

**"THE BOUNDER'S LUCK!"** Extra-special yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars—INSIDE.

# The **MAGNET** 2<sup>D</sup>





LIKE A POW-POW? THEN,—



# Come Into the Office, Boys!

Always glad to hear from you, chums, so drop me a line to the following address: The Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House Farringdon Street, London, E.C.A.

**B**Y way of a change we'll kick off this week with a Greyfriars limerick for which Ernest Clarke, of 34, University Avenue, Belfast, Ireland, will receive one of our handsome prizes. Here it is:

Micky Desmond is OIrish, bedad!  
And, faith, he's a decent ould lad.  
At cricket he's great—  
His bowling's so straight—  
He mows down the wickets like mad!

On several occasions I have passed along to you some good dog stories which have been told to me, and here is a yarn of a dog's intelligence which certainly

## TAKES THE DOG BISCUIT!

Shortly after the outbreak of the Great War a Canadian regiment left their camp for France. With them went "Wolf," their mascot—a magnificent dog that was half-wolf, as its name implies. Some of the officers who were left behind imagined that this was the last they would ever see of Wolf. Nearly three months later, however, a half-starved and weary dog crept into the camp—which was situated in one of the wildest districts of Canada. It looked like Wolf, but the majority of the men in the camp were newcomers, and did not know the old mascot, which, by this time, was supposed to be in France with the regiment. The stray dog was given food and a place to sleep, and no one thought any more about it.

Next day, however, when the soldiers fell in, the stray dog fell in with them! Attempts were made to "shoo" the animal off, but it refused to go. Just then along came an officer, who recognised it as the dog which had left so long ago, and which was supposed to be in France. The first time the soldiers moved off with the band at their head, Wolf took up his old position, with the result that inquiries were made.

Believe it or not, the dog was Wolf! The authorities had refused to allow the animal to land in France, and it had been

taken back to Quebec. There it had sprung ashore, and no one knew what had become of it. And here is the most amazing thing: The camp was no less than two thousand miles away from Quebec!

Wolf had made that two thousand mile journey to his old camp, across all sorts of country, barren mountain land and vast prairies! But he had got home!

I think Wolf deserves the silver-mounted biscuit for long-distance wandering, don't you?

Here is

## ANOTHER GOOD DOG STORY

which was told me by the same officer who recognised Wolf. This time the dog was a mongrel which had attached itself to a body of British troops during the South African War. Ten British troopers were out scouting, and the dog had accompanied them. They tethered their horses, preparatory to going over rough country. Unknown to them, a body of four or five hundred Boers were lying in ambush, and before the ten Britishers knew what was happening, a hail of bullets was poured upon them, while the Boers rode all out to encircle them.

There was just one chance of escaping certain death. If they could reach their horses, mount, and ride away before the Boers could encircle them, all would be well. But the bullets had already caused terror amongst the horses. One of them broke loose and headed across the veld. That meant that one man, at least, could not escape. But the dog was on the spot!

He streaked after that horse like lightning! The reins were trailing in the dust, and the dog gave a leap, gripped the reins, and hung on like grim death! What with the weight of the dog, and the steady pull on the reins, the runaway was checked sufficiently to allow it to be caught, and the ten troopers rode the gauntlet of the Boers' fire, and escaped—with the dog racing alongside them! Needless to say, that mongrel dog found a home for the rest of his days with the

trooper whose life he had saved!

**I**F any of you fellows have a dog who has done anything out of the ordinary I'll be pleased to hear about it!

If, however, you can't spin a dog yarn, just send along a Greyfriars limerick, or a joke, and see if you can win one of the topping prizes I hand out, week by week. Here, for instance, is a "rib-tickler" which wins a splendid Sheffield steel pen-knife for Joe Tunnington, of 5, Edgware Mount, Bayswater Road, Leeds.

Tall Boy: "Garn! Fight you? Why, I could eat you!"



Small Boy: "Yes, and then you'd boast that you had more brains in your stomach than you have in your head!"



One of my Manchester readers tells me that he is cutting out all the titbits of information regarding

## WONDERS OF THE WORLD,

which I give you at odd intervals. He is pasting them all in a book which has already reached large proportions, and is now a veritable encyclopedia of interesting and almost unbelievable things. Well, here are a few more items of interest that you would hardly believe—but they are true!

**Fish That Carry Lanterns!** No light penetrates the sea below a depth of 1,350 feet, but there is a family of fish who actually carry lanterns in their heads to enable them to see at great depths! Known as "Lantern Fish," they are found in the Java Seas, and have large lighting organs below each eye. These "lanterns" throw a beam of light ahead, and enable them to see their prey and pursue it! They can "switch off" these curious lanterns whenever they wish to do so!

**Fish That Talk To Each Other!** Another fish that carries its own light is the Indian Wide-mouthed Fish, which is supplied with two lamps behind the eyes. One shows a red light, and the other green—similar to the lights carried by ships. By flashing first one and then the other of their curious lamps, it is believed that these fish can carry on a conversation with each other by means of light sign-language!

And here is another "fishy tale."  
**Undersea Fairy Lanterns!** The Deep Sea Squid is not content with two lanterns. It is a veritable underwater Brock's Benefit, for it carries no less than twenty-four coloured lamps upon it!

Many other fish carry lights, including the Hatchet Fish and the Angler Fish!

**I** AM afraid that is all the space I have to spare this week. Look out for some answers to queries in next week's MAGNET. In the same issue, you will also find

"BILLY BUNTER'S VENGEANCE!"  
By Frank Richards.

It is the latest and greatest yarn from the versatile pen of this clever author, and it will hold your interest from start to finish. There is a treat in store for you when you commence this first-class yarn, and you'll feel like kicking yourself if you miss it.

There'll also be further rattling fine chapters of Hedley Scott's air war yarn, "Kings of War"—and the usual shorter features.

Take my tip, chums, and order your copy in advance from your newsagent. It will save you from going from one newsagent to another, and being told they are all "sold out!"  
YOUR EDITOR.

## HURRAH! HURRAH!!

# 10,000 TOPPING GIFTS FOR READERS!

See next week's MAGNET for full details, and then make up your mind to win one of these fine prizes.



# THE BOUNDER'S LUCK!



Greyfriars without Vernon-Smith would be like the Fifth of November without fireworks. . . But only by the narrowest of margins does the Bounder escape saying "good-bye" to Greyfriars for all time!

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### A Little Rag!

**B**ANG!

It was the lid of a desk shutting suddenly with a report like a pistol-shot.

Monsieur Charpentier, the French master at Greyfriars jumped.

"So sorry, sir!" said Skinner blandly.

"Quite an accident, sir."

The juniors grinned.

"Accidents" of that kind were of frequent occurrence in the junior French sets.

Nobody at Greyfriars disliked Monsieur Charpentier. Everybody, in fact, liked him more or less. Nevertheless, he was the most thoroughly "ragged" master in the school.

Remove fellows never ventured to rag their own Form master, Mr. Quelch. They would almost as soon have twisted a tiger's tail. But they found "Mossoo" easy game.

That accident with the lid of Skinner's desk, which had made the sensitive and nervy little French gentleman jump almost clear of the floor, would have earned Skinner a hundred lines from Quelch.

But Mossoo never punished a fellow if he could help it. It was always easy to pull Mossoo's leg.

"Skinnair! You should be more careful viz you!" said Monsieur Charpentier. "Zat noise, he make me spring."

Bang!

It was the lid of Bolsover major's desk this time.

"Mon Dieu!" ejaculated Monsieur Charpentier. "Bolsover, zat you be more careful!"

"Quite an accident, sir!" said Bolsover major.

Bang!

"Snoop! Vy you make zat terrible noise?" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier.

"An accident, sir!" said Snoop, grinning.

"He, he, he!" came from Billy Bunter, at the back of the class.

Bang, bang, bang, bang!

Lid after lid banged down on the desks with a din like machine-gun fire.

"Silence!" exclaimed Monsieur Charpentier. "Taisez-vous! Zat you stop! Mon Dieu! On en a assez! Zat you be silent!"

Bang, bang, bang!

The Removites were quite enjoying themselves. They had had first school that morning with Mr. Quelch, and had been as good as gold. Second school being French with Mossoo, they were "taking it out" of him, as it were. There was no doubt that Mossoo was a relief after Quelch.

Lids of desks banged right and left.

Thoughtful fellows, who could feel for a kindhearted and timid little gentleman who did not know how to manage boys, forbore to join in the rag. But these thoughtful fellows were in a minority in the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars. Quite a small minority, in fact.

Quite nice fellows, who meant no harm in the world, enjoyed a rag. And a rag was ever so much more entertaining than French.

Even Bob Cherry, the kindest hearted fellow in the Form, lifted the lid of his desk for a terrific crash.

Harry Wharton caught his arm.

"Chuck it, Bob, you ass!" he whispered.

"Only keeping the pot boiling old bean!" grinned Bob.

"Don't, fathead! Mossoo's getting wild!"

"Well, he's jolly funny, dancing about like a hen on hot bricks!"

"Chuck it, I tell you!"

"Oh, all right!" said Bob resignedly. And that crash, which would have been the loudest of all, was omitted from the programme.

"Not the thing, old fellow!" murmured Frank Nugent. "Poor old Mossoo will be weeping soon."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bang, bang, bang!

Monsieur Charpentier was not exactly dancing like a hen on hot bricks, as Bob described it. But he was undoubtedly getting into a state of high excitement.

Even Mossoo could not believe that all this banging of desks was accidental. Moreover, he had been through it before.

"Zat you be silent viz you!" hooted Mossoo. "Ze next garcon zat make one noise viz one desk, I punish him!"

Bang!

"Todd! You are one bad garcon, Todd!"

"Oh, sir!" said Peter Todd.

"You hear vat I say! I punish you, Todd!"

"Oh, sir, is that fair?" asked Peter. "You didn't punish Skinner and Bolsover and Russell and Ogilvy and—"

"Assez!" gasped Mossoo.

Peter's argument would have earned him "six" with Quelch—if Peter had ventured to argue with Quelch! Quelch knew how to handle boys, and he knew that if a master admitted argument, that



master might as well say farewell to authority.

But poor Mossoo was open to argument. He was terribly afraid of being unjust.

"But, sir," persisted Peter, with an injured, martyr-like expression. "You didn't punish Snoop and Wibley and Bull—"

"Assez!" shrieked Mossoo.

"Mr. Quelch never calls us names in class, sir!" said Peter.

"Vat! Vat you say, Todd?"

Peter Todd was perfectly well aware that "assez" was French for "enough." But he chose to misunderstand. Fellows often did choose to misunderstand when they were dealing with the hapless Mossoo.

"I think I ought to point out, sir, that Mr. Quelch never calls us names," said Peter. "He never calls a fellow an ass, sir."

"Never, sir!" said Johnny Bull, shaking his head. "I don't think the Head would like it, sir."

"The likefulness would not be terrific, esteemed sahib!" declared Hurrce Jamsot Ram Singh. "It is not the proper caper to call a person an esteemed ass, sir!"

Monsieur Charpentier waved his hands wildly.

"Taisez-vous! I do not call you one ass! Zat is a zing I nevair say! Jamais! I say to you, assez!"

"Very well, sir, if you choose to call me an ass, I can't help it, sir," said Peter. "But Mr. Quelch never uses such words in class, sir."

"He never calls a fellow a donkey, sir," said Bob Cherry.

"I do not say donkey!" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier. "Ven I say assez, I say assez, I do not say one ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Vill you not understand, Todd?"

"Yes, sir. I understand that you're calling me names, sir—"

"I call you nozzing! I say to you, assez, which is enoff!" shrieked Monsieur Charpentier. "Todd, I do not zink zat you do not understand. I zink you choke viz me—you pull me ze jambe—zat is, ze leg. You say vun more vord, and I send you to Mr. Quelch!"

Peter did not say one more word. Peter was a past-master in the art of ragging, and he knew when he had reached danger-point.

"Zat you keep ordair in zis class!" gasped Mossoo. "You are here to learn viz me ze French—"

"I don't think!" murmured Skinner.

"Vat—vat you say, Skinnair?"

"I said it's so nice to learn French with you, sir."

"I do not zink zat is vat you say, Skinnair!"

"Oh, yes, sir! Sncop heard me—"

"Oh, yes, sir!" said Snoop. "Skinner said it was so nice to learn French with you, sir—"

"I heard him, sir!" said Bolsover major. "He said it's so nice to learn French with you, sir—"

"His very words, sir," chimed in Stott. "He said—"

"Silence! Taisez-vous!" roared Monsieur Charpentier. "You talk to vaste ze time. On en a assez! Zat zere is no more of zis! Ze next boy zat speak, or make one noise, I send him to Mr. Quelch to be beat viz a cane!"

Bang!

It was Billy Bunter's desk-lid that banged this time.

That was like Bunter.

Every other fellow in the French set realised that Mossoo had now been ragged into a state of fury, and that it

was time to give him a rest, lest worse should befall.

But it was said of old that fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

Bunter, with a fat grin, banged his desk. It was the last straw; and the hapless Owl of the Remove had to pay scot-and-lot for all.

"Buntair! Stand out before ze class, Buntair! Aftair zat I say, you make one fearful noise viz a desk! Zat you stand out, Buntair!"

"Oh, really, sir—" gasped Bunter.

"Venez!" shrieked Mossoo. "Come!"

"I—I never banged my desk, sir—I mean, it was an accident. I—I wasn't ragging, sir. I say—"

Monsieur Charpentier whisked round to Bunter. He grasped the fat Owl by the collar, and jerked him out of the class. There was a yell from Billy Bunter.

"Yaroooooh!"

"Isn't it like that fat chump to beg for it?" murmured Bob Cherry.

"I—I say, sir—I—I didn't—I—I wasn't— Ow! Leggo!" howled Bunter.

Monsieur Charpentier hooked the fat Owl to the door. With his free hand, he threw the door open. Mossoo was going to make an example; and Bunter was going to be the example. There was no doubt that he had asked for it.

"Zere!" gasped Mossoo. "You allez—you go to Mr. Quelch, and you say I send you for ze cane! Allez-vous-en!"

"Oh crikey! Owl!"

Billy Bunter was pushed into the passage. The door banged after him.

Monsieur Charpentier returned to his class, breathing hard and deep, his eyes glinting.

He was ready for more trouble. But he certainly was not prepared for the shock that greeted him when he opened his own desk for the first time that morning.

"Mon dieu!" The French master gasped with amazement, and jumped back about two feet; for as he raised the lid of his own desk, a large toad sprang out.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A roar of laughter echoed round the Remove Form at the unexpected sight, but Mossoo, now thoroughly enraged, subdued it with an imperious wave of his pointer.

"Silence with you, you bad garçons!" he almost shrieked. "Zis is what you call ze practical joke! I vill have no more of zis, garçons! Do you hear me? Ze next garçon who causes any more trouble will follow Buntair to Mr. Quelch's study!"

But there was no more trouble. Nobody wanted to follow Bunter to Quelch's study. Skinner, in particular, was a model pupil now, for he had placed the toad in Mossoo's desk, but he was anxious that that fact should remain undiscovered now that the joke was over. It was ten minutes, at least, before a fellow ventured to drop a French grammar with a crash to the floor, and two or three other fellows fell over one another in their haste to pick it up.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Bunter Takes the Call!

"**B**EAST!" murmured Billy Bunter disconsolately.

Bunter was standing in the study of his Form master, Henry Samuel Quelch.

Quelch was not there.

It was a relief, in a way, to find Quelch

absent. Billy Bunter did not want to "bend over." He hated bending over.

Still, it had to come! The sooner it was over the better, if it had to come. It was distinctly rotten to have to wait for it.

But that had its advantages, too. The longer Bunter had to wait for Quelch, the more he would miss of the French lesson!

Looking at it from that point of view, Bunter found consolation. He hated French, of course. Not so much as he hated Latin, and not nearly so much as he loathed "maths." Still, it was a branch of knowledge; and Billy Bunter had a rooted objection to the acquisition of any kind of knowledge. Bunter had never taken the view that fellows came to school to learn things. Certainly Bunter was not at school for that purpose—if he could help it.

On the whole, Bunter was glad that Quelch wasn't there. The licking would be no worse when it came later; and in the meanwhile he was getting out of French. He took a comfortable seat in Mr. Quelch's armchair—with a watchful eye on the door, ready to jump up if his Form master appeared.

He wondered where Quelch was.

Not being occupied with his Form, he had expected to find Quelch in his study, where Monsieur Charpentier supposed him to be. Getting Latin papers, or some other form of torture, ready for the Remove in third school, most likely. But he was not there; and Bunter sat and waited.

He remembered having heard that Mr. Quelch was expecting a friend to visit him—a gentleman whom he had known in France in the ancient days before the War. Billy Bunter, who heard many things that did not concern him, had heard Quelch speaking to Mr. Prout about it. He remembered Quelch had said something about seeing the House-dame that morning about preparing a room for the visitor, who was to stay two or three days. No doubt that was how Quelch was now engaged, being free from his Form for an hour.

The longer Mr. Quelch was thus engaged, the better William George Bunter would be pleased. He found Mr. Quelch's study armchair more comfortable than the hard oak form in the French class-room.

Bunter was prepared to wait till the end of the French lesson if necessary. In fact, he was rather keen to wait till the end of the French lesson.

Minute followed minute. Quelch did not arrive. Possibly he was still in consultation with the House-dame; giving careful attention to the selection of quarters for his expected guest. Anyhow, he did not come to the study.

Buzzzzzz!

It was the telephone bell.

Billy Bunter started.

Mr. Quelch's telephone was ringing almost at his fat ear.

Buzzzz!

Bunter grabbed the receiver from the hooks without stopping to think. Quelch would hear that raucous buzz, or somebody would hear it and tell him, and that would bring him to the study. Obviously, from Bunter's point of view, it was better to stop the telephone bell at once.

After all, it was easy enough to tell the caller that Quelch wasn't there, and wasn't expected back. This might cause some trouble for Quelch, if it happened to be an important call. But it would not cause trouble for Bunter; and that, of course, was all that mattered.



"Hallo!" said Bunter, into the instrument.

"Allo!" came back over the wires. "Is zat mon ami Quelch?"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bunter. The voice on the telephone was speaking English that had a strong family resemblance to Monsieur Charpentier's.

Evidently it was the visitor whom Mr. Quelch was expecting that day. Bunter already knew that the expected visitor was a French gentleman.

"Who—who's speaking?" stammered Bunter.

"C'est moi—Gaston Sarrail, mon vieux," came the reply. "Mon bon Quelch, it vill be one large pleasure to see you once more, apres vingt ans—

is verree comfortable! Yes! I make some verree nice English friends already! Ze English, I find zem verree amiable."

"Silly ass!" murmured Bunter. Evidently it was a rather effusive French gentleman.

"I look out ze trains," went on Monsieur Sarrail. "A friend I make in zis hotel—a friend very amiable—he help me to understand zem. So it is all right, Quelch. I zink I reach ze ecole—ze school—in time to lunch viz my old friend. Vat?"

Monsieur Sarrail had rung up to tell Mr. Quelch that he would arrive at the school in time for lunch. Some chance acquaintance at the hotel had put him

speaking, Quelch. Zis is vat you call a call of ze trunk, and soon I am out off."

"The—the fact is—" said Bunter, speaking into the transmitter at last.

"Is zat my old friend Quelch zat speak?"

"No! Oh, no! Mr. Quelch has gone out!" stammered Bunter.

"Mon Dieu!" "He—he's been—been called away, and—and won't be back till—the afternoon."

Bunter considered this safe. If the beast supposed that Quelch would not be back till the afternoon, he would not ring up again while Bunter was in the study, at all events.

"Helas!" came Monsieur Sarrail's



"You are not bound to give me away, sir," said Vernon-Smith coolly. "It's not cricket!" "Zat is verree true," assented the French gentleman. "But let zere be none of zis foolshness. Zrow zat silly cigarette away, mon garcon, and make up ze brain to act in ze sensible manner, n'est-ce-pas?"

after twenty years, mon ami! Enfin, I have made zat journey zat I so often zink of, and now I have cross La Manche! I speak from Londres—from ze hotel where I sleep one night."

"Beast!" murmured Billy Bunter.

Billy Bunter had never, of course, seen Monsieur Gaston Sarrail; nobody at Greyfriars had ever seen him, except Mr. Quelch, who apparently had not seen him for twenty years. But Bunter had no doubt that he was a beast. His experiences with Monsieur Charpentier that morning had fed Bunter up with Froggies.

This beast had to ring up from London, at a moment when it was most inconvenient for Billy Bunter! Just as if he was doing it to annoy Bunter!

"Vous coutez?" went on the voice. "You hear me, Quelch? I have one good crossing of La Manche—ze Channel—hier—yesterday. Ze hotel, he

wise to the mysterious meanings of English railway time-tables.

Bunter hesitated over the telephone.

He was well aware that he ought to have asked the French gentleman to hold the line while he called Mr. Quelch.

But between what Bunter ought to have done, and what he generally did, there was a great gulf fixed.

He did not want to call Mr. Quelch. He did not want to see Mr. Quelch till the latest possible moment.

What Bunter wanted was the only thing that mattered. Billy Bunter had no doubt about that.

It was useless to ring off. The beast would only suppose that he was cut off, and would ring again.

Bunter had to "shoo" him off somehow.

"Mais, I do not hear you mon ami," went on Gaston Sarrail. "Please to

voice. "Zen I cannot speak to my old friend Quelch telephoniquement. Is it zat he will not return until ze apres-midi?"

"That's it," said Bunter cheerfully. "He's expected back early in the afternoon."

"Verree well! Zen I vill not come zia morning to lunch if my old friend is absent viz himself. You will please tell Monsieur Quelch zat I come in ze afternoon."

"Oh, certainly!" grinned Bunter.

Bunter was not likely to mention that telephone call to Mr. Quelch, but he did not intend to tell the French gentleman so.

"Je vous remercie—I zank you," came the voice, and the French gentleman in the London hotel rang off.

Billy Bunter replaced the receiver on the hooks.



There was a fat grin on his podgy visage as he settled down in Mr. Quelch's armchair again.

Bunter considered that he had handled this matter rather well. Possibly Mr. Quelch might have liked his old pal from Paris to arrive for lunch, but Bunter could not help that. Bunter had shut him off, and he was not likely to start the telephone-bell buzzing again. And that was that!

And as the minutes passed Bunter had more and more reason to be satisfied with his masterly strategy.

There was a tramping of feet in the passages, and a buzz of voices in the quadrangle.

Second lesson was over, and the fellows were going out for break.

Bunter detached himself from Mr. Quelch's armchair.

The Remove master had not come to his study, and Bunter felt that a fellow could not be expected to wait for him longer. Now that second lesson was over there was, indeed, no reason for longer waiting. With luck, the fat Owl might be able to miss the interview entirely.

He rolled out of his Form master's study, and rolled away cheerily into the quad.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### A Moving Job!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry, as he came swinging along the Remove passage, stopped and stared in at the door of Study No. 4.

Ever since the beginning of term that door had been closed and locked; now it was open.

Study No. 4 in the Remove belonged to Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder

of Greyfriars, and his chum Tom Redwing. They had not come back yet for the new term, Redwing having been laid up, and the Bounder having had leave to stay with him. Mr. Quelch, having discovered that the deserted study was used as a rendezvous for surreptitious smokers, had locked it and taken away the key. Now the door stood wide open, and the study had a newly swept and tidied look.

Bob remembered that the Bounder was coming back that day, but he was not expected till the afternoon, so the study should not have been occupied yet.

But it was occupied. A fat figure occupied it. Billy Bunter blinked at Bob through his big spectacles.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" repeated Bob. He had come up to the Remove passage to fetch something from his study, but he paused to stare in at Bunter, wondering what the fat Owl was up to in Smithy's room. When the bounder was there, Study No. 4 was a land flowing with milk and honey, so to speak, but in Smithy's absence there was nothing to attract Bunter. "What are you up to in Smithy's study, you fat sweep?"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I say, you've come up just when I want somebody," said the fat Owl. "Will you lend me a hand moving my things?"

"Eh? What things?"

"From Study No. 7, you know, into my new study!" answered Bunter, with dignity.

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob. "Smithy's coming back to-day," explained Bunter. "He will be in class with the Remove this afternoon. From what I hear, Redwing isn't coming back for a few days yet. He's going home, or something. He's been ill, or something—or something or other. — But

Smithy will be back to-day. That's why the study has been opened. He will be rather pleased to find me in the study, what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob.

If Billy Bunter fancied that any fellow would be pleased to find him in his study, it showed that Billy Bunter had a fertile fancy.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at," said Bunter, blinking at him. "I suppose Smithy would rather have me than Redwing."

"Oh, my hat!"

"I'm fed-up with Toddy in Study No. 7," said Bunter. "Toddy's mean. You'd hardly believe, old chap, that Toddy tea'd out yesterday, and there was nothing for tea in the study. He never thinks of a fellow when he teas out. After all I've done for him, you know! Well, I'm done with Toddy now. He can see how he gets on without me!"

"Hard cheese on Toddy!" grinned Bob.

"Well, serve him right!" said Bunter. "He's ungrateful. I've told him a good many times I'd change out, and he made out that he didn't care. Now he can jolly well make the best of it!"

"If he has tears, he had better prepare to shed them now!" chuckled Bob.

"But hadn't you better wait and ask Smithy before you cross the jolly old Rubicon? It's barely possible that Smithy mayn't want you in his study."

Billy Bunter winked—a fat wink.

"That's all right," he said. "A fellow can pick any study at the beginning of term. You know that. I'm within my rights. Smithy's bound to like it, of course. But if he doesn't like it he can lump it, see? He, he, he!"

"You fat bounder—"

"I should have taken this study earlier, only—"

"Only it was no use without Smithy here to stand tea in it?" suggested Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Look here, you fat ass," said Bob, "Smithy isn't the man to stand it. He's captain of the Remove now, too. Better think again before you try to land yourself on Smithy."

"I don't know what you mean about landing myself on Smithy," said Bunter, with dignity. "A chap like you might do it, because Smithy's rich—"

"Eh?"

"But not a fellow like me, I hope. I'm taking this study because a fellow has a right to; and if Smithy cuts up rusty, I shall speak to Quelch, of course. House rules are House rules," said Bunter. "A fellow's rights are a fellow's rights. Besides, Smithy will be glad to have me, especially as Redwing isn't coming back yet. When Redwing comes back I shall suggest to him to go to Study No. 7. Toddy is welcome to him, and he's welcome to Toddy. Smithy and I will get on all right. Two wealthy fellows, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't cackle!" said Bunter crossly. "Look here, help me get my things along from Study No. 7. Smithy mayn't believe that it's really my study if my things aren't in it."

"It isn't your study, you fat villain!" said Bob. "House rules don't mean that you can bag a man's study because he's kept away through his pal being ill. Get out of it!"

"Yah!"

Billy Bunter evidently had no intention of getting out. So far as the House rules went he was within his rights. Fellows generally bagged their old studies for a new term if they wanted them, but it was an undoubted fact that

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an empty study could be bagged by any fellow who took a fancy to it. Mr. Quelch, if appealed to, could hardly refuse to uphold the rule, and in this case, as Bunter was aware, he was little likely to favour the Bounder unduly. More than a week of the new term had elapsed, and Smithy had not come back, and that kind of thing was irritating to the Remove master. Redwing, of course, had to stay away, as he was laid up with a severe and lingering cold. But there was no reason, in Mr. Quelch's opinion, why Smithy should stay away, too.

The Head had given leave for Smithy to stay by the bedside of a sick friend. No doubt it was rather meritorious of Smithy, in a way, to want to do so. But perhaps Mr. Quelch had a suspicion that Smithy had more than one motive for his devotion to his chum. It was barely possible that Smithy was glad to prolong his Easter holidays and keep away from lessons till the latest possible date.

Mr. Quelch knew only too well that lessons did not have that attraction for many fellows that they ought to have had.

All the Remove knew that Quelch was not pleased by Vernon-Smith's absence.

In the circumstances, Billy Bunter sagely considered that Quelch was far from likely to stretch a point in the Bounder's favour. He was really more likely to stretch one in Bunter's favour—in the circumstances.

Bob Cherry understood that quite well. Instead of passing along up the passage, he came into Study No. 4.

"You want me to help you move, Bunter?" he asked.

"Yes, old chap," said Bunter, "I've asked Toddy, and he was simply ill-bred on the subject."

"Well, I'm a good-natured chap," said Bob. "I'll help you to move."

"Good!"

Bob grinned. He intended to help Bunter to move. But he did not mean what Bunter meant.

"I dare say Smithy would help you to move same as I'm going to, if you left it till he got back," he remarked.

"Um! I'm not sure about that," said Bunter. "Smithy's got rather a beastly temper, you know; and if he's in one of his tantrums he might cut up rusty. You never know with Smithy! Better have it what the French call a fatal company, you know."

"A—a what? Oh, a fait accompli—a jolly old accomplished fact! I see! Smithy's to find you fixed in the study—and if he cuts up rusty, you're going to bring Quelch into it—and as Quelch is rather huffy with the Bounder for keeping away so long, you think it's a sure thing! It doesn't occur to you that you're a calculating little fat beast?" asked Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"All the same, I'm sure Smithy would help you to move, if he found you here," said Bob, with a chuckle. "But if you'd rather not wait for Smithy, we'll get on with the moving job at once."

"I'm waiting—"

"I won't keep you waiting, old fat bean! I'll help you to move."

"I say—yaroooh—leggo my ear!" yelled Bunter, in surprise and wrath. "What the thump are you up to?"

"Helping you to move!" explained Bob.

"You silly ass!" shrieked Bunter. "I meant—"

"Never mind what you meant—it's what I mean that matters. I'm jolly well going to help you to move."

Bunter moved!

He moved quite quickly, with a grip like a steel vice on his fat ear. Bob

Cherry jerked his ear to the door. Bunter did not want to go to the door. But his ear went; and Bunter had to go with his ear—or else part with it, which was not to be thought of. He went.

Still with a vice-like grip on his ear, Bob slewed him round in the doorway. Billy Bunter gave a howl of apprehension.

He guessed what was coming next.

He guessed right!

Thud!

"Yaroooh!"

One of the largest sizes in boots in the Remove landed on the tightest trousers at Greyfriars School.

Billy Bunter flew.

"Oh crumbs! Oh crikey! Oh jiminy!" Billy Bunter rolled and roared. "Ow! Beast! Wow! Rotter! I say—yaroooh!"

"What on earth's that game?" asked Harry Wharton, coming up the Remove passage.

"I'm helping Bunter to move!" explained Bob Cherry. "He's bagged Smithy's study, and he asked me to help him move. I'm helping him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Move on, Bunter—"

"Ow! Beast! Yaroooh! Leave off kicking me!" yelled Bunter. "I'm jolly well going to have that study—I'll go to Quelch—I'll—yaroooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Whoop! If you kick me again, you beast, I'll—yarroooh!"

"Better move, Bunter!" chuckled Wharton.

"Ow! Oh crikey! Ow! Wow!"

Billy Bunter moved! He scrambled up on his fat little legs and fairly raced along the Remove passage. Bob Cherry bawled after him.

"Call on me next time you want help in moving, Bunter! I'll help you any old time."

"Beast!" floated back from the Remove staircase.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter was gone. If he was still thinking of moving into Smithy's study, he was leaving it till Bob Cherry was no longer on the spot to help him in the moving job.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### Trouble!

"O LD Popper!" murmured Frank Nugent.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Blow!"

The gentleman to whom Frank Nugent alluded rather irreverently as "old Popper" was striding along the towpath by the Sark. Although commonly he was referred to as "old Popper" his full style and title was Sir Hilton Popper, of Popper Court, Baronet of the United Kingdom.

Harry Wharton & Co. came to a halt.

The Famous Five had rambled out after dinner for a harmless and necessary trot along the river till the bell rang for school.

Rambling along the towpath was certainly a very harmless occupation; nevertheless, the sudden sight of Sir Hilton Popper, of Popper Court, was disconcerting.

Sir Hilton was a governor of Greyfriars School; and he took his duties as a governor of the school with awful seriousness. He had the advantage of living quite near Greyfriars—which was not an advantage in the opinion of Dr. Locke. Like most headmasters, Dr. Locke preferred governors at a distance.

The chums of the Remove had rambled rather far, and they were, as a matter of fact, out of school bounds. They had

reached the part of the towpath which ran under the fence of the Three Fishers; a far from delectable resort on the river, frequented by company that was very far from delectable. Certainly, the juniors had no intention of entering the place, which was strictly out of bounds for all Greyfriars fellows, both junior and senior. It was a place well known to Herbert Vernon-Smith and Skinner and other fellows who found amusement in "blagging" on the strict Q.T. But the tastes of the Famous Five did not run in that direction.

Still, they were outside school bounds; and the eye of Sir Hilton Popper, gleaming through Sir Hilton's eyeglass, was upon them. Johnny Bull gave an angry grunt.

"This means a report to Quelch!" he said. "Why can't that old ass mind his own business?"

"Echo answers why?" said Bob Cherry.

"The whyfulness is terrific," said the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Bother him!" said Harry Wharton.

"Blow him!" said Nugent.

The Famous Five waited for Sir Hilton to come up. They knew that he knew that they were out of bounds. In their opinion, "old Popper" had no right to know anything about school bounds; it really was no business of his. Neither, in their opinion, had he any right to butt in, anyhow. Unluckily, it was not their opinion, but Sir Hilton Popper's, that mattered.

"Huh!" Sir Hilton began, with a bark. "Greyfriars boys, I think!"

Sir Hilton knew perfectly well that they were Greyfriars boys; he had seen the Famous Five a good many times. Indeed, it was said that he knew every Greyfriars fellow by sight. In the opinion of Greyfriars men generally, he took an altogether undue interest in the school of which he was one of the governors.

The Famous Five capped him politely. They had a faint hope of "getting by" with politeness. Certainly, wandering out of bounds along the river was not an awful offence; but a report to their Form master meant trouble. Quelch loathed interference from Sir Hilton Popper, of which he had had too much. It was probable, therefore, that he might give the schoolboys what he would easily have preferred to give Sir Hilton, had it been practicable.

"Yes, sir!" said Harry Wharton, with his politest smile.

"What are you doing here?"

"Just walking along the river, sir! It's a—a nice day for a walk, sir! Beautiful weather—"

Grunt, from Sir Hilton. Evidently he did not intend to discuss the weather; and he seemed to have no use for politeness.

"You are out of school bounds!" he rapped.

"We're allowed to come as far as this on a half-holiday, sir!" said Bob.

"Is this a half-holiday?"

"Nunno!"

"Then what do you mean?" rapped Sir Hilton.

Bob made no reply to that. He could not explain that he meant that he hoped Sir Hilton would shut up and mind his own business.

"I find you here," said Sir Hilton, "almost at the gate of a low resort—a disreputable resort!"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob.

The juniors had hardly noticed that they were passing the Three Fishers. Certainly they had given the place no attention, and were not thinking of it.



But it dawned on them that Sir Hilton was suspicious. He scanned them with his sharp eyes from under his shaggy, grey brows.

"We were passing the place, Sir Hilton," said Harry Wharton, compressing his lips a little. "I suppose you don't imagine that we were going in."

"Do not be impertinent, boy!"

"It is you that are impertinent, sir, if you suggest that we were going into that den!" answered Wharton coolly.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob.

Sir Hilton Popper glared at Wharton.

"What!" he ejaculated. "What did you say? How dare you! I shall report this to your Form master!"

Sir Hilton looked for a moment as if he would take the matter into his own hands. The juniors backed away a little as he grasped his stick. They would have been quite pleased to roll Sir Hilton down the bank into the Sark. But ragging a governor of the school was not practical politics; it was one of those happy things that might be dreamed of, but could never be done.

"I think it very likely," barked Sir Hilton, "that I have caught you as you were about to enter that disreputable place. Only last week I saw a boy in a Greyfriars cap leaving that very place, though, unfortunately, I was too far off to recognise him. A boy of about your age—a Greyfriars junior—one of you probably!"

"Rot!" said Johnny Bull.

Sir Hilton jumped.

"What?" he roared.

"Rot!" repeated Johnny Bull stolidly.

"Good gad!"

It was rather a new experience for Sir Hilton Popper to hear his remarks described as "rot." There were few people who ventured to tell the lord of Popper Court these disagreeable truths.

His fiery eye almost popped through his eyeglass as he glared at Johnny Bull. His grip fastened harder on his stick.

"The rotfulness is terrific," added Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Hear, hear!" grinned Bob Cherry.

The Famous Five had quite given up the idea of "getting by" with politeness. Politeness was wasted on the lord of Popper Court.

As a matter of fact, they were aware of the identity of the Greyfriars junior whom Sir Hilton had nearly spotted at the Three Fishers. Skinner of the Remove had told of his narrow escape in the Rag. Certainly the delinquent had not been a member of the Famous Five. Sir Hilton breathed hard.

"So that—that is how you address a governor of the school!" he exclaimed. "We shall see—we shall see! I shall now take you back to the school—I shall take you personally—"

"You won't!" answered Wharton.

"Wha-a-at?"

"Come on, you men!" said Harry. "It's time we got back. Trot!"

The Famous Five swung round and started back along the towpath. They went at a trot. They had no intention whatever of being marched back to Greyfriars under the personal supervision of Sir Hilton Popper.

"Stop!" roared Sir Hilton.

"The stopfulness will not be terrific," grinned the Nabob of Bhanipur. "Put it on fully, my esteemed and ridiculous chums."

Sir Hilton's long legs whisked at a rapid rate as he strode after the juniors. He covered the ground quickly. But he was altogether too dignified a gentleman to run—and the fastest walker

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could not have kept pace with the trotting schoolboys. Fast as he strode, Sir Hilton Popper was left behind.

His brow was thunderous as he strode on. Merely a vague suspicion of the juniors had been in his mind when he spotted the Famous Five close to the gate of the Three Fishers. Now it had turned into a certainty. His angry irritation made him certain. It was not logical, but it was like Sir Hilton Popper. He strode on to Greyfriars, determined to lose no time in bringing those reckless young rascals to account.

But he was out of sight behind when Harry Wharton & Co. trotted in at the school gates. Ten minutes later they saw him come in and stride across to the House.

"Now the jolly old fat's in the fire!" growled Bob Cherry.

"Bother him!" growled Johnny Bull.

Billy Bunter rolled out of the House and blinked round through his big spectacles. He grinned at the Famous Five and rolled over to them.

"I say, you fellows, you're wanted!" grinned Bunter.

"Br-r-r-r!"

"Quelch sent me to tell you! I say, better put some exercise books in your bags!" chuckled Bunter. "Old Popper's there, and he looks quite wild. I say, it's going to be a licking! He, he, he!"

"You fat Owl!"

"Oh, really, Cherry! Serve you jolly well right!" said Bunter. "Kicking a chap out of his own study! I'm jolly glad you're going to be whopped, and I can jolly well say—Whoooooop!"

Billy Bunter sat down suddenly in the quad and roared. Leaving him roaring, the Famous Five went rather dismally into the House and repaired to their Form master's study.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### All Clear!

**M**R. QUELCH was frowning. Sir Hilton Popper, standing by the Form master's table, was frowning still more portentously.

Harry Wharton & Co., as they came into the study, felt rather like five Daniels entering the lion's den.

"Here are the boys!" rapped Sir Hilton before Mr. Quelch could speak. "These are the insolent young rascals!"

"Really, Sir Hilton—" expostulated Mr. Quelch. "Such expressions—"

"I have described these boys as insolent young rascals, sir, and I repeat the words—insolent young rascals!" hooted Sir Hilton. "I report them to you, sir, as their Form master, for frequenting a disreputable place out of school bounds, and for insolence to a governor of the school."

"Rubbish!" said Johnny Bull.

"Bull!" gasped Mr. Quelch.

"You hear him, sir?" gurgled Sir Hilton. "You hear him, sir, with your own ears!"

Really Mr. Quelch could scarcely have heard him with anybody else's.

"Bull, be silent!" exclaimed the Remove master. "How dare you!"

"Sir Hilton Popper has no right to say anything of the sort, sir!" answered Johnny Bull. "I said it's rubbish—and it is rubbish!"

"Sir Hilton is quite mistaken, sir," said Wharton. "We never even looked at the place we were passing—"

"Never even noticed it, sir!" said Nugent.

"I caught them, sir, within a few yards of the gate!" boomed Sir Hilton. "Within a few yards, sir—"

"Anyone who passes along the towpath, Sir Hilton, must pass within a few yards of the gate of the Three Fishers," said Mr. Quelch acidly. "I see no reason whatever for supposing that these juniors intended entering such a place. I accept their assurance on that point without the slightest doubt."

"What! If you doubt my word, sir—"

"Nothing of the kind, Sir Hilton! Pray be reasonable! You saw these boys on the towpath. You did not see them, I presume, within the precincts of the place you mention?"

"I did not! But in a few minutes they—"

"I am afraid, sir, that you jumped to a conclusion—a hasty conclusion—an unjustifiable conclusion!" said Mr. Quelch tartly. "I shall certainly not condemn these juniors for what you suppose they might have done in a few minutes if you had not spoken to them. I do not believe for one moment that they had any such intention."

"Thank you, sir!" said Wharton.

"We give you our word, sir."

"I accept it unhesitatingly," said Mr. Quelch.

Sir Hilton Popper almost foamed.

"Then, sir, these young rascals—these young blackguards—"

Mr. Quelch rose to his feet.

"I decline to hear any such expressions applied to boys belonging to my Form, sir!" he said with great dignity.

"And if you brought any such accusation against them, sir, without a jot or tittle of evidence, sir, it is not surprising that they answered with what you are pleased to describe as insolence, sir! You had no right to insult them!"

"Good gad!" gasped Sir Hilton.

"Good gad!"

Harry Wharton & Co. suppressed a desire to smile. Even a governor of the school was not monarch of all he surveyed at Greyfriars; a discovery Sir Hilton Popper had made before, and was now making again. The irascible old gentleman was growing purple.

"Mr. Quelch! Only the other day I saw a Greyfriars boy leaving that very place, and reported the fact to Dr. Locke. The boy was not identified. But—"

"If the boy can be identified he will be dealt with very severely," said Mr. Quelch. "If you have any reason to believe that it was one of these boys—"

"I caught them at the very gate—"

"That, sir, as I have already pointed out, amounts to nothing. I have very frequently passed that gate myself, when taking a walk along the river!" snapped Mr. Quelch. "But you would not suspect me, I presume, of frequenting disreputable resorts."

"Really, Mr. Quelch—"

"Really, Sir Hilton—"

"My firm belief, sir, is that these boys were about to enter that—that disgraceful resort! I regret now that I did not wait a few minutes, and give them time to condemn themselves by their own actions."

"If you had waited a few minutes I have no doubt whatever that you would have seen these boys pass the place in perfect innocence."

"So that is your view, Mr. Quelch?"

"That is my view, Sir Hilton."

"Good gad!" said the lord of Popper Court.

"One fact appears clear," said Mr. Quelch, "and that is that the boys were out of bounds."

"They do not deny that, I imagine!" said Sir Hilton, bitterly.



"We should not deny anything that was true, sir!" said Harry.

Grunt!  
"That offence, however, is very slight," continued Mr. Quelch, "as, on half-holidays, school bounds are extended. It is, however, an offence, and it will be punished. These boys will take an imposition of one hundred lines each."

"And that is all?" gasped Sir Hilton.  
"That is all," said Mr. Quelch quietly.  
"My boys, you may leave the study."

"Thank you, sir."  
The Famous Five left the study. Mr. Quelch was not always popular in his Form; but just then the chums of the Remove were feeling quite proud of their Form master.

Sir Hilton's eye, and eyeglass, watched

the study, closing the door after him with a bang.

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Quelch, addressing space.

A good many Greyfriars fellows glanced curiously at Sir Hilton Popper's purple face as he strode away to the gates. The Famous Five, in the quad, capped him with great respect—receiving a glare in return. Even Gosling, the porter, touching his ancient hat very deferentially to a governor of the school, was glared at, and he stood blinking after Sir Hilton as the baronet's long legs whisked away down the road.

"My eye!" said Gosling. "Wot I says is this 'cro—my eye!"

Sir Hilton was gone—grimly resolved that the next time he caught those young

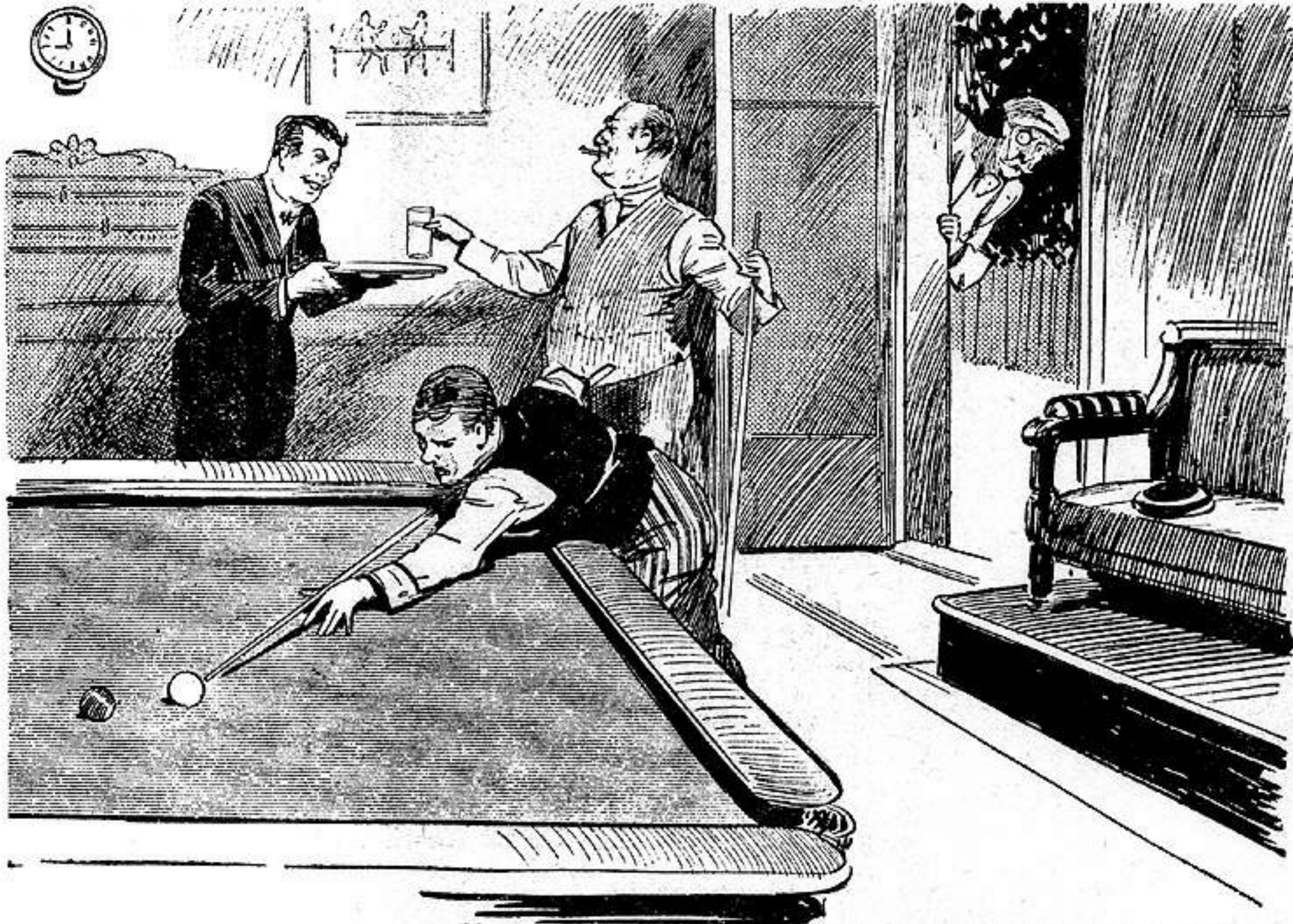
that had been the Bounder's fault. He made no reply.

The train was rapidly approaching Lantham Junction.

Besides the two Greyfriars juniors there was another passenger in the carriage who had made the run from London.

He sat in the farther corner, and the schoolboys had taken no heed of him, only noticing that he looked like a foreigner.

He was a rather slim, sallow gentleman of middle-age, with a pointed, dark beard, dressed with extreme neatness. He was reading a French newspaper most of the time, through a pair of gold-rimmed pince-nez. Every now and then, as the schoolboys talked, he glanced over the top of his paper at



As Sir Hilton Popper stared into the billiards-room he saw Herbert Vernon-Smith leaning over the table, cue in hand, taking a shot. Mr. Banks, the bookmaker, was standing by the table, and a potman was bringing in some liquid refreshment.

"Vernon-Smith!" Sir Hilton fairly barked out the name.

them go. He really looked rather like a tiger whose prey was escaping.

The door closed after the juniors.  
"And the matter ends here, Mr. Quelch?" gasped the lord of Popper Court.

"The matter ends here, sir!" said Mr. Quelch firmly. "You may, of course, place it before the headmaster if you desire. I think, however, that upon reflection you will realise that you have done these boys an injustice."

"I shall realise, sir, nothing of the kind!" boomed Sir Hilton. "And I warn you, sir, that I shall keep this matter in mind. I see, sir, that there is slackness—culpable slackness—in the school of which I am a governor. I see that disgraceful conduct is allowed to pass undetected—that insolence is allowed to pass unpunished! I shall bear it in mind, sir!"

With that, the baronet strode out of

rascals up to mischief there should be no mistake about the matter. It was rather fortunate for Harry Wharton & Co. that they were not the young rascals Sir Hilton supposed.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Back to Greyfriars!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH, the Bounder of Greyfriars, glanced out of the carriage window and grunted. Tom Redwing, seated in the opposite corner, smiled across at him.

"Lantham next!" he said.

"Rotten!" grunted the Bounder.

"We've had a rather long holiday, Smithy!"

"It was mucked up!" growled Smithy.

Tom Redwing did not point out that

them, as if he found some interest in their remarks. But they gave their fellow passenger no attention.

The Bounder was in a discontented mood.

The Easter holidays had not been quite a success. Smithy was on his way back to school now, nearly a fortnight late for term. Redwing had been laid up, at the holiday bungalow in Surrey, and when he was better he had been taken to Mr. Vernon-Smith's house in London, and the Bounder had obtained leave to remain away from school and stay with him there. So long as Tom was ill, Smithy had been a devoted chum—showing a thoughtful kindness and tenderness which few Greyfriars fellows would have suspected in the hard, cynical Bounder.

Still, the "hols" had been "mucked up," as the Bounder expressed it. Now



that his chum was well, Smithy was the old Bounder again, hardly recognisable as the fellow who had been unwearying at a sick bedside.

He was rather keen to get back to Greyfriars. He was captain of the Remove now, and eager to exercise his new powers. Also, he was keen to "get on" with his feud against Harry Wharton, whose place he had captured as captain of the Form. But the holidays had been a frost, and Smithy had not had the good time he had mapped out. Also, his chum was not coming back to the school with him.

"It's rotten!" repeated the Bounder. "Rottenest hols I've ever had—and now the dashed Form-room again, and 'Yes, sir,' and 'No, sir,' and 'Please, sir,' and 'Oh, sir!' Pah!"

"The cricket will be coming on, Smithy—"

"Yes, there's that. I fancy I'll rather make Wharton sit up over the cricket!" assented the Bounder.

Redwing's face clouded.

"I wish you'd chuck that, Smithy, and begin the new term, letting bygones be bygones," he said.

"Likely!" sneered the Bounder.

He glanced from the window again. Lantham could be seen in the distance. At Lantham, Tom was to leave him, while he went on in the train for Courtfield and Greyfriars.

"I wish you were coming on, Reddy!" he grunted.

"Well, my father's home from sea now, and he naturally wants to see me," said Tom—"after I've been ill, too, old chap. I'm putting in three days at Hawkscliff, that's all."

"Classes for me this afternoon!" growled the Bounder. "Quelch will expect me in time for classes, of course. Well, he won't see me."

"You'll be in lots of time, Smithy; this train goes right on to Courtfield."

"The train does!" assented the Bounder. "I don't, though."

"Your father wrote to Quelch, you know—"

"I know!"

"For goodness' sake, Smithy, don't begin the term with a row with your Form master!" said Tom anxiously. "There's going to be trouble in the Remove, quite enough without that. Quelch doesn't like a fellow coming back late for term, anyhow. You were a good chap to stick to me as you did; but Quelch—"

"Bother Quelch!"

The slim, sallow Frenchman on the other side of the carriage was gazing at the two juniors over the top of his paper. There was a faint smile on his face. The juniors did not notice him, however.

"Blow Quelch!" repeated the Bounder. "I'm not going in for classes this afternoon, Reddy. To-morrow's soon enough."

"But what can you say to Quelch if you get in too late for classes, old chap, when he expects—"

"Oh, any old thing!" yawned the Bounder. "Missed the train in London will do. Or a delay on the line. Any old thing."

"But look here, old chap, there's no fun in hanging about by yourself even if you cut classes," said Redwing. "Give it a miss, Smithy."

The Bounder laughed.

"I shan't be hanging about by myself," he answered coolly. "I shall be seeing some friends. Having a good time, in fact. You needn't worry about me, old bean. I can always dig up some fun."

"That's rather rotten, Smithy! If you mean that you're going to play the

goat, and tell Quelch lies when you get in late—"

"Exactly!"

"Well, I think it's rotten!" said Redwing warmly.

"You would!" grinned the Bounder.

"Have a little sense, old chap. If you get spotted—"

"Who's goin' to spot me? It's not a half-holiday, when the jolly old prefects are on the watch!" chuckled the Bounder. "The prefects will be doin' Greek with the Beak. You needn't jaw, Reddy. I've had rotten hols, and I'm goin' to kick a loose leg for the last time before I get under old Quelch's eye again. Chuck it, old bean."

The Bounder's eyes glistened. The part he had lately played, of the devoted pal of a sick friend, had been a strain on him. The uproarious time he had planned for the hols had not come off. The blackguardly kink in the Bounder was well to the fore now. Deeply as he was attached to his chum, Redwing's company was a restraint on him. Had Tom been going on to the school, no doubt Smithy would have "given it a miss," and gone on with him. But, left to his own devices, the Bounder was thinking only of kicking over the traces—and looking forward to the prospect with keen appreciation.

Redwing sighed.

That shady kink in his chum was irksome enough to him, though it made no difference to his friendship.

But it was useless to argue with the Bounder. Tom could only hope that, if Smithy persisted in "playing the goat" instead of going on to the school, where he was expected, he would carry off his recklessness with safety. It was likely enough. There could be no official eyes on the Bounder on a day that was not a half-holiday. And the Bounder's luck had always been phenomenal. He hardly knew how many times he had been within measurable distance of the "sack," but the chopper had never come down. And constant luck encouraged the Bounder to take risks that would have made another fellow pause.

Nothing more was said till the train stopped at Lantham. There Tom Redwing got out of the carriage. He had a walk of some miles before him. There was no railway station near Hawkscliff.

He shook hands with the Bounder, and paused.

"Smithy, old man, I wish—"

"Rats, old bean!" said Smithy.

And Redwing had to leave it at that, with a cloud on his face, as he watched the train steam out of the station again.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### Advice Not Taken!

THE Bounder leaned back in his corner, slipped a hand into his pocket, and drew out a cigarette-case. Seldom, or never, did the Bounder indulge his bad habits in Redwing's company; but they returned in full force as soon as his chum was gone. Indeed, much as he liked Redwing, and regretted that Tom was not coming back that day, it was rather a relief to the Bounder that they had parted company for a time.

More than once he had said, in mockery, that Tom was his guardian angel, and though said in jest, it was true enough. But the company of a guardian angel was sometimes irksome to the wayward Bounder, especially when the blackguardly fit was on him. He selected a cigarette, and lighted it, taking no notice of the stare over the

top of the French gentleman's newspaper across the carriage. If the Froggy did not like his smoking, he could lump it, was the Bounder's opinion.

"Mon jeune ami!"

Vernon-Smith started, and stared at the Frenchman through a little haze of smoke.

"Did you speak?" he ejaculated.

"Mais oui!" The French gentleman laid down his paper, and turned his gold-rimmed glasses on the Bounder, with a very grave expression. "Excusez zat I speak in my own tongue. I am verree recent from Paris, and I forget. But I speak ze English verree fine and large."

The Bounder grinned. This strange gentleman's English reminded him of Monsieur Charpentier's at Greyfriars.

"Go it, sir!" said Vernon-Smith. "You speak English remarkably well, sir."

The Frenchman smiled.

"Zat is verree pleasant to hear," he said. "A friend I make in ze hotel in Londres, he tell me ze same zing. But I speak him, I zink, not so well as vunce upon anozzer time. Vunce I speak ze English very mooch viz my ancient friend Quelch."

"Quelch?" repeated the Bounder, starting.

"You mention zat name when you speak viz your young friend who is parted," said the French gentleman. "I cannot help to hear, you observe. You speak vizin sound of my ears, isn't it? Yes! You speak of Monsieur Quelch, you speak of ze school of ze Greyfriars, and it is to zat place zat I travel viz myself, to see my ancient friend Quelch."

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated the Bounder.

He had given his fellow-traveller no attention whatever. Certainly it had not occurred to him that he had been speaking within hearing of anyone connected with Greyfriars.

He removed the cigarette from his mouth. But the next moment he replaced it there! He was not going to be scared by this Froggy, who happened to be a friend of his Form master's. If the fellow liked to mention it to Quelch, let him!

"It is twenty years," resumed the French gentleman, "zat I have not seen my ancient friend. Always I zink zat I will cross over ze Channel to Angleterre—but zat La Manche—he is so terrible! Now, before I see my ancient friend, I see one garcon zat to him belong."

"Glad to meet you, sir!" said the Bounder cheerfully. The French gentleman was plainly an effusive and talkative gentleman, given to telling his personal affairs to chance acquaintances. Probably he had left a lot of people in the London hotel fully apprised of his history, of his experiences and emotions in crossing the terrible Channel, and of his intention to visit his ancient friend Quelch at Greyfriars School in Kent.

"I am verree pleased to see one garcon zat belong to ze ecole of my ancient friend," said the French gentleman. "But zat is not vy I speak! I am tied to speak to you, mon jeune ami."

"Tied?" repeated Smithy. "Oh, bound! I—I see! You feel bound to speak to me? Fire away, sir!"

"Bound and tied, is he not ze same zing?" asked the Frenchman. "Yes! I zink so! Mon garcon, I am tied to speak to you! I hear vat you say to your young friend. You return to school viz yourself, and mon ami Quelch he expect to see you. Yes? But you zink you give yourself one more vacance—holiday, isn't it? Yes! Zat is verree wrong, my young friend."



The French gentleman shook his head gravely at the Bounder.

Smithy understood now. Evidently, from the talk of the two juniors, the Frenchman was in possession of the Bounder's intentions. He felt it his duty to weigh in with a word in season—all the more because he was a friend of the reckless junior's Form master.

The Bounder compressed his lips.

It was rather unfortunate that a man who knew Quelch had heard him talking to Redwing. But it made no difference to the Bounder's intentions.

"I advise you, my young friend, to give up zis foolishness, and go to your school, where ze bon Quelch expect you. Ozzervise, I am place in verree awkward position, isn't it? Am I not tied—zat is to say bound—to tell ze bon Quelch?"

"Not at all, sir," said the Bounder coolly. "You are bound not to give me away; you can't repeat what you overheard by chance. Not cricket, sir!"

"Zat is verree true," assented the French gentleman. "But ze position is awkward. Take ze advice of Gaston Sarrail, my young friend. It is good advice—verree good advice. Let zere be none of zis foolishness. Zrow zat silly cigarette away, mon garcon, and make up ze brain to act in ze sensible manner, n'est-ce-pas?"

The French gentleman's manner was kind and earnest. But it had no effect on the Bounder. His mind was already made up.

Neither did he think it likely that Monsieur Gaston Sarrail would mention the matter to Mr. Quelch. All he knew was that the junior intended to "play truant," which was no doubt wrong, but not an awfully serious matter. Smithy was glad that he had not mentioned the Three Fishers, his intended destination. Had Monsieur Sarrail been aware of his precise plans, he would hardly have had any choice about intervening.

"You take zat advice, isn't it?" asked Monsieur Sarrail. "J'espere—I hope zat you take him, mon jeune ami."

"You're awfully kind to give me advice, sir, especially as I haven't asked for it," said the Bounder. "Of course, I shall take it. I don't think!" he added, under his breath.

Monsieur Sarrail smiled genially.

"Zat is good," he said. "You will not regret zat you take zat good advice, my young friend."

"I'm sure not, sir!" agreed the Bounder. He was hardly likely to regret taking the advice which he did not intend to take at all.

Apparently satisfied in his mind, the kind French gentleman returned to his paper.

The Bounder threw away the half-smoked cigarette and watched him covertly. It was rotten luck that Quelch's pal from Paris should have been travelling in the same train. Apparently he was going to stay at Greyfriars, for there was a suitcase on the rack, with the initials "G. S." on it. The Bounder had never heard of Gaston Sarrail before, and wished that he had not heard of him now. He realised that it would be judicious to pull the wool, so far as possible, over Monsieur Sarrail's eyes. He was quite determined to carry on with his reckless plans, but he did not want to be called over the coals by Quelch when he turned up late at the school. It was no use beginning the term by getting Quelch's "rag" out.

He rose to his feet as the train slowed down at Redclyffe.

Monsieur Sarrail glanced up.

"Ze gare—ze station—he is not yet Courtfield?" he asked.

"No, sir," answered the Bounder. "This is Redclyffe. We generally take the short cut through the woods from here to the school. I hope I shall see you again, sir, if you're staying at Greyfriars."

"I stay some days viz my ancient friend Quelch," said Monsieur Sarrail. "It will be pleasure to see you, mon garcon. You are vun good boy to take ze good advice."

"It was very kind of you to speak to me, sir!" said Vernon-Smith solemnly. "I can't tell you how much I am obliged. Bonjour, monsieur!"

"Bonjour, mon garcon!" The Bounder stepped from the train. He grinned as he watched it winding down the line towards Courtfield. He had "bottled up" the fussy Froggy. Monsieur Sarrail would say nothing to

**I'VE HAD TO SMILE,  
SO MUST YOU**

at the following amusing joke  
which has earned for J. Holland,  
of 29, Earlswood Avenue, Thorn-  
ton Heath, Croydon, one of our  
**USEFUL POCKET KNIVES!**



Judge (to prisoner): "You robbed this man of everything except his watch."  
Prisoner: "Did I?"  
Judge: "Yes."  
Prisoner: "Then I plead insane!"

Send in a joke as good as the  
one above and a prize will come  
your way!

Quelch now about the reckless talk he had overheard in the railway carriage.

Satisfied on that point, the Bounder left the station—not to walk through the woods to Greyfriars, but to follow the river in the direction of the Three Fishers.

**THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.**

**"Bend Over, Bunter!"**

"**W**ARE beaks!" murmured Skinner.

Some of the Remove fellows grinned.

"I'm going to be good this afternoon," said Skinner. "I'm going to be very, very good. When Quelch looks like that it's enough to make any fellow very, very good indeed."

It was time for class, and the Remove were waiting at their Form-room door for Mr. Quelch.

He appeared in the offing, in the distance, and as soon as he was seen it was noticeable that he looked very grim.

Harry Wharton & Co. had no doubt that that was the effect the interview with Sir Hilton Popper had left on their Form master.

Sir Hilton was gone, and in a towering temper, and he had left Mr. Quelch decidedly cross.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Quelch had had several annoyances that day. They had a cumulative effect, as it were.

He had been expecting a telephone call from his friend Monsieur Sarrail to state at what time the French gentleman would arrive. He had not received it, though he was, happily, unaware that William George Bunter had received it for him. He had rather expected the French gentleman to lunch, but he had not arrived for lunch. Now he was likely to butt in during the afternoon while Mr. Quelch was engaged with his Form, which was rather awkward.

Mr. Quelch was quite pleased at the idea of seeing his old friend again, whom he had known in France before the War and had not seen for twenty years, though they had corresponded regularly. Still, the uncertainty on the subject was annoying.

Then there was the Bounder. He should have arrived before this. His father's letter had stated at what time he would arrive, but he had not come. Mr. Quelch could not help suspecting that, having already had an extra couple of weeks away from school, Vernon-Smith was bagging an extra half-holiday on his own account. No doubt he would arrive, too late for classes, with some plausible explanation. Mr. Quelch had resolved to examine that explanation very closely indeed when Smithy came.

Then there was that disagreeable call from Sir Hilton Popper—disagreeable in itself because the lord of Popper Court was a disagreeable old gentleman—still more disagreeable from the unfounded suspicions he entertained of certain members of Mr. Quelch's Form. Those unfounded suspicions roused Mr. Quelch's ire very seriously.

Last of all there was Bunter. Mr. Quelch had just learned from Monsieur Charpentier that he had sent Bunter up for punishment in second lesson, and that Bunter had not returned to the French set. It was the last straw, and it made Mr. Quelch very cross indeed.

He looked as if the cane was going to be featured that afternoon in the Remove Form. He did not want to cane his old friend Sarrail for failing to phone, and he could not cane the Bounder—yet, at all events. And, of course, Sir Hilton Popper could not be caned, so only Bunter was left. Bunter was booked for more than his share.

Skinner was well advised to decide to be very good that afternoon, after one glance at Mr. Quelch's speaking countenance. All the Remove made up their minds on the spot to be a model Form. Not for a moment did the most reckless fellow dream of banging a desk-lid or dropping a book on the floor with a bump.

As Mr. Quelch came up, the Removites tried to look as if butter would not melt in their mouths.

The Remove master opened the door, and the juniors took their places, even Bob Cherry taking care not to barge anything over or to shuffle his feet.

"Bunter!"

"Oh lor!" gasped Bunter, in alarm. Billy Bunter had hoped from the bottom of his fat heart not to catch Quelch's eye that afternoon. He was even prepared to take as much interest as possible in Latin prose rather than draw Quelch's special attention. And



now the beast was jumping on him first thing!

"Bunter, stand out before the Form!" "Oh crikey!" squeaked the alarmed Owl.

"Bunter, if you utter such ridiculous ejaculations in the Form-room I shall cane you!"

"Oh dear! I—I say, sir, it—it wasn't me!" groaned Bunter.

"What? What was not you?"

"Anything, sir. I—I mean, nothing!" stammered Bunter.

"Stand out at once!"

"Ow!"

Bunter rolled out dismally.

The other fellows felt a little more at ease. If Bunter was going to get it, that, they considered, would take the edge off Quelch's temper. But Bunter did not feel at ease. Far from it. Which of his many delinquencies he was to be called to account for the fat Owl did not know, but it was clear that he was for it.

"Bunter, the French master states that he sent you to my study in second lesson this morning."

"Oh, yes, sir! You—you weren't there, sir, and I—I waited——"

"Monsieur Charpentier states that you did not return for the remainder of the lesson."

"I—I couldn't, sir, when I was waiting for you, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I thought it my duty to wait, sir!"

"And why," said Mr. Quelch in a deep voice, "as you did not see me during second lesson, why did you not come to me afterwards?"

Bunter blinked at him.

Bunter thought that a simply idiotic question. He wondered whether Quelch really thought a fellow would come to him for a licking if he could possibly get out of it. Still, he could not put it like that to Quelch.

"Answer me, Bunter!"

"I—I was afraid of wasting your time, sir," stammered Bunter, "knowing you to be such a busy man, sir, especially as you're expecting a visitor to-day."

"What can you possibly know about that, Bunter?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, in surprise.

"Oh, nothing, sir! I—I never heard you speaking to Mr. Prout about it. Not a word, sir. You can ask Skinner, sir. He knows. I told him."

"Upon my word!" said Mr. Quelch.

He picked up the cane from his desk. Billy Bunter eyed it very uneasily.

"C-c-can I go back to my place now, sir?"

"No, Bunter, you may not go back to your place. You should not have waited during a whole lesson in my study, as you know very well. And as you did not see me there you should have come to me later with the French master's message, as you are also aware."

"I—I—I forgot, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I never knew Mossoo would mention it to you, sir, or—or I'd have come. As it was, I—I forgot."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Bunter, you will bend over that chair."

"Oh crikey!"

In the lowest spirits, Billy Bunter bent his podgy form over the chair. He had had a happy escape that morning; and having had a happy escape, he had dismissed the matter from his mind. The fat Owl had not foreseen that the French master would mention the matter to his Form master—though really he might have foreseen it, after cutting the French class. But Billy Bunter never foresaw anything. The

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licking he had so happily escaped had only been postponed, after all.

Whack! Whack! Whack!

Probably it would have been better for Bunter had he taken his licking before Sir Hilton Popper made his call. It might have been laid on more lightly before that autocratic old gentleman exasperated Mr. Quelch. Now it was not laid on lightly. The cane rang on Bunter.

"Whooop!" roared Bunter. "Oh jiminy! Yarooooop!"

"Silence!" hooted Mr. Quelch. "Go to your place, Bunter——"

"Yoooo-hoooooop!"

"Another sound and I will cane you again, Bunter."

Billy Bunter suppressed his emotions. He crawled back to his place. He sat squirming on the form. After those three hefty swipes, Bunter would have preferred to stand.

Mr. Quelch's glittering eye swept over the Remove. Every fellow tried to look not only as if butter, but as if Devonshire cream, would not melt in his mouth. It was evident that Quelch was not to be trifled with that afternoon. He laid down the cane; and Latin prose began in a rather electric atmosphere. And every man in the Remove felt a sense of deep relief when a tap came at the Form-room door, and Trotter, the page, looked in with a message for Mr. Quelch. Mr. Quelch did not like being called away from his Form during class. His Form, on the other hand, liked it very much. And they had never liked it so much as now.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### Caught in the Act!

SIR HILTON POPPER could scarcely believe his eyes—and his eyeglass.

He stared.

"Good gad!" he ejaculated.

Sir Hilton had left Greyfriars School in a state of boiling wrath. He walked back in the direction of Popper Court by the towpath along the Sark. And he fumed as he walked.

A Greyfriars Form master—a mere nobody, in the lofty estimation of the lord of Popper Court—had rebuffed him. Instead of accepting the opinion of Sir Hilton as confirmation strong as proof of holy writ, that Form master had had an opinion of his own—and had acted on it, instead of acting upon Sir Hilton's much more important opinion.

The autocrat of Popper Court was not used to rebuffs. He did not like them at all. He was inclined to call upon the headmaster of Greyfriars and suggest that Quelch should be discharged from the staff. But he could not help feeling that that might only lead to another rebuff. Dr. Locke was a mild old gentleman; but not an old gentleman to be dictated to, even by so great a man as a member of the Governing Board. Deeply annoyed, intensely angry, Sir Hilton saw nothing for it but to swallow his own smoke, as it were; only resolving to keep the sharpest of sharp eyes on the Three Fishers, and catch the next young rascals who frequented that deplorable place, and prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that he was right, and that Mr. Quelch was wrong. And with these angry thoughts in his mind, striding up the towpath towards the Three Fishers, he sighted a Greyfriars junior turning into the gate ahead of him.

"Good gad!" repeated Sir Hilton.

His eye glittered through his eyeglass. There was no mistake this time! There had been no mistake last time, in

Sir Hilton's opinion. But this time, even that impertinent Form master, Quelch, could not affect to think that there was a mistake.

With his own eyes—not to mention his eyeglass—Sir Hilton saw it.

A Greyfriars junior—a Remove boy—a boy whom the old baronet recognised, as his profile was turned in entering the gate. He had seen Herbert Vernon-Smith of the Remove a good many times, and knew him perfectly well.

Sir Hilton stared, almost blankly. He had expected to make a catch, sooner or later; he had hoped to make a catch—he had been determined to make a catch! But certainly he had not anticipated making a catch that very afternoon, not half an hour after leaving Quelch. He was justified much sooner than he could have imagined would be the case.

Vernon-Smith—undoubtedly it was Vernon-Smith—disappeared in at the gate of the Three Fishers, and vanished from sight.

Sir Hilton smiled—a grim smile.

There was no doubt this time. Had he hurried on and grabbed Vernon-Smith before he entered the place, no doubt the young rascal would have denied his intention, and Quelch would have believed him! Vernon-Smith could hardly deny it now; and Quelch could hardly believe him if he did.

The old baronet strode on.

A Remove boy—one of Mr. Quelch's boys—was now within the precincts of the most disreputable resort in the county! Sir Hilton grimly wondered what Quelch would say to that!

A reckless young rascal—an extremely reckless young rascal, there was no doubt about that. It was class-time at Greyfriars now—it had been close on class when Sir Hilton left Mr. Quelch. This boy—this Vernon-Smith—was not only out of bounds, not only frequenting a disorderly resort—but he was playing truant—stopping out from class! Sir Hilton, naturally, knew nothing of the fact that Vernon-Smith had not yet returned to school—that he was returning that day. Even the Bounder, reckless as he was, would hardly have ventured to cut class, had he been back at the school, and under his Form master's eye. But so far as Sir Hilton could see, this boy was a member of the Lower Fourth Form who chose to stay out of school—this, then, was how Quelch conducted his Form!

Grimly the lord of Popper Court strode on, and stopped at the gate by which the Bounder had vanished a few minutes ago.

Then he paused.

The boy was within the place—that was certain. But the river-side inn was a rambling old place, with extensive grounds, bordered by the towpath on one side and a shady lane on the other. It was a place full of nooks and crannies, where a fellow could easily dodge out of sight, with a dozen avenues of escape. If this young rascal succeeded in evading capture, no doubt he would deny the whole thing at Greyfriars—and it might mean another rebuff for Sir Hilton! Quelch, it was true, could scarcely refuse to accept his positive statement. Still, it was obviously best to catch the young scoundrel in the act, and march him back to Greyfriars with a hand on his shoulder. It would be quite a pleasure to Sir Hilton to repeat his visit to the school, with the culprit in his grasp.

After pausing for reflection, Sir Hilton strode in.

He did not enter the inn at the front—having a strong suspicion that, while he did so, the young rascal might be



leaving it at the back! The fiery old gentleman was "stalking" the Bounder. He walked round the building, to look in at the billiards-room. That was a likely spot to draw the badger, as it were.

Sir Hilton appeared to know his way about the Three Fishers, deplorable as the place was! As a matter of absolute fact, Sir Hilton had known the place well in his younger days; when he had not been quite so particular about his own conduct, as he now was about the conduct of others. He had, in those far-off days, known the Three Fishers quite well; indeed, on some such occasions there had been sounds of revelry by night! But Sir Hilton was not thinking of that now; he was thinking of his righteous wrath and indignation, and of his coming triumph over Mr. Queleh.

There was a sound of a clicking ball

Redwing to the beery, smoky habitues of the Three Fishers, could hardly be considered a change for the better, even by the Bounder. But good behaviour for two or three weeks had tired Smithy, and he was enjoying the temporary lapse into his old dingy pursuits. It was only temporary—Smithy had no intention of "playing the goat" that term; his intention was to devote himself chiefly to cricket, and prove to the Remove that they had a captain who could win matches. This was, indeed, his last free kick, as he would have expressed it, before getting back into school ways. But Sir Hilton Popper was not to guess all that; not that it would have made any difference, had he guessed it.

He stared in at the scene.

Vernon-Smith picked up his cigarette from the ashtray, to take a pull at

Sir Hilton fairly barked.

The Bounder drew a deep breath. Mr. Banks stared at Sir Hilton—the marker winked at the potman. The Bounder paled a little.

Caught—by that meddling old fool—caught! That was his thought. If he had listened to Tom Redwing's earnest expostulations—if he had acted on the kind and good-natured advice of that French gentleman in the train—But it was too late to think of that now.

What was it going to mean to him? A flogging from the Head— If it was only that he could stand it. It would be a rotten beginning to the term; but he could stand it, glad to get off so cheap. But he felt, with a sinking of the heart, that it would be worse than that! It was not as if there was nothing against him. There was many a black mark against the Bounder—only



Monsieur Sarrail's startled eyes almost popped through his gold-rimmed glasses as Mr. Brown levelled a revolver at him. "Please step down," said the Gentleman Pincher, "and accompany me!"

as he reached the open french windows of the billiards-room. A voice came from within:

"Appy to see you back, Master Vernon-Smith! Mister Ponsonby, of 'Igh-cliffe, was asking about you the other day."

It was the marker speaking. Evidently the Bounder of Greyfriars was well-known there.

Sir Hilton stared into the room.

Herbert Vernon-Smith, leaning over the table, cue in hand, was taking a shot. A fat man—recognisable as Mr. Banks, the bookmaker—was standing by the table, his hand resting on his cue. A potman was bringing in some liquid refreshment for Mr. Banks. That red-faced gentleman was smoking a big cigar. Smoke was curling from a cigarette on an ashtray, apparently laid there by the Bounder. Smithy potted the red as Sir Hilton Popper looked in.

Vernon Smith's face was very cheerful. The change of company from Tom

it before taking his next shot. At the same moment Mr. Banks sighted the tall, angular figure in the french windows.

"Oh, holy smoke!" ejaculated Mr. Banks.

Vernon-Smith glanced round.

The cigarette dropped from his fingers.

He stared at Sir Hilton Popper.

"Oh gad!" breathed the Bounder.

He was caught—fairly caught in the act! He had calculated well—there had seemed absolutely no risk of being "snaffled" that afternoon. Masters at Greyfriars were with their Forms; prefects were at Creek with the Head; not an eye belonging to Greyfriars could possibly have fallen on the Bounder. He had never given a thought to Sir Hilton Popper, having, indeed, completely forgotten the important existence of that important personage. He had to remember it now.

"Vernon-Smith!"

his phenomenal luck had saved him from the "sack" already. This would be the last straw!

He knew it!

On his first day back at school—caught smoking and playing billiards with a disreputable racing man, in a rowdy resort! It was the finish—the culmination of his many reckless offences.

The Bounder's thoughts raced.

The game was up!

But if the Bounder was going down, he was going down with a cool head and a stout heart. For a long moment he stared at the menacing figure in the doorway, and his checks paled. Then he was the cool, reckless Bounder again. He nodded to Sir Hilton Popper. His associates at the Three Fishers should not, at all events, see him cringe like a scared schoolboy. He smiled.

"Did you speak, sir?" he asked coolly.

"What! Vernon-Smith! Leave

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(Continued from page 13.)

this place instantly! Come with me! I shall take you back to the school!"

"Awfully kind of you to call in for me, sir!" said the Bounder. "I'll walk with you with pleasure."

"What? What?"

"Where's my hat, Tommy? Sorry, but I shall have to love you and leave you," said the Bounder lightly. "Can't stop—my friend's rather impatient!"

"Oh, my eye!" said Mr. Banks.

The Bounder put on his hat and lounged over to the door. He winked at the marker as he went out, sending that beery gentleman into a fit of merriment.

Sir Hilton's face was like thunder.

"You—you impudent young rascal! Come!" he hooted.

And the Bounder came.

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## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### Taking the Stranger In!

**M**ONSIEUR SARRAIL gathered up an umbrella, a rug, and a suitcase, and stepped from the train at Courtfield Station.

Mr. Quelch's old pal from Paris did not expect to be met at Courtfield Station: Quelch did not know by what train he was arriving—also, Quelch would be engaged in his duties as master of the Remove.

With his umbrella, his rug, and his suitcase, the dapper French gentleman ambled along the platform, with the intention of taking a taxi to the school in the High Street outside. He started suddenly, then a pleased smile flickered over his sallow face as he felt a light touch on his arm, and turned his gold-rimmed glasses on a man who had been loafing on the platform, watching the train come in.

"Eh, bien! Mistair Brown!" exclaimed Monsieur Sarrail, in surprise.

Mr. Brown nodded and smiled.

"Here we are again!" he said genially.

Mr. Brown was a young man, about thirty or thirty-five, with a clean-shaven, rather hard face, and very sharp eyes. He was a well-dressed young man, and had a pleasant manner.

Good clothes and a good manner were essential to Mr. Brown, in his peculiar line of business, a line of business of which the innocent French gentleman had not the slightest suspicion.

Gaston Sarrail beamed on him.

"But you are here, and I leave you in London, sair!" he exclaimed. "You pop up like one John-in-a-box, isn't it?"

Mr. Brown laughed pleasantly.

"I had to run down into Kent in the car," he explained, "and remembering the time your train would be in here, I thought I'd drop in."

"Zat is a verree great pleasure to me," said the Frenchman. "But now I go to my ancient friend at zo school."

"Exactly! Let me run you there in

the car," said Mr. Brown. "I have to go to Canterbury, and shall pass the gates of Greyfriars School. Let me drop you there, what?"

"Zat is verree kind, Monsieur Brown."

"Not at all. It will save the taxi, too," remarked Mr. Brown, "and it will be a pleasure to me, Monsieur Sarrail."

"Mon ami," said Gaston Sarrail, beaming. "Ze kindness, ze politeness, I meet in zis country, since I have cross La Manche, is verree great, and I am overwhelm. Monsieur, I zank you!"

"Here's a porter to take your bag," said Mr. Brown. "This way, Monsieur Sarrail."

Mr. Brown walked with the French gentleman down the platform, followed by a porter with the suitcase.

It was an unexpected meeting on Monsieur Sarrail's part, but a very agreeable one to him. Apart from the pleasure of seeing the agreeable Mr. Brown, there was the saving on the taxi, which appealed to a gentleman who, like most Frenchmen, was very careful with his money.

Monsieur Sarrail had had some doubts about the manners and customs of the natives of unknown Angletterre when he had made up his mind to cross the so terrible "La Manche" and visit his old friend Quelch. Now that he was in Angletterre, however, he realised that at least some of the inhabitants were as polite and cordial as any native of la Belle France. Mr. Brown, whom he had met at his hotel in London, had made a very favourable impression on the French gentleman.

It was Mr. Brown who had helped him elucidate the mysteries of the railway time-tables; Mr. Brown who had been helpful in every way to a stranger in a strange land—and it had never occurred to him that the kind and polite Mr. Brown had any designs on his suitcase or his pocket-book.

That Mr. Brown, if his name was Brown, was a sharper who hung about good hotels in good clothes, rather like a lion seeking what he might devour, was quite unsuspected by the innocent old gentleman.

With his natural effusiveness, Monsieur Sarrail had met Mr. Brown more than half-way, when the well-dressed crook sought to strike up an acquaintance at the London hotel. In the lounge he had talked with Mr. Brown, and told him his whole history; to which Mr. Brown—with an eye to business—had listened with the keenest interest.

Never, in fact, had Gaston Sarrail, who was a very talkative gentleman, found a listener so polite and keenly interested. His opinion of the manners of the natives of Angletterre had greatly improved.

Mr. Brown had not helped himself to the French gentleman's pocket-book—having learned, from that long and interesting conversation, that it was not worth his while.

But other ideas had worked in Mr. Brown's active mind, since he had heard all about Monsieur Sarrail's old friend Quelch, at Greyfriars School, who had not seen him for twenty years!

Monsieur Sarrail was thinking that Mr. Brown was the politest and most pleasant young man he had met for a long time. Mr. Brown—who was known in his own select circle of friends as the "Gentleman Pincher"—was thinking that Monsieur Sarrail was the most innocent old bird he had ever netted.

Both, therefore, were in a pleased and satisfied frame of mind as they walked out of Courtfield Station.

Mr. Brown's car—quite a nice car—was waiting there. The suitcase was placed in it, Monsieur Sarrail took his seat, Mr. Brown sat beside him, and the chauffeur—a very neat and respectable-looking chauffeur—tooled the car away down Courtfield High Street.

It was Gaston Sarrail's first visit to Greyfriars; indeed, his first visit to England. He was naturally unaware that the car took the opposite direction from Greyfriars when it whizzed out of Courtfield at a spanking pace.

He did not, indeed, give much attention to his surroundings; he was talking, and he talked incessantly as the car buzzed on.

It was not till six or seven miles had been covered that Monsieur Sarrail began to feel a little surprised that Greyfriars School was not in sight. His ancient friend Quelch, in his letters, had told him that the school was only two or three miles from Courtfield.

The car was speeding along a road through open country, without a building in sight. Monsieur Sarrail glanced out.

"Ze school, we seen him soon?" he asked.

"The road is up," explained Mr. Brown; "the chauffeur has had to make a detour. Ten minutes more, perhaps—"

"Je comprends!" And the talkative French gentleman rattled on again.

The car turned from the road at last into a track that ran through a woodland. It bumped and rocked over rough ground. It came to a halt at last.

Monsieur Sarrail stared round.

There was a building in sight now—a shed that stood at a distance from the track among the trees, almost hidden by them. That was all. But Mr. Brown threw open the door of the car as if they had reached their destination—as indeed they had.

"We get down here, monsieur," said Mr. Brown.

"But zis is not Greyfriars!" exclaimed the bewildered French gentleman.

"Hardly!" agreed Mr. Brown, with a smile. "But we get down, all the same. Jump to it!"

"Mon Dieu! But vat, zen—expliquez!"

Mr. Brown made a gesture towards the distant shed.

"Mais—je ne comprends pas—" gasped Monsieur Sarrail.

"Probably not," agreed Mr. Brown amicably. "But very likely you will comprehend before morning, if you think it over all the time."

Mr. Brown slid a hand to the back of his elegant trousers. Monsieur Sarrail's startled eyes almost popped through his gold-rimmed glasses as the hand reappeared with something in it. He fairly goggled at the bluish glimmer of the barrel of an automatic.

"Please step down," said Mr. Brown, still polite. The Gentleman Pincher was always polite.

In a dazed and dizzy state Monsieur Sarrail stepped down. His brain was in a whirl. He wondered vaguely whether he was dreaming this. Utterly bewildered, he allowed the polite Mr. Brown to take his arm and lead him towards the lonely shed in the wood. And when he was safely landed in that shed, with the door safely locked on him, Monsieur Sarrail remained in a state of bewilderment, from which he looked as if he would never really recover.



THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Rough on Quelch!

MR. QUELCH glanced round at the Form-room door as Trotter, the page, tapped and opened it, with a baleful eye.

"Well?" He rapped out the word like a bullet.

"If you please, sir—" said Trotter.

"Be brief!"

"Yessir," said Trotter. "Sir 'Ilton Popper's called, sir—"

"What!" It was another bullet.

"Sir 'Ilton Popper, sir, wishes to see you, sir, and I've took him to your study, sir—"

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

Not an hour ago he had seen Sir Hilton Popper; and now, it seemed, Sir Hilton had popped in again—an extremely persistent Popper!

"Sir Hilton Popper?" he repeated.

"Yessir, and Master Vernon-Smith with 'im, sir—"

"Vernon-Smith?"

"Yessir."

"I fail to see—" Mr. Quelch checked himself. "Kindly tell Sir Hilton Popper that I will come at once."

"Yessir."

Trotter disappeared.

The Remove fellows looked at one another. They looked at their Form master.

Mr. Quelch, as before stated, did not like interruptions in class. But the least welcome of all interruptions was an interruption by the lord of Popper Court. Mr. Quelch breathed hard and deep.

Less than an hour ago he had seen the man—almost had "words" with him. He had made an accusation—a most unjustifiable and irritating accusation—against boys in Mr. Quelch's Form. He had been very properly rebuffed. Now he was back again—for what? Governor of the school as Sir Hilton was, this was too much. If Sir Hilton thought that because he was a member of the Governing Board he could persecute a Greyfriars Form master in this way, Sir Hilton was going to find out his mistake. If Sir Hilton was meddling again—meddling was the word—Sir Hilton was going to hear some plain English. On that Mr. Quelch was resolved.

"Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!"

"I have to leave the class for a few minutes. You will keep order here while I am gone."

"Yes, sir!"

Mr. Quelch whisked out of the Form-room.

"Upon my word!" the Removites heard him say, as he vanished.

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob Cherry, when the door had closed—or, rather, banged—after Henry Samuel Quelch. "What's the row now, you men?"

"What does the old ass want this time?" asked Johnny Bull. "He can't be after us again; Quelch put the stopper on him."

"Trotter said that Smithy was with him," said Harry Wharton in wonder. "Smithy was expected back for class, I believe. What the thump is he doing with old Popper?"

"I don't envy Popper if he cheeks Quelch again!" grinned Bob. "Quelch looks like telling him to bend over."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Remove were left in a state of wonder, and there was a buzz of interested discussion in the Form-room. Vernon-Smith, apparently, had come

back to school, and he had arrived in company with Sir Hilton Popper. The Removites were very curious to know what it all meant.

Mr. Quelch was not only curious to know what it meant; he was deeply, intensely angry. If this was some more unjustifiable meddling on the part of Sir Hilton Popper, Mr. Quelch was prepared to speak in a way to which Sir Hilton's august ears were very unaccustomed.

Mr. Quelch was calm, very calm, when he arrived in his study, but it was a deadly calmness. It was the calm before the storm.

Sir Hilton Popper stood in the study like a ramrod. His shaggy, grey brows were contracted; his eyes glinted under them. Herbert Vernon-Smith stood by the window—or, rather, lounged there—with his hands in his pockets. His face expressed cool indifference, much to the irritation of the lord of Popper Court. The Bouncer knew that he was "for it," but he was the fellow to face the music without flinching.

Mr. Quelch rustled in.

He gave Vernon-Smith a passing glance, and fixed his eyes inimically on the tall figure of the baronet.

"Sir Hilton Popper, no doubt you are aware that I should be at this moment engaged with my Form—"

"No doubt, sir!" rumbled Sir Hilton. "And apparently, sir, you have taken no note of the fact that one member of your Form is, or was, absent. This boy—"

"Vernon-Smith has had leave from school, sir, and was expected to return to-day," said Mr. Quelch. "He was not expected in the Form-room until he arrived at the school, sir. I fail—I entirely fail—to see why he has arrived in your company, sir."

"I will explain, sir—"

"Please do so, Sir Hilton, without loss of time."

"I have brought this boy to the school—"

"I am already aware of that, sir!"

"Will you allow me to speak, Mr. Quelch?"

"I am waiting for you to speak, sir, and to explain what appears to me an unwarrantable interference—"

"I found this boy—" boomed Sir Hilton.

"If you found this boy on his way to school, sir, I entirely fail to apprehend why you have accompanied him—"

"I found this boy—"

"If you were under the impression, sir, that Vernon-Smith was out of school without leave, you were under an

(Continued on next page.)

GREYFRIARS HEROES.

No. 27.

The Greyfriars Rhymester admits himself hard put to it to find the hero of Tom Dutton, the deaf junior of the Remove. But his effort, none the less, is well worth reading.

I've come here for an interview;  
Don't make me wipe the floor with you!"

"You'll swipe my jaw!" I heard him roar

In what was quite an awful tone;  
I sadly sighed: "My kingdom for  
An extra-powerful megaphone!"  
He raised his fist and brought it down  
With stunning force upon my crown.

"Keep off!" I yelled with all my might!

Alas! Too late! As I said this,  
He landed a terrific right  
Upon my nasal orifice;  
I woke up with an aching head,  
In pain, a hospital, and bed.

Next day upon the telephone  
I heard the Editor say: "Well,  
Who is his hero?" With a groan  
I answered him: "I cannot tell;  
But somehow I have got a hunch  
That Dutton's hero must be Punch!"



OUR high and mighty Editor Requested me to write a verse On Dutton's hero, and before His awful frown grew any worse,  
I thought I'd better fade away  
And see to it without delay.

A taxi took me down to Kent,  
To Dutton's den was but a step;  
I asked the way, and up I went  
And found Tom Dutton doing prep;  
That he was deaf I could not doubt;  
Thought I: "This means I'll have to shout."

"Hi, Dutton! Wake up! How d'ye do?"

I shouted in tremendous fashion:  
"You've got a hero, haven't you?"  
(My voice was like yo Bull of Bashan),

"I will not stop you if you're busy,  
So tell me quickly then—who is he?"

He answered: "Go to Jericho!"  
His rugged face had grown quite red;

Cried he: "You think I'm deaf, I know,

But I heard plainly what you said:  
You said I'm dizzy—yes, you did!"  
I yelled: "I wouldn't for a quid!"

Then Dutton's face grew dark and grim,  
And slowly he pushed back his cuff;  
I took one startled glance at him,  
And swiftly added: "That's enough!"





entirely mistaken impression, sir! As I have said—"

"I found this boy," roared Sir Hilton Popper, "at a disreputable resort, out of school bounds! No other place, sir, than the Three Fishers—"

"If this is another specimen, sir, of baseless and unjustifiable suspicion on your part—"

"I found this boy—"

"You have already made the same statement, sir, with regard to five other boys in my Form—a statement, sir, that I refused to consider for one moment—a statement, sir, that I rejected with the contempt it deserved—"

"Mr. Quelch!"

"Sir Hilton Popper!"

"I found this boy—"

"As you found the others, sir, I presume—and jumped, sir, to a hasty, an unjust, a totally unjustifiable conclusion—"

"I found this boy in the billiards-room at the Three Fishers, sir!" bawled Sir Hilton Popper. "I found him playing billiards with a bookmaker, sir—a well-known disreputable character! And smoking, sir—smoking cigarettes, sir! And a potman bringing in intoxicating liquors, sir—which may or may not have been for this boy, sir!"

"Oh, draw it mild!" said the Bounder.

Sir Hilton spun round at him.

"What—what? What did you say?"

"I said draw it mild, sir!" answered the Bounder with perfect coolness. "I was smoking a cigarette and playing a hundred up with Banks. But you know jolly well that the whisky-and-soda wasn't for me—or if you don't know it you're a priceless old ass!"

Sir Hilton Popper gurgled.

Mr. Quelch almost staggered. He had taken it for granted that the interfering old gentleman had discovered another mare's-nest. He was quite prepared to hear that Sir Hilton had found Vernon-Smith in what appeared—to him—suspicious circumstances. He realised now that he had taken too much for granted.

It was not a case of suspicion; it was a case of certainty. Sir Hilton had not caught the Bounder outside the place, he had caught him in it. Mr. Quelch felt rather caught himself.

Obviously, in such a case, it was the duty of a governor of the school to collar the young rascal, march him in, and hand him over to his Form master. On this occasion, at least, Mr. Quelch had no right to be angry with Sir Hilton Popper. Nevertheless, he was angry—all the more angry because he had to admit that the interfering old baronet was completely in the right.

It was a "facer" for Mr. Quelch.

In the circumstances, he really ought to have thanked Sir Hilton for bringing this matter to his notice. He did not feel like thanking him.

Sir Hilton gave the cool Bounder a glare and turned back to the dismayed Form master.

"Mr. Quelch, an hour ago I made a report to you—a very serious report! You chose to disregard it! You chose, sir, to treat my opinion—my fixed opinion, sir—with contempt! Now, sir, I have found another boy of your Form—this boy Vernon-Smith—not merely hanging round the precincts of a disreputable resort, but actually in the place itself—in low company, sir—smoking and gambling, sir! And I desire to know, sir, what you have to say to this!"

Mr. Quelch, for the moment, had nothing to say. He was so dismayed and taken aback that he could only

stare. Even the Bounder felt rather sorry for his Form master at that moment.

Sir Hilton had the advantage now—and he was the man to rub it in. This schoolmaster—this usher, as Sir Hilton mentally termed him—could not pass this matter off as he had passed the other matter off. He could not affect to think that there was any doubt in this.

"I am waiting, sir, to hear you!" boomed Sir Hilton. "As a governor of this school, sir, I desire to know—I require to know—how you propose to act in this matter, sir?"

Mr. Quelch found his voice. He gave the Bounder one deadly look and spoke as calmly as he could.

"This boy, sir, will be taken before his headmaster after classes, and I shall demand his immediate expulsion from the school."

"Oh!" said Sir Hilton Popper.

"This boy, sir, will be sent away from Greyfriars to-morrow morning at the latest! He will be expelled, sir, with ignominy!"

"Very good!" said Sir Hilton Popper. "That is very right and proper, Mr. Quelch! I will take my leave, sir, and leave the matter in your hands."

And the lord of Popper Court took his leave, and the Bounder of Greyfriars was left alone with his incensed Form master.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### The Finish!

**H**ERBERT VERNON-SMITH looked at Mr. Quelch.

Mr. Quelch looked at Herbert Vernon-Smith.

There was a long minute of silence after Sir Hilton Popper had gone.

In the baronet's presence Smithy's manner had been cool, indifferent, verging on insolence. But he threw that aside now.

At heart the Bounder was ashamed of himself. He had played the goat and taken one chance too many, and he knew that he had been a fool to do it. And, oddly enough, the Bounder felt the position he had placed his Form master in with regard to Sir Hilton Popper. Never had a man been so disconcerted, so utterly confounded and overwhelmed, as Mr. Quelch had been in the presence of that disagreeable and interfering governor of the school. Sir Hilton had almost gloated—and it was Vernon-Smith who had placed his Form master in that defeated and disconcerted position. For once in a way, the Bounder was really sorry for his misdeeds.

The silence was rather painful. It was the Bounder who broke it.

"I—I suppose it's no good asking you to overlook this, sir?" His tone was respectful.

"Certainly not, Vernon-Smith!" rapped Mr. Quelch.

"I'm awfully sorry, sir."

Mr. Quelch's lip curled.

"Indeed!" he said. "Do you mean you are sorry that your disreputable conduct has been exposed, and that you are to leave the school?"

The Bounder stood silent.

He had rather expected an outburst. He realised that this cold, quiet wrath was more to be feared. He realised that Henry Samuel Quelch was implacable.

If there had been a chance for the Bounder—a remote chance—Sir Hilton Popper had "queered" it. Mr. Quelch could not forgive his humiliation in the presence of that dictatorial gentleman.

"This," said Mr. Quelch, his voice still quiet, "is the end, Vernon-Smith! More than once I have consulted concerning you with your headmaster. More than once it has seemed to me that it was inevitable that you should leave this school. Again and again you have been given another opportunity to do better. But this is the end! On your first day—your very first day—at Greyfriars this term you are discovered acting in a disgraceful way with blackguardly associates. You have placed me, your Form master, in an intolerable position."

"I'm sorry, sir," muttered the Bounder awkwardly. He really was sorry for that, at all events.

"Possibly!" said Mr. Quelch. "I shall say nothing more to you, Vernon-Smith! There is nothing more to be said. When Dr. Locke is at leisure I shall place the matter before him."

He turned to the study door.

Vernon-Smith caught his breath. What a fool—what an utter fool—he had been! Captain of the Remove that term, everything in his hands—it was going to be his best term at Greyfriars—it was going to be triumph all along the line! And he had thrown it all away—for what?

"One moment, sir!" exclaimed the Bounder.

The Remove master turned back. "Well?" he rapped. "If you have anything to say, be brief."

"If you'd give me another chance, sir—"

"Say no more!"

"One moment, sir!" All was at stake now for the Bounder, and he had quite dropped his indifference, his insolence. His manner was earnest, and as contrite as he could make it. "Please listen to me, sir! I—I know the Head will be angry. But—but you are my Form master, sir, and if—if you were satisfied with any other punishment—a flogging, sir—he would—"

"No doubt!" said Mr. Quelch bitterly. "Dr. Locke is kind enough to leave such matters, except in very extreme cases, in the hands of his staff. I have no doubt that he would take a lenient view if I requested him to do so. It is not my duty, Vernon-Smith, to make such a request. It is my duty not to make it! It is my intention, Vernon-Smith, to request your headmaster to expel you from Greyfriars."

With that Mr. Quelch rustled to the door again.

The Bounder gave him a bitter look. There was no chance—he knew that there was no chance—and he had humbled himself for nothing!

"Very well, sir! I shan't ask you twice!" he said. The Bounder's old manner came back with a rush, as it were.

"That will do, Vernon-Smith! No insolence!"

"Am I to go into class, sir?"

"No!"

Mr. Quelch swept out of the study.

The Bounder whistled softly. He was left to his own devices. His Form master, apparently, did not care what he did! Not only had he not been ordered to the Form-room, but he was refused admission there. Nothing could have shown more clearly the view of the Remove master. He no longer regarded Herbert Vernon-Smith as a member of his Form! The Bounder was simply there till the headmaster had time to deal with him, and send him away.

"By gad!" muttered the Bounder. "By gad! You've done it this time, old man—you've done it with a bang!"

He walked out of the study. In the





"Mr. Quelch," said Sir Hilton Popper, "an hour ago I made a serious report to you, and you chose to disregard it. Now, sir, I have found Vernon-Smith in low company, smoking and gambling, and I desire to know what you have to say!"

Mr. Quelch had nothing to say. He was so taken aback that he could only stare.

distance he heard the door of the Remove Form room shut. Mr. Quelch had gone back to his Form—leaving the outcast to do as he liked, evidently not caring a straw if he walked out of the school and returned home! He was done with him!

Only a couple of hours ago, in the train with Tom Redwing, Smithy had been thinking of class in the Form-room with discontent and disgust. He had jibbed at the prospect, and resolved, recklessly, on one more "free kick" before he knuckled down for the term.

Now he would have been glad to take his place in class in the Form-room, glad and joyful to be grinding Latin with Quelch! He would have asked nothing better! If only he could have been sitting in his place in the Remove with the other fellows, like the other fellows, with the same prospects as the other fellows! What a fool—what an absolute ass—he had been!

It was too late to think of that. What was done, was done—and he was going to be "bunked." The Head might have given him another chance—would have given him another chance, if Quelch liked—but Quelch was as hard as a rock. Smithy was not surprised at that; but his heart was heavy as he walked out into the sunny quad.

All the fellows were in the Form-rooms; he had the quadrangle to himself. He walked with downcast face, his hands driven deep into his pockets.

What a fool he had been—that was his tormenting thought! It was going to be such a glorious term—the ball was at his feet! Captain of the Remove—the cricket matches coming on—Wharton, his defeated rival, down and out! His eyes glittered savagely as he thought of it.

Wharton, of course, would get the captaincy back when he was turfed out of the school—that was as good as a certainty. Plenty of Remove men wanted him back already—and with the Bounder off the scene, it was a foregone conclusion. To go—in disgrace—leaving his rival to triumph—

Black and bitter grew the Bounder's hard face. Bunked—on his first day back at school! All he had done, all that he had won, going for nothing—his rival left in possession!

Then another thought came into his mind that banished the black scowl from his brow—the thought of a friend, not of an enemy! Tom Redwing would be back in a few days—and he would not find his chum at Greyfriars! The Bounder's lip quivered. Redwing would miss him—poor old Redwing, who had tried so hard to keep him straight! Fool, thrice fool and blackguard that he had been! If only he had another chance—

There was no other chance. He had tempted Fate too often. Again and again he had tempted it, and his luck had been phenomenal. But at long last his luck had failed him.

It was dismal enough, hanging about the deserted quad by himself, with no company but bitter thoughts. He was tempted to walk out of the school, and take the train home, without waiting to see the Head, without waiting for the formal sentence of expulsion. But he did not entertain that thought. Perhaps some lingering hope remained—some last glimmer of belief in his own luck. He was not the fellow to knuckle under, anyhow, till the last vestige of hope had vanished.

He strolled about with a dark brow,

thinking—thinking! Several times old Gosling stared out of his lodge at the aimlessly wandering junior, no doubt wondering what he was doing out of class.

It was nearing time now for the fellows to come out of the Form-rooms. The Bounder hardly knew whether he wanted to see them or not. But at the thought of coming under their eyes, he drew himself up a little, and squared his shoulders. When they saw him, they were not going to see him looking as if he had taken the "knock." He would carry it off with a cool and smiling face, even with the bitterness of despair in his heart.

There was a whir of wheels, as a taxi drove in.

The Bounder glanced carelessly at it, glad of anything to distract his troubling thoughts.

A man sat in the taxi—a foreign-looking man, with a sallow face, gold-rimmed glasses, and a small, pointed black beard.

The Bounder remembered the Frenchman in the train, who had given him the good advice he had been too foolish to act upon, and he concluded that this was Monsieur Sarrail, Quelch's old pal from Paris.

But a second glance showed him that it was not Monsieur Sarrail.

The man looked like a Frenchman. He looked about Sarrail's size and age. He had the same little, pointed beard and gold-rimmed glasses, and his same, or very similar, clothes. But he was not the same man. There was a superficial resemblance, that was all.

The Bounder stared after the taxi after it had passed him.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,264.



It was odd enough that a Frenchman should be arriving at Greyfriars School on the same day that another Frenchman was expected there! It seemed to be raining Froggies that day!

But he forgot the foreigner in the taxi the next minute. He turned away and resumed his solitary tramping. The man was nothing to him, and he was busy with his own bitter thoughts.

With a black brow and a heavy heart Herbert Vernon-Smith tramped under the old elms, till a rush of feet and a buzz of voices apprised him that the fellows were coming out of the Form-rooms. Then—his heart still heavy, but cool indifference in his face—he walked towards the House.

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Nice for Bunter!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"  
Bob Cherry's powerful voice had a cheery ring.

Harry Wharton and his friends were not, perhaps, very keen to see the Bounder. They had been on rather hostile terms with him before the school broke up for Easter. They had met him in the holidays, and there had been trouble.

If Smithy had come back to school prepared to forget old quarrels, and let bygones be bygones, the Famous Five were ready to meet him half-way. But they doubted it very much. They knew the Bounder's unforgiving nature only too well.

But as they came on him in the quad, after Mr. Quelch had dismissed the Remove, Bob hailed him cheerily, and the rest of the Co. nodded.

"Back again, Smithy?" said Nugent.  
"With all the largeness of life!" remarked the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Herbert Vernon-Smith gave the Co. a nod. They did not know—could not guess—that he was there for only a few hours—that he was under sentence of the sack. He wondered what they would have said had they known. He did not feel disposed to tell them.

"Yes, back again, as large as life!" he said.

"Redwing all right?" asked Harry Wharton. "We heard that he had been laid up in the hols."

"Right as rain! He came back with me as far as Lantham, and left me there to go up to Hawkscliff."

"We heard that you came in with Sir Hilton Popper," said Bob, with a rather curious look at the Bounder.

Vernon-Smith was looking his usual self, and seemed genial; but all the Co. sensed something unusual in the atmosphere. Something was "up" with Smithy, though they did not guess what.

"That's so," assented Vernon-Smith. "Old Popper dropped on me, and was kind enough to walk to the school with me."

"The old bean's been on the warpath to-day," said Johnny Bull. "He had the cheek to stop us on the towpath, and told Quelch he believed we were heading for that putrid den, the Three Fishers. Quelch jolly well put the stopper on him!"

"The stopperfulness was terrific!"  
"Ah! I fancied that something had come between the wind and his nobility," drawled the Bounder. "I didn't find him what you'd call really exhilaratin' company."

"But why didn't you come into class?" asked Bob. "We expected to see you in the Form-room when Quelch came back."

"You know how kind and considerate Quelch is. He let me off lessons my first day back."

"Oh!" said Bob, staring at the Bounder.

"Honest Injun!" said Smithy. "I offered to come into class, and Quelch said 'No.'"

"That's not like Quelch. I thought he was rather ratty at your staying away so long."

"Oh, you don't know, Quelch!" smiled the Bounder. "He's a frightfully nice man, really. We had quite a pleasant chat in his study. Wasn't he lookin' merry and bright when he got back to the Form-room?"

"No fear! He was a jolly old Tartar!"

"That tartfulness was preposterous!"  
"Then I was lucky to cut class," yawned the Bounder.

"I say, you fellows, is that Smithy?" Billy Bunter rolled up and gave the Bounder an ingratiating blink through his big glasses. "Jolly glad to see you're back, Smithy!"

"Good!" said the Bounder. "And I'd be jolly glad to see your back, Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Oh, really, Smithy! I say, come up to our study, old chap!"

"Our study?" repeated Smithy. Bunter nodded cheerfully.

"Yes, old fellow. I'm in Study No. 4 now, you know. I changed this term, out of Study No. 7. It will be rather ripping, won't it?"

Harry Wharton & Co. grinned. They did not expect Herbert Vernon-Smith to regard that new arrangement as ripping.

Probably Billy Bunter had his doubts. He blinked rather anxiously at Smithy. "You'll be ready for tea, old chap," said Bunter hurriedly. "I'm standing tea in the study. Sort of house-warming, you know. Welcome home, and all that."

"You're standing tea in my study—"

"Our study, old fellow." The Bounder looked at Billy Bunter. To the surprise of the Famous Five, and perhaps to Bunter's surprise, he showed no sign of annoyance. He burst into a laugh.

"Well, get on with it, Bunter," he said. "The fact is, I'm ready for tea. Get on with it by all means."

"You—you don't mind me coming into the study, Smithy?"

"Why should I?"

"Of—of—course! It—it will be ripping, won't it, old chap? Some of the fellows thought you mightn't like it."

"What rot!" said the Bounder.

He laughed again. As he was booked never to occupy Study No. 4 in the Remove again, Billy Bunter was welcome to that study so far as he was concerned.

Bunter, quite unaware of the Bounder's thoughts, was relieved. He was determined to stick to his new study, whether Smithy liked it or lumped it. But it was undoubtedly a relief for Smithy to take it in this agreeable and good-tempered way.

"I—I say, Smithy, it—it's all right then, old chap?"

"Right as rain!"

"Oh, good! Now, about tea," said Bunter brightly. "I'm standing the tea, as I said. It's up to me. But—but, I say, Smithy, old chap, I—I've been disappointed about a postal order—"

"Not really?" asked Smithy.

"Yes, really, old fellow. I—I suppose you wouldn't mind lending me the quid—"

"I would!"

"I—I mean, the ten bob. I'm expecting a postal order by the first post to-morrow, you know—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! Smithy, old chap, if you will lend me the five bob—"

"Tell me another funny story!" suggested the Bounder.

"I—I say, old chap, I—I'm actually stony to-day," said Bunter. "I—I've spent all the money I brought back this term—"

"That's right!" said Smithy. "It's good for trade to put huge sums of money in circulation."

"Eh? Oh! Yes! But—but I can't stand tea in the study without a few

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bob, you know," urged Bunter. "I say, you're not going to be mean, are you, Smithy, old chap?"

"Yes, frightfully."

"Well, look here, old fellow, you stand tea in the study to-day, and I'll stand it to-morrow out of my postal order," said the fat Owl. "Take it in turns, you know, what?"

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

There was something rather entertaining in Billy Bunter landing himself in Study No. 4 in the happy expectation of picking up the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. There were going to be no crumbs for Bunter.

"I say, Smithy, old fellow— Look here, you beast, don't walk away when a fellow's talking to you! I say, old chap— Yah! Beast!"

Vernon-Smith strolled on towards the House. Billy Bunter blinked after him with a devastating blink.

Harry Wharton & Co. strolled away, smiling, but a little puzzled. The Bounder puzzled them.

"Smithy's come back a bit changed," said Bob. "Blessed if I expected him to take Bunter like that."

"Well, he can't kick Bunter out of Study No. 4. The fat sweep would put it up to Quelch," remarked Nugent.

"Smithy's the man to kick, all the same."

"Well, yes, that's so."

"Glad to see him so jolly good-tempered, anyhow," said Bob. "We may not have trouble this term, after all. With Smithy Form captain and the cricket matches coming on, we don't want trouble."

"Hear, hear!"

"Well, what about some cricket before tea?" asked Bob. And the Famous Five went down to Little Side, while Herbert Vernon-Smith strolled into the House.

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

### An Amazing Discovery!

"HERE we are again, Smithy!" "Back again, old bean!" Skinner & Co. greeted the Bounder cordially as he came into the House. The black sheep of the Remove at least were glad to see him again.

The Bounder nodded and smiled. Nothing in his indifferent face betrayed the leaden weight that was at his heart. "Feel jolly at getting back, old Tulip?"

"What-ho!" said Smithy.

"We've missed you, old man," said Skinner. "We're going to have some high old times this term, Smithy. His Magnificence the mighty Wharton will have to sing small, what?"

The Bounder did not answer that. By his own act, by his own crass folly, he had washed out that prospect of a triumphant term. He winced at Skinner's words.

"Tea in our study, old bean," said Skinner cheerily. "We've been rather killin' the fatted calf, you know. We've got a spread for you."

"Good man!" said the Bounder. "But I rather think Quelch will be wantin' me now the Head's through with the Sixth."

"You've got to see the Head?" asked Snoop.

The Bounder smiled—a rather wry smile.

"Quelch mentioned it," he answered. "In fact, he made a point of it."

"Well, Quelch won't bother you yet awhile," said Skinner. "He's got a giddy visitor here to-day. Some Froggy that he knew in France about a hundred

years ago before the War. He'll be busy for a bit. I believe he's taken him to his rooms now."

"Oh, has that Froggy blown in?" asked the Bounder. "Man named Sarrail?"

"That's it. But how the thump did you know?" asked Skinner, in surprise. "You haven't been here—"

The Bounder laughed.

"We travelled down in the same train from London," he explained. "The Froggy found I was a Greyfriars man, and introduced himself. A jolly old bean. He gave me some advice, which I didn't take."

"Must have been good advice, then!" grinned Skinner.

"Exactly. That was why I didn't take it, though I rather wish now that I had," drawled the Bounder.

"Well, come up to the study," said Skinner. "Quelch won't want you yet. He's got his Froggy on his hands. The man's only just come."

"Only just come? It must have taken him a jolly long time to get here from Courtfield, then. He went on in the train when I got out at Redclyffe, hours ago."

"Well, he's only just blown in," said Skinner. "Trotter came to the Form-room to tell Quelch that Monsieur Sarrail had come, and Quelch let us off a few minutes early. Why, you must have seen him come in. We heard the taxi—"

Vernon-Smith stared at Skinner.

"I saw the taxi. The man in it wasn't Sarrail."

Skinner stared in his turn.

"It jolly well was," he answered. "Didn't you know him again after meeting him in the train?"

"It wasn't the same man."

"Must have been if it was Sarrail you met. Anyhow, he's with Quelch now, and Quelch will be taking him to tea in Common-room with the other beaks, so he won't want you till afterwards. Come up to the study, old bean," said Skinner. "I tell you Quelch is looking after his Froggy, and he won't want you till after tea, anyhow. Blessed if I see what he wants you at all for. He knows you're here."

"I fancy he's rather keen on seeing me," smiled the Bounder. "Hallo! Here he is!"

Mr. Quelch came from the staircase, with a tall, bearded gentleman, in gold-rimmed glasses, walking by his side. As Skinner had surmised, Quelch was taking his visitor to Common-room for tea with the other beaks. Mr. Quelch was speaking to his companion in very pleasant tones, with a very agreeable smile on his severe countenance. But as he saw the Bounder, Mr. Quelch's smile vanished all of a sudden. He stopped.

"Vernon-Smith!"

"Yes, sir!" answered the Bounder.

"I have no time to deal with you now, Vernon-Smith," said the Remove master. "You will come to my study in an hour, and I shall then take you to your headmaster!"

"Pleased, sir!" drawled the Bounder.

Mr. Quelch's eyes glistened at him for a second. But he did not speak again, and he passed on with the French gentleman.

The Bounder's glance followed them curiously. The man with Mr. Quelch was a Frenchman—or, at least, looked like a Frenchman. But he was not the Frenchman who had spoken to Vernon-Smith in the train. On that point there was no doubt—no shadow of doubt.

"That's old Sarrail, Smithy," said Skinner.

"What the dickens do you mean?" asked the Bounder.

"Eh! What I say, of course!" answered Skinner, puzzled. "That's Quelch's jolly old pal from Paris."

"Par ici, Sarrail!" said Mr. Quelch, as he turned the corner into the passage that led to Masters' Common-room. Apparently, Quelch was speaking in French as a compliment to his French visitor.

The Bounder gave a violent start.

Skinner had told him that the Frenchman with Quelch was Monsieur Sarrail. But, as the man was certainly not the Frenchman Smithy had met in the train, he supposed that Skinner was mistaken, without feeling much interest in the matter.

But, as Mr. Quelch addressed his companion by the name of Sarrail, the Bounder had rather a shock.

He stared after the Form master and his companion blankly as they turned the corner and disappeared in the direction of Common-room.

"What the thump—" muttered Vernon-Smith.

"Come up to the study, old man," said Skinner. "Quelch doesn't want you for an hour. Lots of time for tea."

The Bounder did not move.

"Is that man with Quelch Gaston Sarrail?" he asked.

The Bounder spoke very quietly.

"Eh—yes!" Skinner stared. "Didn't you hear Quelch call him Sarrail? I suppose you know the man again if you met him in the train he came down by?"

"I've a rather good memory for faces," said the Bounder, with a nod. "Did that Johnny bring Sarrail's suitcase in with him, do you know?"

"Yes. I saw Trotter carrying it in about ten minutes ago," said Skinner, more and more puzzled. "What are you driving at, Smithy? What the dickens do you care about the man?"

The Bounder smiled.

"Suitcase with the initials 'G. S.' and a lot of foreign labels on it?" he asked.

"I didn't notice the initials, but I noticed the foreign labels. What about it?"

"Tea—" said Stott.

"Never mind tea for a minute!" yawned the Bounder. "The fact is, I'm rather interested in that Froggy. You see, we had quite a pleasant chat in the train, and he rather jawed about himself. I gathered that Quelch hadn't seen him for twenty years."

He laughed.

"Might be a bit difficult to recognise a man after twenty years—what?" he added.

"Well, I suppose Quelch knows him," said the perplexed Skinner.

"Dear old Quelch!" said the Bounder. "Do you happen to know which is the Froggy's room, old bean?"

"Next room to Quelch's; they've been getting it ready for him to-day," answered Skinner. "Look here, what about tea? Quelch said he would want you in an hour."

"Let's go an' look at Froggy's room. The coast's clear, now Quelch has taken him to tea with the beaks."

"What on earth for?" ejaculated Skinner.

"Oh, let's!" said the Bounder.

He walked away to the stairs, and Skinner & Co. followed him, quite bewildered. They exchanged puzzled glances as they went up the stairs after the Bounder. Juniors were not supposed to butt into Masters' quarters, and why Vernon-Smith wanted to butt in there was a complete mystery to Skinner & Co.



As the Bounder had said, the coast was clear. He opened the door of the room next to Mr. Quelch's, stepped in, and looked round.

The suitcase was there, and his eyes fixed on it at once. There were the initials "G. S." and the French labels: It was the same suitcase he had seen on the rack over Monsieur Sarrail's head in the railway carriage. He knew it at a glance.

That was all the Bounder wished to see. He turned back and rejoined Skinner & Co., and walked away with them to the Remove passage.

There was quite a spread in Study No. 11 in the Remove. Skinner & Co. were celebrating the return of the Bounder—captain of the Remove, and a fellow worth cultivating—little dreaming of what Mr. Quelch wanted him for after tea.

And the Bounder was not thinking so much of that now; the Bounder had other food for thought.

He was in a cheery humour at tea, quite the old Bounder, and Skinner & Co. found him good company.

But his thoughts were racing all the time.

A man—apparently a Frenchman—had arrived at Greyfriars, calling himself Gaston Sarrail, and bringing Gaston Sarrail's baggage with him—and that man was not Gaston Sarrail.

It was startling, amazing, almost incredible; but it was the indubitable fact, and only Smithy knew it.

The man he had met in the train and talked with was Gaston Sarrail. Where was he now?

He had not come on to the school. A man using his name—a man whom the Bounder had never seen till he saw him in the taxi—had arrived in his place.

What had happened to Sarrail?

He had gone on to Courtfield in the train—that was certain. At Courtfield something had happened to him—something that had prevented him from coming on to the school, and allowed an impostor, using his name and baggage, to come on in his place!

Quelch had not seen Gaston Sarrail for twenty years. After twenty years his remembrance would be a little dim; moreover, a man would naturally change a great deal in such a length of time. Any change he noticed in him he would put down to the lapse of years.

Quelch, obviously, had no suspicion. He called the man Sarrail; he received him as Sarrail; indeed, it would have been strange if any suspicion of such a deception had entered the Form master's mind. How could it?

And yet there was a deception. This man was not Sarrail, and he must have got rid of Sarrail somehow in order to take his place.

And his object? Some sort of roguery, that was clear; the man would not take the risk of kidnapping and imposture for nothing. Some London rogue, to whom the effusive French gentleman had talked too freely—that was it; some swindler, confidence-man, or hotel thief—and Quelch had taken him in without a glimmering of suspicion! A rogue, a crook, a thief, was sitting at that moment tea-ing with the beaks under Quelch's wing, and Quelch did not know—and the Bounder did! Nobody knew, except the fellow who was under sentence of expulsion, and who, in a short time, was to be taken before his headmaster to be expelled—turfed out of Greyfriars!

The Bounder grinned as he thought of it.

Skinner & Co. little dreamed of what THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,264.

was passing in the Bounder's mind. But they found him very merry and bright, and he was still merry and bright when they strolled out of study after tea.

## THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

### In False Colours!

THE Gentleman Pincher was feeling good.

He had reason to feel good.

Leaning back in a very comfortable armchair in Mr. Quelch's study, with an excellent cigar between his teeth, he listened to Mr. Quelch with a smile on his face.

Mr. Quelch, not a talkative gentleman as a rule, was talking very freely now, in the company of his old friend from France.

He had corresponded regularly with Gaston Sarrail; but as he had not seen him for twenty years, he naturally had plenty to say when they met.

The "French" gentleman was more than willing to leave as much of the talking as possible to Mr. Quelch.

From the effusive and loquacious gentleman he was impersonating at Greyfriars, Mr. Brown had learned quite enough to carry out his daring trickery. Still, he had to be on his guard.

Mr. Quelch, though unsuspecting, was no fool! The Gentleman Pincher had seen that at a glance.

But he fancied he was carrying on quite well.

Quelch had noted certain little changes in his old friend, and had, in fact, remarked on some of them; but the lapse of twenty years since he had seen Gaston Sarrail fully accounted for them.

In compliment to his friend, he had intended to talk French; but Mr. Brown, though well up in French, was aware that he did not speak like a native of France, and he had cut that short. He had made the extremely natural explanation that while in England, he desired to speak only English, in order to improve his knowledge of the tongue.

There were difficulties, of course. Monsieur Sarrail was engaged in educational matters in France; a topic on which he might have been expected to talk, and a topic on which Mr. Brown was certainly not well-informed.

But when Mr. Quelch raised that topic, his guest dismissed it.

"To-day I vill not talk ze shop, mon ami!" he declared. "To-day you sall tell me of yourself and zis so interesting school."

Mr. Brown, if he could not have talked Monsieur Sarrail's French, certainly talked Monsieur Sarrail's English quite well.

It was not, in fact, the first time that the Gentleman Pincher had played such a part.

The Gentleman Pincher had played many parts in his time! It was no new experience for him to add ten years to his age by artistic lines added to his face, or to sport a false beard that looked as natural as the genuine article, or to wear glasses—with plain-glass lenses.

This little game, indeed, seemed to the Gentleman Pincher one of the easiest he had ever played; and he en-

tertained not the slightest doubt of getting away with it.

What was to stop him?

Nobody at Greyfriars School had ever seen Sarrail, except one man, who had not seen him for twenty years! He arrived when Sarrail was expected, with Sarrail's baggage, Sarrail's papers and belongings, using Sarrail's name. He had not known Mr. Quelch by sight—but, knowing all he did, he could not have had any doubt of the identity of the Form master who met him with smiling face and outstretched hand. The Gentleman Pincher wished that all his little enterprises had been as easy as this!

Besides, he was not keeping it up long! Monsieur Sarrail was locked up in the lonely shed ten miles away, with the Gentleman Pincher's chauffeur-confederate looking after him. But the poor gentleman would be set free on the morrow. Mr. Brown required only one night at Greyfriars School! An expert hotel thief, a crook to whom locks presented no difficulties, needed no more than that. Mr. Quelch had already shown him over the school; and the Gentleman Pincher had been taking mental notes. Quite a comfortable bed had been prepared for Gaston Sarrail; but the Gentleman Pincher was not going to sleep in it. When Greyfriars slept, the Gentleman Pincher was going to get busy; and he was going to take a silent leave before dawn. It was all cut and dried. It was only for one evening that he had to keep up the imposture.

With rings of smoke curling from his cigar, the Gentleman Pincher listened and nodded to Mr. Quelch's remarks.

He was feeling good—very good! He had tea'd with the "beaks" in Masters' Common-room—speaking only "ze English" there. He had been invited to dine with the Head; but had excused himself on the ground of fatigue after his journey. Secure as he felt, he did not want to pass under observation that could be eluded. The fewer eyes that scanned him, the better.

He would have been glad, in fact, to get away to his room without delay; but he could hardly do that yet. But he had told Mr. Quelch that, on this his first evening, he would retire very early. Only the previous day, he explained, he had crossed "zat so terrible La Manche"; and he was not so "verree young" as he once had been.

Mr. Quelch remembered Gaston Sarrail as a talkative gentleman, and now found him rather taciturn. But it was natural to put that down to the fatigue of journeying.

The honoured guest seemed satisfied, indeed pleased, to leave the greater part of the conversation to Mr. Quelch; and if it flagged, he started it again with some question concerning Greyfriars, which set Mr. Quelch's chin in motion once more.

Indeed, in the flow of talk, Mr. Quelch almost forgot a very serious matter that he had on his mind; that of the Bounder.

That, however, was not a matter that the Remove master could dismiss; Vernon-Smith had to be taken to the Head, to receive his sentence; a very disagreeable matter that Mr. Quelch was anxious to get over and done with.

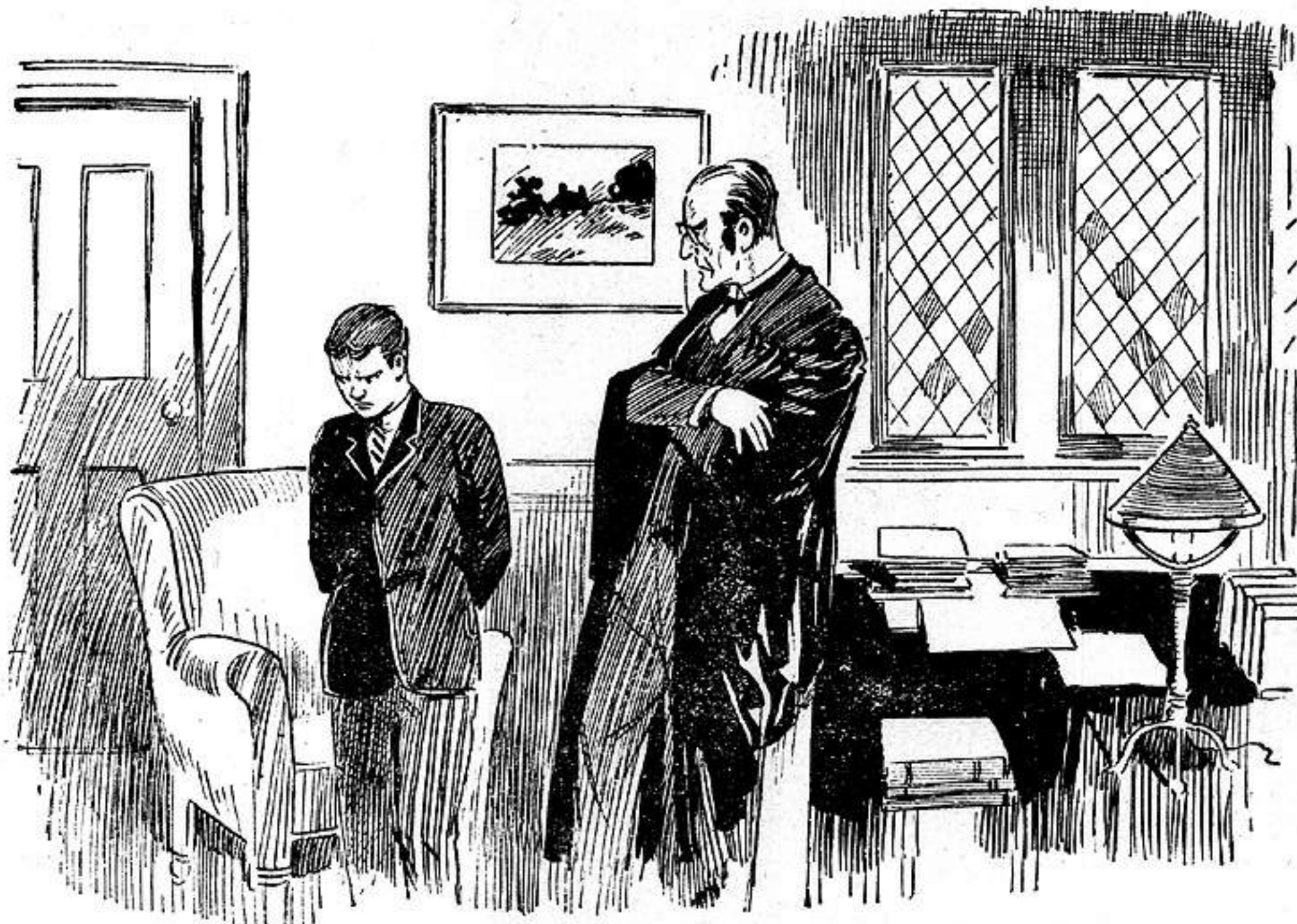
He had told Vernon-Smith to come to his study in an hour. He chatted with "Monsieur Sarrail" while he waited for him to come.

The Bounder did not come; though it was now nearly an hour since the time he should have put in an appearance.

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"This," said Mr. Quelch, "is the end, Vernon-Smith! On your very first day at Greyfriars, you are discovered acting in a disgraceful way, with blackguardly associates, and I am compelled to place the matter before Dr. Locke." "I'm sorry, sir!" muttered the Bounder awkwardly.

It was like the young rascal's impudence, of course; no doubt, knowing that he had to go, it gratified him to treat his Form master with disrespect.

But Mr. Quelch rang for Trotter at last, and told him to find Vernon-Smith and send him to the study.

Trotter returned in about ten minutes—alone! Mr. Quelch, breaking off his conversation with his honoured guest, gave Trotter a severe glance.

"If you please, sir, I can't find Master Vernon-Smith in the House, sir!" said Trotter.

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Quelch.

"I've asked Master Wharton, sir, and he says that he's gone out of gates, sir," said Trotter.

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips.

"Very well, Trotter!" he said briefly.

Trotter retired.

The Remove master wondered whether Vernon-Smith, without waiting for the "sack," had left the school and gone back home. It would be like his impudence to go without a word, without waiting to see the Head. It mattered little; but Mr. Quelch, of course, had to know whether Vernon-Smith was gone or not. It was a little difficult to give his polite attention to his guest, while at the same time wondering what that audacious young rascal was doing.

However, Mr. Quelch dismissed the Bounder from his mind for the time; and resumed his interrupted conversation with "Monsieur Sarrail."

That conversation was destined to be interrupted again; Mr. Quelch little dreamed how. Still less did the Gentleman Pincher. When a heavy tread was heard in the corridor without, little, indeed, did the Gentleman Pincher guess what it boded to him. The Gentleman Pincher was feeling good—but that feeling of goodness was not to last!

## THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Smithy Causes A Surprise!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Bow-wow!"

"But I say, where is he?" demanded Billy Bunter.

"Who, fathead?"

"Smithy—my study-mate, you know."

The Famous Five chuckled.

Billy Bunter had seen very little of his new study-mate, since Herbert Vernon-Smith had been back. There had been no tea in Smithy's study—that study, which the fat Owl had hoped would be like unto a land flowing with milk and honey when the Bounder came—was as bare as Mother Hubbard's celebrated cupboard.

After tea Smithy had disappeared. Several fellows had seen him go out of gates, by himself. He had not come back yet; though it was now close on lock-up. Bunter was getting anxious about his new study-mate. Tea had been a frost; and after tea, Bunter's thoughts naturally turned to supper, that being the next meal. He was not thinking of supper in Hall. Surely Smithy, on his first night back, would be having a study supper! If so, his new study-mate could scarcely be excluded—especially as the Bounder had taken Bunter's invasion so good-temperedly! But Bunter wanted to know! It was an important matter, and a fellow naturally wanted to know where he stood in a matter of such importance.

The Famous Five were adorning the House steps with their persons when the fat Owl rolled up to inquire for Smithy. It was not yet lock-up; but it was near, and Greyfriars fellows were coming in at the gates and crossing to the House. Smithy was not to be seen among them.

"I say, you fellows, Skinner says he went out," said Bunter. "He says he asked Smithy what he was going down to Courtfield for, and Smithy told him he was preparing a pleasant surprise for Quelch. What do you think he meant by that, you fellows?"

"Blessed if I know," answered Harry Wharton.

"The knowfulness is not terrific," said Hurreo Jamsset Ram Singh, shaking his dusky head.

"Well, I suppose he must be gone out, as I can't find him anywhere," said Bunter, with a discontented grunt.

"He's gone out, old fat man," answered Harry. "I saw him go. Quelch seems to want him; he sent Trotter after him half an hour ago."

"Has he said anything to you fellows about a study supper?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! Of course, he wouldn't ask you fellows—you're not Smithy's pals, like I am. I wish the silly ass would come in!" said Bunter pœvishly. "The tuck-shop will be shut pretty soon—he's not leaving himself a lot of time."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here's somebody!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Why, it's Smithy!"

A taxi turned in at the school gates and came up the drive towards the House. Seated in it was Herbert Vernon-Smith, and by his side sat a portly gentleman in uniform, whom the surprised juniors recognised as Inspector Grimes, of Courtfield Police Station.

Mr. Grimes' plump, ruddy face had a very grave, and, at the same time, dubious expression on it. On the Bounder's face was a faintly mocking smile.

The juniors stared at the taxi.

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Why the Bounder had come back from Courtfield accompanied by a police-inspector was a mystery to them.

The taxi stopped at the steps, and the portly inspector got out, followed by the Bounder. He passed the juniors on the steps. Many eyes were on Vernon-Smith, and he paused, with a smile on his face.

"What's this game, Smithy?" asked Bob Cherry. "What the thump have you brought a bobby to the school for?"

The Bounder grinned. "Pleasant surprise for Quelch," he answered. "I thought Grimey might like to meet his pal from Paris."

Harry Wharton & Co. stared at him. So did a good many other fellows. The Bounder's eyes were glimmering. He seemed to be enjoying himself.

"Where's the man now?" he asked. "What man—Monsieur Sarrail? With Quelch in his study, I believe," answered Harry Wharton. "Have you seen him?"

"Smithy travelled in the same train with him to-day," said Skinner. "He told us so. You haven't brought that bobby to see Sarrail, Smithy?"

"Just that!" answered Smithy. "What on earth for?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"I fancied Grimey might like to meet him," drawled the Bounder. "I had to pitch it to him pretty hard to make him come; but he's come."

"But why—?" Smithy laughed. The juniors could see that he was in a state of great, suppressed excitement—why, was a mystery to them. But the Bounder affected a cool nonchalance.

"I fancy the man's a rather interestin' character! I'm jolly glad Quelch's French pal came down in my train this afternoon."

"He, he, he!" came from Billy Bunter. "He wouldn't have, but for me, Smithy."

"What do you mean by that, you fat idiot?"

"Oh, really, Smithy! You see, he phoned Quelch this morning, and said he was coming to lunch, and I was in the study waiting for Quelch, and I jolly well shut him off!" chuckled Bunter. "So he said he'd come in the afternoon—see? He, he, he!"

Vernon-Smith stared at the fat Owl. "My hat!" he ejaculated. "Well, if that's so, you fat ass, you've been more useful than you'll ever be ornamental. If he'd come this morning I should never have seen him, and then—"

"And then what?" asked Bob Cherry. "Then Grimey wouldn't be here, and we should be missing this little excitement we're just going to enjoy."

"What little excitement, you ass?"

"Follow on and see!" The Bounder went into the House. The Remove fellows, exchanging astonished looks, followed him in. That something was "on" was plain enough; but they could not begin to guess what it was. But there was quite an army of curious fellows at the Bounder's heels as he followed Inspector Grimes to Mr. Quelch's study.

## THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Luck!

"COME in!" Mr. Quelch rose to his feet in surprise as his study door opened and Inspector Grimes, of Courtfield, entered with his solid tread. Trotter was in the passage, but the inspector had not waited for the

page to announce him; he had come direct to the study.

"Mr. Grimes! What—?" "You will excuse me, sir," said Mr. Grimes. "I have received a statement—a very remarkable statement—from a Greyfriars boy, and I felt it my duty to call and ascertain whether there was anything in it."

His glance passed Mr. Quelch to the French-looking gentleman in the other armchair.

"Monsieur Sarrail" watched him over his gold-rimmed glasses.

The Gentleman Pincher was not alarmed. He saw no occasion for alarm. But in the presence of a man in blue the Gentleman Pincher was wary.

"Indeed!" said Mr. Quelch. "But—" "I understand that you have a visitor here, sir—a gentleman from Paris, named Sarrail—"

"This is Monsieur Sarrail," said the astonished Remove master.

Mr. Quelch's guest rose, and bowed to the inspector with Gallic grace.

"Zat is my name, sair," he said.

The Courtfield inspector's keen eyes searched him. Perhaps he noted that Monsieur Sarrail was keeping his face turned from the light. The Gentleman Pincher had not expected to come under the keen observation of a police-officer, much more searching than a school-master's.

"The boy, Vernon-Smith, has stated that he travelled in the same train as Monsieur Sarrail, sir, who spoke with him," said Inspector Grimes.

"Very possibly," said Mr. Quelch. "But what—?"

"He has stated that he has seen your visitor since the gentleman arrived in the school, sir—"

"Well?"

"And that he is not the same man!" "Wha-a-t!"

The Gentleman Pincher breathed hard and deep. A chance like this—the merest chance—that the cunningest rogue could not have foreseen or guarded against—

Mr. Quelch stared blankly at the inspector.

"I—I fail to understand you, Mr. Grimes! If you have allowed that young rascal, Vernon-Smith, to play a foolish practical joke on you—"

"Master Vernon-Smith's statement, sir, was so positive, that I felt it my duty to call," said Mr. Grimes. "If he has deceived me, no punishment can be too severe for him. If you are absolutely satisfied as to the identity of this gentleman, whom, I understand, you have not seen for twenty years—"

"Of course I am absolutely satisfied!" barked Mr. Quelch, amazed, but more angry than amazed. "The boy's impudence in making such a statement passes all bounds. Ah, he is here!"

His eyes turned, glinting, on the Bounder, who appeared in the study doorway, with a swarm of fellows behind him. "Vernon-Smith! You—you have dared—"

"Oh, quite, sir!" The Bounder stopped coolly in, his eyes on the French-looking man. "I thought I'd better chip in, sir—I'm sure you'd like Monsieur Sarrail found—"

"Monsieur Sarrail is here!" almost shrieked Mr. Quelch.

"Monsieur Sarrail is not here, sir," said the Bounder calmly. "That man is not Monsieur Sarrail!"

"Boy!" "You have not seen Monsieur Sarrail for twenty years, sir. I saw him this afternoon. I say that that is not the man!"

The Bounder's voice was cool, clear,

sharp. He lifted his hand and pointed to the French-looking man.

"That man is an impostor, sir! He is not Gaston Sarrail! He looks like him. He's got up to look like him—near enough to deceive you, sir, after you've not seen him for so long. But he's not the man! Redwing will tell you the same, sir, if you send for him. He saw Monsieur Sarrail in the train, and he will know that this is not the man."

Mr. Quelch stood dumbfounded. There was a breathless hush in the crowded passage outside. The fellows almost held their breath as they stared in.

"Monsieur Sarrail talked with me in the train, sir," continued the Bounder. "I got out at Redclyffe, and Monsieur Sarrail went on to Courtfield in the train. The train got in there soon after two. This man did not get here till after four. He had time to get rid of Monsieur Sarrail and come on here in his place."

Mr. Quelch gasped. "Vernon-Smith, if you are not out of your senses—"

The Gentleman Pincher found his voice.

"Zat garcon—he has not ze bon sense. Mon ami Quelch, I zink zat you vill not allow zat boy to insult your friend—"

"You do it well!" grinned the Bounder. "But the game's up, my pippin. You've got Monsieur Sarrail parked somewhere—"

"Vernon-Smith—" gasped Mr. Quelch.

Inspector Grimes stood with his eyes fixed on "Monsieur Sarrail." The Bounder nudged his elbow.

"Mr. Grimes, that man looks like Mr. Sarrail, but he's not Sarrail. It would be a jolly big coincidence if he happened to resemble him in real life—what? He's got up to look like him. That beard—"

Without finishing the Bounder made a sudden spring. Before the impostor could raise a hand Vernon-Smith had caught at the little pointed black beard and jerked hard.

It came off in his hand. There was a yell from the fellows in the passage, a gasp from Mr. Quelch, another from Mr. Grimes, and a fierce oath from the "Gentleman Pincher."

What happened next came like lightning. Up to that moment, doubtless, the impostor had hoped to carry it off. But he knew now that the game was up, and he made a sudden bound for the door. So swift was his rush that the Courtfield inspector was shoved aside and the Bounder sent reeling, and the Gentleman Pincher leaped through the doorway.

"Collar him!" roared Bob Cherry.

But for the swarm of Remove fellows in the passage the man would have got clear. But hands closed on him on all sides, and he was dragged down with a heavy bump on the floor.

He struggled savagely. "By gum!" gasped Inspector Grimes. He plunged into the struggling swarm in the passage, and his grasp closed on the desperate rascal. There was a metallic click.

The man who had called himself Gaston Sarrail was lifted to his feet with the handcuffs on his wrists.

"Got him!" grinned the Bounder breathlessly. "Now ask him what he's done with Mr. Sarrail."

"Good heavens!" breathed Mr. Quelch. He could hardly doubt now, and his brain was in a whirl.

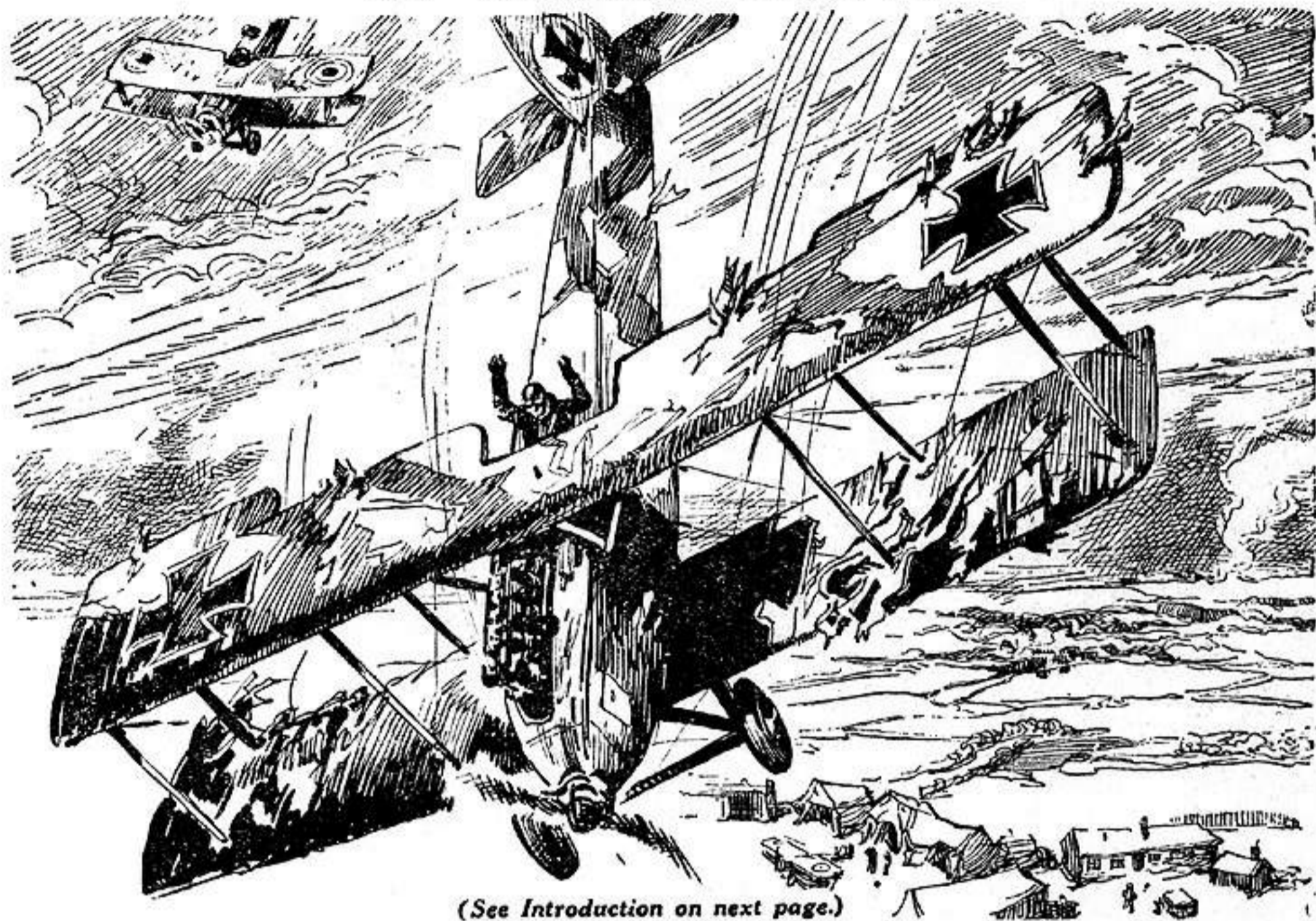
(Continued on page 28.)



YOU'LL BE THRILLED BY THIS POWERFUL FLYING STORY!

# WINGS OF WAR!

BY HEDLEY SCOTT.



(See Introduction on next page.)

## An Unpardonable Crime!

**T**HIS decision Jim Daniels endeavoured to convey to the crestfallen German by heading him off as the Halberstadt suddenly dived, without engine power, in the direction of the German lines. A burst of bullets, purposely aimed wide of the pilot, drove home Jim's intentions.

It was madness for the German to attempt to escape. He would merely be throwing away his life. The Hauptman Marx was a quick thinker. Perhaps if he landed and was taken prisoner a chance of escape might come his way; perhaps he might live to fight these intrepid, chivalrous Englishers again. He decided that discretion was the better part of valour.

The nose of the Halberstadt was turned regretfully towards the distant stretch of country which marked 256 aerodrome. By careful gliding he would just make the landing. Close in his wake forged the Bristol, ready for any "monkey tricks," as Ron remarked. But the battle was over.

The Hauptman Marx, keeping his control-stick between his knees, pushed his arms above his head in token of surrender.

The Halberstadt just reached the aerodrome on the far side. Bumping like a rubber ball, it landed and finally came to rest. Not two yards away from its port wing the Bristol also came to rest.

Tearing towards the Halberstadt came the familiar figure of Sergeant Wilkins. Even as the Hauptman Marx climbed

wearily out of his cockpit and staggered towards the two triumphant Britishers in the Bristol plane the sergeant reached that side of the German plane farthest away from the view of Jim and Ron, and made a hurried search of the cockpit.

Meantime, Jim and Ron were jumping down to the ground and advancing upon their defeated foe.

The German halted exactly three paces from them, clicked his heels, and saluted smartly.

"Gentlemen," he said in broken English, "'tis an honour to have been beaten by so chivalrous foes. May the Hauptman Marx of Douai establishment be permitted to know the names of his gallant conquerors?"

He reeled slightly, but kept at the salute.

And Jim and Ron, returning that soldier's salute, gave the required information.

"My thanks, gentlemen," replied the Hauptman Marx. "I came to lay a wreath in memory of your gallant comrades who fell in yesterday's engagement. You will find it, with the condolences of my comrades, in my plane."

"Oh!" gasped Ron and Jim, somewhat taken aback. "We didn't know—"

The German smiled wanly.

"The fortune of war," he said simply. "Perhaps we meet again; perhaps—"

He reeled and collapsed in a dead faint, right at the feet of the two who had vanquished him.

"Poor devil!" breathed Jim. "He's wounded!"

While the two chums did what they could to make the German comfortable

Sergeant Wilkins pocketed the message in code, taken from the artificial blood-red tulip, and then carried the wreath to them.

Major Locke frowned.

Before him, "on the carpet," stood two penitent members of his squadron—penitent if looks were anything to go by.

And by the time Major Locke had said most of what he had wanted to say Jim and Ron really began to think that they had indeed committed an unpardonable crime.

"Surely you youngsters know that it is strictly against all rules and regulations to take a machine into the air and to go off on a joy-ride without your commanding officer's permission?" he barked.

"I'm afraid it was entirely my fault," said Jim apologetically. "I dragged Ron into it."

"That's not true!" burst out his chum wrathfully. "I didn't need any dragging."

"I don't doubt that," said Locke dryly. "Still, it was a stupid, reckless thing to do. Haven't we had enough casualties? Didn't yesterday's terrible affair teach you anything?"

"We're sorry, sir," said Jim, shifting from one foot to the other.

"I should think so!" barked Locke, frowning. "Fortunately for you, the ending of this silly, outrageous escapade turned out as favourably as it did. I accept your apologies. Consider the matter finished!"

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The two chums saluted, and were about to depart from the squadron office when Locke bade them stay. On the trestle table before him lay the wreath, which Jim had taken from Sergeant Wilkins. The message, taken from the black-bordered envelope was spread upon the table.

"You can read that," said Locke, "and then post it on the notice-board." The message, written in copperplate English, read:

*"Douai Establishment salute the gallant enemy from 256 Squadron, and offer their condolences to the comrades that survive."*

*Captain Oakley, Lieutenant Wallace, Lieutenant Bradley and Sergeant-observer Sharp are in hospital.*

*Remainder fly no more . . ."*

Jim's and Ron's face gladdened and as quickly saddened as they read that message. It was good to learn that Oakley, Wallace Bradley, and Sharp were alive; it was disquieting to know that sixteen other comrades who had made the flight to Douai the previous day would "fly no more," which meant, delicately, that they were dead.

"Keep a stiff upper lip," said Major Locke. "War—"

"Is war!" finished Jim, with a gulp.

"And as a consolation," said Locke kindly, "you can place on your record that you fought one of Germany's crack airmen in the person of Captain Marx, and bested him. For that piece of work, unorthodox as it was, we will say no more about this morning's business."

His eyes strayed to the wreath on the table and fastened grimly on the bulbous flower of the blood-red tulip; once more he beckoned the two chums to stop as they started for the door.

"Did you take this wreath from the cockpit of the Halberstadt yourself?" he asked Jim.

The youngster shook his head.

"No, major. Sergeant Wilkins saw the plane come down and rushed out to meet it. While we were looking after the German fellow the sergeant brought us the wreath."

Locke's eyes narrowed.

"Thank you!" he said. "Sergeant Wilkins is indeed an early riser. The old proverb of the early bird catching the worm seems to be justified in his case, at least."

With which somewhat enigmatical remark he finally dismissed the two chums.

When the sound of their departing footsteps had died away Major Locke picked up the wreath, detached the artificial tulip from it, and examined it, with scrupulous care.

His keen eyes noted the faint pricks made by the needle in the process of sewing the petals together, and a tiny fragment of thin red silk thread.

"Hum!" he murmured. "The one flower in the wreath which is not genuine bears ample signs of having been sewn up. For what purpose? And why should Sergeant Wilkins be the first to handle the wreath? Was he expecting it? Was there some sort of message concealed in that flower?"

And while Major Locke was giving himself much thought to find a fair answer to these questions Sergeant Wilkins, alias "R. One," was seated in his hut reading the code message the kommandant had so cunningly sent him.

The return of the carrier pigeon, to Pierre Marmot, the previous day, had

warned him to expect an important message just after dawn. He was to look for an artificial blood-red tulip, which would contain his latest orders. The wreath bearing the message would be dropped on the aerodrome just after dawn, the petals would be sewn together so that there would be no possibility of the coded message dropping out of its place of concealment when the wreath dropped to the ground.

A perfect piece of "intelligence" work, the traitorous sergeant told himself. No one knew of its receipt, no one knew of the part he was playing to assist the Fatherland. Truly the life of a spy was absurdly easy.

But that's where Sergeant Wilkins did those who followed his dangerous calling, and those on the other side whose job it was to detect them, a grave injustice. Somebody did know. The game of spying was anything but absurdly easy. For at that moment Major Locke had reached a definite conclusion. He had a spy in the squadron, a dangerous spy, and in his opinion the name of that spy was Sergeant Wilkins!

---  
"Goofy!"

"MAY I come in?"

Thorburn's usually cheery face was solemnity itself as he stood in the doorway of the squadron office.

Major Locke's face was equally solemn as he nodded an affirmative.

The youngster carefully closed the door, paused a moment, and then blushed in his confusion.

"Well, young 'un, and what's the bad news?"

"Look here, sir," blurted out Thorburn, "I'm not a suspicious type of chap, but ever since that raid on Douai I've been—"

"Suspicious of someone in the squadron—eh?" put in Locke quietly. "Well, to be quite frank, I have myself."

"You know my gun jammed twice in that show," went on Thorburn.

Locke nodded, and pursed his lips.

"It had been tampered with," said Thorburn uncomfortably. "I spent nearly an hour overhauling that gun before the raid, and yet everything that could possibly go wrong with it went wrong when we were in a tight corner."

He paused, and Locke waited for him to resume.

"I've been making careful inquiries of the men in the armoury, major, and the only chap who could have got at the gun was—"

#### WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE.

*In consequence of plans having leaked out to the enemy through an unknown source, Ferrers Locke—formerly a Secret Service agent, but now Major Locke, D.S.O.—is appointed to take over command of 256 Squadron, R.F.C., a Bristol Fighter squadron of great repute, stationed somewhere in France. Locke's suspicions are aroused by the strange conduct of Sergeant Wilkins, who is, in reality, "R. One"—one of the smartest spies in the service of Germany. Later, when twenty planes from 256 set out on a secret raid they are trapped by an overwhelming number of enemy planes and only ten succeed in limping home to the aerodrome. Shortly after this, Jim Daniels and Ron Glynn, intent on doing a little early morning straffing, contrary to orders, meet a lone German airman whose purpose is to drop a wreath over 256 aerodrome. A long and thrilling fight ensues, till at last the young Britishers, realising that their enemy has run out of petrol, decide to make him land on 256 drome and take him prisoner.*

(Now Read On.)

"Sergeant Wilkins!"

There was a positiveness about Locke's interruption that made Thorburn jump.

"W-why, yes, major!" he stammered. "But how did you know?"

Locke smiled grimly.

"I'm beginning to know quite a lot, young 'un. But we must keep our suspicions to ourselves. I trust you to keep quiet about this, even to your closest pals." His lips tightened. "There's an old saying which suggests that if you give a rogue enough rope to play with he'll put a noose round his neck and hang himself. I think we can apply that to Sergeant Wilkins."

"Are you suggesting that he is a spy?"

"I hardly suggested it," smiled Locke; "but I can see you have made up your own mind about Wilkins' loyalty to Britain. Quite frankly, young 'un, he is a menace to us—to the Allied cause. But his days are numbered!"

The arrival of the adjutant put a stop to this private discussion, and Thorburn made some excuse and departed. He joined Ron and Jim, who at once noticed his unusual quietness.

"What's biting you, Bruce?" demanded Jim, giving his chum a playful tap on the back. "Foot giving you a twinge?"

Thorburn shook his head, and assumed a forced gaiety.

"The jolly old foot is practically sound now. I was just doing a bit of quiet thinking."

"Not in your line, old son!" grinned Ron. "Leave that part of the War to the brass hats. Meantime, join us in a stroll down to the village."

Thorburn grinned. He knew the reason of that suggested stroll down to the village. In a certain perfumery shop, almost opposite the estaminet kept by Pierre Marmot, was a particularly young and beautiful damsel. A smile from her was sufficient to bring a blush to the youthful face of Ron Glynn. Really, it was remarkable how often Ron ran out of soap and hair-oil these days, and how many visits he paid in consequence to the perfumery stores.

"Sure, I'll join you, Ron!" said Thorburn, with a sly wink at Jim. "Run out of soap, old bean?"

"Matter of fact, I want some hair-grease," explained Ron, in some confusion. "Come on! She goes off duty at twelve—ahem—I mean—that is to say—"

"Oh, we know what you mean, old fruit!" chuckled Jim, running a critical eye over Ron's spick-and-span appearance. "Those Bond Street breeches and new jackboots are real lady-killers!"

"Really—" began Ron; but he relapsed into silence as his two chums took him by the arm and headed him in the direction of the village.

It was not a long journey to Madame Stephanie's perfumery shop, and Ron's face assumed the usual crimson embarrassment when madame's pretty daughter smiled upon him.

It took Ron, strangely enough, nearly twenty minutes to purchase his bottle of hair-oil, and then, as he gazed once more at the vision of loveliness behind the counter, his confusion was so great that he dropped the bottle on the floor. There were apologies in broken French from Ron, subdued giggles from his two chums, and much excited concern on the part of madame's daughter. The outcome of it all was the purchase of



another bottle of hair-oil, which Jim took charge of, and a reluctant retreat from the shop—reluctant, so far as Ron was concerned, anyway.

His two chums were laughing uproariously as they stood upon the pavement outside the shop. On Ron's face was an expression of far-away adoration that was comicality itself.

"Isn't she a stunner?" he gasped at last.

"She's stunned you, at any rate, old fruit!" chuckled Jim. "You look positively 'goofy'!"

In his indignant denials, Ron looked more "goofy" than ever, and finally he suggested a visit to the estaminet on the opposite side of the road.

"Come on, then!" said Jim.

And the three entered Pierre Marmot's somewhat dingy establishment.

Ron carefully selected a corner table by the side of a window, which gave a full view of the perfumery shop opposite—and an occasional view of madame's pretty daughter. And so engrossed was Ron in the view from the window that he put the lighted end of his cigarette in his mouth by some mistake, and drank a liberal quantity of the hair-oil Jim had playfully poured into his glass.

"Gug—wug—gug! You benighted idiot!" gasped Ron. "Oh dear! Grooooooh!"

While his chums laughed at the joke, Ron spluttered and coughed and voiced terrible threats on the heads of his devoted pals, and in the midst of it Sergeant Wilkins entered the estaminet.

In the shadowy recess he did not see the three officers, but a sly caution from Pierre Marmot as he shuffled forward warned him that the estaminet was not empty.

Bruce Thorburn stiffened at the sergeant's entry, noted the warning look Marmot gave the sergeant, and wondered mightily. He could not hear what passed between them, but he had a feeling that Marmot was playing a part.

The next moment, however, Sergeant Wilkins bellowed for a packet of cigarettes and a glass of liquor. Pierre Marmot shuffled away to oblige. Out of the corner of his eye Wilkins saw the three officers from his squadron, started almost imperceptibly, recovered on the instant, and started to abuse the estaminet keeper for his slowness.

"Coming, monsieur!" wheezed Pierre Marmot, dumping the required drink and the cigarettes on the small counter. "My legs are not so young as yours."

The sergeant threw a five-franc note on the table, drained his glass at a gulp, gathered up his cigarettes, and then tramped out into the sunshine.

There was nothing out of the ordinary in the whole incident, really, yet Thorburn had an instinctive feeling that it would pay him to keep a close eye on Pierre Marmot. Of this, however, he said nothing to his chums, although on his return to the aerodrome he mentioned it to Major Locke.

"Pierre Marmot?" was the major's remark. "Oh, he's all right! I've had a close inspection made of all the papers of the villagers. They are all in order, with the exception of Madame Stephanie and her daughter—"

"What?"

Bruce Thorburn looked startled.

"Oh, there's nothing fishy about those two good ladies," smiled Locke. "But they are Parisians, and in their eagerness to start a perfumery shop here they overlooked the formalities with the police, and travelled here without getting their papers stamped by the authorities."

"What does that mean, major?"

"It means that they will have to return to Paris," said Locke. "But you look concerned. Have you fallen a victim to the charms of madame's pretty daughter?"

Thorburn grinned.

"I haven't, sir," he answered truthfully. "But some of the boys have. There will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth when they get to know about it."

"Just as well the good ladies are returning to Paris," was Locke's comment. "I've noticed that young Glynn is walking about like a chap in a dream. He'll be trying his hand at writing sonnets next."

And in that Major Locke was very near the truth, for when Jim and Bruce looked for their chum they found him in his hut, with a writing-pad on his knees and a far-away look in his eyes.

"Writing home?" asked Jim.

Ron blushed.

"Er—yes—that is to say—no—"

"Very explicit!" chuckled Jim. "Why, I do believe the goofy ass is writing doggerel!"

He snatched the pad from Ron's knees and bolted with it.

### WANTED!

#### GREYFRIARS LIMERICKS!

If yours is a good 'un, you're "on" a

#### LEATHER POCKET WALLET!

One of this week's prizewinners is John Roy, of 168, Weston Park, Hornsey, N.8, who has submitted the following effort:

Billy Bunter, one night, had a dream:

He was lord of all tuck and ice-cream.

But his snores quokly ceased;  
For his fat nose was squeezed,  
When the rising-bell clanged out supreme.

Get busy on a Greyfriars Limerick to-day, chum!

"You rotter!" howled Ron. "Give me that pad!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Jim, reading the scrawl on the pad. "Listen to this, fellow!"

"Give me that pad!"

"Her eyes are like the stars of night—"

"You blighter!" hooted Ron.

"Her lips are Cupid's own, and bright—"

"Why, I'll—"

"Her hair is raven—"

"Shut up!" roared Ron, making a frantic grab at the pad. "I'll smash you!"

But Jim was relentless. Holding off Ron's furious attempts to regain possession of the pad, he continued reading:

"Her hair is raven—silken thread,  
Crowning the glory of her head!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Thorburn laughed till the water sprang to his eyes.

"In adoration, at her feet," went on Jim. "I lay my heart—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Thorburn.

"You blighter!" yelled Ron, his face crimson with rage and the humiliation of Jim's discovery. "I'll—I'll—"

"That's as far as the goofy ass has

got!" chuckled Jim. "But I'll finish it off for him!"

"You rotter—"

"In adoration, at her feet," repeated Jim, "I lay my heart—now ain't that neat?"

He threw the pad at Ron and bolted for the door, while Thorburn, choking with laughter, limped after him. But the worst blow fell when the "smitten" Ron learned that madame and her daughter had shut up their shop and returned to Paris. Perhaps it was just as well. It certainly saved Ron reams of writing-paper and hours of thought, trying to find a suitable rhyme to "feet"—as Jim philosophically, although tactlessly, remarked.

### Cramp!

"TAKE Jim with you."

Major Locke made that his final order. Thorburn, who since his wound had not been allowed by the medical officer to fly a plane "solo," had repeatedly asked permission to take up a Bristol. Each time, until now, his request had been refused.

"I shall be all right, sir," he had said to Locke. "My foot is absolutely O.K. now!"

But the major was a believer in safety first.

"Take it up by all means, young 'un. But take Jim with you in the back seat—in case of accidents."

Out on the tarmac stood a Bristol Fighter, a couple of mechanics giving the engine a final look over. In the back seat was a duplicate set of controls. Thorburn waved a hand to Jim Daniels, who strolled across in helmet and goggles.

"My son, you travel in the back seat on this journey," he grinned. "I'm taking you for a ride."

"And I'm playing the nurse, what?" said Jim. "Well, baby, don't try any tricks!"

Thorburn grimaced, and climbed up into the pilot's cockpit. It was something like a month since he had handled the control-stick, and this flight was nothing more than a test to see whether he had lost his nerve, or whether his damaged foot would be equal to manipulating the rudder-bar of a plane in flight.

The engine thrummed a reverberating note as Thorburn gave it full throttle, and the noise was like music in his ears. He waved a gloved hand to the mechanics, saw the wooden chocks whipped away from the undercarriage wheels, and started to taxi across the drome.

Three minutes later he was showing Major Locke that he was still as good a pilot as ever by diving perilously close to that distinguished individual's head, and zooming up again in a climbing turn that made Jim's heart turn over.

"Steady on, you maniac!" he roared from the back seat. "I only had my dinner ten minutes ago!"

For the first time Jim realised the sensations of the "back seat" man—totally different from those of a pilot, who, of course, knew in advance every movement his plane was likely to perform. Every known stunt, and some of his own original stunts as well, Thorburn described in the next quarter of an hour, which clearly proved that, whatever damage his wounded foot had suffered, his nerve was still as good as ever.

Yet that damaged foot was far from well. Thorburn grunted several times as



**THE BOUNDER'S LUCK!***(Continued from page 24.)*

For a second the captured rascal glared round him like a wild animal. Then the Gentleman Pincher's accustomed coolness returned. It was not the first time by many a one that the bracelets had clicked on his wrists.

"A fair cop!" he drawled, with no trace of a French accent now. "That's a sharp lad—a very sharp lad. I hope I shall meet him again, alone, in some quiet spot when I come out of the stone jug."

"I'll watch it!" chuckled the Bounder. "You"—Mr. Quelch gazed at the impostor—"you—you—bless my soul—you—"

"I owe you an apology, my good old friend Quelch." The Gentleman Pincher was always polite. "When you see Sarrail caution him not to talk too much to strangers in strange hotels. It leads to trouble. If my official friend here will give me a lift, I will take him to where I left Sarrail. I'm sure the poor old fellow will be glad to get out of the shed. I parked him in a far from comfortable place. But you will realise, I am sure, that I had not a lot of time for making arrangements."

"Bless my soul!"

"You will come with me, my man," said Inspector Grimes, with a faint grin.

"Quite!" assented the Gentleman Pincher. "I am sorry to lose your excellent company, Mr. Quelch, so very soon. My friend here insists, as you see. And you will give Monsieur Sarrail my tip about talking to strangers in hotels. It may be useful to him in the future."

"Bless my soul!"

"And before I go I must thank you for your hospitality; your kind and unsuspecting hospitality. Believe me, you are the kind of man I have always liked to meet!"

"That will do!" said Mr. Grimes. A buzzing crowd of Greyfriars fellows watched the taxi depart, with the handcuffed rascal sitting by the side of the inspector. It was a sensation for Grey-

friars, and the school fairly buzzed with it. Mr. Quelch remained shut up in his study in a dismayed and overwhelmed state. His feelings were hardly to be described, though they could be imagined. He was not seen again until another taxi drove up to the House, a couple of hours later, with the genuine Monsieur Sarrail in it.

Monsieur Sarrail—the genuine article of that name—occupied his room at Greyfriars that night. The Gentleman Pincher was accommodated—at Courtfield Police Station—in much less comfortable quarters.

"Luck!" said the Bounder. The Bounder's luck had always been phenomenal.

It had befriended him again. The next day Monsieur Sarrail was seen about the school; many curious eyes turning on the French gentleman who had had so strange an adventure.

And the Bounder was there, too! Willing or unwilling, Mr. Quelch felt that it was inevitable.

Vernon-Smith's intervention had exposed the impostor, prevented a robbery at the school, and saved Gaston Sarrail from his imprisonment. After that, it was out of the question to proceed with "bunking" the Bounder. Mr. Quelch did not even think of it. There was not even a flogging. There was only a "royal jaw"—to which Smithy listened, with humility and respect, though probably with his tongue in his cheek.

"Luck!" said the Bounder in the Rag. "If you can't be good, my beloved learners, the next best thing is to be lucky!"

But the Bounder had had a narrow escape, and he resolved that, for that term at least, he would be "good." It remained to be seen how it would turn out.

THE END.

*(Next week's issue will contain another ripping yarn of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled: "BILLY BUNTER'S VENGEANCE!" Mind you read it, chums, for this is a story that is too good to be missed!)*

**WINGS OF WAR!***(Continued from page 27.)*

twinges of cramp attacked him from the tendons of the foot to the more solid muscles of his calf.

And it was in the middle of a "roll" that the damaged foot let him down badly. In an effort to straighten up the Bristol, Thorburn pushed hard on the rudder-bar with his right foot, and gasped in pain as the muscles of the leg seemed to twine round each other.

The youngster's face went as pale as death. Cramp in the leg at any time is bad enough, but in the narrow confines of an aeroplane cockpit it is a hundred times worse. With the leg almost doubled up, Thorburn yelled through the connecting telephone:

"Jim! Jim! Take over! Cramp!"

At the moment of the "roll" Jim had gripped the sliding rails of the observer's seat with both hands, but he knew that something was amiss a split second before Thorburn's troubled voice came through to him. Half of the movement known as the roll had been completed in a flash, but instead of coming out of the roll and levelling to an even keel, the Bristol had fallen into a spiral dive. At a speed of a hundred and eighty miles an hour the plane was tearing towards the earth!

Jim gasped, grabbed hold of the duplicate control-stick between his knees, and juggled with it tenderly. Slowly that headlong dive was arrested.

"Fathead!" roared Jim angrily. "Are you trying to break my neck?"

Thorburn turned a face lined with pain towards him. His foot was throbbing, the agony of cramp had him helpless in its grip.

"Cramp!" he managed to bawl out. Then Jim understood.

Looking out of the cockpit, he saw that the aerodrome was about five miles distant. Putting the nose down, he dived the Bristol for it, anxious to get home as quickly as he could.

*(Lucky for Ron that he's got Jim with him. Don't miss next week's chapters of this powerful serial—they teem with thrills and surprises, boys!)*

**2 MY GREAT OFFER**

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