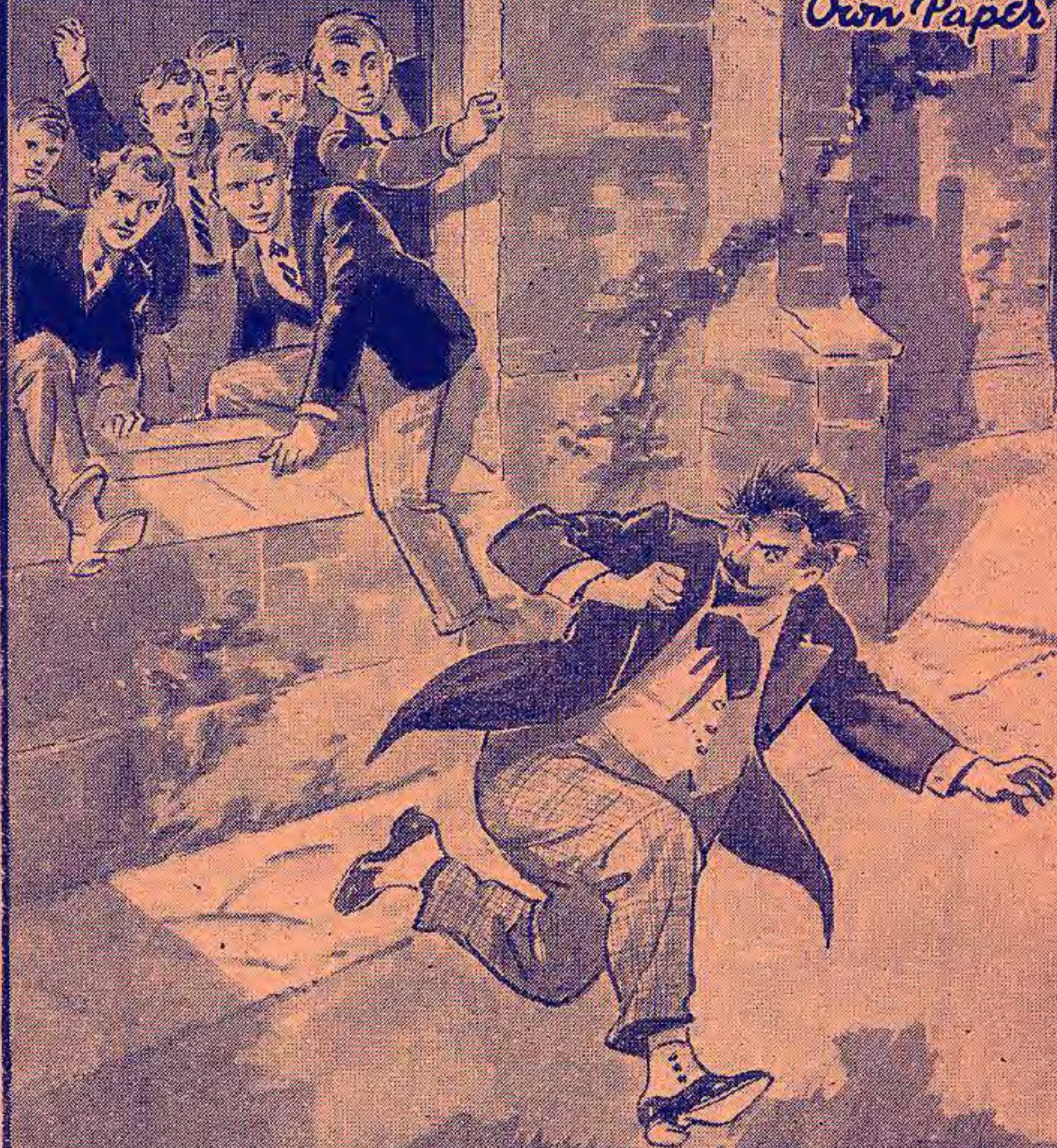


ARE YOU A PRIZEWINNER? GREAT "ARMAMENTS" STAMPS RACE RESULT . . . INSIDE!

The Magnet^{2D}

*Billy Bunter's
Own Paper*



FRENCH LEAVE!

SPECIAL BONUS WEEK FOR "MAGNET" READERS!

THE GREAT ARMAMENTS RACE



5 More Bikes to be Won

2,000 Other Tip-Top Prizes

FREE! FOR COLLECTING ARMAMENTS STAMPS / FREE!

K EEP at it, pals, and collect all the "Armaments" Stamps you can. There are still 5 More "Hercules" Bikes and at least 2,000 of the other grand prizes to be given away in the July contest—for collecting the Stamps MAGNET is printing every week. There are five different kinds to be collected now—BATTLESHIPS, TANKS, DESTROYERS, and so on. Cut them out and try to get as many others as you can—all those you have collected so far (except Bombers, Submarines, and Searchlights, which have been called in) should be kept for this month's contest.

There are twenty more stamps on this page, including **FOUR BONUS HOWITZERS!** Add them to your collection right away, and remember there are more of these stamps to swell your total in other papers like "Gem" and "Modern Boy."

At the end of July we shall again ask you how many of one or more kinds of stamps you have collected. And then the remaining Five Bikes and at least 2,000 of the other prizes will be awarded to those readers with the biggest collections of stamps called for. All second-prize winners will be asked to choose their own gifts.

Don't send any stamps yet! We will tell you how and where when the time comes. The rules governing the contest have already appeared and will be repeated later.

OVERSEAS READERS are in this great scheme also and special awards will be given for the best collections from overseas readers for whom there will be a special closing date.

(N.B.—You can also collect or swap "Armaments" Stamps with readers of—"Boy's Cinema," "Triumph," "Champion," "Modern Boy," "Gem," "Sports Budget," "Detective Weekly," and "Thriller"—stamps can be cut from all these papers, but no reader may win more than one first prize or share, of course.)

FOUR BONUS HOWITZERS



HOWITZER



HOWITZER



HOWITZER



HOWITZER

16 OTHER STAMPS TO SAVE!



BATTLESHIP



TANK

ANTI-AIRCRAFT
GUN

BATTLESHIP



TANK



BATTLESHIP

ANTI-AIRCRAFT
GUN

BATTLESHIP



TANK



DESTROYER



BATTLESHIP



DESTROYER



TANK



HOWITZER



BATTLESHIP

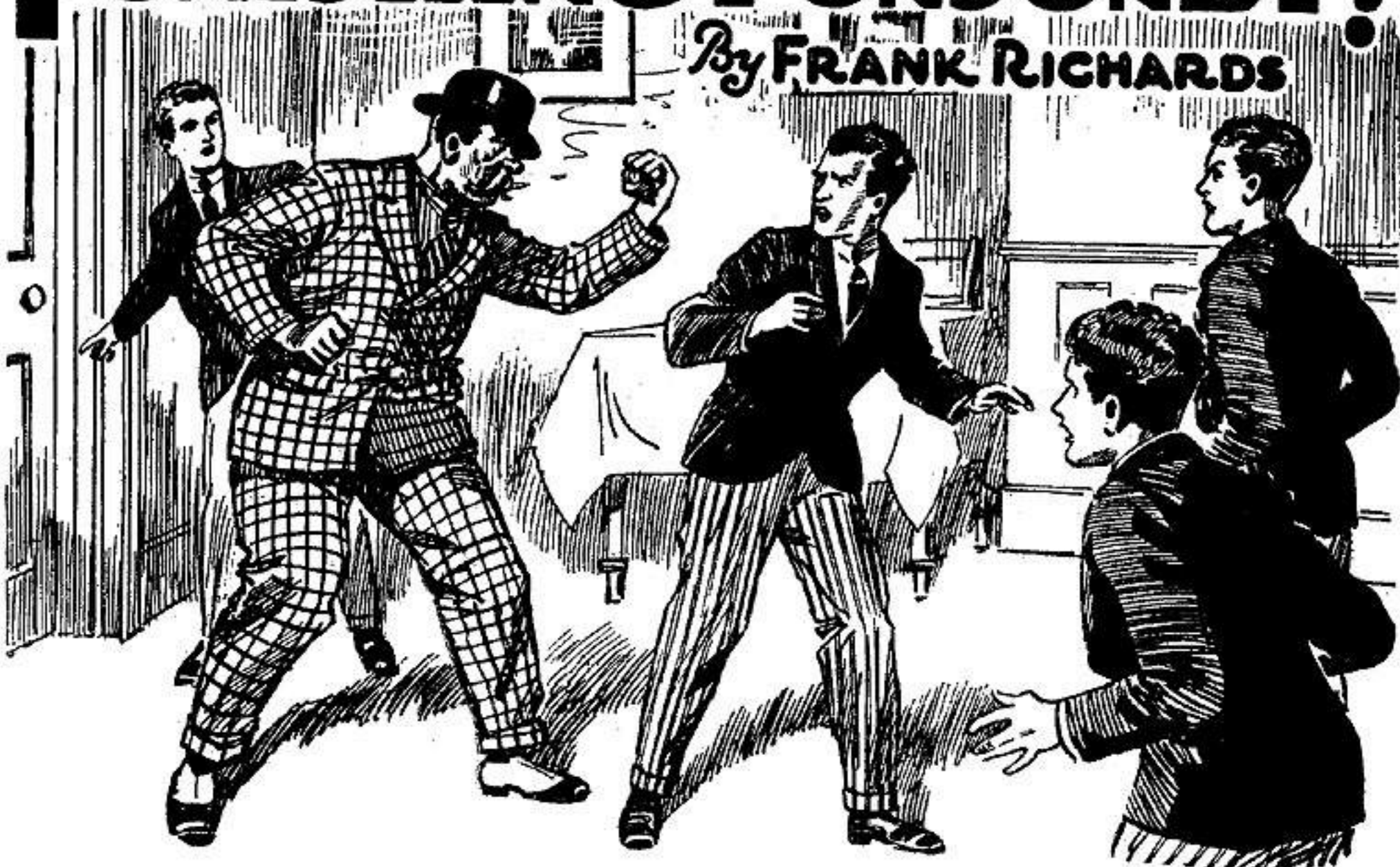


TANK

THE SCHOOLBOY IMPERSONATOR! William Wibley, of the Remove, is not much of a scholar. But when it comes to acting and impersonating, he's got all his schoolfellows beaten to a frazzle! This week, he makes Cecil Ponsonby, the cad of Highcliffe, fairly squirm for telling lies about Greyfriars fellows!

PUNISHING PONSONBY!

By **FRANK RICHARDS**



"Are you going to pay up, or ain't you, Mister Ponsonby?" "Yes, but——" "Well, 'ere I am to collect!" said Mr. Huggins. "And I'm telling you this, you young welsher, I ain't going without my money!"

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Not A Happy Afternoon!

"Is life worth living?" sighed Bob Cherry.

"Oh, it's rotten!" said Harry Wharton.

"Beastly!"

"It's the limit!"

"Oh, blow!"

"Shut up, you fellows, for goodness' sake!" said Wibley of the Remove. "Can't you be quiet when a chap's busy?"

The little crowd of juniors in the Rag at Greyfriars did not shut up. They glared at William Wibley; and, instead of shutting up, told him what they thought of him.

It was a sad and serious state of affairs, that golden July afternoon. The Famous Five of the Remove, though they did not often grouse, were grouching. Smithy and Skinner and Russell and Ogilvy were grouching, too. Even Lord Mauleverer's noble countenance was not so contentedly placid as usual. No fewer than ten members of the Greyfriars Remove were up against it, that glorious summer's afternoon.

The weather was gorgeous. It was a half-holiday. Cloudless skies and a soft breeze seemed to call them forth to the open spaces. The green cricket field, the rippling river, the shady woods, had never seemed so pleasant and attractive. French irregular verbs had never seemed so fearlessly unattractive. But the ten of them were booked for detention that afternoon—at two-thirty

they had to present themselves at the door of Class-room No. 10 for "extra French" with Mossoo!

Monsieur Charpentier had the pleasure—or otherwise—of being detention master! It looked as if he was going to have an extremely disgruntled detention class that afternoon.

"It wouldn't matter so much," groaned Bob, "if it was raining! But just look at the weather! Blow!"

"The blowfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Super 35,000-word Story of Schoolboy Fun and Adventure, featuring HARRY WHARTON & CO., of GREYFRIARS.

"I've a jolly good mind to cut!" growled Smithy.

"It's too thick!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Beastly!" groaned Nugent.

"Oh, rotten!"

"We'll jolly well rag Froggy!" said Skinner.

"There's the little beast now!" said Smithy, with a nod towards the window, at a dapper little figure in the quad. "We could get him from here—anybody got a pea-shooter?"

"Tain't Mossoo's fault, Smithy!"

said Lord Mauleverer mildly. "Quelch gave us the detention, old bean."

"Oh, rats!" grunted the Bounder.

"Will you fellows shut up?" roared Wibley. "Can't you go somewhere else to jaw? Can't you see a fellow's busy?"

Wibley was exasperated.

He was not under detention that afternoon; he was not thinking about detentions. He was sitting at the table in the Rag with a pen in his hand, and sheets of scribbled paper spread out before him. William Wibley, President of the Remove Dramatic Society, was busy on a new play—and these constant interruptions worried him. Wib had his share of the irritability natural to authors.

Really, it was hard luck on Wibley. He had picked the Rag as a quiet spot—for on a half-holiday, in such glorious weather, hardly a fellow would have remained indoors, if he could have helped it. Wib had not expected a single fellow to come in, unless it was Billy Bunter, looking for an armchair. And ten fellows had come in, with French books under their arms—since when there had not been a moment's silence.

Wib was deep in a thrilling drama, which was to be produced later by the R. D. S., called "Bill the Bookie," in which the title-role was to be played by Wib himself. "Jaw" from a crowd of disgruntled juniors was naturally disturbing and exasperating at such a time.

"Shut up, see!" hooted Wibley.

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waving his pen at the group by the window. "You're making me write this play rottenly!"

"Is that different from usual?" asked Bob Cherry innocently.

"You silly owl! Can't you go and play cricket, or pull up the river, or wag dumb-bells about, or something?"

"We've got a detention, fathead! We've got to go in to Mossos in a few minutes!"

"Go now!" said Wibley. "You can wait for him in his class-room, can't you? Or wait in the passage, or anywhere you like! Anyhow, shut up!"

"If it wasn't such ripping weather, I——" said Bob.

"Detentions ought to be only on rainy days!" remarked Ogilvy.

"It's simply gorgeous out!" sighed Bob.

"Quelch is a crusty old file!" said Nugent. "He really ought to have sense enough not to give fellows detentions on days like this!"

"Well, we asked for it," said Johnny Bull. "If we hadn't gone out of bounds——"

"Oh, cheese it, Johnny!"

"That's all very well; but if we hadn't——"

"Shut up, fathead!"

"Shut up, the lot of you!" roared William Wibley. "Will you shut up? I'll jolly well buzz a book at you if you don't shut up!"

"Look at the little beast!" said Vernon-Smith, staring out of the window. "If a fellow had a pea-shooter, he——"

"Bother him!"

"Bless him!"

Monsieur Charpentier, walking in the quad, was happily unconscious of the inimical glances from the window of the Rag. The little French gentleman, a dapper, neat figure, in his tightly fitting frock coat, with his little pointed black beard, and his trim little moustache, paced sedately to and fro, while he waited for half-past two, when he was to take his hapless class.

Probably Mossos did not enjoy detention classes any more than the Greyfriars fellows did. Certainly they made him enjoy such functions as little as possible!

"I've got an apple, Smithy," said Skinner.

"Hand it over."

Skinner produced an apple from his pocket—a small green one. It did not look fearfully attractive as an article of diet, but it was quite useful as a missile.

Vernon-Smith grabbed it and stepped nearer to the open window.

"Chuck it, Smithy!" said Mauleverer.

"I'm goin' to!"

"I mean——"

"Never mind what you mean—shut up!"

Herbert Vernon-Smith took aim from the window—prepared to pop down out of sight as soon as the missile had flown to its mark.

Skinner watched him, grinning. Skinner would not have ventured to play such a reckless trick himself, but he was quite keen to see Mossos get the apple.

"Look here——" objected Mauleverer.

And as Smithy did not heed, his lordship stepped forward and caught his arm, just as the apple was about to fly. Instead of whizzing from the window, it dropped on the floor of the Rag.

"You cheeky ass!" roared the Bounder angrily; and he shoved Mauleverer.

He turned his back, and groped for the apple on the floor.

Bob Cherry, with a cheery grin, kicked it across the room.

"Chuck it, Smithy!" he said.

"You cheeky fool!"

Vernon-Smith rushed after the apple. He recaptured it, and ran back to the window.

But it was too late! Trotter, the page, had come out of the House, and spoken to the French master, and Monsieur Charpentier was following him in. The Bounder's chance was gone. Which, perhaps, was all the better for Smithy; for certainly there would have been a row, had Mossos's hat been knocked off in the quad by a whizzing apple.

But Smithy was disappointed and angry. He glared at Mauleverer, and he glared at Bob.

"You silly, cheeky, blithering, meddling dummies——" he yapped.

"Shut up!" roared Wibley. In a goaded state, the irritated author grabbed up a "Holiday Annual" that lay on the table. "I'll buzz this book at you if you don't shut up! Now then!"

"You silly, cheeky, howling ass!" snorted the Bounder, turning his eloquence on Wibley. "You—— Oh! Great gad! Ooogh!"

Whiz!

Crash!

Bump!

William Wibley was as good as his word. The "Holiday Annual" flew across the Rag, and caught the Bounder under the chin. Smithy staggered back two or three paces, and sat down with a heavy bump.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Row In The Rag!

BUMP!

"Ooogh!" gasped Smithy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Man down!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

Herbert Vernon-Smith bounded to his feet. He had already been in a bad temper. Now he was in a worse.

He flew towards Wibley, and fairly hurled himself at that exasperated youth.

In a moment his arm was round Wibley's neck, dragging him away from the table.

Wibley's chair went over with a crash. His pen flew through the air. He sprawled and roared and hit out, catching Smithy in the eye, and by no means improving his temper thereby.

"Leggo!" yelled Wibley. "I'll jolly well—— Oh crikey!"

Thump, thump, thump!

"Hold on, Smithy!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Mustn't slaughter our tame dramatist!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

Smithy did not heed. He had Wibley's head in chancery, and he thumped and thumped.

Wibley struggled and roared. He could not get his head out of chancery; but he was able to put in some body punches, and he put them in with great vigour.

There was a buzz of excitement and merriment from the juniors as they gathered round in a ring. For the moment they forgot that awful detention class which was now nearly due.

"Go it, Smithy!" chortled Skinner.

"Punch him, Wib!" chuckled Nugent.

Tramp, tramp! Thump, thump!

Punch!

It was quite an exciting combat, but the amateur actor of the Remove was getting the worst of it. Wibley had

heaps of pluck, but he was nowhere near the Bounder's match in a scrap.

Wib could do many things that the other fellows could not do. He could write plays, and he could act in them. He could make himself up as almost anybody. It was still related in the Remove how he had impersonated Monsieur Charpentier, making himself up so exactly like the French master that nobody could tell the difference—an exploit that had come very near to closing Wib's career at Greyfriars. These things Wib could do, and do wonderfully well; the Bounder was not in the same street with him in that line. But when it came to punching, Smithy was several streets ahead of him, and the unfortunate Wib fairly crumpled up in his angry grip.

But the other fellows were not going to see Wib slaughtered.

Three or four of them grasped the Bounder by the shoulders and the neck and dragged him backward. Two or three more grasped Wibley and dragged.

So they came apart.

Wibley staggered back against the wall, crimson and breathless and panting. He gurgled for breath.

The Bounder wrenched himself free.

"Let go, you silly dummies!" he snarled. "Think I'm goin' to let that mad ass bowl me over? I'll jolly well show——"

"Nuff's as good as a feast!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Chuck it, Smithy!"

"The chuckfulness is the proper caper!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Let dogs delight in the barkfulness and the bitfulness, my esteemed and idiotic Smithy!"

Vernon-Smith panted, and set his collar straight. He had rather a pain in his chin where the "Holiday Annual" had landed. Delightful as that volume was from a literary point of view, it was by no means agreeable applied forcefully to the chin. However, the Bounder seemed to agree that Wib had had enough, and he was prepared to let the matter drop.

Wibley was not.

Wib, perhaps, felt that he had had more than enough. He wanted to hand some back. At all events, as soon as he had recovered his breath, he charged across at Herbert Vernon-Smith.

"Now, you cheeky swab——" he gasped.

"Keep off, you howling ass!" hooted Smithy. "Yaroooooh!"

He yelled as Wib, instead of keeping off, landed a set of knuckles right on his prominent nose.

The next moment he had grabbed Wibley again.

There was a wild and whirling struggle for a few moments, and then William Wibley bumped on the floor.

The Bounder's nose was trickling red. His face was as red as the claret that oozed from his nose. He was in a towering rage, which, really, was not surprising. He grabbed Wibley with his left hand, wriggling, and with his right he grabbed up the scribbled sheets from the table, crumpled them, and stuffed them down the back of Wibley's neck.

Wibley roared frantically.

Damage to himself was a light matter in comparison with damage to his precious literary works.

"Oogh! Ow! Stoppit!" shrieked Wibley. "Let my papers alone! Leave my play alone! Stop it! Oh crikey! I'll—I'll—I'll—— Oh, you rotter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stop him!" yelled Wibley. "Oh, my hat! My play! You mad ass! Oh, you dangerous idiot! My papers! My play! Oh crumbs!"

Unheeding, the Bounder crumpled and crammed. The other fellows roared with laughter.

Really, Wibley had asked for it. He had renewed the combat when the Bounder had dropped it, and Smithy's nose spattered drops of red. Having asked for it, Wibley could not complain if he received it.

But he did—loudly! He yelled and he roared; he wriggled and he struggled; he almost foamed.

But it booted not. Sheet after sheet of that precious play was crumpled and crammed down the back of his neck. "Bill the Bookie" disappeared—rammed home by the Bounder's fist.

"There, you potty ass!" gasped the Bounder. "I've a jolly good mind to shove the inkpot after it—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And I jolly well will!"

"You jolly well won't!" grinned Bob Cherry, hooking the inkpot out of reach.

"Oh, you swab!" gasped Wibley, as, released at last, he struggled to his feet. "You rotter! You—you—you blighter! My play— Oh crikey!"

Wibley did not hurl himself at the Bounder again. He groped down his back for "Bill the Bookie." He gurgled with rage as he extracted torn and crumpled sheets. But some were too far gone to be extracted. Wibley groped after them in vain.

"I say, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter rolled into the Rag.

He blinked at the wriggling Wibley through his big spectacles, and then blinked round at the laughing juniors.

"I say, you're in luck, you fellows!" said the fat Owl. "I say, Froggy's gone out!"

"Gone out?" exclaimed Bob.

"I've just seen him," said Bunter. "He had a telephone call—Trotter called him in to take it—and he's gone out! I say, if he's called away, you fellows will get off detention!"

"Oh, what a little bit of luck!"

"Too jolly good to be true!" said Harry Wharton, shaking his head.

"Well, he's gone out," said Bunter. "I saw him trotting down to the gates. I heard him ask Prout about a train at Courtfield."

"Oh, ripping!"

"Topping!"

"The topfulness is terrific!"

Every face in the Rag—except Wibley's—brightened. If Monsieur Charpentier, in answer to a telephone call, had gone out and forgotten his detention class, it was an amazing stroke of good fortune for ten detained juniors.

On the other hand, if he came in, he would expect to find them waiting at the door of Class-room No. 10, and there would be a report to Mr. Quelch if they were not there.

"Better hike along to Class-room No. 10," said Johnny Bull. "It's half-past. If he doesn't come, we can clear."

"Better give him ten minutes, at least," agreed Harry Wharton. "A quarter of an hour would be safer. We want to be able to explain to Quelch if he spots us out of detention."

"Can't be too careful," agreed Bob.

"But, I say, what ripping luck if Froggy's gone out and forgotten us!"

"Hurrah!"

"Yaas, begad!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Let's hope for the best!"

The juniors crowded to the door.

"You can get on with your play now, Wibley!" chuckled Bob.

"You silly idiot!" yapped Wibley.

"I've got to go and get my things off to get it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cackling owls—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You sniggering blitherers—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wibley snorted and tramped out of the Rag, to go up to his study.

Harry Wharton & Co. headed for Class-room No. 10—in an unusually cheery mood for a detention class. As Mossoo appeared to have gone out suddenly, after asking about a train, there really seemed a healthy chance that he would not turn up to take his class—in which case that gorgeous July afternoon was not going to be wasted, after all. They were feeling quite happily anticipative as they waited at Class-room No. 10.

William Wibley did not share that happy mood.

Wibley was shirty.

In his study in the Remove passage he hooked off jacket and waistcoat to extract the remainder of those crumpled sheets. He was about to replace those garments, when he paused.

His frowning face broke into a grin.

"By gum!" said Wibley.

He whistled.

Then, still grinning, he opened his property-box and extracted therefrom many articles—among which were a black frock-coat, a pair of neat black shoes, and other things, which Wibley had not ventured to put on since the celebrated occasion when he had impersonated the French master.

From another box he took a make-up outfit and a little black beard and moustache.

While the detained juniors waited at the door of the French class-room, the amateur actor of the Remove was very busy in his study—making a very remarkable change in his appearance.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

In Deep Disguise!

"I'M going!" growled Vernon-Smith.

"We've jolly well waited long enough!" declared Bob Cherry.

"What about a pull up the river?"

"Fine!"

"Might drop on those Highcliffe eads and give them teco," said Bob hopefully.

"It was through those rotters that we got this detention."

"Let's!"

"Dash it all, we can't be expected to hang on all the afternoon, waiting for a break!" argued Skinner. "We're entitled to clear if he doesn't come."

"I'm going to clear, anyhow!" said the Bounder. "That dashed Froggy can go and eat frogs!"

"What about it, Wharton, old bean?" asked Lord Mauleverer. "Ain't there a giddy rule on the subject?"

"Yes," answered Harry. He laughed.

"Not a rule that we often get a chance of using. But it's the rule, if a master's fifteen minutes late for his class, the class need not wait."

"That does it!" said Bob Cherry.

"It's two-forty-five."

"Not quite," said the captain of the Remove, looking at his watch. "Two-forty-four, old bean!"

"Oh, come on! What's the odds for an odd minute?"

Bob Cherry was thinking of a rippling river, dappled by the shadows of tall trees, with a deep yearning. Likewise, he was thinking of a possible encounter with Ponsonby & Co. of Highcliffe School, a meeting with whom would add a little excitement to the half-holiday.

"Don't you be an ass, Bob!" said Johnny Bull. "A rule's a rule. If we go now we're liable to be hauled up for

breaking detention. If we wait another minute we're all right. Wait!"

"Well, it's worth the other minute," said Nugent.

"Yes; wait!" said Harry.

The Bounder had made a move to go, but he paused. It was, after all, worth the other minute, as it seemed pretty certain that Monsieur Charpentier was not coming. Having kept the detention class waiting for fourteen minutes, it seemed improbable that he would turn up in the fifteenth.

Sixty more seconds, and the class would be as free as air; but they seemed quite long seconds to the ten Removites.

"Time!" said Harry Wharton, at last.

Even as he spoke there was a footstep in the corridor.

A neat, dapper figure in black frock-coat came round the corner, heading, with little mincing steps, for Class-room No. 10.

There was a general groan from the juniors.

They gazed at the sallow face, with its innumerable little wrinkles, its little, trim black moustache, and its little, pointed black beard.

Mossoo was never considered a thing of beauty, or a joy for ever; but never had he seemed such a blot on the landscape as he did at the present moment.

It was really too cruel! Just at the moment when the detention class would have been free to depart, according to established rule in such cases, the missing master had turned up!

It was a crushing blow.

"Oh gad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer.

"Oh blow!" breathed Bob Cherry.

"Oh bother!" groaned Frank Nugent.

Vernon-Smith's eyes gleamed. He wished now that he had not waited that other minute, but had chanced it. He scowled at the trim little figure whisking up the passage.

"Look here, I'm goin'!" he muttered.

"We've waited the quarter."

"Don't be an ass, Smithy!" whispered Bob.

"I tell you I'm goin'!" snarled Smithy.

He tramped down the corridor. Nine fellows watched him, wondering whether he would get away with it. The little dapper gentleman stepped in his way at once and raised a hand.

"Smeest, vere you go? You have one detention, I zink!" exclaimed the squeaky voice of Monsieur Charpentier.

"No, sir. Time's up," said Vernon-Smith. "It's a rule that we don't have to wait more than a quarter of an hour."

"Mais oui! But I am here!" said the French master. "It is quinze—fifteen—minute, and I am here. Go into ze class-room at vunce!"

Smithy breathed hard and swung on. Even the reckless Bounder would not have ventured to do so in dealing with any other master. But Monsieur Charpentier did not possess the authority of other members of Dr. Locke's staff. Often and often he affected to ignore acts of insubordination and disregard for the sake of peace and quiet.

But Mossoo, on this particular afternoon, did not seem so meek and mild as was his wont.

He made a grab at the Bounder as he passed, and caught him by one ear. He tugged at that ear, and jerked the astonished Smithy round.

"Ow!" gasped Smithy.

"Go into ze class-room, Smeest!"

"Hands off!" shouted the Bounder savagely. He looked for a moment as if he would have punched the French master.

"Vat? Anozzer vord, Smeet, and I take you to your Form-master! Vun more vord, and you go to Meester Quelch."

Kierbert Vernon-Smith suppressed his rage. With deep feelings he turned and walked back to the class-room door, and went in with the other fellows. The authority was in Mossoo's hands, if he chose to exercise it, and this time he did choose. Smithy certainly did not want to be walked off to Mr. Quelch.

Neither, certainly, could he guess that Mossoo had powerful and particular reasons for not going to Mr. Quelch.

He had forgotten all about Wibley. He had forgotten all about Wib's tricks of impersonation.

Even had he remembered he would not have suspected that "Mossoo" was other than what he seemed, for the schoolboy actor was, so far as looks went, Mossoo to the very life!

Wib could not resist the temptation when so excellent a chance was afforded by Mossoo's sudden and unexpected absence. Likewise, he was very keen to give those fellows "tit for tat" for what had happened in the Rag.

William Wibley was going to enjoy that afternoon in his own peculiar way, whatever was the fate of the ten fellows whose legs he was so coolly and cheerfully pulling.

He followed the juniors into Class-room No. 10 with the little mincing steps that were so like Mossoo's. He regarded the disgruntled class with glimmering eyes, stroking the little black beard in the way Mossoo had, though taking care not to stroke it too hard in case it became detached.

Vernon-Smith scowled at him. Skinner looked savagely sullen. The other fellows were restive. Only Lord

Mauleverger accepted the situation with his accustomed urbane philosophy.

The look of that detention class showed that it was not going to be a quiet one. Very often there were rags in a French class, and it was obvious that there was going to be ragging now.

Bang!

Skinner started by dropping a desk-lid with a report that rang like a pistol-shot.

"Skinnair!" rapped the French master.

"Quite an accident, sir!" yawned Skinner.

Bang!

Vernon-Smith's desk-lid dropped.

"Smeet!"

"Did you speak to me, sir?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"Mais oui."

"My name's not Smeet," said the Bounder.

"Smeet, you are impertinent! Anozzer vord and I rap you ze knuckles!" rapped Monsieur Wibley, taking up a pointer.

"If you can't call a fellow by his name, sir—Yarooop!" roared the Bounder, in surprise and rage as the pointer rapped.

It was quite a hard rap. Smithy roared, and sucked his knuckles, and glared at the detention master as if he could have bitten him. And the detention class stared at Mossoo in angry astonishment. He seemed in a very unusually warlike mood that afternoon.

"I will keep ordair in zis class! Sherry!"

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped Bob.

"Zat you shuffle not ze feet!"

"Oh yes, sir!"

"Now," said Mossoo, "ve vill work!"

And the detention class, rather to their own surprise, and fearfully against their inclination, found themselves working.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

An Amazing Discovery!

"I SAY, you fellows!" Billy Bunter blinked into Class-room No. 10 in surprise. All was quiet there.

Mossoo sat at his desk reading a book which, outside, bore the title, "La Henriade," and inside, the "Gem." Wibley had provided himself with something rather more entertaining than the French language.

The detention class sat at their desks, busy. Mossoo had directed them to write out the complete conjugation of "avoir." That kept them busy, while William Wibley enjoyed something of a more entertaining nature.

So far, the class were quiet. That terrific rap on Smith's knuckles had discouraged ragging. Even the Bounder was not disposed to recommence yet, though his eyes were gleaming, and he was plotting mischief.

The door opened, and the fat Owl of the Remove blinked in through his big spectacles with a puzzled blink.

Billy Bunter knew, if the detention class did not, that Monsieur Adolphe Henri Charpentier had gone out, and had not come in.

So he was naturally puzzled to know why they were in detention.

Blinking into Class-room No. 10, he fixed his spectacles on the class. And as he did not look round he did not discern, for the moment, the dapper figure at the master's desk.

"I say, you fellows, what are you doing here?" asked Bunter. "I say, that old ass Mossoo has gone out all right."

Bob Cherry made him frantic signs to shut up. But Billy Bunter saw no reason for shutting up—as he did not see Mossoo.

"It's all right, you men!" he declared. "That old sketch, Froggy, hasn't come in. You needn't stick here. I say, I've been looking for you! I say, I went to the tuckshop for an ice-cream, and I found I'd run right out of cash. Mauly, old man—I say, what are you waving at me for, Cherry?"

Bunter blinked at Bob in surprise.

"I say, Mauly, will you lend me a bob till my postal order comes?" he asked. "Look here, come and have an ice-cream with me! I'll stand treat, old chap, if you'll lend me the money. No need to stick here. I tell you that that old donkey Mossoo has gone to Courtfield to catch a train, and—"

"Buntair!"

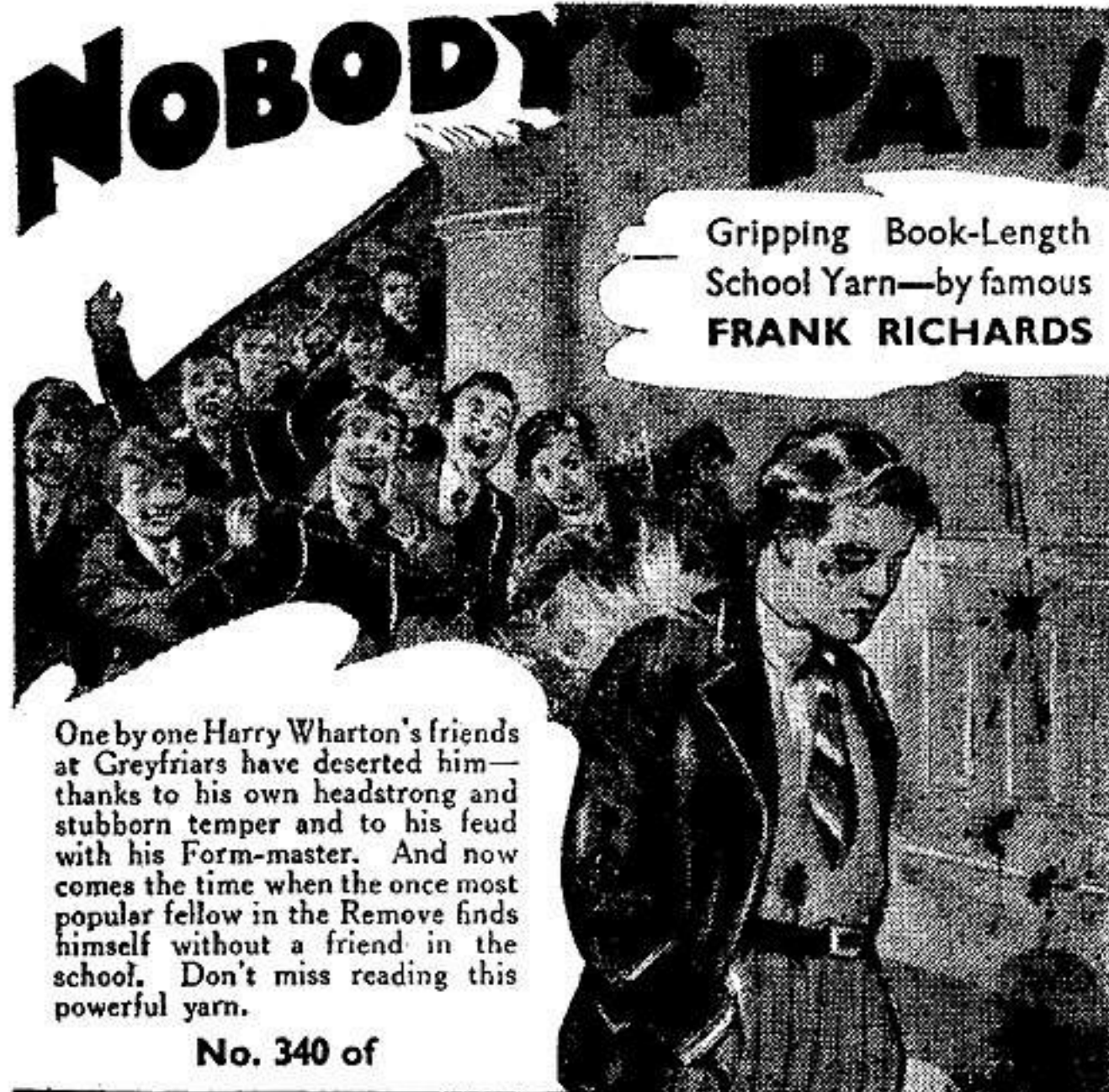
Billy Bunter jumped almost clear of the floor.

He spun round and stared at the French master at the high desk, his little round eyes almost popping through his big round spectacles.

"Oh crikey!" he gasped.

Billy Bunter could hardly believe his little round eyes, or his big round spectacles, either. He knew that Monsieur Charpentier had gone out. He knew that he had not come in again. Yet there he was, sitting at the master's desk! It was enough to surprise any fellow.

"Buntair, vy for you come to zis



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class-room? Is it zat you vish to have the detention, also?"

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Bunter. "N-not at all, sir! I—I thought you were gone out, sir! Oh crikey!"

"Is it zat you call me one old donkey, Buntair?"

"Oh, no!" gasped Bunter.

"I zink zat I hear you, Buntair!"

"Oh, no, sir! I—I was speaking about another old donkey, sir—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Not you at all, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Quite another old donkey, sir!"

It was, perhaps, fortunate for Billy Bunter that the French master in Class-room No. 10 was not the genuine article.

To the surprise of the class, and to Bunter's relief, the dapper little gentleman at the high desk laughed.

"Zat you go away, Buntair," he said. "You must not come here in detention. Allez-vous-en!"

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped Bunter; and he fairly bolted, glad to escape.

How Mossoo happened to be in Class-room No. 10 when, as Bunter knew, he was not within the walls of Greyfriars School at all, was an amazing mystery to Bunter. But there he was, and the fat Owl was glad to get away.

Work was resumed in Class-room No. 10.

The juniors were not giving a lot of attention to French verbs. They were growing more and more restive. Many of them were glancing at the Bounder.

Smithy had slipped his hand into his pocket, where reposed the apple Skinner had handed him in the Rag. That apple was in his grasp under his desk, and he was watching the French master.

All the fellows knew his game; but even the Bounder did not venture to "buzz" that apple, unless he was sure that Mossoo's eyes were not on him. If he caught Mossoo by surprise, the French master would have to pick the culprit out of a class numbering ten.

But it was soon clear that Mossoo was not observing his class.

He seemed deeply engrossed in the "Henriade," though nobody could understand why.

That celebrated poem of Voltaire's was used as a school book at Greyfriars, for which reason alone nobody was likely to read it if he could help it. Monsieur Charpentier, no doubt, saw merits in it which Greyfriars fellows never thought of looking for. Still, it was surprising to see him so deeply engrossed.

Had the juniors been able to look over his shoulder, they would have seen that attractive publication, the "Gem," enclosed in the cover of the old school book.

Anyhow, there it was. The dapper figure at the desk was reading with the keenest interest, and did not look up.

It was too good a chance to be lost.

Vernon-Smith's hand came up over his desk. His eyes gleamed, and he took aim. The other fellows watched, almost breathlessly. Still Mossoo did not look up. Smithy aimed at a bald spot that glimmered in the July sunshine.

Whiz!

The apple sped with deadly aim. Mossoo's head was bent over his desk on which his book lay open. The top of his head was turned towards his class. Right on the summit of his napper landed the apple—bang!—on the bald spot.

"Wow!" came a startled yell. "Oh crumbs! Yaroooh! What the thumping thump—Wow! Yow! Ow! My napper! Wow! My crummet! Oooo-yoooh!"

Mossoo jumped and yelled in his surprise as he received that bang on the top of his head.

The juniors jumped, too.

They fairly bounded.

They had expected Mossoo to yell. But they had not expected him to break out into expressions such as those he had uttered. He might have ejaculated "Mon Dieu!" or "Ciel!" or even "Nom d'un nom!" Anything, in fact, but what he actually had ejaculated.

But for a French master to ejaculate "Oh crumbs!" and "What the thumping thump!" was really too astonishing.

But Wibley, in his surprise, had forgotten for the moment that he was a French master at all. He was, for the moment, a schoolboy, who had been suddenly banged on the head.

"Ow! Wow!" he roared, rubbing his head.

And, to the further and utter amazement of the staring detention class, the bald spot on his head moved as he rubbed it, shifting over one ear, and the hair went along with it.

They fairly gaped.

For a moment it looked as if the French master was rubbing the top of his head off.

Then they knew.

Mossoo's black mop, with the bald spot in the middle, moved over his left ear all together, and on the right side of his head, tow-coloured hair was revealed.

It was a wig! And it was coming off!

Nobody could have guessed it when it was in position. But when it was shifted over one ear, nobody could have failed to guess.

The juniors gazed at him in stupefaction.

"What silly ass—" yelled Mossoo Wibley. "What blithering chump did—"

Then he remembered himself.

He ceased to rub his head. He gave a jerk at the wig to restore it to its proper position.

But it was rather too late. After the first moment of dumbfounded astonishment, every fellow in the detention class knew that this was not Monsieur Charpentier. Mossoo's head of hair, with the bald spot in the centre, was, of course, a fixture. This wasn't!

"Who—" gasped Bob Cherry, with popping eyes.

"What—" stuttered Harry Wharton.

"How—" gasped Nugent. "Why— which—what—who—"

"Who—what— Great pip! Who?" stuttered all the class.

"Wibley!" yelled the Bounder. He was the first to guess. He leaped to his feet. "Spoofed! It's Wibley!"

"Wha-a-at—"

"That howling ass playing his theatrical tricks!" yelled the Bounder. "Think that's Mossoo, with his head coming off? It's that mad ass Wibley at his tricks again!"

"Oh crikey!"

"Wibley!"

"That spoofing ass—"

All the fellows were on their feet now.

They could hardly believe that it was Wibley. Except for the fact that his black hair and his bald spot had taken a list to port, he was still Mossoo to the

last detail. But they knew that he was not Mossoo now: they knew that Mossoo was, after all, out of gates, and that this was some spoofer in his place. And there was only one inhabitant of Greyfriars capable of such an extraordinary spoof—William Wibley.

While the rest of the fellows stared the Bounder rushed across the class-room, red with wrath.

He was detained by Wibley, he had had his knuckles rapped by Wibley: he was sure that it was Wib. He rushed right at him.

Wibley dodged round Mossoo's desk.

"Here, keep off, you mad ass!" he shouted. "Only a joke! Tit for tat! You mucked up my play in the Rag and— Keep off, will you?"

The infuriated Bounder chased him round the desk.

"Collar him!" shouted Bob Cherry. "It's really Wib—"

"Rag the cheeky ass—"

"Rag him!"

"Bump him!"

"Scrag him!"

The whole detention class swarmed out of their places.

Wibley made a wild rush for the door. Two or three fellows darted in to cut off his retreat. He dodged round the desks, with a howling crowd in pursuit.

The window was open. Wibley bounded for the window.

"Collar him!"

"Stop him!"

"Bag him!"

Five or six clutching hands barely missed Wibley as he bounded through the open window and landed in the quad outside; he stumbled, recovered himself, and ran.

"After him!" roared Bob Cherry.

And junior after junior leaped from the class-room window and rushed in hot pursuit.

Class-room No. 10 was left deserted. Detention that afternoon was off, after all.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Luck For Loder!

GERALD LODER of the Sixth Form stared.

He could hardly believe his eyes.

Loder of the Sixth was strolling in the old Cloisters—a cool and shady spot on a hot afternoon in July. But it was not only for coolness and shade that Loder had sought that secluded spot; he was enjoying—or otherwise—a cigarette out of the general view.

At the sudden sound of running feet Loder's cigarette disappeared as if by magic.

It sounded as if a mob of fellows were suddenly rushing into the Cloisters—and a Sixth Form prefect did not want to be spotted smoking!

He stared round and jumped almost clear of the old stone flags as he saw—or, at all events, believed that he saw—the French master of Greyfriars skipping along at top speed, with a mob of juniors in pursuit.

The dapper little figure passed Loder almost like a flash; it passed too quickly for Loder to observe that its black hair had slipped over one side of its cranium, leaving tow-coloured hair visible on the other side; it whizzed on, jumped at the ivied wall, and clambered. Almost in a twinkling that dapper figure vanished over the wall.

After it flew nine excited Remove fellows in hot haste. Of all the exasperated detention class, only Lord Maule-

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verer had not joined in the pursuit of the spoofer; laziness having supervened in his lordship's case. All the other fellows were fearfully keen to get hold of William Wibley and hand over the lesson that he evidently needed.

Fellows who had sat at unnecessary detention on a hot summer's afternoon, grinding French verbs, while a practical joker sat at the master's desk reading the "Gem" were naturally in an excited state when they discovered how their leg had been pulled.

They wanted to get hold of William Wibley—and they wanted to get hold of him at once. Wibley had dodged into the Cloisters, hoping to escape, but they were almost at his heels; they rushed on past the staring Loder.

"What the deuce——" gasped Loder. "Here, stop! What——"

They tore on.

"Wharton! Cherry! Bull! Stop!" stammered Loder.

They were gone!

One after another, in swift pursuit, they clambered over the ivied wall and dropped into the lane outside. They hardly knew that Loder of the Sixth was there; if they heard him they did not heed.

Loder fairly gaped after them.

He knew, of course, that the French master was often ragged in class; often and often there were sounds of revelry from Class-room No. 10 when Adolphe Henri Charpentier was taking a junior class. It had been known for Mossoo to sit in glue, to find a rat in his desk, even to sprawl under a blackboard that was tipped over by accident. But this was the limit! This was unheard-of! A mob of juniors chasing the French master—it was really hard for Loder of the Sixth to believe what his eyes witnessed. He almost doubted their evidence—doubted whether it really could have been Mossoo who had whisked by him in frantic flight.

"By gum!" gasped Loder.

He stood staring after the vanished crowd. They had disappeared over the wall; they had gone out of the school after Mossoo! It was amazing to think of!

For some minutes Loder stood and stared.

But amazement at length gave way to a grim satisfaction. He had not recognised all the juniors; they had passed too quickly for that. But he had recognised Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, Johnny Bull, and the Nabob of Bhanipur. Harry Wharton & Co. were in this—the sort of thing that those young rascals would be in, of course! Which, amazing as it was, was quite agreeable to the bully of the Sixth, who was quite anxious to land those young rascals into hot water.

Loder of the Sixth was feeling extremely inimical towards the cheery Co. Only a few days ago Loder had been through a severe ragging, headed up in a sack, and ducked in a pond. The Famous Five had been supposed to be the culprits, but before the "chopper" came down it was discovered that the real culprits were Ponsonby & Co. of Highcliffe.

As a dutiful prefect Loder ought to have been very glad that the facts had come to light before the wrong parties were punished; but, as a matter of fact, he was feeling very sore.

Perhaps he had a lingering doubt on the subject, and was not quite sure that the Famous Five were so innocent as the Head believed them to be; perhaps he preferred to entertain a doubt.

Anyhow, he was very keen to catch

those cheery juniors. Now he had caught them! This meant a flogging, at the very least. Of all the outrageous rags that had ever been heard of at Greyfriars, chasing a master—even if it was only a French master—was the most utterly outrageous! It was, in fact, so awfully outrageous that it was scarcely credible. But there it was; Loder had seen it—with his own eyes he had seen it!

He walked away to the House in quite a cheery mood. This was news for Quelch, which he would be extremely displeased to hear. Sad to relate, Loder quite enjoyed the idea of displeasing Mr. Quelch with such a report about boys in his Form. Quelch took the Head's view—that the Famous Five were quite cleared of the charge of having "sacked" and "ducked" Loder. He would not be able to acquit them of this.

Loder had a grin on his face as he tapped at the Remove master's door, but he composed his features into an expression of becoming gravity as he entered Mr. Quelch's study.

There was a sound of clicking in that study. Quelch was seated at his typewriter, busy on the umpteenth chapter of his celebrated "History of Greyfriars." He ceased to click and glanced round with ill-concealed impatience as the prefect entered.

"What——" began Mr. Quelch.

"I am sorry to interrupt you, sir," said Loder blandly, "but I must report what I have just seen——"

"Kindly be brief——"

"Wharton, Cherry, Bull, Hurree Singh, and a number of other Remove boys, sir——"

Mr. Quelch held up his hand.

"The boys you name, Loder, are now in the detention class with Monsieur Charpentier!" he rapped.

Loder smiled.

"I think not, sir," he answered.

"Absurd!" said Mr. Quelch. "These boys were given a detention for having gone to Highcliffe without leave. They should be in Monsieur Charpentier's class at this moment. I have no doubt that——"

"Five minutes ago, sir, they passed me in the Cloisters——"

"If you are sure of this, Loder——"

"They were chasing the French master——"

"WHAT!"

"Monsieur Charpentier was running, sir, like a rabbit, and the boys were chasing him——"

"Loder!"

"He clambered over a wall to get away from them——"

Mr. Quelch rose to his feet. He fixed his gimlet eyes on Gerald Loder, with a glare.

"Loder, how dare you come to my study and interrupt my work, with such nonsense as this!" he thundered. "Are you dreaming? Is this a foolish jest? If not, what do you mean, Loder?"

"I've no doubt you are surprised, sir—I was really amazed—but I actually saw them pelting after Monsieur Charpentier in a mob——"

"Impossible!"

"I can only report to you what I saw, sir!" said Loder. "If you do not choose to believe a report made by a Sixth Form prefect——"

"I cannot believe what is obviously impossible, Loder!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "If what you state is correct, every boy concerned in such a riot will be expelled from Greyfriars immediately! But I cannot believe any-

thing of the kind. You are making some absurd mistake."

"I saw them——"

"No doubt you saw the boys! It is possible that they have disregarded detention. Such things have happened. If so, they will be adequately punished. I shall inquire. But that you saw them chasing a member of Dr. Locke's staff is impossible. You must have fancied this."

"I saw——"

"Impossible! However, I will see Monsieur Charpentier at once!"

Mr. Quelch whisked out of his study with a knitted brow. Loder followed him along to Class-room No. 10. He knew, if Mr. Quelch did not, that the detention class would not be found there.

Neither was it! Class-room No. 10 was vacant when Mr. Quelch looked in. Neither Monsieur Charpentier nor his class was to be seen.

The Remove master stared blankly. He knew nothing of Mossoo having been called away by a sudden telephone call; he had supposed him to be in Class-room No. 10 with the detention class. Nobody was there.

"This is very, very singular!" said Mr. Quelch. "Where——"

"I have told you, sir——" grinned Loder.

The vacant state of Class-room No. 10 was proof, if Quelch wanted proof.

Mr. Quelch looked at him. He opened his lips—and shut them again.

Was it possible? Mossoo was gone—the detention class were gone—what had become of them? Was it possible that there had been a rag of unprecedented and unheard-of proportions? It began to look like it.

"You are sure that you saw Monsieur Charpentier, Loder?" asked the Remove master at last.

"He passed me very quickly, sir, but I could hardly be mistaken," said Loder, "and the whole crowd of them were after him like—like Red Indians."

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"Send the boys to me at once, Loder, when you see them again. I shall inquire into this most strictly. If your report is correct, every junior concerned will be expelled from the school."

"Very well, sir."

Mr. Quelch returned to his study in a deeply disturbed and perturbed frame of mind.

Loder of the Sixth strolled out into the quad, with a smile on his face. Those young rascals had got off last time! They were not going to get off this time! It was the "sack" for the lot of them! Which seemed quite a cheery prospect to Loder of the Sixth!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Wibley Hunts Cover!

"O H crumbs!" murmured Wibley.

He heard footsteps.

Footsteps, just then, were most unwelcome to Wibley's ears. He had dived into deep cover, and, at the sound of footsteps, he dreaded that he was discovered!

Wibley had had an exciting hour since he had dodged out of the school with the exasperated detention class in pursuit. Never, in fact, had so much excitement been packed into sixty minutes.

The schoolboy actor had intended to



Monsieur Charpentier caught Vernon-Smith by one ear and tugged. "Ow!" gasped the Bounder. "Go into ze classroom at vunce, Smeat!" exclaimed Mossoo. "Anozzer vord, and I take you to your Form-master!"

carry on in Class-room No. 10 for a couple of hours, at least; keeping the class at French verbs, rapping their knuckles when they got restive, and giving them, in fact, what they richly deserved—in Wib's opinion—for what had happened in the Rag! This was, in Wib's opinion, no end of a joke. It was, he considered, a real shriek! But that fathead, Smithy, had spoiled the whole thing, and Wib had had to flee for his life!

After that it was anything but a joke!

He had escaped from Class-room No. 10—but, once out in the open, he realised that, if he was spotted in the French master's get-up, he had escaped only from the frying-pan into the fire! So his one thought was to get outside the school before anyone spotted him—hence his dash into the Cloisters, under the astonished eyes of Loder of the Sixth!

From the lane outside the Cloisters Wibley had cut away into the wood by the bank of the Sark—with the detention class howling at his heels!

He dodged and twisted and doubled in the wood, in a panting, perspiring state. He had his own clothes on under his outfit as Mossoo, and a double set of garments, on a hot July afternoon, made running and dodging a fearful infliction.

Wibley panted for breath and streamed with perspiration; but he dared not stop—all through the green, bushy wood he could hear calling voices, as the hunters hunted for him.

Wibley was anxious to escape to some quiet spot, where he could strip off the French master's outfit, and resume his own proper person. After which he was going to stay out of gates till calling-over—hoping that, by that time, the detention class would have cooled down!

But escape was not easy, with so many exasperated fellows hunting him—and Wib, at last, adopted a rather desperate resource. He reached a high wooden fence, which barred off the grounds of the Three Fishers from the wood.

The Three Fishers was a spot that was severely out of bounds; but Wibley was desperate, and he squeezed through a gap in the palings, and took refuge within.

There, in the cover of a thicket of hawthorns that grew inside the fence, he was able at last to rest and get his breath, which he sorely needed.

Hardly a minute later he heard pursuers running along the fence—but, to his great relief, they did not stop at the gap, if they noticed it—never guessing that he had dodged into those forbidden precincts.

After which there was happy silence, and Wibley, at long last, was able to strip off his disguise and make the things up into a bundle, to be hidden somewhere till he could smuggle it back to his study in the school.

And it was then that footsteps approached!

Footsteps were coming directly towards the spot where Wib was hidden by the hawthorns, close to the fence.

He hardly breathed.

He hoped that, given time, the detention class would cool down; but he was by no means sure of it. But he was quite sure that if they found him, before they had time to cool down, they would give him the time of his life. He listened anxiously to those footsteps!

Several persons were approaching the spot! But it dawned on him that the footsteps came from within, not without, the fence.

Had some of them guessed where he was, and climbed the fence—to hunt

for him within? Or were the approaching party habitués of the Three Fishers? In either case, Wibley was anxious not to be seen—a Greyfriars fellow was liable to be flogged or "bunked," for being where Wib now was!

To his dismay, the footsteps stopped, quite close at hand—close to the gap by which they had entered. Then a voice came to his ears:

"You'll be on, all right, sir!"

It was a husky voice.

Wibley peered through an interstice in the hawthorns. A fat, squat figure was standing hardly a yard from him, and he recognised Mr. Bill Lodgey—one of the dingy, disreputable crew who hung about the Three Fishers, with whom, as most of the Remove knew, the Bounder of Greyfriars sometimes had sporting transactions.

Standing facing Mr. Lodgey were two elegant and well-dressed fellows—one of them Cecil Ponsonby, the other Richard Monson, of the Fourth Form at Highbury.

One glance was enough for Wibley. He was not in the least interested in the knuts of Highbury, or their dingy dealings with a dingy bookmaker. But he was very careful not to be seen or heard.

For one reason, because he was rather more particular than Pou, and did not want to be seen within the precincts of a disreputable "pub"—for another, because some of the hunters might pass on the outer side of the fence any minute, and he did not want their attention drawn to the gap in the palings.

He waited for the three to go.

Evidently Ponsonby and Monson had been spending their half-holiday at the inn by the river at banker or billiards, and their sporting friend Mr. Lodgey

had walked down to the exit with them, discussing racing matters by the way.

Pon and his pal were going out by the way Wibley had entered. But they stopped for a few last words with the racing man.

"Make it a fiver, Lodgey!" came Pon's voice.

"Jest as you say, sir!"

"What about you, Dick!" asked Ponsonby.

"No fivers for me!" answered Monson. "Might have a quid on."

"It's a good 'orse, sir!" said Mr. Lodgey in his beery voice. "They been keeping Tinkletop dark—but I've 'eard something! Mind, I ain't saying he's going to win; but I'm saying this—I've got my shirt on 'im myself!"

Behind the hawthorns, Wibley grinned contemptuously. He wished that the three would go. He did not want to hear this dingy talk. But he had no choice in the matter, so long as they remained.

"I heard Tinkletop tipped by a man in the Sixth at Highcliffe," said Ponsonby. "I believe he's all right. You can get four to one, Lodgey?"

"Four to one is the price to-day, sir, but I reckon the odds'll shorten afore they run in the three-thirty to-morrow," answered Mr. Lodgey. "I can get four to one for you to-day."

"Done, for a fiver!" said Ponsonby.

"And a quid!" said Monson. "Look here, Cecil, you'd better——"

"I said a fiver!" interrupted Pon.

"Well, you jolly well know——"

"Cut it out! A fiver, Lodgey!"

"That's O.K., sir!" said Lodgey. "I'll be seeing you again to-morrow, sir, win or lose."

"I'll get along after class. That's all right."

A few more words, and Bill Lodgey touched his bowler to the knuts of Highcliffe, and walked away back to the Three Fishers.

Wibley waited impatiently, expecting to hear the Highcliffians squeeze through the gap in the palings. But he heard Monson's muttering voice:

"Look here, Pon, you're a fool!"

"Don't be an ass, old man! That gee-gee will win!" said Ponsonby.

"Langley of the Sixth is backin' him."

"If he doesn't win——"

"He will, you ass!"

"But—— I tell you Langley's backin' him, and Langley's no fool!"

"Look here, Pon, don't be an ass! We've been losin' money all the term, and we're fairly stony! You owe Lodgey a pretty good sum already, and he's beginnin' to get restive about it. And you owe Banks a lot, too; you're a fool to plunge! If you lose to-morrow——"

"I shan't lose to-morrow!"

"Well, if you do, you can't settle, and it may mean trouble. Lodgey will expect that fiver, and you jolly well know that you couldn't raise five shillings, let alone five pounds, to save your life! Look here, cut after him and wash it out; it's safer."

"Don't be an ass, Monson! This will set me up again! Vavasour's dumin' me for what he lent me last week, and Drury wants what I owe him. Tinkletop will set me up again."

"If he doesn't let you down?"

"Oh, rot!"

"Look here, Pon——"

Ponsonby cut the argument short by squeezing through the gap in the fence. Monson gave a grunt, and followed him. And William Wibley at last was shut of them.

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THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Boot For Pon!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"
"Highcliffe cads!"
"Bag 'em!"

The Famous Five forgot Wibley on the spot.

As a matter of fact, the "cooling-down" process for which Wibley hoped had already set in, as far as the Famous Five were concerned.

Smithy was still hunting the elusive japer, and Skinner was keeping him company; Russell and Ogilvy were keeping an eye open for him; but Harry Wharton & Co. had "chucked" it, and decided that a bump or two for Wibley after calling-over would meet the case.

Being a good distance from the school when they came to that conclusion, the chums of the Remove walked on through the wood towards the river; and so it happened that, passing in view of a fence of creeper-clad palings, they spotted two figures emerging from a gap in that fence.

Ponsonby and Monson spotted them a moment later, and walked away very quickly. But the Famous Five broke into a trot at once.

Wibley, the japer, they could forget, exasperated as they had been with him. But Ponsonby was a different proposition.

It was only by chance that they were likely to see Pon, for after his late rascally trickery he was sure to keep out of the way of vengeance if he could.

True, they might see him at Highcliffe when they called there to visit their friends, Courtenay and the Caterpillar; But at Highcliffe, of course, they could not deal with Pon as he deserved. There they had to ignore him if they came across him. But they were very keen to meet the dandy of Highcliffe outside the gates.

The chums of the Remove were very far from vengeful, and not at all given to nursing grudges; but Pon had gone right over the limit, and there was no doubt that he required a drastic warning.

So, having sighted the dandy of Highcliffe, they cut in chase, and Ponsonby and Monson dashed off at full speed through the wood.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry, as he pranced in pursuit. "Hold on, Pon! Stop a minute, old bean! Only going to duck you in the ditch, old thing!"

Pon did not hold on. The prospect of being ducked in a ditch seemed to have for him no attraction whatever.

He raced, and Monson, who was heavier and less active, panted on behind. Fast on their track came the Famous Five, grinning as they ran. They were not really looking very ferocious, but Pon and Monson ran as if Red Indians were on their trail.

They burst out of the wood at last into the winding, dusty Oak Lane, and flew along it, with the grinning five in hot chase. From Oak Lane they cut across a corner of Courtfield Common in the direction of Courtfield, beyond which lay their way back to Highcliffe.

Pon's face was savage and bitter as he scudded. Pon was a lofty and supercilious youth, and he did not like having to run for it like this. Still less, however, did he like the idea of being sat down in a ditch.

It had seemed fearfully funny to Pon to sit Gerald Loder down in a muddy pond, and still more amusing to lay the blame of that transaction on the Famous Five. But the thought of his own elegant trousers squelching in mud was horrid.

It was quite a long chase, but it ended near the Courtfield road. Pon and Monson slacked more and more. Cigarettes in the billiards-room at the Three Fishers had not been good for their wind. They had bellows to mend, and they panted, and they puffed, and they blew.

At length, in sheer breathless desperation, they stopped. The Famous Five, fresh as paint after that long run, came up smiling. Pon eyed them viciously, Monson sullenly.

"Hands off, you cads!" muttered Ponsonby. "Lay a finger on me, and I'll put it up to Mobbs! If you want a row at your school——"

"Nobody's going to lay a finger on you, old bean," said Bob Cherry amiably. "You're not nice to touch, Pon! But a boot will be all right!"

"The bootfulness is the proper caper!" agreed Hurree Janset Ram Singh, with a dasky grin.

"There's a nice muddy ditch a bit farther on!" said Johnny Bull. "Boot the cads as far as that, and boot them in!"

"Go it!" said Harry Wharton. "You've asked for it, Pon! In fact, begged for it! You jolly nearly got the lot of us bunked—sticking that fool Loder in a sack, and making him believe that it was us who had got him——"

"It was only a joke, really," said Monson.

"Not much of a joke for us when we were had up before the Head for ragging a prefect!" said Frank Nugent.

"Well, Pon came over and owned up——"

"Yes, because Mauleverer found him out; and he had to own up or be shown up!" snapped Wharton contemptuously. "The Head fancied he was owning up of his own accord; he never knew that old Mauly had spotted him and made him. We came jolly near being turfed out of Greyfriars——"

"I wish you had been!" snarled Ponsonby. "Keep off, you Greyfriars cads! By gad, if you—— Ow! Yo-woop!"

He struggled furiously as Bob Cherry grasped him. But he was spun round, and a boot landed, and then Pon was running again. Behind him ran Bob, letting out his feet in turn, dribbling Pon along the common.

Behind Bob ran the other fellows, laughing.

Monson was left alone, and glad to be left.

Pon's pals—Monson, Drury, Gadsby, Vavasour—had all had a hand in the affair that had so very nearly turned out terribly serious for the Famous Five of Greyfriars. But they had no doubt that it was Pon's idea; the others had only followed his lead. Pon was the "nigger in the woodpile"; it was Pon who had to learn that he could not do these things. Now he was to receive some much-needed instruction on the subject.

Monson was left panting, and Pon ran like a deer, with the laughing Greyfriars juniors behind him, and Bob Cherry's boots landing in turn on the most elegant trousers at Highcliffe.

"Oh?" yelled Pon. "Ow! Ooogh! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Ponsonby tore on, gasping and spluttering.

He passed a clump of trees, and hurtled out into the road over the common. Coming out suddenly into the road, he very nearly hurtled into a man who was walking along from the direction of Courtfield, hitherto hidden from sight by the trees.

He was a spare, bony man, with a

thin, meagre face, and sharp little eyes like a bird, and thin, hard lips—not at all an attractive man to look at—but quite delightful to Pon's eyes at the moment. For he was Mr. Mobbs, the master of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe!

"What!" ejaculated Mr. Mobbs, staring at Pon. "What—my dear Ponsonby—why are you racing like that? What—"

Pon came to a gasping halt. Never had he been so glad to see Mr. Mobbs.

Not that Pon either liked, or respected, Mr. Mobbs. Among his own friends he generally alluded to him as "Snobby Mobby." Mr. Mobbs made a favourite of Pon, on account of his distinguished connections; and thus did Pon reward him!

But at the present moment Mobby was a windfall to Pon. He was a sorely needed protector.

"What—my dear Ponsonby—what is—" exclaimed Mr. Mobbs.

He was quite astonished to see the elegant, sauntering dandy of Highcliffe bolting like a frightened rabbit, spluttering for breath.

But Mr. Mobbs did not need an answer; it came the next moment in the shape of Bob Cherry hurtling at top speed round the clump of trees. Pon had narrowly missed colliding with Mr. Mobbs. Bob did not miss! Before he saw the master of the Highcliffe Fourth, he crashed.

"Oh!" gasped Bob.

"Oooogh!" spluttered Mr. Mobbs. He went over in the grass, and Bob went over on him, sprawling. And the Co. coming on behind at racing speed, barely stopped in time to save themselves from being added to the heap.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Mobby Is Wrathful!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. came to a breathless halt.

Very nearly they stumbled over the heap in the grass—fortunately, not quite!

They stared at the heap. Mr. Mobbs was flattened out in the grass. His hat had flown off into the road. He was uttering a series of gasping squeaks.

Bob Cherry sprawled over him dizzily. He was taken quite by surprise. He had not had the faintest idea that Mr. Mobbs, or anybody else, was on the other side of that clump of trees when he came careering round in pursuit of Ponsonby. Pon, he supposed, was still in flight—he had shot ahead in a desperate effort to escape! But, really, anybody might have been walking along the road, had Bob reflected. He hadn't.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob. "Oh crikey! Ow!"

He scrambled up. He rubbed his nose ruefully. A bony elbow had banged on that nose, and it had hurt, rather.

"Oh, my hat! Mobby!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Urrrrgh!" gurgled Mr. Mobbs. "Wurrgh!"

"Oh scissors!" breathed Nugent.

Ponsonby stood eyeing the Famous Five. He did not seem to think of going to the assistance of his up-ended Form-master, whose favourite he was.

All Pon was thinking of was whether Mobby's presence would save him from further booting!

Pon really need not have been in doubt about that. The Famous Five did not think very highly of Mr. Mobbs; but they had rather more respect for

schoolmasters than Pon had, and they certainly would not have thought for a moment of carrying on in Mr. Mobbs' presence.

Unheeding Pon, they ran to the aid of the sprawling, breathless, gurgling Mobby.

Harry Wharton grasped one bony arm, Frank Nugent the other, and they heaved him to his feet. Johnny Bull picked up his walking-stick. Hurree Janset Ram Singh fielded his hat.

"Awfully sorry, sir!" said Harry Wharton, sincerely enough. "Bob never saw you, sir—"

"Urrgh!"

"Never saw anybody, sir!" gasped Bob.

"Awfully sorry—"

"Gurrgh!"

"The sorrowfulness is terrific!" declared Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "Here is your esteemed hat, honoured sahib!"

"Oooogh!" spluttered Mr. Mobbs.

FIVE BIKES—AND OVER 2,000 OTHER PRIZES WON BY "ARMAMENTS STAMP" COLLECTORS!

HALLO, pals! Here's good news for thousands of you... we have just finished checking up the entries in the first month of our Great "Armaments" Race!

The contest has already proved such a success that the May prize list has been increased so that every one of the 2,031 readers who sent in a combined total of 166 or more Bombers and Submarines has won the prize of his choice—while the following five readers who topped the list with the biggest totals win the Five "Hercules" Bikes (value £4 7s. 6d. each), offered in the May Contest:

ERIC GARDNER, 80, Botanic Avenue, Belfast, N. Ireland.

C. L. LOMAX, 610, Chorley Old Road, Bolton, Lancs.

DENNIS RUSSELL, 12, Therapia Lane, West Croydon, Surrey.

W. McMEIKIN, 19, Ainsworth Street, Belfast, N. Ireland.

G. H. FOGGITT, 16, Lawson Road, Broomhill, Sheffield, 10.

All prizes have been dispatched and we congratulate the winners! To those who didn't get into the prize list we would say—keep at it and get hold of as many stamps as you can... there are still thousands of prizes to be won!

THIS WEEK'S STAMPS ARE ON PAGE 2.

He stood unsteadily on his bony legs. The expression on his face was most unpleasant.

He had had a very disagreeable shock. He was almost winded. His elbow had banged hard on Bob Cherry's nose. It was not so much hurt as the nose—still, it was hurt!

"Urrgh! Young rascals—hooligans—gurrgh!" he gurgled.

"Awfully sorry, sir—"

"We never saw you, sir!"

"Gurrgh! You were chasing—attacking—a Highcliffe boy—urrgh! A mob of young ruffians!" gasped the master of the Highcliffe Fourth. "Ponsonby, remain with me—I will protect you from these young rascals! Urrgh!"

"Thank you, sir!" said Ponsonby.

"But I have warned you, Ponsonby—urrgh!—to keep away from these—wurrgh—Greyfriars boys, and avoid these—urrgh—continual disgraceful quarrels!"

"I couldn't help their setting on me,

sir!" said Ponsonby meekly. "The whole gang of them—"

"Oh, chuck it, Ponsonby!" exclaimed Harry Wharton. "Only one of us was booting you, and you jolly well asked for it!"

"And if you had the pluck of a bunny rabbit, you could pick your man and put up your hands!" growled Johnny Bull. "You'd rather be booted!"

Ponsonby gave him a bitter and venomous look.

Pon, perhaps, preferred a booting to a hefty scrap. But he did not like it. It was altogether too fearfully humiliating for the lofty dandy of Highcliffe.

"Disgraceful!" exclaimed Mr. Mobbs. "I shall complain to Dr. Locke! A Highcliffe boy cannot walk out on a—groogh—on a half-holiday without being subjected to this—urrgh!—hooliganism—woooogh! You did nothing to—gurrgh—provoke this—urrgh—attack, Ponsonby?"

"Certainly not, sir! I was—was walking in the wood with Monson, when that gang set on me—"

"I shall call on Dr. Locke, and make a very serious complaint!" said Mr. Mobbs. "Your headmaster will deal with you, you young rascals!"

Pon caught his breath.

"If—if you don't mind, sir, please let the matter drop!" he said. "I—I don't want to make any complaint, sir."

The Famous Five simply stared at Ponsonby.

Knowing their Pon as they did, they had no doubt that he would be glad to land them into trouble with their headmaster—and a complaint from a Highcliffe beak meant trouble.

But Harry Wharton guessed, the next moment, the reason for those unexpected words from Pon.

The Famous Five had seen him emerging from the gap in the fence of the Three Fishers; that was where they had spotted him!

Pon did not want an inquiry that might bring that circumstance to light.

Harry Wharton & Co. certainly would not have been likely to give the sportsman of Highcliffe away. Pon's dingy blackguardism was nothing to them, and they were not telltales.

But Pon judged others by himself. He was alarmed at what the juniors might say if they were called up by their headmaster in Mr. Mobbs' presence.

Mr. Mobbs gave his dear Ponsonby a stare.

"Nonsense!" he rapped. "I shall most certainly lay this matter before Dr. Locke, Ponsonby. I have never heard of anything so outrageous. This hooliganism must cease!"

"But, sir—"

"Say no more, Ponsonby! I shall call on Dr. Locke this evening, and lay the whole matter before him. Now you may come with me."

Mr. Mobbs, still gasping, walked off, with a last angry and contemptuous glare at the Greyfriars juniors.

Ponsonby walked with him with a knitted brow.

That meeting with Mr. Mobbs had saved him from the booting he so richly deserved—but Pon was not so sure now that he was glad of it. He was distinctly uneasy as to what might transpire when Mr. Mobbs called on Dr. Locke.

"Oh, blow!" said Nugent. "That means a row with the Head. Bother that bony old bean Mobbs!"

"A royal jaw—if not a whopping!" sighed Bob Cherry. "Bless Mobby! He's nearly knocked my nose in with

his beastly elbow, too! I say, though, it was pretty decent of Pon to try to head him off—not what I should have expected of Pon!”

Harry Wharton laughed scornfully.

“Fathead! He’s afraid we may mention that we saw him sneaking out of that putrid pub. They have to keep up some appearances, even at Highcliffe!”

“Oh, my hat!” said Bob. “Think it was that?”

“Of course it was, ass!”

“But he knows we shouldn’t mention a thing like that.”

“He doesn’t!” said the captain of the Remove contemptuously. “A cad like that can’t understand decent fellows. We mayn’t have to go before the Head—I’m jolly sure that Pon will head Mobby off if he can, in case anything should come out.”

“Well, more power to his giddy elbow,” said Bob. “The Head’s a nice old bean; but I don’t want to call on him specially.”

“Oh, let’s get in to tea,” said Harry. “Perhaps Wibley’s got back by this time—we’ll jolly well bump him if he has!”

“Hear, hear!” agreed Bob.

And the Famous Five walked back to Greyfriars—a little worried by the prospect of a call by Mr. Mobbs to see their headmaster; though there was no doubt that Pon, for reasons of his own, would keep him away, if he could.

But they forgot all about Mr. Mobbs and about Pon when they came in at the school gates.

Loder of the Sixth spotted them and bore down on them.

“Go in to your Form-master at once!” he rapped.

“Oh, my hat!” said Bob. “Anything up, Loder?”

Loder smiled grimly.

“I fancy you know!” he answered. “Get going!”

And the Famous Five went into the House and repaired to their Form-master’s study.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Not So Lucky For Loder!

MR. QUELCH was about to leave his study to go along to the Common-room to tea, when the Famous Five appeared.

He gave the five a grim look as they came in.

“Tea had to wait while he dealt with these culprits.”

That they had, as Loder stated, “chased” the French master, Mr. Quelch could hardly believe; certainly he was not going to believe it without proof. It was much more likely that Loder had made some extraordinary mistake, than that any junior had done anything of the kind. But there was no doubt that they had cut detention, because they had been missing from Class-room No. 10 when he looked in. That was a serious matter.

“Oh! You have returned,” he said. “Wharton, what does this mean? You were in detention this afternoon—you five juniors and five others. The whole detention class appears to have played truant.”

“It’s the rule, sir—” said Harry meekly.

“What? To what rule do you allude, Wharton? What do you mean?” rapped the Remove master.

The five were quite easy in their minds now. Evidently Monsieur Charpentier had not spoken to Quelch before he went out, having gone off in such a hurry to catch a train. So Quelch

supposed that the detention class had “cut.” It was only necessary to explain.

“Monsieur Charpentier did not come to Class-room No. 10, sir,” explained Harry. “The rule is that a class need not wait more than fifteen minutes for a master.”

Mr. Quelch gave him a keen, penetrating look.

“Are you stating, Wharton, that the French master did not come to take the detention class?” he demanded.

“Yes, sir!”

“We waited more than a quarter of an hour for him, sir!” said Bob Cherry.

This was strictly true, for the detention class had waited a quarter of an hour at the door of Class-room No. 10, and had spent half an hour in the class-room afterwards.

Mossoo had not come; and they had, of course, no intention of mentioning that William Wibley, of the Remove, had come in his guise! That was not a matter to be confided to Mr. Quelch.

“We don’t have to wait more than fifteen minutes, sir!” said Nugent.

“It’s the rule, sir!” said Johnny Bull.

Mr. Quelch paused.

It was the rule, there was no doubt about that. It was never an effective rule in the Remove, for Mr. Quelch was never late for his class. But other masters were not so punctual as Quelch. Capper, the master of the Fourth, had been known to forget a class—much to the joy of the Fourth—and Prout, the master of the Fifth, had been known to run on with chin-wag in Common-room and keep the Fifth waiting over the fifteen minutes. The rule on the subject was quite well known, though it was but seldom that Remove fellows were able to derive advantage from it.

“I scarcely understand this!” said Mr. Quelch, after a pause. “If Monsieur Charpentier did not come to take his class, certainly—”

“He did not, sir!”

“If that is the case, you are, of course, excused,” said Mr. Quelch. “But I have received a very extraordinary report from a prefect—Loder. He states that you boys, with others, were engaged in what you would, I presume, call a “rag,” with Monsieur Charpentier as the victim.”

“Oh!” said the juniors.

“According to Loder you were actually chasing the French master—he was running and you were running after him!” said Mr. Quelch. “It is very difficult for me to believe anything of the kind—but Loder has made the report, and I must ask you—kindly do not laugh!” he added, with a snap.

The juniors could not help grinning.

They had hardly noticed Loder, in the Cloisters, when they were chasing Wibley. Somebody had been there, but they had rushed past him in too great a hurry to take any heed of him. They realised now that it was Loder, and that he must have noticed Wibley in his French master’s outfit—and taken him, of course, for Mossoo.

“This is a serious matter!” rapped Mr. Quelch. “If any such outrageous thing has occurred, you will go before Dr. Locke, and—”

“But it hasn’t, sir!” gasped Harry Wharton. “As if any fellow would chase Monsieur Charpentier—and as if he would run away if they did! Of course we never did anything of the kind, sir.”

“Of course not!” said Bob Cherry. “We cut through the Cloisters, sir, after we found that Mossoo wasn’t coming. Monsieur Charpentier wasn’t there.”

“It is extraordinary!” said Mr.

Quelch, pursing his lips. “Loder’s report was quite amazing—I could not credit it! Yet he assured me— He stated definitely—that he saw Monsieur Charpentier, and a number of Remove boys in chase of him— You assure me that nothing of the kind occurred, Wharton?”

“Certainly not, sir! We respect Monsieur Charpentier much too much to do anything of the kind, even if he would let us!” said Harry. “But surely, sir, you cannot suppose that the French master would run away from a crowd of juniors.”

“It certainly appears impossible!” said Mr. Quelch. “I told Loder so! And yet—what can have put such an idea into his mind?”

The juniors offered no suggestion!

They certainly had not chased Monsieur Charpentier—the wildest ragger in the Remove would never have dreamed of such a thing! They had chased Wibley! But they saw no reason for mentioning Wibley! It was not their business to explain how Loder had got such an extraordinary idea into his head!

“I shall, of course, speak to Monsieur Charpentier on the subject,” said Mr. Quelch, with a sharp look at the juniors.

“I am sure, sir, that Monsieur Charpentier will tell you that we never did anything of the kind!” said Harry demurely. “And he will certainly tell you that he never came to take the detention class.”

“It is extraordinary!” said Mr. Quelch. “It is very—” He broke off as a dapper figure appeared at the study doorway.

“Mon cher Quelch—” It was Monsieur Charpentier; evidently back from his afternoon’s excursion. “Mon cher, you come to ze tea, n’est-ce-pas! Also I wish to speak to you—”

“Please step in, sir!” said Mr. Quelch. “I desire to speak to you, also. These juniors state that you did not take the detention class this afternoon.”

“Mais oui!” assented Monsieur Charpentier. “Zat is ze zing of vich I wish to speak, mon cher Quelch! Je vais expliquer—I explain myself. I go to receive a call telephoniquement, n’est-ce-pas, from un ami—a friend—who is at Lantham zis afternoon—a friend zat I have not see for ze long time—and I rush to catch ze train—”

“But—”

“Alors, j’oublie!” explained Mossoo. “I forget! Zat zere is one detention class, it pass from ze mind! I zink of ze friend at Lantham—I zink of ze train zat I must catch—and I do not zink of zat class! Zere is one hurry to catch ze train—I rush—I fly—I vat you call, in English, bank! Zerefore, mon cher Quelch, I come to you to make ze apology zat I forget zose boys of your Form.”

“You have been absent this afternoon, sir?”

“Mais oui! It is only a few minutes zat I am of return.”

“Monsieur Charpentier, Loder of the Sixth Form has stated that he saw you, this afternoon, in the Cloisters, and that you were—ahem—that you were the victim of a—a riot, on the part of these boys—”

Monsieur Charpentier looked astonished, as well he might.

“Je ne comprends rien!” he said. “Zis afternoon I am at Lantham, viz my friend who call me telephoniquement—I am not in a Cloister—zere is no riot—I know nozzing. Loder go to dream all zat.”

“Then nothing of the kind occurred, sir?”



"Wow! My napper! Ow! My crumpet! Ooooo-hoooo!" roared the Form-master, rubbing his head. Then, to the utter amazement of the detention class, the bald spot on his head shifted over one ear, and the hair went along with it. "Wibley!" gasped the juniors. "The spoofer!"

"Nozzing sair! Nozzing!"

"It is extraordinary," said Mr. Quelch. "You may go, my boys! It is clear that Loder must have made some mistake, though I fail to understand how. You may go!"

"Thank you, sir!" murmured the juniors.

And they went!

They contrived not to chuckle till they were at a safe distance from Mr. Quelch's study. Then they chuckled loud and long.

"Dear old Loder!" said Bob Cherry. "He must have fancied that he had us on toast this time——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He must have fancied he saw Mossoo!" grinned Johnny Bull. "I wonder what put that extraordinary idea into Loder's head, you fellows!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the juniors, chuckling, went into the Rag, where a crowd of other fellows were soon chuckling, too.

They were still chuckling in the Rag when Mr. Quelch, not looking in the least disposed to chuckle, went along to Loder's study in the Sixth, rapped at the door, and looked in.

Loder was there, and he gave the Remove master a look of cheerful inquiry. He had no doubt that those young rascals were going up to the Head and that he was wanted as a witness of their nefarious conduct.

"Loder!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir! I——"

"I have seen Monsieur Charpentier, and——"

"Yes, sir. He has told you about the rag?" asked Loder briskly.

"He has told me that nothing of the kind occurred!" almost roared Mr. Quelch. "How you can have made so extraordinary, so foolish, so imbecile a

mistake. Loder, passes my comprehension."

"Eh?"

"Nothing of the kind occurred——"

Loder blinked.

"I saw them——" he howled.

"You saw nothing of the kind, Loder. No doubt you saw some juniors running about, indulging in some horseplay perhaps, but you certainly did not see Monsieur Charpentier concerned in the matter."

"I did!" yelled Loder. "Ask the French master."

"I have asked him! He assures me that nothing of the kind occurred."

"Oh crumbs!"

Loder blinked at Mr. Quelch. He wondered dizzily whether he could have been mistaken! Certainly that running figure in the Cloisters had whisked by him at lightning speed. And yet——

"Mum-mom-mim-Mossoo says it did-dod-dud didn't happen?" he stuttered.

"He does."

"Oh gad!"

"Such a foolish mistake," said Mr. Quelch, "is almost incredible and very reprehensible. Such foolishness—such stupidity—such careless in consequence—pah! I am bound to speak plainly. Loder! You are a fool!"

And Mr. Quelch, with that, whisked away, snapping the door shut after him, leaving Loder of the Sixth simply dumfounded.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Going Through It!

WILLIAM WIBLEY was not seen again till calling-over.

He slipped into Hall at the last moment before the doors were shut. He received expressive looks as he joined the Remove there.

He had put it off till the latest possible moment, but he had to turn up for roll and take his chance. His hope was that the detention class had cooled down; he had given them all the time he could for the cooling process.

Lord Mauleverer gave him a cheery grin. Mauly, at all events, was not "shirty"; he never was! But the Bounder gave him a black look, and Skinner a very hostile one. Russell and Ogilvy made signs to indicate that he had something to expect after roll-call. The Famous Five also eyed him in a rather expressive way. The too-playful Wib realised that the cooling-down process had not gone so far as he had hoped!

After roll-call Wibley slipped away quietly to his study. Though not as a rule shy, Wib preferred to understudy the shy violet for a time and keep clear of the crowd in the Rag.

But he was not fated to keep clear. His study-mates, Morgan and Micky Desmond, came in a few minutes later, grinning.

"You're for it, old man!" remarked Morgan.

"Sure they're coming," said Micky Desmond. "Ye've asked for it, ye omadhaun. Phwat did you play such a thrick on the fellows for?"

"There was a tramp of feet in the Remove passage."

The Bounder appeared in the doorway, Skinner at his side, Russell and Ogilvy following. Behind them came the Famous Five. The whole detention class had arrived, with the exception of Lord Mauleverer.

"Here he is!" said Smithy. "Bag him!"

"Now, look here, no larks!" urged

(Continued on page 16.)

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PUNISHING PONSONBY!



(Continued from page 13.)

Wibley. "You know what you did in the Rag—mucking up my play! You asked for it! It was tit for tat! Besides, it was a jolly good jape! Haven't you fellows any sense of humour? Can't you enjoy a joke?"

It looked as if the fellows hadn't, and couldn't! They crowded into the study and collared Wibley on all sides.

"Bump him!" said Bob Cherry.

"Look here—" roared Wibley.

Bump!

"Oh crumbs!"

Bump!

"Oooo-oooooop!"

Buinp!

"Leggo!" howled Wibley. "You silly asses—I say— Yaroooo!"

Bump!

"Now hand me the ink," said Vernon-Smith.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here, keep off!" shrieked Wibley. "If you mop that ink over me I'll—Gurrerrggghh!"

The contents of the inkpot flooded Wibley and interrupted him. He went off into a series of spasmodic gurgles.

"I think that will do!" said Harry Wharton. "You've got to learn not to be so jolly funny, Wib! Keeping fellows shrieking in a detention-room on a half-holiday is too thick—see?"

"The too-thickfulness is terrific, my esteemed Wib."

"And if you think it's a joke to rap a fellow's knuckles here goes!" said the Bounder, picking up a ruler from the table.

Rap, rap, rap!

"Ow! Oh! Keep off, you rotter! Ooogh!" spluttered Wibley. Rapping knuckles, it seemed, no longer appealed to Wibley as funny—his own knuckles being concerned in the matter. "Stop it! Oh crumbs! Ow!"

"That will do!" said Bob Cherry, laughing. "You keep your theatrical stunts for the Remove plays, Wib, and don't bung them on your old pals."

"You silly ass— Ow!"

"That won't do!" said the Bounder. "Get that property-box open, Skinner! We'll rag all his silly theatrical rubbish as a warning to him."

"What-ho!" grinned Skinner.

"Here, stop that!" roared Wibley, in great alarm. "Don't you touch my props! Leave that box alone! Leave my props alone! Leggo, Smithy, you cad! I say— Yaroooo!"

Wibley struggled frantically. What had happened to himself was neither grateful nor comforting; but what was going to happen to his precious props was much more alarming—to Wib!

He fairly howled with anguish as Skinner, grinning, dragged out the contents of the property-box.

But his struggles did not avail. The Bounder pinned him down with a knee on his chest, and Russell and Ogilvy, grinning, stood on his legs. He struggled, he wriggled, he writhed, and he roared, but it booted not.

The Famous Five exchanged glances. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,587.

"Hold on!" said Harry Wharton. "Hold on, Skinner!"

The practical joker of the Remove needed a ragging—his victims were agreed on that. But there was a limit. Damage to his precious props would have been quite heart-breaking to the amateur actor of the Remove.

"'Nuff's as good as a feast!" said Bob Cherry. "Chuck it, Smithy!"

The Bounder glared.

"You fellows think you've done enough?" he snapped.

"Yes," answered Nugent. "Chuck it!"

"Then you can clear off and leave the rest to me! I'm going to rag all his rubbish to shreds and patches!" snorted the Bounder. "He won't make up again as Mossos, or anybody else, in a hurry! Go it, Skinner!"

"Stop him!" raved Wibley.

"Stop it, Skinner!" said the captain of the Remove. "Now then, chuck it, you fellows; Wib's had enough! He can't help being a silly idiot! Russell, old man, Ogilvy, old bean, chuck it!"

"Oh, all right!" said Russell.

"I dare say that will do!" agreed Ogilvy.

"It won't!" said the Bounder. "You can all chuck it if you like—I'm going to teach the fathead a lesson! Get out and leave it to me!"

"Look here, Smithy—" urged Wharton.

"Shut up and mind your own business!"

"Yes, get out and leave us to get on with it!" said Skinner.

All the victims of Wibley's jape, with the exceptions of Smithy and Skinner, were prepared to "chuck" it. But that would not have helped Wibley much, with the Bounder pinning him down on the floor of the study and Skinner dragging out the contents of the property-box, to be reduced to shreds and patches! Active measures were required.

"Will you chuck it, Smithy?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"No!" roared the Bounder.

"Then we'll chuck you!"

"Let go!" yelled Smithy, as the Famous Five collared him and dragged him by main force off the spluttering Wibley.

But the chums of the Remove did not let go. They whirled the Bounder off Wibley, who scrambled to his feet—dusty and dishevelled, inky and breathless.

He made a spring like a tiger at Skinner, who was pitching all sorts of precious props out of the box.

Skinner suddenly ceased that happy occupation, as Wibley jumped at him. He yelled and beat a prompt retreat to the door, Wibley punching him right and left. Skinner disappeared, yelling, into the passage.

But the Bounder was made of sterner stuff. He struggled furiously in the grasp of five pairs of hands.

"Will you chuck it, Smithy?" gasped Harry Wharton.

"No!" yelled Smithy.

"Chuck him out!" panted Bob

Bump! went the Bounder into the passage. He sprawled there and gasped for breath. Then he bounded up and charged back.

"Oh, my hat! He wants more!" gasped Bob. "Carry him home!"

"Collar him!"

Smithy was collared again, and, resisting fiercely, he was carried bodily out of Wibley's study. He went down the Remove passage, roaring, with arms and legs flying. Peter Todd threw open the door of Study No. 4, and the Bounder was carried into his

study and dumped down on his carpet, amid howls of laughter from the fellows in the passage.

"Now chuck it, old chap!" said Harry Wharton, and the Famous Five streamed out of the Bounder's study, leaving him gurgling for breath.

It was several minutes before Smithy had breath enough to hurtle out of Study No. 4. Then five fellows in the passage grasped him, and he hurtled back. After that Smithy gave it up!

Wib's precious "props" had had a narrow escape. But they had escaped—though it was likely to be a long time before the playful Wib used them again for leg-pulling in the Remove.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Something Like A Surprise!

"I SAY, you fellows—" "Buzz off, Bunter!" "You're wanted!" grinned Billy Bunter.

"Oh!"

It was nearly time for prep.

Harry Wharton & Co were on the Remove landing, when Billy Bunter came up, grinning. They were, as a matter of fact, wondering whether they were likely to be wanted that evening—in view of the acid remarks of Mr. Mobbs.

"I say, Quelch told me to call you!" said Bunter. "He's waiting down the stairs. I say, he looks awfully fierce—looks to me like a licking! I say, you fellows, what have you been up to?"

"Fathead!" grunted Bob Cherry. "Does Quelch really look shirty, you ass?"

"Absolutely fierce!" declared Bunter. "Grinding his teeth!" Billy Bunter liked to pile up the agony. "Like a tiger! Look out for squalls! I say— Wow! Wharrer you kicking me for, Bull, you beast? Wow!"

"Come on!" said Harry, and the five juniors went down the stairs—Bunter dodging another lunge from Johnny Bull's boot, as Johnny followed his friends.

Mr. Quelch was at the foot of the staircase. His face was very grave; but he did not look "fierce," and certainly he was not grinding his teeth, as the cheerful Owl had declared.

"You have been out of gates this afternoon, Wharton, I understand?" he said abruptly.

"Yes, sir."

"Where have you been? I have a special reason for asking."

"In the wood by the Sark, sir, and then on Courtyard Common," answered Harry.

"In the wood!" repeated Mr. Quelch. "In one part, Wharton, the wood by the Sark is bordered by a fence, enclosing the grounds of a certain establishment which is very strictly out of bounds for Greyfriars boys. Did you go anywhere near that spot?"

"Yes, sir," answered Harry, astonished by the question. "We went along quite near the fence of the Three Fishers, sir."

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"Indeed! You did not cross that fence, Wharton?"

"Certainly not."

The Famous Five fairly blinked at their Form-master. Being sent for, they had taken it for granted that it was in connection with some complaint from Mr. Mobbs. But this questioning looked as if they were suspected of something much more serious than booting the dandy of Highcliffe.

"I feel sure of it, Wharton," said Mr. Quelch. "There are boys in my Form in whom I have less confidence; but I feel sure that you can be trusted. I must ask you, however, whether you know a spot in that fence where there is a gap in the palings, by which it is possible to enter and leave."

"We noticed it this afternoon, sir," said Harry. "I've never noticed it before, that I know of."

He did not add that he had noticed that gap in the Three Fishers fence, because he had seen Ponsonby emerging from it, and Monson after him. But for that circumstance, it was probable that he never would have noticed it at all—not being in the least interested in the Three Fishers or means of surreptitious access to that disreputable establishment.

"Then you do know of such a spot, Wharton?" Mr. Quelch frowned a little. "There is, I understand, no path by that fence."

"No, sir."

"Then for what reason were you there?"

"We were looking for a fellow, sir, who had gone through the wood," answered Harry.

"A boy going through the wood, Wharton, would naturally follow a path."

"Well, he was dodging us, sir," admitted the captain of the Remove.

"Um!" said Mr. Quelch, and he paused, frowning. "It is somewhat unfortunate. However, I believe what you have told me, and I have no doubt that your headmaster will do so. Follow me."

The juniors followed him, in wonder, to the Head's study. It appeared that they were suspected of having gone out of bounds—why, they could not guess. Nobody had seen them near the Three Fishers fence, except Ponsonby and Monson. It was quite perplexing. It was, however, a relief to know that it was not on account of Mr. Mobbs that they were to see their headmaster.

But another surprise awaited them when they reached the Head's study.

Mr. Mobbs was there!

The master of the Highcliffe Fourth sat very upright in a chair, with a very unamiable expression on his face. He glanced at the juniors as they entered, with an expression of sarcastic contempt, which surprised them as much as it annoyed them. Dr. Locke was looking very grave.

"Are these the boys, Mr. Mobbs?" asked the Head.

"Those are the boys, sir!" said Mr. Mobbs, his thin lip curling. "Their conduct does not, of course, concern me, as a master in another school; but I felt bound to bring it to your notice."

"Quite so, Mr. Mobbs," said the Head. "Perhaps you will kindly remain while I question the boys."

He fixed his eyes on the wondering five. They were realising, by this time, that Mr. Mobbs' presence had something to do with the questions Mr. Quelch had asked, though they could not understand.

"Mr. Mobbs informs me," said the Head, "that he came on you this afternoon ill-using a Highcliffe boy—"

"Mr. Mobbs is mistaken, sir!" said Harry Wharton.

Sniff, from Mr. Mobbs.

"I am not surprised that such a boy denies it," he said. "No doubt he will deny the rest."

"That remark, sir, is uncalled-for!" said Mr. Quelch, in his most acid tone.

"I am assured that Wharton will deny nothing that is true."

"Thank you, sir!" said Harry. "If Mr. Mobbs will let me speak, what I mean is that we were not ill-using Ponsonby. One of us was booting him, as he jolly well deserved—that is all."

The Head coughed.

"These boys," said Mr. Mobbs, "were ill-using a boy of my Form at Highcliffe. One of them rushed into me and knocked me over."

"That was an accident, sir," said Bob.

Another sniff from Mr. Mobbs.

"It appears," said the Head, "that you were engaged in a scuffle, at least with the boy Ponsonby, and that, in pursuit of him, one of you accidentally collided with Mr. Mobbs."

"Yes, that is so, sir," said Harry. "We apologised to Mr. Mobbs for the accident."

"As the boy Ponsonby was in flight, and you were in pursuit, I must take the view that you were the aggressors," said Dr. Locke. "But that is not the most serious part of the matter. You must explain why you were in pursuit of Ponsonby."

"We were going to boot him, sir, for that rotten trick he played the other day with Loder of the Sixth."

The Head and Mr. Quelch exchanged a quick glance. Mr. Mobbs gave a still most emphatic sniff.

"You had no other reason, Wharton?"

"No, sir," said Harry, puzzled. "What other reason could we have? We don't like the fellow, but we shouldn't have touched him if he hadn't landed us in a row over Loder."

"Mr. Mobbs, will you have the goodness to repeat the statement you made to me?" said the Head.

"Certainly, sir!" snapped Mr. Mobbs. "I questioned Ponsonby on the subject of this quarrel, and I am bound to say, to his credit, that he made every effort to induce me to let the matter drop. He was very unwilling that I should make a complaint to you, and would have preferred to allow these boys to escape unpunished. That, sir, I consider a very proper spirit; nevertheless, my mind was made up. I was resolved that your attention should be drawn to this hooliganism on the part of Greyfriars boys—"

"That matter, sir, I shall deal with. But you told me that Ponsonby made a certain statement—"

"Quite so, sir! I insisted upon knowing the reason why these boys attacked him, and he told me! I felt it my duty, sir, to inform you, in view of their disgraceful conduct—"

"No such conduct has been proved!" said Mr. Quelch sharply.

"Really, Mr. Quelch—"

"Really, Mr. Mobbs—"

Dr. Locke raised his hand, and the two angry gentlemen broke off.

Mr. Mobbs gave the juniors a bitter contemptuous look, and resumed:

"I learned from Ponsonby, sir, that the reason why these boys attacked him so viciously was because, quite by chance, he happened to see them coming out of the precincts of a disreputable public-house. He was walking through the wood by the river, and as he passed the fence of the Three Fishers he saw them coming out by a gap in that fence—a place, sir, which I understand, and certainly should hope, is as strictly out of bounds for Greyfriars boys as for Highcliffe boys. It was because he had, by chance, detected their disgraceful conduct, sir, that they attacked him as they did!"

Harry Wharton & Co. gazed at Mr. Mobbs.

They did not speak.

They couldn't!

Mobbs had taken their breath away.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

The Limit!

"WHARTON!" said the Head. Harry Wharton gasped.

"Yes, sir!"

"Do you admit this?"

Wharton's face crimsoned.

Mr. Mobbs' words had simply dumfounded the Co. They had guessed that something unpleasant was coming, and had wondered what; but certainly they had never dreamed of anything like this.

But Wharton very quickly realised how the matter lay.

Pon had done his best to keep Mr. Mobbs away from Greyfriars. He had failed. He had dreaded what they might say when called up by their headmaster in Mr. Mobbs' presence. And so, with cool unscrupulousness, he had got his blow in first.

He dreaded that they might mention that they had seen him coming out of the Three Fishers by the gap in the fence, so he accused them of doing that very thing!

They could say what they liked now. Pon had cut the ground from under their feet, so far as Mr. Mobbs was concerned, at least. What the Greyfriars masters might think or believe Pon did not care a straw, so long as he pulled the wool over Mobbs' eyes.

"No, sir; I don't admit it!" Harry Wharton said, his voice trembling with angry indignation. "I am not likely to admit a cowardly lie. Ponsonby told Mr. Mobbs a mean, rotten lie, sir, and if Mr. Mobbs believes him, he is a fool!"

"Wharton!" exclaimed the Head.

"Calm yourself, Wharton!" said Mr. Quelch.

Harry Wharton's eyes blazed.

"I tell you, sir—" he exclaimed.

Mr. Mobbs rose to his feet with a bitter face.

"If the boy is allowed to use such an expression to me, sir—" he began.

"Silence, Wharton! One moment, Mr. Mobbs! If you cannot express yourself with propriety, Wharton, be silent. I will question the others. Cherry! Do you deny the statement made by Ponsonby to his Form-master?"

"Yes, sir! It's not true."

"Did any of you enter that—that disreputable resort this afternoon?"

"No, sir."

"Where did you see Ponsonby?"

"Just at the place, sir—the gap in the Three Fishers' fence," said Bob.

"They admit it!" sneered Mr. Mobbs.

"We'll admit a little more, while we're about it!" roared Johnny Bull. "We saw Ponsonby there because he was sneaking out of the rotten den; and he's spun this yarn because he was afraid we might mention it."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

Mr. Quelch smiled, a grim smile.

"That's the truth, sir," said Harry Wharton, speaking quietly. "That cur doesn't understand that a fellow wouldn't give him away, even if there was a row on. We never intended to mention it."

"Upon my word!" gasped Mr. Mobbs. "These boys not only have the effrontery to deny the facts, but they have the audacity to bring such an

accusation against a Highcliffe boy—a paltry act of malice, because Ponsonby unwillingly told me what had occurred and—

"He told you what had never occurred, sir!" said Nugent.

"Do not speak to me!" exclaimed Mr. Mobbs. "I will not be addressed by such boys! Dr. Locke, I will go! It was my duty to inform you how these boys—these young rascals—spent their half-holiday, as it came to my knowledge. I did not expect—I certainly never dreamed—that they would have the audacity to take such a line of defence. I am amazed, sir—and deeply shocked."

"These boys," said Mr. Quelch, in a grinding voice, "have told the truth! Of that I am assured."

"These boys, sir," hooted Mr. Mobbs, "have brought a most malicious accusation against Ponsonby, to cover up their own rascality."

"We're not accusing Ponsonby," said Harry Wharton, "we're explaining why he told that rotten lie."

"Enough!" gasped Mr. Mobbs. "I will hear no more of this! Dr. Locke, you may believe this if you choose—I know what to think of it! I wish you a very good-evening, sir!"

And with that, Mr. Mobbs left the study, shutting the door after him with unnecessary force.

Evidently Mr. Mobbs was not impressed by the counter-accusation! Pon had calculated well! As Shakespeare and another poet have remarked:

"Thrice armed is he that hath his quarrel just!
And four times he who gets his blow in fust!"

Pon had got his blow in "fust." Mr. Mobbs flounced away indignant.

But the Head's impression, and Quelch's, differed very much from Mr. Mobbs'.

Dr. Locke looked at the Remove master when Mobbs was gone.

"You accept the account given by Wharton and his friends, Mr. Quelch?"

"Unreservedly, sir!" said Mr. Quelch, with emphasis.

"Thank you, sir!" said Harry Wharton. "I—I—I am sorry, sir, if I was uncivil to Mr. Mobbs, but—but I—"

"You should be more circumspect, Wharton!" said Dr. Locke. "Mr. Mobbs believes the statement made to him by a Highcliffe boy."

"Yes, sir; but—"

"Neither would this extremely disagreeable episode have occurred at all if you had avoided a quarrel with the Highcliffe boy!" said Dr. Locke. "With regard to the statement that you have been out of bounds, I shall take your Form-master's view, and exonerate you. With regard to the other matter, I shall give you each an imposition of five hundred lines, as a warning to avoid these continual disputes with the Highcliffe boys. If you agree, Mr. Quelch—"

"Perfectly so, sir."

"Very well. You may go, boys!" said the Head.

Harry Wharton & Co. left the study. Their feelings were deep as they went.

Five hundred lines was a tremendous imposition, and likely to use up most of their leisure for the remainder of the week. But that was not the worst; they hardly thought about the lines, for the moment.

Pon's accusation roused all their ire. That dingy, pub-haunting blackguard had accused them, in fact, of being a fellow of his own sort—though Mr.

Mobbs, of course, did not realise that!

They did not value Mr. Mobbs' opinion very highly, but they did not like even Mr. Mobbs to think that of them. And but for Quelch having stood by them, as he had done, a troublesome doubt might have been left in their headmaster's mind. Indeed, he might have a lingering doubt, anyhow, for all they knew!

"That cur!" said Harry Wharton, as the juniors went down the passage.

"That unspeakable toad—"

"I suppose he spun Mobbs that yarn to save his own skin," said Bob, "but it's the jolly old limit, even for Pon!"

Wharton clenched his hands.

"By gum, next time—"

"Wash out next time, old bean!" said Johnny Bull.

"Five hundred lines is enough for me. I don't want to see the Head again over another Highcliffe row."

"Um! I suppose we'd better steer clear for a bit!" said Bob doubtfully.

"And we're asked to tea at Highcliffe on Saturday, too! Courtenay—"

"Ponsonby isn't going to get by with this!" said Harry Wharton savagely.

"The rotten rascal! A pub-haunting, betting, smoky blackguard—making out that we're fellows of the same kidney!"

The Famous Five went up to the Remove for prep. They went in a state of deep and indignant wrath.

This was the limit, even for Ponsonby. And it looked as if Pon was going to get off scot-free, laughing in his sleeve.

Which really was fearfully exasperating!

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not Nice!

"GOT a smoke?"

"What?"

"I say, you fellows, you needn't yell at a chap," said Billy Bunter peevishly.

"I only asked you if you'd got a smoke."

Harry Wharton & Co. looked at Bunter as if they could have eaten him.

It was morning break when the fat Owl of the Remove rolled up to the Famous Five and asked that surprising question.

"You blithering Owl!" hooted Bob Cherry. "What do you mean?"

"Eh? I mean what I say," answered Bunter in surprise.

"If you've got a smoke you might let a fellow have one.

And, look here, you chaps, next time you go to the Three Fishers I'll come.

I'd have come yesterday if you'd told me where you were going."

"Oh, my hat!" said Harry Wharton.

The Famous Five, naturally, had told fellows about the interview in the Head's study the previous evening and what Mr. Mobbs had said.

They were full of indignation on the subject, and most of the fellows agreed that it was the limit.

Two or three fellows, however, took—or affected to take—a different view. It seemed that Bunter was one of them.

"Boot him!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull! I mean to say, now you're found out, you know, you needn't try to spoof a chap!" said Bunter.

He gave the glaring five a fat wink. "I'm a bit of a sport myself; it's all right. I'll come next time. Of course, we shall have to be a bit careful: it won't do to let some Highcliffe cad spot us and give us away—"

"You pernicious porpoise!" said Bob Cherry. "Pon never saw us at that den; it was us who saw Pon there."

"Did the Head believe that?" asked Bunter.

"Yes, and!"

"Innocent old bird, ain't he?" asked Bunter.

The Famous Five did not answer Billy Bunter in words; they grabbed him and sat him down in the quad—suddenly and hard.

Bunter roared as he sat.

They walked away and left him waking the echoes—and they were looking very wrathful as they went.

It was probable that Ponsonby had only been thinking of saving his own rascally skin when he made that untruthful statement to Mr. Mobbs; but mud could not be thrown without some of it sticking.

This sort of thing was most unpleasant.

In third school that morning it was noticeable that Skinner, Snoop, and Stott whispered together when Mr. Quelch's attention was elsewhere, and looked at the Famous Five and grinned and whispered again.

The five could guess that Skinner & Co. were going to make the most of this.

Their feelings towards the cad of Highcliffe were quite ferocious.

This blow from Pon was one that could not be guarded. The accusation had been made, and fellows could believe it—or pretend to believe it—if they liked.

Neither did it seem practicable to make Pon suffer for his sins.

Mr. Quelch had given them a severe warning to avoid further trouble with Highcliffe. That warning had to be heeded.

Moreover, after the way Quelch had stood by them they naturally did not want to disregard his wishes.

And they had a heavy imposition on hand, too, and did not want another.

After class that day they found that the affair had been heard of outside the Remove.

Loder of the Sixth called to them in the quad.

"What's this I hear about you young sweeps?" asked Loder.

"Is that a riddle?" asked Harry Wharton politely.

"From what I hear, you've been caught pub-haunting," said Loder.

"You seem to have got off, but you'd better be careful! You won't get off if I catch you at it!"

Loder walked on, leaving the chums of the Remove glaring after him.

"That rotten jolly well knows—"

said Bob, with a deep breath.

"Of course he does!" said Harry contemptuously. "But any stick is good enough to beat us with."

"We shan't hear the end of this for a long time!" growled Johnny Bull.

"That cad Ponsonby—"

said Nugent.

"That terrific toad Ponsonby—"

"That worm Ponsonby—"

"And we've got to let him off!" sighed Bob. "We mustn't even boot the cad! What a life!"

The Famous Five went into the Rag a little later, and the cheery voice of Harold Skinner greeted their entrance.

"Here come the giddy revellers!"

And there was a laugh.

Harry Wharton glanced round with a gleam in his eyes. His temper was getting a little sore by this time.

"You fellows all know how the matter stands," he said. "You know that Ponsonby is a lying worm. You know it best of all, Skinner, as he's a pal of yours. You'd better shut up!"

"You jolly well know, you cad—"

bawled Johnny Bull.

"My dear chap, I don't know anything about it," answered Skinner,



Loder raised his stick and stepped behind Billy Bunter, who was stooping by the Three Fishers' fence. Whack! "Yoo-hoooooop!" Billy Bunter gave a wild roar of surprise and anguish, as the prefect's stick whacked on his tight trousers. "You beast, Bob Cherry—oh erkeley! Loder! I say, wharrer you up to—wow!"

"Pon says he saw you at the Three Fishers. You say you saw Pon there. It's six of one and half a dozen of the other."

"You weren't there really?" asked Vernon-Smith. That question probably was prompted by what had happened in Wibley's study on Wednesday afternoon. The Bounder knew quite well how the matter stood.

"We've said so, Smithy," answered Wharton, very quietly.

"Yes, I've said so myself in similar circumstances," drawled the Bounder. "We all stretch a point at times."

"You seem to have been jolly near the spot, on your own showing," remarked Bolsover major.

"We were after that fool Wibley, and he went in that direction!" growled Johnny Bull. "You know that."

"I know you say so!" retorted Bolsover. "So would any fellow that got copped."

"You cheeky fool!" roared Johnny.

"He, he, he!" came from Billy Bunter. "I say, you fellows, they were right on the spot! He, he, he! They never went in! He, he!"

The Famous Five left the Rag again. A laugh followed them as they went.

"It's all that fathead Wibley's fault!" said Bob Cherry. "If he hadn't played his potty stunt yesterday we shouldn't have gone after him and shouldn't have been anywhere near the place. Let's go and boot him!"

"Good egg!"

The Famous Five went up to the Remove passage and looked into Wibley's study.

They jumped as they looked in.

William Wibley was there, but he presented a rather unusual aspect. He was standing before the glass, and he turned his head as they came in—and they blinked at a greasy face with a strag-

gling moustache and bushy eyebrows, which looked like that of a rather disreputable man of about fifty.

Wib was busy with one of his theatrical stunts again. It was rather startling to see a beery-looking middle-aged face on a schoolboy.

"You ass!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What the thump are you up to?"

"Bill the Bookie," said Wib. "I'm taking the title part, you know, when we do the play. You fellows want anything?"

"Yes, we've come up to boot you!"

"You silly ass!" roared Wib, backing round the table. "What's biting you now?"

"It was your fault that Pon was able to spread that rotten yarn about us," explained Bob. "We can't go over to Higeliffe to boot Pon, so we've come up to boot you. See?"

"Oh, I've heard about that!" said Wibley. "That's all right! I'm a witness, if you want one."

"What do you mean, fathead?"

Wibley grinned.

"I was there," he explained. "I dodged into that gap in the fence to keep clear of you."

"Oh, my hat! You were there when we passed?" exclaimed Bob.

"Right there—and I saw Ponsonby and Monson squeeze out after jawing to that racing man Lodgey. That must have been when you spotted them."

"Oh!" said Harry Wharton. "Well, you'd better tell the fellows that, Wib, and we may hear the end of it. It will come to punching if we hear much more about it."

"All right," said Wibley. "I'm busy now; get out!"

And the Famous Five got out without booting Wibley.

Wib's evidence on the subject seemed to them very useful: but they were able

to judge its exact value later, when they came down to the Rag after prep. They heard Billy Bunter's fat squeak as they entered.

"I say, you fellows, what do you think? From what I hear, Wibley was at the Three Fishers with those fellows yesterday! Did you know that Wib was that sort of chap? I thought he was wrapped up in theatrical stunts, you know! Fancy him being at that pub with Wharton's gang!"

"Fancy!" chuckled Skinner.

"I say, you know, they made out that they were after Wib for japing them, and it turns out that they were all going to that pub together," said Bunter. "Fancy that! I can jolly well say—Yaroooh!"

A boot landed on Bunter's tight trousers and interrupted him. Bunter roared, and spun round like a fat humming-top.

"Owl! Beast! Yah! Pub-haunters! Yaroooh! If you kick me again, Bull, you beast, I'll jolly well—Whoop!"

"Have another, you fat frog?" roared Johnny ferociously.

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter rolled away hastily.

But it was clear that the Famous Five were not going to hear the end, just yet, of the Three Fishers. They were rather sorry that they had not booted Wibley, after all.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Wibley All Over!

"GET out!" roared five voices in unison.

"But—"

"Boot him!"

"My dear chaps—" remonstrated Wibley.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,587

Generally, William Wibley was quite a welcome caller in Study No. 1. Now his appearance there seemed to cause some excitement.

Another day had passed—without the chums of the Remove hearing the end of the Three Fishers story.

That story was "pie" to Skinner & Co., and they found great amusement in keeping it alive. Likewise, it was pie to Loder of the Sixth, who may or may not have fancied that there was something in it, but who was feeling sore and vengeful, and disposed to use any stick to beat the Famous Five with. The Bounder made a joke of it, and fellows in other Forms got to hear about it, and eyed the five curiously. Indeed, Hobson of the Shell, in the kindness of his heart, spoke to them on the subject, warning them that that sort of thing wasn't good enough for Greyfriars; for which kind warning Hobson was bumped, and rolled over in the quad, and left in a very dusty and dismantled state.

No doubt it would all die away in a short time, but while it lasted it was not nice. And as that fathead Wibley had been the original cause of the whole thing, he was not, for the moment, popular with the exasperated five.

It was certainly true that if Wibley had not played the goat with the detention class on Wednesday, it would not have happened. It was all due to that ass, that goat, that fathead, playing off his theatrical stunts, otherwise the Famous Five would have been nowhere near that gap in the Three Fishers fence on that half-holiday.

So, as Wibley came into Study No. 1 after tea, he was requested, not politely, to get out. And as he did not get out, five fellows rose to help him with their feet.

"Chuck it, you men!" urged Wibley. "Look here, I've come here as a pal. I've got a wheeze!"

"Take it away and boil it!" granted Johnny Bull. "We're fed-up on your silly wheezes!"

"Don't you want to make that cad Ponsonby sit up?" asked Wibley.

"Yes, ass! You can't help!"

"I can do the whole thing!" declared Wibley.

"Rats!"

"If you'll listen——"

"Oh, rot!"

The Famous Five did not appear to have much faith in Wibley's "wheezes." However, they refrained from booting him out of the study, and gave him a chance to speak.

Wibley, eyeing them rather cautiously, sat on a corner of the study table. He had a newspaper in his hand, open, as they noted with some surprise, at the racing news. That was not a section of the news that interested Wibley as a rule.

"Now, look here, you men!" said Wibley. "I've thought this out——"

"With what?" snorted Johnny Bull.

"Do let a fellow speak! I owe you fellows something," said Wibley. "That mad ass Smithy would have mucked up all my props the other day if you hadn't stopped him. I shan't forget that. I'm going to take this up for you fellows, and make that cad Ponsonby fairly squirm for telling lies about Greyfriars chaps."

Wibley spoke impressively.

But the Famous Five were not in the least impressed. They had no faith whatever in Wibley and his stunts.

Wibley, in their opinion, was a fat-

headed ass, who never could resist a practical joke, and always carried one too far.

"Rot!" said Bob Cherry tersely.

"The rotfulness is terrific!"

"I tell you I've got it all out and dried," said Wibley impatiently. "Look at this paper! There's the result of the three o'clock on Thursday. Tinkletop never came in."

"What the thump do you think we care about Tinkletop, you ass?" demanded Harry Wharton.

"Pon does," grinned Wibley.

"Blow Pon! He would!"

"Do listen! Those Highcliffe cads were talking to that beery blighter Lodgey, while I was in cover at that gap in the fence," said Wibley. "Ponsonby put a fiver on Tinkletop, at four to one. The silly chump fancies he knows something about horses. Well, Tinkletop's lost."

"What about it, ass?"

"Monson tried to keep him off it, because they've been losing money on their sporting stunts, and Pon couldn't possibly pay if he lost. He thinks Lodgey will cut up rusty if he isn't paid. Pon owes him money already, and Pon can't pay—see?"

"Do you think we want to hear about Pon's rotten blackguardism?" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Shut up a minute! As the matter stands, Pon's in a hole," said Wibley. "He can't pay Lodgey that fiver. At the same time, he's making out that he never touches such things, and that you fellows do."

"The rotter!"

"The worm!"

"The cad!"

"All that, and more!" agreed Wibley. "Well, I don't know, of course, whether Monson was right, and Lodgey will dun Pon for the money. But suppose he sent a pal of his to see Pon about it?"

The Famous Five stared.

"Poor old Pon," said Bob Cherry. "They're not fearfully particular at Highcliffe, but if a bookie called to see a fellow there——"

"Make him sit up—what?" grinned Wibley.

"You howling ass!" said Harry Wharton. "I don't suppose Lodgey would do anything of the kind. He makes too much out of those dingy cads at Highcliffe to think of showing Pon up. What on earth are you driving at?"

"Bill the Bookie!" said Wibley.

"Eh?"

"What?"

"That's my part in our new play. I've got all the things, and I've been practising the make-up. You saw me yesterday."

"What the merry thump——"

"I could pack all the things in a bag, and get them out of gates tomorrow afternoon. It's a half-holiday," said Wibley. "I make-up in some quiet spot as Bill the Bookie."

"Oh crikey!"

"Then I walk in at Highcliffe, and ask to see Pon."

"Great pip!"

"As if I came from old Lodgey, you know."

"Oh scissors!"

"It will work like a charm," said Wibley, his eyes glistening. "Pon doesn't know I was on the spot on Wednesday, of course, or that I know anything about his affairs. As soon as I say I've come to collect that fiver on Tinkletop for Lodgey, he will take it in like milk."

"Oh scissors!"

"If that doesn't make Pon sit up sky-high, I'll eat my hat!" said Wibley complacently. "Leave the whole thing in my hands. Pon's made out that you fellows go blagging and betting with Lodgey. Well, his blagging and betting will come home to roost when Lodgey's man calls on him at the school—what?"

And Wibley chuckled gleefully.

But the Famous Five did not chuckle. They stared blankly at the complacent Wibley.

"You ass!" said Bob.

"You fathead!" said Harry Wharton.

"You terrific chump!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"You howling duffer!" said Nugent.

"You dangerous maniac!" said Johnny Bull.

Wibley blinked at them. He seemed surprised by this unflattering reception of his wonderful wheeze.

"Don't you like the idea?" he asked. "I tell you it will work like a charm! It will make Pon fairly cringe! Fancy his feelings when Bill the Bookie walks in and asks for him!"

"You'd get spotted, you ass!"

"Not in your life-time!" said Wibley confidently. "Did you spot me when I was playing Mossos the other day—till that mad ass Smithy knocked my wig off, at any rate?"

"You couldn't do it, fathead!"

"I could do it on my head!"

"Even if you could, it would be too thick! There's a limit!"

"Pon doesn't bother about limits."

"Well, no; but——"

"Leave it to me," said Wibley. "I'll handle it all right. On Saturday afternoon——"

"You ass, we're going over to tea with Courtenay on Saturday afternoon, and——"

"All the better. You'll be able to see the fun!"

Bob Cherry rose to his feet.

"Gentlemen, chaps, and sportsmen," he said, "Wibley can't be expected to have any sense, being a born idiot; but he's caused enough trouble with his idiotic theatrical stunts, and he's not going to cause any more! Boot him—all together!"

"Hear, hear!"

Wibley slipped rapidly off the table. He made a jump for the door. Five boots shot after him as he went.

"Yaroooo!"

Wibley went through the doorway like a bullet from a rifle. A wild roar floated back.

"Come on!" said Bob. "Let's boot him right up the passage! Wait a minute, Wib!"

Wibley did not wait!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Caught Bending!

"I SAY, you fellows! Look out for Loder!"

Billy Bunter may have meant that as a kindly warning as the Famous Five walked down to the gates on Saturday afternoon. But the chums of the Remove were no more grateful for kindness from Bunter than from Hobson of the Shell.

Instead of saying "Thanks, old chap!" the nearest member of the Co. let out a boot, eliciting a howl from Bunter.

Then they walked out of gates, frowning.

Whether Loder of the Sixth had an eye on them or not, the Famous Five did not care a boiled bean. And they

had no thanks to render to any fellow who fancied that they did care.

"Beasts!" breathed Bunter, blinking after them through his big spectacles as they went.

Having blinked after them, he rolled after them.

If they were going out of bounds, Bunter was going out of bounds in their company. Bunter rather fancied himself as a "bad hat" like the Bounder, but he had few opportunities for showing what a bad hat he was. So this was an opportunity not to be lost.

Harry Wharton & Co. were going over to Highcliffe that afternoon, and were going to get the motor-bus at the corner of Oak Lane for that purpose.

Billy Bunter, being unaware of that circumstance, had little doubt that they were heading for forbidden spots.

he knew where they were going—or, at least, had no doubt that he did.

Bunter rolled on his way to the Three Fishers' Fence where it bordered the wood, and blinked round for the gap.

It was not difficult to discover; but when he reached it, there was nothing to be seen of the Famous Five in the vicinity.

The fat junior blinked round him in surprise and annoyance.

He was sure that he was not far behind them, but they were not to be seen. He approached the gap in the fence, and put his fat head through the same to survey the interior through his big spectacles.

There were hawthorn-bushes within, but through them the fat Owl could make out the extensive, weedy, unkept grounds of the disreputable inn, with

wood behind Bunter, and heading for the same spot.

"By gum!" breathed Loder, as through the bracken he had a glimpse of a stooping figure at the gap in the fence.

His eyes gleamed.

It was only a glimpse, but he made out the colours of a Greyfriars cap.

It was quite a happy moment for Loder.

Gerald Loder had, as a matter of fact, his eyes open for the Famous Five that afternoon. He did not quite believe that there was anything in that pub-haunting story, but he charitably hoped that there was!

At any rate, if there was, he was going to see that the young rascals got what they deserved. His last report to Quelch had not been quite a success, and

Make Bradman Your Model!

An Interesting and instructive Article on
BATTING, exclusive to the MAGNET.

By UMPIRE.

A COMFORTABLE STANCE!

IF I were to ask you fellows the name of the greatest batsman of the day you would all say Don Bradman. And you'd be perfectly correct, too!

Knocking up centuries is almost as easy as rolling off a form to this great cricketer. Since the Australians have been in England he has played havoc with some of our best bowlers. And the Test matches are not all over yet!

To those of you who would like to become a Bradman, the best thing to do is to learn the first essentials of batsmanship. With this object in view I have been asked to give you the benefit of my knowledge.

A boy does not usually need encouraging when the opportunity comes to him to "wield the willow," whether he be a No. 1 batsman or a No. 11.

A batsman's job is to make runs for his side, but to do so he must know how to keep his wicket intact. Before dealing with this there is the important point of position or stance at the wicket.

As everyone walks differently, so do all batsmen adopt a different stance.

are in the right position to make your stroke when the ball comes along.

The right foot must, of course, be inside the crease to prevent getting stumped. Stand as upright as you can, with your left shoulder—to a right-handed batsman—pointing down the wicket and your eyes watching the bowler's hand.

As regards holding your bat and the position of the hands, you can please yourself about that, although it is best to hold your bat in the middle of the handle.

Many boys wonder what guard to take. It does not matter very much whether you take middle, middle and leg, or leg stump.

PLAY WITH A STRAIGHT BAT!

HAVING taken up your position, the next and all important thing to do is to concentrate and watch the ball and play with a straight bat.

Learning to play with a straight bat is the first principle of batting, the main reason being there is less chance of the

The best plan is to take up a position which you feel to be right—but, more important, which you feel most comfortable.

It does not matter so much how you stand so long as you

ball hitting the wicket. To illustrate this, hold your bat straight in front of the stumps and notice how much is protected, and then hold it crossways. You will see at once the importance of acquiring the habit of playing with a straight bat.

Do not just watch the bowler run up to the wicket, but try to watch his hand. By doing this you give yourself a better opportunity of seeing the ball all the way. When you see the bowler about to deliver the ball, lift your bat straight back so that it will come down in a straight line to meet the oncoming ball.

Unless you are a natural hitter it is advisable, for an over or two, to be content to concentrate on defence, thus giving yourself an opportunity of judging the pace of the bowler and the wicket.

Every boy has a different temperament and style of play. One may be a stolid batsman, another a "slogger." Whatever your method, do not be persuaded by a coach to alter.

A good coach should observe a boy's natural game and develop it. Many a promising batsman has been spoilt by bad coaching.

A boy can learn a tremendous amount by watching first-class players; so, when practising, try to imitate what you have seen. If you do this you may even develop some strokes of your own. Providing they are effective and you are satisfied they are not dangerous, do not be coached out of them.

That suspicion was confirmed when he saw them, at a little distance from the school, turn off into the wood.

If they were going to Courtfield or anywhere else in that direction, they had no occasion to enter that wood. But if they were going to a certain gap in a certain fence, that was their route.

So the grinning fat Owl had no doubt. He was not aware that the chums of the Remove, spotting him astern, and guessing what was in his fat and fatuous mind, had turned into the wood for the playful purpose of pulling his fat leg.

They wound through the wood for about ten minutes, and then emerged into the road again, and walked on towards Courtfield Common, where they were to pick up the bus that came along from Redclyffe.

They chuckled as they walked, wondering whether the fat Owl of the Remove was still tracking them in the wood.

He was.

Bunter had, of course, lost sight of them in the wood, thick in its summer foliage. But that did not matter, as

the red roofs and chimney-stacks of the Three Fishers in the distance.

But there was nobody to be seen.

If they were ahead of Bunter in that direction, they must have hurried and got out of sight.

Bunter wondered whether they had, or whether they had, after all, gone somewhere else.

He wanted to know. If they were going to play the giddy ox, Bunter was going to play the giddy ox, but he did not feel disposed to "go it" on his own. Moreover, having been disappointed about a postal order, Bunter was in his usual hard-up state, and it was not much use butting into a place like the Three Fishers without cash or a friend to borrow some off.

With his fat shoulders and his fat head inside that gap, and the rest of his fat person outside, Bunter blinked up and down and round about in search of some sign of the breakers of bounds.

He was so intent on what was in front of him that he gave no heed to anything in the rear, and did not hear or heed a rustle in the bracken.

Someone was coming through the

Quelch's acid remarks still rankled. Now he hoped for better luck.

And so it happened that Loder strolled through the wood by the river with the intention of keeping an eye on that gap in the Three Fishers' fence and nailing any young rascal who came that way.

And there was one, at least, of the young rascals, stooping at the gap in the fence, apparently in the very act of squeezing through.

Loder moved on quietly, cautiously—in fact, stealthily. He did not want that young rascal to take the alarm and cut before he recognised him. He had no doubt that it was one of the Famous Five, and that the other young sweeps were at hand.

He stepped on—softly.

The stooping figure did not squeeze through the palings and disappear. It seemed a fixture there. In a couple of minutes more Loder had a near view of it, and he scowled blankly.

The fellow at the gap was not one of the Famous Five. Neither was he
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going in. He was looking in, that was all.

Loder could not, of course, see his face, but he knew who that fellow was. Bunter, as he stooped at the gap, displayed chiefly trousers. There were few fellows who could be recognised by a back view, but Bunter was one of the few. His ample proportions gave him away at the first glance.

Loder scowled at the fat bending figure.

He wanted to catch the Famous Five; he did not particularly want to catch Bunter. But Harry Wharton & Co. were not there—and Bunter was. But he was not going in. His head was out of bounds, certainly, but the rest of him wasn't. Even had Loder been keen on catching Bunter, he could hardly have gone to Quelch with a report that Bunter's fat little nose had been out of bounds.

Loder had a stick under his arm.

He slipped it down into his hand and stepped behind the stooping Owl. He was disappointed and annoyed, and Bunter was going to get the benefit of it.

"Beasts!" He heard the fat junior's murmur. "Pulling a chap's leg, the beasts! They never came this way, after all! Beasts! I— Yoo-hooooop!"

Whack!

Billy Bunter gave a wild roar of surprise and anguish, as Loder's stick whacked on his tight trousers.

He roared, and bounded.

"Ow! Wow! Yoo-hooooop!"

Whack!

"Oh crikey! Beast! Wow!" roared Bunter, as he wriggled out of the palings. Oh lor! You beast, Bob Cherry— Oh crikey! Loder! I say, wharrer you up to— Wow!"

Bunter did not stay for a reply to that question. He jumped away, just in time to escape a third swipe, and bolted through the wood. Like the guests in Macbeth, Billy Bunter stood not upon the order of his going, but went at once!

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Tea At Highcliffe!

"BEST manners!" murmured Bob Cherry.

Grunt from Johnny Bull.

However, Johnny contented himself with grunting. He never saw Pon's nose without wanting to punch it; and now he wanted to punch it more than ever; but obviously, a Highcliffe nose was not to be punched in the quadrangle at Highcliffe School.

The Famous Five came in at the gates; and affected, elaborately, not to see Ponsonby & Co.

Pon & Co made themselves quite noticeable.

Ponsonby, Gadsby, Monson, Drury, and Vavasour were all together—and they gave attention to the Greyfriars fellows. Pon assumed his most supercilious and contemptuous smile for the amiable purpose of causing annoyance—in which he succeeded perfectly!

It was not an easy position for the Famous Five—at war with Pon & Co., and on the very friendliest terms with other fellows in the school. And Pon made it as difficult for them as he could.

He would, indeed, have started a "rag," strong in numbers and on his own territory. But that he did not venture to do. Pon had tried that game before, and Frank Courtenay, the captain of the Highcliffe Fourth, had made him feel extremely sorry for having tried it on.

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So Pon had to content himself with looks. He had the satisfaction of knowing that the Greyfriars fellows were longing to punch his cheeky head—and that, being guests at Highcliffe, they had to restrain that longing. He found amusement in noting that their faces were flushed as they passed him.

"Why not barge the cads?" murmured Monson, as the Famous Five passed—loud enough for them to hear.

Johnny Bull paused a second; but Harry Wharton pushed him on. Pon & Co. were left grinning.

"Oh, here you are!" Courtenay of the Fourth came cutting across to greet his visitors. "The Caterpillar's in his study! Come in."

Harry Wharton & Co. went into the House with the captain of the Highcliffe Fourth.

Pon winked at his friends and followed them in.

Rupert de Courcy, otherwise the Caterpillar, was on the Fourth Form landing, and he greeted the Greyfriars fellows with his usual polite urbanity—with the corner of his eye on Pon & Co. as they came up.

"Hold on a minute, Wharton!" called out Ponsonby.

Wharton did not answer or look round. But Pon was not to be denied. He came across the landing, followed by his grinning friends.

"I say, I'm rather sorry, you know," he said, taking no heed of the fact that Wharton was disregarding him. "Mobby kept on pestering me with questions, the other day, till he screwed out of me about you fellows bein' out of bounds at that pub—"

"Oh, chuck it!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, losing patience. "You know we can't punch you here, Ponsonby, chuck it!"

"No ill-feelin', I hope!" said Pon blandly. "I tried all I could to keep Mobby from goin' to your Beak; but the little man would have his way! Obstinate little beast, Mobby!"

"That will do, Ponsonby!" said Courtenay quietly. "Come along to the study, you fellows."

"Well, I only wanted to explain that I never meant to give these chaps away," said Ponsonby. "If they go pub-hauntin', it's no bizney of mine, of course."

The Famous Five, suppressing their feelings, followed Courtenay towards Study No. 3.

Pon & Co. sauntered after them; but the Caterpillar stepped in their way.

"Pon, old man," said the Caterpillar, "those chaps can't punch your head here, bein' visitors to the classic shades of Highcliffe. But I can—and I'm goin' to, unless you shut up! Catch on?"

Pon caught on at once and "chucked" it. He went into his own study, No. 5, with his friends, the whole party chuckling.

"We're goin' to rub this in," he remarked. "Now those cads have taken up pub-hauntin'—"

"But they haven't!" said Gadsby.

"Shut up, Gaddy, you fool! Mobby thinks they have," grinned Ponsonby. "I'm not at all sure he would approve of their comin' here, after what's come out about them. I wish he'd seen them come in! Snobby Mobby on the high horse is rather amusin'."

"Oh, chuck it!" said Gadsby. "You pulled Mobby's leg, to stuff him. We all know that! You never seem to know that there's a limit, Pon."

"I got in first, before those cads could give me away to Mobby!" said Pon, with a sneer.

"I don't believe they would have!" granted Gadsby.

"I wasn't takin' the risk, anyhow! You're a fool, Gaddy! I've told you lots of times that you're a fool!"

"I've told you sometimes that you're a rotter!" grunted Gaddy.

"Oh, don't rag, you men!" yawned Vavasour. "Too hot for raggin'. What about a four at bridge?"

"What about tippin' Mobby that those Greyfriars pub-haunters are here, and seein' how he takes it?" suggested Pon.

The Highcliffe knuts chuckled.

"Good egg!" grinned Monson, "but how—"

"But—"

"But you'd better think twice," said Gadsby sarcastically. "You don't want a scrap with Courtenay, same as you had last time you set Mobby on his Greyfriars pals."

"You're a fool, Gaddy!" said Pon; but he seemed to think that Gaddy's advice was good, all the same, and he kicked the study door shut, and the knuts settled down to bridge.

In Courtenay's study, up the passage, there was quite a cheerful party. Harry Wharton & Co. dismissed Ponsonby from their minds.

There was a handsome spread in Study No. 3; and over tea, Courtenay and his guests talked chiefly cricket, a topic that was of the keenest interest to all of them.

It was not of such keen interest to the Caterpillar: who, however, manfully suppressed an inclination to yawn now and then.

Presently the Caterpillar lounged to the window and stood there, looking into the quad below.

Cricket jaw was still going strong round the table; and the Caterpillar, to tell the truth, was wondering whether those keen cricketers would notice it, if he slipped quietly out of the study for a little stroll.

But he forgot both cricket "jaw" and the circumstances that it bored him, as his eyes fell on an unexpected figure below.

It was an unusual and singular figure to be seen in the quad at Highcliffe School; and a good many fellows were regarding it with curiosity.

"Good gad!" murmured the Caterpillar. "Who—and what—"

"That chap Bradman—" came Bob Cherry's voice.

"Do I sleep, do I dream, I wonder and doubt—are things what they seem or are visions about?" asked the Caterpillar.

"What's up, Rupert?" asked Courtenay, looking across at him.

"Come and look!" grinned the Caterpillar.

Courtenay stepped to the study window and looked. He started.

"Who the thump's that?" he ejaculated.

The Famous Five, in surprise, followed him to the window. They, too, started, at the sight of the man below.

He was rather a stout, squat man, in check coat and trousers, with a fancy waistcoat, and a tie of many colours. He wore a bowler hat rather rakishly on the side of his head and had a cigarette in his mouth. His face had a shiny look, his eyebrows were very bushy and the lower part of his countenance was almost hidden by a big straggling moustache.

He looked "horsey" from head to foot; and seemed to be about forty or fifty years of age.

The Famous Five looked at him fixedly.

It was so extraordinary to see that horsey-looking man walking across the Highcliffe quad that they could not help



"What—what did you call me?" gasped Mr. Mobbs. "Ugly mug!" retorted Mr. Huggins, aggressively, and he stepped towards the master of the Highcliffe Fourth and put up his fists. "Why, I'd knock you into the middle of next week as soon as look at yer, ugly mug!" "Stand back!" shrieked Mr. Mobbs.

remembering what Wibley had said in Study No. 1 the day before. The thought crossed all their minds, at once, that Wibley had carried out that amazing theatrical stunt—and that here he was!

But they dismissed the idea. Wib was a past-master at any sort of disguise, but this could not be the amateur actor of Greyfriars—it simply couldn't!

"Who the dickens——" said Courtenay blankly.

"Friend of Pon's, perhaps!" grinned the Caterpillar.

"What rot!"

The Caterpillar chuckled.

"I'm not so sure, Franky! That's the brand of sportsman that Pon goes to see at the Three Fishers. Pon's giving that delectable resort a wide offing the last day or two—he's had some bad luck. Perhaps his friends at the Three Fishers are yearnin' for his society, and givin' him a look in, as he's givin' them a miss."

"Fathead!" said Courtenay.

"I think," said the Caterpillar, "that I'll cut down and see the bloke! If a beak drops on him the man he's come to see will get into a fearful row—and he may be seen any minute!"

"Maybe you're right, old chap!" said Courtenay. "Anyway, you'll soon see!"

The Caterpillar left the study.

Courtenay and the Greyfriars fellows, continued to look from the window.

In a minute or less they saw the Caterpillar emerge from the House and approach the squat, beery-looking man in the rakish bowler.

What was said, they could not hear; but they saw the horsey man follow the Caterpillar, and both disappeared from sight round the school buildings.

"Man must have got in by mistake," said Courtenay. "I expect De Courcy's showing him out by the back gate."

Harry Wharton & Co. wondered!

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

A Man To See Ponsonby!

TAP! Cecil Ponsonby glanced round, at the tap on his study door.

The door did not open—it was locked. Bridge and cigarettes were going on in Pon's study, and even at a slack school like Highcliffe, fellows had to be a little careful. "Snobby Mobby" was unlikely to butt into Pon's study, and the prefects generally were slack; still, it was only prudent to lock the door on such occasions.

Tap!
"Cut along!" called out Ponsonby. "I'm sportin' my oak while I get this translation done."

At which Pon's friends, sitting round the study table with cards and cigarettes, grinned.

"Better let a chap in, Pon!" came the Caterpillar's voice from outside. "It's rather urgent, old bean!"

"Oh, is that you, Caterpillar? What's up?"

"Man wants to see you."

"Rot! Tell him to go and eat coke!"

"Pon, old man, open the door!" The Caterpillar's usually careless voice had an earnest warning note. "Don't be a goat—get a move on!"

"What the dooce——" said Vavasour.

"Oh, rot!" said Pon. "That ass is tryin' to pull our leg! Cut it out, Caterpillar!"

"There's a man here, Pon——"

"Rot!"

"He wants to see you——"

"Well, I don't want to see him!"

"You better, young man!" came another voice, a rather husky, beery voice. "I ain't going back to Mr. Lodgey without seeing you."

Ponsonby sat quite still for a moment.

His face paled to the hue of chalk. He seemed paralysed as he heard that.

His dingy proceedings at the Three Fishers were, of course, kept carefully secret at his school. Even at Highcliffe, the result would have been very serious for Pon, had his manners and customs become known to his headmaster. Many a half-holiday did Pon spend in the disreputable company of Bill Lodgey and his sporting friends. But that any of that dingy crew would dream of visiting him at Highcliffe had never crossed his mind.

He sat in sheer terror.

It was Gadsby who hurried across to the door and opened it. He was very nearly as much alarmed as Pon; but he had a little more presence of mind at the moment. If a messenger had arrived from Bill Lodgey, that messenger had to be got out of sight, and kept out of sight, somehow.

Gadsby jerked the door open.

Pon & Co. stared at the squat figure in checks outside. The beery man had not even removed his rakish bowler.

The Caterpillar was by his side. He gave the squat man a gentle push into the study.

"Who—who—who are you?" Ponsonby found his voice.

The beery man touched his hat without removing it.

"Name of 'Uggins," he answered. "You're Master Ponsonby—I've seen at the Three Fishers——"

"I've never seen you!" gasped Ponsonby. "What—what do you want? What have you come here for? Is Lodgey gone mad? This is enough to get me sacked! You fool, what do you want here?"

Vavasour and Drury exchanged a glance, and slipped quietly from the
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study. They preferred to be "off" in the scene.

"Don't you call a bloke names, Mr. Ponsonby," said the squat man sulkily. "I fancy you can guess what I come for."

"You fool—brute—idiot!" Ponsonby choked. "I tell you, if you're seen here—Has he been seen, Caterpillar?"

"I spotted him in the quad, and got him round to the back of the House," answered the Caterpillar. "He wouldn't take no for an answer, so I let him in by the back staircase. I don't think any beak has had an eye on him yet, Pon."

"Course I wouldn't take no for an answer!" declared Mr. Huggins loudly. "I come 'ere to see Mr. Ponsonby, didn't I? If I wasn't let in to see 'im I'd kick up a row fast enough, and you can lay to that."

"Don't shout!" hissed Monson.

"Quiet!" breathed Gadsby.

"Who are you talking to?" demanded Mr. Huggins belligerently. "Ain't I good enough to come 'ere? I ask you."

Ponsonby wiped the perspiration from his forehead. That loud, beery voice might be heard by anyone. He shuddered and fairly trembled at the thought of a master or a prefect finding that dreadful visitor in his study. The Caterpillar had done him a good turn in getting the man quietly into the House before he kicked up a row, as he expressed it. But now that he was there he had to be got rid of, and got rid of quick!

But that was not easy, for Pon could guess what he wanted. Pon had not called on Mr. Lodgey after the three o'clock on Thursday, as arranged. He would have called fast enough to collect his winnings, had Tinkletop pulled it off. But as Tinkletop had shared the fate of so many dead certs and been hopelessly beaten, it was useless to call on Mr. Lodgey. Lodgey had to wait for his money.

This looked as if he did not choose to wait.

"Look here——" breathed Pon.

"Lookin'!" said Mr. Huggins sar-

castically. "But what I want to look at is a fiver. Did you put a fiver on Tinkletop, or did you not, Mr. Ponsonby?"

"Yes, yes, yes; but——"

"Did you promise to call on Bill Lodgey after class the day afore yesterday, or did you not?" demanded Mr. Huggins.

"Yes, yes; but——"

"Are you going to pay up, or ain't you?"

"Yes; but——"

"Well, 'ere I am to collect!" said Mr. Huggins. "And I'm telling you this, you young welsher, I ain't going without the money! Take that from me!"

"For goodness' sake, Pon, if you owe the man money, square him, and get shut of him!" muttered the Caterpillar. "I'll stick in the passage and keep fellows clear, if I can; but for goodness' sake don't waste time!"

The Caterpillar drew the door shut, remaining in the passage.

It was sheer good nature on the Caterpillar's part. Pon was no friend of his, and, in fact, he disliked him extremely. But he was ready to do what he could to help in an awful scrape like this.

"Paying up, Mr. Ponsonby?" asked Huggins gruffly.

"Oh gad! I—I can't settle to-day!" muttered Ponsonby. "Tell Lodgey——"

"I ain't going without the fiver."

"I tell you I'm absolutely stony!" hissed Ponsonby. "I'd have called on Lodgey, otherwise. Next week, perhaps——"

"Or p'r'aps the week after, or the week after that!" said Huggins sarcastically. "You're a young welsher, you are!"

"You impertinent scoundrel!" gasped Ponsonby.

"Wot's that?" roared Huggins.

"Quiet, for goodness' sake!" gasped Monson. "Do you want to bring a crowd here, Huggins?"

"Who cares?" demanded Mr. Huggins. "Think I'm going to be called names by that there young welsher! Don't he owe Bill Lodgey the money? Didn't he promise to pay arter the race? Calling a bloke names——"

Ponsonby gave Monson and Gadsby a haggard look. He would have paid any sum if he had had it, to get rid of this awful character before his presence in the school came to the knowledge of the masters. What Dr. Voysey would have said, had he seen Mr. Huggins there, did not bear thinking of. Even Mr. Mobbs could hardly have stood by his favourite, his dear Ponsonby, in the circumstances.

"Can you fellows help?" asked Ponsonby huskily. "I'm stony!"

"You know I'm the same!" grunted Monson.

"Same here," said Gadsby. "Half-a-crown is my limit. We're all up against it this term."

"You lay your bets, and you ain't got the rhino to square!" snorted Mr. Huggins. "If that ain't welshing, what do you call it? Well, Bill Lodgey ain't the man to be diddled like that. I've come 'ere——"

"Lodgey must have gone mad!" muttered Monson. "He will never do any business with a Highcliffe man after this."

"Look here, Huggins——" breathed Ponsonby.

"You paying?" hooted Huggins.

"I've told you I can't! I——"

"Well, I'm 'ere to collect! I'm sticking 'ere till you 'and it over!"

And Mr. Huggins, glancing round Pon's well-appointed study, selected a comfortable armchair and sat down therein. He stretched out his legs in the check trousers, and put his thumbs in the armholes of the fancy waistcoat. His manner was disagreeably determined.

"You—you—you can't stay here!" panted Ponsonby.

"Can't I?" said Mr. Huggins grimly.

"If you're seen here, it means the sack for me!" hissed Ponsonby. "Can't you understand that?"

"You'd better pay up, then!" grunted Mr. Huggins.

"I can't!"

"I'm sticking 'ere till you do!"

And there Mr. Huggins stuck, in the armchair, the hapless knuts regarding him with dismay and horror.

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THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Awful For Pon!

HARRY WHARTON & CO., in Courtenay's study, looked at one another.

Courtenay, with a grave, startled face, had stepped to the door. All of them had heard the husky, beery voice of Mr. Huggins.

"Caterpillar!" The captain of the Fourth called to his chum, in charge of the passage. "What on earth——"

The Caterpillar smiled.

"Man to see Pon!" he answered. "I'm keepin' guard, old bean, in case anybody barges in. If Mobbs comes up, we've got to bar him off somehow while that sportsman's about."

"But what——"

"I gather," said the Caterpillar, "that Pon put a fiver on Tinkletop, and Bill Lodgey wants to be paid, so he's sent a man along to collect."

"The scoundrel!" breathed Courtenay.

"Yes, it's rather the limit!" said De Courcy. "But there it is! These things do happen to sportsmen who go over the odds."

"Ponsonby must be mad to run such risks!" said Courtenay. "This means the sack for him if that man's seen. We must get rid of him——"

"I don't think," said the Caterpillar

gravely, "that Pon's yearnin' for his company, Franky. The attachment is wholly on the side of Mr. Huggins. He won't go without the cash!"

"Good heavens!" breathed Courtenay.

He joined the Caterpillar in the passage. Like his chum, he forgot that Ponsonby was an enemy, now that the dandy of Highcliffe was landed in this fearful scrape.

The Famous Five, in the study, exchanged looks. The same thought was in all their minds—and yet they could not believe it. All that was happening was exactly according to the programme that Wibley had laid down; and it was, on the other hand, utterly unlikely that Bill Lodgey would send a beery associate to collect a debt at Highcliffe, and thus put an end to all future business in that direction. And yet—

"It can't be!" muttered Bob Cherry.

"It can't!" said Nugent.

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"It can't," he said, "and yet—if it is that fool Wibley—"

"Serve Pon right, anyhow!" granted Johnny Bull.

"Yes, but—"

"But the butfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"If an esteemed beak or an absurd prefect should come up—"

"Wibley's a mad ass!" said Harry, in a low voice. "He never knows where to stop! He might—"

"But it can't be—"

"I suppose not—but—" Harry Wharton had a worried look. Ponsonby was an unscrupulous rascal, and the Famous Five were very keen to make him sit up for his sins, but there was a limit—and Wibley, in pursuit of a jape, had no sense of limits!

But was that beery man Wibley in one of his theatrical guises? It did not seem possible.

The Famous Five looked out into the passage. Courtenay's face was very grave, but the Caterpillar gave them a wink.

"Thrillin' situation, you men!" he drawled. "We're keepin' guard! 'Fraid that Mobby may come up any minute, and nobble Pon! If he does would you men mind chargin' him down the stairs? It would keep him busy for a bit."

"Be serious, Rupert!" muttered the captain of the Fourth.

"Sober as a judge, old man!" said the Caterpillar. "Mobby's got to be stalled off somehow if he barges in. Think what a blow it would be to him if his dear Pon had to be bunked from Highcliffe? Mobby would shed briny tears when the Head applied the boot."

"You ass—"

"He would!" declared the Caterpillar. "Hallo, here comes Pon! Not looking so rosy and bloomin' as usual."

Ponsonby's study door opened and Pon came out. He was looking anything but "rosy and blooming." He was almost haggard.

Gadsby and Monson followed him out—and went away to the stairs. They had had, apparently, enough of sharing Pon's afflictions.

Pon came towards the captain of the Fourth.

"Can you help me, Courtenay?" he asked, in a low, husky voice. "There's a man in my study—"

"I know!"

"I'm in an awful hole!" Pon's voice was shaking. Really, he was hard to recognise as the cool, supercilious, sneering dandy of Highcliffe at that moment. "Lodgey must have gone

mad, I think—to send that man here—but—if he's seen here—" Pon trembled. "If you can help me—"

"I'll help you boot the rascal out of the place, with pleasure!"

"Don't be a mad fool!" gasped Ponsonby. "He'll go if I pay him—that's what he's here for! It's a fiver—"

He gave the captain of the Fourth a beseeching look.

"I've got five shillings!" said Courtenay curtly.

Pon's haggard eyes turned on the Caterpillar.

"A quid's my limit!" murmured De Courcy. "If the good gentleman will take an instalment, Pon—"

"He won't!" groaned Ponsonby.

He stood silent for a moment, and then turned his eyes on the Famous Five. He was their enemy; he had played a base trick on them; only an hour ago he had been making himself unpleasant. But Pon cared for none of these things. He was willing to drink the cup of shame and humiliation to the very dregs, if it would save his skin.

"You fellows," he muttered. "I—I say, I'm sorry about what I said to Mobbs, and—and other things. I say, if you'd help me—"

It was not easy for the Greyfriars fellows to conceal the contempt they felt. But they were not the fellows to give anyone a shove when he was down, and, indeed, at that moment, they pitied the helpless young rascal, whose dingy blackguardism had come home to roost in that terrifying way.

"That brute won't go!" said Ponsonby huskily. "And if he kicks up a row, and a master comes up—the game's up. You—you don't want to see a fellow bunked from his school. It's a wonder he's not been spotted already. If I can get rid of him—if you can help—"

"We'd help if we could," said Harry Wharton, breathing rather hard, "but we don't carry pounds in our pockets, Ponsonby."

"Bobs are nearer our mark," said Nugent, "but—"

The Famous Five exchanged glances. If—though they could not believe it—that beery man in Pon's study was Wibley, in one of his amazing disguises, he was not, of course, there to collect money. He was there because he knew that there was no money to collect! But was it Wibley?

"Let me have what you can," said Ponsonby desperately. "For mercy's sake, stand by me—the man may take half—and go—"

"Don't you think it!" came a beery voice, and the squat figure of Mr. Huggins emerged from Pon's study into the passage. "I'm here to collect a fiver, and I ain't taking four pounds nineteen and six—and you can lay to that, Mr. Ponsonby."

Pon stared round like a startled hare. "Go back into the study!" he gasped.

"Shan't!" retorted Mr. Huggins.

"Will you keep out of sight!" groaned Ponsonby.

"Fellows may come up any minute—"

"Wot do I care?"

"A master might come up—"

"Let 'im come!"

"Look here—"

began Courtenay.

"Don't you talk to me! My business 'ere is with that young gentleman! If he don't square—"

Be quiet!" groaned Pon, with a terrified glance towards the staircase.

"I ain't going to be quiet if I ain't paid, and you can lay to that! Nor I ain't sticking 'ere all day, neither! So I tell yer!" exclaimed Mr. Huggins, raising his voice.

The Famous Five were staring intently at Mr. Huggins.

Was he what he appeared to be, or not? For the life of them, they could not tell. All this was so exactly in accordance with Wib's programme, that it seemed a certainty that he was Wib, carrying on that amazing scheme of his. Yet, looking at him, it seemed certain that he was not!

Bob Cherry's eyes glimmered.

If, impossible as it seemed, he was the amateur actor of Greyfriars, that big straggling moustache would come off if it was pulled! If this was a jape, it had, in Bob's opinion, gone far enough—if not too far already!

Bob made a movement along the passage with the intention of putting the matter to the test, by a sudden grab at Mr. Huggins' moustache.

But, even as he moved, there was a sudden patter of feet on the stairs, and Smithson of the Fourth ran up the passage.

"What's up here, you fellows?" he exclaimed. "Mobby's coming up—"

"Oh, gad!"

"Phew!"

Ponsonby, in utter dismay, staggered against the passage wall. A mortar-board rose into view on the stairs; followed into view by the thin, angry face of Mr. Mobbs. The master of the Highcliffe Fourth came whisking up the passage with rustling gown.

"What is all this?" he exclaimed. "A man has been seen—why—what—what—what—" Mr. Mobbs stared, in horrified amazement, at the beery-looking Huggins. "What—what—what—Who is this man?"

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Something Like A Shindy!

"WHO is this man?" gasped Mr. Mobbs.

Courtenay and De Courcy said nothing. The Greyfriars fellows stood dumb. Smithson stared blankly. Ponsonby made an effort to pull himself together. He tried to speak.

"I—I don't know—" he gasped.

"I am sure you do not, Ponsonby!" said Mr. Mobbs. "You would not be likely to know anything, I am sure, of such—such a person!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry involuntarily.

"Courtenay—who is this man?"

"I've never seen him before, sir!" said the captain of the Fourth.

"Who are you?" hooted Mr. Mobbs.

"What are you doing here?"

"Name of 'Uggins, sir!" said the

(Continued on next page.)

**ROYAL
NAVY**

Boys may now enter between the ages of 15 and 17½ years. Full particulars are contained in the illustrated

booklet "The Royal Navy as a Career and How to Join It" which may be obtained on application to the Recruiting Staff Officer, R.N. and R.M. (N), 85, Whitehall, London, S.W.1, or at any Post Office.

beery one cheerfully. "Who are you?" Whoever he was, Mr. Huggins was quite cool!

"I!" exclaimed Mr. Mobbs, "I am a Form-master of this school—I demand to know immediately how you came here."

"Walked!" answered Mr. Huggins.

"What?"

"Shanks' pony, sir!" said Huggins affably. "Jest walked! I've 'ad to sell my Rolls, these 'ard times."

"Do not be so impertinent!" hooted Mr. Mobbs. "What is your business here? You cannot be here to see a Highcliffe boy! Why are you here?"

"Can't a bloke 'op in to see a young covey?" asked Mr. Huggins.

"Certainly not! Not a man of your obvious character! You"—Mr. Mobbs broke off and glared at the Greyfriars juniors—"I see you here—I am bound to say that I am surprised to see you here—is this man an acquaintance of yours? Have you ventured to bring such a person here?"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob.

"Not at all, Mr. Mobbs," answered Harry Wharton quietly and contemptuously. "The man has not asked to see us."

"Then what—explain yourself!" snapped Mr. Mobbs, turning to the beery man again. "If you are here to see someone, give me his name at once."

Ponsonby trembled. He prepared himself for a desperate denial, though he had little hope of getting by with it.

But, to his immense relief, the beery man did not utter his name!

Either Mr. Lodgey's messenger did not want to give him away, or else Wibley of the Remove had a limit, after all. Harry Wharton & Co. could not make up their minds which!

"No fear, old boney!" said Mr. Huggins. "I ain' giving a covey away, I ain't! Ask me another."

"I command you to answer me!" thundered Mr. Mobbs. "Answer me, before I have you thrown from this building."

"Chuck it, ugly mug!" retorted Mr. Huggins.

"What? What did you call me?" gasped Mr. Mobbs.

"Ugly mug!"

"You—you—you insolent knave! I—I will have you thrown from the door!" stuttered Mr. Mobbs. "I—I will—"

"Will yer?" asked Mr. Huggins aggressively, and he stepped towards the master of the Highcliffe Fourth and put up two fists. "Go it, then! Why, I'd knock you into the middle of next week as soon as look at yer, ugly mug!"

"Ruffian—rascal—stand back!" gasped Mr. Mobbs, backing away in a great hurry. "Upon my word—this is—is—stand back!"

Instead of standing back, Mr. Huggins advanced on him, and Mr. Mobbs backed away more quickly than before. He backed and backed, and the beery man followed him down the passage, brandishing his fists.

The juniors looked on blankly.

"Stand back!" shrieked Mr. Mobbs. "Hands off! I will have you taken into custody—I will telephone for the police—I will—"

"There's a oner for your boko!" said Mr. Huggins, lunging out.

Mr. Mobbs bounded back, like a kangaroo, just in time to save his "boko" from capturing the "oner."

"Help!" he spluttered.

"I'll 'elp yer!" growled Mr. Huggins,

and he made a rush at the master of the Highcliffe Fourth.

Mr. Mobbs fairly turned and ran.

He bounded away down the passage, his mortar-board aslant on his head, his gown streaming wildly behind him. He reached the staircase and went down three at a time.

"Help! Assistance! Police! Prefects! Call the porter! Help!" Mr. Mobbs' voice was heard squeaking wildly, below the staircase.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob.

"This," murmured the Caterpillar, "is growin' excitin'. I'm afraid the Head won't be pleased at your friends callin' here, Pon!"

Ponsonby fairly groaned. The fat was in the fire now! In a few minutes there would be a crowd on the spot. And Huggins was not gone! He was not going! He came back along the passage, grinning.

"Ere, young Ponsonby—"

"Go away!" moaned Pon. "For mercy's sake go away, go away, before half the school comes up here! Go away."

"Where's the 'urry?" demanded Mr. Huggins. "That old boney covey ain't ordering me about, and you can lay to that!"

"For goodness' sake go—"

"Don't you think you'd better do a fade-out, Mr. Huggins?" asked the Caterpillar politely. "You'll get run in for this, you know."

"Wot 'ave I done?" asked Mr. Huggins. "A bloke can call to collect an account, can't he? I s'pose it will be O.K. if I explain to the 'eadmaster that I've called from Mr. Lodgey, at the Three Fishers, for a fiver what young Ponsonby owes him?"

"Oh gad!"

"Go away!" moaned Pon. "For mercy's sake, before they come—"

"I ain't going!" said the cheerful Mr. Huggins. "Let 'em all come! I got business 'ere, ain't I—business with you, young Ponsonby. If you back a 'orse—"

"Shut up!" hissed Ponsonby.

From below the staircase there was a buzz of voices, and the excited squeak of Mr. Mobbs could be heard:

"A ruffianly character—a dangerous ruffian—call the prefects—I will telephone to the police station—"

"If you back a 'orse, young Ponsonby—" repeated Mr. Huggins.

"Will you be quiet!" hissed Ponsonby. "You rotter—you rascal—"

"No, I won't!" retorted Mr. Huggins. "And I won't be called names, either, by a young welsher like you! Not without 'itting you in the eye!"

"Ow! Keep off, you mad rascal!" yelled Ponsonby, as Huggins pranced up to him. "Ow, you rotter—you fool—you—you—yaroooooh!"

He jumped away frantically as the squat man punched at him. But he did not jump quite quick enough. A punch landed on his nose, and he yelled; another landed on his chin, and he roared.

"Oh erikoy!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"I say—oh gum!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Stop him—" gasped Courtenay.

"Keep off, you mad brute!" shrieked Ponsonby frantically, as Huggins followed him up. "You ruffian—you—you—oh gad! Oh crumbs! Ow!"

Ponsonby jumped back into his study, Mr. Huggins following him up, punching right and left. There was a

crash, as the dandy of Highcliffe went sprawling over his expensive carpet.

"That'll do for you!" said Mr. Huggins, and he turned back into the passage, leaving Pon yelling.

"Here they come!" grinned the Caterpillar.

Heads appeared on the staircase. Mr. Huggins glanced towards them, but did not seem alarmed. But he stepped quickly up the passage, and stepped in at the open doorway of Courtenay's study.

He shut that door after him, leaving the juniors in the passage staring blankly. They heard the key click in the lock inside.

"What the jolly old dooce—" ejaculated the Caterpillar. He stared blankly at the locked door of his study. A moment more and a crowd was surging along the passage from the stairs.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Only Wibley!

"WHERE is he?" squeaked Mr. Mobbs.

"Where's the man?"

"Where—"

Five or six hefty Highcliffe prefects had come up with Mr. Mobbs. Following them came an excited, wondering crowd of dozens of fellows. Mr. Mobbs was not alarmed now, with so much force to back him up. He was quite fierce. He glared round for the beery man.

"Where is he—Ponsonby—my dear Ponsonby, what has happened?" He stared at Pon, sitting up in his doorway, with his hand to a streaming nose. "Has that ruffian attacked you—has he—"

"Yes—no—" stuttered Pon. "I mean—no—yes—I—I mean—"

"Who is he?" demanded Langley, the captain of Highcliffe.

"I—I—I don't know—"

"Courtenay! Where is that man? Where is he?" exclaimed Mr. Mobbs. "Has he gone into a study? Where—"

"This door is locked!" One of the prefects turned the door-handle of Study No. 3. "Is he in here—"

"Open this door at once!" squeaked Mr. Mobbs. "Rascal—ruffian—" He rapped on the door. "Open this door, you—"

"Is he gone?" came a voice from the study—not in the least like the husky, beery tones of Mr. Huggins.

Harry Wharton & Co fairly jumped as they heard that voice. They knew the voice of William Wibley—speaking in its natural tones!

"Wib!" breathed Bob.

"That ass Wib—" gasped Nugent.

"Wib, after all—"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Who is that?" squeaked Mr. Mobbs. "Who is speaking? Who is there?"

"Me, sir!" came the meek reply; but the door did not unlock.

The Famous Five could guess that Wibley was getting off his Huggins' outfit as fast as he could, and he had to gain time.

"What—what? Who are you, I say?" exclaimed Mr. Mobbs angrily. "Is that ruffian there? That man—is he there? Answer me."

"I'm Wibley, sir—a Greyfriars

(Continued on page 28.)

RAMBLE IN COMFORT WITH—

The GREYFRIARS GUIDE



ALL AROUND GREYFRIARS. A Tour in the District.

(1)
From the gates we'll ramble round
All the old familiar ground,
Let us see what may be found
In the Greyfriars neighbourhood.
And to start with, it is plain,
We must walk down Friardale Lane.
(Or we might walk up again!
That, of course, is understood!)

(2)
Let's go downhill to the right,
Oak Lane corner is in sight,
Where the trees are green and bright,
It's a very pleasant view.
We will let the village wait
While we stroll down to the gate
Of the Popper Court estate.
("Keep outside, and this means
YOU!")

(3)
Popper Court is old and grey,
With a mortgage, so they say,
Which Sir Hilton cannot pay.
Yet, it seems, by all accounts,
He consistently affords
Walls and wire and things in bodes,
And his bill for notice-boards
Must run into high amounts.
(We pause here for one week!)



AFTER SCHOOL HOURS Loving Friends

I'd like the money Smithy spends!
For lavishness he's noted.
And this has brought him many friends
So true and so devoted
That it's a touching sight to see
The way they flock around him.
And how they smile with happy glee
Whenever they have found him!

They follow in adoring herds,
Reminding one of boobies,
And hang upon old Smithy's words
Like rare and precious rubies!
When Smithy's in the tuckshop they
Are with him in full muster,
They'd listen to him there all day,
A tense and silent cluster!

What though their idol cuts up rough,
And sneers and snarls and sniggers?
They all forgive him fast enough
When he gets down to figures!
They're each as happy as a king
When once the feast has started,
Oh, it's a joyful, lovely thing
To be so tender-hearted!

And if they put up with a lot
Of awkward times—what matter?
For Herbert Vernon-Smith is not
An easy man to flatter.
And Skinner, Hazeldene, and Snoop
Have sometimes felt despairing,
And others in that happy group
Find friendship somewhat wearing!

In fact, their friendship's undermined
With many a threatened fracas,
And sometimes they have felt inclined
To jump on Smithy's carcass.
But that is neither here nor there,
And Smithy goes on living,
For when a chap's a millionaire
His friends are SO forgiving!

THE GREYFRIARS ALPHABET HURREE JAMSET RAM SINGH,

Nabob of Bhanipur, the Hindoo Junior
of the Remove

S is for SINGH, our genial Hurree,
A student from the land of curry,
A rather black but comely person
Whom I am proud to vent my verse on!
A prince in manners as in status,
He smiled when other chaps would hate
us.



His smile is always more than pleasant
And makes a fellow glad he's present;
His brain is keen, his eye is keener,
In spite of his reserved demeanour.
His sporting deeds I cannot utter.
He bowls a dreadful daisy-cutter!
His English is a fearful jargon
That's worth threeha'pence at a
bargain;
His mixed-up proverbs are prolific,
The weirdfulness is most terrific!

ANSWER to PUZZLE
PRICE, ANGEL, GREENE.

A WEEKLY BUDGET OF FACT AND FUN

By
THE GREYFRIARS
RHYMESTER

GREYFRIARS GRINS

LATEST SCORE in the MAGNET TEST
MATCH:

Frank Richards (not out)	1,587
"Greyfriars Herald" (out, but still running)	301
Greyfriars Guide (out, but won't go)	51
Editor Scorer's given up counting!	

Frank Richards' fine innings of 1,587 issues has been made entirely by BIG HITS. Apart from a slight attack of writer's cramp in the early thousands he was never in trouble, and it is hoped he will beat Edgar Wallace's record of 36,000,000 words before the end of May. The "Greyfriars Herald" has backed him up nobly in a bright and breezy innings, full of interest from start to finish—which won't happen yet!

PUZZLE PAR

Insert the names of Greyfriars fellows in the blanks and make the titles of some well-known films.

"What Glory!"
"The Dark!"
"The Pastures!"

Answer at foot of col. 2.

The Greyfriars Guide has been sneaking about and has somehow put fifty-one on the board, but no one takes any notice of him.

As for the Editor, he still has his pads on! And he'd like to see the man who'll make him take 'em off!

Gerald Loder was seen coming out of the Three Fishers recently. Judging by the fact that Mr. Twigg, who saw him, has gone to consult an optician, we suppose Loder managed to prove he was somewhere else at the time.

Bunter is furious. Someone has raided his tuck! "The beast ought to be expelled for tuck-raiding!" he declares. "I've a jolly good mind to go to the Head!" He hasn't, though—he's afraid the Head might ask where he got it!

fellow!" came the reply. "Nobody's here but me, sir—"

"Open the door at once!"

"Oh, yes, sir—but is he gone? There was a hulking ruffian in the passage—I'm afraid to open the door, sir, if he hasn't gone—"

"We are searching for him!" snapped Mr. Mobbs. "Courtenay, is this one of your—your Greyfriars friends in this study? Speak to the foolish boy! Wharton! Call to this stupid boy, and—"

"Let Mr. Mobbs in, Wibley!" called out Harry Wharton, in a gasping voice.

"But is that ruffian gone?"

"Oh crumbs! I mean, he—he's not here now!" gasped Harry.

"Oh, all right! Oh dear! I've dropped the key—"

"The man can't be there, sir!" said Langley. "Some silly frightened kid has locked himself in—"

"Search the other studies and the back staircase!" said Mr. Mobbs.

Courtenay and the Caterpillar stood dumbfounded.

Frank Nugent was whispering in their ears, unnoticed in the general hubbub.

Now that the Famous Five knew who "Mr. Huggins" was, they were rather anxious for him to escape undiscovered.

Wib was quite a quick-change artist, and he had his own clothes on under his Huggins outfit; but he had to have time. It was a relief to them to see the search spread along the passage and down the back staircase. Mr. Mobbs, however, remained at the door of Study No. 3, shaking the door-handle.

"Open this door!" he snapped.

"I—I've dropped the key—"

"Find it at once! I insist upon that door being opened! Langley, can you see anything of the man—?"

"No, sir—he seems to have vanished—"

"He may have run down the back staircase. But he may be hiding in this study—if that foolish boy does not open the door, I—I will—"

The key turned in the lock at last.

Mr. Mobbs pitched the door open angrily and stared in.

The Famous Five stared in. Courtenay and the Caterpillar—enlightened by Nugent's whisper—stared in, with popping eyes! Mr. Huggins had entered that study hardly five minutes ago—but nothing was to be seen of Huggins now!

A Greyfriars junior stood there!

His face was grubby from grease-paint hurriedly and imperfectly rubbed off. But there was nothing else unusual in his aspect. Mr. Huggins had disappeared. All that remained of Mr. Huggins was rolled up in a blanket and pushed out of sight behind an arm-chair.

"Is he gone, sir?" exclaimed Wibley.

"I—I locked the door—I—I was so—so scared, sir—"

"Oh crikey!" gurgled Bob Cherry.

"He is gone, you foolish, cowardly boy!" snapped Mr. Mobbs. "But look round the study, Langley—"

"Nobody's here, but that kid, sir."

"It is extraordinary!" said Mr. Mobbs. "He must have run down the back staircase—I cannot imagine who the man was, or what he wanted here—a most truculent ruffian—he attacked me—he seems to have attacked Ponsonby—he must be secured—"

Mr. Mobbs hurried away, and the whole crowd surged on to the back staircase. As Huggins was not to be seen in the passage, or found in any of the Fourth Form studies, the only possible conclusion was that he had dodged down the back stairs! And the whole excited crowd streamed away in pursuit of an imaginary Huggins!

Wibley winked at the other fellows in the study when they were gone.

"Think they'll find him, you fellows?" he asked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You ass, Wib—" gasped Bob Cherry.

"You dangerous maniac!" exclaimed Johnny Bull.

The Caterpillar shut the study door. Frank Courtenay was staring at Wibley in sheer bewilderment.

As Huggins was not there, and Wibley was, he had to believe that the Greyfriars junior was—or had been—that beery, disreputable-looking horsey man. But really it was hard to believe.

"Some jape, what?" asked Wibley cheerily.

"It—it—it was—was you!" stuttered Courtenay. "It—it was you who—who—Oh, my hat!"

"Sort of," assented Wibley. He chuckled. "I say, you'll excuse me for making free with your study, what? You see, time pressed."

"But what—how—why—" gasped the captain of the Highcliffe Fourth.

The Caterpillar chortled as he looked at the Famous Five.

"Did you fellows know?" he asked.

"No more than you did!" answered Harry Wharton. "That howling ass told us that he was going to jape Ponsonby like this, but when we saw Huggins, we couldn't believe that it was Wibley—I can hardly believe it now, really—"

"You see," explained Wibley airily, "these fellows couldn't get back on Pon for the dirty trick he played them, so I came to the rescue! Alone, unaided, I did it—like jolly old Coriolanus, you know."

"But what—"

"Pon made Mobbs believe they were a set of pub-hauntin' rotters—and Mobbs brought it over to Greyfriars! So my idea was to bring a spot of his pub-haunting home to Pon! Catch on?"

"Dear old Pon! Always askin' for somethin' he doesn't want!" chuckled the Caterpillar. "By gad, what a jape! What—Hullo, Pon! Trot in, old bean! Meet William Wibley, the funniest man goin'!"

The study door opened and Ponsonby looked in. Behind him were Monson and Vavasour, with worried, scared faces. The knots of Highcliffe had had the scare of their lives that afternoon!

Ponsonby glanced at Wibley, but without heeding him. He was not interested in William Wibley of the Greyfriars Remove!

"Did that man get away?" he asked breathlessly. He rubbed his nose as he spoke. The man had left Pon something to remember him by!

"I fancy he's got clear, Pon," answered the Caterpillar gravely. "He seems to have sort of suddenly, silently vanished away—like that jolly old boojum in the story, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Ponsonby stared round, scowling, at the laughing juniors. Pon did not see anything to laugh at. Pon was in anything but a laughing mood.

"Thank goodness he's gone!" he breathed. "But fancy that fool Lodgey sendin' the man here—"

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

"It's not a laughin' matter!" snarled Ponsonby.

"Isn't it?" grinned the Caterpillar. "Your mistake, old bean—it is! You don't know what a jolly old laughin' matter it is, Pon! If you did you'd be simply yellin'!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Ponsonby scowled and stepped back out of the study, slamming the door after him with a heavy slam. And another roar of laughter followed him as he departed.

It was quite a mystery to Pon afterwards!

He lost no time in seeing Mr. Lodgey—in dread of another caller to collect that account! But it was only to learn from that dingy gentleman, with utter amazement, that he knew nobody of the name of Huggins, and that he certainly had not sent Huggins, or anybody else, to collect an account at Highcliffe! Mr. Lodgey was, in fact, as puzzled and mystified by the whole occurrence as Pon was!

Mystified as he was, Pon was relieved. And it was another relief to him to find that the Famous Five of Greyfriars were no longer on the war-path! The dandy of Highcliffe had been made to sit up for his sins, and they left it at that—quite satisfied with the way in which Wibley had succeeded in punishing Pon!

THE END.

(Extra-special yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. for next week: "LODGEY'S UNLUCKY DAY!" Don't miss it!)

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BIRCHEMALL GETS THE SACK!

Amazing Developments in This Week's Instalment of "MUTINY AMONG THE MASTERS!"

By DICKY NUGENT

At the moment, when Sir Frederick Funguss made his unexpected appearance in the Fourth Form Room, Doctor Birchmall was sitting in his study, gloating gleefully over the success of his skem to run St. Sam's with a staff of blackleg masters. "Ho, ho, ho!" he was chuckling to himself. "The strike is all over now bar shouting—and all the shouting is being done by the boys at the present moment! Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Head larked with glee, as he heard the aggrivated yells of the blacklegs' yung vik-tims.

"I bet the masters are kicking themselves now for going on strike!" he chortled, as he wiped the tears of merriment from his eyes. "Before long I shall have them going down on their hands and knees and begging me to take them back! Ho, ho, ho! He, he, he!"

But the Head's joy was short-lived. Even as he spoke, a sound fell on his ears that made the lark die on his lips. It was a yell of pain and rage—and the voice this time was not the voice of some junior, writhing

under the cane of a blackleg master! Instead, it was the voice of one of the blacklegs themselves!

"Yaroooo! Help! Lemme alone! Ow-ow-ow!"

"Mr. Caddish!" gasped Doctor Birchmall.

His eyes almost belling out of their sockets, the Head jumped to his feet. Seeing his birch, he bounded to the door.

"By hokey!" he muttered, as he galloped along the passidge leading to the Fourth Form Room. "If those reckless yung raskals are assaulting my chief strike-breaker, they shall pay dearly for it!"

Blissfully unaware of the fact that the Chairman of the St. Sam's Board of Guvvornors had already arrived on the scene, Doctor Birchmall rushed into the Fourth Form Room and started lashing away with his birch at the first object he met.

Unforehunitly, the first object he met was Sir Frederick Funguss!

The Chairman of the St. Sam's guvvernors leaped into the air, yelling feendishly, as the birch started dusting his trowsis.



The GREYFRIARS HERALD

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UNCENSORED LETTERS

No. 4. From TOM REDWING

Dear Dad.—It was fine to get your letter from the Canary Islands. As Buenos Ayres is your next port of call, I am sending a short reply there by air mail in the hope that you will find it waiting for you on your arrival.

Gee, dad! I can tell you I felt pretty envious of you when I read your account of the voyage. You were brief enough about it, but I could fill in the blanks all right, and it brought the smell and swell of the sea to me just as if I had been temporarily whisked across to where you were when you wrote me.

Still, although the sea takes first place in my heart, there's plenty at Greyfriars to keep me happy and interested, too. I am working hard in the hope of finishing somewhere near the top of the Form in the exams. And I'm not neglecting sport, either; I won a good race in the school swimming gala and scored 28 not out in the cricket match against the Shell last week.

Smithy has been on his best behaviour lately. He tries my patience pretty severely at times, as you know; but he's a great pal when you get down to brass tacks, and I know he'd do anything for me.

I will write more fully later and post the letter to the Canaries so that you will get it on your return.

Here's wishing you a jolly good trip, dad! Your affectionate son, TOM.

P.S. Don't bring me back a parrot, dad; I shall get the bird if you do!



Oh, gad! Yarooooo!"

Sir Frederick's refined and culchered voice properly brought the Head back to earth. A shudder of sheer horror ran through him, as he recognised his viktim, and he blinked in amazement to see Mr. Caddish

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take!" wined the Head. "I—I thought it was Mr. Lickham!"

The Chairman of the Guvvornors glared fiercely at the trembling Head through his gleaming monocle.

"Hah! So you thought it was Mr. Lickham, eh?" he barked. "Perhaps I can explain to you what was happening here when you walked in!"

The chairman of the St. Sam's guvvernors mopped his heated brow and snorted.

"Grate gad! An' this is the vile condition to which this famous old school has been reduced! Birchmall! You have heard what this intelligent yung fellah says. Is it true or untrue?"

Beads of perspiration streamed off the Head's face.

"P-p-please, Sir Frederick, it's—it's true!"

Sir Frederick pointed dramatically to the door.

"Then in that case, Birchmall, you're fired—sacked! You are unworthy to remain headmastah another day! Go—and never let your shadow darken these portals again!"

Amid a death-like silence, the Head turned slowly on his heel. A strangled moan escaped him, and he berried his face in his hands. Then he stumbled blindly out of the Form-room into the hard, unsimperthetic world beyond.

Or, at least, that was where everybody thought he had gone. In reality, Doctor Birchmall went no further than the passidge outside. There he remained, to listen in to what happened through the key-hole in the door. And a crafty, cunning look came into his face, as he heard Sir Frederick's next words.

"Affah this," the chairman of the guvvernors said, "the first thing we must do is to find a new headmastah. Somehow or other I am goin' to find a really rippin' one to take the place of that raskal Birchmall."

"What about me?" spoke up Mr. Lickham.

"Me, too!" cried Mr. Justies. "I'd make a jolly good headmaster!"

"I'm the bloke for the job, guv'nor!" yelled Mr. Caddish, above the clamour of eager voices.

"Tell these coves to untie me and I'll sign up!"

A deffening chorus of

appeals from the masters started ringing out. But Sir Frederick Funguss silenced them with a hawty gesture.

"Really, gentlemen, I must confess I am surprised at you having the sawce task for the job affah what has happened," he cried. "How-cvah, I will all have your choice. Before I tell you how, are you strikers all willin' to return to work on your original salaries?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Good. Then I have much pleasah in restorin' the cuts."

"Hokey!"

"Good old Sir Frederick!"

Sir Frederick smiled feintly.

"An' now for the new headmastah!" he cried. "Think it ovah, I have come to the conclusion that the best way to find the most suitable candidat is to hold a competition—a competition open to all comers."

"What sort of a competition do you mean, sir?" queried Mr. Lickham.

"A crossword contest, of something?"

"No, I mean a competition designed to test the brain and strength and curridge of the competitors," answered Sir Frederick. "In my opinion, a headmastah needs strength and curridge as well as branes. Very well, then. My competition will aim at finding out which of the applicants has the most branes and strength and curridge. That man—whoevah he is—will be the next headmastah of St. Sam's!"

"My hat!"

"I will call a meetin' of the guvvernors at once and particulars will be advertised latak," went on Sir Frederick.

"Meantime, Lickham, kindly espy on as headmastah, temporarily. An' see that these fellahs Birchmall engaged are paid an' sent about their business."

"With pleasah, Sir Frederick!" grinned Mr. Lickham.

The chairman of the guvvernors then stalked out, leaving the Form-room in a buzz.

Doctor Birchmall,

hiding behind a handy screen, watched him go.

"So that's how he's going to choose the next Head, is it?" he muttered to himself, as Sir Frederick vanished out of the School House. "Branes, strength and curridge! It's the chance of a lifetime for me to win back my job—and if I don't do it, I'll eat my hat!"

And the Head went back to his house, chuckling into his heard quite cheerfully!

(Birchy gets busy on his great task in next week's instalment. Don't miss it!—Ed.)

LAST WEEK AT GREYFRIARS

Bunter appeared in class with a deadly white complexion and asked to be excused lessons because he felt faint. Mr. Quelch replied unsympathetically by dusting his trousers—after having removed the powdered chalk from his face.

The First Eleven game against St. Jim's was held up for five minutes by a bullock which strayed in through a side gate and decided to make Big Side its grazing ground.

Wharton and Marjorie

Hazeldene won the Junior Mixed Doubles Tennis Championship against Bob Cherry and Clara Trevlyn.

A Winchester repeater accidentally went off when Mr. Prout was cleaning it. Fortunately the only damage was to Mr. Prout's study window—apart from the nerves of Mr. Prout's nearest neighbours!

Somebody aimed a brick at Mrs. Mimble's shop window and knocked down the price of her cakes. Not for long! though!

FAG-BAITERS FEAR WHEN INSPECTORS APPEAR!

Says DICK RUSSELL

If you're in the habit of bullying kids, keep a sharp eye open for chaps wearing a badge bearing the mystical letters "S. P. C. F."

Carry on bullying when one of these snoopers appears and, believe us, you're in for a pretty rough time!

The badge, you see, means that the wearer is an inspector of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Fags. And anyone who doubts the zeal and efficiency of the society's inspectors should do as I did this week and trot round with one of them on his round. It's an eye-opener!

Tom Brown was the inspector who kindly allowed me to accompany him.

"Come with pleasure," he said. "Of course, there may be nothing for you to see. We Cruelty Inspectors have our slack times, you know, as well as our busy times. Sometimes there's quite a slump. But trade always revives again in the end."

I didn't have a chance to ask Brown whether this was a slack day or the opposite. If it was slack, all I can say is, I'm sorry for the S.P.C.F. inspector when he's busy!

The first place we visited was the fags' sports ground, and Brown found a "case" there right away. Walker of the Sixth had been deputed to coach some kids in cricket, and his method of coaching

was to give them vicious back-handers on the ear every time they failed to do exactly what he told them. Brown watched for a couple of minutes, then stepped forward.

"Better lay off that stuff, Walker," he said, briskly. "The youngsters are doing their best; and even if they're not, you've no right to use them as punchballs."

Walker looked round with a glare.

"Looking for a lick-ing, Brown?" he snapped. "You can have one and welcome if you like. But perhaps you'd rather buzz?"

"Sorry, old sport; can't be done," replied Tom Brown. "I happen to be on duty, anyway. Haven't you noticed my badge?"

Walker growled.

"So that's it, is it? You're one of these so-called inspectors of this idiotic so-called society of yours. Well, I'll soon show you what I think of it!"

With these words, Walker made a bull-like rush at Brown. Brown dodged, drew out a whistle from his pocket, and blew a shrill blast on it.

Almost instantly, it seemed, two other inspectors appeared—Squiff and Bulstrode. They went to their colleagues' aid at the double, and between

the three of them they managed to get Walker down and roll most of the cricket-pitch with him.

"I fancy Walker won't feel much like bullying those kids again this afternoon," remarked Brown, cheerfully, as he left his helpers and resumed his patrol. "Just as well I turned up when I did."

"But won't there be an unearthly row about it later?" I asked. "Dash it all, Walker's a Sixth man and you're only a Remove chap."

"Oh, that's all right," grinned Brown. "I dare say I'd get into a spot of trouble



if he reported me. But our customers don't do much reporting. As a rule they're liable to do themselves more harm than us; so they keep mum."

Cries for help from the direction of the tuckshop put a stop to Brown's remarks. We broke into a run and arrived at the shop just in time to catch Bolsover major flattening out Bunter minor's face into a plate of jam-tarts

on a marble-topped table, while at the same time he squirted the contents of a soda-water siphon down the kid's neck.

Brown fairly swooped on Bolsover—rather unskillfully for me, for Bolsy promptly swung round and accidentally turned the jet full on my face!

"Caught in the act, Bolsover!" said Brown, grimly. "As you're a Remove man you'll have to appear before the Remove Court to-morrow—charged with cruelty to a fag!"

"And what about his cruelty to me?" demanded Bolsover, excitedly. "Taking the last crumb of tuck out of my study and leaving me to starve!"

"Extenuating circumstances can be brought to the notice of the judge when you make your defence," said Brown severely. "You shouldn't take the law into your own hands, Bolsy. See that you turn up at the Court after morning classes. You can cut, kid!"

Bunter minor "cut," and Bolsover major scowled and ordered a ginger-pop. And Brown continued on his beat.

Well, those two incidents happened in the space of five minutes. During the next ten minutes, Brown stopped Hilton of the Fifth from kicking Gatty, mopped up the ground with Aubrey Angel for twisting Myers' ears, and presented Skinner with a Remove Court summons for dropping an ice-cream down Bolter's neck. After that, I went and had a rest.

The S.P.C.F. certainly is doing its stuff if the rest of its inspectors are anything like Brown!

YOUR EDITOR CALLING

Anybody looking for a job as chucker-out in a busy editorial office? After spending twenty minutes trying vainly to get rid of callers and begin my chat, I have come to the conclusion that a chucker-out is the only solution to the problem!

You might think that at this time of the year, with the cricket field and river calling and the sun shining merrily, literary aspirants would be at a discount. Take my word for it, chums, they are not! The moment I sit down to work on the "Herald," budding authors, reporters, poets and artists seem to descend on me in a cloud!

I used to lock the door against them at one time; but the lock was broken by would-be contributors on so many

occasions that I gave it up. Then our Fighting Editor, Bob Cherry, took to standing on guard outside in the passage. Gate-crashers stayed away then, and Bob tired of the inactivity, gave it up. After which, my budding contributors returned with a rush!

So now I am back to where I started; and in the twenty minutes before I got down to this editorial, to give you an idea of my difficulties, I had the following callers:

1. Horace Coker, offering to take over the editorship.
2. Temple of the Fourth, trying to get me to print a column of society gossip.
3. Tubbs of the Third, reading aloud the first instalment of a blood-thirsty pirate serial he

has written "specially for the 'Greyfriars Herald.'"

4. Bolsover major, showing me "strong man" photographs of himself which he considers ought to be reproduced in our columns in place of the existing illustrations.
5. Ogilvy, Morgan, and Stott, all offering their services as reporters—at specified salaries.
6. Hoskins of the Shell with a long poem—which he proudly told me had been rejected by one of the leading London papers!

Pretty good going for a warm summer's afternoon, what?

If anybody would like that job as chucker-out, let him trot along at the earliest possible moment. I shall welcome him with open arms.

Meet you again next week, chums!

HARRY WHARTON.