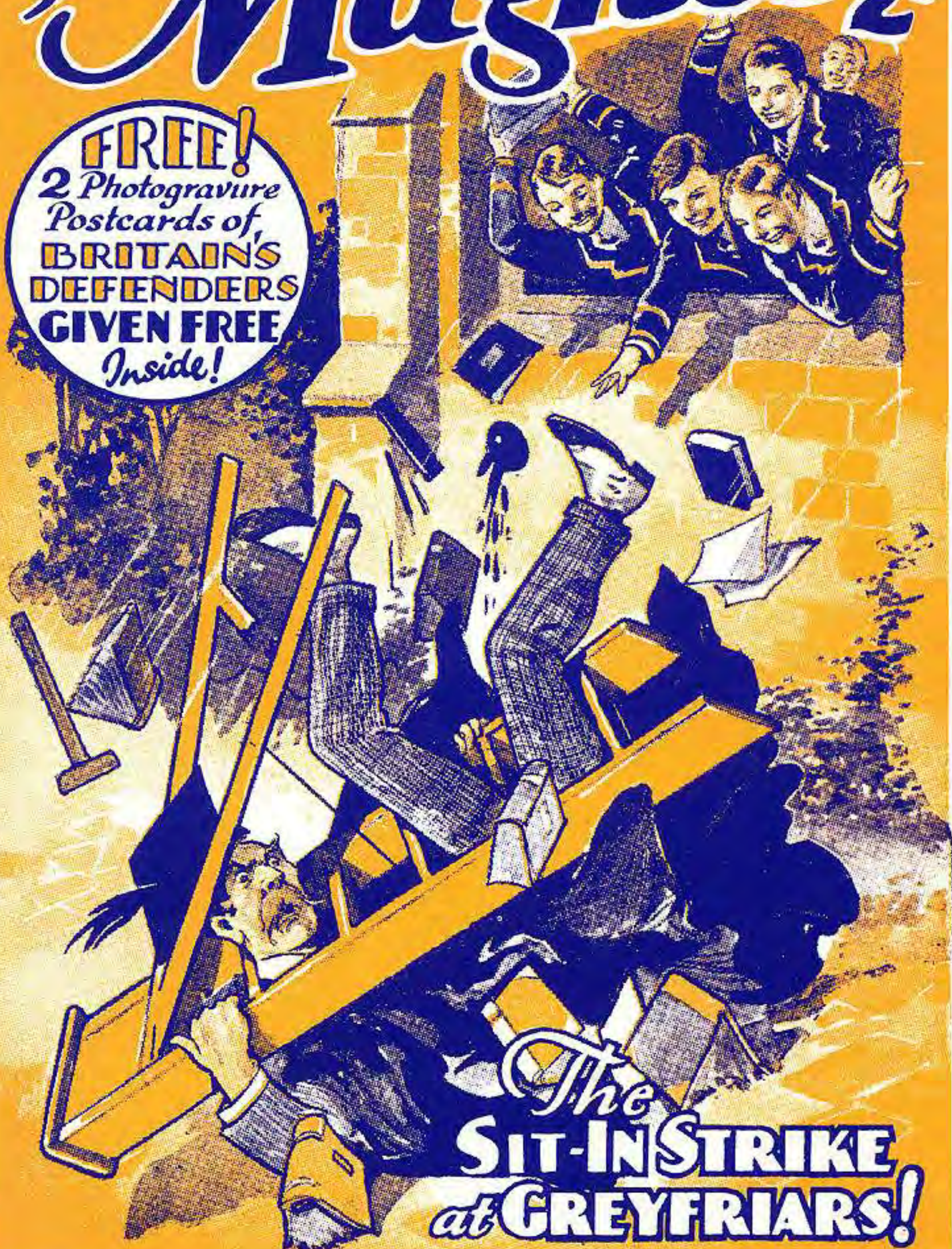


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The
SIT-IN STRIKE
at **GREYFRIARS!**

The STAY-IN STRIKE at GREYFRIARS!

By FRANK RICHARDS



—HARRY WHARTON & CO., the Cheery Chums of GREYFRIARS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Startling News!

"SEEN it?" gasped Billy Bunter.
"Seen what?"
"Hacker's Head!" gasped Bunter.

Harry Wharton & Co. stared at Bunter.

They were in Study No. 1 in the Greyfriars Remove. As it was tea-time, and they were sorting out comestibles, they were not surprised to see Billy Bunter arrive. But they were surprised to see him arrive at a breathless rush, and still more surprised by his extraordinary remarks as he burst into the study.

"Hacker's head!" repeated Harry Wharton.

"Yes; I've just seen it!"
"Never seen it before, you fat ass?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Eh? No! I've just seen Carne of the Sixth sticking it up in Hall."

"Wha-a-t?"
If the Famous Five had been surprised before, they were astonished now.

They were not much interested in Mr. Hacker, the master of the Shell. As Remove fellows, they had nothing to do with him—except when Mr. Hacker butted into matters that did not concern him, as he sometimes did, being a rather interfering gentleman. But they could not help being interested now, as they heard Billy Bunter's extraordinary and startling announcement.

"You—you—you saw Carne of the Sixth sticking it up in Hall!" stuttered Bob.

"Yes, old chap!" gasped Bunter.
"Potty?" asked Frank Nugent.
"Mad?" asked Johnny Bull.

"The madfulness is terrific and preposterous!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Ram Singh, staring at the excited fat Owl.

"Oh, really, you fellows! I tell you it's so!" exclaimed Billy Bunter. "I heard Hobson of the Shell talking about it yesterday, but I never believed it would come off. Now it has!"

"It's come off?" shrieked Bob Cherry.
"Yes; I've just seen Carne of the Sixth sticking it up on the notice-board in Hall!"

"You blithering, blethering, blather-bloater!" roared Bob. "How could Hacker's head come off? And if it did, think a Sixth Form prefect would stick it up in Hall? What the dickens are you burbling about?"

"Eh? I never said Hacker's head had come off, you silly ass!" gasped Bunter. "I said Hacker's Head! It's come off, just as Hobby was saying it would, because Carne is sticking it up on the board."

"Mad as a hatter!" said Harry Wharton, in wonder.

"Oh, really, Wharton; you can go down and see for yourself! Smithy was there when Carne put it up. He saw it, too. Ask Smithy. Hacker must have given it to Carne to put up—"

There was a footstep in the passage, and Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, looked into the study.

"Heard?" he asked.
"Smithy knows!" gasped Bunter.
"Smithy's seen it, haven't you, Smithy?"

"Oh, Bunter's told you already?" said the Bounder. "Pretty thick, isn't it? A lot of fellows thought it would be Prout. But it turns out to be Hacker."

"What turns out to be Hacker?"
"Eh? Hasn't Bunter told you?"

"Bunter's just told us that Hacker's head has come off, and that Carne of the Sixth is sticking it up in Hall," answered Harry Wharton. "We're not exactly believing it."

"The believfulness is not terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

The Bounder stared for a moment, and then burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows, it's true!" yelled Bunter. "I heard Hobson of the Shell tell a lot of fellows that it would come off all right, and it jolly well has!"

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

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" exclaimed Billy Bunter. "I can tell you chaps that it's thick—jolly thick. Hacker's Head—"

"You can tell us chaps," grinned Bob Cherry, "but you'd better not let Hacker hear you saying that his head's jolly thick!"

"Eh? I didn't! I mean—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Smithy.

"I mean it's jolly thick! Hacker's a beast! He doesn't like me," said Billy Bunter. "I say, you fellows, it's true. Carne's stuck it up on the board for all the school to see—Hacker's Head!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bounder seemed doubled up with merriment, and the Famous Five stared at him, and stared at Bunter. They could hardly make head or tail of this. Bunter seemed in excited earnest; but it did not seem probable that Mr. Hacker's head had come off, and still less probable that Carne of the Sixth was sticking it up in Hall, if it had.

"What does that blithering, blethering bloater mean, if he means anything, Smithy?" asked Harry Wharton. "Wandering in his mind, if he's got one to wander in."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Has anything happened to Hacker?" asked Nugent.

"Yes, rather!" chuckled the Bounder. "Oh, sorry, of course! Accident, or what?" asked Harry.

The Famous Five did not like Hacker; Hacker did not like them.

Still, if the master of the Shell had had an accident, they were prepared to be sympathetic.

"Not laid up, like the Head and Quelch?" asked Bob.

"Ha, ha! No! Bucked up, I fancy!" chortled the Bounder. "I rather think Hacker will want a large size in hats, now."

"Bet you he will!" said Billy Bunter. "Bet you Hacker will have a swelled head, now it's come off, you know. And it jolly well has come off, just as Hobby said, because Carne's sticking it up on the board—"

"You burbling bandersnatch, stop talking rot!" roared Johnny Bull. "Is there anything new on the board, Smithy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Smithy. "Yes, Hacker's Head! That is, Carne of the Sixth has just stuck up a notice that the Board of Governors have appointed Mr. Hacker headmaster, to carry on during Dr. Locke's absence."

"Oh!" gasped the Famous Five.

"I say, you fellows, I told you so!" squeaked Bunter. "Hacker's Head—it's come off, just as Hobby said it would—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You howling ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

The Famous Five understood now.

The Owl of the Remove did not mean that Hacker's actual head had come off, and that Carne of the Sixth was sticking it up on the board.

It was Mr. Hacker's ambition to step into the shoes of the absent headmaster that had come off, and Carne was sticking up a notice to that effect in Hall, which was much less startling news, though far from agreeable to the heroes of the Remove.

Mr. Hacker was not a popular master, even in his own Form. In the Shell he was called the "Acid Drop."

Now, it seemed, he was going to be monarch of all he surveyed—at Greyfriars School for a time, at least.

Dr. Locke, the headmaster, and Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, were both laid up with severe colds, and had been taken away to a nursing-home.

A new master, it was understood, would be coming to take the Remove, but it was certain that a senior member of the staff would be selected by the governors to carry on in Dr. Locke's place.

They had selected Hacker!

"Hacker!" said Harry Wharton, with a whistle.

"Hacker Head!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Rotten!" said Johnny Bull.

"The rottenfulness is terrific!"

"Carne's just put the notice up on the board," said Vernon-Smith. "Carne of the Sixth is rather in Hacker's good graces. He's been greasing up to him—expecting this to come off, I suppose. I suppose somebody must carry on while the Big Beak's away, and the jolly old governors have appointed Hacker! They don't know he's no good."

"No good mentioning it to them!" asked Bob, with a grin.

"Bet you there'll be trouble!" said the Bounder, and he walked on up the passage to tell the other fellows the news.

"Let's go and look at the board!" said Harry Wharton.

Tea was on the table. But the Famous Five forgot tea, in the excitement of the latest news. They rushed down the stairs to look at the notice-board in the midst of a crowd of other fellows equally interested.

"I say, you fellows!" squeaked Bunter. "What about tea?"

He was not heeded. The chums of the Remove disappeared—forgetting tea. But it was not wholly forgotten. Billy Bunter looked after that little matter in their absence.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The New Head!

"**R**OTTEN!" said Coker of the Fifth.

It was the following morning.

The new notice was still conspicuous on the board.

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Having taken over the headmastership in Dr. Locke's stead, Mr. Hacker—more commonly known as the "Acid Drop" of the Shell—declares that he will soon have the Remove eating out of his hand. But Harry Wharton & Co. rally as one man, determined to teach the would-be dictator the error of his ways!

~~~~~

Every fellow at Greyfriars had seen it by that time. From the Sixth to the Second, they had read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested the official document, signed by the chairman of the Governing Board, appointing Mr. Horace Hacker headmaster, pro tem.

Many and various were the comments on that document—few of them favourable.

Even Shell fellows did not seem exhilarated by the announcement that their "beak" had been specially selected by the august body of governors to carry on while the Head was away. Hobson, who had told his friends that it would come off, did not seem bucked by the fulfilment of his prediction.

In the morning, before school, some fellows came along to give the notice another "squint." Among them was Coker of the Fifth.

Coker evidently did not approve.

He pronounced it rotten—in a powerful voice that was heard at a good distance. Coker had strong opinions on

many subjects, and he never made a secret of them. They were, Coker thought, worth knowing.

"Of course," said Coker, "it ought to have been Prout!"

His friends, Potter and Greene, nodded assent to that. They did not often agree with Coker—but they agreed now.

"I hear that he's shirty about it!" went on Coker. "He would be, you know! He's senior master here—and they've passed him over for Hacker! He can't be expected to like it!"

Potter and Greene grinned. Everybody knew that Mr. Prout did not like it. On a previous occasion when the Head had been away, Mr. Prout had carried on in his place. There had been a lot of trouble. No doubt that was why the Board of Governors had passed him over this time. Still, it looked like a slight to Prout, and the Fifth Form beak could not be expected to like it, as Coker declared.

"It's rotten!" repeated Coker. "I don't think a lot of Prout, as you fellows know. He rags a fellow in the Form-room. Still, he's my beak!"

Evidently, in Coker's opinion, Mr. Prout derived such importance as he possessed, from the fact that he was Coker's beak!

"The governors," continued Coker, "are a lot of old asses! Your uncle's one of the governors, isn't he, young Wharton?"

"Yes," answered Harry.

"Well, he's an old ass, then!" said Coker.

"Fathead!" said Harry Wharton.

"I don't want any cheek from you, because your beak's away!" said Coker, frowning. "There's one thing about Hacker, at any rate—he will keep cheeky fags in order! That will be all right!"

"Think he will keep cheeky Fifth Form fatheads in order?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Shut up, Cherry!" Coker turned his back on the Removites, and stared disapprovingly at the board again. "This is really rotten, you men! That man Hacker is an interfering sort of old ass. If he fancies he can butt in on the Fifth, he will jolly soon be told where he gets off!"

"Chuck it, Coker!" said Harry Wharton hastily. He spotted a rather bony figure and acid face coming along. It was Mr. Hacker.

Coker's opinions, valuable as they were, could hardly be expected to gratify Mr. Hacker, if he heard them. The captain of the Remove gave Coker a good-natured hint to chuck it.

Coker was staring at the board. Having, of course, no eyes in the back of his head, he did not see Mr. Hacker coming. Neither was he quick on the uptake.

"Shut up, Wharton!" he snapped. "Don't interrupt when a senior man is speaking."

"But, look out—"

"I said, shut up!"

"But I tell you—"

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"Will you shut up when you're told, Wharton? Now, as I was saying, you men, when that cheeky fag interrupted me, this is absolutely rotten! Hacker may be all right as beak in the Shell—I dare say he is—but the governors must be absolute noodles, to think that he's any good as Head! In my opinion, he's no good at all—no good whatever! Who the dickens is Hacker?"

Nobody answered that question.

Everybody but Coker had now seen Mr. Hacker coming up—and noted the expression on his face. A frozen silence surrounded Coker of the Fifth.

Coker glanced round, apparently surprised by the stillness.

"I said, who the dickens is Hacker?" he repeated. "He thinks a lot of himself; but I can tell you men I don't think much of him! And I can jolly well say plainly—Oh gum!"

Coker broke off as he saw Hacker.

He blinked at the master of the Shell. His rugged face reddened under Hacker's baleful glare.

Even Coker, unthinking ass as he was, would not have made those remarks had he been aware that Hacker was within hearing.

Mr. Hacker had a paper in his hand, which he was apparently going to put on the board. He had arrived, for that purpose, at an unfortunate moment for Horace Coker.

"Oh!" repeated Coker faintly. "Gum!"

Mr. Hacker looked at him. His thin lips set hard. Hacker probably knew that the decision of the governors was not endorsed by public opinion at Greyfriars. He was the man to resent that disapproval, and to resent it bitterly. And he was the man to exercise authority to the utmost, and even to stretch it beyond the limit.

"Coker," came Mr. Hacker's sharp, acid voice, "I heard what you said!"

"D-d-did you, sir?" stammered Coker.

"I did, Coker! I shall not cane you, Coker!"

"Wha-a-at!" gasped Coker. He seemed quite overcome at the bare idea of being caned! They were not caned in the Fifth.

"But I shall do so at any repetition of this disrespect!" said Mr. Hacker. "Bear that in mind, Coker!"

Coker could only gaze at him, dizzily wondering whether this bargee fancied that he could whop the Fifth!

"You will take five hundred lines, Coker!" pursued Mr. Hacker.

"What?" gasped Coker.

"You will be detained on Wednesday afternoon to write them!"

"I—I—I—"

"That will do, Coker! Go to your Form-room at once, and remain there till class!"

Coker stood and gazed. His powerful brain was slow to assimilate this. Every other fellow on the spot looked on in silence. Coker did not stir.

Mr. Hacker's sharp eyes glinted at him.

"Do you hear me, Coker?" he rapped.

"My hat!" gasped Coker. He found his voice. "May I point out to you, sir, that you're not my Form-master?"

"For the present, Coker, I am your headmaster, and you will obey me!" rapped Mr. Hacker. "You will do so at once!"

"Oh!" gasped Coker.

"Go!"

Coker did not go. He seemed rooted to the spot, glaring at Hacker.

Potter gave him a nudge on one side—Groene on the other. Coker shook them

off, like troublesome gnats. Red wrath was rising in Coker's rugged countenance. There was a pause—quite a thrilling pause.

"I say, you fellows!" It was a breathless squeak from Billy Bunter.

"I say, here comes Prout!"

Mr. Prout, portly and ponderous, rolled on the scene. He glanced at Hacker—and glanced at Coker.

"What—" he began, in his rich, fruity voice.

"There is no need for you to intervene, Mr. Prout!" came Hacker's acid tones. "I am dealing with Coker."

"What?" Prout began to boom.

"What? Coker is a boy in my Form, Mr. Hacker. You will kindly leave matters pertaining to my Form in my hands, if you please!"

Mr. Hacker looked at him coldly. The ponderous Prout was accustomed to overbear other members of the staff in Common-room. In his new position, Hacker was not to be overborne.

"I presume, Mr. Prout, that you have seen the announcement on the board?" he said icily.

"I have seen it, sir!" boomed Prout.

"But what—"

"Then it is unnecessary for me to tell you, sir, that, by the decision of the governing board, I now exercise the headmaster's authority!" said Mr. Hacker. "I have given Coker an imposition and a detention."

"Sir!"

"You, sir, will see that Coker is kept in detention on Wednesday, and that he writes five hundred lines of Virgil."

"Sir!" gurgled Prout.

"Now, Coker go to your Form-room."

Coker blinked at his Form-master. Prout was purple.

"If it is your intention, Mr. Hacker, to interfere between a Form-master and boys of his Form—" gasped Prout.

"Precisely so, sir, whenever I consider it judicious to do so," said Mr. Hacker calmly. "And I may add, sir, that I desire no argument from members of my staff."

"Your staff sir!" said Prout, like a man in a dream.

"My staff!" said Mr. Hacker, with a nod. "Coker, you are not yet gone! I give you one more opportunity of obeying my command; otherwise, I shall administer a flogging."

"A fuf-fuf-flogging!" gasped Coker.

He gazed at Prout; Prout gazed at Hacker; then, like the deep and dark blue ocean in the poem, Prout rolled on.

Coker blinked after him. Prout had failed him; Prout was helpless. It dawned on Coker that this unspeakable bargee meant what he said—and had the power to do as he said. Coker almost tottered away; he disappeared.

Mr. Hacker affixed the paper in his hand to the notice-board and walked away; and the crowd of fellows left there looked at one another expressively.

Vernon-Smith grinned.

"That bargee means business!" he said.

Evidently the bargee did.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Rough on the Remove!

"CARNE!" ejaculated Bob Cherry suddenly.

"What?"

"Look!"

Bob pointed to the paper Mr. Hacker had placed on the board.

All eyes turned on it.

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"That cad—" said Nugent.

"That bully!" growled Johnny Bull.

"That greaser!" said Vernon-Smith.

There was a buzz among the Remove fellows. That paper pinned up by the new Head referred to the Remove; it was of deep interest to members of that Form.

It announced that Carne of the Sixth Form was to take the Remove that morning. It was quite dismaying news.

Since Mr. Quelch had gone the Remove had had a rather unusually easy time. A new master, no doubt, was coming, but he had not yet come. Extra French with Monsieur Charpentier, extra maths with Mr. Lascelles, had filled up part of the time; for the rest, the Remove had been taken by Wingate of the Sixth, the head prefect of Greyfriars. Wingate was the man to keep order in a class, but his rule was certainly lighter than Quelch's; and extra French with Mossoo had meant, to a large extent, extra rags in the French class-room.

That was over now.

"I say, you fellows, that's awfully rotten!" groaned Billy Bunter dismally. "Why, that beast Carne's the worst bully in the Sixth! Worse than Loder! I say, it's enough to make a fellow wish that Quelch had never got ill at all!"

"Well, that's the limit!" said Bob.

"If that cad begins throwing his weight about in our Form-room—" muttered the Bounder.

"Bet you he will!" said Skinner. "Hacker's backing him up—and Hacker's the goods now! Look out for the jolly old ashplant, my beloved 'earers!"

"It's rotten!" said Harry Wharton. "We got on all right with Wingate; I don't see why Hacker couldn't have left us up to Wingate."

"That's easily explained," said the Bounder sarcastically. "Wingate doesn't grease up to Hacker. Carne does."

"Well, it won't be for long, anyhow," said Bob Cherry. Bob had a way of looking on the bright side of things. "They're getting us a new beak, and he will blow in in a day or two."

"We shall have to stand Carne till then," said the captain of the Remove. "Better toe the line and avoid trouble if we can."

"If!" sneered the Bounder.

"Well, it takes two to make a quarrel," said Nugent.

"And two to keep the peace!" grunted Smithy.

Harry Wharton & Co. went out into the winter sunshine in the quad with rather thoughtful faces. They had not been pleased by the news that Hacker was appointed temporary headmaster; they were still less pleased by the way he was beginning.

The term was little more than a week old. The Famous Five had started it with a little trouble with Mr. Hacker on the first day. That did not matter at the time, as Hacker had been in the wrong, and Mr. Quelch had stood by them; but it might matter a good deal now that Quelch was gone and Hacker monarch of all he surveyed. He was a man to remember offences, and especially defeats. The Famous Five did not like the prospect.

Still less did Billy Bunter like it. Bunter had started that term not only with trouble with Hacker, but with Carne of the Sixth as well.

"I say, you fellows, this is going to be awful!" said the fat junior, as he rolled after the Famous Five into the quad. "Hacker's down on me. You know he made out to Quelch that I pinched his railway ticket the day we came back—"

"So you did pinch it, you fat frog!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Beast! And that brute Carne is down on me more than Hacker," groaned Bunter, "because I spotted him smoking and told a few fellows in confidence."

"The fewfulness was not terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Well, he shouldn't smoke if he doesn't want fellows to know he smokes," said Bunter. "He whopped Skinner for smoking the other day; and everybody knows he smokes himself, after I spotted him. I say, you fellows, if Carne takes us in first school he may put me on con, and I never even looked at the tripe last night. You see, I thought it was going to be Wingate again this morning."

It was an apprehensive Owl that rolled

stacker of the Sixth had to keep up appearances at least.

The Remove filed in and took their places.

Carne of the Sixth stood, with his ash-plant under his arm looking them over. Billy Bunter carefully avoided meeting his eye. Vernon-Smith looked at him coolly—so coolly that Carne's eye glinted at him. Most of the Greyfriars prefects regarded Smithy as a cheeky young rascal—as indeed he was. Carne was ready to put "paid" to the first sign of it in the Form-room now that he was in official charge there.

"Stop shuffling your feet, Cherry!" rapped out Carne.

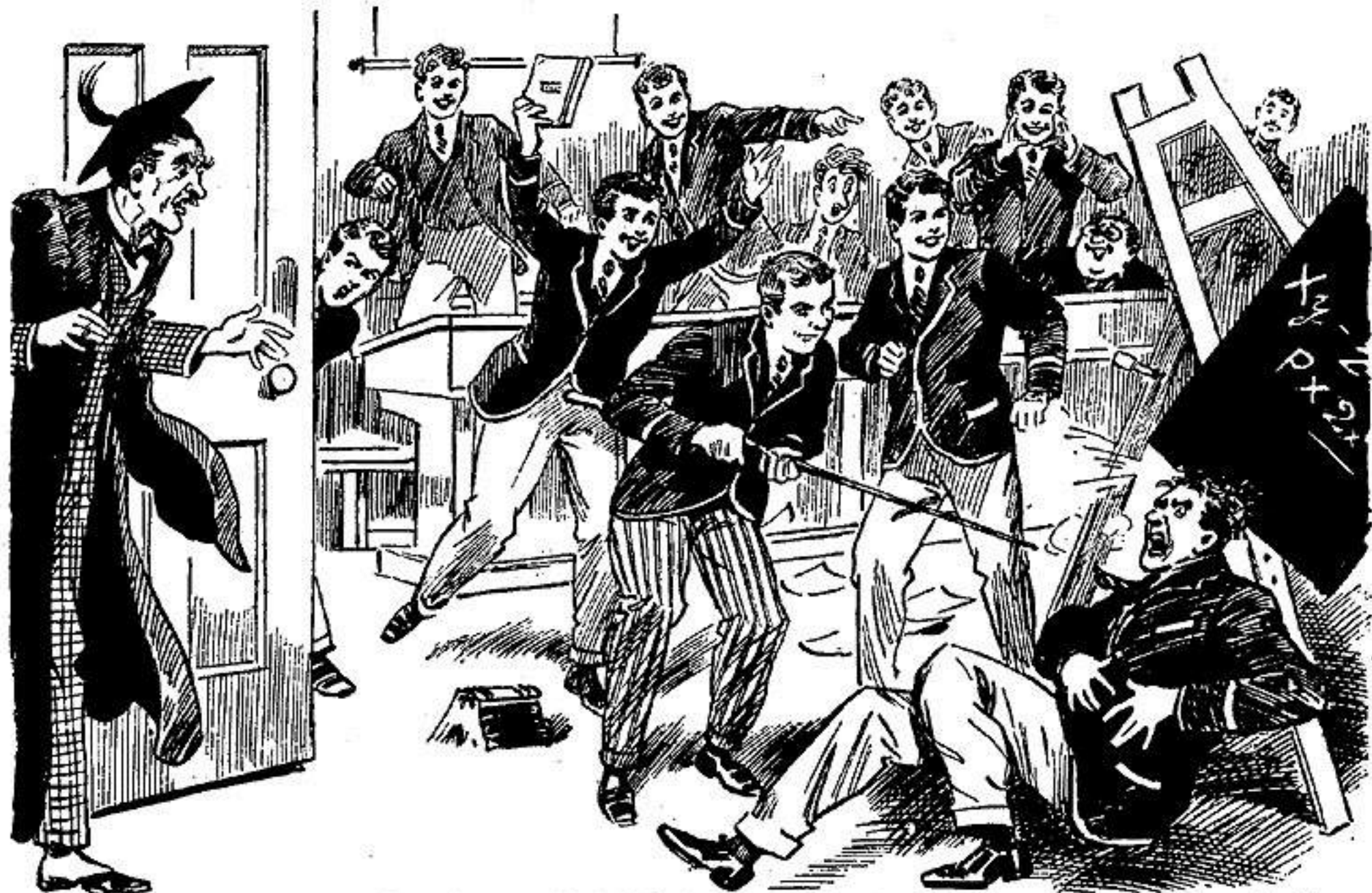
Bob stopped shuffling his feet. He had heard that injunction a good many times from Quelch. Bob was so full of exuberant energy that he did not find

story in his mind, rather than a desire to improve Bunter's knowledge of the tongue of Virgil and Cicero.

The fat Owl was accustomed to handing out the worst translation in the Remove. On this occasion, as he had not even looked at the section of the *Æneid* the Remove had been supposed to prepare in their studies the previous evening, his con was likely to be worse than ever. Billy Bunter wished from the bottom of his fat heart that he had never spotted Carne smoking—or, alternatively, as the lawyers say, that he had never mentioned it.

"I—I say, where do we begin, Toddy?" breathed Bunter in the ear of Peter Todd. The hapless fat Owl did not even know where to begin.

"Vix e conspectu Siculæ—" whispered Peter.



Mr. Hacker reached the Remove Form Room and hurled the door open. He stared in at a scene of wild excitement. Carne of the Sixth was sitting on the floor, with both hands pressed to his side, gurgling for breath. Vernon-Smith, pointer in hand, was grinning down at him. All the Removites were out of their places, laughing and cheering. "What is all this?" roared the infuriated Mr. Hacker.

to the Form-room with the Remove when the bell rang for class.

Most of the Remove had been taking it rather easy with "old Wingate." Bunter had taken it easy to the extent of cutting preparation altogether. It was to be hoped that Carne would not pick on him that morning.

"Hallo, hallo hallo! The dear man's ready for us," murmured Bob Cherry, as they came up to the Remove-room.

Carne was waiting at the door of the Form-room to let the juniors in.

As he was a good deal of a slacker they would not have been surprised had he kept them waiting. Whatever Arthur Carne intended to do in the Remove-room, it was not likely that he intended to put in much hard work there.

But no doubt he was wary of Hacker's sharp eyes. Carne had "greased" himself into Hacker's good graces; but Hacker, according to his lights, was a conscientious and dutiful man, and the

it easy to keep still. However, he contrived to keep still.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, Carne?" answered the captain of the Remove quietly.

"You're head boy here, I believe."

Wharton did not reply "You know I am," as he was tempted to do. He was not giving the bully of the Sixth an opening. He answered quite meekly:

"Yes."

"What is the lesson in this class?"

"*Æneid*, Book I."

"Very well. Bunter!"

"Oh crikey!"

"What did you say, Bunter?"

"Oh, nothing!" gasped Bunter. "I mean I said 'Yes, please, Carne.'"

"Construe!" rapped Carne.

Billy Bunter's worst anticipations were realised.

Not only was he called on for "con," but he was called on first of all. Other fellows, as well as Billy Bunter, suspected that Carne had that smoking

"Todd!" rapped Carne.

"Oh! Yes!"

"Were you speaking to Bunter?"

"Oh! Yes! Only telling him the place, Carne."

"This is the first time I've taken the Remove," said Carne unpleasantly. "When you were up to Quelch, did he allow you to forget the place?"

No answer.

"Answer me, Todd!"

"No," said Peter.

"Did he allow you to tell one another the place?"

"No." Peter had to admit it.

"But—"

"Very well. Take a hundred lines for speaking to Bunter! Now, Bunter, go on at once!"

Peter Todd breathed hard and deep.

Billy Bunter blinked through his big spectacles at the Latin page, and suppressed a groan.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,511.

"Vix e conspectu Siculae telluris in altum—" groaned Bunter.

"Construe!" rapped Carne.

Bunter blinked desperately at Peter. But Toddy could not venture another whisper.

He blinked at the Latin. That it meant something, Bunter knew—but that was no present help to him, as he had not the faintest idea what it meant. Virgil was not, perhaps, a very difficult author; but he needed to be given some attention if he was to be translated. Bunter hadn't given him any.

"I am waiting, Bunter!" said Carne ominously.

"Oh! Yes, I—I'm just going to begin!" gasped Bunter. "I—I know this quite well, Carne. I—I was slogging at prep last night—"

"Get on at once!"

Carne slipped his ashplant down into his hand, evidently ready for use.

Bunter got on with it. Plainly he had to make a shot at it—and he made a shot. Naturally, in the circumstances, it was not a bullseye.

"The vixen suspected by the Sicilians—"

"What?" gasped Carne.

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

Nobody had been feeling like laughing. But Billy Bunter's "oon" would probably have made a cat laugh.

"Is—is—isn't that right?" stuttered Bunter. "I—I mean, vix—vix—vix—"

(Oh crikey! What's vix, Toddy? Whisper, will you?)

"Hardly!" whispered Toddy, taking the risk.

"Look here, you beast, you whisper!" breathed Bunter. It did not occur to his powerful brain that Peter was giving him the translation. "I say, what does vix mean?"

"Bunter, are you whispering to Todd?"

"Oh, no! I only said—"

"Stand out before the Form, Bunter!"

"Oh crikey!"

"You have not prepared this lesson, Bunter!" said Carne, quite in the manner of a Form-master.

"Oh, yes!" gasped Bunter. "I—I was slogging at prep last night, Carne. I never told Toddy I'd chance it with Wingate. You can ask Toddy, Carne."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Carne swished the ashplant.

"Bend over that desk, Bunter!"

"Oh lor'!"

Billy Bunter, wishing still more fervently that he had never told that smoking story about Carne of the Sixth, bent over the desk.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Go to your place, Bunter! You will write out the translation after class. Wharton, you will go on."

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Silence, Bunter!"

"Yow-ow! Wow!"

"Another sound, Bunter, and you get six!"

There was not another sound from Bunter. He wriggled and he squirmed, but he wriggled and squirmed in silence.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

"Goal!"

HARRY WHARTON & CO. came out in break, that morning, not looking quite so merry and bright as was their happy wont.

Billy Bunter was looking as if he

found life no longer worth the trouble of living. Other fellows looked morose and disgruntled. The ashplant had been featured in the morning's performance! More than half the Remove had lines.

The Bounder was scowling like a demon in a pantomime. Even Lord Mauleverer looked less placidly cheerful than usual. Fisher T. Fish guessed that it was the elephant's side-whiskers, and then some. Bolsover major breathed dire threats of buzzing an inkpot at Carne of the Sixth in third school—threats which, it was probable, Bolsover major would forget to carry out.

It was a cold and frosty morning. Snow from a late fall was banked among the old, leafless elms.

Glad to be done with Carne, for the time, at least, Harry Wharton & Co. started a snowball game. It was healthy exercise, in the keen, frosty air, and the game was soon going hot and strong.

Other fellows joined up. No doubt there was some noise. Mr. Hacker glanced with an eye of disfavour from his study window. Hacker did not like noise. He had no particular use for cheery spirits. Carne of the Sixth came out of the House, with his friends Walker and Loder, of that Form.

Walker and Loder were treating Carne with unusual respect. He was high up in favour with the new Head—and there was already a rumour afloat that he might supersede Wingate as head prefect. Hitherto, Carne had been more or less a hanger-on of the other two black sheep of the Sixth. Now he was the "goods," and had to be treated accordingly.

"Noisy little ticks!" remarked Walker, as a snowball flew by within a foot of his head.

Carne glanced round at the juniors.

"Wharton!" he rapped.

Harry Wharton, just then delivering a snowball at Smithy, did not hear—or, at any rate, did not heed.

"Wharton!" roared Carne angrily.

"Oh! Yes, Carne!"

The captain of the Remove looked round.

"Stop this at once!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Stop it! That's all!"

Carne walked on with his friends. Loder and Walker, behind his back, exchanged a wink. It rather amused them to see their pal throwing his weight about in this style.

But it did not amuse the juniors. The snowballers ceased their game; but they glared after Carne in almost speechless indignation.

Snowballing, when snow was available, had always been permitted. Mr. Quelch would never have thought of stopping it. Even Hacker, sour as he was, had not interfered. Authority was evidently getting into Carne's head a little.

"Does that swab think we're going to stand this?" hissed the Bounder.

He had a snowball in his hand, and his eyes gleamed after Carne.

"The swabfulness is terrific, my esteemed Smithy!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But what cannot be cured, must go longest to the well, as the English proverb remarkably observes!"

"I'm not stopping!" said Smithy savagely.

"Better, old chap!" said Harry Wharton. "After all Hacker's Head now, and he's put us under that cad's orders."

"I'll show him exactly how much I care for his orders!" said Vernon-Smith, his eyes gleaming.

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Up went his hand, with the snowball in it. His intention was obvious, and the Famous Five all gasped together:

"Chuck it, Smithy!"

"Stop, you ass!"

"My esteemed fatheaded Smithy—"

Whiz!

Unheeding, the Bounder hurled the snowball with a deadly aim. All the force of his sinowy arm was put into it.

There was a sudden startled yell from Carne of the Sixth. Walking on, after giving his autocratic order, he had his back to the juniors. Smithy's snowball crashed on the back of his head.

"Ooooooh!" yelled Carne.

He staggered forward and pitched over on his hands and knees.

"Goal!" gasped Peter Todd.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Smithy, you ass—"

"Goal! Ha, ha, ha!"

Carne of the Sixth sprawled headlong. His nose tapped on the quad. Loder and Walker stared down at him, and then looked round.

"Oh gad!" said Loder.

Walker grinned.

"Oh! Ow! Oooooh!" spluttered Carne. "Who—what—urrrgh! Something knocked me over— Ooooooh!"

He scrambled to his feet. His hands and the knees of his trousers had collected mud. His nose was red and felt sore.

"Some—some—somebody snowballed me!" he gasped. "One of those young rascals!" He spun round at the Removeites, crimson with rage. "Who was that? Who threw that snowball?"

No answer.

About twenty fellows had seen Smithy whiz the snowball at the bully of the Sixth. Nobody was likely to tell Carne so.

"Wharton," roared Carne, "was that you?"

"No."

"Who was it, then?"

The captain of the Remove stared at him without answering.

"Do you hear me, Wharton?" roared Carne.

"I'm not deaf," answered Harry politely.

"Tell me at once who threw that snowball!"

Wharton breathed hard and deep.

"I will tell you nothing of the sort, Carne!" he answered, very distinctly.

"Take five hundred lines, Wharton!"

"Oh, thanks!" Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"Was it you, Cherry?"

"Not guilty, my lord," answered Bob cheerfully.

Carne stared at the crowd of juniors. His eyes fixed on the face of Herbert Vernon-Smith. There was a mocking gleam in the Bounder's eyes.

"Vernon-Smith, it was you threw that snowball!" said Carne, between his teeth. "Answer me at once! Was it you?"

"Find out!" answered Smithy coolly.

"What?" gasped Carne. "What did you say, Vernon-Smith?"

"I said find out!"

"That means that it was you!" Carne gripped his ashplant, and strode towards the Bounder. "Bend over and touch your toes, Vernon-Smith!"

The Bounder looked at him coolly. All eyes were on Smithy. He made no movement to obey the command. He glanced round at the juniors.

"What about a little run, you men?" asked the Bounder nonchalantly.

"Wha-a-t?"

"Race you round the gym!" said Smithy.

And the Bounder started.

Carne, jumping after him, lashed out with the ash, missing him by a foot. Immediately the whole crowd of juniors scampered off after the Bounder.

"Stop!" roared Carne. "Do you hear me? Stop! Come back at once, Vernon-Smith! Stop! Do you hear?"

No doubt the juniors heard. But they did not heed. The whole crowd scampered away, and Carne was left to waste his sweetness on the desert air.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Rebellion in the Remove!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH looked perfectly cool as he came along to the Remove-room at the clang of the bell for third school.

That trouble awaited him in the Form-room the Bounder could hardly doubt. But it did not seem to worry him.

Harry Wharton was feeling uneasy. So were a good many other fellows. But the Bounder was cool and self-possessed, and seemed rather to enjoy the excitement of the coming "row."

"You're for it, Smithy!" remarked Skinner, as the Remove went in.

"Think so?" drawled the Bounder.

"Well, you dodged Carne in break, but you can't dodge him in the Form-

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room. And he knows you got him with that snowball."

Smithy shook his head.

"He doesn't know," he answered. "He only suspects. He can't punish a man on suspicion, can he? Would that be just?"

"Eh?" Skinner stared. "Lot Carne will worry about that."

"My dear man," said the Bounder, "Carne is a Sixth Form prefect, specially selected by our respected new Head, Hacker, to handle the Remove. We're bound to rely upon his justice."

"Pretty rotten reed to lean on," grinned Snoop.

"Well, if I don't get justice, there will be a spot of trouble," said Vernon-Smith. "But let's hope for the best. I'm not hunting for trouble. You fellows all know what a meek, obedient chap I am."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Remove went in.

Carne of the Sixth was already in the Form-room, and his eyes fixed on Vernon-Smith with a deadly glint. All the Form knew that he had only left the whopping till third school—as Skinner said, Smithy could not dodge in the Form-room. Carne had his ashplant in hand ready.

As the juniors went to their places, he rapped out the Bounder's name.

"Vernon-Smith!"

"Yes, Carne," drawled Smithy.

"You will stand out before the Form!"

"Certainly!"

All eyes fixed on Herbert Vernon-Smith, as he stood facing the prefect.

His coolness was undiminished. As a matter of fact, Smithy liked to have all eyes fixed on him—he dearly loved the limelight. Half the Bounder's troubles in his rather stormy career at Greyfriars were due to his desire to make the fellows stare, and wonder at his nerve.

"Now, Vernon-Smith, give me a plain answer. Did you throw that snowball at me in break?" said Carne.

"I gave you a plain answer when you asked me before, Carne," said the Bounder. "If you've forgotten, I'll say it over again. Find out!"

"That will do," said Carne. He swished the ashplant. "I'll keep order in this Form, or know the reason why! Bend over that desk, Vernon-Smith!"

"Eh—what for?"

"I'm going to give you six, you young scoundrel!"

"You're not," said Smithy coolly.

"Will you bend over?" roared Carne.

"No, I won't!"

There was a brief pause—the Removeites almost holding their breath. It was open revolt now.

The sympathy of all the Remove was with Vernon-Smith. It was true that he was reckless and cheeky, but punishment on suspicion could hardly be called just. Moreover, Carne had asked for that snowball.

The pause was very brief. Carne made a stride at Smithy, and grasped him by the shoulder. His intention was to twist him over the desk, by main force, and lay on the ashplant.

The Bounder, strong and tough as he was, was no use in a struggle with a big Sixth Form man. He was whirled to the desk, the juniors gazing on breathlessly.

But as he was twisted over the desk, Vernon-Smith grabbed an inkpot therefrom, twisted round, and shot the contents in Carne's face.

Splash!

"Ooooooh!" gasped Carne, as the ink splashed full in his face, and he released the Bounder, staggering back.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Oh crumbs!"

"Good old Smithy!" gasped Bolsover major.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Carne, his face smothered with ink, stood gasping and spluttering. Some of it had gone into his mouth, and he gurgled horribly.

He grabbed out his handkerchief and dabbed at the ink. The handkerchief was a drenched inky rag in a moment. Inky and furious, the prefect glared at Vernon-Smith, and rushed at him.

But the Bounder did not wait.

He dodged away among the forms. After him rushed Carne, almost foaming with rage.

Whack!

The ashplant came down, aimed at the dodging Bounder. But Smithy was out of its reach, and it landed on the wrong man. There was a fearful yell from Fisher T. Fish as he got it.

"Aw! Wake snakes! Yaroooh!" Fisher T. Fish wriggled like an eel.

Carne rushed on after the Bounder. Perhaps it was by accident that Bob Cherry's foot got in his way. Perhaps it was not.

Anyhow, that foot did get in his way, and he stumbled over it headlong, and went down with a crash among the forms.

"Man down!" gasped Johnny Bull.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The downfulness is terrific!"

Carne scrambled up, his face red with rage where it was not black with ink. He lashed out at Bob, who gave

a wild roar as he caught the ash with his neck, and rushed on after Vernon-Smith.

"Go it, Smithy!"

"Dodge him!"

"Keep it up!"

All the Remove were on their feet now, and the wildest excitement reigned in the Form-room. Nearly every fellow was shouting encouragement to Smithy.

The Bounder's eyes were dancing. He was enjoying this with his usual reckless disregard of consequences.

Carno, close behind him, lashed with the cane; and Smithy dodged out of the forms. He ran round the blackboard, which stood on its easel, ready for use in third lesson. As the enraged prefect tore after him, the Bounder tipped over blackboard and easel together.

Crash!

There was a terrific crash as the blackboard landed on Carne. There was another crash as Carne landed on the floor, with the blackboard and the easel sprawling over him.

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

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

"Good man, Smithy!"

"Oh! Yow! Wow!" gasped Carno. He sat up dizzily, and pushed off the blackboard and the easel. "Oooooogh! I—I—I'll smash you—ooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The bully of the Sixth picked himself up. He was hurt—and he was infuriated. He gripped his ash convulsively, and rushed at the Bounder.

Herbert Vernon-Smith dodged round the master's desk, with Carne close behind.

On that desk lay a pointer. The Bounder grabbed it up in passing.

As Carne came tearing after him, Vernon-Smith faced round. With the long wooden pointer in his hand, he faced the enraged prefect, in a fencing attitude.

Carno landed out with the ashplant, evidently caring little where the blow fell; and the Bounder warded the blow, and there was a crash as ashplant met pointer. The next moment the Bounder lunged, and the end of the pointer jammed on Carne's waistcoat.

"Ooooooh!" gurgled Carne.

Bump!

He sat at the Bounder's feet, spluttering for breath. And from all the Remove came a roar:

"Ha, ha, ha!"

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Heavy Hand!

MR. HACKER, in the Shell Form-room, paused.

Hacker was taking the Shell, as usual, in third school. Latin prose was the order of the day. But the sounds that floated from the direction of the Remove-room rather interrupted Latin prose. Hobson and his friends exchanged glances. Something, it was clear, was going on in the Remove—something of an exciting nature.

Mr. Hacker's hard, thin face set in a bitter look. There was whispering among the Shell fellows. It died away into dead silence as Mr. Hacker picked up the cane from his desk.

"Hobson!"

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped Hobby, rather apprehensively.

"You will be left in charge here for a few minutes!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" said Hobby, in

great relief. He had a very uneasy eye on the cane in Hacker's hand.

Mr. Hacker strode to the door and left the Form-room.

His brow was dark as he stepped into the passage. There was a terrific din from the Remove-room. Mr. Hacker had placed Carne in charge of that Form in the belief that they needed a heavier and sterner hand than Wingate's. Judging by the uproar, the heavy hand was not making much of a success of it.

The din had brought other masters away from their Forms. Mr. Capper had stepped out from the Fourth—Mr. Prout from the Fifth! The latter addressed Hacker as he appeared.

"Mr. Hacker, may I mention, sir, that it is scarcely possible to hear oneself speak in my Form-room? May I request you, sir, to see that this uproar ceases?"

"I am about to see to the matter, sir!" snapped Mr. Hacker. "I am not at all surprised by disorder in Quelch's Form; but I shall very soon put an end to it!"

"The sooner the better, sir, if classes are to proceed at all!" boomed Prout.

"Kindly say no more, Mr. Prout."

"What?"

"Return to your Form-room. I desire no advice from you, sir, and I have no time to waste in idle discussion!" yapped Mr. Hacker.

Prout gave him a look—a look that spoke volumes of scorn; but it produced no effect on the back of Mr. Hacker, who was striding away to the Remove-room.

"Upon my word!" gasped Prout; and he rolled back to his Form-room almost breathless with indignation.

Hacker reached the Remove-room and hurled the door open. He stared in at a scene of wild excitement.

Carno of the Sixth was sitting on the floor, with both hands pressed to his side, gurgling for breath. The Bounder, pointer in hand, was grinning down at him. All the other fellows were out of their places, laughing and cheering. For the moment, they did not observe the new headmaster at the door.

"What is all this?" roared Mr. Hacker, striding in.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Here's Hacker!"

"I say, you fellows, look out!"

"Ware beaks!"

There was a rush for places at once. Nobody would have minded Hacker, as master of the Shell. But as temporary headmaster of Greyfriars, they had to mind him. Even the Bounder looked a little dismayed.

"Carne!" roared Mr. Hacker.

"Urrrrrgh!" gurgled Carne, pressing his hands to his waistcoat in winded anguish. "Urrrrgh!"

"What does this mean, Carne? Why is your face covered with ink?"

"Wurrgh!"

"Will you answer me?"

"Gurrgh!"

Carno would willingly have answered. But he couldn't. That lunge of the pointer in his waistcoat had winded him. He had not got his second wind yet. He could only gurgle horribly.

"Vernon-Smith! What are you doing out of your place?" thundered Mr. Hacker.

"Carne told me to stand out before the Form, sir!" answered Vernon-Smith innocently.

"Go to your place at once!"

"Certainly, sir!" The Bounder went,

winking at the other fellows as he did so.

"Carne! Get up! What are you sitting there for? What does this mean? Are you out of your senses, or what? Speak!"

"Oooooooogh!"

Mr. Hacker glared at the Remove. There was subdued chuckling in the Form. He glared at Carne. Carne groaned and gurgled.

He bent over the winded prefect, grasped him by the shoulder, and jerked him to his feet. Carne staggered helplessly, still pressing his waistcoat. His fencing-match with the Bounder had been brief; but its result had been painful for Carne. He tottered and gasped.

"Now, Carne, tell me what is the cause of this disturbance! There seems to have been nothing short of a riot here! What has occurred?"

"Urrgh!" Carne struggled to speak. "Vernon-Smith—urrgh—he has attacked me—wurrgh—with a pip-pip-pip—"

"With a what?"

"A pip-pip-pip-pointer! Urrgh!"

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Hacker. "Is it possible that insubordination has been carried to such a length, even in this Form—the most unruly Form at Greyfriars! Vernon-Smith, if you have dared to attack the prefect placed by me in charge of this Form—"

"Oh, no, sir!" said Vernon-Smith. "I defended myself, sir! It was Carne who did the attacking!"

"What—what?"

"All the fellows saw him, sir!" said Smithy cheerfully. "He was chasing me all over the Form-room with a cane! I had to use the pointer to keep him off!"

There was a chortle in the Remove.

"Silence!" hooted Mr. Hacker.

"Carne, explain to me at once what this disturbance means!"

Carno leaned heavily on the master's desk, gurgling. But he was able to speak now, between gurgles.

"I was going to—groooooogh—to cane Vernon-Smith, sir—ooogh—and he struck me with the pi-pip-pointer, and—oooooh!"

"I understand!" said Mr. Hacker bitterly. "Vernon-Smith is the most unruly boy in an unruly Form! I shall deal with him personally! Vernon-Smith, stand out before the Form!"

The Bounder breathed hard. For a second he hesitated—then he stepped out.

Mr. Hacker pointed to a desk with his cane.

"Bend over that desk, Vernon-Smith!"

Again Vernon-Smith hesitated. His clam, Tom Redwing, gave him an almost beseeching look. The Removes were serious enough now. The reckless Bounder had defied Carne; but defying Hacker was a very much more serious matter—as Hacker had a headmaster's powers and authority.

Mr. Hacker's lips set in a tight, bitter line.

"Are you thinking of disobeying me, Vernon-Smith?" he asked, very distinctly. "I warn you that disobedience will be followed by your immediate expulsion from the school!"

"Smithy!" whispered Redwing.

The Bounder set his teeth. That power, undoubtedly, was now in Mr. Hacker's hands. It was not a power that a judicious man would have been keen to use, on the first day of his new authority. But there it was, if Hacker chose to use it.

In silence, with a black brow, Vernon-



A yelling crowd of Removites swept Carne onward to the fountain in the middle of the quad. Many hands heaved him up over the rim of the big, shallow granite basin. Splash! Carne went in, sprawling. "Urrgh!" came a gurgle, as the Sixth Former rolled at full length in the water. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removites.

Smith bent over the desk. Mr. Hacker's hand went up, with the cane in it.

Swish, swish swish!

The Remove looked on in grim silence. Hacker was laying it on as Mr. Quelch had never laid it on in that Form-room. Perhaps he considered that the occasion required unusual severity.

Swish, swish, swish!

In spite of his nerve, and his determination to go through with it without a sound, a yell escaped Smithy at the last swish. It was more than even the tough Boulder could endure in silence.

"Now," said Mr. Hacker grimly, "you may go back to your place, Vernon-Smith! I trust that that will be a warning to you—and to others! Carne!"

"Urrrrgh!"

"You had better go and wash that ink from your face! Request Wingate to step here!"

"Urrgh! Yes, sir!"

Carne tottered from the Form-room. The Removites exchanged glances. They were shut of Carne—for that lesson, at least. But any satisfaction they felt was dashed by Mr. Hacker's next words.

"Every boy here appears to have been concerned in this riot! Every boy here will take five hundred lines!"

"Oh!" gasped the Remove.

"I shall now leave you," continued Mr. Hacker grimly; "and if I hear a sound from this Form-room, I shall return and cane the whole Form!"

"Oh!"

Mr. Hacker whisked away, back to the Shell. And he did not hear another sound from the Remove Form Room. The heavy hand was proving effective—so far at least.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

A Mysterious Disappearance!

"I SAY, you fellows," yelled Billy Bunter, "look at Smithy!"
Plenty of fellows were already looking at Smithy.

After dinner most of the Remove fellows were in the quad. It was getting near time for the bell to ring for class, and the Remove were looking forward, with anything but pleasure, to the prospect of an afternoon with Carne of the Sixth.

Herbert Vernon-Smith was on the path under the Sixth Form study windows. He had stopped under Carne's window.

Carne was in his study. He had been seen glancing from his window, and no fellow was specially anxious to catch his eye—except, apparently, the Boulder. Smithy was asking for it.

Reaching up over the stone sill, the Boulder tapped at the window. A score of fellows stared at him as he did so.

Carne's face was seen within at once. There was a frown on it. It was, of course, unlimited cheek on the part of a Lower Fourth junior to tap at a Sixth Form man's window. Carne looked both angry and surprised as he stared out at Herbert Vernon-Smith.

Tap, tap, tap!

The lower sash of the window shot up. Carne leaned out, glaring at the junior below.

"Vernon-Smith, what does this cheek mean?" he exclaimed. "Go into the House at once, and come to my study!"

"Rats!" answered the Boulder coolly.

"What—what did you say?"

"Deaf! I said rats! R-a-t-s!" Vernon-Smith spelt it out deliberately.

"Got it now, you swab? Rats!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Smithy's the man to ask for it!"

"The askfulness is truly terrific!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Smithy!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. Vernon-Smith did not heed. He grinned up cheerfully at the angry face staring from the window. His hand slipped into his pocket, and came out with an apple in it.

Whiz!

Before Carne knew that the missile was coming, it came! It was rather a ripe apple—perhaps a little over-ripe! It squashed on Carne's nose!

"Smithy, you mad ass!" gasped Redwing.

"Like that, Carne?" asked the Boulder. "I've got another one here!"

Carne, for a moment, stood dabbing squashed apple from his features. Then he scrambled from the window and jumped at Vernon-Smith.

Instantly the Boulder cut away across the quad. The bully of the Sixth charged after him, ashplant in hand.

Smithy disappeared round the school buildings, and the prefect disappeared after him, both going strong. A staring crowd was left in the quad, gasping.

The Boulder was running hard. Had Carne's grasp fallen on him just then, he would have been booked for a whopping compared with which that he had received from Mr. Hacker in the Form-room would have been quite mild.

But Smithy knew what he was about. Keeping ahead of his pursuer, he reached Gosling's woodshed.

The door of that building stood open. The Boulder darted in at the doorway. Carne came panting up a few seconds behind him.

He had the scapegrace of the Remove now. At all events, he fancied that he had. It looked as if Smithy had fairly delivered himself into his hands.

He rushed into the open doorway of the woodshed after Vernon-Smith. The

door was wide open, and Carne, glaring round the shed for the Bouncer, did not realise for the moment that Smithy was behind the door.

Standing in the middle of the shed, gripping his ashplant, he stared around; and the Bouncer whipped from behind the door, whipped out, and slammed the door after him:

"Oh!" gasped Carne.

He rushed at the door.

Click!

Carne had not noticed, naturally, that the key was in the middle of the lock. But it was, and the Bouncer swiftly turned it.

The next moment Carne was dragging fiercely at the door-handle. But he dragged too late. He was locked in the woodshed!

"Caught!" chuckled the Bouncer breathlessly.

"Let me out of this at once, Vernon-Smith!" roared Carne, crashing his ash on the door. "Do you hear? Unlock that door!"

"I'll watch it!" chuckled Smithy.

He jerked the key from the lock. There was a yell of rage from within the woodshed.

The bully of the Sixth understood it all now. That apple at his study window had been intended to draw him in pursuit of the Bouncer. The trap was laid, and he had fallen right into it!

He thumped and banged on the door.

"You young scoundrel!" he yelled. "Will you let me out?"

"Hardly!" grinned the Bouncer.

Carne rushed to the window. But it was a small window, covered by wooden shutters, locked. There was no escape that way. There was, in fact, no escape at all until the Bouncer chose to unlock the door.

"You young villain!" shrieked Carne. "It will be class in a few minutes! Will you let me out or not?"

"Not!" chortled the Bouncer.

Bang, bang, bang! came on the inner side of the woodshed door.

Carne was almost dancing with rage. In five minutes he had to take the Remove. He did not look like taking the Remove now. Shouting for help was not likely to be of much use. The woodshed was at a distance from the school buildings. Nobody was likely to come to it but Gosling.

Bang! Thump! Bang!

"Let me out, you young rascal!" raved Carne. "I'll report this to Hacker! You'll get a flogging for this, Vernon-Smith!"

"Go on!"

"Will you open that door?" roared Carne. "The bell will be going in a few minutes!"

"That's all right, old bean! You're not expected in the Sixth," chuckled Smithy, "and we don't want you in the Remove!"

Bang! Thump! Bang! Thump!

Leaving Carne of the Sixth to bang and thump on the locked door, Vernon-Smith slipped the key into his pocket and strolled away.

The bell for class was beginning to clang now. Carne, almost raving, banged and thumped. Smithy, grinning, sauntered back to the quad and joined the crowd of fellows heading for the House.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Didn't Carne get you?" asked Bob Cherry, as the Bouncer went in with the Remove.

"Oh, no!" drawled Smithy. "I got Carne!"

"You're an awful ass, old chap!" said Nagent. "Carne will take it out of you in class this afternoon!"

"Think so?"

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"Well, don't you, ass?"

"No, not quite! I don't think Carne will be with us this afternoon at all," said Smithy. "I fancy he will be giving the Remove a miss."

"Not likely!" said Bob.

"Well, we shall see!"

The Remove gathered at the door of their Form-room. Carne was not there to let them in. A good many fellows were looking curiously at Herbert Vernon-Smith. They waited, while the other Forms went in. Carne did not appear.

The bell had ceased to ring. Other Forms were getting going. But the Remove still waited at their Form-room door.

"Look here, what's this game, Smithy?" asked Bob. "Where's Carne?"

"O where and O where can he be?" answered the Bouncer.

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

Mr. Hacker had gone in with his Form in the Shell room; but he had noticed that the Remove were still out, and after a few minutes he came out, no doubt to see whether they were yet in. He frowned as he arrived on the spot.

"Wharton!" he rapped.

"Yes, sir?"

"Why are you not in your Form-room?"

"Carne hasn't let us in yet, sir."

"Where is Carne?"

"I don't know."

"That is very extraordinary!" exclaimed Mr. Hacker, very much annoyed. "Carne can hardly have failed to hear the bell. Go to his study and see if he is there, Wharton. The rest of you go into the Form-room."

As Harry Wharton had last seen Carne of the Sixth disappearing round the School House on the track of Vernon-Smith, he certainly did not suppose that the prefect was in his study. It was not for him to offer an opinion, however, and he walked away to the Sixth as bidden.

Mr. Hacker opened the Form-room door, and the Removes went in. They grinned at one another as they took their places. What had happened to Carne, nobody but the Bouncer knew; but the other fellows could guess that he was kept away, somehow.

Mr. Hacker stood in the doorway, visibly angry and impatient, till Harry Wharton came back from the Sixth Form studies.

"Have you told Carne?" he rapped.

"He's not there, sir."

"Have you not seen him at all?" exclaimed Mr. Hacker.

"No, sir, not since some time ago in the quad."

Mr. Hacker compressed his lips hard, and Harry Wharton went to his place.

The new headmaster glanced over the Form. A good many fellows were grinning, but they ceased to grin, under Hacker's baleful eyes.

"Does any boy here know where Carne is?" exclaimed Mr. Hacker, at last.

"I saw him running in the quad, sir, about ten minutes before class," said Vernon-Smith meekly.

"Running in the quad?" repeated Mr. Hacker.

"Yes, sir. I think he was having a race with a junior," said Smithy calmly.

"Nonsense!" rapped Mr. Hacker.

"Absurd!"

He stepped back to the doorway, and looked out to see whether his pet prefect was coming. But nobody was in view.

"Sister Anne, Sister Anne, do you see anyone coming?" murmured Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Hacker glared round.

"Silence! Silence in the Form!"

He stared out into the corridor again. But there was no sign of Carne. Why he was staying out was a complete mystery to Mr. Hacker. Certainly it did not occur to him, for a moment, that Carne was locked in the woodshed, banging at the door, and yelling to be let out. Neither bangs nor yells reached as far as the Form-rooms.

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr. Hacker, at last. "This is most extraordinary! I do not understand this at all! Most extraordinary!"

"Shall we go and look for Carne, sir?" asked Vernon-Smith.

Mr. Hacker gave him a glare.

"Certainly not! Remain where you are! I will send Wingate here!"

Hacker whisked away. He left a smiling Form in the Remove room. Wingate arrived once more to "take" the Remove, and it was quite a cheery afternoon, after all, for that Form. It was not, perhaps, quite so cheery for Carne in the woodshed. But in an imperfect world it was impossible to satisfy everybody.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Carne Loses His Temper!

GOSLING jumped!

Bang! Thump!

"My eye!" said Gosling.

Crash! Bang!

The ancient porter of Greyfriars stared in astonishment.

Gosling had come round to his woodshed. It was close on time for classes to be dismissed, and Carne, by that time, was in almost a frantic state. Gosling had not expected to find anyone in his woodshed; still less, anyone kicking up so terrific a shindy therein.

Carne, with a heavy billet of wood in his hand, was beating on the inner side of the door. Perhaps he was trying to hack a way out. If so, he did not succeed, for the door was stout and strong. But the din was terrific.

"Ere, wot's all this?" demanded Gosling, rapping on the outside of the door. "Where's that key what I left in the lock? Who's locked hisself in my woodshed?"

Carne ceased to hammer and bang, and shouted instead:

"Is that Gosling?"

"Which it are?" grunted Gosling.

"And wot I says is this 'ere—"

"Open that door! Let me out!"

"Ow can a man open that there door when you've got the key inside?" demanded Gosling. "Look here, who's there? I'll report yer!"

"You old fool!"

"Eh?"

"I'm Carne—Carne of the Sixth!" yelled the imprisoned prefect.

"Don't you tell me no lies!" snorted Gosling. "Mr. Carne wouldn't lock hisself in a man's woodshed, him being in the Sixth Form. Look 'ere, you give me your name and I'll report yer!"

"Will you let me out of this, you old idiot?" shrieked Carne.

"I'll report that langwidge, too!" said Gosling. "Now you unlock that there door, you young raskil you, and let a man come into his hown woodshed."

"I can't unlock the door!" yelled Carne. "It's locked on the outside! I'm locked in!"

"Rubbidge!" said Gosling. "Ow could you lock it on the outside, and you inside? Rubbidge!"

"You old ass, I've been locked in by

Vernon-Smith of the Remove! I've been here for two hours, trying to make myself heard!" howled Carne. "Go and get the key away from Vernon-Smith and let me out!"

"Oh, my eye!" said Gosling.

It dawned on Gosling's ancient brain that it was not some festive junior who had locked himself in the shed. It really was Carne of the Sixth, and a junior had locked him in. Gosling grinned.

"Haven't you another key?" roared Carne.

"I got another key in my lodge," said Gosling. "The key what I keep in this 'ere door has been took."

"Go and get it, and let me out!"

Gosling grunted and ambled away.

Carne waited with savage impatience for his return.

The old porter did not hurry. Perhaps he did not like Carne addressing him as an old fool and an old idiot. These truths were too unpleasant for Gosling to be pleased by them.

It was a good ten minutes before he came ambling back with a key in his hand. By that time a bell was ringing. Classes for the day were coming to an end.

At the sound of Gosling's footsteps, Carne yelled:

"Be quick! Will you let me out? Do you hear?"

"I 'ear you!" answered Gosling

stolidly, and without hurrying himself in the least. "I'm a-coming, ain't I?"

He reached the door, and slowly inserted the key in the lock. Gosling was never rapid in his movements, and he seemed to see no reason at present for unusual haste. Carne, inside the shed, yapped at him; but he yapped in vain. It was a full minute before the key turned in the lock.

The moment it had turned, however, Carne dragged the door violently open. Gosling stared at a face white with rage, but he had only a glimpse. Carne rushed out of the woodshed, knocking the old porter aside as he rushed.

"'Ere, 'old on!" gasped Gosling, as he staggered. "Wot I says is this 'ere— Oh, my eye!"

Gosling sat down.

Unheeding him, Carne of the Sixth rushed away. For two hours in the woodshed he had been simmering, as it were; now he was boiling over.

There was only one thought in Carne's mind—to get hold of Herbert Vernon-Smith and thrash him.

He headed for the School House as if he were on the cinder-path.

Greyfriars fellows were streaming out of the House, after class. Scores of eyes turned on Carne as he appeared in sight.

"Look at that bargee!" said Coker of the Fifth, to Potter and Greene. "Look at him! Him a prefect!"

Coker snorted with contempt. Really a Sixth Form prefect was not supposed to rush about with a face white with rage. But the exasperated Carne had forgotten all about dignity and decorum.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "There's Carne!"

"Looks shirty about something!" remarked Johnny Bull, with a grin.

"The shirtiness is terrific!"

"Look out, Smithy!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith was looking out.

Carne, as he spotted him, rushed right at him. He did not order the Bounder to bend over. He did not speak at all. He hurled himself at Smithy, lashing out with the ashplant.

Smithy leaped back, and the lash barely missed him. The next moment, however, he was in Carne's grasp, struggling and yelling, as the ashplant came down in a shower of blows.

"Rescue, Remove!" yelled the Bounder.

There was a buzz of excitement in the quad. Fellows of all Forms crowded round, to stare at the startling scene.

Harry Wharton ran forward.

"Stop that, Carne!" he shouted.

"Collar the brute!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Bag him!"

"Barge him over!"

(Continued on next page.)

Glorious NEW THRILL



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It was not a whopping such as a prefect was entitled to administer. Carne, almost frantic with fury, was lashing the Bounder right and left. Even Hacker would scarcely have approved, had he been present.

Harry Wharton caught the bully of the Sixth by the shoulder, and dragged him back forcibly.

"Stop it!" he panted.

Carne, without speaking, lashed at him with the ash. The captain of the Remove staggered back with a yell: and Carne resumed thrashing the Bounder. But he had time for only one more lick. Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull jumped at him, grasped him, and dragged him over. A moment more, and a dozen Remove fellows had hold of him, and Carne, yelling and spluttering, rolled over in the quad.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

All Ringleaders

"**S** CRAG him!"

"Give him beans!"

It was a wild roar from the whole crowd of Removites. Vernon-Smith, panting for breath, stood tottering. Every other fellow was pushing and shoving to get hold of Carne.

He struggled frantically in many hands. His ashplant was torn away, his hat squashed over his ears, his collar jerked out, his coat split up the back. Breathless and dishevelled, the bully of the Sixth struggled and wriggled and roared.

Loder and Walker were in the quad, and they came up at a run. They were barged off without ceremony. Respect for prefects was quite forgotten in the excitement.

"Bump him!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Go it!"

"Oooogh! Leggo!" raved Carne.

"Let me go! Help!"

Five or six fellows swept him off the ground. He came down again with a heavy concussion on the hard, unsympathetic earth.

Bump!

"Ow!"

Bump!

"Yoo-hooop!"

Bump!

"Yaroooooh!"

It was the first time on record that a Sixth Form prefect had been bumped in the quadrangle by a mob of excited juniors. The Remove were making history at Greyfriars.

"Duck the cad!" panted Vernon-Smith. "Yank him along to the fountain!"

"Good egg!"

"Bring him along!"

"Duck him!"

"Urrrrgh! Oooogh! Yooogh!" spluttered Carne wildly, as he was swept along in the midst of a yelling mob. "Don't you dare—yooogh—don't you—groogh!"

Wingate of the Sixth came striding out of the House.

"Stop that at once!" he roared. "Do you hear me? Stop it!"

But even the captain of Greyfriars was unheeded. A yelling crowd of juniors swept Carne onward to the fountain in the middle of the quad. Many hands heaved him up over the rim of the big, shallow granite basin.

Splash!

Carne went in, sprawling.

"Urrrrgh!" came a gurgle.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Carne rolled at full length in the

water. He scrambled up, drenched and dripping, and strove frantically to scramble out. Four or five hands shoved him back, and he splashed in again.

"Duck the cad!" yelled Smithy.

"Give him a wash!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wingate came striding up. He shoved the juniors roughly aside, and reached the fountain.

"Get out of it, Wingate!" yelled the Bounder. "Mind your own business! Duck Wingate, too, you fellows!"

"Shut up, Smithy!"

Excited as they were, nobody was likely to lay a hand on the captain of the school.

"Clear off, you young sweeps!" rapped Wingate. "You'd better not ask for any more trouble, you've got enough coming! Here, Carne!"

He gave the dripping prefect a helping hand, and Carne scrambled out of the granite basin. He stood gasping for breath, with the water running down him in streams, and forming a pool round his feet.

"I—I—I—" he panted. "I'll—"

"You'd better get in and get changed, if you don't want to catch a prize cold," snapped Wingate.

"I—I'll smash them. I—I'll—"

"Oh, shut up!" said Wingate. "I saw, from my window, how you were pitching into young Vernon-Smith, and if I'd been on the spot I'd have stopped you fast enough. You've asked for this, and it serves you right! Get in and change, and shut up!"

Carne gave him a savage look: but the advice was too good not to be taken. He was drenched to the skin, and the January wind was cold. He started for the House at a run; followed by yells and hoots and cat-calls from the Removites.

Mr. Hacker met him in the doorway, as he went dripping in. The uproar had drawn the new headmaster out. He stared blankly at Carne.

"What—what—" he ejaculated.

"Grooogh! I've been ducked!" gasped Carne. "I'm all wet!" He rushed on, past Mr. Hacker, to his study. What Carne chiefly needed then was a towel.

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Hacker.

He stepped out into the quad, with a brow of thunder.

"I say, you fellows, here comes Hacker!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

The uproar died away as the master of the Shell strode on the scene. There was a sudden silence. Mr. Hacker's eyes glittered over the crowd of juniors.

"What does this riot mean?" he demanded.

Harry Wharton drew a deep breath. As captain of the Form, it was up to him to take the lead. He did not hesitate.

"We've ducked Carne, sir!" he answered.

"Wharton! You have dared to—to attack a Sixth Form prefect, specially appointed by myself to take charge of the Remove!" gasped Mr. Hacker.

"He was pitching into Smithy—"

"Do you dare to tell me that you ventured to interfere between a prefect and a junior whom he was punishing?" thundered Mr. Hacker.

"Yes! You see—"

"Enough! Go into the Form-room, at once, all of you! I shall deal with you there!" thundered Mr. Hacker.

Wharton set his lips. But he walked away to the House, and the other fellows followed.

Mr. Hacker followed them in.

In a few minutes, the Remove were

back in the Form-room, facing Mr. Hacker, with grim faces.

"The ringleaders in this riot will be caned!" said Mr. Hacker. "The whole Form will be detained for four half-holidays!"

"I had nothing to do with it, sir!" ventured Skinner.

There was a howl at once from the whole Form:

"Shut up, Skinner!"

"Cheese it, you swab!"

"Silence!" roared Mr. Hacker. "You need say nothing, Skinner! This Form is out of hand, and I am determined to institute order and obedience. You will find that you are not dealing with Mr. Quelch now. I order the ringleaders in this riot to stand out."

The Famous Five walked out at once, with the Bounder.

Lord Mauleverer followed. His lordship had looked on, with his hands in the pockets of his elegant trousers, during the riot. But he was placidly prepared to face the music with the rest.

Squiff, and Tom Brown, and Peter Todd, Russell and Ogilvy, left their places, and after them, a crowd more.

Mr. Hacker stared at them. He had not expected to see so many ringleaders.

In a few minutes, only four fellows remained in their places; Billy Bunter, Fisher T. Fish, Skinner and Snoop. All the rest apparently, were ringleaders.

The new headmaster of Greyfriars seemed rather at a loss. He had intended to cane the ringleaders: but caning more than two dozen fellows was rather an extensive order.

Bolsover major gave a ferocious glare at the four who remained in their places.

"You rotters stick there, and you'll get something later!" he called out.

"Hear, hear!" chuckled the Bounder.

"Line up, you cads!" shouted Ogilvy.

"Silence!" thundered Mr. Hacker.

"Skinner, you cad—"

"Snoop, you swab—"

"Fishy, you worm—"

"Bunter, you fat slug—"

"Silence!" roared Mr. Hacker.

"Silence, I say!" Skinner and Snoop exchanged a glance, and went out after the Form. Fisher T. Fish followed them, slowly and reluctantly. Last of all, Billy Bunter detached himself from his place, and rolled out. It was clear to all of them, that if they did not back up the Form, their last state would be worse than their first.

The whole Remove was standing out now, before the desks; all of them claiming to be ringleaders.

Mr. Hacker's jaw squared. He had said that he would cane the ringleaders. As the whole Form claimed that distinction, he had either to cane the whole Form, or eat his words.

"Very well," said Mr. Hacker grimly. "the whole Form will be caned! You will bend over in turn! You first, Wharton!"

For the next quarter of an hour Mr. Hacker was a busy man.

He looked a little tired, and a little breathless, by the time he was through. He laid down the cane at last, breathing hard through his long, thin nose.

"I trust," said Mr. Hacker, "that this will be a warning! I am determined—fully determined—to reduce this Form to obedience! To-morrow, Carne of the Sixth Form will be in charge of the Remove, and he will remain in charge till a new master is appointed—which will be a matter of some days! I warn every boy in this Form to take care! Dismiss!"

And the Remove marched out, with feelings that could not have been



Skinner and Snoop were nearly through their impot when Vernon-Smith stepped into the study. "Chuck that!" snapped the Bounder. "Nobody's going to do lines! You're wanted at the Form-meeting! Come on!" He grabbed up the sheets of impot paper and hurled them into the study fire. "We shall have to write that lot over again!" shrieked Snoop.

expressed in words—though Billy Bunter, at least, gave expression to his, in a series of dismal yowls.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Wrathy!

LORD MAULEVERER sat in an armchair in the Rag, with one elegant leg crossed over the other, his hands behind his noble head, and a thoughtful shade on his brow.

There was a buzz of excited voices in the Rag—most of the Remove fellows talking at once. Mauly did not join in it. Mauly was a fellow of few words—and perhaps he considered that there was enough talk going on, without a contribution from his noble self. Judging by the shade on his brow, Mauly was thinking—though that, in the general opinion of the Remove, was not much in his lordship's line.

It was near time for prep. Nobody seemed to be thinking of prep, however. Wild excitement reigned in the Remove.

Most of the fellows were still feeling the effects of that extensive whopping in the Form-room. All of them were angry and indignant. Even Billy Bunter added an indignant squeak to the general buzz. Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth had been in the Rag after tea; but they had been so ill-advised as to express the opinion that whoppings were good for the Remove—and they had left that apartment, yelling, on their necks. The Removites had the room to themselves now.

Vernon-Smith, mounted on a chair, was addressing the Form—rivalled by Bolsover major, who was mounted on the table, also addressing the Form.

"Are we going to stand it?" shouted the Bounder. "I can tell you—"

"Who's Hacker?" roared Bolsover major. "I ask you men, who's Hacker?"

"I guess this is the bee's knee!" said Fisher T. Fish, wriggling. "I'll tell a man, it's the elephant's hind leg, and then some!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Who's Hacker?" came Bolsover's bawl.

"I can tell you," Smithy made his voice heard again, "I can tell you, I'm not going to do the lines Hacker handed out!"

"Same here!" said Peter Todd.

"And the jolly old same!" declared Bob Cherry.

"The samefulness is terrific!"

"Who's Hacker?" Bolsover major's oratorical powers seemed limited, but emphatic. "I ask you, who's Hacker?"

"Who's Carne?" put in Johnny Bull. "A sneaking rotter who greases up to Hacker!"

"Who's Hacker?" bawled Bolsover again.

"He happens to be headmaster at the present moment!" remarked Harry Wharton.

"Yah!" retorted Bolsover major.

"We're up to Carne to-morrow!" went on Vernon-Smith. "Who'll back me up in booting him out of the Form-room?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Draw it mild, old man!"

"What are you going to do, Wharton?" demanded the Bounder. "Captain of the Form is expected to take the lead. Forgotten that?"

Harry Wharton made no reply. As a matter of fact, he was at a loss. That there would be more trouble, with Carne of the Sixth in official charge of the Remove, on the morrow, was a certainty. But as Carne was backed by the new headmaster, it was difficult to

see what was to be done. The reckless Bounder was ready to boot him out of the Form-room, but even Smithy did not propose to boot Mr. Hacker out!

"We've had whoppings, we've got detentions, and Hacker's given us five hundred lines all round to-day!" went on Vernon-Smith. "You've got another five hundred from Carne! Are you going to do a thousand lines?"

"No!" said Harry.

"Well, that means a row with Hacker!" said the Bounder. "Look here, you men—"

"Who's Hacker?" came Bolsover's bawl.

"Shut up, Bolsover!"

"Go it, Smithy!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"You fellows back me up, and we'll boot Carne out of the Remove to-morrow!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith. "And if Hacker barges in—"

"No 'if' about that!" grinned Bob.

"Then we'll buzz inkpots at him!"

"And catch the next train home?" asked Skinner. "Hacker can sack a man now, if he likes—now he's playing at being headmaster."

"Not good enough, Smithy!" said Peter Todd. "Keep cool, old man! You came jolly near being bunked last term—you don't want to ask for it this term!"

"The bunkfulness would be terrifically unpleasant, my esteemed Smithy."

"Funks!" hooted the Bounder. "If you're afraid of Carne, and afraid of Hacker—"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" exclaimed Harry Wharton impatiently. "Hacker's been appointed headmaster by the governors! Nobody likes it—but

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THE STAY-IN-STRIKE GREYFRIARS!



(Continued from page 13.)

we've all got to stand it till Dr. Locke comes back."

"That greaser, Carne, has got Hacker in his pocket! He greases up to him, and pulls his leg! Hacker's a fool, and Carne's a rascal!"

"Hear, hear!"

"If you'll back me up, we'll make Carne tired of handling the Remove! I'm game to rag him in his study now, if you will back up!"

"Oh, rats!"

"Chuck it, Smithy!"

"Funks!" roared the angry Bounder. "Look here! I can jolly well say—Oh, my hat! Yaroooooop!"

Somebody hooked away the leg of the chair on which the Bounder was standing. He came down on the floor of the Rag with a heavy bump.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Vernon-Smith scrambled to his feet, red with rage.

At that moment the door of the Rag was thrown open.

"Ware prefects!" called out Hazeldene.

But it was not a prefect who looked in. It was Coker of the Fifth.

The uproar from the Rag certainly reached the prefects; but they were judiciously turning a deaf ear. Not so Coker of the Fifth! Horace Coker was the man to rush in where angels fear to tread!

"Less noise, there!" rapped Coker, frowning. "Do you know you can be heard all over the House? Think you're going to turn Greyfriars into a bear-garden, because the Head's away? Quiet, see?"

The Removites glared at Coker. They had rebelled against Carne, who was a Sixth Form prefect—and some of them were thinking of rebelling against Hacker, Head as he was for the time being. They were not likely to take orders from a Fifth Form man, who was nobody in particular.

There was a roar at once:

"Scrag that cheeky ass!"

"Collar him!"

"Roll him over!"

There was a rush of the whole crowd at Coker of the Fifth. The excited Removites proceeded to hand out to Coker what they would have liked to hand out to Carne of the Sixth and Mr. Hacker.

Coker had, in fact, barged in at the right moment—for the excited Removites. They were glad to take it out of somebody, and as Coker had asked for it, they took it out of him!

"Here, stop that—hands off—stand back—by gum—yoo-hoooo—oh crumbs—yoooooooooh!" spluttered Coker, as he went over headlong, and disappeared from view under a swarm of yelling juniors.

"Kick him out!"

"Boot him!"

"Scrag him!"

"Ooooooooooh!" spluttered Coker, as he was rolled, bumped, booted, and finally

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hurled forth from the Rag, spinning in the passage.

The door slammed on Coker of the Fifth.

Coker did not return. He crawled away in quite a dizzy state. Even Coker realised that the excited Removites were better left alone.

In the Rag the angry discussion was resumed.

Lord Mauleverer half-rose from his armchair.

"I say, I've been thinkin'—" he began.

He did not continue. A roar of voices drowned Mauly's. His lordship smiled, and sank back into his armchair. Mauly's thoughts, whatever they were, were kept to himself for the present.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The High Hand!

"COME in!" rapped Mr. Hacker. Mr. Hacker was sitting in his study. Carne of the Sixth stood by the table in an attitude of respectful attention. He was receiving instructions from the new headmaster, listening to them as though they were pearls of price falling from Hacker's thin lips.

A tap at the door interrupted Mr. Hacker. It opened, and Wingate of the Sixth came in.

The Greyfriars captain glanced at Carne and paused. Carne gave him a sarcastic and sneering smile. Wingate, as captain of the school, had dropped Carne out of the first eleven, and there was no love lost between them. As the new headmaster's favourite, Carne had a happy prospect of paying off a few old grudges.

Mr. Hacker gave Wingate a cold glance.

"What is it?" he asked curtly.

"If you're busy just now, sir—" said Wingate. He did not want to speak to the new Head in Carne's presence.

"I shall be busy for some time," said Mr. Hacker coldly. "If you have anything to say to me, Wingate, please say it!"

"Very well, sir. It's about the Remove," said the Greyfriars captain. "There's been a lot of trouble in the Form to-day."

"I am aware of that, Wingate. What of it?"

"If I may make a suggestion, sir, I should be prepared to take the Remove until a new master comes in Mr. Quelch's place," said Wingate. "It worked all right for some days; there was no trouble till to-day."

Mr. Hacker raised his hand.

"That will do, Wingate! You are not presuming, I hope, to criticise arrangements made by me, your headmaster?"

Wingate compressed his lips. He knew—as a good many Greyfriars men knew—that Mr. Hacker's new position had got into his head a little.

In Masters' Common-room there were many sarcastic comments on it. Prout boomed on the subject, with the other members of the staff playing up as chorus. Hacker, now that he was Chief Beak, seemed likely to imitate the ancient classical gentleman who was like to strike the stars with his sublime head. Always impatient of contradiction, Hacker was not now to be argued with at all. A narrow-minded and obstinate man who mistook his own bitter obstinacy for a sense of duty was not easy to deal with.

"If that is all, Wingate—" snapped Hacker.

Hacker did not think very much of

Wingate. The mere fact that Dr. Locke had made him head prefect was enough for Hacker. He had no doubt that his own judgment was very much superior to the old Head's.

"That's not all, sir!" said Wingate, a little gruffly. "I'm bound to speak out! Carne cannot manage the Remove or any Form! I have a right to speak out, as head prefect! There was no trouble till Carne started—"

"You need say no more!" said Mr. Hacker icily. "I am using my own judgment, Wingate, as headmaster; and if I require your advice, I will ask for it! Such a contingency is not likely to occur!"

Wingate reddened.

"I have no doubt," continued Mr. Hacker, "that the Remove boys prefer you to Carne. I have no doubt that you allow them to do as they please. I have determined to put down slacking and insubordination in the Lower Fourth Form! You are not capable, I fear, of carrying out my wishes! The Remove need a strong hand, and Carne will deal with them, with my full and firm support! You may leave my study, Wingate!"

The Greyfriars captain left the study without another word.

Mr. Hacker resumed his conversation with Carne.

About ten minutes later there came another interruption. There was another tap at the door.

"Come in!" snapped Mr. Hacker.

This time it was Harry Wharton who entered.

Mr. Hacker raised his eyebrows at the sight of the captain of the Remove.

"You have brought me your lines, Wharton?" he asked.

"No, sir!"

"Then why have you come to my study?"

Wharton glanced at Carne of the Sixth. Like Wingate, he was unwilling to speak in the presence of the new headmaster's favourite.

"Speak!" rapped Mr. Hacker.

"I've been talking the matter over with my friends, sir," said Harry. "We're all sorry there's been so much trouble in the Remove!"

Mr. Hacker's acid face thawed a little.

"If you mean that you are here to express your regret, Wharton, you may certainly proceed. I shall be glad to receive an apology from you, as head boy representing the Remove."

"I—I didn't mean exactly that, sir!" stammered Harry.

"Then what did you mean?" snapped Mr. Hacker, his face acid again. "You are wasting my time, Wharton—your headmaster's time!"

"What I mean is, sir, you have told us that Carne is to take the Remove again to-morrow—"

"Certainly!"

"If you'd be so kind, sir, as to appoint another prefect to do so instead of Carne—"

"What?" yapped Mr. Hacker.

Carne gave the captain of the Remove a bitter look.

"Mr. Hacker is not likely to allow a junior to dictate to him in making his arrangements, Wharton!" he said.

"I should say not!" exclaimed Mr. Hacker. "I should certainly say not! How dare you, Wharton?"

"I mean nothing of the kind, sir," said Harry quietly. "But all the trouble to-day was due to Carne—"

"Silence!"

"If you refuse to hear me, sir—"

"I certainly refuse to listen to any such impertinent and untruthful statements!" exclaimed Mr. Hacker. "Mr.

Quelch's Form has always been the most unruly Form at Greyfriars! There will be a change, now that I am headmaster! You may be assured of that!"

He made a gesture of dismissal. The captain of the Remove remained where he was. He had not finished yet. "I want to make it clear, sir, that we'd be glad in the Remove to have no more trouble," said Harry. "You are not aware of it, sir, but Carne is a bully and a brute, and he takes advantage of being in charge of the Remove to pay off grudges. I feel bound to tell you that that's the real trouble."

Carne's face was almost green as he listened to this. He had not expected to hear such plain speaking.

Mr. Hacker started to his feet. "Wharton, how dare you! Not another word!" he thundered.

"That's the truth, sir, and any fellow in the Remove will tell you the same!" said Harry Wharton.

"Silence, I say! Carne, hand me that cane from the table!"

Carne willingly handed over the cane.

Mr. Hacker grasped it and swished it in the air.

"Now, Wharton, bend over that chair! I shall cane you for your insolence!"

Harry Wharton drew a deep breath. He had doubted whether it would be any use to make an appeal to Hacker, but he had felt bound to make it, as head of the Form. It was only too clear now that it was useless. In silence, he bent over to take his punishment.

Whack, whack, whack!

Mr. Hacker threw down the cane.

"Let that be a warning to you, Wharton! To-morrow Carne will be in charge of the Remove, and the slightest disorder will be visited by the most condign punishment! Be warned in time! Now leave my study!"

Harry Wharton left the study. With compressed lips, he went up to the Remove passage. His friends were waiting for him on the landing.

"What luck?" asked Bob Cherry.

"A licking!" answered Harry.

"Nothing doing!"

Bob whistled.

"Then we're up to Carne to-morrow! There'll be trouble!"

And they went in to prep.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Big Idea!

"A STAY-IN strike!"

"Yaas!"

Lord Mauleverer nodded. The Famous Five blinked at him.

Prep was over in the Remove studies. Not many fellows had given it very much attention. There would be plenty of faults for Carne to find in the morning—if he was on the look-out for them. And on that point there was not much doubt. In every study in the Remove there was excited and angry talk, much to the detriment of prep.

Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh had cut it short to come along to Study No. 1 and speak to Wharton and Nugent. Which was rather against the rules, no fellow being allowed out in prep. But Loder of the Sixth, the prefect on duty, was not keeping a very wary eye on the Remove that evening. He was well aware that the juniors were in a mood to take the risk of handling a prefect, if provoked; and any number of floggings after would not have consoled Loder for being rolled headlong down the Remove staircase.

So Gerald Loder sagely turned a blind eye on the Remove.

The Famous Five were discussing what Bob described as the "state of war" when Lord Mauleverer ambled in.

The whole Form had lines on hand—heavy impots imposed by Mr. Hacker. Some fellows were getting on with them. Skinner and Snoop, little inclined, as a rule, for work, had turned out a good many before prep, and after prep were getting on with them again. So was Fisher T. Fish. They wanted chiefly to avoid whoppings from Hacker. Billy Bunter would probably have done the same, but laziness supervened, and the fat Owl chanced it with the rest of the Form.

Lord Mauleverer, lounging in Study No. 1, with his hands in the pockets of his elegant bags, looking placid and sleepy, as usual, succeeded in surprising the Famous Five.

They broke off their discussion of the "state of war" to stare blankly at his lordship.

"A—a—a stay-in strike!" repeated

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Frank Nugent. "Did you say a stay-in strike, Mauly?"

"Yaas."

"What the dickens——" grunted Johnny Bull.

"I've been thinkin' it over!" said Lord Mauleverer. "So much jaw goin' on in the Rag, before prep, that a fellow hadn't a chance to speak. That's why I've barged in now. I dare say you've heard of the stay-in strikes—frightfully popular form of amusement nowadays——"

"We've heard of them, of course," said Harry Wharton. "But——"

"That's the big idea!" said Mauleverer.

"But——" said Bob Cherry.

"The old-fashioned strike is out of date," explained Mauleverer. "Men who went on strike used to march out. Now they march in, an' take possession of the jolly old works! Big improvement, from the jolly old point of view of tactics. I've thought it out. We're goin' on strike——"

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob. "But——"

"Old man, you butt in like a billy-goat!" said Lord Mauleverer. "Shut up a bit, and listen! When the fellows at the works don't like the way things are run they go on strike. Well, we don't like the way things are run, do we?"

"Hardly!" said Harry, with a smile.

"So we go on strike!" said Mauleverer. "Bootin' prefects and buzzing

inkpots at headmasters may suit Smithy—but Smithy's methods are rather too wild and woolly! Man doesn't want to be sacked. We keep order—modern strikes are orderly. The strikers just march into the works, take possession, and wait for the other party to see reason. We don't want to boot Carne or buzz inkpots at Hacker. We just sit tight till the old bean comes round. See?"

"But——"

"Do you keep goats in this study?" asked Mauly. "Never came across such a lot of buttin'. When the bell goes in the mornin' we go into the Form-room—just as usual. Only, we don't do any work! Not a thing! Just sit an' smile!"

"Oh!"

"No prep, either—nothin' at all! Just go on strikin', pleasantly and peaceably, till the Hacker man sees sense and pushes Carne out! Lots of men in the Remove will be glad to cut lessons. I shan't object to it myself, and——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No classes, no prep, no lines, no anythin'!" elaborated Mauleverer. "We just sit tight and wait for Hacker to come round!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Do you think Hacker will come round?" he asked.

"Hope for the best!" said Mauly. "Give him a chance. Hacker's not a bad old bean, in his own way—only silly and obstinate! Anyhow, he can't do a thing! He can order us into the Form-room, but he can't make us work."

"A horse may be taken to the water, but it cannot be made to save a stitch in time, as the English proverb observes!" remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, with a nod of his dusky head.

"By gum!" said Bob. "It's the big idea!"

"The bigfulness of the idea is terrific."

"Thought I'd mention it," said Lord Mauleverer. "I've started already, as a matter of fact. I haven't done any prep. I leave it up to you, Wharton, as captain of the Form. I'm backing you up, of course!"

And, with a nod to the Famous Five, Lord Mauleverer ambled out of Study No. 1 again.

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at one another.

Mauly's bright idea had rather startled them. But the more they thought of it the better they liked it.

There was a step at the door, and the Bounder looked in, with an aggressive expression on his face. Smithy, at least, was in a temper for unlimited trouble.

"You fellows still got cold feet?" he inquired.

"Oh, shut up, fathead!" said Bob.

"Mauly's put up the big idea, Smithy!" said Harry Wharton.

Vernon-Smith shrugged his shoulders. "That ass!" he said.

Evidently Smithy did not expect much in the way of ideas from the dandy of the Remove. But his expression changed, as Harry Wharton explained. His eyes danced.

"Py gum, that's the stunt!" he exclaimed. "Mauly's no fool! A stay-in strike at Greyfriars—phew!"

"I say, you fellows——"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"But I say, you fellows, what about the lines?" asked Billy Bunter, blinking into the study through his big spectacles. "If you fellows aren't going to do your lines, what about doing mine?"

for me? I don't want a whopping from Hacker to-morrow. Look here, if you fellows did a hundred each, that would see me through! What about it?"

"You fat owl!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I say, you fellows, don't be slackers!" urged Bunter. "A hundred lines each ain't much! Wire in and get 'em done—what? Skinner's nearly finished his, I believe. Look here, I'll start with a dozen lines, if you fellows will do the rest. There!"

"Nobody's going to do any lines for Hacker!" said Bob.

"Well, that's all very well for you fellows," said Bunter; "but I don't want to be whopped—see? I think you fellows might do that impot for me, after all I've done for you, you know."

"Kick him, Smithy—you're nearest!"

"Yaroooh!"

Billy Bunter retired hastily from the spot.

"Call the fellows out of the studies!" said Harry Wharton. "We'd better put it to the vote of the Form. All the Remove will have to stand in."

"What-ho!" chuckled the Bouncer.

The Famous Five left Study No. 1. Prep was not—or should not have been—over yet; but prep was, for the moment, a thing of the past. The Bouncer scudded up the passage, flinging open door after door, and shouting to the fellows within to turn out. Nearly all the Remove were soon crowding in the passage.

Skinner and Snoop, busy with lines, declined to turn out.

"Form-meeting!" snapped the Bouncer, at the door of Study No. 11. "Come on!"

"Busy!" said Skinner.

"Lines!" said Snoop.

"Chuck that I tell you! Nobody's going to do the lines! Come out!"

"We are!" said Skinner. "I've had enough of Hacker's cane, thanks!"

"Same here!" said Snoop.

The Bouncer stepped into the study. Piles of written paper were growing before Skinner and Snoop. They were nearly through the impot, heavy as it was. Vernon-Smith grabbed up the piles in either hand, and hurled them into the study fire. Skinner bounded to his feet with a yell.

"You mad ass!" he howled. "Wharrer you up to?"

"We shall have to write that lot over again!" shrieked Snoop.

"You won't!" said the Bouncer coolly. "Lines are off! Come out to the meeting, both of you!"

"You silly idiot!"

"You blithering ass!"

"Are you coming?"

"No!" yelled Skinner and Snoop together.

"Then I'll help you!"

The Bouncer grabbed at them, and ran the two weedy slackers of the Remove out of the study by their collars.

There were howls of enraged protest from Skinner and Snoop. They were echoed by wild howls from Study No. 14, where Fisher T. Fish had been similarly interrupted. Fishy came spinning out of the study in the grasp of Johnny Bull.

"Say, you boob, will you leggo?" Fisher T. Fish was yelling. "I guess I'll make potato scrapings of you! I'll sure strew you over the shebang in little pieces! Aw! Great gophers! This sure is the bee's knee! Leggo my doggoned neck, you boob! I'm coming, ain't I?"

And Fisher T. Fish came. It was a full meeting of the Remove, and Harry

Wharton, mounted on a chair brought out of a study, proceeded to address the crowd in the passage.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Passed Unanimously!

"GENTLEMEN, chaps, and sportsmen—"

"Hear, hear!"

"In the present crisis in the history of the Greyfriars Remove—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"This meeting has been called to decide on a plan of campaign. We're not standing any more Carne—"

"Never!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Bravo!"

"I don't want to say anything against the fellow; but a rottener bully and a sneaking toad never existed in this school, or any other—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We've had enough of him!" continued Wharton.

"Too much!" roared a dozen voices.

"The too-muchfulness is terrific."

"Hacker can make a pet of him if he likes, but he can't land him on the Remove! The Remove is going on strike till Hacker calls Carne off!"

"On strike!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Mauly put up the idea—" went on the captain of the Remove.

"Good old Mauly!"

"And I think it a jolly good one! We're going to have a stay-in strike in the Remove, and Hacker can like it or lump it—"

"Who's Hacker?" bawled Bolsover major.

"But if we're going to make a success of it," went on Wharton, "we've all got to stand in together! Now Hacker's stepped into the Head's shoes he can sack a man. He can't sack a whole Form. Every man in the Remove has got to join up, or the whole thing goes to pieces! Gentlemen, chaps, and sportsmen, hands up for a stay-in strike!"

"Hurrah!"

"Bravo!"

A forest of hands went up. Some fellows, in their enthusiasm, put up two.

Evidently the idea caught on, and a great majority of the Form were in favour. Hands were elevated on all sides; and the captain of the Remove, glancing over the crowd, spotted only five fellows who had not raised their hands. They were Lord Mauleverer, Billy Bunter, Skinner, Snoop, and Fisher T. Fish.

"Mauly, you ass!" shouted Harry.

"Eh?"

"Why aren't you putting up your hand, fathead, for your own stunt?"

"Oh, I've got my hands in my pockets!" explained Lord Mauleverer. "I suppose it will do if I nod my head—what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Kick him, Toddy!"

"Ow! Oh gad! It's all right, I'm just goin' to put up a paw!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. "Keep off, Toddy, you blitherin' ass!" And his lordship detached a hand from a pocket and put it up.

"Bunter—"

"I—I say, you fellows, I don't want a whopping from Hacker—" squeaked the Owl of the Remove. "I think a strike's a jolly good idea, of course; I'm not awfully keen on work—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But I don't want Hacker to whop

me again! See? That's important!"

"Kick him, Bolsover!"

"What-ho!" grinned Bolsover major.

"Ow! Wow! Leave off kicking me, you beast!" shrieked Billy Bunter. "I say, you fellows— Yaroooooooh! I say— Yoo-hooop!"

A fat and grubby hand went up. Billy Bunter evidently realised that a kicking from Bolsover in hand was worse than a licking from Hacker in the bush, so to speak. The Owl of the Remove made haste to join the majority.

"Now then Fishy—in favour, or not in favour?"

"Nope!" yapped Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I've had one lambasting from Hacker, and I calculate I ain't asking for another!"

"Same here!" said Skinner. "I've had enough from Hacker!"

"Me, too!" said Snoop.

There was a roar from the rest of the Remove.

"Rotters!"

"Funks!"

"Play up, you cads!"

"Scrag them!"

"Hold on!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, raising his hand. "This is a free meeting, and every fellow is free to express an opinion. If those three fellows don't choose to back up the Form, they can stand out."

"You said it!" assented Fisher T. Fish.

"Look here—" bawled Bolsover major.

"Shut up, Bolsover!"

"Silence!"

"Carry on, Wharton!"

"The whole Form has got to stand in," said the captain of the Remove; "but if a fellow chooses to stand out, he's his own master. In that case, such fellows will be kicked up and down the Remove passage—"

"Hear, hear!"

"Until they change their minds! Begin with Fishy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it!"

"Where are you going, Skinner? Stay where you are, Snoop! See that those swabs don't sneak away, some of you! Now get going with Fishy—"

Half a dozen fellows grabbed hold of Skinner and Snoop.

Fisher T. Fish made a wild rush for the stairs.

After him rushed a mob of Removees, all kicking. How many boots landed on Fishy in the next minute or two he could hardly have guessed, reckoned, or calculated. He was headed off from the stairs and chased back up the passage. His frantic yells woke the echoes.

"Aw! Can it! Let up! You hear me yaup?" shrieked Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I'm standing in with the rest of the caboodle! Yep! Sure! Say, you goobs, you let up booting a guy! Ain't I said I'm standing in? Yaroooh! Aw, wake snakes! This sure is the cat's whiskers!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Give him a chance!" called out the captain of the Remove. "Let's have this clear, Fishy! Are you standing in with the Form for a stay-in strike?"

"Yep!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "Oh snakes! Oh great gophers! Ow! Yep!"

"Good man! Nothing like leather—especially boot-leather—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That leaves Skinner and Snoop," said Wharton. "You next, Skinner. Are you standing in with the Form? Please yourself."

Skinner snarled. He was not likely to please himself after what had happened to Fisher T. Fish.



"On the ball!" So far as numbers went, it was more like Rugby than Soccer. But there was, at least, plenty of noise and plenty of strenuous exercise. Trampling feet, shouting voices, crashing of forms that were knocked over, made a terrific din that apprised all Greyfriars that the Remove were enjoying themselves.

"I'm standing in!" he snapped.
"What about you, Snoopy?"
"Yes, rather!" answered Snoop promptly.

"The motion has been put to the meeting and passed unanimously!" said the captain of the Remove. "Once more, to make it clear, hands up for a stay-in strike in the Remove!"

Every hand went up this time. There was not a single dissenter in all the Lower Fourth.

"Passed nem. con.!" grinned the Bounder.

"The nem-confidness is terrific!" chuckled Huxley Janset Ram Singh.

"That does it!" said Harry Wharton. "The Remove, having voted unanimously for a stay-in strike, the stay-in strike begins to-morrow morning!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Bravo!"

Harry Wharton stepped down from the chair. There was a roar of cheering in the Remove passage. It was settled now, and for the first time in the history of Greyfriars the old school was to be the scene of a stay-in strike! And it only remained to be seen what the outcome would be.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Something On!

"Those fags," said Coker of the Fifth, "have got something on!"

Horace made that observation in the quad, the following morning, after breakfast. He made it to Potter and Greene of the Fifth.

"Eh, what?" said Potter.

Potter was thinking of a Fifth Form pick-up, booked for that afternoon, and

not paying full attention to Horace Coker—as, of course, he ought to have been.

"Those fags"—Coker nodded towards a group of Removites—"they've got something on this morning."

"They'd find it pretty parky, in this weather, if they hadn't!" remarked Potter. And Greene smiled.

"I don't mean that, you ass!" said Coker. "I mean they've got something on—some stunt on! They're up to something!"

Horace Coker was not the only fellow who noticed that. Many of the Sixth Form prefects had rather a suspicious eye on the Remove that morning. Fellows in other Forms had heard rumours, and were very curious.

Carne of the Sixth, walking in the quad with his official ashplant under his arm, glanced several times at Harry Wharton & Co. But if the bully of the Sixth was looking for trouble, the Removites did not seem to be. They gathered in groups; they talked in low voices; some of them grinned and chuckled. But they were very quiet and very orderly. If there was anything "on," it did not seem to be in the nature of a rag or a shindy.

Carne had little doubt, or none, that Mr. Hacker's drastic measures had brought the rebellious Remove to heel.

A caning all round for the whole Form was the sort of thing they needed. They were not likely to ask for the same again. Arthur Carne was rather looking forward to that morning with the Remove.

Every fellow who had had a hand in ducking Fin the previous day was going to be made thoroughly sorry for himself—especially the Bounder, who had locked him in the woodshed. The most careful behaviour in the Form-room was

not going to save them. It was going to be a case of the wolf and the lamb over again.

Carne had no doubts, but there were plenty of other fellows at Greyfriars who thought that something would be heard from the Remove that morning.

When the bell rang for class, however, it was a quiet and orderly Form that marched in. Carne of the Sixth let them into the Form-room, as usual, and Mr. Hacker gave them a glance, no doubt to ascertain that all was well, before he went to his own Form.

That glance satisfied Mr. Hacker. The Remove were all in their places, looking almost as if butter would not melt in their mouths.

Three or four members of the Form looked a little apprehensive, that was all. In other faces there were signs of suppressed excitement. But there was no sign of disorder, and Mr. Hacker walked away to the Shell, feeling that he had not been long in getting Quelch's unruly Form into a submissive and obedient state.

Carne stood before the Form, book in hand. Billy Bunter eyed him with dire apprehension through his big spectacles. If Carne picked on him to begin, as he had done the day before, Bunter did not want to be the man to lead in the "strike." Neither did Skinner nor Snoop, or Fisher T. Fish. They hoped that they would not catch the prefect's eye.

But they need not have been uneasy. Carne was anxious to get going—not with Latin verse, but with the ashplant. He called on Vernon-Smith to construe.

The Bounder grinned. He was well aware that if he handed out the most exact "con" ever heard at Greyfriars, it would make no difference. He was

going to get the ashplant for his exploit of the previous day. That mattered little, however, as he was not going to hand out a "con" at all.

Quite unlike Skinner & Co., Smithy was glad to be picked on. It was sheer satisfaction to the reckless Bounder to give the signal for revolt.

"Construe!" snapped Carne.

Herbert Vernon-Smith stood looking at him, with a smiling face. Other fellows watched, breathing hard. The tussle was coming now.

"Do you hear me, Vernon-Smith?" asked Carne grimly.

"Quite!" assented the Bounder.

"I'm waiting."

"Go on waiting!" suggested Smithy.

"Wha-a-t?"

Carne looked at the Bounder. This was his excuse for the ashplant, if he wanted it; he could hardly have wanted a better one!

"Does that mean that you refuse to obey orders, Vernon-Smith?" asked Carne, slipping the cane down into his hand.

"Rats!"

"Will you stand out before the Form, Vernon-Smith?"

"No!"

Carne made a stride towards the Form. Vernon-Smith picked up the inkpot from his desk.

He did not speak, but his look was enough. It was quite plain that the ink would reach Carne before Carne reached Smithy and the prefect stopped. He breathed hard and deep, his eyes gleaming at the defiant Bounder, while the Remove looked on with growing excitement.

Carne clearly did not want to repeat the previous day's experience. He did not want to be washed in ink! It dawned on him that the rebellious Remove had not been brought so thoroughly to heel as he had fancied.

"For the last time, Vernon-Smith, stand out before the Form!" blustered Carne.

"For the last time, go and eat coko!" retorted the Bounder.

"I shall report you to Mr. Hacker for a flogging," said Carne, after a brief pause. "You know what that means!"

"Yes; it means that you don't want this inkpot in your chivvy," agreed the Bounder and there was a chortle.

"Silence!" roared Carne. "Vernon-Smith, you shall be reported for a flogging! Wharton, you will construe!"

"Your mistake, Carne!" said Harry Wharton.

"What do you mean, you young rascal?"

"Exactly what I say."

"Will you construe, or not?"

"Not!"

Carne gripped his cane almost convulsively. But he realised that it was useless to order the captain of the Remove to stand out before the Form and bend over. He noticed, too, that

Wharton, like the Bounder, had picked up an inkpot. Only too clearly the Remove was not in the submissive state that Mr. Hacker happily believed.

"That means a flogging, Wharton!" said Carne, at last.

"Rats!"

"You cheeky little scoundrel!" roared Carne.

"You cheeky big scoundrel!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! You will go on, Cherry."

"Think so?" asked Bob Cherry cheerfully. "I fancy that's another little mistake of yours, Carne."

"I order you to construe!" roared Carne.

"No objection, I'm sure!" said Bob amiably. "Go on ordering! Sing it over as often as you like!"

"I see," said Carne, gritting his teeth, "this is a plot! You're all in this to defy authority!"

"He's guessed that one, too!" said the Bounder admiringly. "Ain't he clever? No wonder Hacker picks him out to run the Remove! What a brain!"

"The brainfulness is terrific!"

Carne stood gripping the ashplant and glaring at the rebellious Form.

Most of the Remove were grinning now. A dozen fellows had picked up inkpots. It was only too clear to Carne that he would get the lot, all at once, if he started in with the ashplant.

There was a long pause. Then he yapped at Bunter.

Bunter was not the fellow for defiance, and Carne's idea was to break his duck, so to speak.

"Bunter, you will begin!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

"Now, then! Sharp!"

"I—I—I—"

"Shut up, Bunter!" shouted a dozen voices.

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I don't want a whopping from Hacker!" wailed the Owl of the Remove.

"Do you want this inkpot from me?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"Oh crikey! No fear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'll get it if you go on con! Shut up!"

"You will do as I tell you, Bunter!" roared Carne. "If you're waiting for this cane—"

"Oh lor'! I—I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Sit down!"

"Cheese it!"

"But—but I don't want to be whopped!" yelled Bunter.

"Carne won't whop you!" said the Bounder. "If Carne touches a man in the Form, he's going to be ragged bald-headed! We'll get Carne before he gets you, you fat fooler!"

Billy Bunter brightened up.

"Oh, all right!" he said. "I—I say, Carne, I—I ain't going on con—see? We're on strike, you know—"

"What?" roared Carne.

"The strikefulness is terrific, my esteemed bullying Carne!"

The expression on Carne's face was quite alarming to Billy Bunter. He gave an uneasy squeak.

"I say, you fellows, you keep him off, you know."

Carne stood red with fury. Authority had broken like a reed in his hands. He made a rush at Billy Bunter, with the cane in the air.

Billy Bunter gave a howl of terror, bolted out of his place, and dodged behind the Form. At the same moment, the Bounder's inkpot whizzed, and caught Carne on the ear, shedding a stream of ink down his neck.

"Oooogh!" gasped Carne.

Splash! came the ink from Bob's inkpot! It caught Carne in his other ear! There was a roar of laughter from the Remove. Carne was of the ink, inky!

He staggered, and yelled.

"You young rascals—ooogh! You—you— Oooogh! I'll—I'll—urrrggh! Stop that, you young scoundrels! Oh! Ooooh!"

Five or six streams of ink converged on Carne of the Sixth. He bounded away to the door. A Latin grammar caught him on the back of the head as he went. A Virgil crashed into his neck.

He dragged the door open.

"Wait till I call Hacker here!" he panted. And he dashed out of the Form-room, shedding ink as he went.

Vernon-Smith stepped to the door, slammed it, and turned the key.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Staying-In On Strike!

"WHAT—what—what?"

Mr. Hacker fairly stuttered.

The Shell fellows stared and giggled.

Form and Form-master blinked at the surprising figure that burst breathlessly into the Shell Form Room. For a moment Mr. Hacker hardly recognised his pet prefect! Carne's face was black and streaming with ink.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Hobson. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" hooted Mr. Hacker. "Take a hundred lines, Hobson! Carne—is—is that Carne?"

"Yes, sir!" gasped the hapless prefect. "I—I've been pelted with inkpots in the Remove. Look at me!" he gurgled.

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Hacker.

His thin, acid face set like a rock. The Shell fellows, as they saw that expression come over the face of the "Acid Drop," did not envy the Remove. Only too clearly there was a high old time in store for that Form, when Hacker got going.

"Look at me!" gasped Carne. "Vernon-Smith, Wharton, Cherry—they're the ringleaders—but a dozen of them—"

"I will deal with this!" said Mr. Hacker.

He picked up a cane from his desk and strode out of the Shell-room. Carne tottered after him, still shedding ink. There was a chortle in the Shell. But it was a subdued chortle; Hacker's Form did not want to attract Hacker back!

With his face set in an expression that the fabled Gorgon might have envied, Mr. Hacker strode down the corridor to the Remove-room. He turned the handle of the door, and pushed.

But the door did not open. The key had been put on the inside and turned. Hacker banged at the locked door. This was an unexpected obstacle.

"Open this door at once!" he shouted.

"Bow-wow!" came from within.

"What?" gasped Mr. Hacker. "Who spoke?"

"Find out, old bean!"

"Will you unlock this door?" shrieked Mr. Hacker. "Wharton! I am speaking to you, Wharton! Unlock this door immediately!"

No answer.

"Do you hear me, Wharton?"

Only a chuckle from within replied.

"Wharton!" roared Mr. Hacker. "I call on you, as head boy of this Form!"

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THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,511.

Open this door instantly, or I shall flog you!"

Silence!

Mr. Hacker waited, trembling with rage. But he waited in vain! There was no answer from the Remove-room—and the door remained locked. He dealt the unoffending panels a resounding crash with his cane.

"Wharton! You are there, and you can hear me! I order you to open this door! Disobey that order, and you will be expelled from Greyfriars to-day!"

"I say, you fellows," came a voice that certainly was not Wharton's, "I say, ain't he waxy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you answer me, Wharton?" roared Mr. Hacker. "Otherwise you are expelled!"

"Very well, sir," came the captain of the Remove's answer, at last, "I will answer you. This Form is on strike, and—"

"What?" shrieked Mr. Hacker.

"Strike!"

"You impudent young rascal—"

"The whole Form's on strike, sir! No more Carnel! We're on strike till we get shut of Carnel!"

"You—you—you—" Mr. Hacker gurgled. "Do you imagine, for one moment, that I will allow you boys to dictate to me? Are you out of your senses, Wharton?"

"No, sir! Are you?"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"For the last time, Wharton, will you open this door?"

"No!"

"Then you are expelled from the school!" roared Mr. Hacker.

"Oh, shut it, Hacker!" came the Bounder's voice.

"Is that you, Vernon-Smith?"

"Yes, old bean!"

"You are expelled also, Vernon-Smith!"

"Rats!"

"The rattfulness is terrific, esteemed Hacker!"

"You also, Hurree Singh!" shrieked Hacker.

"By gad, the old bean's goin' it!" remarked Lord Mauleverer. "We shall all be sacked, at this rate! Sackin' me, too, sir?"

"Me, too?" chortled Peter Todd.

"Don't leave me out in the cold, sir!"

"And me!" roared Bolsover major.

"Sack the whole Form, Hacker! Think the governors will let you get by with it?"

"Go home, Hacker!"

"Go back and chivvy the Shell!"

"Run away and play, Hacker!"

"Go and eat coke, Acid Drop!"

Mr. Hacker, outside the locked Form-room door, almost danced.

But for that locked door, there was no doubt that the cane in his hand would have seen some very active service. But there was thick oak between, and Horace Hacker raged in vain.

Carnel, dabbing ink on his face, stared blankly. He had had no doubt that as soon as Hacker arrived on the scene, all would be calm and bright, so to speak. But it was far from being calm and bright.

Hacker almost foamed. He could not leave the matter where it was. His authority was at an end, if he let the Remove get away with this. But it was clear that that door was not going to be unlocked.

"For the last time, unlock this door!" he shouted. "Otherwise the lock will be forced, and every boy in the Remove flogged!"

Continued on next page.

The STately HOMES of GREYFRIARS

THE COBBLER'S SHOP

By

The Greyfriars Rhymester



(1)

The cobbler is tapping his hammer
In Courtfield, a quaint little shop,
While Dick, his dear son, tackles grammar
Until he is ready to drop!
Dick Penfold is sturdy and clever,
A poet who's simply divine;
Yet never—no, never—no, NEVER,
Would Penfold admit he's so fine!

From early morn till dewy night
Old Penfold goes on mending;
But come what may he's always
bright
Though his work seems never
ending!

(2)

To be sure, several readers have stated
That he and myself are the same!
I've just got a letter (undated)
From one, Basil Briskett by name.
"Has your wretched Rhymester forgotten
His name, when he perpetuates verse?
If he's only a Rhymester, he's rotten!
And if he's Dick Penfold, he's worse!"

(3)
This praise from my ardent admirer
Has caused me to blush till it hurts.
I answered this gentle inquirer
With modest sincerity—"Nerts!"
I can't give this Basil a better
Or clearer reply, but, my hat!
I hope he will stamp his next letter—
I had to pay threepence for that!

(4)

Well, let us get back to the cobbling
Of old leather shoes and the like,
With which Master Penfold goes wobbling
All over the town on his bike;
For Dick, when no other work presses,
Goes into the town with repairs,
And leaves at the wrong folks' addresses,
Old boots which could never be theirs!

(5)
But old Mr. Penfold is grateful
And proud of his scholarship son;
For Dick never thinks it is hateful
Because there is work to be done!
And cobbling appeals to him strongly,
He likes giving father a hand,
And though he does everything wrongly,
His dad always says it is grand.

(6)

But after young Dick has departed,
And gone back to school for the night,
A cheerful and very light-hearted
Old cobbler puts everything right.
With a tap and a bang and a rattle
And a merry old song on his lips,
The cobbler goes forth into battle,
As he and old boots come to grips.

(7)
You'll hear it in all kinds of weather,
A tap and a bang and a song!
As, clad in his apron of leather,
The cobbler goes gally along.
Though Skinner and Snoop may be
scornful,
And sneer at the old man's grey hairs,
He's worth quite a dozen of mournful
And fed-up-with-life millionaires!

(8)

Old Mauly's behaviour outelasses
The fellows who speak in this way,
He calls at the shop when he passes
To hear the old cobbler's "Good-day!"
And fellows like Wharton and Cherry
Look in for a word and a smile;
To see him so bright and so merry
Would lighten the weariest mile!

(9)
Then here's to his health and his labours,
And may all his future be sweet,
Repairing the shoes of his neighbours
And putting the town on its feet!
Like many a limper and hobbler
Who once walked about with a stick,
We'll drink a full glass to the cobbler,
And two to his jolly son Dick!

Next Week: THE AQUARIUM. The Ancestral Home of
Fisher T. Fish.

"Wholesale old scout, ain't he?" said the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Very well!" said Mr. Hacker, between his teeth. "We shall see! Carne, go at once and fetch Gosling here, and tell him to bring tools for forcing a lock!"

"Yes, sir!"

Carne of the Sixth hurried away. There was an alarmed squeak inside the Remove-room.

"I say, you fellows, if old Gosling gets that door open——"

"Bunter!" Mr. Hacker heard that squeak of alarm. "Bunter, unlock this door! Do you hear me, Bunter?"

"Oh! No, sir! I—I can't hear a word!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I order you to unlock this door, Bunter!" roared Mr. Hacker.

"Oh lor! I—I say, Smithy, will you give me the key?"

"Hardly!" chuckled the Bounder.

"I—I can't unlock the door, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Of—of course, I—I'd do it like a shot, only—only there ain't a key, sir——"

"Vernon-Smith, give Bunter the key at once!"

"I'll give him a boot instead, sir!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

From the direction of the Fifth Form Room came a ponderous tread. It was that of Mr. Prout.

"What is this disturbance, sir?" exclaimed Mr. Prout. "Yesterday, sir, classes were interrupted by disturbances in the Remove; again to-day. I desire to know, Mr. Hacker, whether this kind of thing is to continue?"

"You will kindly mind your own business, Mr. Prout, and go back to your Form-room, and do not presume to interfere in what does not concern you!" snapped Mr. Hacker.

"I say, you fellows, he's getting fearfully waxy!" came a squeak from the Remove-room. "Hear him slanging old Prout?"

"Punch his nose, Prout!" shouted the Bounder.

"Oh crumbs! Shut up, Smithy!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Boot him, Prout!" yelled Bolsover major.

"Go away at once, Mr. Prout!" almost foamed Hacker. "Why are you here? Cannot you mind your own affairs? Go away immediately!"

"Don't be cheeky to Prout, Hacker!" called out the Bounder. "Prout's worth a dozen of you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Prout, in majestic indignation, rolled off the scene. A few minutes later Gosling arrived with tools. And all the Forms at Greyfriars sat up and took notice as there was a terrific banging and clanging, hammering and wrenching, at the door of the Remove Form Room.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

No Admittance!

BANG! Clang! Crash! Bang! The din rang through the Remove-room. The lock on the Form-room door was strong; but strong as it was, it was not going to last long under this assault. With hammer and chisel, Gosling banged and clanged and crashed.

"The old scout means business!" remarked Vernon-Smith coolly.

"I say, you fellows, we shall all get whopped now!"

"Kick him!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,511.

"Ow! Keep off, you beast!"

"Well, we're for it now!" said Skinner savagely. "What's going to become of your fatheaded strike when Hacker gets in and gets going with the cane?"

"Kick Skinner!" said Harry Wharton.

Five or six fellows obliged at once, and Skinner dodged round the desks, with a howl. "Defeatists" were not wanted to make their voices heard in the Remove-room.

"Hacker's not in yet!" said the captain of the Remove. "Drag those desks over here—Quelch's first!"

"What-ho!"

A dozen fellows grasped the Form-master's desk, and dragged it towards the door.

Mr. Quelch, if he knew that Hacker had been placed in authority at Greyfriars, probably had some misgivings on the subject; but in the intervals of coughing and sneezing, if he wondered what was happening to his Form in his absence, he certainly never dreamed of this.

The high desk, at which Quelch had been wont to preside over the Remove, went reeling across the room, dragged by the juniors. It was jammed against the door with a loud crash. Inkpots, books, and papers fluttered on all sides, unheeded.

"Now the others!" called out Wharton.

Desks and forms were dragged from their places, and added in a stack to the barricade at the Form-room door.

In a few minutes the door was quite secure. Even when the lock was gone, nothing short of a battering-ram would have pushed it in.

Meanwhile, Gosling banged and clanged, wrenched and hammered and snote. The din woke every echo of Greyfriars School. It rang through the House and echoed over the quadrangle. It penetrated to the regions below stairs, where the cook and the maids listened and stared.

The lock went at last.

Gosling had a heavy hand with tools. The lock was wrenched and hammered to fragments, with very considerable damage to the surrounding wood. Mr. Hacker, in his present mood, cared nothing for the damage. He had to get at the stay-in strikers and reduce them to order and obedience.

"That's done it, sir!" grunted Gosling.

"Push the door open, Gosling!" snapped Mr. Hacker. "I think something has been placed against it within. Push it open!"

Gosling pushed. Had William Gosling been a particularly powerful elephant, he might have succeeded in pushing that door open. As it was, Gosling pushed in vain. He pushed and pushed, but the door did not stir.

"For goodness' sake, Gosling, exert yourself a little, and push that door open!" exclaimed Mr. Hacker impatiently. "You are wasting my time, Gosling!"

"Look 'ere, sir——"

"Do not waste time in idle talk, Gosling! Push that door open immediately!"

"Wot I says is this 'ere!" gasped Gosling. "If I was a blooming traction-engine, p'raps I could push that there door open, Mr. 'Acker! I ain't!"

"Give Gosling your assistance, Carne! Do not stand there idly!" yapped Mr. Hacker.

Even his pet prefect was not safe from Mr. Hacker's acid temper and acid tongue in his present mood.

"Very well, sir!"

Carne of the Sixth joined up and

pushed. But the barricaded door did not stir.

Gosling gasped; Carne panted. Mr. Hacker, breathing hard, joined in the push, exerting all his strength.

Under that combined effort the door yielded about an inch. A narrow slit opened, giving a partial view of the room within. Then the door jammed again, and stirred no farther. A dozen desks and forms were stacked against it, and more than a dozen fellows were bracing themselves to hold the barricade in place. The three outside really had no chance.

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Hacker. "The—the door seems to be—to be barricaded!"

"Wot I says," gasped Gosling, "is this 'ere——"

"Push! Push harder! The door must be forced! Carne, go to the Sixth Form Room and call all the prefects here!"

"Yes, sir!"

Carne, glad of the relief, ceased to shove at the door and hurried away. Gosling ceased his exertions, spat on his hands, and grunted. Mr. Hacker glared into the Form-room by the narrow slit that had opened.

"Vernon-Smith, I can see you, you young rascal! I order you to drag away that barricade at once!"

The Bounder grinned at him through the narrow opening. He had a squirt in his hand, and he took aim through the aperture. There was ink in that squirt.

Swoooooosh!

"Oh! What—what—— Oooooogh!" spluttered Mr. Hacker, as a jet of black fluid caught him in one ear. "Oh! Oooooh! Oh! Wooooh!"

Mr. Hacker jumped back. He clapped his hand to his ear, which was streaming with ink. A crusty grin appeared on Gosling's face. There was a yell of laughter in the Form-room.

The door jammed tight again, and the barricade within was jammed closer. More forms and desks were added to it. The juniors had heard Mr. Hacker's order to Carne, and they knew that in a few minutes a party of hefty Sixth Form men would be shoving at the door.

"Oh! Ooogh!" gasped Mr. Hacker, as he dabbed at an inky ear with his handkerchief. "Upon my word! Vernon-Smith, you are expelled! You shall leave the school to-day! Ooogh! Gosling, how dare you laugh! I repeat, Gosling, how dare you laugh! Do you wish to be discharged, Gosling? What does this impertinence mean, Gosling?"

"Wot I says is this 'ere——"

"Go! Go back to your lodge! You are useless here, Gosling! You are insolent! I shall consider whether to discharge you!" hooted Mr. Hacker.

Gosling gave him a look. From inside the Form-room came the Bounder's voice:

"Don't take lip from Hacker, Gosling! Punch his silly head!"

"Oh, my eye!" gasped Gosling.

"Go!" roared Mr. Hacker.

And Gosling, grinning, went. At his lodge, he confided to Mr. Mumble, the gardener, what he thought of "that there 'Acker." What Gosling thought of Hacker was not complimentary.

Heedless of Gosling and his opinion, Mr. Hacker dabbed ink from his ear while he waited for reinforcements to arrive.

Wingate, Gwynne, Sykes, Loder, Walker, and several other Sixth Form men came down the corridor. Wingate was frowning, Gwynne grinning; Loder winked at Walker. Mr. Hacker hardly concealed his belief that his rule at Greyfriars was an improvement on the

old Head's. To the Sixth Form prefects, this did not look like it.

"Please force that door open!" snapped Mr. Hacker. "It has been barricaded inside by some rebellious young rascals! Force it open!"

"Oh, certainly, sir!" said Wingate.

The seniors braced themselves at the door and shoved. There was plenty of beef and plenty of weight in seven or eight stalwart men of the Sixth Form. The oak door creaked and groaned, and yielded an inch or so. Then the barricade stopped it, with the help of twenty fellows, shoving hard.

"Push!" snapped Mr. Hacker. "Exert yourselves! Loder, you are not pushing at all! Walker, you are slacking! Wingate, will you push that door open, or not?"

Wingate, breathing deep, ceased to shove at the door, and stepped back.

"Impossible, sir!" he said quietly.

"Do not talk nonsense, Wingate! Push that door open at once!" roared Mr. Hacker. "You are not here to argue with me, Wingate—you are here to carry out my instructions! I order you to open that door!"

"But, sir—" panted Gwynne.

"Silence, Gwynne!"

"We can't open it, sir!" said Sykes.

"Do you dare to contradict me, Sykes! Will you push that door open, or will you not?" shrieked Mr. Hacker, almost beside himself.

"Give him six, Wingate!" shouted the Bounder from within.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shut up, you young sweep!" gasped Wingate. He suppressed a chuckle.

"Tell the old ass to bend over, Gwynne!"

Gwynne of the Sixth gurgled.

Mr. Hacker spluttered with fury. Again the hefty Sixth Form men exerted their strength on the door. Again they failed to shift it. Even Hacker had to see that the door could not be pushed open.

"You may go back to your Form-room!" he snapped. "I shall have to use other measures. My prefects seem quite useless!"

The Sixth Formers walked away in silence. But their looks were expressive.

"His prefects!" murmured Gwynne, out of hearing of Mr. Hacker. "Cheeky old ass!"

Mr. Hacker crashed his cane on the door.

"Wharton!" he roared.

"Hullo!"

"I give you one last opportunity of ceasing this riot—this rebellion! Open this door, and admit me at once!"

"Nothing doing!"

"Listen to me!" Mr. Hacker's voice was shaking with passion. "Admit me instantly, and I shall flog the whole Form, and allow the matter to close with that. Persist in this rebellion, and there will be expulsions—Wharton, Vernon-Smith, and Hurree Singh will be expelled from the school to-day. Nothing will induce me to rescind this sentence. Take warning in time! Now open this door!"

"Rats!" called back the Bounder.

"The ratfulness is terrific!"

"Go and eat coke!"

Evidently the three fellows threatened with expulsion were not in a surrendering mood. Mr. Hacker stood for a moment or two, panting with fury. Then he strode away.

For the moment, at least, the Greyfriars strikers had the upper hand.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

No Surrender!

"H E'S gone!"

"We win!"

"Hurrah!"

It was a roar in the Remove Form Room. The rebels of Greyfriars had won the first round. The stay-in strikers were still in possession of the Form-room, and the enemy had, for the present, beaten a retreat. And the Removites rejoiced accordingly.

"By gum! This is no end of a lark!" exclaimed the Bounder, his eyes shining with excitement. "We'll jolly well make Hacker toe the line!"

"The toefulness will be terrific!"

"Whose Hacker?" roared Bolsover major.

"Down with Hacker!"

"Up the Remove!"

"Hurrah!"

"I say, you fellows, it ain't a bad idea, you know!" said Billy Bunter. "No lessons this morning! Jolly good idea, if you ask me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wait till Hacker gets that door

open!" sneered Skinner. "You can't stand against him now he's headmaster! He's sacked three fellows already!"

"We're not gone yet!" said the Bounder.

"You'll have to go!" said Skinner.

"Hacker's got the power!"

Harry Wharton gave the oad of the Remove a glance of contempt. Then he looked round over the crowd of excited faces.

"We've all got to stand together in this," he said. "We've got to carry on, whatever happens, till it's agreed by Hacker that no man in the Remove is sacked. That's got to be the first condition."

"Yes, rather!" said Bob Cherry.

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

"Think Hacker will agree?" sneered Skinner.

"We shall have to make him!"

"Rot!" said Skinner. "I can tell you this much—you're not going to get me sacked along with you. I don't like Hacker, and I don't like Carne, any more than you do—but I'm not going to be bunked. You can jolly well have that to yourself, if you like it!"

"You're going to back up, to the finish, with the rest of the Form, Skinner!" said the captain of the Remove.

"Am I?" said Skinner. He seemed to doubt it.

"Kick him!"

Skinner dodged lunging boots.

There was no sound of Mr. Hacker coming back. Apparently he had returned to the Shell, and decided to give the strikers a rest for a time.

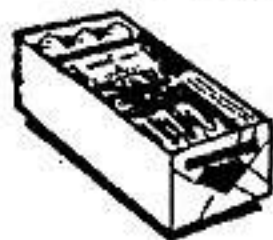
That, as a matter of fact, was about the wisest thing Mr. Hacker could have done, though it was not wisdom, but the impossibility of getting at the rebels, that dictated the move.

Now that the first outburst of excitement was over, some of the fellows were beginning to think a little more seriously, and the expressions on some faces indicated that their reflections were not pleasant.

The leaders of the strike were as determined as ever. Three of them, at least, had no resource now but to carry on to the bitter end. Surrender meant that Wharton, Smithy, and the nabob would be expelled, and turfed out of Greyfriars—for there was no doubt that

(Continued on next page.)

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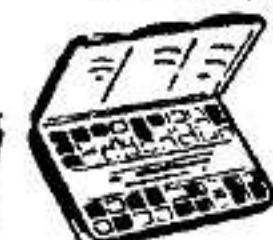
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Hacker meant every word he had said. Skinner, in his role of defeatist, was a source of weakness. Hacker had the power of expulsion in his hands—and Skinner stressed that point. And the bare thought of being "sacked," sent home to face astonished and angry parents, was enough to make even a hot-headed fellow pause.

Skinner, in a corner of the Form-room, talked in low tones with Snoop and Fisher T. Fish—and the little group was gradually joined by others—Hazel-dene, Hilary, and two or three more fellows.

"Hacker's the man to sack fellows!" Skinner muttered. "All very well for Wharton to talk about a fight to a finish—he's sacked already, and he's got nothing to lose. I don't see letting him drag us into it!"

"No fear!" agreed Snoop.

"Nope!" said Fisher T. Fish.

"Better keep things moving, you men!" said the Bounder, with a scornful glance at the group muttering in the corner. "What about a game of football?"

"Good egg!" exclaimed Bob Cherry at once.

"Let's!" said Frank Nugent.

Harry Wharton nodded. "Keeping things moving" was good tactics. Doubt and hesitation were only too likely to set in, if the time was spent in idle waiting.

"We can use a 'dick' for a ball!" said Bob. "Get going!"

"My dear man, we've got a ball!" said Smithy; and he went to the Form-room cupboard, and, to the surprise of the other fellows, turned out a Soccer ball.

Evidently the Bounder had foreseen, a little more clearly than the rest, how matters were likely to go, when the Remove started a stay-in strike.

"Oh, good man!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Now then, pick up sides! The door's one goal—the fireplace is the other! Lots of ink to mark the lines. Join up, every man jack of you!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Get a move on, Bunter!"

"Look here! I'm jolly well not going to barge about after that ball!" exclaimed Bunter indignantly. "If we're getting out of lessons, let's have a rest. I say, you fellows, got any toffee?"

"Are you going to get off that form?" roared Bob.

"No!" yapped Bunter. "I'm jolly well not! Look here—Oh crikey!" Billy Bunter roared, as the form was tipped up and he sprawled on the floor. "Ow! Wow! Beast! Oh crikey!"

"You feeling too tired for Soccer, Mauly?" asked Bob.

"Yaas."

"Like me to help you get moving?"

"Oh! No!" Lord Mauleverer hastily got moving, without waiting for assistance from the energetic Bob.

"Line up, Skinner!" shouted Bob.

"Oh, rats!" yapped Skinner.

"Kick that slacker this way, you fellows!"

"Look here! Yaroooooh! Oh, my hat! I'm coming!" howled Skinner.

"Go it!"

"On the ball!"

"Play up!"

Football fans might hardly have recognised that game as Soccer. With about thirty fellows playing, it was more like Rugby, so far as numbers went.

In other respects it was rather like a scramble, and rather like a dog-fight. But there was, at least, plenty of

noise, and plenty of strenuous exercise. Trampling feet, shouting voices, crashing of forms that were knocked over, made a terrific din that apprised all Greyfriars that the Remove were enjoying themselves.

The game was still going strong when the bell rang for break. Tramping feet in the passages told that the other Forms were going out. A sharp rap came at the door of the Remove-room.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Look out!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

And Soccer was suspended at once as the Greyfriars strikers crowded to the door, in readiness for another attack.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bucking Up Skinner!

"BOYS!" It was Mr. Hacker's voice.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"Anything wanted, old bean?" called out the Bounder.

"Silence, Vernon-Smith! You no longer belong to this school, and you have no right here!" came Mr. Hacker's stern voice.

"Think again!" suggested the Bounder.

"My esteemed and ridiculous Hacker—" began the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"The same applies to you, Hurree Singh. You are expelled, and will be turned out of the school immediately!"

"The hopefulness is great, but the immediateness will not be terrific, esteemed and idiotic Hacker."

"That sort of talk will do no good, Mr. Hacker," said Harry Wharton quietly. "We're all agreed to stand together, and this strike will go on, until you give your word that no fellow here is sacked."

"I refuse to bandy words with you, Wharton—an expelled boy!" came back Hacker's bitter voice. "You no longer belong to Greyfriars, and you are an intruder here!"

"Oh, don't talk rot!" said the captain of the Remove unceremoniously.

"Silence!" roared Mr. Hacker. "Listen to me—all the Remove! I am not speaking to Wharton, Hurree Singh, or Vernon-Smith, who are expelled. I am addressing the rest of the Form. Unless this riot ceases, others will be expelled! I have now given you time for reflection. I warn you to return to obedience! I will expel half the Form, if necessary, to enforce order! Reflect that you will be sent away from the school in disgrace, that you will have to face your parents at home, and return to obedience, while there is yet time."

There was silence in the Remove-room. Skinner & Co. exchanged glances, and other fellows looked dubious.

The Bounder broke the silence.

"Gas!" he said. "Hacker can't sack a whole Form! We've only got to stand together, and stick it out!"

"All very well for you!" yapped Skinner. "You're sacked! I'm not going to be turned out of Greyfriars along with you, Vernon-Smith!"

"Aren't you?" said the Bounder. His face became grim. "Collar that cad! We'll make Skinner answer Hacker! I'll tell him what to say. Bring him here!"

Redwing and Peter Todd gripped Skinner by the arms, pinning him at once. He wriggled, in great alarm, as he was marched towards the door. Bob Cherry added a grip to the back of his collar; Johnny Bull and Nugent took an ear each. Skinner, wriggling

with apprehension, was helpless in the hands of the Philistines.

"Look here! Leave Skinner alone—" began Snoop. But he broke off with a howl as Harry Wharton grasped him by the collar, and sent him spinning along the floor.

"I guess—" began Fisher T. Fish. But he ceased to guess, quite suddenly, as the captain of the Remove grasped him, and upended him over Snoop.

Rap, rap, rap! came sharply at the door.

"Answer me!" came Mr. Hacker's bark. "I will not listen to Wharton, Vernon-Smith, or Hurree Singh! They are no longer Greyfriars boys! But the rest—"

"Answer him, Skinner!" said Vernon-Smith, in a low voice unheard by the new headmaster outside. "Say, get out, you old ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I won't!" hissed Skinner, almost green with rage and terror. "Think I'm going to be sacked along with you, you rotter?"

"Exactly!" assented the Bounder coolly. "You're going to rag Hacker till he puts you on the list for sacking, and I fancy that will make you keen enough on a fight to a finish!"

"Good egg!" chortled Bob. "Go it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I won't!" panted Skinner. "I won't say a word! I won't—"

"Twist his ears till he does, you men!" said the Bounder. "I'll twist his nose! I fancy Skinner will get tired before we do!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Skinner!"

"Buck up, old scout!"

Johnny Bull and Frank Nugent, gripping Skinner's ears, twisted them, and Herbert Vernon-Smith added a twist to his rather long nose. There was a yelp of anguish from Harold Skinner.

"Ow! Leggo! Oh crikey!"

"Talking to Hacker?" asked the Bounder cheerfully.

He gave Skinner's nose another twist, and Skinner gave a muffled howl.

Rap, rap! came at the door.

"Answer him, Skinner!" chuckled Harry Wharton.

Skinner panted with fury. But the twisting of his ears and nose was too much for him. He yelped it out:

"Get out, you old ass!"

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

"What?" roared Mr. Hacker. "Who spoke?"

"Now say 'Go and bag a place in a home for idiots, you old foozler!'" whispered Vernon-Smith, amid chuckles from the juniors.

"I—I won't!" gasped Skinner.

"Twist his ears!" said the Bounder grimly.

"Ow! Wow! I say! Stop it! Go and bag a place in a home for idiots, you old foozler!" yelled Skinner.

"Who is speaking?" came in a roar from Mr. Hacker. "I shall expel that boy! Give me your name, you insolent young rascal! I think I know your voice. It was Skinner speaking. Was it you, Skinner?"

"Tell him your name, and tell him to go and eat coke!" breathed the Bounder. "Pile it on! I've got a pin here—"

"I—I won't! Yow-ow-ow! I—I mean, I—I will! Oh crikey! I'm Skinner!" howled the hapless defeatist. "Wow! I'm Skinner! Go and eat coke!"

"I thought so! You are expelled, Skinner!" roared Mr. Hacker.

"Oh crikey!"



Carne was rolled over to the grate. Vernon-Smith shovelled down soot from the spacious old chimney. Carne glared at the shovel of soot in rage and horror. "Keep that away!" he gasped. "If you dare to put that on me, I'll—Gruugggh! Urrrrgh! Wurrghhh!" He broke off as the soot smothered his head and went down his neck. "Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the Removites.

"You will leave Greyfriars to-day with Wharton, Hurree Singh, and Vernon-Smith!" came Hacker's infuriated roar.

"Now say 'Shut up, fathead!'" whispered Smithy.

"I—I—Shut up, fathead!" howled Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now call him a few choice names. I'll stick this pin in you when you stop!" grinned the Bounder. "Go it, old bean! Pile it on thick!"

"Ow! Wow! Leave off!" shrieked Skinner. "I—I say, Hacker, you're an old ass! You're an old donkey! We're fed-up with you, Hacker! You can go and eat coke, Hacker! Take your silly face away and bury it! Old ass! Fathead! Frump! Foozler! Swab! Silly old ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Removites, almost doubled up with merriment.

Under the persuasion of the jabbing pin in the Bounder's hand, Harold Skinner was going strong.

There was a gurgle of fury outside the door. Unaware of the persuasive methods that were being used on Skinner, Mr. Hacker probably regarded him as the cheekiest member of a cheeky Form. Certainly, of all the Remove, Skinner was least likely to escape Hacker's wrath, if the new headmaster got the upper hand of the Greyfriars strikers.

"Go it!" grinned the Bounder. "Keep it up as long as Hacker's there, Skinner! Or, if you prefer this pin, I'll—"

"Ow! Wow! Go away, Hacker!" yelled the hapless Skinner. "Can't you clear off, you old ass? Get out of it, you foozling old freak! Buzz off, bother you! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You leave Greyfriars to-day,

Skinner!" gasped Mr. Hacker. "I will have no mercy on you, you insolent young scoundrel! I shall flog you before you go!"

"Shut up, you blithering idiot!" howled Skinner, as the pin touched him again. "Cheese it, Hacker, you fat-head!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Hacker's footsteps were heard departing. Apparently he had had enough of that conversation through the door.

Skinner was released, and he stood spluttering with rage and terror, while the Removites roared with laughter.

"You're for a fight to a finish now, Skinner!" roared the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hacker might let us off, but he'll never let Skinner off," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "You'd better chuck talking about surrender, Skinner. It's you for the long jump if Hacker gets the whip-hand, after that!"

That was only too clear to Harold Skinner. There was not likely to be any more "defeatism" from Skinner. He was as deep in the mud now as the other fellows in the mire, and there was no resource left him but to back up the strike all along the line. And that Skinner had to make up his mind to do.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Trying It On!

"THERE they are!" shouted Hobson of the Shell.

There was a swarm of Greyfriars fellows under the Remove windows. The middle window was wide open, and it was packed with grinning faces of Removites.

Hobson & Co., of the Shell, came up

with a rush; Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth arrived; Bolsover minor and Nugent minor came with swarms of the Third and Second. Coker & Co. walked round, with a dozen of the Fifth. Even Sixth Form men came along. Every fellow at Greyfriars was anxious to get a squint at the rebel Form, and see what was going on.

"Here we are, Hobby!" grinned Bob Cherry from the window. "How's your beak? How's jolly old Hacker?"

"Mad as a hatter!" said Hobson, grinning. "We've had a rotten time in the Shell this morning, lines and lickings!"

"Follow our lead, and go on strike!" suggested Vernon-Smith.

"I don't think!" chuckled Hobby.

"Look here, what are you fags up to?" demanded Coker of the Fifth. "This sort of thing won't do! What's this game?"

Horace Coker was frowning. Certainly, he did not like Hacker. He had a detention that afternoon, and five hundred lines, from Hacker. Still, Coker did not approve of fags getting their ears up. Coker of the Fifth simply could not approve of anything of the sort. Fortunately, the Remove were able to get on without Coker's approval.

"It's a strike, old bean!" explained Bob Cherry. "A stay-in strike! We're staying in, on strike!"

"The strikefulness is terrific, my absurd Coker!"

"Rot!" said Coker. "You'd better chuck it at once! If you had me to deal with, you'd chuck it fast enough, I can tell you. Chuck it, see!"

"Hand me that Latin dick, Smithy!" murmured Bob.

Smithy grinned, and handed him the dictionary. Bob held it behind him, as he smiled down at Coker of the Fifth.

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"Did you say chuck it, Coker?" he asked.

"Yes, I did!" said Coker. "This sort of chuck from a mob of fags won't do! Chuck it!"

"Right-ho!" said Bob. "You're the man to ask for things, Coker; but if you say chuck it, here goes!"

Bob's hand came from behind him, with the dictionary in it. He chucked it, with a deadly aim! It crashed on Coker's head.

There was a sudden, surprised yell from Horace Coker, and he sat down in the quad. Potter and Greene chuckled. It rather amused them to see their great leader asking for things in this way, and getting them!

"Wow!" roared Coker. "What—how—oogh—wow! Why, you cheeky young scoundrel, I'll—I'll—I'll—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear man, you said chuck it, and I chucked it!" said Bob. "What's the row? Some people are never satisfied!"

"You silly young idiot, I didn't mean chuck that dick!" roared Coker.

"I did!" answered Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"By gum! I—I—I'll—!" Coker of the Fifth made a rush at the window, clutched at the sill, and clambered up. Coker's head had had a hard knock. There was not much inside it to damage, perhaps: but the outside felt painful. Coker wanted vengeance.

"Come on, Coker!" chirruped Bob. "Hand me an inkpot, Franky! Say when, Coker!"

Bob up-ended an inkpot over Coker's red, excited face as he clambered.

Coker's crimson countenance was streaked with black. A stream of ink went into his open mouth, and Coker coughed and gasped and gurgled horribly. He dropped from the window-sill as suddenly as if it had become red hot!

"Gurrrrrrrgh!" said Coker.

"Ha, ha, ha! Come and have some more, Coker! Lots of ink!"

"Gurrrrrgh!"

Coker did not come for more. Judging by his expression, he had had enough ink and seemed to dislike the flavour. He tramped away, leaving the crowd under the Remove windows yelling.

Nearly all Greyfriars was gathered there. The interest of the whole school was centred in the Remove and in the wild and woolly proceedings of that unruly Form.

The idea of a stay-in strike at Greyfriars seemed to take the fellows by storm. They chuckled and chortled over it. Coker, with his usual lofty attitude towards lesser mortals, disapproved: but it was clear that most of the other fellows wished the rebels luck. Anyhow, it was a tremendous lark: and the whole crowd seemed to be enjoying it.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, here comes Hacker!" said Bob.

The merry roar under the windows of the Remove Form Room had evidently reached the new headmaster's ears. Mr. Hacker came striding out of the House, with a grim and angry brow.

"Disperse at once!" he shouted. "Leave this spot! Any boy holding communication with the Remove will be severely punished! Go!"

Unwillingly the crowd of fellows cleared off. Mr. Hacker, with glinting eyes watched them go. Then he stood and stared, with a deadly glare, at the faces crammed in the window.

Vernon-Smith waved a hand to him.

"Feeling the draught, Hacker?" he asked.

Mr. Hacker did not answer that question. He glanced round at Carne of the Sixth. His faithful satellite was at his heels.

"Carne! Kindly fetch a step-ladder here!" he said.

"Certainly, sir."

Carne went to fetch a step-ladder. The Removites exchanged grins. If Mr. Hacker was thinking of entering the Form-room by the window to deal with

them, they did not think he would get very far.

But that, they soon found, was not Mr. Hacker's intention. Carne came back in a few minutes with the step-ladder. He looked inquiringly at his chief.

"Place it under that window, Carne!" said Mr. Hacker.

Carne placed the step-ladder under the window. He jammed the top of it under the sill, to make it secure from reaching hands above.

Then he turned to his chief again, with a very doubtful expression on his face. If Mr. Hacker was planning to get in at that window, Carne wished him the best of luck; but if he was thinking of Carne getting in, it was quite another matter. The bully of the Sixth rather wished, at that moment, that he was not the new headmaster's faithful right-hand man!

"Now, Carne," directed Mr. Hacker. "Get in at that window—"

"Eh?"

"And get the door of the Form-room open!" said Mr. Hacker.

"But—"

"I will go round to the door and wait there!" said Mr. Hacker. "Lose no time, Carne! You are authorised to use any force that may be needed! Take your ashplant! Now, proceed at once, Carne!"

Carne blinked at him. Daniel, at the door of the lion's den, probably felt like Carne at the Remove window! Carne did not dare to be a Daniel!

But Mr. Hacker did not wait for an answer. He whisked away and went into the House.

A minute later his footsteps were heard in the corridor outside the Form-room door. Hacker evidently expected Carne to carry on as instructed and to get by with it! Carne was more doubtful!

The Form-room window was crammed with Removites. It was easy enough for Carne of the Sixth to mount to the window. What worried him was what was going to happen when he got there!

The juniors grinned down at him joyously. Carne, and his method of handling the Remove, had been the prime cause of the trouble. They were quite happy at the prospect of handling Carne.

For a long minute the bully of the Sixth hesitated, while the juniors grinned and waited for him to get a move on.

But he got a move on at last. Hacker by that time, was at the Form-room door, waiting for Carne to get it open from within. Carne really had no choice in the matter. He had to try it on, at any rate.

He set his teeth, gripped his ashplant, and mounted the steps.

"Now, you young rotters, stand back from that window!" he snarled. "Lift a finger, and you'll get hurt!"

"The hurtfulness may be a boot on the other leg!" chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Carne advanced slowly but steadily. As he reached the window, he lashed and slashed savagely with the ashplant, utterly reckless where the lashes landed. There was a yell from Bob, as he got the first on his neck, and a howl from Smithy, as the next got home on his ear.

The juniors backed from the window. Carne put a knee on the broad stone sill. He reached in at the wide-open window with the cane, slashing right



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and left. The Removites backed out of reach.

Carne scrambled in, and jumped down to the floor.

He was feeling more confident now. The rebels had retreated before the lashing cane, and he had got in quite easily. All he had to do now was to get the door open, and let Hacker in. It seemed to Carne that he was getting away with it.

The next moment, however, he woke up, as it were.

"Bag him!" shouted Harry Wharton. There was a rush of twenty fellows. Carne slashed with the ashplant, and landed two or three. Then he was overwhelmed, and went over yelling, and over him swarmed the Greyfriars rebels.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Held by the Enemy!

"BAG him!" "Got him!" "Ha, ha, ha!" Carne of the Sixth had had his misgivings when he tried it on. Now he found that his misgivings were more than justified.

He wriggled and struggled and wrenched and yelled, in the grasp of as many hands as could find room on him for a hold.

Smithy snatched away his ashplant. The Famous Five had hold of his arms and his neck. Bolsover major and Ogilvy had a leg each. Peter Todd captured his nose—Russell and Squiff his ears. He struggled and yelled frantically, but he had not the ghost of a chance.

"Got him!" chortled Bob. There was no doubt that they had "got" him! A fellow could not have been more utterly and completely "got."

"Oooooogh!" spluttered Carne breathlessly. "Stoppit! Ow! Leggo! I—I'll get out! Ooogh! I'll get out at once! Yooooogh! Oh, my hat! Oh crumbs! Oooooh!"

"You won't get out yet!" chuckled the Bounder. "Easier to get in than to get out, old bean! We're not done with you yet, not by long chalks!"

Rap, rap! came at the door. Mr. Hacker, it appeared, had become aware that Carne had got in. He was waiting impatiently for his pet prefect to get the door open. He was likely to wait.

"Carne!" came Hacker's bark. "Carne! Are you there? I am waiting for you to open this door, Carne! Lose no time, please!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Removites. Carne did not look like opening that door. All Carne's wishes and desires, at that moment, were concentrated on getting out of the window again. But there was no escape for him.

"Put him over a desk!" shouted the Bounder. "I'm going to give him six with his own ashplant!"

"Good egg!" "Shove him over!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you young demons!" panted Carne. "Don't you dare— Ooogh! Leggo! If you dare— Yooooogh! Oh gad! Ow!"

Struggling and wriggling, the bully of the Sixth was dragged to a desk, and jammed over it, face down. He kicked and squirmed, but his arms were held on one side of the desk, his legs on the other—as well as his hair, his ears, and his collar. He squirmed in horrid anticipation as the Bounder swished the cane.

"Go it, Smithy!"

"Lay it on!" "Give him beans!" "Carne!" came Mr. Hacker's yell from the corridor. "I am waiting for you, Carne! Why do you not get this door open, Carne?"

Had Carne been able to reply to Mr. Hacker, probably his reply, at that moment, would have been as disrespectful as anything Hacker had heard from the Remove. But Carne had no breath for speech. He gasped and gurgled breathlessly as he was held down, squirming, on the desk.

Up went the ash in the Bounder's hand. Down it came with a terrific whop.

Whack! Carne emitted a fearful howl. It was almost drowned by the roars of laughter round him. Carne had handled that ash, not wisely but too well, in the Remove-room. Now he was getting his own medicine. Like most medicine, it seemed to have a nasty taste!

Whack, whack, whack! Herbert Vernon-Smith was putting his beef into it. The whacks came down as if the Bounder fancied that he was beating carpet.

Carne wriggled wildly, howling and yelling. So frantic were his struggles that it was not easy to hold him. But he was held, and the cane went up and came down again, hard and heavy.

Whack, whack! "That's six!" chuckled the Bounder. "I say, you fellows, give him some more!" squeaked Billy Bunter. "The beast whopped me yesterday! I say,

make it sixteen—or sixty! What about sixty?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Vernon-Smith jammed the ashplant down the back of Carne's neck. Then he was rolled off the desk. From the passage came rapping on the door, and Hacker's shrill, angry voice.

"Carne! Do you hear me, Carne? I am waiting!"

"Keep on waiting, old bean!" called out Vernon-Smith. "Carne's rather busy at the moment! We're going to chuck him out of the window when we're done with him! Trot round and see him drop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Roll him over this way!" said the Bounder, picking up the shovel from the Form-room grate.

"Ha, ha, ha!" Carne was rolled over to the grate. Vernon-Smith shovelled down soot from the spacious old chimney. Carne glared at the shovel of soot in rage and horror.

"Keep that away!" he gasped. "If you dare to put that on me I'll— Grauggh! Urrrrgh! Wurrghhh!"

Carne's face disappeared under a cloud of soot. A moment before it had been crimson; now it was black as the ace of spades.

Another and another shovelful went over his head and down his neck. From the midst of the soot, the bully of the Sixth gurgled and sneezed.

"Urrrrgh! Gurrgh! Atchooh! Aytishoooh! Ooooooh!"

"Carne," yelled Mr. Hacker, "why (Continued on next page.)"

COME INTO THE OFFICE, BOYS AND GIRLS!

You Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. Write to him: Editor of the MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. A stamped, addressed envelope will ensure a reply.

THREE cheers for the MAGNET. Hip-pip-plp—Hurrah! I guess you're all feeling pleased with yourselves this week, chums, for the First Two of Our Magnificent Series of

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The piece-de-resistance, of course, is the sparkling school story of Harry Wharton & Co. From this week's yarn you've gathered that great excitement prevails at Greyfriars. Mr. Hacker's reign as headmaster has brought about a nice state of affairs. Unyielding severity is Hacker's method of dealing with the unruly Remove. But how far has it got him? Having declared war against the tyrannical Mr. Hacker, Harry Wharton & Co. have resolved to bring the dictator to heel. Hoping to quell the uprising, the new Head singles out those he believes to be the ring-leaders of the stay-in strike and threatens them with expulsion. The effort proves fruitless, however, and Wingate is given the thankless task of "seeing them off the premises." The captain of Greyfriars gets so far, and then— But why spoil your enjoyment of this all-thrilling yarn by saying more? Wait until next Saturday and read:

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Meet you again, then, chums, in next Saturday's FREE GIFT ISSUE of the MAGNET.

Till then, cheerio,

YOUR EDITOR.

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do you not open this door? What are you doing, Carne? Answer me at once!"

"Atchoooh! Aytishoo! 'Shoo!" was Carne's answer. "Oooogh! Woooogh! Moooooogh!"

"Now chuck him out!" said the Bounder. "Hacker can have him back now!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Carne was rolled away to the window, leaving a trail of soot on the floor of the Form-room. He sprawled under the window, gasping and sneezing, half-suffocated with soot. The Removites heaved him up to the window and rolled him out on the sill.

"He's going, Hacker!" shouted the Bounder. "Run round and catch him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Carne rolled off the window-sill, rolled down the step-ladder, and rolled on the ground. He lumped there, sat up, and sneezed volcanically.

From a distance a swarm of Greyfriars fellows were staring at the Remove windows. There was a roar as Carne of the Sixth met their view.

"That's Carne!" gasped Hobson.

"They've sooted him!"

"Oh gad! They're goin' it!" gasped Temple of the Fourth. "Look at him!"

"Atchoo! Chooop! Tishoo-tishoo-oooooh!" sneezed Carne. He staggered to his feet, gouging soot from his eyes and sneezing. Once more the Remove window was crammed with laughing faces.

"Go back to Hacker, Carne!"

"Go and get a wash!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Hacker came out of the House again and hurried to the spot.

It had dawned on Hacker by that time that his pet prefect was not getting the Remove door open.

He jumped at the sight of the blackened, dishevelled figure that tottered under the Remove window.

"Is—is—is that you, Carne?" he stuttered.

"Urrrgh! Ooo—'tishoo—oo-oooooh!" Carne clawed at soot, and sneezed and gurgled. "Oooo—'tishoo—'tishoo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a roar from the crowd in the distance.

Carne of the Sixth tottered away, the January wind blowing clouds of soot from him as he went. The bell rang for third school, and the hilarious crowd in the quad went reluctantly back to the Form-rooms.

But Mr. Hacker did not go. He stood gazing at the grinning juniors in the Remove window, with an expression on his face compared with which the petrifying glare of the fabled Gorgon might have been called a gentle smile.

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

"Hook It, Hacker!"

"STAND back, sir!"

Harry Wharton rapped out the words quickly as Mr. Hacker put his foot on the step-ladder under the window.

Evidently the new headmaster had determined to take matters into his own hands. He came up the steps, came in hand.

There were serious faces among the rebels now. Handling Carne of the Sixth had been rather a "lark," but there was hardly a man in the Remove who was willing to handle the man who stood in the place of their headmaster—if they could help it. On the other hand, they were not going to give in.

"Please stand back, sir!" said Lord Mauleverer respectfully. "We can't let you in, and we should hate to push you out, sir!"

"Oh, let him come in!" exclaimed the Bounder. "I'll punch his face as soon as Carne's!"

"Shut up, Smithy!"

"The punchfulness of an esteemed beak is not the proper caper, my esteemed Smithy!"

Mr. Hacker came up and on. His petrifying glare was fixed on the throng at the window. It was scarcely a dignified proceeding for a headmaster to clamber in at a window. But Mr. Hacker, in the belief that he needed only to get to close quarters with the Remove to reduce them to submission, let dignity slide. He had only waited till the rest of Greyfriars went in to third school so that there would be no

Look out for the next yarn in this exciting series:

"THE NO-SURRENDER SCHOOLBOYS!"

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audience for his acrobatic performances. Now he was coming on, nothing doubting that the rebels would not dare to resist him personally.

"Get back from the window!" he rapped, as he reached the top of the step-ladder and put one knee on the broad, stone sill.

Lord Mauleverer and the Famous Five packed the window, with a dozen fellows behind them. They did not stir. They hoped that Hacker would not persist in asking for it. But if he did persist, he would get what he asked for; there was no doubt about that.

"Please go back, sir," said Harry Wharton mildly. "You can't come in here. You see—"

"I will hear nothing from you, Wharton! You are expelled, and will leave the school to-day with Vernon-Smith, Hurree Singh and Skinner! Any other boy who dares to resist my authority will be expelled at the same time! Now get back from the window, all of you!"

"You see, we're on strike—"

"Enough!"

"It's a stay-in strike, sir," explained Lord Mauleverer. "We're staying in, and keeping possession of the works till you come round! If you'd like to hear our terms for calling off the strike—"

"Silence, Mauleverer!"

"The terms," said his lordship calmly, "are no sackings, floggings, lines, detentions or Carne! If you agree to that, sir, we'll take your word and call off the strike. Otherwise may I advise you to hook it, sir?"

"Get back from the window at once!" roared Mr. Hacker. "Do you dare to dispute my entrance?"

"Yaas!"

That was more than enough for Mr. Hacker. He made a cut at Mauleverer with the cane.

"Ow!" yelled his lordship, as the swipe landed.

"Now—" booted Mr. Hacker.

He got no further.

"Give the old ass what he's asking for!" yelled the Bounder.

"Barge him out!"

"Hook it, Hacker!"

How many hands were laid on him at that moment Hacker could hardly have counted. Every one of them shoved, and shoved hard. The master of the Shell rolled backwards off the window-sill.

He bumped on the step-ladder, and bumped off it, landing on the ground. He gave a spluttering yell as he landed there.

"Man down!" yelled Smithy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hardly knowing whether he was on his head or his heels, Mr. Hacker sprawled and spluttered.

Vernon-Smith reached down, grasped the top of the step-ladder, and sent it crashing down on top of Hacker. Mr. Hacker sat up at the same moment, and his head came through the ladder as it landed. He sat there, with his head through the ladder, blinking.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Greyfriars strikers.

"Oh! Ow! Ooogh!" gasped Mr. Hacker. "Oh! Ah! Ow! Oh! Ah!"

School books hurtled from the window, pelted him as he sat gasping, with the ladder round his neck. Two or three inkpots followed. Then there was a regular rain of missiles, and Mr. Hacker yelled and roared, and scrambled to his feet and staggered away, carrying the clinging step-ladder as he went.

A roar followed him. At a distance the master of the Shell disentangled himself from the step-ladder, amid yells of laughter from the Remove window.

"Come back for some more, Hacker!" shouted the Bounder.

But Mr. Hacker did not come back for more. He seemed to have had enough for the present of the hornets' nest he had woke up in the Remove. He tottered away, and disappeared into the House.

"That's that!" chuckled the Bounder.

"Three cheers for us!"

"Hip-hip-hurrah!"

And that tremendous roar, ringing through Greyfriars from end to end, told all the school that the stay-in strike was going strong.

THE END.

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GEORGE WASHINGTON BIRCHEMALL!

This Week's Bright and Breezy Instalment of
Dicky Nugent's Latest Serial:
"DR. BIRCHEMALL'S RESOLUTIONS!"

THE MASTERS' PLOT!
Crash! Bang! Wallop!
"Trot in, fathead!"
sang out Doctor Birchemall, as that timid nock sounded on his study door.
It was Toadey minor, the sneak of the Fourth, who poked his head into the Head's study. There was a sly, furtive grin on his fizz.

"Spare a minnit, sir?" he asked.
"Two, if you like, Toadey!" grinned the Head, who often availed himself of young Toadey's eggstensive and pekuliar nollidge of what went on behind the scenes at St. Sam's. "Picked up anything at the keyholes lately?"

"Please, sir, the masters were holding a meeting about your New Year resolutions. They said that, as long as you kept your resolutions, they had to keep their own resolution to pay you a weekly sum to the Distressed Headmasters' Fund."

"Yes, yes!" said the Head eagerly.

"Please, sir, they said they thought they'd caught you on the hop over your resolution to go swimming every morning; but they hadn't!"

"Yes, yes, yes!"

"Please, sir, they said their only hoop now was to catch you telling fibs, because you made a resolution always to tell the truth."

"Yes, yes, yes, yes."

"Please, sir, Mr. Lickham has thought of

a wheeze that will bowl you out completely—or so he said."

"Aha!" said Doctor Birchemall, rubbing his hands with glee. "The wheeze, Toadey! What was it?"

"Please, sir, Mr. Lickham and Mr. Justiss are going to hide in that cupboard over there while you're out," said Toadey minor, pointing to a big cupboard facing the windows.

"Then, when you come in, the other masters are going to get different boys to drop in and ask you difficult questions. And the moment you give a wrong answer, Mr. Lickham and Mr. Justiss are going to pounce out from the cupboard and tell you you've broken your promise!"

Doctor Birchemall frowned.

"What's the idea, Toadey? Do they imagine I shan't know the answers, then?"

"Yes, sir," said Toadey minor. "But they said you were such a swankpot that you'd never let the boys see your ignorance. You'd rather give them a wrong answer—and that's just where the masters are going to score."

"Cheeky rotters!"

snorted the Head. "But thanks awfully for tipping me the wink, Toadey. You may go now. I have important bizzness to transact."

After Toadey had gone, Doctor Birchemall became eggstremely bizzzy. First

he shovelled some soot from the chimney and put it into a pail. Then he fixed up the pail inside the cupboard just above the place where the two masters had planned to hide.

"Ha, ha! They won't half look comical when that lot comes down on their nappers!" he muttered to himself as he fastened string from the pail to his desk.

He then went out for a stroll round the House.

When he returned, everything was just as Toadey minor had told him. First one junior came in with a question and then another, till it became a regular procession.

If it had not been for young Toadey's warning, the Head would have fallen an easy viktim of the masters' trap. But fourarmed is fourarmed. Instead of answering questions with the first thing that came into his head, Doctor Birchemall answered with perfect candour and truth: "I don't know!"

As time went on and the Head heard Messrs. Lickham and Justiss shifting about impatiently in the cupboard, his grin grew broader and broader till it seemed to stretch from here to here.

The procession came to an end at last, and the

Head, with a sly wink at his own reflection in the mirror, stood up and gave the string that trailed over his desk a powerful jerk.

"Swoooooosh!"
"Yaroooooop! Ow-ow!"
"Woooooop! Grooooo!"

Shrieks of rage and surprise went up from the direction of the cupboard, followed by fits of coughing and choking. At the same time, grate clouds of soot arose, and the Head gave vent to his feelings in a loud burst of mocking laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A DESPITE RESOLVE!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Doctor Birchemall larked and larked again, as Mr. Lickham and Mr. Justiss staggered out of the cupboard.

Certainly it would have been hard to imagine a more comical site than the two St. Sam's masters presented. They were covered from head to foot with soot as they stood in the middle of the Head's study, coughing and sneezing.

"It's nothing to lark at, sir!" growled Mr. Lickham, when he had regained his breath.

But Doctor Birchemall only larked more loudly than ever.

"Ha, ha, ha! Your mistake, Lickham—it is!

Have a look at your faces in the glass! Ho, ho, ho!"

"I believe you did this a-purpose, sir!" barked Mr. Justiss.

The Head wiped the tears of larfter from his eyes and nodded cheerfully. "Right on the wicket, Justiss—I did. I fixed up that booby-trap in case any eavesdroppers happened to stow away while I was out. Looks as if the precaution was needed, duzzet it?"

"You—you—"

"Enuff!" said the Head sternly. "I did this to pay you out for lissening in. So don't argew the toss. My advice to you gentlemen is to go straight to the bathrooms and have a wash and brush up."

"Ow! Yes, sir!"

"There is only an hour or two to go before we have our annual masters' supper, presided over by Sir Frederick Funguss, added Doctor Birchemall, with a glance at his watch.

"I shall eggpect you to turn up to that function in your best bib and tucker. You know how particular Sir Frederick is and how carefully we have to handle him."

"Grooo! All screen, sir!"

"Go!" said the Head, pointing to the door.

Mr. Lickham and Mr. Justiss went.

Outside they pawed and looked at each other.

"Another failure, Lickham," said Mr. Justiss diamally. "I shall soon begin to believe that it is impossibul to bowl him out."

But to the surprise of Mr. Justiss, the Fourth Form master gave a chuckle.

"Don't be downhearted, Justiss," he said. "When the Head menshuned that supper to-nite, it suddenly dawned on me that we shall get him just where we want him at the supper table. He always has to get up and make a speech saying what a fine, noble, carriekter Sir Frederick is. He'll have to do it to-nite."

And as Sir Frederick happens to be just the opposite of what the Head calls him, the moment he makes that speech he'll be telling fibs! See?"

"By Jove! You're right!" eggclaimed Mr.

Justiss, and he and his colleague went off feeling much more hoapful.

But, unknown to them, something was already happening to dash their hoaps. The moment they vanished, Toadey minor appeared from a doorway and knocked at the Head's door. And in a brace of shakes the Head knew all about it!

"For a time he was simply flummoxed."

"I'm in a terribul a'kammer now and no mistake," he said, after he had once more dismissed the sneak of the Fourth. "Sir Frederick will natchurally eggpect me to make a speech about him as usual. And if I stand up and tell the truth, he'll be frightfully annoyed. On the other hand, if I praise him up and tell a lot of fibs about him, old Justiss and the others will stop paying their subs to the fund."

He pondered deeply. Suddenly his eyes gleamed and a crafty look came into his skollarly face.

"I know!" he muttered. "I'll kidnap Sir Frederick and stop him coming to the supper. Then I can tell the truth about him without fear!"

THE HEAD'S TRIUMF!

"Spare a copper for a poor, honest covey?"

The pekuliar, wining voice fell on the ears of Sir Frederick Funguss, as he crossed the quad that evening.

The chairman of the St. Sam's Guvvernors peered into the pitch darkness before him. He started violently, as he perceived a dim, crouching figger, wearing a cloth cap pulled well down over his eyes and a big, heavy overcoat with the collar turned up so that his chin was completely hidden.

"A footpad, by golly!" gasped Sir Frederick Funguss. "Within the very preinks of St. Sam's! How dare you, you rascal! I'll—"

The next instant he broke off with a wild yell as the footpad heeled himself at his viktim like a tiger at his prey.

"Yarooooo! Leggo! Look here, you beast—"

Sir Frederick's eyes died

January 30th, 1937.

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

No. 225.

The
GREYFRIARS HERALD

STOP PRESS NEWS

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