

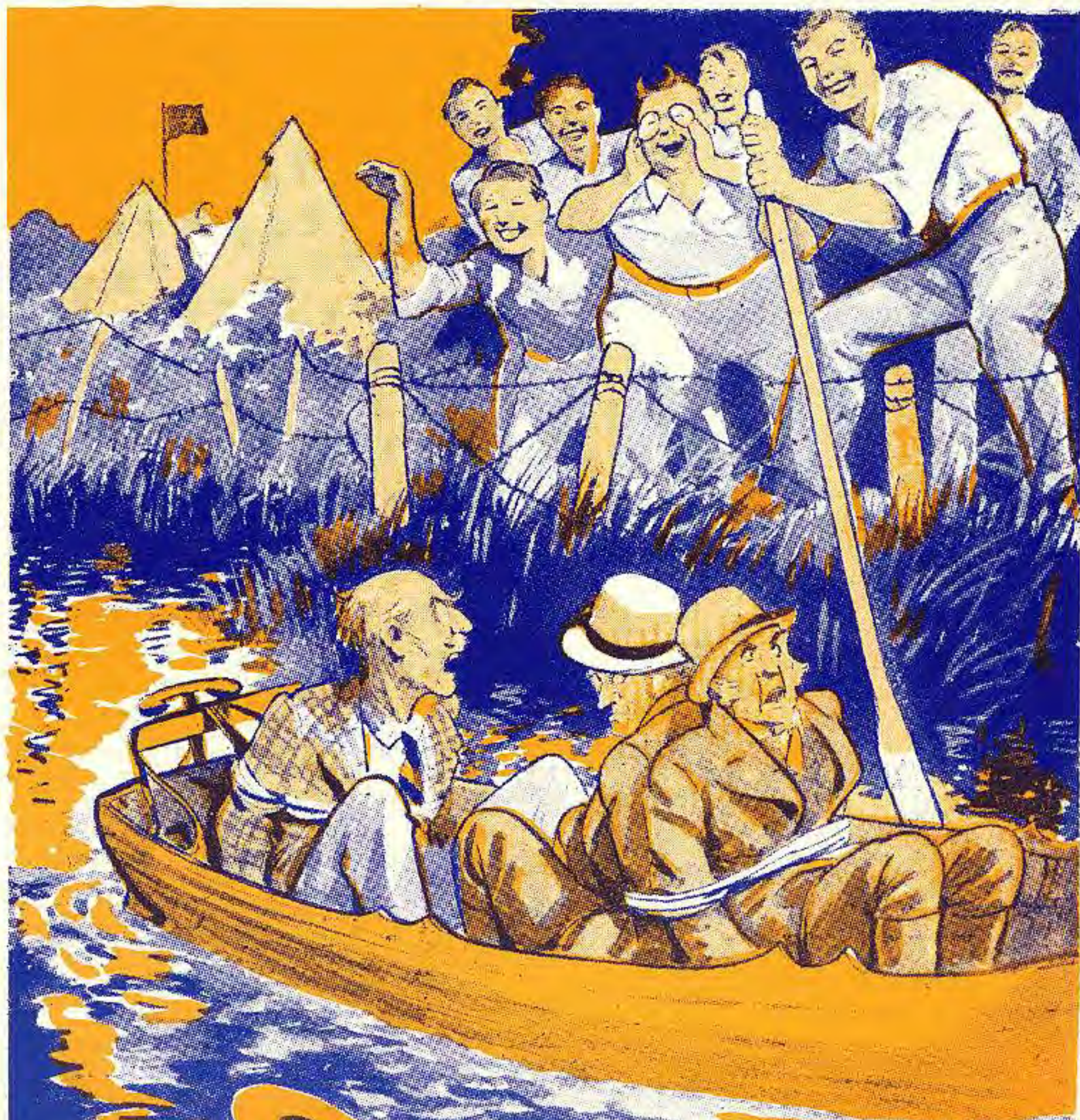
"THE ISLAND SCHOOLBOYS!" Amazing Story of the "No-Surrender" Removites . . **Inside!**

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Read
"THE ISLAND SCHOOLBOYS!"
INSIDE



THE ISLAND SCHOOLBOYS!

BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Out of School!

CLANG, clang, clang! Loud and sharp rang the bell in the sunny July morning.

It was the rising-bell for the Greyfriars Remove. But it was not the bell that they were accustomed to hear in their dormitory at the old school. It swung from a branch of the big oak on Popper's Island, in the River Sark, and it was Bob Cherry who was ringing it with his usual vigour.

A mile away, at Greyfriars School, Gosling was clanging the rising-bell as usual. There, the Sixth and the Fifth, the Shell and the Fourth, the Third and the Second, yawned and turned out. But not the Remove! The Remove were far from their usual quarters.

Neither did they turn out so promptly on Popper's Island as they had been accustomed to do in the Remove dormitory at Greyfriars. Bob Cherry clanged the bell on the oak branch with terrific vim. It was heard all over the island in the river; far away on both banks; it might almost have been heard at Greyfriars.

All the rebels of Greyfriars heard it; but many of them did not heed. There were no classes for the Form that had marched out of Greyfriars and camped on Popper's Island. There were no masters and no prefects. Instead of turning out, many fellows yawned and turned over, and went to sleep again. Billy Bunter's echoing snore was checked only for a moment. Then it was resumed, like a deep bass accompaniment to the clang of the bell.

Clang, clang, clang!

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Vernon-Smith put his head out of a bell-tent.

"Stop that fearful row!" he shouted.

"Turn out, Smithy!" called back Bob cheerily.

"Rats to you!"

"Rising-bell, old bean!"

"Oh, don't be a silly ass!"

The Bounder drew his head in again. Having cast off the authority of head-master and Form-master, Smithy seemed to consider that he was done with authority for good.

Clang, clang, clang, clang!

It was not a musical bell! It was a rusty old iron bell that had once clanged in the fog on a seagoing barge. It had been picked up cheap at Mr. Lazarus' second-hand shop in Courtfield. It was old, it was rusty, and it was cracked; but it made plenty of noise. With Bob Cherry's muscular arm pulling at the rope, it was bound to make plenty of noise.

Sleep was difficult for the laziest fellow in the rebel Form. That cracked old iron bell, like Macbeth, murdered sleep!

"Will you stop that awful row?" yelled Skinner, sitting up in his blankets on a bed of ferns.

Clang, clang, clang!

"Aw, can it, you jay!" howled Fisher T. Fish. "I guess it gets my goat, a few! Pack it up, you pesky geck!"

Clang, clang!

Harry Wharton & Co turned out promptly. They were not slackers, even if they were rebels; and they were ready to set an example of order and discipline to the Remove. Also, they were rather anxious for that bell to cease from troubling.

"Turn out, you slackers!" roared Bob Cherry. "Buck up, Smithy! Get a move on, Toddy! Jump up, Squiff! I'm getting tired of ringing this bell!"

"Not so tired as everybody else, you howling ass!" snorted Bolsover major.

"Let it alone, you fathead!"

"You're not up yet!"

"I'm not getting up yet! Stop that row!"

Clang, clang, clang!

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter's snore stopped, and he lifted a fat face and a fat head from his blankets. "I say, make him stop that row! How's a fellow to sleep with that fearful din going on?"

"The sleepfulness is not the proper caper, my esteemed fat Bunter!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Beast!"

"Turn out, you men!" called out Harry Wharton. "We haven't come here to slack, you know!"

"Haven't we?" growled Skinner. "I jolly well know that I'm not turning out for an hour yet."

"Your mistake!" said the captain of the Remove cheerily. "You are!"

And Skinner did! As Wharton grasped his ankles and hooked him bodily from his blankets, he had no choice about turning out. He rolled on the greensward under the spreading branches of the oak, and roared.

"You cheeky rotter! Leggo! Ow!"

"You turning out, Snoop?"

"No!" snapped Sidney James Snoop.

"I'll help you, old bean!"

"Look here—Yarooooh!"

Snoop rolled over Skinner.

Clang, clang, clang!

"Will you stop that row!" shrieked

Vernon-Smith. "Do you want to wake up everybody from Canterbury to Dover?"

"Why not?" answered Bob. "It's a lovely morning, and time everybody turned out. What's the good of slacking?"

"They'll hear that row at Popper Court, and know we're here!" snarled Skinner. "You'll have old Popper's keepers coming along."

"Let 'em all come!" said Bob. "They're bound to root us out sooner or later, anyhow! It's a lovely morning for a scrap!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Aren't you getting up, Smithy?" asked Johnny Bull.

"No!" came an angry snort from the bell-tent.

"Better crawl out, old bean!"

"Rats!"

Johnny Bull grinned. He sat down on the bell-tent. There was a howl from the Bounder underneath, and he wriggled out.

"You silly ass!" he yelled.

"Look here, Smithy," began Harry Wharton, "we've got to keep some sort of order in the camp—"

"Oh, shut up!"

The Bounder did not seem in a good temper. However, now that he was up, he grabbed his towel and walked down the path under the thick trees on the island for a dip in the Sark.

Other fellows followed his example. Bob Cherry left off ringing the bell at last, much to the relief of all concerned. The Famous Five went round the camp together, rooting out slackers. Fellows who felt entitled to another hour, or another ten minutes, gave up the disputed point, when they were rolled out in a heap, or jerked out by their ears.

Billy Bunter was the last, and he raised strenuous objections. Bunter never liked the rising-bell at Greyfriars, and his view was that it was an absolutely rotten idea to institute one on Popper's Island. What was the use of fellows rebelling against the Head, Bunter wanted to know if they couldn't stay in bed till ten o'clock or eleven? Bunter hugged his blankets round him and glared at the Famous Five.

"Lemme alone!" he bawled. "I'm not getting up yet! You can call me at ten, if you like."

"Roll him out!" said Frank Nugent.

"Beast! Look here, I'll get up when brekker's ready!" said Bunter. "You can call me as soon as it's ready—quite ready, mind—"

"Jump on him!" said Bob Cherry. "Now, all jump together, and see if there's room for all of us to land at once—"

"Yaroooh!"

Billy Bunter was out of his blankets in a twinkling, without waiting for the Famous Five to jump! He did not want to ascertain whether there was room on him for five pairs of feet to land at once!

"Beasts!" he roared.

"Here's your towel, Bunter," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Come along and get a dip!"

"Shan't!" roared Bunter. "Why, we might as well be in school at this rate! I don't need all the washing you fellows do, either. I'm clean!"

"The cleanliness is not preposterous, my esteemed Bunter!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Beast!"

"Poor old Bunter's too tired to walk down to the river," said Bob Cherry. "Let's roll him along like a barrel."

"Hear, hear!"

"Go it!"

Billy Bunter rolled—and roared;

"Whoop! I say, you fellows— Yooop! Leggo! I say, I'm going—I—I want to go—I—I'm just longing for a bathe— Yarooop! Oh crikey!"

And Billy Bunter went—the Famous Five following him, laughing. Under the green branches that jutted out from Popper's Island there was a merry dashing and splashing in the water.

It was quite a cheerful scene that met the eyes of a tall, angular gentleman who came striding down the tow-path beside the Sark. Cheerful as it was, it did not seem to have a cheering effect on Sir Hilton Popper, the lord of Popper Court. He stopped and stared at it in amazement and wrath through his eyeglass.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Ordered Off!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"Popper!"

"The esteemed and ludicrous Popper!"

Harry Wharton & Co., treading water, looked towards the tall figure on the bank. They smiled at the expression on the face of Sir Hilton Popper. Wrath and amazement were mingled in Sir Hilton's speaking countenance. He removed his eyeglass, rubbed it, and jammed it into his eye again, to stare

The voice of authority at Greyfriars School has lost its power. The Removites to a man have rebelled and barricaded themselves on Popper's Island—prepared to stand against all comers. Such a procedure has never before been known in the history of Greyfriars!

at the sportive crowd in the water as if he could hardly believe what he saw through it.

"The dear old bean looks waxy!" remarked Smithy.

"The waxfulness is terrific!"

"I guess he's got his mad up!" remarked Fisher T. Fish, and he promptly scrambled back to the island. There was a wide space between the island and the bank of the Sark, and the bathers were far out of the old baronet's reach. But Fishy was taking no risks.

Sir Hilton Popper strode down to the edge of the grassy bank. He waved an angry hand at the swimmers.

Bob Cherry waved back in cheery greeting.

"Top of the morning, sir!" he called out.

"What? What?"

"Lovely morning, sir! Enjoying life, what?"

"You impertinent young rascal!"

"Oh, my hat! The old bean's turned out of bed on the wrong side this morning," said Bob, "I'm wasting my nice manners on him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What does this mean?" roared Sir Hilton, "How dare you bathe here? What are you doing on my island? You are Greyfriars boys! Why are you not at school?"

"We've cleared out of Greyfriars, for the present, sir!" answered Harry Wharton.

"You have—what?" ejaculated Sir

Hilton. "Do you mean to say that you are out of school without leave?"

"You've got it!" said the Bounder.

"I heard from my keepers that a number of vagrants had camped on my island. I find that they are Greyfriars boys!" exclaimed Sir Hilton. "Get yourselves dressed at once, and return to the school. I shall see that you are all severely punished for this outbreak."

"Thanks awfully, sir!" drawled Lord Mauleverer.

"You are aware that I am a governor of the school!" roared Sir Hilton. "You will obey my commands at once."

"I don't think!" grinned the Bounder.

"Wharton! You are head boy of this Form, I believe?"

"Right on the nail!"

"Do not answer me in that absurd and impertinent manner, Wharton! As you are head boy, see that all the young rascals return to the school at once."

Harry Wharton looked round him at a swarm of grinning faces that dotted the sunny water. Then he looked at the irate Sir Hilton.

"I can't see any here, sir!" he answered.

"What? You cannot see any what?"

"Any young rascals, sir!" answered Harry. "If you mean the young gentlemen of the Greyfriars Remove—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wharton! If you dare to bandy words with me, I shall lay my stick about you!" roared the lord of Popper Court.

"Do not answer me in that absurd and impertinent manner, sir," said the captain of the Remove in a cheery parody of Sir Hilton. And there was a howl of laughter from the rebels of Greyfriars.

Sir Hilton's face, already pink with wrath, became crimson. He had a stick under his arm, and he grasped it, and brandished it at the grinning juniors. It was rather fortunate for them that they were far out of his reach, or certainly that stick would have taken toll. The testy old gentleman stamped out to the very edge of the grassy bank, where it overhung the Sark. But there was no swimmer within reach of the brandished stick. Skinner and Snoop and two or three more fellows followed Fishy's example and retreated on to the island. But most of the Remove remained where they were, only taking care to give the lord of Popper Court, and his stick, a wide berth.

"Joyce!" roared Sir Hilton.

A burly man in velveteens and gaiters came out of the wood. There was a faint grin on his weather-beaten face, as he glanced at the juniors. But his look became gravity itself as Sir Hilton's fiery eye turned on him.

"Joyce! Drive those young scoundrels away from this spot!" rapped Sir Hilton Popper.

"Oh, yes, Sir Hilton!" gasped the keeper.

He blinked at his lord and employer and then blinked at the Removites. Probably he did not quite see how he was to drive away thirty fellows, especially as he had no means of getting at them, unless he swam for it.

"Joyce!" called out Harry Wharton.

"Eh! Yes, Master Wharton."

"You are Sir Hilton's head keeper, I believe?" said the captain of the Remove, in playful imitation of Sir Hilton's remarks to himself.

"Yes, sir!"

"As you are head keeper, see that that old duffer returns to Popper Court at once!" said Wharton.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Removites. Sir Hilton gurgled. Wharton's parody of his own words made the juniors yell, but it did not seem to amuse Sir Hilton in the least.

"You—you—you young ruffian!" He gasped. "I will have you expelled from Greyfriars for this! Joyce! You are laughing! How dare you laugh, Joyce? I repeat, how dare you?"

"I—I—I—" stammered Joyce.

"You should have prevented these young rascals trespassing on my island! What do I pay you for?" roared Sir Hilton. "Wharton!"

"Barge on, old bean!"

"I shall go to the school and see your headmaster! I shall insist upon all of you being taken back to school at once, soundly flogged, and the ring-leaders expelled. Nothing less will satisfy me."

"Then I'm afraid you're booked to stay unsatisfied, sir!" answered the captain of the Remove. "We're not going back till the Head comes to our terms. You see, he's sacked a Remove man for nothing, and we're not letting him go—"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Do you mean to tell me that your headmaster is allowing you to remain out of school?" exclaimed Sir Hilton.

"He can't exactly help it," answered the captain of the Remove. "He sent the Sixth Form prefects after us, and we whopped them—"

"You—you what?"

"Whopped them!"

"The whopfulness was terrific."

"And they were jolly glad to get away!" chorled Bob Cherry. "We haven't seen them since. They're not keen to pay us a second visit."

"Good gad!"

"We're all here now, the whole Remove, to the last giddy man!" went on Wharton. "And we're holding out till the Head comes round! If you're going round to see Dr. Locke, sir, you might mention that we're sticking to Bunter, and are not letting him be sacked. We don't want him, of course—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Nobody could possibly want him—"

"Beast!"

"But fair play's a jewel, and a Remove man isn't going to be sacked for nothing! You might mention that to the Head when you see him."

"You—you—you—" gasped Sir Hilton. "You—you—"

"Try singing, sir!" suggested Peter Todd.

"What?"

"It's good for stuttering!" explained Peter.

Sir Hilton was stuttering with wrath. But he did not try singing! He seemed on the point of choking.

"If—if—if I could reach you—" he gurgled.

"Jump in, sir!" suggested the Bounder. "Give him a shove in, Joyce! It will cool the old bean's temper."

Joyce turned his face away, lest Sir Hilton should suspect him of laughing again. The lord of Popper Court brandished his stick, fairly stamping with rage.

"Look out!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Oh, my hat! He's in!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Sir Hilton was on the very edge of the jutting grassy bank. That angry stamp was his undoing. It dislodged a large chunk of earth, which slipped

down into the river. As Sir Hilton was standing on it, naturally he slipped down along with it.

Splash! Splash!

"Grooooooogh!"

"Oh, jiminy!" gasped Joyce.

Sir Hilton's stick floated away on one side, his hat on the other. He splashed and struggled and gurgled. The keeper leaned down from the bank and grasped him. Drenched and dripping, with his eyeglass fluttering at the end of its cord, Sir Hilton was dragged out of the Sark.

"Gurrrrrgggh!"

He stood with water streaming down him, his clothes clinging limply to his bony figure. He spluttered frantically.

"Oooogh! Ooooch! Oooo - er! Groogh!"

"Do it again!" yelled the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Sir Hilton Popper shook a dripping fist, turned, and stamped away up the bank in the direction of Popper Court. He had had enough of the Greyfriars rebels for the present, and he was badly in need of a towelling and a change. His gasps and gurgles died away in the distance. Joyce, the keeper, followed him, and now that Sir Hilton's lordly back was turned, the grin on Joyce's face extended almost from ear to ear.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Master Without a Form!

MR. QUELCH, the master of the Remove, looked into his Form-room at Greyfriars School with a frowning and troubled face.

Every other Form-room was going strong, but the Remove room was empty. That apartment was seldom the quietest at Greyfriars. Now a pin might have been heard to drop in it.

Mr. Quelch was a Form-master without a Form—which was a very peculiar position for any "beak."

Not a man of the Lower Fourth remained within the walls of the school. Mr. Quelch, like Othello, found his occupation gone.

A Form-master, especially one with a numerous junior Form, is a hard-worked man! So Quelch might have been expected to enjoy the rest from his usual strenuous labours. But he did not! The Remove were a hard Form to handle—with duffers like Bunter, slackers like Mauly, obstreperous fellows like Bolsover major, rascals like Fisher T. Fish, shady scamps like Skinner; but, on the whole, it was a good Form and a credit to the school, and Quelch missed it sorely. He would have been glad to see the Removites in their places and to get on with his job—he felt lost without his work. He could have taken a pleasant walk that fine July morning, and Quelch was a tremendous walker. But he did not want to take a walk; he wanted to take his Form! And his Form was not there to be taken!

Prout, the master of the Fifth, looked out of a doorway up the corridor. He spotted Quelch, and stepped out to speak.

"Your boys are still absent, my dear Quelch!" boomed Prout. "A most extraordinary state of affairs, what, what?"

"Quite!" said Quelch briefly.

And he walked down the corridor to the door on the quad before Prout could resume. He did not want chinwag from Prout. Prout really was the cause of all the trouble. It was because ink

had been squirted over Prout that Billy Bunter had been sacked—and the sacking of Bunter had caused the rebellion of the Remove and their remarkable exodus from the school. Certainly Prout had not asked to be inked!

Quelch walked in the deserted quadrangle, green and sunny and quiet. He did not want to talk to other beaks; since the departure of his Form he had avoided Masters' Common-room as much as possible. He was aware that the other beaks smiled, or sneered, over the present state of affairs, and told one another that such things could not possibly happen in their Forms.

Lascelles, the maths master, passed him in the quad, but did not stop to speak. That young man had tact. He knew that Quelch, outwardly calm, was inwardly writhing. Then Monsieur Charpentier, the French master, appeared in the offing. Mossoo came up to Quelch. Mossoo lacked tact, and he was full of sympathy.

"Les garçons—ze boys, zey are always of to be gone, yes?" asked Monsieur Charpentier.

Mr. Quelch nodded.

"C'est affreux!" said Mossoo. "You shall feel zis, oh yes, verree mooch! Zose young rascals—"

"I do not care to hear such a name applied to the boys of my Form, sir!" said Mr. Quelch stiffly.

"Comment?"

Quelch walked on, leaving Mossoo staring. Monsieur Charpentier realised that his sympathy was not appreciated. He shrugged his shoulders and whisked away.

The Remove master went down to the gates. Gosling, at his lodge, touched his ancient hat, with a very curious look at the Form-master.

Quelch's peculiar position, as a master without a Form, was, of course, talked of up and down Greyfriars, from end to end. Gosling had told Mr. Mimble, the gardener, that these were precious "goings-hon," and Mr. Mimble agreed that they were. Taking no heed of Gosling's stare, Mr. Quelch looked out of gates, up the long white road that ran over the common to Courtfield.

"They ain't coming back, sir!" said Gosling. "Ain't seed 'ide nor 'air of 'em, sir, since they 'ooked it."

Quelch seemed deaf.

"Wot I says is this 'ere, sir—" went on Gosling.

Quelch stepped out into the road. He appeared to have no use for Gosling's entertaining conversation.

Nobody was to be seen on the road. If Mr. Quelch had hoped to spot some sign of returning Removites, he was disappointed. Like Sister Anne, he watched in vain to see anyone coming.

Presently, however, a figure appeared on the road. It was not that of a Remove junior. It was a tall and angular figure, with an eyeglass gleaming in one eye and a stick under one arm.

Quelch compressed his lips a little as he recognised Sir Hilton Popper. It was rather unfortunate that one of the governors of Greyfriars lived so near the school. He had no doubt that Sir Hilton had now learned of the strange state of affairs, and was coming along to poke his lordly nose into it. Indeed, as the rebels of Greyfriars had taken up their quarters on Popper's Island, the baronet could not have remained in ignorance of the outbreak for long.

Sir Hilton was frowning darkly as he came, his long legs whisking. He gave Mr. Quelch a curt nod as he came up.

"Good-morning, sir!" barked Sir

Hilton. "I have called to see Dr. Locke; but you, sir, I think, are the master of the Remove—the boys who have taken possession of my island in the Sark."

"Quite!"

"May I ask, sir, why you have not removed the boys of your Form from my island?" demanded Sir Hilton. "I found them there this morning, sir, and was treated with disrespect and insolence. They refused to go at my order."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, indeed!" snorted Sir Hilton. "Are these boys to be left, sir, wandering about the country at their own pleasure?"

"I understand that they are camped on the island," said Mr. Quelch calmly.

Sir Hilton gasped. This was dashed impertinence, from a man who was, after all, in Sir Hilton's lordly view, only a dashed teacher!

The fact was, that Sir Hilton's claim to that island was very nebulous. Sir Hilton's wide estate was covered with mortgages, as with a garment. But he had found difficulties in raising a mortgage on that island. There was a lack of title-deeds. Lawyers were more particular about title-deeds than was the lord of Popper Court.

"Sir," gasped Sir Hilton, "if you are supporting these boys in this—this rascally rebellion and lawless trespass—"

"Not at all, sir; but—"

"Pah!"

"Really, Sir Hilton—"

"Pah!" repeated Sir Hilton. "If you

clear to you, sir, that— Good gad! Are you going, sir, when I am speaking to you? Stop at once! I insist upon your hearing—"

Sir Hilton insisted in vain. Turning his back on the lord of Popper Court, Mr. Quelch walked away. Sir Hilton glared after him, almost speechless with wrath.

"Mr. Quelch!" he bellowed.

The Remove master did not turn his head.

"Good gad!" gasped Sir Hilton.

He grasped the stick under his arm, and made a stride after Henry Samuel Quelch. Really, it looked, for a moment, as if the irate lord of Popper Court was going to "whop" the back that was turned on him so disdainfully.

Fortunately, Sir Hilton restrained himself. With a snort, he strode on, and



"Why have not the prefects been despatched to remove your rebellious boys from my property?" hooted Sir Hilton Popper. "Attempts have been made," said the Head, "but the prefects were unable—"

"Nonsense and rubbish!" roared Sir Hilton. "Are these senior boys afraid of a mob of juniors? Pah!" The Sixth Formers, showing signs of their recent scrap with the Remove rebels, glared.

"If they wander about, they will probably be brought in by the prefects."

Snort, from Sir Hilton.

"They are trespassing on my property, sir!" he hooted. "Do you suppose, sir, that your boys will be allowed to camp on my property like a mob of disreputable gipsies?"

"On your property, sir?" repeated Mr. Quelch, with a touch of sarcasm. He was in no mood to be bully-ragged by even so great a man as Sir Hilton Popper, baronet, chairman of the governing board of Greyfriars School.

"My island, sir!" hooted Sir Hilton.

"I am sure that my boys would not trespass on private property, sir, if they were aware of it," said Mr. Quelch dryly. "Probably they take the view, general in this neighbourhood, that the island in the Sark is common land, and open to any of the King's subjects, sir!"

venture, sir, to make excuses for these rebellious and impudent young scoundrels—"

"There are some excuses to be made, nevertheless," said Mr. Quelch mildly. "The boys believe that a member of the Form has been unjustly expelled, and they are standing by him. It is, of course, a great error; but—"

"If you encourage these boys, sir, in attempting to dictate to their headmaster, I shall see that you do not long retain your position at Greyfriars!" roared Sir Hilton.

"Kindly do not suggest that I am encouraging them!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "And as for my position at Greyfriars, sir, that does not rest in your hands. I refuse to discuss it with you!"

"What? What?" barked Sir Hilton. "You are aware, sir, that I am chairman of the governors! I will make it

whisked in at the gates of Greyfriars. He was at boiling-point when he arrived at the House, and demanded to see Dr. Locke.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Sir Hilton Takes a Hand!

DR. LOCKE started. He was taking the Sixth Form in Greek, when a deep and booming voice became audible from without.

The Sixth Form fellows exchanged glances. Some of them grinned. They knew the voice of Sir Hilton Popper.

"Bless my soul!" murmured the Head.

He laid down Sophocles—not, perhaps, to the disappointment of the seniors. They were not so keen on Sophocles as their headmaster.

Heavy footsteps were heard on the

corridor. Then there was a startled squeak from Trotter, the House page.

"If you please, sir—"

"Where is Dr. Locke?"

"In the Sixth Form Room, sir! But—"

The heavy footsteps tramped on.

"Bless my soul!" repeated the Head.

Probably he had been expecting to hear, sooner or later, from Sir Hilton Popper. He was not anticipating the interview with any pleasure.

Dr. Locke was, in point of fact, rather at a loss to know how to deal with the strange situation that had arisen in the school. He was taking his time to consider the matter. In the meantime, he had to carry on—and Greek with the Sixth was the order of the day. But Greek with the Sixth seemed a trifle light as air to Sir Hilton. He interrupted Greek with the Sixth ruthlessly.

There was a sharp knock at the Form-room door, and it flew open. Sir Hilton strode in.

"Dr. Locke—"

"Good-morning, sir!" said the Head mildly.

Sir Hilton snorted. He was not there to exchange polite greetings.

"Are you aware, sir, of what is going on?" he demanded. "My property has been invaded by a mob of boys from this school. They refuse to leave at my order. I learn that they are remaining out of school, in defiance of authority. Is that, sir, a proper state of affairs in one of the oldest and most celebrated Public schools in the kingdom?"

"Not at all, Sir Hilton! But—"

"But what, sir?"

"At the present moment, I am taking a class! If you would be kind enough to wait in my study—"

"I shall do nothing of the kind, sir!" barked Sir Hilton. "I insist upon this

matter being dealt with at once! I insist upon those boys being removed from my property without delay! As a governor of the school, I insist upon discipline being maintained here! Why have not these rebellious boys been brought back to the school?"

"Attempts had been made—"

"Have you no prefects, sir?" hooted Sir Hilton. "Why have not the prefects been dispatched to fetch them in?"

"It has been done, sir, but they have resisted—"

"Nonsense!"

"And the prefects were unable—"

"Rubbish!"

"Really, Sir Hilton—"

"I repeat, sir, nonsense and rubbish!" roared Sir Hilton. He glared at the staring Sixth. "Are these senior boys afraid of a mob of juniors? Pah!"

The Sixth glared back. A good many of the Greyfriars prefects had plenty of signs to show of the scrap with the rebels on the island.

Wingate and Gwynne had a swollen nose each, Loder had a big bump on his head, Walker had a dark shade round one eye, Carne had a cauliflower ear. Other fellows had other damages, from which they had not yet recovered.

They had been beaten off by the rebels, and there had been a lot of damage on both sides. They were not, as the angry baronet suggested, afraid of a mob of juniors. Still, they were not keen to try it on again.

"Pah! What is my old school coming to?" snorted Sir Hilton. "Have your prefects, sir, run away from a crowd of small boys—"

"Cheese it!" came a voice from the back of the class.

Sir Hilton jumped.

"What? What? Who spoke?" he roared.

"Silence in the class!" exclaimed the Head. "Really, Sir Hilton, this is no place—no time—"

"I insist, sir, upon this outrageous state of affairs coming to an end at once! At once, sir! Send your prefects with me to the island now, and I will see that they do not run away again."

"Rats!" came a voice.

"Silence!" gasped the Head.

"Dr. Locke, will you deal with this matter at once—instantly?"

"I am considering how to deal with it, sir—"

"Nonsense!"

"Sir!"

"Then I, sir, will deal with the matter personally!" roared Sir Hilton. "If you, sir, as headmaster, cannot maintain order in this school, I will take the matter in hand, as a governor, sir! I will call my keepers and remove the young rascals from the island. Be prepared, sir, to receive them in a very short time; and I shall insist, sir, upon the ringleaders being expelled from the school, and all the others soundly flogged, sir, under my own eyes!"

"Sir Hilton—"

"I have told you, sir, what I am going to do. It is for you to deal with the young rascals when I bring them here, sir!"

With that Sir Hilton Popper stamped out of the Sixth Form Room. The door closed after him with a bang.

"Bless my soul!" murmured the Head faintly.

He passed his hand over his forehead. Sir Hilton's visit left him with a feeling that a whirlwind had blown in and ripped round the Form-room. Fortunately it was nearly time for break, and the Head was soon able to dismiss the Sixth and retire to the quietude of his study.

Sir Hilton Popper was gone—which was one comfort. If he succeeded in bringing the rebels back to the school, that would be another comfort.

The Head was undoubtedly very anxious for the present state of affairs to come to an end. Sitting in his study, he was thinking it over, when the telephone bell rang. With a sigh he took up the receiver. Really, there seemed to be no repose for a harassed headmaster!

"Is that the Head?" came a voice over the wires.

Dr. Locke almost jumped. It was a familiar voice—that of Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove.

"Wharton!" gasped the Head blankly.

"Yes, sir! Good-morning, sir!" came the cheerful voice.

"You—you—you have left the—the island, Wharton?"

That question was rather superfluous, as there was certainly no telephone installation on the island in the Sark.

"I'm speaking from Courtfield Post Office, sir! I thought I could catch you in break."

"If this means, Wharton, that you have decided to cease this rebellion, and return to your duty—"

"Certainly, sir, we shall all be very glad to do so," came the respectful answer of the captain of the Remove. "It depends, sir, on whether you will allow Bunter to stay."

"Bunter! You are aware that Bunter has been expelled, for having attacked a Form-master—"

"Bunter never inked Prout, sir! We all know that!"

"Nonsense!"

"It was some other fellow, sir, and if he's found out and sacked, we shan't say a word! We're standing by Bunter

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because he never did it, and he was sacked for nothing."

"How dare you—"

"I thought I'd tell you, sir, that we're all willing to come back to school, and toe the line, if you'll let Bunter off—"

"You impertinent young rascal!" gasped the Head. "Do you imagine, for one moment, that you will be permitted to dictate to your headmaster?"

"We can't let Bunter down, sir! If you will let him stay on till the end of the term, it might be found out who really inked Prout—"

"That matter is closed, Wharton!"

"Not at all, sir! It's wide open!" answered the captain of the Remove cheerfully. "We're staying out till Bunter gets justice, sir."

"I command you to return to the school at once, Wharton! Immediate submission may induce me to deal with you leniently."

"And you'll let Bunter off, sir?"

"No!" roared the Head.

"Then there's nothing doing, sir! Sorry! Ta-ta!"

"Wharton—"

No reply.

"Boy!"

Silence!

The captain of the Remove had rung off. Dr. Locke, breathing hard and deep, jammed the receiver back on the hooks with a jam that made the instrument rock. At that moment, had the captain of the Remove been within his headmaster's reach, he certainly would have received the thrashing of his life. Fortunately, there was the length of a telephone wire between.

In Courtfield Post Office Harry Wharton left the telephone box. He strolled out of the post office with a cheery smile on his face. But that cheery smile faded away as he almost ran into a tall, angular gentleman who was striding along the pavement.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Wharton.

He jumped back—too late! In a moment he was wriggling with Sir Hilton Popper's sinewy grasp on his collar.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Narrow Escape!

SIR HILTON POPPER fairly grinned.

This was luck!

He was on his way to Popper Court from Greyfriars, and his way lay through Courtfield High Street, past the post office. Certainly he had had not the remotest suspicion that one of the schoolboy rebels was in that building, phoning to his headmaster. Neither had the captain of the Remove any idea that Sir Hilton was at hand. He had, in fact, forgotten the existence of Sir Hilton, important as that gentleman was.

It was an unexpected meeting on both sides—satisfactory only on one side! Sir Hilton grabbed the junior's collar and held on to it like a bulldog to a bone. This was the ring-leader of the rebellion; this was the young rascal who had cheeked him only that morning! The deep, dark frown on Sir Hilton's face was replaced by a smile of happy satisfaction—which to Wharton's eyes seemed rather like the grin of a hyena.

"I have caught you!" exclaimed Sir Hilton.

"Looks like it, sir!" assented Wharton coolly. After the first wriggle he did not resist. Strong and sturdy as he was, he had no chance in a tussle with the lean, but muscular baronet. Not that he had the slightest intention of remaining a prisoner. But he had to wait for a chance.

"Come with me!" rapped Sir Hilton. "I shall take you back to the school at once. Are you alone here?" Sir Hilton glanced round for other rebels.

"No, sir!" answered Harry.

"Who is with you?"

"You, sir!"

"Wha-a-at? What? Are you jesting with me, you young rascal?" ejaculated the baronet.

"Exactly!" assented Wharton.

Sir Hilton breathed hard.

GREYFRIARS CARTOONS

By HAROLD SKINNER.

No. 6.—HURREE JAMSET RAM SINGH

(The dusky member of the Famous Five, and the demon bowler of the Junior Cricket Eleven.)

This week our lightning artist selects the Nabob of Bhanipur as his subject, and as "Inky" himself says: "The penfulness of the esteemed Skinner is terrific!"



Inky comes from India's coral strand-fulness,
Across the water of the wide Pacific;
His flow of English lingo's simply grand-fulness—
In fact, it is terrific!

He bowls at cricket with lightning pace-fulness,
At taking wickets he is most prolific;
And then the smile that breaks out on his facefulness—
It is, of course, terrific!

"You have left the island in the river!" he snapped.

"Had to!" explained Wharton. "I couldn't possibly bring it to Courtfield with me. So I left it."

Sir Hilton breathed harder! Evidently this young rascal was in a jesting mood! Sir Hilton had no use for jests, and he compressed his grip on the junior's collar, grinding bony knuckles into the back of his neck.

"Did any other young scoundrels come with you, Wharton?" he demanded.

"No, there's only an old scoundrel with me, sir."

"Good gad! I have a mind to lay my stick about you—"

"Have you, sir? That's news!" said the captain of the Remove cheerily. "I never knew that you had a mind at all."

"Wha-a-t?"

"If you have, why don't you use it sometimes, sir?"

Sir Hilton did not answer that question. With a red and wrathful visage, he jerked his prisoner along the pavement, stared at by a score of people in the High Street.

It was rather an unusual sight, in Courtfield, for a stiff old gentleman adorned with an eyeglass to be seen jerking a schoolboy along by the collar. Indifferent to stares, Sir Hilton marched the Greyfriars junior off down the street.

"Would you mind taking your knuckles out of the back of my neck, sir?" asked Wharton meekly. "They're rather bony if you don't mind my mentioning it."

The bony knuckles ground harder into the unoffending neck. Sir Hilton grasped his stick with his free hand.

"Another word of insolence and I will thrash you before I take you back to Greyfriars to be expelled!" he snapped. "Come!"

Down the High Street they went, stared at on all sides, and followed by a gathering crowd of curious youths. Mr. Lazarus, in his shop doorway, blinked at them as they passed.

"My cootness!" said Mr. Lazarus, in astonishment.

"Give this old donkey a punch in the eye, will you, Mr. Lazarus?" asked Wharton.

"Oh my cootness!" gasped Mr. Lazarus.

He did not oblige! Sir Hilton, with an angry snort, jerked the Greyfriars junior onward.

Farther on, they came on Inspector Grimes. That official gentleman stared at the strange sight.

Wharton shouted to him.

"Lend me a hand, Mr. Grimes! I'm being kidnapped."

"Kidnapped!" ejaculated the inspector.

"Tell this old ass to let go my collar, please."

"Sir Hilton—what—"

"Stand aside, sir!" snorted Sir Hilton. "This boy is a truant from school, and I am taking him back to Greyfriars!"

"Oh!" said Mr. Grimes, staring. "You had certainly better go back to school, Master Wharton!"

"Can't I give old Popper into custody for kidnapping?" demanded Wharton.

Mr. Grimes grinned.

"Come!" roared Sir Hilton, and he jerked the junior on past the grinning police inspector. Sir Hilton's face was crimson now. He was doing his duty, as he considered it, but he was getting much more publicity than he wanted. Half the younger generation of Courtfield seemed to be following on behind, and, as they passed the Peal of Bells, a number of loungers there joined up, and followed on.

It was getting to be quite a procession. Sir Hilton accelerated more and more.

Suddenly his long legs stumbled and tangled over something. It was Harry Wharton's foot! Tripped by that foot, Sir Hilton stumbled, and fell on his knees. Unfortunately he retained his

iron grasp on the junior's collar, and Wharton wrenched in vain.

"Good gad!" gasped Sir Hilton, as he scrambled up, scarlet with fury. "I—I—I—I will—" Without stating further what he would do, Sir Hilton proceeded to do it! His stick fairly rang on Wharton's shoulders.

"Ow! Wow! Yaroooooh!" roared the junior. "Chuck it! You silly old ass, stop it! Help! Whoop! Chuck it, you dangerous maniac!"

Whack, whack, whack!
"Take that," gasped Sir Hilton, "and that—and that—"

Whack, whack!
"Whooooo! Help!" roared Wharton, as he took them. He wriggled and struggled frantically. "Help! Rescue! Yoo-hooop!"

"Look 'ere, you let the boy alone!" A big brewer's drayman shoved forward. "What's he done, old codger?"

"What?" Sir Hilton glared at the drayman, his breath quite taken away by the cheek of a common mortal in addressing him as "old codger." "What? Stand back! Hold your tongue! Do not interfere here, I warn you."

"I say, help!" shouted Wharton. "Help!"

"Come!" snorted Sir Hilton, jerking on again.

But there was, so to speak, a lion in the path! The big drayman stood in the way, with an angry expression on his rugged face. As Sir Hilton jerked on, the big man gave him a push on the chest with a hand that was like a leg of mutton, and the baronet gasped and spluttered and staggered.

"You 'old on, sir!" said the drayman. "You're a-hitting of that there young covey with that blooming stick, and I asks you, as man to man, wot's he done?"

"Ruffian," gasped Sir Hilton, "stand aside! Instantly!" It seemed almost incredible to the lord of Popper Court that a big, rough drayman should venture to come between the wind and his nobility! But there the drayman was—almost a mountain of bone and muscle and sinew, as tall as Sir Hilton, and twice as heavy, and not to be shifted. And from the thickening crowd came several voices encouraging the burly man.

"I asks you, wot's the boy done?" said the drayman, with calm stolidity. "Nice sort of a father you are, a-walloping a kid like that!"

"What—what! I am not the boy's father!" shrieked Sir Hilton.

"Then if you ain't his father, who are you a-hitting him for?" demanded the drayman indignantly. "Let the boy alone!"

"Yes, let him alone!" came two or three encouraging voices.

"Stand aside!" roared Sir Hilton. "I am taking a truant back to school—"

"No business of yours, if you ain't his father!" retorted the drayman. "You let 'im alone!"

"Make him let go, please!" exclaimed Wharton, his eyes dancing. He had hoped that help of some sort might turn up before Greyfriars was reached. It could not have turned up in a more efficacious form than this! Sir Hilton was a rather powerful man, but the huge drayman could have picked him up in one hand.

"You leave it to me, lad!" said the good-natured drayman. "I ain't seeing a man lay into a kid with a stick like that there! Now, sir, I says, as man to man, you let that kid go, I says, or I'll make you!"

"Rascal! Fool!" spluttered Sir Hilton. "I will have you taken into

custody! I—I will—I—I— Hands off! Villain! Scoundrel! Good gad!"

Sir Hilton Popper lashed out fiercely with his stick. The drayman caught it with a mighty arm, brushing it aside like a fly. Then he took hold of Sir Hilton Popper, and crumpled him up.

"'Ook it, kid!" he advised.
Wharton did not need advice on that point, as soon as Sir Hilton's grasp was jerked off him.

"Thanks!" he gasped. "You're a good sort!" And he flew.

Bump!
Sir Hilton Popper sat down on the pavement. He sat hard! He sat and spluttered, amid laughter from the Courtfield crowd.

"Now, you beyave!" said the drayman, shaking a warning finger at him. And he went back to the Peal of Bells with his friends, leaving Sir Hilton Popper sitting on the pavement, and wondering whether the universe was falling in pieces round him.

When he got on his feet at last he glared round for Harry Wharton. He did not see him! The captain of the Remove, as if he had been a Boojum, had suddenly, silently vanished away.

Sir Hilton Popper took his way to Popper Court, in a frame of mind that was not merely fierce, but absolutely ferocious. His prisoner had escaped, and gone back to rejoin the other young rascals on the island. But Sir Hilton was not going to be long after him. And then the vials of wrath were going to be poured on the devoted heads of the Greyfriars rebels, and they were going to be made to feel that life was hardly worth living! At least, Sir Hilton hoped so.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Attack!

"JOLLY, ain't it?" said Bob Cherry. "The jolliffulness is terrific!"

"Ripping!" said Frank Nugent. "I say, you fellows, this is better

than classes with old Quelch!" remarked Billy Bunter. "So long as the grub doesn't run out, we're all right here."

Most of the Greyfriars Remove agreed with Bob that it was jolly on the island in the river. The most studious fellow in the Form would hardly have preferred Latin in the Form-room. Besides, the more studious fellows could get on with Latin sitting under the trees, if they liked. Few liked!

The river rippled and glowed in the sunshine of July. Fleecy white clouds sailed in a sky of azure. Billy Bunter, with his fat limbs reposing in a couch of ferns, remembered his breakfast with pleasure, and thought of dinner with happy anticipation.

The fact that he was under sentence of the "sack," and only saved from that condign fate by the Remove rallying round him and defying authority, did not seem to worry the fat Owl of the Remove. Bunter had a happy way of dismissing troubles from his podgy mind.

The only cloud on the horizon, from Bunter's point of view, was the possibility that the "grub" might run out!

So long as the grub was all right, everything was all right, so far as William George Bunter could see.

Some of the fellows were clambering in the great branches of the old oak in the middle of the island. Some of them were fishing, though the catches were few and far between.

Skinner, Snoop, and Stott had retired to a quiet spot to smoke cigarettes. Lord Mauleverer was dozing in the

shade, with his straw hat over his aristocratic features. But most of the fellows were at work.

Harry Wharton was absent, having gone to Courtfield to telephone to the Head of Greyfriars. Most of the rebels agreed that, if the Head would "come round," the sooner the rebellion ended the better. Still, they were not particularly keen for it to end. It was, as Bob declared, jolly on Popper's Island, and a great improvement on classes with Quelch.

Fortifications were going on, under the direction of Bob Cherry. There had been no attack since that made by the prefects at the Head's order, which had been beaten off. But it was fairly certain that another would not be long in coming. The rebels were going to be ready for it.

Several expeditions had been made to the shops in Courtfield. Among other things, coils of thick wire had been brought to the island in the boat belonging to Coker of the Fifth, now in possession of the rebels. Almost all round the island the trees and thickets grew to the water's edge. It was possible for an enemy to land anywhere by scrambling through the thickets. But "paid" was going to be put to that by means of a wire entanglement. Line after line of thick wire was run from tree to tree, and bush to bush, round the margin of the island. Piles of cut branches and logs were stacked behind the wire.

"They won't get through that in a hurry!" remarked Bob Cherry. "Why, we could hold out here all the summer, if we liked."

"Only we shall have to be careful about the grub!" said Billy Bunter. "I say, we've run out of jam already!"

"Awful!" said Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"Oh, that's all right! I can rough it!" said Bunter heroically. "So long as there's plenty of marmalade, I can do without jam."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Still, we shall have to be careful," said Bunter. "I'm not thinking of myself, of course. It's not much I eat, as you know! But you fellows—"

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

A rather breathless figure appeared on the bank. Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent jumped into Coker's boat, and pulled across, to bring the captain of the Remove to the island.

"Been in a scrap?" asked the Bounder, as Wharton stepped from the boat on to Popper's Island. "You look it!"

"Old Popper popped up in Courtfield and bagged me," answered Harry. "But I got away! I fancy we shall see him here before long."

"Good egg!" said Smithy. "We want a little excitement!"

"I say, Wharton, did you get it?" called out Billy Bunter.

"Which?" asked Harry.

"The jam, of course, fathead! I reminded you just before you started that we were short of jam."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I wasn't thinking of jam, fathead, when old Popper got me by the neck. I've phoned to the Head, you fellows. I'm afraid there's nothing doing. He seemed waxy."

"We can keep it up as long as he does!" said the Bounder. "What can they do, anyhow? The prefects have been licked, and we're ready to lick 'em again, if they show up!"

"Hear, hear!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Don't you worry, Bunter, we're keeping you safe!" said the Bounder. "Yes, I know that," said Bunter



"Nice sort of a father you are, a-walloping a kid like that!" said the drayman, as Wharton struggled in vain in the grip of Sir Hilton. "What—what!" shrieked the lord of Popper Island. "I am not the boy's father!" "Then if you ain't his father, wot are you a-hitting him for?" demanded the drayman. "Let the boy alone!"

peevishly. "But I was thinking about the jam! I think some fellow ought to go into Courtfield for the jam! I'll pay for it, of course. I told you fellows I was expecting a postal-order—"

"Give us a rest!"

"Beast!"

Harry Wharton was looking up the river in the direction of Popper Court. That mansion was not very far away, though hidden from sight by the thick woods along the Sark. After what had happened in Courtfield that morning, Wharton had no doubt that Sir Hilton Popper would lose no time in dealing with the schoolboys on the island.

"Here they come!" he said suddenly.

A boat came gliding down the river. Joyce and another keeper were pulling, and Sir Hilton Popper sat in the stern, his eyeglass gleaming back the rays of the sun.

"The jolly old enemy!" said Bob Cherry. "Does that old duffer really think that three of them will be able to handle us? We're ten to one."

"If he does he will soon find out his giddy error," grinned the Bounder.

"Line up!" called out Wharton.

"I say, you fellows"—Bunter scrambled out of his nest of ferns—"I—I think I'd better see about cooking the dinner."

And Bunter rolled up the path to the interior of the island.

Most of the Remove gathered at the landing-place, which was on the shore of the island opposite the Popper Court bank. The boat came gliding down between the island and the bank, and the two oarsmen pulled in. Harry Wharton waved his hand to Sir Hilton Popper, sitting like a grim gorgon in the stern, and the baronet's eyes gleamed at him.

"Keep off!" called out Wharton.

"We're not allowing anybody to land here!"

The two keepers glanced over their shoulders at the crowd on the island. They rested on their oars at a little distance. Landing in spite of such heavy odds did not seem to them an easy proposition.

"Keep your distance, Popper!" shouted the Bounder.

Sir Hilton stood up in the boat.

"I order you off my island!" he roared. "I see that you have a boat. Get into it at once and return to the school! Otherwise, force will be used!"

"Same here!" chuckled the Bounder.

"And the forcefulness of our esteemed selves will be terrific, my esteemed and ludicrous Popper!"

"Will you leave my island at once?" roared Sir Hilton.

"Whose island?" inquired Harry Wharton.

"What—what? My island!" hooted Sir Hilton. "What do you mean? You know that you are trespassing there!"

"We don't know anything of the kind," answered the captain of the Remove coolly. "I'll tell you what, old bean! If it's your island, we wouldn't be found dead on it! Trot out your title deeds!"

"Wha-a-t?"

"As soon as we've seen them we'll get off the island—if it's yours," said Wharton. "That's a fair offer."

"The fairfulness is terrific!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Sir Hilton Popper made no answer. Perhaps he was too lofty and dignified to enter into such a discussion with rebel schoolboys. In point of fact, all the countryside knew that the island was common land, and had been so from time immemorial, till Sir Hilton enclosed it as part of his estate. Sir Hilton had "got away" with it, so to

speak, because it was nobody's special business to go to law about it with so big a potentate.

But whether Sir Hilton's claim was well or ill-founded he was very obstinate about it. His keepers had orders to turn all trespassers and picnickers off the island, which they generally did. But turning off the whole Greyfriars Remove was a much larger proposition.

"What about it, old bean?" chortled the Bounder.

"Joyce, get to the island at once! Do you hear me?" roared Sir Hilton. "What are you delaying for? Are you afraid of these schoolboys? I will deal with them as soon as I land."

"Yessir!" gasped Joyce.

The two keepers pulled on. The boat ran in to the island shore and bumped among the willows.

Sir Hilton had a heavy Malacca cane in his hand, and he grasped it almost convulsively. Once he was at close quarters with the Greyfriars rebels, he expected to finish matters with that malacca. He was going to whack right and left, and drive a howling crowd off the island—at least, that was the programme. It remained to carry out the programme.

Joyce held on to a branch to steady the boat while Sir Hilton landed. A tomato, accurately hurled by the Bounder, caught him under the chin, and the head keeper staggered, lost his hold, and plumped into the boat.

It rocked wildly; and Sir Hilton, stepping out, stepped into a foot of mud, instead of on the shore. His boots squelched in mud, and the water lapped round his bony knees.

Three or four fellows gave the boat a shove, and it spun away on the current, and floated down the river, with

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the two keepers sprawling in it. Perhaps Joyce and his man could not stop it. Perhaps they were not keen to do so. Anyhow, the boat whirled away on the current.

"Good gad!" gasped Sir Hilton Popper.

He tramped through mud, and stamped on the island shore. The Removees swarmed round him. Up went the malacca, and right and left it whacked, amid yells and howls.

"Now, then, young rascals! Leave this island at once! Off with you!" roared Sir Hilton. "Go! Get into your boat! Go!"

Whack! Whack!

"Oh, my hat!"

"Oh scissors!"

"Collar him!"

"Up-end him!"

"Yaroo!"

That the Greyfriars rebels would venture to lay disrespectful hands on his lordly person had probably not occurred to Sir Hilton.

But they did. They laid them on, hard and fast.

There was a crash as the lord of Popper Court went down, and his malacca flew from his hand.

He struggled frantically; but the hands that grasped him seemed innumerable. Sprawling in the grass he roared and struggled, and kicked and threatened, all in vain. He had ventured into a hornets' nest; and the hornets were too many for him. The lord of Popper Court was helpless in the hands of the Philistines.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Three Men in a Boat!

"SIT on him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Got him!"

"Duck him!" shouted the Bounder.

"Good egg!"

"Good gad!" gasped Sir Hilton. "Release me! I order you to release me! I—I—Urrgh! Good gad!"

Sir Hilton Popper almost wondered whether he was dreaming. Really it seemed more like a nightmare than reality.

He was dragged to his feet, held on all sides by many hands. His arms, his neck, his ears, his coat-tails, and even his hair were grasped. He wriggled, but he could only wriggle. The odds were overwhelming, and he had not the ghost of a chance. He stood tottering and panting in the midst of a yelling and laughing crowd.

"Duck him!"

"The duckfulness is the proper caper."

"Shove him in!"

"Hold on!" gasped Wharton, as the excited juniors began to heave the gurgling baronet towards the water. "Hold on! Draw the line, you men! He's too jolly old to duck! He will get rheumatism and things."

"Let him!" snapped the Bounder.

"Young rascals! Urrgh! Scoundrels! Gurrgh! I will have you arrested! Wurrgh!" stuttered Sir Hilton incoherently. "Yurrgh!"

"Look out!" shouted Bob Cherry.

The boat was coming back. Joyce and his man were far from keen on a scrap with the Greyfriars crowd; but they came to the rescue of their master. The keepers' boat bumped in the willows again.

"Help!" gurgled Sir Hilton. "Help here! Joyce! Wilson! Help! I will discharge you! Gurrgh! If you do not immediately—Wurrgh!"

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"Go for 'em!" roared the Bounder. And he leaped recklessly into the keeper's boat without waiting for the enemy to land.

"Look here!" gasped Joyce. "You—Oh, jiminy! Ooogh!"

A dozen fellows followed the Bounder. There were plenty left to hold the lord of Popper Court. The boat rocked and shipped water. The two keepers, resisting valiantly, went down in the boat, with water swamping over them. They had come to their master's rescue; but they needed rescue themselves badly. But there was no rescue for them. Swamped with water in the rocking boat, they heaved and wriggled under a swarm of yelling juniors.

"Give over!" gurgled Joyce. "I tell you, give over! Ooogh!"

"Chuck a rope here!" shouted Smithy.

Peter Todd tossed in a rope. With the other fellows holding the two keepers, the Bounder tied them back to back. Then they sat in the bottom of the boat with six inches of water lapping round them.

"Now chuck that old goat in!" shouted Vernon-Smith.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Release me!" shrieked Sir Hilton.

"I order you—I—Oh gad!"

"In you go!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Chuck him in!"

"Head first!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gently does it!" said the captain of the Remove. "Remember his jolly old venerable years!"

Sir Hilton Popper was no longer young, but he was not exactly venerable. However, he was rather glad that the young rascals, excited as they were, had a proper respect for age.

The baronet was not "chucked" into the boat head first; he was lifted in and plumped down on the stern seat.

His stick, his hat, his eyeglass, together with his gloves, were scattered far and wide, and the rest of him was very untidy and dishevelled. But he was still game, and the moment the juniors released him he grasped at the nearest fellow—who happened to be the Bounder—and smacked his head right and left.

"Whooop!" roared Smithy. "Oh crumbs! You potty old ass—Yaroooop!"

Sir Hilton was promptly collared again. He was jammed down to the seat once more, and this time he was not left loose. The Bounder, his ears crimson and burning from hefty smacks, took a turn of the rope round his wrists and tied them behind him to the tiller—after which the lord of Popper Court was unable to do any further damage.

"Now shove off!" shouted Smithy.

The juniors scrambled out of the boat. Many hands shoved at it, and it was sent rocking out into the stream.

It turned on the current and drifted away slowly down the Sark, followed by yells of laughter from the island.

"Good gad!" gasped Sir Hilton Popper dazedly. Really he could hardly believe that these awful things were happening.

He struggled to free his hands. But the Bounder had tied them too safely for that. His struggles only swayed the tiller and caused the boat to wobble as it drifted down the stream.

"Joyce!" howled Sir Hilton. "Joyce, get up! Release me! Do you hear me, Joyce? Release me, you fool!"

"I can't stir a 'and!" gasped the head keeper. "Look at me!"

"And look at me!" groaned the under keeper. "Oh lor!"

"You must free yourselves somehow!" roared Sir Hilton. "Can I remain like this? Have you no sense?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell from the island.

Sir Hilton glared back at the laughing crowd on the landing-place. Bob Cherry waved a hand in farewell.

"I—I—I—" gasped Sir Hilton. "Joyce, if you do not contrive to release me immediately I will discharge you!"

Joyce did not answer that. He was wriggling in his bonds, anxious for release on his own account. But there was nothing doing.

The boat drifted on, wobbling and rocking. A bend of the river hid the island and its laughing crowd from sight. Sir Hilton gazed wildly at the near bank. He was anxious for help, but at the same time he did not want to be seen in his present ridiculous position. So he was both sorry and glad that no one was to be seen on the towpath.

"Good gad!" he gasped.

The current on the Sark was slow, but it was steady, and the boat drifted on. The prospect of arriving at the village of Friardale tied up in the boat was simply horrifying to Sir Hilton Popper, but there seemed no help for it.

But as the drifting boat drew near the Greyfriars boathouse he discerned a figure on the bank. It was that of Mr. Quelch, the master without a Form.

Mr. Quelch had decided on a walk to fill up that idle morning, and there he was. He glanced at the boat and then stared at it, and then his stare became fixed and amazed.

Sir Hilton yelled to him.

"Help! Do you hear me? Help!"

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed the Remove-master.

He approached the margin of the water, staring blankly at the boat, but it was yards out of his reach.

"Will you help me?" shrieked Sir Hilton.

"I cannot reach you, sir!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "What—what—what has happened?"

"Your boys, sir, have treated me like this!" roared Sir Hilton. "Those rebellious young scoundrels on my island, sir! They have ventured, sir, to lay hands on me and—and tie me up in my own boat! I order you to release me, sir! Do you hear me?"

"I am not deaf," answered Mr. Quelch coldly. "And if you will explain how I am to reach you I shall be happy to release you."

"P'raps you could steer the boat in, sir!" gasped Joyce. "Your 'ands being on the tiller, sir—"

Sir Hilton jerked at the tiller the wrong way, and the boat surged out farther from the bank. He snorted and jerked again. Mr. Quelch watched from the towpath.

Probably he was shocked to see the state to which the lord of Popper Court had been reduced by the Remove rebels. At the same time his features were twitching as if he found it hard to repress a smile. But it was no smiling matter to Sir Hilton or the two wretched keepers sitting in six inches of water.

The boat, very clumsily steered, drew in towards the bank again. Mr. Quelch followed it, ready to grab as soon as it came within reach. It bumped on a wedge of mud thick with rushes that jutted into the river, but before the Remove-master could get to it it drifted off again. Quelch's grasp missed it by a yard.

"Fool!" roared Sir Hilton.

"Sir!" gasped Mr. Quelch, pink with indignation.

"Will you help me or not? I quite believe, sir, that you are in sympathy

with those young scoundrels on my island. I have no doubt, sir, that you would be glad for me to be exhibited to the whole village tied up in this ridiculous posture! I have no doubt of it, sir!"

"If you will get within reach——"

"Fool!"

"These expressions, Sir Hilton——"

"Dolt!"

"Really, sir——"

"Imbecile!"

Sir Hilton Popper was far too exasperated to measure his expressions. But really it was not judicious to apply those fancy names to the man upon whom he relied for help.

Mr. Quelch's lips set in a tight line, and his eyes glinted.

"If you'd steer in, sir——" said the head keeper.

"Silence, Joyce! How dare you speak!"

"The man's advice is good, sir," said Mr. Quelch. "Unless you steer within my reach——"

"Idiot!"

Sir Hilton wobbled the tiller again. Once more the boat impinged on the rushes, and Mr. Quelch bent over, and his fingers touched the gunwale.

"Now hold on, you clumsy dolt!" roared Sir Hilton.

Mr. Quelch had been on the point of holding on. Now, perhaps, by accident his fingers slipped on the gunwale, and, instead of holding on, he gave the boat a shove. It shot out into the river.

"Fool! Idiot! Imbecile! Dolt!" spluttered Sir Hilton.

The boat had shot far out of Mr. Quelch's reach. It was caught in the current in the middle of the Sark and floated on faster than before.

Mr. Quelch gazed after it, and apparently gave up the hope of reaching it at all. At all events he walked on up the towpath and gave it no further heed. Probably he was fed-up with Sir Hilton's method of expressing thanks.

"Good gad!" gasped Sir Hilton.

The boat drifted past the Greyfriars raft. Nobody was there; the school was still in class. It drifted on.

Half an hour later the three men in the boat were being released by a grinning, chuckling crowd of villagers at the old wharf in Friardale.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Tit for Tat!

"**W**OW!" yelled Sammy Bunter. Sammy was hurt.

And he was indignant.

So far as Bunter minor of the Second Form could see, there was no reason at all why Coker of the Fifth should have kicked him in passing.

But Coker had—hard!

Horace Coker's mental processes were not always easy for common mortals to follow.

The facts were these. Sammy was the brother of Billy Bunter of the Remove. Billy Bunter had inked—or was supposed to have inked—Coker's Form-master, and had been sacked for that exploit. The Remove rebellion had followed. The Remove rebels had bagged Coker's boat for use in their island refuge. They had handled Coker on that occasion forcibly. Coker, therefore, passing Sammy of the Second in the quad, kicked him, and felt completely justified in so doing. Besides, kickings were good for fags—in Coker's opinion, at least.

Having given Sammy Bunter that completely justifiable kick, Horace Coker walked on, leaving the fat fag yelling.

Sammy blinked after him through the big spectacles that made him look so like his major vengefully.

Coker dismissed the trifling incident from his mind at once. But it was not so easy for Bunter minor to dismiss it. A kick lingers longer in the memory of the kicke, so to speak, than of the kicker.

The fact that Sammy yelled, that he pressed a fat hand in anguish to his podgy trousers, and squirmed, did not worry Coker. Coker had far more important matters than that to think about.

He walked on under the elms, his rugged brow corrugated with thought. He was not even aware that Sammy rolled after him.

Sammy Bunter, at the moment when Coker landed that kick, had been deeply engrossed in a problem. Gatty of the Second had given him an orange, nicely wrapped in paper. Bunter minor had been delighted with that generous gift—until he unwrapped the paper. Then he discovered that the orange was an exceedingly ancient one—in fact, green with age. That explained why George Gatty had given it to him—evidently from a misdirected sense of humour.

Sammy had been examining that orange with keen eyes and spectacles to

COMPILE A GREYFRIARS LIMERICK AND WIN A POCKET WALLET!

Said "Fishy" to Bunter one day:
"You owe me three-ha'pence,
you lay.
You'll sure 'hit the grit'
if you don't remit
Without any further delay!"

The above winning effort was
sent in by Eric Holmes, of 184,
Leeds Road, Nelson, Lancs.

POST YOUR LIMERICK TO-
NIGHT!

ascertain whether some small portion of it yet remained in an edible state. Coker's kick had interrupted that urgent investigation, and Sammy had dropped the ancient orange.

Now he picked it up again.

None of it was edible—not a spot! Indeed, it was not very easy to hold it together in one piece. But Sammy Bunter had thought of a use for it.

As an article of diet, that orange was useless. But landed in the back of Coker's neck, it might yet serve a useful purpose! So the wrathful fag, orange in hand, stalked Coker of the Fifth under the elms, watching for a chance to land it in the back of Coker's neck.

Coker of the Fifth, oblivious of Sammy and such small fry, glanced round him under the trees, and spotted Potter and Greene on a bench there. He joined them, and sat down.

The bench backed on an elm. Sammy Bunter, with deep cunning, approached that elm by a roundabout course to get behind Coker.

"Don't go!" said Coker.

Potter and Greene of the Fifth had risen as their great leader sat down. Coker's arrival seemed to remind them that it was time to get moving.

"Well, I've got to speak to Wingate about the cricket," remarked Potter.

"No good talking to Wingate about cricket," answered Coker. "He doesn't know anything about cricket."

"He's put me in the First Eleven," said Potter.

"That shows that he doesn't know anything about it!"

"Oh!"

"He's left me out," said Coker. "Silly ass, you know! But never mind Wingate now! Sit down! I've something to say."

Coker generally had. It was seldom that his chin had a really long rest. Potter and Greene sat down again. After all, it was nearly tea-time, and Coker couldn't keep them long. And Coker, as usual, was going to stand tea in the study. A fellow had to be tactful with Coker.

"I've been thinking!" went on Coker.

Potter and Greene forbore to ask him what he had done it with. They only wondered.

"Those little sweeps have got my boat on Popper's Island," resumed Coker. "I'm not letting them keep it, of course. How long have they been there now—nearly a week? Nobody seems able to handle them——"

"No bizney of ours!" yawned Greene.

"Don't be an ass, Greene! If the Head had sense enough to make me a prefect, I'd handle them fast enough! They've beaten off the prefects, and the silly chumps don't seem keen to try it on again. Old Popper's tried it on, and I hear that he's caught a cold, that's all. They're just gloating, and fancying that they're going to carry on as long as they like! Well, they're not!"

"Blessed if I see what the beaks are going to do!" said Potter. "The Head's put the Sark out of bounds for the school. He doesn't seem able to think of anything else. Perhaps he's waiting for them to get fed-up with playing the giddy ox."

"I've thought it out. I can't let the cheeky young rascals keep my boat, of course. Besides, that's the crux of the whole matter."

"Good word, anyway!" murmured Greene.

"They get off in that boat, and get grub in from Courtfield," went on Coker. "If the grub ran short, what would they do? They'd have to give in. Well, I'm going to get my boat back—see? The beaks and prefects haven't much sense, but they've sense enough to see that the young sweeps don't get hold of another boat. They'll be stranded and done for—what?"

"You think they'll let you take the boat off them?" asked Potter, with a surreptitious wink at Greene.

"More likely to duck you, old bean, if you go after it!" said Greene, shaking his head. "I'd leave it alone, if I were you."

"I dare say you would!" agreed Coker. "That's the sort of fathead you are, Greene, old chap!"

"Look here——"

"Don't jaw! I'm speaking! I'm not thinking of barging in in the broad daylight and giving those cheeky fags a chance of handling me as they did the prefects!" explained Coker. "I'm going to use strategy. I've got the head for it! We're going after dark——"

"We!" ejaculated Potter.

"Are we?" gasped Greene.

"It's up to me, and I expect you fellows to help!" said Coker. "If we get the boat away, they're done! Well, we're getting the boat away—see?"

"The Head's put the place out of bounds——"

"Quite right, too," said Coker. "But that won't make any difference to me, of course."

"And it's lock-up at dark——"

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"We shall have to get out after lock-up—"

"Break bounds after lock-up!" ejaculated Greene.

"Naturally! We've got to catch them asleep, otherwise the whole mob of them will pile on us—duck us in the river, very likely! They've got cheek enough!" said Coker. "Look what they did to old Popper and his keepers the other day. We can get out after dark and go down to the river—us three. You two fellows stay on the bank; I swim out to the island with a rope—see?"

Potter and Greene gazed at Horace Coker.

Coker had said that he had been thinking. They had doubted it, not really believing that he had the works. But it seemed that he had. Really, it looked as if Coker had put a lot of brainwork into this.

For the actual fact was, as Potter and Greene had to admit, that there was something in it.

If the rebels lost their boat, they would undoubtedly be stranded. Food supplies would be cut off. Surrender would be only a matter of time. And such a night foray as Coker had planned was the only way of getting the boat from them.

The rebels were fairly certain to sleep o' nights. In the day-time they were watchful enough, but they would be off their guard when slumber's chain had bound them. A fellow who swam off silently to the island in the middle of the night had a walk-over before him.

Unhooking the rebels' boat and getting away with it would be easy business. Potter and Greene could only wonder how such a masterly scheme had come into Coker's head.

"See?" repeated Coker. "You fellows needn't get wet—I dare say you're afraid of wetting your dear little feet! I shall swim off, loose the boat, tie the rope to it, and you'll pull it across—with me in it—see? They'll wake up in the morning—stranded!"

"Well, my hat!" said Greene. "It might work—"

"You mean, it will work, Greene! I shall handle it!" said Coker.

"But breaking bounds—" said Potter.

"I fancy the Head will be glad enough, when he hears that we've got the boat away from those young villains, and they're stranded," said Coker. "He won't make a fuss about it. Why, only yesterday old Prout saw that boat, going down to the island from Courtfield, loaded with grub. They're making a regular picnic of it. I heard Prout telling Capper and Wiggins. Stacks of it in the boat, he said—bundles and bundles. Prout said that the boat ought to be got hold of somehow. Of course, he never thought of how. He hasn't the brains! And I can jolly well tell you that we're going to bag that boat to-night—this very night—and put paid to those cheeky young sweeps! And I can say—Yarrop!"

Coker did not mean to say "Yarrop!" He said it suddenly and unintentionally as an ancient orange suddenly squashed on his right ear.

"Oh! Ow! What—Ooooooh!" spluttered Coker, leaping to his feet.

Sammy Bunter, long lurking behind the elm watching for a chance, had risked it at last. Coker had got the orange—under his ear! It burst there, and most of it ran stickily down Coker's neck.

"What—what—who—how—what—"

gaped Coker, dabbing squashed orange with his fingers, in amazement. "Who—what—Why, it's an orange—a rotten orange! Groogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Potter and Greene.

"You cackling idiots!" roared Coker. "What is there to cackle at, I'd like to know? You gurgling dummies—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Who chuckled that rotten orange? Who—" Horace Coker glared round in towering rage. He glimpsed a fat figure vanishing in the distance. "That young scoundrel, Bunter minor! This is because I kicked him—the cheeky young rotter! Why, I—I—I'll smash him! I'll pulverise him! I'll spifficate him! I'll—"

Coker rushed in fierce pursuit, and Potter and Greene, much more amused than Coker, chuckled and chortled as he went.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Brainy!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"Who's that?"

"Either a fat frog or a member of the Bunter family!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a Bunter!" said Bob Cherry with a chuckle. "Billy's jolly old minor. Billy, here's a visitor for you!"

"Oh, rot!" yawned Billy Bunter.

It was a warm afternoon. July was hot, though the heat was tempered by the wind that came up from the sea. Billy Bunter was resting—he was generally resting when he was not eating. He did not seem disposed to stir on the news that his minor had appeared in the offing. Brotherly love was not strongly developed in the Bunter clan. Billy and Sammy could have missed one another's company for weeks with mutual satisfaction.

But though the fat Owl of the Remove was not interested, plenty of other fellows on the island watched Sammy with interest.

The rebels of Greyfriars were on their guard from early morn till dewy eve, and the landing-place on Popper's Island was never left unguarded. It was always possible that a sudden invasion might happen, either from Greyfriars or from Popper Court, and the rebels did not mean to be taken by surprise, if it happened.

Some days had passed since Sir Hilton's wild adventures among the rebels, and the lord of Popper Court had not been seen since. But the garrison of the island did not expect to be left in peace. From the fact that Greyfriars fellows were never seen on the bank, they could easily guess that the Head had drawn in school bounds to break off all communications between them and the rest of the school. And Sammy Bunter's stealthy and surreptitious manner, as he came in sight, showed that he was in dread of being spotted.

Bob Cherry was the first to note his arrival. He saw a fat face and a large pair of spectacles, very like Billy Bunter's, peer out of the wood along the towpath. They were withdrawn after a cautious blink up and down and round about, but they reappeared, and then the fat figure of Samuel Bunter emerged into the open.

The juniors on the island watched him and grinned.

Evidently Sammy had come there to communicate with them, and was very uneasy and nervous about it. Sixth Form prefects sometimes patrolled the

towpath to see that the Head's restriction of bounds was observed. If a prefect's eye had fallen on Sammy, in the act of communicating with the Removites, it would have meant "six."

"Don't call to him!" said Harry Wharton, as Bob was about to hail the fat fag across the arm of the river. "If there's a prefect hanging about he will hear, as well as Sammy."

"True, O king!" assented Bob.

"I guess I spotted a hat under the trees a little while ago!" remarked Fisher T. Fish. "I'll say it was Loder of the Sixth rubbering around."

"Sorry for Sammy, if Loder catches him here!" said the Bounder. "But what the thump does he want?"

"May have heard that we've been shopping in Courtfield and have got lots of grub here," suggested Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors watched. Sammy Bunter, evidently in an agony of uneasiness, blinked up and down the sunny towpath through his big spectacles.

He was taking risks—and it was not the Bunter way to take risks. Like Moses of old, he looked this way, and that way, and, like Moses, he saw no man.

Taking his courage in both hands, so to speak, the fat fag came across, at last, to the margin of the bank, facing the landing-place on the island.

Harry Wharton waved a hand to him. Nobody hailed him, as it was only too probable that other ears were within hearing. Why Sammy was there was rather a mystery, but nobody wanted to land him in the hands of authority.

Bunter minor blinked across through his spectacles and waved a fat hand back, and then put a podgy finger to his lips, in sign of silence. Perhaps he knew that there was a prefect in the wood—or, at least, dreaded it.

But it was a little difficult to see how he was going to make his communication and preserve silence at the same time. Having signed caution to the rebels, Sammy blinked round him again, up and down, and round about. Billy Bunter sat up and blinked at his minor across the water. He was as puzzled as the rest to know why Sammy was there.

As the juniors watched him the fat fag fumbled in his pocket and drew out a small object. He held it up to view and the juniors saw that it was a metal match-box. Sammy made a motion with his arm as an indication that he was about to throw.

"Brainy lad!" grinned the Bounder.

"That's a matchbox!" said Skinner.

"What the thump is he going to chuck us a matchbox for? Does the fat idiot think we're short of matches, or what?"

"There can't be anything to eat in it!" remarked Bunter. "It's too small. What the dickens is he up to?"

"Fathead!" said Smithy. "It's a message, of course! He's written a note, and put it inside."

"That's it, I suppose," assented Harry Wharton.

"The brainfulness of the esteemed Sammy is terrific!" remarked Hurreo Jamset Ram Singh.

"Quite bright!" grinned Bob Cherry.

Really, it was rather bright of Sammy. He dared not call out from the bank, and still less did he dare to wait there for the boat to ferry him across to the island. It was fairly clear that he had enclosed a message in that metal box, that it was the only explanation of his peculiar actions. Why he was taking the trouble was still a mystery, the rebels being, of course, unaware of Sammy's little trouble with Coker of the Fifth.

"I say, you fellows, that's rather



"I can jolly well tell you, Potter and Greene," said Coker, "that we're going to bag my boat from those cheeky young Remove rascals to-night—this very night—and put paid to them! And, I say—yarooooop!" Coker broke off suddenly, with a yell, as an ancient orange squashed in his right ear. Sammy Bunter, lurking behind the elm watching for a chance, had risked it at last!

clever of Sammy!" remarked Billy Bunter. "The fact is we're a clever family——"

"Here it comes!" said Bob.

Sammy's fat arm swung in the air, and the metal matchbox whizzed across the arm of the Sark.

The next moment there was a fearful yell from Billy Bunter.

Sammy had very brightly selected a metal box to carry his message. An ordinary flimsy matchbox would have blown away before reaching the distance. The metal box carried the necessary distance, and a little more, with all Sammy's beef in the throw. It whizzed across the water, across the landing-place, and did not stop till it met an opposing object—which happened to be the fat nose of William George Bunter.

Bang!

"Yarooooop!"

Billy Bunter bounded.

He clasped both fat hands to his fat little nose and roared.

"Ow! Wow! My nose! Yaroooh! Oh crikey! Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The matchbox dropped in the grass, unheeded by Bunter. Bunter was busy with his nose.

"Ow! Little idiot!" gasped Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, gimme something to chuck at him! Anything will do, only, the heavier the better!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Sammy Bunter, on the bank, was grinning. He had not aimed the missile at his major, but he seemed rather amused when it landed on him. Apparently, he derived entertainment from Billy's antics as he clasped his fat little nose and yelped.

"I'll chuck something, old fat bean!" said Bob Cherry.

The juniors had been disposing of the contents of a large bag of apples, and Bob picked a big, ripe apple from the bag.

"Catch him on the nose if you can!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

But Bob had no intention of catching Sammy on the nose. The big, ripe apple was a reward! Bob held it up, signed to Sammy to catch, and tossed it across. Bunter minor caught it, grinned, and promptly dug his teeth into it. Munching the apple, the fat fag vanished into the wood again.

Frank Nugent sorted the matchbox out of the grass. He was about to open it when there was an exclamation from Bob Cherry.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Jolly old Loder!"

Loder of the Sixth emerged from the trees on the bank. Evidently he had not been far away. Perhaps he had heard Bunter's yell when he caught the matchbox with his nose. Anyhow, there he was, on the towpath, staring up and down with suspicious eyes. Fortunately, Sammy Bunter was well out of sight by that time.

The bully of the Sixth came down to the water's edge and stared across at the group on Popper's Island.

Bob Cherry put the thumb of his left hand to his nose and extended the fingers. Loder glared at this disrespectful gesture. Bob amplified it by placing the thumb of his right hand to the little finger of his left and extending the fingers of the right. Loder gripped his ashplant with an almost convulsive grip. He would have given a great deal to lay it round Robert Cherry just then.

"Dear old Loder!" grinned the Bounder. "He looks waxy!"

"The waxfulness is terrific!"

"Give him an apple," suggested Squiff.

"Good egg!" chuckled the Bounder, and he picked an apple from the bag. It whizzed across the water like a bullet. The Bounder was one of the best bowlers in the Remove, and his aim was deadly. There was a sudden fearful howl from Loder of the Sixth as the apple crashed on his chin. Taken by surprise, he went over backwards, and sat down on the bank.

"Good shot!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Man down!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder scrambled to his feet, red with rage.

"You young scoundrels!" he roared.

"Give him another!"

Another apple flew, landing on Loder's ear. Another barely missed him as he dodged. Loder backed away hurriedly and disappeared into the wood. He seemed to have had enough of the Remove rebels, for the moment. Another apple caught him in the back of the head as he disappeared, and a yell floated back. Then Loder of the Sixth was gone.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

A Tip in Time!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. gathered round, as Frank Nugent opened the matchbox.

The juniors were all curious to see what it contained. Obviously, it was a message of some sort.

Nugent drew out a grubby and crumpled half-sheet of impot paper and unfolded it. A dozen fellows read it

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THE ISLAND SCHOOLBOYS!

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at once. The message was written in a scrawling hand, with a plentiful allowance of blots and smears—the customary Bunter caligraphy. The spelling was also of the Bunter variety. It ran:

"You felows look out! Coker of the Fifth is kumming to-nite to koller your bote."

"Coker of the Fifth barging in again!" said Bob Cherry. "Just like Coker!"

"Coming to collar our boat?" said Nugent.

"His boat!" grinned the Bounder.

"Ours now!" said the captain of the Remove. "Coker barged into what didn't concern him, and the boat is a capture from the enemy."

"Hear, hear!"

"Prize of war!" agreed Bob Cherry.

"Like Coker's cheek to think of collaring our boat, just because it was his once."

"The cheekfulness is terrific!"

"But how on earth did Sammy get on to it?" said Johnny Bull. "Coker can't have told fags of the Second about it."

"Bunters have ways of getting information," remarked the Bounder. "Sammy's as good at keyhole work as his major."

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Well, it's jolly decent of the kid to give us this tip!" said the captain of the Remove. "Loder might have bagged him, too! I suppose he found out somehow what Coker was up to. But—"

"He can't come at night without breaking bounds," said Peter Todd.

"Is even Coker idiot enough to get out of school after lights out, just for the pleasure of not minding his own business?"

"Isn't he idiot enough for anything?" asked Hazeldene.

"I guess Coker is the prize goob!" remarked Fisher T. Fish. "Say, you guys, we should sure come out at the little end of the horn if that pesky geek Coker levanted with the boat!"

"He won't!" grinned Bob. "Now we know—"

"Forewarned is four-legged, as the English proverb remarkably observes," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If Sammy's got it right, this is a jolly useful tip," said Harry Wharton. "We should be done for if they got our boat away. At least, we should be in a thumping bad scrape. We couldn't fetch in any more grub without a boat, and they'd take care we didn't get hold of another."

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, you fellows, what should we do if the grub ran out? Oh crumbs!"

Bunter turned almost pale at the awful thought.

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"Well, you'd be all right, Bunter!" remarked Peter Todd.

"Eh! How should I be all right, you ass?"

"You could live on your fat, like a polar bear. It would last you for weeks—or years. You've got tons."

"Beast!"

"The tonfulness is—"

"Terrific!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"I say, you fellows, you mind that beast Coker doesn't get that boat away!" gasped the alarmed Owl. "I can jolly well tell you that I shan't stick here without grub! You can't expect it."

"What?" roared Bob Cherry.

"It's not much I eat!" said Bunter warmly. "But if you fellows fancy I'm going to be kept short of food, you're jolly well mistaken!"

"You fat villain!" roared Bob, in great wrath. "We're only here at all on your account, you grubby, unwashed porker!"

"You can jaw till you're black in the face!" roared back Bunter. "But if you think you're going to starve me, I can jolly well say—Owl! Wow! Yow! Beast! Leave off kicking me! Yaroooooooh!"

Billy Bunter fled.

"I guess that fat geek is a pesky prize-packet," remarked Fisher T. Fish. "I'll say we're a bunch of all-fired ginks to be making any trouble about him!"

"Well, it's the principle of the thing," said the captain of the Remove. "A Remove man isn't going to be sacked for nothing!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We're keeping this up till they find out who really inked Prout!" went on Wharton. "Then it will be all right."

"Will it?" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"Of course it will! The Head won't want to sack Bunter when he gets hold of the right man."

"Aw! Wake snakes!" murmured Fisher T. Fish, and he said no more.

There was one man in the Greyfriars Remove who had the best of reasons for not desiring the facts to come to light about the inking of Prout. That man was Fisher Tarleton Fish.

"Well forewarned is fore-armed," said Bob Cherry. "Coker won't get hold of the boat if he hikes along to-night. He will find some nice fellows sitting up for him."

"All ready to make him sit up!" remarked the Bounder.

"The sit-upfulness will be preposterous."

There was no doubt that that "tip" from Sammy Bunter was very useful to the rebels on the island. They had not been blind to the danger of a night attack; every night some of them were camped at the landing place, where they were certain to be awakened by any attempt to land. But they had not thought of a single fellow swimming off from the bank to capture the boat and get it away under cover of darkness. That operation might have been carried out without awakening any of them, and in the morning they would have found themselves stranded.

Over supper they debated the matter. Coker, if he came, was to be allowed to get as far as the boat. The juniors agreed on that. But he would not be allowed to get away again! They agreed on that also! What was going to happen to Coker would serve as a warning to any other enterprising fellow who was afflicted with an inability to mind his own business!

When the time came to turn in some of the Removites went to sleep, as usual, in tents and sleeping-bags. But

the majority of the Form remained awake—ready for Coker of the Fifth.

The boat was pulled out of the water on the sloping bank. But it was not left untenanted as usual. Three fellows took their blankets into the boat, to camp in it for the night. Near at hand a dozen other fellows camped.

Coker, if he came, was likely to find himself in the midst of an unlooked-for hornets' nest!

As the starry night grew older, Billy Bunter's snore rumbled over the island and the river. Other fellows dropped off into slumber. Wharton, Bob Cherry, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, on their blankets in the boat, were the last to remain awake. But at eleven o'clock Bob gave a deep yawn.

"You fellows keeping awake?" he murmured.

"Eh? Yes!" Wharton started out of a doze. "Oh, yes!"

"Then you can call me when Coker happens!"

And Bob closed his drowsy eyes and went to sleep.

Ten minutes later, Harry Wharton blinked sleepily at Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, whose watchful, dark eyes glimmered in the shadows from his dusky face.

"You keeping awake, Inky?"

The Nabob of Bhanipur grinned.

"The wakefulness is terrific, my esteemed chum!" he answered.

"Then you can call me, old chap."

And Wharton followed Bob's example. Really, it was hardly necessary to remain awake, as the occupants of the boat were certain to wake when Coker barged in. But the dusky nabob did not close his eyes. With Oriental patience, he waited and watched, while the night grew older.

It was close on midnight when a sound across the arm of the river caught the keen ears of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

He started and listened.

Then he bent over the captain of the Remove, and shook him gently.

"Mmmmm!" came in a mumble.

"My esteemed, sleepy-headed chum, the excellent and execrable enemy is at hand!" whispered the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Oh!" gasped Wharton. He started into wide wakefulness and shook Bob by the shoulder.

"Whurrrr! Wharrer marrer—"

"Wake up, old bean! Quiet!" whispered Wharton.

Bob sat up.

"Coker?" he breathed.

"Inky thinks so—"

"The thinkfulness is terrific!" murmured the nabob.

"Good egg!" murmured Bob.

And the three juniors sitting in the darkness in the boat under the trees, waited and watched.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Nocturnal!

"DON'T make a row!" said Coker. That was Horace Coker, all over!

Potter and Greene were not making a sound! Coker was—several sounds! But it was Coker's way to give orders and instructions.

His comrades breathed hard, with difficulty restraining a keen desire to seize Horace Coker and jam his head against the banisters.

But it was no time for jamming Coker's head on the banisters, satisfactory as that proceeding would have been. Fellows breaking school bounds at night could not be too quiet about it,

Greyfriars School was buried in slumber. Up to the last moment, Potter and Greene had hoped that Coker also would be buried in slumber and would not wake till the rising-bell clanged out in the morning. Indeed they would have been glad, just then, for Horace Coker to be buried in anything, anywhere.

But Coker was awake! Coker was in deadly earnest! Coker meant business. There was no escape for his followers.

In a weak moment, Potter and Greene had agreed to back him up in this nocturnal enterprise. Really, they had not had a lot of choice in the matter. Coker had discussed it at tea in the study. Had he discussed it after tea, they might have declined. But Coker was standing the tea, and it was one of Coker's lavish spreads. Potter and Greene could hardly have shared in that magnificent spread and at the same time refused to back up their great leader.

So they had given their adhesion.

Now they repented it, but it was too late to back out! At the witching hour of night, the scheme seemed absolutely rotten to Potter and Greene.

It had not seemed so rotten when Coker told them about it in the quad; neither had it seemed so rotten accompanied by a magnificent spread in the study. But it seemed frightfully rotten when Coker woke them at eleven o'clock and they had to turn out and dress.

Creeping down shadowy staircases in the dark, it seemed rottener than ever. And Coker, of course, had to stumble and barge and make a row, and at the same time whisper orders to keep quiet!

Potter and Greene admitted it was a brainy scheme, especially for Coker. It was probable that the Head would be glad to hear that the islanders had lost their boat, and were cut off from communication with the land and the possibility of getting in supplies. In such circumstances he would doubtless for-

give the irregularity of the proceeding, and might even thank the seniors for having helped in an admittedly difficult situation.

But that depended on success!

If they succeeded no doubt it was all right! It would be a shrewd blow at the Remove rebellion, such as the Sixth Form prefects had failed to deliver. It would be one up, for the Fifth, to succeed where the prefects had failed. But if they did not succeed—And was anything likely to succeed in Coker's hands? It did not seem probable!

Success no doubt would see them through. But if they were caught breaking bounds at night they would be dealt with simply as breakers of bounds, and their intentions would count for nothing! And it was an awfully serious thing to break school bounds after lights out! Fellows were sacked for that sort of thing.

Potter and Greene crept after Coker
(Continued on next page.)



Which was the most memorable Test Match? "UMPIRE" will enlighten you on this subject or any other, for that matter. Bombard him with any ticklish cricket problems you like—he's willing to solve 'em!

A MEMORABLE TEST MATCH!

OF the five grounds on which Test matches between England and Australia will be played, the one at Old Trafford—the scene of the third game—is in some respects the best. There is accommodation for 40,000 spectators, all of whom can see the game perfectly. There are fine stands, too. And the pitch, once notoriously difficult, has now been worked up into a really good one: the sort of which it won't be easy to finish a match even in four days if the weather is good. Despite the jokes which are made about Manchester weather the sun has been known to shine there for days on end!

This home of the Lancashire County Club has been the scene of some great Test match struggles. Indeed it can be said of at least one Test match at Old Trafford—in 1902—that it has never been surpassed for drama. There were critics of the England selectors in those days as there are now, and many people of that time thought a blunder had been made in leaving out the famous George Hirst and playing Fred Tate. The latter was the father of Maurice Tate, who now plays for Sussex, and as it happened the people who criticised the selection of this player were able to say, after the match: "We told you so." For much of the drama of the match centred round this player.

At a critical period of the game, when Australia were having their second innings, and wickets were falling rapidly, Tate missed a chance of catching Darling in the long field from a mighty hit.

Actually that miss was not so much the fault of Tate as of the captain of the side, who should not have put him in that position. You see it does matter where fielders are placed, because some are better in one position than another.

Anyway, the missed chance proved rather expensive. Even so, however, England were only left with 124 runs to get for victory in the last innings. Only 124 did I say? Well, that number was a lot on a rain-ruined pitch against Australian bowlers. This was proved by the fact that when Fred Tate, the last man in, went to the wicket, eight runs were still wanted for victory. Could Tate do it? He got a four about which he knew very little. Only another boundary wanted!

Then it rained, and for forty-five minutes the play was held up. Think of the mental agony of those players—and especially of Fred Tate, whilst he remembered, in every second of that time of waiting, that if he had held the catch there would have been no necessity for him to get any runs at all. Eventually play was resumed. Tate made an effort to get another four. But he missed the ball; his wicket was laid flat and Australia had won a breath-taking game by three runs!

THAT LITTLE WORD "IF"!

ASKED, after the match, why he was not content to play the ball instead of trying to score four, Tate was able to make a humorous remark even amid the tragedy. "If I had hit it, instead of missing it," he said, "England would have won." That little word "if" creeping again into a cricket story. How often has it been used, both before and since that historic Test match at Old Trafford?

I recall another Old Trafford game which was memorable in a different sort of way—that of 1921. Again rain interfered, and there was no play at all the first day. Late in the second day Lord Tennyson, who was the England captain, declared the innings closed with a view to getting the Australians in for about three-quarters of an hour. The players rooped off the field, but when they were

back in the pavilion, Carter, the Australian wicket-keeper, told his captain that the declaration at that time in the evening was illegal according to Test match rules. After twenty minutes of argument England batted again.

I believe this Australian wicket-keeper was the only man on the field who knew that the declaration could not be done. A little lesson in that—it is useful to know the rules of the game. If England had been allowed to declare they might have had time to win the game.

The following day, when Australia batted, a sort of record was set up by "Herby" Collins, the Australian. There was nothing but a draw for which to play, and Collins batted for five and a half hours, during which time he scored a mere forty runs. How's that for a fine bit of stone-walling? All the slow cricket is not confined to these modern times. Collins would not be moved from his purpose of keeping his end up, even though the spectators chivvied and even barracked him.

A TALE OF OLD TRAFFORD!

JUST one little story of the barracking in that match which I think will interest and amuse you. During one spell, in which Collins was at the wicket for nearly an hour without scoring, a spectator who knew that the England captain was a descendant of the famous poet, called out:

"Hi, Mr. Tennyson, why don't you read him one of your grandfather's poems!" No sooner had the words been uttered than another spectator called out: "Shut up, you fool, that's what Tennyson has done, and sent Collins right off to sleep!"

I could tell many more tales of Old Trafford, but must switch off now to answer the questions of two correspondents very briefly.

In reply to a Scunthorpe reader, a batsman cannot properly be given out leg-before-wicket to a ball which does not pitch on the wicket. The diagram which this reader sends tells me quite clearly that the umpire who gave the batsman out was wrong. I must talk to you at greater length one day about leg-before.

In reply to A. C., of Morecambe, the batsman is not out if, in running, he knocks his wicket over. You see, he has already made good his ground.

"UMPIRE."

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down the stairs in a mood of repentance and pessimism. They wished themselves well out of it. But they were not out of it—they were right in it!

Coker led the way downstairs to the Sixth Form lobby. That was the easiest way out, and the door could be left unfastened for return. That lobby was reached by way of the Sixth Form passage, and the Sixth Form studies were bed-rooms as well as studies; the Sixth slept there. It needed caution and nerve to creep past the doors of rooms occupied by prefects, either of whom, if he awakened and spotted them, was entitled to bag them and report them to the Head as breakers of bounds.

And Coker was no creeper!

It was very dark in the House, not a single light burning at that hour. Coker was not a cat to see in the dark! He groped!

A door-handle rattled under his groping hand!

"Quiet!" breathed Potter, almost in agony.

"Shut up, Potter!"

"That's Wingate's door!" hissed Greene.

"Don't talk rot, Greene! You don't know one door from another, in the dark, any more than I do."

"I tell you—"

"I said don't talk rot! In fact, don't talk at all! A job of this kind has to be done quietly!" said Coker. It did not occur to Coker's powerful brain to be quiet himself.

"Get on, for goodness' sake!" groaned Potter.

"I think I know where we are now!" said Coker. "Follow me and keep quiet—wow!" Coker uttered an ejaculation as he bumped on the wall in the dark. "Ooogh! Wow!"

"Oh, be quiet—"

"All your fault, jawing at a fellow! For goodness' sake hold your silly tongue," said Coker, crossly. "I can hear somebody moving now! Nice kettle of fish if we get snaffled by some meddling prefect!"

"Get on!" hissed Potter. "That's Wingate—"

"Don't shout!"

Wingate of the Sixth was stirring in his room. He had undoubtedly heard something.

Potter and Greene pushed on, passing Coker. He could not see them, but he felt them push past, and he grabbed them.

"Don't shove past a chap—better leave it to me to lead!" said Coker. "You fellows know what fools you are—"

A door opened. Even Horace Coker left off talking as he heard that. It was Wingate's door. Evidently the captain of Greyfriars had been alarmed. Wingate, in his pyjamas, stared out into the dark passage.

On tiptoe, with hearts thumping, the three Fifth Formers trod on. They passed silently into the lobby at the end of the passage. Even Coker did not stumble, or tell Potter and Greene to be quiet.

There was a glimmer of starlight at the little window of the lobby. Coker reached the door without knocking anything over. But there was a click as he unlocked the door. It did not occur to Coker to turn the key silently till after he had turned it. Then it was rather too late. It was not a loud click, but it seemed to Coker's comrades to bang out like a pistol-shot.

"Oh you idiot!" breathed Greene.

"Oh you dummy!" hissed Potter.

"Don't yell!" said Coker.

He opened the door. Potter and Greene seemed to pause, and it was

quite probable that if Coker had gone out first they might have closed the door after him and gone back to the Fifth Form dormitory. But Coker did not go out first. He gave Potter a push, and Potter went out first; he gave Greene a push and Greene went out after Potter, stumbling. Then Coker followed them out and shut the door.

He intended, and indeed planned, to close it without a sound. It was sheer ill-luck that it slipped and banged. This did not sound to Potter and Greene like a pistol-shot! It sounded to their startled ears like a cannon-shot.

"Oh you potty chump!" groaned Potter.

"Oh you blithering dummy!" moaned Greene.

"Don't roar!" said Coker.

He led the way across the starlit quad. They entered the old Cloisters to climb the wall. Coker's hold on the ivy slipped, and he landed on the stone flags with a bump. Fortunately, there was no one near the Cloisters to hear the howl that came from Coker.

Potter and Greene dropped outside the wall and waited for him. Coker clambered over again and lowered himself on the ivy outside. A tendril snapped in his hand and Coker descended faster than he had planned. He would have landed with another bump had not Potter and Greene been there. His thrashing arms caught them round their necks, and dragged them over, Coker luckily on top.

"Ow!" spluttered Potter.

"Wow!" gurgled Greene.

"Don't rave!" said Coker. He got off Potter and Greene and stared down at their sprawling, gasping forms. "Why don't you get up? What did you fall down for? Are you staying there all night? You might as well have stayed in bed at this rate."

Potter and Greene got up. It says much for their self-restraint, that they did not fall on Coker, and slay him on the spot!

"Come on!" said Coker.

He led the way. Potter and Greene followed. They were fairly landed in it now: and their only remaining hope was that the Removites on the island would collar Coker and whop him black and blue. That hope sustained their spirits a little as they tramped after Coker through the starry July night.

Meanwhile, Wingate of the Sixth, after listening at his door a few minutes, had gone along the lobby. As he expected, he found the outer door there unlocked. He had suspected that some fellows had been breaking bounds. Now he knew! He locked the door, and went back to bed.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Coker Going Strong!

"**W**AS—was that somebody?"

"Don't be an ass, Potter!"

"I—I thought I heard—" muttered Greene.

"Don't be an idiot, Greene!"

The Fifth Formers were tramping up the tow-path beside the Sark, that glimmered and rippled in the starlight. On their left was the river: on their right the woods of Popper Court, deep and dusky, with little shady paths running up here and there among the trees.

The night was fine: it was quite a pleasant walk, or might have been, had not two of the party been so painfully conscious of the fact that they were out of bounds at forbidden hours. And there was no doubt that it was lonely—fearfully lonely. True, they did not

want to meet anybody at that hour—the more lonely it was, the better, for schoolboys out of bounds. Nevertheless, the loneliness had its disagreeable side.

There might be poachers about. There might be footpads. There might be hulking tramps. Potter and Greene did not feel easy in their minds. It was all very well for the Remove rebels to camp in such lonely precincts, thirty strong. It was different with three fellows, two of whom, at least, had a deep dislike for poachers, footpads, and tramps at close quarters.

A rustle in the wood bordering the tow-path made Potter and Greene stare round uneasily. Coker tramped on regardless. A rabbit scuttling in the underbush was not likely to alarm Horace Coker. Neither was a poacher, a tramp, or a footpad! Nor yet a keeper—if game-keepers were about. Coker was always ready for a row, and not particular with whom he rowed. They had taken a short cut to the river through Sir Hilton Popper's property—where there was an old right-of-way now closed by the autocrat of Popper Court. Coker was quite prepared to argue the point with all the game-keepers in Kent. Potter and Greene weren't!

However, they reached the river, and tramped up the tow-path. Again there was a rustle in the dim woods. This time Coker heard it, and paused.

"Was that somebody?" asked Coker in his turn.

"Don't be an ass!" said Potter, feeling entitled to reply in the same strain as the great Horace to the same question.

"Don't be an idiot!" added Greene.

Coker looked at them. He seemed to be considering! Finally he shook his head, as if dismissing a thought.

"No," he said, "I won't, just now."

"You won't what?" asked Potter, mystified.

"I won't knock your heads together for your cheek! You'd yell, and alarm those fags on the island."

"Oh!" gasped Potter and Greene.

"But don't talk any more," said Coker. "I'm a patient chap, I hope; but I'm not standing any cheek! Shut up!"

Coker led on again. Potter and Greene followed. They were not merely hoping now, but yearning, that the Remove rebels would get hold of Horace Coker, and make a horrible example of him. If they had boiled Coker in oil, Potter and Greene would hardly have considered it too severe.

"Stop!" said Coker, at last. "There's the island."

They halted on a grassy bank.

A dim mass, the wooded island lay in the middle of the starlit river. No sound came to their ears from it: they were too far off to hear Billy Bunter's snore, powerful as it was. Coker slipped off a coil of rope that was looped over his arm. He had come prepared. He dropped the coil, of course, when he took it off his arm. Coker had almost a genius for dropping things, and knocking things over. He stooped and groped for the coil, and discovered—painfully—that it had dropped in a bed of stinging-nettles.

"Wow!" spluttered Coker.

"What the thump—"

"Wow!" Coker threw the coil down again, and rubbed his tingling hands. "Ow! Stinging nettles! Yow!"

There was a suppressed chuckle from Potter and Greene. They were not in a merry mood: but the stinging-nettles seemed to amuse them.

Coker gave them a glare.



As Coker reached the boat, three dark figures suddenly leapt at him and grasped him. "Got him!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Hold him!" panted Wharton. "The holdfulness is terrific!" chimed in Hurree Singh. "Ooooooh!" gasped Coker, taken suddenly by surprise. "What—urrrgh!"

"What are you cackling at?" he demanded. "Is there anything to cackle at in a fellow sticking his hands into stinging-nettles? Don't make that row and wake up those young scoundrels! Do you think you can gurgle like a soda-siphon without being heard?"

"Don't you think they may hear you shouting?" asked Potter.

"Who's shouting?" hissed Coker. "If you can't talk sense, Potter, hold your silly tongue! See! Now keep quiet while I get ready."

Coker uncoiled the rope, and tied one end round his waist. Then he threw off his hat and coat, and kicked off his shoes.

"Both of you hold on to the rope, and pay it out slowly!" he directed. "Mind you don't let it go."

"We won't let you drown!" said Greene.

"Don't be an ass, Greene. That rope isn't for me—it's to tie on the boat, and to pull it across! If I put the oars in, it may waken those young sweeps, and they might be too many for me—more than two dozen of them."

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Potter. "They might! Almost!"

"I shall shove the boat off, and follow it out," said Coker. "You fellows will pull it across. Easy as falling off a form, if you've got the sense of a bunny rabbit."

"Sure you can swim it?" asked Potter.

"Don't be a potty ape!"

"Well, you'll be safe on the rope, anyhow," said Greene. Neither Potter nor Greene had the same faith in Coker's swimming powers that Coker himself had! And they really did not want old Horace to be drowned.

"I should be safe without the rope, Greene! Don't be a blithering, bleating dunderhead! For goodness' sake stop jawing! I never came across fellows

like you two to jaw! Jaw, jaw, jaw!" said Coker.

"You do a little in that line yourself!" said the goaded Greene.

"I said stop jawing."

Greene, breathing hard, stopped "jawing." He began to reconsider his desire for Coker not to be drowned!

Having reduced his followers to obedient silence, Horace Coker took to the water.

Coker could swim—every Greyfriars man had to learn to swim. He fancied that he swam like a fish! But that was only one of Coker's many unfounded fancies. His Form-fellows likened his performances in the water to those of an insane grampus. When he kept afloat he made rough weather for every other swimmer within a wide radius. Over anything like a distance, Coker was more likely to swim like a stone than a fish. However, that arm of the river was not very wide, the water was smooth as a pond, and there was little current. Even Coker was good for that crossing.

Splash! Splash! Splash!

Coker, of course, stepped into a hollow of the river bed, unintentionally, and sat down in the Sark unexpectedly. For a minute or so he performed his insane grampus act. Then he was up again, and swimming.

If any fellow was awake on the island it was certain that he must have heard some of the sounds made by Coker. But the island was silent, and it seemed as if the rebels were asleep.

Had they all been asleep, no doubt Coker would have got through undetected. Coker was, as yet, blissfully unaware that the rebels had been "tipped" in time of his intended visit. He had smacked Sammy Bunter's head, hard, for "buzzing" that squashy orange in his neck: but so far as Coker knew, the episode had ended with the

smacking of Sammy's bullet head. He had discoveries yet to make.

Coker swam out, splashing a good deal, and giving an occasional gurgle. Potter and Greene held the rope, and paid it out as Coker went. They were able to follow his course in the glimmer of the stars, and they were ready to haul him in if life-saving was required. But Coker kept on, and disappeared under the black shadow of the trees on the island.

"By gum!" murmured Potter, quite interested now. "Is that blithering idiot really going to pull it off?"

"Not a bad stunt, if it was anybody but Coker handling it!" remarked Greene. "Bet you he'll make a muck of it, though."

"Well, if there's a fag within ten yards of the boat Coker will be fairly certain to tread on him!" observed Potter.

"Hark!"

The nocturnal silence was broken suddenly by sounds from the island. Potter and Greene started, and listened intently. Of what was happening on Popper's island, they could see nothing under the dark trees. But they realised that some of the rebels were, after all, awake! On that point there was no doubt, no possible shadow of doubt, no possible doubt whatever!

"They've got him!" gasped Potter.

"They have!" gasped Greene.

There was no doubt about it.

They had.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

In a Hornets' Nest!

HORACE COKER had landed—in trouble.

Deep silence and darkness greeted him when he reached the island shore. He ceased to swim, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,378.

and waded in shallow water, blinking round him in the darkness of the shadowy branches overhead. He expected to find the boat tied on to the willows, but he did not find it there. For some minutes he blinked and blinked; then as his eyes grew more accustomed to the deep shadow he discerned the shape of the boat pulled up on the shore. He squelched out of water and mud, and approached it cautiously.

Twigs crackled under his feet. Willow branches brushed and murmured. Those slight sounds would not have awakened sleepers sleeping the sound of healthy sleep of youth. But they were very distinctly audible to three wide-awake fellows grinning in the darkness inside the boat.

Those three fellows made no sound—so far. They were waiting with cheery patience for Coker to get to close quarters.

He got as far as he could.

He reached the boat. It was upright, the keel resting in a little gully. Coker grasped it.

Coker had not quite expected this. Still, he was at no loss to deal with it. It was his own boat, and he knew its weight. It was not difficult for a hefty fellow like Coker to shove it down the bank into the water. Once it was there floating off, it would not matter if the noise awakened the fags. It would be out of their reach. It was only necessary to heave it down the slope into the Sark.

Coker, grasping the boat, heaved. And then suddenly three pairs of hands, grasping Coker, heaved also. Three dark figures, leaping from the boat, strewed Horace Coker on the earth, and strewed themselves over him.

"Got him!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Hold him!" panted Wharton.

"The holdfulness is terrific!"

"Wake up, you men!" yelled Bob.

Coker for the moment hardly knew what was happening. He was taken quite by surprise. But he knew that he was on his back, that a knee was planted on his chest, that somebody was trampling on his long legs, and that somebody else had a grip on his ears.

And he could hear sounds of stirring and voices as if a whole nest of hornets was turning out.

"Oooogh!" gasped Coker. "What—Urrgh!"

"It's Coker!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "I know his jolly old toot. That's either Coker's voice, or an escaped fog-horn."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Got him?" came the Bounder's shout.

"Yes, rather! Here he is!"

"Good egg!"

There was a general scrambling towards the spot. Electric torches and bike lamps gleamed out. There was light on the subject. It gleamed on Coker's startled, infuriated face, glaring up.

"You—you—you—you young rotters!" gasped Coker. "Leggo! Gerroff! I'll smash, I'll spifficate you! I'll—I'll—Groogh!"

"Sit on him!"

"Jump on him!"

"Mop him up!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker struggled wildly. But a dozen fellows were round him, all grabbing and grasping him. Coker had no chance.

"Potter!" yelled Coker. "Greene!"

"Oh, my hat! He's got his pals with him!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Look out!"

"They're not here! They didn't come across with him!"

"There's a rope tied round the fat-head!"

"Potter! Rescue! Greene!" roared Coker.

"Yes, I can see those two duffers reseuing you, old bean, away from this crowd!" chuckled Bob. "We'll bag them, too, if they come across!"

"Catch them coming!" grinned the Bounder. "They'll watch it!"

It was really improbable that Potter and Greene would attempt to swim across, and rescue Horace Coker from a swarm of Removites. That was altogether too large an order for Coker's pals.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Hold on!" shouted Bob, as there came a tug at the

rope that was knotted round Coker's manly form. "They're pulling!"

"Hold him!" yelled Wharton.

"Hang on!"

"Stick to him!"

"The stickfulness is terrific!"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow!" raved Coker.

"Leggo! Wow! I'm being pulled to bits! Yurr-roop! Wow! Oh crikey! Whoop!"

"Ha, ha, ha! Hang on!"

Potter and Greene were doing their best. Having realised that Coker had fallen into the hands of the enemy they bethought themselves of the rope, of which one end was tied to Coker. They dragged on it. If there was a chance of pulling Coker out of the hornets' nest, like a cork out of a bottle, Potter and Greene were going to make the most of it.

They braced themselves to the rope, their feet planted in the earth, and put their beef into it.

Coker was very nearly whisked out of the hands of his captors. But not quite. The Removites were not ready to part with Coker yet. They held on to Coker as if he had been a prize of priceless value.

Removites hung to his arms, his legs, his ears, his hair, his collar, and nearly everything that was his. Like Potter and Greene they put their beef into it, and manfully resisted the strain.

It was a tug-of-war—with Horace Coker as the prize. It was really awful for Coker. The Removites held him fast. The drag on the rope was terrific. It did not drag Coker away; but it seemed as if it was going to cut him in half.

"Urrgh! Wurrgh!" gurgled Coker. "Oh crikey! Help! Leggo! You're pip-pip-pip-pulling me to pi-pop-pieces! Wurrgh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hang on!"

"Yaroo! You're killing me!" shrieked Coker. "Oh crikey! Leggo! You're breaking me in half! Yaroo!"

"Stick to him!" gasped Bob Cherry. "We're keeping some of him, if those fatheads get the rest!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton opened his pocket-knife, and sawed across the taut rope. Really, there was no telling what might have happened to Horace Coker had not the rope parted.

Fortunately it did part. Under the sawing blade it parted suddenly with a snap.

There was a sudden collapse of Potter and Greene. With their feet firmly planted, and leaning back to it, they had been dragging with all their force on the unyielding rope. When it suddenly yielded, and the loose end flew across the water to them, Potter and Greene went over backwards as if they had been shot.

Greene crashed on the towpath; Potter crashed on Greene. Two fearful yells simultaneously awoke the echoes of Popper Court Woods. Fellows staring from the island to the starlit bank saw two pairs of heels kicking up into the air.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a yell across the Sark.

"How's that?" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

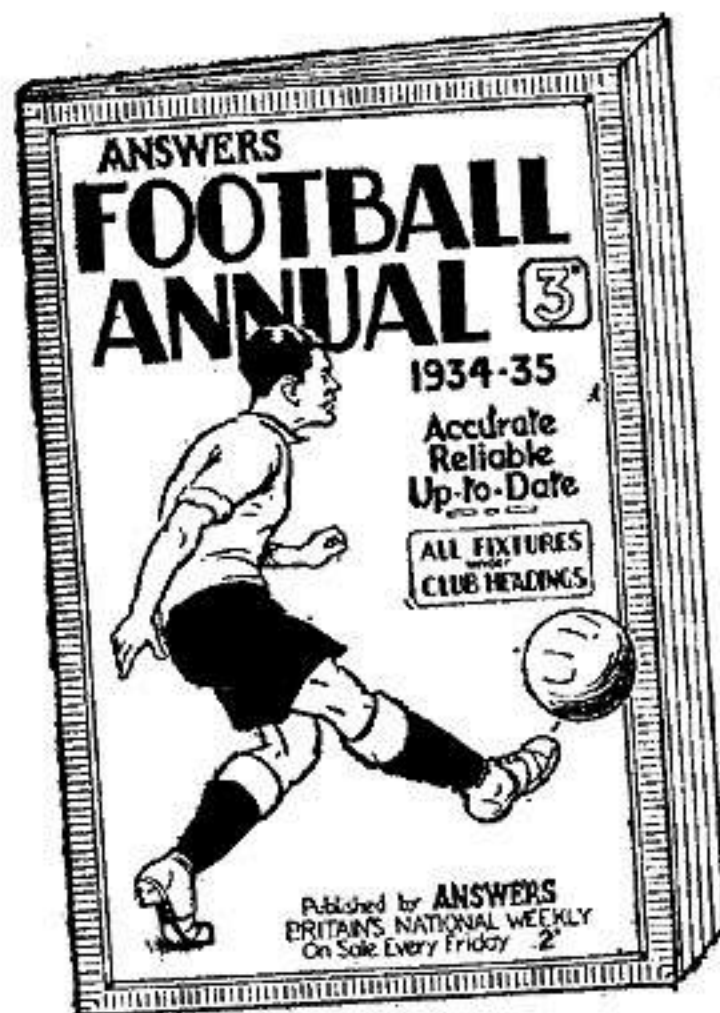
"Oh crumbs!" gasped Potter, struggling to his feet. "Oh, my hat! Ow!"

"Ooooooh!" groaned Greene, sitting up and feeling the back of his head to make sure that it was still there. It felt as if it wasn't. "Oh, my napper! Oh, my nut! Ow!"

"Coming across for Coker?" yelled the Bounder.

"Oh, do!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"



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Potter peered across the stream. He had no intention of attempting to cross it. Whatever was going to happen to Coker in the hands of the rebels, Potter did not want the same to happen to him, also. In the light of the bike lamps under the island trees he made out the crowd of Removites, with Coker wriggling and gasping in their midst. Greene, uninterested in the fate of Coker, continued to rub the back of his head. It had hit the towpath hard when Greene went down, and there was a pain in it.

"Well, they've got him!" said Potter. "Ow!" said Greene. "Wow!" "We can't do anything—" "Wow! My nut! Ow!" "Well, he's asked for it," said Potter philosophically. "Let's hope he'll enjoy it now he's got it." "Ow! My napper! I think it's cracked! Ow!"

"You fellows coming across?" roared the Bounder.

"Thanks, no!" answered Potter. "When you've done with that howling idiot, chuck him in, and we'll pull him out this side."

"We're not done with him yet!" called back Bob Cherry. "We're keeping dear old Horace for a bit! We're going to make him tired of paying visits at such late hours and spoiling our beauty sleep."

"I'll smash you!" roared Coker.

"The smashfulness will be a boot on the other leg, my esteemed and idiotic Coker!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I'll spifficate you!"

"I may be mistaken," remarked Bob Cherry. "But I fancy you are going to get the spiffication, Horace."

"I'll pulverise you!"

"Get that can of tar!" said Bob. "We got it for old Popper, if he blew in again; but it will do just as well for Horace!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Potter and Greene sat down on the bank to wait. That was all that they could do; and Greene was still busily occupied rubbing his head. They could hear the voices on the island, and if they had had any desperate idea of attempting to rescue Coker, the mention of the tar would have banished it at once. Potter and Greene did not want any of the tar! Coker was welcome to all that he had asked for—including the tar!

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Horrid for Horace!

"**H**ERE you are!" "Keep his nut steady!" It was not easy to keep Coker's "nut" steady! Held by innumerable hands as he was, hardly able to move a limb, Coker contrived to duck and dodge with his head, as Bob Cherry lifted the can of tar.

It was not a large can. There were only a couple of gallons of tar in it. But that amount, though not large, was more than Coker wanted on his devoted head—much more. He did not want any! He objected strongly! His head twisted to and fro, almost like the head of a captured serpent, in his frantic efforts to keep it out of the way of the tar-can.

"Hold on to his ears!" said Bob.

"Yaroooh!"

"And his nose—"

"Urrrggh!"

"Now keep him steady! We don't want to waste the tar! Tar costs money, and we're not going to charge Coker anything for it—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker, firmly held, gazed up in horror at the can, as Bob began to tilt it over. The tar within was in a fluid, sticky state. The thought of that sticky fluid on his hair made Coker shudder. It horrified him to the marrow of his bones.

"Chuck it!" he gasped. "I—I say, chuck it!" Coker of the Fifth so far humbled himself as to plead to fags!

"Just going to!" answered Bob. "I'm going to chuck it over your mop, old thing!"

"I don't mean that, you little idiot!"

"I do, you big idiot!"

"Look here! Keep that tar away!"

shrieked Coker. "If you got it for old Popper, keep it for him! Look here! I—I give you best!"

That was a tremendous concession for Horace Coker. Generally, Coker never

knew when he was beaten. But he was convinced this time. A trickle of tar over the side of the can convinced him.

"Let him have it!" roared Bolsover major.

"Mop it over his napper!"

"Keep off!" shrieked Coker, wriggling in horror. "Oh crikey! If you stick that tar on my hair, you young scoundrels—"

"Us what?" demanded Bob.

"I—I—I mean, you—you Remove fellows!" gasped Coker. "I—I say, don't be rotters! I'll go! I—I'll go without thrashing you! There!"

"Awfully kind of Coker to offer to go without thrashing thirty fellows, isn't it?" remarked Frank Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

(Continued on next page.)

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.

HAVE you ever seen a meteor, chums? One of my readers who lives in the quaintly named town of Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada, sends me particulars of a huge visitor from the skies which landed not far away from his town a little while ago. He suggests that it might interest other readers. It must have been

A WEIRD AND WONDERFUL SIGHT,

for my chum tells me that, while it was red in colour and had a long, streaming tail, it gave off a ghastly green light. The sky was lighted as bright as daylight, and as the meteor struck earth, it gave off a magnificent display of sparks, and then exploded. Between Calgary and Edmonton, the light given off by the meteor was strongest, but it was seen from Saskatchewan to British Columbia—a distance of about a thousand miles! That will give you some idea of its brilliance.

A search is being made for the remains of the meteorite, but there is little hope of finding anything, for it is believed to have disappeared in dust. This is the second meteor which has fallen this year. The other fell in Spain in February.

Whenever a meteor falls, scientists always try to discover the aerolites—falling stones which accompany them—which contain iron, nickel, and other minerals. Meteors are sometimes seen in England, and one weighing 10 lbs fell in Ireland in 1902.

MANY of my readers, including Kenneth Knowles, of Chesterfield, have been puzzled by

THE SECRETS OF "KING KONG,"

the famous "trick" film that was such a tremendous success. My Chesterfield reader asks me to tell him how the various "stunts" were "wangled." It would, of course, take many pages of the MAGNET to describe them in detail, but most of

the effects were obtained by "double-exposure." A background was photographed, and the finished film was projected on to a screen. In front of this screen an actor in a gorilla's skin was photographed again, the lights being placed so that they would shine on the actor, but not on the screen. Then both actor and background were photographed together, and the result was that the finished film—which was actually two in one—made the gorilla appear to be several times the height of the trees.

In some "shots" there were actually three or more films in one, thus allowing "property" animals to appear fifty or eighty feet in height, while the human actors were shown as being normal-size. A large number of models were used in the city scenes, while the fights between the "property" animals were taken in the same manner as cartoon films are taken—by shooting only one picture of the animals, then shifting them slightly and taking another picture, and so on. This is a very lengthy process, for twenty-four separate pictures take a long time to "shoot," whereas they only appear on the screen when completed for one second!

This will give you a little idea of some of the difficulties with which modern film producers have to contend.

By the way, Frank Richards has been telling me that the long complete story which he has written for

NEXT WEEK'S "MAGNET"

is, in his opinion, one of the best he has done. And I agree with him. So, I think, will you, when you read:

"THE 'NO-SURRENDER' CRICKETERS!"

which is the title of the long complete yarn featuring the Remove rebels, which will be in your hands next Saturday. Many of my chums have written to say how tip-top the Greyfriars stories are these days, and I am sure they won't be disappointed with the ones which are in store for the future.

"The new adventure thriller, 'The Black Hercules,' is a top-notch," writes one enthusiastic reader, and I feel like replying, in the language of Fisher T. Fish: "Buddy, you've said a mouthful!" Watch out for more exciting chapters next week.

Our other interesting features, including a full-of-mirth "Greyfriars Herald," will appear as usual.

I must apologise to several readers for not being able to answer their queries in this chat, but I hope to have more space at my disposal next week. Until then—cheerio, chums!

YOUR EDITOR.
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,378.

"Give him the tar!" shouted the Bouncer.

Bob held the can over Coker's horrified head. Just a thin trickle of tar came over the side. But he did not pour. As a matter of fact, Bob had no intention of pouring the tar over Coker's head. He was playfully pulling Coker's leg. But a good many of the rebels were in favour of letting Coker have the tar. They shouted to Bob to get going.

"Well, look here! If Coker's sorry, perhaps we can let him off the tar!" said Harry Wharton. "Are you sorry you barged in, Coker?"

"I—I—I—" gurgled the infuriated Horace. "I'll smash the lot of you!"

"That doesn't sound like being sorry!" said Bob. "I think I'd better let him have the tar, after all! Keep your nut steady, Coker!"

"Thanks!" yelled Coker. "Oh, thanks! Oh crikey! Thanks!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Roll him in!" said Wharton, laughing, and Horace Coker was rolled off the island into the muddy margin of the Sark.

He scrambled to his feet there, gabbling with fury. He glared back, tempted to charge at the grinning enemy. Bob Cherry held up the can of tar invitingly.

Coker did not charge.

He swam for the bank! A yell of merriment followed him.

"I rather fancy," remarked Bob Cherry, "that Coker will think twice before he pays us another visit."

"The twicefulness will be terrific."

"Good-night, Coker!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker scrambled out of the water. Potter and Greene rose to their feet. They were grinning—as if they, as well as the juniors, had derived entertainment from the scene on the island. Coker gave them a speechless glare. He squeezed water out of his clothes, jammed on his shoes and coat and hat, and started down the towpath. In the silence of inexpressible wrath, Coker tramped homeward to Greyfriars, with Potter and Greene grinning in his wake.

They clambered in over the Cloister wall. They arrived at the door of the Sixth Form lobby. Potter turned the door handle.

"Oh, my hat!" he ejaculated.

"Open that door, you dummy!" snarled Coker.

"It's locked!"

"Don't be an idiot! How can it be locked? I left it unlocked."

"It's locked now."

"Don't be a dummy! Let me get at it."

Coker got at it! He twisted and wrenched at the door handle. But the lobby door did not stir.

"Oh crumbs!" said Coker blankly.

"Well, isn't it locked?" asked Potter sarcastically.

"Don't be a fathead!"

"Wingate must have come out, after all," said Greene. "I knew Coker had woke him up! He knows somebody is out of bounds, and he's locked the door."

"That's it!" agreed Potter.

"If you'd backed me up," said Coker, "it would have been all right! If we'd got that boat away, it would have been all right! If you'd had the sense of bunny rabbits and the pluck of guinea pigs, it would have been all right! Now look what you've landed us 'all in!'"

"We have?" gasped Potter and Greene.

"Yes, you! And——"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,373.

Coker got no further. Potter and Greene had to face the consequences of being caught out of bounds after lights-out. That was inevitable now. It meant detentions and impositions, at least. It might mean worse than that! It was all Coker's doing, and he laid it all to their charge! It was the last straw! Potter and Greene, goaded, turned on Coker! They grasped him, and banged his head on the lobby door!

Finding solace in that proceeding, they banged it again, and yet again, and yet once more! Then they hurled Coker, roaring, away, and walked along to Wingate's window, to tap for admittance.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Loder Knows How!

GERALD LODER grinned.

Wingate coloured.

It was morning at Greyfriars—a bright and sunny morning. But there were some faces that were not sunny! The headmaster's face was rather like a thundercloud.

Passing Wingate of the Sixth in the quadrangle, Dr. Locke gave him a cold, distant stare, very different from his usual benignant look, and frowned portentously. He passed on, leaving the captain of the school with a red face—and Loder, at a little distance, grinning.

The fact was that the Head's temper had suffered of late. The Lower School regarded the Remove rebellion as a tremendous lark. The seniors shook their heads over it, or grinned over it, as the spirit moved them. The masters, in Common-room, discussed it incessantly, and wondered why the Head did not put a prompt end to it. Certainly the Head would have done so, had he known how. But he did not know how, and the prolongation of this extraordinary state of affairs was getting on his nerves.

The Head seemed to take the view that it was up to the prefects to handle recalcitrant juniors, and especially to Wingate, as head prefect! Power was deputed to them for that purpose.

And they had failed him! The Head in these days was angry with everybody and everything, and especially with his prefects! Hence the cold stare, or, rather, glare, with which he passed George Wingate in the quad that morning.

"Looks as if Wingate's rather at a discount!" Loder remarked to Walker of the Sixth.

Walker grunted.

"The Beak's ratty all round," he said. "He sniffs at Quelch, as if it was Quelch's fault! He snorts at us, as if it was our fault! Prefects ain't supposed to handle a thing like this! It's a job for the beak!"

"Well, head prefect ought to make himself useful in an emergency like this," said Loder. "All Wingate can do is to report fellows for trying to handle what beats him. I hear that some Fifth Form men got out of bounds last night, and he spotted them, and they were up before the Head after prayers. They've got detentions for the rest of the term. And it seems that they went after those young rascals on Popper's Island—so they said, at least."

"Lucky for them the Head believed them!" grunted Walker. "He's rather a simple old duck."

"Well, I fancy it was true; it was like that idiot Coker to barge in and make a fool of himself! Anyhow, he tried it on, ass as he is—and Wingate isn't even trying anything on! I fancy he wouldn't be head prefect much longer if another man handled the matter and got away with it."

Walker looked at his friend.

"If that's your game, there's nothing in it," he said. "You can't touch the young rotters any more than anybody else can."

"The whole thing hangs on Bunter!" said Loder quietly. "Bunter's sacked, and they're sticking to him. If Bunter was got away from the island the whole thing would collapse at once."

"I suppose it would! Got any stunt for getting that fat, frowzy, frabjous fooler away from the rest of the mob?"

"Just that!" said Loder. "Keep it dark, Jimmy, old man—Wingate's not in this! Things would be rather rosier for our set in the Sixth if I were head prefect—what? And I can jolly well tell you that the Head couldn't do less than make me head prefect if I handed Bunter over to him and knocked the bottom out of the whole show."

"Right as rain!" agreed Walker. "But how the thump—I tell you they're sticking to him like glue!"

"Bunter's got a brother here," said Loder.

"What about that?"

"Suppose he got run over by a car—"

"Eh?"

"Parents sent for in a hurry—and his brother sent for, of course, with young Sammy lying in sanny all smashed up—"

"But he won't get run over by a car!" gasped Walker, bewildered. "Think he's going to walk under a motor-car to please you, Loder?"

"You're rather an ass, Jimmy!" said Loder. "Suppose it happened, a prefect would cut across to the island and tell Bunter. What?"

"I suppose so! But it hasn't happened, and won't—"

"Bunter could be told so, all the same," said Loder coolly.

"Oh!" gasped Walker.

James Walker stared at Loder. He began to understand. Loder grinned genially.

"Dash it all, it's too thick, old man!" muttered Walker. "You couldn't tell a rotten lie like that—"

"You've never told one?" inquired Loder pleasantly.

"Well, there's a limit!" said Walker. "Bunter's a fat little beast and the cause of all this trouble, but alarming him with a tale that his young brother's run over by a car—Dash it all, Loder, it's putrid!"

Loder shrugged his shoulders. If there was a chance of "dishing" Wingate, and becoming head prefect in his place, Gerald Loder was not scrupulous about the methods he used.

"Well, thanks for your opinion; but that's the stunt," he said. "It's bound to work! And I'm going over to the island now. No time like the present, and I'd rather take a walk than Greek with the Head, anyhow! You and Carne will come with me—keep out of sight, of course; but we must make sure of the little beast once we've got him off the island. We can easily get leave from the Head. He'll be glad—"

"You don't dare to tell the Head what you've just told me!"

"I shan't go into details," said Loder airily. "I shall simply mention that I believe there's a chance of catching Bunter off the island. So there is, isn't there? When he hears that his brother's smashed up—"

"It's brutal!" growled Walker. "And, look here, have a little sense! Bunter will know perfectly well that Sammy can't have been out of gates this morning, before classes—"

"The accident happened yesterday," answered Loder calmly. "Sammy Bunter was run down by a car and



"Urrgh! Wurrgh! Help! Leggo! You're pip-pip-pip-pulling me to pi-pop-pleeces!" gurgled Coker as the rebel Removites hung on to his arms and his legs. Like Potter and Greene, on the other side of the river, they put their beef into it and manfully resisted the strain. It was a tug-of-war, with Coker as the prize!

brought home on a stretcher. His parents are here already—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And Bunter, of course, will have to come. I shall call the news across from the bank—you won't catch me setting foot on the island. It will work like a charm."

"I—I suppose it will! I don't see how it can fail! But—it's rotten—it's a dirty trick—it's—"

"Thanks!"

Loder walked away to the House, leaving James Walker in a rather perturbed mood. The bell was ringing for classes when Loder came back, accompanied by Carne of the Sixth. Carne was grinning, apparently not sharing Walker's objections to the scheme.

"All serene," said Loder cheerfully. "Exeat for three—and the Beak quite pleased. Come on!"

Walker hesitated, but he followed on. While the rest of Greyfriars went into class, the three black sheep of the Sixth walked out of gates, and followed the path up the river.

Loder halted when the tall oak on Popper's Island came in sight.

"You fellows keep doggo here," he said. "Bunter will come this way—and you grab him when he shows up. I can't collar him in sight of that crew—they'd be on my neck at once!"

"Leave him to us!" said Carne.

Loder nodded and walked on up the towpath, leaving Walker and Carne sitting on the grassy bank under the trees. The bully of the Sixth grinned cheerfully as he went. He flattered himself that his scheme was an absolute winner, and already, in his mind's eye, he saw himself head prefect of Greyfriars in Wingate's place.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came a roar,

as Loder reached the spot opposite the landing place on the island.

Bob Cherry was there, and a dozen fellows joined him at once. At the sight of a Greyfriars prefect they were on their guard. Loder—no longer grinning—came to the water's edge, with a very serious expression on his face.

"Connig over?" shouted the Bounder.

"No!" answered Loder. "Don't rag now, you fellows—it's pretty serious! If Bunter's there, I've got a message for him from the Head! His younger brother was run over by a car yesterday—"

"What?"

"He's in a pretty serious state, and his father and mother came down last night. Bunter's to go at once. That's all."

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob Cherry blankly.

Every face was serious now. Only the Bounder gave Loder of the Sixth a rather suspicious look. Smithy's was not a trusting nature.

"We'll bring him across at once!" called out Harry Wharton.

"Hold on!" muttered the Bounder. "Is it true? If it's a trick to get hold of Bunter—"

"Oh, rot! Think the Head would do a beastly mean thing like that? Don't be an ass, Smithy!"

"Bunter!" shouted Bob. "Bunter, you're wanted!"

Loder suppressed a smile. There was no doubt that that scheme was a "winner." Stepping on the bank, he watched the Removites man the boat and Bunter step into it, and they pulled across from the island.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not a Winner!

"I SAY, you fellows—" "Buck up, old man!" "Yes; but—" "Hope for the best!" said Bob.

"Yes; but—"

"It may be all right, after all," said Harry Wharton. "Poor old Sammy! He did us a good turn yesterday, too. It mayn't be so bad, old chap."

"Yes; but I haven't finished my brekker," said Bunter peevishly. "You might have given a fellow time to finish his brekker!"

"You fat villain, shut up!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Here we are!"

The boat bumped on the bank, and Wharton and Bob Cherry, and the Bounder, jumped out, and Bob lent Billy Bunter a hand to get ashore.

Bunter's fat face was worried and clouded. No doubt he was worrying about Sammy. But he was also worrying about his unfinished breakfast. Sammy's case was urgent, of course; but so was brekker! However, Bunter scrambled ashore.

It was difficult for the schemer of the Sixth to conceal his delight as he saw his prey thus falling fairly into his hands. But Loder contrived to keep a grave, concerned face. He made no motion to touch Bunter. He was carefully keeping up appearances of being there simply as a messenger from the Head, in serious circumstances.

"Hold on a minute!" said Vernon-Smith, with his eyes keenly on Loder. "Let's ask Loder—"

"No good wasting time, Smithy!" said Harry Wharton. "The sooner

Bunter gets to the school, the better. His brother—"

"Bunter wants to know what's happened to his brother," answered the Bounder. "When did it happen, Loder—in the morning?"

Wharton and Bob Cherry stared at the Bounder. Obviously, the "accident" could not have happened in the morning of the previous day, as Sammy Bunter had come along to the island in the afternoon with his "tip" to the rebels. Loder, of course, was quite unaware of that circumstance, and he answered unsuspectingly:

"It happened after classes. I think the kid was going to Courtfield, after class, when he was knocked over. He was brought in on a stretcher."

"Oh lor!" gasped Billy Bunter, his fat face paling. He forgot even brekker, at that.

"For goodness' sake don't waste time jawing, Smithy!" exclaimed Bob Cherry impatiently.

"Perhaps I'm not wasting time!" answered the Bounder coolly. "It seems jolly queer to me that Sammy should have started to walk to Courtfield just before lock-up."

"It happened just after classes," said Loder. "The kid went out after class, and was brought in on a stretcher. That's all. Bunter can please himself about going to see him or not—I've got to get back."

Loder turned away.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Smithy!" exclaimed Wharton and Bob Cherry together.

With a spring rather like that of a tiger, Smithy leaped at Loder as he turned away, grabbed him by the collar, and brought him down on his back on the towpath.

Loder landed with a crash. The next moment the Bounder's knee was planted on his chest, pinning him down.

"Lend a hand here!" roared the Bounder. "Don't let him get away, you dummies! Can't you see it's all spoof!"

"Look here—" gasped Bob.

Loder struggled savagely. But Wharton and Bob Cherry ran to the Bounder's side, and he was grasped and safely held.

"All spoof!" panted the Bounder. "I jolly well knew it was. Nothing's happened to Sammy Bunter."

"But the Head wouldn't—" gasped Bob Cherry.

"The Head's got nothing to do with this, you ass! It's a trick of Loder's to get hold of Bunter. Can't you see?"

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GET YOURS TO-DAY!!!

yelled Vernon-Smith, with angry impatience. "We saw Sammy on this towpath yesterday afternoon. He had only time to get back to Greyfriars for lock-up. If he started for Courtfield at all, as Loder says, he must have started just at lock-up."

"Oh!" gasped Bob. "And Loder says it was just after class—"

"It was an hour after class that we saw him here!" exclaimed Wharton.

"Oh gad!" gasped Loder.

That the Remove rebels had seen anything of Sammy Bunter the previous afternoon Loder had never even dreamed. But the fact that they had, quite disposed of his story that Sammy had started to walk to Courtfield after class and had been knocked down by a car on the road.

"The best-laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley," as the poet has remarked. Loder's precious scheme had "ganged agley" with a vengeance.

"Own up, you rotter!" roared Bob Cherry, taking Loder by the ears and banging his head on the hard, unsympathetic earth. "You lying worm, what have you got to say now?"

"Yaroooh!"

"Own up, you worm!"

"Ow! Leggo! Leave off!" shrieked Loder, struggling frantically. "I—I own up! Yaroooh! Leggo! Oh gad! Leave off banging my head! Wow!"

"I say, you fellows, if it isn't true—"

"It isn't, old chap! It's all right."

"Then I can go back and finish my brekker!" said Bunter brightly. "Of course, I was fearfully worried about Sammy—heart-broken, in fact. But I'm jolly hungry, you know—"

"Kick him!"

"Whoop!"

"Go and get that tar, Smithy!" gasped Bob. "We'll take care of Loder. Lucky we never mopped it over Coker, after all. Go and get it."

"You bet!" grinned the Bounder. "Keep him safe!"

"We've got him!"

Vernon-Smith jumped into the boat again. Bunter jumped after him in hot haste. Brekker called Bunter, with a call that was not to be denied.

The boat shot across to the island again.

While it was gone Loder struggled madly for freedom, but he struggled in vain. Wharton and Bob Cherry had him down, and they kept him down!

Loder was still wriggling and struggling when the boat came back to the bank with as many Remove fellows in it as it would hold. Bunter remained on the island; brekker claimed Bunter. But all the other fellows were keen to lend a hand in dealing with Loder.

They scrambled ashore in an excited mob. The Bounder had the can of tar in his hands and a cheery grin on his face. That tar had been laid in for Sir Hilton Popper. It had very nearly been bestowed on Coker of the Fifth. Now Loder was going to get it!

"Hold him," grinned the Bounder—"and keep clear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't you dare!" shrieked Loder. "You young villains—scoundrels—Oh gad! Keep off! Gurrgrgh!"

Loder sat up, in many hands. More hands than he could have counted were grasping him and holding him ready for the tar. Vernon-Smith tilted the can over his head.

The tar streamed out.

Loder gave a frantic howl as he felt it dropping on his head. He made a terrific effort to tear himself loose, but he could only move his head—and mov-

ing his head only caused the tar to stream down his face, instead of landing on his hair.

It streamed and streamed and streamed—two gallons of it, soft and sticky! Loder's hair was a mass of it; his face was covered with it; it ran behind his ears and down his neck. He disappeared from view under a coating of thick, sticky tar. He was transformed into a negro of the deepest dye—black, but not comely.

Some of the Remove fellows were splashed and smeared a little; that could not be helped, and they did not mind; Loder was getting nearly all of it. The sticky fluid flowed slowly but steadily, amid howls of laughter from the Removes and howls of rage from Loder, till the can was nearly empty; then the Bounder jammed it down on Loder's head like a hat. It fitted quite nicely down to his tarry nose.

"Oh, you young villains! Gurrgrgh!" gurgled Loder, as a trickle of tar went into his mouth.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Behold he is black, but comely!" chortled the Bounder.

"The blackfulness is terrific, but the comeliness is not preposterous!" chuckled Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

"Now kick him out!"

"All kick together!"

"I say, give a fellow room to land him one!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder staggered to his feet, streaming tar. He clutched wildly at the tarry bonnet on his head. But he had no time to get it off; boots were landing on him on all sides. How many kicks he received Loder could not have counted—but they were many, they were hard, and they were heavy. Still bonneted by the tar-can, Loder started at a wild run down the towpath, roars of laughter following him. At a distance he stopped to tear the can from his head, and then ran on again, gasping, gurgling, panting, streaming with perspiration and tar.

Walker and Carne, sitting under the trees, jumped up at the sound of running footsteps.

"Is that Bunter?" exclaimed Walker. "Why, what—Who—who's that blessed nigger—"

"Loder!" shrieked Carne.

"Loder! Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder panted up; he glared with a black face and wildly rolling eyes at the two almost convulsed prefects.

They yelled.

"You silly dummies," shrieked Loder, "what are you cackling at? Look what they've done to me! Look!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Walker and Carne.

Loder, glaring with fury, barged on. What he wanted most just then was a bath, with hot water and soap—plenty of hot water and plenty of soap—and a scrubbing-brush. Walker and Carne followed him, doubled up with merriment. They did not need to ask Loder whether his scheme had failed; only too evidently it had. Loder did not look like becoming head prefect of Greyfriars yet awhile. And the Remove rebels were going as strong as ever on Popper's Island.

THE END.

(The next story in this exciting rebellion series is better than ever. Make a note of the title, chums: "THE 'NO SURRENDER' CRICKETERS!" and then get your newsagent to reserve you a copy of next Saturday's MAGNET.)



The First Real Test!

THE tropical sun beat down mercilessly on the roof of the strange jet-black tower, and made the interior like an oven, but Speedy Jack Carter and Tickler Johnson, the two English lads inside, had more to think about than the terrific heat. They were fascinated by what the giant negro before them was saying.

"I think, gentlemen, as the zero hour is near, it is time I put my plans to a practical test," said the black man.

The two English air mail pilots nodded gloomily. Since their machine had crashed and landed them in the clutches of this remarkable man they had learned all about his plans.

King Hercules, as the huge negro called himself, intended to sweep all the whites out of Africa and establish a Black Empire, with himself at the head. He had discovered hitherto unknown radium deposits, and with the power generated by that wonderful metal he had built a great steel city in the middle of the jungle.

Here he planned and schemed for the day when he would be master of a continent. Hundreds of thousands of steel warriors, called Amarobs, had already been produced by the remarkable machines. Each one of these mechanical soldiers carried a deadly radium gun, and it would be practically impossible to stop them, once the great drive started.

With the assistance of Senhor Miguel Golanzo, a dissipated Portuguese, who had saved his miserable life by teaching Hercules the principles of aeronautics, the black man had now turned his attention to the building of aeroplanes. He was fully aware that his mechanical forces would be at the mercy of aircraft with high explosive bombs, and he meant to arm himself with some counter-weapon.

Jack and Tickler paled at the black man's announcement, for it meant that their worst fears were about to be realised.

They glanced round the remarkably fitted control-room, where the rows of

blue lights showed that everything was working smoothly in the radium city. A line of indicators, like mileometers, showed how many Amarobs and aeroplanes were being turned out by the machines, and Hercules waved a huge hand towards them.

"Half a million Amarobs, five thousand automatic planes, and nearly a hundred control planes," he announced proudly. "Rather a formidable collection?"

Jack nodded, speechless with horror.

"My picked Zulu warriors know exactly what to do. They have received careful instruction in the control and management of the machines, and there is nothing which can humanly be avoided, to go wrong."

"When is this murderous army of yours to be launched?" inquired Tickler, struggling hard to keep his voice steady.

"Very soon."

Hercules rose and pulled down an enormous map of Africa.

With a pair of compasses he measured the distance from the Radium City, in the south-east corner of Angola, to Livingstone, in Rhodesia.

"About four hundred miles! That will do very nicely for our first practical test. To-night you shall come with me,

and I will demonstrate the power and value of my control planes."

It was already getting dark, and Hercules gave instructions to Leopold, his villainous-looking mulatto assistant, to take charge of the control tower.

Leaving Golanzo behind, much to the relief of Jack and Tickler, Hercules took them down in the lift to the great square outside the high control tower.

A body of Amarobs stood stiffly at one side, while a crowd of the splendidly built Zulu warriors formed a solid block in front of the entrance.

At the appearance of the giant negro they literally worshipped, all the natives bowed low, and even the mechanical Amarobs bowed in a stiff, jerky manner.

In the middle of the square was one of the big main control planes, all ready to take the air, and a swarm of lesser natives had gathered round to inspect it.

They fell back quickly as the magnificent bodyguard of the black king approached, and gazed on their master with a reverential awe.

Hercules motioned the two English chums to enter the plane, and, much against their will, they clambered aboard.

The cabin was metal-walled all round, with grille-covered air vents and radium lamps. There were comfortable seats inside, and a large metal-covered screen, the object of which Jack and Tickler could not discover.

With a few sharp commands to his bodyguard, Hercules stepped aboard and secured the door of the pilot house. Then, seating himself before the instrument board, he pressed a switch and the machine began to rise vertically in the air.

Accustomed as they were to the roar of aero engines, the two English pilots found it eerie and strange to be flying without a sound.

Hercules glanced at his row of indicators and pressed another switch. Immediately the machine shot forward at terrific speed.

"Five hundred miles an hour," announced the giant negro, pointing to an indicator on which the speed was registered. "That is quite fast enough."

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By
**GORDON
GREY.**

for our purpose, although this machine can travel twice as fast."

He juggled about with various controls, testing the vertical rise and fall of the plane in feet per second, testing the lateral and backward motion, the direction finder, and various other marvels of his invention.

When the machine had been flying for about an hour Hercules pressed a button beside the metal screen, and there appeared a moving picture of the country over which they were flying.

The two chums were amazed, for they knew that it was pitch-dark outside.

"Infra-red rays," explained Hercules. "They can pierce the darkness and show just where you are."

The wide ribbon of the Zambesi River showed on the screen, and Hercules followed its course. In a few minutes they passed above the gigantic Victoria Falls.

The roar of the falling water came to them dimly, and they could see the spray rising in a great cloud above the falls.

"The smoke that thunders," as my people call it," remarked Hercules. "It is here that our real test will begin."

The plane continued over the white town of Livingstone, and Jack and Tickler held their breath. Were they to witness some terrible slaughter without being able to lift a finger to help?

For some minutes Hercules hovered over the sleeping town, dropping to within a few hundred feet of the roofs. But it was evident that no one in the whole place had the slightest suspicion of the terrible danger overhead.

Satisfied that his machine was absolutely silent, Hercules turned back until he reached the falls again. Here he descended until the shape of that great engineering work, the Victoria Falls Bridge, filled the whole of the photographic screen.

Not until that moment did either Jack or Tickler have the faintest idea of why Hercules had chosen to come this way on his test flight; then suddenly the answer struck them.

If the bridge could be destroyed all heavy transport between the southern and central provinces would be completely cut off. The railway bridge was the only link, and its destruction would do much to hinder the operations of the defending forces.

Hercules kept his plane absolutely stationary, with the bridge right in the centre of the screen. Then, as if fearing that his passengers might endeavour to prevent him carrying out his plans, he covered them with one of the terrible radium pistols.

"Do not try to interfere," he rapped, "or it will be your last action."

Fascinated, the two chums saw Hercules twist the wheel operating the ray projector until the big searchlight pointed straight at the bridge. Then the giant negro snapped down a switch at the side and a beam suddenly appeared on the screen.

As the ray hit the steel bridge there was a slight cloud of dust, and next instant the whole structure had disappeared, completely and noiselessly.

"That will give them something to think about," chuckled Hercules, as he headed the plane back again. "I wonder what they'll say when they wake up and find their bridge gone?"

Jack and Tickler wondered, too; but they were more concerned about finding some way of giving a warning.

A Diabolical Plan!

THE following day Hercules prepared to put his plans into operation at once, and he had all the Amarobs marched to the edge of the clearing which surrounded the Radium City.

Here they were loaded up in planes and transported over the dense jungle to the wild and desolate Kalahari Desert. Hercules knew well enough that he could mass practically the whole of his forces in this inhospitable spot without anyone ever being any the wiser.

All day long the planes went to and fro, the Zulu pilots proving remarkably competent until thousands of steel men were massed in solid, orderly rows out on the desert.

Bullet cars were also taken by air, and the native drivers were eager to start the great drive.

Strangely enough, although Hercules had taught them that the whites were deadly enemies, and must be exterminated at all costs, the natives showed no hostility to the two Englishmen.

Perhaps it was because they thought the white lads enjoyed some special protection from their adored master, but whatever the reason, the two pals found they were allowed to wander about and inspect the arrangements as freely as they liked.

Golanzo, who had definitely joined forces with Hercules, was busy with Leopold, the villainous mulatto, supervising the loading of the Amarobs, while Hercules himself was much too occupied to spare any time or thought for Jack and Tickler.

Disconsolate, and worried by the feverish activity going on around them, the two chums strolled aimlessly round the wonderful steel city.

The machine shops were still turning out their messengers of death at top speed, but they were all too well guarded for the young Britishers to interfere.

"Gosh, it's too awful to have to stand around here doing nothing, with all this going on!" groaned Jack, for the hundredth time.

"We might be able to get away and find help if we could get into Kalahari," suggested Tickler. "Let's have a try, anyway."

Jack was not too keen on the idea, yet there was just a chance of success, and he was forced to admit that it was much better to make an attempt than stand by helplessly.

The two chums made their way to where the bullet cars were lined up all ready to be transported. There was no sign of Golanzo, and Leopold was too busy to notice the English lads as they crept stealthily along between the rows of cars.

After trying several cars, they found one with its sliding door not properly closed, and managed to hide themselves inside. They had no food or water, and were without the slightest idea of how they would manage to cross 600 miles of desolation. But the main thing was to get away.

The lines of cars moved up as those in front were loaded into the big planes and carried away, and eventually Jack and Tickler found themselves swung up into the air when the bullet car, with several others, was hooked on to the underside of a big control plane.

"I will take this one, Mr. Leopold," came the smooth voice of Golanzo, and next instant the machine lifted and rose silently into the air.

After a few minutes Jack thought he could hear someone talking, and he listened intently. Muffled by the metal body of the car and the pilot's cabin, he could dimly hear the voice of Golanzo.

"So! You poor fools thought I did not see you!" chuckled the Portuguese. "I wonder what you will think when you find I have cast off that car in which you are hiding, and you are falling from ten thousand feet? I would give much to see the fear on your faces!"

Jack gritted his teeth, but remained silent. The cunning Golanzo had trapped them, and there was no help. Without the slightest doubt he would carry out his threat, and the two boys would be sent hurtling to destruction.

"I will not take any chances," continued Golanzo. "You shall be dropped right out in the desert, where the vultures can pick your bones!"

In a few minutes the plane was over the vast stretch of desert, and the Portuguese switched his engine over to climb.

The two lads crouched in the bullet car heard him mutter an imprecation. Evidently something had gone wrong with his scheme.

"Diablo! I might have known. This machine is controlled from the tower!"

There was a brief silence as Golanzo found that he could not make the plane rise any higher.

"Good-bye, my friends!" came the sneering voice again. "I am just releasing the hook which holds you. You have not far to fall, but quite enough, I think!"

The two chums felt a sudden violent sickness as the car in which they were dropped like a stone. For a few awful seconds they had the terrible sensation of falling into a bottomless pit.

There was an appalling crash and the whole world became a mass of dancing stars followed by complete blackness as the car struck the ground.

In the plane overhead, the treacherous Portuguese chuckled over his terrible revenge and circled round to make sure that his victims had not survived.

A frown crossed his ugly face as he saw that the car had fallen in one of the huge salt-pans which abound in the Kalahari Desert. Perhaps the mass of yielding briny deposits had broken the fall?

Golanzo brought his machine round and tried to land in order that he could make sure whether his diabolical plan had worked; but to his annoyance he found once again that he did not entirely control the machine.

Shrugging his narrow shoulders, he turned the plane and headed back for the concentration camp to deposit the remainder of his load.

Jack's Brain-wave!

IT was some hours later when Jack and Tickler came to their senses. They ached in every bone and their heads throbbed abominably, but they had both escaped serious injury.

The bullet car was lying on its side, and they managed to crawl out of the sliding door to find themselves in the middle of a wide glistening expanse of salt. The car was nearly covered by the dirty-white crystals which evidently had saved them from having broken bones, if nothing worse.

Jack stepped off the metal car on to the salt and immediately sank up to his

knees. With some difficulty Tickler hauled his pal back and they gazed ruefully at the stretch of crystals.

"How are we going to get off?" demanded Tickler. "We can't walk through that stuff!"

Jack scratched his head and then dived inside the wrecked car. After a great struggle he managed to loosen four plates of metal about four feet long and a foot wide.

"Let's try a bit of ski-ing," he grinned, fastening the plates to his boots.

Walking rather gingerly, and finding it far from easy to maintain their balance, the two chums set out across the salt.

By sliding their feet, they managed to get along slowly, and both of them heaved a sigh of relief when they reached the edge of the salt-pan and were able to discard the heavy and clumsy footwear.

Without wasting any time, they started the long march across the desert, striking due south. Going was slow and heavy across the sandy waste, and frequently they had to make wide detours to get around great salt-pan.

Their tongues became parched and swollen and the sun beat down mercilessly, but they plodded on steadily, for there was no shelter from the relentless heat.

A couple of vultures wheeling far overhead in the brassy sky were the only sign of life, and Tickler shuddered involuntarily as he saw them. Golanzo's threat that the vultures should pick their bones looked like coming true.

The sun was dropping rapidly and the pals vainly searched for a suitable place in which to spend the night.

There was no sign of any change from the monotony of sand and salt, and Jack groaned aloud, while his tongue fairly rattled in his parched throat.

"It's no good, Tickler," he croaked, throwing himself at full length on the scorched ground. "We're finished!"

Tickler collapsed beside his chum, too weary and exhausted to make a sound. He knew as well as Jack that the night would be bitterly cold and that they would probably never see another day. But he was beyond caring.

Neither of them noticed a speck appear in the sky to the north and grow larger at incredible speed, until Jack's staring eyes saw a big plane directly overhead.

Unable to trust himself to speak, he pointed a trembling finger upwards, and Tickler nodded.

Without a sound the machine dropped straight down almost beside them. Leopold, the villainous-looking mulatto, climbed from it. His ugly face split in a wide grin as he saw the exhausted state of the two boys.

"You try to run away?" he asked. "I think it is a good job for you that the Master send me to find you. Even now I have a good mind to leave you here."

Evidently, however, Leopold's fear of his master was too great to allow him the pleasure of leaving the English boys to die, and he bundled them unceremoniously into his plane.

In less than half an hour they were back in the Radium City where Hercules sternly told them to abandon their efforts to escape.

"It is useless," he said. "You can see for yourselves that I can undo in half an hour what it takes you all day to carry out."

Jack and Tickler were too weary to care what happened to them, and they slept that night like logs.

It was nearly midday when they

awoke, and preparations for the great attack were going on apace. Everyone was too busy to worry about the English lads and they appeared to have been forgotten altogether.

The events of the previous day were already passing from their minds and they began to think once more about escape, despite the warning of Hercules.

They wandered out into the great square and watched the feverish activity with horrified interest.

"How about collaring one of those planes and trying to get away in it?" suggested Tickler, indicating the row of control planes which were standing in front of the main tower.

"No good," replied Jack. "That black devil can control 'em all from his



Bert: "What's the matter with your eye, Alf?"

Alf: "Oh, it's a berth mark."

Bert: "Birth mark?"

Alf: "Yes, I got into Bill Slogger's berth last night by mistake!"

J. Corse, of 23, Carloon Drive, Rack House, Wythenshawe, near Manchester, who sent in the above winning joke, carries off one of our **USEFUL POCKET KNIVES. MORE FUNNY STORIES WANTED, PLEASE!**

tower and he'd soon have us back again. If only we could manage to put his main switchboard out of action for a bit we might manage to get away."

Tickler looked glumly across the square to where their own mail plane stood, dwarfed by the machines evolved by Hercules.

"If only our old bus would go with its own engine, we might have a sporting chance," he remarked.

The two chums ambled across to the plane and looked idly over it. The little radium engine fitted by Hercules was still in position, so it was impossible for them to fly the machine. After aimlessly tinkering about, Jack suddenly smote his thigh.

"A brain-wave, my lad," he exclaimed. "There's hope for us yet!"

"What are you burbling about?" demanded Tickler.

"Never you mind," grinned Jack.

"Let's find out where Hercules put our aero engine and petrol tank."

"If you think you're going to get that engine to work you're jolly well mistaken," Tickler replied. "I tried hard enough and—"

"Don't jaw so much," interrupted his companion. "I don't want the engine; all I want is the petrol tank."

The two chums scouted round for some time without success, but eventually found the parts of their old plane stowed away in the basement of the control tower.

Jack got a piece of wood and tested the tank, which was still nearly half-full.

"Splendid!" he announced. "Now we can make a start."

"But what's the idea?" demanded Tickler.

"You leave things to me," grinned Jack. "I just want you to go off and try to get a couple of those radium-proof suits that Hercules is dishing out to his natives. If my plan comes off we shall need 'em!"

Muttering at his pal's secretiveness, Tickler marched off on his errand.

The task was not difficult, for Tickler simply walked into the store where the suits were kept and demanded two from the hefty Zulu in charge.

The native obliged without question, and Tickler hurried back with his captures.

A Desperate Venture!

"NOW," said Jack, when Tickler returned, "the most important and difficult task is to get this petrol tank up on to the roof of the main control tower."

"But it's impossible!" protested Tickler.

"There's nothing like trying, especially with a bit of bluff!" replied Jack cheerfully. "Let's see what we can do."

He stepped out into the square and accosted a native wearing three chromium-plated ankle rings, which showed that the man was a person of some responsibility.

"Four Amarobs to carry something for the master—quickly!" he rapped.

The native bowed and disappeared. In a few seconds he returned with four of the Amarob labourers.

"I wish I knew how to make the beggars work myself!" muttered Jack, as, under the direction of the unsuspecting native, the Amarobs lifted the tank and carried it to the lift.

In a few seconds they reached the top of the building, and the mechanical men carried the tank out on to the roof.

"Of all the sauce!" grinned Tickler, as the native and his four automata disappeared. "You've got plenty of nerve, I must say!"

"Come on, let's get busy!" replied Jack. "First of all, we must get inside those suits, because I'm afraid when our plans start to work there will be plenty of shooting with radium guns."

The two chums wriggled into the queer garb, which was made of some rubberlike material, and fashioned after the style of a diver's dress, with a small goggled helmet. Rubber gloves and boots covered the hands and feet, so that every portion of the body was protected.

"Help me to push the tank over this way a bit."

Jack found it necessary to put his head close to his pal's and hawl at the top of his voice to make Tickler understand.

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They managed to get the tank on a spot which Jack calculated was just above the control board in Hercules' look-out.

Scarcely had they finished moving the tank than they heard the whir of the lift bringing someone else up to the roof.

"Quick—down behind the tank!" said Jack.

The two chums crouched as still as they could.

They heard someone step from the lift, and, risking a glance round the side, Jack saw, to his consternation, that the newcomer was their enemy Leopold.

"There's going to be a scrap now!" he muttered to himself. "Thank goodness we put these suits on!"

The mulatto walked across the flat roof, with one hand on his radium gun.

"Come out, you white trash!" he called. "I know you are there!"

Evidently the native, who Jack thought he had bluffed so easily, had taken the precaution of reporting his action to Leopold.

Jack and Tickler stood up, and the mulatto's ugly face dropped when he saw their radium-proof suits, for his only weapon became useless.

With a bound, Jack was on him, and bore him kicking and struggling to the ground. Tickler joined in the fight, and clapped his hand over the half-caste's mouth to prevent him from shouting.

Leopold proved a tougher handful than the two chums had expected, but Jack managed at last to wrench the heavy gun from his hand.

He was just about to give the mulatto a crack over the head to end matters, when the deep voice of Hercules boomed up from the lift well.

"What is the trouble there?"

Jack's heart missed a beat, but his brain worked like lightning. He jammed the gun into Leopold's ribs with a force that made the mulatto wince.

"Tell your master it is nothing," he ordered.

Trembling with fear, for he needed

no telling that the white lads were desperate, Leopold obeyed, and, to the relief of the two pals, Hercules returned to his room.

"I'm sorry to do this, but there's no alternative," said Jack, and he brought the gun down on Leopold's head, knocking the mulatto unconscious.

"We've got to work quickly now, Tickler," he continued. "Drag that brute to the lift while I set our patent fuse. Can't leave him here, much as he deserves it!"

Tickler hauled the insensible figure to the lift, while Jack turned on the draining-tap of the tank very slightly, so that a little pool of petrol formed on the roof and gradually grew larger.

He had taken the precaution of getting out his matches before he donned the radium suit, and he set light to a small piece of wood which he had brought.

"Now the fuse is all ready, we'd better bunk quick!" he yelled, and Tickler nodded.

Making sure that the brand was well alight, Jack laid it down on the roof where the ever-widening pool of spirit would reach it in a few moments.

Satisfied with their plans, the two chums dived for the lift and shot down as fast as they could go.

They had scarcely got out into the square when there was a terrific roar and a great sheet of flame sprang from the top of the control tower as the petrol tank exploded.

Fortunately for Hercules, there was nothing on which the flames could take hold, and the fire died almost as suddenly as it had commenced.

"Let's hope that's put the control board out of action for a few minutes!" shouted Jack, as they raced across the square.

Together they dashed for the nearest control plane, and the square became crowded with yelling, excited natives.

The explosion had frightened them, and the sight of the two running figures was sufficient evidence of the guilty parties.

Shouts to stop filled the air, and

Hercules' own bodyguard of picked men came racing from the control tower.

Radium guns were pointed at the speeding whites, but their suits kept them safe, while fear and hope gave them extra power.

Tickler scrambled up into the plane, with Jack close on his heels, but an enormous negro got his great hand round the white lad's ankle.

Other natives swarmed round and clambered all over the plane, but the two chums were desperate. This was their one and only chance of escape, and they dared not risk it.

Jack kicked out viciously at his attacker, and caught the black man under the chin. Howling with pain, the negro relaxed his grip, and Jack sprang inside the cabin.

With a sob of relief, he snapped the door in position and switched on the engine.

As the plane left the ground the natives threw themselves from it hurriedly, and in the photographic screen Tickler saw them shaking their fists at the rapidly rising machine.

The colossal figure of Hercules, uninjured by the explosion, burst from the control tower and stood with arms raised on high in an attitude of uncontrollable rage. The very perfection of the machine he had invented himself made it impossible to stop the escape while his control gear was out of order.

Jack switched the plane on to full speed, and the country shot past below the two young air pilots at a terrific rate. They sat back and laughed with relief. It scarcely seemed possible that they really were free at last.

"Now for Johannesburg and the end of Master Hercules' schemes!" said Jack, and the two pals gripped hands in silence.

(Will fortune favour Jack and Tickler, or will they—Whatever you do, chums, don't miss next week's thrilling chapters of this powerful adventure yarn. There's a thrill in every turn of the road!)



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YOUR HOLIDAY CRUISE!

Who'll join me in a Holiday Cruise on a tip-top £200 motor-launch? Fee: £2 a head (bring your own grub). Launch seats 6 in comfort. Party strictly limited to 100 persons. Apply early!—TOM BROWN, Study No. 2, Remove.



No. 93 (New Series).

THE NEW Greyfriars Herald

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.



July 14th, 1934.

THE OLD FIRM!

When you want your impots written for you, don't take chances by employing beginners—come to the old firm! With our long experience we know just what you want. No novice can know what our long experience has taught us! Come to us and be satisfied!—SKINNER & CO., Impot Specialists, Study No. 11, Remove. Established July, 1934.

GREYFRIARS 100 YEARS AGO

But for an alarm of fire in the School House in the early hours of the morning recently, the most sensational escapade of the Term might never have been observed by the authorities.

It was about four o'clock in the morning of Tuesday last when a Third Form boy named Smirke ran down from his dormitory shouting "Fire!" The entire college was astir almost immediately, and for a minute or two there was great excitement, which soon abated, however, when it was found that Smirke had merely been suffering from nightmare.

The boys returned to their dormitories. As they did so, the headmaster made the surprising discovery that the Fourth Form was conspicuous only by its absence. Hurrying up to the Fourth Form dormitory, he made a still more surprising discovery. The Fourth Form had vanished completely!

From the fact that their clothes had gone, too, Dr. Goodsmyle soon inferred that they had left the college premises. For what purpose, was at first a mystery, but, ere long, light was thrown on the subject by one of the college servants, who stated that he had heard a rumour that Ben Gosling, Dr. Goodsmyle's coachman, had secretly arranged to engage in a prize fight with one Tom, the Tartar, on Courtfield Common, at dawn that morning!

Though loath to believe that juniors belonging to Greyfriars had had the temerity to leave their dormitory in the middle of the night to witness an encounter in the prize ring, the headmaster

could think of no other solution. He therefore picked out a number of masters, servants, and senior boys and ordered them to accompany him to the common to find out the truth.

In the light of the dawn, the company set out on foot. Arriving on Courtfield Common they were confronted by an animated scene. Fully a thousand persons, comprising all sorts of sporting gentlemen down to rogues and vagabonds, had assembled in a sheltered part of the common round a roped-off enclosure, in the centre of which two powerful fellows, stripped to the waist, were fighting with a rare zest!

The headmaster and his company instantly recognised one of the pugacious pair as Ben Gosling, the coachman. What interested them even more than that was to see a score of Greyfriars juniors standing at the ringside, cheering lustily!

"A disgraceful affair!" was Dr. Goodsmyle's verdict. "Fetch them away at once, and see to it that the young rascals are marched back to college and locked up in their dormitory!"

The dismay of the youthful sportsmen on finding themselves surrounded by the company from Greyfriars was comical to behold. Even, George Wharton, their leader, found that his usually resourceful tongue did not respond adequately to the situation, and it was a very crestfallen crowd indeed that marched back to the college in the early morning sunshine!

Dr. Goodsmyle, on account, we presume, of his concern for Gosling, stayed behind to the



end and saw Gosling trounce his redoubtable opponent in the fiftieth round.

On his return to the college, where he achieved a record by soundly thrashing every member of the Fourth Form before morning break, he described the fight as the most brutal and demoralising sight he had ever witnessed.

Yet, strange to relate, he has decided to retain Ben Gosling in his service—and, stranger still, has, we understand, increased the fellow's wages! We confess that we are at a loss to understand our worthy headmaster's motives!

(Old Goodsmyle was a bit of a sportsman himself, on the q.t., we fancy! Naturally you're all wondering whether the Ben Gosling mentioned belonged to the family of which our porter is now the representative. The answer is in the affirmative. Ben Gosling was the great-great-uncle of our own Gossy—believe it or not!—Ed.)

ARE YOU A FUNK?

Yes? Well, don't let it worry you. Just buy a tin of Stott's Brickdust Tooth Powder and you'll be able to grit your teeth like a hero! Obtainable only from the maker, W. Stott, Study No. 11, Remove.

SKINNER'S DUAL PERSONALITY

Strange Disease—Staggering Cure

It was following on a whole series of misfortunes that Skinner found that he was suffering from a Dual Personality.

On Monday Wingate found him smoking a cigarette behind the chapel. Remarking that the matter was too serious for him to deal with on his own, Wingate threatened to report it to Mr. Quelch.

On Tuesday, North came across Skinner making very small marks on the backs of some playing cards. Remarking that the matter was too serious for him to deal with on his own, North said he would report it to Mr. Quelch.

On Wednesday, Gwynne discovered Skinner down by the river devouring, with avid interest, a pink sporting paper. Gwynne, too, said that it was too serious a matter for him and that he would have to take it to Mr. Quelch.

All three reports reached Mr. Quelch round about tea-time on Wednesday, and early in the evening Skinner was summoned to the Remove master's study.

In the meantime, he had discovered that he was suffering from two personalities.

When Mr. Quelch asked him for an explanation of his heinous offences, Skinner had a ready reply. He hadn't the faintest recollection of any of them!

Asked by Mr. Quelch how he could possibly deny what three prefects had stated to be true, Skinner explained that he wouldn't dream of denying that they were true. They probably were true, but he just couldn't remember them.

The only logical explanation seemed to be that he was suffering from that malady the newspapers talked so much about—Dual Personality!

Mr. Quelch's stern face relaxed as he listened, and Skinner felt, with some relief, that he had impressed

the beak. When Mr. Quelch spoke, his voice was soft and sympathetic. "A very dreadful affliction, Skinner," he said. "It is only fair to you that the Head should know about this. Undoubtedly, an effort should be made to cure it."

"Exactly, sir," said Skinner, mournfully. "I believe the doctors usually recommend a long rest, don't they?"

"So I believe, Skinner. Come! We will see the Head at once!" They saw the Head. Dr. Locke was even more deeply sympathetic than Mr. Quelch had been.

"An extremely sad case," he said, shaking his head. "It is all the more pathetic that this dreadful malady should occur in one of your tender years, Skinner. A cure must be found at all costs. Have you anything to suggest, Mr. Quelch?"

"Yes, sir. My own feeling is that perhaps some sudden and painful shock might achieve what a dozen doctors might seek in vain," was Mr. Quelch's reply.

"Exactly what I feel myself!" responded the Head warmly.

With that Dr. Locke dived into his desk, to produce, to Skinner's unbounded surprise, a birch.

"Pray bend over, Skinner!" he said gently.

Like one in a dream, Skinner bent over—after a brace of shakes he was yolling like one in a nightmare!

By the time the Head had finished with him, Skinner found that his Dual Personality had vanished for all time. The cure was complete!

What Skinner still doesn't understand is the grave and sympathetic dialogue that preceded the whacking. We can't deny that it's a bit bewildering.

But for the fact that it was the Head and Mr. Quelch, we should strongly suspect that Skinner was having his leg pulled!

WEATHER FORECAST FOR FORMS

Sixth: Atmosphere cool. Fifth: Sultry. Shell: Squalls. Upper Fourth: Storms. REMOVE: EARTHQUAKE.

Further Outlook: Bright intervals as the first shock of the exam. results dies down, followed by a long period of calm, settled weather when they're forgotten!

When the news went round that Snoop had had a row with Tubb of the Third and was booked to fight it out with him, Remove men looked glum. Though a member of a fag Form, Tubb is as big as Snoop and a much better scrapper. His chances of scoring an easy victory were quite rosy and the consequences of such a victory could be easily foreseen.

How could the threatened catastrophe be avoided?

Smithy had a brain-wave.

"Snoop could win all right if he had more self-confidence," he said. "The only way to do it is to give him the self-confidence before he starts!"

"And how the thump are we going to do that?" demanded Bob Cherry.

MAKING A MAN OF SNOOP

Smithy's Great Experiment

By a very simple little ruse, the Bouncer answered. "We'll pretend to give Snoop a little sparring practice before he starts and give him the impression that he can knock us about like ninepins. By the time he's due to meet Tubb, he'll be so sure of himself that he'll rush in like a raging lion and carry all before him!"

You can always rely on Smithy for a tip-top wheeze in an emergency. This one, we had to admit, was a particularly bright effort. If, however, there was any way of cutting out the funk and replacing it with confidence in victory, there was no earthly reason why Snoop should not lick the big Third-Former.

A deputation went round to see Snoop. They found him crouching in an armchair in his study, green at the gills, white at the lips, and wobbling at the knees.

They explained that they had come round in a friendly way to give Snoop a little training for his scrap so that he could acquit himself with credit.

Snoop didn't look at all grateful at first, and it was some time before they could induce him to accompany them to the gym.

At first he was cautious and nervous to a degree. Gradually, however, as he found nothing happening to him, he plucked up courage to start hitting out.

In quick succession, he knocked out Bob Cherry, Vernon-Smith, Redwing, Squiff, and Tom Brown. The first-named three staged elaborate and melodramatic falls, but the last two didn't have a lot of acting to do, for by the time he had come to them, Snoop was thirsting for gore!

There was no doubt that something had happened to Snoop. When he left the gym, his chest was puffed out, his head was high in the air, and a new light gleamed in his eyes.

Snoop was still confident as he marched up to the duelling-ground behind the chapel for the great fight, later in the day. He gave Tubb a contemptuous look that made the fag stare and he laughed and chatted nonchalantly with his seconds as he peeled off his jacket.

At the call of "Time!" to a ringing cheer from the Remove, Snoop rushed into the centre of the ring with the evident intention of wiping Tubb off the slate in the first few seconds.

What happened next was very remarkable to watch.

Tubb stood up to his rush and gave him a slight tap on the chin.

Snoop stopped suddenly, clapped his hands to his chin, and stared in sudden terror at his opponent.

Tubb flicked the end of Snoop's nose. Snoop, with a sudden howl of terror, turned tail and bolted for dear life.

That was the end of the fight!

This self-confidence stuff seems to be all right sometimes—but it lets you down just when you need it most!

FLAG DAY at GREYFRIARS

Lonzy's Effort for Hottentots

How to raise funds for the Hygienic Hats for Hottentots Annual Effort was a problem that puzzled Alonzo Todd considerably till Tom Brown solved it for him.

Brown's suggestion was a Flag Day at Greyfriars!

"Indubitably a most ingenious solution to the difficulty, my dear Brown," Lonzy said gratefully. "I will see that it is put into effect."

And he did. With his own hands he cut out several hundreds of tiny paper flags and wrote "Hygienic Hats for Hottentots" on each of them. Then, he sallied forth with a trayload of them slung over his shoulders and a collecting-box in his hand.

As a Flag Day it was a huge success. Alonzo Todd met with scarcely a single refusal wherever he went.



The financial results, however, were a little peculiar. When he came to count up the contents of the box, Lonzy found that he had collected 3 French francs, 14 cigarette pictures, and 128 trousers buttons!

But Lonzy is a philosopher. He realised that the proceeds of his Flag Day would not do much to help the Hottentots to acquire Hygienic Hats, so he sent it to a fund he felt would appreciate them more.

The Fund for sending Trousers to Timbuctoo, as a matter of fact.

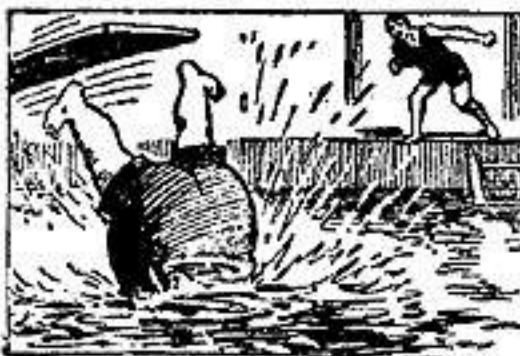
GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

DICKY NUGENT'S WEEKLY WISDOM

Myers is the biggest duffer I ever met. He's so lacking in intelligence that he thinks a brain-wave is something they give to ladies at the hairdresser's!

WOULD-BE CONTRIBUTORS

Please send in your contributions typed on one side only (we use the other side for our own typing) accompanied by as many stamps as you like (we collect them). You are advised to keep a copy of everything you send, as you certainly won't get the original back.



Bunter's efforts at swimming invariably provoke merriment in the school bath. Bob Cherry says the only place Bunter could swim in would be the Dead Sea—which is so salty you can't sink!



Bob Cherry, of the powerful lungs, has discovered the ability to yodel as they do in the Swiss Alps. His new-found "yodel" earned him a hundred lines when he did it in Mr. Quelch's hearing!



When Gerald Loder twisted Dicky Nugent's ear, the fag had his revenge by making Loder an "apple-pie" bed—with a hair brush in the place where Loder would sit! Loder sat only for a fraction of a second!



When a fire broke out in the Senior Common-room, through some cads smoking "under the rose," Harry Wharton was the first to seize and apply a fire-extinguisher—thus averting a conflagration.



Herbert Vernon-Smith is proud of his endurance and, "dared" by Skinner & Co., he swam five miles in the sea off Pegg Bay. Dr. Locke "lectured" him when he had recovered—but Smithy won his wager!



S. Q. I. Field specialises in "quick returns" to the wicket. He enabled Tom Brown, the Remove wicket-keeper, to run out four men when the Remove played the Shell Form at St. Jim's—winning by 40 runs!

OLD PROVERB—NEW VERSION

Bunter's recent attempt to make a new kind of fish-and-potato pudding failed owing to his forgetting the fish.

He spared the "cod" and spoiled the "biled"!