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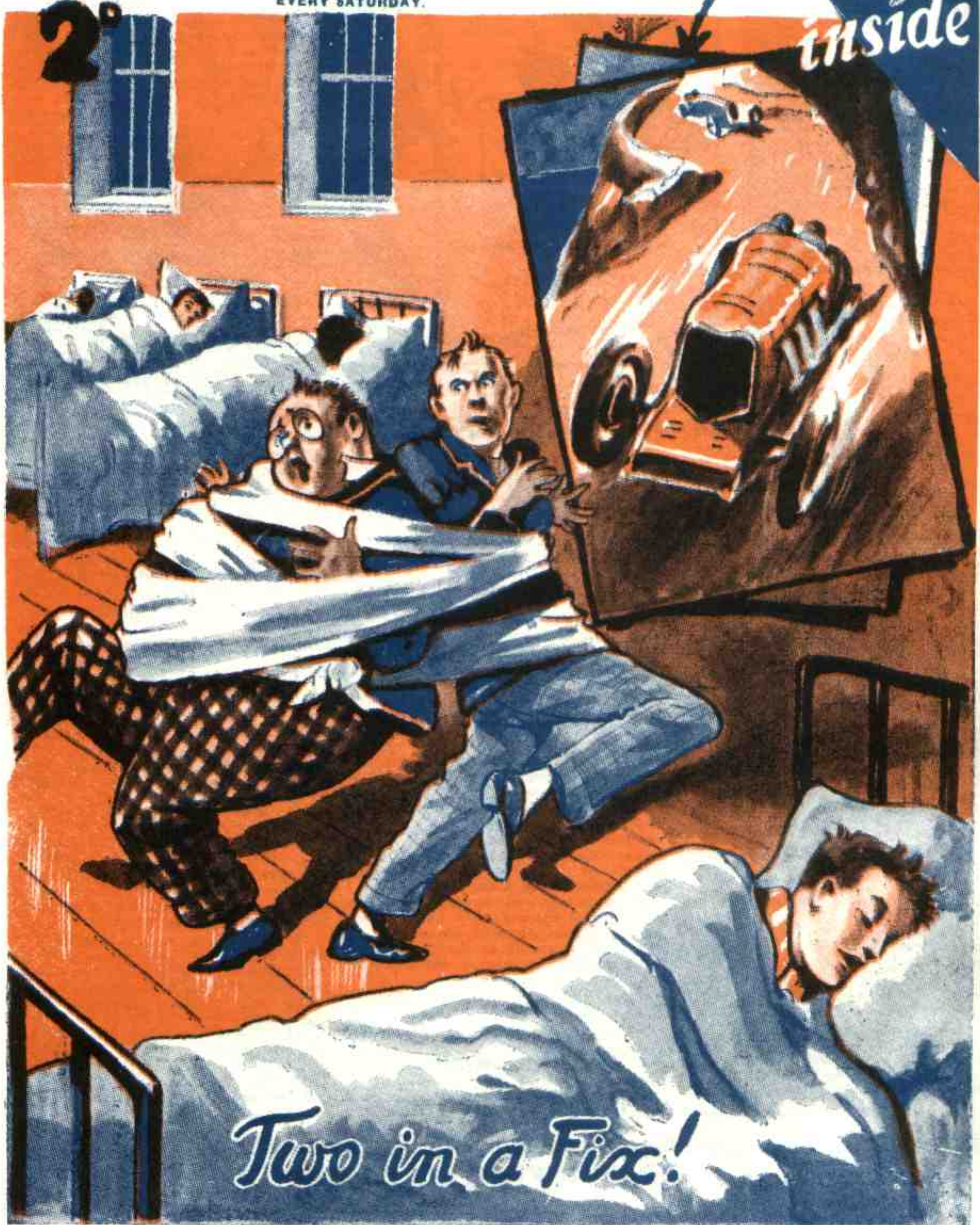
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Two in a Fix!

THE REFORMER OF THE REMOVE!



BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Fed-Up!

TROT in, Alonzo!" That cheery welcome greeted Alonzo Todd of the Greyfriars Remove as he looked into Study No. 1.

Harry Wharton & Co. were at tea in that celebrated apartment. They were discussing poached eggs and the next football match at the same time; and possibly they were not exactly exhilarated when the gentle, simple face of the Duffer of Greyfriars looked in. Alonzo Todd was a good fellow, a nice fellow, an estimable fellow; but his best friend would never have denied that he was a bore! But Study No. 1 in the Remove was a hospitable study; and the Famous Five rather liked old Alonzo, so they chuckled football, which was a topic outside Alonzo's comprehension, and cheerily bade him welcome.

"Trickle in!" said Harry Wharton.

"Take a pew, old bean!" said Frank Nugent.

"Welcome as the flowers in May!" said Bob Cherry solemnly.

"The welcomeness is terrific!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Just one egg left!" said Johnny Bull. "Better late than never, Lonzy! Squattoz-vous!"

Alonzo Todd stepped into the study. But he did not take a seat at the tea-table. He stood and gazed at the Famous Five of the Remove with his serious and thoughtful gaze. Alonzo

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was always serious, and generally thoughtful, though what he did his thinking with the other fellows did not know, as it was generally supposed in the Remove that brains had been left out of Alonzo's composition.

"My dear fellows," said Alonzo, "I trust that I am not interrupting you."

"What a trustful nature!" murmured Bob.

"I have come here to make a few observations to you, Wharton, as head boy and captain of the Form!" explained Alonzo.

"Have tea instead!" suggested Harry Wharton. "You'll like the tea better than I should like the jolly old observations."

"My dear Wharton—"

"Put some more tea in the pot, Franky! Shove over the toast, Bob! Sit down, Alonzo! There's a box."

Alonzo shook his thoughtful head.

"I thank you sincerely for your kind invitation, my dear Wharton," said Alonzo, in the long-winded way which sometimes made the Removites laugh, but oftener made them tired. "But I will not join you at tea for two reasons. In the first place I have had my tea. In the second place, I am not at all sure that you will derive gratification from the observations I am about to make."

"Don't make 'em, then!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"The speechfulness," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "is a bird in hand, but the silence is the cracked pitcher that goes longest to the well." The Nabob of Bhanipur was strong upon proverbial wisdom, though sometimes

his proverbs were a little mixed. The English he had learned from the wisest moonshee at Bhanipur was rather fearful and wonderful.

"I have considered the matter carefully," said Alonzo, "and I trust that you will give me your attention, Wharton! I am not wholly satisfied with your conduct as head boy of the Form."

"Not!" ejaculated Wharton.

"I regret to say, no!"

"Too bad!" said Wharton gravely. "But I'll try to survive it! I may pull through."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shut the door after you!" said Nugent.

"I have not yet made the remarks that I came to make, Nugent."

"The speech can be taken as read! Shut the door after you, there's a good chap!"

"I regret—"

"Look here, old bony bean," said Harry Wharton. "If you've come to tea, squat down! If you've come to jaw, cut it short!"

"The jawfulness of the esteemed Alonzo is rather terrific," remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I will make my observations as brief as practicable," said Alonzo. "As Shakespeare justly remarks, brevity is the soul of wit, and tediousness its limbs and outward flourishes. To begin with—"

"Look here," said Bob Cherry, "I'll tell you what! Stand in the passage and talk, Alonzo, with the door shut! That will please both parties! You can jaw as much as you like, and we shan't hear you."

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"Splendid wheeze!" said Johnny Bull heartily.

"My dear fellow, pray do not be frivolous. The matter is serious," said Alonzo. "I am bound to tell you, Wharton—"

"Couldn't you tell them in Study No. 7?" suggested Wharton. "Toddy and Dutton and Bunter are your study-mates, you know, and it's up to them to stand your chin-music!"

"Hear, hear!" said Bob.

"But it is to you, my dear Wharton, that it is necessary for me to address my remarks, as you are head of the Form!" explained Alonzo. "You are aware, my dear fellow, that since my return to Greyfriars, I have developed rather unusual physical strength. Far be it from me to brag, or swank, or anything of that kind; but is it not a fact that I am now the strongest fellow in the Remove, and quite able to handle any of you fellows as if you were infants?"

The Famous Five looked at Alonzo. The welcoming smiles had faded from their faces. A fellow could get fed-up with the Duffer of Greyfriars in a very short time. Judging by their looks, the chums of the Remove were already in that state.

"For instance," went on Alonzo, "owing to a deplorable misunderstanding, my dear Wharton, I had a scrap with you last week. You may remember that I knocked you out with a single blow."

Wharton's face reddened.

Alonzo was a good fellow, but he was not tactful!

Certainly, no fellow need have been ashamed of getting knocked out by "Strong Alonzo." The amazing strength Alonzo Todd had developed was the talk of Greyfriars.

It had been a complete mystery at first, but Billy Bunter—who had his own ways of acquiring information—had found out that Alonzo took some stuff from a little bottle which he kept locked in his desk in Study No. 7.

Whatever it was, it was wonderful stuff, for it had turned the feeblest fellow in the Lower Fourth into the strongest man at Greyfriars.

Alonzo certainly was not the fellow to brag or swank! He would have been shocked at the idea. Yet there was a trace of a smirk on his face. There was no doubt that Alonzo enjoyed his remarkable position of the Strong Man of Greyfriars, and it was possible that, unconsciously, it had got into his head a little.

"You blithering, burbling, babbling bandersnatch!" said the captain of the Remove. "Is that what you've come here to talk about?"

"Not at all, my dear fellow! I was merely mentioning it—I trust without offending you!"

"Idiot!"

"It is no disgrace to you, my dear fellow, to be knocked out by a single blow from me! I could knock out Wingate of the Sixth just as easily."

"Fathead!"

"In fact, I could mop up this whole study if I were disposed to use my great strength in an unworthy manner!" said Alonzo cheerfully. "But I trust that I shall never so far forget the instructions of my dear Uncle Benjamin, as to become an overbearing or bullying fellow."

"You're welcome to try it on!" growled Johnny Bull, with a growl like that of the Great Huge Bear.

"My dear Bull—"

"Oh, shut up!" Politeness was wearing very thin in Study No. 1.

"However, to resume," said Alonzo, "being in possession of remarkable strength, and able to handle any fellow, or fellows, in the Form, I feel it my duty to use my advantages for good. There are many things going on in the Remove, my dear Wharton, of which I cannot approve, and of which I am convinced that my Uncle Benjamin would not approve."

"Is that the lot?" asked Wharton.

"I am very far from having finished yet, my dear Wharton! In fact, I have hardly begun."

"Your mistake," said the captain of the Remove, rising to his feet. "You've finished, old bony bean! Buzz off!"

"In the circumstances, I decline—"

"Now, look here, fathead!" said Harry. "We all like you, more or less, and we know you mean well, and you can't help being the biggest fool at Greyfriars, or anywhere else. But if you fancy that you can butt into a man's study and jaw him, you're making a mistake! Get out!"

"I shall certainly not leave this study, Wharton, until I have completed the observations I came out here to make," said Alonzo Todd calmly.

"Get out!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Kindly be silent, Bull!"

"Down with this—and down with that——" is the cry of Alonzo Todd, the reformer of the Remove. But he finds his self-imposed task a painful one, for the Remove to a man reply: "Down with Alonzo!" And down he goes!

"You blithering ass!" yelled Nugent. "Have you come here to bully this study, because you've somehow got hold of some patent medicine muck that makes you as strong as a horse? Get out!"

"Kindly be silent, Nugent!" urged Alonzo.

All the Famous Five were on their feet now. Whether the whole quintet of them could handle Strong Alonzo was doubtful. But there was no doubt that they were ready to try. On that point there was no doubt whatever. Alonzo, perhaps, had not intended to make them wrathful. But they were wrathful—very wrathful.

"There's the door, fathead!" said the captain of the Remove. "Are you going?"

"Certainly not! I——"

"Kick him out!" roared Johnny Bull.

"My dear fellows, pray do not get excited! I should be very, very sorry to hurt you——"

Alonzo was interrupted. Like one man the Famous Five rushed at him, collared him, swept him off his feet, and hurled him headlong into the Remove passage. There was a heavy bump as Alonzo smote the floor, and a loud yell.

"Whoop! Oh, my goodness gracious! Yarooop!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Strong Man of Greyfriars!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter yelled in the Remove passage in great excitement. Fellows looked out of six or seven studies along the passage.

The bump of Alonzo Todd snuffing the floor had reached every ear.

"Hallo! What's the row?" called out Vernon-Smith from Study No. 4.

"I say, you fellows, Alonzo's mopping up Wharton's study!" yelled Bunter. "He, he, he!"

"Looks as if Wharton's study is mopping up Alonzo," grinned the Bounder.

"Oh dear! Oh, my goodness!" gasped Alonzo, as he sat up.

He blinked at five excited and wrathful faces in the doorway of Study No. 1.

Peter Todd came out of Study No. 7.

"What the dickens are you up to, Lonzy?" he demanded.

"He isn't up; he's down!" grinned the Bounder.

"Now travel, you ass!" said Harry Wharton. "Take that as a hint, and go!"

"Groogh!" gasped Alonzo.

Strong as Alonzo was, he seemed rather damaged by that terrific bump on the floor of the Remove passage.

"Go it, Alonzo!" yelled Skinner.

Skinner and Snoop and Stott came out of Study No. 11, where they had been smoking cigarettes after tea. Skinner & Co., at least, were glad to see Strong Alonzo in conflict with the Famous Five.

Alonzo staggered to his feet. But it was not to go. He made a step towards the doorway of Study No. 1, which was blocked by the Famous Five. His Cousin Peter caught him by the arm.

"Look here, Lonzy! What are you rowing in that study for? Come away, and don't be an ass!"

"My dear Peter——"

"Oh, shut up, and come away!" said Toddy, jerking at his arm.

"Please release my arm, my dear Peter."

Mild as Alonzo was, there was a strong vein of obstinacy in him.

"Well, I won't!" said Peter. "Who's head of the study, I'd like to know? I'm not letting you row."

"Then I shall have to push you away, my dear fellow, though I very, very much regret having to do so," said Alonzo.

And he gave Peter a push, which sent him spinning along the passage.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Peter, as he collapsed a dozen feet from Strong Alonzo. "Oh, my only hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Say, that baby sure packs some muscle!" chortled Fisher T. Fish. "I guess this is the bee's knee."

Having disposed of Peter, Alonzo turned to Study No. 1 again. He was calm again now, and determined—very determined. The Famous Five regarded him grimly. They were not at all sure that they could keep Strong Alonzo out, if he was determined to come in. But they were going to do their best.

"My dear fellows——" said Alonzo.

"Shut up, and bunk!"

"I decline to do anything of the sort! I came here to make some very, very urgent observations to Wharton——"

"Ring off!"

"To which he will have to listen," said Alonzo calmly. "I am coming into the study. Please stand aside."

"Rats!"

"The raiffulness is terrific!"

"I should be very, very sorry to use force——"

"We'll try to make you sorry if you do," said Johnny Bull.

"Go it, Alonzo!" yelled the delighted Skinner. "Mop 'em up! This is

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where his jolly old Magnificence Wharton sings small, my beloved 'earers!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo Todd marched straight into the doorway of Study No. 1. A crowd of fellows in the Remove passage watched his breathlessly. To look at, Alonzo was anything but athletic. He was bony, and he was weedy. But all the Remove knew of his amazing strength. It was a weird mystery; but there it was—there was no doubt about it. Somewhere in his angular person was packed a strength that a prize-fighter might have envied.

The Famous Five stood firm. They stood shoulder to shoulder to resist the invader. But it was in vain.

Strong Alonzo simply walked through them.

He received, without heeding, several hefty punches that would have knocked an ordinary fellow off his feet. He swept out his arms, and Bob Cherry tumbled over on one side, Harry Wharton on the other.

Johany Bull and Nugent and the nabob jumped at him, grasping him. Alonzo grasped them in turn, and pitched them in a heap on the floor.

Five fellows—the best fighting men in the Remove—strewed the floor of Study No. 1, dizzy and panting. And Alonzo, who had not turned a hair, stood gazing down at them calmly.

"My dear fellows—" he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a roar from the passage.

"Please do not regard my action as implying any hostile feeling towards yourselves—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ain't he a cough-drop?" chortled Skinner.

"It's the bee's knee," chuckled Fisher T. Fish. "I'll say it's the elephant's spats! I surely will!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo Todd blinked round as if surprised by the merriment in the passage. He stepped farther into Study No. 1, and closed the door. The view was shut off from the interested crowd in the passage.

Harry Wharton & Co. sat up. They gasped for breath, and blinked dizzily at the strong man of Greyfriars.

"Now, my dear Wharton—" said Alonzo gently.

"Get out!" gasped the captain of the Remove.

"Not until I have completed my observations!"

Wharton staggered to his feet.

"Pack up, you men!" he panted.

"Yes, rather!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

"Please do not compel me to use further violence," urged Alonzo Todd. "My Uncle Benjamin would be shocked if—"

They hurled themselves at him. For two or three minutes there was a Homeric battle in Study No. 1. But it booted not, as a poet would say. Alonzo had been chucked out once; but he had been rather taken by surprise then. He was not to be chucked out again. For three wild and whirling minutes the

strong man of Greyfriars was the centre of a hectic combat.

Then once more he was the only fellow standing. Five breathless juniors sprawled round him. They sprawled in a spent and exhausted state. The five of them could not handle Strong Alonzo. It was a bitter pill to swallow, but they had to get it down. The Duffer of Greyfriars was not only victor, but an easy victor. He was not even breathing quickly as he gazed at the five sprawling figures.

"Now," said Alonzo mildly, "perhaps you will listen to me patiently. I very, very much wish that you had done so at first. Believe me, my dear fellows. I very, very much regret to be forced to handle you in this way."

"Oooogh!" gurgled Bob Cherry.

"Urrrrgh!" groaned Johnny Bull.

"My remarks, Wharton, are chiefly addressed to you, as captain and head boy of the Remove," continued Alonzo calmly. "I trust that you will now listen with patience."

Wharton had to listen, whether with patience or not. For the moment he could do nothing, but gasp for breath.

"I am far, far from satisfied with your actions as head boy," resumed Alonzo. "Do not suppose that I blame you, my dear fellow! No doubt you do your best, according to your lights! But you have never had, as I have had, the inestimable benefit of the instructions of my Uncle Benjamin. Many things go on in the Remove which would, I am sure, shock my Uncle Benjamin extremely were he aware of them. Did you speak?"

"Groooogh!"

"Smoking," said Alonzo, "goes on in some studies, strictly against the rules of the school. I may instance Skinner's study, and Vernon-Smith's. I feel that this ought to be stopped!"

"Urrgh!"

"Money-lending," said Alonzo, "is a very, very deplorable thing, yet I cannot doubt that it is indulged in by Fish, who makes detestable and illicit profits by lending money at interest among the fags! This must be stopped!"

"Ooooooogh!"

"Breaking of bounds," resumed Alonzo, "is far from unknown! That is a very serious matter! What do you think, my dear Wharton?"

"Gurrgh!"

"To come to the point"—even Alonzo Todd could come to the point, at long last—"I have decided that it is my duty, having the power in my hands, to take up the task of reforming the bad characters in the Form, my dear Wharton. I fear that you have been remiss. I fear that you have been careless. I feel that you have hardly done your duty! I shall now take the matter in hand—I feel it my duty! What did you say?"

"Yurrrgh!"

"You may regard this, my dear Wharton, as invading your province as head boy and captain of the Form. You may object. In the most friendly spirit, my dear fellow, I warn you not to intervene. I shall not allow you to do so. Far be it from me to desire to

use my great strength in any overbearing manner. But, having decided what it is my duty to do, I shall proceed to do it, and I trust, my dear fellow, that you will stand clear! I should be very, very sorry to have to

whop you! Do I make myself clear, my dear Wharton?"

Harry Wharton staggered to his feet. The Co. sat up, still gasping and gurgling. Wharton clutched up an ink-pot.

"I have now completed my observations," said Alonzo Todd, "and if you desire it I will depart from your study. I—yarcooh—oooh—groogh—wooooooh!"

A stream of ink shot from the ink-pot! It caught Alonzo Todd fairly in his countenance, and as his mouth was open to speak, a considerable quantity splashed therein. Alonzo spluttered wildly.

"Urrrrgh! My dear—wurrghgh! Ooooh! Grooooh! Gug-gug-gug!"

"Now, you cheeky fathead!" gasped Wharton.

Bump! One tap from Strong Alonzo laid the captain of the Remove on his back again. Then Alonzo, still spluttering ink, left the study, greeted by a roar of laughter as his inky visage dawned on the crowd in the passage.

The Famous Five, in Study No. 1, sat up. They gasped for breath—they gazed at one another.

"Well, my hat!" said Bob Cherry.

The study door opened. A fat face and a large pair of spectacles glimmered in! Billy Bunter chortled.

"He, he, he! I say, you fellows, you look a moulting lot! He, he, he! You can't handle Alonzo! He, he, he!"

The Famous Five picked themselves up. It was true—they could not handle Alonzo! Bunter was right there! But there was one little circumstance that Billy Bunter seemed to have overlooked—although they could not handle Alonzo they could handle Bunter! And they did!

Five pairs of hands clutched the Owl of the Remove. Billy Bunter yelled in anticipation as he was swept off his feet. He yelled still more loudly as he landed with a terrific bump on the passage floor. The study door slammed on him, and nothing more was heard from Bunter, which was one comfort.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Wibley is Wrathful!

WILLIAM WIBLEY, of the Remove, gave a howl.

It might have made any fellow howl!

Wib had run up the box-room stairs, at the end of the Remove passage, run across the little landing at the top, and turned the handle of the box-room door. He was in rather a hurry. Wibley, the president of the Remove Dramatic Society, was in official charge of the theatrical "props" belonging to that society.

Wib's study, No. 6 in the Remove, overflowed with such things. But there was no space in a junior study for all of them, and Wib kept a box in the box-room, stacked with all sorts of theatrical things—wigs and beards, false noses and masks, and costumes. When Wibley wanted something from that box he would run up for it—as he had run up now. Naturally, a fellow expected a door to open when he turned the door-handle. Nobody would have expected to find a box-room door locked.

So William Wibley, as he turned the door-handle, barged on, taking it for granted that the door would open at his push.

It didn't!

The result was that William Wibley's nose banged on the door with a rather severe bang. And Wibley's howl could

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have been heard at quite a good distance. "Ow!" howled Wibley, letting go the door-handle and clapping his damaged nose. "Wow! What idiot's locked that door? Yow! What blithering cuckoo's locked that door? Whoop! What be-mighted bandersnatch!"

There was a faint chuckle from within the box-room. Someone, evidently, was there! It was followed by silence.

Bang! Bang!

Wibley smote on the panels with his clenched fist!

"Open this door!" he roared.

No reply.

"Who's locked this door?" yelled Wibley. "I've got to come in to my box! What blithering idiot's locked himself in here, I'd like to know! Open the door or I'll dot you in the eye!"

Silence!

Breathing wrath, Wibley stooped to peer through the keyhole. Then he had a view of the interior—and of Skinner, Snoop, and Stott, sitting on boxes and smoking cigarettes, and grinning through the smoke. It was, after all, one of Harold Skinner's little smoking parties—which he did not want interrupted. Judging by their grinning faces, Skinner & Co. were rather amused by Wib's helpless wrath outside.

"Skinner, you rotter!" roared Wibley.

"Chuck that filthy smoke away and open the door! I can see you, you worm! Like me to call a prefect here to catch you smoking, you unclean animal!"

Skinner laughed! Exasperated as Wibley was, he was not likely to "sneak" to master or prefect.

"Will you open this door?" roared Wibley.

it had, apparently, damaged Wib's shoulder. He had a third pain now, added to the other two!

"Oh! Ow! Wow!" gurgled Wibley, as he rubbed his shoulder. "Oh, you rotters! Oh, you smoky freaks! Oh, you blighters! Ow!"

He did not heave his shoulder at the door again. The result was altogether too painful. There was no getting at his property-box in the box-room. Important as the matter was—Wib's theatrical stunts were the most important matter going on in the universe—he had to go empty away! He tramped down the box-room stairs, crimson with wrath.

Fellows in the Remove passage glanced at his crimson countenance and grinned. His face was red, his nose



"I have now completed my observations," said Alonzo Todd, addressing the Famous Five, "and if you fellows desire it, I will depart from your study. I— Yaroooh—ooch—groogh—wooch!" An inkpot flew from Wharton's hand, and a stream of ink caught Alonzo fairly in the face.

Wibley breathed wrath. Dotting the occupant of the box-room in the eye was desirable, but evidently impracticable so long as the door remained locked.

"Will you let me in?" howled Wibley.

No answer.

Wibley stood in intense exasperation. Someone was locked in the box-room and did not intend to open the door. Who and why was rather a mystery. Billy Bunter might have retired to that secluded spot in possession of some other fellow's cake, to devour his prey in safety. Skinner & Co. might have gone there for a surreptitious smoke. In either case, the door was not likely to be unlocked at Wibley's demand.

"You rotter!" roared Wibley. "I'll spifficate you! Do you hear me? I'll spifficate you!"

There came no reply. Since that chuckle, caused by the bang of Wib's nose on the door, the unseen occupant of the box-room had given no sign.

Skinner did not answer, but he leaned towards the door and blew a cloud of cigarette smoke through the keyhole. It caught Wibley in the eye, and he yelled. He jumped away from the door, clapping his hand to his smarting eye. He had a pain in his nose already. Now he had a smart in his eye! And his temper was on the boil.

"By gum! I'll smash in the door!" hooted Wibley.

Skinner & Co. chuckled. They had no intention whatever of letting any fellow in while they were smoking and playing banker. And the lock on the door was a good deal too strong for Wibley to burst.

Crash!

Wibley, boiling with rage, drove his shoulder against the oak, to crack the lock and hurl the door open. The door stood fast. There was a fearful howl from Wibley. That crash had not damaged the door in the least, but

was redder, and he rubbed alternately his shoulder and his eye!

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" sang out Bob Cherry. "What's the jolly old trouble, old bean?"

"I'll smash 'em!" gasped Wibley.

"Who is to receive the esteemed smashfulness?" inquired Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

"I'll spifficate 'em!"

"But what's the row, old chap?" asked Harry Wharton soothingly. William Wibley often got excited, as a fellow with an artistic temperament was entitled to do. If a fellow did not turn up in time for a rehearsal, Wibley would get his artistic hair off. But he was in a quite unusual state of excitement now. He breathed fury.

"I've a jolly good mind to call in a prefect, and give 'em away!" he hooted. "It would make the smoky rotters jump if Wingate or Gwynne

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tapped at the door! I've a jolly good mind to call Quelch!"

"My dear Wibley," came Alonzo Todd's gentle voice from the doorway of Study No. 7, "what ever is the matter? I trust you have not had an accident with your nose, my dear Wibley."

"He, he, he!" contributed Billy Bunter.

Bunter seemed to find something entertaining in the aspect of Wibley's nose.

"Those smoky rotters!" gasped Wibley. "They're locked in the box-room, smoking, and won't let me in! And I want my nose!"

"You want what?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"My nose!" roared Wibley.

"It's sticking on your face, old chap. It looks a bit damaged, but it's there all right!"

"You silly owl!" roared Wibley. "I mean I want my property nose—my Shylock nose. I'm making up a Shylock part, and my nose—my Shylock nose—is in the box upstairs. And they won't let me in."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, goodness gracious!" said Alonzo Todd. "I trust, Wibley, that smoking is not going on in the box-room."

"You blithering ass! Skinner and Snoop and Stott are in there, smoking like chimneys, and playing cards, too, and they won't let me in! I'll jolly well get a hammer, or something, and bash in the lock! My nose—"

Alonzo Todd looked very, very serious. Alonzo, after deep and serious consideration, had determined that it was his duty to see that this kind of thing did not go on in the Remove. The power was in his hands, and he

felt that it was his duty to use it. Alonzo was a good fellow, and a high-minded fellow, and very, very good-intentioned. He was so keen, and so serious, on his good intentions, that he had no time to think about minding his own business! Schoolboy smoking was a rather dingy and disreputable sort of thing, and it was unhealthy, and it was very much against the rules. For that reason, Sixth Form prefects administered the ashplant to offenders when caught—which was very right and proper. But it really was not the business of one Remove fellow to bring up another fellow in the way in which he should go. Alonzo, in his anxiety to do good, forgot that.

"Leave me to deal with this, Wibley," said Alonzo. "I have decided to put down such disreputable and malodorous practices—"

"You cheeky, meddlin' ass!" said Herbert Vernon-Smith, from the doorway of Study No. 4.

Alonzo glanced round at him.

"My dear Smithy—" he said mildly.

"If you meddle in my study you'll hear somethin' drop," snapped the Bounder. "Can't you mind your own bisney, you freak?"

"I regard this as my business, my dear Vernon-Smith. I am not satisfied with the way Wharton acts as head boy—as I have, indeed, informed him—"

"You cheeky idiot!" said the head boy of the Remove. A day had passed since the shundy in Study No. 1, but it was not forgotten.

"I trust, my dear Wharton, that you take no offence from my observation."

"Oh, shut up!"

"If my remarks are unwelcome to you, my dear fellow, I will certainly cease to address you!" said Alonzo

mildly. "But I regard it as my duty to persuade Skinner and his friends to give up the deleterious practice of smoking, and I consider myself entitled to use compulsion; and I shall certainly do so."

Alonzo started for the box-room stairs. Peter Todd yelled after him from Study No. 7.

"Don't be a fool, Lonzy!"

"My dear Peter—"

"What's the good of telling him that?" asked Hazeldene. "He can't help it, can he?"

"My dear Hazel—"

"You'd better mind your own bizney, fathead!" said Squiff.

"I have already remarked, my dear Field, that I regard this as my business!" said Alonzo gently. "And my Uncle Benjamin would be shocked if I should neglect to follow the path of duty!"

Alonzo marched up the box-room stairs. A crowd of fellows stared after him, some of them grinning, and some of them frowning. Wibley, at least, was pleased. The strong man of Greyfriars could deal with Skinner & Co. easily enough, and Wib was rather anxious for them to be dealt with; and he cared little by whom. Most of the Removites regarded Alonzo as a meddlesome ass, but nobody was disposed to handle the mighty Alonzo—at least, on account of a smoky crew like Skinner & Co. So Strong Alonzo was given his head—which he would have taken, in any case!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Strong Hand!

SKINNER was grinning, in the box-room.

"Cheeky ass!" he remarked. "Pass the smokes!" said Snoop.

"Here you are, old bean! I suppose that ass wanted some of the rubbish he parks here. Let him want!"

"Hallo, here he comes again!" said Stott, as there was a footstep on the little landing outside the box-room door.

Tap!

"Oh, buzz off!" called out Skinner. "You're not coming in, Wibley! You should keep your rubbish somewhere else."

"My dear Skinner—"

"Oh, my hat! It's the freak!" exclaimed Snoop. "What the thump do you want, Alonzo? Go away and play."

"I understand that you are smoking here," said Alonzo through the keyhole.

"You do?" exclaimed Skinner.

"Yes, my dear fellow."

"Amazing!" said Skinner. "I never knew that you could understand anything! How do you do it?"

"Please open the door, Skinner! I have come here to put a stop to your unlawful and deleterious indulgence in tobacco."

"Oh crikey!"

"Have they made you a prefect, by any chance?" inquired Snoop.

"Not at all, my dear Snoop. I think the Head might do worse; but probably it has not occurred to him."

"Well, until they make you a prefect, mind your own business!"

"Open the door, at once!"

"Rats!"

"I shall open it by force if you do not turn the key, my dear Skinner."

"Fathead!"

"I assure you, my dear fellow, that I am in earnest. I am acting from a sense of duty, of which I am assured that my Uncle Benjamin would heartily approve."



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Skinner & Co. exchanged glances. Behind a strong oak door, safely locked, they felt safe, even from Strong Alonzo.

"He can't get at us!" murmured Snoop. "Let him rip!"

"Will you open this door, Skinner?"

"Call again next week," suggested Skinner.

"I very, very much regret to use force, but you will realise yourselves, my dear fellows, that you leave me no alternative," said Alonzo.

"He's wound up!" remarked Skinner.

Crash!

A shoulder was jammed against the door from outside. Strong Alonzo was in deadly earnest. He was always in earnest. He had an earnest nature. And the strength he derived from the Wonderful Elixir given him by Professor Sparkinson was amazing. Wibley had only bruised his shoulder on the door. But under that hefty barge from Strong Alonzo the lock cracked and the door flew open.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Skinner, leaping to his feet.

Alonzo Todd strode in. He coughed a little as he entered; the atmosphere of the box-room was thick with smoke.

One.

It will be a

Bumper Christmas Number

Skinner & Co., on their feet, glared at him furiously. They were breaking the rules of the school and were liable to six if spotted by a prefect! But the idea of being called to order by a junior like themselves was intensely exasperating to the black sheep of the Remove.

"You cheeky rotter!" bawled Stott. "Get out!"

"Hook it, you frowsy freak!" howled Snoop.

"Look here, you cheeky rotter!" roared Skinner.

"Grooogh! This disgusting smoke is excessively unpleasant!" gasped Alonzo. "I am shocked at you—nay, disgusted! You have been playing cards as well as smoking, Skinner!"

"Mind your own business!" yelled Skinner.

"Take all those cards and all those cigarettes and place them in the grate!" said Alonzo calmly. "You will then set fire to them!"

"You—you—you blithering freak, do you think you can give us orders like a prefect?" yelled Skinner.

"I think so, my dear Skinner! Please do not delay, as I have no time to waste on you!"

"Shan't!" bawled Stott. "Look here, you men, turn him out! The three of us can handle him!"

Alonzo smirked!

"I fancy not, my dear Stott! But you may try if you like."

"Hold on," muttered Snoop uneasily, "that beast's as strong as a horse—he mopped up all Wharion's crew yesterday—"

"Back up, I tell you!" yelled Stott, and he hurled himself at Alonzo.

Skinner and Snoop hesitated to "back up." It was just as well for them! Alonzo gave Stott a tap, and Frederick Stott shot across the box-room, banged on the wall, and collapsed on the floor. There he lay, spluttering. Alonzo blinked at him.

"I trust, my dear Stott, that you will not compel me to punch you again!" he remarked gently.

"Urrrrggg—" was Stott's only reply. He could only gurgle.

"You rotten bully!" gasped Skinner.

"My dear Skinner—"

"Get out, you rotter!"

"I have already directed you, my dear Skinner, to apply a match to your cards and cigarettes—"

"Shan't!" howled Skinner desperately. "Here, leggo— Oh, you

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rotter— Yaroooh! Whooop! Yooooop! Oh, my napper!"

Alonzo caught Harold Skinner by the collar. He tapped his head on the box-room wall, to an accompaniment of fiendish yells from Skinner. Snoop dodged towards the door—but Alonzo caught him with his left hand and held him quite easily.

"Ow! Ow! Ow! Stoppit!" shrieked Skinner.

With a swing of his mighty arm, Strong Alonzo tossed Skinner to the floor, where he lay gasping beside

Two.

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Stott. Sidney James Snoop, wriggling in Alonzo's left hand, fairly cringed.

"Leggo!" he gasped. "I—I—I'll do anything you like— Oh crikey!"

"Very well, my dear Snoop!" said Alonzo, "pray carry out my directions without undue waste of time."

He released Snoop. With an expression on his face like that of a demon in a pantomime, Sidney James Snoop gathered up the cards and the cigarettes and stacked them in the grate, and applied a match to the heap. Undoubtedly it was the best thing that could have been done with them; Alonzo was right on that point, at least!

There was quite a cheery fire in the old, disused grate for a few minutes! The cards burned freely and the cigarettes smouldered. Skinner and Stott crawled to their feet and stood watching the blaze. They were not disposed to resist, but their feelings were deep. Alonzo turned to them with a gentle smile.

"Please turn out your pockets!" he said.

"Wha-a-at?" gasped Skinner.

"Please lose no more time," said Alonzo gently.

Skinner & Co. looked at one another! To be ordered to turn out their pockets as if they stood in the presence of a suspicious Form-master was the last straw! But they dared not resist! The pockets were turned out. Another packet of cigarettes came to light from Skinner, and a pink racing paper from Snoop. Both were added to the fire.

"Oh, you rotter—you meddling cad!"

groaned Skinner. "We'll make you sit up for this!"

"You are welcome to try, my dear Skinner!" smirked Alonzo. "I fail to see how you will do it, however. Now leave the box-room, and do not come into it again. You are forbidden to use this box-room at all."

"By whom?" hissed Skinner.

"By me!" said Alonzo Todd calmly.

"You cheeky rotter—"

"Please say no more, Skinner, or I may become angry and sling you down the stairs, and I should be very, very sorry to do that!"

Skinner & Co., with feelings too deep for words, marched out of the box-room. Alonzo Todd followed them out, and followed them down the box-room stairs.

A crowd of fellows in the Remove passage gazed at them when they arrived there! Skinner & Co., with crimson faces, went quickly to their study and shut the door. William Wibley, with a cheery grin, went up to the box-room for his props. But the rest of the Removites looked grimly at Alonzo Todd as he walked back to Study No. 7. The reformer of the Remove did not seem to be growing popular, and Alonzo was very, very sorry to see it. But it made no difference to him! He had marked out the path of duty, and Alonzo was a whale on duty! If the fellows misunderstood him, it was very, very sad; but Alonzo was going on, all the same!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Something to Tell Alonzo!

HERBERT VERNON - SMITH smiled rather sardonically as he glanced at the clouded face of his chum and study-mate, Tom Redwing.

Prep was going on in the Remove, but the Bouncer was not giving it much attention. Redwing worked steadily; but the expression on his face showed

Three.

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that he was thinking of other things as well as his work.

"Penny for 'em, Reddy!" said the Bouncer suddenly.

Tom glanced up at him.

"You know what's in my mind, Smithy," he said gruffly. "I think you're a fool! You've made friends again with that cad Ponsonby at Highcliffe, and I've got an idea that you've arranged something with him for to-night. If you're going out of bounds—"

"Why worry?" grinned the Bouncer. "I'm not askin' you to come."

"I shouldn't if you asked me!" said Tom curtly. "I wish you wouldn't play the shady fool, Smithy! And you're risking a lot."

"Risk makes life worth livin'!" yawned the Bouncer. "I— He broke off as there was a tap at the study door. "Who the dooce is comin' here in prep! Trot in, fathead!"

The door opened, and Billy Bunter blinked into the study. Smithy and Redwing stared at him. Fellows were not supposed to leave their studies in preparation, and prep was not yet over. The prefect on duty was supposed to see that fellows didn't.

"I say, you fellows—" began Bunter.

"Buzz off, fathead!" said the Bounder. "If Carne of the Sixth spots you out of your study you'll get six."

"That's all right," said Bunter cheerfully. "You know Carne—I'll bet he's smoking a cigarette somewhere with Loder or Walker instead of keeping an eye on the Remove! I say, Smithy, I'm coming."

"What?"

"I heard you ask Skinner," explained Bunter.

The Bounder's brow darkened.

"You hear too much, Bunter!" he said.

"Oh, really, Smithy! I happened to be near the corner when you were speaking to Skinner, and I couldn't help hearing what you said. Skinner's got the wind up, and won't come! You don't want to go alone, do you, old fellow?"

"Shut the door after you!"

"I'll come!" said Bunter. "I'm not exactly pally with Ponsonby; but I can stand the fellow! Dash it all, I'll be civil to him—civility costs nothing. Is it the Three Fishers or the Cross Keys, Smithy?"

Vernon-Smith's eyes glittered, but he kept calm.

"Neither," he answered; "I was only pulling Skinner's leg! There's nothing on to-night, Bunter, and you can go back to prep."

Tom Redwing compressed his lips. He felt, if Smithy did not, the humiliation of telling lies to a fellow like Bunter. But he gave his attention to his prep and made no remark.

Billy Bunter grinned and bestowed a fat wink on the Bounder. Bunter was not taken in so easily as all that.

"Gammon, old bean!" he answered cheerily. "You're going to meet Pon at the corner of Oak Lane to-night after lights out, and that looks like the Three Fishers! Well, I'll come! Nothing goody-goody about me, I hope! Why shouldn't a fellow shake a loose leg at times, what? There's only one difficulty, old chap—I've been disappointed about a postal order."

Vernon-Smith made no reply.

"I dare say you heard me mention that I was expecting a postal order," said the fat Owl of the Remove, blinking seriously at the Bounder through his big spectacles. "Well, it hasn't come! I suppose you could lend me the quid and take the postal order when it comes in the morning?"

"Get out!"

"It's absolutely certain to come, you know; it's from one of my titled relations," explained Bunter. "You needn't have any doubt about that, Smithy."

"Are you going?"

"You see, I shall need a little cash in hand, if we're going on the razzle," said Bunter calmly. "What about it, Smithy?"

Vernon-Smith rose to his feet. The expression on his face did not indicate that he was going to welcome the fat and fatuous Owl as a companion in his excursion out of bounds that night. It indicated that he was going to make Billy Bunter sorry that he had rolled into Study No. 4.

Bunter eyed him warily.

"No larks, Smithy!" he said. "If you don't want me—"

"You know I don't!"

"I hope I'm not the fellow to barge in where I'm not wanted," said the fat Owl, with dignity. "But if you don't treat me as a pal, Smithy, you can't

expect me to treat you as one! You see that?"

"What do you mean, you blithering fat idiot?" The Bounder's eyes gleamed at William George Bunter. "If you dared to sneak—"

"I hope I'm not a sneak!" said Bunter. "It's not sneaking to mention things to other fellows in the Remove, I suppose?"

The Bounder stared at him.

"You can tell all the Remove, if you like, you fat Owl! You can tell all the Lower School! Sing it out in the Rag, if you want to."

"Oh, all right—I'll tell Alonzo!" grinned Bunter.

Vernon-Smith started.

"Alonzo Todd?" he said.

"Exactly! Alonzo will be glad to hear!" grinned Bunter. "You may be able to get out of bounds to-night, if Alonzo knows—and you may not! I rather fancy not, myself."

Herbert Vernon-Smith breathed hard and deep. He was not a fellow to be threatened with impunity at any time. But to be threatened by a fellow like Bunter, with the intervention of a duffer like Alonzo, was about the last thing the Bounder was likely to endure.

His eyes gleamed, with rage as he stepped towards the Owl of the Remove.

"So you'll tell Alonzo?" he asked.

"You see, if you don't treat me as a pal—"

"You'll tell Alonzo?" repeated the Bounder.

"Yes, I jolly well will!" declared Bunter.

"And you fancy that I should let that frabjous freak interfere with me!"

Billy Bunter chuckled.

"I don't see how you'd stop him!" he grinned. "Alonzo can do as he jolly well likes in the Remove! Didn't you hear how he handled Wharton's crowd the other day—and Skinner's little party this afternoon? He he, he!"

"Shut up, you fathead!" said Tom Redwing, glancing up rather anxiously.

He understood the Bounder's feelings if Bunter did not.

"Rats to you!" retorted Bunter. "I can tell you that if Alonzo knew that Smithy was going out of bounds, he would jolly well stop him! Lonzy's set up to reform the Remove! He, he, he! I'll bet you Skinner won't be found smoking again in a hurry! He, he, he! And you, Smithy—"

"Well, you can tell Alonzo Todd that I'm going out of bounds to-night," said Vernon-Smith. "Tell him at the same time, that I banged your head on my study table—"

"Here, I say—" roared Bunter, as the Bounder grasped him. "I say, old chap—Let go, you beast—Whooooop!"

Bang!

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Tell him that I banged your head twice—"

Bang!

"Yaroooooh!"

"And that I kicked you round my study—"

"Yaroooooh! Whooop! Help!" yelled Bunter, as he fled round Study No. 4 in front of the Bounder's crashing boot. "Fire! Help! Yarooooop! Keep off! I was only jog-jog-joking—yaroooooh! I say, Redwing, keep him off! Oh crikey! Oh scissora! Whooop!"

Bunter rolled over, roaring.

The Bounder bent over him, with glittering eyes. He grasped the fat Owl by the collar.

"You want something to tell Alonzo—"

"Leggo! Help!"

"I'll give you lots to tell him—"

"Help!"

"Tell him I shoved your head into the coal-locker—"

"Yaroooooh! Gug-gug-gug! Ugggggh!"

"Is that enough to tell him, or would you like to tell him that I poured the inkpot down your neck?"

"Urrgh! Help! Yooop! Leggo! I say, old beast—I mean, old chap—dear old fellow—Yaroooooh!"

"Tell him, anyhow, that I chucked you out of my study on your neck!" said the Bounder.

Bump!

Billy Bunter spun into the passage. He landed there with a crash. He sprawled and roared.

"Ooooooh! Oh crikey! Beast! Keep off! I'll tell Alonzo! Yaroooooh!"

"Oh, good! You war, something more to tell Alonzo! Tell him I kicked you along the passage!"

"Yooop! Whoop! Yaroooooh! Oh crumbs!"

Billy Bunter squirmed away from a lunging boot, and fled along the Remove passage. The Bounder went back into his study and slammed the door.

"Urrrrgh! Goooooh! Beast! Urrrrgh!" gurgled Bunter, at a safe distance. "Ow! Urrgh! Urrrrrrgggh! Wurrgh!"

Bunter had plenty to tell Alonzo, there was no doubt about that! He had lots and lots to tell him! But, for the present, Bunter had no breath to tell anybody anything! He just gurgled!

—

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Alonzo the Reformer Going Strong:

HARRY WHARTON awoke suddenly.

It was ten o'clock, and as bed-time for the Greyfriars Remove was half-past nine, most of the Form were fast asleep. All of them, certainly, should have been! But in the Greyfriars Remove, as elsewhere, things were not always as they should have been!

It was a bump against his bed that awakened the captain of the Remove. He started out of slumber and blinked round in the darkness.

"What the thump—" he ejaculated. "Is that somebody up?"

"Oh! No!" came back a gasping voice. "I'm not up, old chap!"

"Bunter, you fat idiot—"

"I'm fast asleep—I mean, I'm not up—that is— You go to sleep, and mind your own business, Wharton!"

"You woke me up, you howling ass!"

"I couldn't help bumping into your beastly bed in the dark! I'm not a cat! Shut up, old chap, or you may wake Alonzo!"

Harry Wharton sat up in bed, and stared through the gloom.

"Are you after Alonzo's mixture again?" he demanded.

"No, you ass! Do be quiet! Smithy will be gone in a minute—"

"Smithy—" repeated Wharton.

"It's all right—Smithy's not going out of bounds, and I'm not going with him!" gasped Bunter. "But do be quiet, or you'll wake Alonzo."

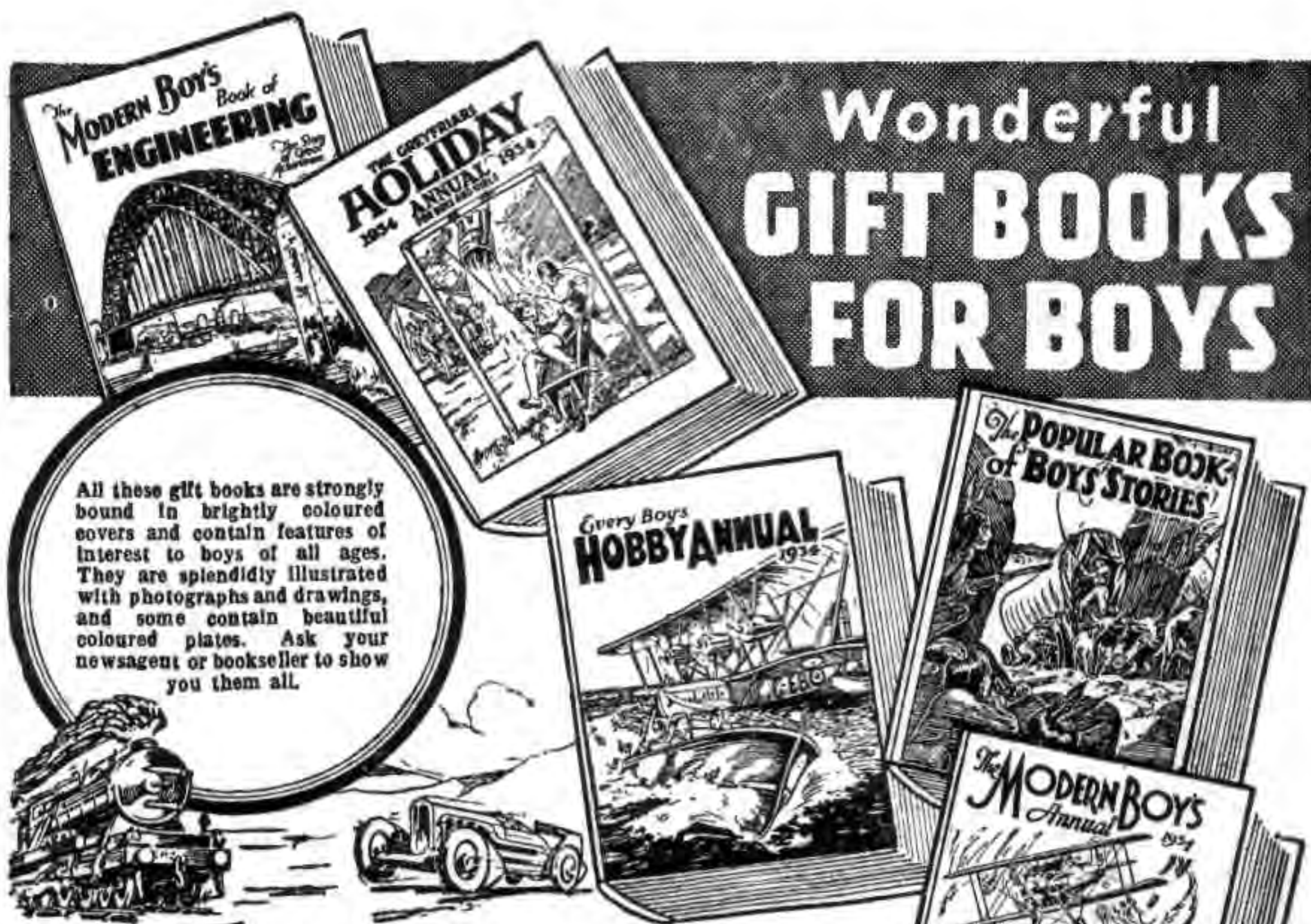
"Oh, my hat!"

In the glimmer of winter starlight from the high windows, Wharton made out Bunter's fat form—and another. The other was dressing quickly in the dark, and, after what Bunter had said, Wharton could guess that it was the Bounder.

"Is that you, Smithy?" he asked.

"Yes. Don't wake the House."

(Continued on page 10.)



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"Better go back to bed, and don't play the goat!"

"Thanks for your advice. When I want any more, I'll ask for it!"

"You'll get a dot in the eye, without asking for it, if you're not a bit more civil, you dingy worm!" grunted the captain of the Remove.

Vernon-Smith made no reply to that. Billy Bunter, groping in the gloom, bumped into another bed.

"Oh, gad!" came Lord Mauleverer's voice. "What's that?"

"Nothing, old chap. Shut up!" said Bunter. "I say, Smithy, I haven't finished dressing. Wait for me."

"Hold your silly tongue, you fat fool!"

"I'm coming, old chap!"

The Bouncer breathed hard through his nose. Reckless as the scapegrace of Greyfriars was, he wanted to get out on his shady excursion without waking all the Remove, and causing general remark. A fellow who was risking the "sack" had to be a little careful.

"Mind, if you start without me, look out for squalls!" said Bunter, in a deep whisper. "I haven't told Alonzo yet—I'm giving you a chance! But if you're going to let me down, Smithy—Yaroooooh!"

Smack!

The Bouncer, in his rage, forgot caution. His open hand came across Billy Bunter's fat face with a terrific smack.

Bunter roared and staggered against a bed.

"Ow! Beast! I'll tell Alonzo——"

Smack!

"Yaroooooh!"

Bunter's roar echoed through the dormitory! Every fellow in the Remove woke up at that roar.

"What on earth's that row?" exclaimed Peter Todd.

"What is that terrific rowfulness?"

"Who's up?"

"What the thump——"

"Goodness gracious! Is the house on fire?" exclaimed Alonzo, sitting up in bed. "My dear fellow, what——"

"Smithy's going out of bounds," yelled Bunter. "Ow! Wow! I say, you fellows, Smithy's going out on the tiles."

"Shut up!" snapped Tom Redwing.

"Shan't!" roared Bunter. "I say, Alonzo, Smithy's going out to meet Ponsonby of Highcliffe and go to the Three Fishers!"

The Bouncer breathed fury. He hastily got on with his dressing. Alonzo's voice came from the gloom.

"My dear Vernon-Smith——"

"Shut up, freak!" snarled the Bouncer.

"I trust, my dear Vernon-Smith, that Bunter's allegation is unfounded——"

"Mind your own bizney!"

"He's going!" howled Bunter vengefully. "He refused to take me with him—I mean, I refused to go with him! I say, Alonzo——"

Alonzo Todd rose from his bed. He groped for a match-box, struck a match, and lighted a candle. Then he gazed at Vernon-Smith, who was putting on his boots with hurried hands.

"I fear, my dear Vernon-Smith, that there can be no doubt about the matter," said the Duffer of Greyfriars gently. "If it is not your intention to break bounds, why are you dressed, and why are you putting on your boots?"

"Find out!"

"Is it possible, Bunter, that you intended to go out of bounds with Vernon-Smith?"

"Oh! No! Nothing of the kind! I didn't stay awake and listen for him to get up——"

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"Then why have you got your trousers on?"

"Eh?"

"I fear, Bunter, that you are prevaricating!" said Alonzo, with a sad shake of the head. "The habit of prevarication grows on you, Bunter."

"Oh, really, you cheeky beast!"

"Please go back to bed at once, Vernon-Smith," said Alonzo. "I cannot allow you to break bounds at night."

"Can't you mind your own business?" inquired Hazeldene.

"I decline to discuss that, Hazell! I feel that my Uncle Benjamin would approve of the line I have taken, and that is sufficient for me. Go back to bed at once, Vernon-Smith, I beg you."

The Bouncer made no answer. He was dressed now, and he started for the door. In the flicker of the candle the Remove fellows looked on from their beds. Alonzo made a bound after Smithy, caught him by the shoulder, and spun him back. It was a hefty spin. Vernon-Smith reeled helplessly, crashed against a bed, and went sprawling to the floor.

"Man down!" said Bob Cherry.

"The downfulness is terrific!"

"I am very, very sorry to have to use such drastic measures, my dear fellow," said Alonzo gently. "But in the circumstances——"

The Bouncer leaped to his feet. His face was crimson with rage. He had no chance against Strong Alonzo—none

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whatever! But he did not stop to think of that! He fairly hurled himself at the self-appointed reformer of the Remove!

"Go it, Smithy!" gasped Skinner.

The Bouncer was a splendid boxer, and Alonzo knew as much about boxing as he did about football, or the Einstein theory of relativity. Alonzo, in his earlier state, would have gone down before the Bouncer like a straw before the wind. But Alonzo, strengthened and invigorated by Professor Sparkinson's wonderful elixir, was a very different Alonzo! The Bouncer got home two terrific punches, but they did not even make Alonzo blink. Then Strong Alonzo's grasp closed on him, and he was swept off his feet.

Struggling frantically, and panting with rage, the Bouncer was tucked under Alonzo's left arm and held there.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the Remove.

The Bouncer squirmed and struggled like a madman! The humiliation of his position was more than he could endure—if he could have helped it! But he couldn't! Alonzo's bony arm was round him like a circle of steel. He was carried back to his bed.

"Back up, you rotters!" shrieked the Bouncer. "Are you going to let this meddlin' cad throw his weight about like this? Wharton—you call yourself captain of the Remove——"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"If you expect a fellow to back you up in breaking bounds after lights out and playing the shady blackguard, Smithy, you're expecting rather too much!" he said.

"You rotten lunk!"

"Alonzo's a meddling ass," said the captain of the Remove. "But a meddling ass is better than a shady blackguard! If I chipped in, it would be to lend Alonzo a hand!"

"Hear, hear!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"The hear, hearfulness is terrific!"

"Redwing——" yelled the Bouncer.

"Aren't you going to back up a pal?"

"Please do not intervene, my dear fellows," said Alonzo mildly. "Smithy, will you give me your promise not to leave the dormitory to-night?"

"No!" yelled the Bouncer.

"Then I shall take measures to see that you do not do so."

"You rotter——"

"He, he, he!" eachinnated Bunter.

"I shall also tie you, Bunter——"

"Wha-a-at?" squeaked Bunter.

"You were going out also——"

"I—I say, I'll promise——"

"I fear that I could not trust your promises, Bunter! You have so often broken them! I shall certainly tie you up as well as Smithy!"

"Why, you cheeky rotter——"

"Come here, Bunter!"

"Shan't!" yelled Bunter.

Alonzo strode at him. He carried the Bouncer under his arm as he strode as if the hefty Bouncer had been an infant. Vernon-Smith foamed with rage. But he was powerless. Alonzo grasped the fat Owl of the Remove and tucked Bunter under his other arm. Bunter roared and squeaked! He was rather sorry, by this time, that he had awakened Alonzo! But it was rather too late to think of that!

The Remove looked on breathlessly. Not a fellow in the Form approved of Alonzo having taken so much upon himself. They looked on him as a meddling ass, as no doubt he was! At the same time, nobody disposed to intervene in such a cause! They might disapprove of Alonzo's fussy meddlings, but they were not inclined to set up as champions of breaking bounds. Not a hand was lifted to aid Smithy or Bunter.

"Redwing!" yelled the Bouncer desperately.

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Tom. "You know jolly well that you ought not to be playing the goat, Smithy! Chuck it!"

"Will you help me, you rotter?"

"Not to break bounds."

"Hang you, then; you're no friend of mine! Skinner——"

"I can see Skinner tackling jolly old Alonzo!" murmured Lord Mauleverer.

"Chance for you, Skinner!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skinner & Co., certainly, sympathised with the Bouncer more than the rest. But they were least likely to render aid.

"Now, Vernon-Smith, if you will give me your word——" murmured Alonzo gently.

"Hang you! I'll smash you!" yelled the Bouncer.

"That, I think, is a task far beyond your powers, my dear fellow. I feel assured that my Uncle Benjamin would approve of my preventing you from indulging in a reckless and indeed disgraceful escapade. Do you not think so, my dear Peter?"

"I think you're a blithering idiot!" answered Toddy. "But get on with it! This will do Smithy good!"

Alonzo got on with it! Smithy struggled frantically, and Bunter squirmed and wriggled like an eel. But Strong Alonzo was too much for the pair of them—much too much! He dragged them together and held both their collars with a single hand!

Back to back, they struggled and wriggled and kicked. It was amazing

to see Alonzo pinning them together by their collars, in the grip of a single hand—but he did!

Taking up a sheet from the Bounder's bed with his left, Alonzo twisted it, and passed it round Smithy and Bunter, like a rope.

He twisted it quite tight; and then, releasing their collars, proceeded to fasten the twisted sheet with elaborate knots.

"Oh, you rotter!" panted the helpless Bounder.

"Ow! Beast! Lemme go!" wailed Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came from the fellows sitting up in bed, staring on at the scene in the candle-light.

"I am very, very sorry for this," said Alonzo gently. "I feel that it is the only thing to be done, but I am very, very sorry."

"Will you let me loose?" choked the Bounder. "I'll yell and bring a prefect here, you potty rotter."

"Better not, old bean!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "The jolly old prefect would want to know why you're up and dressed."

"If you desire to call a prefect, or a master, I have no objection, my dear Vernon-Smith," said Alonzo. "I am very, very willing to place the matter before Wingate, or Gwynne—or, indeed, Mr. Quelch—if you desire."

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

The Bounder, mad with rage as he was, was not likely to welcome the appearance of a prefect or a "beak." Even to get out of that ridiculous and humiliating position, he would not have been glad to see Mr. Quelch arrive in the dormitory!

"I say, you fellows, make him lemme go!" wailed Bunter. "I wasn't going out with Smithy! You can ask Redwing; he knows! He heard me ask Smithy in the study!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I say, Lonzy, old man, let a chap go! We're pals, you know, old fellow."

"Quite so, my dear Bunter; and I trust you will realise that my present action is founded upon a friendly regard for your welfare."

"Beast!" yelled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I shall now return to bed," said Alonzo. "I think, my dear fellows, that you will be able to wriggle loose in the course of time. My object is not to keep you up all night—"

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

"But only to prevent you from acting in a way unworthy of Greyfriars fellows and the best traditions of the school, my dear fellows."

Alonzo blew out the candle and went back to bed. There was a ripple of laughter along the dormitory. Smithy and Bunter, tied back to back, swayed and wriggled, gasped and gurgled.

The Bounder, choking with rage, was silent. But Billy Bunter's voice was heard, almost without a pause. Bunter was quite eloquent.

"Shut up, old fat bean, and let's go to sleep!" said Bob Cherry. "You've asked Alonzo for this, you know."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"This is what comes of being a bold, bad Bunter!" chuckled Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!"

The Remove settled down to sleep again, in spite of Billy Bunter's incessant squeals and squeaks. Smithy set himself to the task of getting loose! But it was not an easy task! Alonzo had twisted that sheet hard, and knotted it firmly.

It was eleven o'clock—Smithy could hear the strokes booming from the clock tower in the December night—before he was free at last—aching, fatigued, breathless, and furious! It was much too late to think of keeping his appointment with Ponsonby of Highcliffe—Pon must have gone long since. Neither was the weary Bounder in a mood for an excursion now, even if it had not been too late. With feelings too deep for words, Vernon-Smith crept back to bed—his thoughts running, not on billiards at the Three Fishers with Pon, but on vengeance on Alonzo Todd! Billy Bunter crawled into bed, too tired and sleepy eyed to think of vengeance!

Meanwhile, Alonzo, secure in a good conscience, and the happy certainty that his excellent Uncle Benjamin would approve of his conduct, was sleeping the sleep of the just!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Fis y's Bargain!

"TUPPENCE!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"Oh, really, Fishy—"

"Take it or leave it!"

"It cost four bob!" hooted Billy Bunter indignantly.

(Continued on next page.)

This is HORNBY TRAIN WEEK

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All this week special displays of Hornby Trains, Rolling Stock and Accessories are being given in the best shops. Ask Dad to take you to one of these displays. Find out for yourself the reason why Hornby Trains are such great favourites with boys all over the world. Examine the splendid Locomotives—so strong and efficient that they enable heavier loads to be hauled at higher speeds than any others. Then see the fine range of Rolling Stock and Accessories that are better this year than ever, all built in perfect proportion and beautifully finished.

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"Buying and selling," said Fishy, "are different matters! That book may have cost four bob! But second-hand books are a drug in the market! If it was noo I wouldn't offer you more'n sixpence! And is it noo?"

Fisher T. Fish was leaning his bony person on the front of the tuckshop in morning break. Billy Bunter stood facing him, with a volume of Virgil in his fat hand. Bunter's celebrated postal order was still in a state of non-arrival! Bunter was hungry—he was always hungry in break!—and generally at other times! The cute and spry merchant of the Remove did not seem to care whether he traded or not. Bunter cared very much! He wanted to sample Mrs. Mumble's tarts before the bell rang for third school! That was important!

"It's nearly new!" urged Bunter. "Look at it! Alonzo—I mean, I always keep my books jolly clean—"

"I guess it's clean, for one of your books!" admitted Fisher T. Fish. "You generally have them jammy and sticky! But the title-page is gone."

"Well, what's the good of a title-page—"

"A guy writes his name on the title-page," said Fishy. "Anyhow, the book's damaged! I risk losing money by offering you tuppence for that book! I may have to keep it for weeks before I hit a galoot that wants to buy a Virgil! Take it or leave it."

"What about fourpence?" asked Bunter.

"Nunk!"

"What about threepence, you skinny skinflint?"

"Nix!"

Billy Bunter glared at the Greyfriars merchant through his big spectacles. It was a really nice and clean copy of Virgil that he was offering for sale, and it had cost four shillings at the beginning of the term. It was unusually clean for a book belonging to Bunter—indeed, it was so clean that nobody, looking at it, would have guessed that it belonged to Bunter at all! Really, it was worth much more than twopence!

It was quite a useful book, too! Few fellows, perhaps, would have wanted it because it contained a great poem in Latin, written by a great Latin poet! But it was used in class—every man had to have a Virgil! And books got lost and damaged sometimes! It had even been known that they had been used to light study fires! A fellow hard up for a book came to Fisher T. Fish as a matter of course—Fishy always had school books in stock, which he bought cheap and sold dear! As he sapiently remarked, buying and selling were quite different matters! And Fishy liked making a profit! He did not believe that there existed any fellow, in the wide world, who did not want to make a profit out of another fellow! If he had believed in the existence of such a guy, Fishy would have considered a home for idiots the proper place for him! Profits meant money—and money was the breath of life to the youth from New York!

"I guess," continued Fishy, "that I

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR SALE!

If you are interested in photographs dealing with Australian and New Zealand locomotives, rolling stock, city trams and buses, etc., you should communicate with Mr. Shennen, c/o Argus Office, 26, O'Connell Street, Sydney, Australia, who has a number of superb photographs for sale.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,347.

got too many school books in stock now! Yep! Bull and Field make a row about stocks of books in the study! Sure! I guess I don't want to take that book off you, even for tuppence! If I do, it will be jest good-nature!"

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated Bunter, as if quite startled by the idea of Fishy doing anything good-natured. "I say, draw it mild!"

Fisher T. Fish detached himself from the shop-front, and turned to jerk away. Fishy did not walk—he jerked! He was too full of push and go, of pep and vim, to walk like an ordinary mortal.

"Hold on!" gasped Bunter. "After all, I can get one for twopence! I'll take it, Fishy."

"I ain't keen on it!" grunted Fisher T. Fish. "But I guess I'm a galoot of my word! Here y'ar!"

Two pennies dropped into Billy Bunter's fat hand, and the volume of Virgil was slipped under Fishy's bony arm. He jerked away with it—quite satisfied with the deal! He was going to sell that volume, some time, for a shilling, at least—two shillings, perhaps—or even half-a-crown, if some fellow was badly in want of it. Billy Bunter rolled into the tuckshop. Before Fishy had conveyed the volume to his study in the Remove, Billy Bunter's twopence had disappeared down his fat neck in the shape of a jam-tart.

After which, Billy Bunter endeavoured to persuade Mrs. Mumble to supply further tarts, on the strength of the postal order he was expecting! Mrs. Mumble, no doubt, had heard of that postal order before! She did not supply the tarts on Bunter's expectations! The Owl of the Remove was still hungry when he rolled out of the tuckshop, at the clang of the bell for third school.

The Remove fellows gathered at the door of their Form-room, with the books required for third lesson, which happened to be Latin verse. Only Alonzo Todd was not supplied with a book; and there was a worried and anxious expression on his face when Bunter rolled up, last, and joined the crowd in the corridor outside the Remove-room.

"My dear Peter," Alonzo was saying, "are you quite, quite sure that you have not seen my Virgil?"

"Seen it lots of times," answered Toddy. "But not to-day, old bean."

"It is very odd," said Alonzo. "I certainly left it on the study table. It is not there now, Peter! I have looked."

"Must be somewhere else, then," suggested Toddy. "Has that occurred to your mighty intellect, Lonzy?"

"Certainly I thought of that, my dear Peter! But I have looked all over the study, and cannot find it."

"Here's Bunter. Ask him."

"My dear Bunter, have you seen my Virgil?" inquired Alonzo.

"Oh, really, you know! You can't expect me to look after your books for you, after the rotten way you treated me last night," said the Owl of the Remove. "I dare say you've lost it somewhere. You know what a silly ass you are!"

"If you have borrowed it, Bunter—"

"Yah! Ask Dutton—perhaps he knows!"

Alonzo tapped Tom Dutton on the arm. The deaf junior glanced round at him.

"Have you seen my Virgil, Dutton?" asked Alonzo.

"Oh, good!" said Dutton. "We had beef yesterday."

"Wha-a-at?"

"But how do you know we're going to have mutton?" asked the deaf junior. "Has Bunter been nosing into the kitchen?"

"Oh, my goodness!" said Alonzo, while the Remove fellows chuckled. "I

did not say mutton, my dear fellow; I said Dutton—I was addressing you by name, my dear fellow."

"What utter rot! I'm a little hard of hearing, I know, but there's no need to bellow!" said Dutton warmly. "You begin bellowing at me, and I'll jolly soon stop you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I did not say bellow!" howled Alonzo. "I have missed a volume that I require for third lesson—"

"I don't see any harm in giving a liar a lesson! Do you mean Bunter?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh dear!" said Alonzo.

Even Strong Alonzo found it rather hard work to talk to Dutton.

Mr. Quelch came along and opened the door of the Form-room. The juniors marched in and took their places. Alonzo stood up in his place.

"If you please, sir—" he began.

"What is it?" rapped the Remove master.

"I am very, very sorry to say that I have been unable to bring my book for this lesson, sir!" said Alonzo. "I have searched for it with exceeding thoroughness, sir, but I cannot ascertain its whereabouts."

"You may refer to the next boy's Virgil in this lesson," said Mr. Quelch, "and you may take fifty lines, to impress upon you to be more careful with your school books!"

"Oh!" said Alonzo. And he sat down.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Not a Trade!

"BORROW mine!" said Peter Todd.

Alonzo shook his head. It was tea-time in the Remove, and Peter had come up to Study No. 7, rather expecting Alonzo to have tea ready, or, at least, on the way. Instead of which, Alonzo was rooting about the study with a worried brow. He had fifty lines to do for Quelch, and until he found P. Vergilius Maro he could not do his lines from that great poet.

This he explained to his Cousin Peter, who cut him short. It was probable that Alonzo Todd never would have left off talking at all if fellows had not cut him short. But he shook his head at Peter's suggestion.

"Shakespeare has remarked, my dear Peter, neither a borrower nor a lender be," said Alonzo seriously; "and my Uncle Benjamin has often repeated that excellent advice to me. Moreover—"

"What about tea?"

"Moreover, our Form-master is very displeased when fellows borrow one another's books, regarding it, justly, as careless and slovenly—"

"Does your jaw ache, Lonzy?"

"Not at all, my dear Peter! Why do you inquire?"

"Oh, I thought perhaps it did by this time! Are you going to fill the kettle?"

"I am exceedingly anxious about my Virgil, Peter! Even if I profited on the present occasion by your very, very kind offer to lend me yours, I should still require a Virgil for future occasions. Yet it appears to have disappeared completely from the study."

Peter Todd yawned deeply.

"Go and bag one from Fishy," he suggested. "Fishy's always got school books to sell."

"I can hardly approve, my dear Peter, of Fishy's conduct in carrying on what amounts to a trade in the Form!" said Alonzo. "Far be it from me to suspect any person of unworthy motives, but I cannot help thinking, Peter, that Fishy's object is to make a profit on these transactions."



Alonzo Todd, carrying Vernon-Smith under his arm as if the hefty Bounder had been an infant, strode towards Bunter. He grasped the fat Owl of the Remove, and tucked him under his other arm. Vernon-Smith foamed with rage, while Bunter roared and squeaked. The Remove looked on breathlessly!

"You don't say so!" ejaculated Toddy.

"I do, Peter—with deep regret, I do! I trust I am not wronging Fish, but this disagreeable suspicion has been forced into my mind by observation of his general conduct!" said Alonzo sadly. "However, in the circumstances, I will adopt your suggestion, and go and see Fish!"

"Stay there as long as you can!" said Peter. "It will give me a rest! And talk to Fishy, will you, Alonzo? Keep on talking to him! He's a real rotter, and he deserves it."

"I am truly glad, my dear Peter, that you think that my conversation may have an improving and moralising effect on Fish!" said Alonzo, beaming.

"Oh crikey!" said Peter.

Alonzo Todd left Study No. 7, and trotted along to Study No. 14, which belonged to Fisher T. Fish, Squiff, and Johnny Bull. Johnny Bull was gone to tea with his chums in Study No. 1; but Fishy and Squiff were there.

"My dear Fish," said Alonzo, "I am in need of a Virgil—the *Aeneid*! Have you such a volume for disposal?"

Fishy was having his tea; but he jumped at once! Tea was a trifle light as air in comparison with a business deal!

"My dear chap, you've barged in at just the right address," he answered cordially. "I guess that hits me where I live! I've got a Virgil I'm selling cheap—only two bob for a book that cost four!"

"That is very, very generous of you, Fish!" said Alonzo. "Did you actually give four shillings for the book you are selling me for two?"

"Wake snakes and walk chalks!" said Fisher T. Fish, gazing at him. "Carry me home to die!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Squiff.

"My dear Field," said Alonzo, "I fail to see any cause for risibility! It is very, very generous of Fish to sell a

four-shilling book for two shillings because I happen to be in need of it! It demonstrates that I have been unjust in my judgment of him, for which I am very, very sorry!"

"Waal, here's the book!" said Fisher T. Fish. "Clean as a new pin—and only the title-page gone! Two bob, Lonzy!"

"Thank you so much, my dear Fish!" Alonzo took the volume. He looked at it! He started a little! The title-page, with the name of the owner, was gone. But the volume seemed familiar to Alonzo! With quite a peculiar expression on his face, the Duffer of Greyfriars turned the leaves. There were marginal notes on some of the pages. Fishy had not even opened the book he had bought from Bunter, so he had not observed those notes in Alonzo's scraggy hand!

"Good gracious!" ejaculated Alonzo. "Fish, I am shocked—nay, disgusted!"

"What's bitin' you now?" asked Fishy. "I guess I'm waiting for that two bob, bo!"

"You will hardly expect me to pay you two shillings for my own Virgil, Fish!" said Alonzo warmly. "I shall most assuredly do nothing of the sort!"

Fisher T. Fish jumped.

"Yorn!" he howled.

"This book," said Alonzo, "was missing from my study! I am driven to the conclusion, Fish, that you abstracted it! I can make every allowance for your being an American, Fish, but this—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Squiff.

"Aw, can it!" snorted Fisher T. Fish. Even the cute, spry business-man from New York did not carry his business principles so far as "pinching." "I guess I bought that book from Bunter, fair and square. I guess that what I've bought is mine, see!"

Fishy snatched the volume from Alonzo's hands.

"From Bunter!" exclaimed Alonzo, in great surprise.

"Sure!"

"But how could Bunter sell you a volume that does not belong to him, but is, indeed, my property, my dear Fish?"

"Better ask him," said Fishy sourly. "I ain't swallerin' it that the book's yourn. Anyhow, you can settle that with Bunter. What I've bought an' paid for is mine. The price of that there book is two bob, if you want it. If it's a trade, shell out! If it ain't, git!"

"If you have indeed purchased that volume from Bunter in good faith, Fish, I shall reimburse you for the amount you paid him."

"Forget it!" jeered Fish.

"But I shall require proof of your statement," said Alonzo, shaking his head. "You are so very, very unscrupulous, Fish—"

"What?"

"So very, very unscrupulous, and, indeed, rascally—"

"You pie-faced clam!"

"I trust you do not mind my referring to your characteristics, so very, very well known in the Remove, Fish—"

"You boneheaded gink—"

"Please come with me to Bunter," said Alonzo. "I assure you that if you paid for the book I will return you the exact amount—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Squiff. "That isn't what Fishy wants! He wants about ten times as much, fathead!"

"In that case, Field, I think that Fish will be seriously disappointed. Will you kindly come with me, Fish?"

"Nope!" snorted Fish. "If you want that book, cough up the dust! If you don't, travel! Absquatulate! Vamoose! Git!"

Alonzo stepped towards the American junior, and grasped him by a bony neck. He jerked him to the door.

(Continued on page 16.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 1,347.

AIM HIGH

Why waste time envying the pampered and petted life of the prefect? Get out of the rut and **BE A PREFECT YOURSELF!** We train you to break into the magic circle in double-quick time. Just sign on the dotted line and send Five Shillings. If there's no dotted line, simply send the Five Bob without troubling to sign—we'll trust you for the signature.—**THE COLLEGE OF PREFECT-SHIP** (Principal: Peter Todd), Study No. 7, Remove.



THE NEW Greyfriars

No. 62 (New Series).

EDITED BY

MY WORST AND BEST EXPERIENCE

By H. Vernon-Smith.

For my age, I suppose I've been in as many tight corners as any fellow alive, and most of them have cropped up a long way from England's shores. The most uncomfortable time I ever had was, of all places on earth, at Friardale! It was a hot summer's day, and I'd stretched myself out under a tree to read an alleged "thriller," which was so thrilling that it soon sent me to sleep! I awoke with the most peculiar feeling I've ever had in my life. It was just as though my head was walking away—every inch of flesh on it seemed to be moving! Slowly, I opened my eyes and saw the ghastly truth—and what I saw was enough to give any man a blue fit! A SWARM OF BEES HAD DESCENDED ON ME! AND BY ALL APPEARANCES, THEY HAD COME TO STAY!

Lucky it was for me, in that ghastly emergency, that—in more senses than one—I managed to keep my head. What I did was to remain perfectly still till somebody should come along and see my predicament; I know that to do otherwise would mean that I should be stung by the entire swarm!

As it happened, the first chappie to appear was just the man I could have wished for at such a moment—Wingate of the Sixth. I was afraid to open my mouth to speak, but there was no need. Wingate just shouted: "Don't move an inch, kid!" and raced off. Two minutes later he reappeared, accompanied by two members of the Friardale Volunteer Fire Brigade, trailing a manual and hose-piping behind them. In a few seconds they had a fine jet of water roaring out of the nozzle, then, yelling to me to sit tight, they directed it right

at my face! The entire swarm was wiped off my head in a jiffy by the avalanche of water, and they didn't come back for more!

I emerged with about half a dozen stings as souvenirs, but I counted myself lucky to have got off so lightly.

Perhaps it doesn't sound much, if you don't think much about it, but I hope it will be a long, long time before I can say I have had a worse experience, anyway!

My best experience was leading the famous expedition of Remove fellows that went to the South Seas in search of Black Peter's treasure. Adventure and fighting is just in my line at all times, and the thrills we got on this particular jaunt were plentiful enough to satisfy me completely.

The crowning joy was the discovery of the treasure. To have had a really top-notch time scrapping with natives and double-crossing Europeans, and to finish up by licking the lot and winning a fortune for Tom Redwing was just about as great and glorious an experience as I could imagine—and is so still!

PRACTICE NOT NEEDED!

By way of preparation for the entertainment season, Bunter has been polishing up his ventriloquism and can now make his voice appear to come from almost any place.

In justice to Bunter, it should be stated that even without practice he can always be relied on to talk out of the back of his neck!

A "BROTH" OF A BOY!

Bolsover says he can tell many stirring stories of an ancestor of his who came over with the Conqueror.

We have an idea Bolsy's ancestor was the camp cook!

HURLED THROUGH HEDGE!



"CHASERS" AMAZING DEAD-HEAT

Memories of the good old days when the young sporting gentlemen of Greyfriars used to ride wild races across the countryside on horseback were recalled this week by a riding match between Brown and Bulstrode. There were, of course, certain differences. In the old days, such matches were usually for a wager of a considerable sum of money, but the stakes on this occasion were nothing more formidable than a dozen jam-tarts! Another point where the modern differed from the ancient was in the matter of the mounts. In bygone days, the horses were almost invariably hired. For the Brown-Bulstrode match, they were borrowed—without the owner's permission!

It was seeing a couple of half-wild ponies in Farmer Barncott's field that made Brown and Bulstrode start arguing about their respective prowess at horsemanship, as a matter of fact, so nothing was more natural than that they should return there to settle the argument.

It took a dozen Removeites nearly half an hour to corner the ponies and get the horsemen safely mounted; but on the other hand there was no delay whatever about the start. Vernon-Smith, the official starter, dropped the flag, and the

"stable lads" just let go, and in a split second the ponies were galloping across the field like a couple of prairie ponies in a fit projected at double speed!

Experienced patrons of the Turf who were present declared that they cannot recall a more exciting race. From start to finish the two were neck to neck and they cleared the ditch that divides the field in half like a horse.

They reached the winning post a clump of trees in the far corner of the field, so close together that no judge could possibly have decided between them.

As a matter of fact, no decision was necessary. The moment the ponies found their further progress stopped by the trees, they came to an abrupt and simultaneous stop, which resulted in Brown and Bulstrode taking a simultaneous dive over their heads right through the hedge into the ditch on the other side. By the time they had arrived there, Brown and Bulstrode were not a bit concerned as to who had won.

Which is the better horseman of the two is still open to question. The way they clung to their respective mounts and yelled with fear was about equally good in both cases, so far as we could see!

Answer to Correspondent

"RUMOUR-MONGER" (Shell).—"Is it true that Alonzo Todd's talk makes people want to strangle something?"

No, "Rumour-monger," but we've noticed that chaps in conversation with 'Lonzy frequently smother a yawn!

Obviously!

Invitations which were sent out to local bigwigs to attend the ceremony of hanging Sir Hilton Popper's portrait in Hall turned out to be the work of a practical joker.

The whole thing was "framed" from the beginning!

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?



W. G. Bunter suffers more than any other fellow when he gets a hundred lines, as he is the most laborious writer at Greyfriars. The only kind of writing Bunter really enjoys is filling in a postal order!

Harree Singh, the Remove outside-right, has a rare turn of speed, and is seldom beaten in a race for the ball. He "lobs" it into the middle with uncanny skill, too—resulting in numerous goals for Greyfriars!

Wibley's plan of producing a film featuring the Removeites fell through owing to lack of financial support. "Wib" still hopes one day to become a successful film producer, however!

the Herald

EXTRA
GOOD
EDITION

December 9th, 1933.

WHEN LEARNING TO SKATE

Don't venture on the ice without fitting on Dr. Kipps' Famous Neck Pad! Fully sprung and awfully comfortable to wear! Customers write: "It's a pleasure to hit the ice with the back of your neck when you're wearing Dr. Kipps' Neck Pad!" Price 2s. 11d., post free, from the Inventor, DR. KIPPS, c/o "GREYFRIARS HERALD."

HYPNOTISED RAGING LION

Brave Bunter Averts Panic

If you've any lingering notion in that nasty suspicious mind of yours that the Remove isn't a hero, dismiss it! One act of valour this week placed Bunter in a position his courage can never be assailed!

To refer, of course, to his splendid bravery at the Field Circus on Wednesday afternoon when, alone and unarmed, he faced a raging lion and quelled it with a look from his blazing eyes. When the lion jumped through the inadvertently opened doorway of his cage and bounded into the ring, there was a yell from the crowd, and five hundred people streaked for the exits. Bunter alone acted differently. As he stated afterwards, it was beneath his dignity to flee from danger; moreover, as a Bunter, it was up to him to stay behind and protect the weak and helpless—even if it cost him his life.

He just stood right in the lion's path, his eyes fixed on the beast.

The lion, with a deep, rumbling roar, came to a stop and fixed his eyes on Bunter. They say that a look from a fearless man will cow the fiercest of beasts. The difficulty is usually to find a fearless man.

Fortunately, on this occasion, Bunter was present.

**EXTRA SPECIAL
CHRISTMAS NUMBER
NEXT WEEK!**

The lion looked at him, and he looked at the lion; and after a minute or so of solid, uninterrupted staring, the lion gave in!

Like a whipped cur the noble animal turned round and padded back to its cage; and all the keeper had to do was to shut the door and bolt it!

Now you know all that, we sincerely hope you'll never again question Bunter's bravery!

But is it true? you ask.

Well, that's the story exactly as Bunter told it to us.



Of course, there are minor differences between his story and that of the lion-tamer.

The lion-tamer says that whereas everybody else had the sense to get out of the tent, Bunter was so paralysed with terror that he could only stand still. He adds that the lion went back to its cage because it evidently didn't feel at home outside it.

But then you know what a jealous lot of beasts these lion-tamers are, don't you?

"BLAZING BEACON" SELLS OUT

Newspaper Under the Hammer

No journalist can remain unaffected by the spectacle of a grand old newspaper being sold up, lock, stock, and barrel by Dutch auction methods, and we're not ashamed to admit that we shed a tear when this humiliation descended on Fisher T. Fish's famous journal, the "Greyfriars Blazing Beacon."

For three stormy weeks this journal has recorded the joys and sorrows of generations of juniors and seniors. Think of the changes it has seen during that long and eventful history! Bunter has received a postal order, Dicky Nugent has washed his face; you might almost say that a new world had come into existence!

The pathetic sight presented by the proprietor of the "Blazing Beacon" as he mounted the rostrum to conduct the sale was one calculated to melt the hardest heart. Fish's face, which is of the type usually described as "hatchet," seemed to have softened under suffering, and his lips, which are normally clamped tightly together, were slightly parted, giving him a somewhat eod-like appearance.

His brief, but moving speech deserves to be recorded in full, and we make no apology for printing it. Here it is:

"Folks! I guess you don't wanna have me spill the history of that wunnerful example of Amurrican journalism flourishing on English soil,

the 'Greyfriars Blazing Beacon.' You got all that dope already.

"I've been put in a spot by rival noospaper guys, I guess, an' the 'Beacon' has stopped printing. BUT NOT FOR LONG! BEFORE WE QUIT THIS ROOM, ONE OF YOU LUCKY GUYS IS GONNA BUY THE PAPER AN' COME INTO ALL THE REWARDS OF MY PIONEER WORK!

"Folks! I'm putting up to auction two wunnerful properties. First, the printing press an' office equipment of the 'Beacon,' slightly damaged by toughs hired, I reckon, by my rival noospaper, the 'Greyfriars Herald'; and second, the goodwill of the paper, by which I mean the loyal support of the army of enthusiastic readers who would rather go without food than go without a number of the 'Blazing Beacon'!

"Wise guys will tell you there are some things that money won't buy—friendship, love, an' truth, for instance. They'll tell you that the devoted affection of a vast public is another commodity that can't be got for all the greenbacks extant. Folks, I'm gonna prove 'em dead wrong by selling you the goodwill of the brainiest boxos in Greyfriars an' district—namely, the supporters of the 'Greyfriars Blazing Beacon'!"

Fisher T. Fish then picked up a mallet and began the auction.

There were no bids for the machinery and equipment, which was accordingly withdrawn.

The goodwill was sold to Tom Brown for the sum of one halfpenny. This coin having transpired to be a dud, Fish is now making application for the return of the goodwill. So the goodwill has been deposited with the Official Receiver, pending the hearing of an action in the Remove Court.

If you don't believe us, trot along to the Official Receiver and ask him to let you have a look at it!

DICKY NUGENT'S WEEKLY WISDOM

An unemployed seaman told Paget he'd make him a reel ship's hammock for half-a-crown spot cash. Since the half-crown changed hands, however, the seaman hasn't been seen.

Paget thought he'd do a hammock; but instead of that, he did a "bunk"!

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!



Frank Nugent is a very pacific fellow, and pours oil on troubled waters among friends. Frank is no mean fighting man—but he prefers to see fellows shake hands rather than punch noses!

Piet Delarey believes oranges keep you fit during the winter, and he has crates of luscious South African oranges sent over from his home. There are always plenty of fellows to help dispose of them!

When Bunter bruised his leg, he demanded that Toddy should hire a bathchair and wheel him round the quad! Toddy did it—but a crowd of laughing fellows soon convinced Bunter that he could walk!

Putting The Lid On It!

Bulstrode, who wore a Swiss mountaineer's hat for his recent rabbit-shooting expedition, treats with utter disdain Vernon-Smith's insinuation that the hat was made of paper.

From what we can see of it, Smithy's insult was hardly "felt"!

Explained!

We understand that a new tag named Vester has made a striking impression on the Second. He is the son of a match manufacturer.



(Continued from page 13.)

"Please come!" he said mildly. "I very, very much fear that you are an unscrupulous rogue, Fish, and I may mention that I have already had my eye on you. Please come at once."

Fishy had not much choice about coming. He sagged in Strong Alonzo's grasp like a bag of bones, and he roared:

"Leggo, you galoot! Let up, you pie-faced guy!" Fishy clutched at the doorpost with bony fingers, as he was jerked out of the study. But a jerk from Strong Alonzo dragged him loose again. "Will you let up, you mugwump?" shrieked Fisher T. Fish.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Squiff. "Yow-ow-woop!" roared Fisher T. Fish. And, with Alonzo's iron grip on his collar, but with the disputed volume still tightly clutched in his bony hand, the enterprising merchant of the Remove went headlong along the passage.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Trouble for Two!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"More trouble!"

"Sounds like Fishy!"

The Famous Five, at tea in Study No. 1, listened to the uproar in the Remove passage. It did sound like Fishy! There was no doubt about that. There was no other nasal voice like Fishy's at Greyfriars, and that nasal voice was going strong on its top note.

"Say, let up! Wake snakes! I guess this is the bee's knee! I'll sure make potato scrapings of you, you pie-faced geek! Yep! Waroooh! Leggo!"

The door of Study No. 1 was kicked open, and the Bounder looked in, with a sour sneer on his face.

"You interested, as captain of the Form, Wharton?" he asked.

"What's on?" asked Harry.

"Only that frabjous freak, Alonzo, running the show again. But I suppose you funk trying to stop him throwing his weight about."

Wharton coloured and rose from the table. If Strong Alonzo chose to throw his weight about, it was a little difficult to see how the captain of the Remove was to stop him. But Harry Wharton was certainly prepared to chip in at once if Alonzo was carrying matters with a high hand.

"Come on, you men!" said Harry, and, taking no more notice of the sneering Bounder, he left the study, followed by his friends.

A good many other fellows were in the passage, drawn there by the frantic howls of Fisher T. Fish. Fishy was squirming wildly in the grasp of Strong Alonzo. The Removites looked on, some of them grinning. Had Fishy been a popular fellow, no doubt there would have been aid for him, strong as Alonzo was, and hard as he was to tackle. But the enterprising youth from "Noo Yark" was far from popular. If

Fishy got into a shindy, the probability was that he had been a little too cute, or a little too spry, and was getting that for which he had asked.

Alonzo had stopped outside the door of Study No. 7, which he had thrown open. He was calling to Billy Bunter. Bunter's peevish voice answered him from the study.

"Oh, really, Lonzy, I've come up to tea! I wish you wouldn't kick up a row at tea-time! I say, Peter, what is there for tea?"

"My dear Bunter—"

"Oh, shut up, Alonzo!"

"Fish declares—"

"Blow Fishy! Fishy's a mean skunk! I don't want to have anything to say to Fishy, or to you, either, if you come to that! Shut up!"

"Will you step into the passage, Bunter?"

"No; I jolly well won't!"

Alonzo, holding Fishy by the collar with his left, stepped into the study. He emerged again, holding Bunter by the collar with his right. Bunter was yelling as wildly as Fishy now.

"Yow-ow! I say, you fellows, rescue! I say— Yarooooop!"

"I guess I'll make potato scrapings of you! Say, you boob Wharton!" yelled Fisher T. Fish, catching sight of the captain of the Remove. "Say, you chip in, see! You make that guy leggo! It's up to you, you galoot!"

"What's the row, Alonzo?" demanded Wharton.

"I have no objection whatever to acquainting you with the circumstances, my dear Wharton!" said Alonzo amicably.

"Well, get on with it, fathead!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"I have missed the Virgil from my study," explained Alonzo. "I find that it is in Fish's possession, and he states that he bought it from Bunter."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It is not a matter of a risible nature, my dear fellows, for if Fish's statement is substantiated, it follows that Bunter has acted in a very, very unscrupulous, and, indeed, dishonest manner. Bunter, did you sell that volume of Virgil to Fish?"

"No!" yelled Bunter.

"Why, you fat clam—" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"I've never seen it before!" howled Bunter. "I know absolutely nothing about it! I never sold it to Fishy for twopence, and I never spent the twopence on a jam tart! Now, leggo, you beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" roared Bunter. "Pretty thick to accuse a fellow of selling another fellow's books! Besides, I made a mistake. I thought it was my Virgil when I sold it to Fishy! And the mean beast only gave me twopence for it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It appears to be established," said Alonzo, "that you sold the book to Fish, Bunter. I cannot help doubting your statement that you mistook it for your own. It is not at all dirty, or sticky—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast! Leggo!" howled Bunter. "I never sold it to him at all! I haven't the least idea how he got hold of it! Yow-ow-ow!"

"I fear that you are very, very unscrupulous, Bunter, and that it will be my duty to whop you—"

"Yarooooop!"

"As for you, Fish, you are as unscrupulous as Bunter. You gave twopence for the book, yet you asked me two shillings—"

"I guess a galoot is entitled to his profit!" snarled Fisher T. Fish. "Will you leggo my doggoned neck, you pie-faced gink?"

"Please place the book in my study, Fish! In the circumstances I shall not return you the twopence you gave Bunter!"

"I guess not!" yelled Fishy.

"No doubt Bunter will return you that sum when his postal order comes. He has mentioned to me that he is expecting a postal order shortly."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Place the book in my study—"

"Nope!" yelled Fisher T. Fish.

Crack!

With a grip on either collar that was not to be denied, Alonzo brought the heads of the two delinquents together. The crack rang along the Remove passage like a pistol-shot. Two fearful yells were blended into one.

"Yaroooooop!"

"Whoooooooop!"

"Now, my dear Fish—"

"You pesky mugwump!" shrieked Fishy.

Crack!

"Aw, wake snakes! Oh, Abraham Lincoln! Yooooop! I guess you can have the pesky book!" shrieked Fishy, and he hurled P. Vergilius Maro into Study No. 7. "Oh, my cabeza! Ow!"

"You may regard that, my dear Fish, as a punishment for your meanness and greed and unscrupulousness—"

"Leggo! I'll sure slaughter you!"

"You may go, Fish. Remember that I shall observe your future conduct, and in the event of you acting again in such an unscrupulous manner I shall kick you severely—harder than that!" said Alonzo, planting his foot behind Fisher Tarleton Fish.

Fishy flew up the passage. It was a hefty kick—a terrific kick! It spun Fishy quite a distance. Then he crashed.

"As for you, Bunter—"

"Yarooooop!"

"I shall give you a severe smacking—"

"Leggo!" shrieked Bunter. "I say, you fellows, make him leggo!"

Alonzo made a knee and extended Bunter face down across it. His face was serious and solemn, as usual. Every other face in the passage was convulsed with merriment—except, of course, Bunter's. Bunter was not feeling merry; he was feeling anything but merry.

Alonzo's right hand rose and fell with a clap like a gunshot. It landed like a flail on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars.

Smack!

"Yarooooop! Help! Fire!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Smack, smack, smack!

"Yo—ooo—hoooooop! Help! I say, you fellows— Whooooop! Oh crikey! Beast! Help! Fire! Whooooop!"

Smack, smack!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There, my dear Bunter! I trust that you will remember this—"

"Yow—ow—ow!"

"And that it will be a very, very valuable lesson to you—"

"Yoooooop!"

"In the event of your requiring further correction, Bunter, I shall always be ready to administer it—"

"Yow—ow—ow—ow!"

"I shall, indeed, regard that as a duty."

"Wow! Beast! Wow!"

Billy Bunter rolled into Study No. 7, roaring. Alonzo followed him in; and Peter, grinning, shut the door.

Fisher T. Fish crawled into Study No. 14—a weary, dreary, and woeful

Fish! He had an ache in his bony head—but that was not the worst. He had no hope whatever of recovering that twopence from Billy Bunter. Twopence was four cents, in what Fishy called real money. Fisher T. Fish had lost four cents—lost them for ever! Fishy would recover sooner or later from the banging of his bony head. But how was he to recover from the loss of money? That was far beyond the recuperative powers of a citizen of the United States. Fishy groaned in anguish of spirit.

Many of the Remove fellows were thinking that Alonzo—Strong Alonzo—was "throwing his weight about" rather too much in the Remove. But nobody felt so bitter about it as Fishy—not even the Bounder. Fishy's opinion was that what Alonzo really deserved was something lingering, with boiling oil in it!

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

"BUZZ off!" said Wibley.

William Wibley was busy in Study No. 6 in the Remove. Prep was over, and Micky Desmond and Morgan had gone down, leaving Wib alone. Wib wanted to be alone. He was busy with his theatrical gadgets, sorting over all sorts of weird things from his property-box. He did not want to be interrupted—least of all by Billy Bunter. So he barked at Bunter over his shoulder as the fat face and big spectacles of the Owl of the Remove glimmered in at the door.

"I say, Wib—"

"Busy!" said Wibley. "Hook it! No supper in this study! Nothing to lend! Try Mauly!"

"Oh, really, Wibley—"

"Shut the door!"

Billy Bunter shut the door. But he placed himself on the inner side first. Wibley snorted and went on sorting out wigs and beards.

"I say, Wib, old man, do listen to a chap!" urged Bunter. "It's rather important—"

"Go and tell somebody else."

"But nobody else in the Remove is so jolly clever at theatricals as you are, old chap."

"Eh?" Wibley's frown changed into a smile. He thawed at once. On one subject, at least, Wib's leg could always be pulled. "If you've come here to talk sense, Bunter, you can run on."

"The fact is I'm frightfully interested in theatricals, Wib," said Billy Bunter, pursuing his advantage.

"After all, a fellow may not be as big a fool as he looks," agreed Wibley.

"I shouldn't mind playing Hamlet for you when you get up a Shakespeare play again, old fellow."

"Fathead!"

"Or Julius Caesar—"

"Idiot!"

"Oh, really, Wib! But what I've come to talk about is this. When you had a row on with Wharton some time back, because you fancied you could play footer—he, he, he!—and he knew you couldn't—"

"What?" roared Wibley.

"I say, don't yell at a chap—you make a fellow jump! When you had that row on with Wharton you got yourself up as Monsieur Charpentier to give him a whopping. It never came off—"

"That was an accident. I—"

"Well, look here, you could make me up," said Bunter. "I've been badly treated by a fellow in my study, and he's too strong for me to whop. But if you make me up so that he would take me for a master I could give him a jolly good hiding. See?"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Wibley, staring at the fat Owl of the Remove. "Oh, my only hat and umbrella! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! You've made yourself up to impersonate people, and taken fellow—"

"Lots of times!" agreed Wibley, with a chuckle. "But you couldn't, you ass!"

"Why couldn't I?" demanded Bunter.

"Well, you're a silly ass, to begin with! Impersonation is a game that requires brains."

"How do you do it, then?" asked Bunter.

"What?"

"You couldn't do it if it needed much brains," said Bunter, shaking his head.

"Now, brains is my long suit. That's where I come out really strong. If it's only brains that's needed, it's all right."

"Oh crikey!" said Wibley. "And how is a fellow to make up when he's got a figure like a barrel? Might make you up as Falstaff, perhaps, or Henry the Eighth."

"A good figure is an advantage," said Bunter. "You ought to know that."

Wib. When a fellow's got a good figure and brains and a gift for acting, it's easy enough. Well, that's me."

"Ye gods!"

"You've made up as Mosasco and taken the fellows in," argued Bunter.

"Well, if you can do it, it stands to reason that I can!"

"Fan me!" gasped Wibley.

"You see the idea?" asked Bunter.

"That beast Alonzo has got so jolly strong that nobody can touch him. I'm a pretty hefty fighting man, as you know—lots of pluck and all that—"

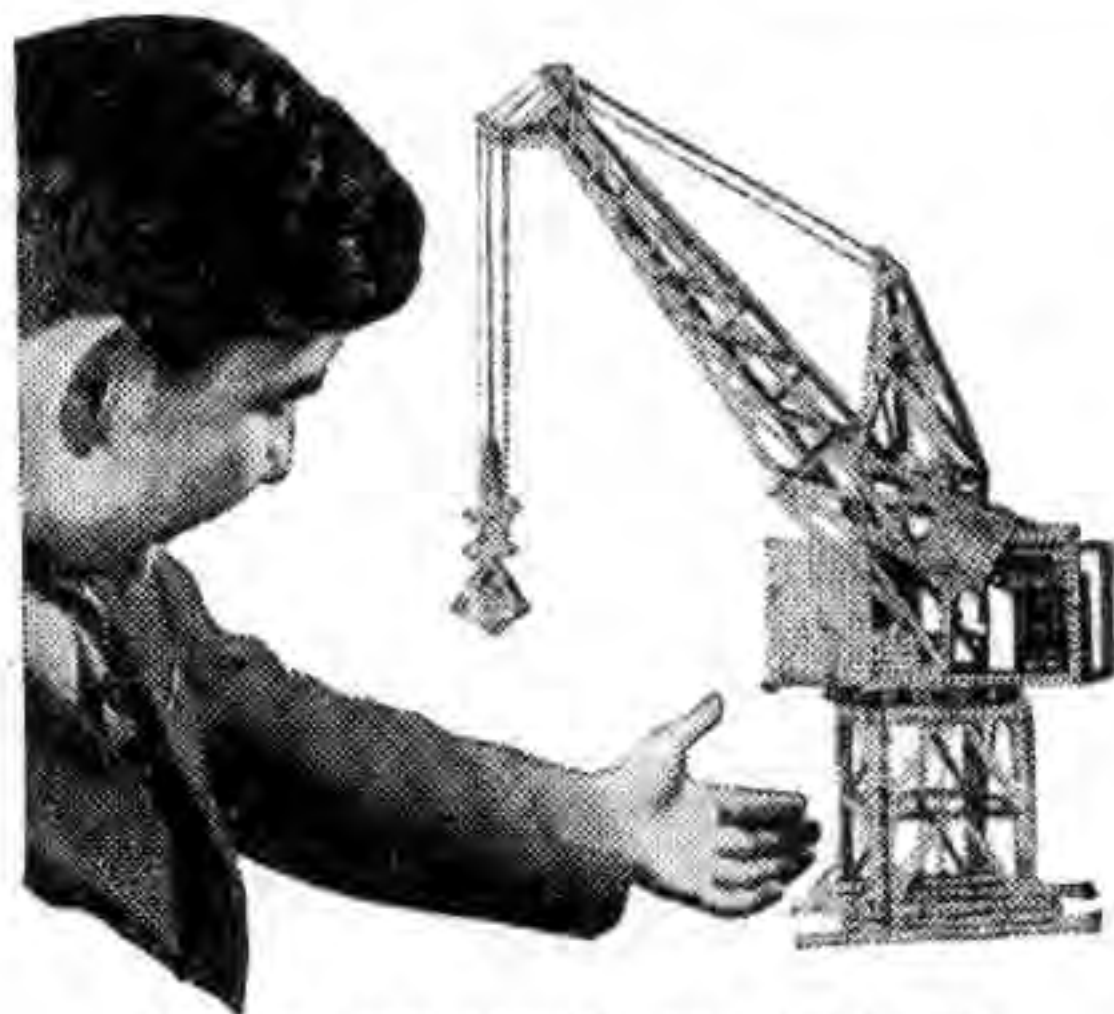
"Phew!"

"For instance, I could knock you into a cocked hat, old chap—"

"Go it!"

(Continued on next page.)

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MECCANO

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"I'm not going to—"

"Lucky for somebody!"

"Not many fellows in the Remove I couldn't handle. But I own up I can't handle Alonzo now he's grown so jolly strong. I admit it," said Bunter, with the air of a fellow making a concession.

"I think I could have guessed that one," remarked Wibley.

"But if he took me for a master—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't cackle! If he took me for a master I could cane him and make him jolly well cringe. Mossoo's gone out this evening, so that will be all right. You've got all the things for making up as a Froggy; you've done it more than once. Well, make me up as a Froggy, and I'll give that beast Alonzo the whop-ping of his life. See?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Wibley.

The idea of the fat, tubby Owl making up as the French master made Wibley almost weep! So far as height went, Bunter might have pulled it off! But Bunter had the disadvantage of being double-width!

Wibley, it was true, could impersonate almost anybody! It was equally true that Bunter couldn't! But the fat Owl was not likely to understand that! Being better looking, better built, and cleverer than Wib, Bunter obviously could do anything that Wib could! At all events, he had no doubt that he could!

It was really a great idea! Wibley actually had made up as a Form-master once, and caned fellows! That, of course, was where Bunter got the idea from! He was going to do the same! Then Alonzo was going to suffer for his sins! Strong as he was, able to throw Remove fellows about like sacks, Alonzo was far too dutiful and respectful to think of using his strength against constituted authority! He would never have dreamed of "handling" a beak! He was only too sure that his Uncle Benjamin could never, never have approved of such a proceeding! So that would be all right—if he took Bunter for a beak—as the fellows had taken Wib on a certain occasion.

As Wib was so keen on theatricals, Bunter had rather expected him to jump at this idea! Instead of which, Wibley doubled up with merriment—as if there was something funny in the suggestion!

He chuckled, he chortled, he wiped his eyes. Billy Bunter blinked at him, his eyes gleaming with wrath.

"Look here, you silly ass—" he roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Wibley.

"Will you do it?" howled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha! Hardly! Look here, don't make me laugh so much—you're giving me a pain!" protested Wibley.

"Roll away, and don't be so funny!"

"You silly fathead—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, look here, lend me the things, then," said Bunter. "I don't really want your help—I can manage without you! After all, I'm a dab at make-up—better than you are, any day! Lend me the things—"

"Fathead!" gasped Wibley.

"Will you lend me—"

"No!" roared Wibley. "I won't! Get out! You've done your funny turn! Now go and make somebody else laugh."

"You cheeky rotter!" hooted Bunter.

"You fancy nobody can act but you! As a matter of fact, you can't act! When you play Hamlet, it's enough to make a cat laugh!"

"Eh, what?" exclaimed Wibley, ceasing to laugh all of a sudden. This touched Wibley on the raw.

"You can't play Hamlet any more than you can play football!" hooted

the Owl of the Remove. "You can't—yaroooooh!"

"Can't play Hamlet?" roared Wibley.

"Well, if I can't play Hamlet, I can jolly well bang a cheeky fat head on a door—"

Bang!

"Like that—"

Bang!

"And that—"

Bang!

"Oh lor'! Oh crikey! Leave off!"

shrieked Bunter. "I say, you can play

—whoop!—Hamlet—you can—yarooooh!

You can—oh jiminy! Whoop!"

Wibley opened the door of Study No. 6. He spun Billy Bunter into the door-

way, and planted a boot behind him.

Wibley was a good-tempered fellow!

But to be told that he could not play

Hamlet was rather too much! Billy

Bunter flew into the passage!

Wibley slammed the door after him.

"Yow-ow-ow!" roared Bunter.

"Beast! Wow!" He yelled through

the keyhole. "Beast! You can't play

Hamlet—when you play Hamlet it's

enough to make a cat cackle! Yah!"

Wibley stayed only to grab up a fives

bat before he tore the door open. It

took him only a moment. But that

moment was enough for Billy Bunter!

By the time the door was open, Billy

Bunter was disappearing at the end of

the passage!

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Desmond Lends a Hand!

"**H**OWLY smoke!" ejaculated Micky Desmond.

Micky was coming up to his study to fetch a book. Wibley, going down, had passed him on the stairs. So when Micky Desmond came along to Study No. 6 in the Remove he naturally expected to find it dark and empty—Morgan being in the Rag with most of the other fellows after prep. Instead, the light was on in the study, and as Desmond opened the door there was a sudden, startled squeak.

"Bunter, ye omadhaun! Phwat are you doing here?" demanded Micky.

"I—I'm not here—"

"Phwat?" roared Micky.

"I—I mean, I—I came in to speak to Wibley—"

"He's just gone down! And sure you jolly well know it! But phwat are ye after? You can't eat Wibley's props!" said Micky, puzzled.

Had there been a cake in the study cupboard, Bunter's visit would have been accounted for, of course. But the fat junior was standing before Wib's property-box, which was open. He was sorting over Wib's theatrical gadgets—which even Bunter, certainly, could not eat!

"I—I say, old chap!" said Bunter.

"It's all right! D-d-don't call Wibley!

No need to bother him, old fellow."

He blinked at Micky through his big

spectacles. "The fact is, Wib gave me

permission to use his props—he actually

asked me to—"

"Gammon!" said Micky. He was

well aware that Wib would have been

wrathy had he known that the Owl of

the Remove was meddling with his

precious props. "Tell the truth, ye

spalpeen! Phwat are you at intirely?"

"It's all right!" repeated Bunter. "I

—I assure you that Wib's lent me his

things! He never refused to make me

up as Mossoo—"

"Phwat!" gasped Micky.

"In fact, he would have helped me,

but—but I didn't want his help! I say,

old chap, you can lend me a hand if you

like!" said Bunter. "I'm a bit short-

sighted, you know! Of course, I'm a

dab at making-up! Still, I'd be glad

of your help! Think I can get this

frock-coat on?"

"Howly mother av Moses!" said

Micky. "Is it thinking of making-up

ye are, like Wib? Tare and ouns! Oh,

my hat! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't cackle," said Bunter

crossly. "I had enough of that from

Wib! I mean, Wib's quite keen on it!

"Go ahead, Bunter," was what he said.

"Use my things as if they were your

own!" His very words! I never waited

for him to go down before I came back

to the study! It's all right! Besides,

Wibley won't know me when I'm made

up! He will take me for Monsieur

Charpentier, just like all the other

fellows, you know!"

"You—you—you're going to make up

as—as—as Mossoo?" gasped Micky.

"That's the idea! You'd like to see

that cheeky ass Alonzo whopped,"

grinned Bunter. "Well, I'm going to

whop him! Thinking I'm the French

master, you see, he will bend over and

take it like a lamb! He, he, he!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Micky.

"Only there's no time to lose, if I'm to

pull it off before dorm," said the Owl

of the Remove. "Lend me a hand, old

fellow."

"Faith, and I'll lend ye two hands

intirely," said Micky Desmond heartily.

"It's the scrame of a joke—the joke of

a loifetoime! Pile in!"

"Shut the door, in case Wibley—"

"If Wib's given ye lave—"

"Oh! Yes! But shut the door in case

Alonzo—"

"All serene!"

Micky Desmond shut the door. Then

he started at once, with great en-

thusiasm, to help Billy Bunter to make

up as Monsieur Charpentier, the French

master of Greyfriars.

Wibley could do it on his head, so to

speak—he could transform himself into

a twin of Mossoo! Bunter had no doubt

that he could do the same, only a little

better! Micky had very strong doubts!

But if Bunter had had a chance of

pulling it off, that chance would have

vanished when Micky lent his aid!

Micky's assistance was due entirely to

his sense of humour! If Bunter was

bent on making a fool of himself, Micky

did not see why he shouldn't help! And

he helped!

The frock-coat that Wib wore when he

made up as a French master was at least

three sizes too small for Bunter, side-

ways. Somehow, with Micky's help, he

squeezed into it, panting. There was a

rending sound, and it split up from the

waist.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Will that

show, old chap?"

"Will it?" gasped Micky. "Sure, I'll

pin it somehow! Lave it to me!"

Bunter buttoned the coat in front.

There was a wide gap behind, showing

a considerable section of Bunter's shirt.

He had omitted the waistcoat, which

even Bunter realised would never go

round him.

Pinning the back of the coat together

was hardly feasible, unless with safety-

pins about a foot long! But Micky

fastened it! Standing behind Bunter to

do the work, he was, of course, invisible

to the fat Owl, as Bunter had no

eyes in the back of his head. So the

Owl of the Remove remained happily

unaware that Micky was fastening the

coat together with lengths of coloured

ribbon, which he pinned on with a reck-

less expenditure of pins.

"Is that all right?" gasped Bunter.

"Poine!" said Micky cheerily.

"The fellows make out that I'm fat!"

said Bunter. "Well, I feel as easy as

anything in this coat! In fact, it's as

loose on me as it would be on Wib."

"Looser intirely," said Micky. Which

was true, as the coat had been widened



"Bend over, Todd!" snapped Bunter, flourishing the cane. "Je suis Mossdo—I mean, Monsieur Charpentier! Je suis going to cane vous—comprenez?" "Bunter—" yelled Squiff. "In disguise—" shrieked Skinner. "Ha, ha, ha!" "Oh, really, you fellows!" gasped Bunter. "I'm not Bunter—I'm Monsieur Charpentier!"

ten or twelve inches at the back, with the aid of the pinned ribbons connecting the two sections.

"The fact is, they're jealous of my figure!" explained Bunter.

"You've a lot for them to be jealous of!" agreed Micky.

"Now, about the make-up. I'm rather a dab at it! Hand me the grease-paints, old chap!"

Bunter proceeded to dab his fat face before the glass. Wibley could produce any complexion he liked with his sticks of grease-paint. And somehow he could make it look natural. Bunter couldn't! He fancied that he could—but that was only one of Bunter's many unfounded fancies. He succeeded in making his face look as if it was badly in need of a wash. He blinked at the result in the glass.

"How's that?" asked the fat Owl complacently.

"Foine!" said Micky. "Put a little more charcoal on the eyebrows—Mossdo's are dark, you know! Lave off yere specs—Mossdo doesn't wear barnacles! Give me the stuff, and I'll touch ye up."

"Ow! You're smothering my specs!"

"Put them in your pocket."

Bunter put his spectacles away. With them the fat Owl did not see remarkably well. Without them, most things were a blur to him. Still, he had to discard them to play Mossdo! So that was that! It did not occur to his fat brain that the dimmer his vision, the better it suited the playful plans of Micky Desmond! Micky made up his face! He gave Bunter one jet-black eyebrow, and one a deep purple! He gave him a nose as crimson as a peony, and a scarlet spot on either cheek.

"Is that a bit too thick?" asked

Bunter doubtfully, blinking at the result in the glass.

"Not a bit of it! Now for the whiskers!"

A waxed moustache was gummed to Bunter's upper lip. A pointed black beard was gummed to his fat chin. This gave him a rather Frenchified look; but certainly he resembled Mossdo no more than he resembled Napoleon Bonaparte. A black wig was added to his bullet head. Behind it, Micky added a ginger wig, pinned on out of the range of Bunter's vision.

"Think anybody would guess who I am?" grinned Bunter.

Micky gurgled.

"No fear! Your own minor wouldn't know ye!"

That was true enough! What Bunter resembled it would have been difficult to say, unless it was a walking stack of grease-paints and theatrical props! But certainly his own identity had completely disappeared! He was as hidden from sight as if he had been enveloped in a sack!

"I shall want a cane," said Bunter. "Wib keeps one here! I say, it's rather a lark to cane chaps, as a master, what? Wib's done it—and I'm going to! Come down and see me do it, old fellow."

"You—you—you're going downstairs like that?" gasped Micky.

"Of course! Alonzo's in the Rag now!"

"Howly Moses!"

"I've got the nerve!" said Bunter. "Not that there's any risk! You see, Mossdo's gone out, and if any beak sees me, he will take me for Mossdo."

Micky gurgled helplessly.

"All right now?" asked Bunter, sorting out Wibley's cane, and tucking it under his arm. "I may as well get

going—there's not a lot of time left before dorn! Follow on, old chap!"

Billy Bunter, in that deep disguise, marched out of the study. But Micky Desmond did not immediately follow. He couldn't! He suppressed his emotions till Bunter was gone! Then he leaned over the study table, almost sobbing!

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Not a Success!

COKER of the Fifth jumped almost clear of the passage floor. Coker's eyes bulged from his head in his astonishment. He gasped.

"Who—who—what—"

Billy Bunter had been lucky, so far. He had passed no one on his way to the Rag, till he came on Coker. He was rather surprised by the effect he produced on Coker—though not so surprised as Coker was.

"What—" gurgled Coker.

"Oh, really, Coker—I mean, que-est-que-c'est?" stammered Bunter, remembering that he was French!

Coker fairly gaped. Why he was so surprised, Bunter did not know! Surely there was nothing very surprising in seeing Monsieur Charpentier coming along a passage at Greyfriars! And Coker, of course, would naturally take Bunter, in his disguise, for Monsieur Charpentier! At least, so Bunter believed!

Whether there was reason for it or not, the Fifth Form man undoubtedly was surprised! He fairly goggled at Bunter.

He did not take him for Monsieur Charpentier! He never dreamed of

that! He did not know what to take him for, unless it was some escaped lunatic who had been daubing paints on his face, and sticking false hair all over his head and neck!

"Oh, my hat!" gurgled Coker. "Who—what—which—great pip!"

"C'est moi!" answered Bunter. "Comment! Plait-il! Gettez vous out of the way, Coker! I mean, allez! Bunkez! Laissez moi passer!"

Bunter rolled on, Coker standing rooted to the floor, and gazing after him spellbound. Coker seemed deprived of breath.

Near the door of the Rag, Bunter came on Temple & Co. of the Fourth going to that apartment. They gazed at him—or rather, gaped at him—just as Coker had done!

"Who—who—who—what——" gabbled Cecil Reginald Temple. "What—what—what's that?"

"Oh, really—taisez vous, Temple! Je suis Monsieur Charpentier, of course!" snapped Bunter.

He rolled past the dazed Fourth Formers, and went into the Rag. Temple blinked after him dizzily.

"D-d-did-did he say he was Monsieur Charpentier?" he gasped.

"He did!" gurgled Fry.

"Oh, rather!" gasped Dabney.

"Who—who—what—I think I've heard his voice! Who is it? Some fellow larking, or what?"

"Goodness knows! He's gone into the Rag! Come on!"

Billy Bunter marched into the Rag.

After prep, that apartment was well crowded with juniors. Nearly all the Remove were there.

Bunter's entrance caused a sensation.

Fellows jumped on all sides, as if moved by springs. Conversation ceased on the spot! Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh was playing chess with Wun Lung, the Chinese. Pieces and pawns went spinning, as they both jumped at the sight of Bunter in disguise. Fisher T. Fish, who was counting his money in a corner, dropped a sixpence—and did not even look for it immediately, so amazed was he! Even Lord Mauleverer, who was reclining at ease in an armchair, sat bolt upright! Alonzo Todd opened his mouth, but was too startled even to ejaculate "Goodness gracious!" Never had there been such a complete surprise in the Rag!

"Bon jour, mes enfants!" said Bunter, in the fond delusion that he was taken for the French master.

"Wha-a-at?" stuttered Harry Wharton.

"I—I mean, bon soir!" said Bunter.

"That is, I mean, je suis ici—je suis venu ici—ou est, Todd—Alonzo Todd."

"Who is it?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Is that Wib playing a trick?" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "No—here's Wib! But who—what—how—"

"The who-fulness is terrific!"

"What's this game?" roared Bolsover major. "Who are you?"

"Some giddy lunatic!" ejaculated Skinner. "I say, look out! Don't let him get hold of the poker!"

"Oh, my goodness!" said Alonzo Todd.

"Who ever and what ever——"

"Je suis Monsieur Charpentier, of course!" said Bunter. "Je crois—I mean, I have come here—zat is to say, je suis ici—to cane zat verree bad boy Todd! Allons!"

Bunter rolled over to Alonzo, the juniors watching him as if petrified. A fat hand brandished the cane.

"Bend over!" commanded Bunter. "I mean, zat you bend over, n'est-ce-pas?"

"Goodness gracious!" gasped Alonzo.

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"Are you addressing that observation to me?"

"Yes—I mean, mais oui! Certainement! I have come here—ici—to cane you viz zis cane! You are one verree bad garcon! Bend over toute de suite."

"I know that jolly old voice!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"And I know that jolly old circumference!" yelled Nugent.

"Bunter!" gasped Peter Todd.

"Oh, my goodness! Is that Bunter?" exclaimed Alonzo. "The voice undoubtedly seems familiar. But, my goodness——"

Bunter flourished the cane.

"Bend over, Todd!" he snapped.

"Je suis Mossoo—I mean, Monsieur Charpentier. Je suis going to cane vous—comprenez?"

"Bunter!" yelled Squiff.

"In disguise!" shrieked Skinner.

"This is one of Wib's stunts! He's borrowed this from Wib——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter, you ass——"

"Bunter, you dummy——"

"Oh, really, you fellows!" gasped Bunter. "I'm not Bunter. I'm Monsieur Charpentier!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared all the Rag. Even the serious Alonzo grinned.

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"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I mean, pourquoi rire?" exclaimed Bunter warmly. "Don't you know—ne savez vous pas——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, this is too rich!" gurgled Bob Cherry. "He's got himself up in about half Wib's props——"

"And he thinks he looks like Mossoo, and——"

"The likeness is not terrific——"

"He's caught this game from you, Wib!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Allons! Taisez-vous, garcons!" howled Bunter. "How dare you cackle—I mean laugh—in the presence of a master?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Je suis old Charpentier——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I am going—I mean, je suis going to cane you, Alonzo, you beast—I mean, vous verree bad garcon——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the Removites.

"Bend over!" roared Bunter, flourishing the cane. "Bendez-vous over toute de suite! Allons!"

"Oh, my goodness!"

"If you refuse to obey a master, Todd——"

"A—a—a master!" gurgled Squiff.

"Oh crikey!"

William Wibley had stood gazing at Bunter spellbound. William Wibley realised that it was his theatrical "props" that adorned Bunter. He realised that it was his property frock-coat that was split up the back, and pinned across with coloured ribbons. As he realised that, William Wibley gave a roar.

"My props! You cheeky villain! I'll make you pay for the damage! I—I—I'll——"

Words failed Wibley. He made a bound at Bunter. He grasped him. There was a howl from Bunter.

"Yaroo! Leggo! I mean, laissez-moi! Oh crikey! You beast, Wibley! Wow! I say, you fellows—— Yaroo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter's beard came off in one of Wibley's hands, his moustache in the other. The crowd in the Rag shrieked. Another grab, and Bunter's black wig came off, and the ginger wig along with it. Howls of laughter greeted that change in Bunter's appearance.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Even Bunter realised that the game was up. Somehow—Bunter did not know how—the fellows hadn't taken him for Mossoo, after all. And Wibley looked as if he was going to slaughter him. The fat junior tore himself from Wibley's grasp, and headed for the door at a bound. That gave all the Rag a full view of the back of his coat, and they shrieked.

Micky Desmond came into the Rag, gasping.

"Is he here? Is he—— Howly Moses!" yelled Micky, as Bunter, heading for the door in full flight, with Wibley on his track, crashed into him. "Oh, howly smoke! Begorra, I'm kilt entirely! Yaroo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Micky went spinning! Bunter trampled wildly over him as he jumped for the door. Wibley trampled over him as he rushed after Bunter. Micky yelled. All the Rag was yelling. Bunter and Wibley disappeared—both going strong. And they left the fellows in the Rag on the verge of weeping.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Limit!

"IT'S the giddy limit!" said Bob Cherry.

"The jolly old limit, and no mistake!" said Johnny Bull.

"I say, you fellows, Smithy will be wild!"

"The wildfulness will be terrific!"

"Look here, Alonzo, you cheeky ass——"

"Wharton ought to chip in, as captain of the Form," said Skinner. "Call Wharton here!"

"What can Wharton do?" sniggered Snoop. "Alonzo could knock him out with his little finger."

"Here comes Redwing!"

A crowd was gathering outside Study No. 4 in the Remove passage towards tea-time the next day. Excitement reigned.

Alonzo Todd was in Study No. 4. The two juniors to whom it belonged were not there. Redwing was downstairs, and the Bounder was out of gates. Alonzo was busy. There was a buzz in the crowd as Tom Redwing came up the passage from the stairs.

"Hallo! Anything on?" asked Redwing, surprised to see the crowd collected round the doorway of his study.

"Yes, rather!" grinned Skinner.

"Just a few, I guess," chuckled Fisher.

P. Fish. "I'll say this is the rhinoceros' side-whiskers."

Redwing, puzzled, stepped into the doorway of Study No. 4. Then he stopped dead, and stared.

"What the thump—" he ejaculated.

The study looked rather dishevelled. Alonzo Todd was pulling out the table drawer. He blinked cheerily at Redwing.

"It is all right, my dear Redwing," he said amicably.

"All right?" gasped Redwing. "What the thump are you rooting over my study for? What do you mean by it?"

"So far as you are concerned, my dear fellow, I should certainly not be rooting over the study," explained Alonzo Todd. "It is entirely on Vernon-Smith's account that I am here."

"Smithy's asked you to look for something—"

"He has certainly not asked me to do so, Redwing, and I think he will probably be annoyed," said Alonzo calmly. "That, however, makes no difference. I feel that I am doing my duty, and that my Uncle Benjamin would approve of my line of action."

"What are you up to?" yelled Redwing.

"I am searching for Vernon-Smith's smokes, cards, and sporting papers," answered Alonzo. "After due consideration, my dear Redwing, I have decided that it is my duty to put down that sort of thing in the Remove. And I am, I trust, not the fellow to shrink from the path of duty."

"You're searching my study!" gasped Redwing.

"Vernon-Smith's study," corrected Alonzo. "I have already found a box of cigarettes, which I have placed on the fire. Perhaps you can smell them burning. If you can indicate the spot where Vernon-Smith keeps his playing-cards—"

"You cheeky ass!"

"Oh, here they are!" said Alonzo. He sorted a pack of cards out of the table drawer, and tossed them on the fire. "Now, my dear Redwing, perhaps you can tell me where Vernon-Smith keeps his sporting papers. It will save me considerable time, and—"

"Get out!" roared Redwing wrathfully.

"My dear Redwing—"

"You cheeky idiot!"

"I am very, very pained to hear you utter such opprobrious epithets, my dear Redwing. And I shall certainly not take my departure until I have done what I regard as my duty, and what I am convinced that my Uncle Benjamin would regard as my duty," said Alonzo firmly.

Tom Redwing's face was crimson with wrath. He was very far from approving of the Bounder's shady manners and customs, which had more than once caused trouble in that study. The sight of Smithy's smokes, or his racing papers, always had an irritating effect on Redwing, and sometimes led to sharp words in Study No. 4. But to have a fellow Removite taking it upon himself to search the study like a suspicious beak, was rather too much for any fellow to stand with patience. Bob Cherry's opinion of the Bounder's ways was well known, and far from complimentary. But even Bob said that it was the limit; and all the other fellows agreed that it was.

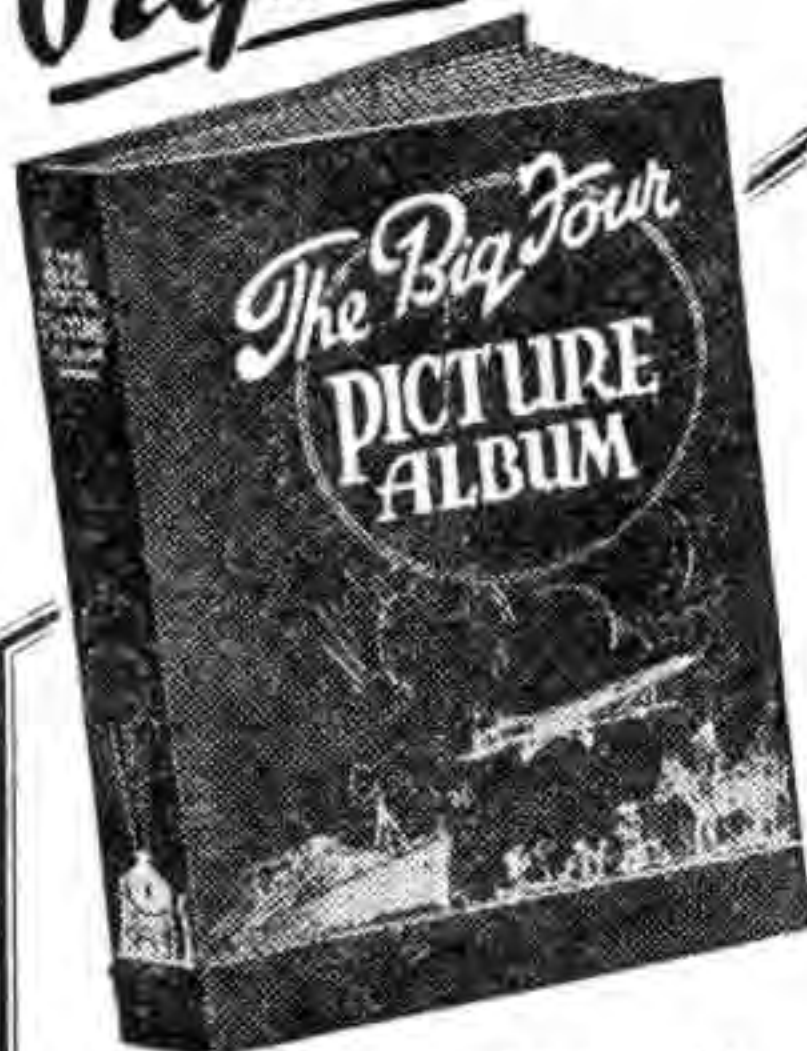
Redwing tramped into the study, his face aflame.

"Get out!" he roared.

"My dear Redwing—"

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"Get out before you're chucked, you meddling ass!"

Alonzo smiled—or, rather, smirked! Since he had become "Strong Alonzo" a certain self-complacency had developed in the Duffer of Greyfriars! His unique position as the strongest fellow in the school, had got into his head a little! Certainly Alonzo would never have been guilty of anything like overbearing conduct—if he realised it! Now he was guilty of it without realising it. And his smirk was rather irritating.

"My dear Redwing," he said soothingly, "you could not possibly chuck me out of the study! Pray do not make a fruitless attempt."

"I'll jolly well try, if you don't hook it this minute!" exclaimed Tom.

"I have not yet completed my search of the study—"

"That's enough!"

Tom grasped Alonzo Todd! He was a sturdy fellow—one of the sturdiest in the Remove! But he went over like a skittle as Alonzo pushed him. He bumped on the floor.

"I am very, very sorry for this, my dear Redwing," said Alonzo mildly; "but in the circumstances—"

"Look here, you cheeky fool!" roared Bob Cherry.

"My dear Cherry—"

"Better call Wharton!" said Squiff, and he ran along the passage to Study No. 1. He came back with the captain of the Remove.

Harry Wharton's brow was dark as he looked in at Alonzo! So far as anyone in the Remove had authority over the Form, that authority was in the hands of the captain and head boy! Alonzo had borrowed that authority, and improved upon it! Wharton certainly would never have considered it his duty to search a fellow's study for smokes! That duty belonged to masters and prefects. The fact was, that Alonzo, like many very, very good people, had rather a leaning towards fussy meddling. He was unconscious of it—people are seldom conscious of their failings! But it was there, all the same—and it was coming out strong now that he had power in his hands.

Redwing staggered to his feet. It was so evidently his intention to renew the combat, unequal as it was, that Alonzo gave him another push, which landed him, gasping, in a corner.

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"Stop that!" rapped out Harry Wharton.

Alonzo glanced round mildly.

"My dear Wharton—" he said gently.

"Get out of Redwing's study!" said Harry. "I suppose you mean well, and you can't help being a fool! But you're going over the limit, and you've got to stop it! Get out at once!"

"I should be very, very sorry to enter into a dispute with you, my dear Wharton," said Alonzo, "but I have my duty to do—"

"Has the Head made you a prefect?" howled Johnny Bull.

"Not at all, my dear Bull! I am acting in this matter entirely on my own responsibility!" explained Alonzo. "I should be glad, very, very glad, if you fellows approved! But I have, at least, the approval of my own conscience—"

"He's wound up!" said Bob.

"And I feel that I should have the whole-hearted approval of my Uncle Benjamin, were he acquainted with the circumstances—"

"Doesn't he ever run down?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Cut it short," said Harry, "and get out of the study! Never mind Uncle Ben! Just get out of another fellow's study and mind your own business!"

Alonzo Todd shook his head.

"Having decided upon a course of action which I regard as necessary and beneficial, my dear Wharton, I should be weak if I turned back when I have set my hand to the plough!" he answered.

"Will you get out?" roared Wharton.

"In the circumstances, my dear fellow, I can only reply in the negative."

"Then you'll be put!"

Alonzo smirked!

"Back up, you men!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, and he led a rush into the study. And the next moment a terrific combat was raging.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Alonzo Carries On!

STRONG ALONZO had never needed his strength more! Harry Wharton & Co. were in deadly earnest, and the Co. backed up their leader as one man! Redwing scrambled up and joined in—Squiff and Tom Brown lent their aid.

Eight fellows grasped Alonzo Todd on all sides. Strong as he was, Alonzo reeled to and fro in their grasp. Outside the study a breathless crowd crammed the doorway, staring in. Plenty of fellows thought that it was time that the strong man of Greyfriars had a lesson, and they hoped that he was going to get one now.

"Go it!" yelled Skinner, mindful of the scene in the box-room.

He was almost tempted to lend a hand himself—but not quite.

"I say, you fellows, chuck him out!" yelled Billy Bunter. Bunter's own scheme of vengeance had been a ghastly failure. He hoped that Harry Wharton & Co. would have better luck! "I say, pitch into him! Thump him! Give him jip! Give him beans! Chuck him out!"

"Here he comes!" gasped Snoop.

A whirling figure flew doorwards!

But it was not Alonzo!

It was Bob Cherry, and he crashed into the crowd, and sprawled! Another whirling figure followed him! It was Harry Wharton! Then Frank Nugent was tossed on the two of them, and then Squiff was added to the heap!

Amazing as it was—unbelievable as it almost was—Strong Alonzo was getting the upper hand! Eight fellows could not handle him!

Bump! Johnny Bull was added to the pile! Crash! Tom Brown came headlong across Johnny.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Gerroff!"

Redwing came spinning, and then Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. Sprawling fellows filled the doorway, rolling over one another, gasping and breathless.

The doorway was blocked with squirming, wriggling figures. There was a roar in the passage.

Alonzo, breathing a little hard, but quite calm, looked at the staring faces in the doorway.

"My dear fellows—" he began.

"I say, you fellows, go for him!" yelled Billy Bunter from the rear.

"Please keep the peace, my dear friends!" urged Alonzo. "I am very, very sorry to have to act in this somewhat violent manner, but in the circumstances—"

"Oh! Ow! Oh crikey!" gasped Bob Cherry, sitting up dizzily. "Oh, my only winter bonnet! Wow!"

"I am terrifically winded!" gurgled the Nabob of Bhanipur. "Oh, my esteemed hat! Ow!"

Harry Wharton struggled up. He staggered against the door, panting for breath. He was game; but for the moment what he wanted was his second wind! There were gurgles on all sides. Breathless fellows blinked at Alonzo Todd.

Alonzo apparently considered the matter at an end. Regardless of almost wolfish looks from the fellows he had handled, he was looking through the table drawer again. A pink paper caught his eye, and a pleased smile dawned on his face.

"Ah, this is it!" said Alonzo.

"Racing Tips"—I am sure, my dear fellows, that you will agree that such a periodical ought never to find a place in any study at Greyfriars—"

"No bizney of yours!" snarled Skinner.

"You meddling ass!"

Alonzo, unheeding, turned to the study fire. "Racing Tips," crumpled, went into the flames and flared up. The self-appointed reformer of the Remove had

completed his task now, and he turned to the door.

"My dear friends," he said mildly, "pray let there be no more violence! I am finished here, and I shall be very, very pleased to take my departure without further unseemly scuffling!"

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at him rather uncertainly. They were there to clear him out of Study No. 4! If he went out of his own accord, that was all right!

"You're going?" gasped Wharton.

"Certainly, my dear fellow!"

"Well, go, then, and be blowed to you!" gasped the captain of the Remove. "And if you begin this stunt again, you fathead, I'll call on the whole Form to handle you and give you the ragging of your life."

"In the path of duty, my dear Wharton—"

"Oh, shut up!"

"Get out!"

"Go and eat coke!"

The fellows made room for Strong Alonzo to pass, and he walked out of the study. Two or three hisses followed him, and Alonzo looked quite pained. Reformers are seldom popular, and undoubtedly the reformer of the Remove was getting towards the lowest ebb of unpopularity in that Form! Peter Todd followed him into Study No. 7 with a frowning brow.

"You silly ass!" said Toddy.

"My dear Peter—"

"You meddling, howling nincompoop—"

"If Uncle Benjamin could hear you using such expressions, my dear Peter, he—"

"You blithering bandersnatch!"

"He would be shocked—nay, disgusted."

"I've a jolly good mind to give you the fives bat!" roared Peter.

Alonzo smirked.

"But that, my dear Peter, is a task far beyond your powers!" he said. "Indeed, if you do not moderate your expressions, I shall seriously consider whether to give you the fives bat, my dear Peter. I should be very, very sorry to do so; but you are aware, my dear Peter, that I could handle you like an infant! Are you not, my dear fellow?"

Peter Todd gazed at his hopeful cousin. Had it been practicable, Alonzo certainly would have got the fives bat—hard! But it wasn't! Peter left the study, and slammed the door after him with a slam that rang the length of the Remove passage.

Redwing, in Study No. 4, was putting it to rights a little. It needed some tidying, after the terrific combat that had taken place there. Several fellows lent him a hand! The Bounder had not yet come in from Courtfield. There was keen speculation in the Remove as to what the Bounder would do about it when he came. Smithy was the last fellow at Greyfriars to put up with Alonzo's meddling patiently. On the other hand, what could he do? There was a buzz of excitement when Billy Bunter squeaked from the Remove staircase that the Bounder was coming!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER

The Bounder's Way!

HERBERT VERNON - SMITH smiled.

The Bounder seemed to have come back from Courtfield in an unusually good temper. Even a good-humoured fellow might have been irritated by Alonzo's high-handed proceedings. And Smithy was not generally

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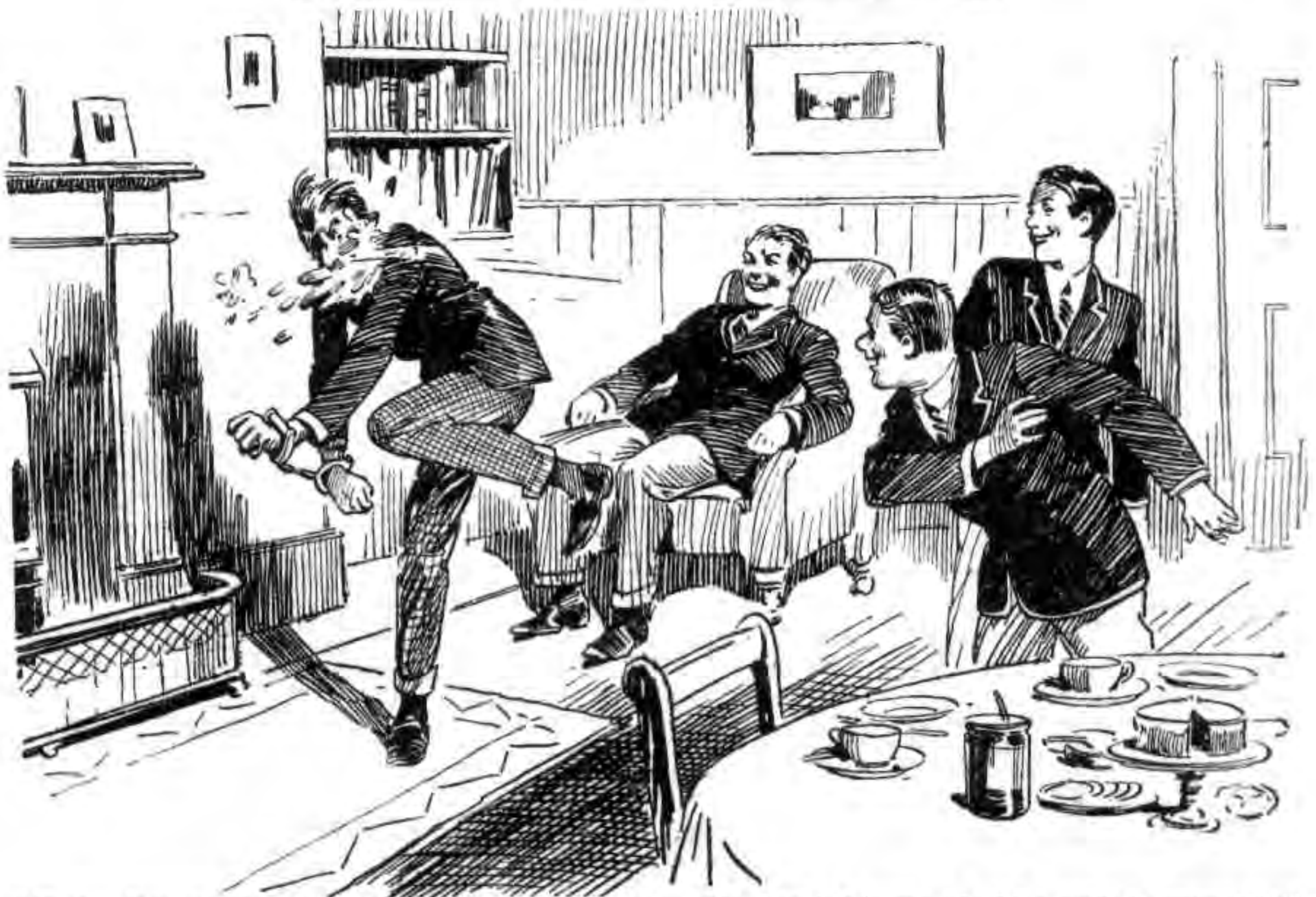
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"My dear Vernon-Smith," said Alonzo Todd. "You cannot possibly intend to leave me in this exceedingly uncomfortable situation——" "You've got it!" assented the Bounder. "You're too jolly strong for me to handle. But I fancy I can handle you now!" He picked up the butter and, with accurate aim, landed it on Alonzo's nose. "Urrrrgh!" gasped Alonzo, wrenching wildly at the handcuffs.

good-humoured. But as he looked into Study No. 4, and half a dozen voices told him what had been going on, Smithy only smiled. He really seemed amused.

"Where's jolly old Alonzo now?" he asked.

"In his study!" said Skinner. "But if——"

"I ought to thank him for looking after me like this!" said the Bounder. "It's jolly good of him, isn't it?"

"Oh, my hat!"

Vernon-Smith strolled along to No. 7. He still had his coat on, as he had come in; and his hands were in the pockets. From one of the pockets came slight metallic clinking. Smithy had something there which he was not revealing to view. The smile was on his face, but there was a peculiar glimmer in his eyes. Quite a crowd of fellows followed him along to Alonzo's study, wondering what was going to happen. It was hard to believe that Smithy was going to take Alonzo's meddling "lying down."

The Bounder tapped politely at the door of No. 7, and opened it. Alonzo Todd was preparing tea at the table; his study-mates leaving him to himself for the present. He paused, and glanced at the Bounder benignly.

"Come in, my dear Vernon-Smith!" he said.

The Bounder stepped in.

"I hear you've been going over my study!" he remarked casually.

"Precisely, my dear fellow! I am happy to say that I have discovered your smokes, and cards, and racing paper, and destroyed them!" said Alonzo, with a beaming smile. "I trust that, after lengthy and serious reflection, my dear fellow, you will thank me for what I have done."

"Oh, quite!" said the Bounder. "Awfully good of you, Alonzo!"

"I am so very, very glad to hear you say so, my dear friend!" beamed Alonzo. "This is most, most gratifying."

"As good as it was of you to keep me from breaking bounds the other night! I haven't forgotten that, you know."

"I trust, my dear fellow, that you remember it with kindness, and realise that I was acting for your good, even while my methods might seem to savour a little of impertinent interference."

"Exactly! I've been thinking how I could show you how jolly grateful I feel, old top!" said the Bounder.

"How very, very pleased I am to hear you say so."

In the passage, the fellows exchanged grinning glances. That the sardonic Bounder was pulling Alonzo's leg was obvious to every fellow but Alonzo Todd. The Duffer of Greyfriars had an infinite capacity for being taken in! Vernon-Smith sat carelessly on the corner of the table, as if he had dropped in for a pleasant chat.

"I've been down to Courtfield, old bean," he remarked. "I dropped in at old Lazarus'. He's got lots of queer things in his second-hand shop. Guess what I've bought!"

"Some very, very good book, I trust, the perusal of which will improve your mind and elevate your thoughts."

"Oh, my hat! I mean, nunno! Look here!" There was a clink of metal again, as the Bounder drew his hand from his overcoat pocket.

"What the thump!" ejaculated Hazel-dene, in the doorway.

"Handcuffs!" gasped Skinner.

It was a pair of heavy, rather rusty, old-fashioned handcuffs that the Bounder held up before the surprised

eyes of the Duffer of Greyfriars. Old Mr. Lazarus had, as Smithy said, all sorts of queer things for sale; and plenty of fellows had noticed that set of rusty old manacles in his dusty window. Nobody, hitherto, had thought of buying them.

"Dear me!" said Alonzo. "What a very extraordinary purchase, my dear Vernon-Smith! To what possible use can you put a pair of handcuffs?"

"Well, they might be useful," said Vernon-Smith. "Suppose there was a burglar, for instance?"

"But surely that is exceedingly improbable?"

"I'll show you how they work!" said Smithy. "It's quite simple! Just hold out your hands—so——"

There was a breathless gasp from the fellows in the doorway! They understood now what the Bounder's game was! But suspicion never entered the mind of the Duffer of Greyfriars.

He was not particularly interested in the handcuffs. But as Smithy seemed to want to show him how they worked, he obligingly held out his hands for the purpose. Alonzo was always obliging!

Click!

"Oh, gum!" gasped Skinner. "Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bounder slipped from the corner of the table. There was a grin on his face—a rather unpleasant grin.

"You see now?" he asked. "They're locked on your wrists, old bean, and only this key can open them!"

"I quite understand, my dear Vernon-Smith!" said Alonzo. "It is very, very kind of you to show me, my dear fellow; but now please take them off, as they are somewhat uncomfortable."

"Oh, you're so jolly strong; you'd

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better snap them!" suggested the Bounder.

Alonzo blinked at him. Strong as he was, he was not equal to snapping a pair of hefty steel handcuffs. Professor Sparkinson's Wonderful Elixir did not invigorate him to that extent!

"I fear that that would be impossible, my dear Vernon-Smith," he answered.

"Think so?" asked the Bounder.

"I am sure, my dear fellow. Pray unlock them."

Vernon-Smith slipped the key into his pocket. There was a ripple of laughter at the doorway.

"My dear Smithy, I am waiting!" said Alonzo mildly.

"Go on waiting!" said Smithy cheerfully.

"Pray release me at once!"

"Rats!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo blinked in surprise at the Bounder's grinning, sardonic face. A fellow who had handled another fellow, as Alonzo had done with Smithy, might really have known what to expect if he let that fellow lock a pair of handcuffs on his wrists! But the Duffer of Greyfriars had suspected nothing! The truth was dawning on him too late!

"My dear Vernon-Smith, you cannot possibly intend to leave me in this exceedingly uncomfortable situation?"

"You've got it!" assented the Bounder. "You're too jolly strong for me to handle, you see, or I'd have given you the thrashing of your life already, you meddling, officious fool! I fancy I can handle you now!"

"Oh, my goodness!"

"Take that as a start!" said Vernon-Smith, picking up the butter from the tea-table. With accurate aim, he landed it on Alonzo's nose.

"Urrrrgh!" gasped Alonzo.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Goodness gracious! Urrrrghh!"

Alonzo wrenched wildly at the handcuffs. He wrenched in vain! Even Strong Alonzo had met his match at last—in that rusty, second-hand pair of handcuffs! Alonzo was a helpless prisoner!

"Have some more?" asked the Bounder.

He hurled the loaf at Alonzo, catching him under the chin.

Bump! Alonzo sat down.

"Here's the jam!"

The Bounder upended the jampot over Alonzo's head, and the contents streamed out.

"Oh! Urrrrgh! Oh, my goodness!"

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

They crammed the doorway of Study No. 7, looking on with the keenest interest.

Alonzo struggled to his feet with some difficulty. As he reached them, the Bounder gave him a shove, which sent him sprawling again. He hit the floor rather hard and roared.

Vernon-Smith snatched the shovel from the fender. Kneeling on Alonzo's shoulders, as he sprawled, with his nose grinding into the study carpet, the Bounder whacked with the shovel. Alonzo was well-placed for a whopping!

The flat of the shovel fairly rang on his trousers.

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Yooop! Oh, my goodness! Please stop it, my dear—Yarooop! Oh, goodness gracious! Yaroooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo heaved wildly under the Bounder's grinding knees. But Strong Alonzo was at too great a disadvantage now. For the first time since his wonderful development of strength had made him monarch of all he surveyed

in the Remove, Alonzo was helpless. Heedless of his frantic heaving, the Bounder whacked and whacked with the flat of the shovel, to an accompaniment of fiendish yells from Alonzo, and roars of laughter from the fellows in the passage.

Not till he was tired did the Bounder cease. Then he pitched the shovel into the fender and rose, gasping.

Alonzo sat up dizzily.

"You—you—you rotter!" he gasped. "Let me go at once—take off these handcuffs! I—I—"

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders. "I've paid you what I owe you, old bean!" he remarked. "But there are other fellows! Good-bye!"

Vernon-Smith sauntered out of the study. Alonzo struggled to his feet. He was buttery, he was jammy, and he had a lot of aches and pains! And it was borne in upon his mind that there was more to come!

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Enough for Alonzo!

"O H, my goodness!" gasped Alonzo Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear Peter—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Toddy.

The reformer of the Remove gazed distressfully at the shrieking crowd in the passage. There was no helping hand for him. Skinner, Snoop, and Stott exchanged a glance, and came into the study. They could deal with Alonzo now! The Bounder had paid his score; but, as he had said, there were other fellows! It was Skinner & Co.'s turn.

"My dear Skinner, if you will kindly release me, I shall be exceedingly grateful!" said Alonzo. "I shall—Yaroooop!"

Skinner picked up a cushion, swung it through the air, and caught Alonzo on the side of the head. The strong man of Greyfriars staggered, stumbled, and landed on the floor with a bump.

"Pin him!" grinned Skinner.

"Hold on!" said Snoop. "He's jolly strong, even with his fins fixed. Shove the table over on him."

"Good egg!"

Three pairs of hands grasped the study table. It was heaved over, on the sprawling Alonzo. Upside down on Alonzo's back, it pinned him to the floor, and Skinner & Co. stood on it to add their weight.

"Urrrrgh!" came in a prolonged gurgle from Alonzo Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess this is the goods!" chortled Fisher T. Fish. "I'll say this is the hippopotamus' whiskers! Yep!"

And Fishy rushed in to lend a hand.

"Get the ink, Fishy!" said Skinner.

"Sure!" chortled Fishy.

Alonzo heaved and struggled under the upturned table. But the table, with three fellows standing on it, pinned him down. Fisher T. Fish proceeded to pour the ink down the back of his neck.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the jolly old rumpus?" exclaimed Bob Cherry. The Famous Five came along from tea in Study No. 1, drawn by the roars of laughter in the Remove passage.

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, as he stared in at the amazing scenes in Study No. 7.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Johnny Bull.

"Alonzo's getting jip!"

"The jipfulness is terrific!"

"Urrrrgh!" gurgled Alonzo.

"Wurrgh! Stop pulling my ears, Skinner—it is excessively painful! Please let go my hair—Yarooop! Wharton—wow—my dear Wharton—Yow—wow—"

"Well?" said the captain of the Remove, laughing. "What?"

"Please intervene at once, my dear Wharton!" gasped Alonzo. "As captain of the Remove, and head boy of the Form, it is your—wow—duty—"

"My dear man," answered Wharton genially, "you've taken all that out of my hands! You've set yourself up to run the Remove! Well, run it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear—wow—Wharton—ow—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Nugent. "You didn't get out of Smithy's study, Alonzo, when the captain of the Remove and the head boy of the Form told you to! You can't have it both ways!"

"Oh, my goodness!"

"I say, you fellows, I've got some gum!" yelled Billy Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove rolled into Study No. 7 with a gum bottle in his fat hands. Alonzo twisted wildly, with apprehension on his face. But there was no escape for Alonzo!

A steady stream of gum poured over his helpless head. It mixed with his tousled hair and flowed over his face and round his ears and down his neck. Alonzo gurgled and guggled.

"Get some ashes and cinders, Bunter," chortled Skinner. "They'll mix well with the gum!"

"Ha, he, he!"

Billy Bunter brought a shovelful of ashes and cinders from the grate. They were added to the gum.

"Oh, my goodness!" gasped Alonzo.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

He heaved frantically. The table rocked. Skinner & Co. had to cling to the upturned legs to save themselves from being rocked off.

"Here, get on, Bunter!" gasped Skinner.

Billy Bunter plumped on the table. There was a gasp from Alonzo, like the air escaping from a badly-punctured tyre. Bunter's weight did it. There was no arguing with that! The hapless Alonzo fairly flattened out.

"Oooooooooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Got him safe now!" gasped Snoop.

"The gotfulness is preposterous!"

"Mum-mum—my dear Wharton—grooogh—" articulated Alonzo.

"Please lend me your—grooogh—assistance—ooooooooogh—"

"I say, you fellows, fetch some more ink—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear—urrrrrgh—Wharton—"

"You've asked for this, old bean," said the captain of the Remove, laughing. "No bizney of mine!"

"The askfulness was terrific!"

Harry Wharton & Co. went back to Study No. 1 to finish their tea. Alonzo was left in the hands of the Amalekites. There was no help for the reformer of the Remove! All the Form were of opinion that "Strong Alonzo" had thrown his weight about too recklessly and taken too much upon himself. Now he had to take what was coming to him. The Bounder's astute trick had placed Strong Alonzo at the mercy of his foes, and they were quite unmerciful.

"Pip-pip—please release me, my d-d-dear fellows!" stuttered Alonzo. "Pip-pip—please leave off pulling my—yow-ow-ow!—ears—wow!"

"I say, you fellows, get some soot out of the chimney—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

(Continued on page 23.)

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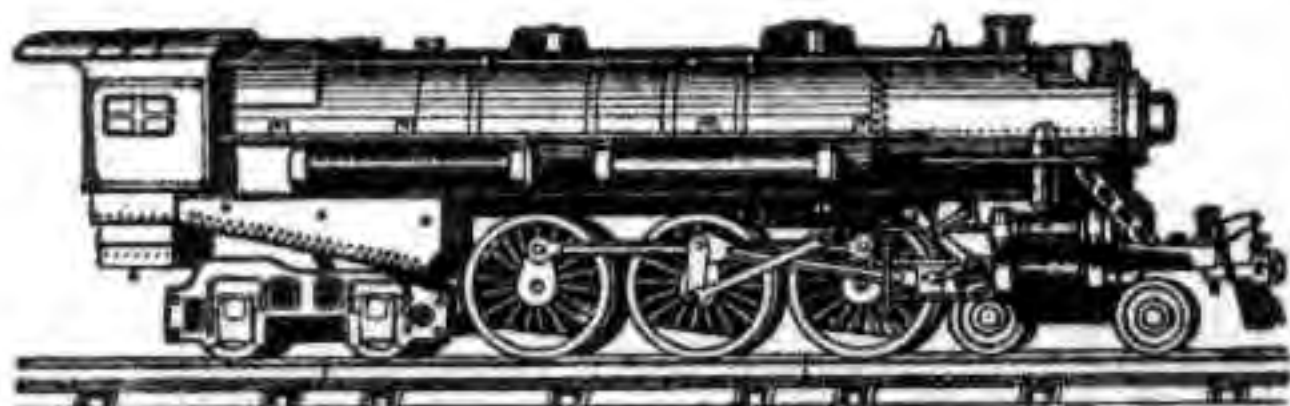
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WHEN THE GREAT APES CAME!

by STUART MARTIN



HOW THE STORY STARTED.

GERRY LAMBERT and **BILLY MURCHIE**, two young airmen, set out on a flight to the Cape. They are flying over the African jungle when they are forced down by an army of apes reared to crush civilisation by a renegade called Stein. By the orders of Big Ling, a giant ape-man, the two pilots are imprisoned—together with a white girl named Lola—in an underground cave. Thanks to Lola, however, the boys escape. Billy is picked up by a Belgian Air Force plane commanded by Captain Bergen, which is later brought down by Big Ling. The captain, who incidentally is Lola's father, and Billy, are about to be thrown into a boiling resin pool when a rope suddenly comes dangling down from the branch of a tree high above! (Now read on.)

Savagery Let Loose!

WITH a leap Billy seized the rope and felt himself being hauled up. Apes leaped after him. One seized his legs, but a coconut crashed on the ape's head and sent it unconscious to the ground. Another leaped up and gripped his ankle. Again a coconut smashed down and the brute fell with a howl of pain. Big Ling made a grab at him, but Billy kicked the ape-man on the jaw and swung clear of the waving hands.

Next moment he was high among the branches, and the white girl and Gerry were hauling him along a limb of the tree.

"This way! This way! Hurry! Hurry!" urged Gerry, pointing to a swinging liana.

The three of them seized it and swung into another tree. Then, seizing one hanging rope after another they swung themselves upward until there was only a frail covering of thin branches between them and the sky. The foliage was so thick they could not be seen from below, but they crouched, panting, along a branch, peering this way and that to observe if they were pursued.

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No ape climbed after them, no sign of Big Ling appeared, but they observed several elephants moving, like big shadows, below, their trunks hoisted above their heads as if scenting for the fugitives.

The girl uttered a short, strange cry as one of the elephants stopped, lifted its trunk once or twice, and then trumpeted.

She clapped her hands and motioned to the boys to follow her. Again she led them across the roof of the forest, swinging like monkeys from tree to tree; and underneath the elephant followed, trunk raised, crashing its way through the undergrowth.

It was a new world up there high above the ground. Strange birds flittered from twig to twig, while lizards lay sleeping on branches. Everything was clean with the cleanness of nature, yet dazzling with the glare of the filtered sunshine.

At last the girl stopped with a note of despair. The boys followed her outstretched hand. She was pointing back, and it seemed that the crest of the forest had opened, for up from the earth rose one strange craft after another until a score trailed out above the jungle.

Every one of these vessels was shaped like a barge with a great stretch of balloon fabric above it that lifted it easily, but slowly. And on board of every barge were crowds of apes, huddled together like cattle in trucks.

Upward came the sledges, eddying as ships might float on a moving tide, then streaming out in a long line, each held to its neighbour by ropes and lashings; and as they settled into line in the breeze, the white pillar of the geyser was suddenly thrust upward like a water-spout.

It rose trim and steady as a whale's spouting; and then it fell again.

But where it had risen there appeared

a figure that could not be mistaken. It was the figure of Big Ling.

The giant ape-man stood in the air for a moment, surveying the armada, then swung his club high and uttered several roars that travelled across the sky. From the air-sledges and the forest below came answering roars.

The boys saw Big Ling climb aboard the foremost sledge and stand there, towering high, his hand shading his eyes as he gazed this way and that.

Again he uttered his cry. Again the replies crashed out. The forest seemed to be alive under the trees. The noise of a vast army on the move came up to the three fugitives.

They peered downward.

Along the floor of the jungle more gorillas stalked, monkeys of all kinds following their ranks, lions sneaking forward amid the cavalcade, buffalo charging into the clearings and disappearing again in the depths of the jungle, elephants moving in droves. The only elephant that did not move to that call was the big bull that stood below the tree in which the three fugitives crouched. He stood wavering, his trunk moving to and fro gently, waiting for orders.

But the terrible army of the beasts of the jungle were advancing towards the spot, raising their eyes again to the gathering of air-sledges bearing the army of apes.

Gerry and Billy saw Big Ling give a signal, and the long line of floating barges began to move in the direction of the tree where the runaways crouched.

There was no sign of Stein in that throng; but, dead or alive, Stein's plan was being put into execution. This was the advance of Big Ling's forces against the forces of civilisation. It was savagery let loose on the world, sweeping in a mighty wave, and gathering momentum as it advanced, knowing no rules but plunder, no law but death!

The three youngsters were in an extremely precarious position. Sweeping towards them in the air was the armada of Big Ling, borne by the wind and driven by rude mat sails which had been hoisted. Down below them the jungle animals were moving in a vast procession. The only stationary animal was the big bull elephant that had remained beneath the tree in which they crouched, his trunk raised high and waving to and fro as if seeking some sign.

It was impossible for Big Ling, as he passed over the forest, not to discover the three youngsters' hiding-place, and if they waited until the procession of beasts below arrived at the spot their escape through the jungle would be equally doomed to failure. There was not a moment to lose.

The girl was already in the act of looking for a way of descent, and Billy and Gerry were preparing to follow her lead when the big bull elephant caused them to change their plans swiftly and unexpectedly. Either the beast was lonely or it scented danger, for it suddenly raised its trunk and trumpeted.

Billy, who was standing apart from Gerry and the girl, so that his form was clear and distinct to higher observers, ducked suddenly. But he was too late to hide. He saw Big Ling swing round and point towards him. He heard a howl from the first bargeload of apes.

The girl and Gerry were already on a lower branch, their moving forms covered by the thick foliage.

Quick as thought, Billy made up his mind.

"Gerry," he called softly, "I'm not coming!"

Gerry stopped and turned a surprised face upwards, while the girl, observing the barges floating towards them, beat her hands together in exasperation.

"Listen, old man," said Billy, speaking rapidly. "I've made up my mind. I'm staying here—"

"But they'll get you, Billy!" warned Gerry.

"I know. I want them to get me."

"What's the idea?"

"It came to me just now," answered Billy. "If the three of us try to escape we'll all be caught now that Big Ling has seen me. So I'm waiting. You two clear off and lie low until—later."

"What do you mean, until later?" asked Gerry.

"I expect I'll be going with the apes, Gerry," explained Billy. "Now, don't waste any more words, old man. Big Ling won't kill me. It will suit me to be with him and Stein, if Stein is there. You and I can have a hand in stopping this war against civilisation if we work independently for the time being, at any rate. You and the girl lie low until the apes have gone and then get the Golden Clipper in order. There's enough petrol in her to take you to France, may be farther. Take the girl with you. Get to England and warn the authorities—"

"And what about you?"

"I'll be with Big Ling's lot," replied Billy. "I'll try to find out their complete plan of campaign and send warnings through somehow—"

The bull elephant trumpeted again, drowning the remainder of Billy's words.

The girl, crouched amid a bower of leaves against the tree-trunk, made a gesture of despair. The elephant on which she had relied had betrayed their presence; and from far above came the answering call from Big Ling, the call that every beast knew and feared.

The next moment Big Ling's craft was overhead, and a heavy, forked

grapnel dropped from above, plunging down towards the floor of the forest in a smother of broken branches and twigs.

The weighty anchor tore a great hole in the foliage, snapping off the branch on to which Gerry hung and sending him hurtling downwards. He fell like a stone, to lay stunned and almost senseless, in the midst of a thick growth of reeds that closed over him like an umbrella. Debris fell upon him, the end of a thick limb crashed on his shoulder, and he forgot everything as the tumultuous scene faded from his brain.

The rude anchor that had been cast down had stripped the tree almost bare of branches, revealing Billy and the girl crouching where the tree forked.

Looking up, Billy saw Big Ling leaning over the side of his craft leering at him. For a moment the two faced each other.

"Where is the other?" Big Ling asked, after a while.

Before Billy could answer the girl raised her voice, the first words Billy had heard her utter since they had met.

"He has gone, Big Ling," she cried. "Fallen among the beasts. Why do you chase us?"

"If that is the case, he is dead by now," answered Big Ling. "Nobody could live down there. See!"

He pointed downwards, and Billy shuddered at what he saw. The marching animals were passing below, elephants, the slinking forms of lions, the hustling buffalo, all moving forward in a mighty traffic jam, shouldering each other, growling and snorting, as they pressed forward.

The entire forces of the jungle were on the move. But Billy's mind was brought back to Big Ling by the latter's voice.

"Stein was right. If one was left he would perhaps be a source of trouble to us. Our war must be waged as a surprise. You come with us."

The girl stepped forward bravely.

"Big Ling," she pleaded, "promise you will not kill this boy. If you do not I will kill myself."

"How?"

"I will jump down among the beasts."

She took up an attitude as if she would dive, and Billy saw her face set in determination. But Big Ling rose to his full height and gave a signal. Immediately a number of gorillas swarmed over the side of the craft and slid down the anchor rope, and in a trice Billy and the girl were surrounded.

Struggling and fighting, they were seized and borne aloft to be hoisted over the gunwale.

Big Ling was smiling grimly.

"Stein did not tell me to kill," he said. "I will not harm, but Stein would be very angry if you kill yourself."

Then, turning, he raised his arm, and the grapnel was drawn up and the barge floated on, the others following in its wake like a stream of floating trucks.

Billy stood by the gunwale watching the strange scene. The girl stood beside him. Big Ling kept his eye on them, but beyond that they were apparently free to move about. Billy was taking note of everything.

Above the flat-bottomed craft floated a gasbag, made of bladders. This was fastened to the sides of the boat with thin lianas as strong as wire. Similar ropes stretched between the remaining boats, and Billy noticed that those behind were larger and ruder than the one in which he stood. The gunwale of Big Ling's craft was almost as high as his head. There was a mast forward, and a sail of matting lying in the bows.

Ranged along the sides were lockers containing food and water jars. The apes in this first boat were different from those in the others.

One Billy noted with surprise might have been a brother of Big Ling. He sat at the stern watching Big Ling as a steersman watches a skipper. He was fifteen feet or so high, Billy judged, with the same gorilla limbs, the same human body and Mongolian face, and the same keen, small eyes. Billy remembered Stein's statement that there were Big Lings in the forest. This was evidently one of the strange tribe!

There was no motor power in the boats, but Billy saw that they were moving with the breeze, which was freshening and blowing towards the north. It was impossible for the wind to be always blowing in this direction, and the audacity of such a voyage struck him as peculiar and absurd. But he was yet to know that Stein was not the man to reveal all his forces at once.

All day long the barges sailed on. Billy was unable to get much of a view of the country over which they were passing, but from below he heard the noises of the animals, and noticed that the apes in his barge were restless and excited. Even Big Ling constantly peered over the side and looked ahead. He treated the girl with a mixture of condescension and a desire to please, and gave her and Billy some food and a jar of water between them.

The sun was setting when Big Ling, standing in the bows, uttered a harsh order. Once more the grapnel was thrown out. It dragged for some time before it held, and then the barges began to descend slowly. They were pulled to the ground by the anchor ropes, which had been sunk amid a clump of trees.

In the distance Billy caught a glimpse of white roofs gleaming in the setting sun; roofs surrounded by a wide plain. His heart leaped as he recognised the place. It was a Belgian headquarters—an outpost for men of the Flying Service.

The sound of an aeroplane overhead caught Billy's ear, and he saw a large plane sweeping up from the south. It was flying in an erratic manner, and, although he was unable to distinguish its marks, the young pilot knew it to be a big Belgian plane.

Meanwhile, the floating boats had grounded. There was no sign of the marching beasts of the forest. All was quiet, save the drone of the plane.

Billy had descended from the craft and stood beside the girl. The gorillas were huddled in groups, squatting here and there. Big Ling stood watching the plane, and beside him stood the smaller ape-man.

Suddenly the girl seized Billy's arm.

"Stein!" she whispered, pointing to the plane.

"How do you know?" asked Billy.

"Look!"

Down circled the plane, to land on the comparatively level ground not far from the trees, and out of it climbed Stein!

"Are you ready?" he asked, running up to Big Ling.

Big Ling nodded.

"Quick, then, before they have time to defend themselves. The signal!"

Big Ling filled his lungs, and then gave vent to a terrible shout that was startling.

(It is the signal for Big Ling's shock troops to attack the Belgian headquarters—the beginning of a new world war—apes versus civilisation? Don't miss next week's exciting chapters, whatever you do, chums!)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,347.

THE REFORMER OF THE REMOVE!

(Continued from page 24.)

"It's the bee's knee!" chortled Fisher T. Fish; and he shovelled down soot from the interior of the study chimney. "My dear fellows—" gasped Alonzo, shuddering with apprehension. "Oh! Ooooooh! Ow! Grooooooh! Gug-gug-gug!"

Soot descended on his head in a heap! It mixed with the gum, and the ashes, and the ink!

"Urrrrgh! Wooooooh! Gug-gug! Oooo-er! Wooooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear fellows—wooch—I am chook-chuck—choking! Urrrrgh! Oh, my goodness! Wrrrrgh!"

"There!" gasped Skinner. "I fancy that will do. It's getting a bit thick here. Come on!"

The ragers, yelling with laughter, left the study. Alonzo Todd, gasping for breath, breathing soot, pitched off the table and sat up. He turned a dizzy, sooty, inky face on the yelling crowd at the doorway. They shrieked as they looked at him. The Duffer of Greyfriars struggled to his feet, panting and gurgling. The crowd surged back as he staggered towards the door. Strong Alonzo had no terrors for anybody with the handcuffs on. But he was too sticky; and inky, and sooty to touch!

The yelling Removeites gave him plenty of sea-room!

"I say, you fellows, ain't he a picture?" gurgled Billy Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo Todd tottered along the passage to Study No. 4. He turned the door-handle with difficulty, with his manacled hands, and blinked in at Smithy and Redwing, who were sitting down to tea. They stared at him, and the Bouncer yelled, and Redwing chuckled.

"My d-d-dear Smithy—" gasped Alonzo.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the Bouncer.

"This is not really a—groogh!—laughing matter! Urrrrgh! I—I must get washed!" gasped Alonzo.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pip-pip-please remove these handcuffs!" gurgled Alonzo. "I must—ooogh!—go and get myself—urrgh—clean—"

"You can stay as you are!" answered the Bouncer coolly. "You're a sight for gods and men and little fishes, and you can stay like it. Go and eat coke!"

"Better give up playing the goat, old bean, and make it pax," suggested Redwing, laughing.

"In the circumstances—groogh—I have decided not to—woogh—continue the work of—ow!—reformation in the Remove—oooooh! I am very, very much surprised that the fellows have—"

urrrgh—received it in such a—wooooh!—spirit. I shall certainly—ugh!—take no further steps to uplift the Remove to a—grooogh—higher level. Wrrrrgh!"

"You mean you're going to mind your own business?"

"Urrrrgh! That is not how I should—ooogh—describe it, my dear—grooogh—Redwing. But—"

Vernon-Smith chuckling, unlocked the handcuffs. Alonzo tottered away, seeking the nearest bath-room. What he wanted chiefly was steaming hot water and plenty of soap! And he went at once in search of them.

Alonzo's reforming zeal had petered out. Perhaps that was not surprising, in the circumstances. A reformer's path is always thorny—and Alonzo had found it inky and sticky and sooty as well! "Strong Alonzo" was still the strong man of Greyfriars, but the Remove had lost its Reformer!

THE END.

(Whatever you do, don't miss next week's **GRAND CHRISTMAS NUMBER** of the **MAGNET**, which will contain an extra-special tale of the chums of Greyfriars, entitled: "**BUNTER THE BULLY!**" You'll find a feast of fun and jollity in this bumper number, chums, and some more coloured pictures to add to your collection. A timely warning—order your copy early!)

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