person himself, but he insisted upon neatness and carefulness from others. Taking that spoiled impot to Loder was simply asking for an order to write it out over again.

There was only one solace left to Toddy—to take it out of Bunter. He glared wildly round for a fives bat.

"He, he, he!"

Bunter did not linger after delivering that cackinnation. Shortsighted as the Owl of the Remove was, he could see that Toddy looked dangerous. He retired along the Remove passage at express speed, opened the door of the next study, dodged into it, and shut the door quickly.

Toddy was not long finding the fives bat, and rushing in pursuit. But the Owl of the Remove was out of sight.

Inside Wibley's study, Bunter palpitated as he heard pursuing feet pass the door, but he grinned when they were past. Toddy, not seeing him in the passage, had rushed on to the Remove staircase, under the impression that he had gone down.

Wibley, Morgan, and Desmond were in No. 6, beginning prep. They stared at Bunter.

"What's this game, you fat bounder?" asked Wibley. "Playing hide and seek, or what?"

"He, he, he! That's it," explained Bunter. "It's a little game with Toddy! He, he, he!"

Toddy's footsteps had died away. Bunter opened the door a few inches and peered out. The passage was empty.

The fat junior tiptoed back to No. 7. On the table lay Peter Todd's imposition, half of it spoiled by the overflow of ink.

Bunter hastily blotted it, gathered it up, and hurried out of the study.

He did not venture towards the Remove staircase. Peter Todd was somewhere in that direction. Bunter was not anxious to meet Peter Todd at present.

He scuttled away towards the Fourth Form quarters, where another staircase gave him a chance of getting down

without meeting Peter. Luck befriended him, and he reached the corner of Master's passage, on the ground floor, without encountering the enraged Toddy.

At that corner he ran into Mr. Steele. "Bunter!" rapped out the new master of the Remove.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "I—I was just coming to your study, sir."

"Have you done your lines, Bunter?"

"I—I've got them here, sir!"

"Indeed! You may take them to my study, and wait for me there," said Mr. Steele.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Bunter.

And he rolled on to Mr. Steele's study.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Mysterious Disappearance!

"TODDY!"

"Oh dear! Yes, Loder!" Peter Todd had not found Bunter. Peter's luck was out.

Looking for Bunter with a fives bat in his hand ready to administer justice, he had found Loder of the Sixth. Loder, in fact, was looking for him. Time was up, and a fellow who had to hand an impot to Loder had to be punctual.

"I was expecting you in my study, Todd!" said Loder agreeably. "I've no doubt you're on your way there with your lines."

As Peter had nothing in his hand but a fives bat, Loder's remark was apparently intended to be playful, the playfulness of a cat dealing with a mouse.

"I've done them, Loder," said Peter.

"All but half-a-dozen—only—"

"Only!" grinned Loder.

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"Only the inkpot was upset over them—"

"Dear me!" said Loder. "I fancy I've heard that one before, Todd! About a thousand times, in fact."

"It's true!" snorted Peter.

"It's always true," smiled Loder. "Still, a bright lad like you ought to be able to think of something fresh."

"I'd nearly finished, when a silly ass bungled a cushion at me and upset the inkpot—"

"Very sad!" said Loder. "Awfully sad, for it's going to get you a licking. Why not tell the truth, and admit that you haven't written a single line?"

"I've written nearly four hundred—"

"Don't give me that over again, Todd! Luckily, I've got my ashplant with me. Bend over."

Peter Todd backed away.

"Look here, Loder, I've really done my lines! They're all mucked up with ink—but if you will step up to my study you can see them—"

"Rubbish!" grunted Loder.

"Well, wait a minute, and I'll fetch them down!"

"I don't generally wait about for fags," said Loder. "I've told you to bend over, Todd!"

"Look here—"

"Last time of asking!" said Loder, swishing his cane.

"One moment!" said a quiet voice.

Loder looked round sourly. He had to be respectful to a Form master, but his look showed how little he relished the intervention of Mr. Richard Steele.

Mr. Steele did not seem to observe his sour look, however. He gave Loder a pleasant smile.

"It's true, sir," said Peter, who, for his part, was extremely glad to see Mr. Steele on the scene. "I've done my

lines, only they're spoiled by the inkpot being upset!"

"Rubbish!" grunted Loder.

"Come, come," said Mr. Steele, in his pleasant way. "I am sure Todd would not tell an untruth, Loder. At all events, let us look into the matter. You say your lines are in your study, Todd?"

"Yes, sir!"

"It is worth while, Loder, to take the trouble of stepping up to the study, rather than risk an injustice," said Mr. Steele, in his most agreeable tone.

Loder, evidently, was not of the same opinion. He did not like taking trouble, and he was not deeply concerned about observing strict justice. Still, as it was impossible to set up in open opposition to Peter's Form master, he had to assent.

"I don't believe a word of it," he said. "But if you think it best, sir, of course we will look into the matter."

"I assure you, sir—"

"Quite so," said Mr. Steele. "I will accompany you to your study, Todd, and we will see."

Loder of the Sixth followed the Form master, scowling as soon as Mr. Steele's back was turned. Peter followed Loder, grinning. The bully of the Sixth was going to be disappointed this time—at least, so it seemed to Todd.

Most of the Remove fellows were in their studies, at prep, by this time. Only Vernon-Smith was to be seen in the passage, standing in the doorway of No. 4 talking to Redwing who was in the study. The Bounder's rather loud voice was audible, as the Form master, the prefect, and Toddy came up the passage from the stairs.

"You're an ass, Reddy! I wish you'd come! It will be no end of a lark!"

"Rot!" came Redwing's reply from

the study. "For goodness' sake, Smithy, chuck it, and come in and get on with your prep."

"Blow prep!" answered Vernon-Smith. "Prep doesn't matter."

Then he glanced round at the sound of footsteps, and coloured a little at the sight of his Form master. He went rather quickly into No. 4. Loder glanced at Mr. Steele, expecting the Remove master to stop at No. 4 and address some caustic remarks to a junior who declared that prep did not matter. But Richard Steele apparently had heard nothing, and he walked on to No. 7.

Tom Dutton had just arrived in No. 7 for prep. He rose to his feet as the Remove master came in.

Loder glanced quickly at the table as he followed Mr. Steele. He smiled sourly as he failed to discern any lines there.

"Well, Todd, where is the imposition?" asked Mr. Steele kindly.

"On the table, sir," said Peter.

"I do not see it."

Peter hurried in.

As he had left the inky impot on the study table when he sallied forth in search of Bunter, he naturally expected to find it there when he returned. But it was not there. Several ink spots and smears remained to tell of the spilt ink, but the impot had vanished.

"I suppose Dutton's moved it, sir," said Peter.

Loder gave an audible sniff.

Gerald Loder was not very particular about the truth himself, and it is well said that a liar's punishment is not that he is not believed, but that he finds it impossible to believe others. Loder had no scruple about lying when he was in a difficulty, and he had no doubt that Toddy was lying.

Mr. Steele turned to Tom Dutton.

"Have you moved Todd's lines from the table?" he asked.

"Dutton's deaf, sir!" murmured Peter. Mr. Steele repeated his question in a louder voice.

"Yes, sir," answered Dutton.

"Please hand them to me, then."

"Eh?"

"Please hand me Todd's lines," said Mr. Steele, crescendo.

Dutton blinked at him.

"I haven't seen any lines, sir," he answered.

"What? You said you have moved them from the table."

"Eh?"

"Did you not say you had moved Todd's lines from the table?" Mr. Steele almost shouted.

"Oh, no, sir! I thought you asked me whether I was going to use the table," said Dutton cheerfully. "I haven't seen any lines."

"Dear me!" said Mr. Steele. "You do not know what has become of the imposition, Dutton?"

"Oh, yes, sir, I know what a preposition is," said Dutton. "It is one of the parts of speech. A preposition—"

"Not preposition, Dutton—imposition!" said Mr. Steele patiently. "I am speaking of an imposition."

"Oh, sir! I don't see why you should give me an imposition," said Dutton, in dismay. "I can tell you what a preposition is, sir—any kid in the Second could. A preposition—"

"Listen to me, Dutton! Todd left some lines on this table, according to his statement to me. Have you seen any lines?"

"Lots, sir! There are a lot in Lantham Chase—"

"What?"

"A lot of pines, sir. Firs, too."

"Lines, Dutton, lines!" hooted Mr. Steele. "I am speaking of Todd's imposition."

WHAT was the

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That really was not surprising, as it was Toddy who had written it.

Mr. Steele stared at it, and stared at Bunter.

"You wrote this, Bunter?"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"It is in Todd's hand."

"Yes, sir; I—I made it like Todd's because—because he writes so much better than I do, sir."

"And how did you come to spill so much ink over it, Bunter?"

"I—I knocked over the inkpot, sir, just as I finished. I was tired, sir," said Bunter, pathetically. "Sticking in the Form-room all the afternoon, writing nearly five hundred lines, sir—"

But for that visit to Peter Todd's study Mr. Steele might have swallowed Bunter's statements whole. Now that he was aware that Todd's imposition, with ink spilled on it, was missing, he was not at all likely to swallow it.

"Bunter!"

"Yes, sir!" groaned Bunter; he could tell by that deep tone that Steele was going to be a beast!

"You did not write these lines, Bunter."

"Oh, yes, sir! In the Form-room—"

"An imposition has been missed from Todd's study, Bunter. Ink had been spilled on it. This, obviously, is the imposition."

Bunter quaked.

"You have taken another boy's lines, to palm off on your Form master as your own!" said Mr. Steele sternly.

"Oh dear! Oh no sir! I—I wouldn't! If—if Todd says he's missed the lines, sir, he—he's mistaken! Besides, he never had any lines to do. Loder never gave him lines for buzzing a snowball at him, sir."

"I think, Bunter, that you are the most untruthful boy in my experience," said Mr. Steele.

"Oh, really, sir! Mr. Quelch used to hold me up as an example to the Form, sir, because I was so truthful," said Bunter. "He used to—compliment me on it, sir."

"You have taken these lines from Todd's study."

"It's my study as well as Todd's, sir."

"You utterly obtuse boy! Is that a reason why you should take Todd's lines and pretend that they are your own?"

"But—but they're mine, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I wrote every word there, sir—every syllable. Besides, he was after me with a fives bat."

"What?"

"I—I mean—"

"You will write out the whole five hundred lines, Bunter, and bring them to me by Saturday!"

"Oh lor!"

"And in the meantime I shall cane you for laziness and untruthfulness."

"Oh crikey!"

Mr. Steele picked up a cane.

"You will bend over that chair, Bunter."

"But, sir," gasped Bunter, "the lines weren't any use to Todd, sir. That beast Loder would have made him write them over again, as there was ink spilled on them."

"That is no excuse for your pretence that you wrote them, Bunter."

"But—but I did write them, sir."

"Wha-a-at?"

"Every line, sir! I—I hope you believe me!"

"Upon my word!" stuttered Mr. Steele. "Bunter, bend over that chair at once!"

"Oh dear!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yow-ow-ow!"

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"You may go, Bunter, and remember to bring me your imposition by Saturday!"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Leave my study!"

Bunter groaned his way to the door. That surreptitious use of Peter's impot had been really a brain-wave, but it had turned out a delusion and a snare. Billy Bunter felt that it was very hard lines. Few fellows would have had the gumption to think of such a wheeze, and Bunter had received no reward whatever for his uncommon gumption.

"By the way, Bunter—" added Mr. Steele, as the Owl of the Remove opened the door.

"Ow! Wow!"

"Has the telephone bell rung while you have been in the study?"

"Oh! No, sir! Not a sound!"

"Very well. You may go!"

And Bunter went.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Plays the Goat!

"GET out!" "Buzz off!" Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent spoke almost simultaneously.

They were at prep in Study No. 1 when Billy Bunter entered suddenly, and closed the door behind him.

Instead of getting out, Bunter put his finger to his lips as a sign of silence.

"Hush!" he breathed.

Wharton and Nugent stared at him. "What the thump—" began the captain of the Remove.

"Hush!"

"You fat chump—"

"Hush! Loder's after me!" breathed Bunter.

"Oh!"

Prep was prep; but if the bully of the Sixth was after Bunter, the fat Owl was welcome to such shelter as Study No. 1 could afford him.

Bunter turned to the door and listened for a moment. Then he turned to the chums of the Remove again.

"Don't you fellows give me away!" he whispered. "That beast, Loder, is after me. He's got his cane."

"What have you done, you fat fraud?"

"Nothing."

"As usual!" grinned Nugent.

"Yes, old chap. It was all Todd's fault," explained Bunter. "I took his lines to Steele, and it would have been all right, only the fathead had told Steele he'd missed his lines. So the beast jumped to it that I was showing up Todd's lines as my own, you know. Just because they were in Todd's fist. Couldn't take a fellow's word!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And Loder made out that Todd hadn't done the impot for him, you know, and was going to lick Todd, and Steele butted in—that beast is always butting in where he isn't wanted—and told him how it was, so Loder had to let Todd off."

"Good!"

"Good?" repeated Bunter. "Why, you silly ass, you know what Loder is like if he has to let a fellow off! He takes it out of another fellow. Now he wants to take it out of me. Just as if I was to blame, you know."

"And you weren't to blame?" asked Nugent sarcastically.

"Not at all, old chap! Steele says I've got to take him the whole impot on Saturday. Just as if I hadn't shown up my lines this evening! Talk about injustice! And Loder makes out that I nearly got Todd a licking for

nothing, so I ought to have a licking. Fancy that!"

"So you jolly well ought!" said Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton! I've had one licking from Steele for nothing. He would have let me alone if you'd gone to him as I wanted and told him about my pater—I mean, my uncle—being run over by a taxi-bus—I mean, a taxi—"

"Why didn't you tell him that yourself?"

"Well, he mightn't have believed me," said Bunter, shaking his head sorrowfully. "The man's no gentleman, you know; he doubts a fellow's word. I say, you fellows, I dodged away from Loder. I'm not going to be licked twice in the same place. The beast's after me. I say, if he comes to this study, will you fellows collar him while I get away?"

"Collar a prefect!" ejaculated Nugent.

"Yes. He's a beast and a bully, and he only wants to lick somebody, as he's disappointed about having to let Todd off. That beast Steele made him let Todd off. He's always butting in. If Loder had taken it out of Todd, he would be satisfied. Now he's after me. I'd much rather he was after you fellows."

"Go on!"

"Collar him if he comes here—" Bunter broke off, and listened with painful intentness at the door to a sound of footsteps. "Oh crumbs! He's coming! I say you fellows, will you collar him if he butts in here?"

"I don't think!" grinned Nugent.

"Beast!"

The footsteps passed the door of Study No. 1. Loder of the Sixth, apparently, had gone on to Study No. 7 to look for Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove turned an anguished countenance towards the two juniors.

"I say, you fellows, that beast will root all along the passage for me. He's bound to come here. If you collar him—"

"Fathead!"

"Well, I'm going to hide," said Bunter. "Mind you don't give me away. Mum's the word, you know."

There was a rather tattered screen in the corner of Study No. 1 Billy Bunter insinuated his fat person behind it, and disappeared from sight.

Wharton and Nugent exchanged a grin, and resumed prep.

"I say, you fellows!" came a hoarse whisper from behind the screen.

"Shut up!"

"I say, mind you don't give me away! Not a word, you know! If Loder comes here, tell him you think I've run away from school."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at. This is a jolly serious matter!" howled Bunter. "I've had one licking! It was all your fault, Wharton, as you know. Look here! Do you think Loder would believe that I'd run away from school?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Hardly!"

"Well, tell him I've fallen downstairs and broken my neck. Say I've been taken to sanny with a broken neck."

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Wharton. "It's just barely possible that he mightn't believe that either."

"Well, make it a leg. A leg will do. Tell him I've broken the spinal column of my left leg—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you beasts—"

"Cheese it! Somebody's coming!" said Nugent.

"Oh crikey!"

"Why the thump are you hiding under that bed, Bunter?" asked Wingate. "I—I-I thought it was Loder!" gasped the terrified Removite.



Bunter became silent. The door of Study No. 1 opened, and Loder of the Sixth looked in.

His look was not amiable. Whether it was because Bunter deserved it, or because Loder wanted to lick somebody, certainly the bully of the Sixth was yearning to use his ashplant. He gave an angry stare round the study.

"Has Bunter been here?" he demanded.

"Bunter of the Remove?" asked Harry.

"Yes, you young ass! What Bunter do you suppose I mean?" snapped Loder.

"Well, there's another Bunter in the Second Form—"

"Has he been here?" snorted Loder.

"Bunter of the Second?" asked Wharton innocently.

"No!" roared Loder. "Bunter of the Remove! Tell me at once whether he has been here!"

"He's been here, but he vanished five minutes ago," answered the captain of the Remove.

"Has he gone downstairs again?"

"We can't see the stairs from here."

"The young scoundrel's hiding somewhere," growled Loder. "I'll give him the licking of his life when I find him!"

Loder turned back to the doorway; and, without leaving the study, looked up and down the Remove passage. Two or three fellows were looking out of their doorways; but William George Bunter was not to be seen. Loder seemed rather uncertain what step next to take; and he remained where he was, scowling up and down the passage.

"I say, you fellows, has he gone?" came a voice from behind the screen in the corner.

Loder jumped. "Oh, my hat!" gasped Wharton.

"So he's here!" roared Loder, glaring at the chums of the Remove. "You know it! You will take a hundred lines each! Bunter, come out at once!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Do you hear me?"

"I—I'm not here!" gasped Bunter.

"Will you come out?"

"Oh crumbs!"

Loder strode across the study towards the screen. He grabbed it by the corner, and hurled it aside.

Billy Bunter was revealed.

"Now, you young rascal—"

How Bunter came to do it he never knew afterwards. But the sight of Loder's angry face, the avishing ashplant in his hand, were too much for the Owl of the Remove. As Loder extended a hand to grasp him, Bunter lowered his head and butted.

Crash!

Bunter's bullet head landed on Loder's waistcoat with a fearful concussion. Loder sat down.

In an instant Bunter had flown past him and vanished from the study. Loder sat where he was, gasping and gurgling.

"Groogh! Gerroogh! Ooooooooooh!"

Loder pressed both hands to his waistcoat, with an expression on his face that might have moved a heart of stone. Bunter had driven every ounce of breath out of him; and Loder was making extraordinary noises as he struggled to get it back.

"Ooooooooooh! Ooooooooo-er! Gugg-gug-gug!"

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Nugent.

"Moooooooooooooh!" came from Loder of the Sixth. "Moooooooooooooh!" It was a strange noise, like the moaning of an asthmatic cow. "Ooooooooooh! Wooooooh! Moooooooooooooh!"

He staggered to his feet at last.

He was no longer thinking of Bunter. Even vengeance did not appeal to Gerald Loder now. With a ghastly face, and both hands pressed tightly to his waistcoat, the prefect tottered from the study.

Wharton and Nugent manfully suppressed their feelings; and it was not till Loder was gone that they ventured to chortle. Then they chortled loud and long.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

To Go or Not to Go!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH was loafing outside Study No. 1 when Harry Wharton and Nugent came out after prep.

Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull and Harroo Singh were coming along the passage, and they joined their chums; and the five of them were proceeding towards the stairs together, when the Bouncer called out:

"Hold on, Wharton!"

Harry glanced back.

"Coming down, Smithy?" he asked.

"Not yet! I want to speak to you!"

"Oh, all right!"

Wharton turned back, while his friends went on down the Remove staircase. Smithy lounged into Study No. 1, and Wharton followed him in, and turned on the light again. Apparently, what the Bouncer had to say could not be said in the passage.

Vernon-Smith kicked the door shut.

"Well, give it a name, old scout!" said Wharton, rather mystified by these preliminaries.

"It's about to-night," said Smithy.

"Well, what about it?"

"I'm going!"

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"You're not breaking bounds again, Smithy, after lights-out—same as you did last night!" exclaimed Wharton, frowning. "Look here, there's a limit, and I jolly well think—"

"Keep your wool on!" said the Bounder icily. "Last night I broke bounds for a joy-ride to Lantham, to see a man there; this is nothing of the kind. I suppose you haven't forgotten that while I was out of bounds last night I saw a man hiding something in the drain tunnel under the river bank; and that you went there, and found the bonds that had been stolen from Topham Croft by the Courtfield cracksmen?"

"I'm not likely to have forgotten that already," answered Harry. "But I don't see—"

"They'll be watching the place to-night—the police, I mean. That detective man you saw at Topham Croft—what was his name?"

"Irons," answered Wharton, after a moment's pause.

He coloured faintly as he made the answer.

Harry Wharton was the only Greyfriars man who knew that Richard Steele, Form master of the Remove, was Inspector Irons, of the Criminal Investigation Department, at Scotland Yard.

He had made the discovery by sheer chance, in taking the stolen bonds back to Topham Croft, where the man from Scotland Yard was investigating the latest exploit of the Courtfield cracksmen.

He had promised Steele to keep the secret; and he was keeping it, fully realising how important the matter was. For had it become known that a Scotland Yard detective was at Greyfriars, in the role of a Form master, it was fairly certain that Inspector Irons would have had little chance of success.

Wharton had no choice but to keep the secret; but he was feeling uncomfortable.

His answer was the exact truth; the detective he had seen at Topham Croft was named Irons. But the man was also Richard Steele, a fact that the Bounder was far from suspecting. So, although Wharton's answer was perfectly truthful, he could not help feeling that it showed more of the wisdom of the serpent than of the innocence of the dove.

"Irons! A queer name!" said the Bounder. "Well, you know what he's certain to do—he or Grimes! The thief doesn't know the bonds have been taken from their hiding-place, and he will come back for them—to-night or some other night. They'll watch the place if they've got any sense."

"Pretty certain to, I think," said Harry.

"Well, I want to be on the scene," said Smithy.

"Rot!" said Wharton, at once. "You can't be there without breaking bounds late at night, for one thing!"

"Dear me!" said the Bounder satirically.

"Oh, I know that's nothing to you!" snapped Wharton. "But you may do a lot of harm. You may get in the way—perhaps give the alarm to the man if he comes there—"

"I'm not a fool!"

"You will be a fool if you meddle in a matter that belongs to the police!" said Harry.

"Might be able to help!" said Smithy. "The police haven't had such a lot of luck in dealing with that thief. He's been raiding places all over this neighbourhood, this term and last, and they haven't put salt on his tail yet. They've got nothing back that he's

lifted, except old Topham's bonds; and that was through me."

"Yes, that's true," said Harry. "Still—"

"If they're watching the place at all, they're at it through information given by me," said Smithy. "It's my game more than theirs, if you come to that! I've a right to take a hand!"

Wharton made no reply to that. There was, to a certain extent, something in what the Bounder said; and, anyhow, it was easy to see that Herbert Vernon-Smith had made up his mind, and that a wilful fellow would have his way. The thrill of the adventure, and the element of risk attached to it, had an irresistible appeal for the Bounder.

"Well, will you come with me?" asked Smithy abruptly.

"I!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Yes, you! Skinner's too funky, and Redwing's too fatheaded; he won't come, anyhow. I want somebody."

"You'll have to look a little farther, then," said Harry. "I'm certainly not going to break school bounds at night."

"I'm not asking you to join in a run to the Three Fishers, or the Cross Keys," said the Bounder sarcastically. "There's no harm in this, I suppose."

"No, but—"

Wharton paused, with a worried look.

He had no doubt that the police would be watching the place that night, for the cracksmen to return for his hidden plunder. And he could have little doubt that Inspector Irons would be there—that is to say, Mr. Steele, the master of the Remove.

The Bounder, if he was on the scene, was not likely to be of any use in dealing with the cracksmen; but it was quite possible that he might discover the Form master's secret.

Wharton knew that secret already, and he could rely on his own discretion. He was far from relying on Smithy's.

Vernon-Smith's eyes were curiously on his face.

"But what?" he asked. "What are you thinking of?"

"You'd better keep clear," said Harry.

"I'm not going to keep clear. I'm going to be on the spot," answered the Bounder coolly. "I wouldn't miss it for worlds."

"You were nearly nabbed out of bounds last night. Steele suspects you already. In fact, knows—"

"I don't care what he suspects or knows, so long as he can't land it on me," said Smithy. "And he can't."

"Look here, Smithy—"

"I'm going. I'd rather have a pal with me; but I'm quite prepared to go alone. I'm going, anyhow."

Wharton paused again.

"The fact is, you'd like to come," said the Bounder, with a grin. "You'd jolly well like it as much as I should."

That was true enough. The excitement of the adventure had an appeal for Wharton. But he shook his head.

"I'd like it all right," he admitted. "But—"

"Well, come, then!"

"You may be doing a lot of harm that you don't understand by butting in, Smithy. I wish you'd give it a miss."

"I may be doing a lot of good. The police have let that cracksmen slip through their fingers for months, and they may let him slip again. We may be able to help."

"I mean—"

"Well, what do you mean?" asked the Bounder sharply.

Wharton opened his lips, but closed them again. He could not explain what what he feared was, that Smithy might

discover the Form master's secret by butting into the affair.

"What are you keeping back?" asked the Bounder. "I can see you've got something on your mind. What is it?"

"I think you ought not to go."

"Well, I'm going. Will you come, or shall I get some other Remove man to go along with me? Bolsover major would come, if I asked him."

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"I'll come," he said.

"Good man!" said the Bounder. But he eyed the captain of the Remove very intently and curiously. He could see clearly enough that Harry had some reason, which he had not stated, for consenting to join in the adventure. "I'll call you at ten-thirty."

"It's a go!" said Harry.

"Right!"

The Bounder lounged out of the study.

Harry Wharton remained in deep thought for some minutes after Vernon-Smith had left him. He had consented to accompany the Bounder, for a good reason. Steele was certain to be there. The Bounder and his companion were very likely to see him with the police, after which the Form master's secret would not be a secret much longer. Smithy, if he discovered it, might be induced to keep it dark; but Bolsover major was certain to talk it all over the school if he found it out.

Certainly Mr. Steele would have been likely to approve of the head boy of his Form breaking bounds at night, for any reason whatsoever. But it was for Steele's sake that Wharton had made up his mind to join the Bounder in his reckless adventure.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

After Lights Out!

WINGATE of the Sixth saw lights out that night for the Remove.

In the Remove dormitory, when the prefect arrived there with the Form, there was one member of the Remove missing.

It was William George Bunter.

Bunter had been missing most of the evening, as a matter of fact.

He had not turned up in Study No. 7 for prep. Peter Todd had kept the fives bat ready for him; but Bunter had not made a close acquaintance with that fives bat.

Before prep was over Peter's wrath had evaporated, and Bunter could have returned to Study No. 7 in security. But Bunter had other reasons for avoiding the public eye.

Loder of the Sixth was anxious to see him.

Twice or thrice Loder had come up to the Remove passage looking for Bunter. Loder was still pale, and apparently had not recovered from the impact of Bunter's bullet head upon his waistcoat.

But Loder did not find the Owl of the Remove, and he gave it up at last, no doubt thinking that Bunter would keep till the morning.

This game of hide and seek between William George Bunter and the bully of the Sixth made the Removes chortle, and they wondered how long it would continue. Apparently it was still going on, as Bunter had not put in an appearance at bed-time.

Wingate glanced round the dormitory.

"There's one fellow not here," he said. "Where's Bunter?"

(Continued on page 12.)

INSIDE INFORMATION



By
The "OLD
REF."

What "Old Ref" doesn't know about the laws of "soccer" isn't worth knowing. If in doubt over any footer problem, write and get his expert opinion. He's always ready to assist "Magnet" readers.

THERE is talk in the North of England about the possibility of the South Shields club, now in the Northern Third Division, moving its home to the east end of Newcastle. A reader from the Newcastle district wants to know whether South Shields could so move without the consent of the football authorities, and what would Newcastle United folk have to say about it, anyway?

In the first place the answer to the direct question is that South Shields could not move from South Shields to Newcastle—or anywhere else—and keep their status without the consent of the rulers of football. The point was raised some years ago and a weak spot in the rules was discovered, and a change made in the regulations concerning the movement of a club from one headquarters to another.

Perhaps you will remember that in the old days there was a club called Woolwich Arsenal, the name being given to them because they played at Woolwich, of course, and because the Arsenal was quite near to their ground. Indeed, the club had originally been started by the workers at the arsenal.

In the course of the years, however, it was found difficult, if not impossible, to carry on a first-class club at Woolwich,

so the directors decided on a move to another part of London.

They chose a spot at Highbury, which is about equal distance from the grounds of Tottenham Hotspur and Clapton Orient.

These two clubs of North London lodged an objection to the proposed move by the Arsenal. They said that their gates would be affected, and they appealed to the rulers of football to stop Woolwich Arsenal coming to Highbury. It was then discovered, however, that the authorities had no power, according to their rules, to stop such a move being made, and, though they might have listened sympathetically to the protests of the two clubs I have named, they could do nothing. But, of course, once the difficulty had been brought to light, an amendment was immediately made in the rules, and now

no club in membership of the League can change its headquarters without the consent of the authorities.

So if South Shields want to move to Newcastle they will have to get permission to do so. Whether such permission would be given is a question which I cannot answer, because I don't know whether any real objection would be lodged against such a move by the present Newcastle club.

I AM reminded of another weak spot in the rules by a query which comes from a reader at Gosport. His team, playing in a recent match, arrived one man short. They started the game with ten men, and it was agreed that if the eleventh player turned up he should take his place in the field. The player did turn up when the match was in progress, but dashed on to the field later on just in time to repel an attack by the other side.

The referee stopped the game, however, and awarded a free kick to the attackers, because the late arrival had come on to the field without his permission. At the same time, the referee, awarding the free kick, said that a goal could be scored direct therefrom. I am asked as to whether the referee was right in both these decisions—that is, in giving a free kick and saying that a goal could be scored direct from it.

This is one of the things which, so far as I can gather, is not dealt with in the rule-books.

The rules say that a player, being off the field, must not come on to it without the permission of the referee. But the rules don't say what shall be the punishment for a breach of this regulation.

I doubt if the referee could have justified his action by any reference to the rules, but, on the other hand, I think his action was justified by common sense. To warn such a player that he was guilty of ungentlemanly conduct would have been the same as inflicting no punishment at all, because he wasn't likely to do the same thing again in the same match, was he?

ONE of my readers from Walton, Liverpool, asks an interesting question concerning an incident in a recent "Derby Day" game between Everton and Liverpool.

In the course of the game a passing movement between the Liverpool forwards was ended by Smith, the Liverpool centre, shooting the ball into the net. The referee immediately awarded a goal, or, at any rate, pointed to the centre of the field to suggest that a legitimate goal had been scored.

The Everton players raised a protest, and the referee was persuaded to consult a linesman. After the consultation the decision was changed and Everton were given a free kick on the grounds that long before Smith scored the goal the linesman had waved another player offside.

The question at issue is this:

Can the referee change his decision after awarding a goal?

The answer is certainly, so long as the change of decision is made before the game is restarted. I cannot express any opinion as to whether the eventual decision was right or wrong in this case, but if the linesman persuaded the referee that there had been an offside infringement, then the referee for his part was quite justified, and even correct, to change his decision.

THIS sort of incident raises another interesting point which deserves the attention of the rule-makers. It is laid down in the rules that the players of football must not, either by word or action, express dissent over any decision given by the referee. Yet it is perfectly obvious that if the Everton players had carried out this rule in the case quoted, they would have had a goal chalked up against them. To put the matter in another way, the rule-makers, on this point, have set an ideal standard of conduct which, if carried out, would lead to injustice.

SHORT REPLIES.

W. T. P., of Wandsworth.—If a full-back, taking a goal-kick, passes the ball back to his goalkeeper, and the latter misses it and it rolls into the net, the award should be a corner-kick. But if, in the same circumstances, the ball just touched the goalkeeper—that is, the second player—and then went into the net, it would be a goal.

G. H. P., of Elstree.—No, the referee would not extend the time of a match to enable a corner-kick to be taken after the goalkeeper had saved a penalty kick for which over-time had been allowed.

C. W. E. B., of Gosport.—See reply to W. T. P. above. The decision should have been a free kick for playing the ball twice. There is no rule now which says that the feet of the player throwing in the ball should be together, and it is correct to bring the ball over the head in both hands.

GOOD-BYE, BUNTER!

(Continued from page 10.)

"Echo answers—where!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"The wherefulness is terrific," grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Wharton, do you know where Bunter is?"

"No, Wingate," answered Harry.

"Why is he not here?" exclaimed the Greyfriars captain impatiently. He glanced round at a crowd of grinning faces. "What's up? You young sweeps seem to have some joke on. What does it mean?"

"I think Bunter's dodging Loder," answered Harry.

"The young ass!"

"The esteemed Loder is terrifically infuriated," explained Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The excellent and ridiculous Bunter butted him on his worthy bread-basket, and caused him infernal pains."

"Caused him what?" roared Wingate.

"Inky means internal pains," said Wharton hastily.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He went downstairs doubled up like a pocket knife," grinned Skinner. "Bunter doesn't want to see him any more."

"Well, the young ass must turn up for dorm," said Wingate, laughing. "Where on earth can he be?"

"Hallo! Hallo! Hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, staring at a fat face and a pair of large spectacles that emerged from underneath Bunter's bed. "Here he is."

"Bunter," exclaimed Wingate, "what the thump are you under that bed for, you young ass?"

"I—I say, I—I thought it might be Loder seeing lights out!" gasped Bunter. "I—I thought I'd creep out of sight. I—I don't want to see Loder, please, Wingate."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, Loder won't bother you after lights-out," said Wingate, with a laugh. "Turn in, you young sweeps."

Wingate left the dormitory, and the Removees proceeded to turn in. Billy Bunter blinked dismally at a grinning Form.

"I say, you fellows, I-d-d-do you think Loder is still vaxy?" he asked.

"Mad as a hatter," said Skinner, with a chuckle. "You rinded him, old fat bean, and he's thirsting for your blood."

"Oh dear!"

"You're all right till morning," said Peter Todd comfortingly. "Loder will slay you in the morning."

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"If you have tears, prepare to shed them after prayers to-morrow," said Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, you fellows, do you think Loder will come here after me?" asked Bunter anxiously.

"Of course he won't, fathead!" said Wharton. "Even prefects are not allowed to kick up a shindy after lights out."

"He may feel better in the morning," said Bunter hopefully. "He—he may be in a good temper by then."

"He may," grinned Skinner. "But the odds are that he mayn't."

"The oddfulness is terrific."

Billy Bunter turned in dismally. He had escaped so far; but the prospects for the morrow were gloomy.

Wingate came back and turned the lights out, and the Remove settled down to slumber.

But it was a whole minute before

Billy Bunter was able to forget his woes in sleep. After which, his deep snore awoke the echoes of the dormitory.

Harry Wharton did not fall asleep so easily as usual. He was thinking of the night's adventure, in a rather troubled frame of mind. But he slept at last, and did not wake till a light touch in the darkness caused him to start from slumber.

He blinked at a dim figure beside his bed.

"Time!" whispered the Bounder.

Wharton sat up and shivered a little. The night was cold. He rubbed his eyes.

"You're going, then?" he asked.

"Of course I'm going. Do you think I'm a fellow to chop and change?" grunted Smithy. "You're coming?"

"I suppose so."

"Buck up, then."

Wharton turned out of bed and dressed in the dark. The Bounder was already dressed.

No other fellow in the dormitory was awake.

Silent as ghosts the two juniors crept out, leaving the rest of the Remove sleeping.

Five minutes later they were stealing quietly away from the House in the winter gloom.

The Bounder touched Wharton's arm as they were making their way towards the Cloisters.

"Steele's still up!" he whispered.

Wharton started and looked round. A light was showing in Mr. Steele's study window across the dusky quad.

"If he knew—" grinned the Bounder.

It was not likely that Richard Steele was thinking much of possible breakers of bounds that night, Wharton considered. Inspector Irons was, no doubt, thinking of the chance that had come, at long last, of getting hold of the Courtfield crackman.

But Wharton was surprised that he was still in the school. He had fully expected that the schoolmaster detective would be with the police, watching on the bank of the Sark.

"You think he's there?" he asked.

It occurred to him that Mr. Steele might have left his study light burning during his absence, to conceal the fact that he was absent.

"Well, his light's on," said Smithy. Then he chuckled softly, the same thought entering his mind that had entered Wharton's. "It may be gammon, though; he may be out on one of his prowls. You know he goes out prowling at night."

Wharton was well aware of that.

"I'm blessed if I know why," said Smithy. "I thought at first that he was up to no good; but I know now that he's a straight man. What he goes prowling for is a giddy mystery."

It was no longer a mystery to Harry Wharton, but he said nothing.

"He's there all right!" added the Bounder suddenly. "Look!"

Upon the window-blind of the Form master's study a shadow appeared. It was the well-defined shadow of a man standing at the telephone, lifting the receiver.

"Phoning to somebody!" said Smithy. "Well, I hope it will keep him busy—too busy to nose into our dormitory. Come on."

They hurried on in the darkness.

Certainly Mr. Steele, at that moment, was not giving much thought to his Form. He was a dutiful Form master, though his mastership at Greyfriars was only a cover for his real business in that part of the country.

But just then Mr. Steele had almost forgotten that he was master of the Remove, and remembered only that he was Inspector Irons of the C.I.D. The Bounder would have been interested, and extremely surprised, could he have heard the talk on the telephone in Mr. Quelch's old study. It was to the police station at Courtfield that the Remove master was speaking.

"I did not get the call," Mr. Steele was saying. "You are sure that Inspector Grimes rang me up this evening?"

"Quite sure, sir."

"Mr. Grimes is not in now?"

"No, sir. He left half an hour ago."

"I will wait till eleven. Ask Mr. Grimes to ring me if he comes in before then. If he comes in later, tell him that I am gone to the place he knows of."

"Very well, sir."

Mr. Steele paced his study with a wrinkle in his brow. How he had missed the call from Courtfield he did not know; and he certainly was not aware that Inspector Grimes was expecting to see him on the bank of the Sark at eleven o'clock. There was one fellow who could have explained; but that fellow was snoring soundly in the Remove dormitory.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Surprising Meeting!

"HUSH!" "What—" The Bounder gripped Wharton's arm, in the darkness of the Cloisters almost fiercely. "Hush!" he breathed.

Harry Wharton stopped, silent; his heart beating rather fast. In the gloomy silence of the deserted old Cloisters the Bounder's keen ear had detected some sound that had escaped Wharton.

The possibility of discovery by a master or a prefect was a rather painful one to Wharton. He was head boy of the Remove, and captain of the Form, and as such was supposed to set a good example, not a bad one, to his Form-fellows. It was true that his motive on the present occasion for being out of bounds was good; but that would count for nothing if he was caught out of his dormitory a such an hour.

He listened intently, but could hear only the moan of the wind from the sea, and the Bounder's suppressed breathing at his side. It was intensely dark under the old stone arches, and he could see nothing, save here and there the dim shape of a pillar.

The Bounder's whisper came at last, barely audible, his mouth close to Wharton's ear.

"There's somebody."

"I heard nothing!" breathed Wharton.

"I did."

"But what—"

"I'm sure of it. There's someone here as well as ourselves. Going the same way, too."

"A fellow breaking bounds?"

"Must be."

"Well, that won't hurt us; he's running the same risk as ourselves," muttered Wharton. "We've nothing to fear from him."

He could not see Vernon-Smith's face in the darkness, but he knew that there was a sneering grin on it.

"Mayn't be a junior like us. Sixth Form men break bounds sometimes—even prefects. You know Loder and Carne—"

"That's so. But—"

"We can't afford to meet a prefect here, even if he's goin' out on the razzle."

"But," said Harry, "Loder or Carne would use the gate; all the prefects have keys to the masters' gate."

"Yes—I'd forgotten that! If it's not a prefect, we needn't worry—unless it's a master. It's not Steele—he's in his study. It's not Prout—we should hear him grunting. Might be Capper, or Twigg—or anybody. Come on, but for goodness' sake, keep quiet."

The Bounder stepped on as he spoke, and Wharton followed him. They moved on tiptoe, without a sound, or with scarce a sound.

Faintly from the darkness ahead came a soft and stealthy footfall. Someone, ahead of them in the darkness, was retreating as they advanced.

Wharton caught his companion's arm. "Smithy! It mayn't be anybody belonging to the school. There was a burglary here last term—"

"The Courtfield cracksman?" grinned Smithy.

"It's possible."

"We'll soon see."

"Careful!" muttered Wharton.

"You bet!"

They moved on slowly, almost noiselessly, listening intently as they went.

Again and again came that soft, stealthy sound from the darkness ahead—the sound of someone who moved with as much caution as themselves. Whether it was some fellow breaking bounds who had hoard them and taken the alarm, or some intruder who had no right within the walls of Greyfriars, they could not guess. But whoever he was, he was retreating towards the spot where the old cloister wall was practicable to a climber—a spot well known to most Greyfriars fellows.

The rustle of ivy and the noise of a slipping fragment of stone reached them, and they knew that the unseen one had reached the wall and was clambering it.

Vernon-Smith made a sudden dive forward.

A beam of brilliant light, dazzling as it came suddenly in the darkness, shot from his hand. The Bounder had turned the light of an electric torch on the figure that climbed the wall. Behind the light the two juniors were in dense darkness, unseen themselves.

Wharton ran quickly after the Bounder.

The beam of light fell on a figure that was clambering the wall—the figure of a man in dark clothes, obviously not a boy. That was all the juniors wanted to know. They had no doubt now that it was an intruder, who had been scared off by the sound of their approach—perhaps the notorious Courtfield cracksman himself.

Vernon-Smith leaped at the figure, grasped an ankle that was whisking up the wall, and dragged with all his force.

There was a muffled exclamation, and the climber came slithering down the wall, to land in a gasping heap on the stone flags.

"Collar him!" hissed the Bounder.

He grasped the man as he sprawled, and Wharton's hands were on the gasping figure a second later.

"Got him!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith's knee was on the fallen man, pinning him down, and both the juniors had him tightly grasped. The sprawling figure heaved under them as the man made an effort to free himself.

A moment more, and the Bounder's electric torch was flashing into the up-turned face.

Then Smithy uttered a gasp of surprise.



Vernon-Smith leaped at the figure, grasped an ankle that was whisking up the wall, and dragged with all his force!

"My hat! It's Barnes!"

"Barnes!" repeated Wharton.

He released the man at once.

"Barnes!" he repeated blankly. "The Head's chauffeur! What on earth are you up to here, Barnes?"

The Bounder released the man at the same moment, and Barnes rose, gasping, to his feet.

Vernon-Smith shut off the torch. Barnes was only a shadow to their eyes then, but they knew him now.

"What's this game, Barnes?" asked the Bounder. "We took you for a giddy burglar, creeping about in the dark like that."

"Oh, sir!" gasped Barnes.

"What the dickens are you goin' out this way for, like a schoolboy breakin' bounds?" demanded Smithy. "Your way out is by the garage gate."

"I—I— The fact is—" gasped Barnes.

"Off your rocker?" asked the mystified Bounder. "Playing at being a naughty schoolboy again?"

"No, sir!" gasped Barnes. "You—you young gentlemen startled me. I think I know your voice, sir. You are Mr. Vernon-Smith."

"Oh, not I'm John James Brown," answered the Bounder, "and this fellow with me is Theophilus Thaddeus Tompkins."

"Wha-a-at?"

"Those are the names for you to remember, if you want to remember any, Barnes," said Vernon-Smith. "Catch on?"

"If you mean that you do not wish me to mention this, sir—"

"I mean exactly that."

"It doesn't concern you, Barnes, you know," said Harry Wharton quietly. "And you can take my word for it that we're not out on mischief."

"Oh, quite, sir," said Barnes. "If you young gentlemen return to the House at once, you may rely upon it that I shall say nothing."

"We're not returning to the House," answered Smithy coolly. "We're goin' out on business of our own—which isn't your bizney, Barnes."

"I am afraid, sir, that unless you go back to the House I shall be compelled to mention the matter to your Form master," said Barnes respectfully. "I think my employer, Dr. Locke, would expect as much from any servant in his employment."

The Bounder's eyes glinted.

"Possibly," he assented. "And your employer would also expect you to explain what you were up to, creeping

(Continued on page 16.)



(Continued from page 13.)

about in the Cloisters in the middle of the night."

"That is easily explained, sir," Barnes was quite calm again now, and his voice was smooth and soft as usual. "I heard some of the young gentlemen speaking of this place where the wall could be climbed, and having nothing to do, I was curious to see it for myself. It is very simple, sir. I could not, of course, take the liberty in the daytime."

The explanation sounded lame enough to the two juniors, but it was impossible to imagine any other motive that Barnes could have had.

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

"That is it, sir."

"Well, I don't care the toss of a coin what you were up to," said the Bouncer. "But I want you to keep your head shut about seeing us out of the House, Barnes."

"If you return to the house, sir—"

"I've told you we're goin' out."

"Then I am afraid it will be my duty—"

"Think twice before you worry about your duty, my man," said Vernon-Smith. "I'm a whale on duty myself, and I may have something to tell Steele at the same time."

"I don't quite understand, sir—"

"I'll put it in words of one syllable if I can. I was in Steele's room, on a jape, the night you got in and searched the room."

Barnes gave a violent start.

"What? I—I— Nonsense! I never did anything of the kind! You are dreaming, sir."

"I've never mentioned it, said the Bouncer coolly. "I suppose that having heard the yarn about Steele you were curious to find out somethin' about him. I was hidden under his bed while you were searchin' his room that night. It's no bizney of mine, but if you cackle about us, Barnes, look out for cackle from me! Catch on!"

Wharton listened in amazement. This was the first he had heard of the chauffeur's surreptitious visit to Mr. Steele's room during the Form master's absence.

There was a long silence. Barnes broke it at last, speaking in a low voice.

"I was doing no harm on that occasion, sir, as you must have seen, if you were there as you say. But my action might be misunderstood, and I should be grateful to you if you would not mention it."

"One good turn deserves another," said the Bouncer.

"Quite so, sir! I shall say nothing."

"Good! And now the sooner you get back to the garage the better. And you'd better stick to the part of the school that belongs to you after this."

"Very good, sir," said Barnes.

He disappeared in the darkness the next moment.

"Come on!" said Vernon-Smith.

A couple of minutes more and the two juniors were outside the wall. They stood close in the shadow for some moments, watching the road.

"Smithy! What on earth was that fellow up to?" asked Wharton. "I can't quite believe what he told us."

"It was sheer gammon," answered the Bouncer.

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"But why should he want to go out secretly this way, instead of leaving by the garage gate, as he could if he liked?"

"Goodness knows; but that was his game. Skinner and I saw him last night when we were out of bounds," said Vernon-Smith. "He seems to prowl around at night like Steele, and he may want to keep it darker than Steele does. He seems a quiet chap; but still waters run deep, and he may go out to paint the town red for all we know. Anyhow, it needn't worry us. Come on, or we shall be late for the merry meetin'."

And the two juniors hurried away in the night in the direction of the river.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Trapped!

"STOP here!" whispered the Bouncer.

It was dim and gloomy on the tow-path by the murmuring waters of the Sark.

On the left of the two juniors was the river, glimmering faintly in a gleam of starlight. On their right were deep woods, dark and silent. Some distance ahead of them was the spot where the bricked tunnel under the bank opened on the river, draining the lake in the Popper Court Woods when the rains were heavy.

In the present hard frosty weather the woodland drain was dry, and it was as safe a hiding-place for the cracksman's plunder as the Courtfield cracksman could have found, but for the accident that Vernon-Smith had been out of bounds the night of the burglary at Topham Croft and had seen him hide the stolen bonds there.

The fact that the hiding-place had been discovered and the bonds removed was still a secret known only to the police and to two schoolboys of Greyfriars.

It was certain that the cracksman, or his confederates, would scarcely venture to visit the place in the daylight; and since the early winter dusk the place had been closely watched—as the juniors easily guessed, though they did not know it for a fact.

Anyone who came for the hidden bonds in the woodland drain was hardly likely to escape, and it was more likely than not that he would come that night. Safe as the hiding-place was, it was unlikely that so valuable a plunder would be left there longer than was absolutely essential.

"We're not near the place yet, Smithy," said Harry, stopping, as the Bouncer drew him to a halt.

"I know that; it's a good hundred yards. But it stands to reason that the hobbies are watchin' the place, and we don't want to run into them."

"Rather not!" agreed Wharton.

"They might take us for the jolly old criminals, and collar us by mistake!" chuckled the Bouncer. "Anyhow, we don't want to advertise the fact that we're out of bounds."

"Quite! But I don't see what we're going to do here," said Harry. He was leaving the lead in the Bouncer's hands, but he was glad enough to keep Smithy off the scene if he could.

"If he comes, and they nab him, we shall hear the shindy from here," said Vernon-Smith. "Then we can chip in if we like. I know I jolly well shall if he slips through their fingers!"

"Of course! But—"

"In the jolly old meantime, we lie low and say nuffin, like Brer Rabbit. Policemen aren't likely to be frightfully keen on help from schoolboys—in fact, they'd be more likely to be ratty if they knew we were here."

"I've no doubt at all about that," said Wharton dryly. "And, in fact, the best thing we could do would be to clear off and mind our own business."

"You can clear off if you like."

"Oh, rot! I shall stay if you do!"

"Well, I'm staying."

The Bouncer stared up the path along the glimmering river. Nothing was to be seen in the darkness, nothing heard save the sigh of the wind in leafless branches in the woods.

The river-bank seemed utterly deserted and lifeless, yet the juniors knew that at a short distance from them there must be keen-eyed, wakeful men vigilantly on the watch.

"They'll be in the trees back from the path," said the Bouncer. "Whoever comes for those bonds will come by the path; he can't know they've been lifted, or anything. They'll see him stop on the bank over the drain, and bag him. It's just pie! If the man comes up the river he will pass this spot, so we'd better lie doggo."

Wharton nodded, and the two juniors moved off the path into the bushes that bordered it.

There they were completely out of sight of anyone coming up the path, but it was easy to watch through the openings in the brambles.

The Bouncer leaned on a tree and took out his cigarette-case.

"You silly ass!" breathed Wharton. "Put that muck away! Do you want to tell anyone who passes that we're here?"

"Right on the wicket!" agreed Smithy, and he slid the case into his coat-pocket again. "Keep your wool on."

The juniors waited. Eleven o'clock had chimed through the night, and it was now more than a quarter-past the hour.

Had the juniors known it, Inspector Grimes and his men were hidden in the trees near the woodland drain, watching the spot; and Mr. Grimes was wondering sorely why the man from Scotland Yard was not there, too—never dreaming that the appointment had been made, not with Inspector Irons, but with a fat and fatuous junior in Mr. Steele's study.

The minutes passed slowly.

Wharton waited patiently enough. He was there unwillingly; but he had come to wait and watch, and it was useless to grouse about what was only to be expected. But the Bouncer had not a patient nature, and the minutes seemed very long indeed to him. He stirred and shifted incessantly, and muttered under his breath.

"Might as well have stopped in the dormitory, at this rate!" he grunted at last.

Wharton smiled faintly.

"Like to chuck it?" he asked.

"No!" grunted the Bouncer.

"He may not come to-night at all—"

"Are you startin' in business as a Job's comforter?" growled the Bouncer.

"Try to think of somethin' more cheery!"

"Well, we're for it," said Harry, "if he doesn't come—"

"He's bound to come! Those bonds were worth twelve thousand pounds; and they wouldn't leave them longer than they could help. They can't know that anything's been found out. Somebody will come to-night."

"It's most likely," agreed Wharton.

"And not jolly late, either," said Vernon-Smith shrewdly.

"The man who fetches them will want to hop out of this locality as fast as he can; and very likely he will time it to catch the last up train from Courtfield. If that's so, he won't be long now."

"That means that it won't be the

crackman himself," said Harry. "He could have got away with them last night, instead of hiding them in the drain."

"I've been thinkin' that out. The Courtfield crackman lives in this neighbourhood somewhere—that's a cert. Might be in employment somewhere to cover up his real job; and in that case, he couldn't bunk off any old time without opening people's eyes, and wouldn't care to risk taking the loot home with him. My idea is that after makin' a haul the fellow sticks his plunder in some place for a confederate to fetch away, and so never runs the risk of havin' it found on him."

"That would account for his hiding the bonds in old Popper's drain last night," assented Wharton.

"I think it's the only way of accountin' for it. If they got one man they'll get the other; they'll make him squeal," said Vernon-Smith. "But I'll bet you that it won't be the jolly old crackman himself who comes for the bonds. I think—Hush!"

The Bounder broke off suddenly. There was a soft approaching footfall on the path by the river.

With beating hearts, the two juniors peered through the bushes.

In the dim winter starlight they had a glimpse of a man in a dark coat, with a cap pulled low over his forehead, and a thick beard that covered almost the lower half of his face.

He passed on with stealthy but swift footsteps and vanished in the gloom up the river-bank.

The Bounder's eyes danced; he caught Wharton's arm.

"That's the johnny!" he breathed.

"I wonder—"

"Of course it's the man! Who else would be sneaking along here at half-past eleven at night? I'll bet he's not a real beaver, either; that beard would come off if a fellow tugged it. You bet!" The Bounder was almost gasping with excitement. "What did I tell you? He came down by the last train to Friarale; that's given him time to get here by this, and he's goin' back by the last up from Courtfield. All cut and dried. My hat! I ought to be a detective myself! Come on!"

"But—"

"I'm goin', anyhow!"

The Bounder stepped out of the bushes and followed up the path. Wharton followed him. The bearded man had disappeared from sight in the gloom, and the juniors were careful to make no sound as they followed in his track.

At the spot where the woodland drain opened into the river under the high bank the space was more open, the trees lying farther back from the Sark. There the starlight fell more clearly, and they had a full view of a dark figure that halted on the edge of the grassy bank over the bricked tunnel. It stood there, shadowy in the starlight for some moments, and then suddenly vanished down the steep bank, and there was a light splash as a displaced stone fell into the water.

"What did I tell you?" grinned the Bounder. "That's the man! He's swung himself down to the tunnel—for the bonds that aren't there! Look! Look!"

Across the starlit towpath, from the trees, three burly figures moved cautiously—Inspector Grimes and two stalwart constables of Courtfield.

"They've got him now!" breathed the Bounder. "He's cornered—he can't get away now!"

Wharton watched breathlessly.

The man had swung down the bank to the bricked arch of the tunnel that opened just above the water. He had

crawled into it; and now the three police were on the bank over the opening. The man was fairly trapped; it seemed as if his escape was impossible now.

In the stillness a faint sound of Inspector Grimes' whispering voice reached the juniors.

GREYFRIARS CELEBRITIES.

Our special Rhymester has had a "stab" at Wun Lung, the Chinese Junior, and the result is as entertaining as little Wun Lung himself.



THOUGH East is East, and West is West,

And one can't join the other.

At Greyfriars, among the rest,

There's one, to each a brother.

Wun Lung, with enigmatic smile,

And almond eyes, remember,

Though full of Oriental guile,

Is quite a well-known member.

A conjurer, this yellow boy,

Is really quite amusing,

And brings to eyes the tears of joy,

Though not of their own choosing.

He's very small, yet holds his own

In most amazing manner;

And he and Hop Hi bear alone

Th' Orient's flowery banner.

At cooking he's a reg'lar knut,

With mice, and frogs, and fishes;

The others all admire it, but

Decline to taste his dishes.

His "lats" and "mices" may be good,

Yet fellows fear to swallow

Wun Lung's amazing Eastern food;

They say it beats them hollow!

In British sports he doesn't share,

Though brilliant at jiu-jitsu;

And, chappies, if you don't take care,

The beggar ups and hits you.

When Wun Lung doesn't want to know

The English for "vous avez,"

A very injured air he'll show,

And murmur: "Me no savvy."

Of all the fellows everywhere,

He thinks there's none so merry,

So pleasant, kindly, free from care,

As our old chum, Bob Cherry.

Wun Lung is popular all round,

Though full of jokes and funning;

And underneath he's really sound,

In spite of Eastern cunning.

So lift your glasses, filled right up

With tuckshop brew—non-heady,

And let us drink a toasting cup

With spirit gay and ready.

"Wun Lung's" the toast, so swig it

down

To this right worthy fellow;

He's always white, won't do you brown,

Despite the fact he's yellow!

The two constables dropped over the bank, splashing ankle-deep in shallow water, truncheons in hand. The splashing, evidently, gave the unseen man the alarm; for there was a startled cry from the bricked tunnel, and a head and shoulders emerged.

The bearded man glared, in startled terror, at the two constables who cut off his escape.

"Seize him!" rapped out the inspector from the bank above.

A second more, and the grasp of the police would have been on the man at the opening of the tunnel. But in that second came a flash, a report, and a cry, and one of the constables toppled back into the river.

"Good heavens!" stuttered Wharton.

The desperate man had fired a revolver. A wounded man splashed back headlong into the river, and his companion grasped him just in time to prevent him from being swept away.

For the moment the way was open to the cornered crook.

He plunged headlong out of the tunnel into shallow water. Mr. Grimes, with a shout, leaped down at him; but the man eluded his grasp, and tore along the bank, knee-deep in water, leaving the portly inspector floundering.

The two juniors, a dozen yards distant, stood spell-bound.

The desperate man came scrambling along under the bank, till he was almost abreast of the spot where Wharton and the Bounder stood. Then he clambered up the bank, to run along the tow-path.

Mr. Grimes was still floundering, and his two men were fully occupied; and the way of escape was open for the desperate rascal—but for the presence of the two Greyfriars juniors.

But as the man started to run down the tow-path, the Bounder leaped at him with the spring of a tiger.

The attack was wholly unexpected; and the man went down like a nine-pin.

"Come on!" shrieked the Bounder.

But Wharton did not need calling.

He was on the man in an instant, grasping him fiercely; the revolver was torn away and tossed aside, and the desperado rolled in the grass, struggling frantically in the hands of the two juniors.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Capture I

TO Harry Wharton the next few moments seemed like pandemonium.

The man was fighting like a wild cat; and sturdy as the two juniors were, they had their hands full with him.

Once he got loose, tossed them off, and leaped up; but the Bounder grasped his ankle and up-ended him as he ran, and he came down again, and Wharton fastened on him instantly.

Had the juniors been left unaided the struggle would have gone against them. But it was only for a few moments that they were left to deal with the ruffian.

Inspector Grimes floundered out of the water, and came clambering up the steep bank, snorting like a grampus and dripping with water. He fairly hurled himself on the struggling man as he reached the spot.

Who the juniors were, and how they came there, Mr. Grimes did not know, and did not care. He knew they were

holding the man he wanted, and that was enough for him.

In three pairs of hands the desperate rascal was soon reduced to helplessness. There was a click as the handcuffs snapped on his wrists.

Then the Courtfield inspector rose, panting, to his feet.

By that time the wounded constable had been drawn safely on the bank by his comrade, and laid in the grass. The inspector grasped the handcuffed man by the collar and jerked him to his feet. Wharton and Vernon-Smith stood gasping for breath, dizzy from the desperate struggle. Both of them were torn and dishevelled and hurt. Mr. Grimes, now that he had time to give them attention, blinked at them in the starlight.

"Greyfriars boys!" he ejaculated.

"Yes!" gasped Wharton.

"What are you doing here?"

"Helping you bag your man," answered the Bounder coolly.

The inspector gave a grunt.

He turned to his prisoner again, and flashed a light on his face. The beard had come off in the struggle, as well as the cap, and the man's face was fully revealed. The two juniors looked at it curiously. It was a hard, cynical face, and totally unknown to them. The man was quiet enough now. With the handcuffs on his wrists he knew that the game was up, and he gave no further trouble.

"We've got you, my man!" said the inspector grimly.

"Looks like it!" answered the prisoner, with a shrug of the shoulders. "What do you want me for?"

"What were you doing in that tunnel under the bank?"

"Looking for water-rats!" said the man coolly. "What do you fancy I was looking for?"

"You'll hear about that later," said Mr. Grimes. He turned to one of the constables who came along the bank. "How's Jackson? Is he badly hurt?"

"In the shoulder, sir. We shall have to get a stretcher."

"Bring this man along."

The constable took charge of the prisoner, and walked him along the bank. Mr. Grimes turned to the schoolboys again.

"You boys have helped me," he said. "I'm glad of your help; but you ought not to have been here."

"We know that, sir," said Harry. "Still, it's rather lucky that we were here, as it's turned out."

"You're out of school without leave, of course?"

"Yes."

The inspector peered at Wharton. "It was you who brought the bonds back to Topham Croft. You guessed, I suppose, that this place would be watched, and wanted to be on in the scene. Is that it?"

Wharton coloured.

"Put it down to little me," said the Bounder. "Wharton came because I came—that's all. It was my doing."

"Well, the sooner you get back to your school, the better," said the inspector gruffly.

"Can't we help—you've had a man hurt," said Harry.

"Thanks—I can manage!" said Mr. Grimes dryly.

"Look here," said the Bounder, "we've helped you, Mr. Grimes, and you can't deny that we came in jolly useful. We don't want you to mention at Greyfriars that we've been here."

"Probably not!" said Mr. Grimes.

"You've no need to tell our Form

master if you should happen to see him," said Vernon-Smith.

Mr. Grimes smiled, a smile that Wharton understood.

"Your Form master?" repeated the inspector.

"Yes—Mr. Steele."

"I am afraid I cannot make any promises," said Mr. Grimes. "I must use my own judgment in the matter. Now you had better go."

He moved away up the bank, leaving the juniors to themselves. They looked at one another.

"Well, we're done here," said Vernon-Smith.

"Let's cut," said Harry.

He was surprised and relieved to find that Mr. Steele had not been on the scene at all. Had the schoolmaster detective been there he could not have failed to take a hand in the matter, and the Bounder could hardly have failed to penetrate his secret. He did not guess that it was owing to the Owl of the Remove that Steele was not there.

"Come on!" said Wharton. He was anxious to be away from the spot, with the Bounder, before Steele arrived, if he was coming.

"I fancy it will be all right," said Vernon-Smith, as they walked away down the path. "Grimes won't want to shout out that a couple of schoolboys bagged his man for him, what? I don't see why Steele should ever hear of it."

Wharton made no reply to that. There was no reason why Mr. Steele, the master of the Remove, should hear of the escapade; but it was certain that Inspector Irons of Scotland Yard would hear the whole story from Mr. Grimes.

And that, in the circumstances, came to the same thing.

But he could not explain that to Smithy. The two juniors hurried away. They were tired, and considerably bruised by the struggle with the captured man, but the Bounder, at least, was in a satisfied mood. The reckless adventure had been justified by its results, and Smithy was not thinking much of the possible consequences.

They reached Greyfriars at last, and clambered in over the wall into the Cloisters. All was dark and silent there.

"I wonder whether Barnes went out this way, after all, after we were gone," remarked the Bounder, glancing about him in the shadows.

"Oh, blow Barnes," said Harry. "I'm sleepy! Come on."

"Same here!" chuckled Smithy. "But it was worth while, old bean. You're not sorry you went?"

"Well, no; not as it's turned out. All the same, I fancy we're booked for a row."

"Steele's not likely to hear of it."

"Well, let's get to bed, anyhow."

Five minutes later, they were stealing silently into a sleeping dormitory, and Harry Wharton was glad enough to lay his head upon his pillow and close his eyes.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Dodging Loder!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter's voice was plaintive.

There was a wrinkle of deep trouble in his fat brow.

The Famous Five smiled.

They knew the cause of the trouble. Loder of the Sixth had probably recovered fully by this time, from the effects of the butting of Bunter's bullet head on his waistcoat. But Gerald

Loder's nature was not a forgiving one. The Owl of the Remove was booked for trouble, when he could no longer dodge Loder, and obviously he could not dodge a Sixth-Form prefect for ever.

"I say, you fellows! It's awful!" said Bunter.

"The awfulness is terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The sympathies are great and preposterous."

"Take your licking, and get it over," suggested Johnny Bull. Johnny was a practical fellow. But practical suggestions of this sort were of no use to Bunter. He did not want a licking.

"Oh, really, Bull! I say, it's simply awful!" said Bunter. "Loder's taking the Remove this morning."

"What?" ejaculated the five together.

"Steele's going out somewhere, I suppose," said Bunter. "Anyhow, there's a notice on the board that the Remove will be taken for the morning by a prefect—and it's Loder."

"Rotten!" said Bob Cherry.

"The rottenfulness is excruciating."

"And—and he will have me in the Form-room to rag!" said Bunter. "I've dodged him up to now. But I can't dodge him in the Form-room. I say, you fellows, what's to be done?"

Bunter blinked anxiously and seriously at the chums of the Remove as he propounded that problem.

But the Famous Five had no solution to offer.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's Loder!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as the bully of the Sixth came into sight in the quad.

Loder had his ashplant under his arm, and was looking about him. Billy Bunter blinked in alarm. He did not need to be told whom Loder was looking for.

"Oh crikey!"

Bunter bolted for the House.

"Bunter! Here!" called out Loder.

"Bunter! Stop!"

"The stopfulness will not be terrific,"

murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Bunter did not stop.

He vanished into the House at express speed.

Loder, with frowning brow, strode after him. The dignity of the Sixth forbade Loder to run; but he walked very fast. He disappeared into the House after Bunter.

"Poor old Bunter!" chuckled Bob.

"Loder's on the giddy war-path."

"The buttfulness on the esteemed bread-basket has made him terrifically waxy," remarked Hurree Singh.

The chums of the Remove resumed their stroll in the quad. Mr. Steele, going towards the House, passed them, and gave them a pleasant smile and a nod.

Wharton coloured a little, but the Form master's glance was not specially directed towards him.

That Mr. Grimes must have reported the events of the night to the man from Scotland Yard, was certain, and Wharton had no doubt that Richard Steele knew all about his escapade.

But Richard Steele was a sportsman. There was a carefully observed dividing line between his duty as a Greyfriars master, and his business as a detective. What he learned as Inspector Irons, he did not use as Remove master.

It was a relief to Wharton, but it was, after all, what he would have expected of Steele, now that he had come to know him well.

As a detective-inspector, Mr. Irons must have been pleased that the schoolboys had been on the spot that eventful night, since it had led to the capture of a dangerous crook. As a Form master, he would have been bound to view their performance with a grave

eye, and to take them before the head-master for condign punishment. Fortunately, it was in his former character that he had learned of the escapade.

Apparently nothing was to be said about the matter, and Harry Wharton was only too glad to hear no more of it.

"I say, you fellows!"

The juniors jumped. Their walk took them past the windows of the head-master's study, and a casement was open, and from the open casement, a fat face and a large pair of spectacles glimmered at them.

They stared up at Bunter.

"You benighted ass!" gasped Wharton. "What are you doing in there?"

"Dodging Loder!" gasped Bunter.

"You frightful chump!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "In the Head's study—suppose he comes in—"

"I expect he's gone to the Sixth by this time. He's not here, anyhow. I say, you fellows, I'm going to drop out of the window. Stand under it, will you for me to fall on?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Do you think we want to be turned into pancakes?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Get away, you fat dummy—here's Prout coming along!" whispered Nugent.

"Oh dear!"

Bunter vanished from the window, as the ponderous figure of the Fifth Form master rolled along the path. The casement shut suddenly.

"The frabjous ass!" said Bob. "If the Head catches him hiding in his study, he'll be for it."

William George Bunter was only too well aware of that. He stood in the Head's study gasping with affright. He had ventured into that sacred and dreaded apartment to dodge Loder, but if the Head came in, it would prove a case of jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire. And as he turned from the window, Bunter heard footsteps in the passage.

"Oh crikey!" groaned the Owl of the Remove.

There was a hand on the door outside, when Bunter slithered out of sight behind a revolving bookcase. Kneeling on the floor behind it, the fat junior was invisible from the door.

The door opened.

"Come in!" said the Head's voice.

Bunter suppressed a groan. Evidently the Head had not yet gone to the Sixth Form room. He was asking one of the masters into the study. This was worse than Loder.

"I shall not delay you long, sir."

Bunter, to his horror, recognised his own Form master's voice. It was that unutterable beast, Steele.

"I am quite at your service," was the Head's courteous reply. "What can I do for you?"

"You are not requiring Barnes' services this morning?"

"Not in the least."

"It would be of material assistance to me, sir, if Barnes could be sent in the car to Folkestone."

"Certainly."

"If you desire me to explain, sir—"

"My dear sir," said the Head, "please make no explanation. You are here to carry out a certain duty, in which I desire to render every assistance in my power. You have an absolutely free hand."

"I can only thank you, sir," said Mr. Steele. "May I take it, then, that Barnes will be sent to a certain address in Folkestone, to bring back a packet, and that my name will not be mentioned in the matter?"

"Quite."

"Here is the address, sir, and the packet is to be collected by Barnes personally, and brought to you by him."

"Rely upon your wishes being carried out."

"Thank you once more, sir."

"Not at all."

Bunter heard Mr. Steele's footsteps recede into the passage. The Head turned to his writing-table, and the fat junior quaked. But Dr. Locke remained only for a few minutes, gathering up papers that were required for the edification of the Sixth, and then left the study.

Bunter gasped with relief.

He crept to the door and opened it a few inches and blinked into the passage. The coast was clear.

The Owl of the Remove crept out and

apparently, had business elsewhere. And as the prefect in question was Gerald Loder, the Remove did not anticipate a happy morning.

Loder, certainly, was not likely to make them work hard. He was too much of a slacker himself to take his temporary duties seriously. But he was certain to bully and brag, for that was, so to speak, the nature of the beast.

But of all the Remove men, Bunter had the blackest anticipations. The other fellows only had Loder's usual unpleasantness to dread. But Bunter was "for" it.

With wonderful luck, he had dodged Loder so far. Dodging him in the Form room was impossible, artful dodger as Bunter was.

The prospect was really awful.



A second more, and the man at the tunnel would have been a prisoner. But in that second came a flash, a report, and a cry, and one of the constables toppled back into the river!

tiptoed along the corridor. At the corner, he almost ran into a Sixth-Form man coming round from the opposite direction.

"Bunter!" rapped out Loder.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Stop—"

But Bunter was already in flight.

"Bunter!" roared Loder of the Sixth.

Billy Bunter heard, but he heeded not. Once more the Owl of the Remove vanished into space. William George Bunter really wasn't having the time of his life that morning.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Any Port in a Storm!

"TODDY, old fellow!"

Peter Todd grinned.

The bell was ringing for class, and the Remove were heading for their Form room.

All the Lower Fourth knew by that time that the Form was to be taken by a prefect that morning, as Mr. Steele,

"Toddy, old chap, what's going to be done?" asked Bunter, almost tearfully. "I can't go into Form with that beast, you know."

"Loder won't kill you, old fat man," said Peter consolingly. "Not more than half, or so."

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"You can't butt a prefect on his third waistcoat button, without something happening, you know," said Toddy. "Take it smiling."

"What awful luck!" groaned Bunter. "Fancy that beast, Steele, sneaking away on this particular morning and leaving us to Loder! Any other morning wouldn't have mattered. Like his cheek, you know!"

"Tell him not to go," suggested Peter sarcastically. "Tell him it's not convenient for him to have this morning off."

"I say, Peter, don't be a beast! I say, suppose you go to Loder and tell him about my poor uncle—"

"What!" howled Peter.

"Do you think it might soften his heart if he knew my poor pater—I mean my poor uncle—had been run over by a taxi-car—I mean a motor-bus?" asked Bunter anxiously.

"I wouldn't bank on it," chuckled Toddy. "Tell him yourself and see how it works."

"Wha-a-at do you think he would do, Toddy?"

"I think he would give you something extra for telling lies, old fat man, and I think you'd deserve it!"

"Beast!"

Peter Todd grinned, and went on his way, after the rest of the Remove.

Bunter followed a few steps, and then stopped.

His fat legs refused to carry him to the Form-room.

Once inside that apartment, with Gerald Loder in charge, Bunter would be in the same state as Daniel in the lion's den. And Billy Bunter did not dare to be a Daniel.

It was a serious matter for a fellow to cut classes, an awfully serious matter. Bunter knew that. But it was a still more serious matter, in Bunter's opinion, to get the licking that Loder of the Sixth had in store for him.

Desperate diseases require desperate remedies. Loder of the Sixth was a disease, and the desperate remedy was to cut class.

"I say, Bob," howled Bunter, as Bob Cherry came rushing by, his books under his arm, a little late.

"Can't stop—"

"I say, old fellow—"

"Buck up and get in, you ass!"

Bob rushed by, and Bunter caught at his arm and hung on. Bob spun round, and his books descended in a shower round him.

"You fat idiot!" roared Bob.

"I say, old chap—" gasped Bunter.

"If I had time, I'd burst you!" howled Bob. "I shall be late now, with that cad Loder waiting for a chance. Shut up."

Bob gathered up his books in hot haste.

"I say," gasped Bunter. "I want you to mention to Loder that I'm ill—"

taken suddenly ill—and gone into sanny. Then he won't look for me."

"Fathead!"

"I'm cutting class, you see—"

"Ass!"

"Mind you tell him I'm in sanny—say the Head took me there personally—and that they think it's a case of scarlet pneumonia!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Or double pneumonia will do," gasped Bunter. "Say scarlet fever and double pneumonia. That sounds serious."

"Does it?" gasped Bob. "Why not make it triple pneumonia? Or quadruple? Or blue funk? That would be true!"

"Look here, you beast—"

"Rats!"

Bob packed his books under his arm and raced for the Form-room.

Bunter blinked after him as he vanished. He did not feel at all sure that Bob would deliver the message, neither could he feel sure that Loder would credit it if delivered. Obviously, it was Bunter's cue to make himself scarce, before he was looked for.

He scuttled away.

After all, he could only be caned for cutting class, and a caning from Steele was milder than one of Loder's lickings. But it was necessary to keep out of sight. Loder was beast enough to search for him if he did not turn up in the Form-room.

Nowhere in the House would Bunter be safe, and in the quad he was in sight from dozens of windows. Like an inspiration, the thought of the garage came into his mind. He had seen Barnes drive away in the Head's car, and from what he had heard in Dr. Locke's study, he knew that Barnes was gone to Folkestone, a very considerable distance, which made it impossible that he could be back for some hours. The garage would be deserted, and it was a deserted and solitary spot that Bunter had wanted.

Had Billy Bunter been less worried he might have wondered why Steele had asked the Head to send Barnes away. But Bunter was too worried now about

his own valuable person, even to be inquisitive. Barnes was gone, and that was all that mattered.

While the Remove men gathered in their Form-room, under the sour eye of Gerald Loder, Billy Bunter scuttled away to the garage.

He entered the yard easily enough, but the garage doors were locked, and he found no admittance there. But at the side of the garage was the private door that led to Barnes' rooms above. Bunter tried the door, and to his immense relief, found that it opened.

In a moment, he was in the little lobby within, and the door was closed again.

There he was safe, from Loder at least.

Whosoever Gerald Loder looked for him, he was not likely to think of the chauffeur's quarters.

A narrow staircase led up to the landing outside the two rooms over the garage. Bunter sat on the bottom step to recover his breath.

But he had no intention of remaining in that cold and uncomfortable spot. As Barnes had left his outer door unlocked, it was possible that he had left his rooms also unlocked—and Barnes' sitting-room was very comfortable. An armchair was there, and perhaps a fire; and Bunter had no hesitation about making himself at home in the chauffeur's room. Barnes might object, if he knew. But he would not know, so that did not matter.

Having recovered his breath, Bunter tiptoed up the stair. The door of Barnes' sitting-room faced the little landing above. It was closed. Bunter tiptoed across the landing towards it. As Barnes was absent, a good many miles on his way to Folkestone by this time, it was unlikely that anyone would be in the building. But the Owl of the Remove was cautious.

"Oh crumbs!" breathed Bunter.

There was a sound from within the room.

Bunter stopped dead.

Someone was there!

It was not Barnes—that was certain! But it was someone—for Bunter could hear soft footsteps. And then a clicking sound, as though a lock had opened. The click was followed by a rustle, as something in a drawer or desk was rummaged through. Someone was in Barnes' sitting-room, searching for something. Bunter listened to the soft, stealthy sounds in utter amazement. Who the dickens could be rummaging through Barnes' room in the chauffeur's absence?

Anyhow, somebody was there, and obviously that room was no hiding-place for Bunter. But curiosity was strong in the Owl's fat mind now. He wanted to know.

With great caution he crept closer to the door, lowered his head, and blinked through the keyhole.

Opposite the door was a window that looked over the front of the garage. And between the door and the window, full in Bunter's view in the light, was a figure he knew well.

Bunter hardly suppressed a gasp of amazement.

The man in the chauffeur's room was Richard Steele, the master of the Remove.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

"Hook It!"

BILLY BUNTER could scarcely believe his eyes, or his spectacles.

His Form master, in the chauffeur's room, rooting among Barnes' things while Barnes was away! It was incredible!

The Master Detective



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But there was no doubt about it. The strong-featured face, with its square jaw and grey eyes, showed clearly in the light from the window. The man was Richard Steele.

Bunter, silent, motionless, overcome with astonishment, blinked, his eye glued to the keyhole.

Steele, obviously, had no suspicion that anyone but himself was in the building.

The expression on his face was stern and intent. It was quite unlike any expression Bunter had ever seen on his Form master's face before. It was the same face, yet it seemed the face of a different man. There was something like the look of a hawk upon it—the look of a bird of prey that was pouncing on its quarry. Never would Bunter have taken that face, as it now looked, for the face of a schoolmaster. In point of fact, the man with the square jaw, at that moment, was no longer Richard Steele, but Inspector Irons, pure and simple.

Bunter's curious eye noted his occupation. He had taken a leather case out of a drawer, and was examining it. There was a lock on the case, and it was locked. Something glimmered in Steele's hand, and the locked case came open.

He had picked the lock!

Bunter felt his fat brain almost swimming! A Form master who picked locks! If this wasn't proof that Steele was in reality a cracksmen, Bunter did not know what proof was! Billy Bunter had caught him fairly in the act!

But it Steele was a cracksmen, his proceedings were peculiar for a man of that fraternity, for he did not remove anything from the case he had opened. Bunter saw him making a meticulous examination of the contents; but every article was replaced after being examined. Then somehow—Bunter did not know how—the case was locked again and put back into the drawer from which it had been taken.

Steele moved, and passed out of Bunter's line of vision.

The fat junior started to his feet.

If he was going—if he came to the door—Bunter's spine turned quite cold at the bare idea of being caught there by the man he had spied upon. Visions of a jemmy, wielded in a murderous hand, danced before his eyes. Loder was better than this!

The Owl of the Remove backed hastily across the landing, and slithered down the narrow stair.

There was a quick footstep above.

Some noise made by the Owl of the Remove, in his hurried flight, had reached the man in the room.

Bunter heard a door open, and a step on the landing. With a gasp of affright he opened the lower door, whisked out, and ran.

Rapid motion was not in Bunter's line as a rule. But on this occasion Bunter fairly flashed.

He did not pause till he was back in the quadrangle, spluttering for breath. There he stopped at last, and leaned on a tree, gasping.

"Oh crikey!" murmured Bunter.

He had forgotten even Loder now, and the fact that he was out of class without leave. His fat brain was quite in a whirl.

What had Steele been up to?

What did it all mean?

Bunter's first impression had been that Steele's secret presence in the chauffeur's quarters, rooting about and picking locks, proved that he was beyond doubt a cracksmen, as Bunter had always believed.

But the fat junior, obtuse as he was,

was capable of seeing what was absolutely obvious. Bunter could, so to speak, see a thing if it leaped to the eye.

The Remove master had been searching Barnes' room. He had not been taking anything away—indeed, it was difficult to imagine that there could be anything worth a thief's while in the room. Barnes was paid good wages, but his quarters could hardly be worth burgling. It was not that—Billy Bunter realised that it was not that.

He knew, besides, that Steele had arranged with the Head to send Barnes away on a long drive that morning.

Now that he had seen Steele searching Barnes' room Bunter could guess that the fetching of a packet from Folkestone was simply a device for getting Barnes



THINK A WHILE—RAISE A SMILE

like S. Vince, of Skeggs Cottage, Writtle, Chelmsford, Essex, who sent in the following joke. S. Vince has been awarded one of this week's useful pocket-knives.

Pat was a new hand, so his workmates, deciding to play a joke on him, drew the features of a donkey on the back of his coat which he had left hanging up. In due course Pat came towards his workmates with the coat in his hand. "What's up, Pat?" asked one, trying to look unconcerned. "Nothing much," replied Pat, quite as unconcerned, "only I'd like to know which one of you wiped his face on my coat!"

It's not a hard task, is it, chums? Then get busy right away and let me have your efforts!

out of the way while Steele was at work over the garage.

That was clear enough! It was clear, too, why Steele had left the Remove to Loder that morning, leaving himself free to take advantage of Barnes' absence.

Obviously, he had great influence over the Head, who trusted him to do as he thought fit. What the thump was he searching over the garage for? He was not there to pinch anything—there was nothing to pinch, if it came to that. Had Barnes been up to something, and was Steele trying to bowl him out? Anyhow, whatever Steele's extraordinary proceedings might be, the Head was backing him up, and was well aware that some of his actions were not in keeping with his character as a Form master.

Bunter was burning with curiosity—never had he wanted to know so much.

Deep in his reflections on this extraordinary mystery, Bunter remained leaning on the elm, forgetful of other matters.

It did not occur to him that he was in sight from the windows of the Remove Form-room till he saw Loder of the Sixth emerge from the house, with a cane under his arm, and stride towards him.

Then Bunter jumped.

"Stop!" shouted Loder, as the fat junior ran.

Bunter put on steam.

All Greyfriars was in the Form-rooms now, and the quad was deserted. So Loder threw his Sixth Form dignity to the winds, and started after Bunter at a run.

The windows of the Remove-room were crammed with grinning faces. Loder having left the Remove to themselves, they were not confining their attention strictly to work. They were more interested in the proceedings outside.

Bunter dodged among the trees, with Loder after him, shouting to him to stop. Bunter did not stop. Every shout from Loder of the Sixth spurred him on to renewed efforts.

"Go it, Bunter!" yelled Bob Cherry, from the Form-room window.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Put it on, Bunter!"

The chase wound away from the trees, and Bunter dodged Loder round the fountain, and came streaking towards the house. Loder, close behind him now, gained at every stride.

"Go it, Bunter!" yelled the juniors.

"Loder will get him!" ejaculated Peter Todd.

"Poor old Bunter."

"He's got him—"

"The gottfulness is terrific."

But Gerald Loder had not quite got Bunter. Close behind the panting, gasping Owl, Loder stretched out a hand to grasp a fat shoulder. His finger-tips touched Bunter.

The Remove watched breathlessly.

Bunter, whether by design or accident, collapsed under that light touch and rolled on the earth, yelling. Loder was going too fast to stop. He plunged over Bunter and flew headlong.

There was a crash as Loder landed on hands and knees, his nose tapping on the hard, unsympathetic quadrangle.

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

"Hook it, Bunter!" shrieked Bob Cherry.

Bunter scrambled up, dizzily. Loder, for the moment, sprawled, quite knocked out by the unexpected crash on the earth.

The Owl of the Remove gave him a blink, and started to run again. He came towards the house, puffing and blowing.

"Put it on!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Hoof it, Bunter!" yelled Squiff.

"Loder's after you!"

"Go it, Bunter!"

Loder staggered up, his hand to his nose, which looked red and raw. He glared round him, spotted Bunter streaking for the house, and flew after him, the expression on his face like unto that of a demon in a pantomime.

"Put it on, Bunter!" yelled all the Remove, from the windows of the Form-room, in wild excitement.

Bunter passed out of their view, and a moment later Loder also. They listened for the sound of yelling to announce that the fat junior had been run down. But no yells reached their ears.

Bunter had not been run down.

Once in the House the fat junior did not pause. Vengeance was behind him, and he had not a second to lose.

He charged down masters' passage like a scared sheep. Perhaps he had a faint hope that even the enraged Loder would not venture to pursue him in that sacred quarter.

But if so, it was a delusive hope. All

the masters were away from their studies at that hour. And, anyway, Loder would not have cared, in his present state of mind. He charged after Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove blinked round, half-way down the passage, and saw Loder coming round the corner after him in full career.

With a yelp of terror Billy Bunter tore open the door of Mr. Steele's study, and pelted in.

Loder was still six feet away when the study door slammed. He spurted and reached the door just as Bunter turned the key in the lock.

Click!

The next second Loder was hammering at the door.

Inside the study Bunter gasped and palpitated.

"Bunter!"

"Ow! Ow! Groogh!"

"Unlock this door!"

"Ow! Wow! Ow!"

"How dare you enter a master's study? Unlock this door at once, Bunter! Do you hear me?" raved Loder.

"Groooogh! Ooooooch! Ow!"

"I'll smash you——"

"Oooooooch!"

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Loder's banging on the door was not likely to make Bunter unlock it. It was only too certain that, if the door was opened, the banging would be transferred to Bunter. Bunter preferred to let the door have it.

"Bunter, you young scoundrel! Let me in at once!"

"Groooogh!"

"Will you open this door?" shrieked Loder.

"Ow! Wow! Ooooh!"

Obviously, Bunter was not going to open the door. Loder gave it up at last. In a frame of mind more appropriate to a tiger in the jungle, than to a prefect of the Sixth, Gerald Loder stamped away, leaving Billy Bunter to puff and blow in Mr. Steele's study—safe, for the present, at least.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Knows How!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. were glad enough to get out in break that morning.

They had not enjoyed class with Loder.

Class work, certainly, had not been a strain; Loder was too slack to care how they did their work. But the amount of "bending over" in the Form-room that morning had constituted a record. Loder had come in after his unsuccessful chase with a red and raw nose, and a temper still more red and raw. Bunter being, for the time, out of his reach, the bully of the Sixth had taken it out of the other fellows.

Break came only in time to prevent a mutiny in the Remove. Had class gone on a little longer, it was probable that the Remove would have collared Loder, Sixth Form prefect as he was, and handled him severely. Fortunately, it had not come to that. The Remove came out in break, and Loder of the Sixth made his way to Mr. Steele's study, to talk to Bunter through the door. But the Owl of the Remove was deaf to the voice of the charmer, and the door remained locked.

Billy Bunter, as a rule, did not fill a prominent place in the Form, and his existence was hardly remembered when he was out of sight. But on the present occasion all the Lower Fourth were interested in Bunter. They wondered where he was, and what had happened to him.

"Loder never got him," remarked Frank Nugent. "The fat idiot's hiding somewhere. I wonder where?"

"The wonderfulness is terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I say, you fellows!"

"Hallo! Hallo! Hallo!"

"There he is!"

Billy Bunter was blinking from the window of Mr. Quelch's old study, now the study of Richard Steele. His fat face was deeply perturbed.

The Famous Five approached the window with grinning faces. That study, evidently, was Bunter's place of refuge.

"I say, you fellows," gasped Bunter, "that awful beast is still after me!"

"You silly ass!" said Johnny Bull. "You'll get it worse for giving Loder all this trouble."

"The worsefulness will be terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter."

"You'd better cut out of that study before Steele comes in," said Harry Wharton.

"I can't!" gasped Bunter.

"Why can't you, ass?"

"Loder's outside the door."

"Oh, my hat!"

"He's simply raging," groaned Bunter. "Hissing through the keyhole like a snake. Raging like a tiger. Oh dear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! I say, you fellows, has Steele come back yet?"

"Haven't seen him. He's away for the morning, I suppose," said Harry.

"He jolly well isn't," said Bunter.

"Look here, he can't stay much longer at the garage, can he?"

"Is he at the garage?"

"Yes. I say, you fellows, you cut off to the garage, and tell Steele to come here! Tell him Loder's after me, and I want him."

The juniors gazed at Bunter.

"Yes, we're likely to carry that message to a Form master—I don't think!" said Johnny Bull.

"The likelihood is not terrific!" chuckled Hurree Singh.

"You see, he will stop Loder," said Bunter.

"I don't see why he should. You've done more than enough to get a prefect's licking."

"I mean, I can make him."

"Eh?"

"What?"

"What I mean is, one good turn deserves another," explained Bunter. "I've been thinking that out while I've been stuck in this study. If I keep mum, that's doing Steele a good turn, isn't it? Well, then, he's bound to keep Loder off. What?"

Bob Cherry tapped his forehead. "Potty!" he remarked sadly. "Poor old Bunter! Has this been coming on long, poor old chap?"

"WHO SCORED THOSE GOALS?"

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Bob Cherry spun round as Bunter clutched at his arm, and his books went scattering in all directions!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Exit Bunter!

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"What do you mean, you fat ass, if you mean anything?" asked Harry Wharton, with a startled look. If Billy Bunter, by any chance, had discovered the secret of the man from Scotland Yard, that secret was not likely to be so secret much longer.

"I know what I know!" said Bunter mysteriously. "I may have seen Steele up to something at the garage this morning, and I may not. That's telling. But it stands to reason that he will want to keep it dark. See? That's where I come in."

"Quite potty!" said Bob.

"The pottiffulness is terrific!"

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

"Here comes Steele," said Harry Wharton. "You'd better get out of that study, Bunter. He's going into the House!"

"I can't, you ass!"

"He's gone in," said Harry. "Look here! Drop from the window, and we'll help you down!"

Bunter shook his head.

"Loder will be after me again, and I can't keep on dodging him," he said. "Steele has got to stop Loder."

"You fat chump—"

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter turned from the window, and the Famous Five walked on, wondering what was going to happen. They lost sight of William George Bunter—little dreaming how long it was to be before they would set eyes again on that fat and fatuous youth.

Mr. Steele had gone into the House, and he came down Masters' passage to his study, quite unsuspecting of what

was going on there. He was surprised to see a prefect of the Sixth bending at the keyhole, apparently talking through it to someone in the study.

"You cheeky little beast! Will you unlock this door?" came to Mr. Steele's ears. "I'll take the skin off you—"

"Loder?" said Mr. Steele quietly.

Loder jumped, and spun round. He coloured under the Remove master's severe gaze.

"May I inquire what this means, Loder?" asked Mr. Steele.

"Bunter is in your study, sir," said Loder. "He cut class this morning, and locked himself in your study. He refuses to open the door!"

"Upon my word!" ejaculated Steele.

"I leave the matter in your hands, sir!" said Loder—with a mental reservation, however.

Whatever Bunter got from Steele, he was going to get something still more drastic from Loder later on. For the present, however, Loder had to give it up, and he walked away down the corridor.

Mr. Steele knocked at the door.

"Oh, go away, you beast!" came a voice from within.

"Wha-a-at?"

"Go away, you beast!"

"Bunter!"

"Oh! Is—that Mr. Steele? I—I thought it was the other beast, sir."

"Open this door at once, Bunter!"

"Oh, certainly, sir!" gasped Bunter.

The door was unlocked, and Richard Steele strode into the study.

BILLY BUNTER blinked at the Remove master.

Steele's clear grey eyes were fixed on the fat and fatuous face of the Owl of the Remove sternly. There was an expression on Bunter's face that the schoolmaster detective, keen as he was, did not quite understand.

Trepidation was there, but it was mingled with a peculiar sort of cheeky confidence.

"Bunter," said Mr. Steele, "I must deal with you severely. I have learned that there was a phone call for me while you were in this study yesterday, which was answered—presumably by way of a practical joke. You must have done this, Bunter!"

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Bunter. "There wasn't a phone call, sir! Besides, as you were not here, sir, I thought I ought to take the call. I-I thought that would be only good-natured, sir."

Mr. Steele gave him an expressive look.

"Besides, the call wasn't for you, sir," said Bunter. "Old Grimes—I-I mean, Inspector Grimes—was asking for a man named Irons, sir. I think he must have given the wrong number. Besides, it was only a joke, sir. And—to tell you the exact truth, sir, the telephone-bell never rang at all while I was in the study."

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Steele. "But that is not all, Bunter. This

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morning you have absented yourself without leave from the Form room, and locked yourself in your master's study. I am afraid I must report you to your headmaster."

"Loder was after me, sir," stammered Bunter. "Like a tiger, sir. I hadn't done anything."

"Nonsense!"

"It—it was quite an accident, sir, butting him in the bread-basket—"

"Wha-a-at?" ejaculated Mr. Steele.

"I—I mean in the tummy, sir," stammered Bunter. "You see—"

"That will do, Bunter!"

"Yes, sir. I—I should like you to tell Loder that I'm not to be licked, sir."

"I will speak to Loder; but if I find that you have deserved your punishment, as I fully expect, I shall certainly not intervene!"

"I—I think you'd better, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"What?"

"You see, sir, one good turn deserves another!" said Bunter, taking his courage in both hands, as it were, and making the plunge.

Mr. Steele stared at him blankly.

"What do you mean, Bunter? I do not understand you."

"I—I mean, I'm keeping it dark, sir."

"You absurd boy! What are you keeping dark, as you call it? Are you referring to the ridiculous story some of the boys believe, or affect to believe—"

"Nunno, sir! But—"

"But what?" rapped out Steele sharply.

"I—I say, sir," gasped Bunter desperately. "I ain't going to tell anybody! But—but one good turn deserves another! You tell Loder he ain't to lick me, and—and I'll keep it dark, sir. I will really! The—the Head wouldn't like you rooting over his chauffeur's rooms, I'm sure, sir, if he knew, and Barnes would very likely give notice! D-d-don't you think so, sir?"

The schoolmaster detective stood very still.

Bunter blinked at him uneasily.

He had unmasked his battery, so to speak. Steele knew now what Bunter could do if he liked. Surely, as one good turn deserved another, he would have sense enough to bar Loder off, rather than have his peculiar proceedings at the garage tattled all over Greyfriars. Bunter tried to feel confident, but his apprehensions predominated. Steele really was not the man to be cheeked like this.

"You must explain a little further, Bunter," said Mr. Steele at last very quietly. "Have you visited the garage this morning?"

"I—I went there to dodge Loder, sir."

"I understand. I was not mistaken in thinking that I heard a sound, then," said the Remove master. "You had the impudence to enter Barnes' quarters."

"Oh, really, sir, as you were there yourself—"

"You imagine that you saw me there?" asked the Form master, still very quietly—so quietly that Bunter's confidence grew stronger.

"Not much imagination about it," said the fat junior. "I jolly well saw you in Barnes' room, sir—picking locks, too. Of course, I'm not going to say anything. I wouldn't! I'm not a fellow for talking—as you may have noticed, sir! I never tattle and chatter, like some fellows I could name. But—but one good turn deserves another, doesn't it, sir?"

Mr. Steele's keen grey eyes seemed almost to bore into Bunter; and his square jaw jutted like a rock.

"So you are making terms with me, Bunter?" he asked.

"Well, sir, it's only fair—"

"You are an extraordinary boy, Bunter," said Richard Steele. "If you were not so obtuse, I should cane you severely before taking you to the headmaster. I must consider how to deal with you."

"You see, sir—"

"Be silent!" rapped out Steele.

Bunter was silent. From a distance came the ringing of a bell for third school, and he heard the Greyfriars fellows trooping in from break. The tramping of footsteps and the buzzing of voices died away. Mr. Steele was still standing silent, with a thoughtful expression on his brow.

He broke the silence at last.

"Follow me, Bunter!"

"I—I say, sir—"

"Follow me!" repeated Steele, in a voice that made Bunter jump.

The Owl of the Remove followed him. Mr. Steele led him to the Head's study.

The Head, as Bunter knew, would be with the Sixth by that time, and not in his study.

Steele waved Bunter into the empty room.

"Remain here!" he said.

"I—I say—"

The Remove master walked away.

Billy Bunter remained alone in the Head's study, in a state of growing apprehension. It looked as if Steele did not understand that one good turn deserved another; or else he fancied that a Form master could not make terms with a cheeky junior. Perhaps he even supposed that, in any case, Billy Bunter could not be trusted to hold his wagging tongue.

Bunter waited, and with every passing minute his confidence oozed away and his uneasiness grew and grew.

There was a footstep at last, and Dr. Locke entered. Mr. Steele was with him, but he remained outside the door.

Bunter blinked apprehensively at the Head.



Poor Old Billy.

That beast Steele must have gone to the Sixth Form room and spoken to him, and brought him here to deal with Bunter. It really seemed as if he did care whether Bunter told the Head what he had done that morning; though it was pretty clear that he did not desire Bunter to tell anyone else.

"Ah! Bunter!" said the Head, staring at the Owl of the Remove.

"Bunter, I am informed that you absented yourself from class this morning without permission. This is very serious!"

"I—I—"

"You need not speak, Bunter. Your Form master is of opinion that a flogging should not be administered, in your case—"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Good!"

"Silence! Mr. Steele is of opinion that you should be sent away from Greyfriars—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"For a short time. This will be a lesson to you. You are not expelled, Bunter; you will be sent to your home, to remain there for a time, and I trust you will return to school in a more obedient and disciplined frame of mind. I shall send your father a note in explanation."

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

"You will leave immediately—"

"I—I say, sir—"

"Mr. Steele, you will see that Bunter catches the next train; I leave the matter in your hands."

"Quite so, sir!"

Dr. Locke rustled away. Billy Bunter blinked after him, and blinked at the impassive face of Richard Steele.

"Look here, sir!" he gasped. "I—I—"

"Silence, Bunter, and follow me. You have your box to pack!"

"But, sir—"

"Come!"

"Oh lor'!"

The Remove were still in Form when a taxi rolled away from Greyfriars, with Bunter's box on top, and Mr. Steele sitting by his side in the cab. The Owl's fat face was the picture of dismay. Of all the beasts Bunter had ever encountered in a beastly world, populated by beasts, the beast sitting at his side was, Bunter thought, the very last word in beasts.

But there was no help for Bunter.

Mr. Steele took his ticket at the station, handed it to him; and, greatly to Bunter's surprise, presented him with a box of chocolates to eat in the train. Then the train rolled out of Courtfield with William George Bunter.

When the Remove came out after third school some of them looked for Bunter. They looked for him, but they found him not. For the present Bunter's place knew him no more. And there were dry eyes in the Remove!

THE END.

(Events are destined to move with dramatic suddenness at Greyfriars now that Billy Bunter is out of the way. In "THE GREY-FRIARS' CRACKSMAN!" readers will find the ideal story, combining humour, excitement and mystery—next week.)

START THIS STIRRING TALE OF THE FOREIGN LEGION TO-DAY!

For the Glory of France!

by Geo. E. Rochester



The papers are signed. For five years Paul and Majuba Smith are sworn to serve France at the niggardly pay of one halfpenny per day. But if the pay is small they are, at least, assured of unlimited adventure 'neath the blazing sun of the desert!

HOW THE STORY STARTED.

Paul Blake, Fifth-Former of Greystones, learns that Guy Warren, the popular captain of the school, is in serious trouble. Thirty pounds of the funds placed in Warren's charge have been gambled away, and rather than see the son of his guardian exposed as a "J," Paul decides to take the blame. This he does by running away from Greystones. A few miles from the school he meets Majuba Smith, an orphaned waif of the roads. The two tell each other their stories, and then Paul suggests that they join the Foreign Legion together. Majuba agrees, and by selling his gold watch, Paul manages to get sufficient money to take him and his new-found friend to Paris. There they offer themselves as recruits for the Legion.

(Now read on.)

Enlisted!

HAVING breakfasted, Paul and Jub set off for the Rue St. Dominique. Arrived there, they presented themselves at the Bureau de Recrutement, where they were received by Sergeant-Major Facquier, who made no effort to conceal his delight at their return.

"Ah," he smiled, "so you have come back, then, mes enfants! This is indeed excellent!"

"Yes, we rather thought you'd be pleased," remarked Paul dryly.

Sergeant-Major Facquier's smile was replaced by a frown. Was it possible that the cub was being insolent?

"You will learn, mes garçons," warned the sergeant-major grimly, "that for the benefit of one's health one listens in silence to the observations of a non-commissioned officer in the Army of France."

He swung on his heel and threw open the door of a bleak, unfurnished room.

"Wait in there!" he ordered.

Paul and Jub obeyed. Half an hour passed before the door opened again,

and Sergeant-Major Facquier thrust his head into the room.

"Come with me!" he said brusquely.

He escorted the boys to the presence of the officer of cavalry who had interviewed them the previous day.

"You still wish to join the Legion?" asked the officer. "You have not changed your minds?"

"No, sir," replied Paul.

The officer hesitated a moment; then, turning to his desk, he picked up two grey, printed forms. Handing one to Paul and one to Jub, he said:

"These are the conditions of service in the Legion. Make yourselves acquainted with them; and remember that once you append your signatures to the forms you belong to France for a period of five years. There is only one way in which you can obtain release before the end of that time—by death!"

Paul nodded and dropped his gaze to the paper, which, in bald and simple form, set out the conditions of service. Reading them through, he explained the gist of them briefly to Jub, then turned to the officer.

"We will sign, sir," he said.

"You are quite sure? Remember, you are taking an irrevocable step."

"We fully realise that, sir," responded Paul. "But we wish to join."

With a shrug of his shoulders the officer dipped a pen in ink and handed it to Paul. Rapidly the boy wrote his signature in the space indicated at the foot of the form. Then, with a sudden strange sense of unreality, he stood watching whilst Jub laboriously scrawled his.

Deliberately, and with his eyes open to what he was doing, he—Paul Blake—had signed away his freedom for five years. What would they hold for him, those years? Hardship, adventure, companionship—death?

Well, time would show. He had no regrets, come what might. The old life was definitely over now; the new life as definitely begun.

Taking the signed forms, the officer glanced at the signatures, then addressed the two boys.

"You are now soldiers of France," he said sternly, "recruits in a corps which for bravery and courage has a name second to none. From now onwards let your every act, your every thought, be for the glory of France."

He consulted a paper on his desk, then resumed:

"You will proceed to Marseilles, where you will be met by a non-commissioned officer, who will escort you to the Fort St. Jean. Should you fail to arrive at Marseilles, you will be treated as deserters from the Legion, and punished accordingly on your being apprehended."

He turned to the sergeant-major, who barked:

"Recruits—left turn!"

The boys marched from the room, and they waited while Sergeant-Major Facquier made out their railway warrants for Marseilles.

"You will catch the midday train from the Gare de Lyon," he informed them, handing them the warrants. "If you are wise you will not think to miss it; so be warned!"

He smiled then and added:

"And if it happens that you are sent to Sidi-bel-Abbes, be good enough to inform Sergeant-Major Bolke, whom you will meet there, that it was I, his good friend, who ushered you into the Legion."

He laughed unpleasantly.

"What is it that they call le bon Bolke?" he ruminated aloud for the

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of his hearers. "Ah, yes, I have it — Sergeant-Major Lunatic-Maker! That is the name they have given him, and he has earned it well. He can drive a man insane. But maybe you will see for yourselves. You will if you are sent to Sidi-bel-Abbes. Well, adieu, *seigneur*!"

"But are we to proceed to Marseilles alone?" demanded Paul.

"Of course," retorted the sergeant-major. "You can find your way to the Gare de Lyon, and the rest is simple. You board the train and—voilà!—you sit there until you arrive at Marseilles. But perhaps"—this with heavy sarcasm—"you suggest that I should accompany you, to look after your needs—to amuse!"

"No, thanks!" cut in Paul. "We should simply hate having you with us! Adieu! And many thanks!"

And before Sergeant-Major Facquier could think of a sufficiently crushing rejoinder the two boys had passed out into the street.

At Fort St. Jean!

THE long, sixteen hours' journey to Marseilles passed uneventfully enough for Paul and Jub, and it was in the early hours of the following morning that they descended from the train at the terminus.

They were met by a sergeant of French infantry, who examined their papers, then curtly bade them follow him. He led them along the waterfront, where lay moored ships of every nation, and brought them eventually to the great iron gates of the grim pile which was Fort St. Jean.

"Two recruits for the Legion," he said, handing them over to the sergeant of the guard.

The sergeant of the guard surveyed them with interest.

"Poor fools!" he remarked sympathetically, as, taking charge of them, he led the way along a narrow stone corridor.

"Enter and meet our future comrades," he said, throwing open a door at the end of the corridor.

Standing aside, he ushered Paul and Jub into a large room, foul and reeking

with the mingled smells of tobacco-fumes and unwashed humanity. Along the whole length of one wall were iron bunks in tiers. A few rough benches stood here and there, and in the middle of the floor was a rough, unvarnished table.

The place was full of men. They were obviously recruits, for all were in civilian dress—a garb which ranged from decently-cut lounge suits to filthy rags and tatters. A few of the men were lying smoking on their bunks, but the majority were either lounging on the benches or playing cards at the table.

The sergeant of the guard having shut the door and departed, Paul and Jub seated themselves on a bunk and proceeded to take further stock of their surroundings and of their future companions.

"They're an awful tough-lookin' crowd, Paul," commented Jub from the corner of his mouth.

Paul nodded. They were, indeed, a tough-looking crowd. Stolid Germans rubbed shoulders with dark-skinned Frenchmen and fair-haired giants from Northern Europe. Here and there sat a swarthy Spaniard or Portuguese, with cigarette drooping lazily from sullen lip.

Crooks, rogues, vagabonds, adventurers! The Legion knows them all. But the Legion asks no questions of its sons, nor seeks to probe the why or the wherefore of a man's enlistment. It offers sanctuary to the criminal; sustenance and comradeship to the down-and-out; a fresh chance to the waster; and glorious adventure to those restless souls to whom adventure is the breath of life.

"And how is Greystones, Blake?"

An amused, drawing voice spoke at Paul's elbow, breaking in on his thoughts. Paul leapt to his feet to confront a tall, good-looking young fellow whose level, blue eyes were smiling pleasantly.

"You—Desmond!" he exclaimed incredulously.

Charles Desmond nodded.

"The same," he replied. "I thought I was not mistaken, although it must be five years since last I saw you."

Yes, it was a full five years since Paul

Blake had tagged for Charles Desmond, Captain of Greystones. And now had come this strange meeting in a French barrack-room in Fort St. Jean.

"But—but—" stammered Paul, taking Desmond's outstretched hand.

"You're wondering what on earth I'm doing here," laughed Desmond. "It's a simple story, easily told. The gov'nor came an awful cropper in the City. It was either an office stool or getting out for me. I got out, and here I am."

Paul dropped his companion's hand. It was up to him to reciprocate: to explain how he came to be a recruit for the Legion. It was not necessary, of course, but it was the decent thing to do. Yet how could he explain?

"I ran away from Greystones," he said awkwardly. "I—I'll tell you about it some day." Then turning, he indicated Jub. "This is my chum, Smith! Jub, this is Charles Desmond!"

Jub and Desmond shook hands, and as they did so a big, burly fellow, three-parts drunk, lurched up against them.

"Pretty, ain't it?" he sneered. "Quite affectin'. Ol' friends meetin' again and all that. Get outa the way!"

He gave Desmond a shove which sent him reeling against the bunk.

"You'd better keep your hands to yourself, my man!" advised Desmond quietly.

The fellow halted, fists clenched and unshaven jaw thrust forward menacingly.

"Ho, indeed!" he said, his eyes taking in Desmond's neatly-clad and well-knit figure. "You say that again, you tailor's dummy, and I'll smash your face in!"

As a promise, it left nothing to the imagination, and the fellow was fully capable of attempting to carry out his words. He was in belligerent and ugly mood, begotten by the liquor he had consumed. Realising that, Desmond turned away with a shrug of his shoulders.

But the other, spoiling for a row, was not to be balked.

Gripping Desmond by the arm, he swung him round.

"Ho, so that's it!" he snarled. "Turn your back on me, eh? I ain't good enough for such a pretty feller as you, ain't I? Well, just hold that, chum!"

His great clenched fist drove savagely upwards. Jerking his head aside, Desmond wrenched himself loose. Then he sent his own fist smashing against the fellow's mouth.

With an oath, the unshaven one staggered back. Recovering himself, he leapt in. Desmond was giving a full three stones away in weight, and moreover his antagonist was by now thoroughly roused.

Roused also, were the other inmates of the room. Cards were temporarily forgotten in this new attraction, and shouting, jeering men jostled and pushed in their efforts to get a better view of the combatants.

Side-swinging a vicious swing to the temple, Desmond got home a punch to the throat, following up with a straight left flush to the other's already bleeding mouth.

"Look out, kid!" screamed a voice. But it was too late. Passion flaming in his eyes, Desmond's assailant had kicked savagely upwards. His heavy boot took Desmond full in the stomach and, with a gasp of sheer agony, he fell backwards.

Before either Paul or Jub could leap in to avenge that blackguardly kick, a slimy-built man, bronzed of face and wearing an immaculate grey lounge suit,



"Look out, kid!" screamed a voice. But it was too late. Passion flaming in his eyes, Desmond's assailant had kicked savagely upwards.

slipped between Desmond and the drunken bully.

"That was very clever, my friend," he said coldly. "Perhaps now you will go and put your head under the tap."

"Get out of my way, curse you!" roared the other.

With that, he attempted to brush the man aside in an endeavour to get at Desmond. Then things began to happen with astonishing swiftness. Something like the kick of a mule took him thus on his long-suffering mouth, bringing a fresh gush from bruised and broken lips. Something else smashed against his jaw, sending him reeling backwards with eyes agape and arms upthrown.

That he did not go down was accounted for by the press of eager spectators who received him into their arms and thrust him forward again. He was quite berserk by this time, and rushed to his doom with arms flailing like windmills.

A smashing blow to the heart brought him up short and gasping. Another, flush to the face, rocked him dazedly on his feet. The onlookers roared their delight. Who the slimy-built, grey-clad man was they did not know. But he could use his fists.

With eyes which never lost their quiet smile, and feet which moved like those of a fencing master, he proceeded to give the maddened, half-blinded bully a much-needed lesson in the manly art of fisticuffs.

He took little punishment himself, and at length, obviously realising that the end was near, his assailant lunged again with vicious boot. It was a clumsy effort, easily evaded. Before the bully could recover his balance, a smash to the jaw sent him down. He essayed to rise, fell back, and rolling over on his face, lay moaning like some great wounded beast.

"Voila!" exclaimed the grey-clad man, and, dusting his hands, turned away with the air of a job well done.

"I say, thanks awfully!" said Desmond weakly.

"Do not mention it, monsieur," replied the other. "It was a pleasure, I assure you."

His tone was that of a cultured man. Desmond stared at him curiously, then blurted:

"My name's Desmond—Charles Desmond."

The other bowed.

"And mine," he said, "is Esterharn. I am happy to meet you, monsieur."

He held out his hand. And thus was born a friendship which was to endure even down into the grey Valley of Death.

Sergeant-Major Bolke!

THE remainder of that day passed uneventfully enough. Those men with money to spend passed the evening in the canteen until the bugle for "Lights Out" brought them stumbling, cursing or singing to their bunks.

As though by mutual consent, Paul, Jub, Desmond, and Esterharn took adjacent bunks. But sleep was long in coming to Paul that night. It had been ripping meeting Desmond again; but awkward in that Desmond would naturally look for some explanation as to why Paul had run away from Grey-stones.

It was impossible for him to tell Desmond the truth, for that would mean breaking his word to Warren. And he certainly was not going to say, "I stole thirty quid and bolted."

What, then, could he say?

There was one consolation. Desmond would never ask. But he would wonder, and there could never be complete trust



Against the wall by Paul's bed, Esterharn had a struggling man clutched by the throat!

between him and Paul until he knew why Paul had cleared out. And the whole basis of friendship is trust.

It was a rotten position, Paul considered, look at it any way he liked.

Paul's thoughts turned to Esterharn. Strange to meet a fellow like that in the Legion, for Esterharn had been a captain of French artillery. That evening he had mentioned it quite casually.

"But I was cashiered, mes amis," he had said, with a shrug. "It is bad to have an enemy in one's superior officer!"

He had left it at that, giving no details. But Esterharn was straight. Paul was prepared to swear to that.

Sleep came at length, but it seemed to Paul that he had scarce closed his eyes before "Reveille" went. Breakfast consisted of bread, soup, and coffee. Then the recruits were assembled in the courtyard and the roll was called by a non-commissioned officer.

"This morning you embark for Oran," he informed them, "where you will be drafted to your various depots."

Then came the order to form fours, and the recruits were marched down to the docks, where they went aboard a small troopship which sailed an hour later.

"Well, we're bound for Africa at last, Jub," said Paul, as he and Jub stood by the rail watching the French coast receding into the mists. "Any regrets?"

"None," replied Jub stolidly. "Unless we're sent to different depots."

"By Jove, I hope we're not," exclaimed Paul, in dismay. "We've just got to stick together now; you and I, and Desmond and Esterharn."

"I don't suppose we'll ever be consulted," said Jub dismally.

"We won't!" laughed Desmond, who had joined them. "But I've been speaking to Esterharn about it. He knows the ins and outs of the game and he's pretty confident that he can wangle our being sent to the same depot."

"But how?" exclaimed Paul.

"He didn't say," replied Desmond.

But three days later, at the fort at Oran, Esterharn sought out, and obtained an interview with the sergeant in charge of drafts. It was a discreet interview in which nothing very much was said, but which terminated in the sergeant pocketing one hundred francs and remarking:

"It will be as you wish, mon ami! After all, what matters who goes here and who goes there?"

So that afternoon, when the draft which was to join the First Regiment of the Foreign Legion at Sidi-bel-Abbes was paraded in the sun-baked barrack-square, Paul and his three companions found themselves included in the company.

The draft marched through the wide streets of the little African town of Oran, gaped at by Arabs, street vendors, and Europeans, who seemed however to have become aware that this motley squad was composed of future legionnaires.

"Hang-dog looking crowd, aren't they?" remarked one obese tourist, to his "better half." "Ex-convicts, most of 'em. Don't know why they don't try to get a better class of fellow in the Legion."

With which learned observation, he mopped his perspiring brow, and, rattling his loose change, waddled off in search of a cooling drink.

Reaching the station, the draft boarded the train for Sidi-bel-Abbes; Paul and his companions sharing a compartment with two Germans, a thin, timid-looking Italian named Valasque, a massive Swede, and a couple of chattering Spaniards.

It was not a fast train by any means, and it jolted and rattled along with intermittent stops at wayside stations where dark-skinned and semi-naked fruit vendors offered their goods—melons, grapes, and figs—at every window.

Gradually, as the train progressed, the scenery changed from pleasant orchards and verdant fields to sandy wastes of stunted shrubs which, in turn, merged into dreary sand-hills of the desert itself.

It was late in the evening when the train eventually clanked into the station of Sidi-bel-Abbes. Two sergeants and a corporal were there to meet the draft, which was formed into fours and marched through the crowded streets to the barracks.

Paul, looking about him, was amazed at the medley of nationalities and costumes which thronged the sidewalks. There were tall, gaunt Arabs in their flowing white robes, Jews in gaily-coloured gabardines, officers of Spahis and Zouaves, great, burly negroes,

naked to the waist, and drably-clad Europeans.

Camels, cars, handcarts, and omnibuses moved in endless and irregular procession along every street, the buildings of which were a curious mixture of Oriental and European architecture.

The barracks were situated away from the main thoroughfares; an ugly, yellow building, three stories in height and fronted by a vast parade ground enclosed by high iron railings.

"Ye gods!" muttered Desmond.

"What a ghastly-looking place!"

"Stop that talking!" barked a sergeant.

The draft swung in through the open gates, past the guard-house and prison, and were halted in the centre of the parade ground.

And to them came Sergeant-Major Bolke.

He was a thick-set, brutish-looking man, with abnormally long arms, square, menacing jaw, thin-lipped mouth, and little dark eyes which seemed ever on the alert.

"What rats!" he remarked expressively, having surveyed the double line of recruits. "Nom d'un nom, but the Bureau de Recrutement has been combing the gutters of Paris!"

He then proceeded to call the roll, lifting his head to scrutinise each man sharply as he answered his name. That done, accompanied by one of the sergeants, he commenced to move slowly down the front rank.

"Stand up, curse you!" he snarled, halting in front of Valasque, the Italian. "I'll straighten that back of yours, you weevil, or break it for you!"

Valiantly Valasque strove to square his shoulders. Sergeant-Major Bolke aiding him with a rap under the chin which brought the poor fellow's teeth together with a click which must have jarred them to their roots.

Continuing this pleasant promenade, Sergeant-Major Bolke halted next in front of Esterharn, who was standing rigidly at attention. He stared at him suspiciously for a moment, then gave tongue.

"You're no recruit!" he barked.

Esterharn made no reply, nor flickered an eyelid.

"Answer me, you dog!" roared Bolke.

"Yes," answered Esterharn.

"You lie, you dog!" bellowed Bolke.

"This isn't the first time you've seen a parade ground. You're a cursed deserter from some regiment of the line. What's your name?"

"Esterharn!"

"Very good!" promised Bolke grimly. "I'll make inquiries about you. If you're not a deserter I'm a liar!"

He paused invitingly. Nothing would have pleased him better than to

have been called a liar. He would have cause for drastic action then, and there wasn't an officer who could conscientiously refuse to support him.

But Esterharn remained mute, and, scowling, Bolke passed on.

"Where did you get that face?" he demanded, pausing in front of Desmond, whose countenance still bore signs of the fight in the barrack-room at Fort St. Jean.

"My face?" repeated Desmond pleasantly. "I was born with it, and—er—since then it's grown on me!"

Glaring Bolke mentally digested this remark for a moment, and found it of an insolence almost incredible.

"You answer me like that again, you filthy hound!" he roared, "and I'll kick the stuffing out of you! I'll remember you! By thunder, but I'll knock you into shape before I'm done, you dog!"

He halted in front of one of the Germans.

"Boche?" he barked.

"Jawohl," assented the man, survey-

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ing him with eyes about as intelligent as a cow's.

"One step forward—march!"

The German stepped obediently out of the rank.

"Fury!" bellowed Bolke. "Is that how you move, you animal? I'll smarten you up, you fat pig, or break your confounded knee-caps!"

He ordered the unmoved German back into the line, then addressed the draft.

"You've come here to be made into soldiers, you miserable scum!" he informed them. "And, by thunder, I'll do it! I know what you are, you police-dodging sneak-thieves! I'll knock discipline into you and make you sweat before I'm through!"

Having thus expressed himself and given the draft a hint as to what to expect, he handed them over to the sergeant, who marched them off to the store-room. There each man was issued with two uniforms, one fatigue uniform, underclothing, and boots.

"What about socks?" demanded Desmond.

"There is none," explained Esterharn. "The Legion does not wear them."

There followed a brief inspection by a commissioned officer, who gave the impression of being bored by the whole proceeding. Then the sergeant took charge of them again, allotting parties of twelve to various sleeping-rooms in the upper stories of the barrack building.

Paul, Jub, Desmond, and Esterharn were directed to a large room, around the walls of which were ranged twenty-five beds. The place was scrupulously clean, cold, and bare.

Aided by Esterharn and a few Legionnaires who were in the room, the recruits learned how to fold their kit and blankets, and were then instructed in the cleaning of accoutrements.

"And if I were you," growled Lemarne, one of the old hands, "I would turn in, for you will be early astir in the morning. Parades are many just now."

"Why is that?" questioned Esterharn, intrigued by the man's tone.

"I will tell you," replied Lemarne. "There is trouble brewing out there in the desert. The Arabs are becoming restless, and more than one battalion will be needed to bring them to a more docile frame of mind. Any day now we may get the order to march. Rest assured it will be soon."

Paul thrilled. Instead of stagnating at Sidi-bel-Abbes, there was, it seemed, a chance of going on active service within the very near future.

"And will Bolke accompany us?" inquired Desmond softly.

Lemarne grinned.

"Why do you ask that?" he said.

"Yes, I think he will."

Desmond nodded, and, turning away, proceeded to undress. The other recruits followed his example, for all were dog-tired. One by one, and in groups, the other inmates of the room came drifting back from the canteen; and by the time the "Lights out!" bugle sounded in the barrack-square below all had turned in.

Paul was asleep almost as soon as his head touched the hard pillow. How long he had slept he did not know; but suddenly a crash and raised, excited voices brought him to instant wakefulness.

The light was on in the room, and against the wall by Paul's bed Esterharn had a struggling man clutched by the throat.

(Adventure was what Paul and Jub joined the Foreign Legion for, and it looks as if they are going to get all they want! Swift action and plenty of thrills is what you'll get in next week's powerful instalment of this great adventure serial. Don't miss reading it, whatever you do.)

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A SNEAKY-LOOKING finger swept stealthily along the Fourth Form passage in the School House at St. Sam's. There was something that made you feel there was dirt

Crash! Bang! Wallop! Noisily, the finger came to a stop outside the door of Jack Jolly's study. And now it was obvious that there was indeed dirt work in the office. For the sinister finger, instead of tapping on the door and entering as any honest citizen might have been expected to do, pawed for a second or two, then applied his ear to the keyhole.

He was an Eve's dropper!

Eve's droppers were not altogether unknown at St. Sam's. Tubby Barrett, of the Fourth, and Tooty minor, of the Third, had both acquired big reputations for their skill in the art of Eve's dropping. But this Eve's dropper resembled neither Barrett nor Tooty. In appearance, he was tall and bony, with a decidedly ugly

Was it—could it be possible that this was Dr. Birchmell, the revered and majestic Head of St. Sam's?

Closer inspection revealed that it was indeed the Head. Dr. Birchmell had evidently set out on one of his periodical Eve's dropping expeditions. He had by this time lost all traces of his recent ordeal on the First Eleven football field. St. Sam's was still chuckling over the strange spectacle the Head had presented when he had become stuck to the ground by the remarkably powerful glue invented by Bright of the Fourth. But Dr. Birchmell's memory was short, and he had almost forgotten the incident by now.

The Head looked a dignified and aw-inspiring figure as he bent down to the study keyhole, his ear twitching and a

Suddenly the grin vanished. He got closer to the door and faintly strained his hearing apparatus to catch what was said inside the study.

"That'll do, you chaps! We've got

enuff glue now to last us for weeks! It was the voice of Bright of the Fourth. "Who's the next on the list of those to be jumped?" came Jack Jolly's cheery voice.

"Think we'd better give the Head another dose?"

There was a titter from the others in the study, then Frank Fearless said:

"Better leave him alone, perhaps, till the buzz of the footer field blows over. I suggest the prefects for the next jape."

"Good egg!"

Dr. Birchmell had heard enuff. With an angry snort, he strained himself up again and kicked open the door of the study, causing, rather, a bit of a sensation among the Fourth Formers.

"My hat!" gasped Jack Jolly. "The 'Right Head'!"

"Right first guess, Jolly!" said Dr. Birchmell, a mocking smile playing around his lips. "So I have discovered the inventor of the glue in the very act!"

Jack Jolly threw a hopeless glare at a big glue-pot standing in the middle of the table.

"Not much good denying it, I suppose, sir," he remarked. "I trusted, sir, that you will take a lenient view of the matter."

"Granted as soon as asked!" was the Head's rather surprising reply. "I do not intend to flog you at all, much as you deserve it. Instead, I will merely give ten thousand lines each."

"Oh, thank you sir!" cornused our heroes, feeling greatly surprised to receive such lenient treatment from a brutal booby like Dr. Birchmell.

"What's that, sir?" asked Jack Jolly curiously.

The Magnet Library—No. 1,149.

The STATUE of ST. SAM'S!

By Dicky Nugent

Lucky Nugent, of the Greyfriars Second Form, has written you a special "glue" story this week. But if you'd seen his original MSS you'd have thought it was a special "ink" story.—Ed.



over, he did not suspect Bright's wonderful invention not having had time to set after the recent boiling the Head had given it. As for the competitors, they were all in too great a hurry to get down to the starting-post to notice anything.

One minute later they were all lined up, ready to start. The Head was the last to take the field. He was attired in running-shorts, over which he wore his academick gown, while his mortar-board, as usual, was set at a jaunty angle on his messy head.

Sir Frederick Fungus, who was acting as starter, jumped, as his eyes fell on Dr. Birchmell.

"Grato pip, Birehy!" he egged.

"What-ho!" replied the Head with dignity.

"Any objection?"

"No, ha. None whatever!" chuckled the worthy baronet. "But surely you're going to discard your cap and gown?"

Dr. Birchmell smiled a superior smile.

"Not at all! I think you will find Sir Frederick that it will not be necessary for me to put myself out a lot to which this lot."

My hat! In that case, I will start you. All ready?"

"Yes, rather!" shouted the competitors, in chorus.

Dang! There was a deafening explosion as Sir Frederick closed his eyes and fired a pistol. An instant later there was a yell of anguish from Mr. Lickham, the master of the Fourth, as the bullet carried off a piece of his left ear. But nobody was troubling about Mr. Lickham just then. All eyes were glued to the running-track.

And then it was found that their eyes were not the only things that were glued to the running-track. To the amazement of the spectators, every one of the runners except the Head failed to start.

Bright's glue had once again done its deadly work.

Roars of rage and dismay burst from the eager athletes as they found themselves unable to start. Some of them, in desperation, tried to reach themselves away from their shoes with the idea of running the race in their socks. But, alas!

in every case they had oozed round the soles and through the canvas uppers, and they found it quite impossible to move.

Meanwhile, Dr. Birchmell, wearing a grin that seemed to cover his skollery die from ear to ear, was jogging round the course on his own. Now and again he glanced round to assure himself that nobody had succeeded in breaking away, and each time he did so he

waried loud and long.

The Head was no runner, in spite of his boasts. But even he found it fairly easy to win a half-mile race with no competitors to oppose him. He rounded the bend for the last hundred yards eventually, and then slackened down to a leisurely walk, boughing and raising his mortar-board to the cheering crowds as he strolled on his way to the winning-post.

Loud and long was the applause as he at last passed the post. The spectators didn't quite know what had happened to the rest of the runners, but they realised that the Head had won the glue race, and they cheered him tremendously.

Bravo, Birchmell! I have seen a good many fine performances in my time, but you, sir, never before have I witnessed a half-mile race in which the winner beat the rest by a clear half-mile!

"It was nothing," Sir Frederick said. "The Head simply, flushing slightly. "And now, what about the doings?"

"You mean the gold cup, my dear sir? I suggest that it should be presented to you publicly before this glue crowd at the foot of the Skool House steps."

"Good wheeze!" grinned the Head, who was always keen on getting into the limelight. "What about a snack in the tuckshop first? As it happens, I haven't any money on me, but—"

"I shall be delighted to stand a bottle of finger-beer and a couple of doanutes to a grate athlete like you!" interposed the chairman of the governors. "Come! and he linked arms with the Head and led him towards the tuckshop, while the crowd moved off to the scene of the coming presentation.

By the time the Head had received the nerving pang of hunger, the unfortunate non-starters had been released from their uncomfortable positions. Having got away, they all returned to the pavilion. That is to say, all with the exception of Jack Jolly. Jack Jolly's keen brain had seen through the Head's little maneuver, and, although it was too late now for protests, the knapsack of the Fourth could

not rest satisfied until he had been avenged.

Followed by his faithful chums, Jack Jolly rushed into the Skool House and upstairs to the Fourth passage.

In his study was a fresh pot of glue which had been made only that morning. Seeing this, Jack carried it out of the study and took it to a passage in the front part of the building from which it was possible to look down on the Skool House steps.

A grate crowd had assembled in front of the steps in readiness for the public presentation of the Fungus Cup, and as Jack Jolly & Co. crowded round the open window, the Head appeared through the concourse.

So that he could be seen better, the Head mounted the balustrade that ran down the side of the steps. From this lofty pedestal he surveyed the cheering mob, with a condescending grin.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" he yelled, "With regard to my wonderful win on the chunder track this afternoon I should like to say—groooo!"

Perhaps that wasn't quite what the Head had intended to say. It seemed the most natural thing to say, however, when he found a sticky and unpleasant bath of glue descending on him from above. The Head fairly choked.

Groooo! Yarrooooo! Keekew me, someone, before I get stuck—groooo!"

Dr. Birchmell's means died away into silence. Jack Jolly's glue had covered him from head to foot. And as the Head dried up, the crowd roared:

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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