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BARRED BY HIS FORM!



THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Being Kind to Smithy!

BILLY BUNTER, of the Greyfriars Remove, blinked up and down the Remove passage, through his big spectacles, with a wary, watchful, and cautious blink.

From the doorway of Study No. 7 he blinked up the passage to the box-room, and down the passage to the staircase. Like Moses of old, he looked this way and that way, and saw no man.

The passage was deserted.

Billy Bunter, satisfied that there was nobody about, stepped out into it. His manner was so wary, so watchful, so excessively cautious, that no one could have seen him without guessing that the fat Owl of the Remove was up to something.

But there was no one to see Bunter!

Prep was over in the Remove, and all, or nearly all, the fellows had gone down. Downstairs, in the Rag, most of the Remove were discussing the cricket match that had been played that day. That was a topic in which Billy Bunter was not deeply interested. But he was glad that it occupied the attention of the Remove. It left Bunter to follow his own devices unobserved.

Cautiously, almost on tiptoe, Billy Bunter moved along the passage to Study No. 4, which belonged to Vernon-Smith and Redwing.

Redwing, he knew, had gone down. Smithy was still in the study. Bunter's business, apparently, was with the Bouncer of Greyfriars.

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He reached the door of Study No. 4.

Then, as a door farther up the passage opened, he jumped swiftly away, in sudden alarm.

Bob Cherry came out of Study No. 13, and came down the passage, with his heavy footsteps. Bob had been rather late in getting through prep. A hard day at cricket had left him disinclined for such things. Now, however, he was through, and he came away from his study—startling Bunter considerably by his sudden appearance.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob stared at the fat junior, whose guilty looks would have struck the least suspicious eye. "What are you up to, fatty?"

"Eh? Nothing!" answered Bunter. "I thought you'd gone down, Cherry—I mean, I was just coming along to ask you if you'd finished. I think Wharton's waiting for you downstairs—in fact, I know he is! I wouldn't keep him waiting, old chap!"

"You fat villain! You were going into Smithy's study."

"Nothing of the kind, old chap! I wouldn't! Smithy's been sent to Coventry by the Form—and I'm as much down on him as anybody! The fact is, I was just going to Mauleverer's study—"

"Turn round!" said Bob.

"Eh? What for?"

"I'm going to kick you as far as the stairs."

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

He made a dive for his own study, bolted in like a fat rabbit into a burrow, and slammed the door. Bob Cherry grinned, and tramped on to the Remove

staircase. His heavy tread rang down the stairs.

Then Bunter opened his door again.

Once more he understudied Moses of old, and blinked this way and that way. Again he found the coast clear, and again he crept up the passage to Study No. 4 in the Remove.

This time he did not hesitate at the door. Some other belated member of the Remove might have emerged and spotted him. He grabbed the door-handle, turned it quickly, and opened the door; he strolled rapidly into Smithy's study, and shut the door after him. Now he was safe from observation if any other beast came along.

"I say, Smithy—" gasped Bunter.

Herbert Vernon-Smith, the fellow who was called the Bouncer of Greyfriars, was sitting in his armchair. His right leg rested on another chair—Smithy had a damaged ankle. There was a cigarette in his mouth, from which a thin spiral of smoke curled up.

He gave a start as Billy Bunter appeared in his study, with the suddenness of a Jack-in-the-box. He fixed his eyes on the fat junior and scowled. It did not require a second glance to ascertain that the Bouncer was in a bad temper—one of his worst.

Even the short-sighted Owl of the Remove could see that, and he warily remained near the door—rather comforted by the knowledge that Smithy had a "game" leg. With a game leg Smithy could not move so actively as usual, and his visitor had time to dodge and escape if necessary.

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"You fat Owl!" snapped the Bounder. "What do you want?"

"I've just looked in, old chap—"

"Look out again!"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"And shut the door after you."

Bunter blinked at him. For a fellow who was "sent to Coventry" by his Form, Smithy seemed very independent—much too independent, to Bunter. The law was laid down that any fellow speaking to Smithy was to be kicked. Billy Bunter was running the risk of being kicked. Evidently the Bounder was ungrateful.

"If that's how you talk to a chap who's being kind to you, Smithy—" began Bunter warmly.

"You fat idiot!"

"You're left on your own here—even your own pal, Redwing, has turned you down!" said Bunter. "Nobody in the Remove is going to speak to you again. I think you might be civil to a fellow who's taking pity on you!"

Bunter spoke indignantly. He felt indignant. But he was rather alarmed at the effect of his words. Vernon-Smith's eyes seemed to flame, and he made a movement to rise from the arm-chair. Bunter grabbed the door-handle, ready to bolt. But a twinge of pain from his crooked ankle caught the Bounder, and he sat down again, gasping.

"You fat fool!" he snarled. "You're not worth kicking! Get out!"

Bunter released the door-handle again.

"Don't get shirty, old chap!" he said soothingly. "The fact is, old chap, I'm not down on you like the rest! Of course, you played a rotten, dirty trick to-day—you can't deny that—sneaking off to some pub or other, and letting them down in the middle of a cricket match! Still, they've have been licked—they hadn't a chance! I offered to play for the Remove—"

"You blithering Owl!"

"But Wharton chose to play Nugent instead—silly ass, you know! If he leaves out a really good man, what can he expect? Of course, St. Jude's won! I don't suppose it would have made much difference if you'd turned up, Smithy. After all, you're no great shakes at cricket, are you?"

The Bounder gazed at him. Bunter, apparently, was there to ingratiate himself somehow. He had his own ways of doing it. Only a crooked ankle kept the Bounder from kicking him out of the study.

"I think you're getting rough luck, old chap," went on Bunter. "They're all down on you, and you're sent to Coventry! Well, I'm not going to cut you, old chap! Of course, I can't speak to you in the quad, or the Rag, or the passages! But I shall drop into your study sometimes, and give you a word or two when I have time."

"Will you?" said Smithy, breathing very hard.

"Yes, old chap—I mean it! That's why I've come in here now," explained Bunter. "Nobody else will take any notice of you; but I'm going to speak to you and chance it—that's me all over. Kindest friend and noblest foe, you know, and all that. You being crooked with that bandy leg, you'd like a fellow to help you get supper in the study, what? Well, I'd do more than that for a fellow I really like!"

"Oh!" ejaculated the Bounder.

He understood the reason now of Bunter's mysterious antics!

Smithy's study was a land flowing with milk and honey! There was always something good in the study cupboard. Seldom, or never, did the Owl of the Remove get a chance at the good things.

But in the present unusual and abnormal circumstances, Bunter saw his chance! A fellow who was barred by the Form ought to be glad if any fellow spoke to him—especially so fascinating a fellow as Bunter!

Such a fellow ought to be glad of anybody's company—and Bunter's company, in Bunter's opinion, at least, was the best going! Billy Bunter was, as usual, after the loaves and fishes!

Slowly and carefully the Bounder lowered his damaged leg to the floor.

"Don't get up, old chap!" said Bunter. "Leave it to me! I'll get supper for you—and join you if you like. Don't speak too loud, of course—fellows might pass the door, and spot me here—I don't want that! If I'm to take notice of you, old chap, we shall have to be a bit diplomatic about it, see?"

"I see," assented Vernon-Smith.

He got up all the same, and limped to the table. There was a cricket bat lying on the table.

Bunter eyed him warily and uneasily. A fellow never quite knew how to take Smithy. And it was quite possible that, after all Bunter's kindness, he was going to cut up rusty. Still, supper in Smithy's study was worth some risk. Supper in Hall, compared to supper with Smithy, was as moonlight unto sunlight, as water unto wine. To Bunter's relief, Smithy did not touch the

The Bounder's in trouble again. In fact, he's "barred" by the Form. Yet, strangely enough, the Bounder is "barred" for doing a good deed—not a bad one!

cricket bat—yet. He leaned on the table, resting his damaged ankle, and eyed Bunter across it.

"There's a cake in the cupboard," said Smithy.

"I'll get it out for you, old chap," said Bunter joyfully. And he rolled across to the cupboard.

It was then that Smithy picked up the bat. While Bunter was hugging the door he had no chance to bag him with his game leg. Now Bunter was across the study, and the Bounder hopped into his line of retreat.

Billy Bunter, his fat hand on the cupboard, blinked round. His little round eyes almost popped through his big round spectacles at the sight of Smithy, bat in hand, between him and the door.

"I—I—I say, Smithy—" he stammered.

"Now, you fat fool—"

"Oh, you beast, pulling my leg!" gasped Bunter; and he dodged round the study table as the Bounder limped towards him. "Ow! Oh! Yaroo!" A hefty lunge from the bat caught Bunter in his fat ribs. "Whoop!"

"Take that, you fat sweep—and that!" Smithy lunged again and again, and the Owl of the Remove yelled as he took them.

Bunter made a frantic bound for the door, after circumnavigating the table. He grabbed wildly at the handle and dragged. Smithy, hopping after him, got in one lick with the bat, which landed on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars as Bunter got the door open. The yell that Billy Bunter gave awoke every echo in the Remove passage.

"Yaroo!"

Then he bounded out.

"Ow! Beast! Wow!" roared Bunter, as he bounded. The door of Study No. 4 slammed after him.

Billy Bunter gasped, and trailed dismally away, rubbing several places where he had a pain. The Bounder, barred by the Form, was left alone in his study again; and his solitude was not broken any more by William George Bunter. Bunter was fed-up with being kind to Smithy.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Two in Coventry!

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

The Greyfriars captain's eyes fell grimly on the Bounder when he limped into the dormitory. Smithy's face was a little pale, but otherwise he showed no sign of the pain he felt. The Bounder had no use for sympathy, and he hated to show that he was hurt. But he could not help the limp, which Wingate noticed at once.

Vernon-Smith went silently across to his bed. No one spoke to him, and no one even looked at him, except Tom Redwing. Harry Wharton & Co. were ignoring his existence, and the rest of the Remove followed suit. The Bounder had been sent to Coventry for letting down his side in the St. Jude's match that day. And since the sentence of the Form had been passed, no Removeite had spoken a word to him, excepting Billy Bunter, in search of a study supper. And that study supper, not having materialised, the fat Owl was as keen as the rest on barring Smithy—keener, in fact.

"Vernon-Smith!" Wingate rapped out the name. "What's the matter with you?"

"Nothin'!"

"You're limping!"

"Only a tap on my ankle. I had a spill on my bike this afternoon," answered the Bounder carelessly.

"And what were you doing on a bike, when you were a member of the junior team playing St. Jude's at cricket?" demanded the Greyfriars captain.

"Ridin'!"

"What?" ejaculated Wingate, while some of the fellows looked round at the Bounder, and grinned. Smithy might be an outcast in his Form, but he had not lost his cool cheek.

"Ridin'!" repeated Smithy. "That's what I generally do when I'm on a bike, Wingate."

"He, he he!" came from Billy Bunter.

Wingate walked across to the Bounder, his face grimmer than ever. Smithy eyed him coolly, sitting on the edge of his bed to take his shoes off.

"You're asking for six," said Wingate. "I don't want any cheek from you, Vernon-Smith. From what I hear, you were in the Remove eleven to-day, and played in the first innings, and then cleared off and cut the rest of the game, leaving your skipper in the lurch. That kind of thing won't do for Greyfriars. And I suppose you know that I shall have to take notice of it, as Head of the Games?"

"Oh, quite!" said Smithy. "But it's rather a distinction, Wingate, for a Lower School fellow to be taken notice of by the captain of the school; so I feel rather bucked."

"Smithy's the man to ask for it, and no mistake!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"The askfulness is truly terrific!" agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

There was only one thing that saved Herbert Vernon-Smith from getting

what he was asking for. Wingate, eyeing him keenly, could see that he was in pain, in spite of his coolness and his air of indifference. And the Greyfriars captain would not "whop" a fellow who was crooked and hurt. His eyes glinted, but he spoke quietly when he answered.

"Cheek won't help you much, Vernon-Smith. You'll come to the prefects' room after class to-morrow, and I shall deal with you."

"Pleased!" answered the Bounder. "You see, Wingate, I'm sent to Coventry by my own Form."

"I'm not surprised at that, after the way you've acted."

"Oh, quite! But bein' in Coventry in the Remove, it will be quite nice to have a chat with the Sixth. Rely on me comin' along."

"That will do!" snapped Wingate; and he turned his back on the Bounder. "Turn in, you kids! Light goes out in five minutes!"

The Greyfriars captain went out into the passage, where he chatted with Gwynne of the Sixth while the Remove turned in. Tom Redwing, after some hesitation, came over to the Bounder. He was Smithy's chum, but he could not help sharing the feelings of the Form on the subject of the Bounder's conduct that day. But Redwing believed, or tried to believe, that Smithy could have explained the matter if he had liked, though why he did not choose to do so was a mystery, unless it was one more sample of the Bounder's headstrong arrogance.

Vernon-Smith gave him a curious look as he came over. He had wondered whether his chum, who had always borne patiently with his many faults and failings, would join in the sentence of the Form. Apparently Redwing did not intend to do so, though he had hesitated.

"Smithy——" he began.

"I say, you fellows," squeaked Billy Bunter, "Redwing's talking to Smithy."

"Shut up, Redwing!" called out Johnny Bull.

"Reddy, old bean," said Harry Wharton, tapping Tom on the shoulder, "chuck it, old chap! Smithy's in Coventry!"

"I know," said Redwing, colouring. "But——"

"You're not making out that he hasn't asked for it, I suppose?" said the captain of the Remove.

"Well, no—but——"

"You know what he's done," said Harry, his eyes glinting. "We were beaten to the wide by St. Jude's, because Vernon-Smith let us down in the middle of the match. He could have stood out of the game if he'd liked. But he played in the first innings, and I couldn't play another man after that. Do you think a fellow who lets us down like that is fit to speak to?"

Redwing's colour deepened. But he did not falter.

"Smithy's my pal," he said.

"That's all very well, but you can't stand out against the Form. He's sent to Coventry, and any fellow speaking to him will get the same! So chuck it, and don't be an ass!"

"I believe Smithy could explain why he cut the match."

"Why doesn't he, then?" demanded Frank Nugent.

"I don't know. But——"

"The butfulness is terrific, my esteemed Redwing," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "The absurd and rotten Smithy is not fit to speak to with a barge-pole!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, leave him alone, Reddy!" exclaimed Squiff.

Redwing shook his head.

"I'm standing by Smithy," he answered. "If you men like to bar me, too, you can get on with it! I'm sticking to my pal."

"You cheeky ass!" bawled Bolsover major.

"This won't do, Redwing," said Harry Wharton, frowning.

"I can't help that—I mean it!"

"Better not, old bean," drawled the Bounder. "Think what you'll lose. Nobody in the Remove will speak to you. No more high-falutin' jaws from Wharton. The loss of his improvin' conversation alone is simply staggerin'. No more babble from Cherry, or gabble from Bull. Nugent will never tell you any more what a delightful little fellow his minor in the Second is. Think you can really stand it? And Bunter will never, never ask you to lend him a bob till his postal order comes."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you cheeky rotter——" exclaimed Frank Nugent, flushing crimson.

Nugent could always be drawn by a gibe on the subject of his minor in the Second.

"Dear me! Nugent's talking to me," said the Bounder. "Does that mean that you're letting me out of Coventry, Nugent? I'm not sure that I'm keen on it—in fact, I shall have to make it a condition that you don't tell me any of the wonderful sayings and doings of your minor!"

There was a chuckle up and down the dormitory. Frank Nugent bit his lip and turned away. Wharton's brows were knitted. He took Redwing's arm and drew him quietly but firmly away from the Bounder. Redwing shook his arm free.

"Leave me alone, Wharton!" he said.

"If that means——"

"It means that I'm sticking to Smithy!"

"Then you don't care what he's done?" exclaimed Wharton angrily.

"I do! But——"

"But what?" rapped the captain of the Remove.

"I'm standing by him, all the same," said Tom stubbornly.

Wharton compressed his lips.

"Then you'll be sent to Coventry along with him," he said.

"Very well!" answered Redwing, quietly.

Wharton turned away from him. He meant every word that he said, and Redwing understood that quite clearly, and all that it meant. But he was prepared to face it for the sake of his chum.

"You're an ass, Reddy, old chap!" said the Bounder. "Look here, I'm not askin' you——"

"No need," answered Tom.

"Those silly asses mean it—you'll be cut by the Form for the rest of the term," said Smithy, in a low voice. "Chuck it, old man!"

"Rats!"

"They mean business——"

"So do I!"

Wingate came back into the dormitory, and the lights were put out. In the usual buzz of talk from bed to bed, after lights out, there were two voices that did not join—Smithy's and Redwing's. Two fellows, one the most unpopular in the school at the present moment, and the other as popular as any fellow at Greyfriars, were barred by the Remove.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Barred!

CLANG! Clang! The rising-bell rang in the clear, sunny May morning.

Bob Cherry was out of bed, in the Remove dormitory, with a bound, before the second clang had died away. Other fellows sat up and yawned.

"Turn out, you slackers!" bawled Bob. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! Bunter! Want a little help?"

Snore!

"Smithy, you slacker—oh, I forgot! Redwing—my hat, I forgot again! Blow both of you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Turn off that megaphone, please," said the Bounder, sitting up in bed.

"Why, you cheeky ass——"

"You're talking to Smithy, fathead!" said Johnny Bull.

"What did the silly ass want to get into Coventry for?" demanded Bob. "I've a jolly good mind to bump him out of bed on his napper!"

"Come an' do it!" invited the Bounder.

"I'll jolly well——"

"Shut up, old chap!" said Harry Wharton.

"Oh, blow!" said Bob.

It was not easy for the exuberant Bob to keep up any trouble with anybody—he would rather have punched Smithy's head and then forgotten all about it. But the sentence of the Form had to be carried out, and Bob toed the line with the rest.

Smithy turned out of bed, wincing a little as he put his damaged leg to the floor. That damaged leg had saved him from a ragging, but probably he would have preferred a ragging to the sentence of Coventry. But if the Bounder did not like his sentence he was not the fellow to show it. His manner was quite cool and indifferent.

And Smithy doubted, too, whether that sentence could be successfully carried on for long. Redwing, at least, was standing by him. And Skinner & Co., though they lined up with the rest of the Remove, were not keen on it—Skinner and his friends cared little whether a fellow had let down his comrades in a cricket match. The cricketers were adamant—they could not pardon the deserter who had brought about their defeat in the first big match of the season. But other fellows were not so keen, and were likely to grow less and less keen as time passed. Schoolboy memories are short, as a rule.

For the present, however, the Bounder was an outcast in his Form. He was ignored by the Remove, and but for Redwing's loyalty he would have been left entirely to himself. Redwing's faithful friendship meant a great deal to him now. The sailorman's son left the dormitory with him, and they went down to early prayers together, and then into the quadrangle. Vernon-Smith was well aware how utterly rotten it would have been to "mooch" about the school entirely by himself—advertising to all Greyfriars that no fellow in his Form wanted to have anything to do with him. That would have been bitterly humiliating to the Bounder, and from that humiliation Redwing's loyalty saved him.

Not that Tom was quite easy in his mind about it. Smithy's sentence was deserved—the Form were in the right, and Smithy was in the wrong—so far as Tom could see. It was rather a severe test of friendship to back up a fellow who was palpably in the wrong against a whole Form that condemned



Bunter made a frantic bound for the door, grabbed the handle, and dragged. Vernon-Smith, hopping after him, got in one lick with the bat, which landed on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars, as Bunter got the door open. "Ow! Beast! Wow! Yarooooop!" yelled Bunter.

him. Redwing could not feel happy about it, and his face was a good deal more troubled than the Bounder's. But he did not falter—he was sticking to his chum, and that was that!

The Famous Five came out into the quad, and the Bounder eyed them, with a sarcastic grin. Harry Wharton and Johnny Bull ignored him as if he did not exist. Hurree Singh looked another way. Bob Cherry coloured rather uncomfortably, and Frank Nugent gave him a look of cold scorn. Frank was more down on the Bounder than his friends, good-natured as he was. It was because Frank had been played in the St. Jude's match in the place to which Smithy considered his own chum, Redwing, was entitled, that the trouble had started. That was the only reason, so far as the Remove knew, why Smithy had let the cricketers down in the middle of the match.

Frank, after all, had played quite a good game, and helped to keep down the margin of defeat, and the Bounder's contemptuous gibes rankled in his breast. Smithy met his scornful glance with a smile.

"Dear old Nugent's got his dear little back up more than the other silly asses," he remarked to Redwing, when the Famous Five had walked on.

"Well, that's natural enough," said Tom. "You treated Nugent rottenly, Smithy—you know that as well as I do!"

"Quite!" agreed the Bounder. "But I rather tried to make up for it afterwards, Reddy."

"Did you?" said Tom. He knew nothing of that.

"In fact, I rather think I have made

up for it, and a little over, if the dear boy only knew!" drawled Smithy.

"I don't see how——"

"Of course you don't! Hallo, here are some of the microbes of the Second! Let's go and speak to them!"

"What on earth for?" demanded Tom.

Three fags of the Second Form—Nugent minor, Gatty, and Myers, were scudding in the quad, jerking off one another's caps, and generally "playing the goat" in the manner of the Second! It was the first time that Herbert Vernon-Smith had shown any interest in the existence of the Second Form.

"Oh, let's!" said Smithy. "It will get Nugent's rag out if he sees me talkin' to his minor."

"Well, I don't want to get Nugent's rag out."

"It will be rather amusin', especially in the circumstances."

"What circumstances?"

"That," said the Bounder gravely, "is a secret—a deep, deadly, and mysterious secret."

"Oh, don't be an ass, Smithy," said Tom restively.

"Can't help it, old bean! Asses, like poets, are born and not made," said Vernon-Smith. "I dare say you never guessed that I was the biggest ass in the Remove—present company excepted, of course."

"Fathead!"

"But it's the fact," said Smithy. "It's the real, genuine, solid fact! Suppose I told you that I cut the cricket yesterday, Reddy, to do a good deed—like one of those jolly scouts who do a good turn every day? Think you could swallow it?"

"I think I could," said Tom. "I

know you better than the other fellows, Smithy. But—the Remove would want a lot of proof, I'm afraid."

"Just what I'm not goin' to give them," said Smithy, laughing. "Let's nail those fags, and make Nugent scowl. It's amusin'."

"Look here, Smithy——"

"Bow-wow! Hallo, young shaver!" The Bounder hailed Nugent minor, and Dicky, rather to Redwing's surprise, gave him a friendly grin. It was only a couple of days since Smithy had smacked the fag's head, when he came up to the Remove passage to see his brother in Study No. 1, and Dicky had promptly hacked his shins in return. So far as Redwing knew, his chum had not come into contact with Master Dicky since then. So it was rather surprising to see that friendly grin on Dicky's face.

"Hallo!" responded Dicky Nugent.

"Getting on all right with your Form master?" asked Smithy.

"Right as rain!" answered Dicky. "Old Twigg's all right! Gatty thinks he's going to give me my pound back some time."

"Sure thing!" said Gatty, with a nod. "Old Twigg's bark is always worse than his bite. Believe me, he will squeeze it out some day when he's in a good temper."

"You see," the Bounder explained to the wondering Redwing, "Dicky had a pound note from a benevolent uncle, and Twigg found that he was going to spend it all on bursting the Second with a gigantic gorge. So he took it away to send back to nunky."

"Hard cheese, Dicky!" said Redwing, with a smile.

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"Well, he was waxy with me, too," said Dicky. "I did him a ripping Latin exercise, but I believe he guessed that Frank did it for me. Then he found out about the pound and bagged it."

"And Dicky bragged that he would take it back from Twigg's desk," said Myers. "But I jolly well knew he wouldn't!"

"Look here, young Myers—" roared Dicky.

"Well, you didn't, anyhow!" jeered Myers.

"I knew it was gas!" agreed Gatty.

"It was gone when I looked for it!" hooted Dicky. "If it had been in Twigg's desk I'd have had it—"

"Gammon!"

"I jolly well tell you I went for it—in Twigg's study, while he was out with Prout yesterday—"

"Shut up, you young ass!" said the Bounder. "That's not a thing to yell out in the quad."

"Well, I'm not having any cheek from these silly duffers!" said Dicky Nugent. "I've a jolly good mind—"

"Here comes your major!" said Gatty. "Let's cut; I can see he's going to jaw you. We hear too much from your major, young Nugent!"

"He won't jaw me," said Dicky independently.

And he eyed Frank Nugent with cool defiance as the Removite came up. Frank was undoubtedly looking less amiable than usual.

"What the dickens are you talking to Vernon-Smith for, Dicky?" asked Frank.

"Because I choose!" answered Dicky.

"Well, let him alone! He's been sent to Coventry by the Remove—"

"I'm not in the Remove, am I?" demanded Nugent minor. "Mob of silly duffers, if you ask me! The Remove can go and eat coke!"

"Well, look here, keep clear of Vernon-Smith!"

"Shan't!" retorted Dicky. "What are you barring Smithy for, I'd like to know? He's a better man than you any day!"

"Hear, hear!" chuckled the Bounder. Nugent crimsoned.

"You young sweep—" he began hotly.

"Oh, can it!" said Dicky. "Leave a man alone! See? You're not going to give me orders because you help me with Latin sometimes. Hallo! There's Bolsover minor, you men. Knock his hat off!"

The heroes of the Second rushed off in chase of Bolsover minor of the Third. Frank gave the Bounder a black look—to which Smithy responded with a cheery grin. Then, without a word, he stalked away to rejoin his friends.

"Amusin', ain't he?" drawled the Bounder.

"Oh, rot!" said Redwing. He did not see anything amusing in irritating and exasperating Frank Nugent. The Bounder seemed to find it amusing, and he was smiling cheerfully when he went in to breakfast with his chum—a barred outcast to the rest of the Remove.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A One-sided Conversation!

HARRY WHARTON, after class that day, lingered in the House when his comrades went out.

He waited by a window in the passage that led to the prefects' room—a passage which the feet of Lower School fellows were generally unwilling to tread. He was waiting there

for Herbert Vernon-Smith to pass. Smithy had to appear before the Head of the Games, to answer for his conduct the previous day, but he was not in a hurry. Wharton had waited some little time before he saw the Bounder lounging up the passage with his hands in his pockets.

The captain of the Remove was looking very thoughtful. The fierce anger roused by Smithy's offence had passed, and reflection had followed. Smithy was sent to Coventry, and if he had nothing to say for himself, he fully deserved it—and more—and Wharton had no idea of making things any easier for him. But had he something to say for himself? That question rather worried the captain of the Remove now that he had had ample time to consider the matter more calmly and at leisure. If he had deliberately left the team in the lurch from no motive but spiteful malice he deserved to be kicked out of Greyfriars. But had he?

With all his faults, all his cheek and his headstrong arrogance, Smithy had always been a sportsman, and his temper—often as it had led him astray—had never led him into such an action as this before. Often, no doubt, he had sailed very near the wind when his back was up. But this was the limit—far beyond the limit. If the fellow had,

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after all, anything to say for himself, then—

Vernon-Smith stared at Wharton for a moment in passing, and would have lounged on. But Harry stepped out into his way.

"Hold on a minute, Smithy," he said almost amicably.

Smithy stopped, still staring. He did not answer. He seemed to remember that he was in Coventry, if his Form captain did not.

"You're going up before Wingate now," went on Wharton. "Well, listen to me. Yesterday you said something about explaining to me why you cut the cricket—keeping it dark from all the rest. That would hardly have done, in the circumstances. Still, I remember you said so. Then you changed your mind, after hearing that Wingate had taken the matter up."

The Bounder smiled ironically, but he did not speak.

"I've been thinking it over," went on Harry. "On the face of it, it looks as if you left us in the lurch, out of rotten malice, because Nugent was played instead of your pal Redwing. But it's hard to believe that any fellow could be such a rotter and such a fool."

No answer.

"You said you had an explanation, which you would give to me alone as cricket captain. But it seems that you didn't want to do that after hearing that head prefect was mixed up in the

matter. Most of the fellows think that means that you went pub-haunting when you left us in the lurch yesterday."

Smithy shrugged his shoulders.

"I thought I'd make a sort of appeal to you, Smithy," said Wharton quietly. "I don't want to believe you an out-and-out rotter. I don't want to have to cut you out of the cricket all through the summer term. I know that you had an accident while you were out; your leg's crooked. I've wondered whether that was why you did not turn up."

Another shrug.

"Even so, it doesn't explain why you went out on your bike while the game was on. Redwing came down to the ground, saying you were coming. But you never came. Wibley saw you go out on your bike soon after that. It looks—well, you know how it looks. But can't you say anything that would make it look different?"

No answer.

"If you can, I'll be jolly glad to hear it! If you can't, Coventry goes on till the end of the term! You can't want that. I ought not to be speaking to you now really, but—well, have you anything to say, Smithy?"

Apparently Smithy hadn't. At all events, he said nothing. He stood staring at the captain of the Remove in silence.

"I'm waiting," said Harry. "Can't you speak?"

Vernon-Smith shook his head. There was a mocking glimmer in his eyes, and Wharton felt his temper rising.

"Why not, you ass?" demanded Harry sharply.

The Bounder, to Wharton's astonishment, felt in his pocket. He took out a little notebook, with a pencil attached. Wharton watched him blankly while he opened it and scribbled a few words in pencil.

"What the thump—" exclaimed Wharton.

Vernon-Smith held up the open page for him to look at. On it was written:

"I'm in Coventry."

Wharton's face crimsoned. He realised that the Bounder was deliberately pulling his leg. Being in Coventry, it amused the sardonic Bounder to keep it up, whether the other fellows did or not.

"You silly, cheeky ass!" exclaimed Wharton, his eyes gleaming. "I'm asking you for the last time—will you answer me?"

Without speaking, the Bounder tapped the words he had written with his forefinger. Evidently he did not intend to speak.

Harry Wharton drew a deep, deep breath. His hands clenched hard. He had transgressed the sentence laid down by the Form, in the hope of somehow clearing up the matter and getting matters back to their old footing. And this was how the Bounder received his attempt to heal the breach. It was in his mind to knock the mocking, jeering fellow headlong.

"You cheeky rotter!" said the captain of the Remove between his teeth. "That finishes it! You're in Coventry, you cad, and you stay there! I've a jolly good mind—"

Vernon-Smith took the pencil again, scribbled a couple of words, and held them up to view. The words were "Shut up!"

The next moment notebook and pencil were knocked from his hand and swept to the floor. Wharton came at him with his hands up, and his eyes glinting over them.

Instantly the Bounder's hands shot up. In another moment there would have been a scrap in progress within a few

yards of the door of the prefects' room! But even as they were about to close in strife, Wharton realised that Smithy was limping, and remembered that he was crocked.

He dropped his hands at once and stepped quickly back. The Bounder stared at him in astonishment; then, as he understood Wharton's motive, his eyes flamed with rage. He was crocked, and he could not have stood up to the captain of the Remove for a minute; but his arrogant pride was up in arms—he hated to be spared. He made a stride after Wharton—and then, as a twinge of pain caught him, panted and stopped.

"Cut it out!" said Harry. "You'll get enough from Wingate, anyhow—no need for me to touch you."

Vernon-Smith opened his lips—and closed them again.

Harry Wharton laughed contemptuously and walked away. The Bounder crammed the notebook into his pocket and scowled after him.

Wharton went out into the quad. The fat voice of Billy Bunter fell on his ears as he looked round for his chums.

"I say, you fellows, are you going to send Wharton to Coventry, like Redwing? He's talking to Smithy—I saw him in the prefects' passage."

"Shut up, you ass!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I tell you I saw them jawing nineteen to the dozen!" said Bunter indignantly. "I jolly well think he ought to be licked. I've a jolly good mind to kick him, so there!"

"The esteemed kickfulness might be a boot on the other leg, my absurd and idiotic Bunter!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Yah!" retorted Bunter. "Who's afraid of Wharton, I'd like to know? Swanking ass, if you ask me! I'd jolly well tell him so if he was here! What are you sniggering at?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Co., who had a full view of the captain of the Remove, coming along behind Bunter. Bunter, who, of course, had no eyes in the back of his bullet head, did not see him coming.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said the fat Owl. "Smithy's in Coventry, and a fellow who speaks to him ought to be jolly well kicked. You can snigger, but what I jolly well say is—Whoooooop!"

Bunter made that remark as a foot landed on his tight trousers. He spun round, roaring, and blinked at Harry Wharton in great alarm through his big spectacles.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "I—I didn't see you, old chap! I—I was just saying to these fellows that it was rather decent of you to speak a word or two to poor old Smithy, and—Beast! Gerroff! Stop kicking me, you rotter! Wow! Oh lor'! Oh crikey!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaroooooh!"

Billy Bunter fled.

"Had it out with Smithy?" asked Johnny Bull, rather gruffly.

"I'm fed-up with the cheeky rotter!" was Wharton's reply.

And that was that!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Benefit of the Doubt!

WINGATE of the Sixth was sitting in the prefects' room, with his ashplant lying on the table within easy reach. Wingate had no doubt that that ashplant would be required in the coming interview.

A few years ago the largest submarine carried only five men. To-day, more than a hundred men form the crew of

"A Demon of the Deep!"

which is the subject of this week's topping photogravure plate.

YOU would shudder at the mere thought of working, eating, sleeping, and generally living down among the maze of astonishing machinery that forms the interior of a modern submarine—with only a shell of steel between you and death in the depths of the sea. But wouldn't you jump at the chance of looking over one of these demons of the deep for a few minutes—providing the sub. were tied up tightly to a harbour wall and not submerged?

Under Water for Sixty Hours!

Yet naval men come to regard that job as just nothing. What have they to assure them that when their submarine submerges they will ever come up again? Well, the submarine of to-day is an astounding marvel, and the chances of accident have been cut down to the minimum. A big, up-to-date submarine costs about half a million pounds to build—many a destroyer costs less—and may carry more than a hundred men as the crew!

It can stay under water for sixty hours, if need be, completely invisible, but for the periscopes—which are the submarine's "eyes"—showing just above the surface. That's the skipper's post, by the end of the periscope, and by its aid he can see over the surface of the sea, in all directions, for a considerable distance. He needs more than one pair of eyes, really, for he has also to watch the instruments which register the submarine's depth.

If the submarine went down too far, the weight of water would crush in her sides like a blown-up paper bag suddenly banged between the hands. His officers and other ratings each have their own special job to attend to, and so it is really a case of all lives aboard being in

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Gwynne and Sykes of the Sixth were in the room with him. The Bounder came in without knocking, and stood before the three prefects with his hands in his pockets and a faintly sneering smile on his hard face. Smithy had to turn up at the order of the Head of the Games, but he made it quite clear that he was not awed by the prefects' room and its lofty occupants. His cool attitude made the Greyfriars captain's brow darken.

"You wanted to see me, I think you said, Wingate!" remarked the Bounder negligently.

"Yes. First of all, take your hands out of your pockets!"

"Any old thing!" The Bounder took them out, but he contrived to infuse impertinence into the way he did it.

"Cheek won't help you, Vernon-Smith!" said Wingate quietly. "Now, let's have this out! From what I've heard, you acted yesterday like a thorough young rotter! You played in an innings, so that Wharton couldn't put a man in in your place—and then let the team down! I hear that there was some trouble about a pal of yours

everyone's hands—with the skipper officially responsible.

It takes less than a minute for a submarine to disappear beneath the sea, this being done by filling the big water-tanks through the sea-cocks, the weight then being sufficient to take the submarine down below. When the submarine is to rise again, the tanks are "blown"—that is, the water is forced out of the tanks and the underwater vessel is then light enough to come to the top again.

In Case of Emergencies!

Should anything go wrong with this machinery, and the submarine fail to rise, the big keel, tons in weight, can be automatically cast off, thus lightening her very considerably. If that fails, the men have a last chance for their lives. They can put on the wonderful Davis Escape Apparatus (as shown in our plate), leave the stricken submarine, and, if they are lucky, shoot to the surface. A famous instance of this apparatus saving several lives occurred when the British submarine Poseidon was sunk, after a collision, in Chinese waters.

A few years ago the biggest submarine carried a crew of only five, and it was always a toss-up whether the crew ever saw the light of day again after submerging. But the crews don't seem to think of their immense dangers. During the Great War, British submarines actually ran the gauntlet of huge, weighted nets sunk by the enemy across the mouth of a piece of water to keep them out. But the submarines simply dived below the nets—deeper than the designers ever intended them to go—then came up, bombarded the enemy coast, and did all the damage they could, then submerged again, and crept back under the nets!

being left out—as if you had any right to dictate to your skipper whom he should play and whom he shouldn't! Is that why you cut the game?"

"No!"

"Then why?" demanded Wingate. "What reason can you give?"

"Well, I might have had a lot of reasons, Wingate," said the Bounder in a casual, conversational tone. "Suppose I had a telegram saying that my pater was ill—"

"Did you?"

"Oh, no!"

"Then what do you mean?" snapped Wingate.

"I mean what I say—that I might have had a lot of reasons, and that might have been one of them. As it happens, it wasn't!"

Wingate stretched out his hand to the ashplant. But he withdrew it again.

"I'm going to be as patient as I can, Vernon-Smith," he said quietly. "No Greyfriars man can be allowed to act as you appear to have done. But I want to hear anything you can say in your defence. Did you have any reason

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for cutting the match, except silly malice against your skipper?"

"Yes."

"What was the reason?"

"I went out on my bike, and was crooked coming back. I was rather cutting it fine, and nearly ran into a rider in Redclyffe Woods."

"All very well; but that doesn't explain why you went out for a bike ride in the middle of a cricket match—and the path through Redclyffe Woods is miles from here. Why did you go out on your bike?"

The Bounder laughed.

"You won't believe me when I tell you," he answered. "But I'll tell you. I went out to do a good deed!"

"What?" roared Wingate, while Gwynne and Sykes stared blankly at the Bounder. Whatever they had expected, they had not expected such a reply as that from the mocking, hard-faced Bounder of Greyfriars.

"G-o-o-d, good d-e-e-d, deed!" said the Bounder, spelling it out, with cheerful impertinence. "I'm not always a model of virtue and an example to errin' youth, like yourself, Wingate—"

"You'd better take care, Vernon-Smith!" said the captain of Greyfriars, breathing hard.

"But, without bein', as a rule, a shinin' light, every now and then I'm not so black as I'm painted," went on Smithy. "Bein' on bad terms with a certain fellow, I went out specially to do him an act of kindness—at the risk of lettin' down the cricket. Sounds steep, doesn't it?"

"Rather too steep, you young ass!" said Gwynne, staring at him. "Give him six and kick him out, Wingate."

But Wingate did not reach for the ashplant. His eyes were fixed very curiously on Herbert Vernon-Smith.

"Do you expect a yarn like that to be swallowed?" he asked.

"Not at all!"

"Then why are you spinning it to me?"

"Because this is one of my truthful days," said the Bounder. "Like jolly old Washington, I cannot tell a lie."

"Very well," said Wingate, compressing his lips. "Who was the fellow you were on bad terms with?"

"Guess!"

"You're to tell me."

"Nothin' doin'," answered the Bounder coolly. "I'm ready to be licked. Which chair shall I bend over?"

"And how did you do the fellow a good turn?" asked Wingate.

"Guess again!"

"You won't tell me that?"

"No!"

"Why not?"

"It might land somebody in trouble. Don't ask me to undo the good work of my own hands," said the Bounder mockingly. "I don't do such a fearful lot of good deeds that I can afford to spoil 'em when done!"

"I'd make it a dozen, Wingate!" remarked Sykes.

"Six will do for me, if you don't mind, Wingate," suggested the Bounder. "I never was greedy."

Again Wingate stretched out his hand to the ashplant. Again he withdrew it. He was looking a little perplexed.

"You've told me this yarn, knowing that I shouldn't believe it!" he said slowly.

"Exactly! I shouldn't have told you if I'd thought for a moment that you'd believe it," assented the Bounder.

"I'm rather disposed to believe it, all the same," said Wingate rather unexpectedly. "It may be sheer unadulterated cheek—but—" He paused.

"You're a tough young scoundrel, Vernon-Smith, and you want licking more than any other kid at Greyfriars. But—"

He paused again. He was puzzled and perplexed. Somehow or other, in spite of the Bounder's mockery, it seemed to Wingate that there was a ring of truth in what he had said.

"If you're telling me the truth—" he said at last.

"A jolly big 'if'!" grunted Gwynne.

"If you're telling me the truth, Vernon-Smith, you went out, intending to return and play cricket, and got crooked on the way home. Is that it?"

"You've got it."

"And the matter was so urgent that you thought you were entitled to take the risk of letting down your skipper?"

"Exactly!"

"I can't see what matter could be so urgent as that."

"There are things in this jolly old universe, Wingate, hidden from even a Sixth-Former, a head prefect, and Head of the Games!" said the Bounder coolly. "As Shakespeare remarks somewhere, there are more things in the heavens and the earth than are dreamt of in your jolly old philosophy."

"You're asking for it," said Wingate grimly. "I'm not sure yet that you won't get it! You want me to believe that some fellow was in a scrape, and you went to help him out, and it was so serious a matter that you had to let the cricket go to pot for it—"

"Not at all!" said the Bounder carelessly. "It's the truth; but I don't care two straws whether you believe it or not."

"Do you expect me to believe it without giving names and details?"

"Not in the least."

"Well, will you give them?"

"No, I won't!"

Wingate rose to his feet.

"Ready!" said the Bounder. "Which chair? Don't hang it out, Wingate—this suspense is killin' me, as the nigger said when they hung him."

But the captain of the school did not pick up the ashplant. He raised his hand; but it was to point to the door.

"You can cut!" he said. "I'm giving you the benefit of the doubt, Vernon-Smith! Cut, you young rascal!"

"Oh!" said Smithy, taken aback.

He stood irresolute. The cool impertinence faded out of his face. He was silent for a moment or two, and then he spoke hurriedly and in a very different tone.

"Look here, Wingate! I'm sorry I cheeked you! But—it was the truth, every word of it, that I've said—and I'd tell you the whole story if it wasn't for getting a silly fool into a row. Now you've let me off, you can believe that that's the truth."

Wingate gave him a long look; and nodded.

"I believe you," he said. "Better not let anything of the kind occur again—but I take your word, Vernon-Smith. Now cut!"

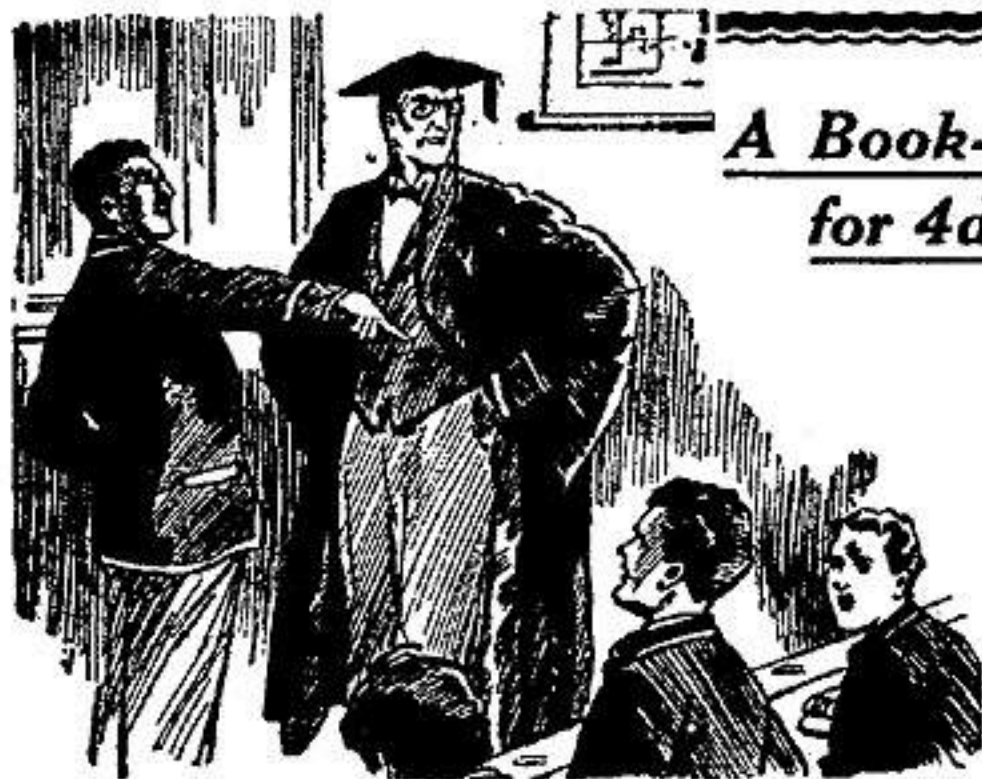
And the Bounder left the prefects' room.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Redwing!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. were coming in to tea when the Bounder came along to the Remove passage after his interview with the Head of the Games.

Smithy was going up the Remove staircase ahead of them, stepping carefully with his "game" leg; but his manner was cool and unconcerned, and it was



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easy to see that there had been no "whopping" in the prefects' room.

The Famous Five could not help being surprised. It seemed impossible that Wingate could have overlooked such an offence as the Bounder's, once he had taken the matter in hand. Yet the Bounder was evidently in cheery spirits; and as he heard the juniors behind him on the stairs he looked round, and laughed lightly. Then he limped on to Study No. 4, where Tom Redwing was waiting rather anxiously for him.

Redwing's clouded brow cleared as Smithy came in. He, as well as the Famous Five, could see that the Bounder's luck had held good again, and that he had come through the interview without damage.

"All serene?" he asked.

"As Inky would say, the serenity is terrific," answered Vernon-Smith, laughing. "It's always the unexpected that happens."

"Not a licking?"

"Do I look like it?"

"Well, no! Is Wingate reporting you to the games-master, or what?"

"Nothing—it's the jolly old end of the affair, so far as the powers are concerned," answered the Bounder, sitting down in the armchair. "I told Wingate the truth, Reddy—up to a point—meanin' to cheek him and pull his leg. But Wingate's no fool! He could see that there was somethin' in it—and he washed it out."

"And what did you tell him?" asked Redwing quietly.

The Bounder chuckled.

"That I was called out urgently to do a good deed, and had to chance the cricket going to pot," he answered.

Redwing jumped.

"You told Wingate that?" he stutered.

"Yes."

"And he didn't skin you?"

"No! As I've said, he's no fool! I said it to pull his leg—but he spotted somehow that it was the fact! Wise old codger, Wingate!"

"The fact, Smithy?"

"The solid, frozen fact!" answered the Bounder. "And now Wingate's let the matter drop, and there won't be any prefects or beaks mixed up in the matter, I'd explain to Wharton—if I wasn't in Coventry! But we're not on speakin' terms now." Vernon-Smith grinned. "Also, as I'm turned out of the cricket, he's no longer my skipper, and so, of course, he's not entitled to an explanation. So I shan't say a word to him."

"I'm afraid it wouldn't be much use satisfying Wharton without telling the other fellows. They would think you'd stuffed him somehow. I'm afraid they'd think you've stuffed Wingate if they knew—"

"Exactly! I'm sayin' nothin'."

"But I shan't think so," said Tom, "and if you care to tell me, Smithy, I'd be glad to know that you weren't to blame."

The Bounder nodded.

"I'll tell you—if you'll keep it deadly dark, Reddy. For one thing, I'd rather stick in Coventry all the while I'm at Greyfriars than be pointed out as a Good Little Georgie who does good deeds! For another, if a single word gets out a fellow will be sacked."

"I can't guess whom," said Redwing.

"A Remove man—"

"A fag in the Second Form."

"Smithy!"

"Fact, old bean! His name's Richard Nugent."

"Nugent's young brother!" exclaimed Redwing, staring blankly at his chum.

The Bounder burst into a laugh.

"I've surprised you, what? I thought

I should! Mind, it's a promise you keep the secret."

"Of course! Don't pull my leg, old man—no use stuffing me."

"Believe me or not, as you like! This is how it was—you told me I'd treated Nugent rottenly—and I agreed that I had! Well, when you came to call me to the cricket after lunch, St. Jude's day, I told you I was comin'—I was goin' to keep Wharton waitin' a bit, and then come. Then I spotted young Nugent sneakin' out of his brother's study lookin' like a ghost. A blind man could have seen that the silly kid had taken the knock. I fancied I'd see what was up—and let Nugent know. Well, he had left a letter for his brother on the table in Study No. 1—open for any fellow to see who'd gone in. Guess what he'd written?"

Redwing shook his head.

"It seems that Twigg bagged a pound-note from him the other day, and was goin' to post it back to the kid's uncle. Dicky bragged to the other fags that he'd take it from Twigg's desk. He looked for it, and it wasn't there—but a fiver, belonging to Twigg, was."

"Oh, my hat! But he didn't—"

"No; he's not a thief—only a silly little idiot! He took the fiver, meanin' to change it and put four pounds back."

"The cheeky little sweep! He'd have been flogged!" exclaimed Redwing, aghast. "But what—"

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"Probably he thought of that, for, accordin' to what he scribbled down in his brother's study, he was goin' to put the note back. But while he was ponderin' over it, standin' at Twigg's window, the wind caught it and blew it away—and he never found it again."

"The young idiot!"

"That's what he wrote for his brother to read," said Smithy, with a sardonic curl of the lip. "Whether it was true, I can't say. He may have pinched the fiver. Still, I think it was true."

"I'm sure it was," said Redwing quietly. "Dicky's a cheeky little rascal, but no thief! But what—"

"He knew what Twigg would think, of course, when he missed the banknote, and he left that letter for his brother, and bunked."

"You don't mean he ran away?" exclaimed Redwing.

"I mean exactly that. He headed for Courtfield on a bike to catch the two o'clock express for home."

"Good heavens! Why, they'd have had no doubt he was guilty—he'd have been disgraced for life!"

"Quite! I thought that would be rather tough on his major. There was a chance of getting hold of the little fool in time, and I cut down for my bike, and went all out after him. I was late for the train—but so was he, as it happened. He hit for Lantham—and I got him on the Redclyffe road, manfully resisted the temptation to wring his neck, and talked to him like a Dutch uncle instead. And he agreed to come back—and I left him, and crooked myself in Redclyffe Woods, ridin' like a giddy lunatic to get back in time for the innings."

"Oh, Smithy! If the fellows knew, they—"

Vernon-Smith chuckled.

"If the fellows knew, it wouldn't be long before the beaks knew, and Master Richard Nugent would be slung out of Greyfriars on his neck!" he said.

"But—but I don't quite get it," said Redwing. "There's been no talk of Twigg missing a banknote, or anything—"

"He hasn't missed one."

"Did the silly kid find it, after all, then?"

"Not in the least! Can't you see, you ass?" growled the Bounder. "Twigg's note was blown goodness knows where, if it really happened as Nugent minor made out—anyhow, it was gone for good. I gave him a fiver to put in Twigg's desk in place of it."

"You gave him a fiver? Oh, Smithy!"

"What could I do, fathead? He wouldn't have come back to be sacked—unless I'd dragged him by his ears—and what good would that have been? He'd have been bunked for pinching Twigg's banknote. Think Twigg would have believed a yarn of a banknote blowing out of the window? The young ass shouldn't have had it in his paws at all. A fellow who bags a man's money can't ask that man to believe that he was going to put it back, only he lost it!"

"But—but suppose Twigg spots that it's a different banknote—you know, they have different numbers, Smithy, and—"

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders.

"That's a risk that had to be taken. But it's precious small. Why should Twigg look at the number? He left a banknote in the desk—he found a banknote there—why should he dream for a moment that the fiver had been changed for another?"

"Well, I suppose there's not much risk," assented Redwing, with a nod. "Twigg loses nothing—but you lose five quid—and—and—and you're sent to Coventry by the Form—and—"

"And that's that!" said the Bounder. "What about tea?"

"I understand that you had to keep it dark, Smithy, when a prefect got hold of the matter. But now Wingate's dropped it, you could tell Wharton—and Nugent, too—they'd keep it dark—"

The Bounder gave a hard laugh.

"Yes, I'm likely to tell them! Can't you imagine me going to Wharton and sayin': 'Please let me out of Coventry, because I'm not really the malicious rotter you've called me, but a dear, good, kind-hearted fellow who forgives his enemies and helps them out of trouble, like Good Little Georgie in the story-book.'"

Redwing laughed involuntarily. Certainly he could not imagine the Bounder of Greyfriars putting it like that.

"But they ought to know!" he said. "Especially Nugent, as he's down on you more than the rest—"

"Yes—that's rather amusin'. But they won't know—from me, or from you, either, Reddy. I've told you what happened—and I rather wish I hadn't. I hardly know now how I came to play the goat like that—it's not in my line. Generally I manage to mind my own business. I must have got a touch of "pi" from associatin' with you."

"I'm glad you did it, Smithy, and you're glad, too," said Tom; "and it's like you, too, though most fellows wouldn't believe it. I wish—"

"What about tea?" interrupted the Bounder. "You'll have to get tea—I can't hop round the study—at least, I don't want to."

"Sit where you are, fathead!" said Redwing, and he proceeded to get the study tea.

His face was bright now, and his heart lighter. He had felt all along that Smithy could have explained, had he chosen—though he had never dreamed that the explanation would be anything like this. And he was glad, from the bottom of his heart, that he had resolved to trust his chum, and stand by him against the Form. More than once, Tom Redwing had been ashamed of Smithy—but he was proud of him now; and if the Bouncer was condemned by the whole school, he had at least one staunch chum to stand by him through thick and thin.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Whose Fiver?

"MAULY!"

Lord Mauleverer of the Remove seemed deaf. If he was not deaf, at all events he turned a deaf ear.

"Mauly!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

It was after class. Lord Mauleverer, having carefully dodged the fellows who would have walked him down to games practice, was taking a gentle stroll in the quad. His lazy lordship was ambling along at about the pace of a fatigued snail, when Billy Bunter's squeak fell on his ears. It had the effect on Mauly of a spur on a steed. Immediately Mauly bucked up, and walked fast.

"Mauly!" howled Bunter.

Mauleverer walked faster.

Bunter rolled in pursuit. Billy Bunter had been disappointed about a postal order that day, which he had long been expecting. And Mrs. Mimble, at the school shop, had a fresh supply of jammy, juicy, creamy tarts! For these two good reasons, the Owl of the Remove wanted to speak to Lord Mauleverer. But the desire for conversation seemed to be all on Bunter's side. Mauly walked faster and faster.

"Beast!" gasped Bunter.

It was quite a warm afternoon in early summer. Billy Bunter did not like putting on speed at any time, especially on a warm afternoon. But he accelerated!

"I say, Mauly, stop a minute!" howled Bunter, labouring in pursuit.

Instead of stopping, Mauly almost ran. He disappeared into the old Cloisters, and as soon as he was out of sight he slipped behind one of the old stone pillars. There he stood, with bated breath.

A minute later Bunter rolled under the old arches. He blinked round for the slim and elegant figure of Lord Mauleverer, without seeing it.

"Beast!" grunted Bunter. "Dodging a chap! Silly ass! Lackadaisical dummy! Rotter!" Whereat Lord Mauleverer grinned.

And Bunter rolled on, blinking to right and blinking to left, in search of his elusive lordship. And Lord Mauleverer, stepping out of his hiding-place on tiptoe, walked back to the quad, and strolled on his way there with a gentle smile on his lazy face—leaving Billy Bunter to root through the Cloisters for him, and hoping that it would take him a long time.

Billy Bunter, like the deep and dark blue ocean in the poem, rolled on. At the end of the Cloisters he stopped at the ivied wall, and ejaculated once more:

"Beast!"

He realised that Mauly had dodged him. Why fellows eluded Billy Bunter's

fascinating society was rather a mystery to Bunter. But there was no doubt that they did! Which way Mauly had gone, and where he was now, the fat Owl could not even guess; he had to give Mauly up. And he leaned on the ivied wall, gasping for breath, and snorted.

It was while Billy Bunter was taking that much-needed rest in that quiet and secluded spot, that he noticed a flimsy slip of paper fluttering in the wind that blew through the Cloisters.

He gave it no particular attention at first, only thinking idly to himself that it looked just like a banknote.

Then, with a sudden jump, the fat Owl realised that that was exactly what it was!

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bunter.

He made a dive for the slip of paper, chased it, and caught it. He blinked at it through his big spectacles.

It was a Bank of England note for five pounds!

How it came blowing about the old Cloisters Bunter could not begin to guess. If a fellow had dropped a five-pound note about the school, the fact would have been announced at once—there would have been a notice on the board—everybody would have known. Fivers were not common at Greyfriars. Lord Mauleverer and the Bouncer and Monty Newland were the only fellows in the Remove who had such things. Coker of the Fifth had fivers sometimes—and one or two other wealthy fellows. But there was nobody at Greyfriars so wealthy, or so careless with money, that he could drop fivers about without notifying his loss and making some effort to recover his property.

So it really was astonishing to pick up a five-pound note in the Cloisters, when, so far as Bunter knew, nobody at Greyfriars had missed such an article.

"It's a fiver!" murmured Bunter, blinking at it. "My hat! I jolly well wish it were mine! I wonder what silly ass dropped it! Smithy's too jolly careful with his money to drop fivers about—Mauly, perhaps, or that ass Coker—but it's jolly queer!"

It really was queer; for banknotes were kept, naturally, in notecases or pocket-books, and there was no conceivable reason why any fellow should take one out of its receptacle in the Cloisters.

Of course, it might have been dropped somewhere else, and blown about in the gusty wind till it landed where Bunter had found it. Still, it was very queer! How the thump could any fellow drop a banknote without being aware of it? Still, there it was—in Bunter's fat paw!

If that fiver had belonged to Bunter—Mrs. Mimble would have done a roaring trade that afternoon in jam tarts! But it did not belong to Bunter—and there had been an occasion when Bunter had found himself in serious trouble for acting on the principle that "findings were keepings." Temptation assailed Bunter, as his fat paw closed on the flimsy slip; but he resisted it manfully, helped, no doubt, by fear of the consequences if he retained possession of the fiver.

"It's somebody's," murmured Bunter. "The silly ass hasn't missed it yet, or there would have been a row about it! Who's idiot enough to drop fivers about, and never miss them? Only Mauly!"

That seemed certain to Bunter! Obviously, the fiver must have belonged to some fellow who possessed such things—and they were few in number. And of all the fellows Bunter had heard of at Greyfriars who ever had fivers there was only one who was careless

with them—and that was Lord Mauleverer. Mauly had been known to use a five-pound note as a bookmark!

"It's Mauly's," decided Bunter. "Must be Mauly's—nobody else is idiot enough to lose fivers! It's Mauly's all right."

And Bunter grinned.

If he restored that lost fiver to Mauly his lordship could scarcely do less than make him a little loan out of it—to the amount of the postal order he was expecting, and which had not yet arrived!

"Silly ass!" grunted Bunter. "Dropping fivers—and dodging a chap who wants to borrow half-a-crown for a few hours! Serve him jolly well right if I didn't give it to him! Still, I will—and he can lend me that five bob I was expecting by post! Or ten—No, dash it all! Why shouldn't he lend me a quid? He will be four pounds to the good, then! Lots of fellows would keep this fiver—lucky for him I'm so jolly honourable! Only they've got numbers on them, and—and—I'd better find Mauly!"

Billy Bunter put the banknote into his pocket, and rolled out of the Cloisters. Mauly had dodged him once, and he had given up his lordship as a bad job! But he simply had to find Mauly now—and the sooner he found him the better! Bunter could not help having a sort of feeling that if he did not get rid of that fiver soon his footsteps would lead him in the direction of the tuck-shop and jam tarts—and then it would be too late!

"I say, Skinner!" He sighted Skinner & Co. lounging in the quad. "I say, seen Mauly?"

"Yes, I've seen him," answered Skinner, with a nod.

"Where?"

"In Hall!"

"What the thump is the silly ass doing in Hall?" grunted Bunter.

He rolled on towards the House.

Skinner smiled at his friends, Snoop and Stott. It was true that he had seen Mauly in Hall; but that was at dinner, hours ago. He did not mention that circumstance to Billy Bunter, however.

It did not dawn on Bunter that Skinner had acted from a misdirected sense of humour, till he had arrived at Hall, and blinked round for Mauly without finding him there.

"Beast!" murmured Bunter, breathing hard with wrath as he realised that the playful Skinner had been pulling his fat leg. And he rolled off once more in search of Mauly.

"Seen Mauly, Squiff?" He came on the Australian junior on his way to Little Side to join Harry Wharton & Co. at cricket practice. "I say, have you seen Mauleverer? I want him badly."

Squiff grinned. He had seen Mauly going up to his study, as a matter of fact. But he wasn't going to give Mauly away. Mauly was the only man in the Remove with such beautiful manners and polished customs that he would never kick Bunter as any other fellow would have done. Mauly would walk down long passages, turn corners, or lock his study door, to elude the attractive society of Billy Bunter; but more drastic methods were not in his lordship's line.

"Looked in the gym?" asked Squiff.

"What is that slacking ass doing in the gym?" grunted Bunter.

And off he rolled again.

It was not until he had explored the gym that he realised that Squiff had not told him that Mauleverer was there,

but only asked him if he had looked there!

Billy Bunter's little round eyes glittered with wrath behind his big round spectacles. Again he took up the weary trail.

On the House steps he came on Peter Todd.

"Seen Mauly, Toddy?"

"I didn't know Mauly had had a remittance," answered Toddy. "How did you know, Bunter?"

"Eh? I don't know, you ass!"

"Then what do you want him for?"

"You silly ass!" grunted Bunter. "I'm not looking for Mauly to borrow anything off him. The fact is, I've got five pounds for him—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Toddy, and he walked on, still laughing, and without giving Bunter any information.

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

He rolled into the House. He arrived at Study No. 12 in the Remove passage, hoping to find Mauly there. The door did not open when he turned the handle. Bunter banged on it.

"I say, Mauly—"

"Oh dear!" came his lordship's plaintive exclamation from within.

"Oh, here you are!" growled Bunter. "I've been hunting for you all over the shop, Mauly! What are you laughing at, you beast? I say, what have you locked your door for, old chap?"

"You!"

"Eh? You silly chump!" roared Bunter, through the keyhole. "I say, Mauly, I want to speak to you very particularly. Open the door, old chap."

"Can't!"

"Why not, you ass?"

"Tired."

"You howling dummy! What's made you tired?"

"You!"

"Beast!" hooted Bunter. "Look here, Mauly, I must speak to you! I've found a five-pound note—and I think it's yours, see?"

"Gammon!"

"You fathead, don't you believe me?"

"Hem!"

"I've got it in my pocket! Look here, Mauly, open the door! Have you dropped a fiver about the school?"

"Not that I know of. If you've got one you don't want, push it under the door!" chuckled Lord Mauleverer.

"Well, you see, I'd like you to lend me a pound out of it, old chap! I've been disappointed about a postal order. What are you cackling at, you idiot? Do you think I'm telling you this just to make you open your door?"

"Yaas."

"Beast!" roared Bunter. "Look here, I've really found a fiver. Is it yours?"

"No!"

"Sure it isn't?"

"Quite!"

"Beast!"

Bunter rolled off again, and a chuckle followed him from Study No. 12. Lord Mauleverer had not lost a fiver, and he certainly did not believe that Billy Bunter had found one.

Bunter, as it happened, was telling the truth; but, of course, no fellow could be expected to guess that.

The fat Owl rolled away with that mysterious fiver still in his possession.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Twigg on the Track!

RICHARD NUGENT of the Second Form presented himself at Mr. Twigg's doorway, with an "impot" in his hand.

Richard had had lines from Twigg, (Continued on next page.)

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which was not at all unusual; but he had written them out very carefully, which was quite unusual; and he had done them promptly, instead of leaving them till the latest possible moment, which was very unusual indeed. He presented himself at Twigg's study, trying to look as if butter would not melt in his mouth.

Dicky was being very good—for the nonce! He nourished hopes that if he made a favourable impression on Twigg, Twigg would let him have his pound note back, instead of sending it by post to the benevolent uncle who had given it to Dicky.

His friends, Gatty and Myers, had advised "soft sawder" as a method of softening Twigg's heart, and Dicky was trying the effect of soft sawder.

At the same time he had a dreadful feeling that all this goodness might be a sheer waste, as it was possible that Twigg had posted that pound note already! Which would have been really awful—goodness being rather a strain on Dicky Nugent.

Mr. Twigg's door was half open, and Quelch, the master of the Remove, was in the study. The Second Form master was speaking when Dicky arrived, and he did not notice the fag at the door.

"Extraordinary, Quelch!" Mr. Twigg was saying. "If one could believe in magic, this would really seem like it!"

"It must surely be the same banknote, Twigg!" answered the Remove master.

Dicky Nugent gave a start.

The mere mention of a banknote was enough to make Nugent minor jump. Smithy of the Remove had saved him from the consequences of his reckless folly; and Dicky, with his usual cheerful carelessness, had dismissed the matter from his mind. But it had occurred to him, every now and then, to wonder whether Mr. Twigg might possibly observe that it was not the same banknote in the drawer in his desk.

It was unlikely—very unlikely; but it was possible. It might happen, and if it did, what would follow? It seemed that Dicky was about to learn. For he could not doubt that it was that banknote of which his Form master was speaking now.

The fag had intended to attract Mr. Twigg's eye, in order to hand over his lines and get away. Now he changed his mind. He backed away quietly out of sight, but remained within hearing. It was rather urgent for Master Dicky to know what Twigg had found out about a banknote.

"That is the extraordinary thing, Quelch!" Mr. Twigg was saying. "It is not the same banknote! The whole occurrence is very puzzling. I do not always take the numbers of notes; but on this occasion I had noticed it, the number being a rather unusual sequence of figures—01234567. That is not a number one would be liable to forget."

"Quite so!" agreed Mr. Quelch.

"Imagine my surprise," went on Mr. Twigg, "when I took the note from my drawer that afternoon and found that it had a different number on it!"

"Really, Mr. Twigg—"

Mr. Quelch's tone was polite, but a little dry. It was clear that the Remove master supposed that Twigg had made some mistake.

It was not, to his mind, an extraordinary and amazing occurrence, but merely a mistake! Richard Nugent knew better; and he listened in the passage, with a thumping heart.

"I intended to send this banknote away by post to-day, in payment of a

certain account," said Mr. Twigg. "Glancing at it, I noticed that the number was not the same. As you see, Quelch, this note is numbered 044434."

"Quite!" said Quelch.

"It is a perfectly good note," said Mr. Twigg. "A genuine Bank of England five-pound note! But it is not the same note that I had in the drawer, which I placed there with my own hands. Is it not extraordinary?"

"Very!" said Quelch.

"There is no mistake in the matter," said Mr. Twigg, doubtless guessing Quelch's unuttered thoughts. "I am absolutely certain of what I say. Someone has been to my desk and changed my banknote for another of the same value! Why?"

"A very difficult question to answer, Mr. Twigg."

"It can scarcely be intended as a practical joke," said the puzzled master of the Second Form. "No one loses or gains by the transaction. It can hardly have been intended merely to perplex me, for very probably I might never have noticed the number of the note. I can think of no explanation, yet it is not a matter that I can pass over without some inquiry."

"If you are sure—"

"There is no doubt about that! It seems like an absolutely meaningless trick; yet I cannot allow anyone to play tricks with money in my study. I must find out exactly what has happened. Can you advise me?"

Richard Nugent shivered.

"Certainly such an occurrence should not be passed over, Twigg, if you are absolutely certain of it," said Mr. Quelch. "No harm appears to have been done; but it is, at least, an act of impertinence. Who could be aware that you kept your money in that drawer?"

"Probably many boys of my Form! In fact, I am sure that one boy, Nugent minor, was aware of it."

The fag in the passage suppressed a gasp.

"A few days ago," resumed Twigg, "I had occasion to take from him a pound note, which a thoughtless relative had given him, and which I found he intended to expend on an orgy in the Form-room. That pound note I placed in the same drawer, till I posted it back to the relative."

Dicky scowled! That pound note was gone, after all! His goodness of the past few days had been a sheer waste!

"Before breakfast one morning I found the boy in this study, and I had no doubt that he had had some reckless and impertinent intention of taking his pound note back," said Mr. Twigg. "I was assured that he had opened that very drawer, and looked into it, when I caught him, though he closed it again so quickly that I did not actually see him. I could not be certain, but I had that impression; and that decided me to return the note to his uncle, otherwise I should have given it back to him later, after he had had time to reflect upon what I said to him on the subject."

That was rather interesting news for Dicky! But for his own reckless check his pound note would have been given back to him! Dicky felt like kicking himself!

"Then Nugent minor, if he opened that drawer, must have seen a five-pound note there," said Mr. Quelch.

"Precisely!" agreed Twigg. "And, so far as I can surmise, he is the only boy who can know anything about it. Yet it is impossible to suspect him of having changed the banknotes!"

That was good news to Dicky, at all events!

"You see, my dear Quelch, a Second Form boy is seldom, or never, in possession of a five-pound note," said Twigg. "That Nugent minor did not possess such a banknote is certain. Had he possessed such a sum of money he would not have been so reckless, so foolishly insolent, as to make an attempt to regain possession of the pound. During the past few days, too, he has been very unusually attentive and obedient, and I have attributed this, I think correctly, to a hope that the pound note would be returned to him as a reward for good behaviour!"

Dicky Nugent opened his eyes wide at this!

Twigg, it appeared, was not quite so blind as the astute young rascals of his Form had supposed! It seemed that he knew the exact value of "soft sawder."

"I am afraid that the boy is capable of any impertinent trick," went on Mr. Twigg. "He is the most troublesome boy in my Form. But he can scarcely have done this, as it is a practical certainty that he cannot have had a five-pound note in his possession at all."

"That seems clear!" assented Mr. Quelch.

"Who has done it, and why it has been done, remains a mystery!" said Mr. Twigg. "But I cannot allow the matter to pass. Possibly I may be able to make a discovery from the number of this note—I may be able to trace it to the boy to whom it belonged."

"That is possible!" agreed Mr. Quelch. "The matter is certainly very singular, and I should advise probing it. It looks like a case of theft; indeed, to my mind the only possible explanation is that some dishonest boy has taken your banknote and spent it, and then, frightened at what he had done, obtained a similar note to replace in the drawer, hoping that you would not observe the difference."

Nugent minor trembled.

"That has occurred to me, Mr. Quelch! As you say, it is the only reasonable explanation. Obviously, I must ascertain what has happened, extraordinary and unpleasant as the occurrence is."

Dicky Nugent stayed to hear no more. Still with his imposition in his hand, he tiptoed away down the passage.

Gatty and Myers were waiting for him near the Second Form Room, with visible signs of impatience. Why Nugent mi was so long taking his lines to his Form master they could not imagine.

"Look here, you've kept us waiting!" grunted Gatty. "We shall never get out of gates at this rate. Did old Twigg jaw you?"

"Why, he hasn't handed in his lines!" exclaimed Myers, staring at the impot in Dicky's hand. "What's up, Dicky?"

The two fags stared at Dicky Nugent. His scared and troubled face told only too plainly that something was "up." But he did not answer the question. He had told them nothing of his folly in having meddled with Twigg's banknote, and he did not intend to tell them. All he had told them was that he had looked for his pound—without finding it. And they did not, as a matter of fact, quite believe that much.

"Is it another row?" asked Gatty. "You're looking quite sick."

Dicky shook his head.

"Let's get out!" he muttered.

"But what about your lines for Twigg?"

"Blow Twigg! I don't want to see Twigg! I'll leave this in his study at tea-time, when he's in the Common-room with the other beaks."

"But why—"



Vernon-Smith entered Wingate's study without knocking, and stood before the three prefects, with his hands in his pockets and a faintly sneering smile on his hard face. "You wanted to see me, Wingate!" "Yes," said Wingate quietly, "but first take your hands out of your pockets." "Any old thing," said the Bounder cheekily.

"Oh, rats! Give us a rest!"

"Look here, Nugent mi—"

Richard Nugent went into the Second Form Room, and put his impot on his desk. Then he joined his friends, and they went out together. But Dicky that afternoon was not the careless, happy-go-lucky scamp he generally was. He had fancied that his trouble was over, after the Bounder had helped him out. He understood now that it was not over—that it was beginning again, and he could not guess how and where it might end. It was rotten luck that Twigg had noticed the different number on the banknote. But there it was; he had! What was to come of it? That was an alarming question to Dicky Nugent. And the other two Second Form "men" did not find him a cheerful companion that afternoon.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Luck at Last!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. at games practice on Little Side were too keen on their occupation to notice the two juniors strolling under the elms in the distance. The Bounder looked at them with a black brow; Redwing with a quiet and cheerful interest. Smithy was still limping a trifle, though his damaged leg was on the mend now. But he could not have joined in the practice; his ankle was still too crooked for strenuous exercise. That was irritating to him. It would have entertained the "barred" Removite to join in, and make himself as unpleasant as possible to the fellows who barred him.

Redwing, whose nature was very

different, wanted to keep clear of them, and he had been unwillingly walked down to the cricket ground by his chum. The match with Highcliffe was coming along soon, and Smithy knew that the captain of the Remove was much exercised in his mind on the subject of filling his place in the team. That was another bitter irritation to Smithy.

His sentence of Coventry he could stand, with an aspect, at least, of cool and contemptuous indifference. But being cut out of the cricket for the rest of the season was hard to bear. But there was not the remotest chance of the fellow who had let the side down in the St. Jude's match being trusted again.

"Look here, Reddy, I can't play cricket, but you can join up," said the Bounder. "No need for you to cut practice."

"I'd rather not," said Redwing briefly.

"That's utter rot! They can't keep you out—or me, either, for that matter! I wish I was fit!" said the Bounder savagely. "Look here! Are you going to chuck cricket because those fools are playing the giddy ox?"

"Well, they don't want me!"

"Fat lot of difference that would make to me!" growled Smithy. "I'd butt in all the more."

Redwing smiled.

"Well, I wouldn't. Let's get out for a ramble."

"Can't, on a game leg. I've a jolly good mind to hop on the pitch and punch Wharton's head!"

"That wouldn't do any good. Come and have a ginger-pop."

"What a silly ass I've been!" muttered Vernon-Smith, as they walked away to the school shop together. "If

I'd minded my own bizney, and let that young scoundrel Nugent mi get it in the neck—"

"I'm glad you didn't. If you'd tell Nugent—"

"Oh, rats! Catch me askin' favours of him, or any other rotter in the Form!" growled Smithy. "I won't say a word! Not a syllable! Let them think what they like, and be hanged! I'm not givin' in!"

"I say, Smithy!"

"Oh, scat! Get out!" snapped the Bounder, as Billy Bunter rolled up, apparently forgetful of the fact that Vernon-Smith was in Coventry.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Shut up and clear!"

"We're in Coventry, you know, Bunter," said Redwing, with a smile. "You'd better keep your distance."

"That's all very well," said Bunter. "But, you see, this is important. If it's Smithy's fiver—"

"Smithy's what?"

"Fiver!" said Bunter. "You see, I've asked Mauly, and it isn't his. He said it wasn't. Well, then, if it's Smithy's—"

"What the thump are you burbling about?" demanded the Bounder, staring at the fat Owl.

"Have you lost a fiver?" asked Bunter. "I've picked up one, blowing about in the Cloisters. If it's yours—"

"You've picked up a five-pound note?" exclaimed the Bounder. "Oh, my hat!" He whistled.

He knew, of course, what five-pound note it must be. Mr. Twigg's banknote was blowing about somewhere, and the Bounder had wondered a good many

(Continued on page 16.)

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(Continued from page 13.)

times whether it would ever turn up again. Evidently it had turned up. Smithy felt rather a twinge of compunction. He had only half-believed Dicky Nugent's story of the banknote blowing away. But if Bunter had found one, it was proof that the fag had told him the truth.

"You see," went on Bunter, "I could take it to Quelch, and he would put a notice on the board; but I'd rather find the owner personally. If it's yours, Smithy—"

"It's mine," said Smithy.

As his own fiver was in Twigg's possession, the lost fiver belonged to him, if it was found. One fiver was as good as another. So the Bounder considered.

"Well, I fancied it might be," said Bunter. "I thought of Mauly first, as he's the only fellow here ass enough to drop fivers about. But he said it wasn't his. Then I thought of you, Smithy. I dare say you were swanking—showing off your money."

"What?"

"And dropped it. Well, if it's yours, I've got it. But there's one thing," went on Bunter, blinking at Smithy seriously through his big spectacles, "I've been disappointed about a postal order—"

"You blithering idiot!"

"From one of my titled relations, you know. It was going to be for a pound."

"Give us a rest!"

"I think if a fellow finds a fellow's fiver, and gives it to him, a fellow might oblige a fellow with a small loan," said Bunter warmly. "I suppose you don't fancy I want you to give me a pound for finding your banknote? A temporary loan—"

"Hand it over, you fat fool!"

"If you're going to lend me a pound I'll—"

"I'll watch it!" growled Smithy.

"Well, if you make it ten bob—"

"I'll make it a thick ear, if you don't hand over the fiver and shut up!"

Bunter backed away a little.

"Well you say it's yours, and, of course, I take your word, Smithy," he said. "Still, I think perhaps I'd better take it to Quelch. After all, that's the rule, if a fellow finds anything. Quelch will put a notice on the board, and you can claim it from him."

The Bounder set his lips.

"Of course, Quelch may make a fuss about a fellow having fivers. He's been down on you before for having too much money in your pockets," grinned Bunter. "That's your look-out, Smithy. No business of mine."

Smithy's eyes glittered at the fat Owl. He quite understood why Bunter was searching for the owner of that banknote, instead of taking it to his Form master, as he ought to have done. Bunter was on the make, as usual. But it certainly did not suit Smithy to have the banknote taken to the Remove master. He could hardly have claimed it from Mr. Quelch on the ground that

his own fiver was now reposing in Twigg's desk in place of it. Quelch, too, would require a claimant to give the number of the note he had lost. And if Mr. Twigg chanced to see anything of that fiver, all the fat might be in the fire.

The Bounder realised that it was a stroke of luck for him that Bunter had come to him with the banknote. He realised, too, that he had to make Bunter that little temporary loan he needed. Otherwise, Bunter would feel it his duty to take the banknote to Quelch.

The Owl of the Remove backed farther away, with a wary eye on Smithy. His fat hand was on the banknote in his pocket.

"The fact is, Smithy, I think I'd better take it to Quelch!" said Bunter breezily. "If you get into a row for having so much money to splash about—"

Vernon-Smith jerked a ten-shilling note from a well-filled notecase. Silently he passed it to the Owl of the Remove.

Bunter grinned cheerily. Out came the fiver, and he flicked it carelessly to the Bounder.

"There you are, old fellow!" he said. "Glad I found it for you! Might have blown anywhere! If you take my advice you won't show your money about so much, it's rather low-class, you know! About this ten bob, I'll let you have it back out of my postal order—on Monday morning. If there's any delay, would you mind waiting till Tuesday?"

"Cut off, Bunter," said Redwing hastily.

"Well, I'd rather have it clear, you know," explained Bunter. "I'm rather particular in money matters. Some fellows aren't—but I am—always was! I say, Smithy—Here, leggo, my collar—wharrer you up to?"

That question was really superfluous. It was quite plain what Herbert Vernon-Smith was up to! He was slewing Bunter round into a favourable position for kicking!

"Yarcooh!" roared Bunter in anticipation.

His anticipations were immediately realised! The Bounder's boot thudded on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars.

"Whoop!"

Bunter flew.

Vernon-Smith and Redwing walked away; leaving Bunter roaring. He blinked after them with an infuriated blink.

"Ow! Beast!" gasped Bunter. "I've a jolly good mind not to settle this ten bob on Monday now! Wow!"

But the fat Owl soon found solace. He rolled away to the school shop; and Mrs. Mumble's fresh supply of jammy, juicy, creamy tarts found a good customer! Billy Bunter sat at the counter, travelling through tarts, happy and shiny and sticky, feeling that life at last was indeed worth living.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

"HOLD on, Reddy!"

Five fellows were grouped round the doorway of Study No. 1 in the Remove when Tom Redwing came up for prep on Friday evening. He would have passed them without a word or a glance, but Harry Wharton called to him, and he stopped, colouring a little. Redwing had never regretted for a moment having thrown in his lot with his ostracised chum; but it was irksome enough to him to be on ill terms with fellows he liked. And the Famous Five of the Remove liked it no more than he did.

"I'm in Coventry, you know," he said, with a faint smile, as he stopped. "Never mind that now," said the captain of the Remove. "Nobody wants to put you in Coventry, as you jolly well know."

"The knowfulness is terrific, my esteemed Reddy!" said the Nabob of Bhanipur. "But so long as the stickfulness to the absurd and disgusting Smithy continues, it is your own ridiculous look-out."

"Well, I'm not grouching," said Redwing quietly. "I'm sorry to be on bad terms; but if you're not talking to Smithy, you'd better not talk to me. In fact, I'd rather you didn't."

"He doesn't enjoy our conversation," said Bob Cherry sadly.

Redwing smiled.

"Well, never mind Smithy for a minute," said Wharton. "We're playing the Fourth in a Form match to-morrow, Redwing, as I dare say you know. There was a lot of trouble—with Smithy—because you couldn't go into the eleven for the St. Jude's match. I'll be glad to play you to-morrow, if you like."

"I'd like it no end, of course."

"Then is it a go?"

"I don't see how you can play a man that's in Coventry with all the other men barring him on the field!" said Redwing.

"Oh, wash out the Coventry," said Harry, with a grimace. "If you're bound to stick to Smithy, stick to him, and be blown! I think you're an ass—but nobody wants to bar you."

"Does that mean that I'm let out?"

"Of course it does, fathcad!"

"And Smithy?"

Wharton knitted his brow.

"Don't be a bigger ass than you can help, Reddy!" he answered sharply. "You know as well as we do that Vernon-Smith deserves it, and more! Smithy is barred by the Form! Nothing's going to alter that! But nobody wants to bar you for sticking to him—after all, the fellow's your pal!"

"And as good a pal as a fellow ever had," said Redwing, "and as good a man as any in the Remove."

"Oh, chuck it!" said Frank Nugent, his lip curling. "We all like you, Reddy, and you know it; but a fellow who will do as Smithy did—pah!"

"You're the last fellow in the Remove who should run him down!" exclaimed Redwing hotly.

"I! And why?" demanded Nugent, staring at him. "You know yourself that he's treated me rottenly."

"Yes—but—"

"But what?" snapped Frank.

"Oh, nothing! Look here, Wharton, thanks for asking me—but fellows who aren't friendly with Smithy can't be friendly with me. A fellow can't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds."

"My esteemed Reddy—" urged Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh.

"Nothing doing!" said Redwing briefly. He made a movement to pass on, but paused again. The chums of the Remove were looking rather grim now. "Look here! You fellows are mistaken about Smithy—"

"Rot!" said Johnny Bull.

"He would have explained about what had happened on St. Jude's day if a prefect hadn't been dragged into the matter. Now he's got his back up and won't—"

"Bother his cheeky back!" said Bob.

"But that's not the only reason! It's not really his secret," said Redwing. "I can't tell you—but—I can tell you that you're making a mistake, and that he never let you down in the St. Jude's match willingly. I can't tell you what he's told me, but—I know it."

"You're an easy fellow to stuff, aren't you?" remarked Johnny Bull, with a sniff. "Chuck it, Reddy!"

"You want a good man for the Highcliffe match next week. Smithy will be fit then, Wharton."

"We don't want a man who clears off in the middle of a game and leaves us in the lurch!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Smithy wouldn't—"

"How do you know he wouldn't?" demanded Nugent. "What he's done once he might do again, I suppose, if his silly back's up."

"That wasn't the reason! But it's no good talking," said Redwing. "I'm sticking to Smithy, and so long as he's barred, you can bar me, too."

With that, Tom Redwing walked up the passage and went into Study No. 4. Bob Cherry made a dismayed grimace; and Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, that's that!" he said. "If a fellow won't be let off, you can't let him off against his will! Bother Smithy!"

"Bother him terrifically!" agreed Hurree Singh.

Tom Redwing found the Bounder in Study No. 4. He did not seem to be thinking of prep. His "game" leg was resting on a chair, and he was carefully rubbing the damaged ankle with embrocation. The swelling was almost gone, and the damage evidently well on the mend. Smithy looked up with a grin as his chum came in.

"Rotten luck, this dashed bandy leg, when a fellow's playin' cricket to-morrow," he said.

"Playing cricket!" repeated Redwing.

"Yes—there's a Form match to-morrow, you know—Remove and Fourth. Sort of practice match for Wharton to pick out his men for the Highcliffe game next week—but I shouldn't wonder if Temple's lot do better than the Remove expect this time."

"But—are you playing?" asked Tom in astonishment.

"Well, I've offered, and I've been accepted—game leg and all!"

"Blessed if I catch on, Smithy! Wharton said nothing about it—he's just asked me to play to-morrow, and I've refused—"

"Awfully kind of him—no room for you in the St. Jude's game, or the Highcliffe game, but he will squeeze you in in a match against those fumbly duffers in the Fourth!" sneered the Bounder.

"I should have been glad enough to play."

"Why did you refuse, then?"

"I fancy you know why, Smithy! But—look here, what do you mean? You can't be playing—"

"I jolly well am! Wharton doesn't know yet."

"He doesn't know you're playing for the Remove?" exclaimed Tom blankly.

"I'm not playin' for the Remove!" said the Bounder coolly. "I've offered Temple of the Fourth to play for him. He's a swankin', silly ass, but he's willin' to play one cricketer in his eleven."

"Oh," said Redwing, his face becoming very grave. "I see! I don't like the idea of a fellow playing against his own side, Smithy."

"Do my own side want me?"

"Well, no; but—"

"Think I'm goin' to chuck cricket for the whole summer at the lordly behest of his Magnificence?" jeered the Bounder. "Forget it! I'm goin' to pick up a game when and where I can, and I'm goin' all out to beat the Remove to-morrow!" His eyes gleamed. "They may find out that I was too good a man to chuck away."

"But you're not fit—your ankle—"

"That's all right! I shall be able to hop around!"

"It's a rotten idea, Smithy! You've got a game leg, and it may let you down in the match."

"I shall stand it somehow! I'm tough—I can stand a twinge or two! I'd stand it if it was torture, to give the Remove beans to-morrow! It won't interfere much with my bowlin', and as for battin', I shall hit all the boundaries I can and save runnin'. I fancy I can hit a few."

Redwing said no more, but sat down to prep, while the Bounder, regardless of prep, continued to doctor his game leg. Hitherto he had been rather careless about it; now he was giving it very careful attention—now that the idea had come into his head of helping the rival

team beat the Form that had cast him out. It was useless to argue with the Bounder, and Tom did not attempt it. But he was troubled and dissatisfied. He hoped that somehow the Bounder would be set right with the Remove. But the line Smithy was taking was only too likely to widen the breach.

But Smithy was quite determined. Game leg or not, he was going to play the cricket of his life on Saturday, and let the Remove see what a good man they were losing for the Highcliffe match. And, except for the damage to his ankle, the Bounder was fit as a fiddle, and in great form.

He did not even look at his prep that evening, taking chances with Quelch in class in the morning. As it happened, Quelch called on him to construe, and

(Continued on next page.)

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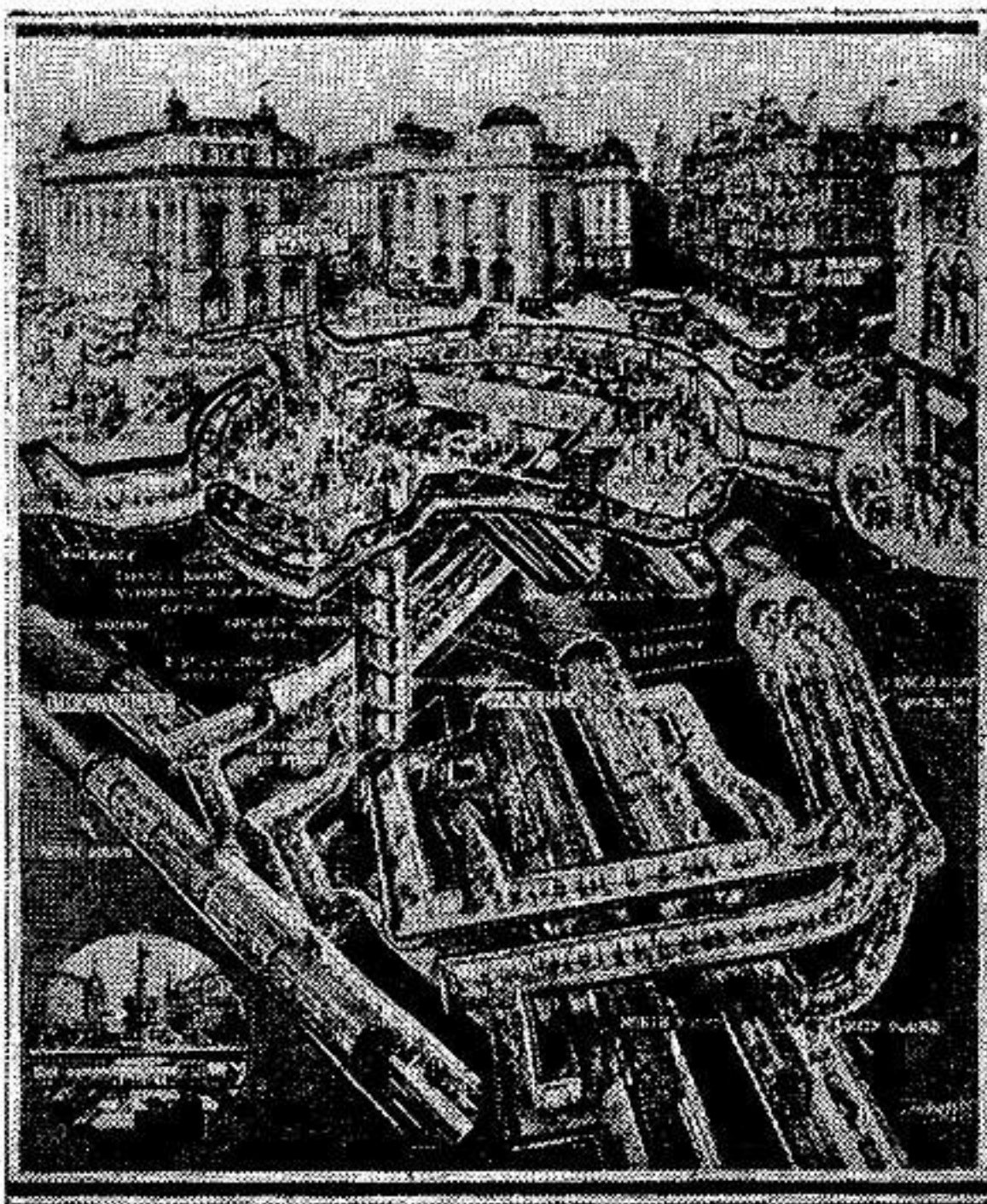
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as Smithy had not prepared a word of the Latin, it looked as if his cricket ambitions might be knocked on the head on the spot by detention that afternoon. But the Bouncer was equal to the occasion.

"I'm sorry, sir," he said, with unusual meekness, "I was quite unable to do my prep last night."

Mr. Quelch's gimlet-eyes fixed on him unpleasantly.

"And why, Vernon-Smith?" he demanded grimly.

"I was rather in pain, sir, owing to the injury to my ankle," said Smithy. "I hope you'll excuse me this time, sir—it really wasn't my fault."

His manner was so meek and respectful that the Remove master was disarmed.

"Very well, Vernon-Smith," he said. "I shall excuse you on this occasion. You will go on, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter blinked at the Bouncer, and blinked at Quelch. Billy Bunter had done no prep the previous evening, for the excellent reason that he had been too lazy. He, too, had hoped not to catch Quelch's eye in the morning—a delusive hope. But as the Bouncer had got off with the story of a pain, the fat Owl considered that the same story might well serve his turn.

"I—I—I'm sorry, sir," stammered Bunter. "I—I was quite unable to do my prep last night—"

"What?" rumbled Mr. Quelch.

"I—I was rather in pain, sir—" said Bunter, hopefully.

"What?" repeated Quelch.

"Owing to an injury to my ankle, sir—"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry—and there was a grin all through the Remove. This was Bunter all over.

"Your ankle is injured, Bunter?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir, fearfully. A—a bruise as big as—as a walnut, sir!" said Bunter. "I—I knocked it with a cricket ball—I mean another fellow knocked it with a cricket ball—at games practice yesterday, sir."

As Bunter had been nowhere near games practice the day before, this was rather steep, even from Bunter.

"Indeed," said Mr. Quelch grimly. "If you were suffering, as you say, Bunter, I should certainly excuse you."

"Thank you, sir!"

"Kindly show me the bruise you have described."

"Wha-a-t?" gasped Bunter.

He hadn't expected that! Really, he might have expected it! But he hadn't!

"Show me the bruise at once."

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter. It was really rather awkward, as he had no bruise to show. "The—the fact is, sir, it—it was awfully painful last night, but—but it got well this morning."

"And there is no sign of it left, Bunter?" inquired Mr. Quelch.

"N-n-none at all, sir."

"That is rather unfortunate, Bunter, as it causes me to disbelieve your statement entirely," said the Remove master. "Step out before the class!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Now bend over that desk!"

Swipe!

"Yaroooooooooh!"

Swipe!

"Whoop!"

"I recommend you, Bunter, to be more truthful," said Mr. Quelch. "You will be detained an hour and a half this afternoon, and you will go through the lesson you should have prepared last night! Take your place!"

"Oh lor'!" groaned Bunter.

Not for the first time, William George Bunter realised that the way of the transgressor was hard!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Form Match!

CECIL REGINALD TEMPLE, the captain of the Fourth, sauntered on the cricket field as if it and the adjacent universe belonged to him.

Nobody could have looked handsomer and more spotless in dazzling flannels—nobody carried a more expensive bat under a more elegant arm. When sisters and cousins and aunts came to see matches at Greyfriars they generally regarded Cecil Reginald as a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. And if looking the part would have done it, there was little doubt that Temple of the Fourth would have been a great cricketer. When it came to actual cricket he had a way of scoring ducks and dropping catches—and his handsome and expensive bat saw very little hard service.

Still, if Cecil Reginald was not very useful, he was highly ornamental—and he was satisfied with himself, which, after all, was a great thing. On this especial afternoon Cecil Reginald wore a very sunny smile.

Temple was not the man to work at games, or to expect his friends to work at games. But he rather liked the idea of beating fellows who did work at games. There were three or four fellows in Temple's team who could play cricket—not Temple's special pals. And on this occasion he had a man in his team who could play all their heads off. Cecil Reginald rather disliked and despised the Bouncer, but he had accepted his offer to play in the Form match, carefully concealing his glee.

The Bouncer was not to be allowed to swank—Temple could furnish all the swank that was needed. But Temple, with all his swank and his conceit and his ineffable self-satisfaction, was quite aware of the Bouncer's value, and knew that with such a recruit he might realise his dear ambition of beating the Remove. They had lost one of their very best men—Temple had gained him—and that change-over might make the result of the contest very different from usual.

The Remove had the nerve, as Temple regarded it, to look on these Form matches simply as practice for more serious affairs. He hoped that they were going to have their eyes opened this time.

Herbert Vernon-Smith came down to the field with the Fourth Form men. He was not limping now, though his ankle was far from mended. He knew very well that the strain on that ankle would hurt him, and hurt him hard—but he did not care. The Bouncer was tough—he would not have cared if he had had to be carried in after the match, so long as he demonstrated to the Remove what a good man they were losing for their match at Highcliffe.

Some of the Remove cricketers gave him grim looks. Still, they had no kick coming, as Fisher T. Fish would have expressed it. They had turned Smithy out, and if Temple wanted him he had a right to him. And there was no doubt that Temple did want him—though he affected an air of rather nonchalant patronage towards the only really strong man in his team.

"There's the rotter, backing up against his own Form!" growled Johnny Bull. "Pah!"

"Temple's welcome to him," said Wharton dryly. "It will be rather amusing to watch his face if Smithy walks off in the middle of the game, and lets him down as he did us the other day."

"He won't do that this time," said Frank Nugent, his lip curling. "The rank outsider would like to see the Remove beaten."

"Well, he won't see that in a hurry," grinned Bob Cherry. "One swallow doesn't make a summer—and one cricketer doesn't make a team! And Smithy's got a game leg, too!"

"He looks fit enough!" remarked Squiff.

"The fitfulness looks terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But the runfulness will tell on the esteemed and ridiculous game leg."

"Don't let him get any, if we can help it!" said Peter Todd. "They're taking first knock; let Inky wash him out to begin with."

"Good egg!" agreed Wharton. "You can do it, Inky!"

"The tryfulness will be preposterous."

But Temple did not open with the Bouncer. He was aware that he ought to have done so, but swank came first. Temple started himself, with Dabney at the other end. Vernon-Smith looked on with a scowl. He wanted to begin the batting, and had no doubt that he would be not out at the end of the innings, if he was not let down by his crooked leg. But Cecil Reginald was not running the risk of letting his new recruit get a swelled head.

However, the Bouncer had not to wait long. Temple survived the over by a series of miracles, and Squiff went on to bowl against Dabney of the Fourth. Walter Dabney gazed sorrowfully at a wrecked wicket, and ambled home. The Bouncer took his place.

Form matches did not usually attract a lot of attention, but a good many fellows had gathered to see the Bouncer play against his own Form. He was watched with great curiosity as he stood up to the bowling of Sampson Quincy Ilfley Field of the Remove. It was quite good bowling, but Smithy was in magnificent form, and he made hay of it. Three boundary hits rewarded him, and there was a cheer round the field.

Wharton knitted his brows.

This was the hitting he wanted when the Highcliffe match came off. The Bouncer was a man the Remove could not spare. But there was no help for it; a fellow who could not be trusted was no good to his side. But it was exasperating, all the same.

At the end of the over the Bouncer stole a single, and was at the batting end when Hurree Jamset Ram Singh took the ball.

"Now open your peepers, my merry men!" murmured Bob Cherry.

And that over was watched with the keenest interest. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was the champion junior bowler of Greyfriars—a wonderful man with the leather. Sixth Form cricketers liked to bag him for bowling at the nets, and he often gave them plenty to think about. And the dusky nabob was in good form now. But it booted not! Smithy played the nabob's bowling as he had played Squiff's, and the batting was so really good that the Remove men—like the ranks of Tuscany of old—could scarce forbear a cheer.

"Eighteen for one!" remarked Bob, when the field changed over. "Not Temple's usual game, what?"

"The esteemed Temple does not look terrifically pleased," murmured the



Once out of sight of Bunter, Mauleverer slipped behind one of the old stone pillars and stood there with bated breath. A minute later, Bunter rolled under the old arches and blinked round for Mauleverer, without seeing him. "Beast!" he grunted. "Dodging a chap!"

Nabob of Bhanipur, and the Remove fellows grinned.

Temple, in fact, was not pleased.

Smithy was doing all—and more than all—that his new captain could have expected of him. But it had the undesirable result of leaving Cecil Reginald himself in the shade. The captain of the Fourth really did not want to be there simply backing up the play of a nobody. He was quite dissatisfied with that state of affairs.

But his dissatisfaction did not last long, for Tom Brown's bowling, in the next over, relieved him of the trouble of standing at his wicket. He walked back to the pavilion with the pleasure—or otherwise—of having scored a handsome round nought. And still he did not look pleased!

"My word! That man can bat!" said Fry of the Fourth, watching the Bounder when he had the bowling again.

"Oh, rather!" agreed Dabney.

"Rather a flashy style," drawled Temple. "Still, he's not doin' badly. Not badly at all!"

Whereat Fry of the Fourth grinned. As the Bounder, by that time, had made 30 off his own bat, and Temple had scored a duck, it really had to be admitted that Smithy was not doing badly.

The rest of the innings was a procession. Scott of the Fourth made a stand. Scott was one of the few members of Temple's team who "worked" at games, and he put up a very decent innings, with Smithy at the other end. But the rest were more or less rabbits, and they fell fast to the Remove bowling. Even the nabob could not touch

Smithy's wicket, and he gave no chances in the field, though every man was keen and anxious to catch him out. Several times, when Smithy was running, his limp was pronounced and obvious, but he kept on with dogged courage and determination, though every now and then his face whitened with pain. He was putting too severe a strain on a game leg, and he was well aware of it, but nothing would have induced him to weaken. As he had confidently anticipated, he was not out at the finish, which came under an hour, and his score was 50, for 15 taken by the rest of the batsmen.

There was a sour grin on the Bounder's face when he came back to the pavilion. Redwing was waiting for him there, with a rather anxious face. The Bounder's limp was very noticeable now, and a keen eye could detect a drawn look in his hard face.

"Not a bad knock, Reddy?" said the Bounder.

"How's your leg?" asked Redwing.

"I believe it will hold out."

"But it feels—"

"Rotten! But I'd play this to a finish and beat the Remove if it was going to lame me for life!" said the Bounder, between his teeth.

To which Redwing made no reply. He did not want to see his Form beaten, still less to see his chum beating them; and a look at Smithy's face showed, to a keenly anxious and friendly eye, that he ought not to have been playing cricket at all. But it was futile to argue with the obstinate Bounder, and he did not attempt it.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Bounder's Win!

DICKY NUGENT grinned.

"Poor old Frank!" he said.

"Your major can't bat!" remarked Gatty.

"Oh, you shut up!" said Dicky at once. "What do you know about batting, George Gatty? You bat like a carpet-beater!"

"Well, he can't bat for toffee!" said Myers. "Look at the way Smithy's whipped out his middle stump!"

"Smithy's some lad!" said Dicky. "He's not half the rotter that fellows make out. I hear that they bar him in the Remove—my major said so. Silly asses, if you ask me! Serve 'em right for him to mop up their wickets!"

The three heroes of the Second, seated under a shady tree, surrounding a bag of cherries, were patronising the Form match with their kindly notice. Dicky was, in fact, rather interested in the Bounder since the good turn Smithy had done him. It is true that he did not think very much about that good turn, having a rather short memory for services rendered. Still, he had not forgotten it, and his feelings towards the Bounder were very kind. So he was there to see Smithy play—and as he was standing a bag of cherries, Gatty and Myers were willing to come also. It was probable that the cricket would not detain them after the cherries were finished.

Dicky grinned an unbrotherly grin when his major's wicket went down. But Frank Nugent was hardly to blame

for going under to the Bounder's bowling. It was such bowling as no Remove man, except Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, could have put up. Smithy was at the top of his form, and never had his bowling been so deadly. Temple of the Fourth was smiling in the field. He had made a catch off Smithy's bowling, putting paid to so good a bat as Squiff—and Cecil Reginald was considerably bucked thereby. And the Bounder's present performance, fine as it was, was not putting the great Cecil Reginald in the shade, for Temple did not claim to be a bowler—and, indeed, despised that branch of cricket. Cutting a handsome figure at the wicket, and going down to any ball that a baby could have played, was Cecil Reginald's idea of cricket—which he lived up to.

Frank Nugent had tried hard to stand up to the Bounder, but he tried in vain. Smithy grinned sardonically when he carried out his bat for a duck.

"Duck's eggs are cheap to-day!" Skinner remarked, as Frank came out, taking care that Nugent should hear him. "Why isn't Wharton playing Bunter? Bunter couldn't do worse than this."

Whereat Skinner's friends chortled.

The fact was that the Remove were having a bad time. If the Bounder's object was to impress on them what a good man they had lost—as it was—he succeeded to perfection. He had put up the "hat trick," as well as making two good catches in the field; and the Remove were six down for 20, which was quite disastrous. Smithy's game seemed to infuse a little more mustard than usual into Temple & Co., and they were playing uncommonly well; even Temple had made a good catch. Wharton himself had been dismissed for only 6—one of Smithy's victims. Faces in the Remove were growing rather long. They were so accustomed to walking over Temple & Co. at games that this sort of thing came as a painful shock. Cricket is anything but a one-man game, yet that was what the Bounder seemed to be making of this match. Game leg and all, he had never been so dangerous.

And all the time, as most of the fellows discerned, he was in pain; more than once he had involuntarily faltered, though his iron determination kept him going. He would not have given in if it had cost him his leg. He was going to beat the Remove—and it looked as if he might.

"This won't be a Fourth Form win, if they pull it off," Johnny Bull growled. "They've got only one cricketer, and he's Remove."

"But isn't he ripping?" said Bob. "Isn't it a putrid shame that he's not going to play for us when we meet Highcliffe?"

"He would be—if he wasn't such a rotter! He ought to be jolly well kicked!"

"Oh, well bowled, Smithy!" roared Bob, as Tom Brown went down to the Bounder. "Well bowled, old bean!"

The Bounder grinned as he heard that roar. It was like Bob to testify his admiration of good cricket, even when it was making hay of his own side.

"This is a jolly old funeral procession!" said Mark Linley. "I've never seen Smithy in such form."

"It bucks him awfully to be dish-ing his own crowd!" snorted Johnny Bull. "That's the sort of blighter he is."

"We'll beat them second knock!" said Frank Nugent.

"We shall have to, if we're to beat them at all," said Bob. "And we shall have to fight for it, too. What a change

from walking over the Fourth with an innings to spare."

"It's all Smithy!" growled Johnny Bull. "Temple will be swanking all over the place that he's licked the Remove, if he pulls it off. He'll forget to mention that a Remove man did it for him."

It was indeed a "procession" to the finish of that innings. It was very unusually brief, and it ended with the Remove all down for 30, leaving the Fourth more than that ahead. When the field came off, the Bounder limped to the pavilion, and fell rather than sat into the chair that Redwing had ready for him. His face was flushed with exertion, but the flush died away, leaving him very pale. His chum brought him lemonade, and he sipped it slowly, without speaking. Temple gave him a rather anxious look. He was going to win that Form match, if the Bounder held out—not otherwise. All Cecil Reginald's conceit could not blind him to the fact that if the Bounder dropped out, the Fourth would be wiped off the field. But the Bounder had no idea of dropping out.

"You ought to cut it, Smithy!" said Redwing, in a low voice. "You're not fit to go on, and you know it."

"And let Temple down, in the middle of the game—as I did the Remove on St. Jude's Day!" sneered the Bounder. "I wonder what they would say of me if I did?"

"You ought not to have played at all!"

"Rot!"

And when the Fourth opened their second innings, the Bounder went on, with Temple at the other end. This time the captain of the Fourth put his mighty man in first, and for several overs the Bounder played up in quite his old style, the runs coming fast. But iron-willed as he was, he was not made of iron, and the strain on his damaged ankle told more and more. He set his teeth and bore it; but the runs slowed down—he could not help that. Twice he had narrow escapes of being stumped, and then he nursed himself a little more carefully. And every now and then came boundary hits that gave him runs without the running. He had taken forty when he fell to a deadly ball from Hurree Jamset Ram Singh; and though he scowled savagely at the Nabob of Bhanipur, he was glad to totter to a chair and sit down.

Temple & Co. put up quite a struggle, and they had added 30 to Smithy's 40 when the last wicket fell.

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "We want 106 to win—and we made 30 in our first knock! If Smithy bowls again—phew!"

It was evident that the result depended on that. All eyes were on the Bounder—which was rather a comfort to him, for Smithy dearly loved the limelight. And his long rest had done him good—he seemed fresh again when the Fourth went into the field once more.

That his hand had not lost its cunning was soon clear. Harry Wharton went down at the last ball of the over, after making 6. Then Bob Cherry knocked Fry's bowling all over the horizon, and put on 15. But when the Bounder bowled again, Bob followed his skipper to the pavilion, and Johnny Bull followed Bob, and Mark Linley followed Johnny. Cecil Reginald Temple fairly grinned with glee, and the fellows round the field shouted and cheered, Dicky Nugent's voice sounding shrilly among the rest. The cherries being finished, Gatty and Myers had deserted him, but Richard Nugent was

generously staying on to the finish to back up Smithy. And the game was worth staying for, so long as the Bounder played.

But Herbert Vernon-Smith was getting to the end of his tether. Over followed over, and Cecil Reginald Temple gave his new recruit all the bowling he could. But Smithy's face was growing set and drawn, beaded with perspiration, and he was seen to stumble several times. The crash came at last—and came suddenly.

The Bounder was bowling, and as he took a little run he stumbled, slipped, and went headlong over.

He gritted his teeth and struggled to rise, but his game leg, long overstrained, had fairly let him down at last, and he could not get up.

Friendly hands lifted him and helped him off the field. Temple gave him a friendly smack on the shoulder.

"You can't keep on, old bean," said Temple. "But we've won the game—all over bar shoutin'. You've done enough, Smithy!"

"I can keep on, after a bit of a rest!" muttered Vernon-Smith, but the words came faintly through colourless lips.

"That's all right, old bean," said Temple soothingly. "Dashed if I know how you've kept it up so long! You must be made of iron!"

Redwing ran to meet his chum, and helped him to a chair at the pavilion. He would have helped him back to the House, but Smithy refused to leave the ground.

"It's sickenin'!" he muttered, between his teeth. "Crooked—when I've got the rotters licked! By gad, I'm goin' on again, if I have to crawl on my hands and knees, if they look like pullin' it out of the fire."

"Not much chance of that," said Tom.

Redwing was right. With the Bounder off the field, the Removes nourished a hope of yet snatching victory from the jaws of defeat. But they had too much leeway to make up. They were six down for 50 when the Bounder went—and the six were their best batsmen. With only four wickets to fall, and 56 to make to win, it was rather too big a task for the "tail" of the Remove side.

The Bounder, however, watched keenly and anxiously. Runs came—the score crept to 65 for seven—78 for eight—90 for nine! It was going to be a close finish, after all—a proof, if one was needed, that the Bounder had been the backbone of the opposition. The score was at a level hundred when the last man fell, and the Remove were beaten by 5 runs.

"Rotten!" grunted the Bounder. "Five—it would have been 50 if I'd kept on! Still, a licking's a licking, what?"

And he grinned.

"Well, we've beaten them, Smithy, old bean!" said Cecil Reginald Temple brightly. "Beaten them—what?"

And Smithy grinned again at the "we." There was not much "we" about it, in his opinion. The Bounder had won that game, and Temple & Co. had very nearly lost it again. But Smithy nodded cheerfully. He was satisfied himself, and willing to leave Temple his self-satisfaction.

"How's the old leg?" added Temple, remembering that the Bounder was crooked.

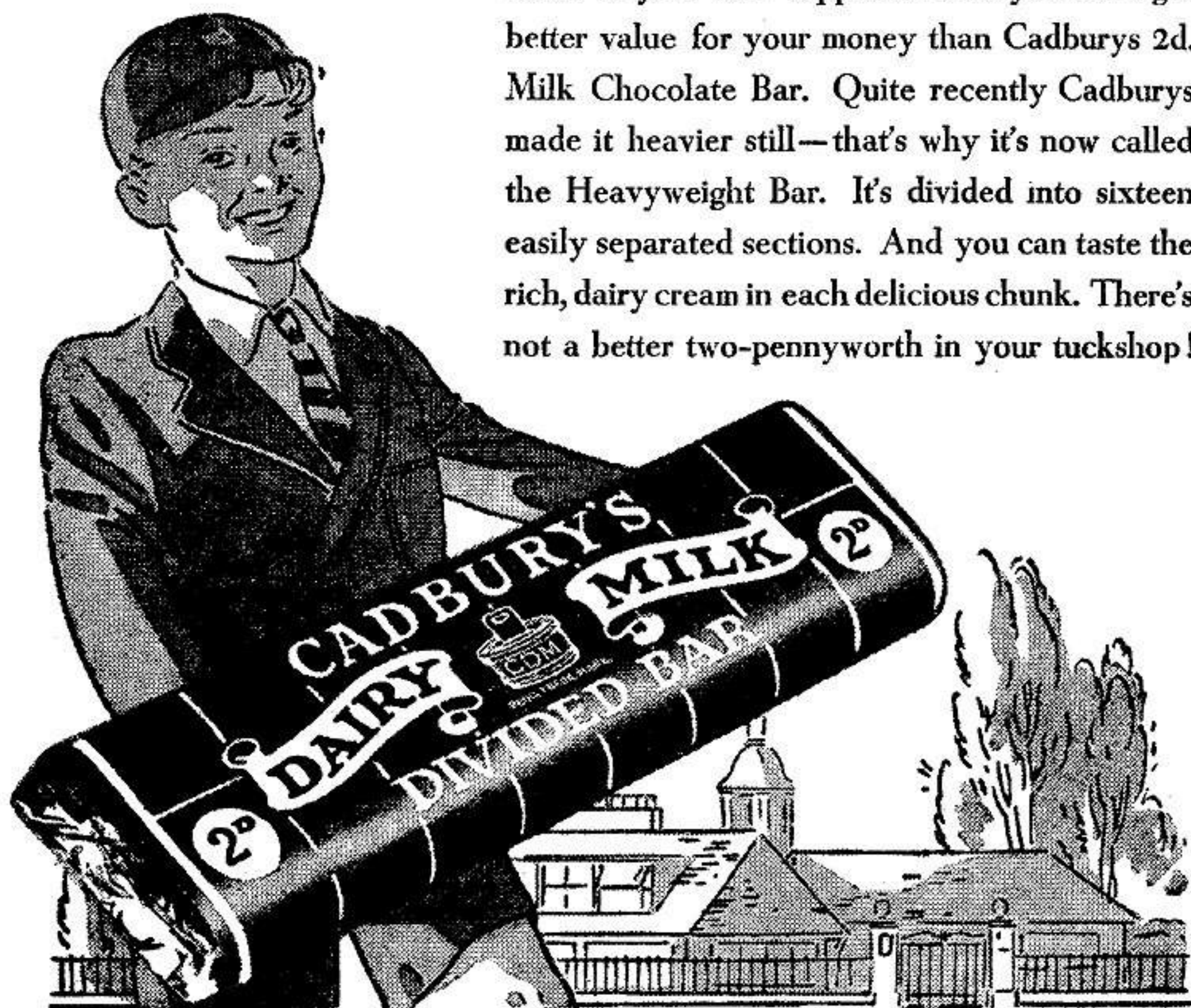
"All right—just a twinge," said Vernon-Smith indifferently.

It was rather more than "just a twinge." Smithy leaned heavily on Tom Redwing when he went back to the

(Continued on page 22.)

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BARRED BY HIS FORM!

(Continued from page 20.)

House. It was all he could do to keep up appearances till he was out of sight. The fellow who had played hard through a summer's afternoon had barely strength enough left to crawl to his study. In Study No. 4 in the Remove, the Bouncer sank into the armchair, white as chalk, and leaned back, closing his eyes. The pain in his strained ankle was excruciating. It was all Smithy could do to keep back a groan. But he uttered no sound—the Bouncer seemed steel all through!

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Called Before the Beaks!

"I SAY, you fellows——"
"With a little luck, we should have done it!" said Bob Cherry. "It's rather sickening for Temple to be making out that he's licked the Remove at cricket!"

"I say——"

"But what a jolly old champion Smithy is," went on Bob. "I'm rather beginning to think that we'd better let him out of Coventry on Highcliffe day—positively for one occasion only, what?"

"Fathead!" said Frank Nugent.

"I say——"

"Oh, shut up, Bunter!"

"I hear you've been whopped," said Bunter. "Rather a pity I had detention this afternoon. I'd have played for you, and it would have been all right. But, I say, Quelch wants Nugent."

"What the thump does he want me for?" demanded Frank. "Go back and tell him I've been playing cricket, and don't feel like seeing beaks."

Billy Bunter chuckled.

"I say, you'd better hike off," he said. "Quelchy is looking frightfully solemn, and so is Twigg!"

"Twigg?" repeated Frank, becoming serious at once at the mention of his minor's Form master. "Is Twigg with Quelch?"

"Yes—looking as solemn as Quelch! Something's up, I fancy," said Bunter. "I don't know what Twigg's got to do with it, unless it's something about your minor. Perhaps he's going to be sacked."

"What?" roared Nugent.

"Well, he's a cheeky young scoundrel," said Bunter. "I dare say Twigg's fed-up with him. I know I am! And he's looking pretty sick, too!"

"What do you mean, you fat idiot?" exclaimed Nugent angrily. "My minor isn't with Quelch, is he?"

"He jolly well is—looking awfully sick!" said Bunter cheerfully. "A face as long as a fiddle. Looks as if he's got it in the neck! He's always up to something! My opinion is that his beak doesn't whop him enough."

Frank Nugent gave the fat Owl a glare, and hurried away. If Dicky and his Form master were in Quelch's study, and Quelch had sent for Frank, it was obvious that something serious was "up." Frank, as a rule, gave rather too much, than too little thought to his young brother in the Second Form, his brotherly care earning very little in the way of thanks from Dicky.

But just lately his mind had been in the cricket, and he had not seen so much of his troublesome minor as was his wont. It was no surprise to learn that Dicky was in trouble—Nugent minor seemed born to trouble as the sparks fly upward. But with two Form masters mixed up in the matter, it looked like

something much more serious than usual.

Frank, as he hurried away to Masters' Passage, wondered what on earth the young scamp could have been up to now.

He tapped at Mr. Quelch's door, and entered, his heart beating.

Quelch and Twigg, as Bunter had said, were looking solemn; and Dicky, standing by the table with the air of a culprit, undoubtedly looked "sick." Frank's first glance went to him; then he looked at his Form master.

"You sent for me, sir?"

"Yes, Nugent," said Mr. Quelch, quite kindly. "I must ask you some questions, my boy, in connection with your brother. A banknote is missing from Mr. Twigg's study——"

Frank gave a start, and his face flamed.

"My brother cannot know anything about that, sir!" he exclaimed.

"I desire to learn whether you know anything about it, Nugent?"

"I, sir!" exclaimed Frank, almost stupefied.

"You know nothing?"

"How could I know anything about it?" gasped Nugent. "I don't understand what you mean!"

Mr. Twigg, in silence, was watching Nugent's face very narrowly. The Remove master went on quietly:

"I will explain the circumstances, Nugent. Some days ago, Mr. Twigg took a pound note from your brother, to return to a relative who had thoughtlessly sent it to him. The following morning he found Nugent minor in his study, and had reason to think he was there to make an attempt to take back the note. That would have been an act of rebellious impudence, but not, of course, dishonest. Your brother has now been questioned by Mr. Twigg, and has admitted that such was his intention."

"But I never——" began Dicky.

"You will be silent, please!" said Mr. Quelch. "The boy has now further admitted that he visited Mr. Twigg's study a second time, while his Form master was absent on Wednesday afternoon, to look for the pound note."

"It wasn't there——" mumbled Dicky.

"Be silent! The pound note was no longer there," resumed Mr. Quelch; "but in the same drawer was a five-pound note!"

"My brother never touched that, sir!" exclaimed Frank indignantly.

"That is what we have to ascertain," said Mr. Quelch dryly. "The note was taken away, and another put in its place. As Mr. Twigg had noticed the number of the banknote, he made the discovery yesterday that the five-pound note in his desk was not the one he had left there."

Frank's eyes opened wide.

"Then no money has been lost at all, sir?" he exclaimed.

"None!" said Mr. Quelch. "The amount that was taken was undoubtedly replaced. But the only possible conclusion to be drawn is that Mr. Twigg's note was stolen, and that the thief replaced it with a similar note, hoping to escape detection thereby. Your brother denies having purloined Mr. Twigg's note——"

"I wouldn't——" began Dicky.

"Will you be silent, Nugent minor?" snapped the Remove master. "The replacing of the money may indicate repentance on the part of the thief—or an action on the part of someone concerned in his welfare. In either case, the matter cannot rest where it is. If Mr. Twigg's banknote has been spent, the boy who abstracted it is a thief, although the amount has been replaced. He must be taken to the headmaster to be dealt with."

"I'm not a thief!" muttered Dicky, on the verge of tears. "I went after my pound note, but I never pinched anything! I wouldn't!"

"Be silent! Your brother admits having opened the money-drawer, Nugent, and if the money was missing there could be no doubt on the subject. He would be adjudged a thief, and expelled from the school. But the money has been replaced—and it is fairly certain that Nugent minor could not have replaced it from his own resources."

"Whoever took the note must have put the other in its place, sir," said Frank.

"Quite so, and I require to know whether you provided your brother with a banknote to enable him to conceal the theft?"

Frank understood now why he had been sent for.

He breathed a deep breath of relief.

"No, sir! I know nothing whatever about it! I have not had a five-pound note this term at all. I can prove that, if it's necessary. If you write to my people, sir, they will tell you. I shouldn't get a banknote from anybody else, and they will tell you that I have not had one."

"I never told Frank anything about it!" mumbled Dicky. "He never knew anything! I went after my pound——"

"Silence!"

The two Form masters looked at Nugent, and exchanged glances. It was plain enough that Frank was telling the truth; besides, the proof he offered was good enough. And if Frank had not given his brother a banknote to replace the missing one, it was scarcely possible to suppose that anyone else had done so. Frank might have stood by the scamp of the Second in such a scrape; but who else?

"Very well, Nugent," said Mr. Quelch at last. "I accept your assurance, and Mr. Twigg does the same——" He glanced at Twigg.

"Certainly!" said the Second Form master.

"And this, sir, clears my brother," said Frank firmly. "Whoever took the note must have put the second one in its place—and Dicky never had one to put there."

"It would appear so, Nugent; but until it is clear what has become of the original note, the matter must continue to be inquired into," said Mr. Quelch. "I am not satisfied that your brother has been frank with me—and Mr. Twigg is not satisfied, either. I have an impression that Nugent minor could tell more if he wished."

"I never stole the banknote!" said Dicky shrilly.

"For the present you may go," said Mr. Quelch, "and my advice to you, Nugent minor, is to make a full confession to your Form master, if you have anything to confess. The matter will not rest until the original banknote has been traced."

Dicky Nugent followed his brother from the study. In the passage, Frank dropped a hand on his minor's shoulder.

"It's all right, Dicky," he said. "You were a silly young ass to go to Twigg's desk after your pound note; but—it's all right! They'll find the fellow who pinched it sooner or later."

Dicky gave his brother a very peculiar look.

"Think so?" he asked.

"Yes; they'll get it by the number, sooner or later."

"Not if it's lost!"

"Lost?" repeated Frank.

"Well, suppose it blew away, or something like that——"

Frank stared at him, and then laughed.

"Not much good the fellow telling



Over followed over, and Vernon-Smith's face was growing set and drawn, and beaded with perspiration. The crash came at last—and came suddenly. The Bounder was bowling, and as he took a little run, he stumbled, slipped, and went headlong over. His "game" leg, long over-strained, had let him down at last!

Twigg that if he's nailed," he said. "Don't be a young ass, Dicky! Who ever pinched Twigg's note spent it—and then got frightened, and put another in its place—that's as clear as daylight."

"You—you think Twigg would think so?"

"Of course he would!" said Nugent. "And that clears you, as it's jolly certain you never had one to put back. It's all right—you needn't worry!"

But Dicky Nugent looked worried, all the same, as he left his brother. Frank went back to his friends in the Rag; but Dicky Nugent went slowly up the stairs, and stopped at Study No. 4 in the Remove.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Change for a Fiver!

BLOW!" growled the Bounder. He shifted his aching leg, which rested on a stool as he sat in the armchair in Study No. 4. Smithy did not repent of his determination to carry on in the cricket match that day; but he was paying for it now.

Never had he felt so thoroughly crooked and rotten; and he had hardly a moment's ease from the pain in his strained ankle.

Redwing remained in the study with him, though the present state of the Bounder's temper made him far from agreeable.

There was a timid tap at the door, and it opened, and a fag of the Second Form looked in.

"Smithy here?" asked Nugent minor. Vernon-Smith scowled at him. He was in no mood to be bothered by

Frank Nugent's young brother—or by anybody.

"Yes, but don't come in now, kid," said Redwing hastily. "Trot along another time."

"And shut the door after you!" growled Smithy.

"I—I've got to speak to you, Smithy!" muttered the fag, and he came into the study. "I—I say, Redwing, I wish you'd cut for a minute or two—"

"You cheeky young sweep!" hooted Vernon-Smith. "What the thump do you mean? Kick him out, Reddy!"

"I've got to speak to you about—about—" stammered the fag. "I say Smithy, there's going to be a row, and—and I've got to tell you."

"If you mean about your playin' the goat last Wednesday, Redwing knows—I've told him!" snapped the Bounder. "You needn't be afraid he will tell anybody else—he's mum as an oyster. But he doesn't want to hear any more about it—and I don't, either! Cut!"

"Well, if he knows, all right. I—I've got to tell you—"

"Go and tell your major instead, if you're in some new scrape!" sneered the Bounder. "Your major's down on me, like the rest, for cutting the cricket last Wednesday, and you know why I did it! Like your dashed check to come to me with your scrapes! Take them to your brother!"

"Easy does it, Smithy," said Redwing quietly. He could see that the fag was frightened and deeply disturbed. "You took the matter up, and it's up to you now!" He shut the study door. "Let the kid speak!"

"I'm fed-up with him and the whole

tribe of Nugents!" growled Vernon-Smith savagely. "What have you been up to now, you young sweep? Pinching another banknote from your beak, or what?"

Dicky's lip trembled.

"You know I never pinched it, Smithy! It blew away—it was lost, and I hunted for it and never found it! But—All the fat's in the fire now. I've been up before Twigg and Quelch, with Frank—"

The Bounder sat up. The movement gave him a bitter twinge, and he uttered a yelp of pain.

"Ow! Oh, my hat! For goodness' sake, you little ass, what do you mean? The matter was settled all right—Twigg's got his fiver, hasn't he? My fiver at least—"

"He's noticed the number."

"Oh gad!"

"He knows it's a different note!" groaned Dicky. "He's had me up to jaw, and I owned up that I went after my pound note. I told him I never pinched his fiver, of course. But—but I never told him about taking it out of his desk, and—and the wind blowing it out of the window! I—I thought he wouldn't believe me, so—"

"Fool if he did!" grunted Vernon-Smith. "I shouldn't have believed you myself, if I didn't happen to know it was true. Fellows don't generally take fivers to let them blow away."

"Frank thinks the same as you," mumbled Dicky. "He laughed when I said the fiver might have blown away. Frank thinks it's all right, because he doesn't know! But—but it isn't! They're going after that putrid fiver, and—and—"

"And they won't be happy till they get it!" jeered the Bounder. "Rotten luck Twigg twigg the number! Why can't the old ass be satisfied—he's lost nothing!"

"They think the fiver was pinched, and the thief got frightened and put another back!" groaned Dicky. "And—and it looks like it, doesn't it?"

"Exactly like it!" grinned Smithy. "Blessed if I see what else they could think, when Twigg found it was a different fiver. Bother the old ass!"

"And—and they won't let it rest! They fancy they're going to trace that rotten fiver and find out who took it. Of course, they can't, as it's lost! But—but I don't know what will happen. If the rotten thing turned up it would prove that it hadn't been spent. But—"

The Bounder laughed.

"Lucky it's turned up, then!" he said.

Richard Nugent gave a jump.

"It's turned up?" he ejaculated.

"Yes, and I've got it."

"Oh!" gasped Dicky. His troubled face brightened. "Oh, what luck! Of course it's yours, Smithy, as Twigg's got your one—one's as good as another! But—but if you've got it—"

"I've got it—at least, there's no doubt that it's the one—couldn't have been two fivers blowing about Greyfriars."

"I know the number of Twigg's note—I heard him tell Quelch," said Dicky eagerly—"rather a queer number—01234567."

The Bounder took out his notecase. He selected a five-pound note from several others, scanning the numbers.

"That's it, then," he said—"01234567. It was picked up in the Cloisters yesterday, and I claimed it from the fellow—it was mine, as Twigg's got my fiver. Pity it's too late to change them back."

"I—I say"—Dicky's manner was eager and excited—"I say, Smithy, it ain't too late! If you'll let me have it, I can do it! I'll wait till old Twigg's safe off the scene and nip into his study—"

"Oh, my hat! If the other note's there—"

"Ten to one it is! Twigg's keeping it, you see—he wouldn't be likely to spend it, in the circus. I'll look, anyhow! I say"—Dicky burst into a cackle of laughter—"I say, fancy old Twigg's face, if he found his own note there, next time he looks into his desk!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Bounder, quite tickled by the idea of such an extraordinary surprise for Mr. Twigg.

Tom Redwing laughed. He could not help it. It had to be admitted that Twigg's face, at such a moment, would be worth seeing.

"He'll think it's jolly old magic!" chuckled Dicky, quite in high spirits again now. "Anyhow, he can't make out that anybody spent the fiver when he finds it in his desk. Can he?"

"Hardly."

"It will prove that there never was any pinching—when he gets his own banknote! That will wash it out, see?"

The Bounder flicked the banknote across to the eager fag.

"Go in and win," he said. "If you get my note back, bring it here—if not, leave Twigg's note there, anyhow."

"You'd lose five pounds then—"

"Oh, don't be a young ass; do as I tell you."

"Oh, all right!"

Nugent minor tucked the banknote into his pocket and left the study, with a face very much brighter than when he had entered it. The Bounder leaned back in his chair.

He did not expect to see Nugent minor again soon; but as a matter of fact, it was less than a quarter of an hour later that the fag came back to Study No. 4 in the Remove.

He came in grinning.

"Well?" grunted the Bounder, while Redwing eyed the grinning young rascal very curiously.

"Right as rain!" chuckled Dicky. "I saw Twigg going to the Head's study, so I knew the coast was clear, see? I nipped into Twigg's study and looked in the drawer—and the fiver was there!" From his trousers pocket Dicky extracted a crumpled fiver. "That's your note, Smithy."

"Thanks!" said the Bounder, as Dicky handed him the five-pound note, numbered 044434, and he tucked it carelessly into his notecase.

"I've left Twigg's note in place of it!" said Dicky. "I say, what will old Twigg think when he sees it? Make him jump, what?"

"Probably he will jump to such an extent as to dint the ceiling with his bald spot!" answered the Bounder. "Well, let him jump! Cut!"

Richard Nugent, grinning, quitted the study again.

"That's that!" said the Bounder. "Ow! Blow this game leg! I shall have to go down to call-over dot-and-carry one! Hallo! What's that?"

"That" was a sharp and angry voice in the Remove passage. It was the voice of Frank Nugent. Evidently Dicky had come on his major as he left the Bounder's study.

"You young sweep! What are you doing up here?"

"Find out!" came Dicky's retort.

"I saw you coming out of Vernon-Smith's study—"

"Go and eat coco!"

"You young rotter! I've told you to keep clear of that fellow—"

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

Tom Redwing shut the door of Study No. 4, and no more was heard.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Light at Last!

FRANK NUGENT'S face was almost crimson with anger.

He was coming up to Study No. 1 with Wharton, and was surprised—and deeply incensed—to see his minor leaving the Bounder's study. The scene with Mr. Quelch and Twigg was fresh in his mind.

Dicky was in a scrape again, his own reckless folly having brought him under a terrible suspicion; and though Frank had assured his minor that it was "all right," he was feeling a deep uneasiness. It seemed to him like the last straw, to find the scamp of the Second hanging about the study of the outcast of the Remove. And Master Dicky's cheeky answers did not have the effect of lessening his anger.

He dropped his hand on Dicky's shoulder, and marched him into Study No. 1. The fag went unwillingly.

"Steady on, Frank, old man!" said Harry. "The fags haven't anything to do with our barring Smithy, you know—"

"My brother's going to bar him!" said Frank, between his set lips. "He's going to have nothing to do with the biggest rotter at Greyfriars. He gets into trouble enough without Vernon-Smith to help him into more. I haven't told you what Quelch wanted me for—"

"You silly ass!" said Dicky. "You don't know what you're talking about. Smithy's a better man than you any day!"

"Shut up, Dicky!" said Wharton.

"Shan't!" said Dicky independently. "Smithy's a better man than you, too! The only decent man in the Remove, in my opinion!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"You didn't think so when he was smacking your head the other day," he remarked. "I remember you hacked his shins."

"Yes; and he stood by me like a brick afterwards!" snapped Dicky. "If he wanted to smack my head again, I'd let him!"

"Had he anything to do with your



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going to Twigg's desk?" asked Frank bitterly.

His brother stared at him.

"You dummy!" was his reply.

"That's what Quelch wanted me for," said Frank, to the captain of the Remove. "The young rascal went to his desk to take back a pound note Twigg wouldn't let him have; and there's a banknote missing, and so—"

"You reckless little villain!" said Harry. "You ought to be jolly well flogged."

"Rats!" said Dicky cheerfully. "Same to you, Frank! Twigg's got his banknote all right, bother him!"

"Dicky would have been up before the Head and sacked before this, only, somehow, another fiver was put in the place of Twigg's one that was taken," went on Frank. "Quelch wanted to know if I'd given him one—to hide a theft—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Luckily, he believed that I hadn't, and as Dicky couldn't have got one from anybody else, that ought to let him out. But he's under suspicion, as they know he went to Twigg's desk, until the note turns up—"

Frank Nugent broke off, with a glare at his minor. "You young sweep! Is that a laughing matter?"

Dicky was grinning.

"It's pretty serious, kid," said Harry Wharton.

"That's all you know!" said Dicky. "You don't know everything in the Remove! Lot of duffers, if you ask me!"

Nugent breathed hard.

"And with that suspicion hanging over him, he hangs about the shadiest rotter in the school!" he said savagely. "If Smithy wasn't crooked, I'd go to his study now—"

"Better go while he's crooked!" grinned Dicky. "When he's fit, you couldn't handle him for toffee!"

Frank's face blazed.

"By gum! I'll—"

"Oh, don't play the goat!" said Dicky. "I wasn't going to tell you anything about it—I don't want any of your jolly old sermons—but now it's turned out all right, I don't care! Twigg's got his own note back—see! Smithy gave it to me, and I've put it in his desk."

"Smithy had it?" exclaimed Wharton blankly.

"Yes, and it was Smithy gave me a fiver to put there when I lost Twigg's!" said Dicky defiantly. "And if it hadn't been for Smithy, I should have got bunked, so there!"

"What on earth is the kid driving at?" asked Wharton. "If you're trying to pull my leg, you young sweep—"

"And you're barring Smithy in the Remove!" jeered Dicky. "And because he cut the cricket on Wednesday! Silly lot of dummies! If you knew what he was doing on Wednesday, Frank, while you were playing games and forgetting that you'd got a brother at all—"

"What do you mean?" asked Frank. "What was it Smithy did on Wednesday?"

"He jolly well came after me when I ran away from School!" snapped Dicky. "Now you know!"

"You—ran—away—from—school?" articulated Frank, gazing blankly at his cheerful minor.

"Well, what could a man do?" demanded Dicky. "Twigg's banknote blew out of the window while I was holding it. I couldn't find it again. You said yourself it would be no use telling him a yarn like that—and I jolly well knew it wasn't! So I was going home!"

"Good heavens!" breathed Frank.

"And how did Smithy know?" asked Wharton quietly.

"He saw the letter I left for Frank in this study," answered Dicky. "Blessed if I know why he took the matter up, but he did! He came after me, and got me. And I wouldn't come back to be sacked, of course; and he gave me a five-pound note to put back in Twigg's desk."

"Good heavens!" repeated Frank.

"It would have been all right if old Twigg hadn't spotted the number—one fiver's as good as another," said Dicky. "But he did spot it, and then, of course, he started nosing into it. I can tell you I got the shivers. So I went to Smithy—"

"You should have come to me," said Frank.

"Lot of good coming to you! I went to ask Smithy what to do, and it turned out that Twigg's banknote had been found, and Smithy had it. So he gave it to me, and I've put it back, and got back Smithy's one, and—and—and"—Dicky broke into a chuckle—"and old Twigg will think it's black magic when he finds his own note in his desk!"

"Well, my hat!" said Harry Wharton. "And is that why Smithy cut the cricket on St. Jude's day?"

"Of course it was. And Frank's been down on him more than anybody else!" sneered Dicky. "Well, I can jolly well tell you that I shouldn't be here now but

YORKSHIRE READER

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for sending in the following Greyfriars limerick.

The Nabob, when playing at cricket,
Is a demon for hitting the wicket:
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for Smithy! But perhaps that's what you want.

Frank Nugent stood silent.

"Why did Smithy do it?" he asked, at last.

"Blessed if I know! He was the last fellow I should have thought would have done it. I'd backed his shins. And you'd been rowing with him; and he played up, all the same, and saw me through. And he's a jolly decent sort—twice the man you are, any day in the week," said Dicky. "Now it's all right, I don't care if everybody knows. And you can go and eat coke—see?"

With that defiance, Richard Nugent marched out of the study and slammed the door after him.

Wharton and Nugent looked at one another.

Nugent's face was quite pale.

"That—that's why Smithy wouldn't explain, after he found that a prefect was mixed up in it," muttered Frank, at last. "It was to keep my minor safe. If Wingate had known—"

"Who'd have thought it?" said Harry.

"Well, nobody. Smithy acted like a rotter to me, and—and perhaps he did this to make up. Goodness knows; it doesn't seem like him! But—but I've barred him, for letting down the side on Wednesday, and—and all the time he did it to save my brother from being kicked out of the school. Oh crumbs!"

"Well, as he never explained, he couldn't expect anything else."

"He couldn't explain."

"I suppose he couldn't. And that young sweep would have told us nothing, if it hadn't turned out all right. Thank goodness it has! I—I think I'll go along and speak to Smithy!"

"I'll come with you."

And the chums of the Remove went along to Study No. 4.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Washed Out!

"L END me a hand, Reddy! That's the dashed bell for dashed call-over!" growled the Bounder of Greyfriars.

Redwing helped his chum out of the armchair. Vernon-Smith stood on one leg; placing the other foot very tenderly on the floor, and wincing. There was a tap at the door, and it opened to admit Frank Nugent and the captain of the Remove.

Smithy stared at them.

"What the thump do you want here?" he snapped. "Forgotten that I'm in Coventry—or what?"

"Yes; and the sooner you forget it, too, the better!" answered Harry Wharton. "That's all washed out now."

"It takes two to make a bargain," answered the Bounder coolly. "You may be willing to inflict your chin-wag on me, but—"

"Cheese it Smithy, old man!" murmured Redwing.

"Dicky's told us what happened last Wednesday, Smithy," said Frank Nugent.

"Last Wednesday? I let down the side last Wednesday—like the rotter I am! Did anything else happen?"

"We know now what else happened," said Frank. "I suppose you've got your back up, Smithy. I don't wonder at it. But you must remember that I knew nothing whatever about it."

"Oh, quite! Is that all?"

"If I'd known—"

"Speech may be taken as read," interrupted the Bounder. "Don't give me any soppy stuff, will you? If you'll get out of the way, Reddy is going to help me along. I've got rather knocked out beating you at cricket."

Frank smiled faintly.

"I won't give you any soppy stuff, Smithy. But I shan't ever forget what you did. And I'm sorry I never knew sooner."

"Rot!"

"You played a great game to-day, Smithy," said Harry Wharton, "and you've got to do the same when we meet Highcliffe."

"The Fourth aren't playing Highcliffe."

"Oh, don't be an ass! You're playing for the Remove, as soon as you're fit."

"I don't quite follow," said the Bounder coolly. "I let down the side in the St. Jude's match, and was very properly kicked out of the cricket for doing so. The fact that I went out to save a young scoundrel like Nugent's young brother from getting what he thoroughly deserved, makes no difference to that, so far as I can see."

"Then you can't see very far, old man," said the captain of the Remove. "Redwing, you can see, can't you, Reddy?"

"Yes, rather!" said Tom, smiling.

"Don't be a goat, Smithy!"

"We want to wash it all out, Smithy," said Harry Wharton. "You'd never have been sent to Coventry if we'd

(Continued on page 28.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,320.

ALLISON OF AVONSHIRE!



Cousin v. Cousin!

BILL ALLISON, in the ordinary way, was one of those fortunate people who do not suffer from nerves, either at cricket or anything else. But for him the match against Avonshire Club and Ground was far from being an ordinary occasion.

Apart from pulling the score round for the school, he had set his heart on playing well to-day—and not only well, but brilliantly. It was not just to “take the mike” out of his Cousin Len, either, as all the Grammarians were hoping fervently that he would. He had other reasons—reasons which he had not mentioned to a soul—for putting up the game of his life now against the Avonshire County men.

And because of this anxiety, Bill was going out to bat, for once in a way, with the “wind-up.” His mouth felt beastly dry and his big, brown fist gripped the bat with unnecessary tightness.

Well he knew his cousin's feelings towards him since the row in Simon Allison's workshop, and the rumour which had ended so disastrously for Len and his mysterious new “partner,” “Corsica” Phil Valetti.

As Bill went out to the wicket the Avonshire pros grinned, or winked, jovially; for most of them knew and liked the cheery youngster, who had often bowled to them at the county nets the previous season, as well as having played in a couple of Club and Ground matches during his holidays. Like Tom Janes, the school coach, they regarded Bill as a coming county man already, little knowing that he had less chance of playing first-class cricket as a regular amateur, like his wealthy cousin, than he had of flying to the moon.

Still, their “pally” smiles bucked Bill up a lot, and some of his confidence began to return. Terry Mason, the Grammarian skipper and first wicket batsman, came down the pitch to utter a few bright, brief, and brotherly words of wisdom.

“Listen, Bill!” he opened, with

friendly candour. “Don't start any of your usual mad-headed slogging till you've got your eye in. Savvy? We're in the soup, and the wicket's playing funny. Go easy at first, and then p'raps we can make this score look a bit better, anyway.”

“All serene, skipper! I'll do my best!” nodded Bill, going to his crease, where Dick Hayes, the veteran Avonshire keeper, greeted him, with a chuckle.

“How do, Bill? Haven't busted your neck on that old iron of yours yet, then. Er—keep your peepers well open, my son. Cousin Len's bumpin' 'em down good and hard this morning,” he added in an undertone, knowing—like most Avonport folk—that little love was lost between the cricketing Allison.

Bill nodded as he took guard. He had known all along what he was in for—some of Len's fastest snorters; “body-liners,” too, probably.

Nevertheless, he hitched his cap forward a bit, hoisted his slacks, and prepared calmly to face the ordeal.

There was no doubt that Len Allison was a good fast bowler, who got plenty of pace and “devil” into every ball. Maybe his tear-away action was a shade too jerky to put him in the same class as Larwood and Voce; and once he lost his length, really good county batsmen

hammered him unmercifully. But against less-capable performers—such as Bill—Len was a terror.

That he was out for his cousin's scalp was obvious from the first.

He paused for a moment at the start of his twenty-yard run to smile at Bill crookedly. The next he came charging up to the wicket full pelt in long, springy strides that ended in a tigerish leap and the whirl of sinewy arms. With every ounce of speed he could muster he let fly—a fast, swinging kicker straight for Bill's body.

Whiz!

Bill Allison hardly saw it. Mindful of Mason's orders, he stepped hurriedly back into his wicket to play the snorter cautiously, but missed it. A sharp stab of pain stung him as the ball sang past the handle of his bat and just nicked his ribs. Then ‘Keeper Hayes, coming across, caught the ball deftly, and—

“Haahh-zatt!” exploded Len in a harsh yell.

Tom Janes, umpiring for the school, shook his head.

“Not out!” he grunted. “And you know it, too!”

Len scowled, caught the wicket-keeper's return, and swung on his heel.

Meanwhile, Bill, rubbing his side tenderly, gave Terry Mason a plaintive grimace that spoke volumes. Stonewalling, or careful play of any sort, wasn't in his line at all. He was a hitter, pure and simple, relying solely on a keen eye and supple wrists.

After that little taste of Len's quality, orders or no orders, he meant to hit!

“It's all right for Terry, whose bat's like a barn door!” he muttered to himself. “But if I fiddle about out here I shall get my block knocked off, instead of getting runs! So—”

Grim-eyed, he braced himself for the next ball. Again Len rushed up to the crease like a bull at a gate, and again launched a thunderbolt at his cousin's leg stump.

But this time Bill, playing his natural game, jumped forward, instead of stepping back.

WHAT'S GONE BEFORE.

Impoverished by years of misfortune, Simon Allison, once part-owner of the great Allison Motor Works, invents a powerful super-charger, but falls through lack of funds to put it on the market. His rascally nephew, Len Allison, “boss” of the works and a “big noise” in the county cricket team, hires a thug named Valetti to terrify the old man into parting with his supercharger at a low price. The effort proves futile, thanks to the timely intervention of Mike Doyle—Simon Allison's mechanic, who recognises in Valetti an old enemy—and smiling Bill Allison. Shortly after this, Bill turns out for his school, who are doing badly against Avonshire Club and Ground, to face the demon bowler, Len Allison!

(Now read on.)

Crack!

Recklessly he lashed out in a swinging cross-bat stroke that drew a moan from Terry Mason, the orthodox batsman. But Bill's villainous swipe connected all right, just as the ball whipped up waist-high—and the result was gorgeous.

There came a sharp smack, followed by a startled shout, and into the air sprang square leg, arms outstretched. He came to earth again, sucking his tingling finger-tips, what time the ball, with all Bill's punch behind it, sailed on, curved, and dropped cleanly on to the cinder path encircling the ground.

Next instant a storm of cheers and claps greeted that mighty "sixer."

"Good old Bill! That's the stuff!"

"Well hit, Bill!"

"Silly ass, Bill!" growled Terry. "Steady, I said!"

Bill, however, twirling his bat cheerfully, only grinned. This was the stuff to administer!

Quickly the pill was returned, while Len Allison stood frowning at the valiant but unsuccessful square leg, who had done his best to catch that lofty hummer. Sulkily the fast bowler strode to his mark, and sent down another "kicker," shorter than ever and dead on the middle stump. But Bill was on the warpath now.

Again he whipped up his bat and stepped back, meaning to force the long-hop past Len to the sight-screen. At the last split second, however, he mistimed it, snicked it sharply, and saw second slip fling himself sideways—a fraction too late. It was another "chance." But it was also another boundary, and the Grammarian supporters roared with glee.

"Hurrah! 70 up! Keep it going, Bill!"

"Pretty batting, William!" murmured Dick Hayes dryly. "Where on earth d'ye learn all these lovely shots?"

"Dunno; but they all count, anyway!" grinned Bill philosophically.

He shot a quick glance at his cousin, who was gritting his teeth. Leonard Allison's temper, never very certain, had given way completely at this latest failure to "get" Bill, and the young hitter's lucky escape added fuel to his wrath.

"Here, what's the matter with you down there? Can't you catch anything?" he rasped, glaring at the slip fielder—who was none other than Forbes, Avonshire's number one batsman, and a good man still, though past his best, like a few more in the team.

The professional, who had been on the point of apologising for his miss, changed his mind, and grunted instead, muttering something about "rotten sportsmanship and bad manners." Then from mid-off came the firm, quiet voice of Mr. Jerry Tempest, an amateur who had long ago given up first-class cricket, and now skippered the Club and Ground wisely and tactfully.

"Steady on, Allison; we all drop 'em sometimes!" He smiled soothingly, cocking a level grey eye at Len, all the same. "And pitch 'em up a bit, too, please. We don't want any of these boys to get their heads bumped off!"

Len swallowed hard, snatched up the ball, and stamped away. Even if he had paid any heed to his captain's request, it was clear that he had no intention of obeying.

Furiously he slung down his fifth express of the over, and by that very fury presented Bill with his third successive boundary. The ball was the wildest of full tosses, and though it whizzed for Bill's chest like a shot from a gun, the Grammarian timed it perfectly all the way.

Shortening his bat, he swayed back and punched the leather crisply and cleanly. No one tried to stop it—no one even moved. Like a brown bullet, the ball hissed yards wide of mid-on, bounced once, and fairly catapulted in amongst the cheering spectators. It was a glorious slam, beautifully placed and chanceless.

Len Allison had asked for punishment—and was getting it!

"Oh, well hit, Bill!"

The Grammarians were on their feet now, cheering the batsman to the echo. Fourteen off four balls, and from a county bowler at that. The score was looking up, with a vengeance!

On the field, however, some of the professionals were eyeing each other dubiously, and watching Len Allison's savage face.

Experts, they had tumbled now to the real nature of the duel that was being waged between the hard-hitting Bill and his ill-tempered cousin. Forbes, edging over to his fellow-slipman, spoke his mind bluntly.

"If our sweet little Leonard isn't trying to slaughter young Bill, I don't know anything about the game! If I was Mr. Tempest, I'd take him off for good next over, and stick him in the long-field. He'll catch that kid a real bad packet sooner or later; that's what he's out to do, I know."

Mr. Tempest, a keen observer himself, had already come to the same conclusion, and stood stroking his chin uneasily as he watched Bill hoist his slacks and prepare for the next delivery. At the end of this over Len Allison was

going to receive marching orders—that was quite definite!

But Len Allison made the most of his last ball!

The young owner of "Allisons" was in a state of blind, reckless rage that would have seemed childish had it not been ominous.

He could tell from their stony glances what the professionals thought of him; and mingling with the applause for Bill, came a few pungent jeers, too, from the "townies" watching the game. The knowledge that he was making himself unpopular always maddened Len, a born seeker of the limelight. The fact that Bill was the cause of his humiliation was the last straw.

As he raced up to deliver his final attack, all the vindictive ruthlessness which had made his late father, Jake Allison, a byword in the town, filled Len's own heart to the exclusion of sportsmanship—everything.

Onlookers, players, all were forgotten then. He could see only Bill, his despised cousin, crouching, cool-eyed and smiling, at the wicket. With a silent curse, he slammed the ball down the pitch, short, straight, and as fast as he could sling it.

Bill knew that bumper had got him the instant it pitched!

Against a veritable thunderbolt of destruction he had no chance. It was the swiftest, most dangerous ball he had ever had to face.

Gallantly, desperately, he swung at it, more to guard himself than to try to score, while at the same time he ducked his head slightly, spurred by the instinct for self-preservation.

That hasty jerk and the flabby peak of his cap were all that saved him from really serious injury!

Beaten both by the pace and wicked "lift" of the ball, he missed and took it full on the forehead.

Thud!

It was as though someone had struck him down with a club.

Round Bill Allison spun, knocked silly by the crushing impact. There came a chorus of horrified shouts, merging to a blurred roaring as he buckled at the knees, dropping his bat and clasping his head. The ground heaved and rolled underfoot; he suddenly felt himself falling—falling.

Then, without a sound, Bill collapsed against his wicket and lay twisted among the spreadeagled stumps.

Bill Speaks His Mind!

WHEN Bill recovered consciousness again, it was in the school pavilion.

Weakly he opened his eyes, winced at the pain that shot through his head, and blinked around, wondering who had hit him and what had happened.

Anxious men and boys in flannels were bending over him, for the game had stopped. As soon as his wits began to function again, the first thing he heard was the sound of angry voices raised in heated argument.

"I say that you ought to be thunderin' well ashamed of yourself!" old Tom Janes was shouting. "D'you think that's the sort of wild-cat stuff to bowl at schoolboys—First Eleven players or not? County bowler, you call yourself, eh? Hub, you're just a bloomin' slinger, as I've always said!"

"I tell you the ball was just an ordinary fast one, you insolent old fool!" Len Allison flashed back. "The young idiot funk'd it—ducked right

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1320.

"COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS!"

WHAT do you think of our great new cricket story? It's "the goods," isn't it, chums? John Brearley certainly puts plenty of "pep" into his yarns, and I feel sure that I shall receive a number of letters congratulating me on having picked such a top-notch story. And what of our series of superb souvenir photo-plates? Fairly taken you by storm, what? Your collection is growing now, and you'll appreciate the photogravure plate which is presented with this week's issue. Don't forget, chums, there are

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To make certain of getting the complete set it is advisable to give your newsagent a standing order for THE MAGNET. It would indeed be a great pity if you missed one of these free gifts. Next week's souvenir plate illustrates "An Underground City" which is situated in the heart of London. Take a glance at the small black-and-white reproduction on page 17 of this issue, and you will get an idea of the treat in store for you.

By the way, be sure and take advantage of our stupendous offer of a Rigby "Super" Model Aeroplane, which you can obtain for 4d. only.

As usual, there's another ripping programme in store for you next week. "THE BOXING 'BEAK,'" by Frank Richards, is the type of school story you all revel in. "The Greyfriars Herald" is a real corking issue, while the continuation of our real life cricket story abounds in thrills. Be on the safe side. Order next week's MAGNET now!

YOUR EDITOR.

into it, that's all! If he'd had the nerve to stand up to it properly, nothing would have—"

How Bill managed to scramble to his feet just then he never quite knew.

Something—a sudden fierce surge of temper—seemed to drive him off the table on which he was lying. Before any of the astonished players could stop him, he pushed through them roughly and shoved old Janes aside. Then, fighting-mad, he seized Len by the neck of his shirt and jammed him back against the wall with a force that made him gasp.

"Funk? You say I funk?" stormed Bill, his rugged face hard as iron. "Why, you rotten outsider—" And back came his right fist for a smashing punch to the chin.

Just in time, however, the onlookers, Avonshire men and Grammarians alike, flung themselves between the infuriated cousins.

Forbes, Dick Hayes, and Tom Janes grabbed Bill and forced him back to the table again, struggling and glaring; Jerry Tempest and the others laid hands on Len, who had gone white to the lips. Violently he strove to tear himself free and get at Bill once more.

"The young gutterpup!" he panted. "Let me go—let go, I say! By gad, I'll teach him to lay his filthy paws on me! That's twice this week, and—"

"Oh, be quiet! Everybody be quiet! What d'you think this is, a cricket match or a brawl?"

Mr. Jerry Tempest, thoroughly aroused, voiced his exasperation sharply, quelling even the raging Len with his wrathful eye.

"Bill, my lad, you lie still and let Tom Janes see to you. And you, Len, any more talk about 'funks,' and I'll have you up before the county committee. The boy didn't funk, and you know it—though he had every reason to duck with the dangerous tripe you were pelting down! Men, get back to the field before the crowd starts swarming in. I think, Len, that you'd better apologise to your cousin right now!"

Len Allison drew back, his teeth showing, fingers curling and uncurling.

"Do you? Well, I'll see you and him hanged first!" he snarled, and stamped out of the pavilion, followed reluctantly by the professionals.

With a grim look, the Club and Ground captain turned back to Bill, whose head, adorned by an ugly violet bruise, was beginning to spin round again.

"Since your cousin seems to have lost his manners, I'll apologise for him, lad,"

he said quietly, like the good sportsman and gentleman he was. Then he went out after his men, determined that Len Allison had not heard the last of the unpleasant scene by long chalks.

As soon as he had gone, and Tom Janes began to bind a wet bandage round Bill's head, the other members of the Grammar school team gave vent to some long-pent-up indignation.

"The bound! He was bumpin' 'em down on purpose!"

"He meant to sock you from the start, Bill!"

Bill winced again, and grunted.

"Oh, cheese it! Those kickers didn't matter; they're all in the game," he answered. "It—it was just that remark about 'funking' that got my—"

Gently, but firmly, Tom Janes laid a hand over the boy's mouth and jerked a significant thumb at the excited Grammarians.

"Get," he ordered; and they "got."

Grumbling and muttering to himself, the veteran coach pinned Bill's bandage neatly and straightened up, tugging at his grizzled moustache.

"Reckon you'll be all right now, my son, though I thought at first you were a case for the doctor," he nodded soberly. "Lucky you ducked and took it on the cap, or I guess that mad idiot would have done more damage."

Satisfied that the tough young athlete's injury was not too bad, he started for the door, to go out and relieve the substitute who had taken his place as umpire.

"Mebbe you'll feel a lot better if you're left alone and quiet. You're out, anyway, since you busted your own wicket. Just lie still, lad, and take it easy, and I'll see you later."

Bill, however, could not lie still; neither could he take it easy. Len's cannon-ball had shaken him up more than he would admit, and his head ached like the dickens. Also, he was beginning to fear that Tom Janes and Terry would not allow him to take any further part in the game.

It was this fear, amounting almost to panic in the end, that forced Bill restlessly to his feet again as a volley of clapping came from the sunny field outside. Easing himself off the table, he staggered across to the window and looked out, gripping the ledge tightly to prevent himself from swaying.

(What putrid luck for Bill to get knocked out like this just when he was getting set for a slashing innings! Look out for more thrilling chapters of this powerful sporting story in next week's Free Gift issue of the MAGNET.)

BARRED BY HIS FORM!

(Continued from page 25.)

known. That's the bell for call-over. Let's go down together."

The Bounder's hard face broke into a grin.

"What about the other fellows?" he asked. "You're not the only pebble on the beach, you know."

"We shall tell them enough to make it all right. Come on, old bean! It was all a rotten mistake! Is your leg very bad?"

"Rotten!"

"Serve you right for whopping us at cricket! Come on!"

The Bounder laughed.

There was a buzz in the Remove when the Bounder joined the crowd going into Hall for call-over, leaning on Harry Wharton's arm, with Frank Nugent on his other side, and Tom Redwing following with a smiling face. Evidently the outcast of the Remove was an outcast no longer.

There was a good deal of surprise in the Remove over the "washing-out" of the sentence of Coventry. But the fellows were satisfied with Wharton's explanation that the Bounder had explained the matter, and that, as cricket captain, he was quite satisfied that it had been unavoidable. And the Remove cricketers, undoubtedly, were glad to welcome Smithy back into the fold—especially as a rod in pickle for Highcliffe. They were surprised, but they were satisfied.

There was one gentleman at Greyfriars who was still more surprised, and not quite satisfied. That was Mr. Twigg, the master of the Second. Twigg rubbed his eyes when he found the five-pound note in his desk, with the number on it—01234567. It was his own note—returned as mysteriously as it had vanished. Obviously there had been no theft, and Twigg was driven to the conclusion that the whole thing was some absurd and inexplicable practical joke.

And when the list for the Highcliffe match was posted up in the Rag, prominent in it was the name of the "deserter" who had been barred by his Form.

THE END.

(Next Saturday's yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. is entitled: "THE BOXING 'BEAK'!" It's absolutely ripping, chums! So is the photogravure plate which will be presented FREE with this issue. See that you order your copy in good time!)



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June 3rd, 1933.

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Advertiser will exchange brand new cricket bat for good book on "How to Play Hopscotch and Marbles." Apply (with our compliments) to CECIL R. TEMPLE, Upper Fourth.
"TAINT RISING BELL!"
It never is, if you go to bed wearing Professor Penfold's Anti-noise Ear Plugs! Ensure a perfect night's rest and an extra ten minutes in the morning! Refuse imitations! Wear only Professor Penfold's.

PUTTING REALISM INTO PICTURES

Mauleverer as Film Producer

For the small sum of twenty pounds a day, Lord Mauleverer has borrowed a moving-picture camera, fitted with a sound-recording apparatus. He explained his aims to a small gathering of Press representatives the other evening. "What was badly needed in this country," he said, "was a 'talkie' that would depict England as it really was—something that would make the audience feel really at home. He proposed to produce a picture of school life that would embody these ideas, and with the help of just one technical adviser he was sure he could do it. The technical adviser came down with the camera on the following day. "Gotta scenario?" was his first question. "Yes. It's about a chap who gets expelled for a crime he never committed, then comes back with a victim's team to play against his old school at cricket. In the sportsman spirit engendered by the jolly old game, the chap who really did the deed confesses an 'everything' ends up in hand. "Punk! Won't do at all!" said the expert. "Start with a cabaret. "Cabaret?" gasped Mauleverer faintly. "But this is supposed to be a school, not a giddy dance-hall! "All the same on the pictures," snapped the expert. "We'll have a chorus of a hundred boys doing a cricket dance. That'll make a snappy start. Now, what about the crime? What sort of a crime is it? "Something pretty bad, dear man. The chap who breaks bounds to play billiards in a temperance billiard-hall. "Nix on that," said the expert decidedly. "Make him pinch the Crown Jewels, kidnap the headmaster, and tie the beads protect to the railway track just before an express comes along. That's action. "Yes, but— "I suppose there's House rivalry in it?" "Oh, yes; in the cricket match, both Houses are fearfully excited at both grimsly determined to win. "Not a chance!" said the film expert, with a depressing gesture. "Let 'em get really nasty over it. We'll make it a battle between the two Houses on the cricket-pitch with machine-guns and hand-grenades. Plenty of pep—that's what the fans are fond of! "Yes, but— "We must have an exciting finish, of course," said the expert thoughtfully. "Say the headmaster turns out to be a homicidal maniac who tries to blow up the school with dynamite. But just as he's doing it, the rescued head perfect turns up with a fifty-yard-long dinosaur he finds in a prehistoric cave inhabited by hideous monsters. The dinosaur eats the Head, the police turn up and arrest the battling cricket teams, and the fellow that committed all the crimes proves to be the detective who was on the track of the dinosaur. What a plot! What a film! Boy, we're gonna knock 'em silly with this!" Of course, Mauleverer couldn't help being impressed. A film containing jewel robberies, murders, machine-guns, dynamite, loony headmasters, and prehistoric monsters had

STOP TROUBLE WITH THE MAJOR

Owing to a renewal of the trouble with the big local handover, the footpath on the other side of the stile has been placed out of bounds. We always maintained that Major Thresher had a "stile" of his own! (No, Tony! We can stand a lot, but one proverb translated by your method is quite enough—thanks, all the same.—Ed.)

AS OTHERS SEE THEM

What I Think of William Gosling
By Dick Russell
Strange though it may seem, I really believe at times that William Gosling, our crusty old keeper of the gate, is quite fond of us. I admit, of course, that he has a very queer way of allowing it! He positively excludes cheerfulness when he manages to slam the gates in our faces at looking-up time. His smile is wonderful to see when he hoists an unhappy junior on his broad back for a head's twisting. Yet, in spite of all that, I fancy that in the long twilight of a summer's evening, when Gosling sits outside his lodge, putting away at his pipe and sipping a glass of water, which is whiskered to contain occasionally a generous admixture of gin, there is often a kindly twinkle in his eye as he looks on the old grey school buildings. He can't help feeling a sentimental twinge when he rummages on the many generations of Greyfriars chaps who have passed through his hands. Gosling has a lot to put up with, you know. It's not all honey being at everybody's beck and call and always having a hundred jobs waiting to be done, and to me it's no wonder the old chap gets crusty sometimes. But Gosling has a corner in his heart for us, take it from me. His attitude during term is invariably hostile. But it's probably otherwise when we're all away on holiday and he keeps his vigil over the deserted school. On those occasions it's ten to one in doubt that he regales his occasional callers with a host of yarns about our virtues, and probably gets really sentimental over the absent horrors who lead him such a dance during term-time. Gosling at Greyfriars is as much an institution as the truckshop and the rising-bell, anyway, so whether you like him or not, you've got to respect him.

WATER-CYCLING TO PARIS

Coker's Amazing Feet—Pardon Feet

The whole school turned out on Wednesday afternoon, when Coker started on his daring trip from the school boat-house on the Salk to Paris on the Seine by water-cycle. Following on Aunt Judy's intervention, the Head granted Coker leave to cycle to Paris provided the trip didn't take longer than three days. Coker was quite confident of his ability to do the trip in less time than that. Loud cheers greeted Coker on his arrival at the boat-house. The water-cycle was moved just off the landing-stage. It was a queer-looking craft, with power and pedals, the motive-power being provided by the pedalling of the rider. Before setting off, Coker made



"Unknown dangers lie ahead of me," said Coker, "when the cheery had died away. 'What care I? My indomitable spirit refuses to be downcast by them! On this trip, gentlemen, I am taking with me as notions one ham sandwich and two

of talk! The time for action has arrived! "Good old Coker!" And Coker, to the tune of a thunder of cheers, stopped on to the water-cycle, jumped on to the saddle and started pedalling for all he was worth. We regret to have to announce, in conclusion, that he has not yet reached Paris. What happened, as a matter of fact, was that Coker had only left the landing-stage ten yards behind him when the water-cycle, owing to some unexplained cause, suddenly submerged and carried him to the bottom of the river! He was fished out with a boat-hook, to the accompaniment of the most terrific cheer of the afternoon! So Coker has not, after all, had to use his tomato to defend himself against man-eating sharks. He used it instead to squash on Potter's nose when Potter injudiciously asked him when he was going to make a second effort to cross the Channel on a water-cycle!

Exciting Scenes at Gates
Wingate, our ever-popular school skipper, met Adventure with a capital A in Courtheld last Tuesday afternoon. It was after school and he was just starting up on his motor-bike outside Chuckley's, where he had been shopping. When a slick-looking gentleman, with a soft hat pulled well over his eyes, dashed out of the crowd and jumped astride the pillion seat. "I want a lift, and I'm in a hurry!" he snarled. "Let her all out and drive out of town, if you value your life. I'm holding a gun against your back." Wingate felt the muzzle of a revolver pressing into him, and he wisely didn't argue. Despite the fact that there were yells of "Stop thief!" behind him, he accelerated, and was soon roaring out of the town at a good fifty. They need through Friar-village and sped towards Greyfriars. Follows who had to jump hurriedly out of the way wondering what the dickens Wingate was up to. When Wingate reached Greyfriars, they realised. Instead of passing the gates, as the crook behind him expected him to do, Wingate, without a thought of the danger to himself, suddenly turned his machine in the direction of the school wall. There was a terrific crash and a wild howl. Wingate was prepared for the impact as his bike crashed against



WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?

Mr. "Larry" Laseplous commended the school O.T.G.—with Wingate as second-in-command. And a smart body of men they are, too!

In a stern rowing race on the Salk, Harry Wharton bested Frank Courtenay of Highbelle by half a length. Wharton is the best oarsman in the Remore!

A plume on the backs of the Salk with Marjorie Haselley wearing the length of the petticoat—and was round the quod by his chum!

W. G. Bunter broke a record by covering the length of the petticoat in 3.7 seconds. It should be mentioned that as a special treat—so long as he—of the Salk was behind him—with an abjectant!

DICKY NUGENT'S WEEKLY WISDOM
When I shot a P at our Form master's nose in class the other day, he was in the middle of a lecture on "How the Pyramids Were Built." I fancy the subject must have got on his nerves. At any rate, the old fogey came down on me like a ton of bricks! On entering the Form-room the other morning, Quechly found a riot in progress and was hit on the back by a flying inkpot. We can assure you he experienced no difficulty in "inkwell"-ing the disturbance!

