

Meet Harry Wharton & Co. in "THE FORM-MASTER'S SECRET!"

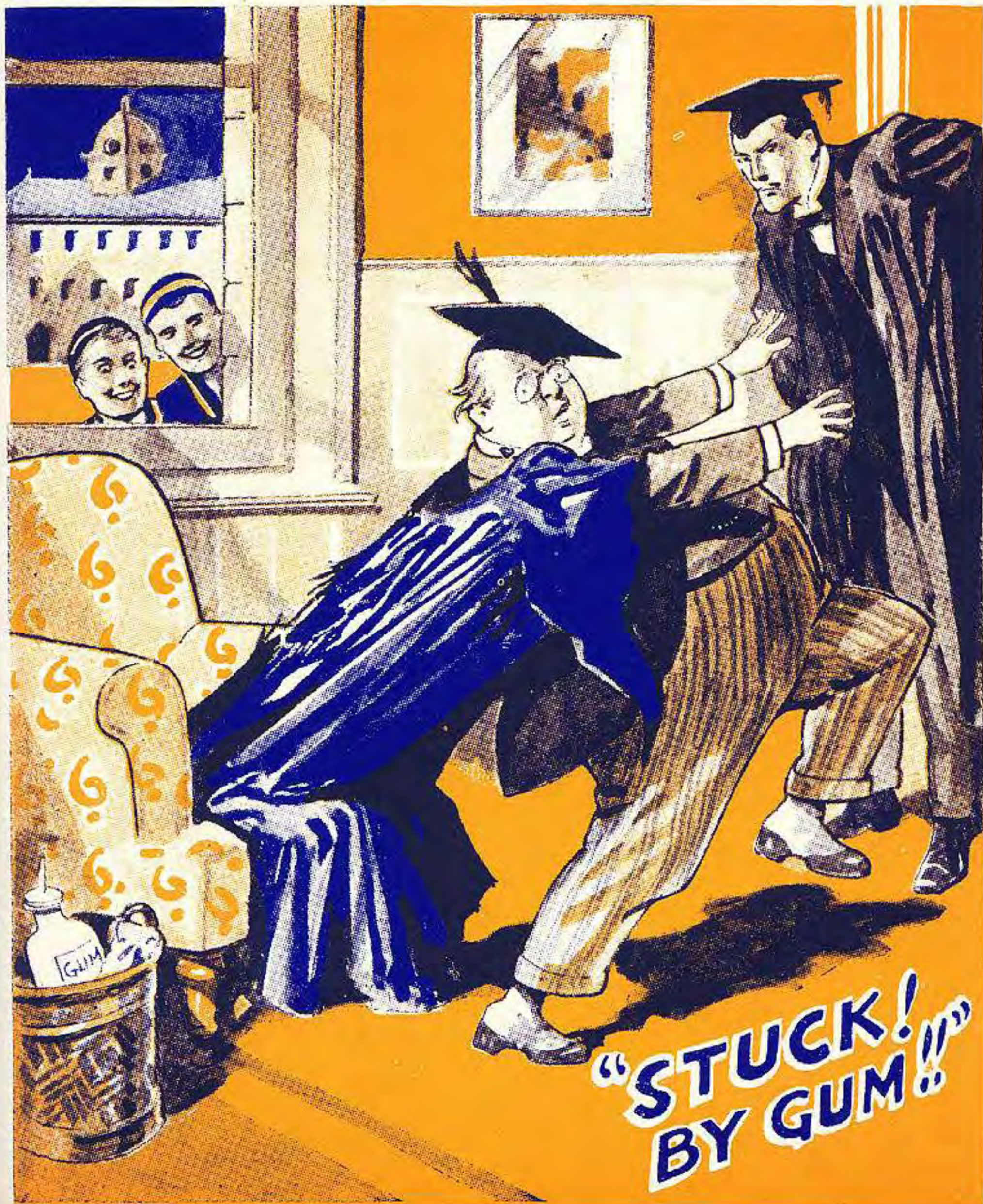
This Week's Sensational School Yarn.

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THE FORM-MASTER'S SECRET!



BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Thunderbolt for Bunter!

HERE he is!"

"Here's Bunter!"

"Poor old Bunter!"

Billy Bunter of the Greyfriars Remove blinked round him in surprise. A dozen fellows in the big doorway all spoke at once as he rolled up to the House. They were apparently waiting for Bunter to come in, and watching for him.

Which was surprising, for Billy Bunter, though of unlimited importance in his own eyes, was of no importance whatsoever in anybody else's. His comings and goings, as a rule, excited no attention—though no doubt his goings were preferred to his comings!

"I say, you fellows—" began the surprised fat junior.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here you are!" roared Bob Cherry. "Where have you been, you bold, bad barrel?"

"Eh? I've been to the bunshop at Courtfield—"

"Gammon!" said Johnny Bull.

"I've had tea there with Mauly—"

"Sez you!" grinned Skinner.

"You're for it, old fat man!" said Harry Wharton.

Bunter blinked at the juniors through his big spectacles in more and more surprise. The Owl of the Remove had rolled home to Greyfriars in quite a cheery mood that half-holiday in time for call-over. There was a happy, shiny, sticky look on his fat face which seemed to bear out his statement that he had been out to tea. Certainly he had been somewhere where there was jam! It was never necessary to engage

the services of Sherlock Holmes or Ferrers Locke to discover what Bunter had last had for a meal. Clues always remained on his fat face.

"I say, you fellows, what's this game?" demanded Bunter. "I haven't done anything—"

"Didn't you say you'd tea'd with Mauleverer?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Eh? Yes!"

"Then you've done Mauly!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast! I say, you fellows, what's up?" asked Bunter, beginning to feel alarmed. There were many sins on Bunter's fat conscience, most of them connected with the lawless annexation of tuck. "I say, is anything up?"

"The game is!" grinned Skinner. "Your game, old man! The Head wants you in his study."

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter. "Well, I never had the pie!"

"The what?" ejaculated Harry Wharton.

"The pie!" said Bunter firmly. "If there's a pie missing, I know nothing about it! I never touched it! Besides, I shouldn't have, if I'd been certain of finding Mauly at the bunshop! But you know what Mauly is—always dodging a fellow! Not that I had the pie, you know! I never knew there was one! Measly thing, too—hardly any gravy in it—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"It's something more serious than a pie this time, you fat duffer!" said Wharton. "It's all over the House, fat-head! You've been out of bounds!"

"I haven't!" roared Bunter.

"Pub-haunting!" chortled Skinner. "Fancy Bunter! Bold, bad Bunter!

Bunter, the giddy kipper! Bunter, the rorty dog!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You're for it, Bunter!" grinned Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars.

"Beast!" roared Billy Bunter, in alarm. "I haven't done anything! Think I'm a smoky, horsey bounder like you, Smithy? Think I want to get the sack, like you did? The beak mightn't let me off as he did you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, you fat sweep!" exclaimed the Bounder angrily; and he made a movement towards the fat junior. Tom Redwing pulled him back.

"Chuck it, Smithy! Bunter's going to get enough from the Head—"

"The jolly old sack!" grinned Skinner. "Fancy Bunter being bunked! All right for us—but what a blow for his people when he gets home!"

"May let him off with a flogging!" remarked Johnny Bull. "The Head knows that Bunter is a blithering idiot, and—"

"Oh, really, Bull—" Billy Bunter, really alarmed now, blinked to and fro, his little round eyes popping behind his big, round spectacles. "I say, you fellows, if this is a lark—"

"The larkfulness is not terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a shake of his dusky head. "You are going to get the absurd and ridiculous chopper."

"What for?" shrieked Bunter.

"You know what you've been up to," said Harry Wharton. "I suppose there isn't any mistake about it?"

"No jolly fear!" said the Bounder. "I tell you I had it from the Head! Bunter was copped getting over the

fence of the Three Fishers—a place, I believe, with a rather unsavoury reputation—not that I know anythin' about it personally, of course—"

There was a chuckle from some of the Remove fellows. Hardly a week ago the Bounder had been "sacked" after being caught at that delectable resort, though he had pulled through, after all. Probably there was no fellow at Greyfriars who knew more about that dingy, disreputable den than the Bounder knew.

"He was copped, and he had the neck to give my name instead of his own," went on Smithy, "and if I jolly well hadn't been in detention, and if the Head hadn't found me in the Form-room, I should have got it right in the neck!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "Is that it?" "You own up?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Oh, that's all right!" said the Owl of the Remove. "You see, a beast threw my cap over the fence of the Three Fishers, and I went after it to get it back—"

"Too thin!" said Skinner, shaking his head. "Better make up a better one than that for the Head, Bunter!"

"I'm not going to tell the Head, fat-head! He mightn't take my word," said Bunter. "He's doubted my word before!"

"Go hon!" "But that's how it happened," explained Bunter, while the juniors eyed him very doubtfully, "and as I was getting back over the fence into the road, a sneaking, interfering meddling rotter came along and made me give him my name. He knew I was a Greyfriars chap from my cap, you see! I don't know who he was—some meddling ass, you know! But I could see that he was going to barge in and tell the Head, so I didn't give him my own name!"

"You gave him mine!" roared the Bounder.

"Yes, old chap! You see, as you were in detention, I knew they couldn't put it on you. Rather deep, wasn't it?" Bunter grinned. "If that meddling rotter barged in and told the Head—I suppose he did, from what you say—well, where was the harm? You were safe enough—and so was I! See?"

The juniors stared at Bunter.

"But do you think the man won't know you again?" hooted Bob.

"He won't see me again; I suppose he won't come here any more," said Bunter. "That's why I've stayed out till close on call-over, to give him plenty of time to get clear." The fat Owl gave a sudden start. "I—I say, he's not here still, is he? Why, it was hours and hours ago—"

"He jolly well is!" said Bob.

"Oh crikey!" "Didn't you know who he was?" roared Johnny Bull.

"Eh? No! How should I know? I'd never seen the silly, meddling ass before!"

"He's our new beak—"

"What—"

"Mr. Smedley—"

"Eh?"

"Man who's come to take Quelch's place while he's away—"

"Oh lor'!"

Billy Bunter's fat jaw dropped! He blinked at the Remove fellows in blank dismay.

"The—the—n-n-new beak!" he stammered. "Oh crikey! Smedley! Oh lor'! I knew that brute was coming this afternoon, but— Oh crumbs! Why, as soon as he sees me, he'll know! Oh scissors!"

"He knows already, and so does the

Head!" grinned the Bounder. "Smedley gave him your jolly old description—fat freak in specs—"

"Beast!"

"And they're waiting for you!"

"Oh lor'!"

"Poor old Bunter!" said Frank Nugent.

"I—I—I say, you fellows!" gasped Bunter. "I—I really went over that fence for my cap—oh crikey! Just nipped over and back—on my word, you know! I—I say, d-d-d-do you think the Beak will believe me?"

"Hardly!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Any man caught out of bounds might say that!" grinned Skinner. "Smithy told a tale about taking a short cut, once, when he was nabbed getting over that very fence!"

"That happened to be true, Skinner!" said the Bounder.

"Oh, of course!" said Skinner blandly. "Let's hope Bunter's yarn happens to be true, too. Let's hope the Beak will think so! While there's life there's hope!"

"For goodness sake, Bunter, don't tell the Head any whoppers when you see him," said Harry Wharton anxiously. "He may let you off with

If the Bounder of Greyfriars ever disgraces himself again, his millionaire father has threatened to disown him and pass on his fortune to a "poor relation." The Bounder decides to mend his ways, but he little dreams that his new Form-master is that "poor relation," and that he has set his heart on possessing the Vernon-Smith millions by hook or by crook!

a whopping, knowing what a fool you are—"

"Beast!"

"But if you tell him any lies, you fat duffer—"

"Am I a fellow to tell lies?" demanded Bunter indignantly. "Have you ever known me to do it? I ask you!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes Wingate!"

Wingate of the Sixth came through the crowd of juniors. Evidently he had spotted Billy Bunter. He dropped his hand on a fat shoulder.

"The Head wants you, Bunter!" he said.

"I—I say, Wingate—" stammered Bunter.

"Come on!"

"It—it wasn't me, Wingate—"

"This way!"

"But I wasn't—I mean, I never—"

Wingate hooked the fat Owl of the Remove into the House, and marched him away to the Head's study. Billy Bunter's fat face was a picture of dismay and alarm as he went. Dr. Locke, the headmaster of Greyfriars School, was quite a kind and benevolent old gentleman; but no fellow liked a personal interview with him in his study! Such interviews often had a painful outcome.

The Remove fellows were left discussing the affair with considerable interest. The question was, whether Billy Bunter would be sacked, or only flogged—an interesting question to his Form; perhaps still more interesting to Bunter himself! Mr. Eustace Smedley, the new master of the Remove, had been only a few hours in the school; but his coming had already provided his Form with a sensation.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Bunter Before the Beak!

"BUNTER, sir!" said Wingate. Dr. Locke was writing at his table. He glanced up. "Thank you, Wingate! Will you ask Mr. Smedley to step here?"

"Certainly, sir!" The Sixth Form prefect left the study, leaving Billy Bunter with his headmaster.

Dr. Locke resumed writing, oblivious of the presence of the fat junior, while he waited for the arrival of the new master.

Billy Bunter blinked at him through his big spectacles. He shifted from one fat leg to the other, and then back to the one. Possibly the Head's work was of some importance—to the Head! But it was rather thick, in Bunter's opinion, to leave him standing like this, with his fate in the balance, in a state of anxiety and alarm. After a few minutes Bunter ventured to break the silence.

"If—if you please, sir—" he mumbled.

The Head glanced up again.

"Kindly say nothing, Bunter, until Mr. Smedley is here," he said.

"Oh! Yes, sir! I was only going to say that it wasn't me, sir—"

"That will do, Bunter!"

"I mean to say, sir, I never—"

"Silence!"

"Oh lor'!" groaned Bunter.

There was a note in the Head's voice that was not to be denied; and Bunter was silent again.

The stillness in the headmaster's study was broken only by the scratching of the pen. Dr. Locke's silvery head was bent over his work, to which he was giving all his attention, regardless of Bunter.

The fat junior's eyes glittered through his spectacles at that silvery head. Really, it looked as if the Beak had forgotten his existence, which was extremely irritating to Bunter. He scowled at the bent head; then he raised a fat fist and shook it at the same, secure in the knowledge that Dr. Locke had no eyes in the top of his head, and could not see him.

It was rather unfortunate that Dr. Locke came to the end of a paragraph at that precise moment, and raised his head.

He stared at Bunter, whose fat fist, rather in want of a wash, was displayed fairly under his nose as he looked up.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Head. "What—what are you doing, Bunter?"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "I—I—I was going to—to—scratch my n-n-nose, sir—"

"Boy!"

"I—I—I mean, sir—"

Fortunately for Bunter, there was a step in the passage, and a tap at the door. It opened, to admit Mr. Smedley, the new master of the Remove.

Dr. Locke's attention was transferred to him, much to Billy Bunter's relief.

"You wished to see me, sir?" said the new master.

"Yes, Mr. Smedley! Bunter is here!" said the Head.

Bunter's eyes, and spectacles, turned on the newcomer. He knew him again at once! He was a rather tall young man, with hard, keen eyes, and a hard mouth, with a small black moustache. He was the interfering stranger who had come along at the unlucky moment when Bunter was getting over the fence of the Three Fishers, on the Courtfield road.

It had not dawned on Bunter's fat brain that he was the new beak who was expected at the school that afternoon. Had he been aware of that Bunter certainly would not have given Vernon-Smith's name as his own when he was questioned.

The hard eyes turned on Bunter without much interest. But it was plain that Mr. Smedley recognised him at once.

"Is that the boy, Mr. Smedley?" asked the Head.

"Yes, sir. That is the boy."

"Bunter!"

"Oh lor'!"

"This gentleman, Mr. Smedley, is your new Form-master, who has come to take the place of Mr. Quelch while he is away. I presume that you were not aware of that when you gave him a false name?"

"Oh! No, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I thought he was just some meddling ass butting in, sir—"

"What?" ejaculated the Head.

"I never knew he'd be here when I came back, sir," groaned Bunter. "I thought he'd be gone long before, if he butted in at all. How was I to know who he was, sir? He never told me."

"That is immaterial, Bunter! There is no doubt that you have been out of school bounds this afternoon, in a place that it is strictly forbidden for any Greyfriars boy to enter!" said the Head sternly.

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Bunter. "The—the fact is, I—I haven't! It wasn't me at all, sir, that Mr. Smedley saw!"

"It was not you!" exclaimed the head.

"No, sir! Some other fellow like me. Remove fellows are much alike, you know, sir—and—and it was some other chap!"

"Bless my soul!" said the Head blankly.

Mr. Smedley gazed at Bunter. He had seen a good many of the Remove by this time. But he had not seen any fellow like Bunter yet! Bunter rather prided himself upon his distinguished appearance—and there was no doubt that any man who saw Bunter once knew him again! His circumference was not to be mistaken.

"That's how it was, sir!" said Bunter eagerly. "It wasn't me at all, sir! I shouldn't have given Smithy's name, sir, if I'd been asked! Besides, I never knew it was Mr. Smedley! Hadn't the faintest idea!"

"This is surely a most extraordinary boy, sir!" said the new master, staring at Bunter.

"A remarkably stupid boy, Mr. Smedley!" said Dr. Locke. "And as untruthful, I fear, as he is stupid!"

"M-m-may I go now, sir?" gasped Bunter, edging towards the door. "Now—now you know it was all a mistake, sir—"

"You may not go, Bunter!"

"Oh lor'!"

"It is clear, Bunter, that you have

been in a disreputable resort this afternoon! I shall—"

"I haven't, sir!" groaned Bunter. "That beast Ponsonby—it was all his fault, sir! Oh dear!"

"What?" Dr. Locke frowned. He had heard a good many things about Ponsonby, of Highcliffe School. It was in the merry Pon's company at the Three Fishers that the Bunder had been caught. "Bunter! Do you mean to say that you visited that disreputable resort with the boy Ponsonby?"

Bunter jumped.

"Oh, no, I didn't! I went—I never went—I—I—I—mean—"

"What do you mean?" snapped the Head.

"He chucked my cap over the fence, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I had to climb over the fence to get it back. That was all, sir."

"Oh!" ejaculated the Head.

"I wasn't in the place five minutes, and I never went anywhere near the pub, sir—"

"The what?"

"I—I mean the inn, sir. Just inside the fence to get my cap. That was all, sir," groaned Bunter.

"Do you expect me to believe that statement, Bunter?"

"Oh lor'! I—I hope so, sir!"

Dr. Locke's frown grew sterner. Billy Bunter's defence was, in point of fact, a little too complete. Either his statement that he hadn't been there at all, or his statement that he had only gone in after his cap might have been believed. But both those statements couldn't possibly be. The natural result was that the headmaster believed neither.

"I do not believe you, Bunter!" said Dr. Locke sternly. "If there is some grain of truth, mixed up with your untruthful statements, I cannot undertake to sift it out. The fact remains that you were discovered climbing out of a disreputable resort, and for whatever reason you may have entered, you were well aware that you were breaking a strict rule of the school. If, however, I could believe that your motive was such an innocent one—"

"I—I hope you can take my word, sir!" groaned Bunter.

"I can do nothing of the kind, Bunter," said the Head coldly. "You are too unscrupulously untruthful for that."

"Oh, really, sir! I wish Mr. Quelch was here, sir. He would tell you that I'm the most truthful chap in the Remove, sir."

"Mr. Quelch has told me that you are the most untruthful boy in all his experience, Bunter."

"Oh lor'!"

"Moreover, you gave a false name when Mr. Smedley questioned you. You gave the name of another Remove boy."

"I knew Smithy could prove that he hadn't been there, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"That's why I gave his name, sir. Not that I was there, sir—"

"What?"

"It wasn't really me at all, sir. I—I haven't been anywhere near the place this afternoon."

"You have just told me that you climbed the fence for your cap!" almost shrieked the Head.

"Well, I had to, sir, when that Highcliffe cad threw it over, sir," argued Bunter. "I couldn't go on to Courtfield without my cap."

"Then how dare you say that you were not there?"

"So I wasn't, sir—nowhere near the place! I went the other way round,

sir, going to Courtfield, and never passed the Three Fishers at all. I never saw Mr. Smedley, sir, and he—he—he never saw me. He saw somebody else, sir, and—and took him for me, sir. That—that's how it really was, sir. I—I—I hope you believe me, sir."

"Believe you!" gasped the Head.

"Yes, sir. M-a-may I g-g-go now?"

Dr. Locke reached for his cane. Mr. Smedley was gazing at Bunter in something like wonder. Probably the happy Owl of the Remove was a new experience for that young man. The headmaster rose to his feet.

"Bunter, I am disposed to credit your statement that you climbed the fence because an ill-natured boy threw your cap over. But you entered forbidden precincts; you gave a false name, and you have stood in my presence uttering a series of outrageous falsehoods. Bend over that chair, Bunter!"

"Oh crikey! I—I say, sir—"

"Instantly!" hooted the Head.

"Oh lor'!"

Billy Bunter bent over the chair in a direful state of horrid anticipation.

Swipe, swipe, swipe, swipe, swipe!

The roar from the Head's study could be heard half across the quad. Remove fellows there exchanged glances. That terrific bellow was an answer to the question—whether it was a whopping or the sack. Evidently it was a whopping.

It might have been a dozen whoppings rolled into one, to judge by the uproar. Certainly Bunter's six swipes were severe enough.

"Now, Bunter—"

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter.

"You may go!"

"Yoo-hooop!"

"Cease that ridiculous noise instantly, Bunter!"

"Yah-hoop! Whooop!"

"Or I will cane you again!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

He ceased the ridiculous noise, and quitted the study in haste. The ridiculous noise recommenced, however, as he went down the corridor. And it continued till he reached the Remove passage. And for quite a long time afterwards fellows who went up or down the passage heard the fat Owl's sounds of woe from Study No. 7.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Putting Wharton's Back Up!

"**T**HAT man Wharton here?"

Tubb of the Third Form put his head into the Rag and stared round. It was not yet time for prep, and a good many of the Remove and the Fourth were in the Rag. Among them were the Famous Five, who, with some other Remove fellows, were discussing the new beak, who had arrived to take the place of the "late lamented" Quelch, as Skinner called him.

The Remove fellows agreed that Mr. Smedley looked like a man who would stand no nonsense—for which they were rather inclined to respect him. As he was only half Quelch's age, and obviously could not have had anything like Quelch's experience, some of the fellows had contemplated a "rag" in the Form-room to begin with. But they had given up that idea after seeing Mr. Smedley. He did not look like a man to be ragged with impunity. Whether they were going to like him or not the Removites did not feel at all sure.

He had not made a good impression on them by "nailing" a Remove man on his way to the school. True, it was

any master's duty to "nail" a fellow out of bounds, but it was not a pleasant way to begin, and most of the fellows thought that he might have left such a disagreeable duty till he was, at least, installed at the school as a master.

Billy Bunter hated him with a deep, dark, and deadly hatred. Bunter declared that he was a spying rotter, a meddling ass, and an interfering beast. These condemnatory opinions were founded on the fact that Bunter had not yet recovered from the Head's whopping. But Vernon-Smith, also, had something to say in the new master's disfavour.

"I tell you he was disappointed when it turned out that it wasn't I that he

anywhere near the pub, you know; only at the fence on the Courtfield road, where they have a sign up. Might have been a teashop where we could go if we liked, for all he knew. But he jumped on me at once."

"That man Wharton here?" bawled Tubb of the Third from the doorway, in tones of impatience.

"That man Wharton" heard him, but he heeded not. A howl from a grubby fag of the Third Form was beneath the notice of the captain of the Remove.

"Look here!" roared Tubb indignantly. "If that man Wharton's here, his beak wants him in his study—see?"

"Oh!" Harry Wharton glanced

study that had been Mr. Quelch's and was now Mr. Smedley's. A rather hard voice bade him enter, and he went in.

Mr. Smedley was seated in Mr. Quelch's armchair, with a cigarette in his mouth. Wharton's glance went involuntarily to the cigarette. If Mr. Quelch ever smoked, he never did so in the presence of his boys. At Greyfriars, as at other schools, there was, in fact, a certain amount of solemn humbug on this subject. Masters were never seen to smoke, except by chance.

Even Prout, the master of the Fifth, who often rolled into his Form-room fairly reeking of his hefty Trichinopoly cigars, was seldom or never seen with one in his mouth.



Dr. Locke finished writing suddenly, and raised his head. He stared at Bunter, whose fat fist was displayed fairly under his nose. "Bless my soul!" ejaculated the Head. "What—what are you—doing, Bunter?"

nailed at the Three Fishers," the Bounder told the fellows in the Rag. "I could see it all over his face."

"Why should he care?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Blessed if I know—unless he likes to see a fellow in trouble. But I jolly well saw it, anyhow."

"I say, you fellows, he's a frightful beast!" groaned Billy Bunter. "I've still got a pain—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a bit odd, you men," remarked Peter Todd. "From what I hear this man Smedley is a stranger in these parts. Nobody's ever seen him here before, anyhow. How the dickens did he know the Three Fishers was out of bounds? How the thump did he hear of the place at all before he came here?"

"That's rather queer," agreed Wharton. "The place has a juicy reputation about these parts, but I don't suppose it's ever been heard of a dozen miles away."

"He knew all right, the beast!" groaned Bunter. "And we weren't

round at that. "Does Smedley want me, Tubb?"

"Yes, he does!" snorted Tubb. "Sent me to find you—bother him! You can tell him from me, Wharton, that Third Form men don't carry messages for other men's beaks—see? Tell him he's a cheeky ass, while you're about it!"

And Tubb of the Third, justly indignant, slammed the door of the Rag, and stalked away. Evidently Mr. Smedley, being new to Greyfriars, did not know how important Third Form "men" were—especially such a "man" as George Tubb.

"What the thump does he want you for, Harry?" asked Frank Nugent. "You haven't been getting into a row already?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Hardly! I suppose he wants to jaw to me because I'm head boy. It's one of the privileges of head boy to be jawed by his beak! I'd better cut off if he wants me."

The captain of the Remove left the Rag and made his way to Masters' Studies. He tapped at the door of the

Wharton's glance was involuntary, and it was instantly averted. But Mr. Smedley was quick on the uptake. As if reminded where he was, he threw the cigarette into the fire.

"Please sit down, my boy!" he said. He had already met Wharton, and was aware that he was head boy of the Form. "Now, Wharton, as my head boy, I should like to have a few words with you."

"Certainly, sir!" said Harry, in his politest manner.

It was, as he had said, a head boy's privilege to be "jawed" by his beak, and a head boy, like everybody else, had to take the rough with the smooth.

He felt Mr. Smedley's sharp eyes keenly on him. On his side, he regarded Mr. Smedley with some interest. Mr. Quelch was to be away till after the Easter holidays, and perhaps longer, recuperating after a severe attack of influenza.

Smedley might be weeks at Greyfriars, or possibly a whole term, so the kind of man he was was rather

interesting to the fellows who had to work with him. All Wharton knew of him was that he was a temporary master, supplied by the usual school agency—Messrs. Leggett & Teggors.

It was said that the Head had heard about him, though he had never met him before, and that Mr. Prout had been heard to say that he had known a man named Smedley at Oxford. That, however, could hardly have been this man Smedley, who had probably been at his prep school when Prout was at Oxford.

While Mr. Smedley talked, it was Wharton's business chiefly to listen and to answer questions put to him. The new master evidently wanted to know all about the Remove and its manners and customs.

For a quarter of an hour or so the talk was what Wharton expected it to be—on matters connected with the Form, and the Form work, and classes, and preparation, and so forth. But the captain of the Remove had a vague impression that there was something else in Mr. Smedley's mind all the time. And he knew that that impression was correct, when the new master said suddenly:

"There is a boy in the Remove named Vernon-Smith?"

"Yes, sir!" answered Harry.

"Owing to what happened to-day on my way here, I have heard a good deal about this boy Vernon-Smith," said Mr. Smedley.

"Yes, sir!" said Harry again, wondering blankly what was coming.

"I understand," said Mr. Smedley, "that he is a boy of somewhat dubious character."

Wharton looked at him.

He was head boy of the Remove, and, therefore, came into official contact with

his Form-master to that extent. But if Smedley supposed that he was going to say anything against any fellow in the Form, Smedley was making a mistake.

"It seems," said Mr. Smedley, "that about a week ago this boy Vernon-Smith was sentenced to be expelled from Greyfriars."

"That is well known, sir."

"For some reason the headmaster allowed him to continue here."

"He is still here, certainly, sir!"

"From what I have heard—from the headmaster, of course,"—said Mr. Smedley, rather hastily. "He is a boy who requires to be kept under some observation."

"I suppose the Head knows best, sir."

"As his Form-master, the matter concerns me very closely, Wharton! I do not desire to have in my Form a boy likely to bring disgrace upon the school, and discredit upon me as his Form-master."

"Indeed, sir!" said Harry, hardly knowing what to say.

"You are, of course, well acquainted with this boy?"

"Of course."

"As I have heard the very best account of you from your headmaster, Wharton, I conclude that a boy of this questionable character is not a friend of yours?"

Wharton coloured.

"We're friendly enough, sir," he answered.

Mr. Smedley gave him a sharp glance.

"You are my head boy, Wharton! That is a position of trust! I shall expect your help and loyal assistance."

"Certainly, sir!"

"I have reason to believe that the

headmaster doubts very seriously whether this boy Vernon-Smith has changed his disreputable course of conduct since his narrow escape from expulsion. From what I have heard of him I doubt it very much myself. In the event of any further lawless outbreak on his part, what may never reach the ears of the masters may very likely be common knowledge in the boy's own Form."

"That's not uncommon, sir!" said Wharton, with a faint smile.

Certainly it was a fact that if the Head had known as much about Smithy as the Remove fellows knew, his sentence of expulsion would have been very unlikely indeed to be rescinded.

"Quite so," said Mr. Smedley. "And, as head boy of my Form, Wharton, trusted by me, it will be your duty to acquaint me with any such matter."

Wharton stared at him.

He could hardly believe his ears.

Was this fellow, he asked himself in wonder, such a rank outsider, such a toad, as to fancy that a Remove fellow would act as a spy and informer against another Remove fellow?

Wharton's face crimsoned.

"You understand me, Wharton?" asked the new master.

"I'm afraid I don't, sir!" answered the captain of the Remove coolly. "I'm not a prefect! A Sixth Form prefect has to report fellows—that's his duty. Any other fellow who reported a fellow would be a sneak and a rotter, and would be cut by all his Form—and jolly well kicked, too!"

"Wharton!"

Mr. Smedley half rose.

Wharton rose, too. He faced the new master, his face red, his heart beating rather fast. But he was ready to repeat his words, if necessary, and still more plainly, if they were not plain enough already.

The new master's hard jaw squared and a glint came into his hard eyes. But he controlled his anger.

"This is not what I expected of my head boy, Wharton," he said at last.

"It's what you might have expected from any Greyfriars fellow, sir!" answered Harry Wharton. "It's no bizney of mine what Smithy does! Being head boy doesn't mean being a spy and a tell-tale!"

Mr. Smedley glanced round the study. Wharton knew what he was looking for—Mr. Quelch's cane. But if the new master had thought of caning the captain of the Remove, he gave up the idea the next moment.

"Very well, Wharton!" he said quietly. "You may leave my study."

Wharton left it.

The Remove fellows were going up to prep as he came along. He went up with them, his face still rather red, and breathing rather fast.

Herbert Vernon-Smith tapped him on the arm in the Remove passage.

"Like the new beak?" he asked.

"No!" answered Wharton briefly.

He went into Study No. 1 for prep. Frank Nugent gave him a curious look when the door was closed.

"You've had a jaw with Smedley, Wharton?"

"Yes."

"He seems to have rubbed you the wrong way."

"A little!"

"What do you think of him?"

"I think he's a toad and a worm and a rotter!" said the captain of the Remove. "I think it's sickening for such a blighter to barge into Greyfriars! By gum, I wish Quelch was back! Pah! He's left a nasty taste in my mouth."



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Wharton said no more; but that was enough to make his chum stare at him in astonishment. His face was still clouded as he sat at prep. The Remove fellows were wondering what their new beak was going to be like. Wharton knew—that he was the rankest of rank outsiders! It was not a pleasant discovery for the captain of the Remove.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Catspaw Required!

I SAY, you fellows!" Billy Bunter blinked into Study No. 4, in the Remove, after prep. That study belonged to the Bounder and his chum Tom Redwing. Bunter could hardly have considered himself "persona grata" in that study after his lawless use of the Bounder's name that afternoon.

Considering that suspicious eyes were generally on the scapegrace of the school, that trickery of Billy Bunter's might very easily have caused serious trouble for the Bounder. But the fat Owl had apparently forgotten that little circumstance. Since then, Bunter had been caned by the Head! The effects had worn off by this time, but a few painful twinges still lingered. Bunter's fat thoughts were occupied by that uncommonly severe licking, and his deep and deadly wrath towards the new master who had been the cause of it.

Redwing had finished prep, but Vernon-Smith was still at his books. That was rather new for the Bounder, who was often careless with prep.

But Smithy was on good behaviour now. Redwing, with great earnestness, had urged him to make a good start with the new master, and not fall into the old state of semi-hostility that had reigned between Smithy and Mr. Quelch. And, seldom as the Bounder acted on good advice, he was doing so now. His recent escape from the sack had not exactly scared him, but it had made him think hard and think deep.

His father, intensely exasperated with his endless escapades, had disowned and disinherited him—and only the fact that Dr. Locke had allowed him to stay on at the school had caused Mr. Vernon-Smith to relax that severe sentence. It was a sharp lesson, that was not lost even on the reckless Bounder.

For the present, at least, Herbert Vernon-Smith was going to "walk delicately" to avoid trouble. Hence his unusual attention to his work that evening. Mr. Smedley, if he put Smithy on construe the next morning, was going to have no cause of complaint.

Billy Bunter blinked in at the two juniors. Bunter had scuffled through prep, as usual, taking his chance with the new master, as he had been accustomed to taking it with Quelch. Smedley looked rather a hard customer; but a very hard customer indeed would have been required to make William George Bunter work!

"I say, you fellows——" repeated Bunter impatiently.

Vernon-Smith did not even look up. Tom Redwing waved the fat junior away. Bunter was not to be waved away, however. He rolled into the study, and shut the door after him.

"I say——" he snorted. "Shut up!" said Tom. "Smithy's working."

"What the thump is he working for?" grunted Bunter. "Smithy never works. Greasing up to the new beak, or what?"

Vernon-Smith's eyes glinted, and he laid down his pen. "Greasing" up to any master was hardly in the Bounder's

line. He prided himself on his reputation as a rebel, defiant of authority.

"You fat ass!" exclaimed Redwing, greatly annoyed. "Go and talk rot in some other study!" He saw at once the effect of Bunter's words on the Bounder. Smithy had "chucked" work at once!

"Oh, really, Redwing! I came here

RHYMES OF THE REMOVE.

No. 9.—Pulling Alonzo's Leg!



The Greyfriars Rhymester tells in masterly style, how a jape on the guileless Alonzo came unstuck!

"My Uncle Benjamin," says Todd,
"Would think it very wrong!"
In every part of school and quad
This is Alonzo's song,
We hear it all day long!

"My Uncle Benjamin," he says,
"Would look at you with pain!"
He'd be disgusted at your ways!
Again and yet again
We hear the old refrain!

We often think of Uncle Ben,
What sort of ass he is.
And nearly all the Greyfriars men
Would like to look at his
Extremely sainted phiz!

What sort of fathead must he be
If 'Lonzy's words are true?
According to old Peter, he
Has just turned eighty-two,
And should be in the Zoo!

Last week a bent old ruin came
By cab, and ambled in.
We heard the quaint old boy exclaim,
In piping tones and thin:
"I'm Uncle Benjamin!"

"Is 'Lonzy anywhere about,
My monkey-featured child?"
He asked me; but they both were out.
I thought he would be wild,
But no; he merely smiled.

The fellows gathered near and far
To see the wondrous sight,
While Uncle took out a cigar
And asked us for a light.
It gave the chaps a fright!

"I hope," said he, "in the Remove
You do not smoke or bet?
I must remark I don't approve
Of youngsters smoking yet—
Here, have a cigarette!"

"I never drink. I should be grieved
If I saw rum or stout!"
And from his coat we all perceived
A bottle sticking out,
Containing rum, no doubt!

Then Peter Todd came walking in,
And Uncle Ben looked sick!
We cried: "Here's Uncle Benjamin!"
Said Peter: "It's a trick!
Some spoofer! Grab him, quick!"

And it was Skinner all the while:
A bright idea he'd got.
He thought he'd take us in, and smile,
His usual silly rot!
We made him wish he'd not!

to speak to Smithy!" said the fat Owl.

"You shut up! I say, Smithy——"

"Just the fellow I wanted to see!" remarked the Bounder grimly. He rose from the table, and glanced round the study for a fives bat. "You had the neck to give Smedley my name this afternoon, Bunter, when you were copped——"

"I didn't know the beast was the new beak here, Smithy! Besides, it was all right for you—as you were in detention, you were quite safe."

"And suppose I'd cut detention?"

"Eh?"

"Suppose I'd been out of gates at the time without leave?"

"Oh crikey!" said Bunter. Evidently the fat junior had not thought of that possibility, though, really, any fellow who knew Smithy might have thought of it.

"No harm done, as it turns out," said Smithy. "But you've got to learn not to use other fellows' names to crawl out of a scrape. Bunter."

"Oh, really, Smithy——"

"Where's that fives bat, Reddy?"

"I—I say, don't be shirty, old chap!" urged Bunter, with a wary eye on the Bounder. "I say, I've come here to put you on to something! You don't like that new beast Smedley, do you?"

"Not a lot!"

"He's dining with the Head this evening," said Bunter.

"What does that matter to me, fat-head?"

"I mean, there's nobody in his study. The beast got me a fearful licking from the Head! I want to pay him out!" explained Bunter. "I've got Toddy's bottle of gum to put in his armchair! Fancy his face when he sits in it! He, he, he!"

"You blithering ass!" exclaimed Redwing. "Take it back to Toddy! Smedley isn't the man to play tricks like that on!"

"You shut up, Redwing! I'm talking to Smithy! Smithy isn't afraid to jape the new beast, are you, Smithy?"

Vernon-Smith smiled grimly. He understood why Bunter had come to Study No. 4 now. Bunter wanted vengeance on the new beak who had caused his licking. But he did not want to handle the matter personally—not desiring to risk another licking! Bunter was in search of a catspaw!

"My idea is this," said Bunter, blinking at the Bounder through his big spectacles. "You get into Smedley's study with the gum, Smithy——"

"Do I?" said the Bounder.

"Yes, old chap! I'll keep watch at the end of the passage, in case Smedley comes back! The post of danger for me, you know!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Safe as houses, old chap!" urged Bunter. "Smedley's dining with the Beak, over in the Head's house; he won't be back yet. You simply can't be caught! Besides, I shall be on the watch. If he shows up, I'll give you the tip."

"Think it's quite safe?"

"Absolutely!" said Bunter.

"Then why not put the gum in his study yourself?"

"Oh, really, Smithy——"

"You fat chump!" said Tom Redwing, laughing.

"You shut up, Redwing! I say, Smithy, don't be a funk! That new beak is a beast! He's put Wharton's back up already! He's got me a licking! Might have got you the sack! Look here——"

Vernon-Smith had spotted the fives bat, on the bookshelf, by this time. He took it down.

"Come on, Smithy!" urged Bunter. "I'll go with you, and—wait at the end of the passage. Come on!"

"Coming!" answered Smithy. And he came—with the fives bat in his hand. "I—I say, Smithy—yaroooh!" roared Bunter, as the end of the fives bat jammed on his well-filled waistcoat. "Beast! Keep off! Oh crikey!"

Bunter turned and grabbed at the door.

Whack!

The flat of the bat came down on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars, with a crack like a rifle-shot.

"Whooooop!" roared Bunter.

He tore the door open, and leaped into the passage.

Whack!

Another lick from the fives bat caught him as he leaped. Another fearful yell rang along the Remove passage as he disappeared.

The Bunder grinned, and tossed the fives bat back on the bookshelf. Billy Bunter was gone! If he was still in want of a catspaw, he was not likely to come again to Study No. 4 in search of one!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bunter's Catch!

"O L D ass!" murmured Billy Bunter.

Thus disrespectfully did the Owl of the Remove allude to no less a person than Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth.

Bunter was annoyed.

It was half an hour since his visit to Study No. 4. Since then, Billy Bunter had propounded his scheme to several Remove fellows in turn—and it had been received with a plentiful lack of enthusiasm.

Nobody in the Remove seemed disposed to distinguish himself by playing japes on the new beak his first evening in the school.

Nobody, in fact, except Bunter, cared whether the fat Owl had been whopped or not—indeed, many fellows told him he deserved it, and another to follow, and a few more!

Bunter, of course, cared! He cared very much! But it was borne in upon his fat mind that japes on the new beak were at a discount, so to speak, in the Remove. Catspaws were not to be had! If anybody was going to gum the armchair in Quelch's study for the behoof of Quelch's substitute, the gumming had to be done by Bunter himself!

The fat Owl, at long last, made up his mind to it. Really, there seemed to be little risk. Smedley was in the Head's house, where he had dined with Dr. Locke. He was as safely off the scene as could be wished. Bunter, of course, would have preferred some other fellow to handle the gum. No other fellow being available he made up his mind to handle it himself. For which reason Bunter was now blinking round the corner of Masters' Studies, through his big spectacles, to ascertain that the coast was clear.

Most of the beaks were in Common-room! But Prout was in his study, for Bunter sighted him looking out of his doorway.

Bunter popped back behind the corner, like a fat tortoise popping its head back into its shell.

"Old ass!" he grunted. "Fat old chump! Yah!"

He waited for Prout to disappear.

Prout's ways were known—and perhaps dreaded—by other beaks at Greyfriars. Bunter knew why he was "squinting" out of his doorway. It was in the hope of seeing some other master

come along, to inveigle him into his study for a chat. Prout's chats were long, and all about Prout. Other beaks dodged them when they could.

Bunter waited a few minutes, and then blinked round the corner again. Prout, luckily, had stepped back into his study.

His door was still open. But Prout was not to be seen. The fat Owl of the Remove tiptoed along the passage, reached the door that had been Mr. Quelch's, and went quickly into the study.

He shut the door after him, and breathed hard.

He was safe now.

Prout could look out of his doorway again—in search of prey, as it were—but he could see nothing of Bunter.

The light was not on in Quelch's old study, now the new master's. But the fire was burning in the grate, and it gave Bunter quite sufficient light for his purpose.

The armchair was beside the fire, and Bunter stepped towards it. From under his jacket he drew a large bottle of gum.

To empty that large bottle into the seat of the chair was quick work. Bunter grinned, and jammed the empty bottle into the wastepaper-basket. There was nearly a pint of gum in the seat of the leather chair—quite enough to surprise any Form-master who sat in it.

But Bunter was not finished yet. From his various pockets he drew other

Will readers please note that owing to the Easter Holidays, the next issue of the MAGNET will be on sale THURSDAY, MARCH 29th.

smaller bottles. He had been making quite a collection. There was a bottle of liquid glue from Squiff's study and a bottle of liquid cement from Bob Cherry's tool-chest. This latter was really terrible stuff, frightfully sticky and adhesive, which, from Billy Bunter's point of view, was all the better!

"He, he, he!" breathed Bunter.

Gum and glue and liquid cement were mixed in the seat of the chair. Spread out thin, the liquid did not show up on the dark, well-worn leather. It was a thousand to one that any man sitting down in that armchair would sit down in complete ignorance of its sticky state. The discovery would come later.

Bunter was finished now. Having jammed the empty bottles into the wastepaper-basket under the table, he turned to the door.

Then he halted, petrified.

Bunter knew those footsteps.

Only Prout had footsteps like that. It was either Prout or an escaped elephant.

Obviously, there could be no escaped elephant in the House. So it was Prout.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

There was no danger of Smedley coming back yet. Bunter was sure of that. But if any master caught him leaving the study, it would be just as bad. He was thankful that he had heard those footsteps before opening the door to escape.

With his fat heart thumping, he waited for the footsteps to pass the door. They came closer and closer.

They arrived at the door, and Bunter waited for them to die away in the other direction.

But they didn't.

They stopped.

As the study was empty, except for Bunter, Smedley being in Dr. Locke's house, it had not occurred to the fat Owl that Prout might be coming to that very study.

But he was!

Bunter gave a gasp of horror as the footsteps stopped and there was a tap at the door. The next second the door-handle turned, and the door opened before the terrified fat Owl had even time to think.

Prout's portly and ample form appeared in the doorway.

"My dear fellow!" said Prout genially.

Bunter could only blink.

Prout had found him there, fresh from his jape on his Form-master, and he addressed him as "My dear fellow"! It was really amazing!

The next moment, however, Bunter realised that Prout supposed that he was addressing Mr. Smedley. Prout gave a start, obviously surprised to find no light on and a fat junior revealed by the firelight.

"What—who—what—" ejaculated Prout.

He switched on the light.

He stared at Bunter.

"Upon my word!" said Prout crossly. "What is this? Who are you— Oh, Bunter! I thought that I heard Mr. Smedley come to this study." Billy Bunter's stealthy tiptoeing had not, perhaps, been so silent as Bunter supposed.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. "I—I—I came to—to—"

"What?"

"I—I came to—to—to speak to my Form-master, sir!" groaned Bunter. "I—I—I wanted to ask him about—about a—a—a book, sir!"

"I see!"

To Bunter's great relief, there was no sign of suspicion in Prout's face. Prout was thinking, not about Bunter, but about Mr. Smedley and his intended "jape" with that young man. After all, there was nothing very unusual in a junior coming to his Form-master's study, and Bunter could only hope that Prout would not mention to Smedley that he had seen him there.

"He—he's not here, sir!" added Bunter, rather superfluously; and he edged to the doorway.

Prout's ample form almost filled it.

Prout stepped into the study.

As soon as he moved, Bunter was able to get out. Prout, with his ponderous tread, rolled across to the fire.

Having dropped in to see Mr. Smedley, and finding that Smedley had not, after all, returned to his study yet, it was apparently Prout's intention to await him there.

That was natural enough on Prout's part. But it was horrifying to Billy Bunter as he saw the Fifth Form master prepare to plant his ample form in the armchair!

Bunter blinked at him.

He blinked at him in dismay and horror.

The leather seat of the armchair was almost swimming in gum and glue and liquid cement! It was intended for Smedley. But if Prout sat in it—

He sat!

Solid and heavy, Prout dropped into the capacious armchair, which, capacious as it was, was not too roomy for the portly Prout. It gave a creak, as if in protest, as it received Prout's weight.

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter.



Vernon-Smith grasped the easel. Perhaps by chance it slipped from his hands and crashed on the back of Bunter's bullet head. "Yaroooh!" wailed the fat junior. "Smeeth!" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier. "It's all right, sir!" said the Bounder. "Quite an accident!"

He whipped out of the study.

It was judicious not to be present when Prout discovered the gum! In a state of utter dismay, Billy Bunter rolled away to the Rag.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry greeted him, as he rolled into that apartment. "Where have you been, you fat duffer?"

Bob was one of the fellows who had declined to be a catpaw.

"Eh—nowhere!" said Bunter. "I mean, I haven't been to Quelch's study—I mean, Smedley's study! I mean, don't you fellows give a fellow away, you know! I say, it's awful!"

"Mean to say that you've gummed Smedley's chair, you howling ass?" exclaimed Tom Redwing. "There will be a row if you have!"

"The rowfulness will be terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Bunter, you ass—" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"I say, you fellows, it's awful!" groaned Bunter. "I say—"

"You blithering bandersnatch!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "If you've really played that idiotic trick, you've got time to wash it out before Smedley comes back from the Head! He's not back yet. Go and clean up the gum!"

"I—I can't!" gasped Bunter.

"Why not, fathead?"

"Prout came in while I was there!"

"Oh, my hat! All the more reason why you should clean up the gum before Smedley sits in it!" chuckled the Bounder.

"I—I—I can't!"

"Why can't you?" asked Nugent.

"Because—because Prout's sat in it!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"I think he's waiting for Smedley to come in. Anyhow, he's sat in it—"

"Great pip!"

"He's sitting in it now——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows——"

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

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! I say——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Rag rang with laughter. The thought of the portly and ponderous Prout sitting in the gum seemed to take the Removites by storm. They yelled and they roared.

Only Bunter did not join in the merriment. Bunter was not feeling merry. Bunter was thinking of the possible—and awful—consequences. From the bottom of his fat heart, he wished that he had not thought of japing the new beak. It was rather too late to wish that now, and Bunter could only wonder, in dismal dismay, what was going to happen.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Sticking to It!

"MY dear fellow——"

Mr. Prout started at once as the rather tall figure of the new Remove-master appeared in the doorway of the study.

Prout had been there about a quarter of an hour, toasting his toes at Mr. Smedley's fire and wondering how long the young man was going to be. If Smedley kept him waiting much longer Prout was going to roll along to the Common-room and inflict his conversation on the other beaks there.

Still, it was very comfortable in Mr. Quelch's deep, old armchair, with his toes on Mr. Quelch's fender, and Prout

waited cheerfully enough, quite unconscious, of course, that a mixture of gum and glue and cement was slowly but surely affixing him to his seat. The ample folds of Mr. Prout's gown absorbed the sticky fluid, and that gown was getting stuck to the leather, tighter and tighter, and harder and harder. Unconscious of it, Prout glanced round at the sound of Mr. Smedley's footsteps, and bestowed a genial nod and smile on the young man as he appeared in the doorway.

Prout was not inclined to rise from that comfortable chair, though, had he known what he was sitting on, no doubt he would have wanted to rise in a hurry. But politeness urged him to his feet. He could hardly remain sitting in a man's study when the man came in. But that leather armchair, in which Mr. Quelch's angular figure found ample space, was rather tightly packed round Prout's portly form. Prout was portly, Prout was ponderous, Prout was plump. Prout's way of rising from an armchair was to place his hands on the arms thereof and heave! He had plenty of weight to heave! It was not a rapid process with Prout.

Mr. Smedley stepped into his study. His first glance at Prout expressed surprise; he had not expected to find anyone there. Then he smiled genially.

Prout's hands were on the arms of the chair, and he was giving his preparatory heave, to rise to his feet, when Mr. Smedley, with a polite gesture waved him back.

"Please don't get up," said the new master. "Mr. Prout, I believe? It is kind of you to give me a look in, like this!"

Prout, instead of heaving up, sank.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,363.

back again. He was quite pleased not to have to get up!

"Not at all, my dear fellow," said the Fifth Form master. "I had hardly a word with you when the chief presented you to us in the Common-room. I have been looking for an opportunity for a little chat."

"A pleasure, sir!" said Mr. Smedley. "I regret that I was not here when you came, sir. I trust you have not waited long."

"A few minutes only—hardly more than a few minutes. It is a real pleasure to me to welcome you to Greyfriars, Mr. Smedley," said Prout.

"You are very kind, sir!" Mr. Smedley sat down, facing Prout. Whether he looked forward or not to enjoying a chat with that ponderous gentleman, at all events he desired to be civil to Dr. Locke's staff, and to make an agreeable impression upon them.

"You see, my dear sir," said Prout, beaming, "I am already acquainted with you. In a sense—"

The new master started violently.

"What?" he ejaculated.

"I mean to say, your name is familiar to me, sir."

Prout was not an observant man. But he could not help observing the startling effect of these words on the new master.

The civil expression and agreeable smile faded from Mr. Smedley's face, as if wiped off with a duster.

He half-rose, staring at Mr. Prout, his hard lips coming together in a sharp line, his eyes glinting.

"What do you mean?" he said. "I fail to understand you, sir!"

Prout's eyes opened wide.

"My dear fellow," he ejaculated, in surprise, "all I mean is that I have seen you before—"

"What?"

Mr. Smedley was on his feet now, staring down at Prout in the armchair. Prout blinked up at him blankly.

"You have seen me before?" exclaimed Mr. Smedley, and his voice was loud, sharp, and harsh.

"Certainly! You see—"

"Where, and when?" rapped Mr. Smedley. "If you are speaking seriously, sir, tell me where and when, and at once!"

Mr. Prout fairly goggled at him. The change in Mr. Smedley's face was surprising and startling. It was hard, sharp, angry, suspicious. Indeed, Prout might have thought that he read alarm there, could he have imagined that the new master had any cause for alarm. The hard eyes, under the knitted brows, glinted at the astonished Fifth Form master.

"My dear sir," gasped Prout. "There is nothing to get excited about. Really, my dear sir— Really—I really fail—"

"Speak plainly, sir!" snapped Mr. Smedley. "I am a stranger here; I have no acquaintances in the school. I had never heard your name before Dr. Locke introduced us, a few hours ago. Yet you say—"

"No doubt I have surprised you, sir," said Mr. Prout, a little offended by the young man's manner, as well as greatly surprised. "But, really, sir—"

"Will you explain your statement, sir?" rapped Mr. Smedley.

"Certainly! But I must remark that that is hardly the tone I expected you to take, sir," said the offended Prout. "I repeat that I am acquainted with your name—"

"My name is Eustace Smedley!"

"Quite so, sir!" said Mr. Prout.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,363.

"That is why I am acquainted with it, naturally."

Mr. Smedley stared at him.

"Probably you do not remember that I have seen you before," went on Mr. Prout.

"Certainly I do not."

"Yet it is a fact, sir."

Mr. Smedley sat down again. His momentary excitement had passed. But his hard, keen eyes seemed to bore into Prout.

"I have asked you, when and where," he said.

"When you were quite a small boy," said Prout. "Quite possibly you do not recall it. Yet I should have expected my name to be somewhat familiar to you. Surely your uncle must have mentioned it in your hearing!"

CANADIAN READER
CRACKS A JOKE
and
WINS A SPECIAL
PRIZE!



Pat: "And what's amiss wid ye, McGinty?"

McGinty: "I've a terrible corn on the sole of my foot."

Pat: "That's a foine place to have it, to be sure. Nobody can step on it, but you!"

Send in your joke and win a prize like: John Allen, of 274, Sanford Avenue, St. Lambert, P. Quebec, Canada, who submitted the above winning effort.

"My—my uncle?"

"Your uncle, Charles Smedley, who was at Oxford with me," said Prout.

"Oh!"

"It is some years since I have seen him," said Prout. "But I really hope that he has not forgotten so old a friend."

"I—I understand. And—and you really saw me when I was a small boy?" asked Mr. Smedley, with a very peculiar look in his eyes.

"That is so," said Mr. Prout. "When I heard that a Mr. Smedley was coming here, in the place of poor Quelch, I wondered whether it might be my old friend, of college days. I learned, however, that it was his nephew, Eustace."

"I—I see!"

"For that reason, sir," said Mr. Prout, with dignity, "I desired to take

an opportunity of welcoming you to Greyfriars School, sir!"

"That was exceedingly kind of you, sir!" Mr. Smedley was his polite self again now. "I am delighted to meet you, Mr. Prout! And, now that you remind me of it, I certainly recall hearing my uncle mention your name many times." He smiled genially. "No doubt I have changed very much since you saw me as a small boy, sir."

"Naturally," said Prout. "You were very like your uncle, as a small boy, but I see no likeness now. As a small boy, too, you had blue eyes."

Mr. Smedley's eyes were a deep brown—almost black.

"It is not uncommon for children to have blue eyes, that afterwards change to brown," he remarked.

"Not at all," agreed Mr. Prout. Some of Prout's plump geniality was gone. Smedley had surprised him, and rather offended him. Still, Prout tried to be as genial as before. "Your uncle, sir, was my friend, many years ago, and I shall be happy to place myself at your service in any possible way. Advice and assistance from an older colleague may be useful to you."

"I shall be very glad, sir!"

Prout smiled again. It was Prout's way to barge in with advice and assistance to colleagues who not only did not need it, but disliked it very much indeed. Apparently, Smedley was going to be an easier victim than the other beaks at Greyfriars.

"And I trust, sir, that your uncle may give you a look-in while you are here, and that I may have the pleasure of seeing him again," said Prout.

"Oh! Very possibly! Quite!"

"It is some years—in fact, many years—since I have seen him," said Prout. "Is he still in Scotland?"

"In—in Scotland? Exactly!"

"And the book?" asked Prout.

"The—the book?"

"How is it progressing?"

Mr. Smedley blinked at Prout.

"Has he published it yet?" asked Prout. "I presume not, or certainly he would have sent me a copy."

"No doubt! I mean, you are right, sir—he has not yet—not yet completed it, I believe," said Mr. Smedley. He rose from his chair. "Another time, Mr. Prout, I shall be delighted to have a—a chat, but if you will excuse me at the present moment—I am somewhat fatigued—a long journey—"

"Oh! Quite so!" said Mr. Prout, offended again.

Having intended to enjoy a long, long chat with Mr. Smedley, Prout was not pleased at being cut short in this abrupt manner. And, without being unduly suspicious, Prout could not help suspecting that Eustace Smedley had invented that fatigue to get out of the chat.

"Another time, sir—"

"Oh, certainly!" said Prout stiffly.

He placed his plump hands on the arms of the chair to rise. He gave the usual heave to lift his ponderous weight.

But this time it did not have the usual result.

Mr. Prout half-rose, and then an unexpected jerk behind pulled him back into the chair again. He sat down suddenly and heavily.

"Upon my word!" ejaculated Prout.

He heaved up again. Again came that sharp jerk! Utterly astonished at finding himself unable to get out of the chair, Prout stared round, absurdly like a kitten trying to look at its tail.

"What—what—" he ejaculated.

"Is anything the matter, sir?" asked Mr. Smedley, who was watching Prout's

antics with mingled surprise and impatience.

"Something is certainly the matter!" gasped Prout. "My—my gown—it appears to be adhering to the seat of the chair—"

"Really, sir—"

"Really, Mr. Smedley, it is very odd that there should be something of a sticky, adhesive nature in the seat of this chair!"

Mr. Prout planted his feet firmly on the floor and made an effort. But by that time the gum, the glue, and the liquid cement had set hard and fast. The tail of his gown was as firmly fixed to the seat of the chair as if it had been riveted there. Prout's effort dragged the chair along on its castors, and in amazement he staggered two or three paces, dragging the armchair after him.

"Bless my soul!" gasped Prout. "What—what—what—"

"What on earth—" exclaimed Mr. Smedley.

Prout twisted round, staring at the stuck tail of his gown, again absurdly suggestive of a kitten chasing its tail!

His face was crimson.

Little did the master of the Fifth realise that two juniors had gone out into the school grounds and were peering in through the study window to watch the effect of the gum.

"Mr. Smedley! What does this mean?" hooted Mr. Prout. "I repeat, sir, what does this mean? My gown is stuck—"

"Nonsense, sir! How can it be stuck?" snapped the new master.

"It is stuck to the chair, sir!" roared Prout. "I am a prisoner in this armchair! I desire to know, sir, what this means? What foolish trick is this?"

"Trick, sir?"

"Gum, sir, or glue, sir, or some such adhesive substance, sir, has been placed in this chair, sir!" bawled Prout. "I am sticking to it, sir—I cannot get out of this chair, sir! Upon my word!"

Mr. Prout made another wild effort. The armchair was lifted on two of its legs. As it crashed down again, there was a tearing, rending sound.

Something had to go! The gum, glue, and cement held fast, and it was Mr. Prout's gown that went!

"My—my gown—" gasped Prout.

"This—this is extraordinary!" exclaimed Mr. Smedley. "I quite fail to understand—"

"It is more than extraordinary, sir!" bawled Mr. Prout. "It is outrageous, sir—it is an unprecedented outrage, sir! Such gross carelessness, sir—such amazing carelessness and slovenliness, sir—I have never heard of such a thing, sir! Gum, sir, gum spilt in the seat of a chair, sir, in which anyone might have sat—gum, sir—gum—"

Mr. Prout gave another wrench. There was another rending sound, and the gown parted in twain, and the Fifth Form master was free! Gasping with his exertions, Prout stared at the section of his gown that remained adhering to the seat of the armchair. Then he strode to the door.

Without another word or look at the new master, he strode out. He almost slammed the door after him. Mr. Smedley was left staring blankly into the armchair, and at the tail of Prout's gown! Prout, in a tailless gown, rather like a Manx cat, rolled away to his study. He snorted and fumed as he went, sorry that he had taken the trouble to look in on a man who was so careless as to spill gum in the seat of an armchair.

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THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Bounder's Choice!

"O NE for you, Smithy!" said Bob Cherry.

It was break the following morning.

That morning the Remove had had their first experience of their new Form-master.

Billy Bunter had eyed him very uneasily through his big spectacles.

So far, Bunter, much to his surprise and relief, had heard nothing about that remarkable jape in the new master's study.

Mr. Smedley certainly did not look like a man to be "japed" with impunity. As Prout had seen Bunter in the study, in Smedley's absence, the fat Owl had expected the chopper to come down. But it had not come down. He was beginning to hope that he was going to hear no more about it.

In break, some of the Remove gathered to look for letters. Billy Bunter turned up, in the hope that his celebrated postal order had arrived at last! Hope springs eternal in the human breast! But once more the Owl of the Remove was doomed to disappointment! There was no letter for Bunter—it seemed that his titled relations had forgotten him again!

There was a letter for Herbert Vernon-Smith, and Bob Cherry took it down from the rack, and tossed it to the Bounder.

"Thanks!"

Vernon-Smith caught the letter, and walked out into the quad with it, unopened, in his hand.

It was addressed to him in his father's handwriting, and it was not uncommon for Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith to enclose a handsome tip when he wrote to his son. But Smithy did not seem to be in a hurry to open the letter. There was a frown on his face as he went into the quad with his chum Redwing. The latter glanced once or twice at the letter in his hand, and at the Bounder.

"That's from your pater, isn't it, Smithy?" he asked.

"Yes!" grunted Smithy.

"Well, aren't you going to read it, old fellow?"

The Bounder grunted again.

"Only another dashed sermon," he growled. "I used to be glad to get letters from the pater. But now—goodness knows what may be in it!"

"It's all right, old chap, since it blew over about your getting bunked. Your father must have been glad about that—in fact, I know he was."

"I'm not so jolly sure!" grunted Smithy. "I hardly know him these days—and I'm blessed if I know what to expect in his letter!"

"Read it and see," suggested Redwing.

The Bounder hesitated. But he nodded and slit the envelope at last. Redwing saw the relief dawn in his face as he read.

"All right?" he asked, with a smile.

"Read it!" said the Bounder.

He passed the letter to his chum. It ran.

"Dear Herbert,—I am satisfied, since my last interview with you, that it really is your intention to pull yourself together, and make good at your school. At the same time, a word of warning will not be out of place. My resolution is irrevocably fixed, and if, after all the warnings you have had, you should be expelled from Greyfriars, I shall carry out my intention of disinheriting you, and adopting your cousin, Lucius Teggars, in your place. Lucius has taken his disappointment extremely well, enhancing my good opinion of him.

"He has written to say that he is delighted to learn that we are now reconciled, and hopes very earnestly that the warning you have had will keep you in the straight path. I should like you to meet this excellent young man; but at present, I understand, he is away from his place of business. There may be an opportunity later.

"During your Form-master's absence, you will have the advantage of making a fresh start, with a new master unprejudiced against you; and I shall be very eager to hear his first report.

"Remember, my boy, how much is at stake, and let there be no more reckless folly. You have every chance now to make good, and if you throw it away, it will be a severe blow to me; but the consequences will be on your own head.

"Your affectionate father,
"S. VERNON-SMITH."

It was an unusually long letter for the millionaire to write. It was more affectionate in tone than Smithy had expected. But Mr. Vernon-Smith's grim resolution was unmistakable. Smithy had his chance; and if he failed he was done for, not only at school, but at home.

"Well, that's all right, Smithy," said Tom, handing the letter back to the Bounder. "Thank goodness it's all ended so well! You've nothing more to fear."

(Continued on next page.)

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"So long as I toe the line!" said the Bounder sarcastically.

"Well, you can do that, old fellow."

"I've got to, anyhow! Quelch is away, anyhow—and he always had a down on me! I may get on better with the new man—I'm going to try. I wonder what sort of a blighter that man Teggers is."

"Well, as he's your cousin, you ought to know something about it—"

"I've never seen him—I've half a dozen cousins I've never seen! All I know of him is that he's junior partner in the firm of Leggett & Teggers—the school agency people. The pater seems to think a lot of him—"

"The man seems decent, from what your father says in this letter."

"Um! I fancy he couldn't have been pleased after having his hopes raised when he heard that I was getting another run!"

"He seems to have taken it well."

"Um! I wonder what he's like!" said the Bounder thoughtfully. "I suppose Smedley has seen him."

"Smedley?" repeated Tom.

"Our new beak! He was sent here from Leggett & Teggers. He must have seen Teggers when he was engaged to take Quelch's place here."

"I suppose he must!" agreed Tom. "Queer that he should have seen your cousin when you haven't yourself."

"I've hardly heard of him till a week ago—and the pater never gave him a thought till he got this bee in his bonnet about giving me the boot if I was sacked here," said the Bounder bitterly. "By gad! The man must be wild with the pater—dangling such a prospect before his nose like a carrot before a donkey and then jerking it away again! If I get bunked he's to take the family name and inherit in my place—blow him! I fancy he must be keen on news that I've come a mucker."

"Oh, rot!" said Tom. "Not if he's a decent man, and your father seems to think so."

"He knows precious little of him, except his reputation as a good business man. I fancy the man would be glad enough to butt in and spoil my chances here if he could."

Tom Redwing laughed.

"Well, he couldn't if he wanted to, old man! Leggett & Teggers have nothing to do with Greyfriars, except to send along a temporary beak when one is wanted! You'll never see Teggers here."

"Hardly!" agreed the Bounder. "All the same, I'm jolly sure he'd dish me if he could!" He crumpled the letter and thrust it into his pocket. "It's all right with the pater—so long as I don't get his back up again! I've got to be careful."

Vernon-Smith gave a discontented grunt. Being careful and giving up his usual reckless and mutinous ways was not an attractive prospect to him. But he had to make up his obstinate mind to it; there was too much at stake now for Smithy to venture to play the fool.

The bell rang for third school; and the Remove went in. Mr. Smedley was at the door of the Remove-room ready for them. Billy Bunter gave him an uneasy blink, but the new master took no special notice of him. Once more Bunter was relieved.

Third lesson in the Remove was Latin prose, and papers were distributed to the juniors. Wharton, as head boy, took the papers from Mr. Smedley and passed them along the Form. He had rather wondered whether, after the talk in the study the previous day, Mr.

Smedley would think of looking for another head boy, more according to his own ideas. But the new master seemed to have forgotten that talk. Having seen the Form started at work on their Latin papers, Mr. Smedley glanced at his wrist-watch.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!"

"I have to see the Head shortly. I shall leave you in charge of the class for a time."

"Very well, sir!"

"You will see that order is kept here and that no one leaves the Form-room!" said Mr. Smedley. "I shall hold you responsible."

"Very well, sir!" repeated Wharton.

A few minutes later the new master went out, and the Remove were left to themselves. Skinner gave a low chuckle as the door closed after him.

"Gammon!" he remarked.

"Eh, what do you mean?" asked Wharton.

"Our new beak's a slacker!" said Skinner. "He's jolly well taking it easy."

"Ho said he's going to see the Head!" said Redwing.

"Gammon!" repeated Skinner, with a grin. "The Head's taking the Sixth."

"Lascelles may be taking the Sixth in maths," said Nugent.

"Lascelles is taking the Fifth in third school at maths," answered Skinner, "and I happen to know that the Head is taking the Sixth in Greek, because I heard Loder grouching about it to Walker, see?"

"I say, you fellows—"

"He's not going to see the Head!" grinned Skinner. "He's gone off to his study for a quiet smoke! Well, if he takes it easy we can take it easy, too."

"Yes, rather!" said Billy Bunter promptly.

"If you're right, Skinner, the man's a bit of a worm," remarked Bob Cherry. "I say, what about a game of footer to pass the time while he's slacking? We can use a dick for a footer."

"Fathead!" said Harry Wharton. "I'm left to keep order here! And Smedley meant that, whether he was gammoning about seeing the Head or not. Keep your places, you duffers!"

The Removites kept their places. But there was little work done in the Form-room during the absence of the new master. While the cat was away, the mice would play, and the Lower Fourth found a cheery buzz of conversation much more entertaining than Latin prose papers.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Putting Paid to Prout!

MR. SMEDLEY, the new master of the Remove, stepped quietly into Study No. 4 in the Remove passage.

Every study in that passage, of course, was deserted during class like all the other studies in the school.

There was nobody in the Remove passage when the new master arrived there; no eye to see him enter Vernon-Smith's study.

He closed the door quietly after him and stood looking round the room.

His face, always a little hard in outline, had set harder. There was a cold, ruthless glint in his hard eyes.

The observant and suspicious Skinner, being aware that the new beak could not possibly have gone to see the Head, as Dr. Locke was deep in Greek with the Sixth Form, had concluded that he was "slacking." But the new master was not slacking!

He was, in fact, giving his attention to the real task that had brought him to Greyfriars School; which was not teaching the Remove! That was only camouflage.

The Bounder had told Redwing that his cousin Lucius Teggers would, if he could, "dish" him at Greyfriars. That view was founded on Smithy's cynical distrust of human nature.

But certainly it had not occurred to the Bounder, keen and suspicious as he was, that Lucius Teggers was actually taking measures to dish him.

It was the absence of Mr. Quelch that had given the plotter his opportunity.

It had, in fact, been easy.

Mr. Teggers, acting for Leggett & Teggers, had recommended Mr. Smedley as a temporary master. Mr. Smedley had been engaged on his recommendation. And Mr. Teggers had coolly dispatched the young man to a post in Canada and borrowed his name and arrived at Greyfriars in his place!

Personally, both were totally unknown there! It was impossible for the trickery to be discovered or suspected, unless he met someone who knew Smedley by sight.

No one at Greyfriars had ever seen the young tutor; though Teggers had now learned, to his deep annoyance, that Mr. Prout had known the young man's uncle, and seen Smedley himself as a small boy.

The new master had immediately resolved to keep Prout at a safe distance, even at the cost of a quarrel with that ponderous gentleman, if necessary. He did not want chats about Prout's old friend Smedley at Oxford, of whom he knew absolutely nothing—though the genuine Smedley, of course, must have known all about him.

The plotter hoped, and expected, that his stay at the school need not last very long. Knowing what he did of Vernon-Smith, he had no doubt that the young rascal could very easily be caught out.

From what he had heard of him, the boy was a thorough young rascal, who had escaped expulsion by the narrowest of margins, and deserved it over and over again.

Lucius Teggers, in the name of Eustace Smedley, was there to see that the young rascal got what he deserved!

Mr. Smedley—to give him the name he had borrowed—stood in the middle of the room, scanning it on all sides.

The Bounder's study was well-furnished—expensively so. The new master noted that, with a bitter eye.

His own schooldays had been hard and penurious; only by working for a scholarship had he been able to reach the University at all—and on leaving Oxford he had been glad to get an assistant mastership in a small school before he became a partner in Leggett & Teggers.

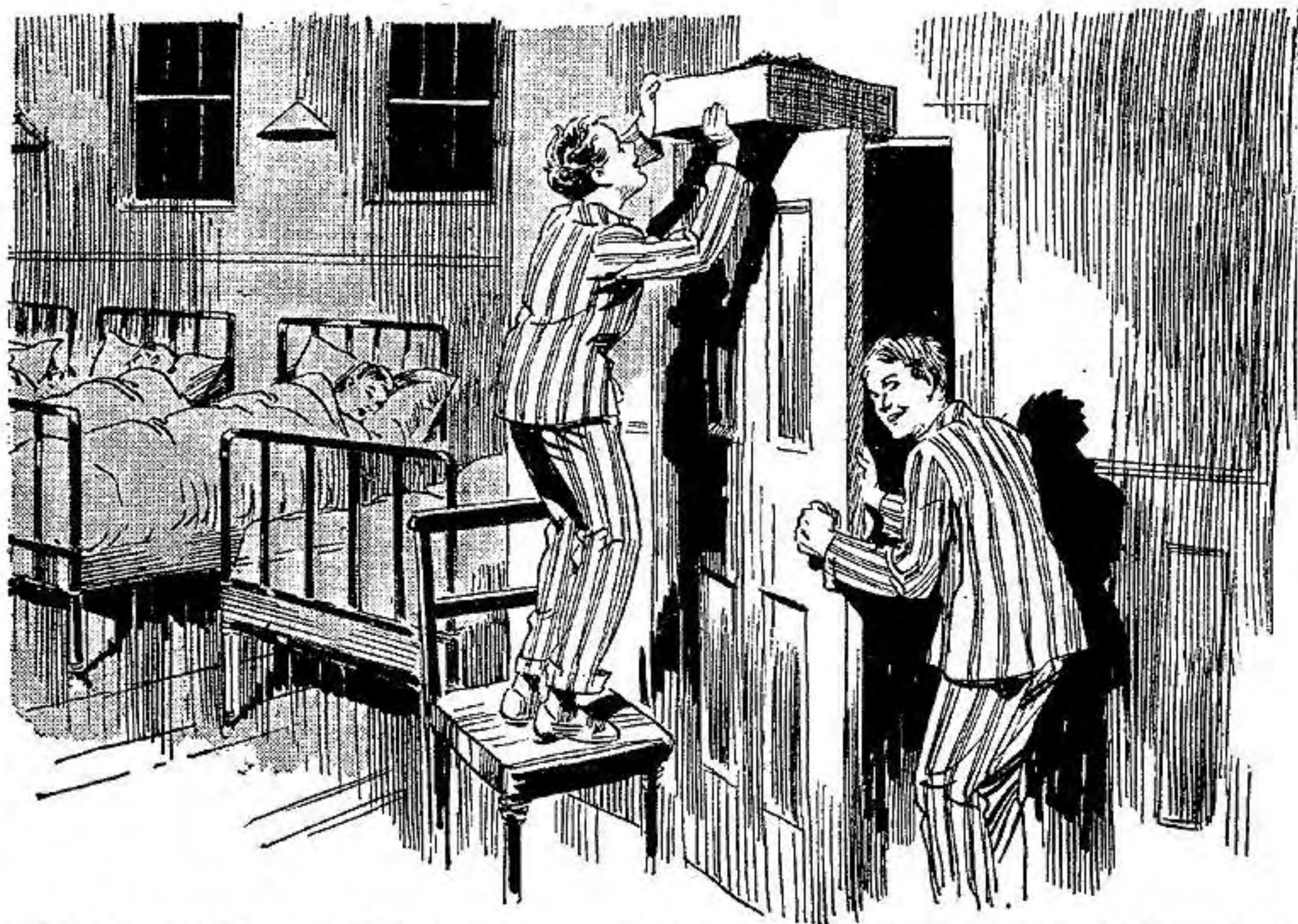
That, however, he had reason to be glad of now, as it enabled him to play his part at Greyfriars as a Form-master.

Having surveyed the study for a few minutes, he proceeded to action.

The study was shared by two fellows—Vernon-Smith and Redwing. But it was easy to pick out the possessions of the millionaire's son from those of the sailorman's son. There was no doubt that the handsome and expensive oak desk belonged to Vernon-Smith.

That desk was locked; but the plotter had come to Greyfriars prepared for little difficulties. A bunch of keys appeared in his hand, and he tried them, one after another, on the desk.

The desk opened at last, and the man with a borrowed name proceeded to search through it.



"Careful, old man!" murmured Wharton, as he opened the door a few inches. Standing on a chair, Bob Cherry placed the box of soot on the top of the door, resting on the lintel over the doorway. Anyone who entered the dormitory that night, was booked for a sudden surprise. "That's that!" said Bob.

He had little doubt, or, rather, no doubt, that he would find in that locked desk ample evidence that the scapegrace of the school had not changed since he had been allowed to stay on. He did not believe that a leopard could change his spots, or an Ethiopian his skin.

Once he was sure, once he had discovered evidence, all was easy! Smokes, racing-papers, playing-cards, correspondence from disreputable characters outside the school—he had little doubt of finding some, or all, of these! He did not intend, of course, to reveal the fact that he had made a surreptitious search of the schoolboy's study. But once he was sure, it would be an easy matter to cause an official search to be made by the headmaster. He had to be sure first.

Little did the Bounder, sitting in the Remove Form Room, dream of what was happening in his study! Certainly had he been able to guess who "Mr. Smedley" really was, the Bounder would have been more careful of what he left in that locked desk!

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

The man at the desk started suddenly and turned his head and listened! It was a tramp of heavy footsteps in the Remove passage.

He gritted his teeth.

With boys and masters occupied in the Form-rooms for an hour to come, he had taken it for granted that he would be perfectly safe in paying that secret visit to Vernon-Smith's study. But he already knew that heavy, elephantine tread! It was the portly tread of Prout, the master of the Fifth!

It came steadily up the passage from the stairs.

What the Fifth Form master could

possibly be doing in the Remove passage was a mystery to the new Remove master. He knew, too, that the Fifth were in their Form-room, and naturally supposed that Prout was with his Form.

Evidently, however, Prout wasn't!

Swiftly the new master closed and relocked Vernon-Smith's desk. Prout was coming up the passage. It was surely unlikely that he would open a study door. But the plotter dared not take the risk of being seen standing at an open desk in a boy's study! That sort of thing was not "done" at Greyfriars. Neither did he desire anyone in the school to suspect that he had any special interest in Herbert Vernon-Smith's study.

He stepped silently and swiftly to the door, and stood listening. His search of the Bounder's desk had been stopped, almost before it had begun.

The heavy tread came closer and closer—and passed! Prout went ponderously on past Study No. 4.

But a minute or two later the heavy tread was heard returning. Prout was coming back.

He could not possibly be coming to Vernon-Smith's study. But the hidden man's heart beat very unpleasantly as he listened.

"Mr. Smedley!"

Prout was calling

Had Prout seen the expression on the face of the man he called, Prout would have jumped!

"Mr. Smedley!" came the portly, fruity voice again. "Are you here, sir?"

The man in the study ground his teeth. Prout knew that he was up in the Remove passage evidently.

Receiving no answer to his call, the Fifth Form master went back towards

the landing at the end of the passage with elephantine tread.

"Mr. Smedley" silently opened the study door and peered out. He had a view of Prout's portly back as he went.

Prout, of course, had no eyes in the back of his head. So he did not see Mr. Smedley step swiftly from the study and draw the door shut after him.

While Prout, portly and ponderous, marched on towards the landing at one end of the Remove passage, Mr. Smedley, light-footed and swift, stepped silently to the box-room stair at the other end.

He disappeared silently up that stair, before the Fifth Form master reached the landing, stopped, and turned.

"Mr. Smedley!" Prout was calling again.

Out of sight on the box-room stair, the new master waited with beating heart. If Prout went, he could return to Vernon-Smith's study and resume his secret search there. He waited for Prout to go.

But Prout did not go!

Back he came along the Remove passage with his heavy tread that made the stout oak planks of the floor creak.

The man on the box-room stair gritted his teeth.

Prout was not going! Evidently he knew that Smedley was somewhere about, and was looking for him! It did not matter if he found him, so long as it was not in a study—especially Vernon-Smith's study. Mr. Smedley drew a deep breath and walked down the box-room stair, as if he had just come from the box-room above.

"Oh, here you are, Mr. Smedley!" exclaimed Prout, sighting him as he

(Continued on page 16.)

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(Continued from page 13.)

emerged into the Remove passage from the staircase.

There was no sign in the new master's face of his bitter irritation. He nodded politely to Prout.

"Yes," he said. "Here I am! I thought I heard someone call while I was in the box-room—"

"A little exploring, what?" smiled Prout.

"Precisely!" Mr. Smedley walked down the passage, Prout turning and rolling at his side. "I must now, however, return to my Form-room."

"I will walk with you," said Prout amiably. "My own Form is with Mr. Lascelles at present, and I am at liberty. Seeing you in the passages from a distance a short while ago, I supposed you were at liberty also."

"For a few minutes only, sir."

The new master understood now. Some other beak was taking the Fifth, and Prout was at liberty—no doubt looking for some victim upon whom to inflict one of his interminable chats! Evidently he had seen Mr. Smedley come upstairs, and had followed him up for that chat! Mr. Smedley had not the slightest intention of gratifying him. He was only anxious to get rid of Prout.

"I am glad of this opportunity of speaking to you again, my dear fellow," said Prout. "I fear that I was somewhat upset in your study last evening. I fear that I expressed myself with—ahem—some vigour!"

"You did, sir!" said Mr. Smedley.

"I regret it!" said Prout. "I was naturally disconcerted—it was a most disagreeable experience, sir! I was annoyed! I admit it! I fancied, sir, that that adhesive substance had been carelessly spilt in the chair—"

"You said so, sir!"

"But on reflection, sir," said Prout, "on reflection, I realised that that was an error, sir! I have no doubt, on reflection, that that adhesive substance had been intentionally placed in your armchair, sir, by a foolish practical joker—and it was intended for you to sit in!"

"Indeed!"

"I feel assured of it, sir, and I apologise for any undue heat in my remarks at the time! I think I can, in fact, name the boy who played the trick—whom I found in your study when I went there—a boy named Bunter—"

"You found Bunter in my study?"

"Exactly, sir; and I advise you to question him. I have little doubt that you will discover that he was the culprit."

"Probably!" said Mr. Smedley.

By this time the two masters had reached the Form-room passage. Mr. Smedley was making for the Remove-room.

"Then you are not at liberty now, sir?" asked Prout. "Seeing you about, I concluded that your Form was with another master. I should be glad, sir,

to resume the agreeable conversation that was interrupted last evening—to hear all you can tell me about my old friend Charles Smedley—"

"I am not at liberty, sir," interrupted the new master. "I have left my Form in charge of my head boy, and therefore—"

"My dear sir!" said Prout. This was a chance for Prout to barge in with sage advice. He never neglected such a chance. "Let me advise you—"

"Really, Mr. Prout—"

"I have already said, sir, that as an older and more experienced colleague, my advice and assistance are wholly at your disposal," said Mr. Prout, benevolently. "You are new here, Mr. Smedley—you are a young man—quite! Quite! My advice—"

"Really, sir—"

"My advice to you, Mr. Smedley, is not to leave your Form, during a school, to itself!" said Mr. Prout. "It is injudicious! The headmaster would be far from pleased! Especially with regard to the Remove—a somewhat unruly Form! My advice—"

The new master stopped, and looked the Fifth Form beak full in the face.

"Mr. Prout! When I require your advice, I will ask you for it!" he said, in a very distinct voice.

Mr. Prout fairly jumped.

"What?" he ejaculated. "What?" "I have spoken plainly, I think, sir!" said the new Remove master. "I will ask for your advice when I feel myself in need of it. Until then, sir, kindly do not take the trouble of bestowing it upon me."

Prout merely gaped!

Never had he been so utterly taken aback.

Many members of the Greyfriars staff had felt inclined at times to tell Prout to mind his own business! But Mr. Smedley was the first member who had ever done so! And he had done it unmistakably!

Prout was still gaping, like a fish out of water, when Mr. Smedley opened the door of the Remove-room, went in, and shut it after him.

Prout, rooted to the floor, stood gaping at the shut door.

"Upon my word!" gasped Prout, at last.

His plump face crimsoned.

"Puppy!" said Prout, addressing space. "By Jove! Puppy!"

Prout rolled away, crimson with indignation. He had intended to be very kind, and very friendly, to that young man! Now he had taken a deep dislike to him, and his feelings were neither kind nor friendly. Which, if Prout could only have guessed it, was exactly what the new master wanted! He was safe now from Prout's chats about his old friend, Eustace Smedley's uncle! He was safe from being found out by Prout!

Prout, of course, did not guess anything of the sort! He bristled with indignation! During the day, he confided to the other members of the staff, one after another, his opinion of the new man who had come in Quelch's place. And that opinion was summed up in the expressive word "Puppy!"

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Down on Smithy!

"TAISEZ-VOUS!"

Bang!

"Zat zere be silence!"

Thump!

It was the French class—as per usual. Monsieur Charpentier sighed deeply. Hardly any fellow in No. 10 class-room

meant any harm. It was the unthinking vivacity of youth! But it was hard luck on Mossoo!

There was a French class that afternoon for the Remove; and they were enjoying it in their own way. A few studious fellows, like Mark Linley or Toddy, did some work. Lazy fellows, like Billy Bunter or Lord Mauleverer, did nothing. Mischievous fellows, like Skinner, did mischief. Noisy fellows, like Bolsover major, made a row.

Perhaps the Remove were a little more free and easy than usual, as their Form-master was away, and there was no danger of Quelch's gimlet-eye gleaming in on their proceedings.

Often—very often indeed—there were sounds of disturbance in Mossoo's classroom. He was used to it. His pupils were used to it. It was rather the rule than the exception.

Skinner dropped a desk-lid with a terrific bang. Answering lids came from different directions, with a series of bangs. Then Bolsover major dropped a book—and in picking it up, hooked a fellow by the leg, and brought him sprawling to the floor. Scrambling up, the floored fellow grasped two or three others, dragging them out of their seats. They were only too willing to be dragged.

"Zat you be quiet viz yourselves!" squealed Monsieur Charpentier. "Take ze place! At vunce you take him, you Smeet—"

"Not my fault, sir!" said the Bounder. "A fellow pulled me out, sir—"

"You, Skinnair—"

"Not my fault, sir," said Skinner. "A fellow pulled me, and I caught hold of Smithy, sir!"

"Take ze place, all of you!" exclaimed Monsieur Charpentier. "I vill keep ze ordair in zis class, or I vill know ze reason vy not! Next time zere is vun noise, I send ze mauvais garcon to ze Head!"

That threat reduced the juniors to order for a little while. French grammar proceeded on its way.

But only for a little while. Herbert Vernon-Smith, contrary to his usual custom, sat quiet in his place, and gave some attention to Mossoo and Frénch. Generally the Bounder was the leader in a rag. Now Smithy was resisting the temptation to rag. He was not likely to stand out, if it started, but at all events, he was not starting it himself.

Opportunity came to the restive juniors when Mossoo wanted the blackboard moved. From the way the juniors jumped up to help, it might have been supposed that they were the most obliging fellows in the world.

"Let me help you, sir!" exclaimed Skinner, first in the field.

"Let me, sir!" exclaimed Bolsover major.

"Let me, sir!" exclaimed a dozen other fellows.

Quite an army rushed out to move the blackboard.

"Zank you, zank you, mes garcons!" said Monsieur Charpentier. "But be careful—zat board he go to fall—zat he not tumble ovair—prenez garde! Ciel! Mon Dieu!"

Crash!

Over went the easel and blackboard, with a terrific crash! Perhaps it was a case of too many cooks spoiling the broth! Or perhaps the young rascals meant it to go over! Anyhow, over it went.

"Mon Dieu!" gasped the hapless French master. "Zat is careless—zat is too clumsy! Take up zat blackboard at vunce viz you."

"Yes, sir! Oh, certainly, sir! Bear a hand, you men!"
 "Don't barge, Bolsover! You're always barging!"
 "Who's barging?"
 "You jolly well are!"
 "Look here, you ass——"
 "Look here, you fathead——"

Bolsover major shoved Skinner, Skinner shoved Bolsover major. The blackboard, half up, crashed down again. Mossco almost danced with excitement and wrath. Along with the blackboard, three or four fellows sprawled on the floor, barged over by other fellows. It was quite a game.

This, in the opinion of the juniors, was better than French! It was much more amusing than French.

"Here, let's get that blackboard up!" shouted the Bounder. He could resist the temptation no longer.

"Smeed! Zat you be quiet, Smeed, vill——"

"I'm only helpin', sir! You're in the way, Skinner! Gerrout of the way, you tick! Gerrout!"

Skinner, shoved by the Bounder, sprawled over Bolsover major. Vernon-Smith grasped the easel, and hooked it up from the floor. Perhaps, by chance, it escaped from his hands, and

crashed over on the desks. There was a yell from Billy Bunter, as the easel crashed on the back of his bullet head.

"Yaroooh! I say, you fellows——"
 "Smeed!" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier.

"It's all right, sir! Quite an accident, sir! I'll get it up for you, sir! Lend a hand, Cherry—don't slack there! Lend a hand, Bull!"

Half the class gathered round the easel, and dragged it off the desks. They swung it round, and Mossco hopped like a kangaroo, just escaping having
 (Continued on next page.)



If you're in doubt over any Soccer problem, "Linesman" will help you out. Try him and see! Address your queries to "Linesman," c/o The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

THE "SPOT" KICK!

PENALTY kicks are interesting and exciting affairs, and this week I have several questions to answer from MAGNET readers concerning these "spot" kicks. In the first place K. B., of Bradford, wants to know whether, in the case of a penalty kick having been taken which failed and the referee ordering it to be re-taken because of some infringement, it is necessary for the same player to take the second kick.

The answer to this is in the negative. I remember a match at Burnley two seasons ago in which Burnley were awarded a penalty kick. First of all McCluggage had a shot from the spot, which was saved, but the referee ordered the kick to be retaken because the goalkeeper had moved. For the second kick Steel was called up, but he failed, and once more the referee decided that there had been an infringement of the rules. So the kick was taken yet a third time, and O'Dowd, who is now a Chelsea player, took it and scored. So you see that in this particular case three different players had a shot with what was really the same penalty kick.

Although different players may take different kicks in the circumstances mentioned above, the same player must not touch the ball twice without some other player intervening. This answer replies to a Sunderland reader. His question concerns a penalty kick in which the ball is sent against one of the goal-posts, and comes back to the original kicker.

In such a case the original kicker must not take a second kick at the ball. If he does so and scores, the point would be disallowed, not for offside, as many people suppose, but for playing the ball twice.

Naturally, if the ball is fisted out by the goalkeeper when a penalty kick is taken, the original kicker can then follow up and give a second kick—if he gets a chance.

Suppose the taker of a penalty kick hits the cross-bar with the shot, and the ball comes back to one of his colleagues, who bangs it into the net. The original taker might then be considered to be offside, because he interfered with the goalkeeper's view of the second shot.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS!

WHILE we are dealing with penalty kicks, I may as well answer another question from a reader who wants to know why goals so often fail to follow the award of a penalty kick. In some cases, I am confident the goalkeeper breaks the rule by moving before the ball is kicked, and the referee fails to notice it. In other cases failure is due to bad placing of the ball by the kicker.

I think too many players "give away" to the goalkeeper the secret of where they intend to place the ball, and the intelligent man "between the sticks" can then make his move to that side of the goal quickly. One of our most successful penalty kick artists is Gordon Hodgson, the Liverpool forward. Indeed, I believe he can boast that he has never yet failed to score from the penalty spot since he became associated with English football—and he takes all the "spot" kicks which are awarded to his side.

The secret of his success lies in the way he deceives the goalkeeper. He seems definitely to look in one direction, and even to point the toe of the shooting boot in that direction. But the ball goes in at the other side because he kicks it, as he himself describes the action, with his little toe.

Another reason for the success of Hodgson is that he keeps the ball low. I would like all my young readers who have to take penalty kicks to bear this in mind: that it is easier for a goalkeeper to throw out his arms to stop a shot than it is for him to throw out his legs. Therefore, keep the ball low, and don't try to break the net. A comparatively slow and low shot, if well placed, will beat any goalkeeper.

"ORDERS IS ORDERS!"

NOW let me turn to some other queries. C. S. C., of Birmingham, wants to know whether extra time will have to be played in this season's Cup Final if the score is level at the finish. An extra half-hour would have to be played in these circumstances.

In the old days the extra half-hour was not played at the first meeting between

two clubs in the Cup Final, and there were many cases of a second match being necessary. Just before the War, however, the authorities made a new order to the effect that extra time should be played at the first meeting if necessary. And I am rather surprised that a Birmingham reader should have put the question about extra time, because Aston Villa were concerned in the only final since the new regulation in which extra time was necessary. This was the first season of normal football after the War, when Huddersfield and the Villa were opponents at Stamford Bridge.

There was no score at the end of ninety minutes' play, and as the War had intervened following the change of rule, most people had forgotten that the rule had been changed. Certainly the players of the Villa and Huddersfield had forgotten it, but referee Jack Howerst hadn't.

The players were trooping off the field, tired, when the referee ordered them back for another half-hour. One of the players was so "done" that he appealed to the referee. "Surely, Mr. Howerst," he said, "you are not going to make us play another half-hour. I haven't a scrap of wind left." But, as the play title has it, "orders is orders," and the extra half-hour had to be played.

I don't know whether Tom Wilson, the centre-half of Huddersfield, was among the really tired ones, but the fact remains that during the extra half-hour he accidentally put the ball through his own goal, and the Villa won the Cup.

THE WEMBLEY TEAM OF WIZARDS!

I AM getting all "farcy" this week! I have to be, to answer some other questions. H. T., of Gateshead, gives me three clubs and asks when they were formed. In reply Derby County started in 1884, Huddersfield Town in 1910, and Leeds United in 1920. Perhaps I ought to amplify the foregoing in so far as it refers to Leeds United. There was a football club called Leeds City and they played on the same ground as the United play on now. But soon after the War the Leeds City club was disbanded by order because of certain irregularities which were discovered by the Football Association.

N. G., of Edinburgh, wants the names of the men who made up what he rightly describes as the Wembley team of Wizards who played against England in 1928. Here is the list of names: Harkness; Nelson, Law; Gibson, Bradshaw, McMullan; Jackson, Dunn, Gallacher, James, Morton. My correspondent will notice that the left half-back was McMullan—christian name James, and not McMillan. This fine little half-back was a Manchester City player in last season's final, and is now manager of Oldham Athletic.

"LINESMAN."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,363.

his legs swept from under him as it swept round.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mes garçons! Bad boys! Smeet! Sherry! Skinnair! Mon Dieu! Zat you touch it not no more!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The door of No. 10 class-room opened. "Cave!" yelled Hazeldene. He rushed back to his place. There was a general scamper. It was the rather tall figure of the new master of the Remove that stood in the doorway.

"Oh, my hat! The beak!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"I say, you fellows——"

Mr. Smedley stepped into the room. He glanced at the overturned easel and blackboard, and at the wildly excited and distressed countenance of Monsieur Henri Adolphe Charpentier. Then he fixed his eyes on Herbert Vernon-Smith, who, like the other fellows, was going back to his place. But the Bouncer was lounging back, instead of scampering like the others.

"Vernon-Smith!" rapped the new master.

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"What does this riot mean?" snapped the new master.

Vernon-Smith stared at him. It had been rather a riot in the French class-room, that was certain. But the Bouncer was no more guilty than the rest of the raggers. Indeed, for once he had been less active than the rest. There was no reason for picking him out.

But Mr. Smedley's eyes were fixed on him grimly.

"Answer me, Vernon-Smith!" he rapped.

"We were helpin' set up the blackboard, sir," said the Bouncer coolly.

"I will not allow you to tell me untruths, Vernon-Smith! It is clear that you were the ring-leader in this riot. I have heard that such is generally the case, and I am not surprised. I shall take you to your headmaster."

The Bouncer set his lips sullenly.

"Follow me, Vernon-Smith!" snapped Mr. Smedley.

"Mais, monsieur!" ejaculated the

French master. "Je crois! I zink zat Smeet is no vorze zan ze ozzers, sair."

"As the boy's Form-master, sir, I am the judge of that," said Mr. Smedley. "I know what I have seen with my own eyes. Vernon-Smith, follow me immediately!"

With a black brow and glinting eyes the Bouncer followed him. The door shut on them both.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob. "The new beak's got a down on Smithy, and no mistake! What the dickens——"

Harry Wharton knitted his brows. He remembered what Smithy had said—that the new beak had appeared disappointed, when the culprit at the Three Fishers turned out not to be the Bouncer. Wharton had put that down to Smithy's fancy at the time, but his talk with Mr. Smedley in the study had rather changed his ideas on the subject. Now he could have no further doubt.

Skinner and Bolsover, and two or three other fellows had taken a more prominent part in the rag in the French class than Smithy had taken, yet he was selected to be marched off to the Head. Already in deep disgrace with his headmaster, Smithy was to be taken before him for judgment; the others were passed over.

That the new beak had a "down" on Smithy was clear, though the reason for it was hard to seek. The only conclusion Wharton could come to was that, having learned of Smithy's reckless and mutinous reputation, the new master had taken a deep prejudice against him. He had not even caned Smithy himself as Quelch would have done; he preferred to report him to the Head.

"The man's rather a rotter!" Wharton muttered to Nugent.

"He doesn't like Smithy, that's a cert!" said Frank.

"Silence in ze class!" said Monsieur Charpentier mildly.

There was no more ragging. One fellow being taken to the headmaster was warning enough. The blackboard was set up without any more accidents, and the lesson proceeded in very unusual quietude.

It was ten minutes before Vernon-Smith came back.

His face was set when he took his place.

"I say, Smithy, had it bad?" whispered Billy Bunter.

The Bouncer did not answer.

"I say, Smithy——"

"Buntair! You speak viz yourself. I zink."

"Oh, no, sir! I only said to Smithy that——"

"Take feefty lines of ze Henriade, Buntair!"

"Oh lor'!"

Bunter, as usual, wanted to know. But he did not ask any more questions in class. When the juniors were dismissed, however, he grabbed Vernon-Smith's arm in the passage.

"I say, Smithy, you're looking frightfully sick!" said the fat Owl. "Did you have it bad from the Beak? Yaroo!"

A savage shove caused Bunter to topple over and sit down suddenly and hard. He roared as he smote the floor; and the Bouncer, scowling, tramped on and left him roaring.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Taking a Tip!

HARRY WHARTON dropped into Study No. 4 in the Remove after tea that day.

He found the Bouncer in his blackest temper, and Tom Redwing looking worried. Vernon-Smith's eyes turned on the captain of the Remove with a far from amiable look.

"What the thump do you want?" he snapped.

Wharton coloured.

"I came to speak to you, Smithy——"

"Well, don't!"

"Smithy——" murmured Redwing.

"Oh, cheese it!" snapped the Bouncer.

Evidently in his present frame of mind Herbert Vernon-Smith had no politeness to waste on anybody.

Harry Wharton did not leave the study, however. He closed the door and turned again to look at the Bouncer, who scowled at him.

"There's something I think I ought to tell you, Smithy," he said quietly. "If you can't be civil, I'll leave it till another time. But you'd better hear it."

"Oh, get it off your chest!" said the Bouncer ungraciously. "If it's pi-jaw, though, you can bottle it up and take it away with you."

"It isn't. It's about the new beak," said Harry.

Vernon-Smith's eyes flamed.

"The rotter!" he said, between his teeth. "I'll level up with him, somehow. What's he down on me for, I'd like to know? What have I done to him?"

"I can't quite make that out," said Harry slowly. "The only thing I can think of is that he's heard all about you, and means to make it clear that you've got to toe the line while he's got the Remove."

"I'll show him!" muttered the Bouncer. "If you've got anything to say in his favour, don't say it to me, or you'll go out of this study on your neck."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Harry impatiently. "I want to put you on your guard. You've had the narrowest escape from the sack that a fellow ever had without going——"

"No bizney of yours!"

Wharton breathed hard. Really, the

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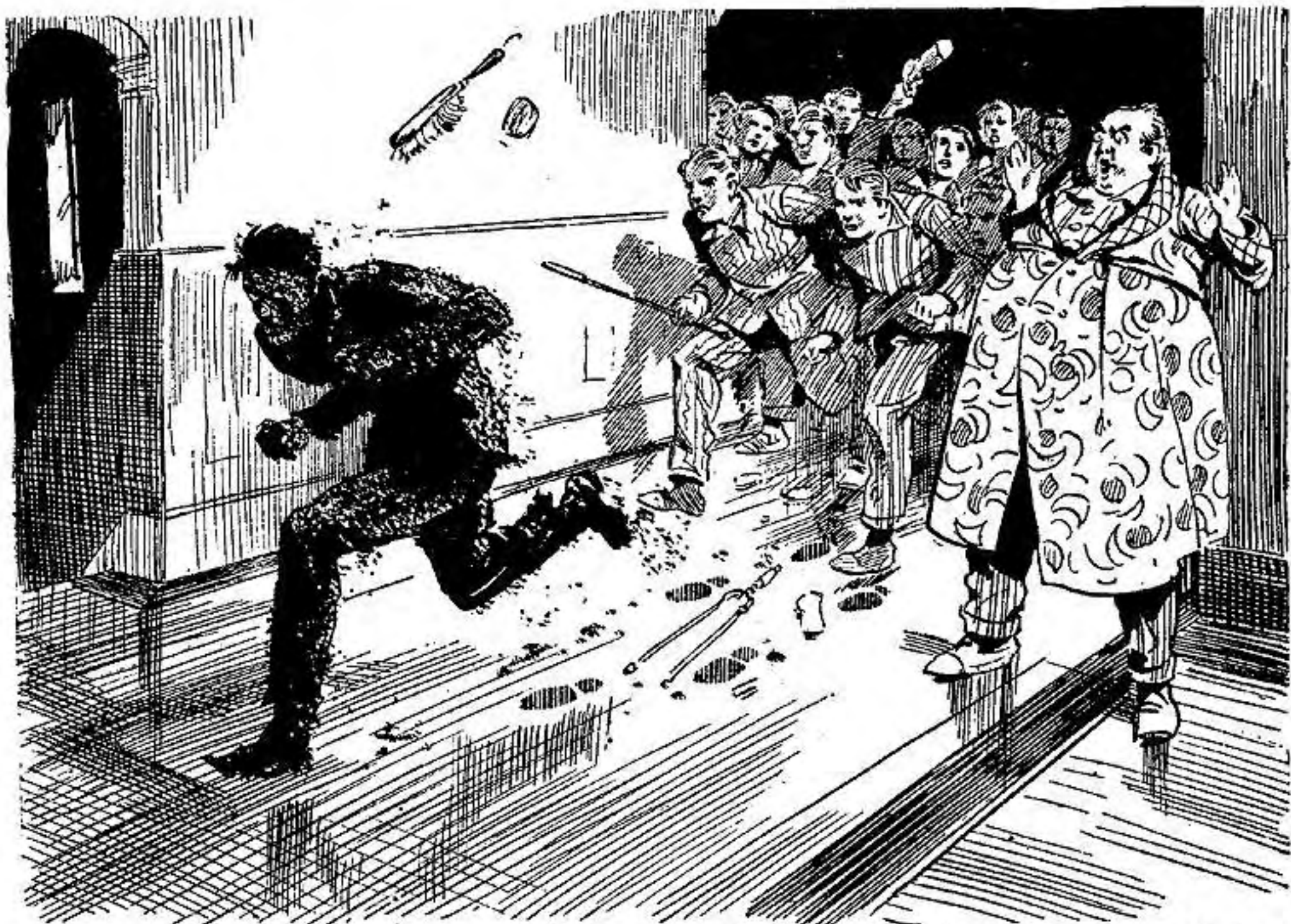
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That is Slim Stack's ultimatum to Dr. Sparshott—and "Sammy" must obey the rascally treasure-seeking gangster if the lives of the Grimslade juniors are to be saved! But unknown to Slim, one of the schoolboy prisoners has his hands free—and Slim is booked for the most terrible shock of his life! Make a point of reading this week's thrilling and dramatic story featuring the Grimslade castaways—
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"Stop him!" "Burglars!" Mr. Prout reached the landing, and switched on the light, just in time to see a blackened figure bolting down the dormitory passage, with a mob of yelling juniors in pursuit. "Great gad!" ejaculated the Fifth-Form master.

Bounder was not an easy fellow to befriend. But the captain of the Remove had come there with something to say, after thinking the matter out carefully, and he was going to say it.

"You'd better listen to me, Vernon-Smith," he said. "It's no bizney of mine what you do, and if you ask for the sack again, it's your own look out. I only want to warn you that if you play the goat you'll be nailed, as safe as houses. Smedley is watching you."

"Don't I know that?" sneered the Bounder. "He made it pretty clear this afternoon."

"I'm going to make it clearer. You know I was called into his study for a jaw with him yesterday. What do you think he wanted?"

"How the dooce should I know? I don't—or care, either!"

"I'm going to tell you, all the same. He wanted me, as head boy, to keep an eye on you, and report to him if you kicked over the traces."

"Oh, great gad!"

"The awful toad!" exclaimed Redwing. "What did you say to him, Wharton?"

"I told him that a head boy's business was not to be a spy and a tell-tale," answered Harry.

The Bounder burst into a laugh.

"Good for you!" he exclaimed. "My hat! What an outsider the man is! So he's specially out to catch me, is he?"

"It looks like it. To be quite candid, Smithy, I'm not surprised that he doesn't want you in his Form—if he's heard all about you. You've said yourself that Quelch would have liked to get shut of you, and Smedley seems to feel the same. I'm giving you the tip, to put you on your guard. He won't find

any sneaks in the Remove, I hope; but a man who's ready to use such methods is pretty dangerous. You've got nothing to fear, so long as you play the game."

"I knew there was pi-jaw comin'."

"That's not pi-jaw, Smithy, that's common sense," said the captain of the Remove quietly. "Play the game, and you're as safe as any other man in the Remove. Play the fool, and that man will catch you, as he's out to do. You won't get another chance from the Head."

"Think I don't know that?" sneered the Bounder.

"Better remember it, then. You can't afford to take chances now. If you've got anything about you, or in the study, that's against the rules, take my tip and get rid of it. We get a Head's inspection sometimes, when everything has to be turned out."

"Once in a blue moon——"

"Well, if you won't take a tip, you won't!" said Harry. "I thought I ought to let you know. That's all."

And, with that, the captain of the Remove left the study, and shut the door after him with rather a bang.

Vernon-Smith sneered; but the sneering expression died off his face, and was replaced by a very thoughtful look.

"My hat!" he said, after a long silence. "If the man put the Head up to inspecting the study all of a sudden; and from what he said to Wharton it looks as if he'd like to catch me out, and——"

He whistled softly.

"If you've got anything here, Smithy——" said Tom anxiously.

"If," sneered the Bounder.

He went to his desk and unlocked it.

He had not uttered a word of thanks to Wharton for his warning. But it had not been lost on him. If the new beak was anxious to catch him out, Smithy was not going to make the path easy for him.

From various recesses in the desk Vernon-Smith made quite a curious collection. Redwing watched him in silence.

There was a box of cigarettes, a copy of the "Racing Tipster," a pack of cards, a cigarette-holder, and a list of race-horses in the Bounders' own hand. Tom Redwing's face became almost pale as he looked at that collection.

"You ass, Smithy!" he breathed. "You utter ass! If you can't be decent, you might at least have a little sense! If that man got the Head to make a search in the study—and you can see that Wharton thinks he might——"

Without replying, the Bounder made a double handful of the articles he had sorted out of the desk, crossed to the fire, and dropped the whole lot into the flames.

"Oh, good!" gasped Redwing.

In silence the Bounder stirred the fire together. There was enough evidence there to get any fellow sacked from Greyfriars! In a few minutes it vanished from existence.

"That's that!" said the Bounder at last.

Tom Redwing breathed more freely.

"Thank goodness for that!" he said. "If there's a Head's inspection now, Smithy, you're all right; and you owe it to Wharton."

The Bounder was not aware how much he owed to Wharton—and to Mr. Prout, as a matter of fact. Those dangerous articles, now destroyed, would certainly

have been discovered in his desk that morning had not Prout interrupted the new master.

And, but for Wharton's tip, on which Smithy had so promptly acted, they would have been discovered that night. If the Bounder, in the Remove dormitory that night, was dreaming, he certainly did not dream of what was happening in Study No. 4 in the Remove.

Midnight was chiming out over Greyfriars, and the whole school was deep in slumber, when the light of an electric torch gleamed in Vernon-Smith's study.

There was the faintest of sounds as Mr. Smedley, alias Lucius Teggers, unlocked the Bounder's desk with a key on his bunch.

Safe now from interruption at the "witching hour of night," the Bounder's rival for a millionaire's fortune groped through the desk; searching every drawer, every recess, and searching in vain.

There was nothing in that desk—now—that the Bounder would have objected to his headmaster seeing!

The man gave up the search at last, and relocked the desk. Then he extended the search further through the study.

But there was nothing to reward him. He gave it up at last, shut off the electric torch, and left the study—puzzled and disappointed!

Had he discovered what he had confidently expected to discover, there would have been a Head's inspection the following day—he could have contrived that easily enough.

Now he dismissed the idea! There was nothing for the Head to find!

Quietly the Bounder's enemy crept back to his room. It looked as if Lucius Teggers' task at Greyfriars would be a longer one than he had anticipated. The scapegrace of the school was not to be caught tripping so easily as he had supposed would be the case. He had to bide his time—and watch and wait!

Little did the Bounder of Greyfriars dream how much depended upon his keeping to his resolution to "go straight," and play the game! At the first false step he was a lost man, and it was as well for Herbert Vernon-Smith that he had resolved that his reform should be sincere.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Sneak Wanted!

"BUNTER—"

"Here I am, old chap!"

"You're wanted!"

"Is it a feed?"

"No, ass! Smedley wants you in his study."

"Oh lor'!" ejaculated Billy Bunter, in dismay.

Bob Cherry, having delivered the Form-master's message, went on his way, whistling. The fat Owl of the Remove blinked after him. Then he rushed after Bob, and caught him by the arm.

"I say, old chap! D-d-did the beast look waxy?" gasped Bunter.

"Didn't notice," answered Bob.

"Well, you might have noticed, you silly ass!" exclaimed Bunter. "I—I say, d-d-do you think it's about the gum?"

Bob Cherry grinned. He had forgotten about that exploit of Billy Bunter's, and Billy Bunter himself had almost forgotten it. But a summons to his Form-master's study reminded Bunter of it.

Smedley, fortunately, hadn't sat in the gum! But Prout had! Bunter had,

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,363.

naturally, expected a "row" about it! But two or three days had passed since, and there had been no row. Bunter was quite prepared to dismiss the matter from his fat mind. He hoped that Smedley had done the same! Now, however, it looked as if Smedley hadn't!

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" snapped Bunter. "The man's a beast, you know! Look how he got me into a row his first day here! If it's about the gum—"

"Cheer up, old fathead!" said Bob encouragingly. "If it was that, he would have dropped on you long ago, I should think. He can't know it was you."

"Well, that old ass Prout saw me in the study, when he sat in it!" said Bunter uneasily. "Still, I've noticed that he's not very friendly with Smedley, and he may not have mentioned it. I saw them in the quad to-day—and Prout fairly glared at him, and walked on without speaking. Perhaps he never told him, after all."

And Billy Bunter, encouraged by that hope, proceeded to his Form-master's study, still feeling rather uneasy and apprehensive, however.

Mr. Smedley was seated by his study window, looking out into the spring sunshine in the quad. Classes were over,

SEND IN A WINNING GREYFRIARS LIMERICK

and

YOU'LL GET A HANDSOME POCKET WALLET!

S. Hobbs, of 40, Nursery Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, catches the judge's eye this week:

Claude Hoskins once patiently sat
Composing a tune in "D" Flat.
He thought it absurd
That fellows who heard
Should ask who had trod on the
cat!

NOTE.—All efforts to be sent to:
"Limericks and Jokes," Editor,
5, Carmelite Street, London,
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and there were a good many fellows in the quadrangle. Among them were Herbert Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing, and the new master's sharp, narrow eyes were fixed on the former. But he turned from the window as the fat Owl of the Remove rolled uneasily in.

"You—you—you sent for me, sir!" stammered Bunter, with an apprehensive blink through his big spectacles.

"Yes, Bunter! You may shut the door!"

Bunter shut the door rather hopefully. This preliminary looked more like a "jaw" than a caning. Bunter did not mind a jaw. He was prepared to listen in silence, or to deny everything and anything, or to express deep regret for anything and everything. Bunter was an accommodating fellow. All he was particular about, was not to be whopped!

The keen, narrow eyes read his uneasy, fat face. During the days he had now been with the Remove, the man with a borrowed name had studied the various members of his Form.

He had realised, quite clearly, that he had made a false move in attempting to make use of his head boy to serve his own turn. Wharton was not the fellow to be made use of in that way. But all

the fellows in the Form were not like Wharton—Bunter, perhaps, least of all.

"I think, Bunter, that it was you who played an absurd and disrespectful trick in this study my first evening here," said Mr. Smedley.

Bunter jumped! So it was that!

"Oh, no, sir!" he answered at once. "I wasn't here, sir! Never entered the study, sir!"

"Mr. Prout mentioned that he saw you here."

"Oh lor'!"

"Now, Bunter—"

"Mr. Prout must—must have been mistaken, sir!" gasped Bunter. "He—he often makes mistakes, sir! I—I don't think he could have seen me here, sir, because—because I was in my own study at the time, sir. Besides, I only came here to ask you about a book, sir—I told Mr. Prout, sir."

"You placed gum in this armchair, and Mr. Prout unfortunately sat in it," said Mr. Smedley. "He was very much annoyed—very much indeed! I am sorry that it is my duty to punish you severely, Bunter!"

"So—so—so am I, sir!" groaned Bunter. "But—but it was days ago, sir! I—I thought you had forgotten all about it, sir! And—and I never did it!"

"I have been considering, Bunter, whether I could overlook your action," said Mr. Smedley. "I am reluctant to use severe measures."

Bunter shared his feelings to the full; in fact, he was more reluctant than Mr. Smedley!

"Oh! Thank you, sir!" gasped Bunter. "M-a-a-ay I go now, sir?" He edged towards the door.

"Remain where you are, Bunter!"

"Oh! Yes! Certainly, sir!"

"I shall not punish you as you deserve now, Bunter. If your future conduct is satisfactory, I shall pass over the matter."

Billy Bunter beamed. But the new master was not finished yet.

"There is another matter to which I must refer. It is a very serious matter. I have reason to believe that some boy in the Remove breaks a very strict rule of the school by leaving the House after lights out."

"Not me, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I wouldn't!"

"Then which boy is it?"

"I—I don't know, sir!" stammered Bunter. "I don't know of anybody, except—"

"Except whom?"

"Oh! Nobody, sir!"

"You are prevaricating, Bunter!" exclaimed the new master, with a knitting of the brows that made the fat Owl jump.

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Bunter in alarm. "I—I don't know anything about Smithy, sir—I don't, really!"

"Do you mean Vernon-Smith?"

"N-n-no, sir! I—I mean, yes, sir! Oh dear!" stammered Bunter.

"You are aware that Vernon-Smith breaks school bounds?"

"Everybody knows what he was bunked for, sir—I mean sacked—that is, expelled—"

"I am not alluding to that! I mean, since that date?" snapped the new master. "You are aware—"

"N-no, sir! Oh, no! May I go now, sir?" gasped Bunter. "I've got some French to do for Mossos, sir."

"Never mind that now," said Mr. Smedley grimly. "You will tell me at once, Bunter, what you know regarding Vernon-Smith."

"Oh lor'!" groaned Bunter. "I—I say, sir, Smithy would jolly well kick me—"

"I will see that you are protected, Bunter."

"But—but the fellows would all be down on a fellow who sneaked, sir," groaned Bunter. "I—I—"

"The source of my information would never be mentioned, Bunter."

Billy Bunter blinked at him. It had not been difficult for the new master to observe that Bunter was a Peeping Tom and an incurable tattler. Whether he was a sneak also, he did not yet know, but he hoped for the best—or rather, the worst!

"Now, Bunter—"

"I—I—" stammered the wretched Owl. He had one eye on the new master and the other on the cane!

"Tell me what you know at once, Bunter!" snapped the new beak.

"N-n-nothing, sir!" gasped Bunter.

The hard, thin lips were compressed in a tight line.

"Very well," said Mr. Smedley, taking up his cane. "I shall now cane you, Bunter, for having placed the gum in my armchair—"

"Oh lor!" gasped Bunter.

"You may bend over!"

Had Billy Bunter been aware of any recent transgressions on the part of the Bounder it was very probable that the information would have been extracted from him by the new master's peculiar methods. As the matter stood, Bunter was aware of nothing of the kind, as there was nothing of the kind to be aware of.

But the fat Owl was not going to be caned if he could help it.

He quite understood how the matter lay now; if he sneaked about Smithy his gumming exploit was to be forgiven; if not, he would get the whopping that was his due.

Billy Bunter was obtuse—but there was a vein of slyness in him as in many

obtuse people. And his habitual resource, in times of difficulty, was fibbing!

This beast wanted to know something about Smithy! Bunter knew nothing! But he had his fat imagination to draw upon! He drew upon it!

"I—I—I say, sir—" gasped Bunter.

"You are wasting my time, Bunter," said the new beak. "If you have anything to tell me—" He swished the cane.

"Oh! Yes! Lots!" gasped Bunter.

"Lots and lots, sir! The—the—the fact is, sir, I—I know all about it."

Mr. Smedley laid down the cane again.

"Go on!" he said.

"The—the fact is, sir—" stammered Bunter.

"Yes, yes?"

"The—the fact is—" Bunter was trying to gain time as he had not yet decided what the "fact" was. All he was certain about was that he did not want to be whopped for gumming the armchair. "The—the actual fact, I—I—I think—I mean, I know—know for a fact—an actual fact, that—that—"

"Yes?"

"I—I know it for a—a fact, sir—"

"What do you know for a fact?"

"I—I—" Bunter had to decide on his facts without further delay. It was neck or nothing! "Smithy—you—you won't let him know I said so, sir—"

"Certainly not! Go on."

"He—he—he's—he's going to—to—to—"

"To break bounds?" The hard eyes glinted.

"N-n-n-no—yes, sir!" gasped Bunter.

"To-night?"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped the fat Owl. He would have made the same answer had the inquirer named any other night.

Luckily for Bunter, Mr. Smedley was not aware of that.

"You are certain of this, Bunter?"

"Oh! Quite! Absolutely certain, sir," groaned Bunter. "Of course, he—he might change his mind! But—I—I think—I—I mean, I know—"

"Very well, Bunter! In the circumstances I shall say nothing more about your foolish trick in this study."

"T-t-thank you, sir!"

"And you need not do the lines I gave you in class this morning!" added Mr. Smedley graciously.

"Oh, good! I—I mean, thank you, sir!" gasped Bunter. "M-a-a-ay I go now, sir?"

"You may go, Bunter!"

Bunter went—gladly!

Mr. Smedley, alias Lucius Teggers, turned to the window again and looked into the quad with a cold, hard smile on his face and watched the Bounder strolling with his chum.

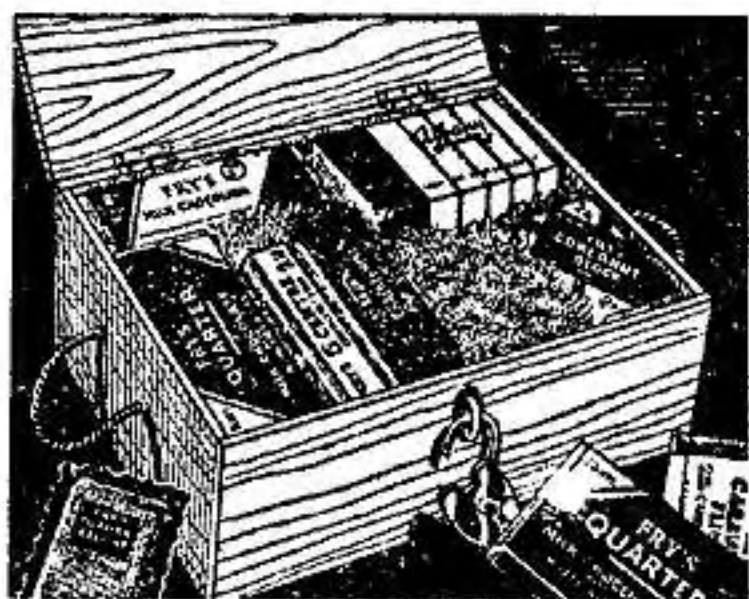
If his conscience troubled him, he soothed it with the reflection that Herbert Vernon-Smith was an unscrupulous young rascal, who richly deserved to be expelled from the school, and who, indeed, would have been expelled had he not hoodwinked his headmaster.

But the plotter's conscience, probably, did not require much soothing.

At all events, the information he had dragged from the wretched Bunter placed the young rascal in his hands! The sneak, for his own sake, would not let it be known that he had given the scapegrace away. The Bounder would leave his dormitory that night, after lights out, and after he was gone—after the man with the borrowed name was quite sure that he had gone—

He smiled, a cat-like smile!

(Continued on next page.)



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As he sat looking into the quad he reflected very pleasantly on the prospect, some day, of handling Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith's millions!

Probably his reflections would not have been so pleasant, had he been able to follow the subsequent proceedings of the Owl of the Remove.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Tea in Study No. 1!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

"Where will you have it?" inquired Bob Cherry genially as he picked up a loaf from the tea-table in Study No. 1 in the Remove.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Stand steady!" said Bob, taking aim. "Bet you I can get you all right on the waistcoat from here! But don't move!"

"Beast!"

Bunter did move!

He moved so quickly that the loaf missed him by a yard!

"Look here, you beast!" roared Bunter indignantly. "I've come here to—"

"We know that, fathead!" remarked Frank Nugent. "Waiting for you to go, old fat frump!"

"Oh, really, Nugent—" Bunter rolled in, with a wary eye on the cheery Bob. "I say, you fellows, is that chair for me?" There were six chairs round the table, and only the Famous Five were present until Billy Bunter barged in.

"That's for Smithy," said Harry Wharton. "Reddy's going to tea with Wingate, and Smithy's coming here."

"Well, you don't want Smithy," argued Bunter. "I suppose you'd rather have me to tea than Smithy."

"The supposefulness is a ridiculous error, my fat and esteemed Bunter," grinned Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

"Oh, really, Inky! I say, you fellows, I've got something to tell you—"

"Go and tell the chaps in your own study!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"Beast! Look here, you don't want that tick Smithy," said Bunter. "He's rather a rotter, and I say—Yaroo!"

A finger and thumb fastened on William George Bunter's fat ear from behind. He spun round with a howl and blinked at Herbert Vernon-Smith.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Famous Five. Smithy had arrived in the study at a rather unfortunate moment for the fat Owl.

"Ow! Leggo, Smithy, you beast!" roared Bunter. "I didn't hear you coming, you beast—I mean—yaroo!"

The Bounder's finger and thumb compressed like a vice on the fat ear, and the Owl of the Remove yelped with anguish.

"Ow! Beast! Wow! Leggo! I wasn't saying—Whooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Who's a rotter?" inquired Vernon-Smith genially.

"Ow! I was only jog-jig-joking!" yelled Bunter. "Can't you take a jig-joke? Leggo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Leggo, you beast! Serve you jolly well right if I did what Smedley's asked me to do!" howled Bunter. "Where would you be then, I'd like to know?"

"Eh—what?"

The Bounder released the fat ear. Billy Bunter rubbed it, and glared at him in great wrath.

"Beast! I jolly well won't tell you now!" he snorted. "I was going to tell these fellows, and you, too, to give you the tip! Now I won't! Wow!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,363.

"What has Smedley asked you to do, Bunter?" asked Harry Wharton, staring at the fat Owl. He had not forgotten his own jaw with Smedley.

"Find out!" snorted the offended Owl.

"Shove that box to the table, Franky! Bunter's staying to tea!" said the captain of the Remove.

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter promptly. "I don't mind staying, old chap, as you're so pressing."

And Bunter sat down. He blinked appreciatively at a dish of smoking-hot sausages on the table.

"Good!" he said. "I like sosses!" Bunter helped himself to the whole contents of the dish. "What are you fellows going to have?"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"We're going to have sosses!" roared Johnny Bull.

And he seized Bunter's plate before the fat Owl could commence operations.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

There were eight sosses, and Johnny served them out, one each for the six and two for Bunter. Bunter grunted.

"If there's anything I can't stand, it's a fellow being greedy at a spread!" he remarked. "Still, I'm getting used to it with you fellows! All right! I can fill up on the cake!"

Bunter's two sosses went down almost like oysters, and he started filling up on the cake, while the other fellows were still on the first course. And from the rate at which Bunter proceeded, it did not look as if there would be much of the second course left for the rest.

"Well, what about Smedley?" asked the Bounder impatiently.

"I say, you fellows, that man Smedley is a tick!" said Bunter. "He's a toad—a rank outsider! Goodness knows where he was brought up! I say, he's let me off for gumming Prout, and he's let me off my lines. Guess why?"

"Well, why?" asked Wharton quietly.

"He thinks I'm going to sneak," said Bunter. "Me, you know! I shouldn't be so surprised if he wanted one of you fellows to do it! But me!"

"You fat chump!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Cough it up!" snapped the Bounder.

"You're jolly well for it, Smithy, if that beast can catch you!" grinned Billy Bunter. "He jolly well knows you break bounds after lights out! Of course, everybody knows that, since you were bunked! He's been asking me about it."

The chums of the Remove stared at Bunter. The Bounder scowled blackly.

"And what did you say?" asked Harry.

"I said he was a sneaking, low-down rotter!" answered Bunter.

"You said that to Smedley?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Well, he didn't hear me," explained Bunter. "I said it after I was safe out of the study."

"You blithering idiot!"

"Look here—"

"I wonder what the Head would think if he knew the man's methods?" said Wharton, his lip curling. "He wouldn't stay here long, I fancy! I wish we had Quelch back!"

"He won't find any sneaks in the Remove!" said Frank. "Even Bunter wouldn't—"

"Why, you cheeky beast!" ejaculated Bunter. "Look here, Nugent—"

"Did you tell Smedley you wouldn't do it?" asked Harry.

"Catch me!" grinned Bunter. "I didn't want to be whopped! If he thinks I'm going to sneak about Smithy, let him! I don't mind what he thinks!

But, I say, you fellows, what do you think of the beast? Ain't he the limit?"

"A bit over the limit, I think!" said Johnny Bull, with a snort. "I suppose he thinks Smithy oughtn't to be here, and—"

"Thanks!" sneered the Bounder.

"But that's no excuse for him, setting a fellow to spy and sneak!" said Johnny. "The man's a rotter!"

"Absolute outsider!" said Bunter. "I stuffed him all right! Mind you jolly well don't break bounds to-night, Smithy! You'll get copped if you do! He'll be jolly well on the watch, as he thinks you're going to!"

"Why should he think so, fathead?" grunted the Bounder.

"Eh—because I told him!"

"You told him?" gasped Vernon-Smith.

"Well, I had to tell him something," explained Bunter. "He was going to whop me for gumming Prout if I hadn't stuffed him. Now he's let me off, he can't rake it up again, can he?"

"You've told him lies about me!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith, staring blankly at the fat Owl.

"Oh, really, Smithy, that's rather a rotten way to put it!" said Bunter. "What was a fellow to do? He was frightfully keen to find out if you were playing the goat; nothing else would satisfy him. I had to tell him something, and nothing else would do, so I told him that. See? I say, you fellows, is there any more cake?"

"Well, my hat!" said the Bounder.

"You blithering, burbling bandersnatch!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Mean to say that you've made Smedley believe that Smithy's going out to-night?"

"What does it matter if Smithy doesn't go?" said Bunter. "I've warned him not to go, haven't I? I tell you, I had to tell the beast something! I say, he's easier to stuff than Quelch. That's one good thing. Did you say there was another cake, Wharton?"

"No, you cormorant!"

"I don't call this much of a feed!" said Bunter. "I say, that man Smedley will be coming up to the dorm to-night! He, he, he! He will think Smithy was scared and changed his mind about going, you know, when he finds him in bed there. He, he, he! He can't rake it up about the gum again, can he? What do you think, Wharton?"

"I think you-ought to be jolly well kicked!"

"The thankfulness is terrific!"

"Beast!" Bunter rose from the table he had done the major part in clearing. "Sorry I can't stop! I've got to see Mauly!"

Bunter rolled out of Study No. 1. He left the Bounder, with a black look on his face, and the other fellows looking very serious. After Bunter was gone there was a discussion—or, rather, a council of war—in that study.

Of the new master's motives the juniors, of course, knew nothing. They could only suppose that he had a "down" on the black sheep of the Remove, and was anxious to relieve the school of his presence. But they had their own opinion of his methods—a very strong opinion. Sneaking and spying were not good enough for Greyfriars, and it was agreed unanimously that that fact ought to be made clear to the new beak. And when the Bounder propounded a scheme for making it clear, he had, for once, the hearty support of the Famous Five.



"Bless my soul!" said the amazed Dr. Locke. "You are not telling me that Vernon-Smith is out of school bounds, Mr. Smedley—" "Certainly I am, sir!" "But—but the boy is standing just behind you!" almost shrieked the Head. "Wha-a-at?" The sooty Form-master spun round, and his eyes almost popped through the soot, at the sight of the Bounder!

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

An Alarm in the Night!

WINGATE of the Sixth saw lights out for the Remove that night. The prefect saw nothing to excite his suspicions that there was anything "on" in the Remove dormitory.

After he had put out the light and gone there was the usual buzz of talk from bed to bed till the fellows dropped off to sleep, with Billy Bunter's deep snore to lull them to repose.

But there were seven fellows who did not close their eyes—the Famous Five, Redwing, and Herbert Vernon-Smith. They were staying awake, in anticipation of what was to come. And when ten o'clock chimed out, and the other fellows were fast asleep, Bob Cherry slipped quietly from his bed, and Harry Wharton followed.

From a recess in the big cupboard at the end of the dormitory a large, flat cardboard box was taken. That box had once contained shirts. Now it contained soot, carefully scraped from study chimneys after prep, and surreptitiously conveyed to the dormitory. It was crammed with soot to the brim.

"Careful, old man!" murmured Wharton. "Don't get any on you! I shouldn't wonder if there's a row about this!"

Bob chuckled softly. It was quite probable that there would be a "row" about what was going to happen that night in the Remove quarters.

Silently Wharton turned the door-handle and opened the door a few inches. Standing on a chair, Bob placed the flat box on the top of the

door, resting on the lintel over the doorway.

Anyone who entered the dormitory that night was booked for a sudden surprise.

Hardly a sound had been made. The chair was lifted back to its place, and the two juniors tiptoed back to bed.

Then they waited.

There was no doubt in their minds that the new beak would barge in. They waited cheerfully for him to "barge."

Minute followed minute! The minutes seemed long to the wakeful juniors. But they waited patiently. What was going to happen was really worth waiting for.

Faintly on the March wind came the chime of the half-hour. It was half-past ten. Still there was no sound, save the steady snore of Billy Bunter, which, like the little brook in the poem, went on for ever.

Harry Wharton & Co. were getting fearfully sleepy by this time. They wished that Smedley would buck up.

But he seemed to be giving the scape-grace plenty of time to get clear. He wanted to be absolutely certain that Vernon-Smith was, indeed, gone when he "barged" in to discover him absent.

But there was a sound at last.

It was the sound of a soft footstep in the corridor outside—the soft tread of a stealthy man in slippers.

That faint sound stopped at the doorway.

Seven wakeful juniors felt their hearts thump! It was coming now! Second followed second—seeming like long minutes.

Perhaps the man outside was surprised to find the door ajar. Probably

he took it as proof that someone had left the dormitory.

It seemed that he was listening; but, if so, he heard nothing but the rumble of Bunter's snoring.

Then suddenly it happened! The door was pushed open from without, the new master feeling for the switch inside to turn on the light as he stepped in. But his fingers never reached the switch.

Crash!

Swoosh!

"Gurrrrrgh!"

A horrible, suffocated gurgle was heard.

"Urrrgh! Wurrgh! Murrgh! Wurrgh!"

In the doorway, still in the dark, a figure was tottering in clouds of soot! Soot swamped over the new beak. It covered his head, his hair, his face, his clothes; it floated round him in clouds. He was clad in soot as in a garment. He lived, and breathed, and had his being in soot!

"Good gad! Grook! What—Urrrgh! Oh! Urrrgh! Wurrgh!" Wild splutters and sputters came from the staggering figure.

Seven listening juniors suppressed their chuckles. But they suppressed them carefully. It was not their cue to wake.

But other fellows woke! A man staggering and spluttering, gurgling and gasping and guggling in the doorway was bound to wake the sleepers.

A dozen fellows sat up in bed with startled exclamations. Only Bunter's snore went on. Every other fellow was awakened.

"What the thump—" exclaimed Peter Todd. "Who's that?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,363.

"What the dooce?" came a yawn from Lord Mauleverer.

"What's that row?" gasped Bolsover major.

"Urrrrggh!" came from the darkness. "Gurrgh! Wurrgh! What—what—Gurrgh! Groogh!"

"What the dickens—"

"Is the house on fire?"

"Who's that?"

"Urrrrggh! Wurrgh! Groogh! Oooosh! At-choooh! Chooop!" Wild spluttering and gurgling and sneezing answered from the dark.

Peter Todd jumped out of bed and struck a match. In the flickering light all eyes turned on a horrible figure staggering just within the dormitory.

He was quite unrecognisable.

Seven fellows knew who he was, but the rest had not the faintest idea. All they could see was a blackened figure, staggering and groping and spluttering.

"Who—who—What is it?" gasped Toddy.

"Is it a burglar?" gasped Skinner, as the match went out. "I say, look out!"

"It's somebody—"

"Burglars!" roared Bob Cherry, waking up all of a sudden! That suggestion from the startled Skinner was enough for Bob! If a blackened, unrecognisable figure barged into the dormitory in the middle of the night fellows were entitled to take him for a burglar if they liked. Bob fairly jumped at the idea!

"Burglars!" he bawled. "Turn out, you men! Burglars! Get your pillows—bolsters! Go for him! Burglars!"

Someone switched on the light. There was a flood of illumination. A dozen fellows, pillow or bolster in hand, rushed at the sprawling figure.

Terrific swipes descended on it, on all sides.

"Burglars! Give him jip!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Burglars! Help! Whop him!"

"Jump on him!"

Swipe, swipe, swipe!

"Urrgh! Yooop! Whoop! Gurrgh! Stop! I—I—Urrgh! Groogh!" came frantically from the sooty, suffocated man sprawling under the swiping pillows and bolsters.

Mr. Smedley tried to speak, but he was choking with soot, and pillows and bolsters were crashing on him right and left. He rolled into the passage, spluttering and squirming and gurgling.

The terrific din rang through the House. Startled voices were heard calling from downstairs; doors opened; lights flashed on. The deep, fruity voice of Mr. Prout was heard:

"What—what is that uproar? What?"

"Burglars!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Urrgh! Groogh! Wurrgh!"

In the passage the sooty man scrambled frantically to his feet. Pillows and bolsters swiped at him, and he fairly turned and ran.

"After him!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Burglars! After him!"

"Stop him!"

"Stop thief!"

"Don't let him get away!"

"Great gad!" ejaculated Mr. Prout.

He reached the landing and switched on the light, just in time to see a blackened figure bolting out of the dormitory passage, with a mob of yelling juniors in pursuit. Who it was, what it was, Mr. Prout did not know; he stared at it petrified.

"Stop him!"

"Burglars!"

The roar from the passage enlightened Mr. Prout! He leaped in the

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,363.

way of the running figure, and grasped at it manfully. Prout was a stout fellow—not only in circumference. He was not afraid of burglars! He jumped at the blackened figure and grasped it, and they went over together on the landing. Clouds of soot scattered over Prout, and he gasped and spluttered. But he held on, like the stout fellow he was.

"Surrender, you scoundrel!" gasped Prout. "I have you—rascal, I have you! Surrender!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"I have him!" gasped Prout. "Do not be alarmed, my boys, I have caught the scoundrel! I have him safe! A negro, I think—a ruffianly negro!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Prout's got him!" gasped Johnny Bull. "Prout's got the burglar!"

"Oh scissors!"

The "burglar" was struggling frantically in Prout's grasp. Probably he would soon have accounted for the stout Prout. But there was plenty of help at hand for Prout. The Removites piled in at once. Hands grasped the burglar, sooty as he was, on all sides, and Bob Cherry thoughtfully bumped a pillow on his face as he strove wildly to speak.

There was no hurry, so far as Bob could see, for the "burglar" to explain who he was. Horrible gurgles and guggles came from the hapless man.

"Secure him!" gasped Prout. "Hold him! He dares to resist! Hold his hands! Hold him wherever you can—"

"Yes, rather, sir!"

"We've got him!"

There was no doubt that they had "got" him! A couple of dozen hands were on him, grasping his arms, and his wrists, his ears, his hair, his ankles, and even his nose. Never had a burglar been so thoroughly and effectually secured. Prout had him down on the landing, and was lodged on him, kneeling on his chest. And Prout's weight was no trifle.

"Urrgh! Gurrgh! I—I—"

Bob Cherry's pillow interrupted the hapless man and he gurgled.

Three or four other masters, and some of the Sixth Form prefects were on the scene by this time. And a stately figure came rustling up the stairs and Dr. Locke appeared. Seldom had there been such excitement in the House at such an hour of the night. The chums of the Remove had intended to "jape" the new beak; but the jape was assuming proportions of which they had never dreamed.

"What—what is this?" ejaculated the Head, as he stared at the startling scene on the big landing.

"A burglar, sir!" gasped Mr. Prout. "A burglar—a savage and desperate negro, sir. But, fortunately, I have him safe!"

And from the savage and desperate negro came a hideous gurgles:

"Gurrgh!"

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not A Burglar!

"HOLD him!" yelled Bob Cherry.

The "burglar" was struggling again. But with Mr. Prout kneeling on his chest and a dozen pairs of hands grasping him, he struggled in vain.

"Bless my soul!" gasped the Head. "Secure him! Most—most extraordinary! Wingate, Gwynne, Loder—see that he does not escape!"

"I have him safe, sir!" gasped Prout.

"He will not escape me easily. Keep still, scoundrel! Surrender, rascal! Someone had better telephone for the police to take him in charge—"

"Oh crikey!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Urrgh! Gurrgh! I—I—I—"

Again a swiping pillow interrupted the wretched man. "Ow! Urrgh!"

"Cherry! Stand back!" said the Head. "You have him safe, Mr. Prout?"

"Quite, sir!"

"What a desperate-looking ruffian!" said Mr. Capper, the master of the Fourth. "But he is not, I think, a negro." Capper peered at the prisoner. "I think his face is blackened—probably for disguise—"

"It is soot!" said Wingate of the Sixth. "The man seems to be smothered with soot!"

"Soot?" exclaimed the Head.

"The sootfulness is terrific!" murmured Huree Jamsat Ram Singh.

"Dear me! It certainly is soot!" exclaimed Dr. Locke. He sniffed, and then he sneezed. "Undoubtedly the man is covered—smothered—with soot! This is—extraordinary!"

"A cunning disguise, sir!" said Mr. Prout. "I certainly took him for a negro. A cunning disguise! But his identity will be revealed. No doubt he is well known to the police."

"Probably—probably!" assented the Head.

"Urrgh! Gurrgh! Wurrgh!" came in an agonised gurgle from the wretched man. "Let me speak! Urrgh!"

"A rope!" exclaimed Mr. Prout. "Someone fetch a rope! A box-rope will do. Unfortunately, there are no handcuffs in the school. But a box-rope—"

"Urrgh! I—I—"

"He must be bound hand and foot until the police arrive—"

"I—I—Urrgh! I—I—"

"Silence, scoundrel! You need say nothing until the officers of the law take you in charge. A box-rope—"

"Gurrgh! Fool—"

"What? What?" ejaculated Prout. "Fool! Release me!" The new beak had the use of his voice at last. "Will you release me at once?"

"What? Certainly not! I am not likely to release you, you desperate rascal! A box-rope!" bawled Prout.

"Fool! Idiot! I am not a burglar!" shrieked the hapless man. "Will you release me, you old fool?"

"Upon my word—"

"Dr. Locke! Will you—"

"Bless my soul! The man's voice seems familiar!" said the Head. "Who—who is he? Keep him secure. Mr. Prout, but let him speak. Who are you?"

"I have him safe, sir. But a box-rope—"

"I am not a burglar!" shrieked the blackened man frantically. "Get off! Release me! I am Mr. Smedley!"

"What?" stuttered the Head blankly.

"Mr. Smedley!" repeated Prout.

"Upon my word, how dare you make such an impudent statement? Rascal!"

"Release me! I—I—"

"I shall do nothing of the kind! A box-rope—"

"One moment, Mr. Prout!" gasped Dr. Locke. "I seem to recognise the man's voice. I—I think it is Mr. Smedley!"

"It is certainly Mr. Smedley, sir!" said Wingate, in utter wonder. "He is black with soot, but it is Mr. Smedley, sir!"

"Pray release him, Mr. Prout!" said the Head. "It is certainly Mr. Smedley, though why he should have

(Continued on page 26.)

THRILL-PACKED DETECTIVE ADVENTURE STORY!

The MAN BEHIND the SCENES!

Starring FERRERS
LOCKE, detective,
and his clever boy
assistant, JACK
DRAKE.



BY
HEDLEY SCOTT

HOW THE STORY STARTED.

Following the tragic disappearance of Christopher Dean, a famous flying man, FERRERS LOCKE, the Baker Street detective, gets on the trail of two clever criminals, JULIUS TANKERHEAD and MERVYN VILLIERS, who are pulling off big financial coups in connection with sporting events. An attempt to frame a big footer match is nipped in the bud at the crucial moment by Locke. In retaliation, Tankerhead hires a dago convict to kill Locke. But the detective captures the would-be killer, and hands him over to the police!

(Now read on.)

Two Wily Birds!

"ME feel faint—" "Tiger" Dillone threw his whole weight on the sturdy arm of the constable, who was taking him to the police station, and uttered the words hoarsely.

Constable X3857 stopped, his youthful face expressing a certain measure of alarm, but his grip on the scraggy arm of the cat-burglar, who had forced an entry into Ferrers Locke's rooms did not relax.

Constable X3857, new to the division, had been taught to be wary of "tricks" employed by folk under arrest, but looking at Tiger Dillone's pale, distraught face he fancied he detected genuine signs of illness. He had a lot to learn yet, had this youthful and zealous officer of the law; for instance, that a street lamp throws a deceiving light on to a human face. For it was in the direct beam of a street light that Tiger Dillone had halted and complained of feeling faint. He certainly looked pale.

The Tiger was a wily bird. He knew at once that this good-natured constable had been taken in, so he proceeded to make full use of that initial advantage.

He suddenly collapsed, with a low moan, and his eyes closed. For humanity's sake the constable withdrew his ju-jutsu grip on the burglar's arm, and, instead, supported the drooping figure by throwing his sturdy arm under the wretched man's shoulders.

That was all Constable X3857 remembered—except that something suddenly smote him with devastating force under the chin.

It was his turn to collapse, and,

incidentally, a signal for the wily Tiger to come to with amazing suddenness and vigour for a stricken man. He rubbed the top of his head where it had come into violent contact with the constable's chin and grinned his childlike smile.

Next second, within a stone's-throw of the police station to which the constable had been escorting him, Tiger Dillone made a complete and unnoticed getaway.

He darted into the shadows like a hunted rat, and was swallowed up by the darkness many seconds before the crestfallen constable collected his scattered senses and rose to his feet.

"Well, I'll be blowed!" murmured the constable, caressing his damaged chin with a gentle hand. "Well, the dirty little rat!"

It was the first and only time Constable X3857 allowed his natural kindness towards suffering humanity ever to come before his strict interpretation of duty. Meanwhile, he made a great search of the surrounding neighbourhood for the rogue who had deceived him.

Needless to say, the Tiger gave him no help in this matter; he had disappeared as swiftly and as completely as if the road had opened up to receive him. A fruitless hour's search did not add to the good temper of the constable, and neither did the scathing remarks his superintendent addressed to him when he made his unhappy report.

In the meantime, Tiger Dillone was making hotfoot for a "doss-house" in Waterloo, where he knew he would be safe for a few hours.

He chose a roundabout course, for obvious reasons, and hugged every shelter en route. But he nearly jumped out of his shabby clothes when, quite unexpectedly, he came face to face with someone who addressed him by name:

"Tiger! What the devil are you doing here?"

Tiger found himself looking up into the astonished face of a middle-aged individual, who was in evening dress. He looked about the last man a fellow like Dillone would know. Then enlightenment came home to the startled Tiger in a flood. The face was quite unfamiliar to him; but the voice was

the same as that of the black-bearded man with the misshapen nose.

"You!" hissed the Tiger. Julius Tankerhead bit his lip. He realised, too late, that he had betrayed himself.

"What are you doing here?" he croaked.

The Tiger began to whine. Bit by bit he told the story of that unhappy entry into Ferrers Locke's chambers and his subsequent arrest and escape.

"You bungling fool!" was all the sympathy he got from Julius Tankerhead. "And you told this hound Locke that you were to meet me at Turrand's?"

The Tiger admitted as much with a flow of explanations and apologies, all the time wondering who this swell guy really was in respectable life—for respectable he certainly was now, by all outward and visible signs.

It was as well perhaps for Julius Tankerhead that the cunning Tiger, ready even to double-cross his own grandfather, if there was money in it, did not know his employer's real name.

Yet chaotic as were Tankerhead's thoughts just then exposure by his hired assassin did not enter them. His mind was toying with a certain diabolical plan which was to be staged at Turrand's as per the appointment—the appointment which he knew now Ferrers Locke would keep instead of the Tiger.

Julius Tankerhead's lips came together grimly. Then he looked down on the diminutive figure of the Tiger.

"Didn't you say the police were looking for you?"

The ex-convict started and gazed about him fearfully.

"Take my tip and lie doggo," said Tankerhead coolly. "After all, Pentonmoor isn't exactly the nicest place to spend a vacation in. And, say, forget you ever met me. Good-night—or, rather, good-morning!"

Without a further word or look, Julius Tankerhead went serenely on his way, feeling with a crook's intuition that Tiger Dillone would attempt to follow him.

He was right. Dangerous as his own position was, Tiger Dillone saw big money ahead of him once he

could "name and place" his strange employer.

He followed the jaunty-striding Tankerhead at a distance of twenty yards. His very keenness to keep the man in sight resulted in a strange trick of fate being played within fifteen minutes of that parting. For the man in evening clothes turned sharply to the right and went down a badly lit side street.

The Tiger slunk after him, came to a dismayed halt when his piercing eyes beheld nothing ahead of him save the drab vista of street, and was about to let forth his opinion of things in a torrent of choice invective, when—

Thud!

A dark figure leaped out of the doorway in front of which the Tiger had stopped; an arm swung up and down with a lightning-like movement, and, like the constable, the Tiger knew no more.

Julius Tankerhead spurned the man's inanimate figure with the toe of his expensive shoe, pocketed the small life-preserver which had done its fell work so quietly and cleanly, and strode off.

Like the Tiger before him, he chose a devious route, finally hailed and got into a taxi, and was driven home.

"Bit of luck for me that I bumped into the Tiger!" he mused, as he lolled back on the cushions and lit an expensive cigar. "And a real bit of luck I fancied a walk home from the club!"

He thought no more of the Tiger lying stretched out and senseless in the darkened street, but let himself in and was soon between the sheets, seeking the sleep of a man who feels that he has well deserved it.

And as for the hapless Tiger, he came to in the very police station towards which Constable X3857 had been taking him earlier on; and almost the first person he saw was that zealous young officer.

But the credit of the Tiger's capture did not go to him; it went to a colleague who had almost pitched over his insensible figure, and, recognising the Tiger, had hastened to "bring him in."

It was as well, perhaps for the Tiger that there was a big, swelling bruise on the back of his head, for, as Constable X3857 reflectively fingered his own bruised chin, he was sorely tempted to return the compliment.

As the Tiger sat on the plank bed in his little cell he cursed the hour he had met up with the "black-bearded man," and already he pictured the smiling face of the warder at Pentonmoor as he opened the big iron gates of the prison to readmit him after such a short spell of freedom.

Even that, however, would not have been so bad to Tiger Dillone if he could have squealed on the man who had employed him. That, alas, was a privilege denied him, for the Tiger hadn't the foggiest notion who he was.

Julius Tankerhead had banked on that right from the commencement of their "business" relationship.

The Trap!

TURRAND'S cafe was a meeting-place of cosmopolitans. Every race under the sun was represented in its steady flow of patrons. And if looks were anything to judge by every crime under the sun was committed by these selfsame patrons.

Trade was good at Turrand's. If you were on the "books," it was rumoured, you could always dispose of burglariously acquired articles, such as diamonds and jewels, and any form of gold. And at Turrand's, too, one could always hire a special, private room, where fresh cribs could be cracked—in theory—and where even more nefarious plans could be talked over at will, safe from the ears of the guardian police.

Monsieur Turrand, a smiling Portuguese, with long, black moustaches, dirty, oily face, and a dirtier soul, was always in attendance. He was well aware that the police kept a lively watch on his premises and upon all who went in and came out. But Monsieur Turrand was an expert at his lawless craft of receiver, and was fond of telling his friends that there were no flies on Monsieur Turrand. There certainly were no flies on this unprepossessing gentleman, for no self-respecting fly would come within a foot of his oily person. And the fact remained that, so far, Monsieur Turrand had successfully kept outside the clutches of the law.

He leaned on the counter now, in his rolled-up shirtsleeves, a grimy apron drawing attention to his rotundity, and the peculiar brightness of his cunning, deep-set eyes was a sure and certain sign that business with Monsieur Turrand was definitely good.

The sanded floor of the cafe was littered with cigarette ends. The marble-topped tables were all engaged by chattering patrons, so much so, that something akin to the tower of Babel, on a miniature scale of course, rose up to smite the ears of any fresh newcomer.

Ferrers Locke had visited Turrand's before, although the estimable proprietor was not aware of that fact. Now the celebrated detective patronised this den of thieves in the guise of a shifty-eyed Italian. His skin was of a dirty olive pallor, his brows were thick and bushy; large, ornate ear-rings dangled from the lobes of his ears, whilst his unruly mop of raven hair was carelessly topped by a wide-brimmed felt hat which had seen better days.

For the rest, he sported a check shirt and collar to match, both sadly in need of a laundry's attention; a pair of tight-fitting trousers of cheap homespun, and long, pointed shoes of a horrible shade of yellow, so beloved by the Continental.

He lounged to the counter, flashed the greasy proprietor a friendly smile, and called for a bottle of his country's cheapest wine. Bottle and glass in hand, he perched himself against the counter, and waited for the dirty clock over the door to signal the hour of twelve.

His keen eyes missed nothing. Among that motley assembly he recognised at least half a dozen men who should have been behind prison bars. But the laws of England are strict and just—no man can be convicted without definite evidence, which is comforting to the law-abiding citizen, and often most accommodating to some of their lawless brethren.

But while he waited, ostensibly for a view of the man in the black beard and the battered nose, Ferrers Locke was storing away mental pictures of more than one chattering patron of Turrand's.

Twelve o'clock chimed out, but among those who came and went there was no sign of the big, bearded man who, the Tiger had said, had employed him. The detective remained at the counter for five more minutes, nonchalantly drinking his wine and puffing at a foul-smell-

ing cigarette. Then he decided to make a move, entirely on speculation.

He sidled along the counter casually until his mouth was almost in line with the grimy ear of the fat proprietor. In broken English he started to whisper:

"Me friend of Tiger Dillone!" He winked as the fat proprietor turned a look of sharp inquiry upon him. "Me arrange to meet Tiger's black-bearded boss! He here to-day, yes, at twelve of the clock, yes?"

The fat face of Monsieur Turrand broke into a beaming, understanding smile.

"He is expecting you, my friend," was the answer. "He was here early—before twelve o'clock. If you will come this way—"

He lifted the flap in the counter as he spoke, and invited Locke to follow him. Behind the counter was a wooden door giving access to a long, dingy passage and a flight of stairs. Leading the way, Monsieur Turrand stopped at the base of the flight of stairs, and pointed upward.

By the light of a flickering gas-jet Locke could make out another doorway at the top of the stairs.

"Go up, my friend," was monsieur's assuring direction, "but be careful to knock three times."

Without paying any further attention to his visitor the fat proprietor waddled back to his counter, leaving Locke standing listening at the foot of the rickety stairs. Nothing uncommon came to the detective's ears, however, and, with a swaggering boldness he climbed the stairs, and knocked three times, as requested, on the panel of the door.

Came the sound of a chair being scraped along the floor, and what was obviously a barked out injunction to enter.

Locke grasped the handle of the door, swung it open, and strode in. What he saw brought a grim frown to his made-up countenance; for, sitting facing him, along a narrow, wooden table, were six real tough-looking specimens of humanity. On the bare table, in front of every man, lay a long stiletto. On the face of every man dwelt a significant expression of cruelty.

Slam!

Locke started slightly as he heard the door swing to and close behind him, realising that it operated on an automatic device. He was virtually a prisoner among these six killers.

"Well, what do you want?" demanded the leader of the six. "Who are you? A nark?"

Locke decided to try bluff. He smiled greasily.

"Me sorry, gentlemen," he began. "Me appear to have come to the wrong room. Perhaps you gentlemen will permit me to go, yes?"

He bowed greasily, aware now that he had walked into some deadly trap, and backed towards the door.

"Say," commanded the leader of the six, "not so fast, greaser! You can't git out anyhow. But what the tarnation are you doin' here, spying on us?"

Locke smiled again and bowed—and backed to the door.

"Gentlemen, me have made some mistake," he repeated. "Me expected to meet my friend with the black beard, yes?"

A low, ominous growl proceeded from the six.

"So that's your tale, is it? Your friend with the black beard? And who the aitch is he when he's at home?"

"Me know not his name!"

The six exchanged significant glances and rose to their feet.

The leader toyed with a long, slender steel blade and fixed a scowling face upon the visitor.

"Well, you greaser, we don't swallow that tale, see? An' we don't know how much you've heard! You look to me like a dirty, yellow spy. And we've a way of our own of dealing with them guys."

"Ay!" It was a menacing growl from the rest of the gang.

Locke, his back to the door, knew that he was in a tight corner. These desperadoes, obviously, had been expecting him. Now on the strength of regarding him as a spy they were prepared to do—what? The detective's lips set in a grim line. He had little doubt of their intentions as he gazed at each hard, cruel face in turn.

"Me sorry, gentlemen—" he bowed again, one arm thrown across his breast, the other flung behind him. And the latter was snaking with the quickness of light, for the revolver he carried in his hip pocket.

Even so, however, the leader of the gang was quicker. His right hand snapped up the long, gleaming stiletto; the wrist muscle barely seemed to move. Next second that gleaming length of steel was speeding straight for Ferrers Locke's right arm even as it emerged from behind his back the revolver grasped firmly in the detective's hand.

Ping!

The stiletto went clean through the sleeve of Locke's jacket and shirt, its slender point buried itself in the panels of the door to a depth of three inches; and Ferrers Locke, wrench as he might, found that arm pinned securely and helplessly to the door. With a desperation that drew mirthless chuckles from the six toughs, he grabbed at the revolver with his left hand. But that hand never reached its objective for in the same moment another stiletto twanged through the air, with the speed of light, jabbed hard against Locke's left sleeve and pinned it back securely to the door.

"Very pretty knife play, my friends!" Locke made no pretence now. He knew he had walked into a trap. "And what next?"

What next came in the form of a savage slap across the face from the grimy hand of the leader. Next, he jerked off Locke's wide-brimmed hat and wig of raven black hair and stood back, holding them aloft triumphantly.

It was the signal for a burst of subdued applause and—more knife play. In a glittering cascade the long stilettos seemed to fall about the helpless detective, ringing him in a hard prisoner against the wooden door as these expert knife throwers did their stuff.

"As I said, very pretty," murmured Locke, now realising that his only hope of emerging from this tight corner alive was to play for time. "What next? But don't hurry the performance—I'm enjoying it, believe me."

"What next?" sneered the leader of the toughs. "Well, when we git tired of this, we're going to beat you up, see?"

He clenched a massive fist and laughed cruelly. Locke knew now the sort of vengeance the master mind behind all this had planned. He was not to be killed yet, apparently. He was to be beaten up, disfigured maybe, by this lawless gang.

"You like the idea, mister clever detective?" jeered the leader. Oh, no, don't be alarmed. We shan't kill you. None of us is particular keen to swing. But when we beat up a guy, specially

a nosey-parkin' detective, he goes out of business for a long time—sometimes for keeps."

"How interesting," drawled Locke, hoping against hope, that Drake, who had been given certain specific instructions would not let him down. "But tell me first, there's a good chap, what you intend to do. I shall appreciate your noble efforts better then."

The leader of the gang laughed grudging admiration.

"Well, you're a cool guy, I'll allow," he admitted, "and if it'll do you any good I'll put you wise to our special treatment."

He finished with a coarse laugh which

was taken up by his villainous comrades.

And while that laugh was echoing around the room there came a faint, tense whisper from the other side of the door.

"Hold on, guv'nor! I'm with you!"

Locke's whole being thrilled—the voice, whispered though it was through the crack where the door joined the wall, was recognisable as Jack Drake's!

(Ferrers Locke's been in many a tight corner, but never one like the present! It looks all UP for the wizard of Baker Street, unless— But read all about it for yourself in next week's thrill-packed chapters.)

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS.

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

ONE of my Canadian readers finds it hard to believe that we have villages in England with some of those curious names which occasionally creep into the newspapers. He won't believe that there is a place called

JOHNNY ALL ALONE.

But, nevertheless, it is perfectly true! The hamlet of Johnny All Alone is Suffolk, on the banks of the Stour. While we are talking about strange place-names, would you believe that there is an English village called Pity Me? It is in the north of England. Not far from London, in Essex, one can come across the most curious names of villages and hamlets. Here are some of them:

Helion Bumpstead, Porridgepot, Maggot's End, Snoreham-in-ruins, Wigborough Wick, Jagers, Tenpenny Heath, Keeler's Tye, Cabbage Row, Gallows Green, Hungerdowns, and Sneating Hall.

A question about man-tracking comes from Peter Gordon, of Gateshead.

CAN BLOODHOUNDS TRACK ANYONE?

he asks. Bloodhounds, of course, have a very acute sense of smell. But they can only track a man if they are trained to distinguish his scent by means of a piece of clothing he has worn, or something that he has handled long enough to have left his "scent" upon it.

Bloodhounds will follow the trail of powerful perfumes such as musk. In the old slave day they were frequently employed to overtake runaway slaves, but, nowadays, they are not employed much in tracking down criminals.

Here is

A SCOTLAND YARD QUERY

from Ginger," of Sheffield. How many police forces are there in London? Well, London is perhaps the only city in the world which has two official police forces. The City of London, which is crowded into one square mile, has its own police. The rest of London comes under the force known as the Metropolitan Police, of which the Criminal Investigation Department

(known as "Scotland Yard") is a section.

While all other police forces in this country are under the control of their own municipalities, the Metropolitan Police is actually an arm of the British Government, like the Navy, the Army, and the Air Force. They are wholly controlled by the Home Office.

Except in very exceptional circumstances, London "hobbies" never carry a gun, and, as a result, London criminals are not generally of the "gun-toting" type which are so often found in foreign cities. But if a London crook does happen to have a gun on him when he is arrested—well, he soon wishes he hadn't, for his sentence can quite likely be ten times as much as it would have been if he had, like the London "cop," relied upon his fists!

THE next query comes from "Seadog," of Swanage. He asks:

HOW MANY SAILS ARE THERE ON A FULL-RIGGED SHIP?

There are no fewer than twenty-eight distinct sails on a three-masted full-rigged ship. There are eighteen square sails—seven on the mainmast, six on the foremast, and five on the mizzenmast. There are six staysails—four of them on the mainmast and one each on the fore and mizzen. There are three jibs on the foremast, and one spanker on the mizzen.

There are, of course, four-masted sailing vessels, but it is a three-master, rigged as I have described above, which is technically known as a ship.

Here's another grand school yarn, starring Tom Merry & Co., the chums of St. Jim's, you simply must read:—

"THE OUTSIDER!"

By Martin Clifford.

It appears in our companion paper, The GEM, on sale now, price 2d.

AS space is getting short, I'd better tell you something about next week's super programme.

I don't think I need say much about:

"FORM-MASTER AND ROGUE!"

which is the title of the long complete yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. In fact, if I just say that it is by your favourite author, Frank Richards, you will probably chime in with "Nuff said!" You know what to expect from him, and he has never let you down yet.

There will be another full of thrills instalment of our great sporting and detective story, and a feast of fun in the "Greyfriars Herald" supplement. Of course, our shorter features will appear as usual, including another little chat with

YOUR EDITOR.

THE FORM-MASTER'S SECRET!

(Continued from page 24.)

acted in this extraordinary manner is beyond my comprehension. No doubt he will explain at once. Pray release him."

Rather grudgingly Prout removed his plump knees from the prisoner's chest. Gasping and spluttering, the new master of the Remove dragged himself to his feet. Under its thick coating of soot, his face was crimson with rage.

"Will you let me speak?" howled Mr. Smedley. "I have been the victim of a trick, Dr. Locke—a trap was laid for me—"

"Oh!" ejaculated the Head.

"What is called, sir, a booby-trap!" spluttered Mr. Smedley. "A box of soot, sir, was placed on top of the door of the Remove dormitory—"

"Bless my soul!"

"It fell on my head, sir, as I opened the door of that dormitory!" gasped Mr. Smedley. "I was—was smothered, sir! The foolish boys took me for a burglar, sir, not recognising me—"

"No wonder, sir!" boomed Prout. "No wonder! What were the boys to think, sir, suddenly awakened at this hour, sir, by a man with a black face—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Silence! The boys must have been very much alarmed, Mr. Smedley—really, it was more than enough to alarm them. They could not possibly have known who you were!"

"We hadn't the faintest idea, sir!" said Peter Todd. "We never dreamed that it was Mr. Smedley, sir! At least I know I didn't."

"I thought it was a burglar, sir," said Skinner. "What was a fellow to think, sir?"

"Quite so, quite so!" said the Head. "Quite so! I do not blame you for the mistake! Certainly, you are not to blame. Someone, however, must have laid the trap of which Mr. Smedley speaks—"

"And I can name him, sir!" gasped Mr. Smedley. "That trap was laid for me, sir, by an incorrigible young rascal in my Form, sir, who has gone out of bounds!"

"What?" exclaimed the Head.

"I had reason to believe, sir, that the boy intended to leave the House after lights out, and I visited the dormitory to ascertain whether he was absent," gasped Mr. Smedley. "I have no doubt, sir, that he left this dastardly trap behind him, in case the dormitory

was visited during his absence from the House."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry.

The chums of the Remove exchanged glances, and grinned. That was, no doubt, a natural conclusion for Smedley to come to, believing as he did that Vernon-Smith was out of bounds.

Smithy suppressed a chuckle as he stared at Mr. Smedley's sooty back. The Form-master, facing the Head, had his back to the mob of juniors, and did not see the Bounder—it had not even occurred to him that Vernon-Smith was there with the rest.

"A boy in your Form out of bounds at this hour of the night, Mr. Smedley!" exclaimed the Head, aghast.

"Yes, sir! The boy Vernon-Smith!" The new beak almost gritted the name through his teeth. "And there is no doubt in my mind that when he went he left this dastardly trap—"

"Vernon-Smith!" repeated the Head blankly.

Looking past the sooty, gasping Form-master, he could see the Bounder among the Removites. In his pyjamas, Vernon-Smith did not look as if he had been out of bounds!

"Yes, sir! That incorrigible young rascal, Vernon-Smith—"

"Bless my soul! You are not telling me that Vernon-Smith is out of school bounds, Mr. Smedley—"

"Certainly I am, sir!"

"But—but—but—" stuttered the amazed headmaster.

"There is no doubt about it, sir, and—"

"But—but the boy is standing just behind you, sir!" almost shrieked Dr. Locke.

"Wha-a-at?"

The sooty Form-master spun round like a humming-top. His eyes almost popped through the soot at the sight of Herbert Vernon-Smith. He blinked at him as if he could not believe his eyes—as indeed he hardly could!

"Vernon-Smith is here, Mr. Smedley!" said Dr. Locke, rather grimly.

"Oh! Ah! He—he—he appears to—be here!" stuttered the new master blankly. "He—he—he must have returned—"

"Have you been out of the dormitory since lights-out, Vernon-Smith?" demanded the Head.

"No, sir—not till this row started," said the Bounder meekly. "I came with the other fellows after the burglar—I mean, after Mr. Smedley—"

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Was Vernon-Smith in the dormitory when this—this alarm was given?"

"Certainly, sir!" answered Harry. "I saw him get out of bed when the light was put on."

"I saw him, too, sir!" said Bob Cherry.

"And I, sir!" said Nugent.

"The sawfulness was terrific, esteemed sir!"

"Smithy certainly hasn't been out of the dormitory till now, sir!" added the captain of the Remove. "He came out with the rest of us."

"I am satisfied that he has not," said the Head. "I am perfectly satisfied. Mr. Smedley, it is plain that you were acting under a misapprehension."

"I—I—I thought—"

"It would be as well, sir, to be certain before making so very positive a statement!" said the headmaster tartly.

"Boys, go back to your dormitory at once. Wingate, will you see the Remove to their dormitory? Mr. Smedley, you are in a shocking state—shocking! This must be inquired into to-morrow—at the present moment, sir, I recommend you—"

Mr. Smedley did not wait to hear what the Head recommended; he hurried away, heading for the nearest bathroom. Prout was snorting; the other beaks smiling; the prefects grinning; the Removites chortling! And the sooty, blackened, dishevelled plotter was glad to get out of sight. He left a sooty trail as he went.

In the Remove dormitory there were explosive chuckles and chortles for a long time before the juniors settled down to sleep again.

They expected an inquiry into the affair of the booby-trap on the morrow. But there was no inquiry. For reasons of his own, the new master let the matter drop. Perhaps he disliked the idea of his peculiar methods coming to the knowledge of the headmaster. On reflection, he considered it judicious to let the whole matter fall into oblivion—and it did. In that strange contest for Mr. Vernon-Smith's millions Smithy had won the first round.

But if the Bounder fancied that the new beak had done with him, he was very much mistaken. The man with a borrowed name was very far from having done with him yet.

THE END.

(Don't miss the next yarn in this exciting new series, chums, whatever you do. It's entitled: "FORM-MASTER AND ROGUE!" and shows Frank Richards at his very best.)



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THE NEW Greyfriars Herald

March 31st, 1934. EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OF COOKING EXPERTS? A meeting to consider this question will be addressed by W. G. Bunter, Esq., in the Rag to-night. We certainly advocate cooking experts ourselves. Most of the experts we've met in the Remove ought to be boiled!

GREYFRIARS 100 YEARS AGO

Grey Friars of 1834! Are ye men of strength and valour like the older generations that made the name of our great college famous, or are ye puny weaklings unworthy of a place on the register of this scholastic foundation? After watching the fastie encounter which took place behind the chapel last week, we fear that the latter description is the appropriate one.

FOOTER-COURTFIELD FASHION

Footer Remove Won't Repeat That impression turned out to be completely justified. Right from the kick-off the Courtfield Smashers were playing with their hands as well as their feet. By which we mean that as soon as a Greyfriars man got the ball some body bobbed up from somewhere and punched him on the nose or grabbed him by the ears!



to the Smashers, with the airy comment, "Offside!" Two minutes later, before we'd recovered from that shock, the Smashers' centre-forward stood almost in the Greyfriars goalmouth and took a pass when he was offside by ten clear yards. Squiff, who was in goal, didn't even attempt to stop the leather; but he almost collapsed when

BUNTER'S FACE WINS PRIZE

Staggering Sequel Bunter rolled into the Editorial office last week and said: "I say, you fellows, why don't you all have your photos taken?" "That's a free coupon out of each, eh?" grinned Bob Cherry. "How much do we have to spend, Fatty?" "If you put it like that, I shall wash my hands of the thing entirely," said Bunter, with a lofty air. "But if you're willing to appreciate that I'm doing you a good turn in my usual kind-hearted fashion, I don't mind telling you all about it. The fact is, if I can get five customers to get their photos taken at the reduced price of three bob a time they give me a photo of myself free of charge."

But why have that? asked Bob in surprise. "I should have thought an occasional glance in a mirror would have been all you could stand!" "Boast!" Bunter snorted; then, to clear things up, he added: "You see, I want a good picture of myself to send to the 'Courtfield Gazette', Budding Film Stars' Competition. There's a prize of a film engagement to the chap who considers to be the best-looking of the lot."

It was out! The staff of the "Greyfriars Herald" stared at Bunter speechlessly for a few seconds, and then, when the amazing fact that Bunter was really and truly entering for a beauty competition had penetrated their brain-boxes, they yelled! "Such a unique event merited encouragement. Everybody wanted his photograph taken particularly, so Nugent went to Courtfield with Bunter and paid for him to have the job done, at cost being defrayed by public subscription. Bunter's portrait was duly entered for the 'Courtfield Gazette' Budding Film Stars' Competition."

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!



HE DOES AS HE'S TOLD

Fag's Obedient Ways Wingate, of the Sixth, recently gave his minor a stern warning. "Loder tells me your fagging hasn't been satisfactory lately," he said. "He can't rely on you to obey a single order, and as often as not you do the opposite to what he tells you. Now, this will have to stop." "Yes, George," said Jack Wingate meekly. "Fagging exists for the purpose of instilling ideas of discipline and obedience into youngsters like you, and I'm going to see that it achieves that purpose," said Wingate major. "Unless you knuckle under and obey Loder's orders from now on there's going to be trouble for you. Understand?"

"Yes, rather!" "Well, that's all right, then," grunted the big man of the Sixth. "See that you do just what he tells you to in future!" Those of our readers who know something of Wingate's rebellious disposition will be surprised to learn that he has carried out his promise to the letter. But the result has not been at all in accordance with Loder's anticipations! The reason for this is, strangely enough, that Wingate minor has carried out every order Loder has given him in the most precise and literal manner possible.

For instance, after Wingate minor had cleared up Loder's study on the first morning, Loder said: "Buzz!" And Jack Wingate, instead of scuttling out of the study, planted his feet firmly in the middle of it and started making a noise like a wasp!

CARELESS PAINTER MYSTERY

To celebrate the coming of spring, the School House has just been given a coat of new paint. On the average, about six fellows per diem have had paint spilled on them. The annoyance became focused on one painter in particular—a short chap with a drooping moustache—and a crowd of infuriated juniors rushed round to see the foreman. The foreman, however, pointed out that his men were always at their dinner from 12.30 to 1.30—the very period in which the spillings had always happened—and, furthermore, that he had never had a man with a drooping moustache working under him.

STUDIES SPRING-CLEANED Ink-stains removed, booby-trap marks blended into carpet patterns, dust neatly collected and piled under the table, and the study delicately perfumed with Essence of Doughnuts. The job complete, 2s. 6d. only!—SOCIAL SERVICES INCORPORATED. (Director: G. Tubb), Third Form-room.

study and turned it into a creditable model of a ship. Two other incidents have come to our notice since then. In the first, Loder came in when Wingate minor was burning a painful of sausages over the fire and, enraged at the thought of his tea being spoiled, shouted: "Chuck it, you young idiot!"

In the second, Wingate minor poked his head round the study door and said: "Mr. Quelch wants you." Loder, who was discussing the chances of a certain "gee-gee" with Carne, said: "Tell him to go and chop chips!" Naturally, he didn't expect the kid to do it. But it's the unexpected that happens. Wingate minor went right to Mr. Quelch and blandly delivered Loder's message!

How much longer the campaign is likely to continue we can't say. But it certainly looks as if it won't be long at the present rate before Loder is only too glad to give Wingate minor best and engage a fag with less original ideas of obedience!

Bolshevik minor received "six" from Wingate for attempting to purchase cigar-ettes—and another "six" from Loder for failing to make the purchase!

The crowd rushed back to the front of the School House, only to find that the mysterious painter had vanished; and up to the time of going to press he has not reappeared! All very mysterious, isn't it? Nobody has the foggiest idea who he could have been. Apart from Skinner, nobody in the school is known to have borrowed a drooping moustache from Wibley's theatrical props. And when Skinner was asked whether it was the man he laughed at the very idea!