

“THE BOUNDER’S RIVAL!”

This week's
Sensational School story

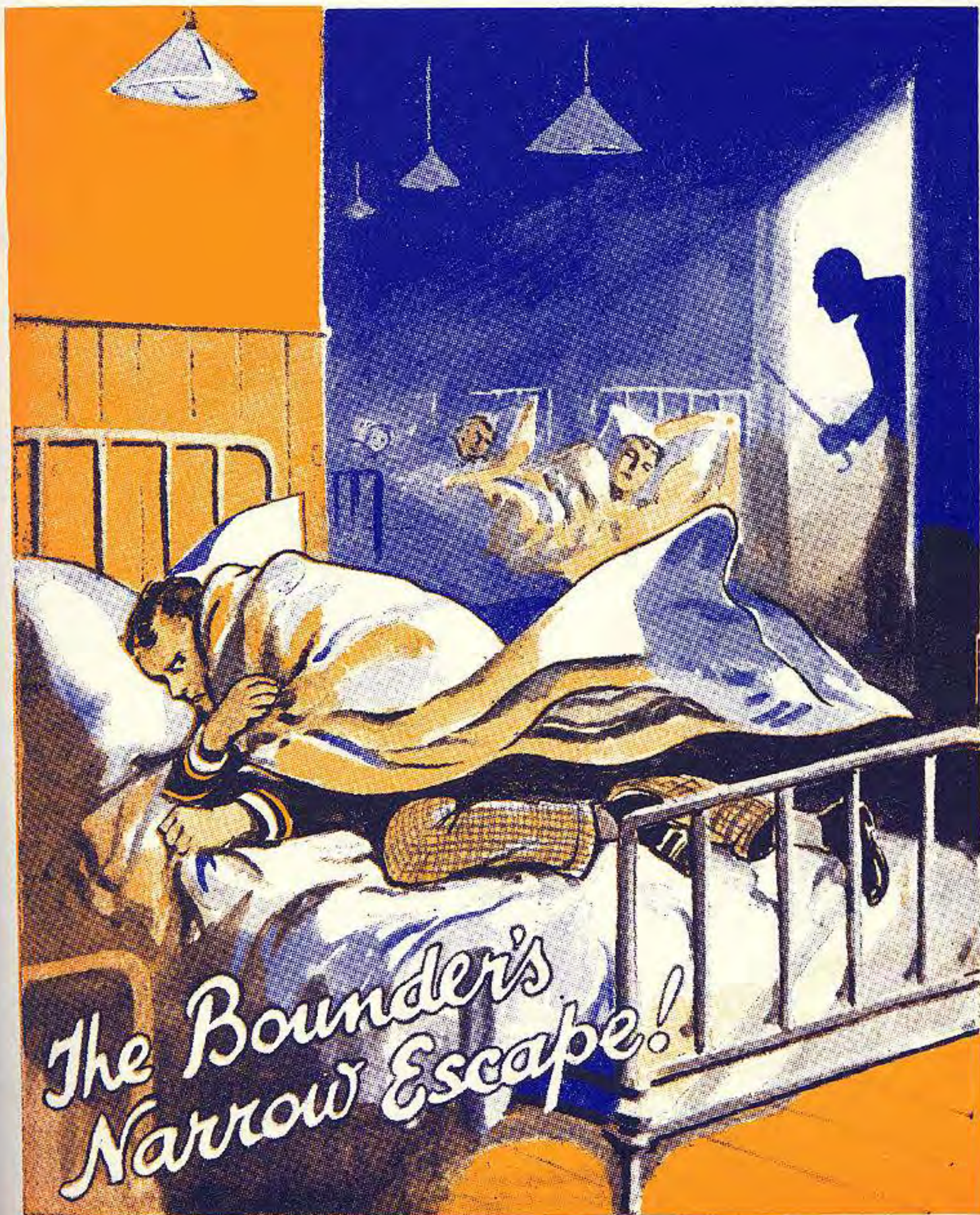
By FRANK RICHARDS.

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THE BOUNDER'S RIVAL!



By

FRANK RICHARDS

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bunter's Bright Idea!

"**B**OTHER the fellow!" granted Billy Bunter.

Bunter was annoyed.

He blinked to and fro through his big spectacles in the quad-rangle at Greyfriars, evidently in search of somebody. But the somebody of whom he was in search did not seem to be in the offing.

"Blow him!" said Bunter.

It was a sunny March morning, and just on time for first school. Any moment now Bunter expected to hear the bell for classes. And for ten minutes, at least, he had been looking for Smithy without finding him. Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, had disappeared after brekker, and the fat Owl of the Remove sought him, but found him not.

"I say, you fellows!" Bunter rolled up to Harry Wharton & Co., who were coming towards the House. "Seen Smithy?"

"I believe he went into the Cloisters," answered Wharton.

"Bother him!" growled Bunter. "It will be class in a minute or two—"

"Smithy isn't coming in to class this morning," said Bob Cherry. "He's leaving while we're in Form."

"I know that. That's why I want to see him—and the silly ass goes wandering off when a fellow wants to speak to him," granted Bunter.

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And the fat Owl started across the quad towards the old Cloisters.

"Don't be late, Bunter!" called out Bob. "It's Loder this morning—"

Unheeding, Bunter rolled on.

In the Cloisters he blinked up and down impatiently for the Bounder. In that secluded spot out of the general view, a junior was pacing up and down with his hands driven deep into his pockets, and a dark frown on his brow. The Bounder of Greyfriars was not looking merry or bright that morning, which was natural enough in a fellow under sentence of the "sack," who was to leave the old school, while the other fellows were in Form. Plenty of fellows sympathised with Smithy, or pitied him; but he wanted neither sympathy nor pity; he wanted to be left alone. And as he saw the fat Owl coming, his frown deepened into a black scowl.

"Oh, here you are, Smithy!" Bunter came panting up. "I've been looking for you, old chap."

"Well, go and look for somebody else!" snapped Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, really, Smithy—"

"Cut off, and leave a fellow alone!"

"It's rather important, old chap," said Bunter. "Don't be shirty, you know! 'Tain't my fault you're bunked, is it? I'm awfully sorry for you, really."

"Oh, shut up!"

The Bounder tramped away. He had rebuffed Harry Wharton & Co. when they said good-bye to him. He had snapped even at his best chum, Tom

Redwing. He was in a bitter and savage mood, and wanted no company—least of all that of the fat and fatuous Owl.

But Bunter was not to be denied. It was said of old that fools rush in where angels fear to tread. The fat Owl rolled after him, and grabbed at his arm.

"I say, Smithy—"

Vernon-Smith jerked his arm away and glared.

"Do listen to a chap!" urged Bunter. "I say, Loder's taking the Remove this morning—that beastly bully, you know. Of course, it's a jolly good thing for Quelch to be away; and the longer it is before a new beak comes, the better. I don't mind Wingate or Walker taking us in Form. But this morning it's that brute Loder of the Sixth—"

"What does it matter to me, you fat Owl?" snapped the Bounder. "I'm done with the Remove."

"That's why I wanted to speak to you," explained Bunter. "You see, you being sacked and going this morning, you can do something that another fellow couldn't do. Loder's in his study now."

"Hang Loder!"

"If a fellow locked him in—"

"What?"

"See the idea?" grinned Bunter. "I've had my eye on the beast! He's in his study. Suppose a fellow nipped along to the Sixth, grabbed his key, and locked the door on the outside?"

The Bounder stared blankly.

"Easy as falling off a form—what?" grinned Bunter. "The fellow walks off with the key, and leaves Loder locked in his study. Might be a jolly long time getting out. We may get off half the lesson—perhaps all of it, with luck—see?"

"I'd like to see you do it!" granted the Bounder.

"I'm not going to do it, fathead! It would mean a fearful whopping, locking a Sixth Form prefect in his study! You're going to do it, Smithy!"

"Wha-a-t?"

"Safe enough for you," explained Bunter. "As you're sacked, you may be gone before Loder gets out. Anyhow, it stands to reason that the Head wouldn't whop you when he's just kicking you out of the school. I've thought it out, you see, old chap."

"Oh!" gasped the Bounder. "You've thought it out, have you?"

"That's it, old fellow. You being sacked, it will be all right for you. But I say, there's no time to lose. The bell may go any minute now. Come on, old chap."

The Bounder gazed at Billy Bunter.

The fact that he had come a "mucker," that the gates of Greyfriars were about to close on him for ever, that his long run of luck had failed him at last, and that he had to go, evidently seemed, to William George Bunter, a trifle light as air.

To the Bounder himself it was very far from being a trifle. But the fat Owl of the Remove, as usual, was thinking entirely of his own fat and important self.

"Come on!" urged Bunter. "I tell you it's all right for you—safe as houses, old chap. Now you're going to be kicked out, you know. Yarrooh!"

Billy Bunter broke off suddenly with a fearful yell.

Why Herbert Vernon-Smith suddenly grasped him by the collar, and banged his head on one of the old stone pillars of the Cloisters Bunter did not know.

But he knew that Vernon-Smith did it. Of that fact he was only too painfully aware.

Bang!

"Whoop!"

Bang!

"Yaroooh!"

"Now, you fat rotter——"

"Yow-ow! Leggo!" roared Bunter. He tore himself loose from the Bounder's angry grasp. "Wow! Beast! Yaroooh! Wharrer you cutting up rusty for, you rotter, I'd like to know? Oh crikey!"

Bunter turned to flee. A boot landed on his tight trousers as he started. He flew.

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter.

He fled for his fat life. After him came the Bounder, letting out first one foot, and then the other, dribbling the Owl of the Remove like a fat football.

Thud, thud, thud, thud!

"Yow-ow-woop!"

"Take that, you fat frump, and that, and that——"

"Oh crikey! Yo-w-ow! Help! I say, you fellows—— Yarooop! Oh crumbs!"

How Bunter escaped from the Cloisters he hardly knew.

The Bounder stopped in the quad and turned back; but Bunter flew on, panting and gasping, under the impression that pursuit was still close behind him. He came charging up to the House steps at a terrific rate. Harry Wharton & Co., about to go in, turned, and stared at him.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" roared Bob Cherry. "What——"

"I say, you fellows! Keep him off!" yelled Bunter. "I say, help! I say, hold him! I say, collar him! Keep him off!"

"Keep who off?"

"Eh!" Bunter blinked round and made the discovery that he was not pursued, and that the Bounder was not in sight. "Oh, I thought he was just behind me! Oh crikey! Oh lor'! I say, you fellows, that beast Smithy—oh lor'—— I say, he kicked me! Wow! I'm jolly glad he's sacked! Why, you rotter, wharrer you kicking me for?" howled Bunter. "Wow! Stop it!"

Billy Bunter dodged into the House, quite tired of boot leather.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Down and Out!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH crossed the quad, tramping slowly towards the House.

The bell had long ceased to ring. The Remove were in their Form-room, with Loder of the Sixth—the other Forms with their masters. There was not a fellow in the deserted quadrangle. From the direction of the gates, old Gosling, the porter, blinked at the Bounder, and shook his ancient head.

The Bounder's brow was darkly knitted; his lips set in a tight line. Since he had received the sentence of the "sack" the previous day, every hour at the school had been an hour of torment for the fellow whose reckless folly had brought disaster upon him. As he had to go, he would have been glad to go at once and get it over, and get out of sight of all eyes, whether indifferent, sympathetic, or mocking. But that did not rest with him—it rested with his father—and Mr. Vernon-Smith had refused to take him when he went, and he was to remain till the Head heard from his father.

He had "mooched" about dismally enough in the Cloisters till the school went in, to avoid the sea of curious eyes. Now, however, he came back to the House—safe from staring faces with all the fellows in Form.

Smithy had been thinking, hard and bitterly. Now his mind was made up. He was not going to be there, to be stared at as a fellow who was sacked, when the school came out in break. He had had more than enough of that.

He went into the House, and tramped up the stairs to the Remove passage. He kicked open the door of Study No. 4, his own study—or that study that had been his. Then he gave a jump at the sight of a Remove fellow in the room. It was Tom Redwing.

"You here!" exclaimed Smithy.

Redwing was standing at the window. He turned, and gave the Bounder a nod. His face was more distressed than Smithy's. The friendship between the two had been chequered enough; but the final disaster of his chum had come almost as a stunning shock to Redwing.

"The Form's gone in," said Vernon-Smith, staring at him. "You'll get into a row, Reddy!"

"I don't care!"

"That brute Loder's taking the Remove. He will jump on you for being late."

"Let him!"

The Bounder's hard, angry face softened as he looked at his chum.

Complete ruin stares the Bounder of Greyfriars in the face—for not only is he under sentence of expulsion, but his father has disowned him. Then comes the Bounder's big chance—the Head relents at the eleventh hour!

"Don't be an ass, Reddy! No good getting into a row!" he said, unusually gently. "Cut off to the Form-room."

Redwing shook his head.

"When are you going?" he asked.

"Now!" answered the Bounder.

"Then your father's phoned to the Head?"

"Not that I know of."

"Then—I don't see——"

The Bounder gave a harsh laugh.

"I'm fed-up with this," he said.

"The pater refused to take me away with him yesterday. I told you what he said! He warned me, last time I came near bein' bunked, that if I was kicked out of the school, he was done with me. He's kept his word. I'm disowned—disinherited!" The Bounder gritted his teeth. "I'm not to go home—goodness knows where I'm to go! I'm to be shoved somewhere—any old place will do, I dare say! The pater's lettin' the Head know this mornin', and then I'm to be shooed out like a strange cat! Well, I'm not waitin'."

"But—you must, old chap!"

"Must I?" The Bounder laughed again. "Well, I won't, see? I'm not goin' to be a sight for a starin' crowd any longer! I'm goin'. I've come here for a few things I want—then I'm walkin' out."

"Gosling will stop you, if——"

"I've no objection to puttin' Gosling on his back before I go! He will be sorry for it if he barges my way."

The Bounder went to his desk and opened it. He began to sort over the interior, his chum watching him with

anxious eyes. From of old, Tom knew how futile it was to argue with the arrogant, self-willed Bounder. It was that arrogant self-will that had landed Smithy in his present scrape; but that scrape had not cured him of it by any means. Tom stood in silence till the Bounder was ready to quit the study again. Then he quietly stepped to the door, and put his back to it.

"Look here, Smithy——" he said quietly.

"No good jawin', fathead!" snapped Vernon-Smith. "The sooner I'm gone, the better! I tell you I won't face the crowd again."

"It's a long time to break, Smithy. The Head may hear from your father before then. He expects you to wait for——"

"Let him expect!"

"You don't want to cheek the Head the last thing you do here, Smithy."

"Why not?" said the Bounder coolly. "I've nothin' more to lose here. I've gone to the bad—with a crash! Precious little I care for the Head now!"

"Well, your father, then——"

"My father?" The Bounder's tone was full of bitter mockery. "I haven't a father now—he told me so! After I've come such a mucker, he's not givin' me any more chances! He's playin' the Roman parent now—the stern Brutus! He won't trust his millions into my hands when the time comes, to make ducks and drakes of! So he's told me! I'm turned off—and he's going to adopt a relative—some sneaking rotter, I suppose, who has been pullin' his leg, and makin' a fool of him! I'm disinherited!" The Bounder clenched his hands. "I had it all from him—before the Head, too! Even the Beak looked sorry for me by the time the pater was through! Well, let him keep to it! I'm askin' nothin' at his hands! I'm goin'!"

"But, old fellow——"

"Let me pass, you ass!"

Redwing did not move from the door. It was because he feared some rash act on Smithy's part that he had cut class that morning. His heart ached for his chum, and he meant to do his best to keep him from making matters, already bad enough, worse.

"Smithy, old fellow, listen to me!" he urged. "I know how you feel! But have a little sense, old chap! Your father is wild with you—you can't blame him, after all the warnings he gave you—after all the chances you had. But he will come round! He's wild with you now, but later——"

"You don't know him!" sneered the Bounder. "He prides himself on never changing his mind or his plans—he's hard as flint! What he's said, he means—every word of it! I'm not blaming him, either, if you come to that! I'm a chip of the old block, and I dare say I should do the same in his place! I had chances enough—and I threw them away! I've played the goat, and I've got the chopper! I knew what to expect if the crash came—and it's come!"

"And yet——" muttered Tom.

"And yet I played the fool, and asked for it!" jeered the Bounder. "You needn't tell me what an idiot I was. Think I don't know? If I had another chance——" He broke off, with an angry shrug of the shoulders. "By gum, if I had another chance, I'd toe the line carefully enough, if only to put paid to that barging scoundrel who's gettin' into my shoes at home! No good thinkin' of that. The Head sacked me before, and let me try again—he won't wash it out this time. He's glad to be shut of me. So would Quelch be if he was here! It will be jolly for old

Quelch, to find me gone when he turns up again—I've always been a thorn in his side! What a fool I've been, Reddy!"

"Don't add to it, old chap, by playing the goat now!" said Redwing. "Wait till the Head sends for you—I'll stay out of class till then—"

"I'm not waitin' a minute longer! Let me pass, you fool!"

"I tell you—"

"Oh, don't be an ass! Get aside!"

"Smithy, old man! You've made your father wild enough already—don't make it worse! What will he think if he hears that you've bolted on your own, without waiting—"

"Let him think what he likes! I'm goin'!" The Bounder's brow darkened. "Do you think you're goin' to stop me, you dummy? I don't want a row with you, Reddy before I go—but I warn you that I'm in a mood to knock you, or anybody else, spinning. Stand away from that door."

Redwing did not move.

"Will you let me pass?" shouted the Bounder, and he came towards his chum, his fists clenched, and his eyes blazing.

"No," said Redwing quietly, "I won't! Matters are bad enough, without being made worse! Stay here!"

"I'll shift you soon enough, you cheeky fool!" And the Bounder laid his angry grasp on Redwing and wrenched him away from the door.

There was a crash, as Tom went spinning across the study, and landed on the rug by the fender. He lay panting for the moment, and the Bounder, unheeding him, dragged the door open. He strode out of the study—and almost crashed into a big, athletic Sixth Former, who arrived at the door at the same moment.

Wingate of the Sixth stepped back a pace, staring at him.

"What the thump!" The captain of Greyfriars stared at the expelled junior's flushed, angry face, and glanced at Redwing, picking himself up from the rug. "Kicking up a shindy, your last morning here, Vernon-Smith, what?"

"Mind your own bizney!" snarled the Bounder. And he made a movement to pass the Sixth Form man.

Wingate's grasp dropped on his shoulder.

"You're wanted!" he said briefly.

"The Head's sent for you!"

"Bother the Head!"

"If you weren't sacked, Vernon-Smith, I'd give you six for that! As it is, you'll come with me!" Wingate's grasp tightened as the Bounder gave a wrench. "Redwing, go to your Form-room at once—you're late for class! Come with me, Vernon-Smith."

The Bounder gritted his teeth. But the Greyfriars captain's grasp on his shoulder was like iron, and he had to go. Herbert Vernon-Smith was not, after all, to clear off on his own that morning.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Roman Father!

B UZZZ!

Dr. Locke, the headmaster of Greyfriars, sighed, as he took up the telephone receiver. It was the call he had been expecting at last.

The Head was in his study. Mr. Lascelles was taking the Sixth Form in mathematics just then, and the headmaster was at leisure. He did not seem to be enjoying his leisure. Waiting in his study for the expected telephone call

from Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith, Dr. Locke had a clouded and troubled brow.

He was thinking of Smithy—the fellow who was "sacked." Never had a fellow deserved it more, or asked for it so persistently. And yet—the Head, who had administered stern justice without a qualm, found himself compassionating the unhappy junior, and feeling deeply concerned about him. Smithy had haunted his thoughts ever since the scene in his study the previous day, when Smithy's father had cast him off.

He sat at the telephone, and placed the receiver to his ear.

"Mr. Vernon-Smith! Good-morning, sir—"

"Oh! Good-morning!" came the barking voice of the millionaire. Mr. Vernon-Smith had little time to waste on polite greetings. "I am sorry to interrupt you, Dr. Locke; but I will be brief. I have now made arrangements for my son's reception in a household of which I will give you the address immediately—"

"Quite so. But—"

"Perhaps you will take down the address, sir! The boy is to be sent there. The responsibility is yours."

"One word, please!" said the headmaster. "I had, as you know, ample cause—more than ample cause—for expelling your son from this school—"

"I am aware of it, sir! I have no desire to make any complaint or to go into the matter again. My time, sir, is valuable, and no doubt yours is also."

The Head coloured.

"Valuable as your time may be, Mr. Vernon-Smith, I request you to listen to me," he said sharply.

"Kindly be brief, sir!"

"I repeat that I have no alternative but to expel Vernon-Smith. He has flagrantly outraged all the laws of the school—breaking bounds after lights out at night, and—"

"Have I disputed it, sir?"

"No! No! What I desire to point out is this—that while feeling that the boy must leave the school, as certainly he must, I feel also that the sentence of expulsion from Greyfriars is a sufficient punishment for his wrongdoing. I assuredly had no idea that he was to be further punished—I expected, as a matter of course, to send him to his home—"

"Is that all, sir?"

"No, sir, that is not all. I am bound to point out, as Vernon-Smith's headmaster, concerned in his welfare, that your treatment of the boy is harsh—"

"That is a matter of opinion, sir. We differ!"

"The boy is expelled—he deserves it—more than deserves it! But to be disowned and disinherited by his father, sir, is a very harsh measure—"

"I gave him fair warning! He knows me to be a man of my word! A boy who is turned out of his school in disgrace shall never be heir to my fortune, sir! He knew what was at stake. I made it quite clear to him."

"Surely, sir, you did not mean all that you said to the boy, your only son, in my presence yesterday?"

"I meant every word, sir! I have already selected the relative whom I shall adopt in his place, and acquainted him with the fact. Herbert know this when he was guilty of his last act of rebellion and folly. After his former sentence of expulsion, which you kindly rescinded, sir, I left him in no doubt on the subject. There is nothing more to be said."

Dr. Locke breathed hard.

"Then you refuse to receive the boy at home?"

"I have said so, sir."

"You have definitely resolved to cast him off?"

"Irrevocably."

"Mr. Vernon-Smith, I beg you to consider—"

"Dr. Locke, I have said that my time is of value! I may add that you are now intervening in family matters!"

"Sir!" gasped the Head, his face scarlet over the telephone.

"Your concern with the boy, sir, ceases when he leaves the school of which you are headmaster! Unless, indeed, you have changed your mind, sir, and decided to allow him to remain—"

"Certainly not!"

"Then discussion is useless, sir. The address to which the boy is to be sent is 'The Laurels, Bayswater Road, London.' There he will be received till further arrangements are made. Good-morning, sir!"

"Mr. Vernon-Smith! I am compelled to appeal to you, for the sake of this unhappy boy—"

"Useless, sir!"

"I beg you to listen—"

"Good-morning, Dr. Locke!"

"Bless my soul!" said the headmaster of Greyfriars, staring blankly at the telephone.

The millionaire had rung off.

Dr. Locke rose from the instrument.

"Bless my soul!" he repeated.

His brows knitted. It was true that, as Mr. Vernon-Smith declared, he had no concern with the boy after he had left Greyfriars. That was his father's affair; and his father was obviously not in want of advice from the headmaster. Annoyed, angry, deeply incensed, the Head was strongly tempted to dismiss the whole matter from his mind, to dispatch the expelled junior to the address given, and wash his hands of the whole tribe of Vernon-Smiths.

But—there was a "but."

The boy was a reckless young rascal. He had offended, not once, but many times. He had been given chance after chance, and had thrown every chance away. He thoroughly deserved to be expelled from his school! It would be a relief when the most troublesome fellow at Greyfriars was gone! But—while Herbert Vernon-Smith deserved, to the full, all that he had received at the hands of his headmaster, he was getting hard measure from his father. Mr. Vernon-Smith, apparently, forgot that a long course of careless indulgence, on his own part, had helped to make the Bounder the reckless and wilful scapegrace that he was. Even apart from that, disinheritance, the blotting-out of all his prospects, was too severe a punishment. With every allowance for a father's just anger, the millionaire was coming down too heavy!

Dr. Locke sighed.

The City gentleman had as good as told him to mind his own business. That was what he wanted to do, very much indeed. But—still there was a troublesome "but."

The Head glanced at the clock. Mr. Lascelles would be leaving the Sixth; it was time for the Head to proceed there.

He left the study and went slowly along the passages to the Sixth Form Room. The mathematics master was just going. Sophocles and the Sixth claimed the Head's attention; but he could not dismiss from his mind the dark, harassed face he had glimpsed in the quad that morning—the face of Herbert Vernon-Smith. It haunted him and worried him. If the boy had been going home, he could and would

have dismissed the matter from his mind. But—

"Wingate!" said the Head. "Will you kindly look for Vernon-Smith, and take him to my study."

"Certainly, sir."

Wingate left the Form-room.

Leaving the Sixth to handle Sophocles on their own for a time, Dr. Locke returned to his study. His mind was in a troubled state of doubt.

All he had to do was to send the expelled junior to the railway station and have done with him. All he had been waiting for was the address to which he was to be sent.

But other thoughts were in the headmaster's mind as he sat in his study and waited for the scapegrace of the school.

With a firm grip on the Bounder's shoulder he marched him towards the headmaster's study.

The Bounder's teeth were set.

"You fool!" he muttered savagely. "Let me go! I'm not going to see the Beak. I'm done with the old ass. Do you fancy that I want yards of pi-jaw before I'm turfed out?"

"Head's orders!" said Wingate. "Come on, and don't play the fool."

"Let me go!"

"This way!" said Wingate cheerfully.

"I'll hack your shins!"

"Better not!" said Wingate quietly.

But the Bounder, in a mood of recklessness that was born of despair, did not heed the warning. He turned on

captain rushing angrily in pursuit. The little, dapper figure of Monsieur Charpentier, the French master, appeared in the doorway from the quad. He stared.

"Stop him, Mossoo!" shouted Wingate.

"Mon Dieu!" ejaculated Monsieur Charpentier.

He skipped in the Bounder's way and grabbed at his collar. Vernon-Smith barged into him with all his weight and strength. He was quite reckless now, in a mood to give all the trouble he could before he went. Monsieur was fairly floored by the Bounder's desperate rush. He went over on his back with a crash.

"Ciel!" he gasped. "Ooooooh! Mon Dieu! Urrrrgh!"



Monsieur Charpentier was fairly floored by the Bounder's desperate rush. He went over on his back with a crash. "Ciel!" he gasped. "Oooooooh! Mon Dieu! Urrrrgh!" It delayed Vernon-Smith only a second; but that was enough for Wingate, who was speeding on his track. Wingate's grasp closed on the Bounder's collar the next moment.

His mind had been made up—now it was swaying in doubt again. To send the boy, young rascal as he was, to so hard a fate, seemed to him beyond the limits of justice. For once in his long career as a schoolmaster Dr. Locke simply did not know what to do.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Last Chance!

"WILL you let me go?"

"No!"

"You rotter!" said the Bounder between his teeth.

Wingate took no heed of that.

He was, as a matter of fact, sorry for the hapless Bounder. He had seen Mr. Vernon-Smith in the Head's study the previous day, and he knew that the expelled junior had plenty of trouble to come, without any more, before he left the school!

the Sixth Form man, struggling and kicking to get free.

Wingate's face set grimly. He was sorry for the wretched fellow, but there was a limit to his patience. His grasp tightened, and the rebel of the Remove was swept off his feet.

"Are you coming, or shall I carry you, Vernon-Smith?" asked the Greyfriars captain coolly.

"Oh, you rotter!" panted Smithy desperately. "Put me down, you bully. I'll walk. Oh, you hound!"

Wingate set him on his feet again. The moment he was on the floor the Bounder, with a sudden wrench, tore himself loose.

Instantly he was springing away.

Wingate grabbed after him, a second too late. Vernon-Smith went down the passage like an arrow, heading for the open doorway on the quad.

"Stop!" roared Wingate.

The Bounder flew on, the Greyfriars

The Bounder stumbled over him. It delayed him only a second; but that was enough for Wingate, speeding on his track.

Wingate's grasp closed on him again and he swung him back bodily from the doorway.

Monsieur Charpentier sat up, gasping for breath. The Bounder spun round at Wingate, savagely resisting.

"Mon Dieu! Qu'est-que-c'est?" spluttered Mossoo. "Vat is ze mattair, isn't it? Vat is all zis?"

The Bounder crumpled up in Wingate's sinewy grasp. Breathless, panting, he was half-led, half-dragged to the Head's study. Holding him by the collar with a grip of iron, Wingate tapped at the door with his other hand and opened it.

"Vernon-Smith, sir!" he said quietly. He pushed the panting junior into the

study and drew the door shut, half-regretting that he had not thrashed him for his insolence. He lingered in the passage a few moments. He would not have been surprised to see the Bounder come bolting out of the study. But the door remained shut, and he walked away at last to the Sixth Form Room.

Vernon-Smith calmed down in the presence of the Head. The passionate outburst of savage temper had passed, succeeded by a miserable feeling of depression. He stood, still panting a little, facing his headmaster. Dr. Locke was looking at him with an expression he did not quite understand. There was silence for some moments, then the headmaster spoke, in an unexpectedly gentle tone.

"I have now heard from your father, Vernon-Smith."

"Yes, sir" muttered the Bounder. "He has given me an address in London to which you are to go when you leave here."

"Very well, sir," said the Bounder dully.

Rather to his own surprise, he was not feeling disposed to "cheek" the Head. He only wanted to get through, and get away—out of sight before all the fellows came trooping out of the Form-rooms.

But there was a long pause. Evidently the Head had something more to say; but it seemed as if he did not quite know how to say it.

"I'm ready, sir," said Vernon-Smith, breaking the silence. "If you don't mind, sir, I'd like to go before all the fellows come out. It's been pretty rotten for me since they knew I was bunked."

"I hardly know what to say to you, Vernon-Smith," said Dr. Locke slowly. "It is very strange, to my mind, that

you should have acted with such reckless thoughtlessness, knowing the severity with which your father would view your expulsion from the school."

"I know I've been a fool, sir. I suppose I never quite realised that my father was in earnest—though I knew he was, all the while."

"You are aware, Vernon-Smith, that your conduct left me no choice in this matter."

"I know, sir. I'm ready to go."

"But I was unaware," went on the Head, "that your father would take so extreme a view of the matter."

The Bounder looked at him. What all this was leading to he could not guess. His heart gave a sudden jump. Was there a chance for him, after all?

"At the beginning of this term," said the Head, "you were found out of bounds, after lights-out, and sentenced to expulsion. Owing to circumstances, that sentence was rescinded, and you were given another chance. What have you made of it?"

"I've thrown it away, like a fool, sir!" said the Bounder.

The Head smiled faintly.

"Vernon-Smith! There is at least one circumstance in your favour," he said, very slowly

The Bounder could only wonder. He had "taken the knock," and it seemed like the end of all things for him. But he did not dispute the justice of his sentence. He was quite unaware of anything that could be adduced in his favour!

"You have been rebellious, insolent, reckless, and a thorn in the side of authority," went on the Head. "You have done disgraceful things, heedless of your own good name and the good name of the school. But I believe, at least, that you have never led other

boys into your own lawless ways. You have been a danger to yourself, but not to others."

"That's true, sir!" said the Bounder. It had hardly occurred to him, but it was clear that the headmaster had observed it, and undoubtedly it was a circumstance in his favour.

"If I had to regard you as a bad influence in your Form, as a danger to others, I should have no alternative but to carry out my sentence. Vernon-Smith. I should have to do my duty unflinchingly. But if I should allow you one more chance to make good—"

The Head paused.

Smithy's eyes danced.

"Oh, sir!" he breathed.

"Understand me, Vernon-Smith! I will ask no promise from you, because I cannot trust you. I will not add promise-breaking to your other transgressions. I shall leave it to you to act with more circumspection. If you offend again you leave this school immediately. You will remain on your good behaviour. The first offence will be the last. If I refrain from sending you away now it is only because of the extreme severity with which you will be treated after you have left. You understand that?"

"I understand, sir," breathed the Bounder.

"Your father is justly angry, but I have no doubt that he will forgive you and will be glad to let bygones be bygones, if you remain here," said the Head. "You must try to regain his good opinion—and mine. I have hesitated long before deciding this, Vernon-Smith. I can only hope that you will not give me cause to regret my decision."

Herbert Vernon-Smith breathed hard and deep. Another chance—to stick on, to escape expulsion, disinheritance—to defeat the scheming, unknown interloper who was counting on barging into his place at home, in his father's good graces! Another chance—when he had not dreamed of a gleam of hope! And had not Redwing stayed him he would have missed it! What a fool he had been—and still was! He felt almost giddy for some moments. The Head was looking at him, quietly and gravely. He did not trust the boy; he could not like him. Yet, if it could possibly be avoided, he could not send him away to what awaited him. He felt that he had to temper justice with mercy—but he feared that he was throwing away kindness upon a hard heart and unrepentant mind.

"I—I—I'm to stay, then, sir?" gasped the Bounder at last.

"Yes," said the Head, almost with an effort. "You are to stay, Vernon-Smith, and I will tell your father so."

"I'll play up, sir! You shan't ever be sorry for it, if I can help it," breathed the Bounder. "I know you won't believe me—I suppose you can't—but I mean it, sir! I mean it, every word!"

"I hope so—I trust so, Vernon-Smith!" said the Head; and there was no doubt that, for the moment, at least, the Bounder was in deep and sincere earnest. "The whole matter will now be dismissed—you will make a fresh start, and I can only hope and trust that you will make the best of it." The Head rose. "You may go to your Form-room, Vernon-Smith."

"Thank you, sir!"

Quietly the Bounder left the study. The black and harassed look was gone from his face. His eyes were shining. The fellow who had been "down and out" seemed to be walking on air as he went to the Remove-room.



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THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Smithy in a Shindy!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. were not having a good time that morning.

Gerald Loder, of the Sixth Form, was taking a turn with the Remove; and Loder, seldom in a good temper, was now in a very bad one. Skinner, who knew, or claimed to know, a good deal about Loder's manners and customs, surmised that his latest "dead cert" had come in eleventh. Anyhow, Loder was bad-tempered; and the Removites got the benefit of it.

Billy Bunter felt the deepest resentment at the Bounder's refusal to carry out his suggestion of locking the bully of the Sixth in his study. Bunter's fat knuckles were rapped several times that lesson, and every rap drew a loud howl from the fat junior. Bob Cherry had lines for shuffling his feet; Nugent for speaking to Wharton, and Wharton for speaking to Nugent; Johnny Bull for dropping a book, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh for dropping a pen. Lord Mauleverer had lines for yawning. Bolsover major for scowling; Peter Todd and Squiff and Hazeldene for something or other, it really hardly mattered what—lines, in fact, fell like leaves in Vallombrosa, in the Remove-room in first school. The juniors could only hope that, as they were so numerous, Loder would forget some of them.

When Tom Redwing came in late Loder had a genuine pretext for breaking out, and he picked up the cane from the Form-master's desk. But even Loder, after a second glance at Tom's face, laid the cane down again and only told him gruffly to go to his place. Not that Redwing cared much whether he was caned or not. He had, so he believed, seen the last of his chum at Greyfriars, and his heart was too heavy for him to think or care about anything else.

Many of the fellows were thinking of the Bounder; wondering whether he was gone, or whether they would see him again in break. Certainly they had no expectation of seeing him in the Form-room.

But that, in point of fact, was where they were destined to see him. First lesson was drawing to an end when there was a footstep in the passage, the door opened, and Herbert Vernon-Smith looked in. And every eye in the Remove was glued on him at once.

"I say, you fellows!" squeaked Billy Bunter in great excitement. "It's Smithy!"

Vernon-Smith stepped in. His face was cool and calm. His eyes glimmered with amusement. He knew that his unexpected appearance in the Form-room caused a sensation there; and he was rather enjoying it.

Loder of the Sixth made a stride towards him, staring.

"Vernon-Smith! What are you doing here?" he rapped. There had lately been trouble between the bully of the Sixth and the rebel of the Remove, which neither of them had forgotten.

"Goin' to my place, Loder!" answered the Bounder meekly.

"Your place?" repeated Loder blankly.

"Yes."

"What do you mean, you young sweep? You're sacked—get out of this Form-room at once."

"I'm not sacked, Loder," said Smithy, with the same meekness. "Dr. Locke has been kind enough to let me off."

There was a buzz in the Remove. Fellows stared incredulously at the

Bounder. Redwing's face brightened, but he was doubtful. Smithy's statement was too surprising to be believed easily. Loder did not believe a word of it; and if he had been inclined to do so, he would have banished the idea, as he caught the wink that Smithy gave Skinner. Skinner grinned, having no doubt that the Bounder was bent on mischief. It was like him to give all the trouble he could before he went.

"You lying young rascal!" said Loder angrily. "Do you mean to tell me that you're staying on in the school, after all? Is that it?"

"That's it exactly, Loder!"

"Well, I don't believe you! But as you've chosen to butt in here, I'll give you six for your cheek." Loder picked up Mr. Quelch's cane again and pointed to a chair with it. "Bend over that chair, Vernon-Smith."

RHYMES OF THE REMOVE.

No. 8.



This week's contribution by the Greyfriars rhymester is entitled: "TOM BROWN'S BIKE." Try singing it to the tune of "John Brown's Body."

Tom Brown's uncle sent
A motor-bike to Brown;
Tom Brown gaily went
To fetch it from the town,
Tom Brown with content
Got on it and sat down,
And the bike went roaring on!

Tom Brown scorched along
The highways straight and true,
Tom Brown, with a song,
Attacked the byways, too!
Then the brakes went wrong,
He knew not what to do,
As the bike went roaring on!

Tom Brown felt a thrill,
But he was keeping cool;
Tom Brown gained the hill
That leads down to the school;
Past the watermill
Towards a slimy pool
That bike went roaring on!

Tom Brown, at a loss,
Was dodging in and out!
Tom Brown came across
The portly form of Prout!
Paul Prout took a toss
That startled him, no doubt,
As the bike went roaring on!

Tom Brown, with a grin,
Sat on his mad machine;
He saw through the din
A pond loom on the scene!
Tom Brown vanished in
The water cold and green,
But the bike went roaring on!

Tom Brown's body lies
A-soaking in the pond!
Tom Brown's full of sighs,
Of which he isn't fond,
Tom Brown's cheery eyes
Are starting to despond,
But the bike goes roaring on!

"He, he, he!" cackled Billy Bunter.

Some of the fellows grinned, while all of them stared curiously and doubtfully at the Bounder. If Vernon-Smith was not, after all, sacked, if he was still a Greyfriars man, he was liable to a prefect's whopping. But he did not step to the chair to bend over it.

"You're goin' to give me six, Loder?" he asked.

"Yes, bend over."

"What for?" asked the Bounder coolly.

"For barging into this Form-room in lesson-time and telling lies! Are you going to bend over that chair?" snapped Loder, swishing the cane.

"No!" answered Vernon-Smith. "I came here because the Head told me to, and I've told you the exact facts, Loder. If you don't believe me, you can go and ask the Head!"

Smithy was telling the truth; but he contrived to tell it in a way that made it unlikely to be believed. He had meant what he said in the Head's study. But he could not resist the temptation to pull Loder's leg. Within ten minutes of his interview with his headmaster he was entering into a tussle with a Sixth Form prefect, with the intention, if he could, of making Loder make a fool of himself. In Loder's present angry temper, that was not a difficult matter.

"Yes—you'd like me to clear out and leave you here, you cheeky young rascal!" said Loder. "I'm not going to the Head! I'm going to whop you for coming here and telling lies."

And Loder advanced on the Bounder, cane in hand.

"Hook it, Smithy!" breathed Bob Cherry.

But the Bounder did not hook it. He dodged round the desks, coolly eluding the lash of Loder's cane.

The bully of the Sixth rushed after him, red with anger. That Vernon-Smith, reckless and audacious now that he was sacked, had come there to interrupt the lesson and make a shindy generally, was what Loder believed—as did most of the Removites. Loder was the last fellow at Greyfriars to stand that patiently.

He pursued Smithy round the desks and almost cornered him, lashing with the cane. Smithy dodged again, and there was a fearful yell from Lord Mauleverer as he caught a stinging cut that was intended for the Bounder.

"Yaroooh!" yelled his lordship, leaping to his feet. "Oh gad! Whoop! You silly ass—Wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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

Loder, panting, rushed after the Bounder again and hunted him out of the desks. Smithy dodged round the Form-master's high desk, and as Loder circled round it after him, gave Mr. Quelch's high chair a shove, sending it over in Loder's path. The pursuing prefect had no time to stop before he stumbled over it. He came down with a crash and a clatter, and a roar that rang far beyond the Remove Form Room.

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

"Go it, Smithy!" chuckled Skinner.

"Good old Bounder!" chortled Bolsover major.

Vernon-Smith, grinning, stood in the middle of the Form-room, while Loder sprawled and panted. He was enjoying this—and the Remove were beginning to enjoy it. They had no doubt that it was Smithy's last shindy before he went; that was Smithy all over! But Redwing called to him anxiously.

"Smithy, old man, chuck it, for

goodness' sake! Do clear off, old chap."

Vernon-Smith glanced round at him. "Can't!" he answered.

"Eh! Why can't you?"

"Can't leave the Form-room in lesson-time! It's against the rules—and you know how particular I am about the rules."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Removites, greatly tickled at the idea of the Bounder being particular about rules.

"Look out, Smithy!" shouted Tom Brown, as Loder got on his feet and made a rush.

But the Bounder was looking out. He sidestepped swiftly and dodged round the master's desk again, jumping over the fallen chair. Loder was after him like a shot, also jumping over the chair. Round and round the high desk they went, amid yells of laughter from the watching Remove.

"Here we go round the mulberry bush!" sang out Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Crack! Crack! came the ring of the cane, landing on the desk as Loder tried to reach the Bounder across it. An ink-pot flew, and crashed on the floor, spurted ink far and wide. Books and papers scattered. Again Loder rushed, his face crimson by this time with rage and excitement. Vernon-Smith fled among the desks, and after him tore Loder, lashing out recklessly with the cane. Wild yells rose on all sides as six or seven fellows got the benefit of those wild lashes.

"Stoppit!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Keep off, you lunatic!"

"Yaroooh!"

"I say, you fellows— Yoo-hooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fellows were scrambling out of their places on all sides—some to escape that reckless lashing of the cane, others because they saw the chance of a rag. The Form-room was in wild confusion now. Some person unknown hurled a Latin grammar, which landed on the back of Loder's head. Somebody else put out a foot, over which Loder stumbled, coming down among the desks with a crash.

"Man down!" yelled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Loder scrambled up, crimson, panting, wild with rage. He had banged a shin on the iron leg of a desk, and he limped rather painfully. He glared round for the Bounder. That active youth was at the other end of the Form-room again, watching him warily. Loder limped a few paces towards him, and then stopped. By this time he seemed to have realised that the Bounder was rather beyond his powers. He threw down the cane.

With a black and bitter glare at the rebel of the Remove, he limped away to the door and left the Form-room. And the Remove, aware that he had gone to fetch the headmaster, waited breathlessly for his return.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Wolf and the Lamb!

"SMITHY, you ass—"
"Cut before the Beak comes!"

"Loder's gone for him!"

"You'll get a Head's flogging before you go!"

"Cut, you ass!"

Advice was showered on the Bounder from all sides, but he did not seem to have any use for it.

He went coolly to his place in the Remove and sat down.

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Evidently he intended to remain.

"Are you going to wait for the Head, Smithy?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Why not?" answered the Bounder.

"The whopfulness will be terrific, my esteemed and ridiculous Smithy!" said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Smithy, old man, what's the good?" exclaimed Redwing. "You're only making matters worse, old chap."

"Isn't that what he wants?" grinned Skinner. "Stick it, Smithy! You can cheek the Head as much as you like now you're sacked! He can't do anything more than that!"

"Oh, shut up, Skinner!" said Bob Cherry. "If Smithy starts cheeking the Head, we'll jolly well scrag him!"

"The scragfulness will be preposterous!"

"Who's goin' to cheek the Head?" drawled Vernon-Smith. "I'm here carryin' out the Head's orders. Fellow can't do more than that."

"Mean to say the Head told you to come here?" exclaimed Frank Nugent.

"Quite!"

"Gammon!" said Bolsover major.

"Smithy," exclaimed Redwing, "is it true you're not going?"

"Haven't I said so?"

"But—but—but the Head can't have let you off!" said Redwing blankly.

"Why should he?"

"I'm so jolly nice that he hates to part with me!" said the Bounder gravely. "He felt that the wrench would be too great!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, Smithy, if it's true—"

"Surprisin' as it may seem, I'm tellin' the truth, old bean. Not a thing I often do, but we all have our little lapses."

"The Head's letting you stay?" said Harry Wharton blankly. Amazing as it was, the captain of the Remove was beginning to believe it. "Well, if it's true, I'm glad."

"Thanks! I'm sure you're all glad!" said Smithy. "In fact, my chief idea in stayin' is to cause general gladness."

"Is the Head gettin' soft?" asked Skinner, in wonder.

"Gratters, old bean, if it's true!" said Bob Cherry. "But—"

"But is it?" asked Johnny Bull.

"True as a die! I'm here to stay, though somehow Loder didn't seem to believe it." The Bounder laughed.

"That's his look-out."

"The Head's letting you stay, and you begin again by kicking up a shindy with a prefect!" said the captain of the Remove. "You may find that you won't stay long at that rate, you ass!"

"Loder kicked up the shindy!" answered Vernon-Smith coolly. "Was I to bend over and take six for coming here when the Head told me to?"

"Well, no. But Loder didn't believe you. Nobody did."

"That's his look-out."

"You jolly well didn't want him to believe you!" grinned Skinner. "He spotted you winking at me, and you meant him to."

"I suppose it was your game to make him make a fool of himself," said Wharton slowly.

"Exactly! I can't make him look a much bigger fool than he is, anyhow."

"Well, if there's a fool here, Smithy, it's you! You might have had sense enough to lie low for a bit if the Head's really given you another chance."

"Oh, rats!" said the Bounder carelessly.

Evidently the Bounder was not worrying. And the Remove had to believe that he had told the truth—that he was, after all, to stay. That was the news that would greet Loder when he

arrived in the Sixth Form Room to report to the Head that the expelled junior had forced his way into the Form-room and persisted in remaining there. The juniors grinned at the thought of Loder's face when the Head told him how the matter stood.

"I say, you fellows, here he comes!" squeaked Billy Bunter.

There was a rush of the juniors back to their places.

Loder of the Sixth came into the Form-room.

But he came unaccompanied by the Head.

His face was quite pale with chagrin.

One look at him told the Remove that the Bounder had stated the facts—he was not "sacked." It was clear, from Loder's look, that he had learned as much from the headmaster.

Vernon-Smith regarded the prefect with a mocking grin.

He had felt quite safe in defying Loder, Sixth Form prefect as he was. Loder had been going to cane him for barging into the Form-room when the Head had sent him there.

Obviously, Loder could not pursue the matter further, now that he had learned the facts. Indeed, probably he was very glad to let it drop, in the circumstances, without bringing the headmaster on the scene.

He gave Smithy one look, but did not speak to him.

The juniors exchanged glances. It was true, then. Once more the Bounder's proverbial luck had pulled him through.

Skinner had surmised all along that Smithy somehow would "wangle" it and dodge the "boot." Apparently, he had succeeded in doing so. And it was like him to barge into fresh trouble with the crisis scarcely past.

Any other fellow, after such a narrow escape, would have taken example by Agag of old, and "walked delicately"—for a time, at least. But Smithy was the same old Smithy!

Latin grammar was resumed in the Remove Form Room.

Gerald Loder's temper was worse than ever—which was not surprising. He had a very keen eye on the Bounder, and gave him very special attention.

But Smithy was on his guard.

Even Loder had to have some pretext for dropping on a fellow, and the Bounder was careful to give him no pretext.

But it was a case of the wolf and the lamb over again—not that there was much that was lamb-like about Smithy! But Loder, in his present temper, was undoubtedly rather wolfish.

It had pleased Smithy to make a fool of the bully of the Sixth; but it was a dangerous game to play with a prefect who had the power of the ashplant, and only needed the slightest excuse for exercising it.

When the Latin prose papers were finished, Wharton, as head boy, collected them and placed them in a little pile on the Form-master's desk.

Loder, as a rule, would hardly have glanced at them; he was not a whale on duty. Now he carefully examined Vernon-Smith's paper. As Smithy had missed more than half the class, he had not finished the paper, for which assuredly he was not to be blamed. But it was a chance for Loder. Any stick was good enough to beat a dog with, in Loder's opinion.

"Vernon-Smith!" he rapped.

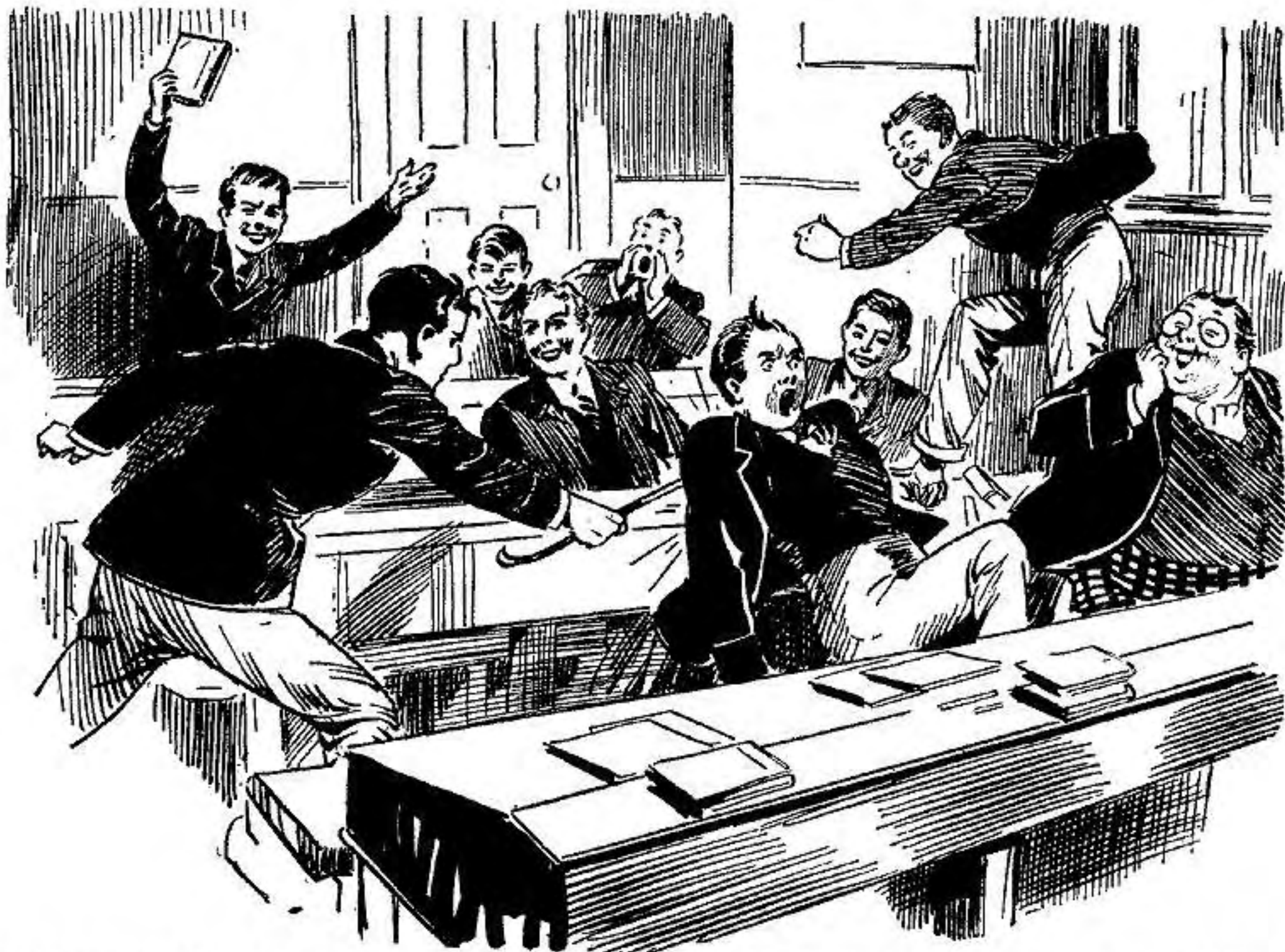
"Yes, Loder!"

"Stand out before the Form!"

The Bounder lounged out.

"You've not finished your paper."

"I had no time, Loder!"



Loder pursued the Bounder round the desks, lashing with the cane. Vernon-Smith dodged, and there was a fearful yell from Lord Mauleverer, as he caught a stinging cut intended for the Bounder. "Yaroooh!" yelled his lordship, leaping to his feet. "Oh, gad! Whoop! You silly ass! Wow!"

"You could have done more than this!"

"I couldn't!"

"I think you could!" said Loder, in a silky voice. "I think you've been slacking, Vernon-Smith."

The juniors looked at one another. They had hardly expected that class to end without trouble. Loder, it was certain, would "get" Smithy if he could—and now he had "got" him.

"No doubt you fancy you can slack as much as you like in this Form-room while your Form-master is away!" said Loder, in the same silky tone. "You will find that that is a mistake, Vernon-Smith."

The Bounder opened his lips—and closed them again. Loder would have liked a cheeky or defiant answer; but Smithy was not going to gratify him. Loder waited a moment or two, but the Bounder stood silent; he was not to be drawn.

Loder picked up Mr. Quelch's cane. "Bend over that chair!" he rapped.

The Bounder breathed hard. There was a pause. Nobody in the Remove-room would have been surprised if the rebel of the Form had repeated his previous exploits. And undoubtedly the Bounder was strongly tempted to do so.

But he realised that it would not do. Loder was in official charge of the Remove in the place of their absent Form-master. It was for him to decide whether a fellow had done what was to be required of him. The Head's authority was behind him in this matter. That he was taking an unfair advantage of his position did not alter that fact.

"I'm waiting, Vernon-Smith!" Loder swished the cane. He was going to whop the junior who had made a fool of him, but he would almost as soon have marched him off to the Head on the charge of slacking, disobedience, and defiance of authority.

Slowly Vernon-Smith bent over the chair. Loder "had" him, and he knew it, and he had to take what was coming to him.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

The whacks rang through the Form-room, almost like pistol-shots.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

It was six, a stiffer six than Mr. Quelch had ever handed out in his Form-room.

Loder seemed disposed to go on with it. But no doubt he realised that there was a limit. He laid down the cane.

"You can go back to your place, Vernon-Smith!" he said. "I warn you to behave yourself while I'm in charge of this Form!"

The Bounder went back to his place in silence. But his eyes were burning. He was wriggling painfully and scowling like a demon when the Remove left the Form-room and went along to Monsieur Charpentier's class-room for second lesson. And Loder grinned after him as he went.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Knows!

"MAN named Smedley!" said Billy Bunter.

Billy Bunter, as usual, was first with the news. Bunter's keyhole system gave him an advantage over other fellows in getting early tidings.

"Smedley!" repeated several voices in the Rag.

"That's it! Eustace Smedley!" said Bunter. "I don't know what he's like, of course, as I've never seen him, but he can't be worse than Quelch, that's one comfort."

All the Remove, of course, were interested to hear about their new master who was coming in the place of Mr. Quelch—the "late lamented" Quelch, as Skinner playfully called him.

Quelch was away on the South Coast, recuperating after influenza—or after handling the Remove, as some fellows in other Forms said. Anyhow, he was away, not to come back before the Easter holidays at the earliest, and the Form, of course, could not carry on without a master. They would have been quite willing to try the experiment—finding things easier with Wingate or Walker and Gwynne, or Mosscoo with extra French, than they had been with gimlet-eyed Quelch, though certainly it was worse than even Quelch when Loder had a turn with the Form. The juniors, however, were not consulted in that matter, and a new "beak" was coming to fill Quelch's place temporarily, and there was considerable interest and speculation on the subject.

"Sounds a rather decent name!" remarked Lord Mauleverer. "Let's hope the man will be a decent bean. When is he coming, Bunter?"

"Wednesday!" said Bunter.

"How old is he, where was he born, and what is his favourite breakfast food?" inquired Bob Cherry gravely.

"Eh? I don't know—"

"You don't?" ejaculated Bob. "Did

somebody come along and kick you away from the keyhole?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you think I was listening when the Head was talking to Prout, you're a suspicious beast," said Bunter. "I heard what the Beak said quite by accident. Seeing them speaking in the passage, I stopped to tie up my shoe-lace—I mean, not seeing them speaking in the passage—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" said Bunter crossly. "Making out that a fellow would listen! You might, Cherry—"

"What?" roared Bob.

"Any of you might! Not me! I happened to hear what the Head said quite by chance while I was picking up my pocket handkerchief. I mean, while I was tying my shoe-lace. He said Smedley was a young man—Master of Arts of Oxford—so he couldn't be the Smedley that Prout knew."

"Did Prout think he knew him, then?"

"I suppose so, from what he said. But a man that Prout knew when he was at Oxford couldn't be young—he would be frightfully old—Prout's frightfully old, you know! Frightfully ancient!" said Billy Bunter. "May have known Smedley's grandfather at Oxford, perhaps. Smedley's young—and I fancy he's rather hard up—"

"Did the Head tell you that?" asked Skinner.

"He told Prout—"

"Rot!" said Harry Wharton. "He wouldn't!"

"Oh, really, Wharton! I suppose I know what I heard while I was picking up my shoe-lace—I mean, tying my handkerchief—that is—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The Head said distinctly that Smedley was hard up!" declared Bunter, with a scornful blink through his big spectacles at the captain of the Remove. "He said the poor blighter hadn't a bean!"

"I can hear him saying that!" chortled Bob Cherry. "It sounds like the Head—just his choice of language."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, they weren't his exact words," said Bunter peevishly. "He said that Smedley's name had been down at the agency for a long time, and that he was glad of the opportunity of giving him an engagement, as he had heard excellent reports of the young man. That means that the man's hard up, doesn't it? I can tell you fellows, school-masters are a drug in the market. Lots and lots of them can't get jobs. I fancy this man Smedley is jumping at the chance with both feet—he may get enough to get his Sunday hat out of pawn—he, he, he!"

"Kick him!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Beast! I can tell you these dashed tutors are a hard-up lot," said Billy Bunter. "If he's had his name down a long time with Leggett and Teggers it means that he can't get a job, and wants one bad!"

Leggett and Teggers, as the Removites knew, was the scholastic agency which supplied Greysfriars and many other schools with temporary beaks when they were wanted.

Any sort of a beak, from a head-master to a music master, could be supplied at short notice by Leggett and Teggers. Once the firm had been Leggett, pure and simple, but new blood had been recently introduced, and now it was Leggett and Teggers. Not that the fellows were in the least degree in-

terested in Leggett and Teggers. To them it was merely an institution, and it hardly crossed their minds that Leggett and Teggers were live human beings.

"Well, he's coming on Wednesday!" went on Bunter. "We've got till then, and, you never know, he may have a railway accident or something, and not turn up after all."

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Let's hope for the best!" chuckled Skinner.

"Some young ass, without much experience!" remarked Bolsover major thoughtfully. "Bit different from Quelch! We shall jolly well be able to rag him in the Remove."

"Oh, rot!" said Redwing. "Give the man a chance."

"Rats to you! What do you think, Smithy?" asked Bolsover major, look-

TIME FOR A JOKE?

Well, here's one for which Gerald Smith, of 9, Humes Avenue, Hanwell, W.7, has been awarded one of this week's **USEFUL POCKET KNIVES.**

NO ADVANTAGE ON EITHER SIDE!

Sergeant (to recruit): "Ever ridden a horse before?"
Recruit: "No, sir."
Sergeant: "Then I've got the very horse for you here. It's never been ridden before, either!"

I've got more prizes in stock, chums, so **PILE IN WITH YOUR EFFORTS!**

ing round at the Bounder. Herbert Vernon-Smith was standing at the window of the Rag, looking out into the quadrangle, and had not been taking part in the talk, or heeding it.

He did not turn his head as Bolsover addressed him. His eyes were fixed on a magnificent Rolls car that had turned in at the gates. The expression on his face was not pleasant. It was his father's car; the Bounder was expecting a visit from Mr. Vernon-Smith that afternoon. He was not looking forward to it with any pleasure.

"Gone deaf, Smithy?" roared Bolsover major.

"Oh rats!" answered Smithy, over his shoulder.

He turned and walked towards the door.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! That's Smithy's pater's car!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as he sighted the Rolls through the window.

"Visit for Smithy!" grinned Skimmer. "He looks as if he's goin' to enjoy it!"

Tom Redwing hurriedly left the Rag after the Bounder. The other fellows were left discussing Bunter's news of the temporary beak, who was coming in a day or two to take the Remove in Quelch's place. Vernon-Smith went up to the Remove passage to his study, perhaps not noticing that his chain was following him.

Redwing overtook him at the door of Study No. 4 in the Remove, and caught him by the arm.

"Your father's come, Smithy!" he exclaimed.

"I know that."

"Aren't you going out to—"

"No!"

Vernon-Smith went into the study. Redwing followed him in, with a clouded brow.

"Hadn't you better—" he asked anxiously.

"Do I ever do what I had better?" sneered the Bounder, as he threw himself into the armchair. "The pater's going to see the Head—he will see me afterwards, here. I can wait for him here. You'd better clear."

"Of course I shall clear," said Tom. "But—I wish you'd try to make peace with your father, Smithy. You've got his back up. What's the good of making matters worse? Go out and meet him when he gets out of the car—"

"I'm stickin' here."

"But look here, Smithy—"

"Shut the door after you!"

Redwing gave him a look. In the state of strain between a headstrong son and an angry father he would have been glad to pour oil on the troubled waters. But it was evidently useless to say anything to Smithy now.

Tom quietly left the study and returned to the Rag.

"Man named Smedley!" Bunter was saying, as he entered, some more fellows having come in who had not yet heard the news. "One of those hard-up tutor-wallahs, you know, from what I heard the Beak say. I dare say he will come here with shiny elbows and frayed trousers—he, he, he! Yaroooh! What beast is that kicking me?"

"Little me, old chap!" said Lord Mauleverer. "You're an inconsiderate little beast, Bunter, givin' a fellow the trouble of gettin' up out of an armchair to kick you!"

"Beast!" roared Bunter. "Ow! Wow! Keep off, you silly fathead!"

Lord Mauleverer, having taken the trouble of getting out of the armchair to kick Bunter, apparently considered that he might as well have his money's worth, as it were! So he kicked him again—and yet again. And Billy Bunter rolled hastily out of the Rag, to spread his news in other quarters.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Shindy in the Study!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH leaned back in the chair in his study, with a dark scowl on his brow. He was waiting to hear the heavy tread of the City gentleman in the Remove passage, and he was expecting the interview with anger, resentment, and a faint dread in his heart.

The change that had come over his once-indulgent father had at first surprised and irritated the Bounder, and later made him both resentful and uneasy.

Smithy was not a fellow to blink the

facts; he knew that he had given his father just cause for anger and for anxiety. But he was an only son; his father had always been indulgent to him, proud of him, and it was difficult for him to realise that he had worn out the millionaire's patience.

It was driven into his mind at last that Mr. Vernon-Smith had lost all faith in him, that he did not regard him as a suitable heir to his immenso fortune, that he felt that he could not trust him with the great business he had built up, with ramifications in every quarter of the globe. That business was, to the millionaire, almost as dear as his son, and he was not going to leave it in the careless hands of a fellow who refused to learn the first lessons of self-control.

The millionaire had been slow to make up his mind on the subject. Having made it up, he was equally slow to change it.

The Head having given Smithy another chance and allowed him to stay on at Greyfriars School, the scapegrace had supposed that the trouble was at an end—that his father would be relieved and delighted.

He made the mortifying discovery that nothing of the kind had happened.

The blow that Mr. Vernon-Smith had feared had fallen, after all his warnings to his scapegrace son. He had made his arrangements accordingly. He seemed unwilling to unmake them again, very probably considering that Smithy's escape was only temporary, and that his wilful, headstrong recklessness would soon "land" him again.

Smithy had had a brief note from his father, expressing neither relief nor delight. It told him that Mr. Vernon-Smith would consider the matter in its new aspect, and see him about it as soon as he could spare time to come down to the school.

Since then the Bounder had been deeply uneasy.

He was aware that with the grim, unbending intention of casting him off if he was kicked out of his school, his father had selected a relative to adopt in his place—someone in whom he could, or fancied he could, place trust and reliance.

Who it was Smithy did not know; he had plenty of relatives, near and distant, though none that bore his name. Plenty of them, he suspected, would be glad enough to creep into the millionaire's good graces and oust his rightful heir. Smithy's opinion of mankind was not a high one—perhaps because he largely judged others by himself. Already, without knowing who that relative was, he hated him.

There was a fear in his heart that his father, having been provoked so far, would refuse to change his plans, on account of what had so unexpectedly happened at the school.

Who was the interloper, the Bounder was wondering savagely. He had cousins named Vernon-Tracy—but it was not one of them, he was sure. He had other cousins of other names—he hardly knew them all. There were some he had never seen, and hardly heard of. It would be like his father thorough in everything he did, to go through the list with sedulous care, picking out the one he could consider worthy of carrying on the vast business organisation that was his life's work, and that would go to pieces if left in careless hands.

Who was the rotter, the Bounder asked himself. He had no doubt that he would learn, in the coming interview with his father. He wanted to know—chiefly so that he could have

a tangible object upon which to concentrate his bitterness.

There were footsteps in the Remove passage. But they did not sound like the tread of the portly City gentleman, and the Bounder did not heed them. The door suddenly opened, and he gave a start.

But it was Billy Bunter's fat face that blinked into the study. The Bounder gave him a savage glare. He was in no mood to be bothered by the fat and fatuous Owl of the Remove.

That savage glare, however, was wasted on Bunter. The dusk was falling in the quad, and it was nearly dark in the studies, and the Bounder had not turned on the light.

Bunter, blinking in through his big spectacles, did not observe the silent, sullen figure sprawling in the armchair.

He grinned and rolled in. Finding the study unlighted, no doubt Bunter took it for granted that it was also unoccupied. And as he was aware that Mr. Vernon-Smith was in the House, no doubt he took it for granted also that Smithy was with his father.

Billy Bunter was taking too much for granted, as he often did.

He rolled across the room to the study cupboard, with a fat grin on his face, unconscious of the angry eyes staring at him in the dusk.

He opened the door of the cupboard and blinked into it.

As he did so Vernon-Smith rose quietly from the armchair and stepped behind him.

There was tuck in the study cupboard—the Bounder's study was always well supplied. Billy Bunter's little round eyes glistened behind his big round spectacles at the sight of a large plate of jam tarts.

"Oh, good!" he ejaculated.

Bunter was just thinking how lucky it was that the Bounder was not at home, when he made the sudden and disconcerting discovery that the Bounder was there! It was quite a painful discovery, as it came in the form of the Bounder's boot crashing on his tight trousers.

Crash!
"Yaroo!" yelled Bunter.

He pitched headlong forward, sprawling half in the cupboard. His fat face landed in the plate of tarts! His fat features squashed them!

"U r r r g g h!" gurgled Bunter.

It was a jammy and sticky Bunter that whirled round to glare at the Bounder through jammy spectacles.

"Oh, you!" he gasped. "Beast! I—I mean, I—I say, old chap—Yaroooh! Leggo! Yaroooh! Oh crikey! Help! Whoop!"

Vernon-Smith grasped his collar. The fat Owl struggled and yelled frantically in that iron grasp.

In his present savage temper the Bounder wanted somebody upon whom to wreak his wrath. Bunter came in useful.

Bang, bang!
Bunter's bullet head smote the cupboard door.

"Ow! Oh crikey! Beast! Leggo!" shrieked Bunter. "I wasn't after your tarts, you beast! I never knew you had any! Yaroooh! I never saw you bring them in after class. Yooop!"

Bang!
"Whoop! Leggo! You're cracking my head!" raved Bunter. "Oh, you rotter! Yaroooh!"

In sheer desperation the fat Owl grappled with the Bounder and struggled. Jam was transferred from his fat face to Herbert Vernon-Smith. A fat fist, lashing out blindly and desperately, caught the Bounder on his rather prominent nose, and he gave a yell, and staggered. Bunter threw his weight on him, and he went down on the study carpet, dragging the Owl of the Remove down with him in his fall.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "I—I say—Yaroooh!"

He roared as he rolled over in the Bounder's fierce grasp, and thump after thump descended on his fat person.

"Ow, ow! Wow! Help! Rescue! Fire!" roared Bunter. "Leave off, you beast! Yaroooh! Whoop! Yooop!"

"Herbert, what—"

A portly figure appeared in the doorway. A plump face stared in. In the shindy going on in Smithy's study, the tread of Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith had not been heard in the passage. Ho

(Continued on next page.)



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arrived at a rather unfortunate moment. Staring into the study he reached for the switch and turned the light on.

"Herbert!" he thundered.

"Oh!" gasped the Bounder.

He threw Bunter aside and faced his father, flushed and breathless. Bunter bounded up.

"Ow! Beast! Leave me alone! Rotter! Yaroooh!" Bunter bounded to the door. "Keep off, you beast! Yooop!"

Mr. Vernon-Smith stepped aside just in time to escape Bunter's charge. The Owl of the Remove passed him, and scudded, yelling, down the passage. His wild howls died away in the direction of the stairs. Mr. Vernon-Smith, with a grim brow, stepped into the study, and shut the door.

"So this is what I find going on!" he snapped. "You knew that I was here, Herbert, and I find you fighting in your study."

"That fat rotter——" muttered the Bounder.

"Oh, you were in the right, and others in the wrong, as usual!" snapped Mr. Vernon-Smith. "I expected to hear that."

"I was going to tell you——"

"You need tell me nothing. It is useless, as I cannot take your word."

And Mr. Vernon-Smith, with a snort walked across to the armchair, and sat down, the Bounder standing before him, still panting, under the cold, hard, stern gaze of his father.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

After the Storm!

HERE was a brief silence.

Cold, hard, and uncompromising, the millionaire's eyes were fixed on his son. Already deeply displeased, there was no doubt that he had been further irritated by the scene that had greeted him in the study. Whatever the cause of the shindy, whatever the rights and wrongs of it, he had seen his son in an outbreak of uncontrolled temper, and it made the worst possible impression on him. His voice seemed to cut like a knife when he spoke at last.

"You may sit down, Herbert. I have seen your headmaster, and had a talk with him. I was greatly surprised to hear that he had decided to let you remain; and not wholly pleased. I considered, indeed, taking you away, in spite of his decision. My plans have been laid, my arrangements made—to come into effect if you were expelled from this school. You were expelled. I cannot understand this shilly-shally weakness on the part of your headmaster."

The Bounder did not answer.

His bitterness, indeed, was too deep for words.

This was his father who, on the previous occasion when he had been sacked, had left no stone unturned to save him. There had been a change—with a vengeance.

"All was settled!" snapped Mr. Vernon-Smith. "I had already acquainted Lucius with my plans."

"Lucius!" repeated Vernon-Smith.

That apparently was the name of the fellow who was to have ousted him, as he regarded it. It was not one of the names that he had turned over in his mind.

"Your Cousin Lucius!" snapped his father.

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"I don't remember him."

"That is not surprising, as you have never seen him. I had never seen him until a few weeks ago. Possibly you have never even heard of him. His name is Lucius Teggers."

"Teggers! I've heard that name somewhere."

"Listen to me, Herbert! When you were previously expelled, I told you that I would never allow my fortune and my business to pass into the hands of a waster. You were given another chance, and I hoped, from the bottom of my heart, that you would make good use of it. But I had lost faith in you, and I prepared to act if you threw away that chance, as you have always thrown away others. I fixed on my nephew, Lucius Teggers, after very careful investigation."

"How did he pull your leg?" asked the Bounder, imprudently and flip-pantly.

The millionaire's brows darkened.

"Herbert!"

"I can see him jumping at a chance like this!" sneered the Bounder.

"He knew nothing of it. He had nothing to do with it. He never knew that I took any interest in him whatever, any more than I have taken in the previous twenty-seven years of his existence. And, having satisfied myself that he was a fit person for my views, in case of necessity, I still said nothing to him—while you had your chance here. Had you made good he would never have heard of my intentions."

"Oh!" muttered the Bounder.

"But after my last visit here, when you were expelled again, I knew that I must give up all hope of you," said the millionaire sternly, "and when I left the school that day I went direct to see Lucius."

"Oh!" repeated Smithy.

He had not even the comfort of feeling that it was some unscrupulous inter-loper who had ousted him. Obviously the whole thing had been Mr. Vernon-Smith's own doing.

"I put the matter to him," resumed the millionaire, "and made it a condition that he should take the name of Vernon-Smith, legally, by deed-poll. It came naturally as a great surprise to him. I gave him twenty-four hours to consider the matter before deciding."

"Twenty-four minutes would have been enough, I fancy," said the Bounder bitterly.

"Possibly. But I desired him to think it over thoroughly. Fortunately, as the matter turns out," said the millionaire, "for the next morning I heard from Dr. Locke that he had decided to let you remain here."

He gave an angry grunt.

"Look at the position you have placed me in! I do not believe—I cannot after your conduct—that you will make good here. Sooner or later there will be another disgraceful outbreak, and the headmaster will expel you. In the meantime, I am left in doubt and indecision. And Lucius, whose hopes have been raised, is to be disappointed, for no fault of his own."

The Bounder breathed a little more freely. The words he listened to were bitter enough. But they showed that his father had, after all, decided to give him a chance. Lucius Teggers, his unknown cousin, was to be disappointed, and that was the chief thing.

"I feel bound," said Mr. Vernon-Smith grudgingly, "to do as much as your headmaster, and give you one more chance, Herbert. My action depended on your being expelled, and, as it turns out, you are not expelled. I

feel bound, therefore, to disappoint Lucius and alter my plans. I shall not regret it if you prove worthy of my faith and trust." His voice was a little kinder. "My boy, will you let me try to believe that you will throw your folly aside, that you will learn that one who is to command must first learn to obey? You have this chance—it will be your last. Will you make the most of it?"

"Leave that to me," said the Bounder. "Dear Lucius won't step into my shoes if I can stop him, father."

"So long as you make good, that is all I ask, Herbert. But a boy who is turned out of his school for bad conduct shall never be my heir, neither shall he be my son. Make no mistake, Herbert! I shall leave you now, once more hoping for the best. But if you cannot learn the lesson of self-government, you know what to expect. If you are expelled from Greyfriars, I shall not intercede for you. I shall cast you off without a word!"

The Bounder breathed hard.

"Let it go at that!" he said quietly.

"I'm a dog with a bad name here—but they can't sack me unless I give cause."

"Give no cause, then!"

"I'll watch it!" said the Bounder, with a faint grin.

Mr. Vernon-Smith looked at him, his stern brow relaxing very considerably.

He meant every word he said, he was adamant on that point, as the Bounder realised very clearly. At the same time, he did not want to carry out his threat, he did not want to replace his own son by another heir. The Bounder realised that, too, and as he realised it, a great deal of his resentment against his father faded away. In point of fact, father and son were very much alike; and it was probable that, in his father's place, Smithy would have acted very much as Samuel Vernon-Smith was doing.

"I think you mean that, Herbert!" said Mr. Vernon-Smith, after a pause, "and I am glad, very glad, to think so. I am placed in a very difficult position with regard to Lucius Teggers, but my son is my son, after all, and I must first think of him."

The Bounder's face softened.

"Father! I'll play up! I know I've been a fool—an idiot—a silly ass! The Head's given me a chance to start fresh—and by gum, I'm goin' to make the most of it. I've a better chance, too, with Quelch away—he never liked me or trusted me—I shall start fresh with a new Form-master! I'll feed from his hand!"

The millionaire smiled.

"Keep to that, Herbert! You know what is at stake—if you throw away your last chance, you prove beyond doubt that you are utterly unfit to take my place when I go. Let me trust you, and be proud of you, as I used to be. That is all I ask."

"Leave it to me!" said Smithy. His face was bright now. "I've been a rotter to give you so much trouble—it's all over, anyhow. But, I say, I've never heard, that I remember, of this chap Teggers—who is he? I remember the name now—there's a scholastic firm called Leggett and Teggers—has he anything to do with that?"

"He is the Teggers in that firm," answered Mr. Vernon-Smith, "he is a young man of the steadiest character—he won a scholarship at Oxford, he became a tutor, and then a master in a school, for a time; he saved, and invested his savings with care and judgment, and he became a partner in the old-established firm of Leggett's, now Leggett and Teggers. Every step



"Yaroooooh!" yelled Bunter, as the Bounder's boot crashed home on his tight trousers. "Wow!" He pitched forward, sprawling half in the cupboard, and his fat face landed in a plate of tarts. "Urrrgh!" he gurgled.

in his career has been careful, methodical, well-thought-out, and I have no doubt that, had he possessed capital, he would now be a rich and successful man. I have the highest opinion of him."

The Bounder listened quietly to that catalogue of the qualities of the unknown Teggers.

The description was that of a man who was likely to gain the esteem of a cautious and successful business man like his father. Lucius Teggers was, in fact, the kind of young man, into which Mr. Vernon-Smith desired to see his own son grow—certainly not the kind of fellow to be sacked from his school, or sent down from his university. At the same time, Smithy could see that there was no hint of personal regard in the matter—all the affection in the millionaire's rather tough heart was reserved for his son. He was more and more relieved.

He had only to be careful, to play the game, as other fellows played it. To give Skinner & Co. a wide berth; to steer clear of Angel of the Fourth, and Price of the Fifth, to keep in with fellows like Harry Wharton & Co. and Squiff, and Tom Brown. This storm, which had threatened to overwhelm him with utter ruin, was passing—and it would be his own fault if it burst on him again.

"I'll take the Teggers-bird for a model, dad!" said the Bounder, laughing, and Mr. Vernon-Smith, at that pleasant and familiar word, smiled.

This interview, to which the Bounder had looked forward with so much bitterness and uneasiness, was not so very terrible, after all. A little later, Tom Redwing, lingering in the Remove passage, uneasy as to what might be

going on in Study No. 4, saw the study door open, and the Bounder look out, with a cheerful face. Smithy signed to him, and he ran up.

"All serene, old bean!" grinned the Bounder. "I say, will you cut down to the tuck-shop! My pater's staying to tea."

It was a glad and happy Redwing that cut down to the tuck-shop.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Has Another Bright Idea!

"I SAY, you fellows!"
 "Shut the door, Bunter!"
 "Certainly, old chap!"
 "I mean, with yourself on the other side of it!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"
 Billy Bunter shut the door of Study No. 1. But the fat person remained on the inner side of the door.

Five fellows glared at him. The Famous Five, of the Remove, were in deep consultation on a rather thorny topic.

The chief football fixtures of the season were over; with quite a handsome record of victories for the Greyfriars Remove. But in their last big fixture, at Highcliffe, they had been beaten—and they had been beaten because the Bounder had let them down, coolly walking off before the game started. Such an offence as that was not to be lightly forgiven—and the Bounder would undoubtedly have had the ragging of his life, but for the disaster that had followed. Offences were wiped out when a fellow got the sack from the school.

Now, however, the sack had been

wiped out, the Bounder was still at Greyfriars, and had to be dealt with. Nobody was thinking of ragging now—that idea had been dropped, and was not revived. Moreover, it was understood that Smithy was on a new tack, and if a fellow was really bent on striving after reform, Harry Wharton & Co. were not the fellows to discourage him. The question was, whether Smithy was to be allowed to play football for the Remove team again. Could he be trusted? With every desire to forget old offences, and help the scapegrace of the school on his new path, Harry Wharton could not help feeling very doubtful about that.

With this matter under discussion, the Famous Five did not want to be interrupted by anybody, least of all, William George Bunter.

So they glared at him!
 Glares, however, had no effect on Bunter! Nothing short of a boot was likely to produce the desired effect—the departure of William George from Study No. 1.

"I say, you fellows—"
 "You're nearest, Bob—kick him!" said the captain of the Remove.

"Beast! I mean, I say, old chap, don't be shirty!" urged Bunter. "I've come here about something rather important."

"It's not tea-time!" said Nugent.
 "Oh, really, Nugent! I say, that man Smedley isn't coming till Wednesday, you know," said Bunter, "and to-morrow—"

"Bother that man, Smedley—and bother you! Buzz!"

"To-morrow we're having Loder
 (Continued on page 16.)



(Continued from page 13.)

again, in third school! It's on the board!" said Bunter.

"Bother Loder!"

"Well, look here, you'd like to keep clear of him, as much as I would!" said Bunter, blinking at them through his big spectacles, "and I've got a wheeze. We can keep absolutely clear of Loder if you fellows back me up."

The chums of the Remove gave Bunter a little attention, at that. Class with Gerald Loder was a very unpleasant and disagreeable business. The Head did not know Loder's little ways as the juniors knew them, or certainly he would never have assigned the Remove to that prefect for a single lesson. An hour of bullying and ragging and nagging from Loder was not an attractive prospect, and if there was any way of keeping clear of it, every fellow in the Remove would have been glad to know.

"Well, what's the game?" asked Johnny Bull. "Cut it short!"

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Buck up, fathead!" said Nugent.

"I'm telling you as fast as I can, only you keep on interrupting me. Suppose Loder was sacked—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Then he couldn't take the Remove to-morrow!" said Bunter. "See? If the Head sacks him, he won't be here."

"You howling ass!" roared Bob Cherry. "Is the Head going to sack one of his prefects, just because we don't want him throwing his weight about in our Form-room?"

"I wish you'd listen to a chap! You know the Head sacked Smithy for pub-haunting, though he's let him off again. He jolly well wouldn't let off a prefect. Well, you know Loder! He haunts pubs, just like Smithy."

"I know fellows say so," said Harry Wharton. "What about it, you long-winded, blithering ass? What on earth has that to do with us?"

"He's going out to-night!" grinned Bunter.

"Did he tell you so?" asked Johnny Bull sarcastically.

"He told Price of the Fifth so!" answered Bunter. "And I jolly well heard him! He wanted Pricey to go—but Pricey refused! He's been toeing the line since he's off with Hilton of the Fifth and had that fearful row with Wingate. Well, Loder's going. He doesn't know I know, of course. He didn't see me behind the elm when he was speaking to Price."

"Lucky for you he didn't!" gasped Bob. "There wouldn't have been much left of you, you spying, prying fat worm!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"For goodness' sake get out, Bunter!" snapped the captain of the Remove. "Do you think we want to hear what you've spied out about Loder's rot?"

"Can't you see?" demanded Bunter.

"Loder goes out, and comes back about

midnight, or later! He has a key to the lobby at the end of the Sixth Form passage, like all the prefects. Easy enough for a prefect to get in and out without the beaks getting wise to it. Of course, that door's bolted at night—but he will leave it unbolted. Well—"

Bunter paused, and blinked at the staring juniors with an air of great astuteness and cunning. "Well, suppose a fellow cut down from the dorm and bolted that door after Loder was gone?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"He couldn't get in again without rousing the House!" grinned Bunter. "He would have a night out, just like Smithy that time, you know! What would he say to the Head in the morning?"

"Oh crumbs!"

"It would be the long jump for him!" said Bunter confidently. "No doubt about that! The Head would be all the waxier, you know, because he's a prefect, and trusted! Well, you nip down from the dorm, Wharton—"

"Do I?" gasped the captain of the Remove.

"Yes, old chap! I'd do it myself, only—only—"

"Only you're afraid of the dark!" suggested Bob Cherry. "And afraid that Loder might catch you at it!"

"Nothing of the sort! Only I'm a rather sound sleeper—I might not be able to keep awake! Otherwise I'd do it like a shot! I say, you fellows, it's the chance of a life-time! With Loder sacked we get quite clear of him, see? Of course, some other beast of a prefect will take us in third school—but even Carne isn't so bad as Loder."

The Famous Five gazed at Bunter.

They had no doubt that his information was correct; they knew something, and suspected more, of the manners and customs of the sportsman of the Sixth. Neither would they have mourned had Loder been caught in the act and turfed out of Greyfriars, as he richly deserved.

But the idea of taking a hand themselves in it certainly never would have occurred to them. Loder was a "rotter," and he was a most unpleasant bully, but getting a fellow the sack was altogether too large an order.

Bunter apparently considered the expulsion of Loder quite a light affair so long as it conduced to his own fat comfort.

"You see," said Bunter, taking up the tale again as the astonished juniors did not speak, "it's a regular catch! We're having a fairly good time owing to Quelch being away ill—but he might as well be well, you know, if we're going to be hunted and harried by that beast Loder! Every time we get Loder in the Form-room it makes me almost wish that Quelch wasn't ill."

"Oh crikey!"

"Well, what about it?" asked Bunter. "Any one of you can do it—I really don't mind which, so long as that beast is bolted out to-night. I'd ask Smithy, as he's got a feud on with Loder, but he's such an ill-tempered beast, you know—you never know how to take him! He kicked me the other day when I asked him to lock Loder in his study, though I pointed out that it was all right for him as he was going to be booted out—"

"He might kick you again," remarked Bob Cherry.

"Well, he might!" admitted Bunter. "You never know with the Bounder."

"But he might not!" said Bob. "And as he might not, and as you ought to be kicked, we'll see that you get it, Bunter!"

"Eh?"

"Gentlemen, chaps, and sportsmen," said Bob Cherry, glancing round,

"Bunter suggests that we should play a dirty trick on Loder of the Sixth! Every fellow who thinks that Bunter ought to be kicked will signify the same in the usual way."

"I—I—I say, you fellows—"

Bunter, rather wishing that he had not shut the door behind him, spun round, grabbed it, and dragged it open. He jumped for the doorway.

Five fellows reached him as he jumped.

Five boots were planted on Billy Bunter! Owing to the circumstance that Bunter was double-width, there was room for them to land.

They landed hard!

There was a terrific roar from William George Bunter as he flew into the Remove passage.

Bump!

Bunter crashed!

"Yaroooooooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, when you've got another bright idea like that, Bunter, bring it to this study, and have some more!" said the captain of the Remove.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

Slam! The door of Study No 1 closed on the roaring Owl. Heedless of his roaring, the Famous Five resumed their football discussion. And Billy Bunter, having expressed his feelings in a series of fearful yells, limped away to Vernon-Smith's study, to try his luck with the Bounder.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Plotter I

MR. LUCIUS TEGGERS, junior partner in the firm of Leggett & Teggars, sat in his private office in the premises of that well-known scholastic agency, in Regent Street, London.

He sat on a swivel chair at his desk, with his eyes fixed on two letters that lay on the desk before him.

Judging by the expression on his face, he was not pleased by the contents of either letter.

"Great gad!" said Mr. Teggars for about the tenth or eleventh time.

He selected a cigarette from his case, put it into his mouth—and then threw it away, unlighted.

He stared at the two letters again. One of them was from the famous City financier and millionaire, Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith! The other was from quite a different person.

Both were dismaying.

Buzz!

Mr. Lucius Teggars muttered something under his breath as the telephone bell rang. He grabbed the receiver off the hooks.

"What?" he fairly barked.

"Eustace Smedley speaking," came a pleasant voice over the wires. "Is that Mr. Teggars?"

"Speaking!" barked Mr. Teggars.

"With reference to the temporary appointment you have so kindly secured me at Greyfriars School—"

"I am busy at the moment—ring up later!" said Mr. Teggars, and he cut off.

Mr. Teggars was not in a mood to bother about a young man whose existence he had almost forgotten.

Neither had he a great deal of politeness, in his present mood at least, to waste on one of the many, many tutors whose names were down on the books of the agency.

What Eustace Smedley might think, and feel, about that brusque rebuff Lucius Teggars cared not one jot or tittle.

He had told the young man that he

was busy! But he did not look very busy that morning! In the outer office, indeed, they had instructions to admit no callers. Having jammed the receiver back on the hooks with a jam that made the instrument rock, Mr. Teggers proceeded to march up and down the room, his hands driven deep into his pockets and a deep line in his brow.

Lucius Teggers was a young man—hardly over twenty-seven or eight. He was a well-dressed and rather personable young man. He generally made a good impression—as certainly he had done on Mr. Vernon-Smith, who was a fairly good judge of character.

Nevertheless, Lucius Teggers was not all that he seemed; appearances in his case were very deceptive.

Outwardly Mr. Teggers was a quiet, serious, extremely well-behaved young man, careful and methodical, a man to be trusted in business affairs. Inwardly there was quite a different Teggers, who would have surprised Mr. Vernon-Smith very much indeed!

Halting at last in his restless pacing, Mr. Teggers fixed his eyes once more on the two letters on his desk.

That from Mr. Vernon-Smith was brief. It apprised Lucius of the change in his plans, owing to the hope he now entertained of not being forced to act so drastically with regard to his son.

Mr. Vernon-Smith was not much given to considering others—but he realised that the withdrawal of a brilliant prospect must have a disappointing effect on any man.

The tone of his letter was therefore a little apologetic. There was also a hint that the affair, so abruptly broken off, might be resumed at a later date. All depended on the future conduct of his son.

Having gritted his teeth over that letter, Lucius Teggers turned to the other.

The other was from a firm of turf accountants.

Mr. Leggett, the senior partner, would have been amazed and shocked had he even dreamed that young Mr. Teggers had any communications whatsoever with betting men. Mr. Vernon-Smith, assuredly, would have dropped him like a hot potato.

That was one of the secrets of the
(Continued on next page.)



What "Linesman" doesn't know about Soccer isn't worth knowing. If you've an intricate problem that wants solving, write to him, c/o The MAGNET, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and get his expert opinion.

MONEY QUESTIONS!

Other people's money is always an interesting subject, and that may be the reason why, in my post-bag this week, there is a query regarding the bonus which is paid to the players of the big football clubs for winning or drawing their matches. Especially does the question apply to Cup-ties, and my correspondent wants to know if the bonus varies as between League games and contests in the knock-out competition.

The bonus does vary a bit, but not until the later stages of the Cup competition have been reached. In the rounds up to the semi-final the bonus which is paid to the players is the same as for League games—that is, one pound per man for a draw and two pounds per man for a win.

The winners of the semi-final ties, however, get four pounds each. The bonus for winning the Cup Final—plus the medals, of course—is eight pounds per player. In the case of a draw in either the semi-final or the final, the bonus is only the same as for a draw in a League game. Of course, you know that the bonus in all cases is paid to the twelfth man—the reserve of each side.

Then there is another money question, the reply to which may be of general interest. "What happens to the gate-money taken in the semi-final ties?" A different principle is applied to the distribution of the gate-money in semi-finals. First of all, the Football Association takes one third of the net receipts from semi-finals, and not receipts mean, of course, the amount left after expenses, entertainment tax, and so on have been deducted. The money which remains is then pooled between the four clubs concerned. I want you to note this carefully—that the money is not merely divided between the two clubs which play in a particular semi-final. The net amount taken at both the semi-finals is pooled, and after the other deductions, is divided into four.

Suppose, just to give an example, that four thousand pounds net was taken at

one semi-final and only two thousand pounds net at the other semi-final. The F.A. would take two thousand pounds and the other four clubs would have one thousand pounds each.

THRILLING DUELS!

Talking of semi-finals, perhaps I may be allowed to recall the most memorable series of games ever played at this stage of the competition. In the season of 1898-9 Liverpool and Sheffield United, who had reached the semi-final, met four times before the winning side was decided. What drama was provided by those four games! At the first meeting Sheffield United were only saved by a goal scored in the last minute, by a half-back who got so desperate that he suddenly went up into the forward line and forced the equalising goal.

Even more amazing was the second match, which was played at Bolton. Liverpool got a lead of two goals, but Sheffield United fought back until they were level again. Then came another big effort by Liverpool in the second half, and they again gained a lead of two goals.

With only a few minutes to go it seemed certain that Sheffield United would pass out, but they rallied, sent every man except the goalkeeper into the attack, and, getting through twice amid tremendous excitement, once more saved the match!

The third meeting was at Manchester, where the spectators got so excited that they crowded over the pitch and the match had to be abandoned before the end. By this time, as fellows who took part in the game have assured me, the players of Liverpool and Sheffield United were heartily sick of the sight of each other. There was nothing else for it but a fourth game. This was played at Derby, and the Sheffield side won by the only goal. Among the stories told of that last match is that the player who got the winning goal was helped to do so by a nip of some stimulant given to him late in the game by a spectator.

SHOULD PLAYERS SHOUT?

As soon as the semi-finals are over, we shall be given the name of the fortunate—if you like the word—referee who has been selected to control the final tie, which will not be played until the twenty-eighth of next month. Even about the choice of the referee for this game there is a certain amount of luck, because it must depend, to a certain extent, on the clubs concerned as to who is given the honour. That is why the final-tie referee is not named until after the semi-finals have been played.

Obviously it would not do for the referee of the final tie to live anywhere near either of the competing clubs.

Passing from this semi-final subject, I turn to an unusual question which comes from a Bradford reader. While he was playing in a match the other day, so he tells me, he shouted "Right!" as the ball was coming to him, meaning to convey to one of his pals that he was in a good position to kick the ball. The referee thereupon told the player that he was not allowed to shout in this way, and my friend wants to know whether the referee was right to stop the play and speak to the player.

The answer to this question depends on the interpretation placed upon the shouting by the referee. If he was convinced—and I think he must have been in this case—that the shouting put an opponent off, then he was justified in stopping the game. There is no law to prevent the player of one side calling out to a colleague, but there is a law which is meant to prevent a player from calling in such a way that the play of an opponent is effected.

In this connection I recall an incident which happened earlier in the present season. Leeds United were playing Sheffield Wednesday at Leeds, and in the course of the game the Wednesday scored what seemed to the spectators to be a perfect goal. The referee disallowed it, however.

The reason, as he explained afterwards, was that the Wednesday player who had scored shouted "Right!" as the ball came across. A Leeds full-back, hearing the shout, and thinking, obviously, that it came from a colleague, made no attempt to play the ball.

It must be emphasised, however, that the football authorities have laid it down that colleagues have a right to call to each other on the field. Sometimes I think we should get better football if players had to be silent, but we will not discuss that point just now. "LINESMAN."

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,362.

inner Mr. Teggers. Mr. Teggers was rather in the nature of a whited sepulchre.

The pressing trouble was that Lucius would not, in all probability, be able to keep that secret much longer.

The letter from the turf accountants pointed out, politely but firmly, that Mr. Teggers' account was now precisely two hundred and fifteen pounds, sixteen shillings in arrear. It expressed a polite but firm refusal to undertake any more betting transactions for Lucius Teggers, until that account was liquidated. And it hinted, more firmly than politely, that if the account was not paid fairly soon the results would be disagreeable.

"Great gad!" said Mr. Teggers, for the umpteenth time.

It was not the only such letter he had received of late. He hardly knew how much money he owed in various directions.

Lucius had impressed Mr. Vernon-Smith as a careful young man, prepared to get on in the world by slow and sure methods. In point of fact, Lucius had long been engaged in efforts to "get rich quick," and he had selected the extremely dubious method of spotting winners.

Getting money for nothing was a tempting prospect, its chief drawback being that it could not be realised.

How deep he was in the mire now Lucius hardly knew. But he knew that a crash had to come, unless something like a miracle happened to save him.

And something like a miracle had happened—or nearly happened. Mr. Vernon-Smith, his wealthy uncle, who had never before taken the slightest notice of his existence, had sought him out, and opened up a prospect that was absolutely dazzling.

A more scrupulous man might have hesitated to lend himself to the millionaire's purpose; might have hesitated to take the place of a disowned and disinherited son. Lucius Teggers had no scruple on that point, and on a few others.

He saw in the prospect escape from debts and difficulties, disgrace, and ruin. He gave not a single thought to the boy who was to be cast out.

And then suddenly came this thunder-clap.

The old fool—for it was thus that he thought of the millionaire—had changed his mind!

Likely enough he would change his mind again. That young scoundrel at Greyfriars would get into some fresh trouble, sooner or later, and evoke the wrath of the Roman parent once more.

But that would be of no use to Lucius, if by that time he was dragged through the courts as an insolvent debtor.

The young rascal, after such an escape, would be careful, for a time at least—long enough to ruin Lucius Teggers.

Once more Mr. Teggers paced up and down the office.

His game was nearly up unless something happened to save him. He was a rascal, and would soon be known as the rascal he was. If that old fool had not changed his mind, or if he could be made to change it again!

On that point Lucius Teggers had concentrated his thoughts; exercised all the powers of a keen, cold, hard, unscrupulous mind.

If that young blackguard at Greyfriars School was expelled, as he ought to have been, all was well—if it came in time. He could ward off disaster for a time, but only for a time!

He threw himself into his seat again, deep in thought. Long, long he sat there, his expression growing harder, darker.

He reached out to the telephone at last and gave a number. The rather pleasant voice of Eustace Smedley, the young tutor, came back.

"Sorry I had to cut off when you rang me." Mr. Teggers' voice was quite kind and friendly now. "The fact is, I wanted to speak to you, Mr. Smedley."

"I am quite at your service, sir!" There was a faint note of uneasiness in Smedley's voice. Much for him depended on getting an appointment, and that depended on the firm of Leggett & Teggers.

"I understand, Mr. Smedley, that you have never been in the neighbourhood of Greyfriars School!"

"So far, no, sir."

"You have no acquaintances there?"

"None that I am aware of."

"I think I remember your mentioning that your last appointment was as a travelling tutor, and that you have been out of the country for a considerable time until lately."

"That is so."

"You have not communicated with Greyfriars School in any way?"

"No, sir. As the matter was in your hands—"

"Quite so—quite so! In these circumstances, Mr. Smedley, probably you will not be very disappointed to hear that the appointment at Greyfriars School has fallen through."

"Oh!" There was a note of deep disappointment in the voice over the telephone.

"I have, however, another appointment I can offer you—"

"I shall be very glad to hear of it."

"You have no objection to going abroad—"

"None!"

"A junior mastership in a school in Canada," said Mr. Teggers. "It has the advantage of being a permanent appointment, whereas at Greyfriars, of course, your post would be purely temporary. No doubt you would prefer that."

"My dear sir, you are very kind!" came the grateful voice on the wires. "I should certainly prefer a permanent appointment very much indeed."

"The matter will be arranged, then, if you are prepared to leave England at a very brief notice—in fact, immediately."

"Perfectly!"

"Please call here this afternoon, then, Mr. Smedley, and we will make final arrangements."

"I cannot sufficiently thank you—"

"Oh, quite—quite!"

Mr. Teggers rang off. It was a kind and smiling Mr. Teggers who interviewed the young tutor that afternoon.

He carried his kindness so far as to see him off by the steamer. And after he was safely off, Mr. Teggers made arrangements at his office for an absence of some weeks. And the young man on the steamer, booked for an appointment in Canada, with bright prospects there, had grateful thoughts of Mr. Teggers. Certainly he did not suspect Mr. Teggers of intending to borrow his name, and his appointment at Greyfriars School, while he was safely out of the country.

Eustace Smedley, quite unknown personally at Greyfriars, was expected there on Wednesday as a temporary master. Lucius Teggers, also quite unknown there personally, was going to arrive in his name. And if the Bounder of Greyfriars was not sacked that term it was not going to be Mr. Teggers' fault!

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

A Friend in Need!

TOM REDWING stirred restlessly. Eleven o'clock had chimed from the old tower of Greyfriars, and perhaps the deep strokes, borne on the March wind, helped to awaken him.

Redwing, contrary to his usual custom, had not been sleeping soundly. He was worried about his chum—not an unusual thing. He was aware, without being told, that Smithy had "something on" that night.

Reckless as the Bounder was, unthinking as he was in following any wild scheme that came into his head, it seemed incredible that after all that had

The Boy Who Ran Away

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"I say, you beast!" yelled Bunter, in alarm, as Ponsonby snatched his cap off and approached the fence of the Three Fishers. "Don't you chuck my cap over that fence, you rotter! I say—oh crikey!" The cap whizzed up in the air to drop on the inner side of the high fence. "Now go after it, old fat bean!" chuckled the Highellian.

happened he could be intending another escapade.

But something was on. Redwing was assured of that, and he was worried. It worried him in his sleep, and when eleven boomed out in the night he awakened—perhaps having heard, also, some slight sound near at hand.

The thought of the Bounder was in his mind immediately his eyes opened. His glance turned towards Vernon-Smith's bed, and in the glimmer of starlight from the high windows of the dormitory he saw that it was vacant.

With a sudden shock he sat up, staring blankly.

What seemed incredible had happened. The Bounder was hunting for trouble again. Was he gone? But the next moment Redwing saw the dark figure standing by the unoccupied bed. Vernon-Smith was dressing, quietly and rapidly. Tom had a glimpse of his face, half seen, but he detected a grin upon it.

His lips set.

His chief feeling at the moment was anger—deep anger! Barely escaped from the sack, with all his prospects in life depending on his good conduct now, the Bounder was at it again. Tom's anxiety for him was the anxiety of a friend; but he felt strongly tempted to turn out of bed and knock the Bounder spinning. Seldom had he been so angry.

The dormitory was silent, save for the low, regular breathing of the sleepers and the snore of Billy Bunter. Nobody had awakened, but Redwing. The Bounder made hardly a sound.

But Redwing was awake—wide awake! He sat looking at his chum for some moments, and then spoke:

"Smithy!"

He did not subdue his voice. It sounded with startling sharpness in the silence of the dormitory.

Vernon-Smith gave a start, and stared round.

"You awake, Reddy?" he muttered.

"Yes."

"Don't shout, you ass!" muttered the Bounder irritably.

"Why not?" said Redwing coolly.

"Do you want to wake the whole dormitory, you ass?"

"Why not?" repeated Redwing.

"Oh, don't be a fool!"

Tom Redwing slipped out of bed. The Bounder, sitting down, was slipping on his shoes. But he was not fully dressed—he had not put on collar or tie.

"Are you going out, Smithy?" Tom's voice trembled with anger as he asked the question.

"Do you think I've turned out to stroll up and down the dormitory? Go back to bed and shut up."

"After what's happened—"

"Don't jaw—you'll wake the fellows."

"I don't care if I wake every man in the Remove—and in Greyfriars, too! You're not going out!"

"What?" The Bounder's face hardened, and he looked grimly at Redwing.

"Who says I'm not?"

"I do!"

"You meddlin' ass—"

"That will do, Smithy! If you haven't sense enough to play the game after what's happened—"

"You silly ass!" muttered the Bounder. "Think I'm mad enough to break bounds after lights out—yet awhile, at any rate? I'm not going out of the House."

"Not out of the House?" Redwing stared,

"I'm going down to the Sixth Form passage—everybody there will be asleep before this—safe as houses."

"Breaking dormitory bounds—"

"That's not a matter for suckin'!" grinned Smithy.

"You can't take risks now, Smithy."

"I can do as I jolly well choose!" answered Vernon-Smith. "And you can mind your own bizney."

"If you're spotted out of the dorm, do you think they'll believe that you never meant to go out of the House—with your reputation—sacked only a few days ago for pub-haunting—"

"I'm chancing it."

"You're not!" said Redwing grimly.

"You silly ass!" said the Bounder.

"I'll tell you what's on. That cur, Loder; is out of bounds to-night—I've got that for certain—"

"Is that what Bunter was telling you—"

"Never mind that. The rotter's out on the tiles—and he's stayin' out. The beaks are frightfully particular here, you know," sneered the Bounder. "A fellow gettin' out of the House at night gets the chopper. Well, what's sauce for the Remove is sauce for the Sixth. Loder took it out of me—and I'm goin' to take it out of him, see?"

"No bizney of yours what Loder of the Sixth does—"

"Not if he leaves me alone. When he hands out the toughest six I've ever had for nothing—"

"It wasn't for nothing. You made a fool of him."

"If you're standin' up for Loder—"

"I'm not! He's a beastly bully. But it's no bizney of yours to get a man

sacked from the school. It's a dirty trick."

"That's your opinion, is it?" sneered the Bounder. "Well, it's not mine. I'm goin' to land Loder to-night. Think he wouldn't land me if he could?"

"It's his duty as a prefect to land any fellow breaking the rules—it's not yours. But never mind Loder. Suppose a master spots you out of the dorm—"

"Quelch is away, with his jolly old gimlet-eye. I'm riskin' it, anyhow."

"You're not!" said Tom. "I'm going to stop you. If you haven't sense enough to take care of yourself, or decency enough to think of your father—"

"Oh, shut up!"

The Bounder, having finished putting on his shoes, rose from the edge of the bed. With a black look at Redwing he started towards the door. Redwing stepped quickly into his path.

"Stand aside, Tom Redwing!" said the Bounder, between his teeth. "Don't try that game again!"

"You were glad enough that I stopped you the other day, Smithy. If I hadn't, you wouldn't be at Greyfriars now."

"I know that. But don't try it again. I don't want to handle you, but you're not stoppin' me."

"I am!"

"Stand aside!" said the Bounder, clenching his hands. "Mind, I shall hit out! I mean it!"

"I mean it, too!"

Without more words, his eyes glinting with anger, the Bounder tramped forward. Redwing did not budge an inch. The Bounder grasped him, to fling him aside; but Redwing gave grip for grip, and he was the stronger of the two. The Bounder struggled with him savagely.

"You fool! Will you let go?" he hissed.

"No, I won't!"

Vernon-Smith made a fierce effort, exerting all his strength. Redwing reeled against a bed; but he kept his grip, and the Bounder fell with him. They sprawled on the bed, much to the surprise of the fellow who was in it, and who suddenly awakened.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "What the thump—"

The struggling juniors rolled off to the floor, wrestling and panting. Bob leaned over, staring at them blankly.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Lucky for Smithy!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"What the dickens—"

"What's that row?"

"Who the deuce—"

A dozen fellows were awake now, sitting up in bed, staring. The sound of the struggle was heard up and down the dormitory.

Vernon-Smith had succeeded in wrenching himself loose, and leaping to his feet. But Redwing was up in a twinkling grasping at him. He was quite as angry as the Bounder.

"You fool, let go!" hissed Vernon-Smith.

"I won't!"

They were struggling again, with a dozen or more Removites staring at them in the dim starlight from the windows.

"Is that a game, you men?" yawned Lord Mauleverer. "I say, can't you leave your wrestlin' matches till the mornin'? A fellow would like to go to sleep, you know."

"Who's scrapping?" asked Skinner.

"Is that Smithy?"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,362.

"Smithy and Redwing!" exclaimed Harry Wharton, in wonder. The captain of the Remove jumped out of bed. "Stop that, you two!"

Unheeding him, the two struggled on—the Bounder striving desperately to break away, Redwing determined to hold him.

"We shall have the prefects up here soon, at this rate!" said Frank Nugent. "They've got an eye on this dormitory, on Smithy's account. Smithy, you silly ass, chuck it!"

"The chuckfulness is the proper caper, my esteemed Smithy!" exclaimed Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

"Stop it!" rapped out the captain of the Remove. And as neither heeded him, he called to Bob Cherry. "Lend a hand here, Bob."

"What-ho!" grinned Bob, and he jumped out.

Wharton grasped Redwing, and Bob seized the Bounder in his powerful grasp. They were jerked apart.

"Now, what's this shindy about?" demanded Wharton.

"Mind your own bizney!" snarled the Bounder.

"It is my bizney, to see that you don't bring the prefects up here, in the middle of the night," said the captain of the Remove. "Why, the fellow's

CAN YOU RHYME?

For submitting the following
GREYFRIARS LIMERICK,
C. Ray, of 287, Beulah Hill,
Upper Norwood, S.E.19, has been
awarded a useful **LEATHER
POCKET WALLET:**

**Of all gluttons, Bunter's the
worst;
There'll sure come a day when
he'll burst!
He gets fatter and fatter,
And—whose orgy no matter—
At "tuck-ins" he's always the
first!**

Have a shot at composing a
limerick to-day, chum!

dressed. Were you going out, you rotter?"

"Find out!"

"You shady blackguard!" said Harry contemptuously. "Is that how you thank the Beak for giving you another chance?"

"Fool!"

"Hold him, Bob!" said Harry, as the angry Bounder struggled to get loose.

"I've got the beauty!" grinned Bob. "Take it quietly, Smithy—all friends here, you know! If Reddy's stopped you from breaking bounds, he's a jolly old friend in need—and I'll hold you till you thank him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You meddlin' fool, I'll smash you if you don't let go!"

"Don't, old bean! I can do a little smashing myself, you know."

"Smithy wasn't going to break House bounds," said Redwing breathlessly. Angry as he was, he was quick to defend his chum. "It's not that, you fellows—he's only playing the fool—a jape on a Sixth Form man!"

"Oh!" said Wharton. "Is that all? I say, Smithy, it's jolly risky, with the beaks watching you like cats—"

"That's my biznoy."

"Well, yes; but—"

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter was awake now. "Don't stop him, you fellows! I say, let Smithy go! You

see, it will be the sack for Loder if Smithy locks him out—"

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Is that it?"

"Might have guessed that one!" said Harry Wharton. "I suppose Bunter came along to you after we kicked him out of our study, Smithy! And you're going down to play a dirty trick on Loder?"

"You're all so jolly fond of Loder, aren't you?" sneered the Bounder.

"Hardly! But we're not going to play a sneaking, dirty trick like that on any man at Greyfriars!" said the captain of the Remove. "There's a limit, though you don't seem to see it. You're not leaving this dormitory."

"I say, you fellows—" squeaked the Owl of the Remove.

"Shut up, Bunter!"

"Beast!"

Vernon-Smith made a sudden, desperate wrench, taking Bob rather by surprise. He tore away, and ran for the door.

Opposition had the effect on Smithy of making him more obstinate. He was savagely determined now to carry on.

But he had to deal with fellows who were as determined as he. Redwing ran after him, and was shoved violently over, and the Bounder rushed on again. But Wharton, with a bound, reached him, and grasped him by the shoulder.

The Bounder was dragged forcibly back as he reached the door and grasped the handle. Still holding the door-handle, he dragged the door wide open as he was whirled backwards in the grasp of the captain of the Remove.

"Let go!" panted Vernon-Smith. And he struck out savagely, letting go the door and dashing his clenched fist full in Wharton's face.

Wharton let go as he staggered under the blow. But he rallied the next second and struck back with all his force, and the Bounder went spinning along the floor, to fall in a heap.

The crash as the Bounder went down rang loud and far. Through the open doorway came a glimmer from a light that was turned on at a distance. Evidently the noise had been heard.

"Cave!" gasped Bob Cherry.

There was a rush of the Removites back to their beds. Rapid footsteps were approaching along the passage outside.

The Bounder staggered to his feet.

For a second he stood panting; then he bolted to his bed, plunged in, and drew the blankets over him, concealing the fact that he was dressed.

He was only just in time.

The light was switched on in the dormitory, and Wingate of the Sixth stood there, staring in.

"What's this row?" demanded Wingate gruffly.

There was no reply.

Every fellow in the Remove was quietly in bed; and Billy Bunter was busily snoring, to show that he, at least, was fast asleep!

Wingate stared in suspiciously.

Every bed was occupied; nobody was out of the dormitory. That some of the juniors had been out of bed, and that some sort of a shindy had been going on, was certain. But all was quiet now.

Another voice came from the corridor, with a sound of footsteps.

"Is that young sweep out, Wingate?"

The Bounder gave a convulsive start as he recognised the voice of Loder of the Sixth. Loder joined Wingate in the doorway and stared in.

Evidently he was not out of bounds that night! Either Bunter had got the date wrong, which was possible, or Loder had decided on "safety first."

Anyhow, there he was—and it was clear that both the prefects had a suspicious eye and ear for the Bounder's dormitory.

"No!" said Wingate. "They're all here! Look here, you young sweeps, if there's any more row I'll come back and thrash the lot of you!"

And the captain of Greyfriars turned off the light and shut the door. The tread of the two prefects died away down the passage.

There was a chuckle from Skinner's bed.

"You'd have walked right into Loder, Smithy! What made you think he was out of bounds to-night?"

"That idiot Bunter!" hissed the Bounder.

"Oh, really, Smithy! I only told you what I heard Loder saying to Price of the Fifth—I can't help it if he's changed his mind—"

Skinner chuckled again. "I dare say he changed his mind because Wingate was still up! Wingate's got an eye on you, Smithy."

"Do you still want to go out, Smithy?" asked Bob Cherry. "I won't stop you if you do."

"Ha, ha, ha!" Vernon-Smith did not reply. But he was heard turning out of bed. Billy Bunter blinked at him in the gloom.

"I say, Smithy, it's no good going now—Loder's not out, after all—Why, what—yaroooh—beast—wow!" howled Bunter, as a pillow descended on him with a terrific smite. "Why—what—Beast—leave off! Oh lor—wow-wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Take that, you fat fool—"

"Yarooop!" "And that!" "Whooooop!"

Vernon-Smith went back to bed, leaving Billy Bunter spluttering. The purveyor of inaccurate information gurgled and gasped and guggled wildly. The Remove settled down to sleep again, but it was quite a long time before Billy Bunter was able to compose himself to slumber. The other fellows were all asleep before the fat Owl's resonant snore once more awoke the echoes of the Remove dormitory.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Over the Top!

"BEAST!" roared Billy Bunter. It was Wednesday afternoon.

That afternoon being a half-holiday, Billy Bunter was taking a walk abroad.

Harry Wharton & Co. were playing football on Little Side at Greyfriars; but Soccer had no appeal for Billy Bunter. Vernon-Smith was under detention in the Remove Form Room—having lately been given detention for three half-holidays by the Head for a row with the French master. This was the third of them; and in the interval much had happened. And what had happened had the effect of making the Bounder go in to detention as meekly as a lamb that afternoon.

Smithy was on his best behaviour now, and he was sitting in the Form-room, working hard at a Latin paper Dr. Locke had set for him. Other fellows were occupied in their own various ways—and Lord Mauleverer's way was to walk down to Courtfield for tea at the bunshop there—and Billy Bunter's way was to walk off in the same direction when he learned where Mauly

had gone. Mauly was not going to be left in want of cheerful and exhilarating company at tea—if Bunter could help it.

But there was a lion in the path—in the shape of Cecil Ponsonby of the Fourth Form at Highcliffe! Pon was sauntering along with his hands in his pockets when he sighted Bunter. Had he sighted Bob Cherry, or Wharton, or any other Greyfriars man who was able to give him what he deserved, Pon would have walked on quietly and peaceably. But Billy Bunter was easy game, and Pon found it amusing to snatch the fat junior's cap off, and hold it out of Bunter's reach.

Bunter jumped after the cap! He hopped and skipped after it! But the slim and elegant Pon, who was a good many inches taller than the fat Owl, found it easy to keep the cap out of his reach.

"Go it!" he said encouragingly. "Hop it, you fat frog! Skip for it, you podgy rabbit!"

Billy Bunter gasped for breath. Jumping and skipping soon told on Bunter. He had a lot of weight to lift.

"Beast!" he yelled. "Gimme my cap!"

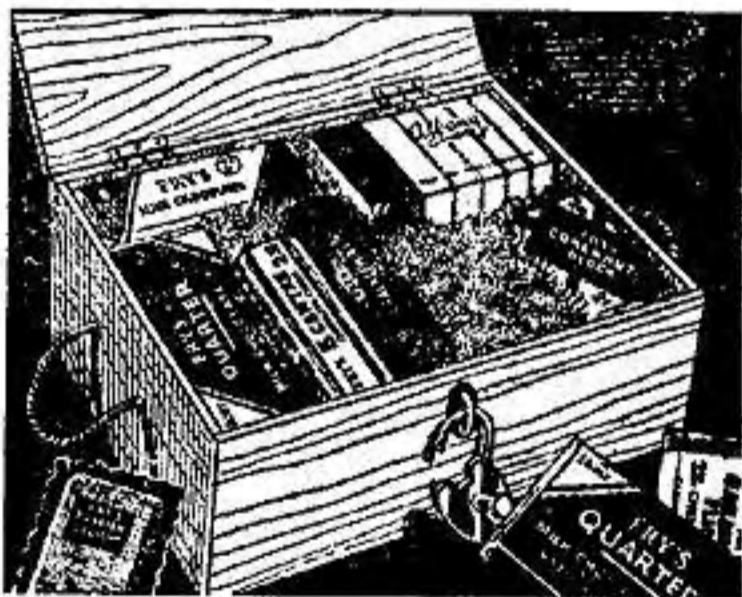
"Jump for it!" grinned Ponsonby. "I'll jolly well punch you!" gasped Bunter.

"Do!" said Pon invitingly. "There'll be a dead porpoise lyin' about soon afterwards! Do!"

Bunter clenched his fat hands. But he dared not punch! He was no match for Pon. He hopped wildly after the cap again.

Pon, grinning, walked on, holding the cap high. Bunter, gasping and gurgling, followed him, every now and then making a desperate jump and snatch.

It was quite entertaining to Pon, (Continued on next page.)



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though not to Bunter. And when he tired of that particular entertainment, Pon looked round for some spot to throw the cap out of the fat Owl's reach.

There was a high fence at the top of a steep grassy bank at the roadside. At one point a signboard showed over it bearing the inscription:

THE THREE FISHERS
Entrance in Oak Lane.

Ponsonby, grinning, turned towards that fence. Oak Lane turned off the Courtfield road at the corner of the common; some little distance away. The entrance to the riverside inn was there, and there was another gate on the towpath on the Sark, as Pon well knew—the Three Fishers being one of his own favourite haunts.

It was almost the most disreputable place in the county, and strictly out of bounds for both Greyfriars and Highcliffe. It was there that the Bounder had been caught when he had been taken up before the Head to be "sacked." Billy Bunter was a very unlikely fellow to venture into such a dangerous quarter, especially with what had happened to Smithy fresh in his fat mind. The cheery Pon approached the fence, to toss the cap over. This was Pon's idea of a lark!

"I say, you beast!" yelled Bunter in alarm, as he discerned the Highcliffe fellow's intention. "Don't you chuck my cap over that fence, you rotter—I say—Oh crikey!"

The cap whizzed up in the air! It dropped on the inner side of the high fence.

"Oh, you awful beast!" gasped Bunter.

"Go after it, old fat bean!" chuckled Ponsonby. "I've never seen a porpoise climbin' a fence! Go it!"

"Oh, you rotter!" groaned Bunter. "Look here, you know I can't go in there—suppose I was seen? I might be sacked like Smithy."

"Would that be a loss?" inquired Ponsonby. "Can't imagine anybody missin' you, fatty."

"Beast!" roared Bunter. "Look here, Ponsonby, you go and fetch my cap back, see?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It won't matter if a Highcliffe man is spotted there, you see!" argued Bunter. "You're a shady lot at Highcliffe, and it doesn't matter much what you do. But a Greyfriars chap can't set his foot inside a place like that without getting bunked! That's where they nabbed Smithy the other day! You see, our school's rather decent—not at all like Highcliffe."

Pon looked at him.

If Bunter hoped by that argument to induce Pon to go after his cap, it showed that Bunter had a very hopeful nature!

Pon did not go after the cap! He kicked Bunter, and walked on up the road. He left the fat Owl yelling.

"Oh lor'!" groaned Bunter as the Highcliffe fellow disappeared in the distance. "Oh crumbs! Oh lor'!"

Pon was gone! The cap was gone! Bunter's hair was blowing out in the March wind! He had to have his cap!

He blinked this way and that way, like Moses of old! Like Moses, he saw no man! After all, it was rather a solitary road—a fellow could nip over the fence and nip back without much danger of being seen. He simply had to field his cap before he went on to join Lord Mauleverer at the bunshop in Courtfield. Besides, caps cost money; he could not afford to lose his cap, even if he could have walked into

Courtfield bareheaded, with his hair blowing about in the wind like quills upon the fretful porcupine. He hesitated—but he approached the fence at last.

A steep grassy bank led up to it, and the fence was six feet high. It was not an easy matter for Bunter. But he found crevices where he could get handhold and foothold, and he clambered up, panting, and got a fat leg over the top.

There he sat astride for a minute or two, to rest and recover his wind. Then he clambered down on the inner side.

His fat heart beat unpleasantly when he found himself landed within the forbidden precincts of the Three Fishers. Once, he remembered, Smithy had climbed out over that very fence and dropped fairly into the hands of a prefect who was passing down the road. Suppose some beast of a prefect happened to be coming along when Bunter climbed out? Would he believe that Bunter had only gone in after his cap? It was not likely! Besides, the rule was strict—cap or no cap, he was forbidden to set foot within those precincts.

He hunted for the cap, anxious to get out on the safe side of the fence. But the inner side of the fence was lined with trees and brambly, neglected bushes, and the fat Owl was shortsighted. He had to hunt and hunt for that cap! Panting, puffing, grunting, in a mingled state of fury and apprehension, he hunted and hunted.

He found the cap at last, where it had fallen in a thicket. He gasped with relief and jammed it on his bullet head.

Then he clambered up the fence again. On the inner side were joists which made climbing easier, and he reached the top without much difficulty.

Head and shoulders over the top, Bunter blinked up and down the road, in fear of seeing some Greyfriars prefect in the offing. He did not want to repeat Smithy's performance of dropping into the hands of authority.

Only one figure was in sight on the road; that of a rather tall young man in an overcoat, walking from the direction of Courtfield, with a bag in his hand.

Bunter blinked at him uneasily.

At a distance it might have been anybody to the shortsighted Owl, and if it was a Greyfriars master, he was already seen, perched on top of the fence, with the signboard of the Three Fishers almost directly behind him.

But the tall young man was a stranger. The bag in his hand was reassuring, it looked as if he was some passenger who had arrived by train and was walking from the station.

As he came closer, Bunter discerned, with great relief, that he had never seen him before.

So it did not matter! Greyfriars masters and prefects were a terror, in circumstances which might be so easily misunderstood. But strangers did not matter—Bunter did not care if a hundred strangers saw him there.

He proceeded to negotiate the fence.

Grunting and gasping, he clambered over and hung by his fat hands, preparing to drop.

It was a matter that required some care, for though it was only a six-foot fence, the grassy bank at the bottom sloped steeply down to the road. Bunter did not want to roll down if he could help it.

The tall young man, coming along the road, stared at him. Perhaps he was struck by the sight of an extremely podgy pair of trousers, prominently displayed as the Owl of the Remove clung to the fence. Perhaps he was acquainted with the reputation of the

Three Fishers; and was struck by seeing a schoolboy climbing out of such a place. Whatever his interest or motive, he came to a halt as he reached the spot and stood staring fixedly at Bunter. He had hard, sharp eyes, and a hard mouth; and both seemed to harden more as he watched the Greyfriars junior, his rather thin lips setting like a vice. Standing at the foot of the steep bank, he waited for Bunter to drop—but he assuredly did not foresee what was going to happen when Bunter did drop!

Bunter dropped!

He missed a footing on the bank—with all his care! It would really not have been Bunter if he hadn't! Missing it, the fat junior went spinning down the steep bank; sprawling headlong down to the road. Before the tall young man knew what was happening Billy Bunter crashed right into him and sent him staggering backwards.

"Oh!" gasped the stranger. He sat down, suddenly and hard, in the dust of the Courtfield road.

"Oooogh!" gurgled Bunter. "What's that? Who's that? Oooogh! Ow!"

And he sat up and blinked dizzily at the other sitter.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

"Name, Please!"

"YOU clumsy young fool!"
"Ow!" gasped Bunter.
"Wow!"

The tall young man scrambled to his feet, his hard face red with anger. That crash in the road had hurt him a little; and might have annoyed a good-tempered man, and he did not seem to be a good-tempered man at all. Bunter blinked at him.

It had not occurred to Bunter's fat brain that this tall young man, a stranger to him, might be Mr. Eustace Smedley, the new master of the Remove, who was expected at Greyfriars that afternoon.

Certainly it would not have occurred to Bunter, or to anyone else, that he was Mr. Lucius Teggars, of the firm of Leggett and Teggars, who was coming to Greyfriars in the name of the young tutor whom he had seen safely off to Canada!

"I say—" gasped Bunter in alarm, as the tall young man stepped towards him and grabbed him by the collar. "I—I say—wow! Leggo! I say, what did you get in the way for? Wow! Leggo! Ow!"

Shake! Shake! Shake!

"Ow! Wow! Ow!" gurgled Bunter.

The hard-lipped man jerked him to his feet. Bunter stood tottering and spluttering. He set his spectacles straight on his fat little nose and blinked in great wrath at the angry man.

"Look here—" he bawled.

"Who are you?" rapped the hard-lipped man sharply.

"Find out!" retorted Bunter independently.

"You are a Greyfriars boy!" The man had his temper in control now, and spoke calmly and quietly. "I know the Greyfriars cap."

His eyes were on the cap that Bunter had retrieved from the grounds of the Three Fishers. His eyes had been on that cap when he first sighted the fat junior on top of the fence.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. He blinked uneasily at the stranger. If this was some meddling beast, who knew that he was a Greyfriars fellow, and was going to report him at the school—

"You belong to Greyfriars?" rapped the young man.

"Oh! Yes!" It was not much use



"The boy I reported to you, sir, was Vernon-Smith," said the new master. "But this boy is Vernon-Smith," said Dr. Locke. "I am very glad, Mr. Smedley, that there is some mistake in the matter and that this is not the boy you saw climbing the fence of the Three Fishers inn!" The Bounder started violently.

denying it when he was wearing a Greyfriars cap, and the man evidently knew the school colours.

"Your Form?"

"Remove!" gasped Bunter.

The hard eyes glinted. They turned on the signboard showing over the fence. The young man raised his hand and pointed.

"That place is out of bounds for Greyfriars boys!" he snapped.

"I—I wasn't there!" gasped Bunter.

"Your name?"

"Oh lor'!" gasped Bunter.

It was evident that this beast, whoever he might happen to be, was going to report him at the school. Bunter could see that. He could have no other reason for inquiring his name.

Bunter could see that much, but he could not understand the keen intensity with which the hard eyes regarded him. He could not dream of the thoughts in the mind of the man with a borrowed name.

But one thing was clear to Bunter—if this meddling beast went to the school to report that he had seen a Greyfriars boy getting out of the most disreputable haunt in the county, he was not going to be able to give the name! Bunter was not bright—but he was bright enough not to give the interfering stranger his name.

Instead of answering, therefore, he backed away, with the intention of scudding off.

A hand was on his shoulder the next moment, with a grip so hard that Bunter felt as if the bones would crack, and he gave a yell.

"Ow! Leggo! Wow!"

"Your name?" snapped the man.

"I—I—I don't mind giving my name, of—of course!" gasped Bunter. "I—I

say, you—you needn't mention it at the school—"

"Give me your name at once!"

"I haven't been— Yow-ow-wow!" howled Bunter, as the vice-like grip tightened. "Wow! Leggo! Oooogh!"

"Your name!"

Bunter blinked at him helplessly. He had to give a name, and he was quite determined not to give his own. He had already admitted that he was a Remove fellow, unfortunately. He remembered that Vernon-Smith was in detention that afternoon. He almost grinned as he thought of that. Smithy's name would do! Any name would do, but his own—but Smithy's was the best—because the Bounder, being in detention at that very moment, would be able to prove beyond doubt that he had never been anywhere near the Three Fishers! It would not matter if this meddling beast told the Head that he had seen Smithy getting out of the Three Fishers—the Bounder's alibi was complete. The Head knew where Smithy was!

"If you do not answer me—"

"Vernon-Smith!" gasped Bunter.

He was surprised by the effect of that name on the hard-faced man. He simply could not understand the blaze that leaped into the hard eyes. For some reason utterly unimaginable by Bunter, that name gave the man satisfaction—almost savage satisfaction! It really seemed as if it was the name that he expected, or hoped, to hear.

"Vernon-Smith!" he repeated.

"Oh! Yes! Leggo!"

"Herbert Vernon-Smith?"

Bunter blinked in amazement! How the dickens did this stranger know that Vernon-Smith was named Herbert? He did not know Smithy, for clearly he believed that Bunter had given the right name.

"Yes!" gasped Bunter.

The man's look was almost gloating.

"Herbert Vernon-Smith, the son of Mr. Samuel Vernon-Smith?" he asked. It was plain that he wanted no doubt in the matter.

"Yes!" gurgled Bunter.

The man released his shoulder.

"Very well," he said quietly, "this will be reported to your headmaster, Vernon-Smith."

He picked up the bag which he had dropped when Bunter bowled him over, and turned in the direction of Greyfriars.

"I—I say—" gasped Bunter.

The man took no further heed of him. Bag in hand, he walked away, with long strides. Evidently he was going directly to the school.

"Beast!" rasped Bunter.

Having watched the tall man out of sight, Bunter turned in the direction of Courtfield. He still had hopes of catching Lord Mauleverer at the bunshop. And he grinned a fat grin as he went. That meddling beast was going to the school to tell Dr. Locke that Herbert Vernon-Smith had dropped over the fence of the Three Fishers—and the Head knew that Vernon-Smith was in the Remove Form Room grinding Latin! Bunter, so far as he could see, was quite safe—and he grinned contentedly as he plugged on to Courtfield.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

Success!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! Is that the new beak?" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

The Remove fellows were coming back to the House from football practice when Bob spotted the tall
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figure that was crossing the quad to the House, bag in hand. The other fellows glanced round with some interest.

"Bunter said he was coming this afternoon," remarked Harry Wharton. "He heard the Head telling Prout. I suppose—"

"Better cap him!" said Nugent, with a grin. "If he's going to be our beak, may as well let him know what nice, polite chaps we are at the start."

"The may-as-wellfulness is terrific!" agreed Hurrec Jamsset Ram Singh.

And the Famous Five politely "capped" the stranger as he passed—and he returned the salute civilly enough, and went on into the House.

Skinner came out a few minutes later. "Seen the new beak?" he asked.

"Is he the new beak?" inquired Bob.

"Yes, I heard him give Trotter his name to take in to the Head—man named Smedley, the tutor-wallah from Leggett & Teggers," said Skinner. "Can't say I like his looks much. Jaw like a vice."

A little later the newcomer was seen again, at the open window of the Head's study. A good many Remove fellows glanced at him as he stood there beside the headmaster, looking out.

Some of the fellows noted, as Skinner had, that the new man had a very firm jaw. He wore a little tooth-brush moustache, but it did not hide much of his hard mouth. Looking at him, the Removites came to the conclusion that he was not a man to stand much nonsense, and Bolsover major gave up his idea of ragging the new man in the Form-room. He looked as if he might prove quite as hard to handle as the "late lamented" Quelch!

The Famous Five, coming along and seeing him there, and sure now that he was their new Form-master; capped him again very solemnly. They heard the headmaster's voice:

"Some boys of your Form, Mr. Smedley! Those are Remove boys."

Feeling the new beak's hard, keen eyes on them, the chums of the Remove tried to look as if butter would not melt in their mouths, as they passed along the path.

"I think I shall like the Form, sir, judging by the looks of those lads," said the new master—a remark which reached the ears of the Famous Five, and caused them to exchange smiles.

"I think, sir," went on the new master, "that there is a boy named Vernon-Smith in the Form?"

"That is so, Mr. Smedley."

"I regret very much, sir, to have to touch on a disagreeable topic on my first day here, so soon after my arrival. But I am bound to mention to you that this boy, Vernon-Smith—"

Harry Wharton & Co. passed out of hearing.

Never had they been so tempted to take Billy Bunter for a model, and linger to hear what was not intended for their ears.

However, they manfully resisted the temptation, and heard no more. But at a distance they looked at one another.

"The new man can't be down on Smithy yet, surely!" said Bob.

"Sounded like it!" said Johnny Bull.

"But he can't have seen him," said Harry Wharton, puzzled. "Smithy's in detention in the Form-room—he won't be out till tea-time. The new beak can't have seen him—"

"Sounds as if he has!"

"Has that howling ass Smithy cut detention, and has the new man dropped on him?" exclaimed Bob, in alarm. "Oh, the ass—"

"Just like Smithy!" grunted Johnny

Bull. "Isn't he always asking for it, at the top of his voice?"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Reddy!" Bob Cherry spotted Tom Redwing in the quad, and harled him. "Reddy, old bean, where's Smithy?"

"In the Form-room," answered Redwing.

"Sure?" asked Harry Wharton.

"I saw him a few minutes ago. Why?" asked Redwing. "He's detained till tea. I gave him a look-in not ten minutes ago."

"Blessed if I can make it out, then," said the captain of the Remove. "That new man, Smedley, seems to be down on him already. And it's jolly odd, if he hasn't seen him."

Redwing stared.

"I don't see why he should be down on him. He certainly hasn't seen him. Smithy's in the Form-room, all right."

It was rather a puzzle, and the juniors had to give it up.

Meanwhile, Dr. Locke was listening with great surprise, and with a gathering frown, to what Mr. Smedley had to tell him.

The headmaster of Greyfriars had received "Mr. Smedley" without the faintest doubt or suspicion.

Mr. Smedley's credentials were in perfect order, and he came with the best recommendations from the firm of Leggett & Teggers. Dr. Locke had heard of him before that, though he had never met him. That the young man who presented himself as Eustace Smedley, M.A., was in reality Lucius Teggers, of the firm of Leggett & Teggers, was, of course, totally unsuspected by the Head. He could not suspect such an impersonation, neither could he possibly have imagined any motive for it.

"This is somewhat painful for me, Dr. Locke," said Mr. Smedley, "but I feel bound to acquaint you with the matter. I walked here from the station this afternoon, and was surprised to see a boy in a Greyfriars cap climbing over a fence on the road—the fence of a place called the Three Fishers. I have heard of this place—a very disreputable resort, as I have heard—"

"Decidedly so!"

"I need hardly ask whether it is out of Greyfriars bounds—"

"Most certainly!"

"I questioned the boy, and made him give me his name," said Mr. Smedley.

"The name was Vernon-Smith."

"Bless my soul!"

"There is a boy of that name in the Remove?" asked Mr. Smedley. "This boy admitted that he was in the Remove here."

"Undoubtedly," said the Head: "You are as yet unacquainted with the boys of your Form, and not all of them, I am sorry to say, are so creditable as the boys I pointed out to you a few minutes ago in the quadrangle. The boy Vernon-Smith was, a few days ago, sentenced to be expelled from the school, having been found by a prefect in the very resort you have named."

"Is it possible, sir?"

"It is only too true," said Dr. Locke, "and it was only for certain considerations, connected with his family affairs, that I rescinded that sentence, and allowed him to remain. But I warned him, unmistakably, that any repetition of his offence would cause him to be sent away immediately, and if he has indeed transgressed, so soon, and so impudently, he leaves Greyfriars this very afternoon."

With all his self-command, the man with a borrowed name could hardly hide his satisfaction.

That the millionaire's son was a young rascal, that he could be caught out in some fresh offence that merited

expulsion, Lucius Teggers had had no doubt. It was for that reason that he had so cunningly got rid of Eustace Smedley and taken his name and place at Greyfriars. To watch the young rascal like a cat watching a mouse, to catch him out, to see him "sacked"—that was the game, after which Mr. Smedley would promptly disappear and Lucius Teggers would reappear in the office in Regent Street, ready for the millionaire's next visit.

But though he had no doubt of success, the plotter had hardly dreamed of success so soon!

Really, it was hardly worth while to have taken the trouble to dispatch the young tutor to Canada and borrow his name, when the scapegrace of the school asked for it like this!

He had hoped for success, and counted on it, but certainly he had not expected it to fall into his hands like a ripe apple, on his first day at Greyfriars.

It was with difficulty that he composed his hard face into an expression of regretful gravity.

Dr. Locke's brow was dark.

If this was the Bounder's return for his kindness, his leniency, his trust then his mind was made up on the spot! No feeling of compassion would deter him from dealing with the hardened, reckless young rascal as he richly deserved.

He had doubted whether he had acted wisely in giving the young reprobate another chance. If he had repaid it in this way—

The mere thought of it brought thunder to the headmaster's brow.

"I regret very much, sir—" murmured the new master.

"Not at all!" said Dr. Locke. "If this is correct I am only too glad to learn the truth. Such ingratitude, such reckless hardness of heart—"

"The boy has a bad character in the school, then?" asked the new master.

"The worst, I am sorry to say. You are absolutely certain that the boy you saw was Vernon-Smith?" asked the Head. "As it happens, he was in detention this afternoon, and if you actually saw him out of gates it means that he has impudently broken detention and left the school without leave—not that I am surprised, for he has done that on so many occasions before."

"He gave me his name—"

"Then there can scarcely be any doubt. However, I will look in at the Remove-room, in order that there may be no possible doubt on the subject. Please come with me."

The two masters left the study together. Dr. Locke's face was dark and frowning, Mr. Smedley's quietly grave. But there was a gloating glint in his hard eyes as he followed the headmaster of Greyfriars to the Remove-room.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not Smithy!

"**B**OTHER this rot!" growled the Bounder.

Smithy was feeling fed-up. That was not surprising, after spending several hours in the dusky Form-room, grinding wearily at a Latin task.

His chum, Redwing, had looked in twice to give him a word—strictly against the rules. Perhaps Tom wanted to make sure that the Bounder had not "cut."

Smithy had been strongly tempted to do so. Every now and then he stepped to the open window and stared out gloomily into the quad. The fresh spring air seemed to call him out.

(Continued on page 28.)

A FULL-OF-THRILLS STORY OF AMAZING DETECTIVE ADVENTURE.

The MAN BEHIND the SCENES!



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

BY
HEDLEY SCOTT

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE.

Following 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, Merwyn Villiers and Julius Tankerhead, who are pulling off big financial coups in connection with sporting events. An attempt on the part of the two rogues to frame a footer match is nipped in the bud by Locke, with the result that Villiers and Tankerhead lose a fortune instead of winning one!

(Now read on.)

Wanted—A Cat's-paw!

"SO long, Tiger—you'll be back again before Christmas!"

There was a broad, knowing look on the face of the warder as he jangled his bunch of keys, selected the right one, and slowly swung back the big iron gates of Pentonmoor Prison.

"Tiger" Dillone snarled.

He was an undersized rat of a man, with an olive complexion from which blazed two piercing black eyes. In that particular moment, as the warder paid his farewells, it was easy to see how Tiger Dillone had earned his nickname. A vicious, animal-like expression settled on his olive face, transforming it into a mask of repellent ferocity. Next moment he had recovered himself, and was smiling with the serenity of an innocent child.

"Me no see you again, mister," he threw back at the warder, who was now re-locking the gates. "Me prefer the American gaols. There they treat a man with proper respect. Me say good-bye to England."

He waved his hand grandiloquently, took a quick look at the massive grey pile in the shadow of which he had "lived" for the past three years, and involuntarily shuddered.

Tiger Dillone had no desire to spend another "vacation" at Pentonmoor.

The warder grinned back in return. This was not the first occasion he had seen Tiger Dillone leave prison after serving a sentence, for both Dartmoor and Parkhurst gaols held official records of his sojourn there. Living an honest existence, within the law, seemed an impossibility with Tiger Dillone; he was a real craftsman at the

perilous business of cat-burglary, and never allowed himself to forget it.

So far, Tiger Dillone's misspent genius in this direction had resulted in twenty of his thirty-seven years of life being spent within prison walls.

But to do him credit now Tiger Dillone had no intention ever of committing any breach of the laws of England, which would see him sent back to such a strict and iron-disciplined prison as Pentonmoor.

He had a better idea than that; he was going to start life afresh in America, for the authorities there, apparently, were more lenient towards their State prisoners. Some of them, the Tiger had been told, actually had wireless sets in their cells, and any sort of meal they fancied. Much better that than the rigid discipline of Pentonmoor, where even a smoke or two was denied the prisoners, and where work was something more than just a mere word.

The Tiger moved off with his usual slinking gait, actually whistling. In the pockets of his somewhat shabby suit was the useful sum of three pounds. In his mind was the pleasant thought of working his passage to America on some tramp steamer and then deserting. Already the Tiger had pictured an unending series of valuable cribs to be cracked on America's Broadway.

Then Fate and Julius Tankerhead knocked all these pleasant theories sideways, so to speak.

As the Tiger slunk off, a saloon car, which had been parked some distance from the main gates of the prison, crawled into action. By the time the released convict was a hundred yards away, and out of sight of the knowing warder, that car passed the Tiger, and a heavily bearded man waved to him.

"Want a lift?"

The Tiger threw out his most bland and childlike smile.

"Me want a lift? Yes, sir, you are verree kind!"

He jumped on to the running-board of the still moving car, and settled himself by the side of the bearded driver, whereupon that individual at once displayed a deep and touching interest in his past life and future aspirations.

"So you've been in for three years,

eh? Too bad! Now, how did you get caught?"

The Tiger's face broke into that repellent animal expression, and his eyes blazed ferociously.

"Me was caught by a smart-alec named Ferrers Locke! Me, the great Tiger, caught by a miserable private tec, not even a Scotland-Yarder! Pshaw!" He spat with feeling, and then assumed his childlike expression. "Me sometimes wish me had buried a knife in his dirty heart!"

The bearded man at the wheel eyed him cheerfully.

"Well," he said, with great deliberation, "if a smart-alec ever put me away within that place"—he indicated the prison—"I'd get even with him somehow."

"Me not falling foul of English police no more!" retorted the Tiger, "otherwise no pay my respects to Mr. Locke. Me off to America."

"Really? Now that's too bad!" drawled the bearded driver. "You see, Tiger, I've always had an admiration for you. Oh, yes," he added hastily, "I know something about you! Knew you were due out of the big house today—that's why I motored down to meet you."

The Tiger looked at him suspiciously. Instinct told him that the beard was false, and that the man's rather battered nose was a perfect piece of make-up.

"Say, mister," he said wolfishly, "what's your game? How you know all this about me? Are you a Scotland Yard man?"

Julius Tankerhead, for he it was behind that clever disguise, laughed immoderately.

"Good heavens, no!" he exclaimed. "I hate the devils! But I thought I'd found the ideal man to do a little job for me. However," he added easily, "it doesn't matter. Perhaps a couple of hundred pounds isn't any good to you!"

He gave all his attention thereafter, apparently, to watching the winding ribbon of road ahead, knowing, of course, that his reference to the sum of money would have instantaneous effect, for Julius Tankerhead had selected his "man" with great care.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,362.

The Tiger's eyes danced greedily. Two hundred pounds! That was a nice, tidy sum to have in his pockets when he shook the dust of England from his feet. It also meant the difference between working his passage across to America, and then deserting, and a first-class passage in a swell liner.

He licked his dry lips and touched Julius Tankerhead's sleeve.

"Me keen to hear more about this little job, mister. Two hundred pounds, you say? Perhaps me be able to oblige, yess?"

Julius Tankerhead stopped the car in a deserted place, and whispered instructions to his now thoroughly interested passenger. A five-pound note changed hands, being, as the wily Tankerhead said, a sign of good faith that a real bargain had been arrived at between them. The rest of the two hundred pounds, he assured Tiger Dillone, would be paid without fail at an agreed-upon address in Soho when the job was done.

Exactly one hour later Julius Tankerhead and his confederate parted, each being perfectly satisfied with the morning's work. Once the Tiger was out of sight, Julius Tankerhead plucked off his false nose and beard, rearranged his hat to its customary angle, and touched a small switch on the dashboard of the car.

Immediately the registration number-plates on the front and rear of the car underwent a change from XY 9825 to LP 4739—a clever contrivance which the rascally Tankerhead had found of inestimable benefit on more than one occasion.

Meanwhile, the Tiger was making his way into a local hostelry, though his first job upon entering the place was not to order some refreshment, but to jot down a registration number on the back of an old envelope while it lingered correctly within his memory. And, of course, the Tiger scribbled down XY 9825.

"Me not so daft as that guy think," he told himself. "Me know disguise when me see it. But me find out who he is by registration, yess!"

Which reflection upon the personal cleverness of Tiger Dillone in dealing with a fellow-rogue called for some celebration in liquid form—a one-man celebration, so to speak, but none the less enjoyable.

A Nocturnal Visitor!

BE careful with that case, there's a good chap. The contents won't stand heavy handling."

A smile accompanied Ferrers Locke's injunction to the two carters who were bringing the packing-case up to his rooms in Baker Street, and material appreciation of the carters' efforts took the form of a crisp ten-shilling note as they took their leave.

Jack Drake came into the comfortable lounge with a hammer and cold chisel.

"Is that the skeleton, guv'nor, you told me about?" he asked, being hard put to it to restrain a shudder.

The famous detective smiled.

"It's a skeleton all right, my lad, but not of a human being. It's a made-up one I bought from a circus man," he explained, "so don't look so squeamish. Here, give me the hammer and chisel!"

But Drake would have none of it. Assured that the contents of the

packing-case contained nothing more harmful than an imitation skeleton, he at once started to prise up the lid. Knowing what he did, however, he was not prepared for the little joke Ferrers Locke played upon him when he tossed the straw packing aside, for that was the signal for Ferrers Locke to switch off the electric light.

And in the darkened lounge, now lit only by the flickering flames from the fire, that imitation skeleton assumed a most hideous, terrifying aspect. The bony structure that seemed to leer at Jack Drake was aglow with an eerie green light which made the youngster shudder and exclaim aloud.

"Not bad, is it, my boy?" chuckled the detective. "Wonderful what a daub or so of luminous paint will do—what?"

Drake laughed his relief.

"Is that all it is, guv'nor? Phew! It fair gave me the creeps! Switch on the lights! I don't like being left in the dark even with an imitation skeleton!"

The lights flashed on as the detective thumbed the switch.

"I think it will do," he said gravely, eyeing the contents of the packing-case. "And by the time I've had a little practice changing a human being into a skeleton merely by waving my magic wand even the experts of the Magicians' Club will have something to think about."

Drake understood then.

Every year the world's cleverest illusionists and magicians gathered together to discuss and perform new tricks. Their annual "do" was to take place in a week or so's time, and, as was his custom, Ferrers Locke had devised a special trick for their entertainment.

"You'll see how it's done by this time to-morrow, my lad!" laughed Locke. "Meanwhile, prop the thing up on its stand by the wall there, and ring for our tame heathen to remove the packing-case."

He settled himself in an armchair what time Jack Drake unpacked the skeleton and rang the bell. The "tame heathen," who also answered to the name of Sing-Sing, nearly jumped clear of the floor as he saw the gruesome-looking skeleton turned in his direction. But with Oriental control the detective's Chinese manservant had himself well in hand, and next second his features were as impassive as a mould.

"Clear that case out of the way, Sing-sing."

"Most certainly, youthful master—and at once!"

With no further interest in the leering skeleton Sing-Sing gathered up the packing-case and sidled off with it noiselessly.

"Made even Sing-Sing jump," chuckled Ferrers Locke.

"How do you know?" challenged Drake. "Why, you weren't looking at him, guv'nor."

"Quite so, my lad," replied the detective. "But you forget I am facing the mirror which reflects the movements of anyone entering the room."

"Oh!" Drake flushed. He had been reminded about that mirror and its particular purpose before. And then to change the subject: "Any development in the Tankerhead-Villiers' case, guv'nor?"

Ferrers Locke shook his head.

"No. Both our birds seem to be lying very low these days. But they're

up to something—of that I'm certain. And I have a feeling that I figure in their plans to a large extent."

"What do you know, guv'nor?" chuckled Drake cheekily.

"Nothing except what my instinct tells me, my boy," was the reply—"and instinct to people who follow our profession is of rare value. I've made several inquiries in various directions, but the results aren't gratifying at all."

"Don't you know enough about these birds to cage them yet, guv'nor?"

"Knowing is one thing, to produce evidence that will satisfy a judge and jury is another," said Ferrers Locke. "At the present moment both of us know that these precious villains, Tankerhead and Villiers, are two of the dirtiest crooks at large. Well, we must be patient. One of these days we shall have enough evidence to settle their hash. Now, you run along to bed—I'm going to read for a couple of hours."

Drake voiced his "good-night" and trudged off to his own room, intimating to the faithful Sing-Sing as he went that he would not be wanted again. Ferrers Locke, meanwhile, switched off the main lights of the lounge and turned on a reading-lamp by the side of his deep armchair.

The clock ticked away on the mantel, the hubbub of the outside traffic gradually diminished as midnight drew near, and the principal sound which disturbed the cosy silence of the flat was that of a youthful snore.

Locke smiled indulgently. Snoring was still a boyish habit of Drake's, despite the detective's efforts to break him of it.

Half-past twelve struck out from the little clock, then the hour of one, with its full accompaniment of Westminster chimes.

And twelve and a half minutes past the hour of one Ferrers Locke started. A cold current of air suddenly wafted against his face. He knew it came from the ventilation grille in the wall. And on the other side of the wall was his bed-room. There was nothing unusual ordinarily in that circumstance, but now Locke remembered that his bed-room window had been closed. The draught of cold air immediately told him that the window had been opened—and opened within the past few minutes.

He knew Sing-Sing and Drake had retired. Then why should his bed-room window be opened so suddenly, and by whom? His ears caught the sound of padded movements.

Instinctively, Locke turned out the reading-lamp and sank lower into the armchair. Now, however, his right hand was comfortably gripped around the butt of an automatic pistol. His ears had not played him false—someone had entered his chambers via the bed-room window. That style of entry suggested at once a burglar—a cat-burglar, Locke smiled grimly. This wouldn't be the first occasion a burglar had tried his hand at robbing him. He would find little in the bed-room, however, and Locke knew that the soft-footed visitor would in due course make for the lounge, where a number of valuables were to be had for the taking.

He was right in one particular, but the stealing of valuables took no place in it.

The footsteps began to pad towards the lounge, but they halted at each door passed en route, and the detective gathered that his unannounced visitor

was peeping in to each of them in turn.

In that particular Ferrers Locke was right, and something seemed to amuse him, for he chuckled softly as the footsteps halted outside the door of the lounge. The handle turned gently, and the door was swung open. Next moment a terrified howl rent the air, for the stealthy intruder became suddenly aware of the gruesome skeleton, horribly unnerving in its coating of luminous paint.

And even while that howl of terror rang through the chambers, and, incidentally, aroused Drake and Sing-Sing, Ferrers Locke switched on the reading-lamp and rose up out of his chair, automatic in hand. He saw a quaking, masked figure backed against the far wall, clear of the door which had automatically closed. On the carpeted floor lay a glimmering blade of Italian workmanship, one blow from which in the hands of an experienced assassin would cause a fatal wound.

"You may come in, Tiger Dillone," said Ferrers Locke coldly and calmly. "I didn't know you were out of prison. But I never forget a face or a figure—even with a mask on."

The terrified wretch covered his starting eyes with trembling hands. In that moment so great was the shock of seeing the skeleton, he firmly believed it was a ghost talking to him.

But Tiger Dillone was soon disillusioned on that score, for he found himself being shaken in a very human grip, whilst a very human hand tore the black mask from his face.

Drake and Sing-Sing arrived in time to see who their nocturnal visitor was, the former recognising him on the spot. "The Tiger!"

Locke smiled grimly, and pocketed his automatic.

"Right first time, my lad," he said approvingly. "Glad to see your memory for faces is improving. Kindly oblige me by picking up that stiletto—thanks! They're nasty things to have lying about the place."

He turned to the shivering, unhappy cat-burglar and shook him again.

"What's the reason of your visit, Tiger—eh?" he demanded.

"Me come only to steal things!" moaned the ex-convict.

Locke's face hardened.

"The mere fact of you jumping in to tell us that suggests that you came with another purpose in view. Now spill it. When did you come out of prison?"

"Yesterday, mister! Let me go! Me haven't taken anything! Me—me—" he caught another glimpse of that leering skeleton and shuddered afresh. "Let me go, mister, please, please!"

Locke's eyes narrowed.

"You didn't come here to steal, my friend," he remarked grimly, "your stiletto tells me that. You've never been caught before with a weapon on you! You were always too scared to do your robberies with violence. You were afraid of getting the cat!"

"Me came only to steal, me tell you!" exclaimed the unhappy cat-burglar. "Honest, mister! Me would not have used the stiletto!"

Locke observed the terror which flashed across the wretch's face every time he glanced at the grinning skeleton. It suggested to the detective a means of getting at the truth quickly.

"See here, Tiger! If you don't come clean in two minutes I'm going to lock you up in a room with that skeleton for company. How do you like it?"

Tiger Dillone's woebegone expression and tearful entreaties said plainly enough that he did not like it.

"One minute up!" said Locke relentlessly.

"No, no, mister! Please—" The wretch broke into a torrent of pleadings and excuses.

"Two minutes!" snapped the detective. "Jack, just open the luggage-room

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.

AS space is rather short this week here is a selection of queries which readers have put up to me, and which I will answer by

RAPID-FIRE REPLIES.

What is a Pawpaw? (J. J., of Brighton): It is a fruit tree which is found in the central United States, and also in the West Indies.

What are the five towns which are mentioned so often in the novels of Arnold Bennett? ("Regular Reader," of Manchester): The "five towns" are Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stoke, Longton, Burslem, and Tunstall.

Will Electrolysis Remove Hair? ("Old Reader," of London, N.): Electrolysis is really intended for such things as refining copper, electroplating, electrotyping, and so on. I think I would prefer to shave rather than submit to electrolysis. All men shave, so why worry because you have a few unwanted hairs growing on your cheeks?

When was Pompeii destroyed? ("Inquirer," of Bow, E.): In the year A.D. 97. There have been subsequent eruptions which have added to the mass of lava which overwhelmed the town at that time, and the present thickness of the lava, etc., is about twenty feet. But, of course, most of the town has now been excavated.

What is a Foumart? (Harry G., of Cheltenham): This is another name for the polecat. Its fur is known as "Fitch," and artists' brushes made from the hair very often masquerade under the name of "camels' hair."

How did Covent Garden get its Name? (L. V., of Hammersmith.) It was originally known as "Convent" Garden, because it stands on the site of a garden which belonged to the abbot and monks of Westminster. The "n" in the name has been dropped.

Now let us have a look at what is in store for MAGNET readers next week. Just to start the ball rolling, Frank Richards kicks off with:

"THE FORM-MASTER'S SECRET!" one of the finest yarns of the Greyfriars chums I have ever read. But, of course, you know that you can rely on a Frank Richards' story to give you just that proper balance of fun and dramatic situations which makes for a real, rattling good school story.

There will be further startling developments in our powerful sporting and detective story, and plenty of chuckles in the "Greyfriars Herald" supplement. The shorter features will, of course, appear as usual. Don't miss next week's record-breaking issue, chums, whatever you do!

YOUR EDITOR.

and cart that skeleton in for me, will you?"

But before the youngster could carry out the detective's request Tiger Dillone broke down.

"No, no, no!" he howled. "Me tell you all! Me come clean!"

"Well, get on with it!" rasped Ferrers Locke.

In a gabble of mixed language came the whole story, from the time Tiger Dillone had been set free and of his meeting with the bearded stranger.

"But me would not have killed you, mister," wound up the wretched Tiger. "Honest, mister, me couldn't have done it—"

"Not even for two hundred pounds?" prompted Ferrers Locke grimly. "Not even for revenge—eh? You tell that somewhere else."

He continued relentless questioning, and gradually drew from the terrified man that he was due to meet his "partner"—the bearded stranger—at twelve o'clock midday at the Cafe Turrand, Soho. Locke made a careful note of the time and place.

"And you don't know who he is—this villain who hired you to murder me?"

Tiger Dillone's black eyes opened wide in mute appeal.

"Me honestly do not know! Me never met him before!" He suddenly remembered something. Feverishly he dived a hand into his jacket pocket, and brought out a grimy envelope.

"But me took his car number, yes!" he hissed. "He shall not escape scot free!"

Locke smiled.

"Not so bad for a dago intelligence," he remarked. "Thanks, I'll make a note of that car number myself."

For some moments he stood surveying the miserable law-breaker and would-be murderer. Finally he spoke.

"Look here, Tiger! I'm going to be easy with you. I'm going to give you in charge—"

The Tiger's pleadings were renewed. Locke silenced them with an imperious gesture.

"But I shall keep the charge down to breaking into my premises with intent to commit a felony—not attempted murder."

Tiger Dillone's dark eyes flashed their gratitude. His face broke into a child-like smile.

"Oh, t'ank you, mister! Me very grateful. Me wouldn't kill you now, not even for three—four hundred—five hundred pounds!"

"Well, it's nice to know my price is so high," smiled Locke. "Jack," he added, "just pop down and get a policeman. Thanks!"

The youngster was back in a few moments with a man in uniform. Locke handed over the prisoner to that stalwart custodian of the law.

"Farewell, Tiger!" was his parting greeting. "Give my regards to the boys at Pentonmoor. They'll be surprised to see you back so soon."

But his bantering mood fell from him the moment the outer door had closed.

"Drake," he said, "this is the work of the Tankerhead-Villiers crush. It sticks out a mile."

"I reckon you're right, guv'nor," remarked Jack Drake, "but there's no proof!"

Locke's lips snapped into a thin, purposeful line.

"Not yet," he answered ominously; "but there might be something useful to be picked up at Turrand's."

(Tankerhead and Villiers are booked for a big surprise, and so are you when you read next week's exciting chapters of this powerful tea story.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,362.

THE BOUNDER'S RIVAL!

(Continued from page 24.)

Now, once more, he was tempted. He rose from his desk, and stood staring out of the window, with a knitted brow. He was fed-up to the chin; and the old recklessness was strong upon him.

But the narrow escape and the terrible warning he had had so recently, had impressed even the Bounder's reckless mind. For a time, at least, he had to toe the line. And perhaps even the Bounder felt some compunction about flouting his headmaster's authority, after receiving so much kindness at his hands.

He grunted, and turned from the window again. After all, it would be fatheaded to cut now, and take all the risk when only a half-hour remained of his detention. He sat down to Latin prose again.

There were footsteps in the corridor a few minutes later! Smithy heard the rustle of a gown.

He was glad that he had resisted that temptation to "cut." The Head was not due for half an hour yet, to release him from detention. But he was coming!

Smithy was sitting at his desk, hard at work, when Dr. Locke stepped into the Form-room. Another man followed the Head in, whom Smithy did not know; but he guessed that it must be the new beak.

He rose to his feet as the Head entered.

He noticed that Dr. Locke stared at him, as if in surprise; and wondered whether the Beak had suspected him of cutting detention.

"You are here!" exclaimed Dr. Locke.

"Yes, sir!" answered the Bounder meekly.

"Have you been out of this Form-room?"

"No, sir."

"Mr. Smedley!" Dr. Locke turned to the tall young man who had followed him in. "There must be some mistake—the boy is here."

Mr. Smedley stared at Vernon-Smith, who regarded him rather curiously.

"I do not quite follow, sir," said the new master. "The boy I reported to you was Vernon-Smith."

"This is Vernon-Smith of the Remove, Mr. Smedley!"

"Wha-a-t!"

Taken utterly by surprise, the new master stared blankly at Smithy. Smithy stared blankly back. What all this meant was a mystery to him.

"That—that boy is Herbert Vernon-Smith!" exclaimed the new master.

"Certainly!"

"I'm Vernon-Smith, sir!" said the Bounder cheerfully.

"This is your new Form-master, Mr. Smedley. Vernon-Smith," said the Head. "I am very glad, Mr. Smedley, that there is some mistake in the matter. This is not the boy you saw climbing the fence of the Three Fishers inn?"

The Bounder started violently.

"N-n-no!" stammered the new master.

"But—but the boy gave me his name—are there two boys named Vernon-Smith in the Remove here, sir?"

"Certainly not! It appears, Mr. Smedley, that the boy you saw must have given you another boy's name."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured the Bounder.

He was quite startled by the look that came over the new master's face. It was, for a second, such an expression as a tiger might have worn on seeing

new member of his staff was from sharing his feelings.

The Bounder was breathing hard. He realised now how matters stood, and he was deeply thankful that he had not, after all, broken detention. Some fellow caught pub-haunting had given Smithy's name instead of his own—and the new master, for some unknown reason, had been glad to catch him in a scrape. What might have been the result had he not been in the Form-room when the Head came, the Bounder hardly dared to think.

"This is a very good paper, Vernon-Smith." The Head was speaking. "You need do no more—you are excused from detention! You may leave the Form-room."

"Thank you, sir."

"Possibly, Mr. Smedley, you can give me a description of the boy who gave you a name not his own—"

"A somewhat fat and unwieldy boy, sir, in spectacles!" said Mr Smedley.

"Bless my soul! There is only one Remove boy to whom that description applies—a boy named Bunter!" said the Head. "I must inquire—"

Vernon-Smith heard that as he left the Form-room.

He grinned as he went down the passage.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry's cheery roar greeted him, as he came into the quad. "Out early, Smithy?"

"Smithy—" exclaimed Redwing.

The Bounder laughed.

"I'm let off early!" he said. "Seen that the new man Smedley? He spotted Bunter at the Three Fishers, as he hiked along here, and jolly old Bunter gave him my name!"

"Oh, my hat! That accounts—"

"There'll be a bit of a surprise waiting for Bunter when he comes in!" chuckled the Bounder.

"Poor old Bunter!"

Billy Bunter, just then, was enjoying tea at the bun-shop in Courtfield with Lord Mauleverer, whom he had successfully run down. Probably Mauly was not enjoying it so much as Bunter. And probably, very probably, Bunter would not have enjoyed it so much, had he known what was waiting for him when he got back to Greyfriars! Fortunately, for his enjoyment of his tea, Billy Bunter didn't know—yet!

THE END.

(Now look out for next week's MAGNET and another grand long school yarn of the Bounder and the chums of Greyfriars, entitled: "THE FORM-MASTER'S SECRET!" You'll vote it great, boys!)

A USEFUL LEATHER POCKET WALLET

goes to K. A. White, of 17, Sandon Street, New Basford, Nottingham, for supplying the following winning Greyfriars limerick:

Said Fisher T. Fish, of New York:
"My father has sure cornered
pork.
Wall Street will crash,
He'll rake in cash,
And ride in a posh car, not walk!"

Get busy on a limerick if you want to win a prize, chum!

his prey escape. It was only a flashing look and it vanished at once, but the Bounder had seen it; and he knew that Mr. Smedley was disappointed—fiercely disappointed. Why, the Bounder could not imagine. He had never seen the man before, and the man had never seen him.

"Another boy's name?" Mr. Smedley turned to Dr. Locke. "Is it possible? I—I suppose it must be—" He broke off, staring at the Bounder again.

Dr. Locke stepped to Vernon-Smith's desk, picked up his Latin paper, and glanced at it. If he needed any proof that Smithy had not been out of the Form-room, he had it in that paper; for it was a long and difficult paper, and it was almost finished. Obviously, Vernon-Smith had been hard at work that afternoon.

It was a relief to the Head; a deep relief! He little dreamed how far that



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EXTRA GOOD EDITION

THE NEW Greyfriars Herald

GOT ANY EMBROCATION?
 Trot it round to us if you have. We've been listening to Coker spouting on "What I would do if I were School Captain"—and he's given us a pain in the neck!—POTTER & GREENE, Games Study, Fifth Passage.

March 24th, 1934. EDITED BY HARRY WHARTON. No. 77 (New Series).

and keeping to the correct side of the road. This explains why he was doing forty on the wrong side at a dangerous crossing just outside Courtfield.

IRONY OF FATE

Coker Annoys Favourite Film Star

"Footling Frolics" was going to be shown in Courtfield, he was in a ferment right up to the day of the first performance. When the great day itself came, he could hardly wait for classes to finish!

As soon as they had finished, he got out the old traction-engine he still calls a motor-bike and raced off at a speed that would have earned him fame and fortune on many a dirt-track.

So anxious was he to arrive at the Courtfield Cinema in time for the first evening show that he omitted to take those elementary precautions which are usually considered necessary when driving, such as easing up without sounding a warning. They got rather heated about it. She demanded his name and address. He gave it and demanded hers.

It was right at this point that Fate dealt Coker the cruel blow we mentioned. Her name turned out to be Gloria Glamure! She was, though Coker hadn't recognised her in her driving kit, the film star of Coker's dreams!

Coker might, of course, have gone down on his hands and knees and begged forgiveness. But somehow he didn't. His brain, he explained afterwards, seemed to be in a whirl, and in a whirl it has been ever since.

When it strikes one!

Fate has dealt Coker a cruel blow. Ever since the Christmas hols., when Coker saw Gloria Glamure in the bashing, crushing, slashing screen sensation "Piffing Parade," Coker has been a Gloria Glamure fan. By that, we mean he writes frequently for her autographed photographs, swoons when he gets a reply, and generally goes goofy when her name crops up.

When Coker knew that Gloria's latest picture "What's the idea?" I asked, in surprise.

"Oh, everybody who calls on me has to have one," Brown explained. "It's what is generally known as my 'Gift of Repartee!'"

Well, perhaps that's enough about Tom Brown for this issue. By the way, in case there's any doubt about the authenticity of this little interview, it was to mention that it was supplied to us by the Amnias-Skinner News Service. So it simply must be true!

George Bulstrode has suddenly become musical, having discovered that he can play a one-string fiddle. The sounds emanating from his study suggest that Bulstrode is not so good as he thinks!

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Now begins a new era of unexampled freedom. In future, rising bell will be rung at 4.30 a.m. instead of 4 a.m. Morning lessons will last from 6.30 a.m. to 12.45 p.m., instead of 7 a.m. to 12.45 p.m. Morning Break of fifteen minutes in the middle. Afternoon School will be from 2 p.m. until 7 p.m., and an interval of ten minutes before bed-time to do exactly as they please.

We are sure that our readers will join us in expressing heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Goodsmyle for these beneficent reforms. We cannot, of course, blind ourselves to the danger that some of the more youthful students may be tempted to misuse the time now placed at their disposal.

(We like sometimes consider ourselves hard done by. In 1934, can only gasp at Great as in the "good old days!")

—Ed.

—Ed.

—Ed.

—Ed.

—Ed.

—Ed.

to it, and the Head glared and roared for a birch. A few moments later, the birch was whistling and Bunter was yelling!

But now for the strange sequel. On the following day, Sir Hilton Popper's gamekeepers caught a poacher they had been chasing for several days. And when they charged him before P.-c. Tozer, they learned that on that occasion he had handed a brace of rabbits to a fat schoolboy when he spotted P.-c. Tozer in the distance.

Bunter's yarn was true, after all! The Head has been informed, and Bunter's name duly expunged from his black books. Unfortunately, it's too late to expunge the flogging!

Bunter has our deepest sympathy. But, really, we can hardly blame the Head. After all, it's the first time Bunter has ever been known to tell the truth, and even a Beak can't be expected to recognise it at once when it comes from such an unusual source!

—Ed.

—Ed.

—Ed.

—Ed.

—Ed.

But I can't help laughing when I think how it happened. You see, he would never have knocked out the berglar if he hadn't fallen down the stairs; and he would never have fallen down the stairs if he hadn't trodden on a tin-tack I left on the landing. So I'm the one who really ought to get the credit!

Skinner's the hero of the school now. It looks as if my tin-tack was the turning "point" of his career!

—Ed.

—Ed.

—Ed.

—Ed.

—Ed.

—Ed.

—Ed.

It appeared that P.-c. Tozer was on duty in Friardale Lane when he observed Bunter walking in the direction of Greyfriars with two dead rabbits. P.-c. Tozer, remembering recent complaints of poaching from Sir Hilton Popper, asked Bunter where he had obtained them. Bunter's reply, which should, of course, have annihilated the constable's suspicions, was: "Look here, you beast, if you think these have been preserved, you're jolly well mistaken. As a matter of fact, my pater sent them to me from Bunter Court in a hamper, and I'm—shem!—just carrying 'em around with me so that nobody will nab them, see!"

He added that Mr. Tozer would take the word of a gentleman and wasn't up to a common village policeman to question him. Anticipating that the constable would then withdraw, thoroughly abashed, Bunter walked on. Much to his chagrin, however, P.-c. Tozer didn't seem at all abashed and showed no signs of withdrawing. On the contrary, he kept up with Bunter and

grinned deviously as he listened

to it, and the Head glared and roared for a birch. A few moments later, the birch was whistling and Bunter was yelling!

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—Ed.

—Ed.

Mind Your Napper!
 Pugilists and others cannot afford to be without Skinner's Solid Steel Skull Saver! Indispensable when attacked by bludgeon-wielders or walking under booby-traps! "Satisfied" writes: "Someone dropped a ton of coals on my napper while I was exploring the cellars, but, fortunately, I happened to be wearing my Skull Saver and it merely felt like someone tickling the back of my neck with a feather!" Send 28.6d. and a note of the size of your head to SKINNER'S SKULL SAVERS, Study No. 11, Remove.



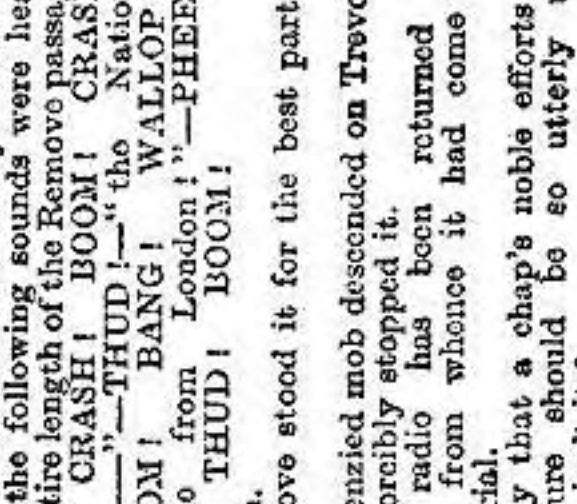
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"Radio's Great!"
 —said Trevor

But Remove Disagreed
 "Radio," said Trevor, one day last week, "is one of the great cultural forces of the present day. The humblest in the land, with the aid of this mighty invention, can now sit in their cottages listening to the world's greatest speakers, musicians and actors!" "Chuck it!" yawned half-a-dozen chaps who were sitting around the fire in the Rag. "The strains of the world's finest music, percolating magically through the ether, have brought to every one of us—"

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT?
 Mrs. Kebble the Greyfriars House keeper, has a pet cat. She was astonished to find Sammy Bunter stroking it kindly the other day. And with a slice of Second-Former cake! Sammy felt he was in thought—and Peter his hard! Peter his hard! Peter his hard!

