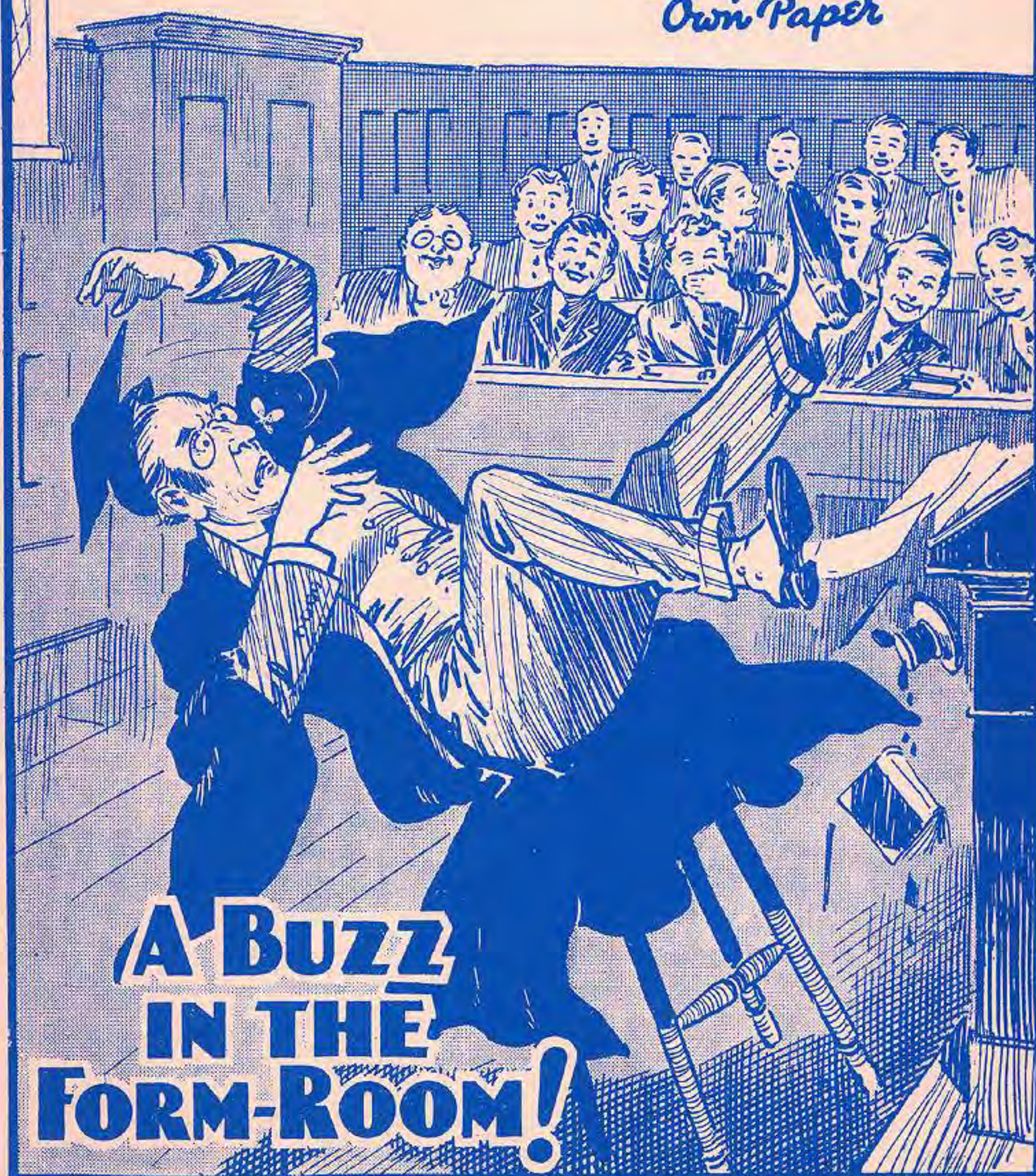


ANOTHER GREAT GREYFRIARS SCHOOL YARN BY FAMOUS FRANK RICHARDS!

The Magnet ^{2^d}

*Billy Bunter's
Own Paper*



**A BUZZ
IN THE
FORM-ROOM!**

THE GREAT 'ARMAMENTS' RACE

5 More Bikes to be Won

2000 Other Tip-Top Prizes

FREE! FOR COLLECTING 'ARMAMENTS' STAMPS / FREE!

GO on collecting all the "Armaments" Stamps you can—it's well worth your while! There are still Five More "Hercules" Bikes and at least 2,000 of the other grand prizes to be given away in the July contest which will finish next week—for collecting the stamps MAGNET is giving. 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 sixteen more stamps on this page! 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." And here's—

★ **A GOOD CHANCE!** This week's GEM contains **FOUR BONUS TANK STAMPS** in addition to sixteen others—making twenty in all.

Hurry up and collect all the stamps you can, because next week we shall be asking you how many of one or more kinds of stamps you have collected. 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. The rules governing the contest have already appeared and will be repeated next week, too.

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.

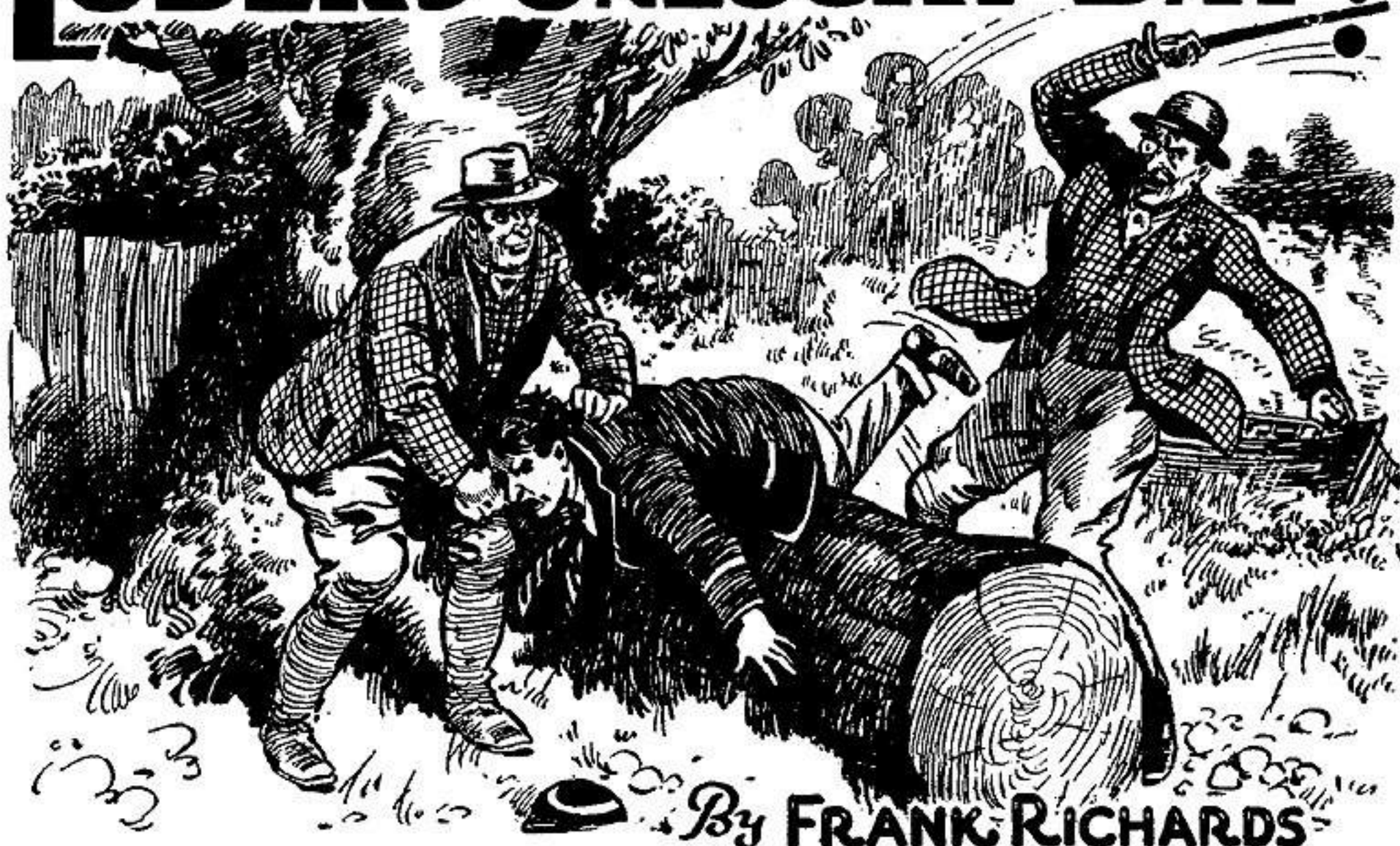
(N.B.—You can also collect or swap "Armaments" Stamps with readers of—"Boy's Cinema," "Triumph," "Champion," "Gem," "Sports Budget," "Modern Boy," "Detective Weekly," and "Thriller"—stamps can be cut from all these papers, but no reader may win more than one first prize or share, of course.)

**16 MORE
STAMPS TO
SAVE!**



POPPER'S ISLAND IS OUT OF BOUNDS to everyone at Greyfriars. But Gerald Loder, the rascally prefect of Greyfriars, overlooks the fact that in trying to catch his enemies trespassing thereon, he is out of bounds himself!

LODER'S UNLUCKY DAY!



Whack, whack, whack, whack! The stick fairly rang on Loder's trousers. "Yarooooooop!" he yelled. He had planned the licking for the Famous Five, instead of which he was getting it himself!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Buzz!

B UZZZ-ZZZZ!

It was hot!

The windows of the Remove Form Room at Greyfriars stood wide open, to let in what air there was.

There did not seem to be much, on that sultry July afternoon.

Nobody in the Greyfriars Remove, at the moment, was enjoying life—not even Bob Cherry.

Latin prose had never seemed so prosy.

Even Mr. Quelch, sitting at his desk with a gimlet-eye on his class, perhaps wished it was over.

So when the wasp sailed in at the open window, buzzing, there was a general stir of relief. It broke the monotony.

Latin prose was the lesson. Every fellow had a page of English before him, that he had to turn into Latin—under his Form-master's eye! Hardly a fellow was putting in good work. Billy Bunter was turning his page into a variety of Latin that would have made Quintilian stare and gasp! Lord Mauleverer was quietly dozing. Other fellows suppressed yawns—or did not suppress them! Many eyes turned on the Form-room clock! Seldom or never had the minute hand seemed to crawl so slowly. And then the buzzing wasp sailed in.

Buzzzzz!

Mr. Quelch made a gesture of annoyance. But the Remove fellows welcomed the arrival. No fellow could be expected to glue his attention to Latin

prose with a wasp buzzing about his ears.

"Ow!" roared Billy Bunter suddenly. Skinner had reached over and poked a fat ear with the tip of a pen-nib! That was enough for Bunter! He roared and jumped.

"Bunter!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Wow! I'm stung!" roared Bunter, clapping a fat hand to a fat ear. "Ow! Oh crikey! I say, you fellows, drive that wasp off! I'm stung!"

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch angrily. "The wasp is nowhere near you, Bunter. Sit down at once!"

**Exciting School-Adventure
Yarn of HARRY WHARTON
& CO., of GREYFRIARS.**

"I've got a fearful sting in the ear, sir—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Bunter, take fifty lines! Now sit down!"

"Oh crikey! Can't I go to the House-dame, sir, and get something for this awful sting?"

"Take a hundred lines, Bunter!"

"Oh lor'!"

Billy Bunter sat down again, rubbing his fat ear. Quelch looked like making it a thousand lines; and a hundred was enough for Bunter.

Buzzzzz!

Three or four fellows jumped to their feet, and waved books or papers. As the wasp was sailing along the ceiling

they were not in very great danger of getting stung. But it was a pleasant relief from sitting down.

"Sit down at once!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch sharply. "Cherry, Bull, Nugent, Vernon-Smith, Wibley—sit down at once!"

"That wasp, sir—"

"Haden't we better drive it out, sir?"

"Certainly not!" hooted Mr. Quelch.

The Remove would have been very glad to turn that lesson into a wild scramble all over the Form-room. The Remove master did not share their views—not in the very least! "Sit down! The wasp will no doubt fly away in a few moments. I command you to sit still! The wasp will—whoooooooh!"

Mr. Quelch broke off with a gasping hoot as the wasp, forsaking the ceiling, shot down and alighted on his majestic countenance.

The wasp reposed on that majestic countenance for about the billionth part of a second!

Quelch heaved backwards to escape, rather overlooking the fact that a sudden backward heave, on a high chair, was a rather dangerous performance.

Crash!

Quelch hardly knew that he was going over till he went!

The chair tilted, the Form-master lost his balance, and he landed on the floor of the Remove-room.

The wasp sailed up again. Probably it had not intended to sting Quelch. If it had, Quelch had given it no time. His retreat was prompt—perhaps too prompt! He sprawled quite dizzily on the Form-room floor, long legs whisking from a tangled gown.

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"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry.
"Man down!" murmured the Bounder.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
The Removites stared at Quelch. It was the very first time that they had seen their severe, sedate Form-master on his back, with his legs whirling in the air! It was quite a startling sight.

"Oh crikey!" gurgled Billy Bunter.
"He, he, he!"

"Oh gad!" ejaculated Lord Mauleverer, and he rushed to his Form-master's assistance.

Maully was the laziest man in the Remove, with the distinguished exception of Billy Bunter. But he was always good-natured and kind-hearted—he would exert himself on another fellow's account, if not on his own. Quelch looked as if he needed aid, and Maully rushed to render the same.

But Quelch was quickly on his feet. No doubt he was conscious of the undignified aspect he presented on the floor. He bounded up almost like an indiarubber ball.

He was rather damaged. No middle-aged gentleman could bang on hard old oak planks without getting a trifle damaged. He was red. He was breathless, and he was fearfully annoyed. His feelings towards the wasp were bitter.

"Mauleverer! What are you doing out of your place?" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Oh gad! I—" gasped his lordship.
"I will not allow this—this incident to be made the excuse for disorder in the Form-room! Take a hundred lines, Mauleverer!"

"Oh! Certainly, sir! But I—"

"Leave the wasp alone! I will deal with it! I repeat that I will not allow it to be made an excuse for disorder! Go back to your place at once!"

"But I—"

"Another word, Mauleverer, and I shall cane you!"
Lord Mauleverer went back to his place, without another word! Quelch was getting dangerous! Other fellows were rather glad that they had not been so prompt to rush to Quelch's assistance!

"Order!" rapped Mr. Quelch. "Keep your places! I will drive the wasp away! I command you to keep your places!"

Unwillingly the Remove did so. This was just like Quelch—there never was any chance of a happy "rag" in his Form-room. Chasing that wasp would have made a merry interlude. Any fellow in the Remove would rather have chased a wasp than translated English into Latin. But there was nothing doing! In the Fourth Form Room, with Mr. Capper, the fellows would have been all over the place, enjoying life. But it was different with Quelch! Quelch ruled in the Remove room with a rod of iron.

"Beast!" murmured Billy Bunter.
"I hope it'll sting him!"

"Did you speak, Bunter?"

"Oh crikey! No, sir! I only said that—"

"Take two hundred lines, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his big spectacles! At that moment he would have given the postal order he was expecting to see that wasp land on Quelch!

Mr. Quelch picked up a volume from his desk and brandished it at the wasp.

"Shooo!" he ejaculated.

Buzzzzzz!

"Shall I get it with this book, sir?" asked the Bounder.

He jumped up, with a Latin grammar in his hand.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,588.

"Take a hundred lines, Vernon-Smith, and sit down."

Quelch did not seem to need assistance—especially from the most hardened ragger in his Form!

Smithy sat down!

Buzzzz-zzzz!

Urged by Quelch's waving volume, the wasp sailed towards the open window, by which it had entered. Probably it did not find a stuffy Form-room to its taste, and was willing to get back to the open spaces.

Quelch followed up the retreating enemy, brandishing. The buzz faded at the window.

Vernon-Smith leaned over towards Billy Bunter, and whispered, unobserved by Quelch, whose attention was fixed on the wasp.

Bunter grinned.

"Shut up, you ass!" whispered Harry Wharton as he caught the words that the Bounder dropped into a fat ear.

"Chuck it!" whispered Bob Cherry.
"Quelch is a bit too dangerous for ventriloquial stunts."

Billy Bunter gave a fat little cough.

Several fellows glanced round at him as he did that. They knew the signs when the Remove ventriloquist was just going to begin. Several fellows gave him warning looks. But warning looks were wasted on Bunter.

Bunter, who could do nothing else, could do ventriloquism in the most remarkable way, and he was always keen to show off his wonderful powers. And this, really, was an opportunity not to be lost.

Mr. Quelch turned back from the window.

"It is gone," he said. "Now—"

Buzz!

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Swatting The Wasp!

BUZZ, buzz, buzz!

Exactly where that buzzing came from, it would have been difficult to say. Certainly it did not seem to proceed from Billy Bunter. But it was within the Form-room—there was no doubt about that. And it was so exactly like the buzzing of the genuine wasp, that the keenest ear could not have told the difference.

Mr. Quelch whirled round to the window, with the impression that the yellow insect was whizzing in again. But he failed to spot it.

Buzz!

That was just behind him, and he whirled round again. The buzz faded across the Form-room, dying away in the most life-like manner.

How an ass like Bunter could do these things was rather a mystery to the Remove fellows. Obviously it could not have required brains.

Buzzzz! floated round the Form-room, and Mr. Quelch, volume in hand, with set lips, followed it.

He was going to deal with that wasp. He would have been satisfied, in the first place, with driving it out of the window. Now he was going to smash it.

But he had, of course, to spot it first. Spotting it was not easy. It was, indeed, extremely difficult to spot a wasp that had no actual existence.

The buzzing led him up the Form-room, and round his desk. Then, it seemed to Quelch, the buzz proceeded from the wastepaper-basket under the desk. He bent, with gleaming eyes.

Buzz!

Bang!

Quelch smote with the book. The wastepaper-basket rocked, rolled, and shed its contents. Among the shreds and patches that were spilled, Quelch's gleaming eyes sought the wasp—in vain!

But the buzz was, for the moment, silent. That looked as if that tremendous bang had done the trick.

Breathing hard, Quelch set up the wastepaper-basket again, gave a last glance round for a disabled wasp to set a foot on, failed to spot one, and resumed his seat on his high chair.

Buzzzz!

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, as the buzz started again, close by his head, so far as his ears could judge. "This is—is most annoying!"

He jumped off the chair, and brandished a book.

The Removites watched him as if fascinated. Fellows who had overheard Smithy's whisper to Bunter, knew that the fat ventriloquist was at work. Other fellows were not aware of it, however, and they supposed that the wasp had got in again, though they were puzzled by its being so very audible, and yet remaining invisible. But to all the Form, Quelch's growing excitement and activity were entertaining.

"Buzzzzz!"

The buzzing floated over the class.

"Here, look out!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Here it comes!"

"Swat that wasp!" exclaimed Frank Nugent.

"Let me get at it—"

"Here it is—"

"No, there it is—"

"Keep your places!" almost shouted Mr. Quelch. "Keep your places! I will not allow disorder in the Form-room! Sit still!"

Buzzzz!

It was under the desks now, buzzing at a great rate. It was all very well for Quelch to tell the fellows to sit still; but it was really asking too much, with a wasp buzzing round their legs. A dozen fellows jumped out of their places. Some of them supposed it to be a real wasp. Some didn't. But they all jumped.

Bang!

Herbert Vernon-Smith brought down a Latin grammar with a terrific crash on his desk.

"Got it!" he shouted.

"Vernon-Smith—"

"It was quite close to me, sir," said the Bounder; which was quite true, for the Remove ventriloquist was quite near at hand.

"If you have destroyed it, Vernon-Smith—"

Buzzzz!

"Must have missed it, sir. I will see—"

"Keep your place!"

"There it goes!" exclaimed Skinner, and he hurled a book.

The book landed on the back of Lord Mauleverer's head—perhaps by accident, though more likely not.

His lordship uttered a howl, and bounded. His hand went to the back of his head.

"Oh, gad! What the dooce—"

"Mauleverer, be silent! Skinner, take a hundred lines—"

"I was trying to get that wasp, sir," said Skinner, in an injured tone. "I was afraid it would sting Mauleverer, sir. I knocked it off only just in time. It was sticking in his back hair, sir."

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Harry Wharton. As he knew, and Skinner knew, that there was no wasp, this surprised him.

"I say, thanks, old man!" gasped Lord Mauleverer, rubbing his head. "But don't knock it off again. I'd rather chance a sting. Ow!"

"I thought you wouldn't like a fellow to be stung, sir," said Skinner, in the same tone of injured innocence.

"Oh, very well! You need not do the lines, if that is the case, Skinner," said Mr. Quelch. And some of the juniors gasped. It was seldom, very seldom indeed, that Quelch's leg could be pulled, but Skinner had got by with it this time. "But do not throw books about. Sit still. I think the wasp is now gone."

Buzzzz!

Mr. Quelch jumped. The buzz was at his feet, or appeared so, and then under his scholastic gown. Buzzzz! Yes, there was no doubt about it. He could not disbelieve his ears, and his ears told him that the wasp was tangled under his gown.

"Oh!" gasped Mr. Quelch. He dragged up his gown with both hands, shaking it violently to shake the wasp out.

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

They could not help it. Quelch, jumping and shaking out a billowing gown, was really too funny.

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

And the buzz ceased. The fat ventriloquist could not cackle and ventriloquise at the same time.

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Quelch breathlessly, as he let the billowing folds of his gown fall into place again.

"Be silent! Boys—"

Buzzzz!

"Boys, sit still! Remove your papers! Take no notice of the wasp, and no doubt it will fly away in a few moments—"

Buzzzzzz!

Mr. Quelch whirled round like a humming-top at a deep and threatening buzz just behind his head.

The Bouncer jumped up again.

"On your gown, sir—just behind. Shall I get it?"

"Oh, please do, Vernon-Smith!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

Bang!

"Yaroooh!" roared the Remove master. "Vernon-Smith, how dare you! I say, how dare you strike me with that book—"

"Eh? You asked me to get the wasp, sir!" said the Bouncer, staring. "I couldn't take it in my fingers, sir! 'Tain't safe!"

Mr. Quelch gasped.

"Very well, if you have destroyed it," he said, suppressing his feelings. "But—"

Buzzzz! Buzzzz! Buzzzz!

"You have not destroyed it, Vernon-Smith. I doubt whether you saw the wasp on my gown at all. Sit down! If you stir again, I shall cane you! I will cane the next boy who leaves his place! Leave the wasp to me!"

Mr. Quelch made a dive at his desk, and grabbed up a cane. Then he glared round for that troublesome wasp. One swipe from the cane—if it landed—would have finished any wasp. But that wasp was uncommonly difficult to swipe.

Buzzzzzz!

The buzz trailed off across the Form-room, and Mr. Quelch followed it with gleaming eyes and uplifted cane. The juniors choked down their merriment as they watched him.

Buzzzz!

The buzz faded away into the Form-room cupboard, of which the door had been left ajar.

Mr. Quelch, with great presence of

mind, grabbed the cupboard door, and banged it suddenly shut. That imprisoned the wasp, or at least should have done so. He latched the cupboard door.

He gasped with relief as he returned to his desk.

Buzzzz!

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, fairly goaded by that renewed buzz. "There seem to be a great many wasps about this afternoon. It cannot be the same wasp. It—"

Buzzzzzzzz!

He broke off at a buzzing behind his ear and lashed round with the cane. Apparently that scared off the wasp, for the buzzing floated away over the Form-room. Fellows jumped up as it floated over the class.

"Keep your places!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"But that wasp, sir!"

"We don't want to be stung, sir!"

"It's just here, sir!"

"Just there, sir!"

"Look out, you men!"

"There it is!"

"There it goes!"

Mr. Quelch rushed towards the class, cane in hand. He was going to swat that wasp—he was going to have done with it. He swept among the desks.

"Where is it?" he panted. "Point it out to me!"

"Here, sir!"

"There, sir!"

"Just buzzing round Wibley, sir!"

"No; there it is on Bunter!"

"There it goes!"

"Here it comes!"

"It's on your mortar-board, sir!"

"Just behind your ear, sir!"

"Mind it doesn't sting you, sir!"

Mr. Quelch lashed round with the cane. He had no desire whatever to be stung by a wasp! He swiped round, perhaps rather hastily. There was a fiendish howl in the Form-room as the cane caught a fat ear.

"Yarooooooh!"

Billy Bunter bounded as if he had been electrified.

He bounded, he leaped, he roared, and he yelled. He clapped a fat hand to a fat ear and woke all the echoes. By a singular coincidence the buzzing ceased at the same moment!

"Ow! Yow! Yaroooh!" yelled Bunter. "Wharrer you hitting me for? Yoo-hoop! Oh! My ear! Wow! Oh crikey! Yarooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Goodness gracious!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "Bunter—"

"Yoo-hoo-hooooop!"

"Do not make that absurd noise, Bunter!"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Be silent!"

"Oh crumbs! Oh crikey! My ear!"

"Silence! Sit down, all of you! The wasp appears to be gone!" said Mr. Quelch. "Bunter, be silent!"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

Mr. Quelch returned to his desk. He was right—the wasp was gone! The fat ventriloquist was in no state to put up any more ventriloquism. He was rubbing a fat ear in deep anguish.

During the remainder of that lesson mumbles and moans were heard from Billy Bunter—but there was no more buzzing!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Loder Gets The Laugh!

GERALD LODER of the Sixth Form frowned.

He frowned at the door of the Rag.

That door was closed, but the thick

oak did not shut off the sounds of merriment that proceeded from the junior room.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a roar.

"Go it, Wib!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The cheery sound of boyish laughter might have pleased some ears, but it did not seem to please Loder's.

Loder of the Sixth was in a disgruntled state.

The end of the term was near at hand. Most fellows were looking forward to the summer holidays. On that particular evening there was rather a celebration going on in the Rag. William Wibley of the Remove was doing some of his "impersonations."

Wibley did that kind of thing well. He could always get an audience when he gave a show. On this occasion he had an unusually distinguished audience—no less a person than his Form-master having graciously consented to take a seat in the Rag for a time to witness the entertainment.

The sounds of merriment from the Rag indicated that Wib's audience were enjoying the show, and Loder, if he had liked, might have stepped in and enjoyed it also. But he was, as already stated, in a disgruntled state.

He had had trouble that term with the Famous Five of the Remove. He had not had the best of that trouble. He did not want the term to end without those young rascals having received what, in Loder's opinion, they deserved. He would have been very pleased to whop Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull, Bob Cherry, and Hurrea Jamset Ram Singh one after another. But even Loder had to have some excuse, and now, as he listened to the uproar from the Rag, he considered whether that might be made the excuse he needed.

He knew that the juniors had some end-of-the-term show on, and that there was a large audience in the Rag, though he did not know that a very distinguished member was included in that audience. There was undoubtedly a good deal of noise coming from the Rag. It was a prefect's right, and, indeed, duty, to keep noise within reasonable limits.

Loder considered the matter for a time, frowning at the door of the Rag. Undoubtedly there was a lot of noise!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Old Wib's a corker!"

"Go it, old man!"

Wibley, as a quick-change artist, was popular. Having appeared in one character, he needed only to pop behind a screen for a minute to reappear in another. He was keeping his audience in a roar.

Loder decided that there was noise enough to justify interference. He did not really need a lot of justification: what he was set upon was interference!

If he barged in and stopped the show, on the excuse of too much noise, some of the young sweeps would probably be cheeky! Then the ashplant would come into play! That was what Loder wanted!

So, having made up his mind, the bully of the Sixth turned the door-handle, opened the door, and looked in.

Nobody in the Rag heeded him. All eyes were fixed on the portion of the room marked off as a stage. There William Wibley was going through his stunts.

Loder stared at him.

He hardly recognised Wibley. Wib was at the moment got up in his outfit of Bill the Bookie, giving a masterly imitation of a bookmaker. Having finished that turn, Wib vanished behind

the screen, and almost immediately reappeared in the guise of a remarkably fat schoolboy in spectacles—eliciting a roar from his audience as well as a squeak of protest from one member thereof!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter to the life!"

"The genuine Owl!"

"I say, you fellows, if you think that silly ass looks anything like me, you're jolly well mistaken! Why, he's fat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder pushed in. That roar of laughter was really Homeric; he had all the excuse he wanted. He strode into the Rag, with a stern brow. He made a warning gesture to Wibley.

"Now then, stop that! Less noise here! If you young sweeps can't keep quiet go to your studies! Do you fancy that you can turn the school into a bear-garden! Wibley, take that rubbish off at once, and go to your study."

"What!" yelled Wibley indignantly. "Look here, Loder—"

"Don't answer me! Do as I tell you! You can be heard all over the school, making this row! Disgraceful! Stop it at once!" snapped Loder.

"Look here, Loder—" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Silence! Another word of impudence from you, Wharton, and I'll give you six! Now then, get out, the lot of you!"

The numerous audience gazed at Loder of the Sixth. Evidently he did not know that a Form-master was present!

Mr. Quelch, seated in a deep armchair, was looking on at the entertainment with a kindly, smiling face. But that kindly smile left his countenance now.

"Out with you—the whole crew!" exclaimed Loder in his most bullying tone. "Every noisy sweep here!"

"Does that apply to me, Loder?" asked an icy voice.

"Eh?" Loder jumped. "Wha-a-t?"

A tall and angular figure rose from an armchair. A grim face, with a pair of glinting, gimlet-eyes dawned on the startled prefect.

Loder stared at it. He blinked at it. He fairly gaped at it. Never had the bully of the Sixth been so utterly taken aback.

"Oh!" Loder gasped. "I—I didn't see you, sir! I—I never knew you were here! I—I—I—"

"I presume not, Loder," said the Remove master icily. "I certainly presume not! I regard your interference here, Loder, as utterly uncalled-for. If the juniors were making too much noise, Loder, I should tell them so. I see no harm, Loder, in innocent hilarity. If you do, Loder, I can only say that you are not a suitable senior to exercise the authority of a prefect, and I shall certainly acquaint the headmaster with my opinion."

Loder gurgled.

"Oh, sorry, sir! I—I didn't see! I—I never knew! I—I—I—" he gasped helplessly. "If—if you think, sir—I mean, if you approve—"

"I should not be present, Loder, if I did not. Kindly leave this room, Loder, and shut the door after you!" snapped Mr. Quelch.

"Oh! Ah! Yes, certainly!"

Loder almost tottered to the door. His face was scarlet with rage and confusion. He was anxious to get away from a sea of grinning faces as quickly as he could. Never had Loder of the Sixth put his foot in it so disastrously. He tottered through the doorway, and shut the door after him, gasping.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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It was a yell from the Rag. But it was not Wibley's imitation of Bunter that made the juniors yell; it was Loder's crimson and confused face as he disappeared. Loder gritted his teeth as he heard it, and tramped away to his study in the worst temper ever.

Mr. Quelch sat down again. He resumed his kindly smile. Wib's entertainment went on, cheered to the echo. But good as Wib's entertainment was, the Remove fellows agreed that Loder's "turn" had been a real shriek. Long after they had finished laughing at Wibley, they were still laughing at Loder.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Mauly's Island!

"MAULY, old chap—"

"Oh dear!" sighed Lord Mauleverer.

Billy Bunter blinked at him in surprise.

"I say, what's the matter, Mauly?" he asked. "You were looking quite bright a moment ago—when I came along; now you're looking like a funeral! What's the matter?"

"You!"

"Oh, really, Mauly"—Billy Bunter gave his lordship a reproachful blink through his big spectacles—"if that's what you call civil, when a fellow comes up to your study to speak to you—I say, what are you looking at that map for?"

Bunter blinked at a large map of the Pacific Ocean that was spread out on the table in Study No. 12.

As it was tea-time, Bunter had hoped to see something much more attractive than a map spread out on the study table.

"Kalua-alua-lalua!" answered Lord Mauleverer.

Bunter jumped.

"Eh!" he ejaculated. "What?"

"Kalua-alua-lalua!"

"Wharrer you mean, you silly ass?" hooted Bunter. "Trying to pull my leg, or what? What do you mean by Kally-wally-what-do-you-call-it?"

"That's what I'm lookin' for, old fat bean," answered Mauleverer. "It's an island in the jolly old Pacific."

"Well, of all the silly idiots! We have to do maps in geography, but—well, of all the fatheaded asses!" gasped Bunter.

It looked to Bunter as if Mauleverer was doing some work in the geographical line that he need not have done. A fellow who did any work when he hadn't to was a surprising mystery to Bunter. The fat Owl of the Remove found it hard enough to work when he had to.

"Run away and play, old man!" suggested Lord Mauleverer, turning his noble eyes on the map again.

"Oh, I'll help you!" said Bunter. "I suppose you're going to have tea when you've done with that silly map?"

"Yaas."

"Well, look here, why not leave it till after tea? Or why not chuck it altogether?" suggested Bunter brightly. "I'll help you get tea instead. Look here, Mauly, don't waste your time on that rot! It's bad enough in class! Never mind Kooly-wooly-thingummy, old chap!"

"But I do mind," explained Lord Mauleverer. "It's frightfully interestin', Bunter. It's in latitude something or other, and longitude something else—about a thousand miles from Sydney, I believe. I'm jolly well goin' to trail it down. Know where Sydney is?"

"In his study, if you mean Snoop—"

"Wha-at?"

"Sidney Snoop is the only Sidney I know at Greyfriars," said Bunter, blinking at him. "I say, are you getting pally with Snoop, Mauly?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Lord Mauleverer.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! Calling him Sidney—"

"Sydney's in Australia, fathead!" chuckled Lord Mauleverer.

"Rot! He's in his study!"

"I mean Sydney—there's a big city in Australia called Sydney!" gasped his lordship.

"Is there?" asked Bunter. "Oh, I dare say there is! In fact, I believe I've heard of it, now you mention it. I'm pretty good at geography."

"It's celebrated for somethin'," said Lord Mauleverer. "I fancy it's a harbour or somethin', or a bridge or somethin' else. See if you can spot Sydney on the map—"

"Is that it?"

Bunter jabbed with a fat thumb.

"That's Singapore—"

"Well, that, then?"

"That's Hong Kong," grinned Lord Mauleverer. "Oh, here it is! Here's Sydney. Now, about a thousand miles, I think—or was it a hundred? Can't have been a million. The Pacific Ocean seems rather a big spot, even on a map. See a letter about anywhere, Bunter? It's nunky's letter. I laid it down somewhere."

Billy Bunter was short-sighted, but not too short-sighted to spot a letter, especially another fellow's letter. Bunter had a great interest in other fellows' letters. He picked it up from the ottoman under the window.

"Here it is, Mauly! I'll look it out for you, if you like."

Bunter ran his eyes and his spectacles over the letter. His eyes almost popped through his spectacles as he read:

"My dear Herbert,—I think it a most excellent idea for you to undertake a trip to Kalua-alua-lalua during the holidays. I am very glad you like the idea. It will be much to your advantage to make personal acquaintance with your own property. I will make every arrangement for the journey, and no doubt you would like to take a party of your school friends—"

That was as far as Bunter got. Lord Mauleverer jerked the letter from his hand. He had requested Bunter to look for the letter, not to read it.

"I say, Mauly, I wasn't reading that letter; only looking for what you wanted. I never saw a word! I say, does that island really belong to you?"

Lord Mauleverer grinned.

"Yaas," he answered.

"You own an island in the Pacific?" gasped Bunter.

"Yaas."

"Oh crikey! How did you get hold of it?" gasped Bunter. "I never knew you owned an island, Mauly. Why didn't you ever mention it?"

"Forgot it!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"A fellow can't remember everything, can he?" said Mauly. "I've got enough to think of at school without rememberin' dashed islands spotted about the Pacific."

Bunter blinked at him. Had Bunter owned an island, in the Pacific or elsewhere, he certainly would not have forgotten the circumstance.

But it was rather a different matter with the schoolboy millionaire. Lord Mauleverer owned—or was going to own when he came of age—so much property



"Out with you—you noisy sweeps!" roared Loder, striding angrily into the Rag. "Does that apply to me, Loder?" asked an icy voice. "Eh?" Loder jumped. "Wha-a-at?" The Sixth Former fairly gaped at the sight of Mr. Quelch. "I—I'm sorry, sir!" he gasped.

in various places that really he could not be expected to remember it all.

Mauleverer Towers, in Hampshire, was only one item; there were coal-mines in Wales, moors in Scotland, mansions in all sorts of counties, a chateau in France, and a castle in Germany, and many other things. Mauly did not know how many; and among so many, it was really not surprising that so small an item as an island in the Pacific had escaped him.

"But how did you get it, Mauly?" gasped Bunter.

"My pater bought it donkey's years ago, when he was yachtin' in those parts. Now, where the dooce—"

Mauly's eyes were searching the map for that elusive island, Kalua-alua-lua.

"And you forgot all about it?"

"Yaas."

"Then what's made you remember it?"

Lord Mauleverer did not answer that question. His eyes searched the map.

Billy Bunter blinked at him very curiously. Bunter always wanted to know! The more a matter did not concern him, the more the fat Owl wanted to know all about it.

"I say, Mauly, has anything happened to make you think of it all of a sudden these hols?" asked Bunter.

"Yaas."

"What was it, old chap?"

"Is that Toddy callin' you, Bunter?"

"Eh? No!"

"Well, look here, do you know whether Wibley's done his lines for Mossoo?"

"No!"

"Go and ask him!"

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

"Oh, here it is!" Lord Mauleverer dropped a slim forefinger on a dot marked in the vast space of ocean north

of the Fiji Islands. "Yaas, that's it! Spotted it at last!"

"You haven't answered my question, Mauly! You've got some special reason for thinking about that island now?"

"Yaas!"

"Well, what is it?" asked Bunter.

"One that I'm goin' to keep to myself, old fat bean!" answered Lord Mauleverer. "Is that Loder callin' you, Bunter?"

"No!"

"I wish it was!" sighed Lord Mauleverer.

"Look here, old chap," said Bunter, "if you're going on a trip to a Pacific Island these hols, you'll want a pal to look after you a bit! I mean to say, you know what a fool you are, old chap—"

"Oh, gad! Yaas, quite!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

"Well, I'll come!" said Bunter. "I've got a lot of invitations for the hols, but I'll turn them down for your sake, Mauly—"

"Don't! Please don't!"

"I mean it!" declared Bunter. "Count on me, Mauly! The fact is, I should rather like the trip! I'll come, old fellow!"

Lord Mauleverer looked at Billy Bunter thoughtfully. His noble brow wrinkled in deep reflection.

"It's no good," he said at last. "It was bound to come!"

"Eh? What do you mean, Mauly?" asked Bunter, in surprise. "What was bound to come, old fellow?"

"I mean, I've got through the term, so far, without kickin' you," explained Lord Mauleverer. "I was going to see if I could keep it up to the finish! But I see now that it can't be done! Turn round."

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

"Don't give me all the trouble of

slewin' you round, Bunter, when you're so jolly heavy—"

"Why, you cheeky beast!" roared Bunter. "You kick me, you beast, and I jolly well won't come with you for the hols—"

"Stick to that!" said Lord Mauleverer.

And he grabbed the fat Owl's collar, spun him round, and planted an elegant boot on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars.

There was a roar from Billy Bunter as he travelled through the doorway.

"Ow! Beast! Wow!"

Lord Mauleverer shut the door and resumed his study of the map.

There was a howl through the key-hole:

"Beast!"

It was followed by the sound of departing footsteps.

Lord Mauleverer grinned cheerily, and went on with his geographical studies, unassisted further by Billy Bunter.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER:

Wib's Way!

"GET out!" said William Wibley. Wibley did not look up as he rapped out that remark. The opening of the study door was enough for him.

Wib was busy. He was memorising lines. The Remove Dramatic Society were giving a play at the end of the term; and a Remove play was chiefly Wibley! Wib had written it—he preferred his own work to Shakespeare's, as more modern and snappy—and he had, of course, given himself a fat part.

Indeed, Wib had to speak about half the lines in that play—the other half

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being whacked out among about a dozen other characters!

This was exactly as it should be, in Wib's opinion; but, of course, it meant a lot of mugging up. He had a lot of lines to get by memory, and stacks of cues to remember. Being busy at this urgent work after class in his study, he naturally did not want to be interrupted. So he snapped when the door opened.

"Mais, vat is zat, Vibley?" exclaimed a startling voice.

"Oh!" ejaculated Wib.

He jumped up and blinked at the French master.

Monsieur Charpentier frowned at him.

"I—I didn't know it was you, sir," stammered Wibley. "I—I—"

"N'importe!" said Monsieur Charpentier. "Vibley, it is again and again zat I ask you if zose lines are written."

"Lines!" repeated Wibley vaguely. With his head stuffed with his own lines in the play, he had forgotten Mossoo's lines. Really, the president of the R. D. S. had no time to bother about French impositions.

"Where are zose lines, Vibley?" demanded Monsieur Charpentier sternly. "I tell you to bring zem to my study, and you do not come to my study, so I come viz myself to you, Vibley, and I demand vunce more, where are zose lines?"

Wibley suppressed his impatience as well as he could.

Mossoo had given him a hundred lines from the *Henriade*, days ago, for inattention in the French class. It was not really Wib's fault that he had been inattentive; a fellow could not memorise lines from a "script" held under his desk, and attend to a French master at one and the same time!

He had not done the lines! He had

had no time! Mossoo, no doubt, expected him to find time. That was the sort of thing a beak did expect!

Now Mossoo seemed to be losing patience. He had come up to Wibley's study for those French lines.

It was quite a futile visit, so far as that went. Wib could have handed him lots of lines from his play—none from the *Henriade*. He had not written a single line of his imposition so far.

"Mais repondez donc!" rapped Monsieur Charpentier. "Where are zose lines, Vibley? Zat you answer."

"The fact is, sir, I haven't had time—"

Monsieur Charpentier raised his hand.

"Assez!" he said sternly. "Enoff! I zink you shall find ze time, Vibley! Ozzervise, I take you to Meester Quelch! Venez avec moi—come viz me."

Wibley breathed hard. He did not want to be walked into Mr. Quelch's study and reported for not having done his lines for Mossoo. That meant swipes from Quelch, and the lines to follow!

"If—if you'll give me a little time, sir—" he stammered.

"But I give you ze verree mooch time!" said Monsieur Charpentier. "Vunce and vunce more, and also vunce again, I ask you for zose lines, Vibley, and now I carry myself up ze stairs to ask vun more time. Allons donc!"

"You—you see, sir—"

"I give you one more time," said Mossoo. He was a kind-hearted little man. "In one hour you shall bring zose lines to my study—and if it is not zat you do so, I come viz myself here to take you to Meester Quelch!"

"Thank you, sir!" said Wibley.

And Monsieur Charpentier, frowning, walked away down the Remove passage—giving Wib one more chance.

Wib grunted.

He intended to take advantage of that chance. He was going to do the lines. But he did not begin immediately. He picked up his script, and went on with it, leaving the French lines till a little later.

A dramatist deep in his own work was not likely to remember anything else. Wibley forgot all about Mossoo and his hundred lines.

He was deep in much more important matters, when Morgan and Micky Desmond came into the study nearly an hour later.

"Get out!" hooted Wibley. "Can't you let a fellow have a little quiet?"

"But we've come in to tay!" said Micky.

"Bother tea! Go to tea in Hall!"

"We've got sausages and ham, and a cake, look you!" said Morgan.

"Go and boil them! Gerrouit!"

Morgan and Micky grinned. Really, they were not likely to get out of their own study at tea-time, because the amateur dramatist of the Remove did not want to be interrupted by tea!

"Phwere's the froying-pan?" asked Micky.

"Blow the frying-pan!" roared Wibley. "I've got to get these lines off! First that little ass Mossoo comes and interrupts me—then you silly fatheads butt in! How's a man to stand it, I'd like to know?"

"Yis, but phwere's the froying-pan?"

"Can't you go to tea along the passage?" roared Wibley. "Can't you go down to Hall? Can't you shut up?"

"Phwere the juice is that froying-pan?"

"Here you are!" said Morgan. He disinterred the frying-pan from under a heap of books in the armchair.

"Phwere's the spirit-stove? Got any methylated? Wibley, dear man, have ye got any—"

"Oh, shut up!" roared Wibley, and he gathered his script and hurtled out of the study.

Obviously, the study was no place for a fellow memorising lines. The indignant Wib carried off his script in search of some quieter spot.

"What about tay, ye omadhaun?" shouted Micky after him. "Sure we've got sosses and ham, and an illigant cake—"

But Wibley was gone! Sosses and ham, and a cake, had no appeal for him at the moment—no more than lines from the *Henriade*.

They had, however, a strong appeal for Micky and Morgan, who were hungry after games practice. Sosses sizzled in the frying-pan over the spirit-stove in the fender, spreading a delicious scent in the study.

Micky turned out a dish of beautifully browned sausages, for which he and Morgan would willingly have given all Wibley's dramatic works, with Shakespeare's thrown in!

The two juniors sat down cheerfully to tea.

They had hardly started, when there was a footstep in the passage, a tap at the door, and it opened, to reveal the little sallow face and pointed black beard of Monsieur Charpentier.

"Vibley!" snapped Mossoo. "You come not to my study viz zose lines! Vibley, I am here to take you to Meester Quelch."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Micky. He jumped up. "Plaze come in, sorr! Do plaze come in! Faith, and we'd be so glad, sorr, if you'd take a cup of tay, sorr."

"Mais, ce Vibley—" Mossoo glanced round the study. "Zat Vibley he is not here viz himself—"

"He's hard at work with lines, sir!"



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said Morgan. This was a strictly true statement; though the "lines" on which Wibley was hard at work were not French lines, but dramatic lines.

"Vous en êtes sûr—you are sure of zat?" asked Mossoo.

"Oh, quite, sir!" said Morgan. "Wibley left the study when we came in, sir, so as not to be interrupted at those lines, sir." Morgan made that statement with great solemnity. If Mossoo supposed that he was referring to the French lines, Mossoo was welcome to suppose so.

Mossoo did suppose so!

"But zose lines, zey should be finish!" he said. "Where is zat Wibley?"

"Won't you come in, sorr?" asked Micky Desmond persuasively. "You had tay with Wharton in his study once this term, and it's sure only fair to have tay with us once, before the term-end. Don't you think so, sorr?"

Monsieur Charpentier's frown melted away.

Micky Desmond's look was persuasive, indeed entreating. The young rascal looked as if the dearest wish of his life was to have the French master to tea for once!

"Please do, sir!" said Morgan, playing up manfully. "It's only fair, sir, as you had tea with Wharton once—"

"Plaze, sorr—" pleaded Micky.

Monsieur Charpentier stepped into the study. He could not resist that respectful and hospitable appeal.

Mossoo, in fact, rather liked teeing in a fellow's study. It made him feel popular! And certainly he had never been invited so pressingly and earnestly.

Micky and Morgan, it was true, only wanted to keep him off Wibley's track. They were thinking of that howling ass Wib, who had evidently forgotten his lines again, and was in danger of being walked in to Quelch. But whatever their motive, they did earnestly desire to see Mossoo sitting peacefully at the tea-table in the study. And Mossoo came in, with a genial smile on his face, instead of a wrathful frown.

"I zank you, my good garçons!" he said. "I vill sit down and take ze cup of ze tea—"

"They're lovely sosses, sir—"

"Let me help you, sir," urged Morgan. "Get a clean plate, Micky."

"Yis, and illigant ham, sorr! And I was wondhering, sorr, if you'd tell us something about the Henriade while we have tay," said the diplomatic Micky.

It was quite a cheery tea-party in Study No. 6. Micky and Morgan looked after their guest—and Monsieur Charpentier made a very good tea, and told them about that great poem, the Henriade. He was pleased—and Micky and Morgan were pleased to be able to keep him quiet, and give that silly ass Wib another chance. So everybody was pleased, and tea was passing off quite pleasantly, when there came an interruption—an interruption that was sudden, startling, and astonishing—in fact, astounding!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Loder Sees It All!

LODER of the Sixth tapped at Mr. Quelch's door, and entered.

There was a somewhat grim expression on Loder's face. At the same time, he had a satisfied look.

Loder had been thinking! Since the scene in the Rag the previous evening, Loder had, in fact, been doing a lot of thinking! The outcome was this call at the Remove master's study.

Mr. Quelch did not seem pleased to see him. That incident in the Rag had

annoyed him. He gave Loder a sharp look of inquiry.

"What—" he asked.

"I have come here, sir, to refer to a rather serious matter," said Loder. "A boy of your Form—"

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"Kindly reflect before you speak, Loder," he said acidly. "I shall scrutinise very closely any report I receive from you regarding a boy of my Form! Your extremely high-handed actions last evening—"

"I am referring to a matter that occurred some days ago, sir, when I made a report to you of a riotous action by Remove boys—"

"I remember perfectly!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "You reported to me that a number of boys in my Form were ragging, as you called it, the French master. You made the absurd statement that they were actually chasing Monsieur Charpentier. I regarded the statement as ridiculous, and told you so."

"Yes, sir, but—"

"I told you, Loder, that I asked Monsieur Charpentier himself, and he assured me that nothing of the kind occurred—and that he had, indeed, been absent from the school at the time you fancied that you saw him being roughly handled by Remove boys!" said Mr. Quelch sternly.

"Yes, but—"

"Such an error—such a ridiculous mistake—ought never to have occurred," said Mr. Quelch. "I told you so very plainly, Loder! How you can have fancied that you saw Monsieur Charpentier among that crowd of Remove boys, when he was certainly not present, I cannot imagine! No responsible prefect would make so foolish a mistake."

Loder breathed hard.

"Will you let me speak, sir? I saw what I reported to you—and I was very greatly puzzled by Monsieur Charpentier's statement that the riot never occurred. But what I saw last night has—"

"That can have nothing to do with the matter, Loder! What do you mean, if you have any meaning at all?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch testily.

"I mean this, sir," said Loder, "that I saw that junior, Wibley, doing his theatrical stuff—making himself up as one person after another—and I've been thinking it out since, and I've jolly well guessed how I was taken in that day I thought I saw the French master being ragged—"

"Really, Loder—"

"I know I never made a mistake," said Loder. "I saw him all right! Only I know now that it was not the French master, but that young rascal got up in his theatrical outfit—"

"Wha-a-t?"

Mr. Quelch stared blankly at the prefect.

"I'd forgotten it at the time," went on Loder. "But I've remembered it since—that young rascal Wibley was in trouble last term for making himself up as the French master, and taking him off, to amuse the juniors in the Rag. I suppose you can recall that, sir."

"I recall something of the kind, Loder! But Wibley was very seriously warned never to play such a disrespectful trick again, and—"

"But he did, all the same," said Loder viciously, "and now I've thought it over, I feel jolly sure that it was that young rascal, got up as the French master, that I saw the other day with a mob of Remove boys—"

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Quelch.

"I'm certain of it, sir! I never thought of it at the time, as I'd for-

gotten what happened last term; but seeing him last night—"

"Nonsense!" repeated Mr. Quelch decisively. "It is a week since the occurrence you speak of, and this is rather late in the day, Loder, to come to me with new theories on the subject. You made a foolish mistake—"

"I did not!"

"The matter is closed, Loder."

Loder set his lips.

"I'm absolutely certain, sir, that on that occasion, that young rascal Wibley was got up as the French master—a most disrespectful action. If you will send for him—"

"I shall do nothing of the kind, Loder! I decline to revive a matter so long closed! Kindly say no more."

Loder looked at him. Then, with deep feelings, he left the Remove master's study.

In the passage he clenched his hands.

He was certain that he had solved that peculiar mystery; as, indeed, he had, though it had taken him a week to do so. Having seen the French master, as he had believed, ragged by a mob of Remove boys, he had reported the same to Quelch—and had been utterly staggered by Monsieur Charpentier's statement that nothing of the kind had occurred.

Now he knew! Wibley's theatrical stunts in the Rag had reminded him of that old story of Wibley's impersonation of the French master, which had led to no end of a row at the time. Wibley had done it over again—that was how the matter stood. Loder was assured of that!

But it was, certainly, rather late in the day to take the affair up again. Quelch, evidently, had no use for further worry on the subject.

"The old ass!" breathed Loder.

Loder was not likely to leave it at that! Now that he knew the facts, he was going to bring the facts to light, whether Quelch liked it or not!

He was a prefect, and he had a right to inquire into the matter. He was going to do so—and he was going to make Wibley admit the facts! At all events, he was going to try his hardest to do so.

Having thought the matter over for a few minutes, Gerald Loder made his way to the Remove quarters. He was going to see Wibley; and, if he could, surprise him into an admission! If he succeeded, Quelch would not be able to refuse to take the matter up.

On the Remove landing, he glanced round at a number of Remove boys, but Wibley was not among them. Most of the Remove were coming in to tea now.

"I say, you fellows, here's Loder!" squeaked Billy Bunter, as the bully of the Sixth appeared on the Remove staircase.

The Famous Five and Smithy and Peter Todd and several other Remove fellows regarded Loder with hostile inquiry.

"Is Wibley in his study?" asked Loder, looking round.

"Wibley?" repeated Harry Wharton. "I think he went to his study after class—I haven't seen him since."

"Anything up, Loder?" ventured Bob Cherry.

"I fancy you know as much about it as I could tell you!" sneered Loder. "Who was it you were chasing in the Cloisters last week, when I thought you were ragging the French master?"

"Oh!" gasped Bob.

Loder grinned sourly at the startled looks on many faces. If he had doubted before, he would not have doubted now.

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He passed the juniors, and walked up the Remove passage.

Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged dismayed glances. They had forgotten that affair of a week ago—and this was a very disagreeable reminder. Wibley had pulled their leg, got up as Mossoo; and they had chased him, in great wrath; but most assuredly they did not want him hauled up before Quelch for that reckless jape.

"That fathead's tumbled to it!" said Johnny Bull.

"Trouble for poor old Wib!" said the Bounder. "Well, he jolly well asked for it, imitating Mossoo, after the row there was before."

"That cad Loder never can let a matter drop!" growled Bob. "It's a week ago—why can't he chuck it?"

The Bounder laughed.

"He looked such an ass in the Rag last night—he's got his back up! Poor old Wib—he's for it this time! The blithering idiot may be doing some potty theatrical stunt in his study, this very minute, and Loder will catch him at it."

"He wouldn't be such a fool as to play his Mossoo stunt again!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, in great dismay.

"Isn't he fool enough for anything?"

"Oh, my hat! I'll let him know Loder's coming, anyhow!" Bob Cherry bawled along the Remove passage, from the landing. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! Anybody know where Wibley is? Loder's looking for Wibley!"

Loder gave him a backward scowl over his shoulder. He did not need telling that that roar was intended to put Wibley on his guard, if he was in his study and engaged in any way that was not suitable to meet the eye of authority.

The thought that had occurred to Bob occurred to Loder also—very likely the young rascal was, at that very moment, playing some theatrical stunt, "taking off" some person whom he ought to have regarded with respect—perhaps even got up in his "Mossoo" outfit.

Loder hurried up the passage.

If, by happy chance, there was anything going on in Wibley's study that Wib would have preferred not to meet a prefect's eyes, Loder's eyes were going to fall on it, promptly.

He reached Wibley's door and threw it open. He walked right into the study. Then he jumped.

Sitting at the table in the study, disposing of tea, were three figures—David Morgan, Micky Desmond, and Monsieur Charpentier!

Upon Monsieur Charpentier, Loder's eyes fixed, almost gloatingly!

"By gad!" he gasped. "Caught! Fairly caught!"

Loder had no doubt!

This was the face and figure he had seen, on that occasion a week ago, when he had fancied that the juniors were ragging Mossoo! This was Wibley got up in his Mossoo outfit! Loder saw it all!

Of course it was!

That Monsieur Charpentier, for the only time that term, was teasing in Wibley's study, while Wibley was absent, was not likely to occur to Loder!

Not for an instant did he suppose that the dapper, black-bearded figure at the table, with Wibley's study-mates, was the genuine Mossoo! It was Wibley, playing that disrespectful trick all over again—and Loder had caught him in the very act!

He wasted no time.

The young rascal was not going to be allowed to get any of these things off, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,588.

before his Form-master's eyes fell on him.

He was going to Quelch, exactly as he was!

Loder made a rapid stride, and gripped the dapper figure by the back of the collar! One swing of his arm, and that figure came away from the table, the chair flying over backwards.

"Come along!" roared Loder.

And Monsieur Charpentier, wondering whether he was dreaming, came, bundling.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Not Wibley!

"MON Dieu!" spluttered Monsieur Charpentier.

He struggled!

He spluttered!

He shrieked!

Morgan and Micky Desmond leaped to their feet, amazed, alarmed, fairly dumbfounded. Loder's sudden entrance had startled them. His action startled them much more.

"Phwat—" gasped Micky, while Morgan just stared, transfixed.

"Mais, laissez-moi!" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier. "Vat is it zat you do, you Loder? Etas vous fou? Is it zat you are mad? Laissez-moi, donc!"

"Come on!" grinned Loder.

He was not to be taken in by this! Well enough he knew that in his cheeky impersonation of Mossoo, Wibley could pick up his manner of speaking, as easily as his looks. It was part of his game.

Mossoo was a little gentleman—no taller than many of the Remove fellows, and absolutely powerless in the grasp of a hefty Sixth Form man.

There were juniors who could have "handled" Mossoo; and Loder handled him with the greatest of ease.

He whirled his prisoner to the door, and whirled him out into the Remove passage.

Monsieur Charpentier struggled and wriggled and foamed; but he had to go. There was no help for that.

"Phwat are ye are up to, Loder?" gasped Micky. "You'll be sacked for ragging Mossoo! Howly mother av Moses!"

"He's mad!" gasped Morgan.

Unheeding, Loder whirled his prisoner along the passage.

A dozen fellows looked out of their studies. The crowd on the landing stared.

"A moi!" yelled Mossoo frantically. "Au secours! Ze help! Ze help! Zat Loder is mat—mat! Ze help!"

"Shut up, you cheeky young sweep!" hooted Loder. "You young rascal, think I don't know you're Wibley?"

"Mais quoi—vat? Vat zen? Laissez-moi! Leave me to go—you are mat—mat — laissez-moi — imbecile — laissez-moi—"

"Wibley!" gasped a dozen fellows.

"Ze help!" yelled Mossoo.

It was fearfully humiliating to Monsieur Charpentier to be marched along by the collar, like an unruly fag! But marched along he was! Loder's grip was like iron! He propelled the wriggling, struggling, shrieking French master along the passage to the landing.

"Will you come quietly, Wibley!" roared Loder angrily. "Do you want me to smack your head? Come quietly, will you?"

"Mais non—non—non—"

"And stop that silly nonsense!" exclaimed the exasperated Loder. "Do you fancy you can take me in with it, you young idiot?"

"A moi! Ze help! Au secours!" howled Monsieur Charpentier.

Harry Wharton & Co stared on, while the struggling little man was propelled across the landing to the staircase.

"Poor old Wib!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"The poorfulness of the esteemed Wib is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"A fair cop!" said the Bounder.

From Loder's words, and from the fact that he was yanking the unfortunate French master along by the collar, the juniors had no doubt that it was Wibley.

His looks told them nothing; for when the schoolboy actor was got up, there was not a pin to choose between them.

It only surprised them that Wib was keeping it up, now that he was in a prefect's grasp and being marched off to his Form-master.

"I say, you fellows, Wibley will be sacked this time!" squeaked Billy Bunter. "They were going to sack him when he made us as Mossoo last term, you know—he will get it this time."

"Well, some fellows do ask for it!" said the Bounder, shrugging his shoulders. "Fancy letting Loder catch him in that rig!"

"Asking for it, by gum!" said Skinner.

"A moi!" yelled Mossoo, struggling on the Remove staircase and clutching at the banisters. "Ze help!"

"Will you come?" roared Loder, dragging at him.

"Mais non, non, non—jamais!" shrieked Mossoo. "Laissez-moi, coquin—fou—imbecile—head of one pudding! Zat you leave me to go!"

He clung frantically to the banisters.

"For goodness' sake, Wib—" exclaimed Nugent.

"Wibley, old man—" said Johnny Bull.

"Je ne suis pas Wibley—je suis Adolphe Charpentier—vous etes tous fous!" yelled Mossoo. "All of you is mat! Ze help!"

"By gad!" Lord Mauleverer came along the passage. "Is that really Wibley, you men, got up—"

"Eh? Of course it is, fathead!" answered Bob. "Think Loder would be yanking Monsieur Charpentier about like that? Loder caught him made up in his study—doing his Mossoo stunt and—"

"Ze help!" yelled Mossoo despairingly.

With a powerful wrench Loder jerked him away from the banisters and bundled him down the Remove staircase!

Loder could quite understand that Wibley was unwilling to go before his Form-master in that rig! But he was going!

On the next landing, a crowd of seniors gathered, attracted by the wild yells and howls of the unfortunate Mossoo. A dozen of the Fifth stared in blank amazement.

"Au secours!" shrieked Mossoo. "Ze help, mes garçons, ze help! Zat Loder is mat—mat as ze hat merchant! Ze help!"

"What the thump are you doing with Mossoo, Loder?" exclaimed Coker of the Fifth. "Gone off your rocker?"

"It's not Mossoo, you fool!" snapped Loder. "It's that young rascal Wibley got up to impersonate him—"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Coker.

"He did the same thing last week, and I took him for Mossoo!" explained Loder. "Now I've caught him at it in his study, and he's going to Quelch, just as he is! Get out of the way!"

He whirled Monsieur Charpentier

across the landing to the lower staircase, leaving the Fifth Form men staring in a buzz.

"Laissez-moi!" came Mossoo's despairing howl, floating up the stairs. "Oh, mon Dieu! Nom d'un, nom d'un chien! Laissez mon donc."

"Come on, will you?" yapped Loder. "You're going to Quelch!"

Wingate of the Sixth appeared at the foot of the staircase, gazing up! He jumped at what he saw.

"Loder!" he gasped. "What—what—are you mad? Loder! Let Monsieur Charpentier go at once—"

Loder gave an angry snort.

"It's not Monsieur Charpentier, it's Wibley—Wibley of the Remove, and I'm taking him to Quelch!"

"Wha-a-at?" stuttered the captain of Greyfriars.

"The young scoundrel doesn't want his beak to see him in this get-up—but he's going to! He will be sacked for this! Come on, you young rascal!"

"Loder, are you sure—" gasped Wingate.

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

Loder marched his struggling captive onward, heading for the Remove master's study.

Mossoo's wild wail floated back:

"Ze help! Vill you not help me, zen, in ze hands of zis matman? Je vous dis, c'est un fou! He is mat-verree mat! Ze help! Au secours!"

"Poor old Wib!" sighed Bob Cherry, looking down over the banisters till Loder and his prisoner disappeared. "Still keeping it up! What's the use? He can't expect Loder to believe that he's Mossoo, when he knows he's Wib."

"I say, you fellows, Wib will be sacked this time—"

"Oh, shut up, Bunter!"

"Well, he's done it once too often," said Smithy. "He—why, what—who—how—which— Great Christopher Columbus!"

"Wibley!" yelled the juniors.

Every eye fixed on a fellow who came out of the Remove passage on the landing. He had a bunch of papers in his hand, and a surprised expression on his face. It was William Wibley—who, as everybody had supposed, up to that moment, had been yanked downstairs by Loder of the Sixth.

"What's up?" asked Wibley.

"Is—is—is that you, Wib?" gasped Harry Wharton.

"Think it's my ghost?" asked Wibley, staring.

"But—but—oh crikey!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"What's all this row about?" asked Wibley. "I had to get out of my study, because Morgan and Desmond barged in for tea. Then I go up to the box-room to get a spot of quiet, to learn my lines, and there's all this fearful row! What the thump is up? I thought I heard Mossoo yelling—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I say, you fellows, it's Wib! I say, it must be Mossoo that Loder's got—I say—He, he, he!"

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

"But what—" roared Wibley.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Remove fellows fairly doubled up with mirth. There was Wibley—under their eyes. Evidently, therefore, it was not Wib in his Mossoo outfit that Loder of the Sixth had yanked down the stairs!

It was Mossoo—the genuine Mossoo! Somehow or other he must have been in Wibley's study—and Loder had got him there! Last week he had mistaken Wib, in his disguise, for Mossoo; now he had mistaken Mossoo for Wib in his

disguise! The juniors shrieked as they realised it!

"Mossoo!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"He's got Mossoo—"

"The genuine Froggy!" gurgled Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He—he—he's got Mossoo, and marching him along to Quelch!" gurgled the Bounder. "Oh, fan me, somebody! Poor old Loder! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the whole crowd roared! They roared, and they howled, and they yelled. They were almost in hysterics. They laughed till they wept! Loder was the man to make mistakes—but this time he had fairly put the lid on! It was really too rich—and the Remove rocked with merriment.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Awful For Loder!

MR. QUELCH jumped up. He bounded up like an india-rubber ball.

His gimlet-eyes almost popped from his face.

He gazed with unbelieving eyes as his study door opened and Loder of the Sixth appeared there, dragging in a crimson, breathless, spluttering, gurgling French master!

"Loder!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "What—what is this? Are you insane? Are you out of your senses? What are—"

"Here he is, sir!" said Loder coolly.

"I caught him fairly in the act! He resisted, sir. He has been struggling all the way; but I was determined that you should see him in this get-up—and here he is!"

"Laissez-moi—ze help, mon cher Quelch—"

"Loder, how dare you lay hands on Monsieur Charpentier? How dare you lay—"

"That's not Monsieur Charpentier, sir!"

Loder, having got his prisoner safely inside the study, released him.

The breathless French master tottered away from him, gurgling.

"Not Monsieur Charpentier!" stuttered Mr. Quelch. "I fear that you cannot be in your right senses, Loder, and—"

"It's Wibley, sir!"

"W-w-wibley!"

"Exactly! I told you, sir, that after thinking it over, I jolly well knew that it was Wibley of the Remove that I saw last week, got up as the French master—the same trick that he was nearly sacked for last term! Well, I went to his study to question him, and found him got up in the very same way—and here he is! And I hope, sir," added Loder, with a touch of sarcasm, "that you will now take the matter up and deal with that impudent young rascal as he deserves."

Mr. Quelch looked at him.

He looked at

Mossoo.

For a moment he

was nonplussed. He

had, as a matter

of fact, seen Wibley

a term ago, in his

get-up as the

French master, and

had taken him for

Mossoo. So he was

well acquainted

with Wibley's skill

in that particular

line. And Gerald

Loder, obviously,

believed what he said. Certainly, he would never, knowingly, have laid hands on a member of Dr. Locke's staff. So, for a moment, the Remove master stood silent, dumbfounded.

But Monsieur Charpentier was not silent. He was full of eloquence! He waved both hands in wild gesticulations. He spluttered and howled.

"Mon cher Quelch! Keep zat matman away. Zat Loder—he is mat! He seize me by ze neck while zat I sit at a table in a study. he drag me—he vat you call yank me—down ze stair! Mon Dieu! I go to ze Head! I demand zat he is sack—expel—bunk—"

"Goodness gracious!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "Loder, have you made another ridiculous mistake? Is it possible—"

"Is that cheeky young rascal still keeping it up?" exclaimed Loder, in sheer wonder. "Well, what a nerve! It's Wibley, sir—"

"You utterly stupid blockhead, it is not Wibley—"

"I caught him in his study, sir—"

"You—you incredibly foolish—unthinking—absurd—ridiculous—idiotic young—"

"It's Wibley!" roared Loder indignantly. "He's trying to keep it up, to pull your leg and get off! He's got nerve enough for anything, the young sweep! I'll jolly soon show you that that beard comes off, and then you'll see!"

Loder charged at the spluttering Frenchman and grabbed at the little black beard!

He got a good grip on it and tugged.

The shriek that Monsieur Charpentier uttered woke most of the echoes of Greyfriars School. He felt as if that little black beard was being pulled out by the roots—as, indeed, it nearly was.

Loder tugged.

But the beard did not come off!

Any false beard would certainly have come off under that tug! But Mossoo's beard didn't! It stuck there! It dawned even on Loder that it grew there!

"Oh!" gasped Loder.

He let go that beard as if it burned his fingers!

He staggered.

Loder was ready to suspect anybody of almost anything, but he could not suspect Wibley of the Remove of having grown a beard! That, really, was not a thing that the most suspicious fellow could have suspected!

That beard was genuine. It followed that Loder's prisoner was not Wibley! As he realised that, Loder fairly staggered, overcome with horror at what he had done.

He gazed at Mossoo. He goggled at him. His head seemed to be turning round. It was not Wibley. It was Mossoo! Only too clearly, he had made a dreadful mistake.

"Oh!" he gasped again.

"Coquin—sclerat—fou—imbecile!" shrieked Mossoo. He caressed his

(Continued on next page.)

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ruffled, heard with one hand and shook the other, clenched, at Loder. "Mais vous êtes fou! I go to ze Head—I tell him ze—you are expel—sack, bunk—"

"Oh gosh!" gasped Loder.

"Loder, how can you, even you, with all your impenetrable stupidity, have made such a ridiculous—such an absurd mistake?" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"I—I—I thought— Oh crumbs! I—I thought— Oh crikey! He—he—he was in Wibley's study. I—I found him there, having tea with Wibley's friends. I—I—I thought—"

"Head of a pudding!" yelled Monsieur Charpentier. "Is it zat a master may not have ze tea in ze study?"

"Oh, no! Yes! But— Oh crikey! I—I thought—"

"Imbecile! I go to ze Head!" gasped Monsieur Charpentier. "I am insult—I am drag about—I am yank down ze stairs—Mon Dieu!"

"I—I thought—"

"You zought! It is not zat you can sink, grand fool zat you are! Nom d'un nom—I am drag about like one sack—one sack of ze coke—"

"I—I—I'm sorry!" gasped Loder. "I—I thought— Oh crumbs! I certainly thought— Oh lor'!"

His dismay and confusion were so overwhelming that Mr. Quelch took pity on him. He made soothing gestures to the exasperated Frenchman.

"Loder has made a foolish, an unimaginably foolish mistake, Monsieur Charpentier," he said. "He thought—he is so stupid that he really thought—that it was not you, but a boy playing a theatrical part—you will remember that such a thing once occurred, and Loder was so incredibly foolish as to fancy—"

"I am seize—I am drag—I am push and pull!" gasped Monsieur Charpentier. "Is it zat I, Adolphe Charpentier, shall be push and pull?"

"No, certainly not! Such stupidity—such unthinking absurdity— But Loder will apologise—"

"Certainly, sir!" gasped Loder. "I—I apologise most sincerely, sir! I'm awfully sorry—fearfully sorry—"

There was no doubt that Loder was sorry. His brain almost swam at the thought of going before the Head on the charge of having dragged the French master headlong out of a study and down the stairs, and having tugged at his beard! Loder was scared almost out of his wits at what he had done.

"Mais voyez donc—I am seize—I am push and pull—I am drag like one sack of ze coke—I smack you ze head, Loder—I smack you ze foolish head for zat—"

"I—I say, sir, I—I— Yaroooh!" roared Loder, as Monsieur Charpentier pranced up to him and smote.

Smack!

"Zat you take zat—"

"Look here—"

Smack!

"And zat—"

"I say— Ow! Look here, I say—" roared Loder.

Smack!

"Oh gosh!"

Loder made a jump for the door! He had had enough of this!

"Monsieur Charpentier!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

Mossoo did not heed. He was angry—which was not surprising! Three smacks at Loder's head did not seem, to him, to meet the case! As Loder dashed for the doorway Mossoo charged after him and let out a foot.

It landed on Loder's trousers with a crash!

"And zat!" gasped Mossoo.

"Yoo-hoop!"

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Loder shot through the doorway! He landed on his hands and knees in the passage, roaring.

Monsieur Charpentier jumped after him. Even yet he did not seem to think that Loder had had enough!

But Loder thought that he had. He was sure of it! He bounded up and fled, going down the passage as if it had been the cinder-path!

Monsieur Charpentier was left gesticulating and spluttering in the passage.

Mr. Quelch shut his study door. He did not laugh till he had shut it. Then he did—till he almost wept!

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Which Island?

"**B**LOW old Popper!" said Bob Cherry.

"Yes; but—"

"It's the last half-holiday!"

"Yes; but—"

"And look at the weather!"

"Yes; but—"

"Setting up as a billy-goat?" asked Bob Cherry sarcastically.

"The butfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Rām Singh.

"Let's!" said Bob.

Harry Wharton looked dubious. It was a glorious afternoon in July, it was a half-holiday, and a pull up the river appealed to all the members of the Co. Camping out for tea on Popper's Island seemed attractive. There was only one drawback—the fact that Sir Hilton Popper, who owned that island in the river, was fearfully particular never to let anybody put it to any use. Hardly ever did the old baronet set foot on it, but he strenuously objected to any other foot being set on it.

Which was rather like the dog in the manger, and did not meet with the approval of Greyfriars fellows, who liked landing on that island. Moreover, it was by no means sure that that island did belong to the lord of Popper Court, if the matter could have been tested at law; but, everybody's business being nobody's business, it never was so tested.

"We don't want to wind up the term with a row," said the captain of the Remove. "And old Popper—"

"Bless old Popper!"

"Yes; but—"

"There you go again—billy-goating!" said Bob. "Look here, I've got to finish my lines for Quelch. Then we'll go."

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"No good playing the goat, old man," he said. "The Head's put that island out of bounds, to satisfy old Popper, and we've got to respect the Head, if we don't the Popper bird. Wash it out, Bob!"

Grunt! from Bob Cherry.

"We'll have a boat out and pull up the river as far as Highcliffe and see Courtenay and the old Caterpillar," said Harry. "What about that?"

"Oh, all right!" said Bob. "But blow old Popper, all the same! You men go and put in a spot at the nets while I do those rotten lines. Quelch seems to want them."

And Bob Cherry went into the House, leaving his friends in the quad, and tramped up the stairs to the Remove passage.

Bob was rather keen on going to the island up the river for the last time that term; however, he had given up the point. He had lines on hand for Mr. Quelch, which had to be handed in before he went out, and he headed for his study, No. 13, to get going—a dis-

agreeable task on a half-holiday which he was anxious to get through.

But he stopped as he passed the open doorway of Study No. 12, Lord Mauleverer's study. Mauly's plaintive voice reached him from within.

"Go away!"

"Oh, really, Mauly—"

"Buzz off, Bunter! Look here, I've kicked you once, and I'm jolly well not going to get off this sofa to kick you again! I'm tired. Buzz!"

"But I say, Mauly, about going to the island—"

"Go away!" moaned Lord Mauleverer.

"If you'd like me to come to the island with you, Mauly—"

"Buzz off!"

"I say, old chap, are you really going to the island?"

"Yaas."

"Well, you'll want a pal—"

"Go away!"

"Look here, you beast—"

"Bob, trot in, old man!" exclaimed Lord Mauleverer, as he sighted Bob Cherry's cheery grinning face at the doorway. "I say, kick Bunter out for me; there's a good chap! I kicked him yesterday, but the effect doesn't last."

"Certainly!" said Bob. "Anything to oblige! This way, Bunter!"

"Look here, you beast—"

"Kick him right down the passage!" suggested Lord Mauleverer. "I hate kickin' him; it makes me tired. But you're so jolly hefty, old bean—"

"My dear chap, I'll boot him right round Greyfriars, if you like," said Bob cheerily. "Bunter can do with a lot of booting. Here goes!"

Billy Bunter dodged round the table. "Look here, you beast, you keep off!" he roared. "Don't you get butting in here, Cherry! I'm going to that island with Mauly, and he doesn't want you, and if you butt in, I can jolly well say— Yaroooop!"

Billy Bunter dodged out of the study.

One lift from Bob's boot was enough for him. He decided to give Mauly a rest till Bob was no longer in the offing.

"Beast!"—floated back along the Remove passage. And the fat Owl was gone.

"Thanks, old bean!" yawned Lord Mauleverer, letting his noble head sink peacefully on a cushion again. "Life's a grand sweet song, as the poet Johnny remarks, when Bunter ain't on the spot. Tons of thanks!"

"So you're going to the island, Mauly?" asked Bob.

He was thinking, of course, of Popper Island, which he had been discussing a few minutes ago with his chums. He had not heard of any other island. And he was rather surprised. Mauly, stretched lazily on his elegant sofa in his study, did not look like exerting himself to the extent of a pull up the river to Popper's Island.

"Yaas!" assented Mauly. He, of course, was thinking of the island of Kalua-alua-lalua, which Bunter had just been discussing. "You've heard about it?"

"Eh? Of course," said Bob, staring.

Lord Mauleverer nodded. As Bunter had heard about it, he had no doubt that other fellows had.

Bunter did not generally keep things to himself. But, as a matter of fact, Bob had not heard a word on the subject, and had not the faintest idea that Lord Mauleverer was the happy proprietor of an island in the Pacific Ocean, and was going there in the summer holidays.

"Like to come?" asked Mauly.



"Come along!" roared Loder, gripping Monsieur Froggy by the back of the collar and dragging him away from the table. "Mon Dieu!" spluttered the French master. "Howly mother av Moses!" gasped Micky Desmond. "Phwat are ye up to, Loder?"

"Yes, but—"

"I've been goin' to ask you, and your pals. Do come!"

"Think it's safe?" asked Bob.

He was still thinking of Popper's Island, and of the possibility of being spotted there by Sir Hilton, or some of his keepers, and reported to the Head.

But Lord Mauleverer, who had not the remotest idea that Bob was thinking of the island in the Sark, sat up, and stared.

"Safe!" he repeated.

"Well, Wharton thinks—"

"Oh, safe as houses! Lot you care whether it's safe or not, you ass!" said Mauly. "Tryin' to pull my leg, or what? You'd like to go all the more if it wasn't safe, and you jolly well know you would!"

Bob Cherry laughed.

"It's a go, then!" he said. "I'll cut off and get my lines done, and then I'll tell the other chaps. If you want to go to the island, Mauly, we're jolly well going, and chance it!"

And Bob tramped out of Study No. 12, and went into Study No. 13, where he got going on lines. Lord Mauleverer leaned his noble head on his silken cushion, and gazed contentedly from the window—for about ten minutes. Then there was a footstep in the passage, and a fat face and a pair of large spectacles looked in.

"I say, Mauly—"

"Oh dear!"

"Is that beast gone? I say, old chap, I mean it about coming to the island! I'm going to put everything else aside, old fellow. There's going to be pretty big things on at Bunter Court these hols; but I'm going to turn it all down, Mauly, to come with you. I say, where are you going, Mauly?"

Lord Mauleverer heaved his weary limbs off the sofa. Happy contentment departed with the arrival of Billy Bunter. He sighed, and strolled out of the study.

"I say, Mauly, old chap—"

Mauly, old chap, walked down the passage. After him rolled Bunter.

"Mauly, old fellow—"

Mauly, old fellow, went down the stairs—so did Bunter.

"I say, Mauly, old pal—"

Mauly, old pal, walked out of the House. After him walked Bunter.

"Look here, Mauly, you silly ass!" hooted Bunter.

Mauly walked down to the gates, and walked out. Mauly was not keen on walks. Still, a walk had this advantage, that it was an infallible method of dropping Bunter. Exertion of any kind was not in Bunter's line.

"Beast!" roared Bunter, from the gateway.

Mauleverer smiled amiably, and walked on.

Billy Bunter, left at the gate, snorted, and rolled back into the quad.

Bunter was irritated. He had fully settled that he was going to Mauly's island, with Mauly, for the vac. Mauly hadn't. Mauly, of course, had to settle it, too; but Bunter was finding a lot of difficulty in pinning Mauly down. Time was getting close now. It was near the end of the term. Matters had to be settled before the school broke up. They were still unsettled, which was rather a worry to Bunter.

It was half an hour later that Bob Cherry came out of the House, looked about him, and spotted Bunter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" he bawled. "Seen Mauly?"

Bob had done his lines, and taken them in to Mr. Quelch. On his way

down he had looked into Study No. 12 for Mauleverer, and failed to find him there. As Mauly had—as Bob supposed—arranged to go to Popper's Island, he wanted to find him.

Snort, from Bunter.

"Mauly doesn't want you at the island, Bob Cherry!" he snapped, referring, of course, to Mauly's island.

"You fat ass!" said Bob. "He's going to the island, and he wants us all to go with him." Bob was referring to Popper's Island. "Have you seen him?"

"He's gone out!" yapped Bunter. "Half an hour ago."

"Well, the ass, he might have waited!" said Bob; and he went off to call his friends.

Billy Bunter cast a disdainful blink after him through his big spectacles. It looked, to Bunter, as if those fellows were going to stick on to Mauly for the hols. Bunter could not help feeling scornful towards fellows who would stick on to a fellow for the hols. He could not help feeling contemptuous towards such fellows. And he expressed his scorn and contempt by a sniff, which, however, had no effect on Bob Cherry's back as he walked cheerily away.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Out Of Bounds!

"BUT—"

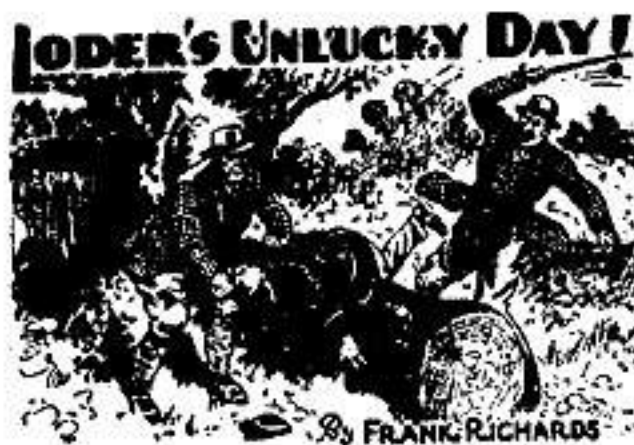
"Now, look here," said Bob Cherry, "you can wash out the 'buts'—see? Mauly's started. We've just got to go!"

"But—"

"Come on!" said Bob.

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(Continued from page 13.)

"Sure Mauly's gone?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Yes, he went out half an hour ago. Bunter saw him."

"Sure he's gone to the island?"

"He said he was going to the island, and asked me if we'd come, and I jolly well said we would, and so—"

"Well, it's queer he couldn't wait for us, then. Mauly isn't generally in a fearful hurry."

"We can't let him down," said Bob. "Mauly's ass enough to walk right into a keeper. Come on!"

"Oh, all right!"

They went down to the boathouse, and pushed out the roomy old boat which belonged to the five in common. Mauly's handsome skiff was not in its usual place. Mauly did not use that skiff often, but very often other fellows did. As a matter of fact, Russell and Ogilvy were out in it that afternoon. But the Famous Five, in the circumstances, naturally supposed that Mauly had gone off in it, starting first for the island in the river.

It was rather perplexing, for Mauly was seldom first to start anywhere. Generally, he was the last, and required reminding. Still, there seemed no doubt in this case.

Mauly had said that he was going to the "island," and asked Bob to come with his pals. And as he had gone out, they could only conclude that he had started for Popper's Island, expecting them to follow.

So they pushed off from the raft, and pulled away up the Sark.

Loder of the Sixth was lounging on the towpath, with Carne and Walker, and he cast an eye on them as they went. Loder was in a permanently disgruntled state these days. The affair of Mossoo and Wibley had made him more disgruntled than ever. Fellows were still chuckling over that extraordinary mistake of Loder's—Loder being, in fact, the only fellow who was not amused.

"That swab's got his eye on us!" grunted Johnny Bull, as he noted Loder on the tow-path turning his head.

"What's the odds?" said Bob cheerily. "We can go up the river if we like—bounds go up to Courtfield Bridge, on a half-holiday. Anybody can pass Popper's Island, so long as he doesn't land on it."

"We're going to land on it, fathead!"

"Loder won't walk a mile to see whether we do!" grinned Bob.

Bob was right—Loder watched the boat pull away, but did not follow up the tow-path. Very likely he was suspicious—but not to the extent of walking a mile!

They saw no sign of Mauly on the river—which was not surprising, as Mauly, just then, was strolling under the shady trees in Friardale Lane. But they took it for granted that he had already reached the island, and landed there.

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As they drew near Popper's Island, the Famous Five were very wary and watchful.

A row with Sir Hilton Popper or his keepers meant a report to their head-master; and even Bob Cherry regarded that with seriousness.

However, there was no one in sight on the tow-path, and they had to take their chance of an eye looking from the green sweeping woods along the bank.

They pulled in at the landing-place on the island, where thick masses of willows gave plenty of cover for the boat.

"I suppose Mauly's here," said Harry, as Bob tied the painter.

"Of course he is—we should have passed him on the river if he wasn't."

"Where's his boat, then?"

"Shoved it out of sight, I expect! He could pick up that skiff of his, and stick it in cover."

"Not much like Mauly to think of that—"

"Well, it's not here," said Bob. "If we can't see it, it must be out of sight! That's logic. See?"

"The logicity is terrific!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "But perhaps the esteemed Mauly forgot all about the island, and walked off somewhere else."

"Oh, rot!" said Bob.

"I shouldn't wonder," said Nugent, laughing. "That would be rather like old Mauly."

"Rot!" repeated Bob. "He's here all right! I'll give him a yell—"

"Oh, do!" said Johnny Bull, with deep sarcasm. "Old Popper's keepers would be glad to hear from you."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Um!" said Bob. "Better keep quiet, perhaps! Anyhow, we'll find Mauly here all right! Got the basket?"

"Here you are."

The little island in the river was thickly wooded. Taking the basket containing the "grub" from the boat, the juniors pushed up a tangled path to the centre of the island, where a great oak-tree spread huge branches over most of the other vegetation.

That was a favourite spot for picnicking, when fellows took the risk of being spotted on Popper's Island. They expected to find Lord Mauleverer sitting in the shade of the big oak.

But his lordship was not to be seen there.

They looked round them.

Mauly might—improbably—have had the presence of mind to put his skiff out of sight, in case of watchful eyes from the bank. But there seemed no reason why he should put himself also out of sight.

But he was not to be seen. There was neither sight nor sound of him. A doubt was growing even in Bob's mind now. Really, it looked as if Lord Mauleverer was not on the island at all. It was true that his lordship was rather a forgetful fellow; but it was rather extraordinary if he had forgotten his arrangement with Bob! Still, he did not seem to be there.

"Gone to sleep in the shade somewhere, I expect!" said Bob.

"Forgotten all about it, more likely!" said Nugent.

"Oh, rot! Even Mauly wouldn't be such an ass!" said Bob crossly. "Let's look for him—he must be somewhere about."

They looked! They called—taking care not to call too loudly, lest ears on the bank should hear. But there was no answer—neither was his lordship discovered reposing in the shade of the foliage.

It was clear, at last, that he was not on the island. And, friendly as they all

felt towards his lordship, the Famous Five were feeling very much disposed to boot him. There they were, out of bounds, wholly and solely because Mauly had announced his intention of going to the "island," and requested their company—and Mauly was not there!

"The blithering ass!" said Bob. "He hasn't come."

"Sure he meant to!" asked Johnny Bull.

"He said so, ass!"

"You might have misunderstood him—"

"How could I, fathead?"

"Well, you're rather an ass, you know!" argued Johnny.

"You silly owl—" hooted Bob.

"Well, he's not here," said Harry, "and it's tea-time. Squat down and open the basket."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here he comes!" exclaimed Bob, as a sound of splashing oars was heard from the river. A boat was approaching the island from lower down the Sark.

Bob plunged through the thickets towards the nearest part of the bank, to look at the approaching boat. He had no doubt—for the moment—that it was Mauly—arriving late.

But as he looked through an opening of the foliage at the sunny Sark, he gave a gasp.

"Oh crikey! That's not Mauly—"

"Who—"

"Old Popper!"

"Great pip!"

The juniors forgot the picnic basket now. They peered through the foliage at the boat that was coming up the river.

A man in gaiters and velveteens was pulling a pair of oars—it was Joyce, the head-keeper of Popper Court. An angular gentleman, with an eyeglass screwed into his eye, sat in the stern, with a knitted brow. That was Sir Hilton, the lord of Popper Court.

The boat was still at a little distance. But there was little doubt that it was pulling to the island. The juniors hoped that it was going to pass—but it was a faint hope.

They backed from the island's edge. They exchanged glances. And then four members of the Co. addressed Bob Cherry all together. It was a case of four souls with but a single thought; four hearts that beat as one!

"You fathead!"

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Tree'd!

BOB CHERRY breathed hard. "That ass!" he said. "That chump—that blithering idiot Mauly! He's jolly well landed us!"

Really, it was rough luck. Bob had given up the idea of visiting the island that afternoon, because this very thing might have happened! He had taken up the idea again, after his talk with Mauly in Study No. 12, and fairly driven his friends into it. And here they were—out of bounds on Popper's Island, with "Old Popper" in the offing; and Mauly had not turned up at all!

"I'll jolly well boot him—" hissed Bob.

"Fathead!"

"Ass!"

"Oh, don't jaw!" said Bob crossly. "Is it my fault? Mauly said distinctly—"

"Chump!"

"Blitherer!"

"Shut up, you footling burlers! Look here, let's get the boat out of sight

before that old nosy-parker barges in. He can't know we're here—he's just nosing about! If he doesn't see the boat—"

"Might be a chance!" said Harry. "Quick, then!"

The juniors ran back to the landing-place. They grasped the roomy old boat, and dragged it up through the willows. Shoes got wet, and trousers muddy in the process; but that could not be helped. There was no time to lose. It was a matter of minutes before Sir Hilton Popper would be stalking on the island; and if they were caught there, it meant trouble with the Head, and a royal row to wind up the term. Nobody wanted that.

Luckily, the summer foliage on the island was at its thickest. There was plenty of cover for the boat, once it was dragged up. They parked it in a mass of thick bushes, carefully arranging branches and twigs to hide it from view. They then cut back to the middle of the island; only in time, for the keeper's boat was pulling in to the landing-place, and in another minute they would have been seen.

As they reached the shade of the big oak, they heard the bump of the Popper Court boat as it reached the island among the willows at the landing-place.

Bob pointed upwards; it was not safe to speak, with ears so near at hand. And the Famous Five clambered swiftly up into the oak.

It was the safest refuge at hand. Whether Sir Hilton suspected or not that trespassers were on the island, he was not likely to search the branches of a tall oak-tree for such offenders. Sir Hilton Popper was long past the tree-climbing age!

"Joyce!" They heard the old baronet's bark clearly through the trees and thickets on the island. He had landed.

"Yes, Sir Hilton!"

"Place the camp-stool here! And my newspaper! You may return for me in an hour's time, Joyce."

"Yes, Sir Hilton!"

There was a sound of rustling, and a grunt from the old baronet. Then he was heard to bark again.

"There is no boat here, Joyce?"

"No, Sir Hilton."

"There have been trespassers on the island lately, Joyce. I saw some boys in Highcliffe caps last Saturday. Unfortunately, I could not recognise them. It is a half-holiday there to-day, I believe. We shall see!"

The boat was heard to pull away.

"Oh, what rotten luck!" breathed Bob.

Sir Hilton Popper was not merely giving his island the once-over. He was going to sit there for an hour, that pleasant summer's afternoon, reading his newspaper—with one eye open, evidently, for trespassers. Apparently some of the Highcliffe fellows had been there lately! Sir Hilton was thinking of Highcliffe fellows—and had no idea that five Greyfriars fellows were parked in the branches of the big oak! The prospect of remaining parked there for a whole hour, or more, was dismaying.

"The rottenfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "We shall have to stick in this tree like idiotic monkeys."

"Nice afternoon!" murmured Johnny Bull.

"Better than being copped and marched in to the Head!" grunted Bob.

"If we hadn't been such silly asses as to get out of bounds—" said Johnny Bull.

"Do you want me to push you off that branch, Johnny?" inquired Bob.

"Eh? No!"

"Then shut up!"

"Look here, you cheeky ass—"

"Oh, don't rag!" said Harry Wharton. "We'll jolly well rag Mauly when we get back, for landing us in this!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Listen!" breathed Bob.

The old baronet had settled down on his camp-stool with his newspaper, after Joyce had pulled on up the river. Now, however, he was stirring again. The juniors heard a grunt, and then a bark.

"Good gad! Young rascals! Then they have been here! By Jove, if I had the trespassing young scoundrels within reach of my stick!"

The juniors in the oak branches exchanged looks. Evidently Sir Hilton, as he sat by the landing-place, had spotted signs of landing.

That, really, was not surprising, for dragging the Remove boat through the willows had left plenty of "sign." A casual eye might not have noticed it, but it had dawned on Sir Hilton as he sat there.

They heard him rise to his feet and move about. Trees and thickets hid him from their eyes, but they could hear his movements. He seemed to be poking into bushes with his stick. They heard a thud!

They knew what it was! The searching stick had come into contact with the hidden boat! Sir Hilton's bark followed:

"A boat! By gad, a boat—hidden out of sight! Good gad, then they are still on my island—they could not have left the boat here! I will complain of this at Highcliffe! By Jove, I will take the young rascals there! I will march them in to Dr. Voysey, by gad!"

There was a heavy tramp of feet.

Sir Hilton was coming up the tangled path, into the middle of the island. Looking down through interstices of the foliage, the juniors saw the crown of a bowler hat. The lord of Popper Court was right under them.

He stared about him, and grunted.

Harry Wharton & Co. remained as still as mice. Sir Hilton, so far, had the impression that the trespassers, whom he now knew to be on the island, belonged to Highcliffe School. They were quite anxious that he should not get an impression that those trespassers belonged to Greyfriars.

The bowler hat passed out of view again. Sir Hilton was searching. He knew that they were on the island—the hidden boat proved that. He was going to root them out. He was "quartering" the island, like a hunting dog, questing in all directions.

He came back under the big oak at last. His grunting was now almost continuous, and very expressive.

The juniors were still as statues. As he had not found the trespassers on terra firma, Sir Hilton could hardly fail to guess that they had taken cover in a tree. With the one exception, the trees on the island were small. If the trespassers were in a tree, they were in that big oak. Sir Hilton Popper's lordly brain did not function with any very great efficiency, but that much was clear to him.

The bowler hat was now tilted back, and the juniors had a glimpse of a red face and a white moustache and two very angry, glinting eyes.

"Come down!" roared Sir Hilton.

No reply!

"I know you are there! Descend at once! By gad, if my keeper were here, I would send him up for you! Come down at once! Do you hear?"

The inhabitants of the oak-tree heard; but, like the celebrated Gladiator, they heeded not! If discovery had to come, they were going to defer it till the latest possible moment. They hardly breathed.

"By Jove, I will take you personally to Highcliffe and hand you over to Dr. Voysey! Do you hear?"

The chums of the Remove were not afraid of being taken to Highcliffe and handed over to Dr. Voysey! But they were very uneasy about being taken to Greyfriars and handed over to Dr. Locke! They gave no sign.

"Come down!" roared the irate Sir Hilton, staring up. "I know you are there! By gad, I can see your foot! Come down!"

"Oh crumbs!" breathed Bob.

He jerked up a foot, which dangled below a branch. If Sir Hilton wanted proof that some fellow was in the oak, he had it now. He roared:

"Will you come down at once! I will lay my stick about you the moment you are in my hands!"

If Sir Hilton supposed that that would be an inducement to the trespassers to descend, he was in error. They hugged cover.

"By gad!" gasped Sir Hilton.

They heard him tramp back to the landing-place—doubtless to see whether Joyce was in sight in his boat. Evidently Joyce was not, for he came tramping back to the oak. He glared up, brandishing his stick.

"You trespassing young scoundrels, come down this instant!" he roared.

There was no answer from above.

Sir Hilton, under the tree, almost foamed. Not only was his precious island being trespassed upon, but his lordly behests were being disregarded. That was more than enough to exasperate the lord of Popper Court, who was, as he knew only too well, a much more important person than any common mortal.

He glared up, and then he reached up. Sir Hilton was a tall gentleman—Nature, who had been rather stingy with him in the matter of brains, had made it up in inches. He was long, and he had a long reach. He could reach a branch that was beyond the grasp of lesser mortals. And he did! He got a grip on a stout branch, and dragged and shook it with great violence—as if seeking to shake the trespassers down, like ripe apples from an apple-tree.

That branch, unfortunately, jutted from the branch on which Bob Cherry was perched. Bob's branch tilted and shook, and Bob slipped.

He clutched wildly for support, missed it, and shot down!

There was a wild tearing and rending of foliage, a gasping splutter from Bob, and he whizzed—and landed!

He landed on a bowler hat!

It had not occurred to Sir Hilton Popper's powerful brain that if he shook trespassers out of the tree while he stood underneath, he was likely to make a catch with his summit. That was what he did.

Crash!

Bob Cherry crashed on the hat, smashing it in, and driving it down over the baronet's ears. Sir Hilton Popper folded up under him like a pocket-knife.

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He gave one gurgle and collapsed. Bob, spluttering, rolled over him.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Hook It!

"O OOOOOOOOOOOH!"

That was Sir Hilton's remark, as he folded up. Bob rolled on him—and then off him!

He scrambled to his feet.

Sir Hilton did not! He couldn't! He was winded! He was dizzy! He was dazed! He hardly knew what was happening. He felt as if he had been bombed from the air. And his crushed hat was jammed down over his ears and his eyes, and he was, temporarily, blindfolded. In a state of collapse, the lord of Popper Court lay extended, gurgling. "Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob.

He stared at the sprawling baronet.

But Bob Cherry was quick on the uptake, if Sir Hilton was not. He gave a breathless howl to his friends above.

"Come on! Quick, quick!"

There was a chance. It was only a matter of moments, but there was a chance. The four fellows above were already scrambling down. If Bob were caught, they were all caught; and they had no idea of leaving Bob to it on his own.

That was fortunate, for they dropped from the oak, even as Bob howled to them, dropping all round the sprawling baronet.

"Quick!" hissed Bob. "Hook it—quick!"

They all realised that it was a time for quickness. Sir Hilton, winded, sprawled with his face deep in grass-roots, his head deep in a squashed hat. But that state of affairs was not a permanent one. It would not be long before Sir Hilton got his face out of the grass roots and his head out of the hat! It was a matter of moments—but moments just then were invaluable! Greased lightning had nothing on the Famous Five of the Remove as they shot away from the spot!

Almost in a bound they were at the landing-place.

"The boat!"

"Quick!"

"Hurry up!"

They dragged frantically at the boat. They whirled it out of the bushes. It was a heavy old boat—but many hands made light work. Seconds were precious; they did not waste one.

With amazing swiftness they had that boat off the shore and splashing into the water.

They hurled themselves into it, sending it rocking out into the river, tumbling over one another as it went. They tumbled, they sprawled, they bumped—but they rocked away!

From the island came a roar that might have proceeded from an enraged bull buffalo.

It was a roar of rage from the lord of Popper Court. Sir Hilton, roaring, struggled with his hat as he struggled to his feet.

"Quick!"

"For goodness' sake—"

"Go it!"

Bob Cherry got hold of one oar. Harry Wharton another. They dashed them into the rowlocks and pulled. The boat zigzagged away, going down with the current.

Frank Nugent rubbed his head, which had banged on a locker, and grabbed another oar. Johnny Bull picked himself out of a wash of water and did the same. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh grabbed the lines. Four oars pulled desperately. Whether they had been spotted or not the juniors could not yet be sure. But they hoped for the best. Anyhow, if speed could save them, speed was going to. They pulled as if for their lives. The Remove boat fairly whizzed. From the island came roars of wrath and wild scrambling. But by the time Sir Hilton Popper reached the water's edge and glared after the fugitives the boat had careered round a bend of the winding Sark. It was out of sight of the baronet's gleaming eyes. But the boat's crew still rowed hard. They rowed hard till Greyfriars was in sight. Then breathlessly they slackened speed. "Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob Cherry. He mopped a streaming brow. "Oh scissors! He never saw us!" "Let's hope he didn't!" gasped Harry Wharton. "If he did we shall get into a record row for this." "I've got about fifty bumps and bruises—"

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"Never mind that if we get clear!" chuckled Nugent. "You couldn't have done better than dropping on his nut, Bob! Jolly lucky you're such a clumsy ass, old chap!"

"How could I help it when—"

"We're all right, I fancy!" said Johnny Bull. "He couldn't have spotted us. Look here, let's pull down as far as Friardale. The farther off we're seen from Popper's Island this afternoon the better."

"Good egg!"

And the chums of the Remove pulled past the Greyfriars boathouse and glided on down the river towards the village.

"Hullo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob suddenly, as his eyes fell on an elegant figure strolling on the towpath.

"Mauly!"

"That howling ass!"

The boat's crew stared across at Mauly. There he was, with a straw hat on his noble head, his hands in his pockets, sauntering elegantly and lazily along the towpath.

They stared at him and they glared at him. Evidently Mauly had not given a single thought to Popper's Island. There he was, sauntering along towards the village, his back to the island, a mile and a half away.

Bob Cherry shoved his hand into the picnic basket. He withdrew it with an orange in it.

The other fellows grinned.

Lord Mauleverer was not looking towards the river. He did not observe the boat. He had no idea what was coming—till it came!

Whiz!

Squash!

"Gurriggh!"

The orange—a ripe one, not to say over-ripe—landed in the middle of his lordship's aristocratic features. It burst and squashed there.

Lord Mauleverer sat down quite suddenly in the grass on the towpath. He sat and yelled through a mist of orange-juice.

"Oooh! Oh gad! Oh, my hat! Wooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The boat pulled on its way, echoing with laughter—leaving Mauly sitting on the bank, spluttering and grabbing and clawing wildly at squashed orange. Which was an instalment of what was due to Mauly—he was going to get the rest after calling-over!

The chums of Greyfriars bent to the oars, and the Remove boat fairly whizzed, going down with the current.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Merely A Misunderstanding!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. answered to their names at calling-over with a spot of apprehension.

They were almost sure that they had escaped unseen and unrecognised from Popper's Island—but not quite. If there were trouble to come, it was coming now, and they eyed Mr. Quelch as he stood on the library steps and called the roll under the July sunset.

But, to their great relief, Quelch gave them no particular attention. After roll they were not told that they were wanted. Evidently there had been no report from "old Popper." Sir Hilton was in blissful ignorance of who had dropped on his lofty nut, and it was all clear.

"We're in luck!" said Bob, as the school dispersed after roll. "But we might have been landed, and we're going to slay that ass Mauly, all the same."

"The slyfulness is the proper caper!" agreed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Bag him!"

Lord Mauleverer was strolling peacefully away after the open-air roll, and the Famous Five followed on. After such a narrow escape from bad trouble they felt that a lesson was due to his lordship.

But for a lucky accident they might have been up before the Head at this very moment. So they followed his lordship as he strolled under the elms and bagged him.

Mauly did not seem to be expecting anything of that kind—any more than he had expected the orange on the towpath. He gave a startled gasp as five pairs of hands grabbed him and swept him off his feet.

"Bump him!" said Bob.

"Begad! I say—Woohoo!"

Bump!

"Here! Leggo! What the dooce—what the jolly old dooce—"

Bump!

"You potty duffers, wharrer you at?" yelled Mauleverer. "I say—"

Bump!

"Oh gad! Oh crikey! Ow!" gasped Lord Mauleverer, sitting and gasping for breath and blinking dizzily at the five.

"You howlin' asses, have you gone off your rockers? I'll wallop the lot of you as soon as I get my breath! What are you pitchin' into a chap for, you fatheads?"

"You don't know?" grinned Bob.

"Eh? How should I know? Gone mad?" gasped Mauly. "Some mad ass buzzed an orange at me by the river this afternoon—now you grab a fellow! Has everybody gone potty?"

"Why didn't you turn up at Popper's Island this afternoon?" demanded Bob.

"Why should I?"

"Why should you?" repeated Bob blankly.

"Yaas! Silly trick, if you ask me," answered Lord Mauleverer, picking himself up and dusting his elegant bags. "Popper's Island is out of bounds, isn't it? Why ask for trouble? Life's packed with trouble—why ask for more?"

"You footling, frabjous, flopshus fat-head!" answered Bob in measured tones. "Don't you remember fixing it up with me to go to Popper's Island this afternoon?"

"Not at all!"

"Well, my only hat! Don't you remember it now I remind you?" roared Bob.

"No!"



"It's Wibley in disguise!" roared Loder, indignantly. "He's pulling your leg, Mr. Quelch. I'll pull that beard off, and then you'll see!" The Sixth Former grabbed at the little black beard and pulled. The beard did not come off, however, and the shriek that Monsieur Charpentier uttered woke most of the echoes of Greyfriars School.

The Famous Five gazed at Lord Mauleverer. Mauly had a memory that was first cousin to a sieve, it was true. But this really was surprising.

"Did you make some mistake, after all, Bob?" asked Johnny Bull. "You remember I asked you if you had—"

"And you remember I told you you were a silly owl!" hooted Bob. "Look here, Mauly, don't be an ass! Mean to say you don't remember my coming up to your study and kicking Bunter out for you?"

"Oh! Yaas."

"He was talking to you about going to the island—he wanted to go with you—remember that?" hooted Bob.

"Eh?"

"And I asked you if you were going and you said yes, and said you were going to ask us—" roared Bob.

Lord Mauleverer stared at him! He blinked at him! Then he burst into a yell.

"Ha, ha, ha! You ass! Ha, ha!"

"Oh, you remember that, do you?" snorted Bob. "Well, as you started first, we thought you'd gone to the island, and went after you—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cackling ass, we nearly got copped by old Popper, and should have been, only we parked ourselves in a tree—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And you never came—after landing us in it!" roared Bob. "And if you can't do anything, but cackle, I'll jolly well bang your silly head, and—"

"Hold on!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. He jumped back and waved off the excited Bob with both hands. "It was a misunderstandin', old chap! My fault, I dare say! Still, I remember I asked you if you'd heard of the island—"

"Heard of it, ass? Hasn't every

fellow at Greyfriars heard of Popper's Island? What do you mean?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, bump him!"

"Hold on! Bunter wasn't speakin' about Popper's Island!" gasped Mauleverer. "It was another island he was talkin' about—ha, ha, ha!"

"Another island! There isn't any other island hereabouts—"

"Nunno! It's farther off than Popper's Island—about sixteen thousand miles—"

"Wha-a-t?"

"About that, I think—though I wouldn't be particular to a thousand miles or so. It's called Kalua-alua-lua, and it's in the Pacific Ocean!" gurgled Lord Mauleverer. "I never meant I was goin' this afternoon—ha, ha, ha!—I can't do sixteen thousand miles on a half-holiday—ha, ha, ha!—I meant that I was goin' in the vac. Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry stared at him. The Co. stared at him. The Pacific Island was a new one on them!

"You see, Bunter spotted me lookin' it out on the map, and when you said you'd heard of it, I supposed that he'd told you!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. "I wasn't goin' to Popper's Island! When I went out, I went for a walk, to get shut of Bunter! You never mentioned Popper's Island to me—I never thought about Popper's Island—ha, ha, ha! And you hiked off to that island—ha, ha, ha!"

Lord Mauleverer yelled.

"Oh!" said Bob. "Oh! My hat! You ass—I meant Popper's Island, of course—"

"You never said so."

"Well, I thought Bunter was speaking to you about Popper's Island. What was I to think, you ass?" hooted Bob. "I've never heard about bally-whally-

loo, or whatever you call it—leave off cackling, you silly owl!"

"I fancied there was a mistake!"

grinned Johnny Bull. "Bob all over!"

"How was I to know?" roared Bob.

"The mistakefulness was terrific,"

chortled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"How was I to know?" bawled Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha! Of course you couldn't, old man!" gasped Lord Mauleverer. "You can't help bein' an ass—I mean, I dare say it was my fault! Ha, ha, ha!"

The Co. chuckled. They saw the misunderstanding now—which had very nearly landed them in the biggest row of the term. Still, it hadn't quite—so that was all right! And they were all keenly interested in the Pacific island, of which they now heard for the first time.

"No harm done, as it turned out!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "But what's that about a Pacific island, Mauly? Mean to say you're going to the South Seas for the vac?"

"Yaas! So are you!"

"Are we?" ejaculated Harry.

"Yaas! I asked Bob, for the lot of you—oh, my mistake—he thought I was askin' you to come to Popper's Island—ha, ha, ha!"

"What was I to think?" roared Bob.

"Of course—of course!" said Lord Mauleverer soothingly. "Fellow might think anythin' with a brain like yours, old chap—I—I mean, it was my fault—my fault entirely! Anyhow, we're gettin' it clear now! If you fellows haven't anythin' better on will you come to the South Seas with me this vac?"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"We're not likely to have anything better than that on, Mauly, old man," he answered. "But what—and where and how—"

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"Nunky thinks it's a good idea for me to go and look at my island—"

"Your island!" yelled the Famous Five.

"Yaas."

"Oh, my hat! You've got an island? Any continents?"

"No; only an island. My pater picked it up years ago, when he was cruisin' in those parts. Coconut plantations — lagoon — Kanakas — copra — shade of the shelterin' palm, and all that! It's a dooce of a long trip, but I've got a special and particular reason for goin', or I wouldn't take the trouble, of course."

"Awful lot of trouble, getting a holiday in the South Seas!" said Bob. "Nuff to make a fellow tired of life, what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaas," said Lord Mauleverer innocently. "When I think of the distance, you know, I feel quite fagged out. Still, once we get on the island, we can sit down under the palms—I shall do a lot of sittin' under the palms. And we can do a big bit of the distance by plane—and after all, a fellow can sit in a plane as comfortably as in a railway train. If you fellows don't think it will bore you—"

The Co. chuckled! They did not think it was likely that they would be bored by a trip to a Pacific island in the holidays! It seemed improbable.

"I'd be fearfully glad if you'll come!" said Lord Mauleverer. "So far as I know there's no cannibals or such things around Kalua-alua-lalua. I wouldn't be sure—still, I dare say cannibals ain't bad chaps when you come to know them. Mr. McTab will put us up."

"Who's Mr. McTab?"

"My manager! I don't know what he manages—somethin' or other. I dare say, or he wouldn't be a manager. I mean to say, that stands to reason, doesn't it? He's got a bungalow on the island—and from what nunky says, he's quite a nice man. I fancy he's Scotch—"

"Sounds sort of!" grinned Bob.

"Yaas, he's Scotch—you have to have Scotch managers, you know—they're straight," explained Lord Mauleverer. "All over the East there's Scotch managers of estates, for that reason. You put a Scotchman in charge, and then you don't have to worry, see?"

"That's one up for Caledonia!" said Bob, laughing. "I suppose an unreliable manager could make a pretty good thing out of an estate sixteen thousand miles away!"

"Yaas! This sportsman McTab is manager and magistrate on the island, and trader and shipping agent and—and Lord High Everything-Else, you know. He will look after us all right. Think you'd like to come?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Just a few, Mauly!"

"You can consider that bumping entirely washed out, old man," said Bob Cherry. "Of course, we never knew that you had a Pacific island in your pocket when we bumped you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If it's a bit rough in some ways, you fellows can stand it?" said Lord Mauleverer. "There's a schooner—you may like that—"

"A schooner! Oh crumbs!"

"And a lot of other islands spotted about, you know—we can do some cruisin'—in fact, I shall have to, really, as I've got to look for somebody—"

Lord Mauleverer paused. "You're going sixteen thousand miles to look for somebody?" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

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"Yaas."

"We'll help you, old man! We shan't mind putting on a few extra thousand miles, if you don't spot him in the first sixteen thousand!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Is it a go, then?" asked Lord Mauleverer.

"The go-fulness is terrific, my esteemed Mauly!" grinned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

And a "go" it was!

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing!

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

Bunter was annoyed.

In break that morning he had shown a keen desire for the company of the Famous Five. But that desire being wholly on Bunter's side, and not shared in the least by the five, they had found pressing business in other directions, whenever the fat Owl appeared in the offing.

Bunter, it seemed, had something to say—something very special. But he had to go in to third school with that something still unsaid.

Now, when the Remove were dismissed once more, those unspeakable beasts were still playing the same game. The moment they spotted Bunter they walked off—just as if Bunter was one of those bores whom fellows naturally prefer to dodge.

But Bunter was not going to be dodged. The matter was urgent. So he yelled:

"I say, you fellows! Wharton, you beast—I mean, Wharton, old chap! I say, do stop a minute! You fellows, it's important!"

Harry Wharton laughed. Bunter seemed undecided whether he was a beast, or an old chap. In either case, he did not want to hear from Bunter. With break-up so close at hand, he thought that he could guess the urgent matter that the fat Owl was so eager to discuss.

The Famous Five, instead of stopping, grinned and accelerated.

Billy Bunter broke into a trot in pursuit. Bunter did not like trotting—especially in warm July. But this urgent matter really had to be settled.

"Put it on!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

As Bunter trotted, the Famous Five trotted. They seemed rather amused by this peculiar game. Bunter, not in the least amused, panted after them.

"Now, then, stop that! What are you racing about the quad for?" came a bullying voice. And Harry Wharton & Co. slowed down as Loder of the Sixth stepped in their way. "Stop it, see?"

"Look here, Loder—" began Johnny Bull, in a deep voice.

"That's enough—just stop it!"

Loder loafed away, leaving the Famous Five breathing hard. They had not exactly been "racing" about the quad; but any pretext was enough for Loder, in his present disgruntled state, to make himself unpleasant. And a prefect was a prefect, and had to be regarded.

"Cheeky swab!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"I say, you fellows!" Bunter came panting up. "I say, didn't you hear me call you?"

"Yes; that's why we cut."

"Oh, really, Cherry, you cheeky beast—I mean—I—I mean— All

right, old chap! But it's rather urgent, you know, old fellow."

"Make it clear," suggested Bob. "Which am I—a cheeky beast, or an old fellow?"

"The whichfulness is terrific," chuckled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "Let us walk quickly, my esteemed chums, as the execrable Loder objects to the trotfulness."

"Look here, you silly nigger—I mean to say, look here, Inky, dear old chap!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter really seemed a little mixed. However, he had caught the elusive five now, owing to Loder's intervention, and he proceeded, rather breathlessly.

"I say, you fellows, we've always been pals, haven't we?"

"Have we?" asked Harry Wharton, in surprise.

"Oh, really, Wharton! Who stood by you when you first came here, and nobody could stand you, because of your rotten temper?" demanded Billy Bunter warmly.

"You fat chump—"

"Didn't I speak to you, as a pal, the very first day you came to Greyfriars?" demanded Bunter. "What did I say to you the first day?"

"You told me you were expecting a postal order—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly fathead!" roared Bunter. "I mean, Harry, old chap! Look here, don't be a cad, you know! We've been pals, and I can't forget old friendships, if you can. Same with you, Nugent. I may have called you a milksop, and a soft ninny, sometimes, but I never meant it, old fellow."

"Turn round!" said Frank Nugent.

"Eh? What for?"

"I'm going to boot you!"

"Beast! I mean, don't be a cad, Franky, old fellow! Remember what pals we've been. And you, Bob—"

"Have we been pals, too?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Well, dash it all, old fellow, I think I've been pretty friendly to you," said Bunter. "I mean to say, hardly any fellow could stand a clumsy hippopotamus barging about like a bull in a china shop. But I always make allowances for you. I know you can't help being a silly fathead, and having the biggest feet in the Remove, and spreading them all over the school—"

"Go it!" gasped Bob. "This makes a fellow feel fearfully pally!"

"And then you, Bull," went on Bunter. "I always liked you, old chap. I liked you from the day you came. I remember you coming in that day. And I never said to Ogilvy that you had a face like a bulldog, and the manners of a walrus. Of course, you had, the same as you have now, but I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! And you, too, Inky," went on Bunter. "Tain't every chap that would be pally with a blinking nigger, but I've always treated you as a friend. I don't care if you're as black as the ace of spades—I don't, really, old chap! What does it matter if a fellow's a bit of a skeich, so long as his heart's in the right place? That's how I look at it."

The Nabob of Bhanipur gazed at Billy Bunter. Perhaps it was just as well for Bunter that Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was one of the best-tempered fellows in the Remove.

"We've been pals all along," said Bunter, blinking at the five through

his big spectacles. "Should auld acquaintance be forgot, and all that, you know? Think of auld lang syne, as Shakespeare says—"

"Shakespeare?" gasped Bob.

"Well, Shakespeare, or somebody. Byron, perhaps—"

"Might have been Burns?" suggested Bob.

"Oh, no, it wasn't Burns!" said Bunter, shaking his head. "Milton, I fancy. You don't know much about poetry, Bob. Anyhow, whoever it was, think of auld lang syne, and—and things, you know. It goes like this:

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
When we sit down to dine,
We'll talk a lot of tommy-rot,
For the sake of auld lang syne."

"It's really touching, you know," said Bunter. "I never think of auld lang syne without being touched—"

"That's easily explained," said Bob. "You see, you've always been a bit touched—"

"The touchfulness is terrific!"

"I don't mean that sort of touched, you silly Owl—I mean, dear old chap! Well, as I was saying, our friendship's stood the test of time, and all that—united we stand, divided we don't, see? Stick together—four square—against all the winds that blow—what?"

"Does that fat idiot mean anything?" inquired Johnny Bull. "Or is he just gabbling because he's a gabbling ass?"

"Oh, really, Bull! As I was saying, we've been pals, and just think of the time when we're old boys, you know, and remember our dear old days at the dear old school, and—and things like that, you know. And—and—and when you see Mauly, just mention that you'd like me to join up for the hols, see?"

"Oh!" ejaculated Bob. "That's the milk in the coconut, is it?"

"Well, you see, Mauly's such an ass," explained Bunter. "I've offered to go with him, and see him through all the fearful dangers of the South Seas, and so on, but he seems shy about it, somehow. I've explained to him what pals we are, and how you fellows wouldn't enjoy the holiday if I wasn't there."

"Oh crikey!"

"And—and—and Mauly said that he'd put me on the list, if you fellows wanted him to."

"Oh!" gasped the Famous Five.

They understood, at long last, why they were Bunter's dear old pals, and had been promoted to top place in his friendship.

"So there it is," said Bunter. "It's rather fatheaded of Mauly; but he's a fool, as you fellows know. But there it is. He says I can come, if you fellows ask him specially, because you really want me."

"Safe offer," grinned Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"All you've got to do," said Bunter, "is to tell Mauly that you really want me to come—that you'd hardly care for the holiday without me. That will fix it. Mauly's a silly idiot, but he's a man of his word, you know. He will stick to it, if you ask him. You go and ask him now, Wharton—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Don't cackle, you silly ass! This is a serious matter. Mauly's left it at that, and he won't budge. So if you fellows don't ask him, I shan't be coming, see? Go and ask him now. Strike the iron while it's hot, you

know. For the sake of auld lang syne, and so on, you know."

"Where's Mauly?" asked Bob.

"There he is, loafing over there by the House," said Bunter eagerly, pointing with a fat finger.

"Come on, you men!" said Bob, turning his back towards the House.

And his comrades, grinning, came on.

"I say, you fellows, you're walking right away from Mauly!" yelled Bunter.

"Quite!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly chumps, how can you speak to Mauly if you walk right away from him?" roared Bunter.

The Famous Five did not answer that question. They chuckled, and walked on—right away from Mauly. Apparently they did not intend to speak to Mauly.

Billy Bunter glared after them with a glare that almost cracked his spectacles.

"Beasts!" he roared.

Evidently Bunter's blandishments had been in vain. His touching appeal to old friendship had failed. There was nothing doing. The Famous Five were not going to help the fat Owl plant himself on Mauly—even for the sake of auld lang syne!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Very Surprising!

"WHARTON! Are you zere, Wharton?"

Harry Wharton glanced round.

"Yes, sir!" he called back.

Harry Wharton & Co. were in the Rag after class. They were discussing, with considerable satisfaction, the happy prospects for the summer vacation. Every member of the Co. was keen to join in a trip to the South Seas—especially as the first part of the trip was to be by plane. It was, in fact, quite a gorgeous prospect.

Billy Bunter was leaning on the open door of the Rag, regarding them with morose blinks through his big spectacles.

Bunter was peeved.

He had settled definitely that he was going on that trip to Kalua-alua-lalua. But Mauly seemed to have put paid to that. Mauly hated saying no—moreover, it was useless to say no to William George Bunter. But by leaving it to the Famous Five, Mauly had, with great relief, got away from the subject.

As Bunter had told him, as a reason for including his fat self in the party, that the Famous Five wouldn't enjoy the holiday without him, being such attached pals, all that was necessary was for the Co. to corroborate that statement. Which, however, they did not dream of doing.

It was enough to peeve any fellow.

Wherefore did Billy Bunter blink morosely at the chums of the Remove, who seemed impervious to morose blinks, and did not, in fact, notice that he was there at all?

But the cheery discussion of the coming trip was interrupted by the well-known voice of Monsieur Charpentier calling in from the passage.

Harry Wharton glanced round at the door, without noticing Bunter, and still less a sly twinkle behind the spectacles of the Remove ventriloquist.

"You are zere, Wharton!" called the voice.

"I'm here, sir."

"Please to look for Lodair, Wharton, and tell him zat I vish to speak to him in my study at vunce."

"Oh, blow!" murmured the captain of the Remove. Aloud he said: "Very well, sir—certainly!"

"Zank you, Wharton."

"Why the dickens can't Froggy look for Loder himself if he wants him?" grunted Johnny Bull. "He can't fag the Remove."

"Blow!" said Harry.

And he left his friends and walked over to the door.

He did not want to come into contact with the bully of the Sixth; neither was it a privilege of the French master to send Remove fellows on messages. However, he could hardly refuse, so he went. He did not hurry himself, which was perhaps the reason why he did not see Monsieur Charpentier in the passage when he emerged from the Rag.

He proceeded first to Loder's study in the Sixth, tapped, and looked in. Loder was not there.

He next proceeded to the prefects' room and again tapped and looked in. Several Sixth Form prefects were there, but Gerald Loder was not among them.

"Know where Loder is, Walker?" he asked. "Mossoo wants him."

"Gone out!" answered Walker.

"Oh! Out of gates?"

"Yes."

Harry Wharton left the prefects' room and proceeded next to the French master's study. As Loder was gone out of gates he could not deliver the message, and he had to inform Monsieur Charpentier of that fact.

"Entrez!" said Monsieur Charpentier, as the captain of the Remove tapped and opened his study door. "Vat is it, mon garçon?"

"Loder's gone out, sir!" said Harry.

"Lodair?" repeated Mossoo blankly.

"Yes, sir. He's gone out of gates."

Monsieur Charpentier was sitting by his study window, reading the "Figaro." He laid down the "Figaro," rose to his feet, and stared at the junior at the door.

He looked surprised, and he looked displeased. Why, Wharton could not guess. He must, the junior supposed, have expected his messenger to come there to tell him that Loder was not to be found, as the message could not be delivered.

"Je ne comprends pas, Wharton," said Monsieur Charpentier. "Vat is it to me, je vous demande, if zat Lodair he is go out of gates?"

"I mean, I can't find him, sir, as he's gone out," explained Harry. Really, he expected Mossoo to guess that one.

"You cannot find Lodair?"

"No, sir."

"And vy for you come to tell me zat you cannot find Lodair? Is zis one choke? You make ze fun, isn't it?"

Harry Wharton stared at him.

"I don't understand you, sir! I've looked for Loder, and Walker told me that he had gone out of gates, so I came to tell you."

"And vy for?" demanded Monsieur Charpentier testily. "If you make not one choke viz me, vy for you come to tell me zat?"

"I thought you'd wish to know, sir," answered Harry, in astonishment.

"And vy for I vish to know?" exclaimed the French master. "I vish to know nozzings of zat Lodair, zat impertinent one zat pull and push me ze ozzer day. Vat is it zat you mean? Expliquez, done."

"I mean, I couldn't tell him to come to your study, sir, as he was gone out," said the bewildered junior.

"And vy for you tell him to come to my study? Your zink zat I vish to see zat insolent Lodair?" snapped Monsieur Charpentier.

"Eh? Yes! I—I suppose so, sir!" gasped Wharton. "You asked me to look for him and send him here—"

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"Vat?" exclaimed Monsieur Charpentier, staring at him. "I ask you! Vat do you mean, Wharton? Is zis a choke—vat you call one rag? I ask you nozzings."

Harry Wharton blinked at him. He wondered whether the little French gentleman was wandering in his mind. It was hardly ten minutes since the well-known voice had called in at the door of the Rag.

Monsieur Charpentier frowned at him portentously.

Mossoo was accustomed to all sorts of rags from the juniors, and he could only conclude that this was one more of them. Certainly it did not occur to him, any more than it did to the captain of the Remove, that a fat ventriloquist had imitated his beautiful accent.

After what had happened recently, Loder's name to the French master was rather like a red rag to a bull. He made a step towards his study table and picked up a cane therefrom.

"Mauvais garçon!" he said severely. "You came here to pull me ze leg. I zink! Vous savez bien—you know verree vell zat I do not vish to see zat Lodair!"

"But you asked me, sir!" gasped Harry.

"I ask you nozzings!" hooted Monsieur Charpentier. "Vat you mean, you bad one? Ven is it zat I ask you?"

"You called to me in the Rag not ten minutes ago—"

"Mon Dieu!" exclaimed Monsieur Charpentier. "Ze sheek of zat boy! You have ze grand sheek to say zat I call you, it is ten minutes, ven zat I have not leave zis study since I come to read ze journal it is one hour ago. If it is not zat you are mat, Wharton, zis is ze sheek!"

"Well, my hat!" gasped Harry. "You did call me—"

"Non, jamais!"

"A dozen fellows heard you—"

"Assez! I hear no more of zis! Zat you hold out ze hand, mauvais garçon."

"But—"

"If you hold not out ze hand I take you to Meester Quelch! Toute de suite!" snapped Monsieur Charpentier.

Harry Wharton, quite amazed and bewildered, held out his hand.

Mossoo did not tell him to "bend over," as Quelch would have done. He was content with a swipe on the palm.

Swipe!

"Oh!" gasped Harry.

"Maintenant, allez-vous-en," said Monsieur Charpentier sternly. "You make one more sheeky choke viz me and I take you to Meester Quelch, and your punishment is of ze most severe! Now zat you go."

Harry Wharton, with deep feelings, tucked an aching palm under his arm and left the study. He liked Monsieur Charpentier and respected him, but at the moment he would rather have liked to handle him like Loder.

Monsieur Charpentier frowned after him as he went, and then sat down, still frowning, to resume the persual of the "Figaro." And the captain of the Remove, with inexpressible feelings, returned to the Rag, with his hand tucked under his arm.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Once Too Often!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! What's the row?"

"He, he, he!"

Billy Bunter was still leaning his fat person on the door of the

Rag, when the captain of the Remove came back to that apartment.

Wharton gave him a glare in passing in return for his fat chuckle, and rejoined his friends—with an expression on his face that drew their inquiring glances.

"That mad old ass Mossoo!" growled Wharton. He squeezed an aching palm. "That howling old frog-scoffer—ow!"

"What the dickens—" exclaimed Nugent.

Wharton breathed hard.

"That toad-chewing old marionette said he never arked me to look for Loder and send him to his study—"

"Eh? We all heard him—"

"I know! He's forgotten it already, and says he didn't; and gave me a swipe for saying he did! He thought I was pulling his leg! You all heard him call me—"

"The hearfulness was preposterous!" exclaimed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, in astonishment. "Is the esteemed Froggy off his absurd rocker?"

"Looks like it!" growled the captain of the Remove. "I've had a swipe! Must be as mad as a hatter!"

"But didn't he want Loder, then?"

"He says he didn't! I know he asked me to call him. How he could forget it in ten minutes beats me. The old ass! I suppose if I'd found Loder, and sent him, the old duffer would have asked him what he'd come for!"

"Lucky you didn't find Loder, then," grinned Bob Cherry. "Loder would have fancied you were pulling his leg, and you would have got a good six! But look here, Mossoo couldn't have forgotten—"

"Well, he did!"

"You're dreaming, old bean," said Vernon-Smith, staring at the captain of the Remove. "How could even that old ass forget that he called you from that door ten minutes ago?"

"He said so, at any rate! Must be potty, I think!" said Harry, squeezing his tingling palm. "I've had a swipe! Think I dreamed that, Smithy, you ass?"

"Well, it's jolly queer," said the Bouncer blankly. "Unless he's balmy or—"

Smithy was interrupted. A well-known voice called in from the passage:

"Sherry! Are you zere, Sherry?"

"Eh?" Bob spun round towards the door. "Yes, sir!"

All the juniors stared across the room towards the door. Monsieur Charpentier was not to be seen there. Apparently he was calling in from the passage as on the previous occasion.

"Sherry! Please go and find Valker, and ask him to step into my study!" came the familiar voice.

"Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Bob.

The juniors stared at the doorway, and at one another. This, after what had already happened, was simply astonishing.

It looked as if Mossoo had followed almost on Wharton's heels, as far as the doorway of the Rag, to send Bob on an errand, precisely as he had sent Wharton. And why he did not step in was really peculiar.

"Don't go, Bob!" said Harry Wharton. "If he wants Walker, let him go and tell him himself."

"Well, he's asked me—" said Bob, hesitating.

"Let the old ass rip!"

"Shurrup, you ass, he'll hear you!" breathed Johnny Bull.

"I don't care if he does!" Wharton's temper was not improved by his fool's errand, and the ache in his swiped palm. "Don't go!"

"Sherry!" came the voice, more sharply. "Is it zat you do not hear me, Sherry? Go at vunce and tell Valker to come to my study."

Nobody but Bunter was standing near the door, so the juniors could not see into the passage. Nobody, however, doubted that Monsieur Charpentier was there, calling to the junior in the Rag.

But, as Bob hesitated, Wibley of the Remove walked in. He stared at the little crowd of juniors, all standing and staring towards the doorway.

"Anything up?" he asked.

"That old ass Mossoo!" answered Harry. "He could stand there and yowl till call-over before I'd go again. Look here, Bob, don't go."

"Stand where?" asked Wibley, staring. "Mossoo isn't here, is he?"

"Didn't you pass him coming in, fat-head?"

"Eh? No!"

"You didn't?" howled Bob Cherry. "Isn't he out there in the passage?"

"If he is, he's invisible—I never saw him!" answered Wibley. "What the dickens are you getting at?"

The Bouncer made a rush to the door. He stared into an empty passage. Then he made a sudden grab at a fat figure that detached itself from the door and would have rolled out of the Rag.

Bunter did not roll out—he rolled in, with Smithy's grasp on the back of a fat neck!

"Leggo, Smithy, you cad!" howled Bunter. "I say, you fellows, make that beast leggo—"

The Bouncer was chuckling. He had guessed; though it had not yet dawned on the other fellows, who were deeply puzzled.

"Here he is!" grinned Smithy.

"Ow! Leggo!"

"What the thump are you collaring Bunter for?" asked Bob Cherry.

"What's Bunter done?"

"Guess!" grinned the Bouncer.

"Oh!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, a light breaking on his mind. "That fat chump—that podgy villain's ventriloquism—"

"Oh!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Leggo!" yelled Bunter in alarm. "I say, you fellows, it wasn't me! I—I've quite forgotten how to do ventriloquism—"

"You fat swab!" roared the captain of the Remove, red with wrath. "It was you all the time! Mossoo never called me at all—"

"Or me!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Oh! Yes! He did! I—I heard him! It wasn't me! Will you leggo my neck, Smithy, you beast!" howled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Bouncer. "No wonder Mossoo gave you a swipe! Loder would have given you more than that, if you'd sent him barging into Mossoo's study for nothing."

"Why, you—you fat foozler!" gasped Harry. "You pulled my leg with your rotten tricks, to make me go and make a fool of Loder—if he hadn't been out, I should have done it—"

"I—I—I didn't!" gasped Bunter. "Besides, look how rottenly you've treated me—coming between me and my pal Mauly like you've done! Not that I did it, you know! I never knew Loder had gone out—I mean, I never thought about Loder at all—I never gave—"

"Boot him!"

"Bump him!"

"Scrag him!"

"I say, you fellows, you keep off!" yelled the alarmed Owl. "I never did it, and I only did it for a joke! I—I thought it would amuse you, really!"

Jig-jig-just a spot of ventriloquism to—
to make you laugh, you know—”

“Boot him!”

“Leggo! Keep off! I never did it!” yelled Bunter, as boot-leather established contact with his tight trousers. “Serve you jolly well right, too! I say, you fellows—yaroop!”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

It was all explained now—and Wharton, who had fallen to the trick, and Bob, who nearly had, vied with one another in booting the fat ventriloquist round the Rag! They booted in turns, Billy Bunter fleeing wildly round the long table, amid yells of laughter.

Bunter had got away with the first trick—but he had not got away with the second! It was like Bunter to try it on once too often! Now he wished that he had not got away with any—the way of the fat transgressor was hard!

“Yaroooh! Help! Gerroff! Stop kicking me, you beasts!” shrieked Bunter. “Can’t you take a jig-jig-joke? Wow! I say, you fellows—yow-ow-ow! I say—yaroop!”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

The fat Owl, yelling frantically, bolted for the door. A final lift from Bob’s foot, the heaviest in the Remove, landed him in the passage. Bunter roared and vanished.

Bunter’s ventriloquial voice was not heard again. But his natural voice was heard for quite a long time, and his remarks were chiefly “Ow!” and “Yow!” and “Wow!”

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Loder On The Trail!

GERALD LODER started a little, and looked round.

Loder was quite surprised, and quite interested. The remarks that reached his ears were, in fact, both surprising and interesting—specially interesting, in view of his keen desire to bring those young rascals, the Famous Five, to book before the end of the term.

Harry Wharton & Co. were strolling down to the gates with very cheery faces. Their voices reached Loder’s ears as they passed near him. Perhaps they did not observe him standing there by one of the old elms. Really, he was big enough to be seen! Perhaps they did not care if he heard—but that, really, was still more surprising, considering that he was a prefect and well known to be keen on catching them out.

“Topping on the island,” Bob Cherry was saying.

“Just ripping!” said Harry Wharton. “I’m rather keen to get there.”

“The keenfulness is terrific,” remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, “and the topfulness will also be great.”

“We hadn’t settled what we were going to do,” said Frank Nugent. “Jolly idea to go to the island.”

“What-ho!” said Johnny Bull.

Every one of the Co. spoke in Loder’s hearing, and they passed on, leaving him staring after them.

“Well, by gad!” breathed Loder.

His eyes gleamed.

Loder, naturally, had never heard of Lord Mauleverer’s island in the Pacific. Kaula-alua-lalua was quite unknown to him.

He had not, therefore, the faintest idea that the chums of the Remove were talking about their trip in the holidays. Such an idea naturally did not occur to him for a moment.

He was, in fact, making precisely the same mistake that Bob Cherry had made a few days ago.



Sir Hilton shook the branch on which Bob Cherry was perched. The Greyfriars junior clutched wildly for support, missed it, and shot down. Crash! He landed on a bowler hat. “Ooooooooooooooooooch!” gasped Sir Hilton, as he folded up under the weight.

The island to every fellow at Greyfriars was Popper’s Island. There was no other island anywhere near the school. Fellows who talked about going to an island could only mean Popper’s Island in the Sark.

That island was strictly out of bounds. It meant a caning and detention to be caught on that island. The Head, who had heard more than enough of Sir Hilton Popper’s complaints on the subject, was very severe on that point.

“By gad!” repeated Loder.

And he smiled—a sour smile!

He had those young rascals where he wanted them now. Loder was not a fearfully dutiful prefect, as a rule, but he was going to do his duty now with great zeal. He was going to catch them in the act.

True, a prefect who learned that a set of reckless juniors were going out of bounds might have been expected to warn them off, and prevent that

transgression. But that was not Loder’s intention at all.

He was going to let them get on with it. When they had got on with it, he was going to nab them, and walk them in to the Head for judgment. Then they would get what they richly deserved for having got on the wrong side of a disgruntled prefect.

Loder, smiling sourly, gave them plenty of time. He was not going to show up in the offing and give them the alarm. Not Loder!

He allowed half an hour to elapse before he walked down to the boat house. There he took out his skiff.

He was sure, of course, after what he had heard, but he made assurance doubly sure by a word to the boat-keeper. From the boat-keeper he learned that Wharton and his friends had taken their boat out half an hour ago.

Loder smiled as he pulled up the river.

He was happily unaware that the Famous Five had gone in the opposite direction. They had, in fact, pulled down to Friardale, for the excellent reason that Marjorie Hazeldene and Clara Trevlyn had a boat out from Cliff House that afternoon. At the very moment that Loder pushed off from the school raft, Harry Wharton & Co. were with Marjorie and Clara at Friardale bridge.

Not suspecting anything of the kind for a moment—after what he had heard—Loder pulled up the river for Popper's Island.

He pushed in to the landing-place on the little island in the river, and looked round for the Remove boat.

As that boat was a couple of miles away down the river, naturally he did not see it.

Still, he was not surprised. There was plenty of cover for hiding a boat in the willows, and most likely the young sweeps had shoved it out of sight, in case it should be seen—as, indeed, they had done on a late occasion.

He tied up, and stepped ashore.

That they were on the island, he had not the slightest doubt. They had said that they were going to the island, they had taken their boat out, and he had given them half an hour. After that—how could there be any doubt?

Loder of the Sixth had no doubt, at all events.

He grinned as he walked up the tangled path on the island, expecting to sight them any moment, probably picnicking. But he did not sight them.

"Come out of it, you young sweeps!" called out Loder, nothing doubting that they had seen him coming, and dodged into the bushes and trees. "I know you're here, so you may as well show up."

There was no answer. If anybody was on that island, besides Loder, he was keeping very quiet.

Loder's grin changed to a scowl.

"Will you show up?" he shouted. "I tell you I know you're there!"

Still there was no answer, and Loder,

growing angrier and angrier, began to root about over the thickly wooded island in search of the breakers of bounds. And he was too busily occupied to take heed of the splash of an oar in the river.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not Loder's Lucky Day!

SIR HILTON POPPER could hardly believe his eyes, or his eyeglass.

His crusty old face was red with wrath.

His eye, and his eyeglass, fixed on a skiff that pulled in to the island, and on the fellow who landed from it, and disappeared among the trees.

He stared.

Sir Hilton was taking a walk that afternoon in his woods along the Sark, with a gun under his arm, and an eye on the island. Sir Hilton had, in fact, taken several walks every day within eyeshot of that island, since the occasion when a trespasser had fallen on his head from the oak-tree. He was fearfully anxious to spot that trespasser if he came again and he almost haunted the vicinity of that island.

Now at last he was in luck.

"Good gad!" said Sir Hilton. "Under my very eyes! Good gad!"

He stood among the trees on the edge of the wood, staring. Loder had not seen him, but he had seen Loder.

"Joyce!" barked Sir Hilton.

The keeper appeared from the wood.

"Get your boat at once! Bring it along the bank! That young scoundrel has gone trespassing on the island again—under my very eyes! Lose no time!"

"Yes, Sir Hilton!"

Joyce hurried away.

Sir Hilton Popper continued to watch the island, his very eyeglass gleaming with wrath. He had supposed that the trespassers on his island were junior boys, belonging to Highcliffe or Greyfriars. He was quite

astonished to see that this trespasser was evidently a senior—a Sixth Form man, certainly old enough to know better.

Senior or junior, Sir Hilton was going to bag him. He was going to bag that trespasser, and march him home to Dr. Locke at Greyfriars, and demand exemplary punishment. He was going to see whether cheeky school-boys could trespass on his island just as they liked.

With his eye gleaming through his eyeglass, the lord of Popper Court watched, and waited impatiently for Joyce to arrive with the boat. The keeper did not keep him waiting long.

The boat came down the stream, and Joyce held on for Sir Hilton to step into it. Then he pulled across to the landing-place on the island.

Sir Hilton laid down his gun in the boat. He wished he had had a stick with him, instead. Being rather short of intellectual resources, the lord of Popper Court generally filled in his spare time by walking out with a gun and killing something. The furry and feathery denizens of Popper Court Woods had cause to be thankful that he had spotted that trespasser. Loder had, quite inadvertently, saved several harmless lives.

Joyce pulled across, and the boat bumped on the island landing-place.

Sir Hilton stalked ashore.

"Now, then, you young rascal!" he barked, as he sighted Loder among the thickets. "I have caught you this time! Come here! Come here at once!"

Loder jumped.

"Oh crumbs!" he ejaculated.

He stared at the irascible old baronet. "Bounds" did not apply to Sixth Form prefects. Loder was all right, so far as that went. But he was trespassing—there was no doubt about that. In his eagerness to catch those young sweeps, the Famous Five, out of bounds, Loder had rather overlooked that fact.

The sudden and unexpected apparition of an angry old gentleman reminded him of it unpleasantly.

Still, Loder could explain. An explanation ought to satisfy the lord of Popper Court. Loder hoped so, at least.

"You will not climb a tree this time!" barked Sir Hilton grimly. "You will not escape unrecognised by tumbling down on my head, you young rascal, as you did before! I shall take you to your headmaster!"

"Please let me explain!" gasped Loder. "I am not trespassing here, Sir Hilton!"

"What are you doing, then?" barked Sir Hilton. "Have you no eyes? Can you see that board, or can you not?"

"Yes, yes; but—"

"Does it say that 'Trespassers will be Prosecuted,' or does it not?" demanded Sir Hilton.

"Oh, yes! But—"

"Then you know that you are trespassing! You are a Greyfriars boy! I shall take you to your headmaster!"

"Please let me explain!" gasped Loder. "I am a prefect of Greyfriars—a Sixth Form prefect. My name is Loder."

"Good gad!" roared Sir Hilton. "My old school is coming to something, when prefects trespass like small boys in the Third Form! Good gad!"

"I was not trespassing!" shrieked Loder. "I am here to take away some juniors who have landed on this island."

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BOOK

I am looking for them. They are here—"

"Nonsense! There is no one here!"

"I tell you I'm looking for them—a set of young rascals—"

"And I tell you," roared Sir Hilton, "that I do not believe a word of it, as it is perfectly clear that there is no one else on this island. If the boys are here, produce them! Let me see them! Can you see any boys on the island, Joyce?"

"No, Sir Hilton!"

"They—they came here," stammered Loder. "I came after them. They are hiding here somewhere."

"Then where is their boat?" barked Sir Hilton. "If this palpably false story has any truth in it, where is their boat? Are you going to tell me that they swam here?"

"No! Their boat must be hidden somewhere!" gasped Loder.

"Joyce! Ascertain whether there is any other boat on the island, beside the one that this trespassing, lying young rascal came in!"

"Yes, Sir Hilton!"

It did not take the keeper long to ascertain that there was no boat on the island, excepting Loder's and his own.

Even Loder had to realise that there was no boat there—and, in consequence, no boys! It looked as if the Famous Five, after all, had escaped in time!

"Well," barked Sir Hilton, "I have given you an opportunity to prove your statement—an obviously false statement! There is no boat on the island! There are no boys! You are trespassing—"

"Nothing of the kind!" gasped Loder. "I thought—I had reason to believe—"

"Nonsense!"

"I—I assure you, Sir Hilton, I—I—"

"And I assure you," roared Sir Hilton, "that I will not permit lawless young rascals to trespass on my property, whether they are junior boys or Sixth Form prefects! I will take you to your headmaster—"

"Dr. Locke will understand," gasped Loder. "He will certainly understand when I explain to him. I—I will certainly go to my headmaster—"

"Indeed!" snorted Sir Hilton. "You mean to say that you will make the same untruthful statement to your headmaster, and that Dr. Locke will credit it! Huh! You fancy that you will be allowed to escape unpunished, after I have caught you—actually caught you—trespassing on my property! Undeceive yourself, you young rascal! I will not take you to your headmaster! I will deal with you personally! Joyce, find me a stick!"

"Yes, Sir Hilton!"

"I tell you," yelled Loder, "they were here! They must have cleared off—"

"Enough!" roared Sir Hilton. "I desire to hear no more from you! Joyce, lose no time! Find me a stick!"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Loder.

He was prepared to be taken to his headmaster. He thought—at least, he hoped—that that would turn out all right. But he was not prepared for this! He decided not to wait till Joyce found a stick. He made a sudden rush for his skiff.

Sir Hilton grabbed him by the ear.

"Stop!" he roared.

"Ow! Let go, you old fool!" roared Loder desperately.

"What—what?"

Sir Hilton did not let go. Instead of

letting go Loder's ear, he twisted it. He did not seem to like Loder calling him an old fool! He had no use for such painful truths.

"Joyce, bring me that stick!"

"Here it is, Sir Hilton!"

"You silly old idiot!" shrieked Loder. "Do you think you can wallop a fellow? Let go, you old ass! I say— Oh crumbs! Oh crikey! Yarooooop!"

"Hold him, Joyce! Hold him across that leg—yes, that will do nicely! Now, you trespassing young rascal, take that—and that—and that!"

"Yaroooooooop!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

Sir Hilton laid it on with a hefty hand!

Whack, whack, whack, whack, whack!

The stick fairly rang on Loder's trousers!

Whack, whack, whack, whack!

This was the sort of thing he had planned for the Famous Five—caught trespassing! Unfortunately, it was not the Famous Five, but Loder who had been caught trespassing, and it was Loder who was getting it!

Whack, whack, whack, whack, whack!

"There!" gasped Sir Hilton breathlessly. "That will be a lesson to you! I will teach you not to trespass on my property! Put him in his boat, Joyce! See him off the island! Go, you young rascal—lawless, trespassing young rascal! If I catch you trespassing on this island again—"

Loder, as he scuttled away in his skiff, left the old baronet barking—and quite unlikely to catch Loder trespassing again!

It was an unhappy, squirming, twisting Loder that got back to Greyfriars. Only a short time ago, Loder had fancied that he was in luck! But as he wriggled and squirmed on his homeward way, he realised, only too clearly, that this was not his lucky day!

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Working The Oracle!

CLICK!

"Beast!" roared Billy Bunter.

Lord Mauleverer chuckled.

After class that day almost every man in the Remove was out of doors, in the bright July weather. But when Mauly came up to his study, he found one member of his Form on the landing—the fattest member, whose little round eyes and big round spectacles fastened on him at once.

Billy Bunter rolled up the passage after Mauly. This was one more chance for a heart-to-heart talk with him.

Heart-to-heart talks, however, had no appeal for Mauly. He shut his study door and, before Bunter could open it again, turned the key inside.

Billy Bunter was left blinking at solid oak, while his lazy lordship was left in peace, to repose his elegant limbs on the study sofa for the rest he needed after the exertion of walking up the stairs.

"Beast!" howled Bunter through the keyhole. "I say, you silly ass, open this door! I say, Mauly, old chap, Wharton's calling you!"

"I don't seem to hear him, old fat bean!" answered Lord Mauleverer from the sofa within.

"I say, I hear him quite plainly, Mauly!"

"That's what comes of havin' such jolly long ears!" said Mauly. "Nobody else at Greyfriars could hear him callin' from Friardale!"

"Oh! Has he gone down to Friardale? I—I mean, I can hear Bob Cherry calling you, Mauly!"

"Well, Bob's got a hefty hoot, but can you really hear him hootin' from Friardale, Bunter?"

"Oh! Has he gone with the other beast? I—I mean, Loder's calling you, Mauly—you'd better not keep a prefect waiting!"

There was a chuckle from Study No. 12, but no answer.

"I say, Mauly!" howled Bunter.

"Go away, old fat man!"

"I say, Wharton asked me to mention to you that he's very keen on my joining up for that trip to Kooly-wooly-loopy! Is it all right?"

"Ask him to mention it to me himself, old porpoise."

"Beast!"

Billy Bunter bestowed a thump on the door and retired, breathing wrath.

He rolled into Study No. 7 and sat down there, still breathing wrath. Matters were getting serious. The school was breaking-up in a day or two—and Bunter was still not included in the party for Kalua-alua-lalua.

This was very irritating, and the fat Owl would have thrown up the idea, with contemptuous scorn, had anything else turned up. But nothing else had.

It was useless to give Smithy a hint that he would be willing to join him on a trip to Switzerland with his father—such hints were a sheer waste on the Bunder. He had told Peter Todd that he could, after all, stand a week or two in Bloomsbury with Peter, but it appeared, from Toddy's reply, that if Bunter could, Toddy couldn't! He had talked to Ogilvy about the glorious, unequalled scenery of Scotland, which he was anxious to behold—but Ogilvy told him that his face would spoil even Scottish scenery.

So Bunter came back to the South Sea idea, after every attempted excursion in other directions! It was Kalua-alua-lalua or nothing!

But that unspeakable beast, Mauleverer, had fairly barred him off. If Bunter's dear old pals, the Famous Five, wanted Bunter, Mauly was ready to agree. But it was only too clear that Bunter's dear old pals didn't—indeed, they did not seem to realise that they were Bunter's dear old pals at all!

But difficulties were only made to be overcome—and Bunter was the fellow to overcome difficulties in the way of landing himself for the "hols"!

Bunter thought it out. And suddenly a wide grin spread over his fat face, and he gave a little fat chuckle.

His cogitations had borne fruit.

He rose from the armchair and blinked out of his study, up and down the passage.

No one was in sight. Fellows were not likely to come in till tea-time. Except for Mauly, in his study, with the door locked, Bunter had the Remove passage to himself.

In view of the remarkable idea that had come into his fat brain, this suited him exactly.

He stepped into the passage and walked up to Study No. 12, stamping as heavily as he could on the floor as he went. Any fellow who had heard him coming along with that heavy tread would naturally have guessed that Bob Cherry was coming.

He stopped at Mauly's door and rattled the door-handle; then he bawled in a voice that was so like Bob Cherry's

roar that hardly an ear in the Remove could have told the difference:

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Sporting your oak, Mauly?"

"Yaas," came a yawn from within. "Want anythin', old bean?"

"No. What are you locked in for?"

"Keepin' out a porpoise."

"Beast!" breathed Bunter.

He tramped on up the passage with the same heavy tread.

Lord Mauleverer was left, naturally, with the impression that the chums of the Remove had come in.

A minute later Bunter was outside Study No. 12 again.

Again he rattled the door-handle.

"You at home, Mauly?" This time the Greyfriars ventriloquist put over a very good imitation of Harry Wharton's voice. It was not so easy to imitate as Bob Cherry's roar, but Bunter could do these things.

"Yaas," yawned Mauleverer. "Who's there?"

"Don't you know my voice, fathead? Wharton!"

"Yaas, old bean."

"I wanted to speak to you, Mauly. Don't trouble to move, old man. It's only about that trip to the Pacific."

"Yaas." Lord Mauleverer did not move—he never moved unless it was necessary to move.

"I've been talking it over with the other fellows, about Bunter—"

"Bunter?"

"Yes. It seems that you're going to ask us, if we'd like him to come. The fact is, we would."

"Oh gad!"

"You see, Bunter's had a good many holidays with us, and we should rather miss him if he didn't come along," went on Wharton's voice.

"Not really?" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

"Well, yes. Of course, it's for you to settle, Mauly, but we'd all like you to ask him, if you're agreeable."

"Oh, yaas! All serene."

"Is it a go, then?"

"Yaas!"

"Thanks, old man!"

"Not at all! I don't mind, really. I was only thinkin' of you fellows. If you can stand him, I can."

Bunter very nearly ejaculated "Beast!" at that, but he restrained that remark.

"I'll tell the fellows, then," said Wharton's voice. "You mention it to Bunter when you see him, will you, Mauly?"

"Yaas!"

And Billy Bunter rolled quietly away, grinning from ear to ear.

Billy Bunter's peculiar ventriloquial tricks generally earned him more kicks than halfpence, but on this occasion there was no doubt that his weird gift had turned up trumps.

Really it was a brilliant idea. Mauly's sporting his oak had given him the chance, and he had made the most of it. Lord Mauleverer, in the belief that the chums of the Remove wanted him to ask Bunter, had said that he would ask him—and Mauly was a man of his word.

The fat Owl chuckled. He felt that he had reason to chuckle.

He allowed about ten minutes to elapse, then he rolled along to Study No. 12 again.

"I say, Mauly—" he squeaked through the keyhole.

"Oh dear!"

"I say, Mauly, about the hols. I shall have to fix up something else if I'm not going with my pals. Time's getting close, you know. Wharton says he'd like me to come, but it's for you to say. What about it?"

"Yaas," yawned Lord Mauleverer. "Come if you like, old fat bean."

"That's hardly good enough for me, Mauly!" answered Bunter with dignity.

"I'm not the fellow to butt in, I hope, where I'm not wanted."

"Oh, gad!"

"My friends want me to come. If you put it decently, I'll come! That's all I've got to say about it. Otherwise, wash it right out," said Bunter loftily.

"Oh!" gasped Lord Mauleverer.

"Yaas, all right! Wharton's just told me that they'd like you along—"

"He, he, he!"

"What are you sniggering at?"

"Oh, nothing! Carry on, Mauly," said Bunter hastily. "Are you asking me to join the party?"

"Yaas."

"Well, look here, I hope you've made up your mind definitely, after all this shilly-shallying! I've had a letter from my pal D'Arcy at St. Jim's—he wants me for these hols—huntin' and shootin', and all that! Smithy's rather keen for me to go to Switzerland with him, too. I want it settled definitely before I turn other fellows down. Is it settled?"

"Yaas."

"I'm coming with you, then?"

"Yaas."

"All right, old man; rely on me! I won't let you down!"

And Billy Bunter, not always a man of his word, was absolutely reliable, as far as that went! He did not let Mauly down!

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

Loder's Last Shot!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. came in, in a cheery crowd after their trip down the river. Loder of the Sixth was in the quad, and he came towards them at once.

Loder seemed to be walking rather painfully. And his expression was more disgruntled than ever.

"Oh, here you are!" he said grimly.

"Here we are, here we are, here we are again!" sang Bob Cherry cheerily.

"Want us, Loder? Looking for some nice and improving company?"

Loder scowled.

"I'm taking you to your Form-master!" he snapped. "You got away from me on the island, you young rascals; you saw me coming, I suppose—"

"On the island?" repeated Harry Wharton blankly.

"Are you going to deny that you've been to Popper's Island?" asked Loder sarcastically.

"Well, yes, just a few, as we've been nowhere near it!" answered the captain of the Remove in astonishment.

"We've been down the river—"

"You can tell Quelch that!" said Loder sourly. "Follow me at once!"

"Oh, all right!"

The Famous Five followed Loder across to the House. They were quite surprised, but not at all alarmed. As they had not been to Popper's Island, but in the opposite direction, there was nothing to be alarmed about. They only wondered what bee Loder had got in his bonnet now!

Loder stalked on ahead—wriggling a little as he stalked. He was still feeling the effects of Sir Hilton's stick. The lord of Popper Court had laid it on not wisely, but too well!

"Anythin' up, you men?" asked Lord Mauleverer, as they passed him, going in.

"Loder's taking us to Quelch!" answered Harry.

"What for?"

"Goodness knows," said Bob, "or to be more exact, badness knows! I mean, Loder knows! We don't."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder scowled round.

"Follow me at once!" he yapped.

"Twice, if you like!" answered Bob affably.

And they followed him to the Remove master's study.

Mr. Quelch did not seem pleased to see Loder. He had had rather more than enough of Loder of late.

However, he listened patiently to his report. Those five juniors had been out of bounds! Loder had followed them to Popper's Island; but, having seen him coming, they had got away before he landed. Loder had no doubt about this—though it was surprising news to the Famous Five.

"Well?" said Mr. Quelch, when Loder had finished, fixing his gimlet-eyes on the five, his hand straying towards a cane.

"We haven't been to Popper's Island to-day, sir!" said Harry Wharton.

"We've been down the river to Friardale in our boat."

Loder's lip curled.

"We can prove it if necessary, sir," added the captain of the Remove. "We met some of the Cliff House girls at Friardale Bridge—they had a boat out and—"

"I think," said Mr. Quelch, "that I can accept your word without such evidence, Wharton! However, I must go into this matter. You did not, it seems, see these boys at the island, Loder?"

"They got away before I reached it, sir! I knew they were going there, and followed—as—as soon as I could."

Loder gave the Famous Five a bitter look. "They were discussing their intention, sir, as they passed me in the quadrangle, before they went. They did not even seem to care if I heard them. I was standing quite near as they went out, and they all spoke on the subject—their intention of going to the island."

Harry Wharton & Co. gazed at Loder.

For a moment or two they were dumbfounded. They had, as a matter of fact, seen Loder near the gates when they went out; but they had forgotten what they had been discussing when they passed him—certainly not a visit to Popper's Island. Then, suddenly, it dawned on Bob Cherry.

He burst into a sudden roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Cherry!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Oh! Sorry—sorry, sir! Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Bob. "Oh, my hat! Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder glared at him. Mr. Quelch stared at him. Then, as it dawned on the other fellows, they laughed, too!

It was Bob's little mistake over again—only this time Loder had made it!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

(Continued on page 28.)

Fall in, "Magnetites," for Another Interesting Tour with—

The GREYFRIARS GUIDE



ALL AROUND GREYFRIARS. A Tour of the District

(1).

In Oak Lane we stand and ponder.
Popper Court lies on the right,
And if you should wish to wander
To the left—keep out of sight!
For behind the trees and bushes
Pon and Skinner lose their tin
As they "cannon off the cushes"
In the old Three Fishers Inn.



AFTER SCHOOL HOURS Mauly Sees The Sights

When Mauly hired a motor-car
To take him for a run
He thought that he would travel far
And see how things were done;
When Mauly hired a motor-car
He meant to have some fun.

When Mauly sank upon the seat,
So soft and warm and deep,
He knew the countryside was sweet,
But didn't care a heap;
For when he sank upon the seat
He swiftly sank asleep!

They came to Wapshot aerodrome
To see an air display.
The aeroplanes came circling home;
The people cheered: "Hooray!"
But one at Wapshot aerodrome
In peaceful slumber lay!

They passed a village cricket match
A most exciting scene;
A fieldsman made a brilliant catch
Far out against the screen.
But Mauly at that cricket match
Was sleeping and serene!

And once upon that thrilling trip
They saw a lifeboat speed
To rescue from a sailing ship
A crew who stood in need.
But Mauly on that thrilling trip
Took very little heed.

A short while after this they passed
A car on fire, it seems;
The passengers alighted fast,
With agitated screams.
But Mauly slumbered as they passed,
And smiled a bit—at dreams!

"It's very pleasant," Mauly said,
That night, when we were sad
At having to go up to bed
(And he, of course, was glad!).
"It's very pleasant," Mauly said,
"To see the sights, begad!"

(2).

Let's walk down towards the river.
Here we see the tavern sign,
And we notice, with a shiver,
Mr. Joseph Banks recline
In an attitude of languor
On the gatepost, with a grin.
Let us then repulse with anger
His inducements to "Walk in."

(3).

And, with luck, we don't surrender
To the bait upon his hook;
For old Prout rolls by in splendour
And he gives us both a LOOK!
Then his face becomes quite mottled,
As he quickly rolls away;
For this Banks (who's rather "bottled")
Nods to him and says: "Good-day!"
(On the road again next week.)

THE GREYFRIARS ALPHABET

HAROLD SKINNER

The "artful blade" of the Remove

S is for SKINNER, an artful card;
They ought to give him three months'
hard!
He's full of fearful, cunning jokes,
And loves a paralysing hoax!



Last night he took some coloured ink
To bed with him, which made us blink!
And in the night, while Bunter slept,
Forth from his lair this Skinner crept,
And painted Bunter's features red
And black and green—then back to bed!
Now, Bunter seldom washes; so,
With splitting sides, we saw him go
With this adornment into class.
And Quelchy said— But let it pass!
Yes, Skinner's cunning, full of vice—
But often funny, if not nice!

ANSWER to PUZZLE
PLAGUE, AGUE.



A WEEKLY BUDGET OF FACT AND FUN

By

THE GREYFRIARS
RHYMESTER

WHAT THE STARS FORETELL

In these days every up-to-date paper
does a bit of Star-Squinting; so step
right into the astrologer's cavern, and
let me consult the stars with the won-
drous telescope that came all the way
from the grim and mysterious Peni
Bazaar.

HARRY WHARTON.—It is written
in the stars that he will pick me for the
match against Highcliffe. If he does
this, his future is painted in such glow-
ing colours that the eye simply can't
behold them. But if he leaves me out,
it were better for him that he had never
seen the light of day; for a slow death,
in the most excruciating agony, is the
best he can possibly hope for.

PUZZLE CORNER

There's a word of ONE syl-
lable, which means an illness.
Take away two letters, and you
get a word of TWO syllables,
also meaning an illness. What
is it?

Answer at foot of column 2.

HAROLD SKINNER.—He was born
under the sign of Sirius, and that's a
Sirius matter. He will come to a bad
end, and hasn't far to go. A dark-
haired fellow, who writes jolly good
poetry, will cross his path and give him
a black eye for putting gum in the dark-
haired one's fountain-pen, and if you
don't mind waiting a second, we'll see
if the stars are right. (P.S.—They
were!)

LORD MAULEVERER.—Was born
under the sign of Morpheus. Is there
still.

BOLSOVER MAJOR.—(Now, wait a
minute! You just say one word about
my face, that's all.—B. M.).—The stars
show a handsome, well-knit fellow, so
Bolsy can't blame THEM for his
features. (Yaroooh!)

P.S.—It is written in the stars that
the astrologer has been moved to the
Sanny.

This is not a laughing matter! What do you mean? What—"

Loder misunderstood, sir!" gasped Harry Wharton. "I remember now, we were talking about going to the island, when we passed him near the gates—"

"To the island?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"I said so, sir!" said Loder grimly. "I was too late to catch them there, and I had a rather—a rather awkward meeting with Sir Hilton Popper! As they were no longer on the island, he refused to believe—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!" rapped Mr. Quelch. "Wharton, if you were, in fact, discussing a visit to the island, it appears clear—"

"Not Popper's Island, sir!" gasped Harry.

"What! There is no other island in this vicinity! You do not mean the island in Pegg Bay, I presume, which is many miles out of bounds!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch sternly.

"Oh, no, sir! Farther off than that—"

"Farther!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

"Yes, sir! About sixteen thousand miles—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"An island in the Pacific, sir!" gurgled Bob Cherry.

"In the Pacific?" said Mr. Quelch, like a man in a dream. "What do you mean, Cherry? Are you venturing to jest with me?"

"Oh, no, sir! We were talking about the vac—we weren't going this afternoon—ha, ha!—we're going to an island in the holidays, sir, with Mauleverer—an island in the Pacific and—"

"The island of Kalua-alua-lalua—not Popper's Island—ha, ha, ha!"

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Quelch. "An—an—an island in the—the Pacific!"

"Yes, sir! We're going with Mauleverer—that's what we were talking about when we passed Loder, sir—ha, ha—"

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Quelch. Loder this passes all patience! After your ridiculous, your absurd mistake, with the French master, you overhear these boys discussing their arrangements for the vacation, and make another mistake still more ridiculous! Are you utterly stupid, Loder? Are you an idiot?"

Loder gurgled. He realised that he had put his foot in it again. He had bagged that whacking on Popper's Island for nothing—absolutely nothing—nothing but a "jaw" from Mr. Quelch.

"You may go, my boys," said the Remove master. "The matter is fully explained—please leave my study! Loder, kindly remain a few minutes."

Harry Wharton & Co., as they went grinning down the passage, did not

envy Gerald Loder those few minutes!

It was Loder's last shot. Break-up for the summer holidays followed—without Loder having brought those young sweeps, the Famous Five, to book! And they forgot all about Loder and all his works when they set their faces

Southward-Ho!—for the blue waters and coral-fringed islands of the Pacific.

THE END.

(Look out for the opening yarn of our grand summer series commencing in next Saturday's MAGNET.)



COME INTO the OFFICE BOYS—AND GIRLS!

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. Write to him: Editor of the "Magnet," The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

"HOW many vacations do Harry Wharton & Co. have during the course of a year?" asks Bob Mason, of Leicester. Three, chum. Easter, summer, and Christmas. And what's more, your old favourites break up for the summer vac this week! This year the chums of Greyfriars are booked for Kalua-alua-lalua—an island in the South Seas, and the property of Lord Mauleverer—a trip full of adventure and unknown perils. The opening yarn in this swift-moving and exciting series:

"SOUTH SEAS ADVENTURERS!"

is only a foretaste of what's in store for you during the next few weeks, chums. I won't spoil the yarn by telling you why Mauly and his schoolfellows are making this special visit, for it's one of those things that improve with the keeping. My advice is, however, do not miss it!

FRANK RICHARDS' SCHOOLDAYS!

Here's great news for you chums! A special feature of the stupendous new programme of stories just starting in our companion paper, the "Gem," is the first gripping yarn of a grand series dealing with the schooldays of our popular author. Frank Richards went to school in the backwoods of British Columbia, Canada and his adventures are full of fun and thrills. This is a school-story series that is out of the ordinary, and as it is written by Martin Clifford, a personal friend of Frank Richards, readers can look forward to a tip-top treat. Don't miss the fine opening yarn, "A Tenderfoot in Canada!" It appears in the "Gem," on sale Wednesday, July 20th, price 2d.

This week comes a query regarding our stories.

IS GREYFRIARS A REAL SCHOOL?

As a matter of fact, several readers have asked me this question of late. Well, the answer is that Mr. Frank Richards has modelled his stories upon a big Public school. The actual names are fictitious, but this popular author draws upon real life for his description of various characters—which is why they actually seem to live. So, although you cannot hope to go to Greyfriars under that name, you will find the counterparts of Harry Wharton & Co. in hundreds of schools in Great Britain.

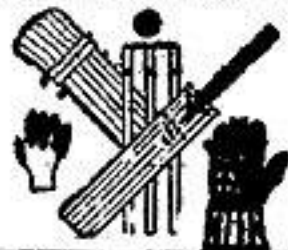
"How on earth did Billy Bunter manage to get into the Greyfriars Remove if he's such an ass as Mr. Frank Richards describes him?" is a question fired at me by another reader. My reply to this is: Sorry, chum, don't lay the blame on me. The fat porpoise is as artful as a wagonload of monkeys, as everybody knows! After all, there is such a thing as a "charity remove," isn't there? Perhaps that's how Bunter got into his present Form.

The next letter comes from A. Wallis, of Coventry, who wants to know if Mr. J. L. Sullivan, the famous boxer, was ever titled the heavy-weight champion of the world. Sullivan had the distinction of being the first champion of the world in a bare-knuckle fight. In 1889 he won the heavy-weight championship of America by beating Jake Kilrain at Richburg. He was defeated by Jim Corbett, September 7th, 1892, at New Orleans, in a twenty-three rounds contest for the world's heavy-weight championship.

That's about all for this week. Happy reading, chums!

YOUR EDITOR.

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WHEN ANSWERING ADVERTISEMENTS PLEASE
:: :: :: :: MENTION THIS PAPER. :: :: ::

DOCTOR BIRCHEMALL'S BOLD BID!

Another Laughable Instalment of
"MUTINY AMONG THE MASTERS!"

By DICKY NUGENT

"What price Lickham winning the kontest for the headmastership?" Jack Jolly, of St. Sam's, asked that question, as he and his chums wended their way towards the Fourth Form Room for morning classes; and there was a yell from Merry and Bright.

"Lickham? Not likely!"

"No such luck!" grinned Fearless. "As a matter of fact, I'd like to see him as Head, though I'd be sorry to lose him as our Form-master. But he duzzent stand an earthly."

"Even if the competi-

tion was only for branes, he'd be nowhere in it," said Merry, with a shake of his head. "But Sir Frederick Funguss said he would test the applicants for strength and curridge, too. So that rules out Lickham completely."

"Yes, I'm afraid you're right, old chap," admitted Jack Jolly, ruefully. "I expect some awful outsider like Caddish, the blackleg master, will win in the end. I hear he put his name down."

"Let's hoap he loses, anyway," snorted Frank Fearless, as he led the way into Jolly's study.

"I'd sooner have old Birchermall back than that raskal!"

"Thanks, Fearless, for those few kind words!" The chums of the Fourth started violently, as a familiar voice from within the study greeted them in this fashion.

"Doctor Birchermall!" they gasped.

The ex-headmaster of St. Sam's rose from the armchair, grinning all over his face.

"Good morning, boys!" he cried. "I

hoap I'm not introod-ing!"

"Not at all, sir!" gasped Jack Jolly. "But it's rather a surprise to see you, considering you've got the push!"

Doctor Birchermall winked.

"I am very hoapful, Jolly, that that will prove to be merely a passing phase—to be quickly forgotten when I resume my old accustomed role as head-master of St. Sam's!"

he grinned. "Keep it

dark, boys—but I have resolved to make a bold bid to recapture the honner!"

"The dickens you have, sir!"

"But mum's the word for the present, mind!" chuckled the ex-headmaster. "I want to spring a serprize on everybody at the last minnit. Twigg-voo?"

"We won't breathe a word, sir," larfed Jolly.

"But what are you doing here?"

"Ahem! Well, to tell you the truth, Jolly, I have come to ask you a slite favour," said Doctor Birchermall, with a coff.

"You may think it a strange whim on my part; but I want to disguise myself in a suit of armour!"

"What the merry dickens—"

"It sounds a little weerd, I know," grinned the Head. "But I must ask you to take my word for it that by helping me into the disguise which I have brought with me, you will be helping me to recapture the head-mastership. I am on my metal now; and before doing anything else, I want to get into a suit of armour!"

"Well, it sounds a commical idea to me, I must say," remarked Jolly. "But we'll help you. You've been a beestly rotter to us at times in the past. But we don't bear any mallis. Where's the armour?"

"Here you are, Jolly!" And Doctor Birchermall pointed to a suit of armour that lay strewn on the floor beside the armchair.

Grately puzzled by the Head's strange whim, the chums of the Fourth set about squeezing him into the armour. This was no easy task, for the armour had evidently been made for somebody much smaller than the long-legged Doctor Birchermall. But they managed it in the end, and the sacked head-master of St. Sam's seemed to be quite satisfied, as he gazed at his reflection in the mirror over the mantel-piece.

"Thanks awfully, boys!" he grinned.

"You had better run along to your Form-rooms now or you'll be late. Don't forget to keep it dark!"

"All serene, sir!"

And Jack Jolly & Co. picked up their books and rushed off to morning classes.

Doctor Birchermall waited for five minnits after their departure from the study and then he followed them.

"Safe snuff now, I fancy!" he grinned, as he trotted into the pass-idge. "I verybody will be in chas; by this time and I can get to the Guvverno's Room without the slitest danger of being spotted."

The ex-headmaster's forecast proved correct. He reached the Guvverno's Room without being seen by a sole. There he took his stand in a dark corner and pulled the visor of his helmet down over his face.

"Ha, ha! I bet the Guvverno's would have fifty fits if they knew I was whiting here to listen to all they say at their secret meeting!" he muttered to himself.

"But non of them will have the sl test suspishon that there is a yewman being inside this armour—let alone their old headmaste!"

Once again Doctor Birchermall's forecast proved uncannily correct. When the aged guvvernors of St. Sam's hobbled in a little later, not one of them gave more than a cursory glance at the suit of armour in the corner.

When they were all in their places, Sir Frederick Funguss stood on his hind legs and started the meeting; and if Jack Jolly & Co. had been there to hear what was said, they would no

longer have wondered why Doctor Birchermall had been so anxious to disguise himself.

The fact was, that the guvvernors had met to decide what questions were to be put to the applicants for the head-mastership in the Branes Test. Doctor Birchermall, with his usual cunning, had decided to make sure of passing the test by getting to know

them carefully in his memory!

The meeting broke up at last. By that time, the exam questions had been decided on in full detail. And Doctor Birchermall knew them all off by hart. He was as excited as a Second Form fag, as he trotted back to Jack Jolly's study to await release from his metalliek covering.

If you win the strength an' curridge tests as well as this test of brane-powah, then you shall have anothah chance as headmastah of St. Sam's!"

"Thanks, awfully, Sir Frederick!" grinned the ex-headmaster. "I haven't the slitest doubt that I shall come through with flying enllers! Here's hoaping!"

And he went to his place in the exam-room with a look of serene konfidence on his face.

(Birchy looks a safe bet for the "Branes Test." But how will he get on with the other tests? For the answer, read the rib-tickling instalment in next week's "Greyfriars Herald.")

the questions in advance!

"Jentlemen!" cried Sir Frederick. "We now commence the difficult task of deciding the examination questions. The aim bein' to test the brane powah of the applicants, the questions should be as tricky as possibul—propah brane-teasahs, in fact! Has anybody any suggestions to make?"

"I have!" grinned Colonel de Creppit. "Let's ask them what's two and six. The silly chumps will all say 'eight.' But the real answer will be 'half-a-crown'! Tricky, what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Toppin' ideah, by Jove!" chuckled Sir Frederick. "Any more wheezes?"

"I know a good one, you chaps!" cackled Sir Gouty Greybeard. "Ask them what London stands on. They'll all say 'On the River Thames.' But the right answer will be 'On the ground'! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the guvvernors.

Ideas rolled up in an unending stream after that. Sir Frederick noted them all in an exercise-book; and Doctor Birchermall, listening gleefully from within his tin suit, noted

UNCENSORED LETTERS

No. 5. From GEORGE WINGATE

Dear Governor,—First, about cricket. We won the match at St. Jude's by an innings and eight runs, and I scored 103 not out. How's that, umpire?

We certainly must have been in exceptionally good fettle. St. Jude's were at full strength and played quite well; but North, who took most of their wickets, was in absolutely deadly form. He played right up to first-class county standard all the way through. By the way, I bowled three of their men out myself.

I have put this first, as I know how keen you have been to see me make a success of cricket this term. In other directions, I have done my best, and I don't think it will prove a bad best, either. I had a strong hint from Mr. Prout that I have secured the Head's Prize for Latin Prose and I know I have done well in the exams. Finally, you will be glad to know that the Head sent for me yesterday and gave me quite a pat on the back for the way I have run school affairs during the past school year. So, altogether, governor, I don't think you will be able to say that I have let you down!

A skipper's job at a school like Greyfriars is not all honey, and when I look back on the past twelve months I realise that I have had my ups and downs.

There is always a tendency towards dingy amusement in certain quarters—often among Sixth Form men who should know better. It's no easy matter to stamp it out without running the risk of being called a dictator—which makes a chap unpopular among a much larger section of fellows than those affected. I think, however, that I have at any rate kept things well in hand, while preserving the good will of the majority; and that's something!

Be seeing you soon, governor! Love to all at home!

Your affectionate
GEORGE.

Answer to Correspondent

"Curious."—Is it true that Greyfriars fellows are reluctant to leave the school for the vac.?

Well, judging by the way chaps fight to get out of the crowd after the final Assembly, some of them certainly find it difficult to tear themselves "a way" from it.

When chased across a field by a bull one day last week, we are told that Gatty, of the Second, turned as white as a sheet.

With the exception of his hands, of course!

Strange, But True!

Coker of the Fifth claims that he has super-sight.

Yet Mr. Prout insists that he needs constant "super-vision"!

Quite Appropriate!

Loder threatens to engage a private detective to find out who upset a bottle of red ink over his carpet while he was out of the House.

He evidently thinks that a "study in scarlet" calls for the services of a Sherlock Holmes!

BUNTER IS A TUCK-DIVINER!

He's Marvellous!—Says BOB CHERRY

Bunter gave a display of tuck-divining this week that simply staggered Greyfriars.

This is no leg-pull, old pals, I mean it!

Of course, you've all heard of water-diviners—johnnies who go all goofy when they feel they're near water! Well, believe me, kids, water-diviners have got nothing on our Prize Porker. I watched it with my own eyes. It was marvellous!

Smithy is the chap we have to thank for this new and fascinating sidelight on Bunter. He had an argument with Skinner about Bunter's gift for finding tuck. Skinner said it was just low cunning. Smithy maintained that it was real magic—a supernatural phenomenon, as he put it!

To settle it, they agreed to put the matter to the test. Tuck was to be hidden in sundry unexpected places in the Remove passage and Bunter was to be blindfolded and allowed to roam about at his own sweet will. All the tuck he could find was to be his.

Just to make sure there was no cheating, Skinner took Bunter down to the tuckshop and plied him with jam-tarts while Smithy remained behind in the

Remove quarters and found hiding-places for the tuck. The rest of us helped Smithy.

You can take your Uncle Bob's word for it that we made it just as difficult as we could for the old Porpoise. Tuck was packed in sealed boxes up study chimneys, inside desks, under chairs, on top of tall cupboards and anywhere else where tuck had no right to be.

Skinner brought up Bunter at the agreed time and Smithy bandaged his eyes so that there was no possibility of the old bean seeing out of the corners. He turned him round three times, as in Blind Man's Buff, and let go.

Bunter stood still for a few ticks, pawing the air. And then, believe it or not, he rolled straight down the passage, walked unfalteringly into Smithy's study, climbed on to a chair and grabbed a basketful of tuck from the top of a cupboard that the Bouncer had thought right out of his range!

"I say, you fellows, I'm on the right track here, I fancy!" he gasped.

The funny thing about it was that Bunter seemed just as surprised as the rest of us. When Peter Todd accused him



of having found out all about it before he started, Bunter simply yelled protests.

"I didn't! Ask Smithy! Look here, Peter Todd, if you're trying to diddle me out of this tuck—"

"Well, have it your own way, then!" Toddy grinned. "You're one parcel of tuck to the good, anyway! Now try him again, Smithy!"

The Bouncer made doubly sure of Bunter's

eye-bandage and released him again.

Will you credit it, old pals, when I tell you that he walked right back to my own den and dived into a locker in which I had carefully hidden my modest store of grub!

Now I can answer for it that there was no deception in this case. I happened to be the only fellow who knew where the grub had been put.

And Bunter had walked to it blindfolded and yanked it out as though he had known all about it!

From that moment, I was convinced that we were watching giddy miracles. Afterwards, when the Porpoise unearthed tuck from Brown's chimney, Wharton's window-seat and Bolsover's desk, everyone else was convinced.

Quite seriously, it was an amazing performance—and a jolly disturbing one to some fellows, too!

Bunter was a big enough danger to tuck-owners, they argue, when he relied on mere cunning to find his eats. Now that he can fall back on magic, too, it won't be safe for a Remove man to keep tuck at all.

Personally, I don't look on it quite so pessimistically as that. My own opinion is that whatever happens in the future, the jolly old Porpoise can't possibly be any worse at tuck-snatching than he has been in the past!

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Your Editor Calling

As we go to press this week, the sole topic of conversation is the school sports, which are being held in two days' time.

We in the Remove have done very well at cricket this term; and we simply covered ourselves with glory in the swimming gala. So now we are all hoping to bring off a nice little hat-trick by bagging all the most important of the junior trophies in the sports!

It would be false modesty on my part if I said that we didn't stand an excellent chance of doing this. Nor should I be putting on side if I said that we are streets ahead of the other Forms in the Lower School—Shell included, if you like. The plain fact is that we are!

Getting down to it, I shall be very much surprised and even rather disgusted if we fail to wipe out the opposition almost completely. Still, there's many a slip 'twixt cup and lip; and I may be in for a shock. Over-confidence is never advisable in sport, anyway, and I am impressing on our fellows the importance of treating the opposition seriously—even though it doesn't seem to warrant it.

With Sports Day over, the athletic side of the Summer Term will be practically at an end and the summer vac. will be upon us.

Time marches on, chums—and my space is finished for this week!

Meet you again in next week's number!

HARRY WHARTON.