

Two Splendid School Yarns, Thrilling War Story, Free Gift Coupon!
(In This BUMPER Issue, Boys.)

The **MAGNET** 2^D





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., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

WELL, chums, this is the fifth week of our 10,000 Free Gift Scheme, and by now you should have amassed quite a huge total of points. All readers participating in this gigantic scheme should bear in mind that this week's "Ranger," our great adventure-story weekly, is giving away—in addition to the usual coupon value 50 points—a Special Bonus Coupon worth 250 points. Just think of it—another 300 points to add to your growing total! If you prefer school stories, then get a copy of our companion paper, the "Gem." You'll revel in the magnificent long complete stories of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's and incidentally get more points to add to your collection.

You remember me telling you a couple of good yarns concerning dogs in warfare? Well, here is another which has been sent along by F. Barnes, of Strood, Kent.

During the Great War, as you know, many ingenious devices were adopted by the Germans to get information through from their spies. About five kilometres behind the lines at La Bassee there was a rough-coated dog of the retriever type owned by the proprietor of an estaminet. The dog was frequently seen in the vicinity of the firing line, but its speed and smallness saved it from stray shots.

One day an English soldier entered the estaminet, and began stroking the dog. Much to the "Tommy's" surprise he suddenly discovered that the dog's coat had slipped around!

AN INGENIOUS SPY'S TRICK

was then discovered! The dog was fitted with a false coat, so cleverly constructed and matched to the colour of the dog that it defied detection. And, under the false coat, dispatches from the spy were discovered! The dog, being able to get from the British lines to the German, was the unknowing carrier of vital information!

Needless to say, the spy was discovered and paid the penalty, and after that dogs were not allowed anywhere near the firing line.

The Germans, of course, used a large number of dogs in the war, but most of them were on hospital service. The majority of them were Alsatians, and many of the Alsatians now in this country and America are descendants of war-dogs which were taken "prisoners" by British and American officers.

HERE are a few more interesting THINGS YOU WOULD HARDLY BELIEVE!

Coffee can be used for lighting streets! There is a surplus of coffee beans in Brazil, and all sorts of schemes for making use of them have been put forward. According to experts, these coffee beans can be used for extracting illuminating gas—and the gas is to be used in the street lamps of Brazilian towns!

Have you ever seen a spectacled cow? There are some! In the far North, cattle

are now being supplied with spectacles, because so many of them are lost through being blinded in blizzards! Tinted spectacles are also supplied to cattle in northern regions to preserve their eyes from the glare of the sun on the snow!

Thirty-six years "up the pole"! You've read about "pole-squatters," haven't you? A London man recently sat on the top of a pole for seventy-two hours. But St. Simcon Stylites—an early Christian who lived over 1,500 years ago—sat on the top of a pillar nine feet high for a penance. The perch on which he lived was only three feet in diameter—but he stayed up there for thirty-six years!

Football is the riskiest game in the world! Not in this country, perhaps, because only one person has been killed while playing football in recent years. But in America no fewer than forty-three footballers were either killed or died of injuries received in a match during last year!

An animal that carries fifty others on its back! The female tarantula—the poisonous spider—carries her young on her back. Sometimes there are as many as fifty carried at one time!

A threepenny piece clock! One of the treasured possessions of the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers is a tiny clock that goes for eight days without re-winding. It is over 100 years old, and is no bigger than a threepenny piece!

Ready for a laugh? Right, here goes! This rib-tickler comes from M. G. Milner, of 177, Vaughan Road, West Harrow, Middlesex, who gets a splendid Sheffield steel penknife for it:

Teacher: "Jones, where is the capital of England?"

Jones: "Please, sir, I heard father say that most of it is in America!"



I HAVE a letter here from Tom Williams, of Cardigan. He asks me to tell him which is

BRITAIN'S TALLEST TREE?

He will find this if he pays a visit to Powis Castle. It is called the Douglas fir, and is 160 feet in height, and 11 feet in circumference. Wales has always been famous for its tall trees, and an oak which was cut down in Monmouthshire yielded no less than 2,423 cubic feet of timber—more than has ever been obtained from any other tree.

At Powis Castle there is also an oak tree which is 105 feet high, and 24 feet in circumference. A third is 31 feet in circumference, but it is not so tall, and it is hollow.

Now for a few

RAPID-FIRE REFLIES.

Harry Wharton and Co. at Ravenspur Grange, "Three Roaders," of Edinburgh, want to know if it is possible for

me to republish this series in "The Schoolboys' Own Library." I am happy to tell them that this will be done in due course.

Which is the loneliest place in the world? J. K. C., of Houghton: The island of Tristan da Cunha, in the South Atlantic. It was visited by a British warship recently—and that was the first ship that had called within two and a half years! Fancy having to wait all that time for your copies of The MAGNET!

How many wireless listeners are there in this country? L. H., of Hampton Court: The latest figures show that there will be over four and a half million licences taken out this year! But as several people will "listen-in" to each set, there may well be somewhere in the neighbourhood of fifteen million listeners!

How does one become a wireless announcer? Same Reader: There are now no vacancies on the B.B.C. An idea of the difficulty in getting such a post is given by the returns of an American company. No fewer than 2,500 people applied, and were given tests during the last two years. Only ten of them received appointments.

Which travels quickest—wireless waves or lightning? Don Harding, of Manchester: Wireless waves are the quicker. They travel at the same speed as light—186,000 miles a second. The speed of lightning is not constant, but it rarely travels at more than one-fifth the speed of wireless.

E. K. M. (Harlesden).—Yes, it is quite true that mountains had to be removed to construct the Panama Canal! The amount of rock and earth removed in the making of the canal was 360,000,000 tons! No wonder the Americans call it "the big ditch"!

John Warren (Wallsend).—The most valuable book in the world is worth £325,000. It is called the "Codex Alexandrinus," and is in the British Museum.

A splendid prize of a leather pocket wallet goes this week to Victor Gilmore, of 74, Carlton Street, Hessele Road, Hull, East Yorks, in return for the following Greyfriars limerick:—

Quoth Bunter to Todd: "Can't you see, You're too thin to be handsome like me. But a figure like mine You'd develop in time."

If you ate heaps more doughnuts for tea."

THERE'S another ripping programme of yarns in store for you all next week, chums. First comes Frank Richards' latest—and greatest—story of the chums of Greyfriars. It is entitled:

"COKER'S CAMERA 'CLICKS'!"

and when I say that it will hold your interest from the very first line to the very last, you will know I am not exaggerating!

Then comes another fine instalment of our "full-of-thrills" story, "Wings of War"; and a really side-splitting adventure of Doctor Birchmell and his comical capers!

And, of course, there'll be another coupon value 50 points to add to your collection. Are you going to be one of the lucky ten thousand readers? Don't run risks! Order your next week's copy now—if you haven't already done so!

YOUR EDITOR.

Truants of the Remove!



By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Too Thick!

HENRY SAMUEL QUELCH, master of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, frowned.

He frowned portentously.

Any Remove man who had seen that portentous frown on Quelch's scholastic brow would have sat up and taken notice at once, and realised that it was time to be very, very good.

Unluckily, the Remove fellows could not see through a thick oaken door and down a long corridor, so they remained in happy ignorance of Quelch's frown, and of what was coming to them.

Instead of being very, very good, it had to be admitted that they were very, very bad.

Last lesson that day for the Remove was French, with Monsieur Charpentier. Having handed over his Form to the French master, Mr. Quelch naturally supposed that he was done with them. He supposed that he was going to have a quiet hour in his study, to devote to that "History of Greyfriars" which had been his constant companion for years. But those suppositions proved to be ill-founded.

Deep in the throes of composition, Mr. Quelch was vaguely aware for some time of a sort of noise in the distance.

It came faintly to his ears, for the French class-room was not near at hand. He hardly noticed it at first. But at last he rose, opened his study door, and looked out into the corridor irritably. Then the distant din came more plainly to his ears.

Mr. Quelch reflected irascibly that Mr. Twigg really might have kept better order in the Second Form Room. Then it dawned upon him that the sounds of revelry proceeded, not from the Second Form Room, but from the class-room where his own Form were

receiving instruction—more or less—from the French master.

The frown that wrinkled Quelch's brow as he realised that made it look like corrugated iron.

He really seemed to be imitating the "frightful, fearful, frantic frown" of the Lord High Executioner.

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Quelch.

He stood and listened. He was aware that Mossco often failed to keep order in the junior French sets. But there was a limit, and this was altogether too thick—though Mr. Quelch, of course, would not have described it as too thick. He would have described it as unparalleled.

Mr. Quelch rustled along the-corridor

"If you are not funky, you'll follow me out of the Form-room and be blown to Mr. Quelch!" said the Bounder of Greyfriars. And, with few exceptions, the Removites followed their captain out of the detention-room!

in the direction of the French class-room.

The uproar grew louder as he approached.

Trampling of feet, buzzing of voices, indicated that it was not French that was going on in that class-room. It sounded more like a Rugby game mixed with an air-raid and a dog-fight.

Grimmer and grimmer grew Quelch's brow as he advanced. He reached the door of the class-room.

Trump, tramp, tramp!

Crash!

"Mes garçons!" It was Monsieur Charpentier's voice on its top note. "Assez! Zat you take vunce more ze places! Mon Dieu! My good boys—my verree good boys—zat is enoff!"

"It's all right, sir!" That was the voice of Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars. "We'll have the jolly old blackboard up again in a tick, sir!"

"Go it, you men!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Up she goes!"

"Now then, all together!"

Crash!

"My hat! It's down again!" It was Smithy's voice once more. "You men are jolly clumsy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips in a tight line.

A "rag" was going on—not an unusual happening in a junior French set. Vernon-Smith, no doubt, was the leading spirit. The Bounder was a born ragger. He had lately become captain of the Remove, in the place of Harry Wharton—but that made little difference to the Bounder, if any. Mr. Quelch had not the slightest doubt that it was the most troublesome fellow in his Form who had started this uproar.

"Now then, all together again!" shouted the Bounder.

"Go it, you fellows!"

"Up she goes again!"

"Hurrah!"

"Mes garçons!" Mossco's voice was a shriek. "Laissez—leave zat blackboard zere! It is no matter! Zat he remain viz himself on ze floor! N'importe! Allez—take vunce more ze place, my verree good boys! I zank you, but it is too much!"

"Oh, sir, we'll have it up in a jiffy!"

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"Queer how the blessed thing keeps on rolling over!"

"The queerfulness is terrific."

"I say, you fellows, give a fellow a chance!"

"Now then, all together——"

"Up she goes!"

Mr. Quelch opened the class-room door. He gazed in. In the wild and whirling excitement of the moment the juniors did not see the opening door and did not see the severe face staring in at them.

The Remove were busy. They seemed to be enjoying life.

Monsieur Charpentier was almost tearing his hair. Mossoo was the most amiable and the most unsuspecting master at Greyfriars. It was almost too easy to pull his leg. But even Mossoo was beginning to suspect that all these obliging fellows who were lending a hand at setting up a fallen blackboard and easel were not quite in earnest in their endeavours.

If they were really trying to get that blackboard right again they were having the very worst of luck. Every time it went up, it went over again with a fearful crash.

It had gone over in the first place through Smithy barging into it—by accident, of course. Such accidents were of painfully frequent occurrence when Mossoo took a junior class. Smithy had called on the other fellows to help him set it up. Like the obliging fellows they were, the Remove had fairly rushed to help.

Many hands are said to make light work. On the other hand, too many cooks spoil the broth. This seemed to be a case of too many cooks—for the juniors had been busy for more than ten minutes setting up that blackboard, and it was not up yet.

Crash!

"Oh, my hat! There she goes again!"

"You clumsy ass, Cherry——"

"You shoved it, Skinner——"

"You got in my way, you ass!"

"Yarooooooh!" roared Billy Bunter. "Yow-ow-ow! You trod on my foot, Toddy, you beast!"

"Chuck it, you men!" said Harry Wharton, laughing breathlessly. "Enough's as good as a feast, you know!"

"My dear man, Mossoo's waiting for us to get this blackboard up! We've simply got to do it!" said the Bounder.

"Mes garçons! I zank you—but it is too much noise! Zat you take ze place!" moaned Monsieur Charpentier.

"Just a tick, sir—we'll have it up this time! Now, you men, all get hold together!" shouted the Bounder.

"I say, you fellows——"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"But, I say——"

"Get out of the light, you fat ass!"

"I say, it's Quelch——" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"Wha-a-at?"

Startled faces stared round at the doorway.

The roar of voices and the trampling of feet died away with amazing suddenness. Blackboard and easel, which were on the point of crashing again, stood firm.

The grim face of Henry Samuel Quelch, staring in at the doorway, seemed to have a paralysing effect on the Lower Fourth—like that dread figure that drew Priam's curtains at dead of night!

"Oh gad!" breathed the Bounder.

"Quelch!"

"Oh crikey!" murmured Bob Cherry.

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"Oh crumbs!"

Mr. Quelch stepped in. His Form gazed at him in sudden, deep silence. A pin might have been heard to drop as Henry Samuel Quelch stepped in.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Heavy Hand!

MONSIEUR CHARPENTIER ceased to gesticulate; he ceased to shriek. One basilisk glare from Quelch had done more in the way of restoring order than all poor Mossoo's gesticulations and shrieks. Quelch knew how to handle boys. Mossoo did not. Mossoo still believed—or was trying to persuade himself that he believed—that the ragers were really trying to set up that blackboard. Quelch was not likely to believe it, or to affect to believe it for the sake of dodging trouble. Quelch, in fact, was the right man in the right place.

"Mon cher Quelch," murmured Mossoo feebly.

"I fear, Monsieur Charpentier, that my Form are rather out of hand," said Mr. Quelch. "I am sorry for this. I will see that they give you no further trouble."

This was rather tactful of Quelch. Taking authority out of another master's hands was a delicate matter. That was what Quelch was doing, in point of fact; but he put it as nicely as he could.

"Mais, monsieur!" The French master was almost as dismayed as the juniors by the expression on the speaking countenance of Henry Samuel Quelch. He hated to see boys punished, as the young rascals of the Remove were only too well aware. "But, sir, ze boys zey are not bad. Zey try to set up zat blackboard which have fall over. Je vous en assure——"

"I am afraid that my boys have taken advantage of your good nature, sir," said Mr. Quelch. "I will deal with them."

He fixed his gimlet eyes on an uneasy Remove.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!"

"You are head boy of the Remove, Wharton."

"Um! Yes, sir!"

"Yet I find you taking part in this unseemly disturbance."

Wharton did not reply. He could not deny it. Certainly he had meant no harm. No fellow in the Remove had really meant any harm. It was just a "rag"—more entertaining than French.

"We—we were setting up the blackboard, sir," ventured Frank Nugent. "I—I think Mossoo wanted the blackboard set up again, sir."

"We were really obliging Monsieur Charpentier, sir," said Bolsover major. "He was going to use the blackboard."

"The obligefulness was terrific, esteemed sahib," murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I require to know," said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice, "how the blackboard happened to fall over in the first place?"

"A—a fellow barged into it, sir," said Skinner.

"That boy will stand forward," said Mr. Quelch.

Herbert Vernon-Smith lounged forward. Now that Quelch was on the scene, Smithy knew that it meant trouble. But the Bounder was not daunted. In fact, he rather liked to draw all eyes upon him by facing the

music with cool unconcern. His manner was not only cool, but had a veiled impertinence as he faced his Form master. "You knocked over the blackboard, Vernon-Smith?"

"Yes, sir," drawled the Bounder. "Quite an accident, of course."

"Do you expect me to believe that statement, Vernon-Smith?"

The Bounder appeared to consider for a moment.

"Well, no, sir," he answered, with perfect coolness. "It would do for Mossoo, sir, but I'm afraid it won't do for you."

"Mon Dieu!" murmured Monsieur Charpentier.

There was a suppressed snigger in the Remove. Only the Bounder of Greyfriars would have made such a reply to a beak. But it was quite in Smithy's style. The Bounder dearly loved the limelight.

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips hard. "I presume, Vernon-Smith, that that answer is intended for impertinence," he said.

"Not at all, sir. I thought you'd like me to tell the truth," said the Bounder cheerfully.

"You knocked over the blackboard intentionally, Vernon-Smith?"

"Oh, quite, sir!"

"And for what reason?"

"Just to start a rag, sir."

The juniors fairly caught their breath. "Cheeking a beak" was a dangerous game, when the beak was Henry Samuel Quelch. As an amusement, it might be likened to twisting a tiger's tail. But Herbert Vernon-Smith was as cool as ice. The fact that all eyes were upon him, that the fellows were astonished, and almost scared by his cool impudence, was like meat and drink to the Bounder.

"Very well, Vernon-Smith. Monsieur Charpentier, I will borrow your cane. Vernon-Smith, you will bend over that chair."

"Certainly, sir!"

The Bounder bent over with an air of negligence. He knew what was coming to him, and he was prepared to go through it with cool hardihood. Mr. Quelch swished the cane.

Whack, whack, whack!

The Remove stared on in silence. The cane came down as if Quelch fancied that he was beating carpet. In spite of his iron nerve the Bounder had hard work to keep back a yell. But he shut his teeth hard, and was silent. Nobody was going to hear the Bounder of Greyfriars yell when he was taking six.

Monsieur Charpentier turned away his distressed and amiable face. The sight was too painful for the kind-hearted French gentleman. Henry Samuel Quelch was made of sterner stuff.

Whack, whack, whack!

Still Vernon-Smith kept his teeth shut hard, and no sound came from him. But his face was pale. The juniors watched breathlessly, admiring the Bounder's nerve, and wondering where Quelch packed the muscle.

Six hefty whacks had rung through the room like successive pistol-shots. Mr. Quelch laid down the cane.

"You may go to your place, Vernon-Smith."

The Bounder rose, his face pale, and a bead of perspiration on his forehead. But he was still game.

"Thank you, sir!" he said demurely.

And he made it a point to lounge to his place with an air of unconcern.

The Remove waited. They hoped

that Quelch's exertions had tired him. The toughest fellow in the Form did not want such a "six" as the Bounder had undergone. Skinner and Snoop were quite pallid at the thought. And Billy Bunter quaked like a fat jelly. Quelch's steely eyes glittered over a repentant Form. And nobody wanted to meet them. The silence grew quite painful till Quelch spoke again.

"The whole Form will be detained for the half-holiday to-morrow," he said. "You, Wharton, as head boy of the Form, take five hundred lines in addition."

"Oh!" gasped the Remove.

It was rather a heavy punishment, though no heavier than the young rascals deserved for such a rag. But it made a good many members of the Form stare at their Form master in

Mr. Quelch turned to the French master.

"I apologise, sir, for the trouble my Form have given you," he said, very politely. "I think they will give you no more."

The Remove master was right there.

"In the event, however, of further disorder in this class," added Mr. Quelch, "I shall detain them for six half-holidays."

That, so to speak, put the lid on. Monsieur Charpentier was assured of an extremely orderly class for the remainder of that lesson, at least.

Mr. Quelch rustled out of the classroom. He left silence and dismay behind him.

Monsieur Charpentier coughed.

"Ve vill now go off, mes garçons," he

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Up to Smithy!

"W E'VE done it now!" "The donefulness it terrific!"

"We've been, and gone, and done it!" groaned Bob Cherry.

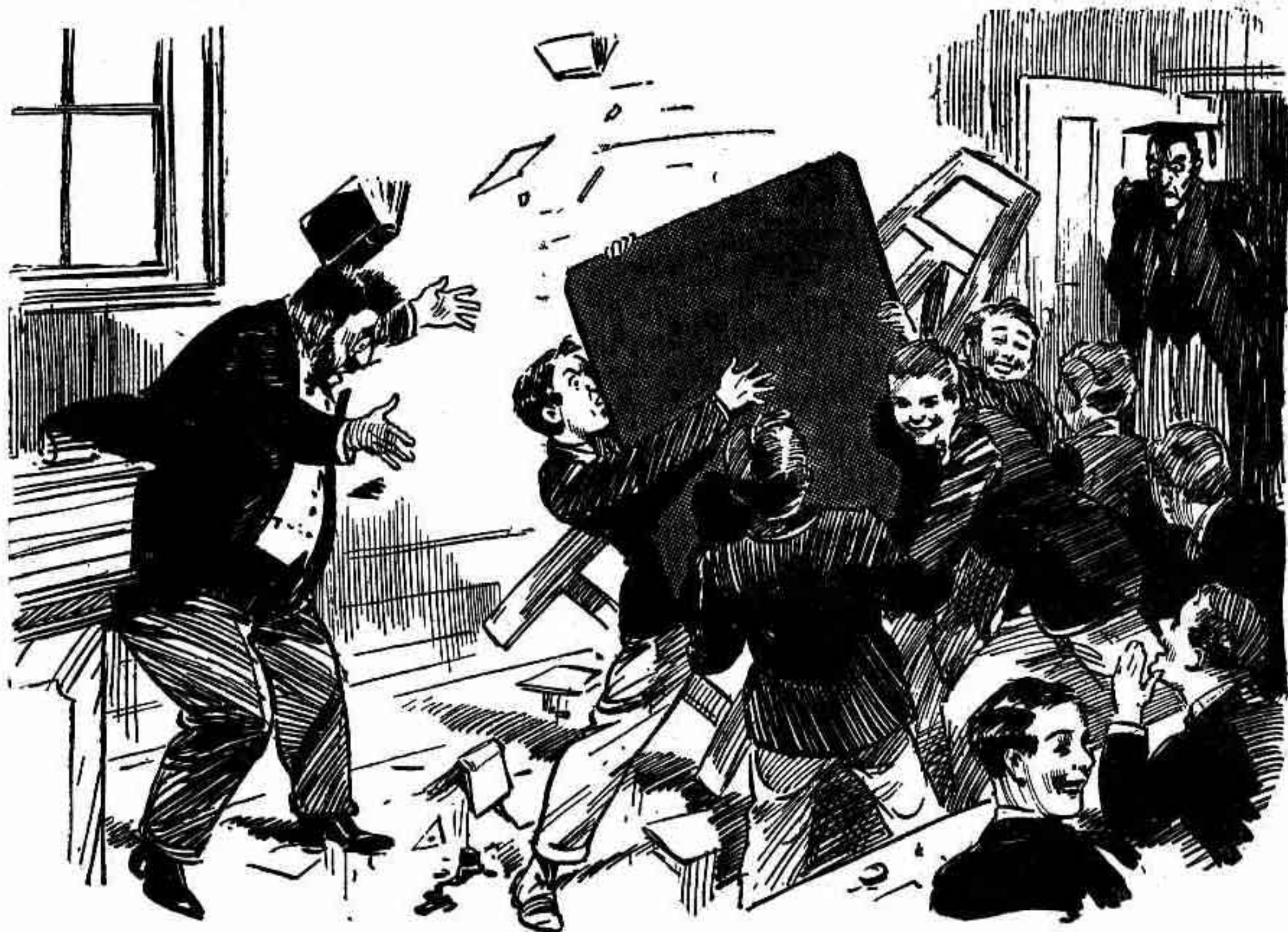
"If that ass Smithy hadn't checked Quelch—" growled Johnny Bull.

"Well, we're for it now," said Harry Wharton.

"No doubt about that!"

The Famous Five, usually as merry and bright as any fellows in the Remove, or any other Form at Greyfriars, looked dismal enough as they walked into the quad after class.

Both detentions and lickings came their way at times; and it was not their wont to grouse. These things were



"Now then, all together again!" shouted Vernon-Smith. "Up she goes!" Crash! "My hat, it's down again!" Every time Harry Wharton & Co. set up the fallen blackboard and easel they crashed down again. Monsieur Charpentier was gesticulating wildly when the class-room door opened and Mr. Quelch stared in.

utter consternation. The morrow was Wednesday and a half-holiday, as Mr. Quelch, of course, was aware. But perhaps he was not aware that it was the date of the St. Jude's match. The Remove cricketers were only too well aware of it.

Fellows like Bunter and Skinner and Snoop, who cared nothing for cricket, were glad that it was detention, and not six all round. But the cricketers were horrified. Even the reckless Bounder wished that he had not started that rag in the French class.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry, in utter dismay.

Harry Wharton opened his lips to speak. But he closed them again. Quelch, at the moment at least, was not to be reasoned with. He might be tackled later when he had cooled down. Just at present silence was golden.

said, probably meaning that they would go on.

And they went on.

The Remove were well known to be the most unruly Form at Greyfriars School. They needed Quelch's iron hand, and they knew it; and, in fact, rather prided themselves on it. But that unruly Form was as good as gold now!

Never had Monsieur Charpentier had so orderly a class. His pupils looked as if butter would not melt in their mouths. They hung on Mossoo's words as if they loved the French master and the French language, and found hitherto unimagined delights in French grammar! Nobody wanted Quelch to come back.

Mr. Quelch, at last, was able to give his undivided attention, in his study, to his celebrated "History of Greyfriars." Not a sound came from the Remove.

a part of schoolboy existence, and were taken philosophically.

But when a cricket date was concerned, it was quite a different matter. The fixture with St. Jude's had to be played. That was as fixed and immutable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. But, obviously it couldn't be played if the Remove were under detention on Wednesday. They couldn't play St. Jude's in the Remove Form-room!

Mr. Quelch took a kindly interest in Form games; though he was many years beyond the cricketing age himself. Sometimes he would even honour the Remove men by ambling along to Little Side to watch an innings. But this was not a matter that was first in his thoughts. No doubt he had forgotten—if he had ever noted—the date of the St. Jude's match. He was a

rather severe gentleman; but it certainly was not his way to allow punishments to interfere with School fixtures. Had he been aware how matters stood, he would hardly have given the Form detention on St. Jude's day. More likely he would have made it "six" all round.

But he was a firm gentleman—very firm! What he had said, he had said. Having promulgated his sentence, it was likely that Quelch would stand by it, disastrous as it was. It was possible that, if the matter was put before him gently and tactfully, he would relent. But it was a delicate matter—a very delicate matter. And the outcome was dubious.

"The fact is," said Harry Wharton soberly, "we've played the goat—"

"Just found that out?" growled Bob.

"The goatfulness was preposterous!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh dolorously. "But, after all, it was only an esteemed rag."

"Mossoo really asks for these things!" said Johnny Bull. "And if that goat Smithy hadn't cheeked Quelch—"

"Well, he did—and that's that—"

Skinner of the Remove came along, with a grin on his face. Skinner seemed rather amused by the lugubrious looks of the Famous Five.

"You men look in a moulting state!" he remarked. "What the dickens did you expect? Take it smiling."

Five glares were turned on the cheerful Skinner.

"You silly ass!" growled Bob Cherry. "It's not the detention we're grouching about, as you jolly well know. It mucks up the cricket."

"You'll have to scratch!" grinned Skinner.

It was not a time for grinning. It was all very well for a weedy slacker like Skinner, who hated cricket, to grin at the idea of scratching a fixture because the cricketers were under detention. To the other fellows it was a frightfully serious matter—and the next moment Skinner, also, was taking a serious view as Bob Cherry let out the largest foot in the Remove.

"Yoooooop!" roared Skinner.

"Have another, you grinning monkey?" growled Bob.

"Oh, you rotter! Keep off!" yelled Skinner, and he departed hastily, no longer grinning.

"Something's got to be done," said Harry Wharton decidedly. "We've got to put it to Quelch."

"He's had time to cool down now," said Bob hopefully. "You go and put it to him, old scout."

Wharton shook his head.

"Smithy's captain of the Remove," he answered, "It's up to Smithy."

"You're head boy of the Form."

"Head boy has nothing to do with games. It's for the captain of the Form to handle this."

"That tears it," said Nugent. The Co. looked at one another.

Undoubtedly, it was for the captain of the Remove to handle the matter—that was certain. But all the Co. felt that Herbert Vernon-Smith was the last fellow who ought to put it to Quelch. He had been the leader in the rag—he had cheeked Quelch, and caused him to come down more heavily than he might otherwise have done—and it was quite on the cards that he might cheek him again if he interviewed him—in which case all the fat would be in the fire.

But it was impossible for Wharton to take the matter out of his hands—all the more because Wharton had been

captain of the Remove last term, and Smithy was watchful and jealous of his new authority.

Friendly relations had been established, more or less, between the rivals of the Remove. But any attempt to encroach on Smithy's position as captain of the Form was certain to knock those friendly relations into a cocked hat.

"I can't chip in," said Wharton quietly. "It's up to Smithy. Smithy will have to see Quelch about it."

"It's a gonner, then," said Bob diamally. "Smithy's more likely to cheek him than not, when he asks him."

"Precious captain of the Form!" growled Johnny Bull. "I think it's about time Smithy was turned out."

"Anyhow, Smithy is captain, and we've got to back him up," said Harry Wharton.

"That's right," said Bob. "Smithy's rather an ass; but he's a jolly good fellow in some ways. We're backing him up."

"Thanks!" said a rather sarcastic voice. The Bouncer came along under the elms, and joined the Famous Five.

"That's good!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's going to be done, Smithy?" asked Bob.

The Bouncer shrugged his shoulders.

"Looks as if we are—if Quelch sticks to it," he answered. "But you can bet your socks on one thing—we're going over to St. Jude's to-morrow to play cricket, Quelch or no Quelch!"

"We can't if we're under detention, Smithy!" said Nugent.

"Can't we?" sneered the Bouncer. "I'm goin'. I suppose the team are not goin' to leave me to play a one-man game?"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Johnny Bull gruffly. "Are you thinking of the eleven marching out under Quelch's eyes, and telling him to go and eat cokes?"

"Yes—rather than scratch!" answered the Bouncer coolly.

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob.

The Famous Five stared at the Bouncer. There was a sardonic grin on his rather hard face, and a glitter in his eyes.

Kicking against authority, regardless of consequences, was one of the Bouncer's ways. He was a rebel to the marrow of his bones—which was quite in keeping with his unsparing use of authority when it was in his own hands; for the rebel and the tyrant are, after all, only the same person in different circumstances.

"We're playing at St. Jude's to-morrow," said the Bouncer quietly, and deliberately, "and I expect every man in the team to back me up. I'm not knucklin' under to Quelch where games are concerned."

"We're standing by you, of course, if there's anything doing," said Harry Wharton. "But I don't see what we're to do if Quelch bungs us in the Form-room."

"We can walk out!" suggested the Bouncer coolly.

"You think Quelch would let us?" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Might screw him up in his study," "Oh crikey!"

"My esteemed Smithy—"

The Bouncer laughed. Evidently he was prepared for reckless measures; and had no hesitation in dragging less reckless fellows into his own wild escapades.

"We're playing St. Jude's," he said. "That's a settled thing. Everything else has got to fit into that."

"We can't defy our Form master, Smithy, and you know it," said Harry.

"I don't know it!" retorted the Bouncer. "Quelch can go and eat cokes, and I'm prepared to tell him so, if necessary. I'm captain of the Remove, and the men have got to back me up—leavin' out any funks and shirkers who are afraid of the beaks."

Wharton compressed his lips.

"We shall back you up all along the line if there's anything doing," he said. "But there's a limit, Smithy."

"If you explained to Quelch and asked him—decently—" said Frank Nugent.

"Oh, I'll ask him," said the Bouncer. "But I'm not goin' to eat humble pie to Quelch, or anybody else. But I'll ask him."

"For goodness' sake, Smithy, put it civilly, when you're asking a favour of a man like Quelch!" exclaimed Wharton.

"I don't look on it as a favour. Quelch has no right to interfere with the Form games, and he knows it—or ought to know it. I'm not goin' to kow-tow to a twopenny tyrant."

"Quelch isn't a tyrant," snapped Wharton. "You know jolly well that we all played the giddy ox in the French set. I know it was a jolly good rag, but we asked for what we got. It wouldn't matter a straw if it wasn't for the St. Jude's match to-morrow. Quelch has forgotten that. If it's put decently he will let us off and give us detention next Saturday, instead. Only, it will have to be put a bit tactfully."

"You'd grease up to the beak if you were captain—what?" sneered the Bouncer.

"Oh, rats!"

"Well, I happen to be captain, and it's in my hands!" said Vernon-Smith.

"I'm goin' to speak to Quelch and see what can be done. But whatever he says, we're goin' over to St. Jude's to-morrow to play cricket, and every man who's afraid to back up will be kicked out of the eleven for the rest of the season. That's a tip!"

With that the Bouncer lounged away to the House.

Wharton looked after him, breathing hard, with a gleam in his eyes. Johnny Bull gave an emphatic grunt.

"The game's up, at this rate," said Nugent.

"Smithy's not a bad sort," said Bob slowly. Bob Cherry was mindful of a good turn the Bouncer had recently done him. "But that six he got in class has put his back up, I suppose. I—I hope he won't rag Quelch."

"The cheeky ass!" muttered Wharton. "We've got to back him up," said Bob.

"Yes. But— Oh, let's go in to tea," said Harry. "Anyhow, it's in Smithy's hands; we can't do anything."

And the Famous Five went in to tea. There were clouded and thoughtful faces over tea in Study No. 1 that afternoon.

Smithy was captain of the Remove, and it was up to Smithy—the matter had to be left in his hands. But the chums of the Remove could not help feeling that it could not have been left in worse hands.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

From Bad to Worse!

M R. QUELCH smiled genially. The Jove-like wrath had departed from Quelch's brow.

He had had a happy hour with his celebrated "History of Greyfriars." Now that great work was laid

(Continued at foot of next page.)

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(Continued from previous page.)
aside and Mr. Quelch was seated in his armchair with a paper open before him.

That paper was the "Public School Review," and in its pages was an article signed "H. S. Quelch." Quelch, in his leisure hours, wrote little contributions for scholastic papers. He liked to see his views in print. He felt that they were useful—indeed, very useful—in the great cause of education. This especial article was entitled, "The Public School: Present and Future." It embodied views founded on a quarter of a century's experience as a schoolmaster. Quelch could not help feeling pleased with that article, with the prominent place it was given in a prominent paper, and with the reflection that it was bound to attract considerable attention from headmasters of Public schools all over the kingdom. Hence his genial smile.

Like most authors, Quelch was fond of reading his own works. They seemed so superior, somehow, to the works of anybody else.

Perusing that masterly article on an important subject, Quelch could not help feeling pleased. The June sunshine at his window was reflected in the frosty but genial smile on his countenance.

Tap!

Mr. Quelch laid the "Public School

Review" on his knees as that tap came at his study door. He hoped that it was another member of the staff dropping in for a chat. He would have been quite pleased to chat with another master about that article.

"Come in!"

It was Herbert Vernon-Smith, of the Remove, who entered. The welcoming smile faded from Quelch's face. It was replaced by his customary severe expression. But he did not frown, though he had not forgotten the Bouncer's many offences. He was in a genial mood—in exactly the mood, in fact, to make a reasonable concession, if the matter was placed before him respectfully and tactfully.

"What is it, Vernon-Smith?"

"I want to speak to you about the detention to-morrow, sir," said the Bouncer. "The fellows expect me to speak, as captain of the Form."

"Indeed?" said Mr. Quelch. "There is nothing, so far as I am aware, to be said on the subject, Vernon-Smith."

"We're playing cricket to-morrow, sir."

Possibly it was because Smithy was still feeling severe twinges from the "six," in addition to his natural propensity to "cheek," that he put it like that. He was sore, and sullen, and savage; and he handled an extremely

delicate matter rather in the manner of a bull at a gate. Any other fellow would have said: "We're booked to play cricket to-morrow"—which would have enlightened Quelch without offending him. The Bouncer's words hardly enlightened, but undoubtedly offended him. The well-known glint came into the gimlet eyes.

"What? What did you say?" Quelch's voice was like iron. "You are playing cricket to-morrow! You are under detention to-morrow, Vernon-Smith. Have you come to my study to be impertinent—indeed, insolent?"

Vernon-Smith set his lips.

His words had, indeed, implied that he was going to play cricket on Wednesday, brushing aside the fact that he was under detention. Of all the staff at Greyfriars, Mr. Quelch was about the last man to take that. His jaw squared in the way the Remove knew well.

"I mean, sir—"

Smithy would have amended it, but the incensed master of the Remove did not give him time.

"Vernon-Smith, I have punished you already to-day for impertinence. I am loath to punish you again. Leave my study!"

"Will you let me speak, sir?" said the Bouncer. "I'm bound to speak, as captain of the Form—"

"Since you have mentioned that matter, Vernon-Smith, I will say something on the subject," said Mr. Quelch grimly. "Why Wharton resigned the captaincy of the Remove last term is not clear to me, but I regretted it very much. I regretted still more to see you, Vernon-Smith, elected in his place."

"You're very kind, sir!" said the Bounder.

He could not resist that touch of sarcasm. Smithy's "sarc" had landed him in trouble more than once.

"I am extremely reluctant," pursued Mr. Quelch, with a glare, "to interfere in such a matter in restraint of the liberty of choice in my Form. For that reason I refrained. But I consider that my Form made a serious error in this matter. You, Vernon-Smith, are the most troublesome boy in the Lower Fourth—the most reckless, the most impertinent; the leader in the most outrageous proceedings—'rags,' as I think you call them. More than once, indeed, your conduct has been such that your headmaster has contemplated sending you away from the school. My opinion is that you are not fitted to exercise the authority of Form captain. And I warn you very seriously, Vernon-Smith, that unless you are very careful I shall intervene and quash the Form election and cancel your captaincy of the Remove."

"Will you, sir?" breathed the Bounder.

His eyes glistened rather like Quelch's own.

It was in the power of the Form master to do as he menaced; and such an act would have been a crushing blow to the Bounder. He could not have resisted, and he was only too well aware that a new election would have reinstated his rival in the Remove. Even if he had been allowed to stand for re-election, he would have had no chance in the voting. Last time he had got in by a majority of one; and more than half the fellows who had voted for him had repented since, and told him so in quite plain language.

The anger that boiled up in Smithy's breast was so passionate that it was with great difficulty that he checked the hot words that rose to his lips. Mr. Quelch made a gesture towards the door.

"That, Vernon-Smith, is a warning," he said. "Now you may go."

But the Bounder did not go.

"To-morrow, sir, is the date of a cricket match—a regular fixture in the Remove list," he said stubbornly.

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch.

That was evidently news to him. The Bounder, in his bitterness, would have liked to believe that Quelch knew it all the time, and had deliberately disregarded an affair that was of the greatest importance to his Form. But he could see that Quelch had not been aware of it.

Mr. Quelch looked very thoughtful. His look showed that he was weighing the matter up in his mind. Mr. Quelch was a severe gentleman, but he was kind, and he was just, and he would have been very unwilling indeed to "muck up," as the juniors described it, a cricket fixture in the Form. Had he been dealing with Wharton, or almost any other fellow in the Remove, probably a compromise would have been arrived at. Detention might have been left over till the next half-holiday, or impositions might have been substituted. It was the Bounder's cue to wait respectfully while Quelch pondered over it. He waited hardly a moment.

"We can't scratch a cricket match, sir," said Vernon-Smith.

Mr. Quelch glared.

"That is not a matter for you to decide, Vernon-Smith, in the present circumstances," he barked. "You certainly cannot play a cricket match while you are under detention."

"We're bound to play, sir."

Smithy was adding oil to flames. Perhaps he did not exactly mean it, but every word he uttered implied that he intended to carry on, regardless of what his Form master might decide.

Mr. Quelch's lips set in a tight line.

"That is enough, Vernon-Smith! I will not listen to a single word more!" he said. "I can scarcely believe that you attach great importance to this cricket match, when you, the captain of the Form, and responsible in such matters, risked detention by an outrageous prank in a class-room the day before the match. As for your apparent assumption that you can dictate to your Form master, that is another example of the insolence which, I fear, is a part of your character. Leave my study!"

"If you will let us off to-morrow, sir—"

"I shall do nothing of the kind, sir! Go!"

The Bounder's eyes glittered.

"We've got to play the match, sir," he said.

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, rising to his feet. "This is too much! Vernon-Smith, the whole Form is detained to-morrow, from two o'clock until five o'clock, and not in any circumstances whatever will I rescind that sentence. Leave my study before I cane you!"

"I shall appeal to the games master, sir."

"What?" Mr. Quelch fairly hooted.

"What?"

Even the Bounder quailed a little at the look that came over Mr. Quelch's face.

"Vernon-Smith! Another word—another syllable—and I shall take you to your headmaster for a flogging! Go!"

And the Bounder, shutting his teeth hard, left the study without another word!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Bounder Means Business!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Oh, shut up, Bunter!"

"Smithy's done it, you men!" grinned the fat Owl of the Remove.

"What do you mean, fathead?"

"He, he, he!"

Billy Bunter seemed amused.

The five juniors in Study No. 1 were not at all amused.

Harry Wharton & Co. thought it very probable that Smithy had "done it." But it was far from amusing.

The St. Jude's fixture was not one of the most important on the Remove list—nothing like the matches with St. Jim's and Rookwood. Still, it was a regular fixture, and scratching a regular fixture was not a trifling matter—especially if it was to be scratched for no better reason than that the captain of the Remove could not keep a civil tongue in his head when he was dealing with his Form master.

Smithy had not been exactly a success as captain of the Remove. Most of the fellows considered that he had "thrown his weight about" rather too freely in that position. That could have been forgiven, if there had been nothing more serious.

But if Smithy's arrogant temper was to lead to washing out cricket matches, the general opinion in the Remove was

that the sooner they had a new skipper, the better.

Neither did the Bounder's declared intention of playing that match, in defiance of the Remove master's authority, evoke much enthusiasm. It was not likely to come off, for one thing, and if it came off it was likely to lead to floggings all round—and that was not what the Remove cricketers wanted.

All the fellows agreed that it was up to the Bounder, as captain of the Form, to see that the St. Jude's match was played. But an act of reckless and outrageous rebellion against authority was not the way.

Harry Wharton & Co. were talking it over, after tea, when Billy Bunter butted in. Bunter, evidently, had the latest news. His little round eyes twinkled behind his big round spectacles.

"I say, you fellows, Smithy's done it!" gurgled Bunter. "I say, old Quelch is in an awful state! I thought he was going to bite Lascelles."

"Lascelles?" repeated Harry Wharton.

Mr. Lascelles was games master at Greyfriars, and the juniors had already been considering whether he might be induced to put in a word for them.

"He, he, he! Lascelles looked quite pink!" giggled Bunter. "Quelch fairly snapped his head off! He's generally jolly civil to Lascelles; but he spoke to him as he sometimes does to Prout."

"And how do you know what Quelch said to Lascelles, you fat frog?" demanded Johnny Bull, with a glare at Bunter.

"I happened to hear them speaking," explained Bunter. "I wasn't listening, of course—I hope I'm incapable of it. I stopped to—look from a window, you know, when I saw them—"

"Oh, dry up!"

"And as they didn't happen to notice me, I heard what they said—quite by accident," rattled on Bunter. "I wasn't keeping round the corner so that they shouldn't spot me—"

"Kick him!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I say, Smithy must have put it up to Lascelles," said Bunter. "He spoke to Quelch in the passage, as the jolly old beak was going along to Common-room. Of course, Lascelles has a right to chip in, as games master. He put it very civilly, too; but he had hardly mentioned the matter when Quelch cut him short."

"Smithy must have got Quelch's rag out!" groaned Bob. "He likes Lascelles, as a rule."

"He didn't look as if he liked him!" chuckled Bunter. "He told him to shut up."

"What?" roared the Famous Five. "Told him to mind his own dashed business," said Bunter. "Told him it was like his cheek to butt in."

"You frabjous owl!" roared Bob Cherry.

It was probable that Quelch's "rag" was out; but it was extremely improbable that one member of Dr. Locke's staff had told another member to "shut up." That was very improbable indeed.

"I heard every word," said Bunter. "He told Lascelles he was fed-up with the subject—"

"I can hear Quelch saying that!" grinned Nugent.

"Well, they weren't his exact words," admitted Bunter.

"The exactfulness is probably not terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"But it comes to the same thing," said Bunter. "What he said was that he desired to hear nothing on the subject,

and requested Lascelles to make no further reference to it."

"That sounds more like Quelch," said Bob.

"He said he wasn't jolly well going to stand any more dashed cheek from a young sweep like Smithy—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Not his exact words, you know; but he meant that. What he said was, that Vernon-Smith had presumed to attempt to dictate to him. You know how beaks jaw—never a short word if a long one will do!"

"Well, the fat's in the fire now!" said Bob.

"He, he, he! Smithy's done it, and no mistake!" grinned Bunter. "Smithy fancies himself too much, you know,

"Yaroooooh!" roared the hapless Owl.

"I say, you fellows, rescue!"

"Chuck that, Smithy!" said Harry Wharton sharply.

"Yes, chuck it!" growled Johnny Bull. "There's no sense in taking it out of Bunter because you've made a muck of things!"

Vernon-Smith gave the Famous Five a savage scowl, and proceeded to bang Bunter's hapless head once more. But that bang did not materialise. Harry Wharton jumped forward and caught his arm.

"Chuck it, you ass!" he snapped.

"Let go, you fool!" snarled the Bounder.

"Oh, rot!"

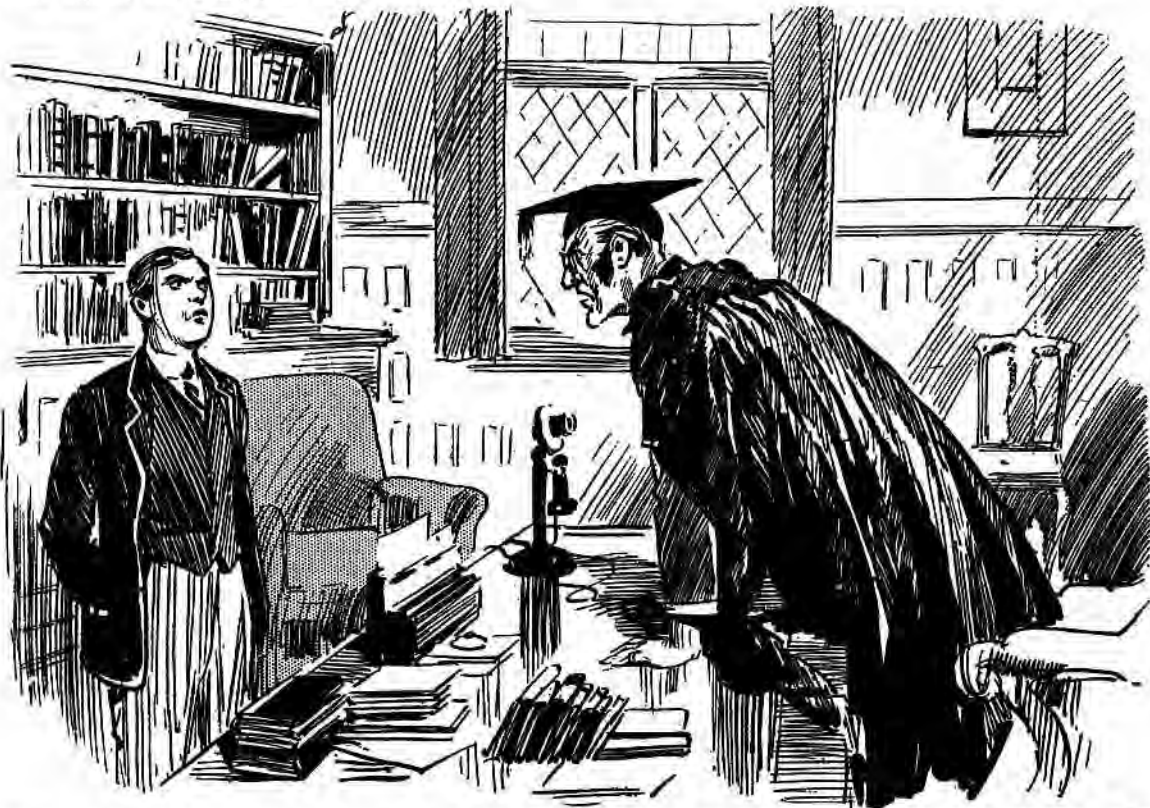
"Quelch has got his back up! All the more because I told him I should appeal to the games master! He's turned Lascelles down! But we're playing the match to-morrow, all the same! I've come here to tell you that. I'm going over to St. Jude's, if I'm sacked for it—and every man who isn't a funk and a coward will follow me!"

Without waiting for a reply the Bounder swung on to his own study. He kicked open the door of No. 4, and strode in. His chum, Tom Redwing, was there, and he gave the Bounder an anxious look.

"What's the news, Smithy?" he asked.

"Quelch won't give way an inch."

"Then that's the finish!"



"We can't scratch the cricket match to-morrow, sir!" said Vernon-Smith. "If you won't let us off detention I shall appeal to the games master!" "What?" hooted Mr. Quelch. "Vernon-Smith! Another word—another syllable—and I shall take you to your headmaster for a flogging! Go!"

since he got in as captain of the Remove. He's been cheeky to me!"

"You potty owl!"

"Well, he has!" said Bunter. "He's cheeked me a good many times, in fact, and I've come jolly near licking him more than once, and I can jolly well say—Whoooooop!"

There was a footstep behind Billy Bunter in the Remove passage. He gave a yell as a heavy hand dropped on his collar, and his bullet head was banged on the door of Study No. 1.

"Yaroooooh! Leggo! Smithy, you beast—Yaroooooh!"

Bang!

"Whooooop! I say, you fellows, make him leggo!" yelled Bunter frantically. "Owl! Wow! Leggo, you beast—Whooooop!"

The Bounder's brow was black and his eyes glinting. Evidently Herbert Vernon-Smith was in the worst of tempers. He had come along at a rather unlucky moment for Billy Bunter.

Bang!

Instead of letting go, Wharton wrenched the Bounder's grasp from Billy Bunter's collar.

"Cut!" he said curtly.

Billy Bunter was only too glad to cut. The moment he was released he was off the mark, and he did the Remove passage at about sixty miles per hour, yelling as he went.

"By gad!" The Bounder turned on Wharton, with glittering eyes and clenched fists. "If you're askin' for trouble, Wharton—"

"Don't be a fool!" Harry Wharton stepped back, keeping his hands down. "Ragging Bunter won't do any good! And scrapping won't, either! We've got to fix up about to-morrow; and if we're scratching, we've got to let St. Jude's know."

"We're not scratchin'!" snarled the Bounder.

"Has Quelch—" began Nugent.

The Bounder gave a scoffing laugh.

"Not in the least," said the Bounder sardonically. "It's the beginnin'."

"Smithy, old man—"

"Oh, chuck it!" said the Bounder rudely. "I've got to think this out! Leave a fellow alone!"

Redwing gave him a rather long look, and left the study. The captain of the Remove was left alone—to think it out! And if the Remove men were going to play a cricket match at St. Jude's on the morrow, in spite of their Form master's order of detention, there was no doubt that it required some hard thinking.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Wrathy!

REMOVE men, the following morning, wore worried looks.

Even the fellows who cared little for cricket, and were not bothering about the game at St. Jude's, were rather dolorous. Detention for

the half-holiday was not a nappy prospect.

These fellows, however, did not matter much, in the general estimation. It was the St. Jude's fixture that mattered.

The Bounder's brow was dark, and his feelings bitter. His resentment against the Remove master was deep. It surprised and angered him to find that the other fellows shared it very slightly. Quelch had given the Form detention on a cricket date, which was frightfully hard luck; but it was the Bounder's own fault if the match was scratched, and all the cricketers knew it, whether Smithy liked to admit it or not.

Smithy had asked for trouble in the first place, by starting the rag in French class, and cheeking Quelch when he came to restore order. He had put the lid on in his interview with Quelch afterwards. All the fellows knew that Quelch, severe as he was, was the man to make a reasonable concession. If, like Pharaoh of old, he had hardened his heart, it was Smithy's doing.

The intervention of the games master would have done some good in other circumstances. But Vernon-Smith's declaration that he was going to "appeal" to the games master, had fairly torn it. Mr. Quelch had evidently resolved to make it unmistakably clear that there was no appeal from his authority. And some of the fellows, who had thought of asking Wingate of the Sixth, as head of the games, to chip in, realised that it was too late to be of any use. Quelch's back was up, and if he had refused to listen to the games master, it was certain that he would not listen to Wingate.

It exasperated Smithy to find that in the Remove the blame was laid, not on Quelch, but on himself. The cricketers resented Quelch's action—but they all agreed that the matter could have been

set right if Smithy had handled it with tact; if, in short, anyone but the headstrong and arrogant Bounder had had to deal with Quelch.

"Quelch wouldn't have refused Wharton, if it had been Wharton," Squiff told the other cricketers. "But what was the man to do, when a fellow asks him a favour and cheeks him at the same time? The cheeky ass told him he would appeal to Lascelles. That put it up to Quelch to stick to it like glue."

And the other fellows agreed with the Australian junior.

But it was a rotten state of affairs. Every cricketer in the Form was exasperated with the Bounder, and not less so because Smithy declared that the match was going to be played, all the same. He refused to scratch, and St. Jude's were expecting the Remove team early in the afternoon. It was too late now to write, but there was time for a telegram; but the suggestion of a telegram scratching the match was received by the Bounder only with a snarl of angry contempt.

In the Remove Form Room that morning there was rather a tense atmosphere.

Mr. Quelch was cold and grim. His Form was restless and resentful. Judging by Quelch's looks, he was still irritated with the Remove; but, as a matter of fact, the Form master was more worried than irritated. Few of the juniors guessed that Quelch was feeling the disappointment he had inflicted on them. But that was the truth.

But the die was cast.

Without abandoning his authority over his own Form, Mr. Quelch could hardly yield the point now. Practically, it would have been yielding to the dictation of a single cheeky, arrogant member of his Form. It would have placed him rather in the position of a

master like Monsieur Charpentier. His deepest ire had been roused by the Bounder's appeal from his authority to that of the games master. Quelch was now adamant.

First and second lesson passed off dismally in the Form-room, and the Remove were dismissed for break.

They came out in a grouching crowd.

Outside the door of the Form-room three or four fellows gathered round Harry Wharton.

"Look here! It's up to you, now that Smithy's made a muck of it," said Peter Todd. "You put it to Quelch! He will listen to you."

Wharton shook his head.

"It's up to you!" said Squiff.

"Look here, Wharton—" growled Tom Brown.

"Nothing doing," answered Harry quietly. "Smithy's the captain of the Form, and I can't butt in."

"As the matter stands, we're not playing, and we're not scratching, and St. Jude's will be waiting for us this afternoon on their ground. Are we going to let them down like that?" snorted Johnny Bull.

"Ask Smithy!"

"Blow Smithy!" said a dozen voices.

"The blowfulness is terrific!"

"Look here, Wharton! Smithy's a back number. Quelch will listen to you, and you've jolly well got to put it to him!" exclaimed Squiff.

"So long as Smithy is captain of the Remove, I'm backing him up," answered Wharton. "Our skipper has a right to expect to be backed up, and I'm standing by Smithy!"

"Fathead!"

"Ass!"

Wharton escaped from the crowd, and went out into the quad. He was as worried and annoyed as any other fellow in the Remove, but it was not for him to act in the Form captain's place.

There were few fellows in the Form who did not wish, from the bottom of their hearts, that Wharton was back in his old place as skipper. But it was not for Wharton to take advantage of it. If Vernon-Smith was turned out, and a new election held, he was ready to stand for election. That was a very different matter.

But he spurned with scorn the bare idea of using the present state of affairs to the disadvantage of his rival. Smithy was skipper, and so long as he was skipper, the former captain of the Remove was backing him up. He only hoped that some way might yet be found out of the difficulty, and certainly he was not thinking of any benefit for himself.

An angry crowd surrounded the Bounder in the quad. A dozen fellows told him, eloquently, and all at once, what they thought of him, both personally and as Form captain. Herbert Vernon-Smith listened, with a sneer on his face, unperturbed.

"Are you sending a telegram to St. Jude's?" demanded Squiff.

"No!"

"Then Nugent, as secretary, had better send it, whether you like it or not."

"You see," drawled the Bounder, "we're not scratching this match."

"They'll be waiting for us on their ground!" yelled Peter Todd.

"We shan't keep them waiting."

"Are we going to march out of the Form-room under Quelch's nose?" almost shrieked Peter Todd.

"Yes!"

"You—you dummy! Think he'll let us?"

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.

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Squitt shook an excited fist under his nose.

"I can tell you this, Vernon-Smith," he bawled, "if this match is mucked up, you'll be sacked from the captaincy!"

"I'm not deaf!" the Bounder pointed out.

"What?"

"Whisper and I shall hear!" said Smithy, with perfect coolness.

"You—you—you cheeky idiot——"

"Scrag him!" said Tom Brown. "Scrag the silly ass! Then let's go round and kick every man that voted for him in the election."

"Keep your little tempers," said the Bounder. "I've told you that we're playing St. Jude's this afternoon. Leave it at that."

"How are we going to play them?" roared Johnny Bull.

"With bat and ball," answered the Bounder pleasantly. "That's how it is usually played, I believe."

"You—you funny idiot——"

"You burbling thump——"

"Scrag him!"

It really looked as if the enraged cricketers were going to "scrag" the captain of the Remove. The Bounder, with a contemptuous grin on his face, and his hands in his pockets, stood perfectly cool. Harry Wharton stepped quietly to his side.

"Chuck that, you men!" he said. "What's the good of ragging?"

And the angry crowd moved off and left the Bounder alone with Wharton.

"Still backin' me up, old bean?" asked Smithy lightly.

"Yes, Smithy!"

"You're not the man to fish in troubled waters, are you?" grinned the Bounder. "If I were in your place——"

"Never mind what you'd do in my place, Smithy. I'm thinking of the cricket," said Harry. "What the thump are we going to do?"

"Beat St. Jude's, I hope," answered the Bounder, and he strolled away, whistling.

Evidently, it was still fixed in the Bounder's mind that the game at St. Jude's was going to be played that day. How he was going to work it, was known only to the Bounder—and, perhaps, it was not known to him.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Luck!

B UZZZZ!

The raucous buzz of the telephone bell was not welcome to the ears of Henry Samuel Quelch as he sat in his study in morning break.

Mr. Quelch was in an irritated mood; and he was seeking calm and solace in a reperusal of that masterly article in the columns of the "Public School Review."

The buzz of the telephone interrupted that perusal.

Mr. Quelch lifted the receiver.

"Hallo!" he barked into the transmitter.

"Is that Mr. Quelch at Greyfriars?"

"Speaking!" barked the Remove master.

"Good-morning, Mr. Quelch. Dr. Wyatt, speaking from St. Jude's School!" came a rather pleasant, deep voice over the wires.

"Oh! Good-morning!" said Mr. Quelch, ceasing to bark. He was acquainted with the headmaster of St. Jude's, and had a considerable respect for that gentleman.

He wondered, however, what the St. Jude's headmaster could possibly have to say to him over the telephone.

"I trust I am not interrupting you, Mr. Quelch."

"Not at all, sir!" said Mr. Quelch, more politely than veraciously.

"I have been looking at the 'Public School Review'——"

"Oh!" a pleased smile dawned on the frosty countenance of Henry Samuel Quelch.

"I conclude that the article signed 'H. S. Quelch' is your work, sir?"

"Quite!" said Mr. Quelch.

"I have been interested—extremely interested, by this article, Mr. Quelch."

"You are very kind, sir!" There was no trace of irritation in the Remove master's face now. He beamed.

As a Form master, Mr. Quelch was a severe, almost grim, gentleman. As an author, he was gentle as the cooing

might look in this afternoon. I take it that you are at liberty?"

"Oh, quite! I had a matter of detention to see to, but that I can easily leave to a prefect! I shall be honoured, sir."

"I should be glad if you could come to lunch, sir, and then——"

Mr. Quelch coughed.

"I should be delighted, Dr. Wyatt; but I have certain duties, in connection with my Form—but early in the afternoon——"

"Very well, Mr. Quelch; I shall expect you any time after lunch, and the earlier the better," said the St. Jude's headmaster very cordially.

And after a few more gracious words on both sides, the receivers were put up.

Mr. Quelch paced his study for a few minutes, with an agreeable smile on his face.

The Remove Form master had felt convinced that that article in the "Public School Review" would attract some attention. With all due modesty, he could not help thinking that it was a masterly article; that it touched the spot, as it were! It was distinctly agreeable to find that he had been right; still more agreeable, for a headmaster to ring him up so soon after the appearance of the article, eager to discuss his views with him. Mr. Quelch had always felt some respect for the headmaster of St. Jude's; and now he respected that gentleman more than ever. Obviously, Dr. Wyatt was a man of great judgment.

It had been a very pleasant talk on the telephone—and there was to be a longer and still more pleasant talk at St. Jude's. The whole subject would be thrashed out, in all its bearings.

Mr. Quelch rather regretted that he had not stretched a point for once and cut the Form dinner at Greyfriars and lunched at St. Jude's—so keen was he to begin that interesting discussion with a headmaster of so much intelligence and judgment.

Still, he could ring a taxi and leave immediately after the school dinner; and a happy afternoon lay before him.

He had intended to supervise the detention of his Form; keeping a gimlet eye on them, to see that their time was not wasted in the Form-room. That task, however, could be left to a Sixth Form prefect. He could ask Wingate, or Walker, or Loder—that was easily arranged.

The bell for third school interrupted Mr. Quelch's agreeable reflections.

He left his study and proceeded to the Remove room.

In his pleasant, pleased mood, it was rather disagreeable to see the sombre looks of most of his Form, when they came in for third school. He felt a twinge. But that matter was settled; there was no help for it; it was impossible for him to make any concession. But he certainly felt sorry that the Remove would be at detention tasks while two scholastic chins were wagging so happily in the St. Jude's headmaster's study that bright June afternoon.

He hoped, however, that this severe lesson would benefit the Remove, and especially that impertinent boy, Vernon-Smith!

Certainly it did not cross Mr. Quelch's mind for a single instant that that impertinent boy, Vernon-Smith, was thinking of defying the detention order, and intending to carry on regardless of Henry Samuel Quelch. That was not a thought that was likely to enter Mr. Quelch's mind.

Third lesson passed rather dismally in the Remove-room. Most of the

TELL A TALE AND WIN A HANDSOME PRIZE

like Arthur Leckie, Box 28, Ruthilda, Sask., Canada, who submitted the following rousing rib-tickler:



Tommy (halting at shop window): "Papa, didn't you tell mamma we must economise?"
Father: "Yes, I did, Tommy. Why?"

Tommy: "Well, I was thinking that if you got me a bicycle I wouldn't wear out so many pairs of shoes!"

Finished laughing? Good!
Then have a shot at winning one of our topping prizes yourself!

dove. It was not the Form master, but the author, who was now grinning like a good-tempered gargoyle over the telephone.

"I think, sir, that in certain directions, your conclusions are open to discussion," went on the St. Jude's headmaster.

"No doubt, sir, no doubt!" said Mr. Quelch amiably.

"It would be a great pleasure to me, sir, to discuss the matter with you, and compare notes on this extremely interesting and important subject."

"It would be a pleasure to me, sir!" said Mr. Quelch heartily. "A very great pleasure indeed."

"I am glad to hear you say so, Mr. Quelch! Perhaps you would do me the pleasure of calling at St. Jude's——"

"Certainly, sir!"

"As there is a half-holiday at both schools to-day, Mr. Quelch, perhaps you

fellows were thinking of cricket, and the Bounder was thinking of rather desperate plans for carrying on, in spite of Mr. Quelch. The Remove master had seldom had a more inattentive class.

But he was very patient, surprising the juniors with his patience and equable temper. They knew nothing, of course, of that happy talk on the telephone and the attractive appointment Mr. Quelch had for the afternoon.

The lesson ended at last, and Mr. Quelch had a few words to say before he dismissed the Remove.

"My boys," he said, quite kindly, "I regret that it is my duty to detain you this afternoon. I regret it very much."

Breathless attention was fixed on Quelch. For a moment the Remove hoped that this exordium meant that they were to be let off.

That brief hope was dashed the next moment.

"But duty, howsoever disagreeable, must be done," said Mr. Quelch firmly. "You will all be in the Form-room at two o'clock!"

"Oh!"

"I am called away this afternoon," went on Mr. Quelch. "I shall therefore leave my Form in charge of a prefect!"

The Bounder's eyes flashed.

"That prefect will take control in this Form-room from two o'clock until five o'clock. I trust that my boys will be quiet, orderly, and attentive to their tasks. That is the way to regain my good opinion, which I trust is valued in my Form!"

Skinner winked at Snoop—fortunately without being spotted by the gimlet eye of his Form master.

"But I shall instruct the prefect to report to me if there is any disorder!" went on Mr. Quelch in a rather deeper voice. "Anything of the kind will be severely punished!"

There was a pause.

"Dismiss!" said Mr. Quelch.

The Remove marched out.

Herbert Vernon-Smith swung down the passage, his hands in his pockets, and a grin on his face. Redwing gave him a troubled look.

"This is luck!" said Smithy.

"I don't see it, old chap!"

"Quelch will be off the scene!" The Bounder laughed aloud. "We can deal with a prefect! What? By gad, L. y luck never lets me down, Reddy! It always turns up trumps, old man!"

"For goodness' sake, Smithy, don't think of playing the goat!" said Redwing, in deep distress. "A Sixth Form prefect! You can't think of handling a Sixth Form prefect!"

"Can't I?" grinned the Bounder. "Wait till Quelch is off the scene, that's all! A prefect won't stop us!"

"He jolly well will!" said Tom.

"Not if his head's jammed in a wastepaper-basket, and his legs tied to Quelch's desk!"

"What!" gasped Redwing, aghast.

The Bounder chuckled.

"Leave it to me!" he said, and the Bounder walked away, laughing, leaving his chum staring after him in utter consternation.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Detention with Loder!

"**L**ODER looks cross!" remarked Bob Cherry.

Gerald Loder of the Sixth Form undoubtedly looked rather cross.

After dinner Harry Wharton & Co. walked in the quad, not in a cheery

humour, waiting for the hour of detention. Loder, coming away from the House, passed them, and they noted the scowl on his face.

Loder was not the best-tempered fellow at the best of times. Now he looked the worst-tempered fellow at Greyfriars.

He had had a glum face at the school dinner. There had been only a few of the Sixth Form at dinner. The First Eleven were playing away that day, and Wingate and his merry men had left early. Loder, though he was a good deal of a slacker, considered that he was entitled to a place in the First Eleven, but he seldom had a chance of figuring therein. On the present occasion he was left out, and it annoyed him. While Loder was dining at the high table in Hall at Greyfriars that day, the First Eleven were at Lantham, ten miles away. Loder looked glum about it, all the more because he saw, or fancied he saw, smiles on some other faces, and connected those smiles with his own disappointment.

But now, as he strode across the quad, Loder was looking more than glum. He was looking angry and savage. Something, apparently, had occurred since dinner to make his temper worse.

So bad was Loder's temper, in fact, that he seemed to be longing to take it out of somebody. Harry Wharton & Co. merely glanced at him as he passed like a thundercloud. According to the proverb, a cat may look at a king. But Gerald Loder, it seemed, was not to be even looked at with impunity in his present frame of mind.

"Don't loaf about there, you young rotters!" barked Loder.

"My esteemed Loder," remonstrated Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "the loaf-fulness is not terrific!"

Loder glared at the chums of the Remove.

"You young rascals! Why the thump couldn't your Form master whop you all round instead of detaining you?"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Frank Nugent.

The Famous Five grinned. Loder's remark let in light on the cause of his bad temper.

Mr. Quelch had said that the detained Form would be in charge of a prefect during his absence. It was easy now to guess that Loder was the prefect selected for the happy task.

"Don't give me any trouble this afternoon, that's all!" said Loder scowling. "I'm bringing my ashplant into the Form-room, as I've got to waste the afternoon keeping an eye on you young scoundrels! If you ask for it, you'll get it—hard!"

"Awfully sorry you've got to take us in detention, Loder!" said Bob Cherry politely. "Still, it's worse for us than for you, isn't it?"

"Take fifty lines, Cherry!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Loder strode on, scowling.

He had been disappointed about the cricket that afternoon. But he had intended to indemnify himself by spending some happy hours up the river at the Three Fishers, where there were cigarettes and a billiards-table, and one or two sporting fellows, who belonged to Highcliffe, to meet. That little programme was completely knocked on the head by Mr. Quelch's request that he should take the Remove in detention.

It was scarcely possible for Loder to refuse Mr. Quelch's request. A Greyfriars prefect had duties as well as privileges, and though Loder was not a "whale" on duty, he could not expect to dodge it all the time. Quelch had asked him civilly whether he had any

special engagement that afternoon, and Loder, of course, could not tell him that he had planned to meet some Highcliffe men at a pub out of bounds to play billiards. So Loder was "for it."

"What a 'appy afternoon it's going to be!" sighed Bob Cherry. "We shall enjoy life with Loder in the Form-room—what?"

"The enjoyfulness will not be terrific!"

"According to Smithy, we're playing cricket this afternoon, and not staying in the Form-room at all!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Smithy's as ass!" said Nugent.

"Loder's practically detained along with us!" grinned Bob. "He looks quite cross about it. If Smithy begins any bunkum, I fancy Loder will make a jolly old example of him."

Harry Wharton looked very thoughtful. He was sure that the Bounder had some scheme in his mind, though he could not guess what it was.

Smithy was reckless enough for anything, but the idea of a whole Form marching out of detention without leave made all the other fellows look grave. Plenty of fellows would have risked that much, doubtless, rather than have left the St. Jude's cricketers waiting for a team that was never to arrive. But in the presence of a Sixth Form prefect it was impracticable. Handling Loder and tying his legs to a desk, and sticking his head into the wastepaper-basket, was an easier thing to say than to do; and nobody was likely to back up the Bounder in such unheard-of proceedings, even if Smithy himself was so wildly reckless as to be capable of taking the lead.

No word, however, had been sent to St. Jude's. Lunn and his men would be expecting the Greyfriars team, and expecting them soon. Obviously, the Bounder intended to carry on.

Such a state of affairs, Wharton knew, appealed to the Bounder's reckless, lawless nature. If he succeeded in getting that match played, in spite of everything, it would add immensely to his prestige as a fellow who did not care two straws for authority, and did not give a snap of the fingers for masters or prefects. And the Bounder's luck was well known to be wonderful. Wharton wondered whether, after all, Smithy would pull it off. He could not help thinking that this time the Bounder had bitten off more than he could possibly chew.

At two o'clock an unwilling Form assembled in the Remove-room. All other Forms were at liberty, and preparing to enjoy the sunny June afternoon. There was a cricket match on between the Fourth and the Shell. Hobson & Co. of the Shell, and Cecil Reginald Temple and his merry men in the Fourth, looked merry and bright. Fags of the Third and the Second went out of gates in cheery swarms. Coker of the Fifth careered away on his motor-bike—his friends, Potter and Greenc, were playing cricket at Lantham, and Horace Coker was going to give them a look in, if he reached Lantham alive. Other senior men, as well as a good many juniors, were going over to Lantham to see the game there. In all Greyfriars School only the hapless Remove were down on their luck—but they were very deep down on it indeed.

Loder of the Sixth came into the Remove-room with Mr. Quelch. In the presence of the Form master Loder restrained his temper; but he looked glum. Mr. Quelch had already prepared detention papers for the Form—sufficient to keep them occupied for three more or



Loder picked up a cane and approached Bunter. Whack! "Yaroooh!" Billy Bunter's snore suddenly changed into a fearful yell. "Do you think you're in the dormitory, you fat young scoundrel!" demanded Loder. "Perhaps you'll keep awake now!"

less happy hours. Leaving them in charge of the gloomy prefect, Mr. Quelch quitted the Form-room, and a few minutes later a taxi was heard to grind away on the drive.

The Bounder's eyes gleamed as he heard Quelch depart.

Where the Remove master was gone he did not know, and did not care. Mr. Quelch was away for the afternoon, and that was all Smithy cared about.

Loder sat at the Form master's desk and scowled. He had brought a novel to keep him company, but that was a poor consolation for what he was missing at the Three Fishers.

Gloomy faces were bent over detention tasks at the Remove desks. Some of the fellows looked up, to give Vernon-Smith homicidal glances. This, it seemed, was the outcome of the Bounder's swank. Detention, after all, and the St. Jude's men left waiting on their ground, without even being notified that the match was off. Probably only the presence of a prefect saved Herbert Vernon-Smith from the ragging of his life.

"Bunter!"

Loder rapped out the name.

"Ow! Oh, yes! It—it wasn't me, Loder!" gasped Billy Bunter, in great alarm.

"Are you eating toffees in class?"

"Oh, no! Not at all, Loder! I—I haven't any toffees!" gasped the fat Owl. "I didn't know you were watching me. I—I mean—"

"Step out before the class, Bunter!"

"Oh lor!"

Bunter rolled out dismally.

"Take that toffee from your mouth, you sticky little pig, and put it in the wastepaper-basket!" snapped Loder.

"Oh crikey!"

"Now bend over that desk!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Whack!

"Yooooop!"

Billy Bunter crawled back to his place, wriggling.

Loder grunted, and sat down at Mr. Quelch's desk again, feeling a little better.

The Removites looked grim and savage. Loder, irritated by the duty he had to do, was going to take it out of the detained Form—that was clear. He had begun on Billy Bunter, but there was more to come. It looked like being a happy afternoon for the Remove.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Hour and the Man!

TAP!

Trotter, the House page, opened the door of the Remove-room, and looked in. Loder glanced across at him, and snapped:

"What do you want?"

"Telegram for you, sir," said Trotter.

"Oh, bring it here!"

Loder was looking surprised as he took the telegram and opened it. It was uncommon enough for a Greyfriars man to receive a telegram. But as he glanced at the message he started, and the glum gloominess left his face as if wiped off with a duster. He smiled.

The Remove fellows wondered what there might be in that wire to cause Gerald Loder to look so good-tempered all of a sudden.

Skinner whispered a surmise that it was from a "bookie," announcing that Loder had backed a winner, a suggestion that caused a snigger in the Form. The sportsman of the Sixth was not likely to have a racing telegram addressed to the school. But it was clear

that there was some very gratifying news in that telegram.

"Right! No answer," said Loder; and Trotter left the Form-room.

Loder rose from the Form master's desk.

He glanced quite genially at the Remove. He was quite a different Loder from the fellow who had caned Bunter five minutes ago.

The Bounder's eyes were fixed on him, with a sarcastic smile. The other fellows only wondered what had caused this sudden change in Loder. They would have known, and would have been still more surprised, if they could have seen the buff slip in Loder's hand. It ran:

"Handed in at Lantham Post Office. Loder, Greyfriars School. Come over at once. Bring your bat.—WINGATE."

It was enough to make Loder smile. He was wanted, after all, in the First Eleven match at Lantham.

It was rather late to call him, certainly, but better late than never. Something had happened, apparently, and Wingate wanted another man. Somebody crooked or missing—goodness knew what! No doubt Greyfriars had batted first, and were still batting, and there was a place for Loder. Some man at the tail of the innings was, for some reason, not available. Anyhow, whatever the explanation, there it was. Loder was called on in hot haste—a call that he was only too glad to obey. Even the sportsman of the Sixth would rather have played for the School than have put in the afternoon at the Three Fishers—indefinitely rather than have put

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(Continued from page 13.)

in the afternoon with a detained junior Form.

Loder fairly grinned.

The task Mr. Quelch had assigned him, of course, had to be put aside, when his cricket captain called on him. Loder had to find another prefect to take his place, and he was only too glad to have to do so.

In his keen satisfaction he could not help telling the Remove the happy news. Fellows had grinned, or he fancied they had, when the First Eleven left him at home. It bucked Loder to be able to tell the world that he was wanted, after all.

"I shall have to leave you kids," said Loder. "I'm called over to Lantham to play cricket."

There was a buzz of surprise in the Remove.

So that was it!

No wonder Loder had looked pleased.

"I've no time to lose," went on Loder. "Not a second to spare, in fact. I'm wanted to bat. I shall leave you here. You will keep your places, and keep on with your work, and I shall ask another prefect to come along."

"Gratters, Loder!" said Vernon-Smith.

"The gratterfulness is terrific, my esteemed Loder," declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Thanks!" said Loder, very genially. "I hope I shall knock up a few for Greyfriars. Keep order here."

Loder almost bounded out of the Form-room.

There was a buzz as the door closed.

"Well, my only hat!" said Bob Cherry. "What on earth's happened to the First Eleven, if they want a man at the last minute like this?"

"Accident or something," said Peter Todd. "Goodness knows!"

"Blessed if I understand Wingate calling Loder, though!" said Tom Redwing. "There's better men than Loder about."

"Loder doesn't seem to think so," chuckled Squiff.

Vernon-Smith was on his feet.

"Never mind the First Eleven," he said. "It's the Remove matches we've got to think of. Come on!"

"What?"

"Loder won't find another prefect to take his place in a hurry," said the Bounder. "We've got five minutes at the very least. That's enough, unless you men want to sit here cackling."

"But—" ejaculated Harry Wharton.

The Bounder interrupted him with savage impatience.

"Get a move on, you ass! We've got to be clear before another prefect butts in, unless you want to back me up in tying him, hand and foot."

"Oh, don't be an ass! Look here, Smithy—" exclaimed Mark Linley.

"Nuff said! The eleven will follow me!" rapped out the Bounder. "The rest of the Form can please themselves!"

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Wharton, Cherry, Bull, Hurree Singh, Squiff, Brown, Linley, Redwing, Todd, Ogilvy—get a move on!"

"But—"

"Are you coming?" roared the Bounder. "Or are you funky?"

"I say, you fellows," squeaked Billy Bunter, "Quelch will be wild!"

"Blow Quelch, you fat fool!"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Who's backing me up?" snarled the Bounder. "Wharton—"

Harry Wharton, with a startled look, fixed his eyes on the Bounder.

"Did you know that telegram was coming for Loder, Smithy?" he asked very quietly.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob Cherry.

The Bounder laughed scoffingly.

"Never mind what I knew! Are you backing me up, or are you leaving your captain in the lurch because you're funky?"

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"I'm backing you up," he said.

"Same here!" said Bob Cherry at once.

"The samefulness is terrific."

"We're all backing up, I suppose," said Peter Todd dubiously. "But there'll be a fearful row, Smithy!"

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.

"I shall get the butt-end of it if there's a row, as ringleader," he said. "If I don't funk it, you needn't."

"Don't be a cheeky ass! Nobody's funking it! But—"

"Come on, then!"

Vernon-Smith threw open the door of the Form-room. If there was hesitation, it was only for a moment. Like one man, the cricketers marched out of the Form-room after the captain of the Remove. The coast was clear; there was no one to say them nay. Frank Nugent followed them. He was not in the eleven, but he was not the man to stand back when his comrades were taking risks.

Wharton caught his arm.

"Cut back, Franky—"

"Rats!" answered Nugent.

"There's no need—"

"Rot!"

"It means a frightful row with Quelch, old man."

"That's why I'm coming."

Bolsover major jumped up and followed on. Then five or six other fellows left their places and joined up. It was a crowd that hurried away from the Form-room. Some fellows rose, and sat down again. Only the more reckless spirits followed Nugent's example. Less than half the Remove remained in the Form-room—in a buzz of excitement.

"I say, you fellows, they'll all be flogged!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"Beak's floggings all round!" said Skinner. "I rather think I'm stayin' in, like a good, obedient boy who loves his kind teachers. What about you, Snoopey?"

"I'm glued here!" grinned Snoop.

"Stick where you are, Stott."

Stott shook his head.

"I'm not going to let those chaps take all the risk," he said. "I'm going after them."

"More fool you!" said Skinner; and Stott, unheeding, went.

"I guess I'm freezing to this here desk!" remarked Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I don't want any floggings in mine."

"I—I've a jolly good mind to go—" said Hazeldene.

"And a better mind not to!" grinned Skinner.

"Well, if Smithy had put me in the team—"

"You'll be jolly glad he didn't when Quelch comes home!" chuckled Snoop. "Smithy's the man to ask for it, and no mistake!"

The Remove-room was in a buzz while the remnant of the Form waited for another prefect to come along in Loder's place. What that prefect would say when he came and found less than half the detained Form there was an interesting question. But he did not seem in a hurry to arrive—which was all the better for the cricketers. Even Billy Bunter, though he was busy extracting his toffee from the wastepaper-basket, hoped that the Remove Eleven would succeed in getting clear.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Out of Bounds!

"BUT—"

"Come on!"

"But—"

"Shut up, and follow on!"

snapped Vernon-Smith.

In a state of breathless excitement the crowd of Remove fellows found themselves outside the walls of Greyfriars.

They had not ventured to leave by the gates. There was no doubt that Gosling, the porter, knew that the Remove were detained that day, and it would not have done for Gosling to see them going.

They left by way of the Cloisters, dropping over a low wall into a lane. A few minutes had sufficed to get ready to start; with not a second to spare, they had not wasted a fraction of a second. The Bounder was as cool as ice, and evidently enjoying the escapade, and counting upon fortune favouring him. Many of the other fellows doubted whether they would get clear. But, as a matter of fact, it was easy.

On that sunny June afternoon the school was almost deserted. The First Eleven, playing at Lantham, had drawn a crowd of fellows away; and a junior match going on on Little Side at Greyfriars had drawn another crowd to that spot. Most important of all, Mr. Quelch was absent; and Loder of the Sixth was already speeding away on a motor-bike for Lantham.

Few eyes, as it happened, fell on the truant Removites as they started, and those few did not matter. It was true that Mr. Prout, master of the Fifth, was walking in the quad with Capper, master of the Fourth, and both masters glanced at the Removites; but they had nothing to do with Quelch's Form, and probably did not even know that the Remove were under detention. Dr. Locke, the Head, himself was seated at his open study window, and his kind and benevolent glance fell on the truants, but with undiminished benevolence; the Head was not aware that these young rascals were supposed to be sitting in their Form-room at detention tasks. Risky as it seemed, recklessly venturesome, the Remove men walked to a secluded spot in the school wall and climbed over as if they were not under detention at all.

In the lane outside, Vernon-Smith led the way towards the road. Several fellows asked questions, to which the Bounder did not take the trouble to reply. They were already due at St. Jude's, and St. Jude's was a good many miles away. They had got unexpectedly clear, but the question of transport remained. They had to get to St. Jude's somehow.

The Bounder proceeded at a trot, and the other fellows trotted in his wake,

They turned from the lane into the Courtfield road, where they breathed rather more freely.

By that time there was little doubt that Loder's substitute had arrived in the Remove Form Room and found a crowd missing.

"Safe now!" said Bob Cherry, as they trotted along the road towards Courtfield.

"But we've got to get to St. Jude's," said Peter Todd. "If we're taking a train from Courtfield we might as well have stayed at home. We should get to St. Jude's about tea-time."

"Smithy, old man——" said Bob.

"Follow on."

"Walking it?" grunted Johnny Bull.

The Bounder did not answer. A little distance up the high-road he turned off into a lane. In that lane stood a motor-omnibus.

The driver stood leaning on the big vehicle, smoking a cigarette. He threw away the cigarette and touched his hat to the Bounder.

"Ready, sir!"

"Sharp's the word!" said Vernon-Smith. "Pile in, you men!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Great pip!"

"The pipfulness is terrific!"

Evidently the captain of the Remove had made his arrangements beforehand. The crowd of juniors piled into the motor-bus, and the engine roared. Away up the lane went the crowded vehicle, leaving Greyfriars rapidly in the distance behind.

"You had this jolly old bus all ready, Smithy!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" drawled the Bounder.

"Good man!"

"Jolly lucky that wire coming for Loder!" said Squiff. "If that hadn't happened, Smithy, we couldn't have cleared."

"That's why it happened," answered the Bounder coolly.

"Wha-a-at?" ejaculated the Australian junior.

"What the thump, Smithy——" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

Harry Wharton looked at the Bounder, but did not speak. The suspicion was already in his mind that Vernon-Smith had somehow "wangled" that telegram from Lantham. It had happened altogether too luckily for him, to be merely a coincidence.

"What the dickens do you mean, Smithy?" asked Tom Redwing uneasily. "You couldn't have known that Wingate was going to wire to Loder."

The Bounder laughed.

"Didn't you fellows think it rather queer that Wingate should happen to want Loder at Lantham, at the last minute like that?" he asked.

"The queerfulness was terrific."

"If Loder knew as much about his own cricket as Wingate does, he would have thought it jolly queer, too!" drawled Smithy. "I fancy Loder is goin' to get rather a jolt when he drops in at Lantham cricket ground."

"But——" gasped Bob.

The juniors stared blankly at the Bounder as the crowded bus roared on. Smithy was grinning; but the other faces were very serious.

"Mean to say that you wangled that wire, Smithy?" asked Peter Todd, at last.

"What do you think?" yawned Smithy.

"Oh, my hat!"

"But—but how——" stuttered Bob Cherry. "Do you mean that Wingate never sent the wire at all?"

"Wingate never even heard of it," answered the Bounder.

"Then who——"

"Oh, I know a man at Lantham!" said Vernon-Smith carelessly. "And as soon as I knew Loder was to take control this afternoon in the Form-room, I got my friend at Lantham on the phone."

"You—you—you got a man to send a telegram in Wingate's name?" gasped Bob. "Oh, great Christopher Columbus!"

"Then—then Loder isn't wanted to play at Lantham at all?" exclaimed Nugent.

"Scarcely!"

"Oh crikey!"

"You—you awful idiot, Smithy!" said Squiff. "There'll be a fearful row about this. What do you think Loder will feel like when he butts in at Lantham and finds he's not wanted?"

"Like a bear with a sore head, I imagine," answered Vernon-Smith carelessly. "But I'm not worrying a fearful lot about Loder's feelings."

"It's too jolly thick!" said Johnny Bull. "Why, it's against the law to send a telegram in another man's name; it's jolly like forgery!"

"Loder had to be got rid of somehow," remarked the Bounder. "I'd have been ready to collar him, and tie him to Quelch's desk; but I dare say you'd have kicked at that."

"The kickfulness would have been terrific, my esteemed Smithy."

"It's too thick!" growled Johnny Bull. "Loder's rather a cad and a bully—but pulling a man's leg like that—He will look an awful fool when he butts in at Lantham——"

"Oh, quite!" yawned the Bounder.

"There'll be a row about that telegram," said Nugent. "You may have a bobby dropping in to ask you about it, Smithy."

"Hardly! I've got a pretty complete alibi. I was at Greyfriars when the telegram was sent at Lantham."

"I call it a rotten trick!" said Johnny Bull.

"So glad to hear your opinion, old bean," said the Bounder, unmoved.

Johnny Bull grunted, but made no further rejoinder. As a matter of fact, his opinion was generally shared. The Bounder's methods were his own, and such methods as these were not likely to be approved by the other fellows.

"Well, we're for it now," said Harry Wharton. "Anvhow, we get the game at St. Jude's. It's worth a flogging all round—we shall get that. But we can stand it."

"The flogfulness will be terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The esteemed Quelch will be posterously infuriated."

"No doubt about that!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Quelch will be in a royal wax! Can't be helped."

"I told Quelch we were going to play this match," said the Bounder. "And we're going to play it. We've got to face the music afterwards, I know that. Anybody who's afraid can hop off this bus, and get back to the Form-room in time."

"Oh, rats!"

The motor-bus rolled swiftly on its way, eating up the miles.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Spool!

JAMES WALKER of the Sixth Form lounged along to the Remove-room, with a novel under his arm. Loder had found him in his study, deep in that novel, and asked him to take his place with the

Form under detention, while he buzzed off on his motor-bike for Lantham.

Walker was willing to oblige; but he saw no occasion for hurry, and he stayed to finish his chapter before he loafed along to the Remove.

He arrived there a quarter of an hour after Smithy and the fellows who were backing up the Bounder had departed. He found the Form-room in a buzz of excitement, which died away as the prefect entered.

Walker glanced carelessly at the Form, and then stared. Had only two or three fellows slipped out while no eyes was on the Remove, it was probable that Walker would not have noted their absence. But the most careless eye could not have failed to notice that there were hardly a dozen fellows present out of a rather numerous Form.

"Hallo! What does this mean?" asked Walker. "Isn't the whole Form under detention this afternoon?"

Some of the juniors grinned, but no one answered.

"Loder told me that the whole Form was detained!" snapped the prefect. "Where are the others? Wharton—isn't Wharton here? What the dickens is this game? Russell!"

"Yes, Walker!" said Russell.

"Where are the other young sweeps? Have they cleared off, or what?"

"I—I think a few fellows have gone out, Walker!" answered Russell.

"More than half the Form, you mean! Young sweeps!" grunted Walker. "Well, they'll get it hot from Quelch. Asking for it, by Jove!"

The remnant of the Remove wondered whether James Walker was going to leave it at that. Apparently he was; for he sat down at Mr. Quelch's desk and opened his novel.

"You young rascals get on with it!" said Walker admonishingly. "Don't jaw, and don't idle and fool about! If there's so much as a whisper, I shall wade in with the ashplant, see?"

And James Walker settled down to read, and the detained juniors gave more or less attention to their tasks. Walker was generally an easy-going fellow, and not severely troubled by a strong sense of duty. So long as the juniors left him in peace to read his novel he was satisfied; and as he was undoubtedly a change for the better after Loder, the juniors were satisfied also.

So there was peace and quiet in the Remove-room, and fellows who talked instead of working, were careful to talk in low whispers that did not disturb that dutiful prefect.

Walker gave them no heed; not even when a low rumbling sound in the Form-room announced that Billy Bunter had gone to sleep.

It was a warm afternoon, and Bunter had done very well at dinner, and detention tasks had palled on him. He snored peacefully, while the other fellows whispered, or lounged at their desks, and Walker devoted himself to the breathless adventures of Bulldog Drummond.

But that atmosphere of contented peace was destined to be disturbed. The chug-chugging of a motor-bike was wafted from the distance on the summer breeze, unheeded; but a few minutes afterwards there was a tramp of foot-steps in the passage, the Form-room door was hurled open, and—to the amazement of the juniors and James Walker—Loder of the Sixth strode in.

Loder was not looking pleasant.

He had been bad-tempered before, till that arrival of the telegram from Lantham made him uncommonly genial. But his previous bad temper, compared

with his present bad temper, was as moonlight unto sunlight, as water unto wine. Loder, judging by his expression, seemed to be understudying a demon in a pantomime.

Walker stared at him.

"Hallo!" he said. "You back? The Lantham match can't be over, surely."

"No!" hissed Loder.

"Then what the thump—"

"I've had my leg pulled!" muttered Loder. "Some—some practical joker—some rotten, spoofing rascal—sent that telegram—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"It wasn't from Wingate!" Loder choked. "He fairly jumped when I told him—hardly believed me, till I showed him the telegram. Some rotten rascal pulling my leg—making a fool of me—"

"My hat!" said Walker. He suppressed a grin. "Who the dooce could have played a trick like that, Loder?"

"I don't know—but I'm going to find out," said Loder, between his teeth. "There's a crowd of fellows over at Lantham, and it might have been any one of them, I suppose."

"What a sell!" murmured Walker.

He looked as sympathetic as he could. But the glimmer in his eyes showed that he saw an entertaining side to the affair.

As a matter of fact, Walker had been greatly surprised when Loder told him that he was wired for to play at Lantham. So he was not so surprised as Loder to learn that the wire was a "spoof" by some unscrupulous practical joker.

Probably Loder guessed his thoughts, for he gave him a black scowl.

Loder was feeling sore and savage.

His rush across to Lantham on his motor-bike to play in a match where he was not wanted and not even thought of was likely to become a standing joke for some time.

He yearned to get hold of the practical joker, but he could not even guess who it might have been; the bully of the Sixth had too many enemies to be able to think of them all at once.

"Rotten, old chap!" said Walker. "But really, you know, you might have guessed that it was a spoof, come to think of it."

"How was I to guess, you ass?"

"Well, you weren't really likely to be wanted in a First Eleven match, were you, old fellow?" said Walker blandly.

Loder gritted his teeth.

Plenty of fellows would be putting it like that, and chortling over it! It was extremely humiliating and disagreeable for Loder.

"Well, I'll leave you in charge here, as you're not—hem—playing cricket, after all!" said Walker; and he tucked his novel under his arm.

Loder glanced inimically at the detained juniors. Most of them had heard what he said to Walker, and he was looking for a grinning face. But the juniors were careful not to grin. They knew what to expect from Gerald Loder if they did.

There were a good many of them who could have enlightened Loder as to the probable source of that "spoof" wire. As soon as they heard that it was a trick they thought of the Bounder at once.

That, however, they were not likely to tell Loder.

How Smithy had wangled it they did not know; but they had little doubt that he had wangled it somehow. It could scarcely have been a coincidence.

Loder's suspicious eyes did not detect any grinning among the juniors. But

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he noticed at once that a large proportion of the Form was absent. He snapped at Walker as the latter was going to the door.

"Have you been letting the fags out of detention, Walker? Where's the rest of them?"

Walker looked round.

"Oh, they're gone!" he said. "They seem to have cleared off when you left them, Loder. They were gone when I came in!"

"Where are they, then?"

"Haven't the foggiest."

"Look here, Walker, this won't do!" snapped Loder. "You were left in charge here, and it was up to you."

"I tell you they were gone when I came here," answered Walker. "I dare say they've cleared off to Lantham to see the First Eleven play. Didn't you see any of them there?"

And Walker left the Form-room, not greatly troubled about the truancy of the Removites. He did not grin till the door had closed after him, after which he grinned broadly. He met Price of the Fifth at the end of the corridor and stopped to tell Price about Loder's telegram, whereat Stephen Price chortled and went off to tell other fellows.

Loder, in the Form-room, scowled at the remaining Removites. All the juniors, excepting Billy Bunter, were giving keen attention to their tasks now; they were quite aware that Loder was yearning to "take it out" of somebody. Billy Bunter was still asleep, and his snore rumbled more or less musically through the room. Loder picked up a cane from the Form master's desk and approached Bunter.

Whack!

"Yaroooooh!"

Billy Bunter's snore was suddenly changed into a fearful yell.

Whack!

"Whooop!"

"Do you think you're in the dormitory, you fat young scoundrel?" demanded Loder, as Bunter blinked at him like a startled owl.

"Ow! Oh crikey! Beast!" gasped Bunter.

"What?"

"I—I—I mean—yaroooooh!" roared the hapless Owl of the Remove, as the cane came down across his fat shoulders again.

"Perhaps you'll keep awake now!" remarked Loder.

"Ow! Wow!" groaned Bunter.

There was no doubt that William George Bunter would keep awake after that. He was very wide-awake indeed.

Loder glared round, as if looking for another victim. But the rest of the juniors were working sedulously, as if they loved Latin prose, and even Loder had no excuse for handling the cane again. Loder sat down at Mr. Quelch's desk and tried to think out the problem of who could have sent that spoof telegram from Lantham, while the detained juniors worked wearily at Latin and longed for five o'clock.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The St. Jude's Match!

"W E bat!" said the Bounder.

Harry Wharton & Co. were almost surprised to find themselves on Little Side at St. Jude's. But there they were!

The keenest cricketer in the Remove Eleven could not help thinking a little of what was to follow that game; the reckoning that was to come after the feast.

The Bounder's plans had worked like a charm—so far. He had got away with it! The Remove men were at St. Jude's, the game was about to begin. In that peculiar contest between a rebellious junior and his Form master the junior had taken all the tricks—up to now. And it was plain that the reckless escapade added to the Bounder's enjoyment—he was in a mood of elation.

Few of the other fellows shared it. Trouble waited for them when they returned to their school, and though they admitted that the St. Jude's fixture was worth it, nevertheless it was a disagreeable prospect. Wharton, as head boy of the Form, could not feel his conscience quite at ease. Breaking detention was a serious matter. But he felt that he had had no choice about backing up the Bounder.

Anyhow, there they were, and they tried to think only of cricket and dismiss less pleasant matters from their minds. That was not very difficult once the game had started.

Vernon-Smith opened the innings, with Tom Redwing at the other end. He knew as well as the rest that he ought to have opened with Wharton; but it was Smithy's way to give his chum all the limelight he could—rather to Tom's discomfort.

Lunn, the junior captain of St. Jude's, led his men into the field. And that the Bounder was at the top of his form was soon shown, as he proceeded to knock the bowling all over the field.

Harry Wharton & Co. stood before the pavilion, looking on, with the little crowd of Greyfriars men.

A dozen Removites were present, as well as the cricketers, though some of them were feeling dubious about their wisdom in following the team on this occasion. Still, Bolsover major remarked that the more fellows there were in the soup the easier the beaks would have to go with them; and there was something in that. It was extremely unlikely that a score of floggings would be administered; it would be rather a record for Greyfriars if it happened. And the followers of the team were at least given a good game to watch. Vernon-Smith was always a good man with the bat, and sometimes brilliant; but he had never been so brilliant as now. The fact that he was the leader in a wholesale and reckless rebellion against authority was like wine to the Bounder. He was enjoying every moment to the full.

"Smithy's good!" said Bob Cherry gleefully. "That's another four! My hat! Smithy can handle the willow when he likes!"

"Terrific!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Blessed if I thought it would come off, but here we are!" said Harry Wharton. "Smithy's an ass, but he has a lot of luck. So long as we play out the match I shan't grouse."

"Well, we're all right now!" said Bob. "Nobody's likely to come after us from Greyfriars."

That thought had haunted Wharton's mind.

But it was, after all, improbable. The prefect who had taken Loder's place in the Remove-room, or Loder if he had returned from Lantham, would not know where the truant Form had gone. More likely than not they would suppose that the juniors had cleared off to Lantham to see the First Eleven play. And as Quelch was away for the afternoon he was safe—or so it appeared, at least. Where Quelch had gone that afternoon nobody knew or cared, and certainly



Mr. Quelch strode on to the cricket field and raised a hand commandingly. "Stop!" he ordered. "Vernon-Smith! Stop this game at once! How dare you? You are under detention—and I find you here! Cease this game immediately, and return to your school!"

nobody was likely to guess that he was, in those very moments, sitting in the study of the headmaster of St. Jude's, enjoying a deep discussion of "The Public School—Present and Future."

"Safe as houses!" said Frank Nugent. "It was a rotten trick Smithy played on Loder, but it worked all right. Poor old Loder!"

"There goes Smithy again!"

"Good old Bouncer!"

"Well hit, Smithy!"

"St. Jude's are going to have some leather-hunting this afternoon," grinned Bob Cherry. "We're beginning well, old beans."

"Wait till Redwing gets the bowling," said Ogilvy. "Smithy shouldn't have started with Reddy."

"Smithy knows that!" grunted Johnny Bull.

Redwing, however, lived through an over, and captured a couple of runs; and then the Bouncer had the bowling again. He proceeded to make hay of it. A single brought Tom to the batting end, and then he found the St. Jude's bowling too good for him.

"How's that?"

"Out!"

"Man in, Wharton!" said Bob.

Harry Wharton took Redwing's place at the wickets. Then the Greyfriars fellows settled down to watch a good innings. Wharton was as good as the Bouncer in his most brilliant moments; and Smithy was at his very best. The partnership looked likely to last long.

"Bravo!"

"Good man!"

"Hurrah!"

"Runs are cheap to-day," said Bob Cherry. "Dash it all, you men, it was worth while risking it for this, what?"

"Hear, hear!"

"The worth whilefulness was terrific,"

said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "if there is no esteemed and execrable interruption."

"Oh, we're as right as rain!" said Bob cheerfully. "If anybody was coming after us from Greyfriars, we'd have seen him by this time."

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh nodded, but his dusky face was thoughtful. The Nabob of Bhanipur, like many of the fellows, wondered dubiously whether that game would be played out to the end. So far as they could see, all was "safe as houses"—but—there was a "but," and it seemed to many of the fellows a big "but." Some of the fellows simply could not believe that such a reckless escapade could be carried out successfully to the finish.

And if authority intervened—and the game was interrupted—what then? That was an awful possibility.

"If Quelch happened to come back —" murmured Peter Todd.

"Oh, rot!" said Bob. "Quelch is away for the afternoon. It would be rotten luck if he got back and missed us."

"The old bean would jolly soon find out where we were—he'd know at once we were playing cricket," said Peter. "And he would come after us as fast as petrol could shift him!"

"Think he'd interrupt a cricket match, even if he did?" asked Bob. "Fathead!"

"Well, I—I suppose he would!" admitted Bob. "Beaks don't look at these things as we do, I suppose."

"No supposing about it," said Squiff.

"If Quelch spotted us playing cricket, when we ought to be in detention, he would wade in and walk us off the field—if we were playing in a Test match! We'd better hope that Quelch bears nothing about it till it's all over."

"My hat! What a scene!" said

Ogilvy, with a deep breath. "What on earth would the St. Jude's men think?"

Johnny Bull gave a snort.

"They would think we're a crowd of silly, piffing duffers—just what we are!" he answered. "They'd think that if we let our skipper lead us into a scrape like that, the sooner we lynched our skipper the better."

"If this game is interrupted by the beaks, Smithy will be jolly well lynched," said Peter Todd. "We're backing him up, all along the line—and facing the music afterwards—but if Smithy doesn't get away with it after all, Smithy can look out for squalls. It's up to Smithy!"

"Yes, rather!" said Tom Brown. "Better have scratched than be walked off the field, with the game unfinished, by a beak! Precious lot of silly idiots we should look."

"Oh, chuck it!" said Bob Cherry uncomfortably. "You're making my jolly old flesh creep! They're knocking up the runs all right! Think of cricket—and give Quelch a rest!"

"Let's hope that Quelch will give us a rest!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, bless Quelch! Look at Wharton!—that's four!"

"Bravo!"

The innings went on in great style, runs piling up; and the Greyfriars fellows tried to dismiss Quelch and painful possibilities from their minds.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There goes Smithy!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, at last.

The Bouncer had knocked up forty off his own bat, when a catch in the field put him out. Johnny Bull went to take his place, and the Bouncer joined the little crowd at the pavilion.

Wharton was well set, and looked like staying in. Herbert Vernon-Smith stood watching, when he felt a tap on his arm, and looked round at Bolsover major. Bolsover's face was startled and scared; and the Bounder stared at him in irritated surprise.

"What the thump—"

"Quelch!" whispered Bolsover major.

The Bounder started.

"What? Where?"

"Here!"

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Carry On!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH felt for a moment as if his heart had missed a beat. He stared blankly at Bolsover major. Then his swift glance swept round. For that moment he dreaded to see the tall, angular figure and severe face of his Form master, bearing down on him. But only the cricketers, and the crowd of fellows that had gathered round the ground, were to be seen. The Bounder caught his breath, and gave Bolsover major a fierce look.

"You fool!" he muttered. "What do you mean?"

"He's here!" breathed Bolsover.

"You've seen him?"

"Yes!"

"If you're pulling my leg—"

"Don't be a fool! I'm giving you the tip!" muttered Bolsover. "I haven't told anybody else yet—"

"Quiet!" breathed the Bounder.

He moved away with Bolsover major out of hearing of the other fellows. His heart was throbbing. Quelch, so far as he had known, was safe for the afternoon; he had calculated on that. But the Bounder was still cool.

"Now cough it up," he muttered. "Quick! If you've seen him, where is he? How the thump can he be here?"

"Goodness knows, but I've seen him. I fancy he was before us," answered Bolsover. "I was taking a stroll round, talking to some St. Jude's men, when I spotted him—"

"Where?" hissed the Bounder.

"In a study—the headmaster's study,

I think. The window was open, and I heard his voice—and looked! There he was—jawing away nineteen to the dozen to a St. Jude's beak."

"Oh gad! Did he see you?"

"No jolly fear! He wasn't looking towards the window—and you can bet I ducked after I spotted him!" grinned Bolsover major. "He can't know we're here—he wouldn't be sitting there jawing if he knew!"

The Bounder nodded.

That much was clear; though what could have brought the Remove master of Greyfriars to St. Jude's that afternoon, of all afternoons, was a mystery.

"This was his jolly old appointment," muttered Bolsover. "He told us he would be away for the afternoon; and he must have been coming over to see the St. Jude's beak. He doesn't know we're here."

"Of course, he knew we had a cricket match on, but he didn't know it was at St. Jude's. What rotten, putrid luck!" muttered the Bounder, between his teeth. "Lucky he never saw you. But—"

The Bounder clenched his hands.

He stared away across the playing-field towards the distant House.

At the distance he could not pick out the headmaster's window, but he remembered that it overlooked the cricket ground.

The two gentlemen in Dr. Wyatt's study could hardly fail to be aware that a cricket match was going on. Certainly, it was not likely to occur to Mr. Quelch that his Form, whom he supposed to be under detention at Greyfriars, were playing cricket within sight of him.

But if he looked out of the window—if he fixed his eyes on the cricket ground—if that happened, the Bounder knew that Quelch would know at once.

Quelch's eyes were remarkably keen, and it was certain that he would recognise the Removees. For nearly an hour, already, they had been playing cricket within sight of the room where Henry Samuel Quelch sat!

"What putrid luck!" repeated the Bounder bitterly.

It seemed to Smithy that this was an undeserved blow from fate. All had

gone so well, so far; his luck, which seldom failed him, had stood his friend once more. Now it had failed—or had it failed? The Bounder was not the man to give in while there was a shot in the locker.

"I thought I'd give you the tip," said Bolsover major. "The sooner we clear off the better now. Quelch hasn't spotted us yet; but, of course, he's bound to spot us before the game's over. We don't want a row with our beak—here!"

"Clear off as soon as you like!" answered Smithy, with a nod.

"But you—"

"I'm here to play cricket."

"Oh crumbs!" Now you know Quelch's here—"

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders. His mind was made up. He was going to carry on, and hope for the best. Bolsover major stared at him.

"You're sticking to it?" he asked.

"Of course."

"Phew! Quelch is simply bound to spot you sooner or later—the minute he squints this way—"

"I'm chancing that. But you may as well clear off—go while the going's good! Keep your mouth shut!"

"But—the other chaps—"

"Keep your mouth shut, I tell you," muttered the Bounder fiercely. "If this gets round, the game's as good as chucked away! Think the men will put up a good game when they know that Quelch's eye may fall on them at any minute?"

"Not likely," grinned Bolsover major. "They haven't all got your nerve, Smithy—not to mention your dashed impudence! I fancy there would be a fine assortment of duck's eggs."

"Exactly! Keep it dark, then."

"Oh, all right! Wish you luck, old bean; though you haven't an earthly. If you've got any sense you'll out the game and clear before Quelch gets on your track."

"I can see myself doing it," said the Bounder disdainfully. His eyes gleamed.

"By gad! If he butts into the game I'd run him off the field by his neck."

"I don't quite see any Remove man running Quelch off the field by his neck!" chuckled Bolsover. "Well, if you're sticking it out, Smithy, I'm sticking it out, too—and chance Quelch."

The Bounder nodded, and walked back to the pavilion.

The Bounder knitted his brows as he watched the cricket. Cool as he was, reckless as he was, it made his heart beat unpleasantly to think of Mr. Quelch sitting near an open study window that overlooked the game. If the gimlet eyes once turned in that direction—

Smithy hoped that they would not. But he knew that he was taking the most desperate of chances.

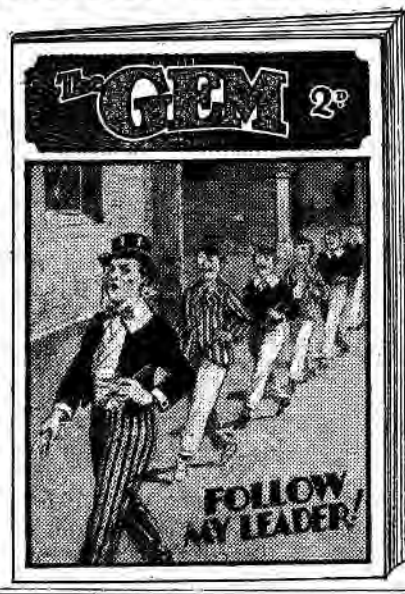
He glanced round at the waiting batsmen. They were keenly watching Wharton and Johnny Bull at the wickets, and if they had not forgotten Quelch, at least that obnoxious gentleman had been relegated to the backs of their minds. He wondered what would be the effect on them if they learned what Bolsover major had discovered.

Probably they would be willing to take the chance with him and back him up—hoping that Quelch would remain too deep in "jaw" to give any attention to what was going on almost under his nose.

After having backed him up so far, they could hardly let him down. But what sort of cricket they would play, in such circumstances, was quite another matter. Duck's eggs would be cheap—there was little doubt about that. Few Remove men had the iron nerve of the Bounder.

But they did not know, and were not

LOOK FOR THIS COVER!



JUST take a look at this small reproduction of this week's cover of the GEM. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, member for "Piccadilly" in the St. Jim's "Parliament" certainly seems to have some followers! But perhaps he wouldn't be so pleased if he had eyes in the back of his head! Get a copy of the GEM and read "Prime Minister of St. Jim's!"

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going to know, if Vernon-Smith could help it. He was going to finish that game, if he could, and win it if he could—and the Bounder had an almost superstitious belief in his luck. His luck would see him through yet.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, Wharton's out!"

Squiff went to take Wharton's place. Wharton had put up a good innings, and his face was ruddy and very cheerful as he joined the Greyfriars group at the pavilion. He had succeeded at last in forgetting Henry Samuel Queleh and disagreeable possibilities. And he had taken fifty runs.

"Good man!" said Smithy, with a cordial grin at Wharton. "That's the stuff to give 'em, old bean!"

Wharton nodded, with a smile, a trifle surprised by the Bounder's cordiality. As skipper, Smithy had to be pleased with Wharton's fifty, but as batsman he was rather likely to compare it with his own forty and find dissatisfaction in the comparison.

"We may not have to bat a second time," added Smithy. "If we keep on like this we may make them follow their innings—what?"

"Looks like it," agreed Wharton.

The Bounder watched the batsmen tensely. Squiff and Johnny Bull were putting on the runs. The Bounder was keen on a win—keener on a rapid win. With all his nerve he was wildly anxious to get through. The mere thought of the game being interrupted, of the Remove cricketers being ordered off the field with the match unfinished by an angry Form master gave him a chill. He wanted fast play and piles of runs. If Greyfriars did not have to bat a second time they would get through all the sooner—and every minute counted, in the peculiar circumstances. Even then he had to hope that the gimlet eyes in Dr. Wyatt's study would not turn in that direction during the first and second innings of St. Jude's. It was a lot to hope for. The Bounder's brows were knitted, and his eyes gleamed under them as he watched the game.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Sword of Damocles!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! There goes Johnny!"

"Fool!" muttered the Bounder.

Johnny Bull went down to a ball that spread-eagled his wicket. The Bounder gave a snarl.

Harry Wharton glanced at him rather grimly.

"That was a good ball, Smithy," he said quietly. "A man can't stay in for ever."

Vernon-Smith grunted angrily.

"The dummy! Was he asleep when that ball came down?" he said bitterly. "We want runs—not duck's eggs!"

"Bull has put up a dozen runs, Smithy."

"What's the good of that?" snarled the Bounder. "We want runs—not wickets chucked away!"

The strain was telling on Smithy's nerves and temper. If there was a chance of getting through with that match it was by saving an innings—and even so the chance was remote, and the Bounder knew it. He was hungry for runs, as it were, and in a mood to rag any of his men without mercy.

"My esteemed Smithy," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, who was next man in, "the runfulness is already terrific."

"Oh, get on!" snapped the Bounder. "And for goodness' sake don't throw your wicket away like that clumsy ass!"

"The clumsiness of the esteemed Johnny is not preposterous," said the Nabob of Bhanipur warmly.

"Are you here to jaw, or to play cricket?" snapped Vernon-Smith.

"My esteemed and idiotic Smithy—" "Shut up, and get moving!"

The Nabob of Bhanipur gave Smithy a rather fixed look, but he went out to his wicket without further rejoinder. Johnny Bull had put on a dozen runs, and it was good bowling that had taken his wicket; but the Bounder was in no mood to be just.

He scowled at Johnny as that sturdy youth came back to the pavilion, receiving a grim stare in response.

"Were you asleep when that ball came down?" jeered the Bounder.

"No," grunted Johnny Bull, "I wasn't!"

"You hadn't got your eyes shut?"

"No," said Johnny, in a voice that was like the growl of the Great Huge Bear, "I hadn't!"

"Looked as if you had!"

"You cheeky ass—"

"Oh, shut up!"

Johnny Bull drew a deep, deep breath. But he restrained his feelings, and stalked away without answering.

A USEFUL LEATHER POCKET WALLET

goes to E. H. Owen, of 12, Woodbines Avenue, Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey, who sent in the following Greyfriars limerick.

Hoskins, the Shell musician,
Thought out a great composi-
He fancied that it [tion].
Would prove a big hit.
But—alas!—it was only a vision.

Try your hand at writing these Greyfriars limericks, boys! It's a fascinating pastime and the prizes offered for winning efforts are well worth having.

The other fellows eyed the Bounder curiously.

Wharton was frowning. He could see that there was something amiss with the Bounder, though he could not guess what it was. The restless glitter in Smithy's eyes, the suppressed excitement in his face, were not wholly accounted for by his keenness on the game—though he was keen enough.

Wharton noticed, too, that every few minutes the Bounder's eyes turned from the pitch and sought the windows of the distant House—and several times he followed Smithy's glance in wonder. Other fellows noticed it, too, and wondered. Bolsover major, leaning on the pavilion, with his hands in his pockets, noticed it, and grinned. He wondered whether the Bounder's nerve would hold out. Smithy was equal to the strain; but he was showing signs of it.

"What's the row, Smithy?" Tom Redwing spoke quietly in his chum's ear. "What's the trouble, old bean?"

Smithy gave him a grim stare.

"We've got to get through!" he snapped.

"Well, we're getting through—it looks as if we mayn't have to bat a second time, at this rate. What more do you want?"

Grunt, from the Bounder.

"Not likely now that anybody will come along from Greyfriars and butt in!" added Tom. "That would have

happened already, if it was going to happen at all, Smithy!"

Smithy gave another grunt. He was not afraid of anyone coming along from Greyfriars to butt in. That danger was over. What he was afraid of was a pair of gimlet eyes in a study within sight of the cricket-field, which might at any moment discover what was going on. But he did not tell Tom Redwing that.

"You've got something on your mind, old fellow!" said Tom, uneasily.

"Think so?" scoffed the Bounder.

"I don't see—"

"Oh, rot!"

Tom Redwing said no more. It was plain to him that something apart from the game was troubling the captain of the Remove, but Smithy evidently did not intend to say what it was.

Again the Bounder's glance sought the windows of the House, sharply, suspiciously, savagely. He looked back as there was a shout from the St. Jude's men round the field.

"How's that?"

"Out!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith gritted his teeth. Sampson Quincy Ifley Field was down and out, and Peter Todd was preparing to take his place.

"My hat!" said the Bounder savagely. "I've brought a precious crew of rabbits over here for this match! I might as well have brought Bunter!"

"What utter rot!" said Harry Wharton sharply. "What the dickens is the matter with you, Smithy? Squiff's put on twenty—"

"Oh, don't jaw!"

Wharton compressed his lips hard.

"Thinking of the flogging to come, Smithy?" asked Peter.

"Don't be a silly idiot, if you can help it!" snarled Smithy. "Keep your breath for making runs—if you know how to make any! I suppose you're going to hand out a duck's egg!"

"Possibly!" said Toddy, coolly. "But with a good-tempered, smiling, encouraging sort of skipper like you, Smithy, a man's bound to do his level best! Your good-tempered face bucks a man no end!"

"Get a move on, you fool!" snapped the Bounder, as some of the fellows laughed.

"I won't punch your face here, Smithy!" said Peter thoughtfully. "I'll punch it later in the Remove passage!"

And Peter passed Squiff on his way to the wickets. Vernon-Smith scowled at Squiff, rather to the Australian junior's surprise.

"Hallo, what's biting you, Smithy?" he asked.

"Call yourself a batsman?" snarled the Bounder.

"No! I call myself a bowler," answered Squiff calmly. "But I can bat a little bit! I don't call twenty runs bad!"

"I call it rotten!"

"Well, you can call it what you like, and be blown to you!" said Squiff, and he turned his back on his disgruntled skipper.

"Dash it all, Smithy—" said Bob Cherry.

"Don't jaw—get ready to follow the next silly ass who chucks his wicket away!" growled the Bounder.

"Oh, rats!" said Bob.

The Bounder stared savagely at the batsmen. Peter Todd and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh were making the running in good style. The runs were coming slowly, but they were coming. With hours of play ahead, it was not

much use counting minutes, but the Bounder was counting the minutes. He gritted his teeth when Peter Todd went down, after adding ten to the score.

"Fumbling, fooling dummy!" he growled. "For the love of Mike, put up a better show than that, Cherry!"

"I'll try!" said Bob. "But Toddy isn't a fumbling, fooling dummy, Smithy, and you know it as well as I do!"

"Don't jaw, for goodness' sake!" "Bow-wow!" said Bob cheerily, and he walked out with his bat.

Toddy came back, greeted by the Bounder with a black scowl which seemed to be all the reward he had for his batsmen.

"I'll bring Bunter next time!" snapped the Bounder.

"Do!" said Toddy.

"You fumbling ass!"

"Same to you, old bean, and many of them!" said Peter affably.

The Bounder was making no effort to control or conceal his savage temper. The Remove cricketers looked at him, and looked at one another.

So far as the cricket went, the Remove skipper had nothing to grouse about; the score was unusually good. And Smithy was not the fellow to be thinking about the consequences of his rebellious escapade. So what was the matter with him was rather a mystery to the other fellows. But it was only too obvious that something was the matter.

The sword of Damocles was suspended over Smithy—in the shape of a pair of gimlet eyes in Dr. Wyatt's study. And under the strain, his temper grew more and more savage, and his brow blacker and blacker.

"There goes Bob!" said Nugent at last.

"The dummy!" growled the Bounder. Nobody replied to that. The cricketers were getting used to the Bounder's savage comments by this time. Mark Linley went on in Bob's place, and Bob Cherry, coming back, was received with the usual scowl by his skipper—to which he replied with a cheery grin.

"Smithy's got 'em!" he murmured to Wharton.

"Looks like it!" said Harry dryly.

"What's up with him?"

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

Smithy, unheeding the rather expressive looks of the Remove cricketers, watched the finish of the innings with a black brow—his eyes wandering every now and then towards the House. Mark Linley was followed by Tom Brown, and Ogilvy was last man in. With a score of 188 for the innings, the skipper might have been expected to smile, but the captain of the Remove seemed to be imitating that ancient king who never smiled again.

But the end of the innings was a relief to Smithy, in a way. There was a good chance, at least, that Greyfriars might not have to bat again, and so far there had been no sign from Quelch. The Bounder was still hoping for the best when he led his men into the field for the St. Jude's first innings. The ball was given to Hurrea Jamset Ram Singh, the champion bowler of the Greyfriars Remove.

"Put your beef into it, Inky!" said the Bounder. "And a little mustard, too!"

"The beef-fulness will be terrific," and the esteemed mustard preposterous!" assured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

The dusky junior went on to bowl.

and the Bounder, watchful for chances in the field, had to give up glancing towards the House at last. He tried to dismiss Quelch from his mind, though without success. But the sword of Damocles was still suspended, and the Bounder was still hoping to pull through.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Mr. Quelch Butts In!

HENRY SAMUEL QUELCH jumped.

A grave and elderly Form master was not much given to jumping. But now Mr. Quelch jumped—almost like a kangaroo.

Standing at the open window of Dr. Wyatt's study at St. Jude's, gazing out into the bright June sunshine, Mr. Quelch stared with gimlet eyes that looked like popping out of his head in his amazement.

The Remove master had been enjoying that discussion with the headmaster of St. Jude's. They had thrashed out the subject of "The Public School—Present and Future," in almost all its bearings. On most points they agreed, but there was just difference enough in their opinions to give zest to the discussion. Time flew. Two happy old gentlemen talked and talked, hardly noticing the passage of time. Both disliked the interruption when a St. Jude's master came in to speak to the Head for a few minutes.

However, Mr. Quelch politely rose and walked to the window, and stood looking out while Dr. Wyatt disposed of his caller. For two or three minutes Mr. Quelch looked out, with a cheerful, good-tempered face into the bright sunshine, and then his gaze turned on the cricket ground in the distance.

Mr. Quelch had been vaguely aware that cricket was going on—a shout or two had reached him, but he had given it no thought.

Now he turned a benevolent eye on the cricket ground, watching the white-clad figures on the sunny greensward—and the next moment his eye ceased to be benevolent, and he jumped.

He gazed!

The distance was considerable, but Mr. Quelch had keen eyesight. Keen as his gimlet eyes were, he fancied for a moment or two that they must be deceiving him. For how could fellows of his Form, detained at Greyfriars, possibly be playing cricket at St. Jude's? It seemed impossible—as, indeed, it ought to have been.

After that convulsive jump, Henry Samuel Quelch stood still, as if rooted to the floor, gazing.

It was no deception—no optical delusion! They were Removites of Greyfriars who were playing cricket—he did not know the men at the wickets, who were evidently St. Jude's fellows; but he knew the men in the field—he picked out Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, Herbert Vernon-Smith, and the rest, one after another. Well he knew the dusky-skinned junior who was bowling. Mr. Quelch's face, previously good-tempered and amiable, set harder and harder, till it seemed moulded in iron—his gaze more and more resembled that of the fabled basilisk of ancient times.

Even the Bounder might have felt daunted had he seen the face that looked from the window.

Mr. Quelch's lips set in a hard line. He had left his Form under detention at Greyfriars. Now they were at St. Jude's—playing cricket!

This, then, was the match that had

had to be scratched because of the detention order—unscratched, after all.

His Form, as soon as his back was turned, had broken detention—apparently regardless of the prefect he had left in charge of them. Not only the cricketers—he could see nearly a dozen other Remove men grouped before the pavilion, looking on. Nearly all the Form, apparently—out of bounds, in defiance of authority!

He realised that they had been there a long time; the cricket match of which he had been vaguely conscious was being played by his own boys—and he had never dreamed of it!

They did not, of course, know that he was there—it was by a coincidence they could not have foreseen, that he was in the headmaster's study at St. Jude's that afternoon. Had he chanced to look out of the window before—

He was looking out now!

He was glad, after all, of that interruption which had caused him to walk to the window and look out. But for that, he might have gone on talking—he would have gone on talking—and the rebellious young rascals might have finished their game and left, leaving him in ignorance of what had happened fairly under his nose! He set his teeth hard at the thought. He did not grit his teeth—they were an expensive set. But he looked like gritting them.

"Upon my word!" breathed Mr. Quelch.

A door closed behind him. The caller was gone. Dr. Wyatt's voice fell on his ears. Mr. Quelch turned from the window.

The change in the expression of his face rather surprised the St. Jude's headmaster. Mr. Quelch controlled his wrath; but he could not control the bitter set of his lips, the glint in his eyes.

Not for a moment did he think of allowing the rebellious young rascals to "get away" with this! His detained Form had walked out of detention—and they had to be shepherded back into detention without the loss of a moment. It was an awkward situation. He had to break off that pleasant and enjoyable discussion, "The Public School—Present and Future," had to be left to take care of itself.

He had to get away and round up his mutinous Form. Not for worlds, not for whole universes, would Henry Samuel Quelch have allowed the young rebels to go on playing cricket in defiance of his authority. He trembled with anger at the thought.

"You were saying—" Dr. Wyatt's pleasant, chatty voice ran on.

"You were saying, when we were interrupted, that a judicious firmness will never fail to keep order in the most unruly Form. There are masters who are ragged—there are masters who are disregarded, and, indeed, disobeyed—but you have never experienced anything of that kind as master of the Lower Fourth at Greyfriars. I agree with you that the discipline of a Form largely depends on the character of the Form master—I fully agree, that disrespect or disobedience in a Form must be attributed as a fault to the Form master concerned—"

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "Ah! Quite! But—"

That was what Mr. Quelch had been saying, just before he spotted his Form on the St. Jude's cricket ground!

He rather wished that he had been saying something else!

"I fully agree," said the St. Jude's chief beak, "that in case of any such trouble in a Form, the headmaster should lay the blame less on the boys



"Serag the cheeky ass!" hissed the surging mob of juniors, as Vernon-Smith lounged carelessly down the Remove staircase in the midst of the Famous Five and Redwing. With a very thoughtful face, the Bounder made his way to Masters' Studies and tapped at Mr. Quelch's door.

than on the Form master—as you were saying—"

"Oh! Ah! But—there may be exceptional circumstances—" stammered Mr. Quelch, his cheeks very pink. "The—the fact is—I—I must ask you to excuse me for a few minutes—I have just seen some of my boys who should now be in detention—I must speak to them and send them back to the school."

"Dear me!" said Dr. Wyatt. "Certainly, Mr. Quelch."

"A—a few minutes, sir—"

"Oh, quite!"

Mr. Quelch escaped from the study. He knew—knew in the very marrow of his bones—that the St. Jude's headmaster smiled after the door had closed on him.

Mr. Quelch himself did not feel like smiling.

He hurried out of the House and strode down to the cricket ground.

The look on his face made a good many St. Jude's fellows glance at him curiously as he passed them. Mr. Quelch did not heed them—did not even see them. His glinting eyes were fixed on the white figures dotting the green. He was too dignified a gentleman to run; but he strode along at a great rate. He burst suddenly on the view of the Remove fellows at the pavilion, and there was a general gasp.

"Quelch!"

"Great Scott! Quelch!"

"Oh crumbs!"

A moment more and Mr. Quelch was striding on the cricket field. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had just finished an over. He had taken two wickets. The field was about to change over when Mr. Quelch happened.

"Stop!"

Every eye turned on Mr. Quelch.

The St. Jude's men stared at him in wonder. The Greyfriars fellows stared

at him in horror. A grisly ghost stalking on the cricket field could not have horrified them more.

Herbert Vernon-Smith set his teeth. The sword of Damocles had come down—at last! The Bounder stood rooted to the ground, staring at his Form master. His eyes blazed with rage.

"Vernon-Smith, stop this at once," Mr. Quelch's voice was not loud, but it reached all ears. "How dare you? You are under detention—and I find you here! Cease this game immediately and return to your school!"

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Ordered Off!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. stood quite still, their eyes fixed on Mr. Quelch.

Except for the Bounder, the whole team had forgotten Quelch by this time. His sudden appearance on the cricket field was utterly unexpected. They had not known where he was that afternoon, never dreaming that he was at St. Jude's—but now they knew! Now they knew only too well. Mr. Quelch's hand was raised commandingly, ordering them off the field. He was calm—but with a deadly calmness.

"Vernon-Smith!"

The Bounder did not answer, save with a savage stare.

"You are the ring-leader in this, Vernon-Smith," rapped Mr. Quelch. "I have no doubt of that! And you, Wharton, the head boy of my Form, have given your support to this act of fragrant disobedience and rebellion."

Wharton did not speak.

"I am surprised at this in you, Wharton, though I am surprised at nothing in Vernon-Smith! You will leave this field, and this school, immediately and return to Greyfriars."

The Bounder was breathing hard.

"Will you let us finish the match, sir?" he asked.

"Certainly I will allow nothing of the kind, Vernon-Smith!" exclaimed the Remove master. "How dare you ask such a thing?"

The Bounder looked round at the rest. The expression on Smithy's face was desperate. He muttered in Wharton's ear:

"We'll collar the old fool and run him off—"

"You silly ass!" was Wharton's answer.

The Bounder snarled.

"Will you men back me up, and—"

"Oh, don't be a goat!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Shut up, Smithy, you dummy!"

"You've done it now, you silly ass! Now shut up!"

The Bounder gritted his teeth.

He was in an utterly desperate mood; but the most reckless fellow in the Remove was hardly likely to think of backing him up to the extent of collaring Mr. Quelch and running him off the cricket field. Probably, even the Bounder would have thought twice, even if the other fellows had been reckless enough to back him to that extent.

"Go!" rapped Mr. Quelch. "Return to Greyfriars instantly and remain in the Form-room till I come. Go!"

The St. Jude's men stared on blankly. The Greyfriars cricketers were crimson with discomfort and humiliation.

They were angry with their Form master; angry with everybody and everything; but their anger was deepest with the Bounder. The captain of the Remove had landed them in this—they had backed him up, and this was the outcome. Slowly, dismally, they moved off the field.

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"What's the row? What the dickens—" Lunn, the St. Jude's junior captain, cut across to the Bounder. "What's this game, Vernon-Smith? Who—"

"That old fool's our Form master!" snarled the Bounder. "We can't finish the game."

"Oh, my hat! But—but what—" "We're here without leave, Lunn," said Harry Wharton, his face burning. "We're awfully sorry—"

"The sorrowfulness is terrific!" groaned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Our esteemed and absurd Form master left us in detention—"

"And we cut—" said Bob Cherry. "Well, my hat!" said Lunn.

"If these fellows would back me up, I'd collar the old ass and sling him off the field!" hissed the Bounder. "But they—"

Lunn stared at him. "You wouldn't play cricket here after pitching your Form master off the field, Vernon-Smith!" he said dryly. "Well, this is a go! My hat!"

The wretched Removites marched off the field, with crimson faces.

Mr. Quelch followed them, shepherd-ing them off. The St. Jude's men were in a buzz of amazement and excitement; some of them were grinning. Some of them made sarcastic comments that reached the ears of the Greyfriars juniors.

"For goodness' sake, let's get out of this!" breathed Bob Cherry. "We were silly asses to come! Let's get out of it!" "They'll wash out this fixture after this!" growled Johnny Bull. "Not that I'd care ever to show my face here again."

"That fool Smithy—" "That idiot Smithy—" "Quelch was here all the time, it seems—"

"Asking for it!" "Precious set of silly idiots we look! Look at those blighters over there laughing!"

"Well, it's enough to make a cat laugh, isn't it? That idiot Smithy—" "Lose no time!" came Mr. Quelch's grinding voice.

The hapless Removites lost no time. They were only too anxious to get out of sight and hide their blushes.

Staring eyes and grinning faces did not diminish their discomfort. The Bounder's face was black with rage. Every other fellow was keenly conscious of humiliation. Some of them looked as if they would have been glad for the earth to open and swallow them up.

The motor-bus was parked near at hand, waiting to convey the team back to Greyfriars. It was wanted sooner than anticipated. Mr. Quelch, with a grim face, followed the hapless juniors to the vehicle. A score of dismal Removites packed themselves in.

Mr. Quelch stood and watched the motor-bus depart. Then, still grim, he walked back to St. Jude's—while the rebels of the Remove rolled on their weary way home.

There was grim silence in the motor-bus for a time, but all eyes were fixed on the Bounder.

Vernon-Smith sat with a savage face. He could not fail to be aware of the feelings of his team, but his thoughts were occupied with his own disappointment and defeat. The luck upon which he had counted had let him down at last—with a crash!

Better to have remained in detention—better to have wired scratching the match—better to have cut it short and cleared when Bolsover major warned

him—better anything than what had happened.

That scene on the St. Jude's ground was not likely to be forgotten soon in the Remove. At St. Jude's the fellows would laugh, or sneer, or shrug their shoulders, as the spirit moved them—in the Greyfriars Remove there would be gnashing of teeth.

Johnny Bull broke the silence. "Well, you've done it now, Vernon-Smith," he said.

"The donefulness is terrific!" The Bounder looked up. "Shut up!" he snarled. "I don't want any jaw now."

"Whether you want it or not, you'll get it," said Johnny Bull, "you cheeky, pig-headed ass! Do you fancy for one minute that you're going to keep on as captain of the Remove after landing us like this?"

"We're fed-up with you, Smithy," said Squiff—"fed right up to the back teeth, if you want to know!"

The Bounder stared round at a crowd of hostile faces. He shrugged his shoulders, and relapsed into sullen silence. But the other fellows were not silent, and during that dismal run home to Greyfriars, almost every voice in the crowded bus was raised to tell the captain of the Remove what the Remove thought of him. By the time Greyfriars was reached, Herbert Vernon-Smith could not possibly have been left in any doubt on that subject.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Right Thing!

"HAVE him out!" "Rag him!" "Scrag him!" It was a roar of voices in the Remove passage.

Herbert Vernon-Smith stood in Study No. 4, his hands in his pockets, and a bitter and sarcastic grin on his face.

He was alone there. Most, if not all, of the Remove were crowded in the passage, and their voices came loudly to the Bounder's ears.

If ever a fellow had been unpopular, the Bounder of Greyfriars was unpopular now. And the Bounder, who was no fool, knew that he deserved it. From one reckless act to another he had gone on, till he had landed his hapless followers in disaster. He could not complain of the backing he had received—all the fellows had backed him up loyally and well. The fault was his—and his alone, and he knew it.

He listened to the roar in the Remove passage.

The Famous Five, and two or three other fellows—Redwing and Mauleverer and one or two others—were grouped before his study door. They were standing in the way of the rest of the Form. Harry Wharton, his ousted rival, was taking the lead in his defence—still backing up the Bounder. But nearly all the Remove wanted to get hold of Vernon-Smith, and from their shouts it sounded as if they were bent rather on lynching than ragging him.

It was some hours since the dismal return from St. Jude's. Mr. Quelch had come back—pale with concentrated wrath. Sentence had been promulgated. Floggings had been expected—but the sentence had not taken that form. It was worse than that. A notice on the board in Mr. Quelch's hand, announced that the Remove were gated for all holidays in the summer term.

That put the lid on! Even the disastrous fizzle at St. Jude's

was almost forgotten. Gating for the summer term meant the washing out of all cricket fixtures. Henry Samuel Quelch had come down heavy and hard.

"Have him out!" yelled Squiff. "Look here, you men! Clear off before you get damaged! We're going to scrag him!" "Chuck it!" The Bounder heard Harry Wharton's quiet voice. "Smithy's made a ghastly muck of things—I know that. But the Form elected him skipper, and the Form will have to stand it. Chuck it!"

"The chuckfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed and idiotic friends!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The ragfulness of the absurd Smithy will not soften the stony heart of the respectable Quelch."

"Have him out!" roared Bolsover major. "The rotter—skulking in a study—"

The Bounder stepped to the door and threw it wide open.

He stepped into the passage, cool as ice.

"Here I am!" he said.

There was a roar.

"Collar him!"

"Scrag him!"

"Mop up the passage with him!"

Harry Wharton & Co. gathered round the captain of the Remove. Smithy did not even take his hands from his pockets. He eyed the excited crowd almost nonchalantly.

"You cheeky ass!" roared Peter Todd. "What have you got to say for yourself now?"

"Nothin'!" answered the Bounder lightly.

"Scrag him!"

"Oh, chuck it!" said Squiff, turning away. "After all, ragging the silly ass won't do any good now!"

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders, and walked coolly down the Remove passage.

The surging mob of juniors hooted and hissed, but the Famous Five and Redwing kept round Smithy to the end of the passage. The Bounder lounged carelessly down the Remove staircase, howls and cat-calls following him.

Smithy's face was very thoughtful as he made his way to Masters' Studies. He tapped at Mr. Quelch's door.

The Remove master fixed his eyes grimly on the rebel of the Form as he entered. His voice rapped out:

"What do you want, Vernon-Smith?"

"Only a word, sir!" said the Bounder, with unusual meekness.

"Be brief!"

"I should like to point out, sir," said the Bounder, quietly and calmly, "that I was to blame for what happened to-day—not the other fellows. Nobody was to blame but myself."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch grimly.

"The whole thing was my doing," went on Vernon-Smith. "As captain of the Remove, the fellows felt bound to back me up—"

"That is no excuse for rebellion, Vernon-Smith."

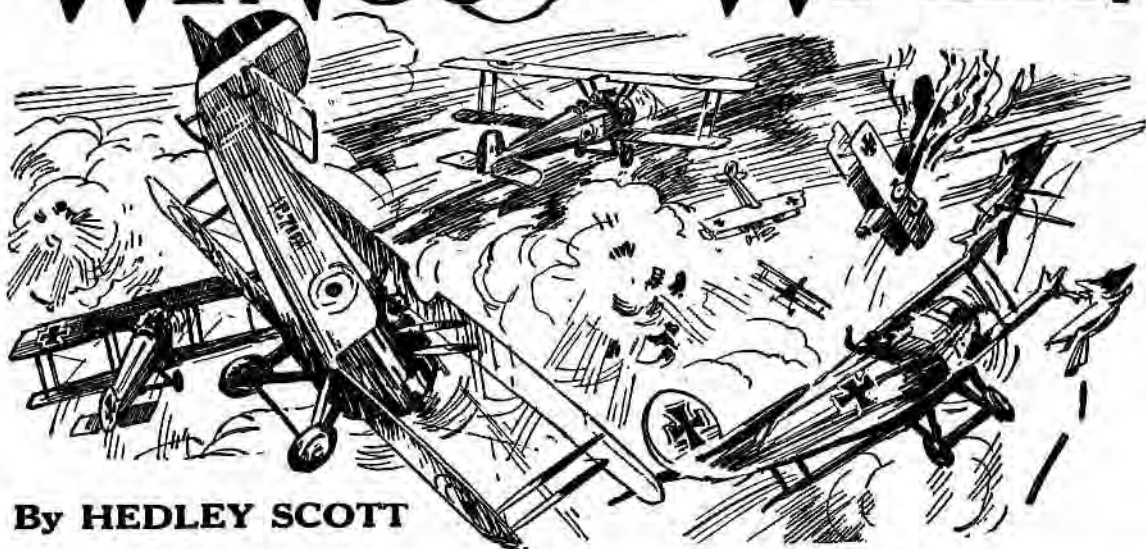
"I suppose not. But every man in the Form was really against it, but I had my way! I can see now—that I was an ass—"

"Indeed!"

"I've landed the whole Form in the soup," said the Bounder quietly, "and they don't deserve it, sir. I was to blame—and I'd be glad to take the responsibility. I'm ready to resign the captaincy of the Form on the spot, and to take any punishment, even"—he paused a moment—"even if it's the sack, sir!"

(Continued on page 28.)

WINGS of WAR!



By HEDLEY SCOTT

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE.

MAJOR FERRERS LOCKE—A BRITISH SECRET SERVICE AGENT—IS PUT IN CHARGE OF 256 SQUADRON, R.F.C., STATIONED "SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE." JIM DANIELS, RON GLYNN, AND BRUCE THORBURN, THREE STAUNCH CHUMS, ARE FLYING OFFICERS. LOCKE'S SUSPICIONS ARE SOON AROUSED BY THE STRANGE CONDUCT OF SERGEANT WILKINS, WHO IS, IN REALITY, "R. ONE," ONE OF THE SMARTEST SPIES IN THE SERVICE OF GERMANY. LOCKE LEARNS OF WILKINS' DASTARDLY PLOT TO BLOW UP THE SQUADRON, AND ONLY AVERTS DISASTER IN THE NICK OF TIME. IN THE ENSUING CHASE THE MAJOR IS KNOCKED UNCONSCIOUS AND PLACED ABOARD AN ALBATROSS WHICH IS WAITING IN READINESS TO CONVEY "R. ONE" BACK TO GERMANY. JIM AND RON GIVE CHASE TO THE GERMAN PLANE IN A BRISTOL FIGHTER. THEIR PLANE IS FORCED DOWN, HOWEVER, IN GERMAN TERRITORY. WHILE, DISGUISED AS LABOURERS, THEY ARE AWAITING AN OPPORTUNITY TO ESCAPE, THEY COME FACE TO FACE WITH "R. ONE"—NOW PROMOTED TO COLONEL IN RECOGNITION OF HIS MERITORIOUS SERVICES—WHO RECOGNISES THEM AND ORDERS THEIR ARREST.

In the Tyrant's Power !

"GREAT jumping snakes!" gasped Daniels. "The rotter seems to be a regular son of a gun here. Now we are in the soup!"

"And it's thick soup, at that," grinned Ron bravely. "He looks like a German bandmaster, don't he?"

"Put them on board!" ordered their old enemy. "They will accompany me to Holzminden Prison Camp. And if you value your lives, don't let them escape."

"Very well, Herr Colonel!"

"Colonel!" gasped Ron. "D'you get that, Jim, old sport? This giddy British sergeant is a dirty German colonel, after all."

"Well, Germany's welcome to him!" replied Jim disgustedly. "He was no durned good as a Britisher, anyway."

Next moment the two were being hustled into a compartment, under the menace of half a dozen armed men, with bayonets fixed to their Mauser rifles.

The screech of the engine whistle echoed along the platform, the wheels started to revolve, and the long journey to Holzminden Camp began.

"Corks! A Zep shed!"

Ron Glynn made that exclamation with enthusiasm as he gazed out of the grimy window of the rocking train; and Jim's spirits, which had fallen to a low level, revived on the instant.

For hours on end the two captives had

endured that long, wearisome journey, trying to cheer each other up, and, by way of a change, trying to take a rise out of their burly guards. The latter, however, knew nothing of the English language, so Jim's and Ron's efforts were failures from the start. The same could be said of Ron's attempts to talk to the "sausage-eaters" in their own language. Gazing out of the window of the train had been the principal occupation after that. Now, coming nearer at every moment, grew the outlines of a giant hangar. Dotted about at regular intervals some distance from the long shed were smaller hangars.

"It's a blessed Zep house all right!" agreed Jim. "And those other sheds are aeroplane hangars, I'll wager."

"Must be near Cologne, then," said Ron thoughtfully. "I remember visiting this drome a few months before this eternal War started. But they hadn't a Zep shed then."

"Bickendorf!" The guttural voice of one of the guards proved Ron to be right.

"That's the name of the show," said Ron. "Bickendorf. Now we shan't be long for Cologne."

The chums watched the aerodrome fascinatedly. In their minds' eye they could see themselves making a bolt for freedom—and in one of the speedy German planes which lay so near at hand. That a similar thought, must have crossed the mind of the corporal in charge of them was very obvious, for he jerked the chums away from the window.

"You stay here, sons of pigs!"

Ron, who understood German, though he experienced difficulty in speaking it, had no doubt as to the guard's meaning.

A few moments later the cathedral city of Cologne flashed by. The two Britishers thought that a lengthy stop would be made here; but, beyond a slight pause, prior to being shunted on to another line, the long journey to Holzminden continued.

"How much farther?" Again Ron tried his bad German on one of the guards. This time he met with a little more success, although the answer did anything but please him.

"One hundred and fifty miles."

Ron passed the information on to Jim, whereat there was a deep groan. Both the Britishers knew that they were bound for Holzminden—a prison camp with a reputation for iron discipline and harsh treatment towards those who attempted to escape.

The hours rolled by. Deeper and deeper into Germany proper rumbled the train, covering the miles with irritating sluggishness.

Neither of the prisoners had been given so much as a bite of bread since the journey started, and now the pangs of hunger were gnawing at their vitals. Even a drink of water would have tasted like nectar then.

The train rumbled on, blaring its snaky way into the night, and rolling by towns and villages of whose identity, or very existence, the two Britishers

were totally unaware. Mercifully, sleep had claimed them, stilling—for the time being, at any rate—the desire for food and drink.

"Sons of pigs! Awake!" Both Ron and Jim blinked as they opened their eyes. The guttural command that had awakened them had also been accompanied by a prod with the butt-end of a rifle.

The two youngsters rubbed their eyes. The sun was streaming into the carriage window.

"Where are we?" asked Ron, stifling a yawn. "Hallo! Holzminden!"

"Cheerful-looking hole—I don't think!" growled Jim, scrambling down on to the platform.

Thereafter the chums had no further opportunity for conversation. They were separated by an officious sergeant, who gave into their keeping the various baggage belonging to the Colonel von Wolfson, and told to get moving.

Surrounded by armed men, the two prisoners, fifty yards apart, began the weary foot journey to the camp. Both of them did their best to memorise the surrounding country, for there was never any telling whether an opportunity to escape might present itself later.

They came in sight of the prison camp at last—an ugly barracks of a building in stone, surrounded by a high wall and vast quantities of barbed wire. Sentries clicked their heels and saluted like automata as the colonel, astride a magnificent cavalry horse, passed before their set, strained faces.

Those sentries, Ron and Jim told themselves, looked badly in need of a square meal. Yet there were others—Britishers, Belgians, French, and Russians—inside the cold, grey walls, going about their tasks mechanically, who were much more in need of food, for they looked on the point of collapse through starvation. Their clothes, tattered and begrimed, hung loosely over their emaciated frames. In their eyes was the bitterness of war, suspense, and misery.

"Good lor!" gasped Ron to himself.

"The poor beggars look about all-in!" He scowled as he caught Colonel von Wolfson's gloating face turned upon him. The spy's expression seemed to imply that it would not be long before the latest arrivals at Holzminden deteriorated to a similar condition.

"Halt!" The sergeant in charge of the two new prisoners brought them to a standstill. The baggage was taken from them, and, still under heavy armed escort, they were marched into a stone cell. The door of the cell clanged upon them, a key grated in the lock.

"Well, this is a go, and no mistake!" grunted Ron, peering about him.

"Hardly the royal suite, what?" said Jim, noting the two plank beds built on trestles and covered by a single blanket. "Still, it might be worse."

"But not much worse!" chuckled Ron. A ray of light filtered through a small grille set high in the wall of their prison—the only contact with the outside world.

For the space of an hour the two sat huddled on their respective beds, a prey to gloomy thought. Came the sudden click of the lock, and the cell door swung open. A tall, massive sergeant of infantry, with a face that would not have disgraced that of an ape, stood in the doorway.

"Attention! Quick march!"

Led by an armed soldier, complete in field grey coat, steel helmet, and rifle

carried at the slope, the two prisoners marched down a labyrinth of corridors that echoed drearily to their steps. Eventually the sergeant striding behind them called a halt outside a steel door, upon which was the legend:

KOMMANDANT.

"Now for the fireworks!" whispered Ron.

"Silence, gentlemen!" ordered the sergeant, with particular, leering emphasis on the "gentlemen."

The door swung open; the squad marched in.

"Hallo! There's his nibs!" breathed Ron involuntarily.

"His nibs" was none other than the newly appointed Kommandant of Holzminden Prison—Colonel von Wolfson, alias R. One, alias Sergeant Wilkins, of the Royal Flying Corps.

The tyrant was seated at a table which was littered with papers, index cabinets, and reports. Behind him stood two German under officers, stiffly at attention, and with faces devoid of expression.

But what came into the two youngsters' view next they were hardly prepared for. In the far corner of the room, between two armed guards, was Major Locke! He started forward a step, and the light from the window, cutting across his features, brought simultaneous exclamations from Ron and Jim.

"Major—"

"Attention!" bawled the sergeant. The kommandant chuckled hugely at the surprise writ in every British countenance there.

"Ho, ho! Three of my pretty birds all in one cage! This is indeed fortunate!"

"You perishing cur!" roared Ron.

"You dirty traitor!" echoed Jim.

And neither of them saw Major Locke's warning glance. Neither of them yet were fully aware of the power that now lay in the hands of the man whom they had hitherto known as Sergeant Wilkins.

"Silence, pigs!" rasped the kommandant. "I will have you know that I am the big noise here. For years I have sweated beneath your tin soldiers, obeyed their orders, run and fetched. Now this is my turn. Do you know that I could have you shot as easily as that?"

He cracked his fingers cruelly.

"Do you know that I have always wanted you two whippersnappers in my power? Do you understand that I have schemed much to get your accursed major in my hands? Be careful, swineheads, for you are now in the presence of the master of this prison camp—Colonel von Wolfson!"

If he hoped to intimidate the two youngsters by his threats, he was mistaken. In the faces of both of them showed only scorn and loathing. They were yet, these two boys, to learn the full venom of the tyrant's hatred.

"It is my duty to warn you British officers," continued the kommandant, "that any attempt at escape will be severely punished. Men have been known to be shot—mysteriously—for making such attempts." He sneered. "Yet such bantams as you would scarcely have enough nerve to try. I do warn you, moreover, that any slackness is heavily punishable. There are cells where recalcitrant prisoners linger in solitary confinement for weeks on end.

They see nothing but the four walls, hear nothing but the mad echoes of their own voices."

He paused to note what impression he made upon his prisoners.

"Sometimes," he continued, "they ask for death—pray for the end. I warn you of this, for it is my duty. You will carry out all tasks—allotted to you with smartness, obedience, and implicitness. You will find the rules of this camp in the compound. Dismiss!"

The prisoners, this time with Major Locke in the van, left the kommandant's office under escort.

Colonel von Wolfson stared after them with eyes that glittered and narrowed in cunning and cruelty. Next minute he was pressing the bell on his desk.

"Bring Colonel Mortimer from cell No. 5 at once!" he barked at the orderly who appeared like a Jack-in-the-box.

"Ja, Herr Kommandant."

Three minutes later the steel door opened again, to admit the very wreck of a man. A tattered khaki jacket settled on an emaciated frame which was bowed with exhaustion. A gaunt, pale face, in which two eyes burned brightly, turned challengingly on the brutal kommandant.

"Greetings, Colonel Mortimer!" began Von Wolfson. "I introduce myself as the newly appointed kommandant."

The colonel in the tattered British uniform inclined his head slightly and waited.

"My information, colonel—handed to me by my predecessor—is that you are a very troublesome prisoner. You have been in solitary confinement for three months or more?" This latter was more in the form of a question.

The colonel nodded and tried to straighten up his drooping frame.

"I am going to rescind that sentence," resumed Von Wolfson, acting his part well. "You will not find me a hard man, mein kolonel, providing you do not give me trouble."

"Thank you!" Colonel Mortimer's voice was weak, but his eyes blazed with mocking light. "Such kindness was hardly what I expected—Sergeant Wilkins, alias R. One, alias Von Wolfson. 'Twas a good job for you that I was captured so long ago as twelve months, for I had marked you down as a spy serving in the British Forces."

Von Wolfson's eyes blazed in return, but he kept himself well in hand.

"Your memory for faces does you credit. As I said, however, I intend to rescind your sentence. Take him away to the main compound"—this latter to the armed guards. "Give him food and drink."

Colonel Mortimer turned slowly on his heel and dragged his weary feet between those of the guards. The steel door of the kommandant's office closed again—the footsteps died away.

"Now we shan't be long!" muttered the kommandant in English, a language which neither of his under officers understood. "Mortimer, the swine, will talk—will talk the moment he meets that dog Ferrers Locke! Who knows but he will pass on to him the secret document which the Fatherland needs so much? After that—poof!"

The thought pleased him mightily, for he rubbed his large, gross hands together and chuckled time and again. Already, in his mind's eye, Colonel von Wolfson could see further promotion lying just round the corner.

A Daring Plan I

ALL three are safe—prisoners-of-war in Holzinden Camp!" Bruce Thorburn's pale face lit up with relief, tinged with excitement.

Two weeks had passed since the memorable night in which his chums had disappeared into the darkness—two weeks of mental anguish. Fourteen days of suspense; for no news had leaked out through the Prisoners of War Society that the three men from 256 Squadron were still in the land of the living.

Now, the evening of the fourteenth day Lieutenant Thorburn had presented himself at G.H.Q. in search of information, hoping against hope the powers that be would give him the comfort he needed.

An elderly adjutant laid down the list of names which had just come into his possession and smiled at Thorburn. "And that is all I can tell you, young man."

Thorburn murmured his thanks and withdrew. Hope leaped high in his heart. His chums were alive—prisoners-of-war in Holzinden Camp.

He wished from the bottom of his heart that some other camp had been chosen; for the reputation of that camp, brought back by escaped Allied prisoners, and corroborated by German prisoners who had served some of their time there, was grim, to say the least.

Yet Fate could have treated the heroes of 256 Squadron worse, Thorburn told himself—repeatedly told himself that—until he learned the identity of the prison kommandant. Then his views changed.

It was the chance interrogation of a prisoner taken by the British in their latest advance across German territory that put young Thorburn wise. For this prisoner had been attached to Holzinden for the three days following the arrival of Major Locke and Glynn and Daniels. Then the Fatherland's need for troops physically fit and trained to trench warfare to throw into the gaps made by the Allied advance had seen the German sent overnight to the front. Thorburn jumped when he heard the news.

"Colonel von Wolfen?" he gasped, remembering that Von Wolfen was the name Pierre Marmot had said Sergeant Wilkins passed under in his own country. "What's he like?"

The description of the tyrant left no room for doubt in the youngster's mind, and the German prisoner-of-war, having corroborated that description, passed on his way, the richer by fifty cigarettes and a like number of francs, wondering whether all Englishmen were similarly mad, or as generous.

Back at the aerodrome Thorburn kept to himself. All the time his mind dwelt on finding some means of effecting his chums' escape from Holzinden and Sergeant Wilkins. Thorburn still thought of the spy as Sergeant Wilkins.

Plan after plan of action the youngster turned down as impracticable; yet he refused to give up his idea of rescue.

Then providence—in the shape of a Gotha night bomber which had been forced to land three miles away from 256 Aerodrome, owing to engine trouble—came to his aid. A very worried-looking captain, now acting temporary major in the absence of Ferrers Locke, singled out Thorburn for a "job" headquarters wanted done.

"Look here, Thorburn," said Captain Winterton half-apologetically, "I know you won't thank me for giving you a

taximan's job, but the rest of the boys are out on a straffe over the lines."

"Get it off your chest, old bean," said Thorburn, with a smile.

"H.Q. have just phoned through to say that a blessed Gotha, or somethin', came down in Arle meadows last night. Gun crew, pilot, etcetera, gave themselves up—"

Thorburn's eyes gleamed; his heart pumped as though it would burst.

"Go on!" he said breathlessly.

"H.Q. want me to send someone to have a look at the machine and report on it."

"Yes, yes! Is it a wreck, then?" Captain Winterton yawned.

"No; the beastly thing choked, or somethin', so the heads say. Take a car over, will you, like a good fellow, and have a look at the job. Fly the bus back here, if you can."

"Count on me, old bean!" exploded Thorburn rapturously; and, to Winterton's astonishment, he seized him like a dance partner and waltzed him round until he was giddy.

"I say, chuck it, old man!" protested Winterton. "Gone loopy, or what?"

Thorburn let him go suddenly—so suddenly that the dignified captain sat down in a very undignified fashion in the centre of a particularly dark and greasy oil puddle. What Captain Winterton said after that was more forcible than polite.

By this time, however, Thorburn was racing for the squadron car, and before Winterton had extracted himself from the oil puddle, the car was roaring out of the depot as fast as the engine would take it.

That exhilarating ride to Arle meadows was performed in record time; and while Thorburn's grey eyes were abstracted, his brain was busily evolving a stunt that was destined to turn out the greatest of his War career.

"Ah!" Thorburn's admiration of the sight which met his gaze as the car turned off the main road suddenly, and bumped across some undulating marshland, was confined to that one ejaculation. There stood one of the biggest bombers he had ever seen—the German Gotha.

The squadron car rocked and bumped across the intervening space, and in a few more moments Thorburn had jumped out of the car, and was racing towards the Gotha.

Around it stood a group of gaping, awe-struck peasants and one British Tommy, hastily summoned to mount guard over the German plane during the small hours of the morning.

"Hallo, old bean!" said Thorburn delightedly, answering the Tommy's salute mechanically. "And how's this jolly old bag of tricks?"

"Dunno, sir," came the reply. "But I'll be glad to see the back of it."

"You would, eh?" murmured Thorburn, running a practised eye over the giant plane.

"S'pose they thought the bloomin' thing would fly off on its lonesome!" added the Tommy.

"You never know, old chap," said Thorburn, who had by this time unfastened the engine cowl of the near side motor, and was examining it.

He climbed up into the cockpit and looked eagerly at the petrol gauge. To his great satisfaction, the tank appeared to be quite half-full. The oil gauge indicated similarly comforting news. Then, with painstaking thoroughness, he began to search for the trouble. In half an hour he had found it—a choked petrol feed—and effected a remedy.

Next, to the wondering interest of the

Tommy, he "doped" the engines with a hand petrol-pump, and essayed to start them. At last they broke into life, scattering the peasants to right and left, and giving the Tommy a shock at the same time by the "draught" they created, to say nothing of the din.

Seated at the controls in the spacious cockpit, Thorburn revved the engines up until they were well warmed. Then, casting about him, he let out a whoop of triumph; for near at hand was a black leather flying-jacket and companion helmet.

"The fates are kind!" Thorburn laughed. "German make—a Hun captain's, at that!"

Again the engines were tested under full throttles. They answered nobly.

"Now for the great adventure!" exclaimed Thorburn, with eyes glinting and face grimly determined. "Coming to Germany, Tommy?"

He throttled back the engines again as he spoke so that the Tommy could hear him.

"No bloomin' fear!" bawled that individual. "France is bad enough!"

Thorburn beckoned to the driver of the squadron car and yelled at him:

"Tell Captain Winterton—tell him that Lieutenant Thorburn is off to Holzinden—"

"Where, sir?" queried the driver, scratching his head.

"Holzinden Prison Camp!" yelled Thorburn. "I'm going to try to rescue my pals who are prisoners there!"

"Luv a duck!" gaped the driver. "What—"

The rest of his words were caught up and swept away in the mighty back draught of the plane as Thorburn started gently to taxi forward and head the nose of the Gotha against the wind.

Would the blessed thing rise? Would he be able to control it once it was off the ground? Was there any chance of success of bringing about this mad attempt at rescue?

These and kindred questions chased their way through Thorburn's mind, but he dismissed them all.

He was going to make the attempt; and cared not over much whether he perished if the attempt developed into a failure.

His born "bird sense" soon made him familiar with the controls of the Gotha, although as he pulled back on the control-stick he had a feeling that the giant plane would crash into a hedge, towards which he was racing at eighty miles an hour. Another inch back on the control-stick—The landing wheels were clear now of the ground. The Gotha was rising—was clear of the hedge.

The great adventure had begun!

Singing merrily to himself, Thorburn climbed the Gotha higher and higher into the heavens, determined not to make his "crossing of the line" under an altitude of sixteen to twenty thousand feet.

It was fortunate for the youngster that the driver of the squadron car got into immediate touch with Captain Winterton and explained what Lieutenant Thorburn had done. For the "temporary O.C." phoned headquarters immediately, who, in turn, notified all British and Allied planes to allow a safe passage to a certain Gotha piloted by a mad young devil from 256 Squadron.

(Be sure you follow Thorburn's thrilling adventures over German territory by reading next week's chapters of this powerful War story, boys. Order your MAGNET early!)

TRUANTS OF THE REMOVE.

(Continued from page 24.)

Mr. Quelch looked fixedly at the Bounder.

Vernon-Smith stood before him, quiet and calm, quite different from the reckless, cheeky Bounder that the Remove master knew so well.

There was a long pause.

"I repeat, sir, that I did the whole thing," said Vernon-Smith. "The fellows backed me up, because it would have looked like funking if they hadn't. It's rather hard that the whole Form should suffer for one fellow's fault."

Mr. Quelch was still silent, his gimlet eyes fixed on the Bounder. But he spoke at last.

"I am glad that you have come to me, Vernon-Smith! I shall consider the matter. It is understood, of course, that you cannot remain captain of the Form—you have shown yourself unfit for the post. No one can command, Vernon-Smith, who has not learned to obey. If a new election is held, and a boy whom I can trust is elected in your place, I will undertake to reconsider the matter. That is all I can say at present."

"Thank you, sir!" said the Bounder.

And he left the study quietly.

Harry Wharton & Co. were in Study No. 1 when the Bounder looked in. The Famous Five stared at him rather grimly.

"Feelin' pretty rotten, what?" asked Smithy, with a grin.

"The rottenfulness is terrific, my idiotic Smithy!"

"Think we're feeling joyful with the cricket washed out for the whole season?" asked Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"Then you'll be glad to hear the news."

"What news?" asked Wharton.

"New election for Form captain—late captain; resigned, not standin' for re-election," drawled Smithy, "and if a sportsman whom Quelch can trust is elected, the gating is wiped out—and everything in the garden will be lovely! Official—from Quelch!"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"And if you put up, Wharton, I'm votin' for you!" added the Bounder.

"I've made a ghastly muck of it—your own words, old bean—and I'll be glad to

see a better man take it on. You've backed me up—not wisely, but too well, as jolly old Shakespeare puts it—and if you're elected, I'll back you up—in anythin' short of playin' cricket matches without leave. I'm goin' to draw the line at that!"

Another "Magnetite" Wins a Useful

LEATHER POCKET WALLET

for supplying the following Greyfriars limerick:

Said portly Paul Pontifex Prout:
"I've been in my time a great scout.

I've shot grizzlies by dozens
For my sisters and cousins,"
But his words are open to doubt!

A handsome wallet has been forwarded to V. E. Birt, 8, Redhill Cottages, Duxmore, Ross-on-Wye.

And the Bounder walked away, laughing.

The Bounder had been at the lowest ebb of unpopularity in the Remove. But he had done the right thing at the finish. When the new election was held, Smithy's hand went up with a crowd of others for Harry Wharton—who was elected almost without opposition.

And following the election came the rescinding of the "gating" of the Remove, which was Mr. Quelch's contribution to the general satisfaction. And it was Smithy's resolve to back up the new captain of the Remove as loyally as Harry Wharton had backed up the Bounder.

THE END.

(So the Bounder's reign as school captain has ended at last! Horace Coker, the foot of the Fifth, is the leading light in next week's magnificent yarn of firefryers. Note the title, chums: "COKE'S CAMERA 'CLICKS'!" and prepare yourself for a splendid treat.)

DR. BIRCHEMALL'S HALF-HOLLERDAY!

(Continued from page 15.)

grips. Jack stood his ground, grabbed the boof's horns in a grip of iron, and applied a swift ju-jitsu twist.

Bellowing and shrieking with pain and rage, the boof crashed to the ground.

"Now run, Miss Molly!" commanded Jack Jolly.

"But what about you?" protested Molly Birchemall.

"I shall be all right," said Jack.

Molly Birchemall threw him a grateful glance and tripped across the field to join her father on the other side of the hedge.

Only when Miss Molly had reached the place of safety did Jack Jolly relax his grip. Then, at last, he released the boof and walked calmly back.

The Head, who was grinning all over his dial with delight, almost bugged the kaptin of the Fourth.

"Jolly! My brave lad!" he cried. "How can I ever express what I feel about your heroism?"

"Oh, it was nothing, sir! I only did what any other hero would have done in my place!" said Jack Jolly modestly.

"It was wonderful!" trilled Molly Birchemall, with a coy glance at her rescuer. "I am sure pop will never forget it!"

"Never!" declared the Head enthusiastically. "I was going to birlch you and your friends black and blew, Jolly. But that's all washed out, now!"

"Oh, thank you, sir!" grinned Jack Jolly & Co.

"Come, Molly; we will return to St. Sam's for tea," said Dr. Birchemall, linking arms with his fare dauter. "Good-by, boys!"

"Good-by, sir! Good-by, Miss Molly!"

The chums of the Fourth watched the Head and his dauter out of site. Then they sat down beneath the shade of the hedge and started on the contents of the piknik-basket.

And, after all their adventures, they enjoyed it tremendously!

THE END.

(Next week's amusing yarn of Dr. Birchemall and the cheery chums of St. Sam's is a real corker. It's entitled: "DIDDLING DR. BIRCHEMALL!" and is guaranteed to keep you in fits of laughter.)

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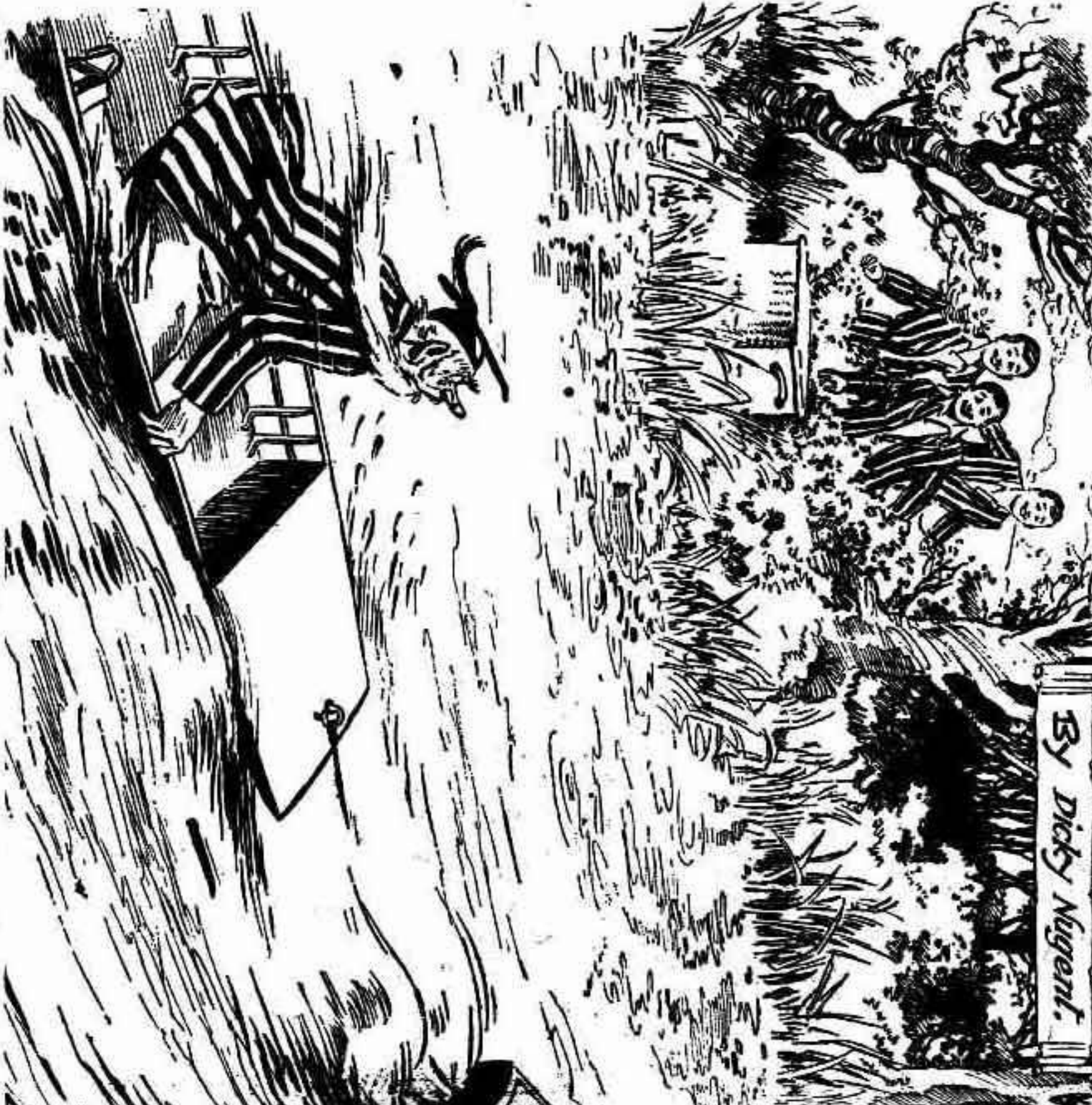
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DR. BIRCHEMALL'S HAIR

By Dicky Nugent.



HOLLERDAY!



The Editor feels bound to explain that Dicky Nugent insisted on his story being set up in print just as it appeared in the manuscript—hence the weird and original spelling!

"**THIS** is something like!" breathed Jack Jolly. "Ripping!" merrered his chum, Merry.

"Top-hole!" grinned Bright. It was Wednesday—a half-holiday at St. Sam's—and the weather was certainly a treat.

Above, the sun was shining. Below, birds were warbling, bees were buzzing, and the river was gurgling, while inside Jack Jolly & Co.'s piknik-basket the cheese was humming. All Natcher seemed to be in song.

The chums of the Fourth were standing on the landing-stage by the River Ripple. Their cricket fixture with St. Alf's was off owing to the St. Alf's fellows being down with the mumps, measles, and hooping-cough; so Jack Jolly & Co. had decided to have a ro on the river and a piknik on the island instead.

Jack Jolly grabbed hold of the piknik-basket.

"Reddy?" he asked. "Reddy, I, reddy!" grinned Merry and Bright.

"Then we'll make a start!" "Half a minute!" interrupted a cultured, skollery voice behind them just then.

Jack Jolly & Co. wheeled round in dismay. They reckermised the voice instantly.

It was Dr. Birchmall, the venerable Head of St. Sam's!

Dr. Birchmall was standing behind them, grinning all over his dial. He was dressed in white flannel trousers, a striped blazer, and his usual motor-board.

"Going roing?" he asked jollially.

"Yes, sir!"

"Then you'll have to go roing with one man and a piknik-basket short, I'm afraid! As it happens, Jolly, I am going punting—and I shall want you to pole for me!"

"Oh crickey!"

"Really, Jolly, I do wish you would refrain from these absurd slang egg-pressions!" said the Head severely. "You should say 'Bust me!' or 'Oh, my giddy aunt!'—not 'Oh crickey!'"

"Oh, my giddy aunt!"

"That's much better! Well, here's the punt. I'll get in first, and you can hand me the tuck-basket!"

If looks could have killed, Dr. Birchmall would have shrivelled up and perished at that moment. Unfortunatly, looks didn't kill, so he was able to clime into the punt in safety, while Jack Jolly & Co. stood on the landing-stage glaring at him.

"Nice afternoon, sir!" remarked Burleigh of the Sixth, from the speedboat which he and Talboy were just starting up.

"Tip-top!" grinned the Head, as he sorted out the cushions. "I see you favor modern methods of petrol propulsion, Burleigh. Personally, I am all for the ease and elegance of a punt—provided, of course, someone else is doing the poling!"

"Something in that, sir!" chuckled Burleigh. "But I prefer to hear the roar of the engine and feel the wind wissling past my ears. P'raps that duzzent appeal to you?"

"Not in the slightest! Give me a punt supplied with plenty of cushions and a basket of tuck and a comic paper, and I ask for nothing more! Aren't you roddy yet, Jolly?"

"Shan't be long, sir!" said Jack Jolly, pretending to pick up the tuck-basket.

Now, while the Head had been exercising his tung, Jack Jolly had not been idle. A sudden inspiration had struck him when the Head started talking to Burleigh; why not tie up the punt to Burleigh's speedboat?

With Jack Jolly to think was to act. Almost before he had recovered from being struck with the brainwave, he was leaning over the side, and deftly knotting up the punt to the stern of the motor-boat.

When the Head turned round again, the deed had been done.

"Good-by, sir!" called out Burleigh, as he pressed the self-starter.

"Good-by, Burleigh! I'm jolly glad I'm not coming with you—here, what the thump!—Ow-wow! Hellup! Woopoo!" yelled the Head suddenly.

When the old buffer said he was glad he wasn't going with Burleigh, it hadn't occurred to him that circumstances were going to kompel him.

But they did!

Honk-honk! Bang! Wallop! Crash! Bang!

Like an unleashed greyhound, Burleigh's speedboat leaped away from the landing-stage and tore through the rippling waters of the River Ripple. And the Head's punt went with it!

The shock of the unexpected start almost hurled him into the river. But in the nick of time he managed to peel his teeth and hang on by the skin of them.

Chug-chug! Bang! Crash! Wallop! "Help! Murder! Perlice! Yaroooo!" shrieked the Head, as he felt his frail craft skim through the water.

But there was no answering call. The crashing and clattering of the engine drowned everything—though the boat still kept afloat!—and Burleigh and Talboy didn't hear a syllable.

Clinging desperately to the punt, Dr. Birchmall was whirled away down the river at terrific speed. And Jack Jolly & Co., from the landing-stage, where they still held their piknik-basket intact, nearly bust their sides with laughing.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

II.

THANK goodness we managed to get rid of the old josses!" said Jack Jolly, after he had dried his tears of mirth.

"Now we'll buzz off before he comes back."

"Yes, rather!" cursed Merry and Bright. The heroes of the Fourth tumbled into their skiff, taking their piknik-basket with them. After what had happened, they didn't feel at all anxious to meet the Head again!

Grinning all over their dials, Jack Jolly & Co. roed towards the island, which was fortunately in the opposite direction to that taken by Burleigh and Talboy.

Our heroes enjoyed the ro. On the way they swamped Swankleigh and Downer and Buck of the Fifth, and overturned Toady and Creeper of the Remove, and won a terrific peashooter duel with Stainer & Co. of the Third. It was just the peaceful kind of afternoon Jack Jolly & Co. enjoyed best of all.

chew doornuts like the Head shouldn't find much difficulty about a bit of nothed rope. There! What did I tell you?"

"Oh crickey!"

The Head had dun the trick! The rope snapped, the speedboat leaped forward, and the Head's punt shot off at a tangent straight towards the island!

Jack Jolly & Co. tried desperately to hide the piknik-basket. But they were too late. Long before they had time to put it out of site the punt had collided with the island, and the Head came flying through the air.

Bump! "Woopoo!" roared the Head. "Oh crums! I've broken my back and dislocated my shoulder and fraktered my spine and—"

He stopped suddenly as he found himself looking up at Jack Jolly & Co. Then, recovering from his ailments with surprising speed, he jumped to his feet and glared at the sheepish chums of the Fourth.

"G-g-good-afternoon, sir!" said Jack Jolly & Co.

"Rats!" retorted the Head, beginning to grin a somewhat unpleasant grin. "So I have found you again, you young villains! What did you mean by trying me up to that there speedboat, mite I inquire?"

"Well, you see, sir—" "Silence!" roared the Head, who was obviously in one of his unreasonable moods. "I'll flog you all black and blew when we get back to St. Sam's, bust me if I won't! In the meantime, I'm going to skoff that feed you've brought with you! Serve it up!"

"B-b-but, sir—" "Serve it up and don't argue the toss!" said the Head, in tones that brooked no argument.

"There was no help for it. Jack Jolly & Co. unpacked the piknik-basket, and Dr. Birchmall spread himself out on the grass.

But Jack Jolly made up his mind he'd put the greedy old buffer off his stroke if he could. While the Head's back was turned, he got a bottle of likwid soap from the skiff and sprinkled it jeenerously over the sandwiches.

"Don't keep me waiting, you young villains!" called out the Head.

"Sorry, sir! Here are some delishus sandwiches to go on with!"

"Ta!" said the Head, taking half a duzen and cramming them elegantly into his mouth. "After my eggspert-ences this afternoon, a good feed is just what I—Ugh! Woopoo! Grooooo! Woopoo!"

"Jolly nice sandwiches, aren't they?" grinned Jack Jolly.

But by the look of the Head, he didn't think so! His classical fazz had turned a sickly green in color, his eyes were bulging out of their sockets, and he was choking and gasping and spluttering as though he had swallowed poison.

"Mmmmm! Groooo! Woopoo!" he gurgled. "Pat me on the back, Jolly, or I shall dye—wooooo! Ow! Warrer you doing?"

"Pating you on the back, sir!" answered Jack Jolly cheerfully. "Wasn't that what you wanted?"

"Groooo! I asked you to pat me, not to brake my spine!" roared the Head. "Oh dear! That's better! Ow! And now there's going to be trouble—trouble with a kapial T!"

"What for, sir?" asked Jack Jolly innocently. "Because you young villains, not content with trying me up to a blessed speed, have added to your offence by

trying to poison me!" hooted the Head. "We will return to St. Sam's at once. The bell shall be told for a General Assembly, and the Skool shall be told of your crimes. After that, I shall brch you all black and blew!"

"Oh crums!"

"Man the boat!" said the Head. "You will ro me back to the boathouse in your skiff. I do not intend to risk any more of your lartx to-day! Come!" And the Head led the way.

III.

I was a cheerless procession that wound its way up from the river bank to St. Sam's that afternoon. The Head walked in front, muttering into his beard and stowing at all sundry, Jack Jolly came next, dismally wissling the "Dead March," and Merry and Bright brought up the rear, still carrying the piknik-basket.

"Wonder if it'll hurt much?" asked Bright, sotto vocey, as they tramped along.

"Not half it won't!" snorted the Head, who seemed to have ears at the back of his head. "Chinese torcher going! I intend to make you howl and shriek for the mercy you'll never get!"

"Oh, grate pip!" "Fortunatly I got in a brand-new supply of birches from my holerslers this morning," added the Head callously. "So you need have no fear that I shall run short!"

"What's that?" asked Jack Jolly suddenly.

The little procession came to a sudden stop. A scream had rent the silence of the summer afternoon. It was a tinkling musical scream like that of a bewitful damsel in distress.

"Help! Oh, help!"

"Miss Molly!" gasped Jack Jolly. "She is being attacked by a mad bool, or I'm a Dutchman!"

The Head's face went garstly white. "You mean Molly Birchmall—my dawter?" he asked horsely. "Impossible!"

"Look for yourself, then!" said Jack Jolly, pointing through a gap in the hedge.

They all looked. The site that met their eyes farley froze the blud in their veins.

Molly Birchmall, the Head's pretty dawter, was standing in the middle of the field in a state of terror, while a huge mad bool careered wildly towards her.

"My dawter! My dawter!" moaned the Head. "Oh crums! Who will save her?"

Fortunatly, there was one who was prepared to risk life and lim to aid bewy in distress. Before the question had left the Head's lips, Jack Jolly was plunging through the gap in the hedge! It was lucky that Jack Jolly was the champion sprinter of St. Sam's, or nothing could have been dun to save the unhappy girl. As it was, Jack covered fifty yards in less than three seconds, and arrived on the soon just in time.

"Stand behind me, Miss Molly!" he panted.

"My hero!" sobbed Molly Birchmall tremulously.

Jack Jolly gritted his teeth and faced the mad beast. The bool made a terrific bool-like rush and charged down on him.

Thud! Wallop! Thud! In a fraction of time, they were at

(Continued on page 28.)