

EXPULSED JUNIOR RETURNS AS NEW BOY TO GREYFRIARS!

The Magnet^{2D}

Billy Bunter's
Own Paper



Je parlais
Je parlais
Il parlait
on parlions
vous parliez
Ils parlaient

SNUFF SAID!

SCREAMINGLY FUNNY SCHOOL STORY, STARRING WILLIAM WIBLEY—

The Boy Who Came Back!

By FRANK RICHARDS



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

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Punch for Popper!

"YOU men on?"

Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, asked that question.

Smithy, with a grin on his face, looked in at the doorway of Study No. 1 in the Remove. Three juniors in that study looked at the Bounder—and at a bag he carried in his hand.

It was a bag of flour. Naturally, they looked surprised. A bag of flour was an exceedingly unusual article for a Remove fellow to be carrying about.

"On?" repeated Harry Wharton.

"On what?" asked Frank Nugent.

The third junior in the study did not speak. Archibald Popper of the Remove was a new fellow at Greyfriars. He looked very curiously at the Bounder.

"We're after Froggy!" explained Smithy. He held up the bag of flour. "I've got this for him."

"You've got that for Monsieur Charpentier?" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "What the dickens—"

"To drop on his napper," further explained the Bounder.

"Oh crumbs!" ejaculated Nugent.

"You utter ass, Smithy!" exclaimed Wharton. "Do you want to be sacked, like poor old Wibley? If you drop that on the French master—"

"I'm not going to drop my card with it!" said the Bounder sarcastically.

"He won't know whom it comes from—only he will guess that it comes from the Remove! You fellows on?"

"But how—"

"Easy as falling off a form! I'm going to wait at the window over Mossos's study, and when he puts his head out of his window—"

"You think he will put it out, just

to oblige you, because you're waiting with a bag of flour to drop on it?" asked Nugent.

"Oh, don't be an ass! He's got to be made to put his napper out, of course. That's where you fellows come in. You stick in the quad, and chuck something at his window till he looks out to see what's up. Then I get him."

"Oh!" said Harry dubiously.

"Um!" said Frank Nugent.

"If you're funky, I'll ask another chap!" said the Bounder, with a sneer. "I've asked Skinner already, and he doesn't seem to fancy it. Bunter would do it, only he's such a howling ass. Look here, Wharton! It's up to you! Haven't we agreed to rag Froggy bald-headed for the rest of the term, for getting a Remove man sacked from the school?"

The captain of the Remove nodded.

"Yes—but—"

"Wash out the butts," said the Bounder. "Come on! Mossos's in his study now, and we can catch him."

Harry Wharton and Nugent exchanged a glance, and rose. They were a little dubious. All the Greyfriars Remove were keen enough on ragging Mossos, who had caused the expulsion of a member of the Form. But the Bounder's idea of a rag was rather drastic. A bag of flour bursting on a beak's head was an awfully serious matter, if the deed was traced home to the doers thereof. Still, they were not going to hold back.

"Hold on a minute, you fellows!" Archibald Popper, the new junior, put in a word. "I say, I'd think twice about this, if I were you."

Wharton and Nugent glanced at him. The Bounder gave him an aggressive stare.

"What the dickens has it got to do with you, Popper?" snapped Vernon-

Smith. "What are you barging in for?"

"Well, look here!" said the new junior. "I've only been here a day or two, but I've heard all about that chap Wibley, who was sacked. From what I hear, he was sacked for guying the French master, in some theatrical stunt. Mossos went off at the deep end, and he had to go."

"And we're jolly well going to make Froggy sit up for it, too!" said the Bounder grimly. "We'll make the cheeky little beast understand that he can't get a man sacked in the Remove. Wibley was a bit of a fool—"

"What?"

"In fact, he was a silly ass, and a fat-head! But he was a Remove man, and we're going to make Mossos sorry he's gone! Poor old Wibley couldn't help being a fool—"

"You cheeky ass!" exclaimed the new junior.

"Eh—what? What the dickens do you mean?" exclaimed the Bounder. "You never knew Wibley! You came after he was gone!"

"Oh! Yes! But—" The new junior stammered a little. "I—I mean, from what I've heard of him, Wibley was a very clever chap—"

"He was clever in a amateur theatricals," said Harry Wharton. "Simply wonderful in that line. He could make himself up as almost anybody else, and get away with it. That was the cause of the trouble—making himself up like the French master, and guying Mossos in the Rag. Mossos caught him at it, and all the fat was in the fire."

"But he was a fool in everything else," said the Bounder. "But, fool or not, we're going to make Froggy sit up for getting him sacked, and you can shut up and mind your own bizney, young Popper!"

"Look here——"

"That's enough from you!" snapped the Bounder. "You've got too much to say for a new kid."

"I tell you——"

"And I tell you to shut up! If you put on any swank here, like your fat-headed uncle at Popper Court, you'll get booted! Come on, you fellows!"

"Will you let a chap speak!" exclaimed the new junior. "You listen to me, Wharton, if that fathead won't! I've heard that when Wibley went, he hoped that Froggy might get over his tantrums, and speak a word for him to the Head, and give him a chance of coming back. Well, ragging Mossoo isn't the way to make him get over his tantrums. See?"

"Oh!" said Harry Wharton. "Something in that, Smithy!"

"Rot!" snapped the Bounder. "Wibley's gone, and when a fellow's sacked, he's sacked, and that's that! Wibley talked some rot about staying on here somehow, and not going home, and giving Mossoo time to cool down—he was always talking some silly rot! There was nothing in it, even if he could have done it, and he couldn't! He's gone, and he will never be seen here again——"

"That's all you know!" interjected the new junior.

"Well, I know more about it than a new kid!" yapped the Bounder. "And I don't want any more cheek from you, Popper. Shut up! Come on, you chaps!"

Wharton and Nugent paused for a moment.

They had been rather struck by the new junior's argument.

Certainly, if William Wibley, now an exile from Greyfriars School, still entertained a hope of getting back, that remote chance depended on the French master getting over his "tantrums."

In which case ragging Mossoo was the very worst way of going to work on William Wibley's account.

"Look here, Smithy——" began Nugent.

"Are you coming?" snapped Smithy. "Never mind that cheeky new cad! If Quelch had shoved him in my study, I'd teach him not to put his oar in! Look here! If you're funky, I'll go and ask Bob Cherry, or Bull, or Inky. Coming or not?"

"Oh, all right!"

"Look here, stop!" Archibald Popper interposed, as the two juniors moved towards the door. "You're going to chuck this, Vernon-Smith, I tell you!"

"What?" roared the Bounder.

"The truth is, that you're keen on a row, and you're making Wibley the excuse!" snapped Archibald Popper. "You're always in a row with somebody, and any excuse is good enough for you!"

"Oh, my hat!" grinned Frank Nugent. "Popper's spotted you, Smithy, though he hasn't been here long."

The Bounder's eyes gleamed.

"Are you going to try to stop me, Popper?" he asked, in a tone of angry menace. "Get on with it, if you like!"

"I'm going to!" said Archibald Popper.

He made a stride at the Bounder, and grabbed at the bag of flour in his hand.

Smithy's right came up like a flash. He hit out, straight from the shoulder, landing a terrific jolt on the new junior's chest.

"Ow!" gasped Archibald.

He went over backwards, as if a

cannon ball had struck him. There was a heavy bump as he landed on the study carpet, and a loud tap as the back of his head hit the floor.

The Bounder grinned down at him savagely.

"Get up and have another!" he exclaimed.

The new junior sat up. He clasped his head with both hands. He did not get on his feet. He just sat there, holding his head.

Wharton and Nugent looked at him rather anxiously. The new junior's head had given the floor a hard rap, and from the way he sat clasping it with both hands, it looked as if damage was done.

"Hurt?" asked Harry, stepping towards him.

"Made of putty?" jeered the Bounder derisively.

"Oh, get out!" gasped Archibald Popper. "I'm all right! Leave me alone! Get out of this study, blow you!"

"But if your napper's hurt——" exclaimed Nugent.

"Leave me alone, bother you!"

Archibald Popper sat where he was, clasping his head, his fingers buried in his thick dark hair. But clearly he did not want any help; he only wanted to be left alone.

The Bounder, with a sneering laugh, stepped out into the Remove passage.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent followed him.

William Wibley's skill as an amateur actor has brought about his expulsion from Greyfriars. But it also enables him to put into practice an amazing scheme for getting back!

Not till they were gone did the new junior rise to his feet. Then he stepped quickly to the door, closed it, and turned the key in the lock. Then his hands went to his head again; and had his studymates been still present, they would have jumped at what followed. For the thick, dark brown hair that covered Archibald Popper's head came off in his hands, revealing a close-cropped head of tallow-coloured hair.

Such a sight in any Remove study would have made any Remove man jump clear of the floor with amazement.

"By gum!" breathed the new junior. "If it had come right off—by gum! I shall have to be careful to keep out of scrapping—by gum!"

And, taking a small bottle of adhesive fluid from his waistcoat pocket, "Archibald Popper" dabbed the interior of the wig, and replaced it on his head, adjusting it carefully before the glass.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Too Late for Tea!

BILLY BUNTER dabbed the back of a fat hand hastily over a large mouth, and blinked guiltily through his big spectacles.

Bunter was seated in the armchair in Study No. 7 in the Remove.

The door of that study opened to admit Peter Todd.

It was tea-time in the Remove, and Toddy had come in to tea.

He glanced at the fat figure in the armchair and frowned.

"Lazybones!" he grunted

"Oh, really, Toddy——"

"If you're sticking in the study, you fat slacker, you might have got tea ready while I was at the cricket!" yapped Peter.

"Oh, I—I was just going to!" gasped Bunter, with another dab at his mouth. "But, I—I say, Toddy, ain't you tea-ing out to-day along with Dutton?"

"No, fathead! Dutton's gone to tea with Mauly, and I'm tea-ing here," said Peter. "Get up and lend a hand, if you want any!"

"I—I say, Peter, wait a minute!" exclaimed Bunter, as his studymate turned towards the cupboard. "I say, I've been wanting to speak to you, old chap! I—I want to ask your advice, old fellow!"

"If it's about the lines for Mossoo, I advise you to get them done," said Peter. "Mossoo's fearfully shirty these days, and he will want to see them."

"Tain't that! I say, Peter, you've seen that new chap who calls himself Popper——"

"Which?" Peter Todd turned from the cupboard door and fixed his eyes on the fat Owl of the Remove. "What do you mean, fathead? I've seen that new kid Popper, if that's what you mean."

"That's the chap I mean," said Bunter, blinking at Peter seriously through his big spectacles. "Well, I want you to advise me what to do about it."

"Eh?"

"You see, he ain't Popper!" said Bunter.

"He ain't Popper?" said Peter Todd blankly. "Popper ain't Popper? Mad?"

"I've spotted him!" explained Bunter. "He ain't himself at all—I mean to say, he's somebody else—see?"

"Not quite!" said Peter Todd. "I don't think I should see that, fatty, even if you lent me your specs! Does insanity run in your family?"

"I say, Peter, I mean it! I've told Wharton, and he only laughed. But it's an absolute certainty!" said Bunter impressively. "You see, I've seen Sir Hilton Popper's nephew, and this chap ain't a bit like him. He's a spoofer—an impostor! Ain't it awful, Peter?"

Peter Todd gazed at his fat studymate. He did not seem to think that it was awful. He seemed to be wondering whether Billy Bunter was wandering in his fat mind.

"I'll tell you how it is, Toddy," went on Bunter, while Peter gazed at him blankly. "The other day I took a short cut across Popper Court woods, and ran into the old buffer——"

"Who?"

"Sir Hilton Popper, you know. He had his nephew with him—chap named Archibald, a red-headed chap. I heard him call him Archibald, you know, and he called him uncle——"

"He called his nephew uncle?"

"No, you ass! Archibald called the old buffer uncle! So there was no doubt about it—see? Well, I got clear of old Popper, but young Popper chased me, kicking me all the way to the gate."

Billy Bunter gave a reminiscent wriggle.

"Well, when I heard that young Popper had come to Greyfriars, I was going to chip him about his ginger hair—see?—because the beast booted me," went on Bunter; "and it turns out that he hasn't red hair at all. And he ain't like young Popper in looks, either. Young Popper's like old Popper, with a beaky nose. This chap ain't like him at all. He ain't the same chap, Peter."

"Oh, my hat!" said Peter.

"Nobody knows but me," said Bunter.

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"I've told two or three fellows, but they only laughed."

"No wonder!" commented Peter.

"But the chap ain't the chap!" said Bunter. "I don't know who he is, but he ain't himself—I'm certain of that! You see, I saw him with old Popper, and noticed that he had red hair. You've seen the new chap, Peter. Has he got red hair?"

"No," said Peter.

"Then what would you advise me to do, Peter?"

"Get some new specs!" said Peter.

"Eh?"

"If you see red hair where there isn't any with those specs, it's time you had some new ones!"

"You silly ass!" roared Bunter. "I say, Peter, it's true! I tell you that that chap ain't old Popper's nephew at all! I was going to call him 'Ginger,' because he booted me, and he ain't ginger at all, and he ain't the same chap that booted me, either."

"I dare say he will set that right if he hears you spinning a yarn like this about him," said Peter. "He will boot you fast enough."

"Oh, don't be a fathead!" yapped Bunter. "I can't leave it where it is, can I, Peter? That chap makes out he's old Popper's nephew. He ain't! We all heard that Sir Hilton Popper's nephew was coming to the school a week or more ago, but he hasn't come, Peter. This chap has come. He calls himself Popper. He ain't Popper at all! I say, Peter, do you think he's murdered young Popper, and pinched his box and things—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Peter.

Billy Bunter blinked at him in astonishment.

He had not expected that dramatic and tragic suggestion to cause Peter Todd to yell with laughter.

But it did.

Peter fairly howled.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" yapped Bunter. "I tell you he ain't Popper—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So where is Popper?" demanded Bunter. "If this chap has murdered him and hidden the body somewhere, it ain't a laughing matter, Peter Todd!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Peter. He seemed to think that it was.

"If you mean that you don't believe me, Toddy—"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Peter. "Not quite, old fat man! Hardly! Scarcely! Not a fearful lot! You see, you're as blind as an owl, and as fatheaded as they make 'em, and you fancied the red hair, if you saw young Popper at all; and, as you say you did, the probability is that you didn't—"

"Beast!"

"Now chuck it!" said Peter. "I want my tea! Lend a hand—"

"But, I say, Peter, I tell you that Popper ain't Popper at all! Can I let it go on?" demanded Bunter. "Think I ought to go to Quelch about it, Peter—or the Head?"

"It's a funny story, old fat man, but don't tell it twice!" said Peter. "Chuck it now, and let's have tea!"

Peter Todd turned towards the study cupboard again. Evidently he did not believe a word of Bunter's startling statement that Popper, the new boy in the Greyfriars Remove, was not Popper at all. Really, such a statement wanted some believing.

"I say, Peter, never mind tea yet."

"I'm hungry, fathead! Aren't you?" demanded Peter. "You're generally hungry enough, and a little over! Look here, go and fill the kettle, while I get the grub out!"

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"Oh, all right!" Bunter heaved himself out of the armchair. "I say, Peter, don't open that door for a minute! I mean, where's the kettle? I say, can you see the kettle, Peter?"

"There it is in the fender, under your silly nose, you owl!" answered Peter, turning from the cupboard door to point.

"Oh! So—so—so it is!" stammered Bunter. "I say, pip-pip-pick it up for me, old chap!"

"Can't you pick up a kettle?" roared Peter.

"Oh, yes—no! I—I mean, don't get the things out of the cupboard for a minute, old chap! I—I'll be back in a—a—jiffy!"

Billy Bunter grabbed the kettle, and started for the study doorway.

Peter Todd, with sudden suspicion, stepped in his way.

"What have you been up to?" he demanded.

"Eh? Nothing, old chap!"

"You've got jam on your chivvy!" roared Peter.

"Have—have I, old chap? I—I had jam at brekker, old fellow!" stammered Bunter. "I say, let a chap pass! I—I want to fill this kettle!"

"If you've scoffed the grub—"

"Oh, really, Toddy! As if I'd touch the jam!" exclaimed Billy Bunter indignantly. "I don't care much for jam. There wasn't much, either, only a pound pot—"

"Then you've had it?" yelled Peter.

"No!" roared Bunter. "I haven't touched it! I didn't know there was any jam there. There wasn't any when I looked into the cupboard. Besides, I haven't looked in the cupboard. Why should I? I say, let me go and fill this kettle!"

"You—you—you—" gasped Peter.

"I say, you'll find the jam there all right, Peter! If you think I was telling you about Popper to keep you from looking in the cupboard, you're jolly well mistaken! I say, Toddy, let me go and fill this kettle, while you get out the—the jam—"

Peter Todd made a jump to the study cupboard, grabbed open the door, and glared therein. Bunter made a jump for the doorway. Peter needed only one glance into the cupboard; then he turned, and made another jump—at Bunter!

The fat Owl was leaping through the doorway.

Peter's foot shot out, and landed on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars, as he leaped.

Bump!

Clang!

"Yaroo!"

Billy Bunter landed in the passage, in a heap. The kettle clanged beside him.

Peter leaped out after him, and grabbed up the kettle.

Bang, bang, bang!

"Oh crikey! Yaroo!" roared Bunter, as the kettle banged on his fat head. "Oh! Whoop! Leave off, you beast! I never had the—yaroo! —jam! I never had the cake! I never had the— Who-hoop!"

Bang! Clang! Bang!

"Ow! Oh crumbs! Yaroo!"

Billy Bunter squirmed to his feet, and fled down the Remove passage. He roared as he fled. Peter Todd brandished a dented kettle after him.

"Stop, you fat bloater! Come back, you frowsy frump! I haven't finished yet! I'm going to bust this kettle on you!" he roared.

But Billy Bunter did not stop. If Peter had not finished, Bunter had.

Bunter disappeared down the Remove staircase, leaving Peter brandishing the kettle.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Remove Rag!

THUMP!

"Entez!" rapped Monsieur Charpentier.

Thump!

"Mon Dieu! Zat you entair!"

Thump!

For the third time, there came a heavy thump at the French master's study door.

Monsieur Charpentier—variously termed Mossoo and Froggy at Greyfriars—breathed hard as he rose to his feet.

Mossoo was seated by his study window, enjoying the sunshine of July while he read a letter from one of his many relatives in la belle France. The window was not open. Most windows at Greyfriars School were as wide open as possible that hot July afternoon; but Mossoo, in the way of his countrymen, had no liking for fresh air.

The thumping at the door interrupted his perusal of the letter from his native land. At the first thump Mossoo supposed that somebody was coming in, and had knocked with unusual vigour. At the second thump he was puzzled. At the third he understood, and his eyes gleamed, and his little, pointed black beard bristled with wrath. It was a "rag."

The door remained shut; but he knew that it was a Remove junior on the other side. Mossoo did not need telling that.

Ever since William Wibley of the Remove had been expelled from the school, Mossoo had been at war with the Remove.

In the French class they ragged him as he had never been ragged before—though poor Mossoo was rather used to rags in class. But outside classes they ragged, which was rather a new thing.

Only that afternoon Mossoo had nearly sat in a sea of gum in his armchair. But for the fact that he had wheeled the armchair to the sunny window, and the glimmering gum had caught the sunshine, he would indubitably have sat in it. He had wiped it away with a duster—with deep feelings.

And now some reckless young rascal was thumping at his study door.

With gleaming eyes Mossoo rose to his feet, and grabbed a cane from his table.

But at the creak of his chair, as he rose, there was a sound of scampering feet in the passage. The ragger was gone.

Monsieur Charpentier sat down again, his face set with anger. He laid down the cane, and resumed the perusal of the letter from France.

Gradually his brow cleared as he read the news from home—news of little Adolphe, and little Henri, and little Henriette, and a host of other nephews and nieces to whom he was not "Froggy," but "l'oncle Henri."

Thump!

It came so suddenly, and so loudly, that it made Mossoo bound.

"Mon Dieu! Mais c'en est trop!" gasped Mossoo, and he leaped up, grabbed the cane, and rushed to the door.

Scampering footsteps receded as he rushed.

He dragged open the door, and popped into the passage.

No one was to be seen. The ragger had escaped in time.

Breathing hard, Monsieur Charpentier shut the door, and returned to his seat at the window.

Three minutes elapsed, and then—
Thump! Scamper!
"Ciel!" gasped Monsieur Charpentier.

He tore to the door, tore it open, and rushed out again, brandishing the cane.

But again the ragger had escaped. Only an empty passage met Mossoo's infuriated eyes.

He stood gasping with wrath. Instead of re-entering his study this time, the French master whisked along the

dow. A few more minutes, and calmness supervened, and he almost forgot the rag.

He was reminded of it, suddenly.

Thump, thump, thump!

Scamper!

"Ciel!" breathed Mossoo, as he rose again.

He stepped to the door, but this time he did not open it. With great artfulness, Monsieur Charpentier posted himself just inside the door, and waited!

Four times in succession, young rascals of the Remove had tiptoed down the passage to that door,

grip was on the collar of that fat figure.

Billy Bunter gave a startled yell.

"Ow! I say, leggo—"

"Buntair! Co gros garçon! Vous!" hissed Monsieur Charpentier. "Come viz me! I take you to ze Head! Venez, done!"

"I—I say, sir—" gasped Bunter.

"Venez!" roared Monsieur Charpentier, and he fairly dragged the spluttering Owl of the Remove along the passage.

"Urrgh! Leggo! I say—oh crikey! Leggo! Oooogh!" gurgled Bunter as he went.



Peter Todd got busy with the kettle. Bang, bang, bang! "Oh crikey! Yarooop!" roared Bunter, as the kettle banged on his fat head. "Oh! Whoop! Leave off, you beast! I never had the—yarooop!—jam! I never had the cake! I never had the—who-hooooop!" Bang! Clang! Bang!

passage to the study belonging to Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove.

He rapped at Quelch's door, hurled it open, and rushed in.

"Monsieur Quelch! Je vous dis, zis is of ze too much!" spluttered Monsieur Charpentier. "I tell you, sair, I vill have no more of zis! Zose boys of your Form, sair, zey make ze bang at ze door of ze most terrible, and zen zey fly—et je demande—"

Monsieur Charpentier, in his angry excitement, had got that far before he perceived that the study was unoccupied.

Quelch was not there!

Really, Mossoo might have guessed that one had he been less excitable. The hardiest spirits in the Remove would hardly have ragged in Masters' Passage, had Mr. Quelch been in his study. It was fairly certain that the young rascals had made sure that Quelch had gone out before they started.

"Nom d'un nom!" snapped Mossoo. And he retired from Quelch's study, and returned to his own.

He slammed the door with a slam that rang the length of the passage.

Once more he sat down at the win-

thumped, and scuttled off before he could spot them. He did not doubt that there was more to come. Next time he was going to whip open the door instantly there was a knock, and grab the offender before he had time to escape. And that offender was going to be marched off to the headmaster, with Mossoo's grip on his collar. A Head's flogging would be a lesson that the Remove raggers would not be likely to forget in a hurry.

Breathing fury, Mossoo waited, and listened.

There was a footstep in the passage a few minutes later. His eyes gleamed and glittered.

On the previous occasions he had not heard the raggers coming. This time he heard footsteps.

He reached the door-handle, and held it in readiness to open the instant the knock came. He waited, rather like a tiger crouching for a spring.

Knock!

Instantly Mossoo wrenched the door open, and leaped out like a tiger from his lair. He crashed into a fat figure outside the door. In a split second his

"Mauvais garçon! You rag, isn't it?" hissed Mossoo. "Vat you call one rag, mauvais garçon! Mon Dieu!"

"Ow! I didn't—I wasn't—I never—"

"Venes, gros garçon."

"Ow! Leggo!"

But Monsieur Charpentier did not let go. Wriggling, Billy Bunter was marched off to Dr. Locke's study in the grasp of the enraged and exasperated Mossoo, gasping and spluttering wildly as he went.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Surprise for Mr. Quelch!

"CHERRY!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Bob Cherry.

He coloured. Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamsset Ram Singh, who were with him, looked a little self-conscious.

The three juniors were coming out of the House, as Mr. Quelch, master of the Remove, came in. They met their Form-master face to face; and it rather startled them.

Mr. Quelch, who had been walking in

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the quad, did not, of course, know that those three members of his Form had, only a few minutes ago, been engaged in a "rag" on the French master.

They had!

They had delivered the thumps at Mossos's door—Johnny Bull once, Inky once, and Bob twice! After which they had decided to call it a day, as it were, and keep off the grass. Considering how they had been occupied, only a few minutes ago, they could not help a guilty feeling as they almost ran into their Form-master.

From the point of view of the Removites, it was up to them to avenge poor old Wibley's disaster. But they did not, of course, expect Mr. Quelch to see it in that light.

"Have you done your lines for Monsieur Charpentier, Cherry?" asked Mr. Quelch, to the relief of the three. Evidently Quelch had no suspicion of the rag. It was upon quite another subject that he had stopped them to speak.

"Oh! No, sir," said Bob.

"Have you written your French imposition, Bull?"

"No, sir!" growled Johnny Bull.

"And you, Hurree Singh?"

"No, esteemed sahib!"

Mr. Quelch frowned.

"Monsieur Charpentier has reported to me, that lines given to boys of my Form, have not been handed in to him," he said. "I must ask you why the lines have not been written."

The three juniors exchanged glances. During the latest rag in the French class—avenging the hapless Wibley—Mossos had gone completely off at the deep end, and showered lines on the class like the falling leaves in autumn.

That would not have mattered much, if he had omitted to ask for them to be shown up, as was generally the case—for Mossos, as a rule, recovered very quickly from his "tantrums," and let offenders off very lightly.

But since the affair of Wibley, Mossos had been a changed Mossos! Incessant raggings had not mollified his temper. Before he had time to recover from one, there was another and another. Mossos in these days had become as fast as Hacker, the master of the Shell—who had hitherto had the distinction of being the worst-tempered master at Greyfriars. And so, instead of forgetting to ask for lines, he had not only asked for them, but reported to the Remove master that the imposts remained unwritten, in spite of his demands. Which meant that Quelch's cane would be featured in the next item on the programme.

"Well?" rapped Mr. Quelch.

His frown intensified. He was aware of the deep resentment in his Form following the expulsion of William Wibley. To a certain extent, he sympathised. He was annoyed with the French master for having insisted upon that drastic sentence, thus leaving the Head no choice in the matter. But discipline was discipline! Fellows could not refuse to obey orders, howsoever resentful they might feel.

"It is now several days since the lines were given out!" said Mr. Quelch, in a deep voice. "I require an explanation at once!"

"Well, sir, there's such an awful lot!" said Bob.

Johnny Bull gave a grunt.

"We can't stay out of class to write lines, sir," he said, "and we're not allowed to cut prep! I don't know where a fellow's supposed to find the time to write lines by the thousand."

Mr. Quelch started a little.

"Nonsense, Bull!" he said sharply. "What do you mean by that? How

many lines has Monsieur Charpentier given you?"

"A thousand, sir! And in French!"

"How many lines have been given you, Cherry?" asked Mr. Quelch, compressing his lips.

"Fifteen hundred, sir."

"Wha-a-t?" Mr. Quelch almost gasped. "Are you jesting, Cherry?"

"No, sir!"

"How many lines have been given you, Hurree Singh?"

"Five hundred, esteemed sir."

"And Smithy's got two thousand, and Wharton's got twelve hundred, and a lot of fellows have a thousand each!" growled Johnny Bull. "And, as our Form-master, sir, I hope you'll tell us how we're to get through them."

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips harder.

His annoyance was intense.

Lines were generally handed out in a hundred, or two hundred at a time. In awfully serious cases, five hundred might be given—but that was very exceptional.

It was clear that Monsieur Charpentier, in a state of passionate wrath, had showered out lines that could not possibly be written, by fellows who had plenty of other occupations for their time.

It was unpleasant for Mr. Quelch, for, as the Form-master concerned, it was up to him to see that the tasks were done—and to cane the offenders if the tasks were not done.

"I will speak to Monsieur Charpentier," said Mr. Quelch, after a pause. "I was certainly unaware that the impositions were so exceptionally heavy! I will see the French master on the subject."

The three juniors went out into the quad, and Mr. Quelch walked up Masters' Passage.

He did not go to his own study. He went to Monsieur Charpentier's. This awkward matter had to be settled at once.

Obviously, such impositions could not be written.

Severe master as he was, Quelch was the man to see justice done to his Form. Monsieur Charpentier had the right to impose lines for faults in the French class, on any boy in any Form; and to report the boy to his Form-master if the lines were not written. But he had no right to impose lines on this absurd scale.

The matter was awkward—Quelch did not want trouble with a colleague on the staff. But these impots were going to be reduced: and Quelch was going to see that they were reduced. And if Mossoo refused to reduce them, Quelch was going to tell him, point blank, that he would not allow such ridiculous impositions to be written by boys of his Form.

His mind was quite made up on that subject: and his lips were set in a tight line as he arrived at the French master's study.

The door was ajar, and Mr. Quelch tapped on it, pushed it open, and entered. He set his lips still harder as he saw that the study was vacant. Monsieur Charpentier was not there. Only a few minutes ago, Mr. Quelch, from the quad, had seen him sitting at his window, reading. Now he was gone.

It was extremely irritating; for, having an unpleasant task to perform, Mr. Quelch naturally wanted to get it over.

On the chair by the window, lay the letter that Mossoo had been reading. That looked as if he had been called away suddenly from the study—and would probably be returning soon. Mr. Quelch decided to wait for him.

He waited.

He did not sit down. He leaned his tall and angular figure on the mantelpiece while he waited.

Tap, tap!

Mr. Quelch, already in a state of annoyance, glanced round very irritably at that tapping sound at the window.

It sounded like a woodpecker, but evidently it was not a woodpecker. He wondered irritably what it was.

Tap!

Mr. Quelch's eyes gleamed.

He knew now!

Tap, tap!

Some fellow, out in the quad, was pitching pellets against the glass, causing that irritating tap. A pea-shooter, or perhaps a catapult, was being used. Anyhow, tiny pellets were tapping on the panes from without.

It was, of course, a "rag." Quelch knew that at once; and he had no doubt that boys of his Form were concerned. It was due to their resentment of Wibley's expulsion. He was well aware that there had been an unusual amount of ragging, with the French master as the victim, since William Wibley had gone.

Tap, tap!

He stepped to the window, threw up the sash, and put his head out, in the hope of spotting the fellow who was pelting the window.

What happened next was unexpected. It took Mr. Quelch utterly by surprise.

Readers

PLEASE NOTE

that owing to the August Bank Holiday the next issue of The MAGNET will be on sale FRIDAY, July 30th.

As his head was put out of the window, and his gimlet eyes swept the quad, something crashed on his head from above—and burst!

It was a paper bag—packed with flour! It burst open instantly as it dropped on the top of Quelch's head.

"Oooooogh!" spluttered Mr. Quelch.

Smothered with flour, he staggered back into the study. Flour crowned him, flour smothered him—it was thick on his mortar-board, it filled his ears, it mingled with his hair, it streamed down his neck, it smothered all over his gown. Utterly amazed, almost wondering whether he was dreaming, Mr. Quelch tottered—in the midst of a world of flour.

"Oooooogh!" he gasped. "Urrrrghh! Ooooooch! Wurrghh!"

The Bouncer, in the room above, had got his man—though, rather unfortunately, it was the wrong man!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

All Right for Bunter!

DR. LOCKE, the headmaster of Greyfriars, raised his eyes—and his eyebrows—as his study door opened after a hurried knock, and Monsieur Charpentier burst in—jerking Billy Bunter by the collar.

The headmaster's eyebrows rose so expressively at the sight that they seemed almost about to pop over his head.

A calm and dignified headmaster did not approve of hectic excitement on the part of a member of his staff. And Mossoo was fearfully excited.

"Zat you come in, Buntair!" panted Mossoo. "Ecoutez! I make you to come to ze Head, n'est-ce-pas?"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

Billy Bunter, in point of fact, did not know why Mossoo had collared him, did not know why he was dragged off to the Head's study, and was in a state of bewildered astonishment and indignation.

He had had no share in the rag at Mossoo's door—he did not even know that Bob Cherry, Hurree Singh, and Johnny Bull had been delivering runaway thumps at that door. They had "chucked" it and walked away before Bunter arrived on the spot, to fall into Mossoo's clutches.

So the bewildered Owl could make nothing at all of this, unless Mossoo had suddenly gone out of his senses!

What, indeed, was any fellow to think, when he came to a master's study with an excuse about his lines, and that master suddenly popped out on him, grabbed him by the collar, and marched him away?

But whether Mossoo had suddenly gone insane or not, Bunter did not want to see the Head. He never wanted to see the Head. There were too many sins on Billy Bunter's fat conscience for him ever to feel quite comfortable in the presence of his headmaster.

He hung back at the door.

But Mossoo was not to be denied. He fairly wrenched the fat junior into the study, and landed him, like a fat fish, on the carpet, in front of the Head's writing-table, where Dr. Locke majestically sat.

"Monsieur Charpentier!" said Dr. Locke, in a cold, even voice, "may I request you to calm yourself?"

"Mais—" gasped Mossoo.

"Kindly release that junior's collar."

"Zat garcon—"

"I must point out to you, Monsieur, that that is not the way in which a Greyfriars boy should be brought into the presence of his headmaster," said Dr. Locke icily.

"Mais ce garcon—" panted Mossoo.

He released Bunter's collar, and the fat junior, gasping, backed away from him.

"I—I say—" gasped Bunter. "I—I say, you keep off! I say, sir, you make him keep off!"

"Silence, Bunter! Monsieur Charpentier, kindly tell me at once why you have brought this Remove boy to me."

"It is one, zat you call rag!" panted Monsieur Charpentier. "I sit viz myself in ze study, and zere come one zump at ze door—"

"One what?" ejaculated the Head.

"One zump—one loud zump of ze most terrible—"

"Oh! A thump!"

"Mais ouil! Zat is zat I say—one zump! I rush to ze door, and zere is no vun! I sit down vunce more viz myself, and vunce again zere is one verree terrible zump at ze door! I run—I fly—but zere is no vun—"

Dr. Locke frowned.

"I understand!" he said. "And this boy—"

"I catch him!" gasped Mossoo. "Zere is zump and zump and zump, toujours zere is zump, but ze garcon he run, he go, he disappear viz himself, ven zat I get to ze door! So I vait inside, and ven zat he come vunce more, I open ze door and I jump, I pop, I bound—"

"Bunter! How dare you—"

"I didn't!" shrieked Bunter. "I wasn't! I never!"

"Mais, silence, done!" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier. "Is it not zat I catch you in ze act, mauvais garcon?"

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Quatre fois—four times zero is zump, zump—and zen I catch zat Buntair—”

“I wasn’t” yelled Bunter. “I never—I—”

“I bring zat mauvais garçon to you, sair! I zink zat one flogging vill make zose bad boys zink vunce or twice before zat zey play zo trick on me!” gasped Mossoo.

“I didn’t!” shrieked Bunter.

“Bunter! Do you deny that you knocked at Monsieur Charpentier’s door?” demanded the Head sternly.

“Oh, no! Of course I knocked,” gasped Bunter. “A chap has to knock at a master’s door, sir, before he goes in, hasn’t he?”

“Oh! Certainly! But—” Dr. Locke paused. “Monsieur Charpentier, I understand you to say that there was a series of runaway knocks at your study door—”

“Mais oui! Zump, zump, zump—”

“You are sure that Bunter was taking part in this disrespectful trick?”

“I catch him in ze act.”

“I didn’t!” spluttered Bunter. “I never! Oh lor’! I never knew there was a rag, sir— Oh crikey—”

“Why did you go to Monsieur Charpentier’s study, Bunter?”

“I had to go about my lines, sir!” gasped Bunter. “I’ve got hundreds of lines, like all the fellows, and I—I haven’t done them, sir! And Toddy said I’d better do them, because Mossoo was fearfully shirty—”

“Wha-a-t?”

“Fearfully shirty, sir!” gasped Bunter.

“Please do not use such expressions in speaking to your headmaster, Bunter.”

“Oh! Yes, sir! I mean, no, sir! I mean, that’s what Toddy said, sir, so I—I thought I’d go to Mossoo, sir, and explain why I hadn’t done my lines, before he jawed to Quelch—I—I mean, before he mentioned it to Quelch—”

“You went to Monsieur Charpentier’s study to speak to him about an imposition given in the French class, Bunter?”

“Yes, sir! I—I didn’t want Quelch on my track—I—I mean, I—I didn’t want my Form-master to be bothered about it, sir—”

“Mon Dieu!” murmured Monsieur Charpentier in dismay.

He realised that he had acted a little hastily. Ragers had thumped at his door, one after another—and he had taken the next comer for another ragger. But really any fellow might have come to his study!

“Then you took no part in this—hem!—rag, Bunter?” asked the Head.

“No, sir!” gasped Bunter. “I never knew there was a rag!”

“Then why did you suppose that Monsieur Charpentier brought you to me, Bunter?” asked Dr. Locke, with a searching look at the fat Owl.

“I thought he’d gone balmy, sir.”

“What?”

“Balmy, sir! I mean, potty!”

“You mean what?” gasped the Head.

“I—I mean, batty, sir! That is, batchy!” stammered Bunter. “Wonky in the crumpe, sir!”

“Silence, you absurd boy! Monsieur Charpentier, you tell me that certain unknown persons thumped loudly at your door—”

“Ze loud and terrible zumps—”

“Did Bunter thump loudly in the same manner, or did he knock in the usual way?”

“Oh!” gasped Mossoo! “It is true zat Buntair did not zump like ze ozzers. No; he knock. But I zink—”

“It appears, sir, that there is a mistake,” said the Head coldly. “I am quite satisfied with this junior’s explanation.”

It appears that he came to your study to speak about certain lines that you had given him, and knocked in the usual way, knowing nothing of what had happened before he arrived. You seem to have jumped to a very hasty conclusion, monsieur.”

Poor Mossoo had already realised that!

Ragers after ragers had come and gone, and he had pounced on a fellow who had nothing to do with the rag. That was as clear to him now as to the Head.

He stammered, his face crimson with discomfort and mortification.

“Are you satisfied, Monsieur Charpentier?” asked the Head grimly.

“Mais oui!” gasped Mossoo. “Certainement! Je me trompe—I deceive myself—”

“Bunter, you may go!”

Billy Bunter rolled from the Head’s study. He grinned as he closed the door. It was all right for Bunter; it was not all right for Mossoo. The fat Owl was quite aware that Mossoo was going to get a few well-chosen words from his chief before he got away.

Which was very agreeable to Bunter, if not to Mossoo. He rolled down the passage, grinning.

Mossoo was not grinning when he emerged from the Head’s study a few minutes later. He was perspiring. He mopped his damp brow as he meandered back to his own study.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Floury!

“U RRRRRGGGH!”

“Nom d’un nom!” gasped Mossoo.

He stood in his study doorway, staring at a strange, startling figure within, his eyes almost popping from his head.

“Gurrgh!” came a gurgling gasp from that strange figure.

“Mais, qu’est-ce qui-c’est?” gasped Mossoo.

“Wurrrrgh! Ooooooh!”

“La farine!” breathed Monsieur Charpentier. “C’est de la farine! Flour! Zat is flour!”

“Grooooooh!”

The floury figure in the study gasped and gurgled and spluttered and puffed and blew, and grabbed wildly at flour.

“Mais qui—” gasped Mossoo.

For the moment he did not recognise the Remove master. Mr. Quelch was too thoroughly disguised by flour. Flour clothed him like a garment. Flour showered round him, as he gasped and spluttered and grabbed and clawed.

Quelch’s face could not be seen under the flour. Could it have been seen, its expression would have been startling. Under the flour it was crimson with fury. Seldom, or never, had Henry Samuel Quelch been so terribly enraged.

“But vat is all zis?” exclaimed Mossoo. “Vat it shall mean? Who are you, monsieur? And vy for you smozzer yourself wiz la farine—viz ze flour?”

“Uuuuurrgh!” gasped Mr. Quelch. A good deal of flour had got into his mouth, and it rendered speech a little difficult. “I—urrgh!—grooooh!—I am smothered with—with flour! It—it appears to be—to be flour! It has been—woooooh!—dropped on my—grooooh!—head! Urrgh!”

“Is zat Monsieur Quelch?” gasped Mossoo. “Oui, I zink zat it is Monsieur Quelch! You drop zat flour on your head, sair? Mais je vous demande, vy for you drop zat flour on your head?”

“Do not be nonsensical, sir!” spluttered Mr. Quelch, through the flour. “This—this flour was dropped on my head as I looked from the—gurrgh!”

“From vat?” gasped Mossoo.

“From the window. Someone must have been at the window above—gurrgh!—with a bag of flour—urrgh! No doubt it was intended for you, Monsieur Charpentier. But I came here to speak to you, and—wurrrgh!”

“Mon Dieu!” gasped Mossoo. “Ciel! Ze is a trick of ze most disrespectful!”

“The perpetrator will suffer for it, sir!” gasped Mr. Quelch. “He shall be—urrgh!—flogged—gurrgh!”

He dabbed flour from his hair, his eyes, his nose, his ears. The study was spotted and splattered with white.

Monsieur Charpentier stared at him in horror, but with a faint smile dawning on his face.

This had happened in his study, and there could be no doubt that it was intended for him, though Quelch had unfortunately got it. It was one more move in the Remove warfare, and but for the circumstances that Mr. Quelch had dropped in to speak to him during his brief absence, Mossoo would have bagged the flour. Quelch had bagged it, and the result was likely to be serious for the Form that had declared war on Mossoo.

Mr. Quelch gave him a floury glare. He detected that lurking smile.

“You are amused, sir!” he spluttered.

“Mais non, non, jamais!” gasped Mossoo. “Pas du tout! I am shock—I am dismay! Zis is one outrage of ze most terrible—”

“Pah!”

Mr. Quelch whisked doorward.

Monsieur Charpentier hopped actively out of his way. He did not want any of the flour.

The Remove master left a white trail behind him as he went. When he was gone, Monsieur Charpentier smiled again—more broadly. He was shocked and he was sympathetic; but undoubtedly Mr. Quelch’s aspect, as a pillar of flour, had its absurd side. And there was something amusing—to Mossoo, if not to Mr. Quelch—in the young rascals of the Remove getting their own Form-master, in mistake for the French master, with that bag of flour. It was possible that the outcome might make them fed-up with their feud with Froggy.

Mr. Quelch hurried away, trailing flour behind him.

His first thought was to seek the perpetrator of the awful outrage in the room above. But he realised at once that there was no chance of that.

Minutes had passed, and seconds were enough for that young rascal, whoever he was. He was not likely to have lingered after dropping the bag of flour on the head at the window below. Stern justice on that iniquitous young rascal had to wait.

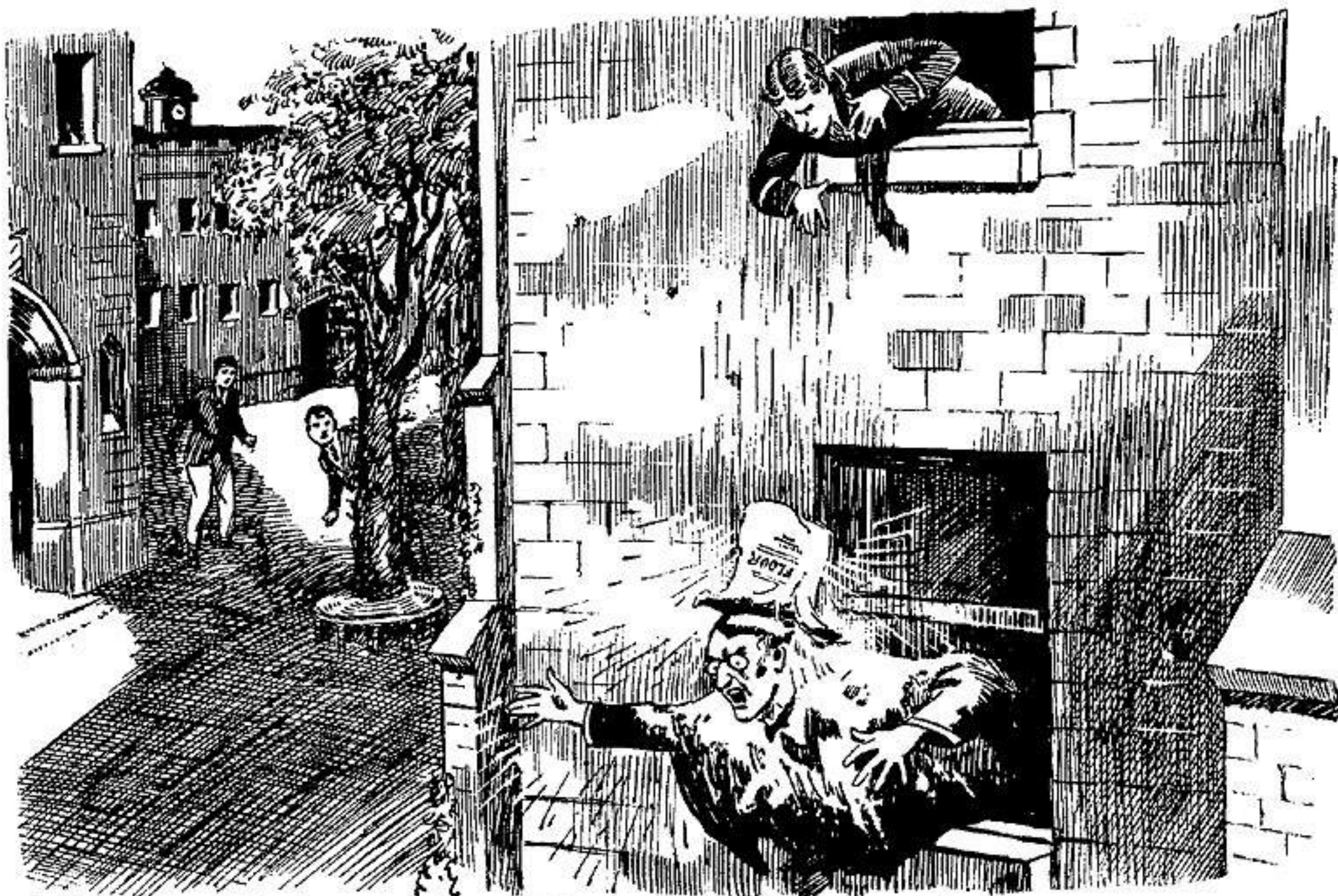
Quelch was chiefly in need of a wash and a change. Under the flour his cheeks burned at the idea of being seen about the House in this state.

Strewing flour as he went, he hurried away to his own quarters.

“Oh crikey!” There was a loud and startled squeak from Billy Bunter, the first to spot the floury Form-master. “Who—who—what’s that?”

The fat Owl stared at Mr. Quelch with his eyes almost popping through his spectacles.

Quelch breathed wrath. His study was on the ground floor, but his rooms were on the floor above, and he had to go up the first staircase. To do so he had to run the gauntlet of many eyes.



As Mr. Quelch put his head out of the window, and his gimlet eye swept the quad, something crashed on his head from above—and burst! It was a paper bag—packed with flour. It burst open instantly as it dropped on the top of the Remove master's head. "Ooooooh!" spluttered Mr. Quelch.

He brushed angrily past Bunter, leaving the fat junior sneezing from a whiff of flour.

"Atchhhooo!" sneezed Bunter. "I say—aytishoo!—who—shoo! Shoo-oo!"

"Bless my soul!" It was Mr. Prout's deep boom. The Fifth Form master was standing at the foot of the stairs, speaking to Blundell of his Form. Both of them stared in amazement at the floury Form-master. "Who—what—"

"Is that Mr. Quelch?" gasped Blundell of the Fifth.

"Quelch!" boomed Prout. "My dear Quelch! My dear fellow, has anything happened—"

"Cannot you see that something has happened, Mr. Prout?" snorted the Remove master. His temper was failing him.

"Really, Quelch—"

"Urrrrgh!"

Quelch whisked up the stairs, leaving Mr. Prout and the captain of the Fifth staring.

Coker of the Fifth, coming down, met him face to face, and gave a roar.

"Oh crumbs! Who's that? Ha, ha, ha!"

Quelch whisked on, leaving Coker roaring.

Temple and Dabney, of the Fourth, were on the landing. They jumped at the sight of the whitened figure that tore by.

"What the dooce—" gasped Temple.

"Who the thump—" stuttered Dabney.

Quelch whisked on, scattering flour.

"I say, you fellows, it's Quelch!" squeaked Billy Bunter, from below. "I say, it's my beak, smothered with flour! He, he, he!"

Mr. Quelch rushed to his room. Generally Quelch's movements were

leisurely, indeed stately, as became a Form-master of his years. Now he fairly raced. He did the upper passage to his room as if it were the cinder-path, only anxious to get out of sight before more eyes fell upon him in that ghastly state.

It was unfortunate that Mr. Hacker, the master of the Shell, stepped out of his room as the Remove master came careering by.

Quelch, of course, was not aware that Hacker was just going to step out. Hacker, of course, had not the faintest idea that a floury Form-master was coming up the passage like a runaway war-horse. They met unexpectedly.

Crash!

Bump!

"What—" roared Hacker, as he sprawled.

"Ooooooh!" gasped Quelch, as he sprawled over the master of the Shell.

"What—what—who—who—upon my word—what fool—what lunatic—what dolt—" gasped Mr. Hacker.

"Oooh! I—I—I am sorry, Hacker!" spluttered Mr. Quelch, as he detached himself from Hacker's waistcoat. "I—I did not see you! I—I—ooooh!"

"Is that Quelch?" Hacker sat up. "Good gad, sir, you have winded me—you have smothered me with flour! In the name of all that is senseless, Quelch, why are you racing about the House in that extraordinary state? I have a right to ask you, Quelch, what you mean—what you can possibly mean—by these inexplicable antics?" howled Mr. Hacker.

Mr. Quelch did not stop to explain. He circumnavigated Hacker, and rushed on to his own room.

The door slammed after him, with a mighty slam.

"The man is mad!" gasped Mr.

Hacker. He picked himself up, and dabbed at the flour. "Mad! That is the only word for it—mad!"

In the American sense of that word, Mr. Quelch undoubtedly was "mad" just then—mad as a hornet! In a state of breathless fury, to which words could not have done anything like justice, he cleaned off flour, washed off flour, rubbed and scrubbed off flour, and changed his floury attire.

His fury intensified during that process, and by the time he emerged from his room, newly swept and garnished, the master of the Greyfriars Remove was in a frame of mind that was positively dangerous.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Awful News!

"I SAY, you fellows!" yelled Billy Bunter.

He burst into the Rag, his fat face wreathed with grins, his eyes popping with excitement behind his big spectacles.

There was a sound of laughter in the Rag. A good many Remove men were there, after tea, and they seemed to be enjoying a joke. A few, perhaps, looked rather grave, but most of them chortled.

Herbert Vernon-Smith was the centre of attraction. Within a minute of dropping the flour out of the window the Bouncer had reached the Rag—his retreat had been of the very promptest.

Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent had come in from the quad.

Smithy had been extremely careful to ascertain that no trace of flour was left about him. Wharton and Nugent had carefully concealed the peashooters with which they had pattered, from a

safe distance, at Mossoo's study window, in cover of the elms.

There was nothing to connect any of them with what had happened—so far as beaks and prefects were concerned. In the Remove, of course, there was no secret about it. There were no sneaks in that Form, and all were up against Mossoo on Wibley's account.

Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had come in with their friends. Comparing notes, they found that the flour-bag rag had followed very soon after their own door-thumping rag. Which added to the gaiety of the Removites.

Mossoo was getting it hot and strong—first from one, then from another. No doubt, in the fullness of time, he would be sorry that he had caused the sacking of a Remove man!

So far, there was no knowledge of the dreadful truth. Smithy, from the upper window, had barely glimpsed a head below before he dropped the flour—and that glimpse was only of the back of a head.

Wharton and Nugent, in the quad, had blotted themselves behind a tree-trunk at a sound of the window opening, so they had not seen Mr. Quelch. Only a moment or two later they had ventured to peer and had glimpsed a whitened figure tottering and spluttering in Mossoo's study—of course, taking it for Mossoo.

There was no doubt—not a shadow of a doubt—that the Bounder's reckless jape had worked like a charm—so far. And a crowd of Removites chuckled and chortled as it was told.

"Right on his napper!" grinned the Bounder. "Bang on his napper! I heard it burst as it hit—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared all the Rag.

"And we saw him, a minute afterward!" chuckled Nugent. "White as a jolly old ghost!"

"Flour all over!" said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There'll be a fearful row about this, you fatheads!" said Archibald Popper.

The new junior had come into the Rag to learn what had happened, and he, at all events, did not seem amused.

The Bounder stared round at him.

"You barging in again?" he asked aggressively. "I've told you that you've got too much to say, young Popper!"

"Popper's right!" drawled Lord Mauleverer. "There'll be a fearful row, Smithy, and you'll be flogged if you're spotted. And you jolly well deserve it, too!"

"Shut up, Mauly!" roared Bolsover major. "I call it a jolly good jape!"

"You would!" assented Mauleverer.

"Look here, you cheeky ass—"

"It's the jape of the term!" declared Skinner. "Risky, if you like—but the real goods!"

"We've set out to rag Mossoo, Mauly!" said Johnny Bull. "We're going to make him sorry for getting old Wib turfed out!"

"The sorrowfulness is going to be terrific!" declared Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Look here, you're an ass, Mauly!" said Harry Wharton warmly.

"I've heard that one!" said Lord Mauleverer placidly.

"And a fathead—" said Bob Cherry.

"I've heard that one, too! A rag's all very well—but this is too thick!" said Mauleverer. "There's a limit, though Smithy doesn't seem to know it!"

"Rats!" retorted the Bounder.

"Bet you Mossoo's sorry for himself, anyhow!" grinned Bob Cherry.

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"Not much doubt about that!" chuckled Peter Todd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And a tremendous wax he will be in, too!" exclaimed the new junior. "Lot of chance of his coming round and letting Wibley off, after this!"

"Oh rot!" said Peter Todd. "There wasn't any chance of that, Popper! Wibley's gone home, and he can't come back. I dare say his pater's sticking him in some other school already."

"A potty trick!" said Popper.

Herbert Vernon-Smith made a stride towards the new junior. Smithy was greatly bucked by his exploit, and far from pleased by hearing Archibald Popper's description of it as a potty trick.

"Are you askin' for some more, you cheeky rotter?" demanded the Bounder. "I let you off, in your study, with one knock, as you funk; but if you jaw too much, I'll mop up the Rag with you!"

"Hear, hear!" said Skinner. "We don't want Sir Hilton Popper's swank at second-hand here! You've got too much to say, Popper!"

"The too-muchfulness is preposterous, my esteemed and idiotic Popper!" said the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"What the dickens does it matter to you, Popper?" asked Harry Wharton. "You never knew Wibley, and I suppose you can't care a bean about Mossoo! What are you worrying about, then, you fathead?"

"Why the dickens can't you leave Froggy alone?" snapped Popper. "He's not a bad little ass when he's left alone. He might have come round by this time, but for all this ragging—"

"And what does it matter to you?" demanded the Bounder.

"Oh, rats!" grunted Popper.

Perhaps he had his own reasons—reasons that the juniors would never have dreamed of guessing—for not answering that question.

"Shut up, Popper, you cheeky ass!" said several voices.

"Mind your own bizney!"

"Ring off!"

It was then that the door of the Rag opened and Billy Bunter rolled in, grinning with glee, and gasping out with excitement at the same time.

But Billy Bunter's excited howl was not heeded. Vernon-Smith, with a very unpleasant expression on his face, advanced on Popper, pushing back his cuffs.

"Put up your hands, you cheeky cad!" he said. "I'll jolly well—"

"Oh, chuck that, Smithy!" said Bob Cherry. He interposed, pushing the Bounder back. "It's a free country! A fellow can talk out of his hat if he likes!"

"I say, you fellows—" yelled Bunter.

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Get out of the way, Cherry!" snapped the Bounder.

Vernon-Smith was intensely angry. He was taking the lead in the war against Mossoo; and it had to be admitted that he was ready to take risks—big risks. And the Bounder did not realise that it was his ingrained love of rows and excitement that influenced him, far more than indignation on the expelled junior's account. He had had enough cheek from a fellow who had been only a few days in the school; and, as Popper persisted in asking for it, he was going to give Sir Hilton's nephew what he asked for!

But Bob did not step aside. He pushed the Bounder back again.

"Easy does it, old man!" he said soothingly.

"You silly ass!"

"Same to you, with knobs on!" said Bob affably. "Look here—"

"I say, you fellows!" yelled Bunter. "I say, will you listen to a chap? I say—he, he, he!—all smothered with flour—he, he, he!"

"Oh! You've seen him?" exclaimed half a dozen fellows.

Billy Bunter was given attention at last.

"He, he, he! Yes, rather!" chortled Bunter. "I say, you fellows, I wonder who did it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Smothered!" roared Bunter. "Smothered from head to foot! I didn't know him at first! Prout didn't! He, he, he! Smothered! White as a ghost! He, he, he! I say, you fellows, somebody has been japing him with a bag of flour, or something! You fellows know anything about it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the crowd in the Rag.

"He, he, he!" echoed Bunter. "I say, he looked a sight, I can tell you! He snapped Prout's head off! He, he, he! I say, think it was a Remove man did it?"

"Sort of!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"The sortfulness is terrific!"

"I say, you fellows, I shouldn't like to be the chap that did it when Quelch comes down!" said Bunter. "Funny, if you like; but Quelch will be as mad as a hatter!"

"Rot!" said Skinner. "Quelch don't like Froggy any more than we do for getting poor old Wibley sacked. Quelch won't mind a fearful lot."

"He looked as if he minded!" grinned Bunter. "And he jolly well sounded like it, too! Smothered with flour—He, he, he! Poor old Quelch!"

"Poor old Quelch?" repeated Harry Wharton, with a start. "What do you mean, fathead? Has anything happened to Quelch?"

Bunter blinked at him.

"Eh? Haven't I just been telling you?" he asked. "Smothered with flour—"

"What?"

"Quelch!"

"Mossoo, you mean—"

"You blithering ass—"

"Eh?" Bunter blinked round in surprise. "I mean Quelch! I saw him—smothered with flour from head to foot!"

Sudden silence fell on the Rag. Nobody was laughing now. The mere possibility that it was so horrified the Removites.

Vernon-Smith, forgetting all about his dispute with the new junior, strode at Billy Bunter, with a black brow. He grasped him by a fat shoulder and shook him savagely.

"You fat rotter!" he hissed. "What do you mean? It was Mossoo that got the flour—"

"Ow! Leggo!" howled Bunter.

"What do you mean?" roared the Bounder, in rage and alarm.

"Ooogh—I mean, leggo! Stop shook-shook-shaking me, you beast!" spluttered Bunter. "If you make my specs fall off, you'll have to pay for them! Leggo! I say, you fellows, make him leggo!"

Three or four fellows jerked the angry Bounder away from Bunter. Matters were too awfully serious for indulgence of Smithy's temper.

"Now, Bunter, tell us!" snapped Harry Wharton.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "I've told you, haven't I? I saw Quelch—urrrrrggh!—smothered with flour—Yurrrggh! That beast has shaken all the bib-bib-breath out of me—Ooogh! It was Quelch!"

"It wasn't!" hissed the Bounder. "What would Quelch be doing in Mossoo's study? And I saw Mossoo there, too, a little while before."

"Oh crumbs!" said Harry Wharton blankly. "Quelch! There's going to be an awful row now!"

"I tell you—" hooted the Bounder. He did not believe it yet. It was, in fact, too awful to believe, if he could help it.

Temple of the Fourth came into the Rag. He was grinning.

"You fellows heard?" he asked.

"Heard what?" asked Harry.

And the whole crowd hung on Temple's reply.

"Your beak, Quelch—somebody's mopped flour over him!" grinned Temple. "I hardly knew him when he passed us on the landing!"

"Quelch! Sure it was Quelch?" breathed Frank Nugent.

"Eh? Oh, yes! It was Quelch. I say, he looked a sketch! 'Flour all over him from head to foot! Ha, ha, ha!"

Cecil Reginald Temple laughed.

But his was the only laugh that was heard in the Rag. The Removites were not laughing now. They were not feeling like laughing. They gazed at one another far from laughing, and every face registered horror and dismay.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

On the Carpet!

WINGATE of the Sixth shepherded the Remove into their Form-room. Wingate's face was grave, though hardly as grave as most faces in the Remove.

All Greyfriars knew what had happened now; it was the one topic. A

dozen fellows, at least, had seen Mr. Quelch in his floury state, as well as some of the masters. In Common-room, the beaks were discussing it; in study and passage, fellows of all Forms discussed it.

Everybody guessed that it was a ghastly blunder. The fact that Mr. Quelch had got it at Monsieur Charpentier's study window showed what had been intended.

The order having gone forth for the Remove to gather in their Form-room indicated that Mr. Quelch knew how the matter stood, and in what Form to seek for the culprit, or culprits.

Three fellows in that Form felt uneasy enough. Wharton and Nugent had done the outside work; Smithy had done the inside work. The three of them were "for it," with a vengeance, if they were caught—more especially Wharton, who, as head boy of the Form, was expected to set an example of law and order, not of wild and reckless ragging.

The captain of the Remove realised that. Skinner congratulated himself on having refused to have a hand in such a dangerous rag. Wharton could have kicked himself for having had a hand in it. He had been reluctant to do so; it was only the Bounder's gibe about "funking" that had really made him do it. Frank Nugent had been still more dubious, but he had followed his chum's lead. And the reckless Bounder had landed them in—this!

Certainly, no one could have foreseen such a disaster. Who could have guessed that, by the time the ragers were posted ready for the rag, Mossoo would have gone marching off to the Head's study with Billy Bunter, and Quelch would have called to speak to him and waited in his study? Such a

mischance could not have been guarded against.

It would have caused a terrific row if Mossoo had got the flour, but it was simply unnerving for Quelch to have got it.

The Removites had nothing against Quelch—not that they would have dreamed of ragging him if they had. And he had been the victim of the most reckless rag of the term.

Wharton and Nugent were worried. The Bounder, doubtless, was worried, too, but he displayed his usual coolness and assurance.

"Anythin' up, Wingate?" he asked, as the Greyfriars captain marched the Form in. "Are we up for a row, or what?"

"I fancy some of you know!" answered the prefect dryly. "I don't suppose any fellow outside this Form would rag Quelch."

"Nobody inside the Form would rag him, Wingate; I'm sure of that," said the Bounder. "Some ass might make a mistake, perhaps! Think Quelch fancies that it was a Remove man?"

"Looks like it, as he's asked me to collect the Form," answered Wingate.

"Hardly fair, is it?" argued Smithy.

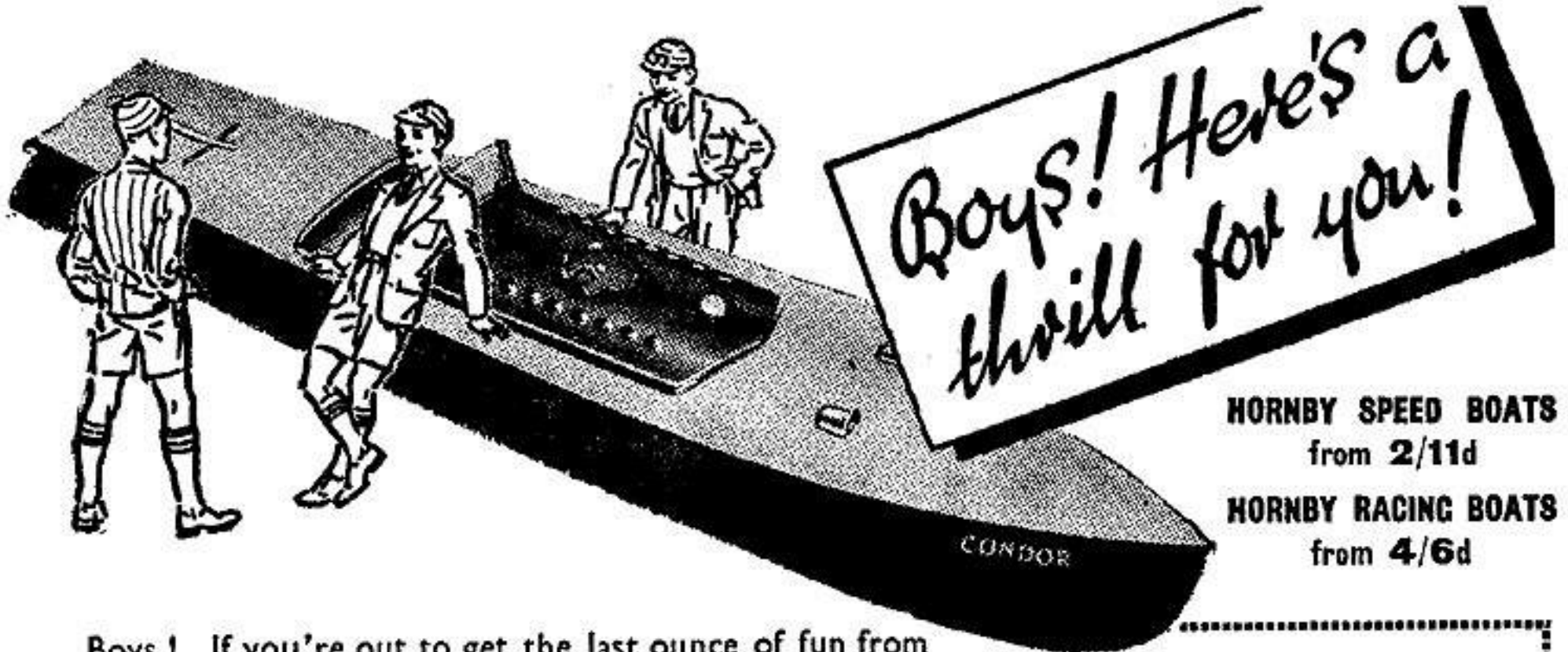
"It looks to me, Wingate, as if that bag of flour was meant for Mossoo, and lots of fellows rag Mossoo. Might be a man in the Fourth or the Shell."

"Fifth Form man, perhaps," suggested Skinner. "Some ass like Coker!"

"Yes; I wonder where Coker was at the time!" remarked Vernon-Smith thoughtfully. "Might even have been a Sixth Form man. What do you think, Wingate?"

"I think you'd better not be cheeky, Vernon-Smith, unless you want me to

(Continued on next page.)



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give you six before Quelch begins on you!"

Mr. Quelch appeared in the doorway. His Form hardly dared to look at him.

However, they did look, and were not reassured by what they saw.

Quelch had cleaned off the flour; he was his usual spotless self. His jaw was clamped like a vice; his eyes glinted. He was calm—with a deadly calmness; much more alarming than excitement like Mossoo's. His glance swept over the Form, and the Removites dropped their eyes before it.

"Are all the boys here, Wingate?" asked Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir!"

"Thank you!"

Wingate went out, and Mr. Quelch came in.

A pin might have been heard to drop as he stood with his gimlet eyes fixed on his silent Form.

"No doubt you are all aware of what has occurred," Mr. Quelch's voice was quiet, but very penetrating. "Certain boys pelted Monsieur Charpentier's window—obviously, to cause him to look out—while another dropped a bag of flour from a window above. As I chanced to be in the study, waiting for Monsieur Charpentier, I was the victim of this miserable trick. Every boy concerned in it will be flogged in Hall by the headmaster! I order them to stand out!"

Nobody stood out.

The raggers had to take what was coming to them, if it came. But certainly they were not going to ask for it.

Mr. Quelch waited a long minute. There was dead silence. At the end of that minute, his jaw looked a little more like a steel vice than before.

"I am waiting!" he said.

"May I speak, sir?" asked the Bounder.

The gimlet eyes glittered at him.

"Certainly you may, Vernon-Smith, if you have anything to confess."

"Oh, no, sir!" said the Bounder coolly. "But I don't know why the Remove should be picked on like this. No fellow here would have a hand in a rag on you, sir."

"There is no doubt, Vernon-Smith, that the rag, as you term it, was intended for Monsieur Charpentier. I am quite aware of the feeling in this Form since Wibley was expelled a few days ago. This Form has caused Monsieur Charpentier incessant trouble since. I have had to intervene on more than one occasion. I have, therefore, no doubt whatever that this outrage was perpetrated by Remove boys as an act of hostility against the French master. On that point there is not the slightest doubt in my mind."

Silence!

"If the culprits do not choose to confess, the most searching and rigid inquiry will be made!" said Mr. Quelch. "The matter will not end until they are discovered. That discovery is assured."

Three fellows hoped most sincerely and fervently that their Form-master was in error on that point!

"In the meantime," went on Mr. Quelch, his voice growing deeper, "I shall give very special attention to this disrespectful hostility displayed by my Form against a particular member of Dr. Locke's staff! I have made allowances for a feeling of regret, even of resentment, at a Remove boy's expulsion. I shall now take the severest measures."

He paused for a moment.

"It was my intention to speak to Monsieur Charpentier on the subject of

certain impositions which appeared to me excessive, and to request him to reduce them. From what has occurred this afternoon, I am convinced that Monsieur Charpentier was not acting too severely. These impositions will, therefore, be written; and all of them must be handed in to Monsieur Charpentier by to-morrow evening. Every boy who fails to hand in his lines by that time will be caned, and detained for a half-holiday."

"Oh crumbs!" breathed Bob Cherry. The Remove fellows were dimly silent. An endless vista of French impositions stretched before them.

Mossoo they might have ventured to disregard—Quelch was not to be disregarded, especially in his present mood.

Lines—lines by the thousand! Every leisure moment was booked for lines. Lines—endless lines—and in French, too—and that little beast Froggy would be sure to insist on the accents being put in. This was the net outcome of Smithy's reckless rag!

"I give the culprits concerned in the outrage to-day one more opportunity of confessing!" rumbled Mr. Quelch.

The culprits did not avail themselves of that opportunity.

There was a dead silence.

"Very well!" Mr. Quelch almost bit off the words. "Investigation will proceed! Dismiss!"

The Remove marched out. And, as soon as they were safe out of their Form-master's hearing, quite a lot of them had something to say to the Bounder.

"You fool, Smithy!"

"You ass!"

"You idiot!"

"You dummy!"

"You bonthead!"

"You terrific fathead!"

"You clump!"

The Bounder, scowling, tramped away, without waiting for more than that.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Smithy Sticks Out!

"I SAY, you fellows! 'Tain't fair!" wailed Billy Bunter.

It was the following day—Saturday. That afternoon was a half-holiday—but not for the Remove.

With a single exception, the whole Form was booked.

Archibald Popper, the new junior, had no French lines on hand. There had been only one French class for the Removites since Popper had come; and in that class, the new junior had sat quiet and sedate, taking no part in the noisy and reckless proceedings of the rest of the Form.

That was natural enough in a new fellow, and had caused no remark at the time. But it caused a good deal of remark now.

Billy Bunter felt quite aggrieved about it. Bunter, like the rest, had French impositions on hand; every man in the Remove had lines from Mossoo, even quiet and orderly fellows like Lord Mauleverer and Mark Linley. And the order had gone forth that all lines had to be handed in that day.

That meant sitting in the Form-room to write out yards and yards of that great poem, the *Henriade*—a poem which was loathed in the Remove above all other poetical works whatsoever.

When Mossoo gave lines, they were generally from the *Henriade*, which was used in the French class as a school-book. Acquaintance with that great work, Mossoo thought, was a good thing for his youthful pupils.

Few of them had any desire to become more closely acquainted with that great work. Indeed, many of the Removites would have liked to have the gloves on with the great Voltaire for having written it at all!

Smithy had advocated refusing to do lines for Mossoo. Many fellows had thought of backing up that suggestion. But now that Mr. Quelch had taken the matter in hand, that idea had to be dropped like a hot potato.

War with Mossoo was one thing; war with Henry Samuel Quelch was quite another. Only the Bounder, with his usual recklessness, was still toying with the idea.

On Saturday afternoon, all other occupations had to be put aside for the writing of French impots. It was frightfully annoying to all the Remove. And the fact that Popper escaped the general fate drew some attention on him—not very friendly.

"'Tain't fair!" Billy Bunter told the Famous Five after dinner on Saturday. "That new cad ought to stand in with the Form! Greasing up to Froggy, you know!"

"Oh, rot!" said Harry Wharton. "Popper doesn't happen to have lines, that's all. He hasn't been ragging Mossoo."

"Well, he ought to have been; he's been in one class with the little beast, and he never even banged the lid of his desk!" said Bunter indignantly. "Never even spoke in class! Rotten smug!"

"My dear ass," said Bob Cherry, "Popper never knew Wibley—he came after Wib went—so he doesn't feel about it as we do."

"Sneaking rotter!" said Bunter. "He ought to be doing lines like the rest. He's against ragging Froggy—he's said so a lot of times. I've a jolly good mind to punch his head."

"I'll give you a bunk up!" suggested Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! Look here, I've told you chaps already that that chap Popper ain't Popper at all," said Bunter. "I saw young Popper at Popper Court, and he's got red hair—I've told you so—"

"Don't tell us again!" said Frank Nugent.

"A rotten impostor!" said Bunter.

"Cheese it, fathead!"

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter was still sticking to his remarkable story that Archibald Popper was not the genuine article. Most of the Remove fellows had heard that story, and laughed over it.

They were not likely to believe that some other fellow, unknown, had arrived at Greyfriars School, in the place of Sir Hilton Popper's nephew, under the name of that youth.

Bunter was certain of it. He was the only fellow at Greyfriars who had seen Sir Hilton Popper's nephew before his arrival. He had seen his red head—like a house on fire, according to Bunter. The new junior had dark, thick brown hair. Evidently—to Bunter—he was not the same fellow.

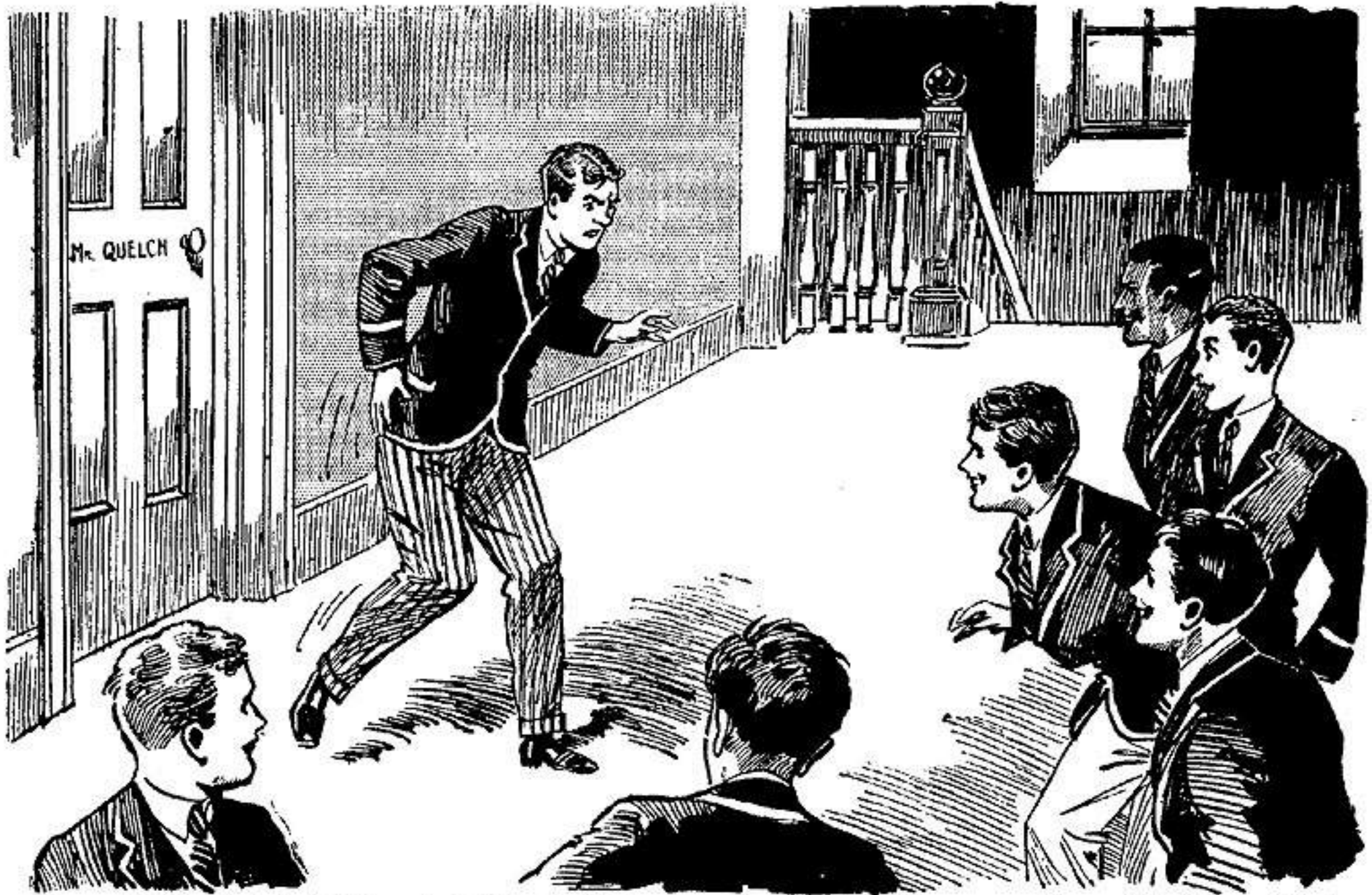
But Bunter's strange story was not believed. It was regarded, in the Remove, as the most idiotic of his many idiotic yarns.

Whether he was mistaken, or whether he had made it up, nobody knew or cared; but nobody doubted that it was one or the other.

"I say, you fellows, I tell you he's a spoofer," declared Bunter, "and now he's sneaking out of lines!"

"Fathead!"

"Well, I don't see why I should go into detention if Popper doesn't."



Vernon-Smith wriggled painfully as he left Mr. Quelch's room and walked down the passage. Some of the Remove fellows were waiting for him at the corner, and they gave him sympathetic looks. "Had it bad?" asked Bob Cherry. "Oh, no! Quite nice!" snapped the Bounder. "I'm wriggling like this because I enjoyed it, fathead!"

granted Bunter. "And I'm jolly well not going in, see? Smithy says he isn't, and I won't, either!"

"Don't be an ass!" said Harry Wharton. "The impots have got to be done now. Quelch has taken it up. They've got to be handed in to-day. Come in with the rest."

"Shan't!" said Bunter.

"Ass!"

The Famous Five went in, and the rest of the Form followed.

Billy Bunter remained out—with two other members of the Form—Popper and Vernon-Smith.

In the Form-room, the Bounder's chum, Tom Redwing, had a worried look—and he went out to look for Smithy.

It was not an official detention. Fellows could stay out if they liked to leave the lines undone, and take the consequences. But that afternoon was all the time that remained for writing the lines, and nearly all the Form had made up their minds to do it.

Redwing looked round the quad for the Bounder, and found him loafing under the elms, with his hands in his pockets, in the company of Billy Bunter.

"Coming in, Smithy?" he asked.

"No!"

"You've got two thousand lines, old fellow," said Redwing anxiously. "It's a lot, even for a whole afternoon. If you lose time—"

"I'm not writing lines for Mossos!"

"You heard what Quelch told us yesterday."

"I'm not deaf!"

"Look here, Smithy, don't be an ass!" urged Redwing. "We might have got away with it with Froggy, but we can't get away with it with Quelch. It means a licking if the lines aren't handed in."

"I know."

"Well, come in and get them done."

"Rats!"

"We're sticking it out, ain't we, Smithy?" said Billy Bunter. "We ain't afraid of Quelch, are we, old chap?"

"I'm not!" said the Bounder. "You are!"

"Why, you beast—"

Redwing gave it up, and went back to the Form-room alone.

A few minutes later Mr. Quelch came out of the House, and he glanced at the two Removites under the elms.

He did not speak. The juniors were free, on a half-holiday, so long as the lines were handed in by the appointed time. If they were not handed in, the consequences were going to be painful.

But, though Mr. Quelch walked on without making any remark, his glance was enough for Billy Bunter. One glance from Quelch was enough to make Bunter's courage, such as it was, ooze out at his fat finger-ends!

"I—I say, Smithy, I—I think I shall do those lines, after all!" murmured Bunter. "If Quelch makes a point of it, you know—"

"You fat ass!"

"Yah! I fancy you'll hand them in, all right, same as the rest!" jeered Bunter, and he rolled off to the Form-room.

Smithy was left alone.

As a matter of fact, he was tempted to follow Bunter and join the rest of the Form at their weary task.

But his obstinate and arrogant temper held him back. He had said that he would not do the lines for Mossos—and what he had said he had said! He was not going to back out. The rest of the Remove could toe the line, if they liked—not the Bounder.

In the Form-room the Removites ground wearily and dreadingly at endless

French, finding a little relief, at intervals, by telling one another what they thought of Froggy.

Some of them expected to see the Bounder come in, sooner or later, making up his mind to it. But the Bounder did not come.

Smithy, reckless of consequences, was sticking it out!

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Alias Archibald Popper!

WILLIAM WIBLEY looked in the glass, in Study No. 1, and grinned.

The reflection in the glass bore no resemblance to the face, well known in the Remove, of William Wibley.

The Remove fellows, so deeply concerned about the expelled junior, little dreamed how near he was to them all the time.

So far as anybody at Greyfriars knew, Wibley had gone home, to face an irate parent's wrath, after Wingate of the Sixth had seen him into his train at Courtfield station, a few days ago.

That he had had an idea of hanging on, somehow, at the school, in the hope that Mossos's wrath would cool, and that he would thereby get another chance, some of the fellows knew.

But that he had actually done so, nobody knew, or was likely to guess.

But there he was!

Bunter, who alone knew that the new junior was not the genuine Archibald Popper, little dreamed who he really was.

Yet it had been easy—to a fellow like Wibley!

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(Continued from page 13.)

His skill in disguise and impersonation, was wonderful. And in this case he had only to impersonate a fellow the Remove had never seen, and were not likely to see.

By chance, he had learned that Sir Hilton Popper had changed his mind about sending his nephew to Greyfriars. That had put this amazing stunt into Wibley's mind.

He had taken a telephone call intended for the Head. So Wibley knew—and the Head did not know—that Archibald Popper was not coming.

With a skilful change in his appearance, William Wibley had returned to Greyfriars—as Archibald Popper!

He had passed muster with the Head, and with Mr. Quelch, and with all the Remove fellows who knew him so well. Playing a part was second nature to Wibley.

Of course, such an extraordinary game could not go on very long. Something would be sure to turn up to put paid to it. But if it lasted long enough to effect Wibley's purpose, that was all he wanted.

He was avoiding that painful scene at home. He was staying in the school. He was avoiding being sent to another school. And he was going to keep an eye on Mossoo—watching for a favourable moment.

Mossoo was sure to get over his wrath sooner or later. He was the kindest and most placable little gentleman, at heart.

Ten to one, he would be sorry, after a time, that he had been so very hard on Wibley. Wib hoped so, at least.

Then would be the time!

At a favourable moment Archibald Popper would disappear, and William Wibley, in his own proper person, would make an appeal to the French master, with a good chance of success.

That was the plan—or, rather, that had been the plan.

It had looked, to Wibley, quite a good thing. But now it looked like being knocked on the head by the attitude the Remove had taken up on Wib's account.

Wibley had not thought of that, or anticipated it. No doubt it was gratifying, in a way, to find the Remove fellows so concerned about him. But it was disastrous to his little scheme.

Froggy, incessantly ragged every day since the expelled junior had gone, was not getting into a better temper. His temper was steadily deteriorating. He was having an awful time—all due to the expulsion of Wibley. His thoughts of the absent junior were not likely to be growing compassionate—in these circumstances. Far from it. The mere name of Wibley was likely to be to him like a red rag to a bull.

However, William Wibley still hoped for the best.

He had a hopeful nature.

So long as he was at Greyfriars, he was at Greyfriars; that, at least, was that! He was not, at least, gone for good.

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And, to Wib, there was a keen enjoyment in playing this extraordinary part—the biggest "spoof" he had ever brought off.

So he grinned cheerily at his reflection in the glass in Study No. 1, grinning at a face that even he could not recognise as his own!

Then he sat down at the study table to write a letter home. With all the Form busy writing lives in the Form-room, there was no danger of being observed—which was rather important.

"Dear Father,—I am very glad you gave me permission to stay on for a time. As I explained to you, it was entirely due to the French master getting his rag out that the Head sacked me, and I am sure that he will come round. It is only necessary for him to put in a word for me with the Head, and it will be all right. I hope to be able to write again soon and tell you that it is all washed out.—Your affectionate son,
WILL."

Wibley, alias Archibald Popper, enclosed that letter in an envelope and addressed it to his father.

He hoped that it would have a soothing effect on the old folks at home.

Certainly, Mr. Wibley had not the remotest idea of the peculiar conditions under which his son was staying on at the school.

All he knew was that Wib was staying on, in the hope of the French master taking a more lenient view of the case.

It was not likely to occur to him that Wib was staying on in the guise of a new junior named Archibald Popper.

Having addressed and stamped that letter, Wibley slipped it into his pocket and left the study.

He sauntered cheerily out of the House into the bright July sunshine. He did not intend to post that letter in the school box. In Wib's peculiar circumstances a fellow could not be too careful. He was going to walk down to Friardale and drop it in at the village post office.

The Bounder, loafing idly in the quad, scowled at him as he crossed towards the gates.

Smithy's temper, always a little unreliable, was at its very worst that afternoon. He was "sticking it out" in the matter of the lines for Froggy; but he anticipated, without any pleasure, the inevitable interview with Mr. Quelch that would follow. The sight of the new fellow, who had had the cheek to set himself up against the ragging of Froggy, was more than enough to bring a scowl to his brow and a glint to his eyes.

He came quickly towards "Archibald Popper."

Wibley eyed him warily, and quickened his pace a little.

He did not want any more trouble with the Bounder. In the row in the study the previous day, he had had a narrow escape of losing his brown wig, which would have given his game away with a vengeance. Wib's disguise was a perfect one, to the eye; but it was, so to speak, semi-detached. He could not afford to get into scrapping.

"You rotten cad!" said the Bounder. "You've got no lines to do for Froggy! You grease up to the little beast pretty thoroughly!"

Wibley grinned.

He had his own reasons—good reasons—for not joining in the ragging of Mossoo, but they were not reasons that he could explain to any fellow at Greyfriars. Before his expulsion Wibley

had been as ready for a rag as any fellow in the Form—readier than many of them—but circumstances were altered now.

He walked on quickly, without answering.

The Bounder was in an aggressive and quarrelsome temper—and one narrow escape was enough for Wibley.

Vernon-Smith stepped after him as he went and let out his boot.

Thud!

"Yoo-hoop!" yelled Wibley, staggering forward and nearly falling.

He recovered himself and spun round at the Bounder, his eyes blazing. For the moment he forgot the necessity of keeping out of a scrap.

He rushed back at Vernon-Smith, hitting out right and left.

Smithy, with a grin, put up his hands and met him more than half-way.

"Plucked up a little courage since yesterday?" he jeered. "Come on, and I'll—Ow! Wow! Oh, my hat!"

Wibley's fist landed on the Bounder's nose, and he staggered; the next moment he fairly hurled himself at the new junior.

They would have closed in fierce strife the next moment, but in that moment Wibley remembered. He was not afraid of the Bounder, but he was fearfully afraid of hair and eyebrows and even complexion being dislodged.

He jumped swiftly back, and back again, and yet again, as the Bounder followed him up; he retreated in a series of backward bounds.

"Look here, chuck it!" he gasped. "I give you best if you like! Keep off, you silly fathead! Can't you keep your silly temper, you dummy? Keep off, I tell you! Oh, my hat!"

The Bounder, unheeding, followed him up; and Archibald Popper suddenly turned, took to his heels, and dashed out at the gates.

"Why, you rotten funk!" gasped the Bounder. "Come back, you measly coward! Stop, you sneaking funk!"

He rushed after Popper of the Remove, but the new junior was going down the road at top speed for Friardale.

Vernon-Smith stared after him from the gates in astonishment and disgust.

"Well, of all the rotten, measly funks!" ejaculated the Bounder. "By gum! Of all the rotten, sneaking, measly, crawling, cringing funks—"

Archibald Popper disappeared in the dusty distance; and the Bounder, with a snort of contempt and scorn, jammed his hands into his pockets and tramped back into the quad.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Six for Smithy!

"WHAT a sell!" said Bob Cherry on Monday morning.

"Frightful!" grinned Nugent.

"I say, you fellows, it's just rotten!" said Billy Bunter. "Think of Smithy getting by like that! I wish I'd stuck it out, too!"

Many Remove fellows were thinking the same.

The Bounder was grinning serenely when the Form came out in break that morning.

Contrary to all expectation, Smithy had "got away" with it—so far, at least. All the rest of the Remove had shown up their lines on Saturday. Some of them had got through sooner and some later, but all had got through sooner or later and taken in those impots to Monsieur Charpentier.

The Bounder had not written a line. He had said that he wouldn't, and he hadn't. And nothing had come of it—so far.

Unless Mossoo reported him to his Form-master it was all right. Mr. Quelch would not act in the matter unless he received a complaint from the French master.

But all the Remove had expected Mossoo to do exactly that—the Bounder included. Clearly Mossoo had made no report of one junior having failed to hand in his lines.

When, in class on Monday morning, Mr. Quelch made no reference to the matter, Smithy did not doubt that he had "got by" with his defiance, and the other fellows had the same impression.

It was, as Bob declared, a "sell." If one fellow could get by, other fellows could have got by—and the whole Form had slogged and slaved at lines all through a sunny half-holiday for nothing.

The Bounder openly rejoiced.

"Serve you jolly well right for givin' in!" he told the other fellows. "If you'd stuck out it would have been all right. Froggy's got the wind up, and he doesn't want any more trouble with us."

"Blessed if it doesn't look like it!" remarked Kipps of the Remove. "He can't have put it up to Quelch, or the old bean would have been down on you like a ton of bricks."

"He dare not!" sneered the Bounder.

"Well, gratters, old scout!" said Bob Cherry. "But it was a big risk. Quelch would have made you sit up if Mossoo had put it to him."

"It's a putrid sell, though!" growled Skinner. "If we'd backed up Smithy we should all have got off. Mossoo's getting funky."

"Rot!" said Lord Mauleverer. "If you'll take a friendly tip, Smithy, you'll do those lines. Mossoo isn't funk-ing trouble with the Remove; only he's a good little ass, and he doesn't want to get a fellow whopped if he can help it."

"Oh!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Think that's it, Mauly?"

"Yaas."

"Then you're a silly, blithering ass!" said Vernon-Smith. "Mossoo's down on us as hard as he can go. Look how he got old Wibley sacked."

"Yaas. But he's a good little ass, all the same, and he's givin' you time, Smithy. Play up while you've got the time."

"Rats!" said the Bounder contemptuously.

Opinion was divided in the Remove—many fellows agreeing with Smithy that Mossoo funk'd further trouble; others inclining to Mauly's opinion, that he was displaying patience and kindness, from unwillingness to land a fellow with severe punishment.

If the latter was the case, he was still waiting for the lines to be shown up.

Smithy did not think so; and had he thought so, it would have made no difference to his attitude of defiance. So far, at least, he had got by with it, and he was confident that Mossoo would not mention the matter again.

That confidence had a rather rude shock later in the day, when the Remove came out after class.

Monsieur Charpentier was in the corridor, and he called to Vernon-Smith.

"Smeat!"

The Bounder breathed rather hard as he stopped.

Skinner winked at the other fellows.

"Yes, sir?" muttered Smithy.

"Smeat, vy for have you not handed

in zo imposition, like the ozzier garçons?" asked Mossoo.

"I've not written any lines, sir," answered Smithy sullenly.

He knew now that he was wrong, and Mauly right. That discovery only added to his sullen resentment.

"You have written nozzings?" asked Monsieur Charpentier. "I give you deux mille—two thousand lines—and you have written nozzings."

"No, sir."

"Zen I report you to Monsieur Quelch, Smeat!"

"You will do as you please!" retorted the Bounder, and he turned and walked away.

"Mon Dieu!" murmured Monsieur Charpentier, colouring with annoyance, as he stared after the angry Bounder.

"I say, you fellows, Mossoo's after him!" grinned Bunter, as the Removites went out. "I say, I'm jolly glad I did my lines, after all!"

Bunter's gladness on that subject was shared by all.

It was not, after all, a "sell." Mossoo had simply been exercising patience and giving the Bounder a chance. As he had not availed himself of it he was going up to Quelch.

A quarter of an hour later Smithy was called into his Form-master's study. His brow was dark as he presented himself there.

"Vernon-Smith," rapped Mr. Quelch, "Monsieur Charpentier reports to me that you have not handed in your imposition."

"Two thousand lines is too much for any fellow to write, sir," said the Bounder. "Nobody ever gets an impot like that."

"After the outrage that occurred on Friday afternoon, Vernon-Smith, I have taken the view that the French impositions, though certainly severe, were deserved," said Mr. Quelch coldly. "I gave instructions to the whole Form that they were to be written and handed in by Saturday evening."

Vernon-Smith made no reply.

"As you have disregarded that order, Vernon-Smith, I shall deal with you severely," said the Remove master. "You will be caned and detained for the half-holiday on Wednesday. Bend over that chair."

The Bounder went through what followed with set lips, and without a sound.

It was a severe "six," but the Bounder was tough.

After that infliction, Mr. Quelch laid down the cane, and motioned to the junior to leave the study.

Smithy went, his lips shut hard. He wriggled painfully as he walked down the passage. Some of the Remove fellows were waiting for him at the corner, and they gave him sympathetic looks.

"Had it bad?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Oh, no! Quite nice! I'm wriggling like this because I enjoyed it, you silly fathead!" snapped the Bounder.

And he stamped on, leaving the juniors grinning.

MODEL CRAFT

I guess all you fellows are interested in really super model Speed Boats. If so, turn to page 11 and there you will find details of the Hornby Speed Boat Folder, printed in colour and giving all details of the Hornby fleet of Speed Boats and Racers. They are all there—from the out-and-out racers to the smart limousines. What a thrill to be champion of the pond this year!

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Wibley Gets His Hair Off!

HOLD on!" William Wibley, alias Archibald Popper, held on. He had not much choice in the matter, as a burly, broken-nosed man was barring the narrow footpath in front of him.

Wibley backed away a step or two quickly.

He had never seen that unpleasant-looking tramp before, but he had heard of him.

Mr. Huggins' broken nose was rather a distinctive feature. He was the tramp who had stopped Billy Bunter the previous week, and would have deprived the fat Owl of the Remove of his watch, had not Mr. Quelch and Monsieur Charpentier happened on the spot, and weighed in with their walking-sticks.

Wibley had heard the story, but had not given the broken-nosed man any thought—till now.

Now he rather wished that he had not taken a walk after class in Friar-dale Wood.

He was thinking of anything but disreputable tramps as he sauntered along the shady footpath under the thick branches. Had he thought of him, he would have supposed that Mr. Huggins had cleared out of the neighbourhood, where P.C. Tozer of Friar-dale had an eye open for him.

But the man with the dilapidated nose evidently had not cleared out, for here he was, leering at the Greyfriars junior, and displaying a set of knuckles in a significant manner.

"What do you want?" asked Wibley, a rather superfluous question.

It was clear enough what the ruffian wanted.

"P'r'aps you could 'elp a covey on his way?" suggested the broken-nosed man, coming a step nearer as Wibley backed.

Wibley backed another step.

"P'r'aps you could make it a pound?" went on Mr. Huggins, following the junior up as he retreated. "I wouldn't like to bash in that nose of yours—not if you behave, young covey. Wot about a pound?"

William Wibley had more than a pound in his possession, but he was not in the least disposed to hand over the same to the tramp. But he was in a lonely spot, more than half a mile from the lane, and he had no chance whatever in a tussle with the hefty Huggins.

He backed away more quickly, keeping a wary eye on the broken-nosed man.

"I said 'old on, young covey!" said Mr. Huggins, in a deep, threatening growl. "You asking for it?"

He came on quickly.

Wibley halted. He was not going to be robbed, if he could help it; but he had to be wary. It was clear that Mr. Huggins was a reckless man with his fists.

"Did you say a pound?" said Wibley, slipping his hand into his pocket.

"I says a pound, and I means a pound!" grunted Mr. Huggins. "And you can 'and it over afore I gives you a oner, or arter, jest as you like, young covey!"

"Here you are!" said Wibley.

Mr. Huggins held out his hand for the pound. But he did not receive it in that hand.

Wibley was going to give him a pound, but that pound was not coin.

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of the realm. It was quite a different sort of pound that he was thinking of handing over.

His hand came out of his pocket—clenched. Before the broken-nosed man realised what was happening Wibley's fist crashed on his broken nose with all the beef that Wibley could put into the punch. He fairly pounded that nose, and Mr. Huggins, taken quite by surprise, sat down suddenly.

He yelled as he sat.

Wibley whirled round and ran.

He had gained time to get out of reach, and for the rest he had to depend on speed.

He flew along the footpath in the direction of Friardale Lane.

For a moment or two the broken-nosed man remained sitting, and spluttering, with his hand to his nose, where he had a pain.

Then he scrambled to his feet, his stubbly face red with rage, and rushed in pursuit of the schoolboy.

His heavy footsteps pounded on the grassy path.

"Strike me pink!" he panted. "You wait till I get 'old of you!"

Wibley was not likely to wait.

He ran; he flew; he almost whizzed.

But fast behind him came the heavy tramp of running feet.

Without looking back he knew that the tramp was gaining, and he put on a desperate effort.

A trailing branch caught his straw hat, and whirled it from his head. But Wibley did not think of stopping for it. Hatless, he tore on.

Closer, and closer behind him, came the heavy tread.

Mr. Huggins was gaining at every stride.

Friardale Lane was in sight now, at a distance. Once in the open lane the ruffian would dare to pursue him no farther. But the lane was still distant, as the pursuing tread sounded closer and closer.

"Old on!" panted a voice, so close behind that it made Wibley jump.

An outstretched hand touched his shoulder; but, as if the touch electrified him, the junior bounded on out of reach, and Huggins' finger-tips slipped from his jacket.

Panting for breath, damp with perspiration, Wibley flew on.

The lane was only fifty yards distant now. But again a stretching hand touched him. He was almost in the tramp's grasp.

Again a desperate bound saved him, and he flew on.

He raced wildly for the stile on the lane.

But Huggins made an effort, too.

Wibley had almost reached the stile, when the outstretched hand behind him grabbed again.

This time the ruffian did not grab at his shoulder. He grabbed at his hair, which gave a better hold.

"Oh!" gasped Wibley, as the hand behind clutched his hair, and held.

"Gotcher!" panted the broken-nosed man.

And he dragged.

The next moment he staggered back, with a yell of horrified amazement. Wibley flew on.

Huggins was still grabbing his hair. Wibley flew on without it. It was the thick brown hair of Archibald Popper that was in Huggins' grasp—and Wibley's own short-cropped, tallow-coloured hair was revealed to view.

"Strike me pink!" spluttered the astounded Huggins.

He went over backwards, and landed with a bump.

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Dragging at a schoolboy by his hair, the tramp had naturally expected to drag the schoolboy back. Naturally he had never dreamed that the hair would come off in his grasp; but it did, and Mr. Huggins sat down in a state of almost gibbering astonishment.

Wibley flew on, and cleared the stile with a desperate bound.

He had not been able to stop for his hat—and he was not able to stop for his hair. He bounded over the stile into the lane, and disappeared from the amazed eyes of the broken-nosed man.

"Strike me pink and yaller and blue!" gasped Mr. Huggins.

He sat, blinking at the curly, brown wig in his hand, with almost unbelieving eyes—the most astounded tramp in the County of Kent.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Borrowing a Hat!

"OH scissors!" murmured Wibley.

He was safe from the tramp. He had left Mr.

Huggins a mile behind when he came to a halt. He was not bothering about the broken-nosed man. He was lurking behind the hedge in Friardale Lane, at a short distance from the school gates, wondering what on earth he was going to do.

He had lost Archibald Popper's brown hair. His own tallowy crop leaped to the eye—if he was seen. He dared not be seen—by any Greyfriars eye.

It was the sight of Wingate and Gwynne of the Sixth, coming along the lane, that had caused him to pop out of sight behind the hedge.

What was he going to do?

Even without that brown hair, he was not recognisable as Wibley, so effective were the facial changes he had made in his looks. But, obviously, Archibald Popper of the Remove could not walk out of gates with brown hair, and come back with hair of another colour, without exciting a lot of attention.

Remove fellows had taken no notice of Billy Bunter's strange tale concerning Sir Hilton Popper's nephew; but they were certain to sit up and take notice if they saw such a startling change as this in Archibald Popper.

It was not far from lock-up now, and Wibley had to go in. He could not go in without his hair. Had he still possessed a hat he could have jammed it down hard, and hoped to pass muster. But his hat, like his hair, had been left behind in Friardale Wood.

He backed more closely into cover as some Greyfriars fellows came by.

Hobson and Hoskins and Stewart of the Shell passed, within six or seven feet of him.

Wibley hardly breathed till they were by.

If one Greyfriars eye fell on him in his present state, his game was up.

Wibley was prepared for difficulties, in playing the part of a new fellow at Greyfriars. But he had never anticipated anything like this.

He had to go in—or be missed at calling-over. And he could not go in.

In the study he had an ample supply of theatrical gadgets, and the missing brown hair could be replaced. But Study No. 1 in the Remove, though only a couple of hundred yards from the spot where he lurked, might as well have been at the ends of the earth. He could

not reach Study No. 1 without running the gauntlet of all the eyes at Greyfriars School.

"Oh crikey!" groaned Wibley.

He had to get a hat. Hats did not grow on hedges; and the only resource, therefore, was to borrow a hat. But in the peculiar circumstances, he had to borrow a hat without being seen by the owner thereof.

Any old hat would not do—it had to be a Greyfriars hat, or, at least, a cap.

Wibley was driven to the conclusion that he either had to snatch a Greyfriars hat, to get back into the school, or else give up his stunt as Archibald Popper on the spot. Which Wibley did not think of doing for one moment.

Now that it was getting near lock-up, a good many Greyfriars fellows were coming along, to go in at the gates.

Having decided on his only possible course of action, Wibley watched, through the hedge, with eager eyes, rather like a bandit lying in ambush. He had to wait till a fellow came by alone—and even then it was risky. But he had to take the risk.

A party of Fourth Formers came along the lane from the village.

Wibley popped back into deeper cover as Temple, Dabney, and Fry sauntered by.

After them, Coker of the Fifth came by with Potter and Greene of that Form. And after Coker, five or six fags of the Third ambled along. Then came Nugent minor of the Second Form, with Gatty and Myers.

Wibley began to wonder whether he ever would spot a fellow on his own.

Then a fat figure, a fat face, and a large pair of spectacles dawned on him.

Billy Bunter was rolling up the lane towards the school.

Bunter was on his own.

Wibley breathed hard, and squeezed through the hedge, ready to grab.

A moment more, and Bunter's straw hat would have been snatched from his head, doubtless much to his surprise. But just as Wibley was going to grab, there was a buzz of bicycle bells, and a bunch of cyclists came sweeping up the lane.

Wibley popped back just in time.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came a cheery roar. "How did that porpoise get out of the Zoo?"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"Oh! It's Bunter!"

"Beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five pedalled on, and Bunter rolled after them.

Wibley, behind the hedge, breathed wrath.

His chance was gone. Bunter was out of reach. The hapless impersonator had to settle down and watch again.

Fellows passed in twos and threes. Then, at last, Wibley spotted a fellow on his own again.

It was the Bounder, tramping along, with his hands in his pockets, and a scowl on his brow. Smithy, to judge by his expression, was still feeling twinges from the six in Quelehy's study.

Wibley watched him through the hedge.

He did not want any more trouble with Smithy, if he could help it. But he had no choice in the matter now. He simply had to have a hat!

Smithy was alone, there was nobody else in sight at the moment, and Smithy's straw hat was his game. And, as if to make it easy for him, the Bounder, deep in sullen thought, was walking with his eyes on the ground, without a glance to right or left.

Wibley's heart beat, as he reached



"Gotcher!" panted the broken-nosed man, as he clutched at Wibley's mop of hair. Next moment Huggins staggered back, with a yell of horrified amazement. He was still grabbing the hair, and Wibley was racing on without it!

through the hawthorns. He had to grab that hat, and jam it on his own head before he was seen. Once seen bare-headed, minus Archibald Popper's hair, the game was up.

The Bounder, unseeing, passed him.

Wibley acted swiftly and unerringly. He made a jump from the hedge behind Vernon-Smith, grabbed his hat off, and jammed it on his own head, in a split second.

He jumped away as Smithy, with a gasp of angry surprise, spun round.

"What—who—what—" stuttered Smithy.

He stared at Wibley, in surprise and rage. With the straw hat jammed well on, Wibley's cranium was completely out of sight, and—so long as the hat remained there—he was Archibald Popper to the eye.

"Why, you—you cheeky kid!" yelled the enraged Bounder. "Give me my hat!"

He rushed at Archibald Popper.

Wibley darted back through the hedge.

Less than ever did he want a tussle with the Bounder now. He simply could not afford to part with that hat!

The Bounder rushed after him.

"Give me my hat!" he yelled. "Why, I'll smash you, you cheeky rotter! Bagging a fellow's hat, by gad! Give me my hat!"

Wibley tore on.

The enraged Bounder rushed in furious pursuit. For the second time that afternoon William Wibley went all out, in a desperate race. He cut along the hedge, darted through a gap into the lane, and ran for the school—with the Bounder raging on his track.

Breathless, but ahead in the race, Archibald Popper tore in at the gates of Greyfriars.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Smithy on the War-path!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"
"What's up?"
"Popper—"
"What the thump—"

Harry Wharton & Co. stared in astonishment at the sight of Archibald Popper racing desperately in at the gates, and, a moment later, the Bounder racing furiously after him—bareheaded, his hair blowing out in the wind.

"What the preposterous dickens—" ejaculated Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

The Bounder yelled:

"Stop him!"

"But what's up, fathead?" called out Harry Wharton.

"Stop him!"

The Famous Five did not think of stopping Popper. He raced by, heading for the House. Instead of stopping Popper, they stopped Smithy. They all grasped him together, as he came charging by.

"Now hold on, and tell us what's up!" said Harry.

"Let go, you fool!" roared Vernon-Smith, struggling.

"Keep your temper, old bean," said Bob Cherry soothingly. "What are you chasing young Popper for?"

"You seem to be always rowing with that chap!" said Nugent. "What has he done this time?"

"Will you let go, you fools?" yelled Vernon-Smith.

"No!" answered Harry Wharton coolly. "That new kid doesn't want a row with you, Smithy, and you can leave him alone."

"He's got my hat!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"The cheeky cad grabbed my hat, and cut off with it!" yelled the Bounder. "I'm going to smash him! Do you

think I'm going to let the cad grab my hat?"

"Oh!" gasped Harry.

The chums of the Remove released the Bounder. As he was bareheaded, it was obvious that he had lost his hat—and if Archibald Popper had bagged it, that, undoubtedly, was a justification for the Bounder's angry pursuit.

Smithy, immediately he was released, shot on to the House.

But the new junior had gained ground and he was already darting in.

"What the dickens can the silly ass have grabbed Smithy's hat for?" asked Harry Wharton, in wonder.

"Must have lost his own," said Johnny Bull. "But that's no reason for grabbing another fellow's."

"Better follow on," remarked Bob. "Popper seems a cheeky ass, but Smithy mustn't slaughter him!"

The Famous Five followed the Bounder into the House. They glimpsed him on the staircase, and followed up. His angry voice was heard shouting in the Remove landing.

"Did Popper come up?"

"Just gone into his study," answered Peter Todd. "He had his hat on—"

"The cheeky rotter—he had my hat on! I'll smash him!"

The Bounder rushed into the Remove passage.

"I say, you fellows," squeaked Billy Bunter, as the Famous Five arrived on the landing, "what's up? What's Popper racing about with his hat on for?"

"Oh! Listen to the band!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as a loud sound of banging came from the Remove passage.

Bang, bang, bang!

Harry Wharton & Co. hurried into the passage.

Herbert Vernon-Smith, at the door of

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Study No. 1, was pounding on that door with his clenched fist. The door, evidently, was locked inside.

Bang, bang, bang!

"Let me in, you funky cad!" roared the Bounder. "I'll smash you! Give me my hat, you rotter!"

"Is Popper there?" gasped Nugent.

"He's locked himself in! I'll smash him!" gasped the Bounder. "Grabbing a fellow's hat, and running off with it—a silly fag trick! I'll mop him up all over the passage!"

"Is the fellow off his rocker?" exclaimed Harry Wharton. He rapped on the door. "Popper! Are you there, Popper?"

"Yes, I'm here," came back the voice that the juniors knew as that of Archibald Popper.

"Have you gone potty?"

"No, have you?"

"You silly ass!" roared Wharton. "Let us into the study!"

"Let me in, you rotter!" roared Vernon-Smith.

"You're too jolly dangerous, old bean! I'll wait till you're in a better temper, if you don't mind!"

"You've got my hat!" yelled the Bounder.

"I've done with it now, thanks! I'll drop it from the window, if you want it. Go down into the quad and field it!"

"I'm coming into that study to smash you for your cheek!"

"Getting through the keyhole?"

"What—what do you mean, you fool?"

"I mean that that's the only way in at present."

"Will you unlock this door?" roared Vernon-Smith.

"No!"

"I'll smash you!"

"I've heard that one!"

"I—I—I'll—"

The Bounder gasped with rage. He banged savagely on the door, and kicked at the lower panels.

The din rang along the Remove passage.

A dozen fellows gathered to see what was on.

Bang, bang! Thump! Kick! Bang!

"You'll have the prefects up here at that rate!" remarked Hazeldene.

"Hang the prefects!" snarled the Bounder.

"Oh, chuck it, Smithy!" said Bob.

"Popper will have to come out for calling-over in ten minutes—"

Bang, bang, bang!

"For goodness' sake, stop that row!" exclaimed Peter Todd. "Do you want to be heard all over the school, fathead?"

Bang, bang, bang!

"Smithy, you ass—"

"Chuck it!"

"You'll bring a beak up here!"

"Stop that row!"

The Bounder, unheeding, banged on. Vernon-Smith had a violent temper when it was let go—and it was let go now full tilt! He was almost foaming with rage, as he banged and kicked at the study door.

Had Popper let him in just then, there was little doubt that Popper would have been rather damaged. It was not surprising that he kept the door locked. It was known already in the Remove that the new junior funk'd scrapping with the Bounder—Smithy had not been silent about the incident on Saturday, when Popper had taken to his heels and fled from him.

As a matter of fact, it was not "funk" that actuated Archibald Popper at the moment. Smithy's hat had served his purpose—he had dodged into the shelter

of his study undetected. Now he was busy—in a way that the Remove fellows never dreamed of suspecting.

From a locked suitcase in the study, Wibley had taken a curly brown wig, the duplicate of the one he had left in Mr. Huggins' clutches in Friardale Wood. While the enraged Bounder was hammering at the study door, Wibley was adjusting that brown hair over his own close crop, and fixing it in place with adhesive fluid. Wib was not likely to open the door just then!

Bang, bang, bang! Kick, kick! Bang!

Some of the fellows in the passage grinned, and some shrugged their shoulders.

Smithy's display of uncontrolled temper was not Greyfriars style. It was not without reason that he had been nicknamed the "Bounder."

Careless of what the fellows thought of him, and careless of the terrific din that rang through the House, Vernon-Smith banged and thumped and kicked on the oaken door. Such an uproar was not likely to pass unregarded, and it did not.

There was a sudden squeak from Billy Bunter on the landing.

"Cave! I say, you fellows, Quelch's coming!"

The enraged Bounder did not even hear. He banged and kicked, in breathless rage, as the Remove master came with rapid strides into the passage.

"What is this disturbance?" thundered Mr. Quelch. "What—"

Even the Bounder ceased, as he heard his Form-master's voice. His fist was raised for another bang, but he dropped it without banging.

Mr. Quelch's gimlet eyes fixed on his crimson face, with grim disapproval.

"Vernon-Smith! Why are you making this disturbance? Are you aware that you can be heard in Masters' Studies?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "Is that door locked? Is someone locked in the study? What does this mean, Wharton?"

"Popper's locked in the study, sir!" said Harry.

"And why is Popper locked in the study?" snapped Mr. Quelch. "Am I to understand, Vernon-Smith, that your violent and quarrelsome temper has caused a new boy to lock himself in his study?"

The Bounder panted, but he did not answer that question.

Mr. Quelch gave him a thunderous frown, and tapped at the study door.

"Popper! Open this door immediately! It is your Form-master speaking."

"Yes, sir!" came a meek voice.

William Wibley gave a last glance into the glass—and Archibald Popper opened the study door!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Who's a Funk?

HARRY WHARTON & CO. stood silent—the Bounder panting.

In the doorway of Study No. 1 Popper of the Remove appeared in sight—presenting his accustomed aspect.

Vernon-Smith's eyes blazed at him; but in his Form-master's presence, he had to keep his temper in control.

"Popper!" said Mr. Quelch in a deep voice.

"Yes, sir!" murmured the new junior.

"Why did you lock that door?"

"I didn't want anybody in the study, sir!" answered Popper meekly.

"Vernon-Smith!" Quelch turned to the Bounder.

"Yes, sir!" muttered Smithy.

"Was it your intention to use violence towards this new junior, if the study door had been unlocked?"

It was not much use to deny it. Neither was the Bounder disposed to deny it.

"I was going to punch his cheeky head, sir!" he answered. "He bagged my hat and ran off with it, and I was going—"

"You were making all that disturbance, Vernon-Smith, and displaying a shocking violence of temper, because this new boy played a thoughtless trick, taking away your hat?" demanded Mr. Quelch sternly.

The Bounder breathed hard.

What had occurred had been enough to make any fellow angry; but that was not all. Popper had irritated the Bounder again and again, by his opposition to the ragging of Mosses, and so excited his hostility. But that, of course, Smithy could not explain to Mr. Quelch.

"I am shocked at this, Vernon-Smith," went on the Remove master, as Smithy did not answer. "Popper certainly should not have played such a foolish trick—but there was, after all, no harm in it. You must learn to control your temper, Vernon-Smith. Popper is a new boy here—he has been less than a week in the school—neither is he a match for you physically. You should be ashamed of yourself, Vernon-Smith."

Smithy took that in silence, almost choking.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir."

"You should have intervened here, as head boy of my Form!" said Mr. Quelch. "This is very much like bullying a new boy, and I should have expected you to put a stop to anything of the kind at once."

Wharton coloured, and said nothing.

"Let there be no more of this," said Mr. Quelch. "If it should come to my knowledge, Vernon-Smith, that you have raised your hand against this new boy, I shall report you to Dr. Locke for a flogging. You will take two hundred lines for having made such a disturbance. I shall cane you for any repetition of it."

With that, Mr. Quelch turned, and rustled away to the stairs.

A silent crowd was left in the Remove passage.

Popper, in the study doorway, smiled.

Mr. Quelch's intervention had been a stroke of good luck for the disguised schoolboy. Not for reasons of "funk," but for reasons that none of the juniors dreamed of guessing, he was very anxious to avoid scrapping with the Bounder.

The Removites gave him rather peculiar glances.

It was true that, as Mr. Quelch stated, he was no match for the Bounder—anyone could see that. Nevertheless, a fellow was not expected to lock himself in a study to keep out of a scrap.

"You rotten funk!" said Vernon-Smith, breaking the silence, as Mr. Quelch's footsteps died away down the stairs.

"My dear chap—" murmured Popper.

"Measly funk!" jeered Bolsover major. "I heard that Smithy booted you the other day! Yah!"

"I say, you fellows, what a sneaking funk!" said Billy Bunter. "Fancy a chap locking himself in because he's funky."

"What did you do the other day, Bunter, when Tubb of the Third was after you?" inquired Bob Cherry.

"Beast!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

(Continued on page 22.)

WHAT'S WHAT and WHO'S WHO? Leave it to—

The GREYFRIARS GUIDE

A TOUR OF GREYFRIARS. (THE ELM WALK.)

(1)

Beneath the whispering elm-trees here
Is Prouty's favourite stroll;
Along this path, when nights are clear,
He moves with stately roll!
And there's a look of pompous worth
Upon his massive phiz,
As though he's sure he owns the earth
And all that therein is!



(2)

Here is the seat where Bunter sits
To eat a stolen feast,
Until the owner gives him fits
And makes him gurggle: "Beast!"
And then, as soon as Bunter goes,
The watchful pigeon comes,
For every Greyfriars pigeon knows
Where Bunter is, there's crumbs!

(3)

The elm walk's peaceful and serene,
Not used much by the boys.
At one end there's a stretch of green
And quite a lot of noise.
The grassy elm walk leads us there,
The playing fields! Let's go!
(That's if you have a week to spare,
It takes a week, you know!)
(Next week: The Playing Fields.)



A WEEKLY BUDGET OF FACT AND FUN

By
THE GREYFRIARS
RHYMESTER

AFTER SCHOOL HOURS Sports Day

(1)

It's a very great occasion
When we have our summer sports,
And we do not need persuasion
To climb into running shorts!
Aunts and uncles hover near us,
As we line up for the start,
And excited schoolmates cheer us
As we wait with beating heart.

(2)

There goes Wingate, running lightly,
On the last lap of the mile.
Loud applause—he's spurred slightly
And he wins in smashing style!
Now the jump is won by Blundell,
Sailing over five-feet-ten.
Coker tried, but came a bundle!
(Laughter from the Greyfriars men!)

(3)

Now we watch with eager faces
Wharton and his merry crew
Ready for the junior races,
Seniors stand and watch them, too.
Then there comes a yell that curdles
All the milk for miles around
As Bob Cherry wins the hurdles,
Leaping lightly o'er the ground.

(4)

Now the tug of war—why worry?
Bunter comes into his own,
Pelling like a motor lorry
With his forty-seven stone!
None can offer him resistance,
Fourth and Shell, with frantic grunts,
Find they're wiped out of existence—
Bunter's useful just for once!

THE GREYFRIARS ALPHABET

PERCY BOLSOVER
(The Bully of the Remove.)

B is for BOLSOVER—Battling Percy!
Pommelling fags without any mercy.
Gee, how he loves a thrilling struggle
Where Second Formers groan and guggle,
As Percy plants a score of punches
Just where the latter keep their lunches!



Says he: "I spifficate the blighters!
All Second Form and Third Form
fighters
Who like a desperate shemozzle
Can come and get one on the schnozzle!"
But let's be just: though Percy fully
Deserves the title of a bully.
He's really not so very rotten,
And if his face could be forgotten,
He'd be quite handsome—in a fashion!
(I bet that rouses Percy's passion!)

ANSWER TO PUZZLE

Gosling and Wun Lung, Temple and
Mimble, Ogilvy and Linley, Walker
and Hacker, Gwynne and Greene.

GREYFRIARS GRINS

Linley boasts that he can do the
hundred yards in ten seconds dead.
Nobody's ever seen him do it alive!

In an interview, George Tubb of the
Third Form said his ambition was to do
things he had never done before. We
suggest that he starts by washing his
neck!

Coker of the Fifth, tired of slaughtering
chickens on his motor-bike, is thinking
of taking up aeroplane flying.
Sparrows and skylarks received the
news with grave faces.

If Bunter tells lies all day, what does
he do all night?

He lies still.

What is it that even Mr. Quelch over-
looks?

His own nose.

PUZZLE PAR

Can you make TWO Grey-
friars names of each of the fol-
lowing by substituting other
letters for the X's?

XXXLXNG — XXMXLE —
XXXLXY — XAXKER —
GXXXNE.

Answer at foot of col. 2

What's the difference between a pound
of butter and Bolsover?

One weighs a pound and the other
pounds away.

Sammy Bunter of the Second is
exactly like his brother Billy in appear-
ance. We offer our sympathy to both
of 'em.

Greyfriars men are seldom late for
call-over, because if they miss call-over
in Big Hall, they're called over the
coals in their Form-master's study.

In the recent Maths exam I came out
with eight marks—two on my paper and
six elsewhere!

JOIN UP AGAIN WITH THE GREYFRIARS GUIDE NEXT FRIDAY!

Herbert Vernon-Smith clenched his hands, and made a step towards the junior in the doorway.

"Quelch is gone now, you rotter!" he said, between his teeth. "Now you can put up your hands!"

"My dear man, I'm not going to get you a flogging!" remonstrated Popper.

"I'll chance that! Put up your hands, or I'll knock you head over heels into that study!" hissed the Bounder.

"You won't!" said Harry Wharton, curtly.

He grasped the Bounder's shoulder, and hooked him back from the doorway.

Vernon-Smith turned on him savagely.

"Hands off, you fool!"

"You heard what Quelch said——" snapped the captain of the Remove.

"Hang Quelch!" snarled the Bounder.

"Hang him as high as Haman, if he'll let you! But I'm not going to be jawed again for letting bullying go on in the Remove! Chuck it!"

"Yes, chuck it, Smithy!" urged Bob Cherry. "After all, what does it matter if Popper bagged your hat? There it is on the study table, if you want it."

"The chuckfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed shirty Smithy!" murmured Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

"Let go my shoulder, Wharton! I'm going to smash him!"

"You're not!" said Harry. "You'll toe the line, Vernon-Smith, and let the kid alone. He seems to be a bit of a funk—but that's all the more reason for leaving him alone."

"I'll do as I choose!" roared the Bounder.

"You won't!"

"You'll see, hang you!"

With a savage wrench, Smithy tore himself loose from the captain of the Remove, and made a spring at Archibald Popper. In his rage, he cared nothing for the risk of a flogging—though undoubtedly he would have cared a good deal, later, when he was cool.

But he was not allowed to carry on. Before he could reach Popper, Harry Wharton grasped him again, and dragged him back.

"Collar the fathead!" growled Johnny Bull.

The Famous Five all grasped the Bounder together. He struggled fiercely, but he was swept off his feet.

"Carry him home!" grinned Bob.

"You rotters!" yelled the Bounder, as he was carried, kicking and struggling, up the Remove passage, through a laughing crowd. "Let go! Redwing, lend me a hand!"

"Better keep quiet, Smithy," answered Tom, "I'm not going to help you bag a Head's flogging."

Peter Todd opened the door of Study No. 4. Smithy whirled in the doorway, in the grasp of the Famous Five, and was pitched headlong in.

He sprawled on the study carpet, spluttering for breath.

"Now chuck it, fathead!" said Harry: and the chums of the Remove walked back down the passage.

The Bounder was left wild with rage, and panting for breath.

At the door of Study No. 1, Archibald Popper stepped out, and joined the Famous Five. He was quite cool and cheerful.

"Going down to Hall?" he asked.

"Yes," answered Harry, rather curtly.

"Calling-over in a few minutes."

"I'll come with you," said Popper.

"Oh, do!" said Johnny Bull sarcastically. "You can't keep yourself locked in a study after the bell goes, that's a cert!"

"You see, I don't want a scrap with

Smithy," said Popper, cheerfully, as he crossed the landing to the stairs with the Famous Five.

"We'd guessed that one, Popper!" said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Rotten funk!" said Skinner, with a sneer.

Popper looked round.

"That meant for my address, Skinner?" he asked.

"Yes—funk!" jeered Skinner.

"Hold on a tick, you fellows!" said Popper. "I don't want a scrap with Smithy, but I'm rather keen on one with Skinner, if you're not in a hurry."

The new junior advanced on Skinner, with his hands up.

Skinner backed away with some dismay. After the new fellow's proceedings, it had seemed absolutely safe, to Skinner, to call him a funk; and he was quite surprised to find the funk suddenly turn warlike.

"Look here, keep your paws to yourself!" stammered Skinner, backing away. "You can row with Smithy, if you want a row."

"I think you called me a funk," grinned Popper. "I'm going to punch your nose, Skinner—like that!"

"Ow!" Skinner jumped back. "Look here, you fool——"

Popper followed him up, the Famous Five looking on in astonishment. But William Wibley knew what he was about. He did not want a scrap with the Bounder, for in such a scrap, his disguise would have been knocked to pieces. But he knew Skinner of old—and exactly what sort of a scrap Skinner was likely to put up against a fellow with a hard punch. Archibald Popper was a new fellow—but William Wibley knew all about Skinner!

"Look here—stop it—blow you, chuck it!" howled Skinner, as Archibald Popper drove him back into the Remove passage. "You silly ass—you cheeky rotter—oh crikey!"

Bump!

Skinner sat down in the Remove passage, landed there by a hefty jolt on his chin.

The disguised schoolboy grinned down at him.

"Having some more?" he asked, cheerfully.

"Ow! No! Leave me alone, you fool!" gasped Skinner.

"Who's a funk?" grinned Popper.

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

Archibald Popper, grinning, rejoined the Famous Five, and they went down the stairs together.

Skinner picked himself up, rubbing his chin with one hand, and his nose with the other—and mentally resolving to make absolutely sure, on another occasion, that a fellow was a funk, before he called him one!

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Wibley Takes a Hand!

THIRD school, the following morning, was anticipated with rather mixed feelings by the Remove.

That "school" was French, with Monsieur Charpentier—and it was laid down, as a law, in the Remove, that no French class should pass off without a rag. Indignation on the subject of Wibley, expelled for guying Mossos, was as strong as ever; and every man in the Form was as keen as ever on the feud with Froggy. But, since Quelch had taken the matter in hand, the young rascals of his Form realised that they had, like Agag, of old, to walk delicately.

Quelch, in the first place, had had a spot of sympathy for the Remove attitude; for he liked the expulsion of a boy in his Form no more than the Removites did. But the episode of the flour-bag had changed all that.

Since that reckless jape, which had turned out so disastrously, Quelch was turning his grimmest frown on ragging in the French class. None of the juniors had forgotten that dismal half-holiday spent in grinding out French impots. They did not want it over again—and if Quelch backed up Froggy, history was likely to repeat itself.

Desk banging, shying books about, and other of the cruder forms of ragging, had to be "chucked." It was altogether too risky, with Quelch keeping an eye and an ear open.

Some of the weaker spirits, like Skinner and Snoop and Fishy, were for chucking it altogether. Other fellows were feeling dubious. Archibald Popper was emphatically against ragging. But the opinion of a new fellow, hardly a week in the school, carried no weight; and Popper was told in the most unceremonious way to shut his head.

But the Bounder had no doubts. The feud with Froggy had started on the expelled junior's account—but it was a personal matter with Smithy now. He had bagged "six" from Quelch for leaving his French impot unwritten—he had detention for Wednesday afternoon. And he would have carried on with the ragging of Froggy, if only because that cheeky new kid, Popper, was against it.

Smithy after calming down—had decided that he had better heed Mr. Quelch's warning. He did not—on reflection—want a Head's flogging. So he refrained from punching Archibald Popper. But that made him all the more bitterly hostile towards the new junior.

Certainly, had he known that junior's real identity, his hostility would have evaporated. He had liked Wibley well enough when he was at Greyfriars, as most of the Remove fellows did. And if he had known the facts he would have understood the new junior's motives.

But he knew no more on that subject than the rest of the Remove. To him, as to the others, Archibald Popper was a new kid who had altogether too much to say for himself.

In break, that morning, Smithy joined the Famous Five in the quad. Popper was with them, but he took no notice of Popper, except to give him a scowl.

"You fellows got anything on for Froggy this morning?" asked Vernon-Smith.

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"We're not letting him off," he said. "We're going to make him sit up for getting Wibley sacked. But——"

"Why not let it drop?" interjected the new junior.

"Shut up, Popper!" said the Famous Five, with one voice.

"But I think——"

"You don't!" said Bob. "You've got nothing to do it with! Just shut up!"

"Yes, cut it out, Popper!" said Wharton. "You never knew poor old Wibley—what are you grinning at, you ass?"

Archibald Popper could not help grinning. The Removites would have been surprised to learn how well he knew Wibley!

"Never mind that cheeky cad!" snapped the Bounder. "If you fellows haven't anything for Froggy, I have—see!"

"Oh, good!"



While the enraged Vernon-Smith was hammering at the study door, Wibley was adjusting a false wig over his own close crop. Bang, bang, bang! There was a sudden squeak from Billy Bunter, on the landing. "Cave! I say, Quelch's coming!" The enraged Bounder did not even hear him.

The Famous Five were all attention at once.

Vernon-Smith slipped his hand into his pocket and drew out a small paper bag. On it was printed: "Tinkle's Topping Toffees." But as he held it up there was a whiff from it that was unmistakably that of electric snuff.

"What the dickens—" asked Bob.

"Wait till Froggy turns his back in class—and up this goes to the ceiling!" grinned Smithy. "It will burst open there—"

"Oh crumbs!"

"A shower of snuff on his nut—" The Bounder chuckled. "I fancy it will make Froggy hop—what?"

The Famous Five grinned. They could not help it, at the idea of the French master's surprise, when a shower of snuff descended on his head. But their faces became grave again. It was like Smithy, when he was on a "rag," to disregard limits! But there was a limit, all the same.

"Jolly funny, old bean," said Wharton. "But—"

"But—" murmured Nugent.

"The butfulness is terrific, my esteemed Smithy."

"A bit too thick, old man," said Johnny Bull, shaking his head. "Snuff's fearfully unpleasant stuff, and—"

"That's why! Think I feel like spraying Mossos with attar of roses?" asked the Bounder sarcastically.

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Bob. "There'll be a fearful row, Smithy—"

"If you're afraid of a row you can tell Quelch who did it!" sneered the Bounder.

And with that unpleasant remark, Smithy put the paper bag back into his pocket and walked away, whistling.

"Silly ass!" granted Johnny Bull.

Archibald Popper frowned after the Bounder as he went.

"He ought to be jolly well stopped!" he muttered.

"Well, you stop him!" suggested Bob, with a grin. "You're no end of a fighting-man. Go after him and mop up the quad with him!"

"Oh, rats!" grunted Popper, and he said no more.

A good many of the Remove were grinning when the bell called them into Class-room No. 10 for the French lesson.

Most of them knew what the Bounder had on hand; and while some, like the Famous Five, considered Smithy's stunt rather "outside," they were all keen to see what was going to happen in Class-room No. 10.

Certainly, Monsieur Charpentier would be worth watching when a shower of snuff dropped suddenly on him from the ceiling.

That there would be a fearful row was assured, and the perpetrator, if discovered, was booked for a Head's flogging. The Bounder was the fellow to run the risk of that.

But he was not going to be spotted, if he could help it. And nobody in the Remove, approving or disapproving, was going to give him away.

Monsieur Charpentier greeted his pupils with an amiable smile, in the French class-room.

A day or two's respite from the Remove seemed to have restored Mossos to something like his old amiable and placable self.

Archibald Popper noted that fact, and wondered whether the time was not getting ripe for discarding the Popper outfit and making his intended appeal to the French master. But if Smithy's rag came off, as planned, there was no chance. Snuff on his Gallic nut was sure to put Mossos into a mood of wrath

and indignation that would last for days.

Sitting on the form behind the Bounder, Archibald Popper kept his eyes on Smithy. He had made up his mind that that rag was not coming off.

Monsieur Charpentier was almost beaming as the French lesson started. The class was quiet and orderly—there was no hint of a rag—not a desk-lid banged, not a book thudded on the floor, not an ink-ball whizzed in the air. To Mossos it looked like an end of his trouble with that unruly Form, which was a great relief to his mind. He did not guess that that unaccustomed quiet in his class was due to a happy anticipation of the rag that was to come, as soon as Smithy saw his chance.

That chance came when, about a quarter of an hour later, Mossos took the chalk to elucidate some irregularity in irregular verbs on the blackboard.

He turned his back on the class while he chalked French on the blackboard, and all eyes turned on Smithy. Only a breathless giggle from Billy Bunter broke the silence.

Smithy's hand slipped into his pocket.

It came out, with the little paper bag in it.

Up went the Bounder's hand, and in another second the paper bag would have struck the ceiling, over the French master's head, and its contents would have come showering down on the hapless Mossos.

But in that second Archibald Popper reached over from behind and grabbed the Bounder's wrist.

His intention was to stop the throw; but the paper bag was already leaving the Bounder's hand as he grabbed.

The result of that grab was to deflect Smithy's aim.

The bag of electric snuff shot up; but THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,537.

instead of shooting away from the class in the direction of the French master, it shot straight up, over the class, as Smithy's wrist was dragged back.

The next instant snuff was descending in a shower over the French class, and Class-room No. 10 rang and echoed with a volcanic outbreak of sneezing from all the Remove.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Rough on the Remove!

"**A**YTISHOO!"
"Atchooooh!"
"Urrrggh!"
"Oooogh!"

"Groooogh!"
"Atchooooh! Aytshoo! Tishoo! Tishoo!"

"I say, you fellows—shooo-ooo-oooh!"
"Oh, gad—atchooooooh!"
"Gurrgrgh!"

Monsieur Charpentier turned from the blackboard, chalk in hand, and stared at his class in amazement.

Where he stood, at the blackboard, he was out of the range of the shower of falling snuff.

It dropped fairly on his class, scattering over them, catching every fellow in the class, setting every fellow sneezing frantically.

Some had it worse than others; but all of them had it. They sneezed, they coughed, they spluttered.

"Mon Dieu!" exclaimed Monsieur Charpentier. "Vat is all zat? Taisez-vous! Zat you be silent in ze class!"

"Gurrgrgh! Atchooooh!"
"Ooooch! Aytshoo!"
"Tishoo—tishoo-shoo!"

Mossoo's first idea was that it was a "rag." This sudden, volcanic outbreak of sneezing was a game to interrupt the lesson. But he soon perceived that it was genuine. A whiff of the snuff reached him.

"Mais comment?" exclaimed Mossoo. "Vat is all zat? It is ze snuff zat I smell viz my nose! Mais pourquoi?"

"Atchooooooh!" roared all the Remove. "Aytishoo! Shoo-shoo-oooh!"

"Oooogh!" gurgled Billy Bunter. "I say, you fellows—woogh! Gooogh!"
"Ooooooooh!"

"Aytishoo! Shoo!"

"You sneeze viz you!" gasped the astonished French master. "Is it zat some garçon play ze trick viz ze snuff!"

Another whiff caught him, and he sneezed, as he made a step towards the class.

He made a backward step very quickly, dabbing his handkerchief to his nose. Mossoo did not want any of the snuff.

"Oh, gum!" gasped Bob Cherry, blowing his nose frantically. "Oh crikey! You idiot, Smithy—"

"Oooooooogh!"

"You howling ass!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"I say, you fellows—aytishoooooooh!"

Vernon-Smith was sneezing as hard as anybody. So was Archibald Popper. Being right under the falling snuff, they had got it thicker than most of the fellows. For a minute or two the Bounder was helpless—shaken from head to foot by tempestuous sneezes.

"Mais qui?" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier. "Who is zat bring ze snuff into ze class-room? I demand to know zat!"

Only a roar of sneezing answered Mossoo. All the fellows were on their feet, sneezing, coughing, spluttering!

It was quite an unexpected outcome of the Bounder's jape.

Mossoo—keeping at a safe distance—had no more than a whiff of the snuff. The Remove had it all to themselves. They were almost in convulsions.

But the Bounder pulled himself together at last. His eyes and nose were streaming, and sneezes shook him like electric shocks. Even Smithy, perhaps, realised just then that practical jokes with snuff were rather too "thick." But he was boiling with rage. It was Popper who had caused this disaster—grabbing his wrist as he flung the bag of snuff.

Certainly, Popper had not meant it to fall on the class. He had meant to prevent it being flung at all. But whatever he had meant, he had spoiled the Bounder's jape with this awful result.

Smithy—still sneezing—turned on the new junior.

Archibald Popper was doubled up with sneezes! Smithy reached over the desk and punched.

"Urrrggh!" spluttered Popper, as he caught the Bounder's knuckles with his ear, and went down among the desks.

"Smeat!" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier. "Smeat! Vy for you do zat? You verree bad boy, Smeat—"

"Groogh! I'll smash him!" spluttered the Bounder. "Oooch! Atchooooooh! I'll smash the silly, cheeky idiot! Oooooogh!"

"Urrrggh! Aytishoo!"

"You fool, Smithy—"

"You idiot, Popper—"

"Atchooooh! Choooooooop!"

"Aytishoooooooop!"

"I say, you fellows—tishoo—tishoo—tishoo!"

Archibald Popper scrambled to his feet.

Monsieur Charpentier gesticulated with both hands.

"Zat you keep ze ordair!" he spluttered. "Sherry, open ze fenetre—ze vindow! Smeat, open ze door! Let in ze air! Zat you keep ze ordair! Ouvrez la fenetre—ouvrez la porte! Allons done!"

Door and window were set wide open, and the summer breeze helped to clear the atmosphere.

The uproar of sneezing and spluttering slackened. Sneezes went off like minute guns, instead of in volleys. The effect of the shower of snuff was passing.

"Zat you take ze place!" hooted Monsieur Charpentier. "Et maintenant, I demand to know who bring ze snuff into ze class-room. Vat mauvais garçon is it zat play zis trick in ze class, I demand to know?"

But Mossoo demanded to know in vain. Nobody was going to give the Bounder away, though most of the Form were yearning to scrag him for his snuff stunt.

The juniors resumed their places—every face crimson, every nose streaming, every eye winking and blinking, and sneezes still popping at intervals.

Never had there been a more uncomfortable and unhappy class.

Monsieur Charpentier surveyed them wrathfully. He was unaware of his own narrow escape. His impression was that some reckless ass had scattered snuff in the class by way of a rag.

"I demand to know!" he roared.

"Atchoooooooooh!"

"Zis is a trick of ze most stupid!" hooted Mossoo. "If I know not ze garçon zat zrow ze snuff, I give ze whole class two hundred lines of ze Henriade!"

There was no reply save a sneeze or two.

"Verree vell, zen," snapped Mossoo. "Ze whole class take ze two hundred lines! Now ve vill resume."

It was an unhappy class for the rest of the hour. Pocket handkerchiefs were much in evidence. Sneezes continued to punctuate the lesson. It was an angry class, and an angry master. Mossoo's good temper was quite gone. He yapped and snapped at the class, and the class gave him all the trouble they could. There was general relief when dismissal came, and the juniors were able to get out into the fresh air.

"You idiot, Smithy!" said a dozen fellows, as they went out.

"That meddlin' fool Popper!" hissed the Bounder.

"You howling ass!" roared Bob Cherry. "Never mind Popper—the clumsy ass was trying to stop you! Look here, Smithy, you chuck it, see? You play any more fool tricks with snuff, and we'll jolly well boot you!"

"Boot him anyhow!" snorted Johnny Bull.

"I'll smash that meddlin' fool—"

"Oh, bump him!" said Bob. "Collar the silly ass and bump him! That's what he wants!"

"Look here—leggo—oh, gad! I'll—I'll—oooooooh!"

Bump!

"You rotters—you—"

Bump!

"I'll—I'll—"

Bump!

"Oooooooooh!"

Vernon-Smith was left sitting breathless.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Something In It!

BILLY BUNTER rolled up the Remove passage at tea-time, and stopped at Study No. 4.

There was a grin of happy anticipation on Billy Bunter's fat face. He blinked into the Bounder's study with a cheery blink.

That study was a land flowing in milk and honey, so to speak, and Billy Bunter often had a longing eye on it. But it was very seldom that he was asked to enter therein.

Now he had a special invitation to tea with the Bounder.

Why Smithy had asked him, Bunter did not know. It could hardly be that he had found out, all of a sudden, what a nice fellow Bunter was. Certainly, if that was it, it had taken Smithy a long time to make the discovery.

But Bunter was not bothering about whys and wherefores. For once, he was able to roll into that study without being booted out. And he rolled in happily.

Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing were there.

The Bounder was not looking good-tempered. The disaster in Class-room No. 10 that day did not make for good temper. All the Remove had told him what they thought of him and his snuff stunts. He had been bumped—and he had been slanged right and left. And he was denied the satisfaction of hammering Archibald Popper, the cause of the trouble.

Mr. Quelch was a man of his word, and a Head's flogging hung over him, if he gratified his deep yearning to knock the new junior into a cocked hat. It was only with the greatest difficulty that he had restrained that yearning; but he had restrained it.

But Popper was not going to escape retribution if Smithy could help it. Punching was barred, but there might be other ways. It was for that reason, though Bunter did not know it, that the fat Owl had been asked to tea in Study No. 4.

"I say, you fellows, here I am!"

chirped Bunter cheerfully, as he rolled in.

Redwing looked at him.

"Hook it!" he said briefly.

"Oh, really, Redwing—"

"I've asked Bunter to tea!" snapped the Bounder.

"Oh! All right, then," said Redwing in surprise. "I don't mind! But what the dickens do you want Bunter for?"

"I want to hear him talk!"

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

"You shut up, Redwing," said Bunter loftily. "Smithy can ask a pal to tea if he likes in his own study I suppose. And if he likes my conversation—"

The Bounder laughed.

"Sit down, fathead!" he said.

Bunter sat down.

The table in Study No. 4 was, as usual, well-spread.

The fat Owl feasted his eyes, and his spectacles, upon an array of excellent things.

"Pile in!" said Smithy hospitably.

Bunter lost no time.

Tea in Study No. 4 proceeded in silence for some time. The Bounder was thoughtful, Redwing puzzled, and Billy Bunter far too busy for speech. Not till Bunter had parked about three times as much as Smithy and Redwing together did the fat Owl find leisure for conversation. Then he remarked:

"Jolly good spread, Smithy, old chap! I say, this pineapple is good! Not like what we get in the pinery at Bunter Court, of course—but good."

"You fat ass!"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"You've been spinning a queer yarn about that fellow Popper ever since he's been here, Bunter," remarked the Bounder. "What put it into your head?"

"It's true!" said Bunter, with his mouth full of pineapple. "The fellows can cackle as much as they like, but it's jolly well true. Have you ever heard me tell whoppers? I ask you."

Tom Redwing gave his chum a quiet look. He understood now.

Smithy had taken no more notice of Bunter's extraordinary tale about the new junior than the rest of the Remove, so far. Now he wanted to go into it, and hear all about it.

There was only one explanation of that. He was willing to use any stick to beat Popper with—and he hoped, at

least, that something could be made out of Bunter's yarn.

"Better chuck that, Smithy," said Tom quietly. "You know there's nothing in Bunter's silly gabble."

"Yah!" from Bunter.

"I've been thinkin' it over, Reddy," said the Bounder coolly, "since—"

"Since you've rowed with Popper, and Quelch has put a stop to your hammering him!" snapped Redwing.

"Exactly!" assented Smithy. "And thinkin' it over, I've wondered whether there's somethin' in it."

"Rubbish!"

"It's queer, at any rate, that even Bunter should make such an idiotic mistake," said the Bounder. "He's as blind as an owl—but he can see whether a fellow's hair is red or not. He says that he saw old Popper with his nephew, and that the kid's hair was red—"

"I don't suppose he saw him at all."

"I've told you I did!" roared Bunter.

"That most likely means that you didn't."

"Beast!"

"Well, let's hear it, anyhow!" said the Bounder. "Go it, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter was only too pleased to "go it." His amazing yarn had been laughed at in the Remove. He had not been able to find one serious listener. Now, at last, he had found one.

"You see, I took a short cut across Popper Court Woods, and ran into old Popper, and a kid with him," he related. "I got behind a tree, out of sight. You know what old Popper's like if he spots a chap in his woods. Well, there they were—old Popper and the kid, with red hair like a house on fire."

"Might have been any kid," said Redwing.

"That's all you know!" sneered Bunter. "I heard Sir Hilton Popper call him Archibald, anyhow, and I heard the kid call him uncle."

"Sure of that?" asked the Bounder attentively, while Redwing shrugged his shoulders.

Bunter had a way of inventing details to substantiate his yarns. Redwing had little doubt that that was exactly what he was doing now. Probably the Bounder would have had no

doubt, either, but for his keenness to get a "handle" against the new fellow in the Remove.

"Eh? Of course, I'm sure!" said Bunter. "I'm not deaf, I suppose. Old Popper said something about having changed his mind about sending the kid to Greyfriars, and the red-headed chap said he'd rather go to sea, or something of that kind. I forget the exact words."

Redwing gave a slight start, and the Bounder's eyes gleamed. This detail did not sound like an invention of Bunter's.

"By gad!" said the Bounder, with a deep breath. "If there was anything in it—"

"There isn't!" said Redwing.

"If it's true that old Popper called the kid Archibald, and the kid called him uncle— He couldn't have two nephews of the same name—quite! And if old Popper's nephew Archibald has red hair—"

"That new chap hasn't," grinned Bunter. "The beast kicked me when they spotted me behind the tree! Kicked me all the way to the gate! Then when I heard that Popper had come here, I went to his study and shouted 'Ginger!' in at the door, thinking it was that red-headed chap, you know—and it wasn't."

"By gad!" repeated the Bounder. He rose to his feet, his eyes gleaming.

"Look here, Smithy, don't be an ass!" said Redwing sharply. "What are you going to do? Make a fool of yourself by taking up that silly yarn?"

"Hardly!" grinned the Bounder. "What I'm going to do, old bean, is to make sure whether there's anything in it."

"And how, fathead?"

"Prout's gone out for a walk."

"What the dickens has Prout got to do with it?"

"Nothin'; only while he's out, a fellow can borrow his phone," said the Bounder. "Popper Court's on the phone—and it's easy enough to screw out of old Popper whether his nephew's at Greyfriars or not."

"Oh!" ejaculated Redwing.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "I

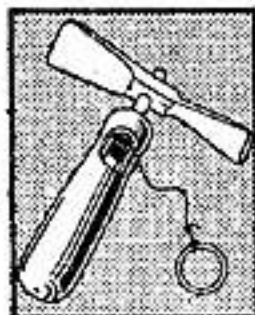
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say, Smithy, that will fix the cad all right. He, he, he!"

The Bounder looked at him.

Bunter was grinning all over his fat face. His confidence was unmistakable.

"He, he, he!" chortled Bunter. "Go it, Smithy! I say, you find it out from old Popper, and we'll go along to his study and denounce him—what? Show him up before the fellows! He, he, he!"

Redwing looked at the fat junior, startled.

The Bounder laughed.

"What do you think now, Reddy?" he asked.

Redwing made no reply; and the Bounder, still laughing, walked out of the study.

Redwing was left in rather troubled thought; and Billy Bunter, grinning cheerily, resumed his attack on the foodstuffs.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Not Archibald!

"POPPER COURT?"

"Yes; butler speaking."

"Is Sir Hilton at home?"

"No. Sir Hilton has not yet returned from London."

"Is his nephew at home—Archibald Popper?"

"No. Master Archibald is in London with Sir Hilton."

The Bounder gasped.

He sat at Mr. Prout's telephone, in Mr. Prout's study. He had rung up Popper Court in search of information. He was getting it.

Archibald Popper was in London with his uncle, the lord of Popper Court. Unless Sir Hilton Popper had two nephews of the same name, the new fellow in the Remove was not, and could not be, Archibald Popper.

"By gad!" breathed Smithy.

"Who is speaking?" went on the voice from Popper Court.

"Speaking from Greyfriars," said the Bounder coolly. "Greyfriars School. A fellow here who knows Archibald has been expectin' to see him. Can you tell me when he will be back?"

"I understand, sir, that Master Archibald is not returning to Popper Court at all."

"We heard that he was coming to Greyfriars, in the Remove," said the Bounder.

"Oh, quite so, sir; but Sir Hilton has changed his plans, as I understand. Master Archibald is going to sea."

Smithy's eyes gleamed. That statement bore out what Billy Bunter had said. The Bounder had no further doubts. It was an impostor who had come to Greyfriars in the name of Sir Hilton Popper's nephew. Who, and how, and why, remained a mystery; but there could be no doubt about the fact.

"Oh, I see!" went on Smithy, in a casual tone. "So we shan't be seeing Archibald at Greyfriars, after all?"

"No, sir."

"No mistake about it, I suppose?" asked the Bounder. "I've heard that Sir Hilton has two nephews named Archibald—"

"Indeed, sir! I have never heard of it. Sir Hilton has several nephews, but only one, I think, named Archibald."

"The one we were expecting here has red hair, according to what the fellow told us who knows him."

"That is Master Archibald, sir. He is now in London with Sir Hilton," said the butler, at Popper Court. "Is there anything more?"

"No, thanks!"

The Bounder rang off.

He slipped out of Prout's study, and walked down the passage, his eyes glittering.

The Popper Court butler had answered his questions, unsuspectingly, under the impression that some Greyfriars fellow, who knew Archibald, had been expecting to see him at the school. He had told Smithy everything he could have wanted to know.

Sir Hilton Popper had only one nephew named Archibald. That nephew had red hair. He was in London with Sir Hilton. He was not being sent to Greyfriars, after all, but was going to sea.

Nothing could be clearer than that. The fellow in Study No. 1 was no more Archibald Popper than Herbert Vernon-Smith was.

"By gum!" breathed the Bounder.

He was glad that he had taken the matter up now.

His idea in taking it up had been to root out anything there might be in Bunter's strange story, to give the new junior a knock back for his meddling, and his cheek generally. But the matter now assumed a more serious aspect in his mind.

Some impostor, some spoofer, was sailing under false colours at Greyfriars—using a name that was not his own, spoofing the whole school—for what object?

Obviously, it seemed, an object that would not bear the light. Unless the fellow was some young crook, with a crooked game to play, there seemed no explanation.

Smithy's eyes were gleaming with suppressed excitement as he went up to the Remove.

There was a cheery buzz of voices from Study No. 1 as he passed the half-open door.

The Famous Five were at tea there—with Archibald Popper.

The Bounder smiled grimly as he passed on. He had a surprise up his sleeve for that cheery study.

He went on to Study No. 4, and grinned in at the doorway.

Redwing gave him a rather worried look of inquiry. Billy Bunter, finishing the last wedge of cake, blinked at him through his big spectacles.

"Well?" rapped Redwing, uneasy at the Bounder's sardonic grin.

"All clear!" grinned Smithy.

"You've found out that Popper's all right?"

"No; all wrong."

"What do you mean?" granted Redwing.

"I mean that I've spoken to the butler at Popper Court, and found out that Archibald Popper never came to Greyfriars at all," said the Bounder deliberately. "And I mean that I'm going to that impostor's study to show him up, and collar him, if necessary, to be handed over to the police."

"Smithy!"

"Trot along, Bunter, old fat bean!" said Smithy.

"What-ho!" chuckled Bunter. "I fancy those beasts won't cackle, now you've found it out, Smithy. He, he, he!"

"But—" gasped Redwing, utterly taken aback.

"Come on, Reddy! Lend a hand if he has to be collared!" grinned the

Bounder. "Goodness knows who and what he is—all I know is that he isn't Archibald Popper! Come on!"

The Bounder walked down the passage again, and Billy Bunter and Tom Redwing followed him to the door of Study No. 1.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Denounced!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. sat at tea in Study No. 1.

Archibald Popper was with them, as a member of the study. He was not specially pally with his study-mates—but they were friendly.

Every now and then, indeed, it seemed to Wharton and Nugent that there was something familiar about Popper, as if they had known him longer than the week he had been at Greyfriars. Little unguarded expressions, at times, struck a familiar note—which was rather perplexing, as they certainly had had no previous acquaintance with any nephew of Sir Hilton Popper, of Popper Court.

The Famous Five, in fact, did not quite know what to make of Popper. He had seemed like a funk in his dealings with Smithy—but he had certainly shown no funk in dealing with Skinner. And, although he plainly desired to dodge trouble with the Bounder, he had played that fatheaded trick of snatching his hat, and cutting off with it. Then there was his opposition to the ragging of Mossos, which was rather irritating, with the whole Form set and fixed on their feud with Froggy.

At the present moment, however, the chums of the Remove were not bothering about Popper. He was teasing with them simply because he belonged to the study, and Bob and Johnny and the nabob had come in to tea with their pals.

The five were talking cricket in general, and the Remove match in particular.

The captain of the Remove had practically made up his mind to put Frank Nugent in the team for Rookwood; which was a happy prospect all round; and, deep in that topic, they had almost forgotten Popper was in the study.

Archibald had his own subjects for reflection. He was thinking that he had already been back at Greyfriars a week, after the "bunking" of William Wibley, and that nothing had come of it, so far. The warfare between the Remove and the French master had quite upset his plans—and when it looked like dying away, the Bounder's snuff stunt had started it fresh again.

Mossos certainly was not so shirty as he would have been had he bagged the snuff. But he was shirty; and once more Wibley had to postpone his intended interview with him. Obviously he had to choose his moment carefully, and catch Froggy in his very best temper. Not, it was clear, just after a rag in the French class-room.

Cricket "jaw" was going strong in the study, when the door opened, and the Bounder stepped in.

Archibald Popper gave him a wary look, and dropped his hand carelessly on the teapot on the table. If Smithy had come there for a scrap on account of the snuff episode, he was not going to get what he wanted—he was going to get what he did not want.

Harry Wharton waved an impatient hand at the Bounder.

"Cut!" he said curtly.

"Are you always as polite as that to callers?" asked Smithy.

"Well, if it's a friendly call, trot in; but we don't want any ragging here," said the captain of the Remove bluntly. "You can leave Popper alone!"

"That's just it—I can't!" grinned the Bounder.

"Well, if you begin a row here, you'll go out on your neck!" said Frank Nugent. "That's a tip, Smithy!"

The Bounder laughed, and came into the study.

To the surprise of the six juniors there, Billy Bunter followed him in, grinning from one ear to the other, and Tom Redwing followed Bunter.

When all three were inside, Vernon-Smith shut the study door, and put his back to it.

That proceeding was eyed with more and more surprise by the occupants of the study.

"Look here, what's this game?" demanded Bob Cherry. "You haven't come here for a row, Redwing, surely?"

"No, no!" said Tom. "Smithy's got something to say to Popper—I mean, the new kid—"

"He, he, he!" from Bunter. "I say, you fellows, I've told Smithy all about it—he, he, he! I say, make him tell us what his name really is! He, he, he!"

Harry Wharton rose to his feet, frowning.

"Bunter's been spinning you his fat-headed yarn about Popper, Smithy?" he asked.

"That's it!" smiled the Bounder.

"And you're ass enough to fancy that there's anything in it?"

"You've got it!"

"Then you're a silly fathead!" said the captain of the Remove sharply. "You know Bunter and his gabble as well as we do—"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"And you're not going to row with Popper in this study!" declared Wharton. "So chuck it, right on the spot!"

"I'm certainly not going to row with Popper!" agreed the Bounder, with a grin. "I don't know anybody of that name—except old Sir Hilton, at Popper Court. But I'm going to make that cheeky cad, whoever he is, explain why he's using the name of Popper."

"That will do! Cut!" snapped Wharton; while Archibald, sitting at the table, eyed the Bounder very curiously, his heart beating a little faster.

So far, Bunter's yarn had not caused him any trouble. But he had a misgiving that it was going to cause him trouble now.

But he was quite cool. William Wibley had plenty of nerve, and it was not likely to fail him.

Vernon-Smith shrugged his shoulders. "I'll cut, if you like!" he said. "If I do, I go straight to Quelch—and if that crook dodges out and gets away while I'm gone, you'll be responsible."

"That what?" yelled Bob Cherry.

"That crook!" said Vernon-Smith grimly. "A fellow who borrows another fellow's name, and comes to this school under false colours, can only be some sort of a crook, so far as I can see."

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Nugent.

The Famous Five all looked at Popper. He was staring at the Bounder, and grinning. His grin widened. It developed into a laugh. The laugh developed into a roar. He almost yelled:

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bounder glared at him angrily.

He was not merely assured, but he knew that this fellow was not Sir Hilton Popper's nephew Archibald. He was an impostor!

An impostor, when he was found out, might have been expected to show uneasiness, or brazen impudence—anything but unrestrained merriment.

But it was merriment that this impostor displayed. And it was evident that his merriment was genuine. He yelled with laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha! Good old Smithy! Ha, ha, ha!"

"So you think it's funny, do you?" snarled the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha! Just a few!" chortled Archibald Popper. "Have you been to the films lately, Smithy? Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five laughed, too.

Popper's merriment was infectious. And Smithy's accusation seemed the limit of absurdity to them.

Vernon-Smith set his lips hard.

"Right!" he said savagely. "I'll cut—and take it straight to Quelch! We'll see whether that impostor will laugh when he comes up before a beak, and is asked who he really is."

Popper's mirth was suddenly checked.

"Hold on!" he exclaimed, as the Bounder was turning to the door.

Vernon-Smith turned back; a bitter sneer on his face.

"Oh! That touches you, does it?" he said. "You don't want to stand up to Quelch and answer questions?"

"No fear!" said the new junior, with another chuckle. "Look here, get it off your chest, Vernon-Smith! I'll try not to laugh, really."

"I say, you fellows, that chap's got a nerve!" said Billy Bunter. "He ain't Popper at all, you know! Popper's got red hair, and he hasn't! I told you fellows, the day he came, that he wasn't himself at all—"

"Shut up, Bunter! Carry on, Smithy!" said the captain of the Remove. "You've taken up this rot because you're annoyed with Popper—that's as plain as daylight. But you'd better keep it in this study—Quelch won't enjoy a film story! He doesn't go to the talkies."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Very well," said the Bounder, with set lips. "Listen to this. I've been on the telephone to Popper Court, and the butler's told me that Sir Hilton and his nephew Archibald are in London."

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Rubbish!"

"Sir Hilton changed his mind about sending the kid to Greyfriars—a red-haired kid, as I got out of the butler," sneered the Bounder. "Bunter had that right. Archibald Popper is in London now with his uncle! That fellow is here under his name!"

"I say, you fellows! I told you so—"

"Shut up, Bunter! Look here, Smithy, if that's straight—" Harry Wharton stared blankly at the Bounder.

"Quite! And if that fellow doesn't own up, here and now, that he is an impostor, and explain what his game is, I'm going to collar him, and prevent him from getting away before he's questioned," said the Bounder. "Now, you spoofer, what have you got to say?"

Archibald Popper yawned.

"You're frightfully amusing, old bean!" he said.

"It's all rot!" said Bob Cherry.

"The rotfulness is terrific!"

"Very well!" The Bounder shut his teeth, and laid his hand on the door-

handle. "I'm going down to Quelch. Redwing, see that that fellow doesn't get away while I'm gone."

"Oh gum!" gasped Archibald Popper. "Shut that door, Smithy!"

The Bounder dragged the door open.

"Shut that door, you ass!" gasped the new junior. "I own up!"

THE TWENTY-FIRST CHAPTER.

Keep It Dark!

"WHAT!" stuttered Harry Wharton.

"Wha-a-t?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Popper—"

"You—you—you own up!" said Nugent dazedly.

"Oh, my hat!"

The Famous Five stared at Archibald Popper with bulging eyes.

Vernon-Smith, quietly, shut the door again, and put his back to it.

There was a squeak from Billy Bunter.

"He, he, he! I say, you fellows, I jolly well knew! I jolly well told you! He, he, he! I say, I fancy he's a burglar!"

"What on earth does this mean, Popper?" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Did—did—did you say you own up?"

The captain of the Remove really doubted whether he had heard aright.

The new junior nodded.

There was no help for it now. He could not let the matter come before the Remove master. A very little inquiry by Mr. Quelch would have revealed the fact that he was not Archibald Popper.

With all his nerve, William Wibley quaked at the idea of standing before Quelch's gimlet eyes, and facing his grim inquiries. And he still clung to a hope of keeping his secret.

The Bounder laughed sarcastically.

"He had to own up!" he sneered.

"Think he could keep this game up to a beak? Quelch would only have to phone up Popper Court to be told what I was told. That spoofing rotter knows that!"

"Quite!" assented Archibald, with another nod. "You've got me!"

"But—but—but it's impossible!" gasped Nugent. "M-m-mean to say that you—that you're not Archibald Popper at all?"

"Not; and never was!"

"Then who are you?" stuttered Johnny Bull.

"Oh, just myself, you know," said the new junior cheerfully. "Not a crook. Ha, ha, ha! Just a nice boy like yourselves."

"I can't believe there's any harm in the chap," said Redwing quietly. "But you will have to explain this, whoever you are."

"I say, you fellows, he's a burglar! He's after the Head's safe!"

"Shut up, you fat ass!"

"Beast!"

"I want you fellows to keep this dark," said Archibald. "It's a sort of—hem!—joke—a jape, you know. I'm quite harmless. Harmless and necessary, in fact. Even dear old Smithy wouldn't want to give me away, if he knew."

"A jape," repeated Wharton.

"Sort of."

"You'll have to make it a bit clearer than that," said the captain of the Remove grimly. "You must be potty if you fancy we can keep this dark, now that you've owned up that you're here in a false name."

"Yes, rather!" said Johnny Bull.

"The ratherfulness is terrific, my esteemed spoofing Popper!"

The new junior grinned. He could not help it. Even now that they knew, on his own confession, that he was not Archibald Popper, the Removites had not the faintest suspicion who he was. Not for a moment did it occur to them that they were standing in the presence of the fellow who had been expelled from the school a week ago.

"If you've got anything to say, you can get on with it," said Vernon-Smith. "If you can prove that it's nothing more than a practical joke—good! But you'll have to prove it."

"Well, I'm not a crook, old bean!" grinned the new junior. "Ha, ha! I'll tell you fellows how it was. I knew that old Popper's nephew wasn't coming to Greyfriars, after all, and that he was a stranger here, so I had the idea of dropping in in his place. No harm done, if you fellows will keep it dark."

"And who are you?"

"I'd rather not mention that, if you don't mind."

The Bounder gave a sardonic laugh. "I dare say there's a lot of things you'd rather not mention," he remarked. "You'll find that you have to mention them—to Quelch, or the Head, or Inspector Grimes."

"Oh, don't be an ass, Smithy!" said Bob. "I don't believe there's any harm in the chap. But, of course, this can't be kept dark."

"Hardly," said Nugent.

"Look here," urged Archibald, "if you knew, you'd know it was all right. I'd tell you, like a shot, only—only if it gets out, I'm done for!"

"You're done for now!" said the Bounder grimly. "Are you going to tell us your name, or not?"

"Not!"

"That does it!" The Bounder turned to the door once more. "Keep him here, you fellows! The police may want him."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Archibald.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Billy Bunter. "You'll be run in for this, now you're found out. I dare say you've got the Head's silver spoons in your pocket this very minute."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you cheeky, cackling beast!"

"Hold on, Smithy! Keep that door shut!" gasped Archibald. "I'll tell you, and trust you to keep it dark. I was going to keep it to myself; but it's up to you not to give me away."

The Bounder paused again.

"Well, who are you?" he rapped.

"Guess!" grinned Archibald.

"How can I guess, you silly ass, when I never saw you before last week?" snapped the Bounder.

"You jolly well did!"

"Where, then?"

"Here!"

"Here!" repeated the Bounder blankly. "At Greyfriars, do you mean?"

"Exactly! I told Wharton that I should come back—"

"You told me!" stammered Wharton.

"Yes, you! You thought I was talking out of my hat at the time! But I had this stunt in mind then, you see! While I was waiting in the Head's study that evening, before I was sacked, I got a telephone call from old Popper, intended for the Head! So I knew that Archibald wasn't coming, and the Head didn't! I never knew he had red hair, blow him! I never knew that that frog had seen him, either. So—"

"Who are you?" howled Wharton.

"Wibley!"

"WIBLEY!"

There was a yell in Study No. 1. It was followed by silence, as the juniors gazed at Archibald Popper.

The Bounder almost staggered.

"Wibley!" he gasped. "Rot! Rubbish! As if we shouldn't know a chap we've known for whole terms! Gammon!"

"Wibley!" breathed Bob Cherry.

"Old Wib! Impossible!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Billy Bunter, his little round eyes almost popping through his big round spectacles. "Oh crumbs! I say, you fellows—oh jiminy!"

"You—you—you can't be Wibley!" gasped Harry Wharton. "As if we shouldn't know—"

Wibley chuckled.

"My dear chap, I could make up as you, and make you believe it was yourself!" he said. "This is simply pie to me. If I'd only known that the Popper sportsman had red hair, it would have been all serene. But I'd never seen him. But for that blithering idiot Bunter—"

"Beast!"

"Wibley!" repeated the Bounder, like a fellow in a dream. "Oh, my hat! Wibley!"

"Wibley!" gasped Johnny Bull.

"Just Wibley!" grinned the schoolboy actor. "This hair comes off, so do the eyebrows, and so does the complexion, unless I'm jolly careful with it. That's why I bagged your hat yesterday, Smithy, old man! A tramp grabbed me, and hooked my hair off, and I had to leave it with him—"

"Ek?"

"And as I'd lost my hat at the same time, I had to borrow one to get back into the school—"

"Oh!"

"Some stunt, what?" said Wibley complacently. "Now perhaps you'll understand why I was against ragging Froggy! I want to catch him in a good temper, and put it up to him to speak a word to the Head! I could have brought it off before this, if you hadn't been ragging him wild! See?"

"Oh!"

"You've got to keep it dark, now I've told you," added Wibley anxiously. "I'm sacked, and this is my only chance of getting back! You can't give a Remove man away. You've made me tell you—and now it's up to you to see me through."

They gazed at him.

Wibley was speaking in his natural voice now, which they knew if they did not know his face. They had to believe that he was Wibley! But even now they knew, they could hardly spot a trace of the Wibley they knew, in Archibald Popper.

"Wibley!" repeated the Bounder.

"You silly fathead, if you'd told us—"

"Catch me telling anybody if I could help it!" said Wibley. "Too jolly risky. But I've had to tell you now, and you've got to keep it dark!"

The Bounder laughed. He had been bitterly hostile to Archibald Popper—but all hostility vanished now that Archibald had turned out to be William Wibley.

"We'll keep it dark, of course," he said. "If you'd let me into it, you ass, I'd have helped."

"Help now!" said Wibley cheerfully.

"We can't give Wibley away, of course!" gasped Wharton. "But—"

"Wash out the butts!" said Wibley. "Keep it dark, that's all! Go easy on ragging Froggy, and give me a chance, see? It only needs a word from him to the Head. Then I wash out Popper, and turn up as Wibley! Right as rain!"

There was a general nodding of heads. Amazing as Wibley's stunt was, the chums of the Remove wished him luck the Bounder as keenly as anyone.

"All serene, what?" grinned Wibley. "Mind, I'm still Popper—mind that! And I've got to keep out of scraps, Smithy—these things come off too easily in a scrap!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Bob. "There's Bunter! That fat ass will be cackling it all over the school—"

"Oh, really, you fellows! I suppose I can keep a secret!" said Billy Bunter warmly. "Now I know it's Wibley, it's all right! I shan't give you away, Wib, old chap! You can trust me! Did I ever let a pal down? I ask you."

Billy Bunter blinked round indignantly through his spectacles.

"If you breathe a word—" hissed Wibley.

"My dear chap, leave it to me!" said Bunter reassuringly. "That's all right! But what I was going to say is this—I've been disappointed about a postal order—"

"What?"

"From one of my titled relations—"

"You fat ass!"

"Oh, really, Wibley! You'd be jolly well booted out, if Quelch knew how you were spoofing him!" exclaimed the fat Owl. "I'm not going to give you away. But in the circumstances, I think you might cash that postal order! I really think that! It's for ten bob!" added Bunter.

Archibald Popper, alias William Wibley, looked at Billy Bunter for a long moment in silence—expressive silence. Then Billy Bunter rolled out of Study No. 1 with his celebrated postal order cashed at last!

Wibley's secret remained a secret.

The fellows who knew were not going to say a word. But they wondered how long it could last. For the present, at all events, William Wibley, still at Greyfriars, remained invisible there—and carried on cheerfully as Archibald of the Remove!

THE END.

(The next yarn in this spanking fine series is entitled: "THE INVISIBLE SCHOOLBOY!" Watch out for it in NEXT FRIDAY'S ISSUE of the MAGNET!)

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DOCTOR BIRCHEMALL'S BOARDING-HOUSE!

First Instalment of a Rib-Tickling Seaside Serial

By DICKY NUGENT



The GREYFRIARS HERALD

No. 251.

EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON.

July 31st, 1937.



SHOULD THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS BE MODERNISED?

"Yes!" Says H. VERNON-SMITH

Old buildings are like old pictures. The further away you stand from them the better they look! Greyfriars, from a distance, looks great, I agree, and I'd be all for preserving it in its ancient beauty—if I hadn't to live in it!

Unfortunately, I have to live in it. And when you have to live in a place you have to come close enough to it to see a lot of drawbacks that aren't visible when you see it from a distance.

What you see is overcrowded studies, draughty common-rooms, stuffy Form-rooms, inadequate bath-room accommodation! You see a dining-hall that looks like a cathedral, gloomy passages, and winding stairs. All very fine and large when they were built, no doubt—but not quite suited to modern ideas!

I'm all for rebuilding the place. After all, we can still preserve its classical beauty—on picture postcards!

"NO!" SAYS HARRY WHARTON.

I don't agree with Smithy at all. Three or four fellows to a study is not overcrowding, to begin with. If every man had a study to himself he'd only start pining for other fellows' company, anyway—so even if they are overcrowded, it doesn't matter!

The Common-rooms are admittedly a bit draughty, but we are provided with screens, so what's the odds? The Form-rooms are not particularly stuffy, and bath-room accommodation meets most fellows' needs. The hall is a bit overwhelming for meals, perhaps, but it's better than cheap and nasty. As for the winding stairs—well, I find the banisters very convenient for sliding down!

The school buildings make a noble pile, surrounded by an air of dignity which unconsciously does us all a lot of good. Long may they remain unspoiled by modern "improvements"!

BUNTER'S WATCHWORD FOR VAC. IS ORIGINALITY!

Says BOB CHERRY

In an interview I was privileged to have with Mr. W. G. Bunter this week, he expressed deep contempt for "ordinary" summer holidays.

"The worst of the popular resorts is that you meet so many common trippers," he told our reporter.

"The low beggars get everywhere, y'know. What the dooce is the good of Switzerland? Simply swarming with trippers, by gad! Just the same with the Tyrol. France simply reeks with 'em. They're like flies on the Rhine. Italy and the Riviera are unbearable on account of 'em!"

"Same thing applies to cruising. Even the best liners are full of low, vulgar people. So the holiday watchword for a member of the upper class like myself must be 'originality.' That's the only way a fellow can protect himself against running into the low-down outsiders he's bound to meet on 'ordinary' holidays.

"Chaps like yourself, for instance!" concluded Mr. Bunter brightly. I thanked Mr. Bunter with appropriate humility for his gracious interview. Then I sat him in a puddle and rolled him on the grass and wiped my feet on him.

Incidentally, unless someone else comes to the rescue, our fat old pal's originality is likely to take him away with Pa and Ma Bunter this year.

They're going to Margate.

SIEGE OF GUNMAN'S STRONGHOLD!

Amazing Story in Court!

The appearance of a notorious young gangster in the dock led to a scramble for seats in the public gallery in the Remove Court on Thursday.

George Tubb, described as a sportsman, was charged with being in possession of firearms without a licence. His appearance was the sequel to a battle which, in the words of Mr. Peter Todd, K.C., counsel for the prosecution, would have done justice to any American film.

Relating the story of the battle with a quiet under-emphasis which was very effective, Mr. Todd said that the police had been keeping watch on prisoner for some time with a view to confirming their suspicions that he was supplying lawless elements in the Third and Second Forms with arms. On Wednesday, a squad of men led by Detective-Inspector Penfold approached a box-room

where they had reason to believe there was a store of arms.

They were met with a fusillade from a sub-machine-gun-shooter that drove them to cover, and this was the start of a battle that lasted half an hour.

Prisoner, who was alone in the box-room, defended



himself with catapults, pea-shooters, and water-pistols, and defied the police from behind a barricade of trunks and packing-cases, driving back charge after charge with severe loss to the attackers. It was only when reserves of police entered through the window and made an assault from

last few weeks. Society must defend itself against people like Tubb. He would have to go to penal servitude for twenty years. In view of the near approach of the summer vac., the sentence was afterwards commuted to one of twenty minutes.

and sported a taxi to Bella Vista.

"My hat! I don't think much of this place!" remarked Frank Fearless, as he rang the bell outside a dingy-looking house in one of the back streets.

Then the door opened, and Fearless jumped. "The Head!" he cried. "Oh, grate pip!" gasped Jack Jolly. "I didn't know you were going to be a guest here, sir!"

"I'm not!" grinned Doctor Birchmhall. "I'm more than a guest, Jolly—I'M THE LANDLADY! Welcome to Bella Vista!"

The only answer the Head received was four sickening thuds.

The shock had proved too much for Jack Jolly & Co. They had fainted!

(There's fun galore in next week's sparkling instalment of "Doctor Birchmhall's Boarding-House!" Don't miss it!)

The golden sands of Sandyville came into view at last, and Jack Jolly & Co. tumbled out of the train

rather more than we expected to pay," grinned Jack Jolly. "But if Bella Vista is anything like you say, it's well worth the extra."

"I vote we book at once," said Fearless. "May we use the tellyphone, sir?"

"There's no need, Fearless. I myself represent Bella Vista, and all you have to do to secure your rooms is to give me your deposit."

"Right-o, we'll risk it," grinned the kaplin of the Fourth. "Here's my pound!"

He had been very careful

not to mention who was going to be in charge of the boarding-house. The crafty old fossil knew very well that the Co. would have found plenty of eggscuses for not coming had they known the truth.

Later in the day, Jack Jolly & Co. quitted St. Sam's. They had to go to their respective homes for the night, and they were going to meet on the following day and go to Sandyville together.

Next day, they all met at Joynham Junction and caught the first train to Sandyville.

The grate express roared merrily—and the chums of the Fourth larked heartily, for they were all in grate spirits at the prospect of a seaside hollerday.

The golden sands of Sandyville came into view at last, and Jack Jolly & Co. tumbled out of the train

BREAKING-UP DAY!

Bang! Crash! Wallop! "Bless my sole!"

Mr. I. Jolliweli Lickham, master of the St. Sam's Fourth, pawed in his task of packing a suitcase. A defenning din had suddenly started in the passidge outside his room. It sounded like somebody smashing up milk bottles and it made Mr. Lickham turn quite pale.

Bang! Crash! Wallop! Thud!

"What the merry dickens!" gasped Mr. Lickham.

In fear and trembling, the master of the Fourth opened the door and looked out cautiously to see what was happening.

To his utter amazement, he found Doctor Alfred Birchmhall, the awe-inspiring headmaster of St. Sam's, dancing up and down the passidge, hitting out at every breakable object within reach! Two electric light bulbs had already gone west and several pictures were lying in ruins on the floor. As Mr. Lickham looked out, a bust of Julius Sizzer flew in a thowsand pieces under a smashing blow from the Head's implement of destruction.

Bang! Mr. Lickham gave a gasp of horror.

"Sir! Sir! What are you doing of?!" he cried. "You're breaking everything up!"

Doctor Birchmhall lowered his sledgehammer and looked round; and, to Mr. Lickham's serprize, he was grinning with the utmost cheerfulness.

"Natcherally I'm breaking everything up, Lickham!" he chortled. "Why not?"

"Eh??"

"It's breaking-up day, isn't it?" grinned the Head. "Very well, then; I'm going to break up as well as everybody else! This is my share in the general breaking-up process!"

Mr. Lickham gasped. "M-my hat! But aren't you making a sllite mistake, sir? Breaking up for the summer vack duzzent mean that we have to run amuck with sledge-hammers?"

Doctor Birchmhall nitted his brows in puzzlement. "If it duzzent mean that, Lickham, what does it mean?"

Mr. Lickham larked. "It meerly means the breaking up of the assembly of skollars who attend St.

Sam's during term time, sir."

"Well, Lickham, I must say you serprize me!" grinned Doctor Birchmhall. "Although I have never previously joined in the breaking-up festivities, I always imagined they were concerned with the breaking up of everything you felt like breaking up!"

"Grate pip!"

"Feeling in a high-spirited mood this morning, I thought I would do a bit of breaking up myself," eggsplained the Head. "However, as I seem to be doing the wrong kind of breaking up, I suppose I had better desist. Hurrah for the hollerdays, Lickham, anyway!"

With these words, the Head flung away his sledgehammer and started waltzing Mr. Lickham up and down the passidge. Unforchunily, he didn't trubble to look where he threw the sledge-hammer; and Binding, the page, turned into the passidge at just the wrong moment—unforchunily for him!

There was a sickening thud, as the sledgehammer collided with Binding; and Binding uttered a yell of pane that brought the Head's dance to an end.

"Yarooooo!"

"Oh, crums! Sorry, Binding! Hurt?" asked Doctor Birchmhall.

"Ow! Yessir! You bonked me on the boko!"

"Binding! Binding!" cried the Head, more in sorrow than in anger. "It hurts me more than I can tell to hear you use such a vulgar slangy eggspression as 'bonked me on the boko'."

"Ow! Which I'm sorry, sir!"

"So you ought to be! A better way to eggspress your meaning, Binding, would be to say 'You coshed me on the conk.' But to bizziness! Am I wanted, Binding?"

"Yessir," said Binding. "A ledly wants to see you. Name of Miss Maria Birchmhall."

The Head wissled. "Few! It's my Aunt Maria that keeps a board-ing-house at Sandyville-on-Sea. This means an invitation, for a cert! Hooray!"

He flung Mr. Lickham aside and flung himself out of the passidge.

Mr. Lickham and Binding were not at all sorry to see the back of him.

The Head sprinted downstairs and soon reached

his study. He was looking awfully eggstod. He felt sure his Aunt Maria had come to invite him to Sandyville-on-Sea; and the prospect of a seaside hollerday on the cheap pleased him immensely.

But a bigger serprize even than that was in store for Doctor Birchmhall.

When he got to his study, it was to find that his aunt was not in her usual good helth and boisterous spirrits. She prosceeded to eggsplain why she looked so seedy; and what she told him faredly took the cake!

"Alfred!" she said. "The fukt is that the doctor has ordered me a complete rest and a change of surroundings. I've been looking after other people's hollerdays for sixty-five years or so; and now he says it's time I had a hollerday myself."

Doctor Birchmhall raised his eyebrows.

"That's all very well, auntie," he said. "But if you go away for a hollerday, what is going to happen to the boarding-house?"

It was Miss Maria Birchmhall's reply that staggered the Head.

"Ah!" she said. "That's where you come in!"

The Head started violently. "Me?"

"Yes, you!" nodded the Head's aunt. "I want

Vista is not quite the same as St. Sam's—"

"My hat! I should say not!"

"But you will find it as easy as anything to adapt yourself to the new atmosphere. Instead of feeding folks' heads with nollidge, you will feed their faces with porridge. The main thing to remember is to rook your guests as much as possible. Do you think you can do that, Alfred?"

The Head's somewhat shiftly eyes gleemed.

"Ahem! I eggspect I could do that as well as most people, auntie—probably better! The only thing that trubbles me is the thought that it's a little infra dig for the Head of a grate skool like St. Sam's to manage a seaside board-ing-house. Er—what kind of fee would you be prepared to pay for my services, auntie?"

"Half the prophets, Alfred."

Doctor Birchmhall pondered deeply for a moment. Then he grinned and nodded. "Done!" he cried. "I'll sink my pride, auntie! The headmaster of St. Sam's shall become land-lady of Bella Vista!"

And in this way Doctor Birchmhall began an adventure that was destined to have some very comical consequences!

LIKE LAMBS TO THE SLAUGHTER!

"What's the next move?"

Frank Fearless asked that question and he and Merry and Bright looked to Jack Jolly for an answer.

The kaplin of the Fourth, who was holding a letter in his hand, grinned rather rewwfully.

"We shall have to find diggings somewhere else—that's all," he said. "It's a bit thick, being turned down at the last minnit like this; but something's bound to turn up!"

"I'm not so sure," remarked Merry, with a shake of his head. "Sandyville-on-Sea is pretty crowded at this time of the year, you know. It's quite possible we shan't find a place in the town with accomodation for four."

Before Jolly could think of a suitable reply to that, there came an interruption. A majestic figger appeared in the doorway of the skool

tuckshop, where the chums of the Fourth had been discussing ice-cream and the hollerday problem, and a familiar voice hailed them jeenially.

"Good-morning, boys! Been disappointed over your hollerday diggings?"

Jack Jolly & Co. looked serprized, as they turned to the Head.

"Right on the wicket, sir!" said Jack Jolly. "We have, as a matter of fukt. But how did you know?"

Doctor Birchmhall grinned.

"A little bird wippeder it in my ear, Jolly—a bird of the name of Tubby Barrell, if you really want to know! But, cheer up, boys! Just as it happens, I'm in a position to reserve you the best diggings in Sandyville—and at a very reasonable figger."

"The dickens you are!"

"The boarding-house I have in mind, boys," said the Head, enthowsiasially, "is the boardinghouse you've dreamed about, but never eggspected to see! It's a really ripping place—honest injun!"

"Are the beds nice and comfy, sir?"

"Comfy? I should just think they are! Every bed is fitted with a Neverest box-spring and Itemoor blankets. The pillovs are down—and the guests hardly ever want to get up at Bella Vista!"

"Is that the name of the place, sir?" asked Merry.

The Head nodded.

"Bella Vista—meaning 'bewtiful view.' It would be hard to think of a more fitting name for this delightful rony-voo, from which you get the most exquisite sea-views—provided you climb on to the top of the climb-leys to see them!"

Finally, boys, we are no irritating little extras and no petty restrictions," he concluded the Head. "The extras are all big ones and the restrictions mitey important," he added, under his breth. "Such, in brief, is the desirable board-ing-house known as Bella Vista. The fees, specially reduced for your bennyfit, are ridiculously low—five ginnies a week each! Book now for a fortnight, boys, and avoid disappointment later!"

"Well, sir, five ginnies is

you to look after the boarding-house for me while I'm away!"

"B-b-bless my sole!"

"It will make a fine hobby for your hollerdays," said Miss Birchmhall, with a feint smile. "I am sure, Alfred, that you will be a grate suxxess as a seaside landlady. Of corse, Bella

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