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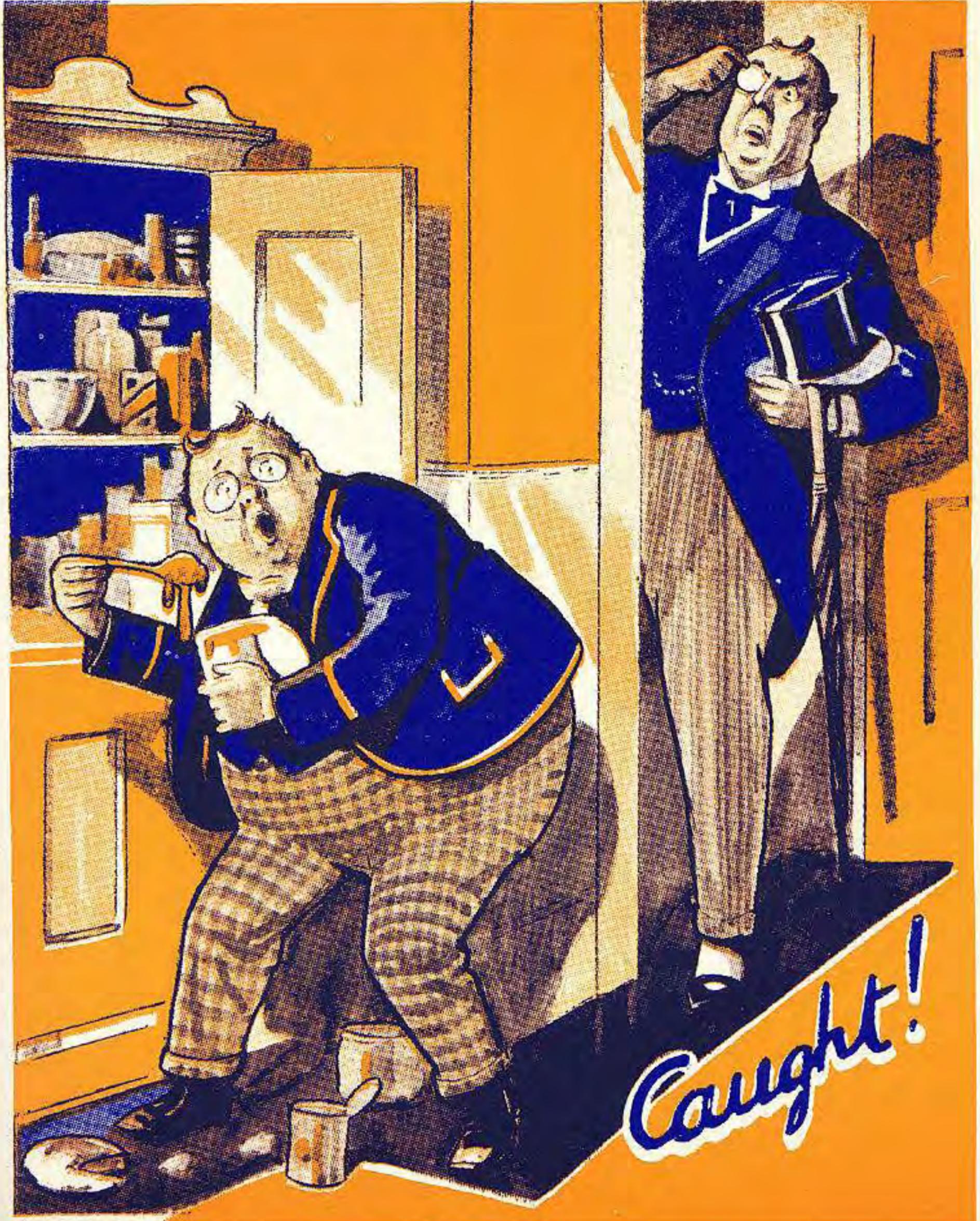
SPORTING AND
DETECTIVE THRILLER

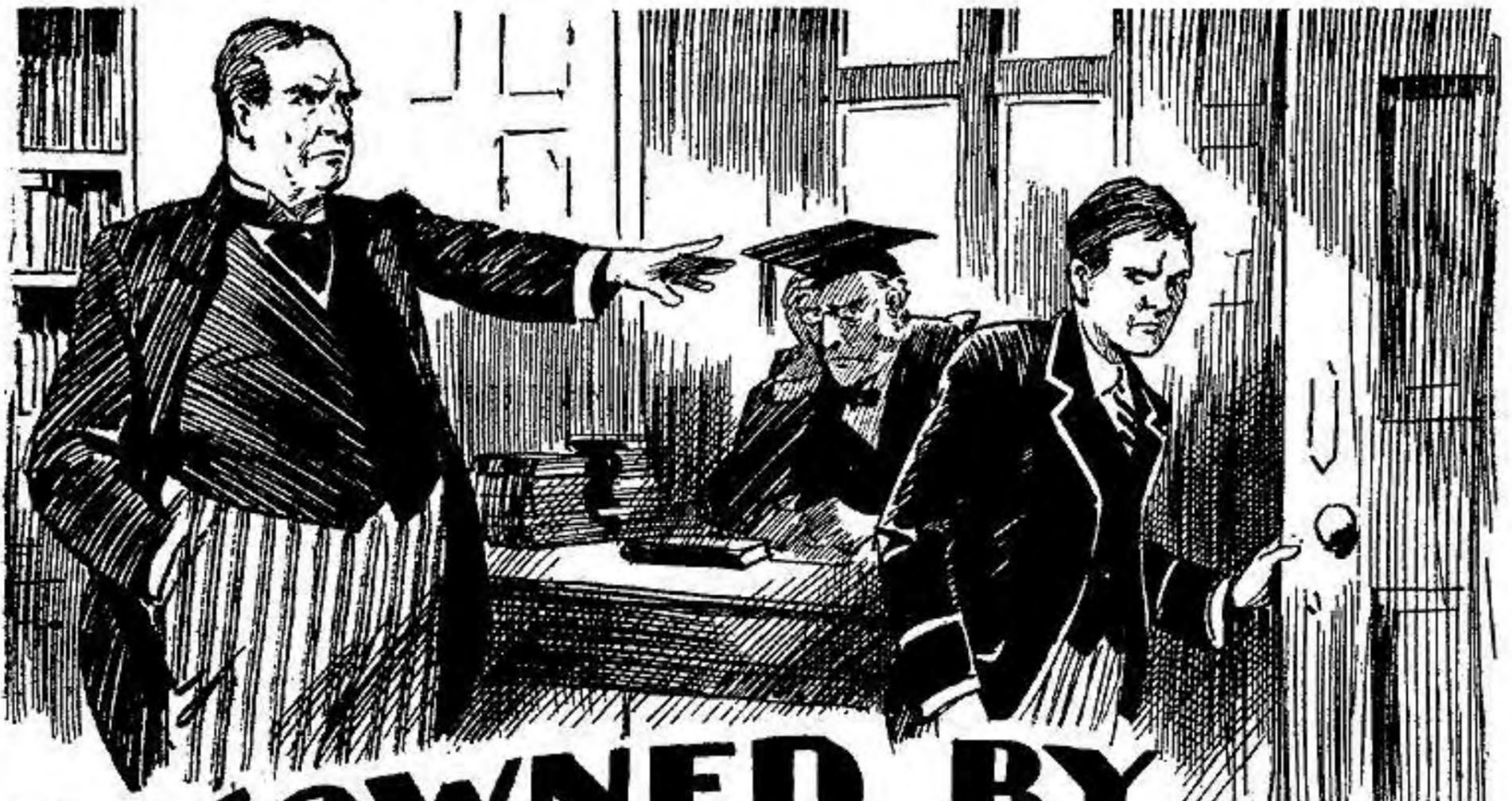
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DISOWNED BY HIS FATHER!

BY FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Asking for It!

"SMITHY!"

"Go and eat coke!" Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, did not trouble to turn his head as he answered. He was seated in the armchair in Study No. 4, in the Remove passage at Greyfriars, when Harry Wharton appeared in the doorway. The Bounder's feet rested on another chair, his hands were behind his head, and there was a cigarette in his mouth.

Harry Wharton looked at him. The study door was half-open, and anyone might have come along the passage and seen the Bounder, with the cigarette sending a curl of smoke towards the study ceiling. It was only a few days since Smithy had had a dozen of the best from the Head for having smokes in his possession. Masters and prefects had a suspicious eye on him. If ever a fellow asked for trouble, the Bounder of Greyfriars seemed to be doing so that term.

"Look here, Smithy—"

"I said go and eat coke!" Without stirring, the Bounder flung the answer over his shoulder. "I don't remember askin' you to this study."

"It's about the football!"

"Hang the football!"

"If you mean that—"

"I generally mean what I say!"

Harry Wharton stood silent, looking at him. He was strongly tempted to take the Bounder at his word, walk away, and leave him to his own devices. But he hesitated. Smithy was one of the best men in the Remove eleven, and he was wanted in the match on Wednesday at Highelife School. But that

was not all. The captain of the Remove was really concerned for the wayward, obstinate fellow, who had had so many narrow escapes of being "turfed" out of the school, and who seemed bent on coming a "mucker" at last.

Vernon-Smith blew out a little cloud of smoke, took the cigarette from his lips, and looked round at his Form captain. There was a sneering smile on his face, and his eyes were hard as flint.

"May as well put it plain," he said. "We've never been friends, Wharton—and now we're the other thing. I'm fed up with you—and all your crew! You'd be glad enough to drop me out of the eleven, only you want me to get goals for you. Well, find another man."

"I can find another man easily enough—but not so good a man as you, Smithy!" said the captain of the Remove mildly.

The Bounder grinned sourly.

"Soft sawder cuts no ice in this study," he answered. "You've got the whole Form down on me. I'm a dog with a bad name. Well, leave me alone. That's all I want."

"You got the Form down on you by a rotten jape on the Head!" answered Wharton. "You got a ragging, and you deserved it. You've had time to get over that."

"Well, I haven't got over it! And I'll make some of you sit up for it yet," said the Bounder, with a scowl.

"Then you won't play for Greyfriars on Wednesday?"

"No, I won't."

"Isn't that rather cutting off your nose to spite your face?" asked the captain of the Remove. "You're keen on footer—you're not a loafing slacker like Skinner or Snoop. You don't really

want to stand out of Soccer—the last big fixture of the season, too!"

"Whether I want to or not, I'm goin' to," sneered the Bounder. "And if you want to know, I've already fixed up somethin' else for Wednesday, and I wouldn't cut it out if you asked me on your bended knees."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"I shouldn't be likely to do that," he said. "Well, if you won't play, you won't, and I'll find another man. You're rather a fool, Smithy."

"Same to you without the 'rather,'" answered the Bounder.

He threw himself back in the armchair again and replaced the cigarette in his mouth and smoked sullenly. Harry Wharton made a movement to go, but again he hesitated.

"Look here, Smithy," he said quietly. "If you can't be decent, you might at least have a little sense! If you're caught smoking in your study—"

"No bizney of yours!"

"Perhaps not! But I should hate to see you sacked."

"The Head's got a down on me, and he'd like to see me turfed out," sneered the Bounder. "But he could hardly sack a man for smokin'. He gave me a dozen last time. That's about the limit."

"I'm not so sure," said Harry. "You've been piling it on pretty thick. You were sacked, but the beak let you come back, to give you another chance. After that, he's not likely to go easy with you if he catches you out."

"And you'd weep briny tears if I went?" jeered the Bounder. "Cut out the pi-jaw, and give a fellow a rest. I've told you that you're not wanted here."

The captain of the Remove compressed his lips. His own temper was not a

very patient one, and he was strongly inclined to stride into the study, grab the insolent fellow sprawling in the arm-chair, and thump some of the cheek out of him.

He restrained that impulse, however, and turned away from the door. As he did so, he sighted a Sixth Form man coming along the passage from the stairs. It was Wingate of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars. Wharton stopped where he was. The Greyfriars captain called to him, still at a little distance.

"Is Vernon-Smith in his study Wharton?"

"Oh!" gasped Wharton. "Yes!"

From where he stood, outside the open doorway, Wharton had a full view of the Bounder, sprawling and smoking! And the head prefect of Greyfriars was coming to the study! It was, as the Bounder had himself said, no business of Wharton's—the scapegrace was asking for trouble, and the trouble was coming! But Wharton did not stop to think of that. All hostility vanished on the spot; he was thinking only of getting Smithy out of another scrape! And he had little time to think!

He turned again into the doorway, made a jump across the study, and snatched the cigarette from the Bounder's mouth. With the same movement of his hand, he tossed it out of the window.

There was a yell of rage from the Bounder.

Unaware that a Sixth Form prefect was coming up the passage, he was also quite unaware of Wharton's motive. He fairly bounded out of the chair, his eyes flashing.

"You cheeky cad!" he shouted.

He hurled himself at the captain of the Remove, hitting out savagely. Wharton put up his hands, backing towards the door under the furious attack.

"You fool, Smithy!" he breathed. "Chuck it! You—"

"By gad! You meddlin' hound," shouted the Bounder, and he came on fiercely, his eyes blazing over his lashing fists.

Harry Wharton backed into the passage. He backed into Wingate of the Sixth, as the prefect arrived on the spot. Vernon-Smith, following him up fiercely, gave a start at the sight of the Greyfriars captain. He dropped his hands, staring at Wingate.

"Hallo! What's this? Scrapping?" grunted Wingate. "Stop it at once! Can't you young ruffians keep the peace in this passage for five minutes together?"

The Bounder stood silent. He knew now why Wharton had disposed of the cigarette so unceremoniously, and he could guess, too, why the captain of the Remove had backed out into the passage before his attack—to keep Wingate from entering No. 4. Had the Greyfriars captain gone in, he could scarcely have failed to detect the scent of cigarette smoke. The Bounder stood as if confounded.

"You can cut off, Wharton!" snapped Wingate. "And don't let there be any more of this!"

"Yes, Wingate!" said Harry, with great meekness, and he went down the passage to his own study.

Wingate fixed his eyes on the Bounder.

"You've got a detention class with the French master," he snapped. "Why haven't you turned up?"

"Forgot!" said the Bounder nonchalantly.

"You'd better remember next time! Cut off to Class-room No. 10, and be thankful that I don't give you six for

giving me the trouble to come up after you!" said Wingate.

"Oh, all right!"

The Bounder walked down the passage, Wingate following more slowly. As he passed the open doorway of Study No. 1, Smithy looked in. Wharton was there, with Frank Nugent. The Bounder gave him a grin.

"Thanks!" he said.

And he went down the Remove staircase,

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Detention Class I

BOB CHERRY groaned.

"It's rotten!" he remarked.

"The rottenfulness," said Hurree Janset Ram Singh, "is terrific!"

"Well, you asked for it!" observed Johnny Bull.

"You silly ass!" said Bob witheringly. "A fellow can ask for what he doesn't want! For instance, you're asking me now to jam your silly head on the banisters, but I don't suppose you want that."

"Well, you did ask for it!" said Johnny stolidly, "and—"

"Oh, come on, Inky!" growled Bob. "We're late already. It's in No. 10. Come on!"

Bob Cherry, for once, was not in his usual exuberant spirits. But any

Despite repeated warnings to behave himself or leave Greyfriars, the headstrong Bounder continues to disregard authority. Then, suddenly, disaster, overwhelming and calamitous, overtakes him as, in addition to being expelled from the school, he is "dis-owned by his father!"

fellow's spirits might have been dashed by the prospect of an hour in a detention class.

If Johnny Bull fancied that it was any comfort to Bob to know that he had asked for it, Johnny was mistaken! It wasn't!

Besides, Bob hadn't really meant to ask for it.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, was absent from his duties, and though it was understood that a temporary master was coming to take his place, that temporary master had not yet put in an appearance. The consequence was, that the Lower Fourth were a little out of hand. It was, to some extent, rather like that position in ancient times, when there was no king in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Few of the fellows meant any harm. But a Form taken by a prefect in the place of a master, was liable to kick a little. It depended largely on the prefect! A resolute fellow like Wingate handled the Remove easily—a slacker like Walker let them do as they liked—and in either case there was peace. A bully like Loder of the Sixth "threw his weight about," and there was trouble.

But it was while Walker was in charge of the Remove, unfortunately, that the Head had looked in to see how things were going. James Walker had been sitting at Quelch's desk reading a novel—the Removites chatting in their places—and six or seven of them out of

their places. Those six or seven were sentenced to a detention class.

Bob was one of them—Hurree Singh another—the Bounder another. Bob had simply been illustrating a certain kick, using a Latin Grammar for a football—quite a harmless proceeding, really, but, in the Head's opinion, inappropriate in lesson-time.

Now there was going to be an extra hour of French as a reward! French is a great language, and a knowledge of it is extremely useful. But nobody was very keen on acquiring additional knowledge of it after class.

Neither, perhaps, did Monsieur Charpentier expect to enjoy that hour. A detention master's life, like that of the policeman in the song, is not a happy one. Even in the regular French sets Mossoo was rather ragged; in detention classes it was worse.

Mossoo's detention class dribbled in. Billy Bunter was there—not with the object of acquiring knowledge of French, if Bunter could help it. Bob Cherry came in with the Nabob of Bhanipur. Herbert Vernon-Smith followed them in, with his hands in his pockets, lounging—conduct which would have earned him "six" from Mr. Quelch, but which Mossoo pretended not to notice. Skinner, Bolsover major, Hazeldene, and Snoop drifted in, a little late—Mossoo affecting not to notice that they were late. Peace at any price was Mossoo's motto—which naturally led to his getting very little peace.

All these were Remove men. But there were others to come—Temple, Dabney, and Fry, of the Fourth, were booked for detention French for their sins. They came into the class-room arm-in-arm, five minutes late. They lounged to the desks, making it clear from their manner that they did not care a straw for Adolpho Henri Charpentier.

Three or four other fellows dropped in, one by one, and Monsieur Charpentier, consulting his list of "detenus," found that he had his whole class. So the last comer, who happened to be Hobson of the Shell was requested to "fermez la porte"—which Hobby did, closing the door with a bang that awoke most of the echoes of Greyfriars School, and caused Monsieur Charpentier to jump clear of the floor.

"Allons! Zat you make not so mooch noise viz zat door!" ejaculated Monsieur Charpentier.

"But you asked me to shut it, sir!" said Hobson, with an air of injured innocence.

"I ask you not to slam him viz tum big bang!" snapped Mossoo. "You are stupid, Hobson! Take your place!"

Bang, bang! went a couple of desk-lids.

Monsieur Charpentier sighed. The usual rag was beginning!

"Sherry! Skinnair! Make not so mooch noise viz zosc desks!"

"Sorry, sir!" said Bob sincerely enough. Bob was a good-natured fellow, though he rather liked noise, and he kindly remembered that the detention master was, after all, only performing his duties.

"It slipped, sir!" said Skinner—which was quite untruthful. "I couldn't help it banging, sir! It was like this, sir!"

Skinner lifted the desk-lid again, to show how it had slipped.

Bang!

"It went just like that, sir!" said Skinner innocently.

"Mon Dieu! If you do zat vunce more, Skinnair, I report you to ze Head!"

"Oh, sir! I was only showing you how—"

"Taisez-vous! Silence in ze class! Smeest, take down ze feet!" The Bounder, sprawling on a form, had his feet resting on a desk.

He did not answer or move. His name, certainly, was not "Smeest," and it pleased him not to understand Mossoo's pronunciation.

"Alors! You hear me, Smeest?" squeaked Monsieur Charpentier.

The Bounder stared straight at him without answering. There was a grin through the detention class. Smithy, evidently, was bent on a rag—and detained fellows enjoyed a rag much more than French.

"Stick it, Smithy!" whispered Bolsover major.

"Smeest," shouted Monsieur Charpentier, "vill you answer me?"

No reply.

Monsieur Charpentier caught up a pointer from Quelch's desk, and came towards the class. He reached over, and gave a sudden swipe at the Bounder's sprawling legs.

Vernon-Smith moved his feet then—quite suddenly.

"Yaroooh!" he roared. And his legs disappeared under the desk.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! It is not for to laff!" exclaimed Monsieur Charpentier. "I vill not have zis impudence, Smeest!"

"If you're talking to me, my name's not Smeest!" snarled the Bounder.

"Taisez-vous! You are ze baddest boy in ze class!" said Monsieur Charpentier. "Ze ozzers are bad, and some are badder zan ozzers, but of all ze class, you are ze baddest!"

"Is that a French word, sir?" asked Temple of the Fourth.

"Vat? Is vat a French word, Temple?"

"Baddest, sir! What does it mean in English?"

"Zat is one English vord, Temple! You are sheeky also, like Smeest! I vill not have sheek! After zis class, you vill write one hundred lines of ze Henriade!"

Temple grinned cheerfully. Seldom or never did Mossoo ask to see the lines which he handed out so generously in class. Nobody minded getting lines from Mossoo.

Bang bang!

"Bolsover—Azeldene—vat you do?"

"Accident, sir—the lid slipped—"

"Take one hundred lines of ze Henriade, bofe of you bad boys!"

Bang! came a desk lid from another direction. Monsieur Charpentier spun round. His eyes fixed on Hurree Janset Ram Singh. As a matter of fact it was Snoop who had banged the desk; but monsieur was excited, and when he was excited he was hasty, and liable to make mistakes.

"Hurree Singh! You bang zat desk, after all zat I say—"

"Not at all fully, esteemed monsieur!" answered the Nabob of Bhanipur.

"You vill take one hundred lines of ze Henriade."

"The thankfulness is terrific!"

"Now ve vill proceed," said Monsieur Charpentier. "I vill keep ze ordair in zis class, or I vill know ze reason vy not!"

"I say, you fellows, go it!" whispered Billy Bunter. "Don't let that little beast begin on French."

"You speak in ze class, Buntair!"

"Oh, no, sir! I never opened my mouth," answered Billy Bunter promptly. "I only said—"

"Take one hundred lines!"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"Take two hundred lines!"

"But, really, sir—"

"Take three hundred lines!"

"Oh crikey!"

French began—as usual. Every now and then a desk-lid went, like a pistol-shot. Then there would be a thud of a falling book. Then Temple of the Fourth asked if they might have the window open, and Hobson of the Shell immediately raised an objection, other fellows joined wartyly in the argument, and for a good five minutes there was babel in Class-room No. 10, and French was not even an also ran.

Order having been restored, more or less, French was resumed; only to be interrupted once more when an ink-ball landed on Billy Bunter's big spectacles, and elicited a loud yell from the Owl of the Remove. It was Skinner who had projected the ink-ball, unseen by Mossoo, but Mossoo caught a grin on Vernon-Smith's face, and that was enough for him. The pointer came down on Smithy's shoulders.

"Take zat viz you, Smeest!" snapped Monsieur Charpentier.

"What the thump do you mean?" roared the Bounder. "You silly little ass—"

The door of Class-room No. 10 opened as the Bounder was speaking. The Head stepped in.

And there was an awful silence.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

For It!

DR LOCKE looked at the detention class.

The detention class looked at Dr Locke.

A pin might have been heard to drop in Class-room No. 10.

The Bounder breathed hard.

He knew that the Head had heard him: heard him calling the French master a silly ass! The expression on Dr. Locke's face showed what he thought of it.

"Oh crikey!" murmured Billy Bunter. "Smithy's done it now!"

"The donefulness is terrific!" murmured the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Smithy realised very clearly that he had "done it." An expression of dogged defiance grew on his hard face.

Dr. Locke advanced into the room.

"I feared, Monsieur Charpentier, that this class might be giving you trouble," said the Head courteously. "I am sorry to see that my fears were well-founded. Vernon-Smith!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Stand out before the class!"

The Bounder stood out.

"I heard you," said the Head, "apply a disrespectful expression to Monsieur Charpentier."

"Did you, sir?"

"I did! I have warned you, more than once, to be careful Vernon-Smith. I sent you away from Greyfriars! You were allowed to return, in the hope that you would amend your conduct. You have not done so. You have been the most troublesome boy in Mr. Quelch's Form; you have gone from bad to worse. Now I hear you addressing an insult to a member of my staff."

"Oh, sair!" murmured Monsieur Charpentier, in distress. The look on the Head's face alarmed Mossoo, as much as it alarmed the juniors. He had a kind and tender heart, and shrank from the thought of severe punishment for anybody. Which was probably the reason why he was the worst-ragged master at Greyfriars School.

"I heard what the boy said, Monsieur Charpentier."

"I zink zat he speak vizout to zink,

sair!" stammered Mossoo, fervently wishing that the Head had not stepped in at that unfortunate moment. "Also I vhack him viz a pointer, sair."

"If you please, sir, it was I who threw the ink-ball," said Skinner meekly. "Mossoo thought it was Vernon-Smith, sir, but it was I."

"Helas! Zen I vhack Smeest for nozzings!" said Monsieur Charpentier. "I hope, sair, zat you forgive Smeest."

Dr. Locke compressed his lips.

"If it is true that you were punished under a mistake, Vernon-Smith—"

"I never did anything!" said the Bounder sullenly.

"Je me trompe—" mumbled Monsieur Charpentier. "I deceive myself and—"

"Very well!" said the Head. "It was my intention, Vernon-Smith, to administer a severe flogging for the expression you used. In the circumstances, I shall punish you less severely. You will be detained for the two half-holidays this week, and I shall cane you. Kindly hand me a cane, monsieur."

Mossoo handed the headmaster a cane. Dr. Locke pointed with it to a form.

"Bend over that form, Vernon-Smith!"

In silence, gritting his teeth, the Bounder bent over. The detention class looked on in silence while the Head administered six. Not a sound came from the Bounder. Every one of the six was a "swipe"; but the hardy Bounder shut his teeth hard and endured in silence.

The Head laid down the cane.

"You may go to your place, Vernon-Smith!" He glanced over the class as the Bounder went. "Let there be no more disorder here!"

And Dr. Locke walked out.

There was no more disorder in the French detention class. Not a desk-lid banged, not a book was dropped! Even Billy Bunter gave a little attention to French! The Bounder's punishment, and the possibility that the Head might look in again, were enough for the detained juniors. Only the Bounder sat sullenly scowling, ready for more trouble; but Monsieur Charpentier judiciously passed him over, leaving him entirely alone till the class was dismissed.

"Hard luck, Smithy," said Bob Cherry, when the juniors went down the corridor. "Did it hurt?"

"Oh, no!" answered the Bounder sarcastically. "I enjoyed it!"

"Well, you'll get over it, old bean! Gating for two half-holidays is worse than a licking!"

"The worsefulness is terrific, as the esteemed and ridiculous Highcliffe match takes place on Wednesday!" remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Oh, that's all right—I've heard that Smithy's standing out," said Bob. "You're not in the team, are you, Smithy?"

"No!"

"That's all right, then."

"Is it?" said the Bounder, with a sneer. "I happen to have an engagement on Wednesday afternoon, though I'm not playing football."

Bob looked at him.

"I dare say you'll be all the better for having your engagement washed out, whatever it is," he said dryly. "I've heard that you've been making friends again with Ponsonby and his crew at Highcliffe. If your engagement was in that direction, all the better for you."

"I've had enough pi-jaw from Whar-ton, thanks!" said the Bounder. "Don't give me his sormons at second-hand."

"I've a jolly good mind to give you a dot in the eye at first-hand!" grunted Bob.

"Get on with it!" sneered Smithy.

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

Bob Cherry walked away with the nabob, rather regretting that he had stopped to speak to the sullen scapegrace of the Remove. Vernon-Smith, with a black brow, went up to the Remove passage, where he found his chum, Tom Redwing, in Study No. 4. There was a bright fire burning in Study No. 4, and tea was ready on the table, and Tom gave him a cheery smile as he came in. But the smile faded from his face as he caught Smithy's expression.

"Anything up?" he asked. He was not surprised; there always seemed to

"Yes; just in time to hear me call Mossoo a silly little ass!"

"Smithy!"

"You've just called him that yourself!" sneered Smithy.

"Not in his presence," said Redwing quietly. "He is a little ass, and there's no harm in a fellow saying so; but to insult the man—"

"Oh, can it!" said the Bounder rudely. "I seem to be getting nothing but pi-jaw this term! Detention on Wednesday and Saturday—under the beak's own eye!" He gritted his teeth. "Well, fellows have broken out of detention before now, and may again."

"It would be mad to try it on, Smithy! The Head's got his back up with you already."

"What I mean is, the Head isn't the man to keep a fellow in detention if he's wanted to play in a match. If Wharton put it to him that you were wanted at Highcliffe, ten to one he'd let you off on Wednesday. You might get lines instead—"

The Bounder started a little. His eyes gleamed.

"Reddy, old man, you're a giddy genius!" he exclaimed. "I'll hike along and speak to Wharton now."

"Good man," said Tom.

And his face was brighter, as the Bounder left the study. In his sullen resentment against the whole Form, the Bounder had cut games, which was a bad thing for him or any fellow. Getting him back into Remove football was the best thing his chum could



Bang, bang, bang! One after another the desk-lids crashed down. "Sherry! Skinnair!" cried the exasperated Monsieur Charpentier. "Make not so mooch noise viz zose desks!" "The lid slipped, sir!" said Skinner. "I was like this, sir!" He lifted the desk-lid again, to show how it slipped. Bang! "Mon Dieu!" squeaked the French master. "If you do zat vunce more, I report you to ze Head!"

be something "up" with the Bounder of Greyfriars.

Vernon-Smith grunted as he threw himself into a chair.

"I've been in detention," he growled. "You know that."

"A rag, I suppose?" said Tom.

"As it happens, I was an injured innocent," sneered the Bounder. "Skinner buzzed an ink-ball at Bunter, and Mossoo cracked me with a pointer, thinking it was me."

Redwing laughed.

"Just like Mossoo; he's no end of a little ass!" he said. "I suppose you'd already got his rag out, though, or he wouldn't have jumped on you."

"Oh, I'm always to blame, of course," said the Bounder. "It's my fault I've got a Head's licking and detention all the week."

"Did the beak come in—"

"I'm not stayin' in gates on Wednesday!"

"Let's have some tea!" said Tom abruptly.

They sat down to tea. The Bounder's face remained sullen and morose; Tom's was very thoughtful. Many a time Redwing had played the part of guardian angel to his wayward chum, and he was thinking now how to save Smithy from his own recklessness.

"I've got an idea, Smithy!" he said, after a long silence. "You've refused to play football for the Remove—"

"Chance for you to bag my place!"

"Oh, don't be an ass! Wharton's keen to have you in the team—all the fellows are keen. If you chucked up playing the goat, and told Wharton you'd changed your mind, he'd make room for you like a shot!"

"Rats!"

possibly have done for him. It bucked Redwing to think that he had succeeded so far. He little guessed the thoughts that were working in the Bounder's mind.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Whose Coat?

"I SAY, you fellows—"
"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Wherefore this thusness?"

"Oh, roally, Cherry—"

"The thusfulness is terrific!" grinned Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Fan me!" said Johnny Bull, grinning.

"Whose coat?" chuckled Harry Wharton.

The Famous Five of the Remove gazed at Billy Bunter as he rolled up to them in the quad in admiration and wonder.

Billy Bunter, for once in his fat career, looked well dressed!

Certainly, his trousers were as baggy as ever, his elbows shiny, his cuffs frayed, his collar soiled; but these little trifles were hidden by a handsome overcoat. It was a new overcoat, an expensive overcoat; it was a well-cut overcoat; and though rather tight 'on Bunter's ample form, it made him look very unusually neat and natty. Seeing Bunter well dressed was seeing an uncommon sight; so the chums of the Remove naturally wanted to know the reason of this "thusness."

As Wharton asked "whose coat?" the other fellows chuckled. Wharton had hit the nail on the head. That coat was new, handsome, clean, expensive—four reasons why it could not belong to William George Bunter. Evidently Bunter had borrowed that coat—very probably without mentioning the fact to the owner.

"I've seen that coat before!" grinned Bob. "It's a Remove coat! Whose?"

"Oh, really, Cherry! I suppose a fellow can have a new coat!" said Bunter. "The fact is, it came down specially from my tailor's to-day."

"Gammon!"

"If you think it's Smithy's coat—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm not the fellow to bag another fellow's coat, I hope! Besides, I'm going down to Courtfield, and it looks like rain. And I haven't got that toffee off my coat yet. And it's split, too. Not that I've borrowed this coat, you know. It's not Smithy's."

"I don't think I'd lark with Smithy's clobber, Bunter," said the captain of

the Remove, shaking his head. "Better find a better-tempered chap when you want to bag a coat."

"Well, Mauly's gone out in his coat, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Famous Five. Apparently Bunter had had felonious designs on Lord Mauleverer's coat, in the first place.

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter crossly. "It's rather rotten, if you ask me, making out that I'm a fellow to borrow another fellow's coat! Still, you needn't mention it to Smithy, if you see him. He's a suspicious beast, and might make out that this was his coat, if he happened to want it, you know, and missed it from the lobby. I say, you fellows, I'm going down to Courtfield—can you lend me five bob?"

"The canfulness is not terrific."

"I'll tell you how the matter stands," said Bunter, blinking seriously at the Removites through his big spectacles. "I was expecting a postal order this morning—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"It hasn't come—"

"You don't say so?" ejaculated Bob

Cherry.

"I do, old chap—there's been some delay in the post, and I've been disappointed about that postal order."

"Too bad!" said Frank Nugent sympathetically. "I remember you were disappointed about it last term."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That wasn't the same postal order, fathead!" said Bunter peevishly. "This one is from one of my titled relations. It will come to-morrow morning. Will one of you fellows let me have the five bob, and take the postal order when it comes?"

"Don't all speak at once!" chuckled Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here comes Smithy!"

"Oh crikey!" ejaculated Bunter, blinking round in alarm.

Vernon-Smith and Tom Redwing came in sight, strolling from under the old elms. They came quite suddenly on the group of juniors in the quad, and the Bounder's eyes fastened at once on Bunter's handsome new coat.

"By gad!" he exclaimed. "What the—"

The fat Owl of the Remove backed away. He rather wished now that he had started for Courtfield without stopping to try to raise the wind from the Famous Five. But it was too late to wish that now.

"I—I say, Smithy—" he stammered.

"What are you doing in my coat?" demanded Vernon-Smith.

"It—it isn't your coat, old chap! It's like it—very much like it—but it—it isn't your coat! Look in the lobby, and you'll find your coat there, hanging on the peg I took it from—"

"What?" gasped the Bounder.

"I mean, on the peg I didn't take it from!" stuttered Bunter. "It's there, all right, old fellow—I saw it, not five minutes ago. I haven't taken it—in fact, I haven't been anywhere near the lobby—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Take it off, you fat chump!" said Tom Redwing, laying a hand on his chum's arm. "No harm done, Smithy!"

"Do you think I'm going to have that fat slug wearing my clothes?" growled the Bounder. "Mauly can put up with it if he likes—he's soft. I'll kick him back to the House—"

"Tain't your coat!" squeaked Bunter. "And it's not damaged, anyhow—only one of the buttons came off—here, I say—keep off, you beast—hold him, you fellows—yaroooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Bounder made a jump for Bunter. Bunter made a jump to escape. He ran for the House, with Vernon-Smith close behind him. Smithy gained fast, and grabbed at a fat shoulder. Bunter spun desperately away, slipped, and stumbled over.

Splash!

"Oooogh!" gasped Bunter, as he landed in an extensive puddle left by recent rain.

He rolled in the puddle, and sat up in it. Vernon-Smith halted, just in time to save himself from falling over him. He stared at his handsome new coat—still new, but by no means handsome. Rolling in a muddy puddle had inevitable results. That beautiful overcoat was smothered with mud from neck to tail.

"Why, I—I—I'll—" gasped the Bounder.

He hurled himself at the Owl of the Remove.

"Whoop!" roared Bunter. "Keep off! Stop it! Beast! I say, you fellows—rescue! Yaroooooop!"

Smack, smack, smack! Thump, thump, thump!

It was then that Coker of the Fifth happened. Coker, strolling in the quad with Potter and Greene, beheld this startling scene, and came up at once. Coker, as usual, felt an urge to mind anybody's business but his own.

"Here, what's this?" rapped out Coker. "Stop that! Let that kid alone! Stop this bullying!"

He grabbed Vernon-Smith by the collar.

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"Mind your own business, you fool!" snarled the Bounder.

"I say, help!" roared Bunter. "I say, Coker, keep him off! Look what he's done to my coat. I say, stop him!"

"I'll stop him fast enough," said Coker, and he jerked the angry Bounder away. "Now, then, you young hooligan— Why—what—ow—wow— My hat!"

Smithy was not the fellow to be handled with impunity by a Fifth Form man. He punched fiercely, and Coker yelled and staggered. But he kept his grasp on the Bounder and tightened it. They struggled.

Bunter scrambled up. He gave Smithy and Coker one blink and bolted for the House, like a scared rabbit for a burrow.

Coker was not likely to hold the Bounder long. Bunter had no time to lose. He tore into the House.

A blink back from the doorway showed him Vernon-Smith breaking away from Coker and starting in pursuit again.

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter.

He headed for the stairs—and stopped! The Bounder would run him down fast enough in the Remove passage. In this pressing moment of peril, Billy Bunter's brain worked swiftly. He remembered that Mr. Quelch's study, in Masters' passage, was vacant. He ran for Masters' passage and disappeared. It was a case of any port in a storm—and Vernon-Smith was not likely to root among the masters' studies in search of him.

A minute after the door of Quelch's study closed on Bunter, Herbert Vernon-Smith was rooting through the Remove passage for a fat junior in a muddy overcoat. But he found him not.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Talk on the Telephone!

BILLY BUNTER gasped. He was breathless after that hot chase.

He plumped into the armchair in Quelch's study and gasped for wind. "Beast!" gurgled Bunter.

His walk to Courtfield was off now! Being in the unusual possession of half-a-crown, Bunter had intended to tea at the bun-shop in Courtfield, where there was a young lady in attendance who, Bunter firmly believed, regarded him with admiring eyes. It was true that that young lady had sometimes glanced at Bunter. The fact was that she did not often see a fellow who was nearly as broad as he was long.

Bunter, unaware of the cause of the young lady's interest in him, had no doubt that it was due to his uncommon good looks! He was willing to give encouragement, and at such a time, of course, a fellow liked to be decently dressed. Hence the borrowing of Smithy's handsome overcoat, which had ended so disastrously for the fat Owl.

But if the young lady at the bunshop hoped to see Bunter's good looks that afternoon, she was going to be disappointed. Not for his fat life did Bunter dare to leave his refuge yet awhile. He had to give the angry Bounder time to cool down, at least.

So he sat in Quelch's armchair in Quelch's study, gasped for breath, and reflected how jolly lucky it was that Quelch happened to be ill just then!

Certainly, he was likely to land in trouble if he was discovered taking possession of a master's study! But nobody was likely to come there and discover him! That was all right!

His reflections were interrupted by the buzz of the telephone-bell.

"Oh lor'!" ejaculated Bunter.

He had just been feeling a comfortable certainty that nobody was likely to come there! But it was certain that somebody would come there if the telephone-bell went on ringing.

Bunter heaved his weight out of the armchair, jumped to the instrument, and grabbed the receiver off the hooks. Bunter, being there, had to take the

RHYMES OF THE REMOVE
No. 7.



In the words of Fisher T. Fish, the American junior, I guess and calculate the Greyfriars Rhymester has sure spilt a bibful in the following rousing verses, entitled: "A SHOCK FOR SHYLOCK!"—Ed.

Years and years and years ago
(Or so it seems to Fish, you know),
He started business, lending "dough,"
At twenty-five per cent!
He'd hardly started on the job—
Had booked, in fact, two chaps to rob—
When Bunter borrowed fifteen bob
And signed a note—and went!

For weeks the matter was at rest,
And then old Fishy thought it best
To hint that compound interest
Was mounting every night;
But Bunter didn't understand
The business scheme that Fish had
planned,
And when he did, he waved his hand
And said: "It's quite all right!"

Fish had his doubts, and said: "You
jay!
Let's see your greenbacks right away!
It's twenty-five per cent per day
You're owing, you big gink!"
Said Billy Bunter: "Can't be did!
But I shall have from Uncle Syd
A postal-order for a quid
To-morrow night, I think."

"A quid!" Fish uttered horrid sounds,
His lamentation filled the grounds.
"You owe me forty-seven pounds,
Sixteen-and-six," he groaned.
"I'll go to Quelch now—to-day!"
Said Bunter: "Do, old chap, and say
How much you're asking me to pay,
And just how much you loaned!"

"You pesky mugwump!" Fishy hissed,
And raised his Transatlantic fist.
The Owl endeavoured to resist,
But Fishy laid him flat!
"You clam!" he howled. "Your pesky
tricks
Can't welsh this child: Forget it! Nix!
It's forty-seven, sixteen, six
You owe me, and that's that!"

Then Quelch, passing murmured:
"Hum!
And how does this boy Bunter come
To owe you this enormous sum?"
And Fishy felt a throb!
"I—I—" he gasped. "It's just a
joke!"
Quelch looked at him, so with a choke
The horrid truth poor Fishy spoke
"I lent him fifteen bob!"

Like authors, when descriptions fail,
Just here, I think, we'll draw the veil!

call; had he not taken it someone would have come to the study and discovered him there!

"Hallo! Is that Mr. Quelch?" came a deep, rather sharp voice. "Mr. Vernon-Smith speaking!"

"Oh orikey!" murmured Bunter. It was the Bounder's father on the wire.

"Eh? What? What did you say, Mr. Quelch?"

"Oh! Nothing!" gasped Bunter. "All right! Go on!"

Evidently Smithy's father was unaware that Smithy's Form-master was away from Greyfriars.

"Please excuse my interrupting you, Mr. Quelch! No doubt you are busy—"

"Oh, yes! Very!"

"I am sorry—but I shall not keep you a moment! It is my intention to visit Greyfriars to-morrow afternoon to see my son. I understand that it is a half-holiday on Wednesday?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Perhaps, sir, you will kindly tell Herbert to expect me?"

"Oh, yes!"

"If convenient to you, sir, I should like to talk with you at the same time. I have been considerably perturbed by your report at the half-term. It seems that you are not satisfied with Herbert."

"No fear!" said Bunter.

"What? What did you say, Mr. Quelch?"

"I—I mean—"

"I understand! Herbert has been giving you trouble?"

"Yes, rather! Chasing a fellow—"

"What!"

"I—I mean, he—he—he is—is—is a beast—I mean, a most ill-tempered and—and disrespectful fellow—"

"I am sorry to hear it! I have not forgotten, sir, your kindness and the Head's kindness in allowing my son to return to Greyfriars this term after what happened. I am grateful! Your report at the half-term was a shock to me. I had hoped that Herbert had learned his lesson and was doing better. Apparently he is not."

"Catch him!"

"Eh?"

"I mean, certainly not! He's worse and worse—the worst fellow at the school—a regular rotter and beast—"

"Is that Mr. Quelch speaking?"

"Oh, yes! Exactly!"

"I do not seem to recognise your voice."

"Oh, that's the telephone, you know! These rotten telephones! I hardly recognise yours—sounds more like a pig grunting!"

"Mr. Quelch! Really—"

"Yes, really!" said Bunter cheerfully.

"I gather that you are angry with my son, Mr. Quelch? Perhaps I am not surprised! I must discuss the matter with you when I come to-morrow—but I may say, here and now, that I am as dissatisfied with Herbert's reckless conduct as you can be, and that if he does not amend it is my intention to take extremely severe measures."

"Jolly glad to hear it," said Bunter. "What he wants is a thundering good hiding!"

"What? What?"

"I—I mean, he requires adequate correction—" amended Bunter, putting it more in Quelch's style.

"Surely, sir, that is in your province. However, we shall discuss the matter. You will speak to Herbert and tell him to remain in the school to-morrow afternoon. I am exceedingly sorry, sir, that my son should have given you so much trouble. Good-bye, sir!"

"Good-bye!" grinned Bunter.

He replaced the receiver and rolled back to the armchair, grinning. Having shut off Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith on the phone, he was safe in the study, unless some other beast rang up Quelch! Fortunately, no other beast did!

The Owl of the Remove was feeling more at ease in his fat mind now. Anyone else who had taken that call would, of course, have told Vernon-Smith that his father was coming to the school on the morrow. Bunter could tell him or not as he liked! That was going to depend on how the Bounder acted in the matter of the overcoat! One good turn deserves another. If Smithy was decent, Bunter would tell him the news—if he wasn't, Smithy could go and eat coke and be blowed to him! That was how the fat Owl decided the point.

If the Bounder remained in detention he would, of course, be in the school when his father came. But Bunter had heard that Smithy was, after all, included in the Remove eleven that was going over to Highcliffe to play Courtenay's team there, and that the captain of the Remove hoped to get him leave from the Head. So it was rather important for the Bounder to learn that his father was coming to Greyfriars to see him—especially as the millionaire seemed to be in a very annoyed and irritated mood with his son. Mr. Vernon-Smith was an extremely indulgent parent, but it seemed that he was getting fed-up at last with the Bounder's incessant scrapes. Smithy's narrow escape from expulsion had certainly been a shock to him.

It was not till nearly tea-time that Billy Bunter ventured out of Mr. Quelch's study. By that time, he hoped, the Bounder had cooled down—and, anyhow, he could not wait in cover any longer, without risk of missing a meal—which was unthinkable.

Taking Smithy's muddy overcoat over his arm, Bunter blinked into the passage, saw that the coast was clear, and rolled away. Smithy's coat was hung up on its peg again, and Bunter was done with it. The mud on it was dry by that time; but it did not occur to Bunter to take a brush and brush it off. Exertion of any kind never had any appeal for Bunter.

Leaving the muddy coat hanging, the fat Owl rolled away to the Remove passage in search of tea.

Ten minutes later, Herbert Vernon-Smith was looking at that coat—lately a new coat, now crumpled and muddy and forlorn. Having looked at it, the Bounder, with a glitter in his eyes, went to look for Billy Bunter!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Chucked Out!

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Scat!"

"I've looked in—" began Billy Bunter, with dignity, as he blinked into Study No. 1 through his big spectacles.

"Look out again—" suggested Frank Nugent.

"Better look out, Bunter!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Last time I saw Smithy he was hunting you! He's wrathy."

"Blow Smithy! I've looked in to ask you fellows—"

"Ask next door!"

"If you'd like me to cook the sosses!" concluded Bunter.

Harry Wharton laughed. There were sausages to grace the tea-table in Study No. 1 in the Remove, and Bunter was a great man at cooking sausages. He was

still a greater man at disposing of them when cooked.

"Roll in, fatty!" said the captain of the Remove.

Bunter rolled in, in great relief. He was keen on bagging a tea in the study; but he was almost as keen on the company of the Famous Five as on the sosses! He felt safer in company when the Bounder was hunting for him! Any other fellow, Bunter reflected, would have got over his temper by this time; but the Bounder had a beastly temper, and with him you never could tell! Study No. 1 was a happy refuge to the hunted Owl.

The fat junior sorted out the frying-pan from the bottom of the study cupboard, and there was soon an appetising and agreeable scent of cooking sausages—very grateful and comforting to fellows who had been at football practice in a keen March wind!

Having cooked the sosses, Bunter, of course, could not be denied a share in them—the lion's share—and he sat down to tea with the chums of the Remove. He sat as far from the door as possible, with the table and the five juniors between him and the doorway. For once his fat attention was not wholly concentrated on the foodstuffs. He listened to footsteps in the Remove passage with quite a painful intentness.

"I—I say, you fellows!" he gasped in alarm, as the study door opened.

But it was Skinner who looked in.

"Oh, you're here!" said Skinner, with a grin at the alarmed, fat face across the tea-table. "Smithy's looking for you."

"I—I say, tell him I've gone to tea with the Head, will you, Skinner?" gasped Bunter.

"He's coming up the stairs now!" chuckled Skinner.

"D-d-does he look waxy?"

"Simply ferocious!"

"Oh crikey! I say, old chap, tell him Lascelles has asked me to tea, will you, and I've gone? Or—or tell him I've gone home to a funeral."

"Judging by Smithy's looks, you'll be staying here for your own funeral!" answered Skinner heartlessly.

And he walked away, laughing.

Billy Bunter blinked round at the five faces in the study.

"I say, you fellows, you'll stand by me, won't you?" he asked anxiously. "I never had Smithy's coat, you know—"

"Fathead!"

"I mean, it was his fault it got muddy! He can tip Trotter a bob to brush it. I'll stand the bob, when—when my postal order comes. I say, Wharton, you're not going to let a fellow kick up a row in your study, are you?"

"I'd rather not," assented Wharton. "Perhaps you'd better step out into the passage to see Smithy."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Look here, you fat chump, you jolly well deserve to be kicked for bagging a fellow's coat!" said Johnny Bull. "Get it over!"

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Smithy's entitled to a free kick!" agreed Bob Cherry. "What are you grousing about, Bunter, when you asked for it?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"The askfulness was terrific, my esteemed Bunter. The bagfulness of a fellow's coat was not the proper caper."

"Beast!"

"Hallo hallo, hallo! Here comes his wrathy nibs!" said Bob, as there was a crash at the study door, and it flew wide open.

Herbert Vernon-Smith tramped in, with a scowling brow.

"Is that the way you usually enter a study, Smithy?" asked Nugent. "They don't do it like that in the best circles."

"So he's here," said the Bounder, unheeding. "Bunter, you fat scoundrel—"

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Chuck it, Smithy, old bean," said Bob amicably. "We all put up with Bunter's weird ways, more or less. Why shouldn't you, like any other fellow? I haven't kicked him for bagging my socks the other day—and I can't afford new things like you can."

"You're a soft-headed fool, and I'm not!" answered the Bounder.

"Thanks! What sort of polish do you use for your manners?" inquired Bob. "It must be worth a guinea a box!"

"I—I say, Smithy, old chap!" gasped Bunter. "I say, I never had your coat! I mean, I should have had Mauly's coat, only the beast went out in it—he was always selfish. And it wasn't much of a coat, you know—your coats ain't much good—you don't know how to give an order to a tailor—you new rich fellows never do!"

If Billy Bunter hoped to placate the wrathful Bounder by those remarks, it showed that he had a very hopeful nature!

Vernon-Smith strode round the table, grasped him by the collar, and jerked him backwards over his chair. The chair went to the floor with a crash and Bunter roared in the Bounder's grasp.

Harry Wharton & Co. were all on their feet now, far from pleased. It was true that, as Bob had observed, the Bounder was entitled to a free kick. But he was not entitled to kick up a shindy in another fellow's study.

"Look here, Smithy, draw it mild!"

"Mind your own business!"

"Look here—"

"Oh, shut up!"

Wharton breathed hard. Now that the Bounder had offered his services for the Highcliffe match, and was in the Remove eleven again, Wharton was very anxious to avoid a renewal of the trouble with him. But there was a limit, and Smithy was getting perilously near it.

"I say, you fellows, make him leggo!" howled Bunter, sagging like a sack of coke in the Bounder's muscular grasp. "I say, Smithy, old chap—"

"Look here, Smithy, chuck it!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Rats to you!"

"I say, chuck it, old chap, and I'll tell you something—something that you'd like to know!" gasped Bunter.

"You fat fool!"

"I mean it, old chap! I was in Quelch's study, and— Yaroooh!" roared Bunter, as the Bounder swung him round and kicked.

"That will do, Smithy!" said Harry Wharton, setting his lips.

"It won't!"

"I tell you—"

"You can gabble till you're black in the face, but I'm going to kick the fat scoundrel to the end of the passage and back again!"

"Yaroooh!"

"You're not!" said Wharton decisively. "Let him go!"

"Rats!"

The Bounder kicked again, and Bunter, with a yell, spun to the door. Vernon-Smith followed him up, with another kick coming. But that kick did not land. Harry Wharton grasped him by the shoulder, and spun him away from the Owl of the Remove.



French lesson was interrupted when an ink-ball landed on Billy Bunter's big spectacles, and elicited a loud yell from the Owl of the Remove. It was Skinner who had projected the ink-ball—unseen by Mossou. But Mossou jumped to the conclusion that Vernon-Smith was the guilty party!

"That's enough, Smithy!" he said tersely.

"Let go my shoulder!"

"Not unless you save Bunter alone!"

Bunter raced round the table. The Bounder wrenched himself free from Wharton, by main force, and rushed after him.

"I say, you fellows, keep him off!" yelled Bunter.

"Look here, that's the jolly old limit!" exclaimed Frank Nugent. "Get out of this study, Smithy!"

He caught at the Bounder and dragged him back. Smithy's fist shot out, and Frank staggered back with a gasp.

That was more than enough for the other fellows. They collared Vernon-Smith on all sides, whirled him to the doorway, and pitched him headlong into the passage.

The Bounder landed there with a bump and a yell.

"Now, hook it, unless you want some more!" snapped Bob Cherry. "By gum, if you don't clear we'll give you the frog's-march up the passage!"

And Bob slammed the study door.

Herbert Vernon-Smith picked himself up, panting for breath, and red with fury. He limped up the passage to his own study. The trouble, for the present, was over though nobody who knew the Bounder expected that to be the end of it.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Highcliffe Day!

HARRY WHARTON was in rather a worried mood the following morning.

The position of football captain in the Remove was not quite a

sinecure. The weather was fine, which was a comfort to the fellows looking forward to the game at Highcliffe that afternoon. But the morose and unreliable Bounder was a thorn in the side of the captain of the Remove.

Courtenay, the junior captain of Highcliffe had a good team, and the Remove had to put their best men in the field for that fixture. Smithy was one of the very best. It had not been without an effort that Wharton had swallowed the Bounder's cheek and put his name in the list again. But he had done it, and hoped for the best. Then the "row" in the study had followed, and he would not have been surprised if the angry and resentful Bounder had stepped out again.

Indeed, he had a lurking suspicion that that row had been partly intended as an excuse for letting the team down. Certainly, Bunter's fatuous proceedings had been very irritating, and the Bounder's temper was not good. Still, it seemed to Wharton that Vernon-Smith had rather jumped at the chance of a row.

Smithy, however, had said nothing on the subject since, and his name was still in the list posted up in the Rag. Whether Smithy intended to stand out, almost at the last moment, was a problem—an intensely irritating one—to the football skipper.

That was not the only difficulty, either. The Head had to be asked to let Vernon-Smith off detention for the afternoon, to play at Highcliffe; and that was a doubtful proposition. The headmaster was kind and considerate; it was very likely that he would stretch a point for the sake of the junior team. On the other hand, Smithy's detention was so thoroughly well deserved that

Wharton had a natural hesitation about making the request. Certainly, he could not make it unless it was absolutely certain that the Bounder was going to play in the match—and that was quite uncertain now.

The Remove had a turn with Wingate of the Sixth that morning, and then extra maths with Mr. Lascelles. It was rumoured in the Remove that Mr. Quelch was away for weeks, in which case, it was certain that a new master would take his place. Nothing, however, was settled yet, and the Lower Fourth were still in a state of interregnum. A fellow in the Bounder's position might have been expected to be very careful that morning, in the hope of being let off in the afternoon. But Smithy was far from careful. He checked Wingate in first class, and was caned. He yawned openly in the face of Mr. Lascelles at maths, and Larry fixed a very grim eye on him.

"If you were not already detained this afternoon, Vernon-Smith, I should give you a detention," he said. "As it is, I shall give you an imposition. I shall prepare some problems for you."

"You're awfully good, sir!" said the Bounder.

"Do you desire me to report you to your headmaster for insolence, Vernon-Smith?"

"I don't mind, sir."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Lascelles grimly. "Well, I shall not trouble Dr. Locke with you, Vernon-Smith; I shall cane you. Bend over that form!"

And, for the second time that morning, Vernon-Smith had to bend over. He was scowling savagely when the Remove came out in break. In third school Walker of the Sixth took the

Remove, and they had an easy time while Walker sat at Quelch's desk and perused the thrilling adventures of Hangdog Chummond. Even the Bounder behaved himself when he was left alone. When the Remove were finally dismissed for the day Harry Wharton joined the Bounder in the passage.

"I'm speaking to the Head before he goes to lunch," he said abruptly.

"It's settled that you're coming over to Highcliffe with us?"

"I'm comin'."

"All serene, then," said the captain of the Remove, relieved. "I wanted to know for certain, that's all."

"You couldn't take my word?" sneered the Bounder.

"I'm taking it," answered Wharton, determined not to be drawn into a quarrel. "I'll go and catch the beak in his study now."

The Bounder cast a sneering glance after him as he went. Then, sighting Billy Bunter coming down the passage, he landed a kick on that fat youth's right trousers, sending Bunter scuttling off with a howl.

It was with some hesitation that Wharton tapped at the Head's door and entered. Fortunately, Dr. Locke was likely to know nothing of the Bounder's conduct in the Form-room that morning. Had he been aware of it, it would not have been much use asking favours for Smithy. The Head of Greyfriars received the captain of the Remove with his usual benignity, but his kind face became very grave when he heard what Wharton had to say.

He remained silent for some moments, considering the matter.

"I wouldn't ask you, sir," said Harry, colouring, "only this is rather a big fixture for us, and we want to beat Highcliffe, if we can."

"Quite so!" assented the Head kindly. "I quite understand that. And you tell me that Vernon-Smith is essential to the team?"

"He's our best winger, sir. I'd as soon stand out myself as leave him out."

Dr. Locke smiled.

"I should be very sorry to deprive you of a man you need in a match," he said. "On the understanding that Vernon-Smith goes with the junior footballers, to play in the match at Highcliffe, I will rescind his detention, Wharton. You may tell him, from me, that he may write an imposition of two hundred lines of Virgil, in the place of his detention this afternoon, the lines to be handed to me by Saturday."

"Thank you, sir!" said Harry, gratefully.

And he left the study, feeling, as Greyfriars fellows had often thought before, that the Head was a brick!

A fat junior was waiting for him at the corner of the passage. Billy Bunter grinned at him as he came along.

"Seen the Head, old chap?" asked Bunter.

"Yes, fatty."

"Smithy let off detention?"

"Yes," answered Harry, rather surprised by Bunter's interest in the matter.

Football did not loom very large on Billy Bunter's horizon.

"He, he, he!"

"What are you cackling at, you fat duffer?"

"Smithy will be out of gates this afternoon, then!" grinned Bunter.

"Of course!"

"He, he, he! Serve him jolly well right!" said Bunter. "I'd have told him, only I wasn't going to tell him while he was kicking a chap. Why should I?"

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Wharton stared.

"You'd have told him what?"

"That's telling!" chuckled Bunter.

"Fathead!"

Wharton went on his way, leaving the Owl of the Remove still chuckling. Billy Bunter seemed to be entertained about something; but Wharton was not curious to know what it was. He went out into the quadrangle to look for the Bounder, and found him with Redwing.

"All serene!" he said brightly. "The Head's a jolly old brick! You're to do two hundred lines of Virgil by Saturday, Smithy, and you're let off this afternoon to play at Highcliffe."

"Oh, good!" exclaimed Redwing.

"That's ripping!"

The Bounder smiled sarcastically.

"Ripping, is it?" he said. "I fancy Wharton would have given you my place if I had to stand out."

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Now
what about a joke from YOU!
Pile in with your efforts right away!

"Rot!" said Tom. "I'd play, like a shot, but we want to beat Highcliffe."

"Modesty, thy name is Redwing!" grinned the Bounder.

"Oh, don't be an ass, Smithy," said Wharton. "Redwing would have had the place, but he's not in the same street with you, and he knows it, as well as you and I do. We can't beat Highcliffe without you."

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders. "That's rot!" he said. "A man can't always be at the top of his form. As likely as not, I shall be no good."

"Bosh! You're going to score goals," said the captain of the Remove cheerfully, and he left the Bounder with Redwing. There was a slightly uneasy expression on Vernon-Smith's face.

"You'll be coming over with the team, Reddy?" he said.

"Yes, rather. I'm down as a reserve, anyhow," said Tom, with a

smile. "And I shouldn't be likely to miss the game."

"You might be wanted, after all."

"Not likely!"

"Accidents might happen."

"Well, if any fellow tumbles off the brake and breaks a leg I shall be on the spot!" said Redwing, with a laugh.

The Bounder said no more. He walked away by himself, his hands driven deep into his pockets, thinking. The expression on his face indicated that his thoughts were not wholly pleasant.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Let Down!

"JOLLY day!" remarked Bob Cherry, when the brake came round for the footballers.

Most days were jolly to the cheerful Bob. But it really was a jolly day; clear and cold and fine. There had been rains, and there had been fogs, but they seemed to have cleared off specially in time for the football match at Highcliffe. It was a cheery crowd that packed into the brake.

If there was one face a little clouded it was Vernon-Smith's. Which was unexpected, for a fellow let off detention to play in a football match on an ideal day for the game might have been expected to look very merry and bright. But the Bounder, these days, seldom looked either merry or bright. So far as football went he held his old place in the Form, and every fellow was glad to have him in the eleven. But in all else his popularity was at its lowest ebb.

Billy Bunter watched the footballers start, with a fat grin on his face. Billy Bunter knew, what nobody else knew, that Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith was coming to Greyfriars that afternoon to see his son, expecting to find Herbert waiting for him there. He was coming. Bunter knew, in a far from pleasant temper with Herbert. Indulgent parent as he was, his temper was hasty and headstrong like his son's. Billy Bunter considered that there would very probably be an explosion of wrath when the millionaire found that his son was gone. And he also considered that it would serve Smithy jolly well right!

Bunter, to do him justice, would have told the Bounder about that message on the telephone. But he could not go near Smithy without being kicked. In those peculiar circumstances Bunter felt justified in leaving Vernon-Smith in the dark—and he expected, and, indeed, hoped, that "old Smith" would make matters jolly warm for "young Smith."

The brake rolled away, leaving Bunter grinning.

There was a cheery chatter in the brake as it ran by Courtfield to Highcliffe School. The Bounder did not join in it. All through the journey he did not utter a single word. The cloud on his face had deepened, and Tom Redwing, who knew his chum well, gave him more than one uneasy glance. There was something on Smithy's mind, he knew, though he could not imagine what it was. So far as he and the other fellows could see, Smithy ought to have been congratulating himself on his good luck.

Knowing Smithy as he did, it seemed to him that the Bounder had resolved upon some course of action, with his usual stubborn obstinacy, but was not quite satisfied in his conscience about it. But he had no doubt that the exertion and excitement of the football match would banish that cloud from his chum's face.

Three Highcliffe fellows—Ponsonby

and Gadsby and Monson—were sauntering near the gates when the brake arrived with the Greyfriars fellows. They looked at the Remove crowd, not with friendly eyes; but Ponsonby waved a hand to the Bounder, who acknowledged the salute. It was not long since Smithy had been on fighting terms with Pon & Co., but they had made it up since then—for a time! When the shady side of Smithy's character was uppermost he had much in common with the black sheep of Highcliffe.

Harry Wharton & Co. carefully avoided taking note of the three. They did not want a row with Highcliffians on the day of the Highcliffe match. Pon winked at his friends as the brake rolled on.

"Smithy's come!" he remarked. "What's he with that crew for, though?" asked Monson.

"I believe he was in detention, and he's made use of them to get away," answered Ponsonby.

"Dirty trick!" said Gadsby. Pon laughed.

"Smithy's pretty deep!" he remarked. "He seems to be breakin' out in quite his old style this term. Hang on here till he blows along."

"We shall be late at the Three Fishers at this rate!" grunted Gadsby. "I'm not keen on the fellow's company."

"Oh, rot! Let's wait!"

And the three waited. Pon probably was no keener on Smithy's company than Gaddy was. But when he was going to improve the shining hour by playing billiards at a disreputable resort he was glad to have the company of a fellow who could put a liver on the game without missing it.

Courtenay, the captain of the Highcliffe Fourth, greeted the Greyfriars visitors cheerily when they arrived. His chum, the Caterpillar, gave Vernon-Smith a rather curious glance, noting the one clouded face among so many bright and cheery ones.

"That's a chap that doesn't seem to be enjoyin' life, old bean!" drawled De Courcy, when the Greyfriars fellows went in to change. "Misses dear old Pon perhaps! Is he lookin' for him?"

The Bounder had not gone in with the rest.

With his hands in his pockets he was sauntering away. Courtenay glanced after him.

"Is he friendly with Pon?" he asked carelessly.

"I've heard that this term they're rather thick again—havin', I suppose, come to understand one another's sterlin' qualities," said the Caterpillar gravely.

Courtenay laughed.

"He's a good footballer," he said. "One of the best men they've got, I believe. If he wants to speak to Pon it's too late—Ponsonby's gone out of gates."

"Bad boys!" said the Caterpillar. "Lookin' on the wine when it is red an' the billiards-table when it is green! Much better be playin' Soccer with good boys like us, old bean. Poor old Pon can't understand what it's like to be thrillin' with keenness for a game!" And the Caterpillar gave a deep yawn, perhaps to show how keen he was!

Vernon-Smith had disappeared from the football ground. Why he had wandered away while the other fellows were changing for the match was rather a puzzle. But he was gone.

"Seen Smithy?" Tom Redwing came up to the two Highcliffe fellows a couple of minutes later.

"Yes," answered the Caterpillar. "He's gone for a walk, I think."

Redwing stared. "Gone for a walk?" he repeated.

"The whistle goes in a few minutes. What do you mean, De Courcy?"

"Only what I say, old tulip! Last I saw of him he was doin' the vanishin' trick behind those jolly old oaks! Perhaps you'll find him there, meditatin'."

Redwing, rather puzzled and very uneasy, ran in the direction of the oak-trees, a little distance off the football ground. The Caterpillar gave his chum a whimsical look.

"Is that man cuttin' the game?" he asked.

"How could he, when he's come over to play?" said Courtenay, with a stare.

"How indeed!" drawled the Caterpillar. "I seem to remember some chat of Pon & Co.'s—I gathered that they were expectin' to see Smithy to-day."

"To see him play football, then."

"Well, they're not what you'd call frightfully keen on Soccer! My belief is that wild horses wouldn't drag Pon & Co. into watchin' a game, unless they had a big bet on it."

"Oh, rot!" said Courtenay.

"Rot or not, that man Redwing's comin' back empty-handed."

Tom Redwing came back alone, his face clouded and troubled. By that time the Greyfriars men were changed and in the field. Harry Wharton called out to Redwing:

"Where's Smithy? He's not changed yet."

"I—I can't see him about!" Redwing came up rather breathlessly. "He seems to have left the ground."

"Left the ground!" repeated the captain of the Remove, staring.

"I—I can't make it out!"

"Is the man mad?" exclaimed Squiff. "We're all ready for the whistle, and he's gone wandering off. What is he up to?"

"We can't keep Highcliffe waiting," said Bob. "For goodness' sake find that silly ass and tell him to get changed!"

There were six or seven Remove fellows present, as well as the members of the team. Harry Wharton, with a knitted brow, called to them to hunt for Smithy and send him along, and some of the Highcliffe fellows joined them in looking for the Bounder.

Wharton was breathing hard.

Vernon Smith's action was absolutely unaccountable, unless— But the captain of the Remove could not believe that. He remembered well enough that the Bounder had stated that he had an "engagement" for that afternoon, though he had forgotten it till that moment. Likely enough that engagement had been with the young blackguards of Highcliffe. Was it possible—could it be possible—that the unscrupulous Bounder had made use of the footballers to get off detention, with no intention whatever of playing football at Highcliffe.

But Wharton could not believe it. It was time for the kick-off now, and a Highcliffe Fifth Form man, who was referee, was ready, and looking impatient. Wharton had to ask Courtenay for a few minutes' grace. But it was useless, for the fellows who had gone to look for Vernon-Smith came back without him. And one of them brought the news that he had asked the school porter if he had seen Smithy, and received the answer that the Bounder had been seen going down the road with Ponsonby & Co. That settled the matter.

"He's let us down!" said Harry Wharton, in a low voice. "It was a rotten trick, all the time. He never meant to play, and he was making use of us to get off the Head's detention."

"He wouldn't!" muttered Redwing. "He couldn't!"

"He has!" said Wharton savagely. "Where is he, then?"

Redwing could not answer that.

"The rotten rascal!" said Bob Cherry, with a deep breath. "If that's right, he's a bigger rotter than anybody ever imagined!"

"We've got to play without him! Get into your things, Reddy!"

Whatever was the cause of the Bounder's absence, it was clear that he was not going to play in that match, and that Highcliffe could be kept waiting no longer. Tom Redwing changed, and lined up with the Remove in the Bounder's place, and the game started.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.
Smithy's Pater!

"H E, he, he!" That unmusical cachinnation escaped from Billy Bunter at the sight of a magnificent car turning in at the gates of Greyfriars.

(Continued on next page.)

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stout gentleman in a silk hat who sat in it.

Mr. Vernon-Smith had arrived.

There was a somewhat set and severe expression on Mr. Vernon-Smith's plump face. Probably he was looking forward, in rather a grim mood, to the interview with his scapegrace son.

Bunter grinned as the car passed him, and chuckled again. Two or three fellows "capped" the millionaire as he passed.

"That's old Smith," remarked Skinner to Snoop. "Tremendous old swell—what? Why can't all our paters be moneylenders, Snoop?"

Whereat Sidney James Snoop chortled.

"What are you cackling at, Bunter? Thinking that that car is nearly as good as your Ford at home?" asked Skinner.

"Oh, really, Skinner! I say, the old bean's come to see the young bean, and Smithy's gone over to Highcliffe," grinned Bunter. "I fancy he will get his hair off—what? He, he, he!"

"Well, he couldn't expect Smithy to stay in gates, unless he told him he was coming, and he can't have," said Skinner.

"He, he, he!"

"Suddenly found that he had an hour to spare, from skinning the poor old public on the Stock Exchange," remarked Skinner satirically. "His time's frightfully valuable, Snoop—worth about a hundred pounds an hour—or is it a thousand? We must ask Smithy. He toils not, neither does he spin, but Solomon in all his glory was never arrayed in a fur-collared coat like that."

And Snoop chortled again.

Many eyes were turned on that magnificent Rolls, and on the millionaire when he alighted from it. Wealth seemed to exude all over Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith. If there were other things in the universe of more importance than wealth, Mr. Vernon-Smith was probably unconscious of their existence.

Dr. Locke, from his study window, beheld the arrival of the millionaire, and sighed. He had been unaware that Mr. Vernon-Smith was calling that day, and he dreaded an interview with the rather overpowering gentleman. No headmaster enjoys interviewing parents, and Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith was a very formidable parent. Also, the Head's last interview with him, on the occasion when Smithy had been "sacked," had been somewhat disagreeable.

Certainly, the Head had had good reason to rescind that sentence at the time; but he was left with a sort of feeling that Mr. Vernon-Smith had rather bullied him. Mr. Vernon-Smith was one of those overpowering personalities who seem to breathe up all the air in a room, and leave everybody else gasping. Dr. Locke wondered rather dismally what had brought the millionaire to Greyfriars that day, and hoped that he had only called to see his son, and not to see his son's headmaster.

As a matter of fact, he had; but, nevertheless, in a few minutes there came a tap at the Head's door, and Trotter showed the millionaire in. And Dr. Locke rose to meet him with courtesy.

Mr. Vernon-Smith seemed annoyed. He gave a kind of grunt in reply to the headmaster's courteous greeting. Dr. Locke, remembering his interview with Wharton, guessed the cause of the frown on the plump face.

"I regret that your son is not within gates, Mr. Vernon-Smith," he said.

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"Had he been aware of your intention to visit the school, no doubt—"

"I presume that he was aware of it, sir."

"I think not," said the Head. "If you had written—"

"I telephoned, sir. I am quite surprised and puzzled," said Mr. Vernon-Smith, with another grunt. "I telephoned yesterday to Mr. Quelch, my son's Form-master, stating my intention to call to-day. I understood that he would inform my son, also that he would be available for a discussion with me. I am informed, however, that my son is absent, engaged upon a football match or something, and that Mr. Quelch has gone. I do not understand this, sir."

The Head blinked.

"There must be some misunderstanding," he said mildly. "You could scarcely have spoken to Mr. Quelch on the telephone."

"I was given his number."

"No doubt; but Mr. Quelch is now away from Greyfriars—"

"My call was taken."

"Someone must have taken it, on hearing the bell ring," said the Head, very much puzzled. "But I fail to see why he did not explain to you."

"So do I, sir—so do I. I was most undoubtedly led to suppose that it was Mr. Quelch who was speaking to me."

"I am quite perplexed, sir. I shall certainly inquire—"

Mr. Vernon-Smith made a gesture.

"As the matter stands, I am here, and I cannot see my son's Form-master, and my son is away," he said. "Whoever took my call certainly cannot have told Herbert that I was coming to see him to-day."

"Apparently not," said the Head. "I shall make the most rigid inquiry—"

"My time, sir, is of value!" grunted Mr. Vernon-Smith. "It is improbable that I shall have another free afternoon for weeks to come, and it is urgent for me to see my son. I have gathered that his Form-master is far from satisfied with him."

"I regret to say that that is the case, sir."

"A feeling that you share, I have no doubt."

"I am sorry to say—yes."

"I share it, also," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "It is my intention to speak very plainly to Herbert. If the lesson he had was lost on him, it is time that he had another, and a more severe one. Yet, owing to some inexplicable trickery on the telephone, he is not here when I call. Where is he?"

"I understand that he is playing football with boys of his Form at Highcliffe School," said the Head. "The boys will return before calling-over—"

Grunt!

"Or if you cared to do so, you could run over to Highcliffe in your car," suggested the Head. "It is only a few miles from here."

Dr. Locke hoped that his visitor would adopt that suggestion. The prospect of Mr. Vernon-Smith remaining till the juniors came back from Highcliffe was quite dismaying to the old gentleman.

To his satisfaction Mr. Vernon-Smith gave a nod.

"Probably you would be interested to see your son playing for his school," said the Head. "Although Vernon-Smith has been far from giving satisfaction in class, and in his general ways, I am glad to say that in games, at all events, he has won a great deal of credit. In fact, I specially excused him from detention to-day, in order that he might play in this football match."

"So he was under detention to-day?" grunted Mr. Vernon-Smith. "May I ask for what offence?"

"For insolence to a master," said the Head. "That, I am sorry to say, is nothing new."

"He will learn better, sir," said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "By Jove, he shall learn better, or repent it. I am glad to hear, however, that he is good at games—and that his occupation this afternoon is an honourable one. I trust, sir, that you have had no reason to suspect him of his former offences—breaking school bounds, mixing with low associates—"

The Head was silent.

"Come, sir," grunted Mr. Vernon-Smith, "be frank with me. You told me, and I am far from blaming you, that if my son repeated such offences you would expel him from the school. I cannot expect anything else; and I am naturally anxious on the point."

"I will be frank," said the Head. "It is suspected—indeed more than suspected—that Vernon-Smith has not departed from his former ways; but if he persists in them, he is very wary, and so far there has been no proof on the subject."

"It is only fair to give the boy the benefit of the doubt, sir."

"That is what I have done!" said the Head. "And I still hope that my distrust of him is without foundation."

"Very well, sir, I shall see him, and talk to him," said Mr. Vernon-Smith, rising. "I will proceed to Highcliffe at once, and shall be glad to see him playing football there. I will bring him back to Greyfriars in my car, and that will give me an opportunity for a serious talk with the boy."

Which the Head was very pleased to hear.

Mr. Vernon-Smith took his leave, and the magnificent Rolls rolled away with him. His brow cleared as he shot away to Highcliffe. Angry and annoyed as he was with the reckless Bounder, the millionaire was proud of his son, and he was glad of an opportunity to see him playing for his school—a man so important to the team that he had been specially let off detention to play. He was in quite a good humour by the time he reached Highcliffe School—though his good humour was destined to disappear very soon after his arrival there.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Not a Win!

"GOAL!"

"Bravo, Wharton!"

"Well kicked, sir!"

The Highcliffe match was going strong when Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith, leaving his car at the gates, walked down to the ground.

It was uphill work for the Remove men.

The first half was drawing to a finish, and the goal that had just been taken by the captain of the Remove was the first for Greyfriars—while Highcliffe already had two to their credit.

The Bounder was sorely missed.

Tom Redwing was a good, steady, reliable man; but he was not, as Wharton had said, in the same street with the Bounder.

Smithy was wanted, and wanted badly.

Highcliffe were in great form; Courtenay had his team in splendid shape. Even with the Remove at the top of their strength, victory would have been on the knees of the gods. The loss of the best man on the wing was a heavy handicap to Greyfriars.

Had Smithy kept to his original intention, and sulkily stood out of Remove



Bunter ran for the House, with Vernon-Smith close behind him. The Bounder gained fast, and grabbed at a fat shoulder. Bunter spun desperately away, slipped, and stumbled over. Splash! "Oooogh!" gasped the fat Remove, as he landed in an extensive puddle left by the recent rain.

football, it would have been bad enough; but that, the captain of the Remove would have had to make the best of. But it was bitter to be let down at the last moment by miserable trickery. Wharton knew, as all the fellows knew now, that Smithy had never intended to play—he had made use of the football captain to get him leave for the afternoon, and that was all.

Coolly leaving them in the lurch, he had gone off with Pon & Co. on some disreputable excursion—making them, to a great extent, parties in his own wretched deception of the headmaster. Certainly they could not give him away to the Head—which placed them in the undesirable position of screening his wrong-doing. Equally certainly they were going to deal with him themselves later on, and make him sorry for his trickery. But that was no present help.

Feelings of anger and resentment did not conduce to the best play. The Bounder's desertion had a rotten effect on the whole team. Most of all it affected Redwing badly. He was keen enough to play, and he did his best; but his best was not so good as usual. With his chum's conduct weighing on his mind, shame for him mingling with apprehension of what was to follow, Tom could not put up a good game, and it did not take Wharton long to realise that he had made a mistake in playing the Bounder's chum. But it was too late to think of that—it was another trouble that he had to make the best of.

With a first-class man gone, and an average player in his place who was at the lowest point of his form, and a general feeling of anger and irritation, the Remove footballers were really lucky in keeping the margin down, against a team like Courtenay's.

It was a relief to them when Wharton

got through at last, and landed the ball in the net. They lined up again for Highcliffe to kick off, with rather more hopeful feelings.

"After all I'd like to show the rotter that we can win matches without him," said Squiff, who was keeping goal for the Remove.

"And we jolly well can!" declared Bob Cherry.

"The cantfulness is terrific!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "We must go all outfully, and mop up the ridiculous ground with the absurd Highcliffians."

And the side lined up with that intention. It was then that a stout gentleman in a fur-collared coat and a silk hat was seen making his way down to the field. Bob Cherry spotted him, and gave a low whistle.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! That's old Smithy!" he ejaculated.

"Smithy!" repeated Wharton.

"Old Smithy—Smithy's pater."

"Oh, my hat!"

The captain of the Remove looked round at Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"Smithy can't have known his pater was going to blow in!" he remarked. "I wonder what's brought him here!"

But there was no time for the footballers to bother about that. They lined up, and the whistle went, and play was resumed. It was going strong when Mr. Vernon-Smith arrived—regarded rather curiously by the Greyfriars fellows who had come over to watch the game. They did not need telling that the millionaire expected to see his son there—he could hardly have come for any other reason.

Mr. Vernon-Smith stood looking on at the game for a few minutes, the Greyfriars spectators glancing at him, and exchanging curious glances. Apparently he was trying to pick out his son

among the men in blue-and-white. He turned his head at last, and spoke to Hazeldene of the Remove—who was watching the match not in the best of tempers. Hazel had an idea that he ought to have been in goal instead of Squiff—an idea that Hazel had entirely to himself. He had another idea that Wharton ought to have picked him instead of Redwing to take the Bounder's place—another idea that was entirely his own!

"Where is my son?" asked Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"Nobody knows, sir!" answered Hazel, with a wink at his friends.

"Eh, what? Is he not here playing football?"

"No, sir!"

"I don't understand this," barked Mr. Vernon-Smith. "I have been to Greyfriars to see him, and learned from the Head that he was here playing football. Has he been injured, and gone off the field?"

"He hasn't played, sir."

Snort, from the millionaire.

"Some schoolboy dispute, what? Nonsense! Well, if he is not playing, where is he? What?"

Mr. Vernon-Smith was intensely annoyed. It had been a comfort to him to anticipate seeing his son playing for Greyfriars, cheered by his schoolfellows for his play. Apparently, however, he had come over to Highcliffe for nothing.

"Sorry I don't know where he is, sir!" answered Hazel. "He seems to have cleared off on his own, so far as I can make out."

"Do you mean that he is not here at Highcliffe?" snapped Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"If he is, he's not in sight, sir."

(Continued on page 16.)

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(Continued from page 13.)

"I must speak to Wharton! Where is Wharton?"

"Playing, sir!" said several voices.

"Well, I must speak to him." Some of the juniors grinned. In his office in the City, Mr. Vernon-Smith was a tremendously big gun. On a football ground he was nobody. But it was clear that he did not understand that.

Whether the irate millionaire would have barged in and interrupted the game cannot be said; fortunately, at that moment the whistle went for half-time. Harry Wharton, hearing his name called, ran across towards Mr. Vernon-Smith. The millionaire almost glared at him.

"You are Wharton?" he snapped. "I seem to remember that you are captain of my son's Form. Where is Herbert?"

"I don't know, Mr. Vernon-Smith," answered Harry. Angry as he was with the Bounder himself, he had no desire to add to his father's anger against him, and he intended to say nothing of the desertion if he could help it.

"Dr. Locko informed me that he had given my son special leave this afternoon to play football here!" hooted the millionaire. "After that, have you the impudence to tell me that you have turned him out of the team?"

Wharton coloured. "I shouldn't call it impudence, if there was a reason for turning a man out of the team," he answered.

"Is that how the matter stands?" snorted Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"Well, no!"

"Then why is not my son playing football here, as I expected?"

"He can tell you that himself, sir," said Harry quietly. "He stood out for some reason."

"What reason?"

"He did not tell me."

"You were entitled to know, as his captain. Do you mean that there has been some silly schoolboy quarrel?"

"No!"

"Do you mean to say that he left you without giving a reason?"

"Yes."

"And why?"

"I can't answer that question, sir: I suppose Smithy can."

"Where is he, then?"

"I haven't the least idea."

Some of the fellows, as they listened, could have guessed pretty accurately where the Bounder was. But certainly they had no intention of telling Mr. Vernon-Smith that most probably his son had gone to the Three Fishers, on the river, to play billiards with Ponsonby & Co.!

Mr. Vernon-Smith breathed wrath. Nobody was likely to tell him, but it was likely that the suspicion was in his own mind. Frank Nugent, always anxious to pour oil on the troubled waters, had a suggestion to make.

"If Smithy knew you were coming down this afternoon, sir, he may have gone back to Greyfriars to meet you," he said.

"If he knew, he would not have been likely to leave Greyfriars before I arrived," grunted Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Still, what you suggest is possible, I suppose—I had better go back."

And the millionaire stalked away. "Trouble to come for Smithy!" murmured Bob. "The old bean won't find him at Greyfriars—we jolly well know he's gone on the razzle-dazzle."

"The knowfulness is terrific." "I hope he hasn't, for his own sake," said Harry. "He's got something coming from the Remove, for letting us down like this, but we don't want him to get in a row with his father."

"He's the fellow to ask for it, and no mistake!" said Bob. "Well, it's his own look-out, and he blowed to him!"

The whistle went for the second half, and Mr. Vernon-Smith, rolling off once more in his Rolls, was forgotten.

In the second half, the Removites played a great game. Squiff, in goal, was a tower of strength, and the best men of Highcliffe found him hard to beat. But there was no doubt that, good as the Remove men were, the Highcliffe team were a little better, and a little counted for a lot in a hard-contested game. Another goal came to the Caterpillar, making the score three one. Peter Todd succeeded in putting in the ball for Greyfriars and it was three two. But that was the last shot in the locker. The score was still three two when the final whistle went, and when the Remove footballers started for home it was agreed on all hands that the Bounder's desertion had cost them the match, and that hanging was too good for him.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Playing the Goat!

"BRACE up, Smithy!" smiled Pon.

The Bounder scowled. Pon & Co. were in high feather that afternoon. The bright spring sunshine, the keen March wind, did not tempt them out of doors. The atmosphere of stale tobacco in the billiards-room at the Three Fishers did not worry them. The young rascals of Highcliffe were enjoying themselves in their own way, but it was plain that the Bounder of Greyfriars was not enjoying himself.

He had been playing billiards with Pon and Gaddy and Monson, in turn, and there had been "quids" on the game and Smithy had lost all the time. He did not care for that! Money was little to him, he had more than he wanted, and more than was good for him. Usually the Bounder was good at that game, as at most others, but he played "rottenly" now, much to the satisfaction of Pon & Co. who had no objection whatever to collecting Smithy's superfluous quids.

Smithy was not the first fellow to discover that he was by no means so ruthless and unscrupulous as he fancied himself!

He had planned, coolly enough, to make the football match at Highcliffe a pretext for getting out of detention. He had laughed in his sleeve at being taken on trust by the captain of the Remove.

But all the time, there was a twinge of uneasiness in his mind, though it had not deterred him from following his own wilful way.

Now he had brought it off! He was free to carry out his original plans for that afternoon, at the cost of leaving the footballers in the lurch. And—a

little to his own surprise—it worried him deeply.

There was a blackguardly kink in the Bounder, but in sober fact, he liked a healthy outdoor game over so much better than "rotting" about with fellows like Ponsonby & Co.

While he was making clumsy, unthinking shots on the stained billiardstable at the Three Fishers, his thoughts were with the Remove team.

They wanted him—he was unpopular enough in the Remove, but they wanted him in the game. Even the fellows who liked him least, would have been glad to see him in the ranks. And a good game for Greyfriars would have helped to wash out the unpopularity that his late conduct had earned him.

And he wanted to play! He did not in the least want to play billiards, and he did want to play football! It was the last big fixture of the season, too—and the Remove set much store by it. He would not have another chance! Not that the fellows would be likely to trust him again, after he had let them down like this. They would be angry and indignant, very likely there would be a ragging—worse than last week's ragging, which had put his back up with the Form!

He was not worrying about that, however. He gave little thought, if any, to the consequences of his actions. He was realising that his passionate, headstrong temper had betrayed him again—that he had in sheer reckless bravado done the worst thing possible for himself and everybody else. And—to add to his irritation—those Highcliffe rotters were amused by his sulky temper and his rotten play.

Of his father, the Bounder was not thinking. The previous week he had expected his father at the school from day to day; but Mr. Vernon-Smith had not come.

As Smithy had bitterly described it to his chum, he believed that his father was playing "cat and mouse" with him—keeping him in expectation of a visit that might never materialise, to keep him on his good behaviour. Three or four times Mr. Vernon-Smith had said that he was coming, and had not come. Now the Bounder had dismissed that matter from his mind, taking it for granted that he would not see his father till the Easter holidays.

He gave Ponsonby a scowl in reply to his remark. Pon winked at his friends. It was worth Pon's while to keep on friendly terms with the scapegrace of Greyfriars, and his comrades backed him up, but among themselves, they agreed that the fellow was a rank outsider. Smithy's manners, perhaps, were not quite so polished as Pon's. Neither was he so thorough a young blackguard as that festive youth.

"No end of a stunt of yours, Smithy, gettin' out of detention by makin' use of that pi crowd!" said Ponsonby amicably. "Not worryin' about what they'll do to you when you go home, what?"

"Hardly!" grunted the Bounder.

He dropped the butt of his cue to the floor. He was sick of the place—of the stained, damaged cloth, the smoky atmosphere, the beery face of the marker, the greedy faces of Pon & Co., the whole rotten business. Had it been possible, he would have cut the whole thing, and got back to Highcliffe for the football match. But it was too late to think of that. The match was over by that time.

"Another game?" asked Gadsby. Oh, let's get out of this!" grunted the Bounder. "Look here, we can get a boat here, and pull up the river."

Pon & Co. exchanged glances. A pull up the river, in the keen wind of a

March afternoon, appealed to the Bounder, sick of his present dingy surroundings. It was far from appealing to the slackers of Highcliffe.

"Well, you're rather off your form, old bean, and I suppose you don't want to go on losin'," remarked Ponsonby.

The Bounder gave him an evil look. The suggestion that he wanted to "chuck" the game because he was losing irritated him intensely, as Pon knew that it would. He gave up the idea at once.

"I'm game if you want to keep on!" he granted.

"Well, we've got the place to ourselves, and we can't always have the table," said Pon. "But what's the good

of rottin' about with quids? Put a fiver on and make it interestin'."

The Bounder looked at him for a second and nodded. He was off his form, and had played carelessly, and he knew what was in Pon's mind as well as if Pon had explained it in words. Pon was "on the make." Smithy had lost several pound notes, and now he was going to lose fivers—at least, Ponsonby thought so. But there were other thoughts in the Bounder's mind.

He was "sick" with himself, sick with his associates, and rather unreasonably he blamed them as much as he blamed himself; at all events, he was as irritated with them as with himself. He did not like them, and they did not like him,

yet here he was with them after letting down a crowd of decent fellows who had trusted him—and at the risk of being "sacked" if his headmaster learned of what he was doing. And Pon wanted to increase the stakes simply because he had played rottenly and looked like going on playing rottenly. It afforded the Bounder a sardonic amusement to give Pon a surprise and a lesson.

He chalked his cue, making up his mind to give attention to his play and put up his best game. He could beat the Highcliffe nuts at that game, as at any other, if he chose to exert himself. Now, casting troublesome reflections from his mind, he did choose.

(Continued on next page.)



"Linesman" will be pleased to answer your Soccer queries, however intricate they may be. Write to him: c/o The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and watch out for his reply in this weekly feature.

THE DOUBLE EVENT!

THERE are certain things about football which, on the face of them, at any rate, provide a puzzle. One of these is expressed in a letter just to hand from a MAGNET reader. "I believe," he writes, "it is rather a long time since the same team won the League championship and the English Cup in the same season. Is this so, and can you explain why it should be so?"

Certainly it is a fact that the double event, as we refer to it—Championship and Cup—very rarely come off. Indeed during the whole existence of football this dual success has only been accomplished on two occasions. And the last occasion was thirty-seven years ago! This fact doesn't prevent clubs trying for the double, and even this season we have heard talk about certain clubs doing it.

The odds are clearly against, and the reason, of course, is a simple one.

The strain of playing for the two things is too great to be borne successfully by ordinary players. Every Cup round through which a club passes—bar the first one—means a League match put back to mid-week at a period of the season when footballers are not feeling particularly fresh. Every additional match, too, means another chance of star players getting injured, and the team being upset in consequence.

There may even be extra matches apart from the League games which have to be postponed: Cup replays. I could tell you of plenty of teams which have had a real chance of the double in comparatively recent times, but the story so far as most of them are concerned, is failure to get either honour while striving for both. The most notable case was that of Huddersfield Town in 1928. They were in the running for the League championship. They got to the final tie. But they only finished second in the League and lost in the Cup Final.

One of the players of Huddersfield told me that in his view the affair which "cooked their goose" was the semi-final against Sheffield United. Before they got through this game they had to play

three most strenuous games. If they had disposed of these opponents at the first attempt they might have pulled off the double. So while I should not like to say the Championship and the Cup will never again be won by the same club in the same season the odds are obviously against.

PLAYING THE BALL TWICE!

AN unusual incident happened in a match at Griffithstown, Monmouthshire, recently, and I am asked to give my verdict. One side had a goal-kick, and, as is often done, this was taken by the full-back tapping the ball with a view to the goalkeeper picking it up and punting it down the field. In this particular case, however, when the full-back tapped the ball towards the goalkeeper, the latter missed it, and the leather went into the net. The referee first gave a corner-kick, but on appeal and protest, a linesman was consulted, and the referee changed his decision, giving a goal against the side whose full-back had tapped the ball into the net.

Now I do wish that the ref had stuck to his original decision, because he was correct in giving a corner-kick, and incorrect when he changed the decision to a goal.

It could not be a goal, because a second player had not touched the ball from the goal-kick. If the goalkeeper had just touched the ball, say with an outstretched hand, and it had gone into the net afterwards, then it would have been right and proper for a goal to be awarded.

I once saw a case on somewhat similar lines which caused a lot of controversy. The full-back took the goal-kick, and banged the ball high in the air. There was a strong wind blowing, and the ball was driven back into the goal mouth. The full-back who had taken the kick got desperate when he saw the ball coming back, and he fisted it out of goal with his hands.

What should be the decision? Some said a penalty kick, because the full-back had handled the ball. Others said a free-kick should be given because the same

player played the ball twice in succession. The latter verdict, however, was confirmed by the authorities. They said that the offence was playing the ball twice.

CONCENTRATE ON THE BALL!

FROM Lurgan, in Ireland, comes a note asking me to give some hints on tackling. I rather like the way this note is worded, for the writer says: "Can you tell me how to rush at the enemy and get the 'ball'?" It isn't a bad idea to regard an opponent on the football field as an enemy, in the sport sense, of course. He is in possession of something you want—the ball—and you have to go for it. That is the right attitude of mind towards a tackle. Say to yourself: "That ball's mine, and I am going to have it." That is the first essential, so far as the mind is concerned, in going for the ball. Having decided to go for it, don't hesitate. A half-hearted tackle is no use at all.

The most important point, in my view, when making the tackle is to concentrate on the ball. Remember that it is the ball you are after, not the player.

Too many footballers, going in to tackle, try to keep an eye on the player. That is bad. I know that Alex James, who has perhaps been the most difficult man to tackle we have had in football during our time, always thinks he can beat the opponent who watches his feet. But he finds it more difficult to beat an opponent who keeps his eyes on the ball!

In a big cup-tie witnessed by a Chatham reader recently, the centre-forward was approaching the penalty area with the ball when—quite unfairly—he was gripped by the waist and held up. The referee's whistle sounded as the player struggled on just into the penalty area. My correspondent thinks that as the player got into the penalty area a penalty should have been given, but the referee decided on a free-kick outside the line.

If the foul was committed outside the line, then the referee was right. The question is not where the player finished after the unfair tackle, but where the unfair tackle was made.

Many a player is fouled just outside the area when he is running hard, and by the time he has come to earth he is inside the area. But the award must only be a free kick outside the area.

In reply to J. M., of Haislam, Blenkinsop has played more times for England than Dean the respective totals for matches against countries of the British Isles being fifteen and ten. The totals for all International matches are Blenkinsop 26, Dean 16. So the Sheffield Wednesday player leads easily.

LINESMAN.

He watched Ponsonby run up a break of forty. Then he played—not as he had played before, but with a cool head, a steady, keen eye, and a hand of steel. Concentrating on the game, he played as Pon could not have played to save his life. He potted the red as often as he liked; he collected all the cannons he wanted, leaving the balls where he wanted to leave them. And Gadsby and Monson watched him with interest, and the beery marker ceased yawning and watched, and Ponsonby, too, watched, with a face growing longer and longer.

He had told the sulky, dispirited Bounder to "brace up," and now the Bounder had braced up with a vengeance.

He was still going strong when he doubled Pon's score; and it was pretty he was cynically amused by the varying in a single break. It was evidence of misspent hours, not much to the Bounder's credit, but there it was! And he was cynically amused by the varying expressions on Pon's face—Pon, by that time, deeply repenting that he had laid a fiver on the game in the hope of annexing larger chunks of the Bounder's superfluous cash.

Intent on the game now as if he lived for nothing else, the Bounder had eyes only for the billiards balls, and the three Highcliffians and the marker had eyes only for the play. None of them noticed a footstep outside the open french windows of the room which looked on the weedy, ill-kept garden of the Three Fishers. None of them was aware of a stalwart, athletic figure that stepped into the french window and stood looking at the group round the shabby table.

Vernon-Smith had not missed a shot so far. But he missed one suddenly, and his cue clattered down on the cloth, as his name was suddenly called from the french windows in a voice he knew only too well.

"Vernon-Smith!"

The Bounder, dropping his cue, spun round, with a gasp. One word fell from his lips as he stared at the familiar figure.

"Caught!"

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Where is Smithy?

"MR. VERNON-SMITH!"
Dr. Locke suppressed a sigh.

Really he did not want to see Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith again that afternoon. But there was no help for it, and he had to rise courteously, with as agreeable a smile as he could muster, as Trotter announced the City gentleman once more.

Mr. Vernon-Smith bustled into the study.

There was a slight flush in his plump face, and his brows were slightly knitted. Mr. Vernon-Smith, it was easy to see, was in a state of irritation.

He had put aside many affairs, and taken off that afternoon to pay his long-promised visit to his son. And his son was not there to see him, and could not apparently be found. Mr. Vernon-Smith's time was of value—immense value! West African gold-mines were booming in the City, and the millionaire was "up to the neck" in Jungle gold-mines. Perhaps it did not occur to him that the Greyfriars headmaster's time was also of some value. Like his son, the millionaire was rather given to thinking chiefly of himself.

"Dr. Locke!" His manner was abrupt. "I regret troubling you again, sir—"

"Not at all!" murmured the Head.

"But really, sir, I must see my son! I have postponed several appointments, and put off some urgent affairs to come here this afternoon. I was unable to come, as I had intended, last week; but now I have found an opportunity, sir—which I may not find again before the end of the term. It is necessary for me to have a discussion with my son."

"As I have said, sir, he is at Highcliffe School to-day—"

"I have been to Highcliffe."

"Then surely you have seen your son," said Dr. Locke, raising his eyebrows.

"I have not, sir."

"But I fail to see—" The Head blinked at him over his glasses. "Your son certainly is at Highcliffe, sir. Whar-

ton, the captain of his Form, specially asked me to excuse him from detention so that he could play in the football match there. Undoubtedly he is there, sir."

"He is not there, sir."

"Really, Mr. Vernon-Smith—"

"I have been to Highcliffe, sir, and questioned some Greyfriars boys there. It appears that my son went there with the footballers, but, for some reason I cannot learn, he did not play in the match."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head blankly.

"It was suggested that he might have come back here, and I have, therefore, come back. I really must see him, sir. Is he now in Greyfriars?"

"Pray be seated, Mr. Vernon-Smith. If the boy has returned to the school the fact will very soon be ascertained."

Mr. Vernon-Smith crashed into a chair.

His valuable time had been wasted, and looked like being wasted further. He was growing more and more intensely irritated.

The Head rang for Trotter, and requested him to find Vernon-Smith of the Remove if he was within the precincts of the school, and send him to the study at once.

Trotter departed on that rather hopeless quest.

"It is really extraordinary!" grunted Mr. Vernon-Smith. "From the fact that my son did not remain at Highcliffe to play football, it looks as if he may have learned that I was coming here. I should like to know, sir, who took the telephone-call from me yesterday. I had no doubt at the time that it was Mr. Quelch; though, whoever he was, he used some expressions that surprised me a little in a Form-master."

"Certainly it was not Mr. Quelch," said the Head. "Mr. Quelch has not been in his usual health this term, and he has gone away for a rest and a change. He left on Saturday, sir."

"Someone certainly took the call, and did not, apparently, mention the matter to my son. I cannot, therefore, blame Herbert for not being here when I came. But I expected to see him at Highcliffe after what you told me, sir. But if he learned later that I was calling and returned here, where is he? I asked several boys as I came in, but no one appears to have seen him since he left in the brake."

Dr. Locke's face set.

A suspicion was dawning in his mind. But for Mr. Vernon-Smith's visit the Head probably would never have learned that Smithy had not played football that afternoon at Highcliffe. Angry and indignant as Harry Wharton & Co. were, they would not, of course, have dreamed of giving him away to his headmaster. But he knew now! And knowing that, and knowing the Bounder, the Head was not long in putting two and two together. His face hardened and hardened.

Trotter came back to the study at last.

He came back to report that he could not find Vernon-Smith of the Remove, that nobody had seen anything of him since he started for Highcliffe, and that the fellows he had asked had told him that Vernon-Smith was at Highcliffe playing in the match there.

"Then my son is not in the school!" exclaimed Mr. Vernon-Smith, with an angry stare that made Trotter jump.

"No, sir!" gasped Trotter.

"This is really extraordinary, sir!" snorted Mr. Vernon-Smith. "I do not understand this at all, sir!"

"Neither do I, sir, at the present moment," said the Head very dryly.

Prisoners of Castaway Island!



When an aeroplane landed on Castaway Island, it seemed to Dr. Sparshott and Jim Dainty & Co., the Grimslade crusoes, that rescue had at last arrived. Yet how short-lived that hope was! For the newcomers from the air were not friends, but ruthless enemies, come to find the vast treasure of Castaway Island!

No rescue for the Grimslade castaways. Instead, the beginning of a fresh series of perilous adventures; a struggle for freedom from the villainous treasure-seekers who have made them prisoners.

"THE CHEERIO CASTAWAYS"

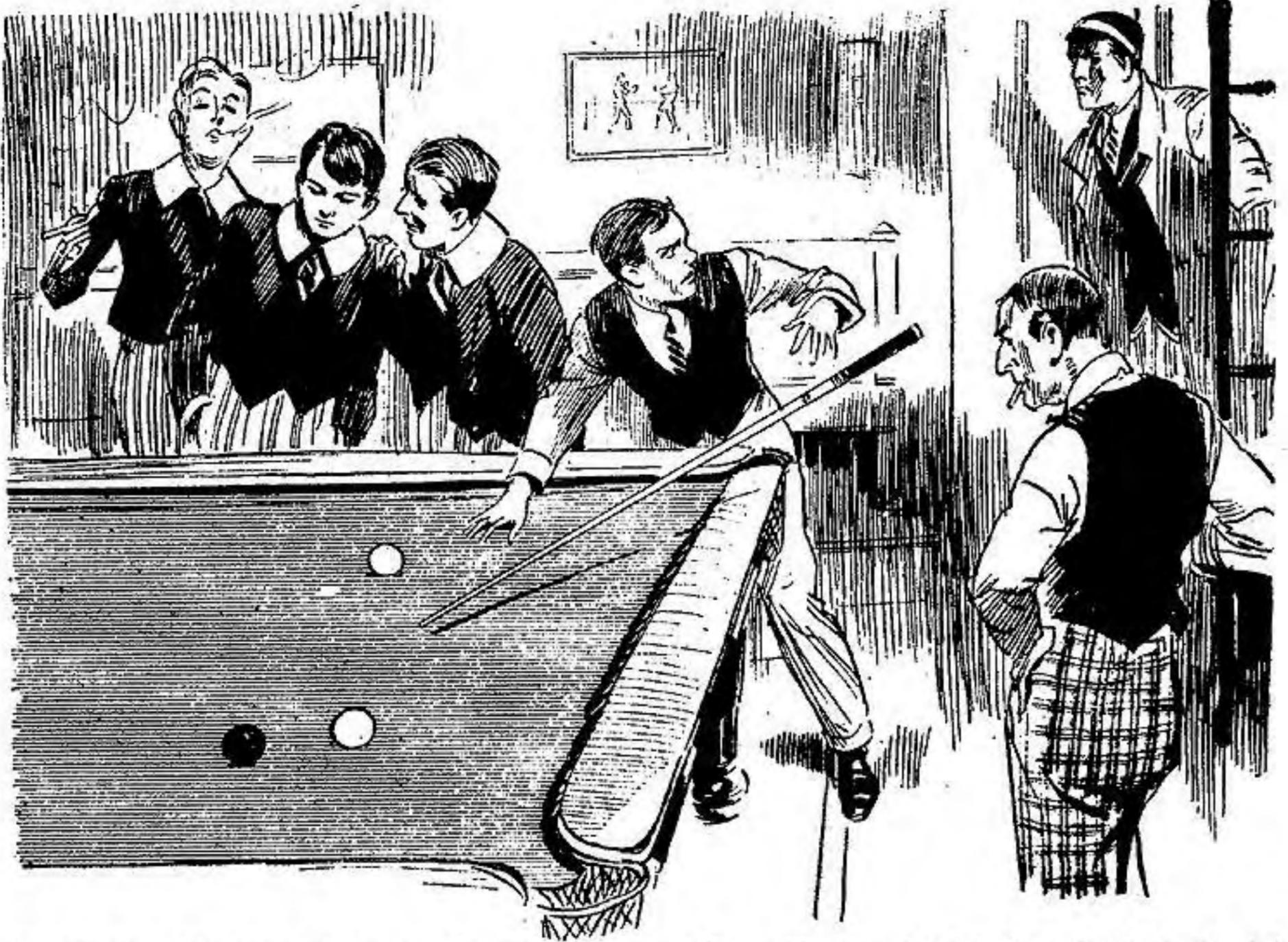
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The three Higheliffians watched Vernon-Smith with interest as he piled up his score. The Bounder had not missed a shot so far. But he missed one, suddenly, and his cue clattered down on the table when a well-known voice shouted his name. "Vernon-Smith!" The Bounder spun round to face Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars!

Mr. Vernon-Smith rose and looked at his watch.

"I have some business, sir, at Lantham, which I intended to see to after seeing my son here. As the matter stands, I will drive over to Lantham now, and will, with your permission, return here later to see Herbert."

"Very well, sir!" said Dr. Locke.

Mr. Vernon-Smith hurried away to his car. Trotter, at a sign from the Head, had lingered at the doorway. Now Dr. Locke told him to ascertain whether Wingate of the Sixth was in the House, and request him to come to the study.

Trotter departed once more, and this time he was successful. In a few minutes the captain of Greyfriars was in the presence of his headmaster.

"Wingate," said Dr. Locke quietly, "you have, I believe, kept some observation on Vernon-Smith, of the Remove, according to my request, since the time when I cancelled his sentence of expulsion from the school."

"Certainly, sir!" answered Wingate. "What is your impression of the boy now, Wingate?"

The Sixth Form prefect seemed to be in no hurry to answer.

"He was given an opportunity," said the Head, "to mend his ways, and do better. Is it your impression that he has made any serious and earnest attempt to do so?"

"I can hardly say so, sir!" answered Wingate slowly. "But at the same time I'm bound to say that he has not been found out in any breaking of the rules."

"I am afraid, Wingate, that he is more wary than well-conducted," said Dr. Locke. "I have little doubt—I may say, no doubt—that he was the author of the wretched trick that was played on

me a few days ago, when ink was—hem—introduced into my hat. I felt compelled to let the matter pass, as there was insufficient proof, but there was little or no doubt in my own mind. And only yesterday I had to punish him for an actual insult to a member of my staff, Monsieur Charpentier. On the occasion when he was caught out of bounds after lights out, Wingate, it transpired that he had visited a disreputable resort in this neighbourhood—called the Three Fishers—a place on the river."

"Yes, sir!" said Wingate. "You have no reason to suppose that he continues to frequent such a place, Wingate?"

"I can't say I have, sir!" Wingate hardly knew what to say. He had little doubt that the Bounder of Greyfriars was the same old Bounder—but if that was the case, as he suspected, Smithy had covered up his tracks very carefully, and there was nothing like proof against him. He did not want to state vague suspicions against any fellow.

Dr. Locke gave him a rather searching look.

"I think I understand you, Wingate! Now, it seems that Vernon-Smith, who was given special leave to go to Highcliffe this afternoon, on Wharton's representation that he was needed in the match, has not, after all, played football there, and cannot be found there at all."

Wingate opened his eyes. "He certainly left with the Remove team, sir! I myself saw him go in the brake with Wharton and the rest."

"No doubt!" said the Head. "But it appears that he quitted them on their arrival at Highcliffe. Wharton, I am

sure, would not be a party to a deception—but I have no faith in Vernon-Smith whatever. I cannot help surmising, Wingate, that this unscrupulous boy had no intention whatever of playing in the match at Highcliffe, but had quite other intentions for the afternoon."

Wingate suppressed a smile. What the Head "surmised" was already a certainty in his own mind, and he had little doubt where the Bounder could be found, while the Remove men were playing football at Highcliffe.

"I place this matter in your hands, Wingate, as head prefect!" said Dr. Locke. "It must be ascertained, beyond doubt, where and how Vernon-Smith has spent his time since he left Greyfriars in the brake."

"I understand, sir." Five minutes later George Wingate wheeled out his push-bike and mounted it. His way lay up the towpath on the Sark, towards the Three Fishers.

Mr. Vernon-Smith, deep in business affairs at Lantham, had, for the time, dismissed his scapegrace son from his mind. Probably, however, the City gentleman would not have given such undivided attention to those business affairs had he been aware of what was going on at Greyfriars.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Caught!

"CAUGHT!" That single word fell from the Bounder's lips. He stood by the shabby billiards-table, staring across it at the athletic figure in
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the french windows—the figure of Wingate, of the Greyfriars Sixth.

"Great gad!" murmured Ponsonby.

The beery marker stared.

Pon & Co. looked at the Greyfriars prefect. As Highcliffe fellows, they had nothing to fear from him. Greyfriars prefects had no concern with them. Pon, indeed, was hardly sorry to see Wingate there. It meant a fearful row for the Bounder, but it meant also that Pon was not going to lose the fiver he had so recklessly put on the game. That hundred up was not going to be finished now!

The Bounder, heedless of the staring Highcliffians, looked at Wingate, the colour wavering in his cheeks, deep bitterness in his breast.

This was the finish for him!

What on earth could have brought the head prefect of Greyfriars to such a den as the Three Fishers was an absolute mystery to him. So long as he was careful not to be spotted entering or leaving the place, he had supposed that he was safe enough there. On the present occasion he had believed himself doubly safe, as everybody at Greyfriars supposed that he was playing football at Highcliffe. But here was Wingate of the Sixth—staring at him grimly across the dingy room—and he was fairly caught!

It was for this that he had let down his football captain, let down the team—betrayed his trust! To be spotted and marched back to school by a prefect—to be sacked!

He drew a deep, deep breath.

The game was up!

The luck on which he prided himself, the luck that was a proverb in the Remove, had failed him, at long last. He had tempted Fate once too often.

"Vernon-Smith!" repeated Wingate quietly. "I've come for you! Come!"

The Bounder's lip curled.

"Who gave me away?" he asked bitterly.

"Come!"

"You knew I was here?"

"I guessed. Come with me!"

It was the finish for the Bounder of Greyfriars, and he knew it. But he was game! Above all, he was not going to show any sign of weakness before the Highcliffe fellows.

"In a hurry?" he drawled. "Can't you let us finish the game, Wingate?"

The Greyfriars captain's brow darkened.

"Check's no use to you now, Vernon-Smith," he said. "Are you coming, or do you want me to take you by the collar?"

"I should hate to give you so much trouble, old bean," drawled the Bounder. "I'll come, as you're so pressin'. Sorry I can't finish the game, Pon, old nut! I may not see you again this term, but look me up in town in the hols. Cheerio, old beans."

The Bounder lounged away from the table.

"You: coat, sir!" said the marker.

"Thanks!"

The Bounder slipped into the coat the marker held for him, took his hat, and tipped the man a half-crown. Then he lounged over to Wingate.

"That's a cool young gent, sir!" said the beery marker to Ponsonby, as the Bounder lounged away after Wingate and disappeared.

"Game bird, and no mistake!" remarked Gadsby. "What rotten luck to be snaffled like that!"

"Well, he's asked for it, often enough," yawned Pon. "What about a hundred up, Gaddy? I'll give you twenty-five."

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Which was all the concern the nuts of Highcliffe wasted on their Greyfriars friend who had come a "mucker." They devoted their attention to the noble game of billiards, and forgot all about the Bounder.

Vernon-Smith's look was cool and collected as he walked down the weedy path with Wingate and out on to the towpath by the river. But inwardly there was a chill at his heart.

This meant the "sack." There was no doubt about that. He had offended too often to be pardoned now that he was caught fairly in the act. He was going before the Head to be expelled. But he was not thinking of the Head now, but of his father! What would his father say—what would he do—when he heard the news? He remembered his last interview with his father—when Dr. Locke had rescinded his sentence of expulsion. He remembered only too well the deep wrath and bitter words of the millionaire. Every word that Mr. Vernon-Smith had uttered he had meant, and the Bounder knew that what awaited him at Greyfriars was as

was a dirty trick! I know that, too! But the cur who's given me away—"

"Nobody's given you away! Your father came to Greyfriars this afternoon, and went over to Highcliffe to see you there—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"That's how it came out!"

"My father! At Greyfriars—now?" stammered the Bounder.

"He's left—but I understand he's coming back later in the afternoon. If you knew he was coming—"

"I never knew!"

The Bounder stared at Wingate for a moment or two. He understood now that it was useless to make any appeal to the prefect. It was not Wingate's power to help him, if he would! The Head knew! Knew that he had deceived him, that he had not gone to Highcliffe to play football—knew the whole thing!

And his father was there! That threatened visit, which had been put off and put off again and again, till he had believed that it was not coming at all—had taken place on this day of all days, the unluckiest day that it could have happened! It was his father who had landed him in the soup!

The Bounder burst into a bitter laugh. He drove his hands deep into his pockets, and followed Wingate in at the gates of Greyfriars, without another word.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Landed at Last!

"I SAY, you fellows!"

Billy Bunter's fat face was pink with excitement when he met the returning footballers coming in.

Bunter liked to be first with the news. He liked to have thrilling tidings to impart. Now he had startling news—there was no doubt about that.

His little, round eyes were almost popping through his big, round spectacles. Bunter's news was known up and down the school—but the fellows who had just come back from Highcliffe had not heard it yet—and the fat Owl was first in the field with it. A crowd of fellows who hadn't heard really came as a windfall to the loquacious Owl.

"I say—Smithy—"

"Smithy!" repeated Harry Wharton, knitting his brows. All the fellows were thinking of Smithy.

It was a disgruntled team that had come back after the Highcliffe match. The Remove men were sportsmen, and could take a beating. But a beating caused by a man letting them down, was quite another matter. They had come back to Greyfriars feeling like lynching Smithy.

"Is he back?" asked Bob Cherry.

"He, he, he! Yes, rather!"

"Oh! I fancied the rotter had gone on the razzle!" growled Johnny Bull. "Well, if he's back, we want to see him!"

"The wantfulness is terrific!"

"We'll jolly well make him sorry for himself!" said Peter Todd. "We'll make the measly worm understand that he can't play tricks like this."

Bunter grinned. Evidently the footballers had no idea, so far, of what had happened.

"You can't see him!" he grinned.

"Why not, fathead?" growled Squiff.

"He's in punny!" grinned Bunter.

"Punny!" That was the juniors' name for the punishment-room. Only on very serious occasions were fellows locked up in "punny." Indeed, it was to be taken as a preliminary to "bunking."

WANTED— GREYFRIARS LIMERICKS.

Splendid leather pocket wallets are awarded for Greyfriars limericks contributed by readers of the MAGNET.

One of this week's handsome prizes goes to G. A. Scammell, "Penrhyn," Glastonbury Road, Wells, Somerset, whose winning effort appears herewith:

Billy Bunter's a "gorger" sublime,
He eats three rabbit-pies at a time.
When asked: "Why the third?"
He sniffs "One's absurd,
And to eat only two is a crime!"

Send your limericks and jokes to:
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nothing compared with what awaited him at home, when he saw his father!

Prefect and junior walked on in silence till Greyfriars was in sight. Then the Bounder spoke, at last, quietly.

"This means the long jump for me, Wingate."

"I suppose so," said Wingate shortly.

"I've played the fool! But—I know it's no good askin' you, Wingate, but this means more to me than even the sack. My father—"

Wingate looked at him.

"It's rather late to think about that, Vernon-Smith!"

"I know! But—you're bound to report me to the Head?" Perhaps a glimmer of hope remained in the Bounder's heart. "I did your minor a good turn once, Wingate! I hate to remind you of it; but—this means the finish for me, not only at the school, but at home."

"I should be bound to report you, in any case, Vernon-Smith! But as it happens, I've no choice in the matter. The Head sent me to look for you."

"The Head did!" Smithy stared at him. "The Head believes that I'm playing football at Highcliffe, Wingate."

"It came out that you weren't!" said the Greyfriars captain dryly.

The Bounder gritted his teeth.

"I let them down! I know that! It

"Smithy in punny!" exclaimed Redwing. "Is that the truth, you fat ass?"

"Oh, really, Redwing—" "You fellows heard?" Temple of the Fourth came up. "That man Smithy, in your Form, is lagged!"

"But what—why—" stammered Redwing. Tom had come back to Greyfriars with troublesome apprehensions of what was going to happen to his chum at the hands of the fellows he had let down. But he had not apprehended this.

"Goodness knows!" said Temple. "Lots of fellows saw him come in with Wingate of the Sixth—did Wingate pick him up at Highcliffe?"

"No; Smithy never played," answered Wharton. "He cleared off before the match started—his pater came there to see him, and missed him."

"Well, he came in with Wingate a little while ago. He's lagged," said Temple. "Wingate took him to the Head's study. And now he's in punny. Looks as if it's the sack!"

"But what has he done?" asked Nugent.

"Blessed if I know! But he's always doing something," said Temple. "He nearly got it at the beginning of the term, you know. Now he's got it right in the neck, I fancy. Wingate must have rooted him out of some place out of bounds. The Beak isn't likely to let him off a second time, if that's it! Looks like the long jump for Smithy."

"I say, you fellows—" "Do you know anything about it, Bunter?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"Yes, rather! More than Temple!" answered Bunter promptly. "I heard Wingate mention to Gwynne of the Sixth that he found him at the Three Fishers."

"The awful ass!" muttered Redwing, overcome with dismay.

"Well, we guessed that he'd cleared off for something of the sort," said Harry. "That was the precious engagement he had for this afternoon, I suppose."

"That's what he let us down for!" said Johnny Bull grimly. "Well, I wish him joy of it!"

"Poor old Smithy!" murmured Bob. A few minutes ago Bob had been feeling inclined to knock Smithy's features through the back of Smithy's head. But the news of his utter disaster was disarming.

Wrath faded away when the fellows learned that the deserter was up for the sack.

"I say, you fellows, it's fearfully exciting, ain't it?" said Billy Bunter cheerfully. "We don't often have an expulsion. I say, I wonder whether it will be in Hall, with all the school there. That would be rather thrilling, what? If his pater had stayed a little longer he could have taken Smithy home in the car with him! He, he, he!"

"Oh, don't cackle!" growled Bob Cherry.

It was a breathless topic in the Remove studies over tea.

Tom Redwing was not thinking of tea. He made his way quietly to the long corridor that led to the punishment-room, in the hope of getting a word with his chum. It was strictly against the rules, of course, for any fellow to communicate with an occupant of the punishment-room, and Redwing was generally a careful observer of rules and regulations. On this occasion he did not give them a thought. The door of the corridor was not locked, and he was able

to reach the door of the punishment-room. That door, of course, was locked, and the key taken away.

Within, Redwing could hear a sound of hurriedly pacing feet. He could imagine with what feelings the Bounder was tramping restlessly about the narrow confines of his prison.

He tapped quietly on the door. The tramping footsteps stopped suddenly. Redwing bent to the keyhole.

"You're there, Smithy?" he whispered.

"That you, Reddy?"

"Yes."

"You'll get six if you're caught there!"

"Oh, rot!"

He heard the Bounder laugh.

"Smithy, is the game up?"

"Quite!" answered the Bounder coolly. "How did the game go at Highcliffe, Reddy?"

"Eh? Oh! We lost!" Redwing had almost forgotten that.

"I suppose the fellows are rather wild with me?"

"Yes—no—what does that matter? Smithy, isn't there any hope?" muttered Redwing huskily.

"Not a glimmer! Wingate rooted me out at the Three Fishers, playing billiards there with Pon & Co. The Head sent him."

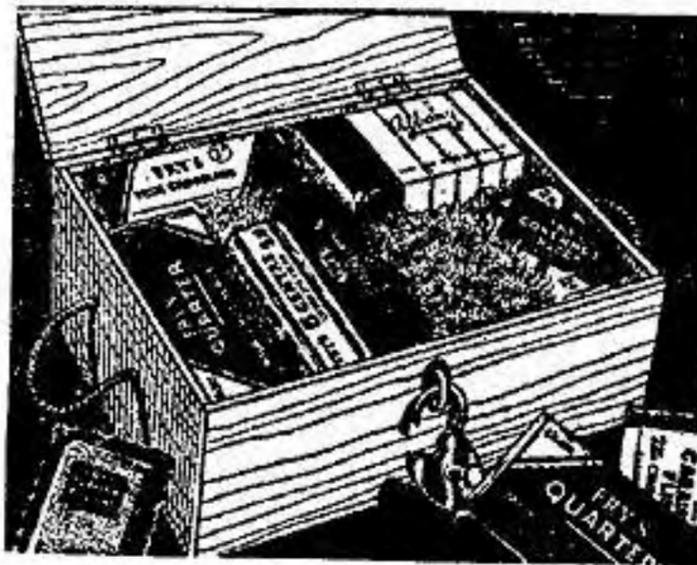
"Oh, Smithy! But—but how did they know?"

The Bounder laughed again—a bitter, sardonic laugh.

"Oh, it's quite amusin'!" he answered.

"The pater's been on the warpath all this term, because I was nearly sacked. Now he's brought it about himself. I expected him all last week, and he never came, and I fancied he wasn't

(Continued on next page.)



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comin'. He barged in to-day—just in time to dish me to the wide."

"Your father—"

"But for him the Head would never have known! Never a word! Queer, ain't it?" said the Bounder in a tone of bitter mockery. "The pater's brought it off himself—the last thing he would have wanted! He has no idea, so far—he's over at Lantham, but he's coming back, the Head told me! Comin' back for a heart-to-heart talk—ha, ha! He will have the pleasure of takin' me home in the car instead. It's his own doings! If I'd known he was coming it wouldn't have happened, of course."

"Oh, Smithy!"

The Bounder laughed again—a laugh that was not pleasant to hear.

"Then—you're sacked, Smithy?"

"Just that! The beak was glad of the chance! He's never forgotten the ink in his hat—he knew that it was I, of course, though it could never be proved. There's only one really sad circumstance—Quetch isn't here to see me sacked! If the old bean had known that it was comin' so soon, I'm sure he would have stayed on to enjoy it." And again the Bounder gave that hard and mirthless laugh.

"Isn't there a chance?"

"None! Last time there were a sort of extenuating circumstances—the beak stretched a point! This time there aren't any! I'm done to the wide, Reddy! Can't say I haven't asked for it! I'm lagged here till the pater comes back—to take me away with him. State of happy anticipation, what?"

The Bounder's reckless, mocking tone could not conceal the misery and despair in his heart. He was done for at the school, and reckless as he was, he was dreading the interview with his father. Any minute now Mr. Vernon-Smith might arrive—to learn on his arrival that his son was expelled from Greyfriars and was to leave with him when he went. With all his nerve the Bounder dreaded what was to come.

"Landed at last, Reddy!" he said. "Landed at last, old man! I always fancied that my luck would pull me through—but it's lot me down at the finish with a bump!"

"Then—you're going home with your father?"

"I suppose so—if he'll take me! I suppose he can't kick me out on my own into the wide, weary world! He'd like to. I fancy—he's utterly sick with me, Reddy—and he will be sicker when he hears! But there's certain legal responsibilities on a parent—he can't turn me off—not quite! But I'm done for at home—worse than I'm done for here! What a giddy idiot I've been, Reddy!"

There was a step in the corridor. "Cut off, Redwing!" It was Wingate's voice. "You know you're not allowed here! Cut!"

Tom Redwing went slowly away. Wingate followed him from the corridor. In the punishment-room the Bounder resumed his restless pacing—waiting for the inevitable—"landed" at last!

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Beastly for Bunter!

BILLY BUNTER grinned. Study No. 4 in the Remove was deserted—till William George Bunter introduced his fat person into it.

That study belonged to the Bounder and his chum, Tom Redwing. The Bounder was in "punny"—and Redwing was in the quad, mouching about miserably under the elms after his talk

with Smithy. He was not thinking of tea—though it was past tea-time; which was a thing that Bunter could not understand. Bunter certainly had never been so deeply concerned for the fate of another fellow that it caused him to forget a meal.

But the present state of affairs suited the Owl of the Remove admirably. There had been a "thin" tea in Study No. 7, the study that Billy Bunter honoured with his presence. Bunter was still in a state of disappointment about a postal order.

The Bounder's study, on the other hand, was a land flowing with milk and honey! And the fat Owl was after the milk and honey!

He shut the door and rolled across to the study cupboard! Insatiable grub-raider as Bunter was, he would have hesitated to raid the Bounder's study cupboard in other circumstances. He had collected innumerable kicks from Smithy merely for borrowing his coat! Borrowing his tuck meant still more and severer kickings—but for the present happy circumstances! Now Bunter had a free field!

"Oh good!" gasped Bunter, as he blinked into the study cupboard through his big spectacles.

Smithy, as usual, was well-supplied. There was a large cake, there was a bag of tarts, there was a dish of ham, there were pots of jam and preserves, there were all sorts of good things.

Billy Bunter gloated over them.

But he did not waste much time gloating! Bunter was hungry! He had had only one tea so far!

Swiftly the fat Owl transferred the excellent things to the table. He sat down to tea.

Smithy, it was certain, could not come in and interrupt him. Redwing probably would not, but if he did, Redwing wasn't a savage-tempered beast like Smithy! Moreover, the things were Smithy's, not Redwing's. Bunter felt himself fairly safe.

He guzzled—and guzzled—and guzzled!

There was quite a stack of provender on the table! But it diminished fast! Billy Bunter's fat face grew sticky and shiny. His breath came in gasps. Seldom did the fat Owl of the Remove get a chance to spread himself like this! He was making the most of it.

In the other studies fellows were talking of the Bounder, and of the cropper he had come! Bunter was not wasting any thought on the Bounder—the Bounder's tuck claimed all his attention.

The fat junior was helping himself to the contents of a jar of strawberry jam, lading it out with a tablespoon, when footsteps approached the door.

They were heavy footsteps, certainly not those of a Remove fellow. It was not Redwing coming in.

Bunter heard those footsteps without heeding them. He supposed that some beak was coming along the passage.

The door opened.

"Oh!" ejaculated Bunter.

A portly gentleman stood in the doorway.

Billy Bunter blinked at Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith!

The tablespoon, full of jam, was arrested on its way to Billy Bunter's capacious mouth. He blinked at the portly City gentleman.

Bunter was unaware that Mr. Vernon-Smith was booked to come back to Greyfriars that afternoon after his call at Lantham. He had not given Smithy's pater any thought at all.

Now, as the millionaire looked in, he could see that Mr. Vernon-Smith had not yet heard. Evidently he had walked up to the study, expecting to find his son there.

Mr. Vernon-Smith walked in and glanced round the room. Then he frowned, and his eyes fixed on Bunter.

"Where is Herbert?" he snapped.

"Eh?" gasped Bunter.

"Has he not returned to the school yet?" demanded Mr. Vernon-Smith angrily. "Good gad! Who are you? You are not Redwing. I think I remember you—Punter—your name is Punter—"

"Bub-Bub-Bunter, sir!" gasped the Owl of the Remove.

"Yes, yes, Bunter! Where is my son?" snapped Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Good gad! Is he still out of gates? What? I understood from the porter that it was now past lock-up! Is Herbert in the school now?"

"Oh, yes!" gasped Bunter.

Mr. Vernon-Smith's brow cleared a little.

"Very good!" He stepped into the study. "Go and tell him that I am here, Bunter! Tell him to come at once!"

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

It was clear that Mr. Vernon-Smith had not seen the Head, and knew nothing of what had transpired in his absence. Having returned from Lantham, he had come up to Smithy's study to see his son, nothing doubting that by that time he had returned to the school—little dreaming in what circumstances he had returned. Bunter, jammy and sticky, with the tablespoonful of jam still in his fat hand, blinked at him. Certainly he could not do as he was bidden—as Smithy was locked up in "punny."

Mr. Vernon-Smith dropped his portly weight into Smithy's armchair. He gave the Owl of the Remove a stare.

"Will you go and call my son?" he rapped.

"I—I—I can't!" gasped Bunter.

"You have said that he is in the school!" snorted Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, yes! But—"

"I find you in his study—making yourself at home here, apparently. Go and call him at once."

"B-b-but—" stuttered Bunter. "You—you see—"

"What?"

"Ho—ho—he's bunked—" gasped Bunter.

"What? What do you mean?"

"I—I mean, he's sacked—"

Mr. Vernon-Smith hooked himself out of the armchair again. He glared at the stammering Owl.

"Sacked! What do you mean by sacked?"

"I—I mean, ex-expelled! Yaroooh!" roared Bunter. He dropped the tablespoon as the angry gentleman caught him by the collar and shook him vigorously. "Groooogh! Oooooogh! Leggo!"

"You young rascal!" roared Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"Urrrggh! Leave off shook-shook-shaking me!" gurgled Bunter.

"How dare you!"

"I—I—I say— Grugggh! Ooogh! I say— Urrrggh!"

"How dare you make such a statement!" roared Mr. Vernon-Smith. "How dare you, I say! Am I a proper subject for foolish jests? What? Take that!"

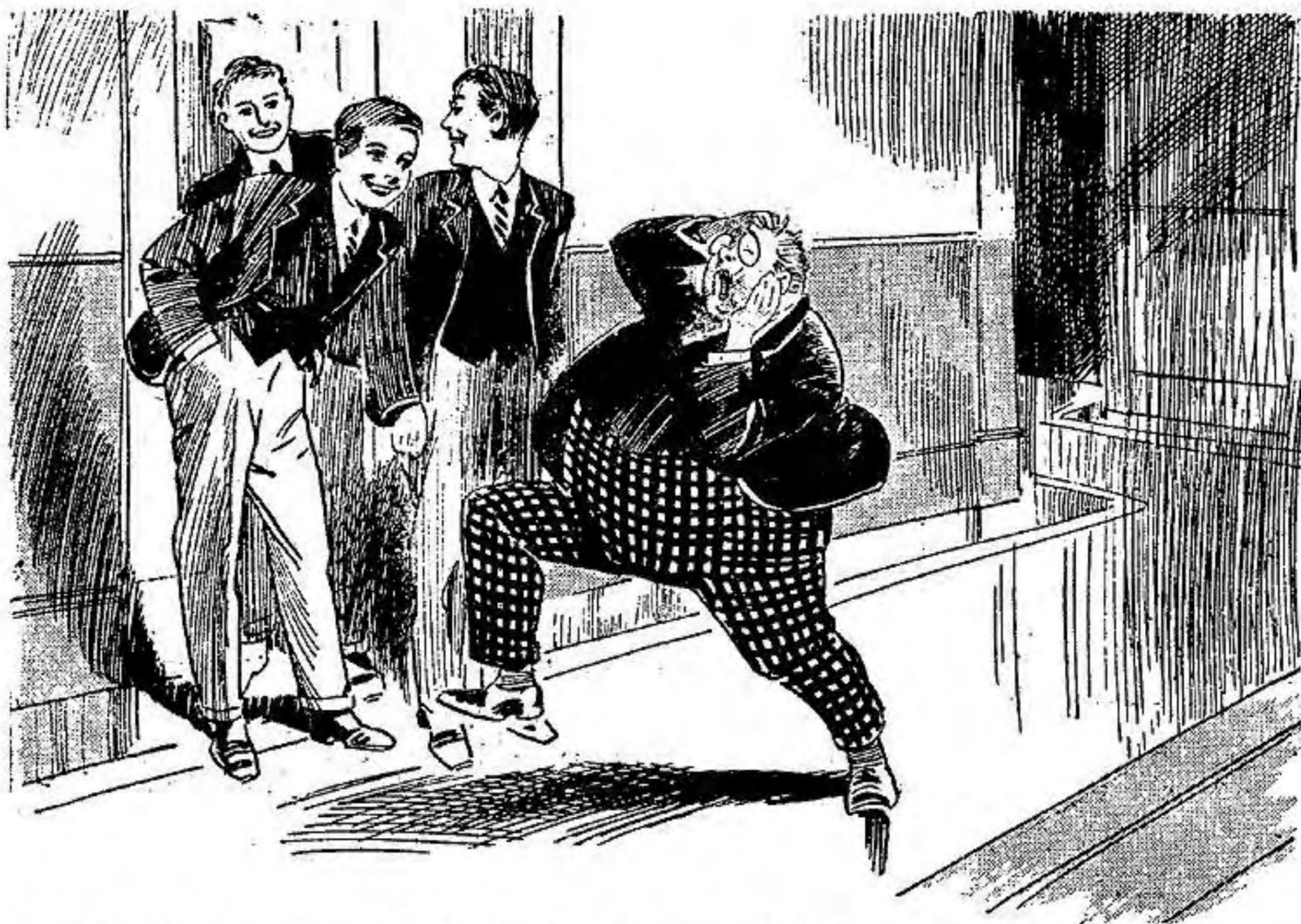
Smack!

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter, as he took it! Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith had a heavy hand.

That smack made Bunter's bullet head ring! He staggered.

Smack!

Another hefty swipe on the other side of the bullet head righted him against Bunter yelled.



Bunter, with his head singing, bolted from the study into the passage like an active kangaroo. "Ow, ow, ow!" he roared, as he went. "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" called out Bob Cherry. "What's the row, old fat bean?" "It's old Smith!" gasped the Owl of the Remove. "Smacking a fellow's head, you know, just because I told him that young Smith was sacked. Wow!"

"Now," snorted Mr. Vernon-Smith, "go and call my son! Immediately!"

"Oh crikey!"

Bunter, with his head singing, bolted from the study. Certainly he had no intention of calling Smithy! But he was very anxious to escape from Smithy's pater! He even forgot that there were foodstuffs on the table still unconsumed! He jumped into the passage like an active kangaroo.

"Ow! Ow! Wow!" he roared, as he went.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the row, old fat bean?" called out Bob Cherry from the doorway of Study No. 1.

"Ow! Wow! It's old Smith!" gasped Bunter. "Smacking a fellow's head, you know, just because I told him that young Smith was sacked. Wow!"

"Oh, my hat! Is Smithy's pater there?" exclaimed Bob.

"Ow! Yes! Wow!"

Mr. Vernon-Smith's angry face looked out of Study No. 4. Billy Bunter promptly scuttled away. The City gentleman called to Bob.

"Cherry! You are Cherry, I think? Where is my son?"

"Oh!" gasped Bob. He was unwilling to be the fellow to hand on the news, but he had to answer. "I—I think—Smithy's in—in punny, sir!"

"Punny!" hooted Mr. Vernon-Smith. "What do you mean? Do you talk English at this school or some other language?"

"I—I mean the punishment-room, sir!" stammered Bob.

"Oh!"

Mr. Vernon-Smith came out of Study No. 4, striding down the passage. His brow was like a thundercloud. Bob

backed into Study No. 1, where he had "tea'd" with the Co. Smithy's pater was looking quite dangerous. The millionaire halted and glared into the study at the Famous Five.

"Did you say that my son is in the punishment-room?" he hooted.

"Yes!" gasped Bob.

"For what reason?" It was dawning on Mr. Vernon-Smith that he had smacked Bunter's head not for an ill-timed jest, but in return for accurate information! His eyes glinted under his knitted brows. "Wharton!"

"Yes, sir!" said Harry.

"That boy Punter—Bunter—stated that my son was expelled! Do you know anything about it?"

"I only know what the fellows are saying, sir!" answered the captain of the Remove. "Smithy's in punny now, and they say—"

"Pah!"

With a snort of wrath, Mr. Vernon-Smith turned away and tramped off to the stairs. Evidently he was going to see the Head!

The chums of the Remove exchanged glances.

"My hat! The old bean's in a bait!" murmured Johnny Bull.

"Poor old Smithy!" said Bob.

Only a short time ago the Famous Five had been yearning to give Smithy the ragging of his life! They had almost forgotten that now. His game was up, and he had to go—and Mr. Vernon-Smith's look told plainly enough what he was going to do, and they were sorry! But their sympathy could not help the Bounder. His long run of luck had failed him at last, and he was "for it."

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Disowned!

RAP!

Dr. Locke quite jumped. He was expecting Mr. Vernon-Smith! He had heard the car arrive; he had, from his window, seen it halt in the gathering dusk, and he knew that the millionaire had come back from Lantham. Mr. Vernon-Smith, however, did not come directly to see him, and the Head, in a very troubled and uneasy frame of mind, waited for him. It was a painful interview that was before him, and he was anxious for it to be over. Minutes after minutes passed, and Mr. Vernon-Smith was not shown in. Then all of a sudden came that forceful rap on the door, which was flung open. The millionaire had arrived—and shown himself in!

He strode into the study, a good deal like a whirlwind. Dr. Locke rose to his feet with a courteous bow. Obviously the interview was going to be unpleasant. The millionaire's face was almost purple, and it was easy for the headmaster to see that he had wind of how matters stood.

"My dear sir—" murmured the Head.

"Where is my son?" rapped Mr. Vernon-Smith.

"At the present moment he is confined to the punishment-room," answered Dr. Locke. "He—"

"Why?" The question came like a bullet from a rifle.

"Pray be seated, sir, and I will explain—"

"Unnecessary!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith. "I found a boy in my son's

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study, who stated that my son was expelled. I smacked his head—"

"Bless my soul! But the statement was correct!" gasped the Head.

"My son is expelled?"

"Yes! I—"

"I heard nothing of this when I was here a few hours since. Nothing whatever was said on the subject, sir."

"Quite so! Because—"

"What has the boy done?"

"If you will allow me to speak, sir," said the Head, with a touch of asperity, "I will explain. You informed me yourself that your son was not at Highcliffe, and had not played football there."

"What of that? Is that a serious offence?" snorted Mr. Vernon-Smith. "Is my son expelled for not playing football?"

"Certainly not! Please let me speak! The boy, sir, has long been under the most serious suspicion—I have greatly doubted whether he had changed in the slightest degree after his recent sentence of expulsion was rescinded. I could not doubt, sir, that he had deceived me, sir, getting leave from detention on the pretence of playing football at Highcliffe—"

"Even so, sir, a matter for a caning. But—"

"If you will allow me to complete my remarks, sir—"

"I am waiting for you to do so, sir!"

"I sent a Sixth Form prefect to find your son! I had little doubt that he would be found in a disreputable resort he has been known to frequent. He was found there, sir!"

"Oh!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith, taken aback.

"He was found, sir, at a disreputable public-house up the river, a place strictly out of bounds, which he has been flogged for visiting before," said the Head. "It is obvious that he has not changed in the least, but has only added cunning deception to his bad conduct. I warned him, sir, that if he was allowed to remain here his next serious transgression would be his last. You will hardly expect me to exercise further leniency, sir, in such a case."

"Oh!" repeated Mr. Vernon-Smith.

He sat, or, rather, slumped, into a chair.

"I am sorry, sir!" said the Head of Greyfriars. "I am more sorry than I can say. But I feel that there is nothing else to be done, and Vernon-Smith must leave. There will be no public expulsion—he may leave with you, sir, as quietly as may be; but—"

Mr. Vernon-Smith was breathing hard and deep. It was clear that he had received a blow—a heavy blow! It was also clear that his chief feeling was one of intense and bitter anger.

"Then I myself have been the cause of this in a way!" he said slowly. "If I had not come here you would never have known—"

"Possibly not, on this occasion; though I have no doubt that your son's conduct would have come to my knowledge sooner or later," said the headmaster. "I regret very much—"

Mr. Vernon-Smith waved a plump hand, waving the headmaster's regret aside, as it were.

"Understand me, sir," he said, "I am not blaming you! You have been very patient with my son! You have been very lenient. I am quite well aware of that. He has been given more chances than he, or I, had any right to expect. Now the crash has come! You have finally decided to expel him?"

"Reluctantly sir—yes!"

"That is settled then!" said the

millionaire grimly. "I have talked to Herbert seriously, and given him serious warning! He knows what to expect if he is expelled from school. Possibly he may have fancied that I did not mean what I said. He will find that I meant every word."

Dr. Locke looked at the hard, angry, ruthless face, and felt an inward twinge. From his previous experiences of Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith, he had expected an outbreak of anger; a half-bullying appeal to give the scapograce of the school yet one more chance. That, it seemed, was not in the millionaire's thoughts now. His anger was directed, not against his son's headmaster, but against his son. And it was implacable.

"At another school, sir—" the Head ventured to suggest.

"I shall not send Herbert to another school, Dr. Locke."

"After such a lesson, sir, he might make an effort—"

"He has had his chance here, sir—and this is what he has made of it. I am a man of my word, sir! As he has made his bed, so he will lie on it. I must see him before I go. Will you send for him?"

Dr. Locke started a little. He was taking it for granted that the expelled junior was leaving with his father. In point of fact, it would have been a relief to the Head to see both of them depart. But that, apparently, was not Mr. Vernon-Smith's intention.

"I will send for him, sir!" said the Head.

He rang for Trotter.

"Trotter, kindly take this key to Wingate, of the Sixth Form, and request him to bring Master Vernon-Smith here."

"Yessir!"

Trotter departed with the key.

Mr. Vernon-Smith sat in silence, his face grim and growing grimmer and grimmer while he waited.

The Head, in a far from comfortable mood, glanced at him from moment to moment.

His own anger towards the Bounder was deep enough. But he felt it dip away at the sight of the implacable wrath in the face of Smithy's father. Expulsion was a severe punishment; but he realised that the transgressor had even worse to expect at home.

Wingate of the Sixth arrived at last with the Bounder.

"Vernon-Smith, sir!" said the prefect.

And, after a glance at the millionaire, Wingate felt sorry for the scapograce who had given him more trouble than any other fellow at the school.

"Thank you, Wingate! Come in, Vernon-Smith!"

The Head's voice was unexpectedly kind to the Bounder.

Wingate drew the door shut, and went, with a clouded face. Smithy was a young sweep and a young rascal; but the Greyfriars captain, after that one look at his father, pitied him.

The Bounder came quietly into the study. His face was a little pale, but he was calm and collected.

"Your father is here, Vernon-Smith," said the Head. "I have explained to him that you—that you must leave."

"Yes, sir."

Smithy looked at his father. His face became a little paler as he looked. The hard sharp eyes were fixed on him from under the knitted brows, but there was no word of greeting, or even of recognition. He might have been a

stranger to the man who sat squarely, staring at him.

The Bounder's lip trembled a little. "Father!" he said, in a faltering voice.

The grim stare did not relax. "You need not call me that!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith, slowly and deliberately. "I warned you that I should disown you, and disinherit you, if you left this school in disgrace! You are leaving it in disgrace! You are no son of mine!"

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Taking the Knock!

HERE was a long moment of silence in the room.

Dr. Locke shifted uncomfortably in his chair. He took off his glasses, wiped them, and replaced them on his nose. Seldom, or never, had the headmaster of Greyfriars felt such utter discomfort. Deeply as the Bounder had offended, deeply as his headmaster resented his deception, his insolence, his shady rascality, he pitied the boy now.

Smithy stood silent. There was little trace of his usual audacity about him now. His face had grown very pale.

Dr. Locke broke the painful silence. "You may go and pack your box, Vernon-Smith! You will leave with your father—"

The millionaire raised a plump hand. "You mistake, sir!" he cut in incisively. "The boy does not leave with me!"

"Really, sir—as you are here—"

"I mean what I say, sir!"

"I—I suppose I'm going home, father!" muttered the Bounder.

"You have neither a father nor a home!" answered Mr. Vernon-Smith, coldly and grimly. "You had both, and you have chosen to throw them away. I have said that you are no son of mine. I am accustomed to mean what I say! Last term Dr. Locke decided to send you away—I prevailed upon him to give you another chance. This term you were again sentenced to expulsion—again, you were given a chance to make good. You have exhausted your headmaster's patience—and mine! You have not forgotten what I said to you. That, if you were expelled from Greyfriars, I should disown and disinherit you! You are expelled—and I am done with you!"

"Mr. Vernon-Smith—" murmured the Head.

"You, sir, I can only thank for your sorely tried patience with this boy," said the millionaire. He fixed his eyes on the Bounder again. "I have said that you are no longer my son—and I mean it! I am obliged by the law to provide for you—and that I shall do. But my home will not be your home—and the fortune I have amassed will never be yours to fling to the winds! I shall make arrangements for your reception elsewhere—I shall make arrangements for you to enter an office, where you will have an opportunity of making your own way in the world. But I shall not see you again—and tomorrow my will shall be altered."

"Mr. Vernon-Smith—"

"Kindly allow me to speak to this boy, sir, whom I am not likely to see again!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith icily.

"I beg you to reconsider—"

"I have considered, sir, and am not a man to change my views. I have already decided what to do, in the event of your defeating all the hopes I had of you," went on Mr. Vernon-

(Continued on page 28.)

THRILL-PACKED STORY OF AMAZING DETECTIVE ADVENTURE.

The MAN BEHIND the SCENES!

Starring FERRERS
LOCKE, detective,
and his clever boy
assistant, JACK
DRAKE.



HOW THE STORY STARTED.

After the tragic disappearance of Christopher Dean, a famous flying man, FERRERS LOCKE, the private detective of Baker Street gets on the trail of two clever criminals, MERVYN VILLIERS and JULIUS TANKERHEAD, who are pulling off big financial coups in connection with sporting events. Their latest attempted rousery is the framing of a League football match between London Athletic and Malpas Villa. Under cover of night Locke and Drake, his boy assistant, visit the Athletic foorer ground, the former stealthily breaking into the club-rooms, for he has reason to think that it is here that he will find a valuable clue.

(Now read on.)

The Secret of the Boots!

LIKE a human shadow, Ferrers Locke crept along the stone passage beneath the giant grand stand, which gave admission to and exit from the various club-rooms, the shaded bulb of his pocket torch playing fitfully upon the damp walls and flagged flooring.

He grunted his appreciation when his keen eyes beheld a faint, but serviceable line of footprints, suggesting that Drake's late assailant might have left them. He was not surprised when the tell-tale prints led right up to the Athletic's changing-room—a spacious apartment, with a number of padlocked metal lockers lining two sides of the four walls.

Inside those lockers the detective knew, from past experience, the players left their football boots and kit. And slotted into a little frame on each of these lockers was a small square of pasteboard carrying the name of the player.

The detective allowed the beam of light from his torch to play upon each locker in turn, but once again the smudgy footprints on the newly washed floor pointed to a direct clue. In three instances the footprints collected in front of a locker, as good as saying that the owner of the muddy feet was concerned only with these three lockers.

Advancing upon the lockers, Ferrers Locke glimpsed the names of the players—Astin, Jobers, and Gallagher.

"The three star forwards," mused the detective—"the Athletic's usual match winners, all of them Internationals. Hum!"

He peered intently at the nearest

padlock and smiled grimly. A moment or so later, with his bunch of skeleton keys, he had picked the lock. Opening the lid of the locker, all he saw was a perfectly clean jersey, a pair of shorts, and stockings, fresh from the laundry, shinguards, and well-worn football boots.

Propping his torch into a position that would throw a light over the various articles, he examined them carefully. It was only when his keen eyes dwelt upon the football boots that he showed a trace of excitement, for at the darkened toe of each boot, under Locke's powerful magnifying-lens, there gleamed a pinpoint of bright metal, not unlike a broken-off pin or needle.

"Now I'm beginning to see daylight," Locke reflected as, setting down the boots on the floor, he moved to the next locker and carried out the same inspection.

As in the case of the first locker, the football boots in locker No. 2 showed under the powerful magnifying-glass the same extraordinary results. Thus it came as no great surprise to the Baker Street detective when he picked the lock of the third receptacle and made the same discovery.

"Very ingenious!" he murmured.

Without further delay, he gathered the three pairs of football boots in a heap, tied them together by the long laces, and slung them over his shoulder. Then, having closed the three lockers, he quietly crept out of the dressing-room and made his way back to the spot where Drake awaited him.

"Thought you were never coming back, guv'nor," was Drake's greeting. "Found anything—"

He broke off as he caught sight of the six football boots slung across his chief's shoulder.

"This is where we beat it, my lad," breathed Locke. "Come on, we've a lot to do—and not a great deal of time to do it in."

He darted off to that section of the big hoarding where he had left the rope swinging by its grappling-hook.

"Up you go, my lad!" he whispered. "And be as quiet as a mouse!"

Drake grinned and began to swarm up the slender rope. Arrived at the top of the hoarding, he peered intently around him, and then signalled to

Ferrers Locke to make the climb. The detective was beside him in a few moments, and, stopping only to draw up the rope, swing it over the outer side of the hoarding and refix the grappling-hook, Drake shinned down, and was soon standing on the bedewed pavement, shrouded in darkness.

He felt the detective touch ground a moment later, and promptly gave one quick, upward jerk of the swinging rope to free the grappling hook, catching it dexterously as it descended.

"Follow me, my lad," said Ferrers Locke. "I left the car in a side street."

Winding up the rope as he went, Drake followed, closely atop of his chief, as Locke darted off into a side street and looked for his car. The flickering lights of a number of lamp-posts showed him clearly that this was indeed the street where he had parked the car; but there was absolutely no sign of it now.

"Well—" began Locke, and then frowned.

"Somebody's half-inched it, guv'nor," suggested Drake cheerfully.

Locke grimaced. "That seems to be about the size of it, confound it," he replied. "Can't be helped—we'll have to take a taxi."

Drake nodded, but it was quite ten minutes before a disengaged taximan hove in sight, by which time Ferrers Locke was growing impatient. He snapped out his address, promised the driver double fare if he made good speed, settled back on the worn cushions, and was lost in a deep reverie.

The loss of his car occupied no place in his thoughts now. His wasn't the first car to be "pinched" by a car thief; it was an only too common practice these days, and invariably stolen cars came back to their owners in course of time. Besides, Locke was insured. He was thinking of those gleaming pinpoints of metal in the football boots he had brought with him, and eventually wove a theory around their presence which he felt instinctively to be a correct one.

He was still much preoccupied when the taxi drew to a standstill—so much so that he almost forgot to pay off the driver, who was expecting the promised double pay. But he paid up, with

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good grace, what time Drake was already turning the key of the door.

Once in his own chambers, Ferrers Locke made straight for the laboratory—an untidy-looking workshop, with glass retorts, test tubes, Bunsen burners, jars of chemicals, and microscopic apparatus littering the various benches.

Unconscious, seemingly, of Drake's presence, the detective once again placed one of the football boots into position beneath his powerful microscope and gazed at it for some moments.

Idly Drake picked up one of the remaining boots and unconsciously slipped his hand into it. Next moment an ejaculation escaped him, and he withdrew his hand as if it had been stung, and began to suck one of his fingers.

Locke, turning, snatched the boot out of his grasp.

"You young ass!" he said severely. "Did the needle prick you?"

Drake coloured and smiled awkwardly.

"Something pricked me, guv'nor," he said, displaying his index finger, which showed a tiny puncture by the nail from which trickled a thin bubble of blood. "But what—why all the fuss?"

Locke's eyes gleamed, and his assistant noticed a tinge of anxiety in them.

"Jack, that needle which you ran your finger on was doped!" he said hoarsely. "I feel sure it was—"

"Doped?" gasped Drake. "Do you mean poisoned?"

"Poison of some sort," answered the detective. "You impetuous young ass—you shouldn't have meddled with the boots! Why do you think I brought them here?"

It was a reprimand, but a deal of the sting of it was taken out by Locke's anxiety for his assistant's welfare.

Drake's blue eyes twinkled.

"Don't worry, guv'nor," he said. "I'm beginning to catch on. This is the little trick Villiers and Tankerhead were arranging to play on three of the Athletic's men to-morrow, what?"

Locke nodded impatiently.

"Well," continued the youngster, "I don't suppose the effects will be really dangerous. Murder wouldn't suit those two villains. Regard me as an experimental subject, guv'nor."

Even as he spoke he began to feel extraordinarily tired, and instinctively he groped for a chair and flopped down in it.

Ferrers Locke eyed him intently.

"The needle was doped! By thunder, it was a foul idea. See it, Jack? The moment these players kicked the ball their toes would come up against the needle, and the doped would put paid to their football for the afternoon."

All the time he was talking the detective was loading a hyperdermic needle. Drake, whose eyes were half-closed, yawned and yawned until he felt that he would yawn his head off. He made no objection when Ferrers Locke bared his arm and jabbed the hyperdermic needle into the firm flesh.

"I think that will do the trick, my lad," said Locke grimly. "The symptoms you showed suggest to me that an old American-Indian poison was used. The effect is to produce extreme tiredness almost to a stage of inertia. But that little dose I gave you will pull you round."

"O.K., chief," smiled Drake sleepily.

"You leave me and get on with your job."

The detective grunted, gave his young assistant another searching glance, satisfied himself that he was at least in no real danger, and began to operate upon each football boot with a delicate, finely pointed pair of steel tweezers.

One by one he withdrew the poison-tipped needles which had been forced into the boots, and laid them on a slab of black marble.

Once more he examined the tips of the needles as he dipped them singly in a small glass container filled with acid, and watched their chemical reaction.

"I was right, Jack," he said triumphantly. "They have all been dipped in Mughra—that's the name of the beastly stuff. You'll be as right as a triquet in half an hour. Take it easy!"

Drake nodded smilingly.

"I'm feeling better already, guv'nor," he lied bravely, for the effects of the antidote Locke had administered had not begun to work yet. "Be a blow for Villiers and Tankerhead when they find someone's put the kybosh on their dirty stunt. You going to take the boots back, guv'nor?"

Locke nodded.

"As quickly as possible, my lad. You'll be all right by the time I return. Just take things easily."

He gathered up the football boots, dabbed the insides of them with a stringent antiseptic lest any of the poison still lingered on the leather, and stowed them into a small suitcase. Five minutes later the detective was speeding in a taxi to the London Athletic Football Club Ground.

He dismissed the taxi a quarter of a mile away from the big enclosure, walked the remaining distance, and negotiated the high hoarding in exactly the same way as he had done before. In less than twenty minutes he was back again outside the big enclosure, the rope with the grappling-hook stowed away neatly in the now empty suitcase.

"Now, Mr. Villiers, I wonder how you'll like it?" he chuckled as he walked away.

A Fortune at Stake!

AT that precise moment Mr. Mervyn Villiers was liking it very much indeed. He was in communication with his co-partner in crime, Julius Tankerhead.

"I've been trying to get you for hours, Julius," he spoke into the telephone. "Thought you'd like to know that Morris fixed the job nicely. Don't you think we might squeeze Joe Blimers for another thousand or two?"

A chuckle sounded over the wires.

"You always were a greedy fellow, Mervyn," returned Tankerhead. "Still, it looks a snip. I think I'll increase our wager with that poor fish, Joe, first thing in the morning. Good-night, partner—and happy dreams!"

He rang off, and Villiers turned to his confidential "man" Morris.

"Tankerhead's going to increase the stake, Morris," he exclaimed, rubbing his hands. "By gosh! This is the greatest thing we've ever pulled."

"It was easy enough," he said. "I fixed the three pairs of boots in a jiffy. To-morrow, after the match, I can get hold of them again and draw out the needles. That's where you'll be able to help—you being a director."

Villiers nodded, and then the smile on his flabby face departed suddenly.

"Who do you think it was prowling round the stand when you were on the job?" he asked.

"I've told you a dozen times, boss," replied Morris, "that I think it was some young guy playing amateur burglar. But all he got was a wallop over the head with a length of tubing. Don't worry about him. What about turning in?"

"A good suggestion," conceded Villiers, stifling a yawn. "We want to be fit for the match to-morrow—what!—even if Astin, Joberts, and Gallagher aren't!"

But a big surprise awaited the three arch schemers when the time came round for the London Athletic's match with Malpen Villa. Joe Blimers, the millionaire bookmaker, who found himself occupying a seat next to Mervyn Villiers in the directors' "box," prodded Villiers' well-covered ribs with a knucky finger.

"You know that chap Tankerhead, old sport Chap over in the other enclosure"—he jerked a thumb in the direction—"well, he's gone crackers on the chances of the Villa winning this bloomin' match." He lowered his voice to a thick whisper. "Actually had the nerve to back 'em again this morning for another thousand jimmy o' goblins."

Mervyn Villiers flashed him a cheery, hypocritical smile.

"Some folk seem to have more money than sense," he remarked. "Still, you've got no cause to worry, Joe! Why, the Athletic will walk round the Villa to-day—mark my words!"

"Don't I know it, cocky," chuckled Joe Blimers, closing one puffy eye in a poor attempt at winking knowingly. "Joe Blimers didn't make his pile through being a mug!"

Conversation palled, and the estimable Joe began to fill in time by perusing his newspaper. Suddenly he slapped his thigh and guffawed, whereat Mervyn Villiers turned on him a look of inquiry.

"What's biting you?"

"Look at this, old sport!" cried Joe, thrusting the newspaper in front of Villiers' face. "'Ferrers Locke's Car Stolen—By a Policeman!'"

Villiers' eyes narrowed as he read that blazing headline, and then the snappy write-up which followed it. Boiled down, it stated that Ferrers Locke's car had been left in a side turning, near the football ground of the London Athletic, unattended and without any lights. A zealous policeman had waited in vain for the distinguished owner to arrive, doubtless to inform him that he would be summoned for obstruction, and, having waited, he had then had the unattended car towed into the police station. The famous detective, so went the report, had been traced by means of the usual number plates and licence holder.

Mervyn Villiers, with a peculiar feeling of uneasiness creeping over him, had no time to read more, for Joe Blimers suddenly snatched the paper out of his hands and pocketed it as a swelling roar from the crowd announced that the players were entering the arena.

Despite the uproar—for the Athletic commanded a big and lusty following which numbered a regular fifty thousand—Mervyn Villiers could hear only one oft-repeated phrase which dinned itself in his aching head.

"What was Ferrers Locke doing here last night?"

It was a direct result of Villiers' guilty

conscience that the phrase repeated itself, but it assumed a greater proportion of significance as the game went on, for the doped football boots did not produce the effect the arch-schemer desired.

The three International forwards in the Athletic's front line played at the top of their form, completely over-running the struggling defence of the inferior Malpen Villa.

And by half-time, much to the growing horror of Villiers, Morris and Tankerhead—and to the undisguised joy of Joe Blimers, the bookmaker—the home side were three goals up—thanks to the brilliance of the three players in question.

During the interval Tankerhead and Villiers contrived to meet. Both looked strained and alarmed.

"What's gone wrong, Mervyn?" croaked Tankerhead. "Why, man, the Villa will never win this game!"

Villiers shrugged his shoulders like a man who sees disaster threatening to overwhelm him and is unable to stave it off.

"I can't understand it," he muttered fiercely. "Morris did the job perfectly. He doesn't make blunders. But the dope hasn't worked. Why, the three of

them ought to have been off the field in less than ten minutes after the start of the match."

Tankerhead was furious and livid. He could see a small fortune slipping through his grasp. Worse still, he'd got to pay—and a handsome sum at that. Haggard of face, he sought out Joe Blimers just before the resumption of the match.

"Like to call the bet off, Joe?" he asked, forcing a smile. "Reckon I'm not so keen now."

Joe waved a bejewelled hand with a large gesture.

"No fear, cocky," he said in his thick, fruity voice. "But no one can say Joe Blimers ain't a sport! Here, I'll double the odds! Now what d'you say to that?"

What Tankerhead said to that was unprintable. In a nightmare of anxiety he watched the second half of that memorable game and groaned aloud when the final whistle blew and the Athletic came off the field, easy victors by the astonishing total of nine goals to one.

From a seat in the stand Ferrers Locke, Jack Drake—the latter now fully recovered, watched both the match and

the misery in the faces of the three schemers concerned. And when the big crowd began to stream out, the detective managed to edge his way over to Mervyn Villiers.

"Hallo, Villiers!" he said boisterously. "Don't you feel well? Your team's won handsomely. What have you got the needle about?"

Villiers started guiltily at the word "needle," and Locke, observant of it, laughed in such a fashion that what had once been just a suspicion in Villiers' mind now became a certainty.

He knew now why Ferrers Locke had been in the vicinity the previous night—he said as much to Julius Tankerhead later in the day.

"That man has got on to us, Julius," he said hoarsely. "He's played with us. I feel it—I know it!"

Tankerhead's face set in an evil mould. "Is that so," he ground out between clenched teeth. "Then it's time Mister bloomin' clever Locke was silenced once and for all!"

(Julius Tankerhead will have to get up very early in the morning if he wants to "put one over" on Ferrers Locke! Look out for more super thrills in next week's chapters, chums.)

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.4. A stamped, addressed envelope will ensure a reply.

READERS who have been collecting the special tokens published in connection with our wonderful **WORLD PICTORIAL GAZETTEER** will find on page 26 the eighth and final token in this grand offer. I need not emphasise the point unduly, for readers interested in this splendid Gazetteer already know what a unique volume it is, but I really must add that this wonderful volume is a veritable mine of information for young and old alike. If you fellows want one more token to complete the set of six required, don't forget you'll find it on page 26. 'Nuff said!

What do you think of the vexed question of "fagging," chums? I ask because I have received a letter from a reader this week who starts off with the question:

SHOULD FAGGING BE ABOLISHED?

According to him, it shouldn't. While agreeing that some seniors are bullies and cads, he still thinks that fagging instils in a boy a sense of self-respect, coupled with intelligence and self-reliance. I have not space to give the whole of my chum's letter, but he concludes with: "Taking everything into consideration, I think fagging creates a very healthy influence amongst juniors."

Half a minute, though, chums! His letter is signed, "A Prefect." Well, that's all right for a prefect; but what do the fags themselves think about it? Do they like making tea and keeping their fag-masters' studies spotlessly clean? It would be interesting to know.

But, listen, you fellows. Don't blame me for passing on the above reader's comments. His ideas are not necessarily my own, and—however, I'm here to be shot at, so fire away!

HERE is a poser which Don Ledsam, of Sydney, N.S.W., Australia, puts up to me. He wants to know which is

THE LARGEST SUBMARINE IN THE WORLD.

I don't mind telling you that many people want to know the answer to that question—the naval experts included! At one time full details concerning the size and tonnage of all types of war vessels were freely published. Recently, however, naval powers have been extremely reluctant to pass on any information.

The last French submarine to be launched was hailed as the largest in the world. But its launching was surrounded by mystery, and newspaper correspondents were unable to glean anything save the most meagre details concerning it. Since then the Japanese have been extending their navy, and they, too, are not inclined to let anyone know very much about what they are doing, although they are said to possess some large and powerful underwater craft.

So the answer to this question is, I am afraid, "wrapped in mystery"!

B. R. S., of Chelmsford, Essex, wants to know where he can obtain

BACK NUMBERS OF THE "MAGNET."

Recent issues of this paper are available from the Back Number Department, Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Bear Alley, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. They can be obtained by sending 3d. in stamps, for each number required, which includes postage. Back numbers are only kept for a limited time, and those which my correspondent asks for are, unfortunately, out of print, owing to the tremendous demand there has been for them.

I am afraid the only way he can obtain earlier numbers is by getting into touch

with other readers, although there are not many who are willing to part with their collection.

This brings home the importance of my oft-repeated advice, which is that you should not only order your copies in advance, but you should hang on to them like grim death once you have them!

JUST to finish up, here is an interesting piece of information which an Australian reader has sent me concerning

A DISAPPEARING RIVER.

Not far from Roebourne, in Western Australia, a river of fresh, clear water rises on a high and dry tableland. It flows for ten miles and then disappears as suddenly as it started! It is estimated that no less than 130 million gallons of water flows past in a day. At its widest part this strange river measures 600 feet, and it is 68 feet in depth.

And another Australian reader sends the following:

At Barrum, in Victoria, the name of the house which is used as a police station is named Kumalong. A little while ago, in the garden of the house next door, a notice was displayed: "Old Copper for Sale"!

Now for next week's attractions.

When you have read

"THE BOUNDER'S RIVAL!"

By Frank Richards,

you will probably say, as one of this week's correspondents does: "How Frank Richards manages to turn out such wonderful stories every week I cannot think!" This splendid author is certainly keeping his word to make **MAGNET** stories better and better every week. So look out for it, chums. You won't be disappointed.

Then, when you've finished it, you can turn to the thrills that abound in next week's chapters of our powerful sporting and detective story. More fun and frolic is to be found in the "Greyfriars Herald" supplement, and I'll have another little chat with any of you who care to drop me a line.

All the best, chums!

YOUR EDITOR.

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DISOWNED BY HIS FATHER!*(Continued from page 24.)*

Smith, his eyes on his son again. "I have selected a relative, whom I shall adopt in your place, and in whose hands I shall be able to trust my affairs when the time comes. I have left this matter in abeyance, while you had your chance here. Now it is decided—you have decided it. I have no more to say to you!"

Mr. Vernon-Smith rose.

"But, sir—" The Head also rose, in some agitation.

Herbert Vernon-Smith stood as if turned to stone.

"I have done, sir. To-morrow, at an early hour, I will inform you of the address to which this boy is to be sent. I regret having to leave him on your hands, even for a few hours; but there is no alternative. I definitely refuse to take him with me. Once more, sir, I thank you for the patience you have shown, useless as it has proved."

With that, and a stiff bow to the Head, Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith turned to the door, opened it, and walked out.

He shut the door behind him firmly, and his heavy footsteps were heard receding down the passage.

Dr. Locke sank back into his seat.

"Bless my soul!" he murmured faintly.

The Bounder did not speak or move. His eyes were fixed on the door that had closed on his father, and he seemed rooted to the floor. In the silence the hum of an engine was heard without.

Mr. Vernon-Smith was going.

The Bounder licked his dry lips. His father was going—after casting him off! He had been warned; he could not deny that. He had known that the warning was seriously meant. Yet now that the blow had fallen, it overwhelmed him.

The buzz of the car died away in the distance. The millionaire was gone from Greyfriars. His son remained.

"Bless my soul!" repeated the Head.

He coughed.

"You—you may go, Vernon-Smith," he said, at length.

"Very well, sir." The Bounder's tone was strangely quiet. "Am I to go back to the punishment-room, sir?"

The Head coughed again.

"No. That is—is unnecessary. You may go to your study, Vernon-Smith. You must remain here the night, until—until I hear from your father in the morning. But in the—the circumstances, you need not return to the punishment-room."

"Very well, sir."

Quietly the Bounder of Greyfriars left his headmaster's study. His face was white, but it was quite calm. Dr. Locke's eyes followed him till he was gone. Then for a long time the headmaster sat at his table, deep in painful thought. At the corner of the corridor Smithy found Redwing waiting for him. Tom gave his chum's white, set face a glance, and passed a hand through his arm.

"Your father's gone, Smithy."

The Bounder nodded.

"Does that mean—" Redwing scanned his face. "He's gone without you, Smithy. You're not sacked, after all?"

"Yes."

"But your father's gone!"

"Yes."

"Smithy"—Redwing felt a vague alarm—"what's happened?"

The Bounder's lip quivered.

"I'm done for! Kicked out of school, and kicked out of home! Don't talk to

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me now, old chap! I can't stand any more!"

He shook his arm free from Redwing and walked away, leaving his chum gazing after him in alarm and dismay.

Harry Wharton & Co. were on the Remove landing when the Bounder came up. They looked at him and a sudden silence fell on them. He stopped.

"Sorry I played you that rotten trick to-day, Wharton," he said, in an even tone. "I've got it in the neck, if that's any consolation to you."

"It isn't," said the captain of the Remove quietly. "You're going?"

"Yes."

"I'm sorry."

"Thanks!"

The Bounder walked on to his study, and the door closed on him. The chums of the Remove looked at one another uneasily.

"What's happened?" muttered Bob.

"The sack, of course; but there's something else. He looks—"

"As if he's taken the knock," muttered Johnny Bull. "And—and—and a jolly hard one."

"Nothing a fellow can do," said Harry uncomfortably.

"Nothing."

The Bounder was not seen in the Rag that evening. He was the one topic there. The "bunking" of the Bounder was a matter of breathless interest in the Remove, and indeed through all Greyfriars. It was very seldom that a Greyfriars man was bunked, though all the fellows agreed that it was only by phenomenal luck that Smithy had escaped it so long. Why his father had gone without him, why he was remaining till the morrow was a puzzle to all but Redwing, who said nothing on the subject. Skinner averred that the Bounder would somehow "wangle" it yet—that he would pull through somehow. But of that, so far as anyone could see, there was no chance. Certainly the Bounder himself had no hope of it.

He was not seen again till dorm, when he joined the Remove going up. Every eye was on him; but little was to be read in his face. He was rather pale, and very quiet—that was all.

Wingate of the Sixth, who saw lights out for the Remove, gave him a very curious look. He, like others, was puzzled to see the expelled junior still there. But he made no remark.

The Remove turned in; the light was put out. Billy Bunter's snore was heard, and one by one the fellows dropped off to sleep.

But there was one who did not sleep.

The midnight stars, glimmering in at the high windows of the Remove dormitory, glimmered on one wakeful face—the Bounder's. He was not sleeping; he was thinking, bitter thoughts.

Sacked! If that had been all! Disowned, and disinherited. Even yet Herbert Vernon-Smith could not wholly realise it. When he left Greyfriars on the morrow, it would not be to go home. His father's home was no longer his. If he had had a mother—

His eyes closed at last, and he slept, till the rising-bell in the windy March morning awakened him—to his last day at Greyfriars School!

THE END.

(Watch out for next Saturday's MAGNET and another splendid long yarn of Vernon-Smith and the chums of Greyfriars. It is entitled: "THE BOUNDER'S RIVAL!" Be sure and order your copy in advance, chums!)

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EXTRA GOOD EDITION

THE NEW Greyfriars Herald

FOR SALE
 Two-seater Cycle at the knock-out price of One Pound. Our prices always have been as cheap as the cheapest of our competitors, but this time we really can say we've "TANDEM!"—DICKY RAKE & CO., Cycle Salesmen and Swoppers, Study No. 6, Remove.

March 17th, 1934. EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON. No. 76 (New Series).

SKINNER—WATER-CYCLE CHAMP

Amazing "Luck" in Ragtime Race
 Inspired by Coker's heroic attempt to cross the Channel on a water-cycle last year, several Remove men have recently taken up the exhilarating pastime of water-cycling in earnest. The first over the rippling waters of the Sark, and you'll get some idea of his speed when we tell you that some of the spectators whiled away the time reading books, and just looked up every ten minutes or so to see how much progress he had made!

In the circumstances, Skinner can hardly be blamed for taking his time over the race. He certainly exercised plenty of care in guiding his machine over the rippling waters of the Sark, and you'll get some idea of his speed when we tell you that some of the spectators whiled away the time reading books, and just looked up every ten minutes or so to see how much progress he had made!

It is only fair to the other competitors to mention that there is a slight suspicion of foul play attached to the race. On examining the machines that were fished out of the water, the judges found that in each case holes had been bored in the floats. Apart from finding a large drill in Skinner's locker, however, they discovered nothing that could possibly have caused the holes, so how they arose is a deep mystery.

All that can be done is to congratulate the winner on his wonderful luck!



WHY WAVES WRECKED BOAT RACE

Startling Truth Revealed
 Do you remember that amazing Boat Race when the Oxford and Cambridge boats both capsized through a mountainous wave sweeping up the river? Probably you don't, so you'll have to take our word for it!

It was an astounding climax to the race, believe us. The rival crews were racing along a stretch of water as smooth as a sheet of glass, and the cheering crowds that urged on their favourites to victory had no thought of the tragedy that was looming ahead.

Suddenly, above the deafening shouts of the spectators, arose a deeper roar. The cheers died away as the crowds heard it, and a million eyes were turned towards Putney, whence the mysterious sound was coming, while a million lips framed the question: "What is it?"

That question was soon answered. Sweeping along the river with a roar as of a thousand furies came an immense wall of water, so high that it almost darkened the sky.

The terrified spectators gave one look at the strange sight, then, howling with fear, ran for their lives. As for the rival boats, they were flung into the air like matchsticks, and their crews hurled in all directions.

It was, of course, the end of the Boat Race. The crews were in no condition to start again after their swim through the turbulent waters to the banks of the river, and the race was postponed till another day.

What an experience to have lived through! What a day to look back on! By the way, we have only recently found out what caused that astonishing wave.

GREYFRIARS A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

March 17th, 1834
 The boys of Greyfriars College lined up on the banks of the River Sark in large numbers at Saturday to witness the greatest sporting event of the term, viz., the rowing-race between two crews of gentlemen belonging to the Sixth and Fifth Forms respectively.

The race, which was for stakes of 50 guineas aside, evoked the liveliest interest in the neighbourhood, and sportsmen from amongst the nobility and gentry arrived on horseback or by carriage from many distant parts and applauded the contending crews in the most condescending manner.

The gentlemen of the Fifth Form, who received a start of three lengths, made a brave show against their older and more experienced opponents, and the race was in doubt until the winning post, at the Three Fishers Inn, was reached. In the last few yards, however, the Sixth Form boat gained a considerable advantage and the senior crew won a most exciting race by a length.

When the rival oarsmen recovered from their exertions, they sat down to a 25-course dinner in the large kitchen of the inn, and the sumptuous repast was enjoyed by all with great gusto, and accompanied by the most infectious merriment.

We regret to add that the oarsmen's merriment was not sustained on their return to college, when, on account of their lateness, they were given fairly stripes apiece by their respective Form-masters.



Auto-Sculling Sensation

Sixth Lose to Second
 One of the most fascinating little devices we have ever seen was introduced to Greyfriars last week, when Fisher T. Fish turned up in the gym with a hired Auto Boat Racer.

This machine consists of two structures built to represent eight-seater racing skiffs, with sliding-seats and handles for oars. The crews take their seats and pull away just as they would do on the river, and their efforts are electrically recorded by a couple of moving lights which travel up a glass panel in front of the "boats" until one of them reaches a spot marked "WINNING POST."

This concludes the race, and the extent of the win is recorded on a chart in lengths. Nobby idea, what? Fish explained that no school was complete without one of these machines and that any crew could rapidly reach Varsity standard by practising on it in the gym. He added that the charge would be a mere threepence per seat per race.

Having rolled Fishy all round the gym, and warned him that he would meet a sudden and ghastly fate one of these days if he didn't cease to be such a Shylock, the fellows decided that the Auto Boat Racer was worth trying even at threepence per seat per race, and for two or three days Fish's Auto Boat Racer reigned supreme as the biggest attraction in the School.

What brought an end to its popularity was, strangely enough, the Open Championship which Fishy ran in connection with it. The Open Championship was quite exciting in the preliminary stages. Every Form in the School competed, and Forms were drawn against each other in heats.

In the First Round, the Remove beat the Third, the Fifth beat the Fourth, the Sixth beat the Shell, and the Second drew a "bye."

In the Second Round, the Sixth beat the Fifth and the Second created a sensation by beating the Remove!

WARS OF THE ROSETTES

Bolsover's Pro-Cambridge Campaign
 Bolsover went up to Tubb, of the Third, the other day and, with a growl of "I'll teach you to support Oxford!" gave him a ferocious tweak of the nose and snatched away his dark blue rosette.

On the following day, he tweaked the noses of Gatty and Myers, pulled the hair of Egey, and twisted the arms of Dicky Nugent and Wingate minor. Each act was accompanied by a growl of "I'll teach you to support Oxford!" and the snatching away of a dark blue rosette.

There was a dawning consciousness in junior circles of the fact that Bolsover was supporting Cambridge in the Boat Race.

This occasioned a certain amount of surprise, as Bolsover was a keen supporter of Oxford last year. When it was learned, however, that Bolsover's second cousin's new employer in the City has a nephew who once knew a man whose butler's father had been a college servant at Cambridge, it was generally agreed that Bolsover had pretty strong grounds for supporting Cambridge this year.

No keen did Bolsover become on Cambridge in the course of a day or so, that it wasn't safe for Oxford supporters to venture forth wearing their colours, unless they kept together in batches of half a dozen or more!

And when Bolsover wandered among the fags, he left behind him an easily followed trail of thick cars, squashed noses, and discoloured eyes!

Anybody, but Bolsover, would have known that there comes a point where the worm turns and that, anyway, the modern fag can't be kept down by brute force alone. Bolsover, however, didn't know that until yesterday morning; but hisson Minor, Upper Fourth.



Indoor Footer Final

Don't miss the Cup Final between Study No. 6 and Study No. 13 in the Remove Passage at 8 p.m. on Wednesday next! Reserved seats in study doorways, is, each, landing rails, 6d. per person. Players are requested to wear rubber-soled shoes. Fags wanted to keep a look-out for beaks and prefects: good pay! All parties. From H. WHARTON, Study No. 1, Remove.

Gatty: "What's the longest word in the English language?"
 Bunter M.L.: "Durnio! What?"
 Gatty: "...Smiles"—because there's a mile between the two 'S's'!"

Imported Eggs

Two dozen unique specimens for sale. Owner finds he won't be able to turn up to the meeting of the Upper Fourth Debating Society after all.—Apply Tomlinson Minor, Upper Fourth.

Would You Believe It?

Donald Ogny is a mechanical-kite-flying is the latest craze among the fags. Dicky Nugent has constructed a box kite which engages in thrilling duels with his minor, Hop H.—the only one who can oppose him in tower!

Looking for Thrilling Adventure?

If so, we recommend you to join Mr. Prout's Big Game Hunting Party for the Easter Hols. Expedition will explore the wildest parts of Surrey in search of squirrels, hedgehogs, mice, and other ferocious animals. Complete retinue may be placed in Mr. Prout, who has emerged triumphant from a hundred gory battles with rabbits, moorhens, etc.—Apply direct to P. P. PROUT, Esq., M.A., Mustard Common room.

GREYFRIARS FACTS WHILE YOU WAIT!

When W. G. Bunter visited a friend in the States, he wished a perfect's cry of "Fag!" When he is still waiting to be heard, the bully calls the fags a millionaire, though, and, scuttle right and left to get out of hearing!

Any fag within ear, mus, answer a perfect's cry of "Fag!" When he is still waiting to be heard, the bully calls the fags a millionaire, though, and, scuttle right and left to get out of hearing!

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